

Zhivago Duncan

As the Jungle Weeps

20 March–19 April 2014

JAMM Art Gallery is proud to present *As the Jungle Weeps*, a multimedia exhibition by Berlin based artist Zhivago Duncan whose work investigates misconstrued perceptions between cultural differences and questions physical and moral truths.

The half Syrian, half Danish artist has recently completed a project in Jordan where he went out to the deserts of Wadi Rum, camped with the Bedouins and explored the industrial districts of Aqaba and the farmlands of Rum. Using photography, video, sculpture and painting, Duncan delves into the familiarity and foreignness of intimate dialogues between the various subjects and objects that fueled his trip to Jordan.

Titan is an edited video of an explosion scene from a classic American cartoon projected onto a vale of silica sand spilling out of the blade of a JCB loader. This flat animation mirrors the five-panel painting *Folklore* which has been painted using AK47s, shotguns and 9 mm hand guns. Machine reflects machine, flat surfaces are both still and moving, explosion both animated and real. The video installation is composed of seven screens each one projecting a section of the performance of the JCB. All videos are slowed and different timelines are brought to one creating a slight offset in the video.

Pure as my heart is another video composite piece with nine panels, filming a beautiful Islamic fountain in nine segments; each video has its own timeline and is set on loop. Silent, the video robs the viewer of the soothing sounds of moving water and reflects the universal values of purification.

While visiting Petra, which harbours some of the finest sands and earth pigments, Duncan came across multiple stands where Bedouins write tourists' names in bottles with different coloured sands. Using various tools and pouring techniques they garnish the bottles with camels, palm trees and various decorative patterns enhancing your personalised souvenir. Another consistent element at the stands are VISA logos. Every stand accepted Visa cards. They each stated "we welcome VISA" which transformed the impersonal payment method into a name. The artist had a sand bottle emptied, denied of all camels, palm trees and ornamentation to just have four colours and a VISA logo made to the best quality of the artisan's ability. *Sands of Time* exemplifies the paradox between socio-economic evolution and the devolution of regards towards the ancient worlds.

Born in Terre Haute, Indiana in 1980, Zhivago Duncan has lived between the US, Saudi Arabia, the UK, Malta, Bulgaria and France and is currently based in Berlin, Germany. He graduated from Chelsea College of Art and Design in London in 2007. Duncan works with ceramics, models, oil paint, silkscreen, cars, mechanics and kinetics, toys, electronics, film and photography. Using as many methods as possible in his practice, in order to push the borders of control and chaos within his work, he experiments with various materials for a period of time defined by his interest in them; this resulting in a certain ignorance and amateur approach to the work with error and singularity being the final outcome. Through pulling away from set methods and techniques within the classic language of art, Duncan investigates notions of lost identity and forgotten culture. Duncan's work has been exhibited, among others, at CFA in Berlin, the Saatchi Gallery London, Von der Heydt Museum in Wuppertal and the Philara Collection, Dusseldorf.

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PO Box 127440 | Dubai | UAE | T: +971 4 328 5169 | F: +971 4 328 5179 | info@jamm-art.org | www.jamm-art.org