

2. March 2023

**PRESSE RELEASE**

**KUTAIBA MAMOU**

**Obsession, Vulnerability and the Dark Sides of War**

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**Exhibition at The House of Syrian Art in Bremen | Curated by Frizzi Krella**

March 4 – March 27, 2023

**Opening: March 3, 2023 at 6 pm**

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The House of Syrian Art exhibits the work of Kutaiba Mamou, a young Syrian artist born 1984 in Homs, for the first time in Germany.

Kutaiba Mamou's vibrant and colorful drawings on paper are immensely meaningful to his development as an artist. His work is simultaneously moving and shocking. In his initial artistic career, Kutaiba chose the path of quite realistic paintings. However, a severe war injury changed everything for him. After coma, paralysis and temporary loss of memory he was forced to learn to draw with his left hand. He began depicting this altered reality with brush, color and pencil in a completely new manner, questioning and reflecting on its changes. He began looking for role models in the European Modernism which originated between World War I and II, searching for possible answers and new artistic means. His obsessive drawing turned into an outlet, a necessity and a passion. While searching for his own language in his art, one that would reflect the human vulnerability both regarding the mind and the body, his drawings also became tainted with the sheer helplessness of not being able to oppose the human tragedy taking place in his birth country Syria with anything other than his art.

At a first glance, Kutaiba's work may seem scrawly, emblematic, almost naive. He uses rudimentary images that are reminiscent of a child's drawings. They are at the core of his wild, unconventional albeit intentional compositions that are embellished with signs and abbreviations, letters and added material and become progressively more complex. The unmistakable symbol of a cross as a simultaneous sign for eternity and finitude is a recurring one in his graphic paintings. Equally repetitive is the emblem of a bird that symbolizes the longing for freedom and life. At times, Kutaiba's imagery is reminiscent of the large, non-hierarchical drawings ranging from artists such as Cy Twombly to Basquiat, while also displaying some similarities with Popart.

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Somewhere between trivial scrawls and substantial existentialism, his usage of lines, symbols and color develops into his very own, unmistakeable and authentic style.

His paintings, drawings and collages are inspired by events and experiences both from reality and movies, trauma and vision and are enigmatic, multi-layered and provocative.

## Kutaiba Mamou

Born 1984, Kutaiba Mamou lives and works as an artist in his birth city Homs.

After his studies at the Jesuit Monastery Saint John of Damascus in Homs and graduating from Business School at the University of Latakia, he proceeded to study at the Adham Ismail Institute of Fine Arts from 2014-2016. In 2015, he began partaking in various exhibitions. In 2021 the Adonia Art Gallery organized his first singular exhibition at the Opera House of Damascus.

The opening is accompanied by the release of the catalogue *KUTAIBA MAMOU – Obsession, Vulnerability and the Dark Sides of War*. It contains an interview with the artist and a text by Frizzi Krella. (Published by the Takla Foundation, ISBN 978-3-00-070771-3; 10 Euro)

Two accompanying events are scheduled during the course of the exhibition. More information will be published on the website of the Takla Foundation shortly.

## Program

### Opening | March 3, 2023 | 6pm

Introduction: Frizzi Krella, Director of the House of Syrian Art

### Tour guided by curator Frizzi Krella | TBA

### Further events will be announced shortly

*For more information and images for download for press purposes please see [www.takla-stiftung.org>presse](http://www.takla-stiftung.org>presse)*

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**Opening hours: Tue to Fri 3 to 6 pm**

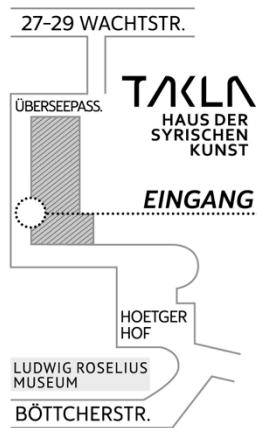
**Sat 11 till 17**

**Sun and Mon closed**

**Admission is free.**

**Guided tours on request: [info@takla-stiftung.org](mailto:info@takla-stiftung.org)**

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## PRESS PHOTOS



Kutaiba Mamou, o.T. | o.J.  
Acryl, Mixed media on paper | 70 x 50 cm



Kutaiba Mamou, o.T. | o.J.  
Acryl on paper | 71 x 49 cm



Kutaiba Mamou, o.T. (Frontier) | 2019  
Acryl on paper | 71 x 49 cm



Kutaiba Mamou, o.T. | 2019  
Acryl, Plastic foil on paper | 72 x 51 cm