

## Vian Sora

### *House of Pearls*

31<sup>st</sup> October – 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2024

The Third Line is pleased to announce *House of Pearls*, our first solo exhibition with Louisville-based artist Vian Sora. The exhibition presents new paintings and works on paper that explore pearls as a metaphor for achieving stability and the needed structural integrity for life itself to regenerate.



*Vian Sora, Biomimicry III, 2024, Oil on canvas with mixed media, 213,36 x 152.4 cm*

In this new body of work, Sora – an Iraqi-born artist who sought refuge in Dubai following the US invasion of Iraq – explores the fundamental elements of caustic cycles: the solid and fluid violent states intrinsic to nature from which pearls grow, and examines connectivity as an essential element to humanity's collective consciousness. Drawing on her experiences as a war survivor and immigrant, Sora reflects on the uncertainty and shifting boundaries of existence, capturing the physical, mental, and emotional toll experienced across nations, cultures, and time. Her paintings reveal the complex nature of identity and seek cohesion like the iridescent layers of a natural pearl.

Sora's technique begins with canvases laid flat, mirroring the landscapes she has traversed, before transitioning them upright to assert control. Starting with a minimal palette of three colours, she gradually introduces up to 20 hues through meticulous layering, with each piece featuring up to 50 layers of colours and texture. This process balances spontaneity with precision, capturing the tension between disorder and control in her work.

Through this layered process, Sora depicts imagined landscapes and ocean scenes marked with distorted Arabic calligraphy and vivid colours, evoking a pearl-like luminosity. Her work captures the vulnerability and courage of displaced individuals, portraying personal and collective traumas and ongoing struggles. By using multiple layers of paint, Sora captures explosive intensity and deep psychological states. Her abstract figures emerge from chaos, revealing inherent beauty.

*“Part of the challenge and intrigue for me is how my intentions start somewhere and it goes somewhere else, then I bring them back to the intention. The discovery and the accident are even more interesting for me than the intention. You dive deep into the subconscious in a way that is impossible to replicate through illustration.” - Vian Sora*

### **About Vian Sora**

Vian Sora (b. 1976, Baghdad, Iraq) has lived and worked in Louisville, Kentucky since 2009. She received a BS from Al Mansour University in Baghdad, Iraq in 2000 and studied printmaking at the Istanbul Museum of Graphic Art (IMOGA) in Istanbul, Turkey in 2007. Sora’s work has been presented in solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally including the Baltimore Art Museum, Baltimore, MD; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; Contemporary Arts Center (CAC), Cincinnati, OH; Sharjah Biennale, Sharjah, UAE; IMOGA, Istanbul, Turkey; as well as the KMAC Triennial, Louisville, KY; Grinnell College Museum of Art; among others. Commencing in 2025, Sora will have a travelling solo museum show at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and the Speed Art Museum.

Sora's work is included in the collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA; KMAC Museum, Louisville, KY; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; Grinnell College Museum of Art, IA; Ministry of Culture Contemporary Collection, Baghdad, Iraq; the Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, OH; Fidelity Art Collection, Boston, MA; and the Shah Garg Foundation Collection, New York, NY; as well as numerous private collections.

### **About The Third Line**

Founded in 2005, The Third Line is a Dubai-based gallery that represents contemporary artists locally, regionally, and internationally. With over 19 years of dedicated commitment to the arts, it has become a pioneering platform for established talent and emerging voices from the region and its diaspora, building a dynamic program that explores the diversity of practices in the region.

In addition to its exhibitions, The Third Line engages in the production of art publications in English and Arabic and hosts numerous non-profit, alternative programs that add to the discourse on art, film, music, and literature in the region.

Represented artists include: Abbas Akhavan, Ala Ebtekar, Amir H. Fallah, Anuar Khalifi, Bady Dalloul, Farah Al Qasimi, Farhad Moshiri, Fouad Elkoury, Hassan Hajjaj, Hayv Kahraman, Huda Lutfi, Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, Jordan Nassar, Laleh Khorramian, Lamyra Gargash, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarman, Nima Nabavi, Pouran Jinchi, Rana Begum, Sahand Hesamiyan, Kamran Samimi, Sara Naim, Sarah Awad, Shirin Aliabadi, Slavs and Tatars, Sophia Al Maria, Tarek Al-Ghoussein, yasiin bey, and Youssef Nabil.

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