

Mandy El-Sayegh

MUTATIONS IN BLUE, WHITE AND RED

November 8—December 22, 2018

536 West 22nd Street, New York

@lehmannmaupin / #mandyelsayegh

Opening reception: Thursday, November 8, 2018



MUTATIONS IN BLUE, WHITE AND RED, Installation view, Lehmann Maupin, New York, November 8-December 22, 2018. Photo: Matthew Herrmann. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul.

New York, October 15, 2018—Lehmann Maupin is pleased to announce *MUTATIONS IN BLUE, WHITE AND RED*, an exhibition of recent paintings, drawings, and sculpture by Mandy El-Sayegh that marks the London-based artist's first solo exhibition in the U.S. The gallery will host an opening reception for El-Sayegh on Thursday, November 8, from 6 to 8 PM.

MUTATIONS IN BLUE, WHITE AND RED brings together examples from different series of works by El-Sayegh, which together form an artistic practice rooted in assemblage and the political, social, and economic complexities of humanity. Featured in the exhibition are a number of mixed-media paintings from El-Sayegh's *Net-Grid* series, along with examples of her *Windows* series, which is comprised of intricate blue ink drawings executed on large-scale canvases. Also on view is a selection of the artist's table works, vitrine-like sculptures containing small latex objects, images, and found ephemera, as well as works from her *Piece Paintings* series, which are exhibited here for the first time. El-Sayegh has also created an installation where she has applied layers of *The Financial Times* to the walls and floor of one of the galleries, offering a different surface for the

work. *The Financial Times*, chosen both for its signification of global finance and the flesh-pink tone of its pages, reflects El-Sayegh's interest in the complex interactions (and often confrontations) between the body and the political landscape.

El-Sayegh's process often begins with periods of focused research of written material, scientific and biological diagrams, and pop cultural imagery. Adapting elements of psychoanalysis to a formal aesthetic that merges minimalism, pop, and figuration, she occupies a quasi-paranoid worldview as a creative response to societal alienation. From this shifting standpoint, El-Sayegh invokes a complex investigation of the body as signifier in the context of shared cultural trauma, linguistic entropy, and the endless mutability of meaning itself. "My practice is preoccupied with part-whole relations," explains the artist, "and with 'procedural thinking' that allows for observable growth and decay." With intricate graphic webs of abstracted imagery suggesting unchecked growth, El-Sayegh's crystalline blue ink *Windows* works are perhaps her clearest allusion to autonomous organic patterning, but the interest spans her entire oeuvre.

El-Sayegh's interest in the functioning of systems—whether biological, linguistic or indeed political—is connected to her exploration of the relationship between figure and ground in painterly terms and to her questioning of how we derive meaning from this "ground," which can refer to both a metaphorical and a physical understanding of space. This ongoing project links together seemingly disparate series of works in a more sustained investigative process. For El-Sayegh, the exploration of "grounds" also has a political resonance, in terms of the physical ground bodies are permitted to occupy, and the condition of groundlessness as evocative of statelessness. However, her investigation is not triangulated toward making a specific statement; rather her interest lies in creating methods that invite the viewer to consider the very processes of constructing meaning. The organization of her work into series reflects the observational stance El-Sayegh adopts, establishing a set of rules for each work that are allowed to play out again and again, with the artist and viewers bearing witness to the results.

Though El-Sayegh's processes are deeply invested in systems, she simultaneously questions and rejects the systematic, particularly in relation to the construction of meaning. Layered compositions deliberately obfuscate, with fragments of newsprint and text embedded in the dense *Net-Grid* paintings and phrases or words hidden in the *Windows'* compositions. El-Sayegh remains mindful of the potential for systems of categorization to tip over into prejudice or violence, the regulation and management of human beings under certain regimes, and the pathologization of difference. Indebted to the anti-taxonomical and the nonsensical, El-Sayegh creates her work as spaces where the dominant modes of creating meaning can be broken down and new forms of meaning can materialize.

About the artist

Mandy El-Sayegh (Born in 1985, Malaysia; lives in London) received her BFA in 2007 from the University of Westminster, London, followed by her MFA in painting in 2011 from the Royal College of Art, London. El-Sayegh has exhibited with The Mistake Room, Guadalajara, Mexico, (2018); Carl Kostyál, London (2017); Sharjah Biennial 13: Tamawuj, Sharjah, UAE (2017); and Carlos/Ishikawa, London (2016), among others.

About Lehmann Maupin

lehmannmaupin.com

New York
501 West 24th Street
536 West 22nd Street
New York NY 10011
Telephone +1 212 255 2923

Hong Kong
407 Pedder Building
12 Pedder Street
Central Hong Kong
Telephone +852 2530 0025

Seoul
74-18 Yulgok-ro3-gil
Jongno-gu Seoul
Telephone +822 725 0094

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996. The gallery represents a diverse range of American artists, as well as artists and estates from across Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, and the Middle East. It has been instrumental in introducing numerous artists from around the world in their first New York exhibitions. Known for championing artists who create groundbreaking and challenging forms of visual expression, the gallery prioritizes personal investigations and individual narratives. Lehmann Maupin prizes the distinct conceptual approaches that its artists offer on the essential matters that shape international culture today, including gender, class, religion, history, politics, and globalism. In 2013, with two locations in New York, significant interest in its artists abroad, and growing opportunities in new markets, Lehmann Maupin opened an additional location in Hong Kong, followed by Seoul in 2017. For more information on the gallery and its artists, visit www.lehmannmaupin.com

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

Marilyn Minter, Through October 27, 2018, Pedder Building, HONG KONG

Suh Se Ok, Through October 27, 2018, West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

Nari Ward, *CORRECTIONAL*, Through November 17, 2018, 74-18, Yulgok-ro 3-gil, SEOUL

Catherine Opie, *The Modernist*, November 1—January 17, 2019, West 24th Street, NEW YORK

Kader Attia, November 1—December 22, 2018, Pedder Building, HONG KONG

Angel Otero, November 1—December 22, 2018, Yulgok-ro 3-gil, SEOUL

McArthur Binion, January 17—February 23, 2019, West 24th Street, NEW YORK

For more information on Mandy El-Sayegh or other Lehmann Maupin artists, please contact Kathryn McKinney at +1 212 255 2923 or kathryn@lehmannmaupin.com.

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