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After Ago by Richard Yasmine

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SEP 30, 2021 / FURNITURE

After Ago by Richard Yasmine

After Ago is a minimal furniture collection created by Lebanon-based architect and designer Richard Yasmine for Galerie Philia's "First Times" exhibition in New York City. Yasmine is one of 30 featured artists and designers, many of whom have not shown with the gallery or in the US before. Inspired by Postmodernism, the Memphis movement, and Art Deco, After Ago is an ode to the arch; a sculptural shape made up of single lines that have the ability to create a range of objects, and yet remain timeless. Initially beginning with sketches, Yasmine embraced "the splendor of the curves," and created a seat, a shelving unit, a table, a tray, and a vase, which he then crafted by hand and painted using multiple materials, including foam, lightweight concrete plaster, acrylic, stoneware, and clay.

The alternating black and white lines on either side of the works explore the idea of contrasting opposites, which Yasmine attributes to the history of his native Beirut; a city that has experienced a myriad of highs and lows, “with its multiple lives and layers throughout centuries, Beirut always rises from the ashes longing for eternal life.” In fact, the series was originally inspired by the anniversary of the 2020 blast, and the rebuilding of the city thereafter.

Opposing factors are at the heart of Yasmine’s ethos, preferring not to identify the differences between reality and imagination, but instead, creating intriguing and controversial design objects that incorporate a modern approach to his cultural traditions. Integrating Middle Eastern, specifically Lebanese, savoir-faire to his designs and collaborating with local craftsmen, Yasmine’s designs are a marriage between the old and the new. “These layers of black and white represent the emotional alteration between sadness and happiness, madness and sanity, calm and anxiousness.”

“First Times” reflects Galerie Philia’s eye for works that emanate from different cultures and transcend formal, stylistic, national, and historical barriers. The collection on show unites a wide range of artistic worlds connected by their interculturalism and sheer artistic quality, regardless of their point of origin. Each work has an intrinsic aesthetic value, which together, creates a constellation of visible relationships without a centerpiece. Resisting trends and time, this collection offers multiple permutations, adapting to ever-changing interiors, sensibilities, and lifestyles.

This exhibition is also an opportunity to present Philia Interiors at Galerie Philia’s new Tribeca location, on view at 39 Lispenard Street until December 3rd.

Photography by Richard Yasmine, courtesy of Galerie Philia.





