

SILENT GARDEN

ARTWORKS BY BASHAR ALHROUB

Zawyeh Gallery, Ramallah

Open daily except Fridays, from September 5 to October 31, 2020

By Rana
Anani

A riot of flowers with jarring colors and harsh angles dominates the forefront, at other times they take a backstage to blue, green, and grey hues, depending on the time of the year or the day the scenes were observed.



Surprisingly, *Silent Garden* was not inspired during the COVID-19 pandemic when isolation became central to humans, and when people started looking inwards for refuge. The series is the result of a few years' work, simulating the artist's life and stemming from his own sense of isolation. "I feel that I'm stranger on so many levels, especially on the political level, like everyone else. I have no say in issues that affect my life and existence on this land, and as time passes, I feel more helpless and isolated." Frustrated and unable to make a change or blend in, Bashar Alhroub made his garden with its exotic plants the center of his attention not only by attending to it but also by painting the new blossoming flowers, the various plants, and the diverse combination of colors throughout the seasons. Using

acrylic and coal on canvas, Bashar produced a set of artworks that has roots in impressionism, reminding us of works by Monet and Rousseau.

We can see similarities between the flowers, exotic in nature, and the alienation that the artist feels as he tries to adapt to his surroundings. Looking at the perspective of the paintings, we see these similarities when the artist places himself on par with the plants in the visual sense. In front of the big canvas, we are overwhelmed with the dominant tall plants and can sense a conversation between them and the artist, as if the plants have turned into his intimate soul mates.

Ultimately, Bashar's *Silent Garden* transforms into a healing escape rather than a physical reality. It becomes a sanctuary that provides therapy to the stranger in Bashar's soul, bringing about the peace and tranquility that he strives for in pursuit of his inner reality away from the outside world.

A secret garden can only be accessed through a secret door, and in this exhibition, Bashar opens the door, letting us into his secret wordless world, revealing the intimate, secluded personal journey of the past few years.

For further information, please visit the gallery website at www.zawyeh.net, or contact the gallery manager, Yusef Hussein, at yhussein@zawyeh.net or 059 915 0049.

