

Ahmed Alsoudani at Marlborough Contemporary, New York

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“Garage Sale,” 2018 Ahmed Alsoudani Acrylic, charcoal, color pencil on canvas; 76 x 124 in., 193 x 315 cm (Courtesy the artist and Marlborough Contemporary, New York and London)

The exhibition is on view at Marlborough Contemporary, New York, venue through December 15, 2018.

While continuing his commitment to underlying draftsmanship as a vigorous physical act and to a distinctive chromatic approach, these new paintings show some striking developments in tone and content, says the gallery. While the earlier works by the artist have been driven by the violent tumult of his war-torn youth, these new ones show evidence of more quotidian stresses familiar to all New Yorkers, and an increased, reflective distance from his formative experiences.

“We see more self-contained references to the influence of ever-present surveillance, the aestheticization of suffering by the news media, and the intimate push and pull of our close interpersonal relationships amid a general crush of undistinguished humanity. To this end we begin to see some airy, soft-edged application of paint; the syrupy gravity of an undersea tableaux; or even the melancholic swirl of cast-off personal possessions that comprise a yard sale,” the gallery writes.

Alsoudani has often said that there is effectively no gap between thought and execution in his paintings. The surfaces are the actualization of accumulated physical experience, as well as an activation of his enthusiasm for works of fiction and poetry from every corner of the globe — especially those by inhabitants of occupied territories or exiles from war.

“These influences are not merely illustrated but, rather, are processed and refracted through the act of painting, providing a viewer with a direct expression of multivalent rumination,” the gallery writes. “In a formal shift, the recent introduction of uncharacteristically geometric areas of pure color create startling interruptions to his otherwise restless and roiling compositions. This has a secondary flattening effect that calls attention to the painting’s surface where there is typically a complex depth of field and an almost Cubist spatial logic. It is through these subtle compositional strategies that the tussle between painting and drawing are played out on Alsoudani’s canvasses and point to the inherent conflict and visceral nature of his process and content.”

The exhibition is on view through December 15, 2018, at Marlborough Contemporary, 545 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10001.