

Majd Abdel Hamid
Ode to the Sea
Opening January 30, 2025

Ode to the Sea is an ongoing body of work—a travel journal of various cities and islands around the Mediterranean Sea. The first chapter focuses on the Kerkennah Islands in Tunisia, the second on Beirut, and the third on Anafi Island in Greece. In each place, materials like fabric, soap, found objects, and threads are gathered. This travel journal evolves into a collection of photo books, sculptures, collages on cotton paper, videos.

The narratives emerge through visual and material compositions, creating a dialogue between sensory experiences and memories. Details such as shifting light, color studies, shades, and subtle impressions converge to evoke an ongoing, nonverbal diary.

"Completing a piece takes hours and hours, sometimes hundreds of hours. He develops series—a principle that allows him to explore the same theme, the same motif—over several years. His creative approach is slow and meticulous, sometimes laborious, especially when the material is recalcitrant. Making, undoing, doing, and starting again are not just ways of warding off time. The artist doesn't spare himself and sometimes pushes his limits to the point of excess. But there is never any question of a show of force or virtuosity to achieve excellence, only of aiming accurately.

The repetition, consistency, rigor, patience, and perseverance that are required of him can send him into a state of trance. "It has become an essential part of my daily habits, providing me with a safe space, like being in a state of light trance, where you can withdraw from the blackmail of images, news, statements, withdraw but without retreating to a sense of denial, a self-care ritual with a compulsive eagerness to be relevant. How can we distract ourselves while maintaining healthy proximity to society?" the artist asks. Embroidering becomes an act of resistance, resilience, and wisdom, a salutary meditation that allows him to banish apprehension and anxiety by maintaining a safe distance with the hustle and bustle of the world, not too close so as not to fall. Embroidering produces a mental space, a shelter, an intimate safe space in which to escape reality." Ludovic Delalande

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About the artist

Majd Abdel Hamid is a visual artist from Palestine. He was born in Damascus in 1988, and is currently based between Beirut and Paris. He graduated from Malmö Art Academy, Sweden (2010) and attended the International Academy of Art in Palestine (2007-2009).

Majd Abdel Hamid's solo exhibitions include *Muscle Memory*, CCA: Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow; *800 meters and a corridor*, gb agency, Paris (2022); *A Stitch in Time*, Fondation d'Entreprise Hermès, Brussels curated by Guillaume Desanges (2021).

Majd Abdel Hamid's work has been featured in numerous group exhibitions, including *Memory Sews Together Events That Hadn't Previously Met*, Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah; *Splendid Isolation*, SMAK, Ghent; *La Beauté du Diable*, Frac Franche-Comté, Besançon (2022); *Répare, Reprise*, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, (2021); *Heartbreak*, Ruya Maps, Venice; *Touché!* (gesture, movement, action), Beirut Art Center, Beyrouth, (2019); *Unravelled*, Beirut Art Center, Beyrouth (2017); at Krognoshuset Lund in Sweden (2016), the Valencia Institute of Modern Art in Spain and the Halil Saakini Cultural Center in Palestine (2018).

He has taken part in several international residencies and workshops, including *March Project* (Sharjah Art Foundation, 2015), *Former West* (Berlin, Germany, 2013) and *Truth is Concrete* (Granz, Austria, 2012). Hamid worked in residence at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris in 2009. He was a finalist for the Young Artist of the Year Award, presented by the A.M. Qattan Foundation, in 2008, 2010, and 2012.

Majd Abdel Hamid's work is part of international public collections including Centre Pompidou, Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris, France; The Stockholm County Council, Stockholm, Sweden; S.M.A.K., Ghent, Belgium; Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE; Kadist Art Fondation, Paris, France; Frac Franche-Comté, Besançon, France; CNAP, Collection Nationale, Paris, France, Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz, Liechtenstein, Saradar Collection, Beirut, Lebanon.