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THE BREAKDOWN: Lebanese artist Adlita Stephan — 'Sifat Al- Daken'

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(Attributes of the Obscure)



The artist's egg-shaped artwork is on show at Gale (Supplied)

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Updated 31
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ARAB NEWS

December 31, 2020
09:25

The Lebanese artist discusses her egg-shaped artwork, covered in Arabic writing, which is on show at Galerie

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My medium has always been language — as a visual aspect but also as content: What is it able to create in the mind of the viewer? Repetition is a tool that’s always present in my work as it can be really overwhelming.

This work is tied to the theme of my exhibition, which is based on a group of words in Arabic. I came up with these words in a small notebook called “Al-Daken Wa ‘Oubouroh” (Darkness and its Crossing).

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The
artist's egg-
shaped artwork
is covered in
Arabic writing.
(Supplied)

I used this notebook to sometimes escape from my work or to try my hand at finding some stimulation and inspiration. Some of the words are: The dark, the frightful, the repulsive, the fatal, the tormentor, the colossal, the deadly, the horrifying, the bitter, the abyssal, the destructive, the obscure, the painful, the venomous, the ruthless, the secretive... There are more than 200 of these words that focus on darkness in terms of color and its sacred side, but I

never used the term
'black.' They're also
descriptive of an
emotional state — of
psychological
suffering, which
leads to physical
pain.

It's descriptive of the
human condition
that people know
exists but they don't
go near it and try to
avoid it. There are so
many ugly things in
our world and we
don't want to know
about them. And
when we do know
about them, it
shocks us.

There were mistakes
when I was writing —
sometimes my hand
would smudge the
text. But these
mistakes are
necessary. If
everything was
identical, it would
look as if it was
printed. It took me
three or four days to
write everything by
hand and I used
plaster to make the
egg.

Why the shape of an egg? There's something mysterious about it, as if it's hiding something. It is the origin of things. I made this egg in 2019, but, honestly, many Lebanese felt that it was made now. In the end, an artwork should be universal, through which people are looking for a specific identification.



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