

## SUITE EGYPTIENNE

**Fouad Elkoury**

April 13 – May 16, 2017

The Third Line is pleased to present Fouad Elkoury's fourth solo exhibition in Dubai *Suite Egyptienne*, an account of the artist's photographic travels through Egypt starting in the late 80's. Using Gustave Flaubert and Maxime Du Camp as guides, Fouad followed their footsteps along the Nile valley nearly 150 years later. The gallery will exhibit the complete series of *Suite Egyptienne*, including photographs that have never been shown before.



Fouad Elkoury, *Kuchuk Hanem*, 1990, Ink-jet print on Baryta paper, 72 x 90 cm

In 1849, Gustave Flaubert and his friend Maxime du Camp embarked on a journey through Egypt commissioned by the French Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce and the Académie des Instructions in Paris respectively. Emblem of the East to the French Bourgeoisie, both were asked to report on 'the Orient' which subsequently became central to Flaubert's writings.

A symbol of Flaubert's romance with the East was his encounter with Kuchuk Hanem, the famed courtesan from Esna which unexpectedly imposed poetry and romance on the writer's study of Egypt. Considered by Fouad Elkoury the subject of some of Flaubert's most beautiful pages, she returns in his *Suite Egyptienne*. Whilst in pursuit of Flaubert and Du Camp's voyage, accompanied by his then wife, Nada, a subconscious overlap of narratives was created. *Kuchuk Hanem*, 1990, picturing Nada on a sofa playfully hiding her face behind a fan, is Fouad's reading of Flaubert's encounter. Nada became the protagonist in Fouad's depiction of Egypt, transforming the 150-year-old Orientalist narrative into a personal fiction.

Fouad's work evokes a sense of nostalgia for the era of Flaubert's romanticism, while also making us reminisce the Egypt of 1989. *Suite Egyptienne* is an intimate series of photos, a sequence of over 80 images taken a quarter century ago, showing the ephemeral and layered qualities of history.

## About Fouad Elkoury

Fouad Elkoury has been at the forefront of photographic practices in Lebanon and the wider Middle East. In 1982, he covered the Israeli invasion of Beirut and in 1984 published *Beyrouth Aller-Retour*, a book documenting the bomb-shocked city - a prelude to his sophomore project *Beirut City Centre* in 1991, and ignited a distinguished bibliography, which continues to this day. He created the Beirut-based Arab Image Foundation in 1997. Fouad's *On Love and War*, a series of journal entries spanning the duration of Israel's invasion of Lebanon in August 2006 was shown in Lebanon's first National Pavilion in the Venice Biennale of 2007.

Fouad has enjoyed numerous solo and group exhibitions internationally including: *Don't You Think It's Time For Love?*, Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Moscow, Russia (2016); *Migrantes en el arte contemporáneo (Migrants in Contemporary Art)*, CAC-Centro de Arte Contemporaneo, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2015); *The Lost Empire*, The Third Line, Dubai, UAE, (2014); *Le Plus Beau Jour*, Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris, France (2014); *Here and Elsewhere*, New Museum, New York, USA (2014); *The Sea is my Land*, MAXXI, Rome, Italy (2013); *Roundtable*, 9th Gwanju Biennial, Gwangju, South Korea (2012); *Be...longing*, Beirut Art Center, Beirut, Lebanon (2011); *What Happened to my Dreams?*, The Third Line Gallery, Dubai (2009); *On war and love*, 52nd Venice Biennale (Lebanese Pavilion), (2007); *Les peintres de la vie moderne*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; *Civilisation (fake = real?)*, The Third Line, Dubai, UAE (2006); *Civilisation, fake = real ?*, Sharjah Biennial, Sharjah, UAE (2005).

Fouad's works are part of permanent collections including the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris, France; Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris France, Solidere, Beirut, Lebanon and Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE.

He currently lives between Paris and Beirut.

## About The Third Line

The Third Line is a Dubai-based art gallery that represents contemporary Middle Eastern artists locally, regionally and internationally. The Third Line also hosts non-profit, alternative programs to increase interest and dialogue in the region.

The Third Line's book publishing division Works on Paper collaborates with associated artists from the region to publish and co-publish content. Projects include Presence by photographer Lamy Gargash (2008), In Absentia by Tarek Al-Ghoussein (2009), Cosmic Geometry, an extensive monograph on Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, edited by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Karen Marta (2011), and the self-titled treatise Huda Lutfi about the artist's Cairo based practice.

Represented artists include: Abbas Akhavan, Ala Ebtakar, Amir H. Fallah, Arwa Abouon, Babak Golkar, Fara Al Qasimi, Farhad Moshiri, Fouad Elkoury, Golnaz Fathi, Hassan Hajjaj, Hayv Kahraman, Huda Lutfi, Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, Laleh Khorramian, Lamy Gargash, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Pouran Jinchi, Rana Begum, Sahand Hesamiyan, Sara Naim, Sherin Guirguis, Shirin Aliabadi, Slavs and Tatars, Sophia Al-Maria, Tarek Al-Ghoussein, Youssef Nabil and Zineb Sedira.

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