

ADA CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY PRESENTS
PAINTING WITH MY EYES CLOSED
A SOLO EXHIBITION BY YOUSRA RAOUCHI
23 JUNE – 06 AUGUST 2023
ACCRA, GHANA

ADA contemporary art gallery is pleased to present *Painting With My Eyes Closed*, a solo exhibition by Moroccan artist Youssra Raouchi (b.1999).



Portrait of the artist courtesy of ADA contemporary art gallery.

"I do not like my paintings to be viewed as having a secret meaning behind them. I prefer that they are enjoyed like Jazz music as Jazz doesn't follow rules or structures; there are no repetitive notes, it is free and chaotic and that creates the beauty that we enjoy."

- Youssra Raouchi

On view from 23 June 2023, Youssra Raouchi presents a body of work that is rooted in the post-structuralist Rhizome philosophy put forth by French theorists Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari that refers to a non-linear network of multiplicities.

Rather than narrativize history and culture, the rhizome presents history and culture as a map or wide array of attractions and influences with no specific origin or genesis, for a "rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing." Youssra creates her works from the wellspring of multiplicity within her own identity much like this; she is undefined by her tradition as a member of the Amazigh culture of North Africa, nor by the many languages she speaks, or by her gender. She does not confine herself to one medium, nor does she only focus on one concept or area of study, but is enamoured with multiple dimensions, questioning and examining the coexistence of polarities that ultimately make us human.

Each work explores the amorphous space between the dualities of the exterior and the interior, the spiritual realm and the physical world, culture and the core of personality, the social and the mental, surface and depth, behaviour, thoughts or feelings, and so on. Her experimentation with shapes, colours and perspectives is translated into rooms that are open yet closed, industrial yet dream-like, her exploration seen in the gentle strokes of lilac that form clouds and impasto tones that form backgrounds. Youssra advances her approach to materiality within and beyond painting as a linear discipline. Each painting explores notions of space, sexuality, and identity, becoming a rhizome unto itself and transporting the viewer into another world.

Youssra places herself as the subject in most of her compositions – only analysing what has come forth after the work is complete. Painting her reflection has become second nature, the features she knows so well flow forth easily and render each work a mirror, not only to her state of mind, but to the experience of the viewer as well. In most of her works, the figures are flat and abstract with only the face being well defined, alluding to the paradoxes that exist in peoples' identities – who we really are, what we pretend to be to the world, and the parts we leave unexamined.

In *Painting With My Eyes Closed*, Youssra invites the viewer to venture into the depths of their memories to cypher where the interpretations they form on their own truly originate. With the use of surreal composition of spaces and vibrant distorted landscapes, childlike wonder meets mature truths of life at an equilibrium, presenting us with a state of pure bewilderment, uncertainty and the wonderful conundrum of facing our honest intimate selves.

The exhibition is on view until 06 August 2023.

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ABOUT YOUSRA RAOUCHI

Yousra Raouchi, (b. 1999), is a Moroccan multi-disciplinary artist, whose mastery of merging figurative and expressionist art in painting and use of mixed media inspires extensive dialogues. She is a graduate of the National Institute of Fine Arts in Tetouan, Morocco, where she studied Fine Art. Her interest in historical, political, social, & ecological issues and painting as a concept, galvanizes her work with light markings of the influence of artists such as Anselm Kiefer, Robert Rauschenberg and Hilma af Klint. With a hybrid practice, her works transcend categorization, questioning mediums, and the limitations they place on the artists.

Yousra has participated in various projects in institutions and spaces in Morocco such as Le 18, Festival d'Art Indigene, 2021, FLATTA Residency, 2020 and a collective exhibition at Villa Des Arts Casablanca.

ABOUT ADA CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY

ADA contemporary art gallery, based in Accra, Ghana, specialises in the work of emerging artists across Africa and its diaspora. Established in 2020 by modern African art advisor Adora Mba, ADA is committed to nurturing Ghana and the continent's contemporary art community and fostering its ties and influence amongst global audiences. Highlighting individual early career artistic practices, the gallery's program includes dedicated solo exhibitions; offsite projects and exhibitions; site-specific commissions; talks; creative partnerships; philanthropic activities with local actors; and international art fairs.

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