

Paper Trail

22 May – 6 September, 2017

Amy Arif, Nada Baraka, Shahira Hammad, Mustafa El Hussein, Ahmed Nagy, Fadwa Ramadan, Hany Rashed, Nehad Said, Noura Seif, Aya Tarek, Moustafa Youssef, Islam Zaher

Gypsum Gallery is pleased to collaborate with Saida Al Harakany, founder of Adsum Art Consultancy, for our summer group exhibition entitled “Paper Trail”. The show is exclusively devoted to works on paper and brings together almost 150 new and old drawings and prints by twelve artists living and working in the city of Cairo.

“Paper Trail” is inspired by the immediacy of this intimate and fragile medium, one that is often overlooked in any artist’s oeuvre. From the minimalist, abstract ink drawings of Ahmed Nagy to the loose, color monoprints of Nada Baraka, the works in this show have an introspective streak. They are neither sketches nor studies but artworks in their own right. With an emotional and psychological range that is as varied as the artists themselves, the pieces act as personal records of moments, memories, experiences and places.

Mostafa Youssef’s set of 12 monochrome miniatures are made of tiny, almost imperceptible ink dots and reflect his educational background in comic design and his passion for storytelling. The small squares are based on memorable scenes from films that have left an indelible mark on the artist. Islam Zaher’s series of brown ink drawings are similarly inspired by another creative form, namely Franz Kafka’s 1922 short story entitled “Investigations of a Dog”. The dynamic drawings present a perfect balance between a fluid, almost calligraphic line, and minute crosshatching.

Mapping and geography connect the small drawings of Nehad Said to those of Mustafa El Hussein. Said’s detail-driven works are graphic interpretations of aerial photographs of Luxor in Upper Egypt where her family is from, while Hussein maps out through dotted figures and diagrammatic drawings the overlapping territories in which both he and his father served during their military conscription in Egypt.

With a wide range of references and variations, whether botanical, textual, geometric or figurative, the works in the show attest to the versatility of the medium in which physical marks imprinted on paper recount compelling stories, some real, some imagined.