

MOHAMMED KAZEM

Infinite Angles

Opening: 23 March, 2 – 8pm
24 March – 20 May, 2020



Sound of Light, 2020, Acrylic and ink on canvas, 152 x 183 cm

scratches on paper. Continuing his scratching technique, which Kazem began in the 1990's, he created abrasions into the paper's surface with a pair of scissors pushes and pulls the blade against the paper, tearing and scratching the material in an effort to render sound visual. In this installation, Kazem includes a found bathroom door, which he first encountered at an Italian restaurant in Cincinnati, Ohio. The door wears the marks of history upon its surface; layers of paint, now slowly coming off, attempt to mask the evidence of the countless palms that have pressed upon it. Visitors to the exhibition are invited to push through Kazem's found door, activating its hinges and its potential to continue harnessing the energy from the force of each hand. On the other side, a display of new scratch works on coloured paper mark the sound of each angle made as the door swings open – each colour sourced from the painted layers on the door's degraded surface.

Infinite Angles highlights Kazem's painterly vocabulary. In *Sound of Light* (2019–20), the artist tunes into the light collected in the interior spaces of buildings under construction. With large swathes of paint, Kazem creates an illuminated surface that beckons one to step inside its world. Each stroke of paint captures light as it streams in through openings of architectural expanse. Kazem explains how buildings emit sounds that are determined by the light that touches it. Protrusions, concrete bricks, domes, arches, and scaffolds appear through the light that settles on each in a different way, emitting different sounds. Loudest might be daybreak as the light thrusts through the darkness while a murmur happens at sunset as the lights retreat and fold into the night sky. The process includes the making of photographs, and for these paintings, Kazem began with photographing images of sites across Dubai and, and then continued to paint these images on large canvas. His collections of light on architecture are painted with the strokes of an industrial roller among other materials and every surface transmits the sound Kazem has picked up from the light bending and stretching across each site. While the *Collecting Light* (2020) are scratch works on large scrolls of white paper, which appear as imprints of frequencies emitted by the light stroking these enchanting spaces of architecture that Kazem finds across various cities. Enthralled by light passing through fabricated spaces, Kazem evokes a sense of the sublime as he reorients the image to that very specific event of light sounding as it touches the surface of things.

Windows (2019-2020) is a series of watercolour and graphite on paper, depicting various scenes around the UAE. From one frame to another, a short story unravels. Read in any direction, these works capture invisible and intimate events in the landscape: laundry day at a labour compound, a figure in repose. In doing the everyday, they remain in the shadows, or their backs turned and walking away. Kazem explains that in each work you cannot fully see the figures, you can only see traces of them. Along with the new architecture, they creep horizontally from coast to desert. Kazem depicts pockets within quotidian temporary life, sketching the

Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde is pleased to announce its exhibition of *Mohammed Kazem: Infinite Angles*. The exhibition features new works on paper, paintings and readymade, which continue Kazem's exploration of materiality and the visualization of light and sound. The artworks on view are imprints and records of both material and immaterial things in the world, they reveal an invisible light and inaudible sound that exists in a continuous sequence with no beginning or end. Kazem photographs light to capture its manifestations across building constructions. He also hears the sound of light as he scratches it onto the surface of paper.

Kazem's paintings, drawings, and scratched paper act as a site for the production of creative work, where his material is reshaped into an artefact that documents this labour. *Sound of Angles* (2020) is an installation that brings together a found door and new

figures and their surroundings, capturing minor histories of physical labour that scratches the surface of an environment and alters its topography.

Kazem's artistic practice hovers across meditative actions and conceptual themes that appear in iterations that always extend from the artist's physical place in the world. Labour, as a metaphysical concept stretches its very own limits, and Kazem shows us this by invisible events in the everyday. In ongoing undulations, a blade pushes and tears through paper, a door swings from one inside to another, and the sounds of light are collected and refracted.

Artist Biography

Mohammed Kazem (born 1969, Dubai) lives and works in Dubai. He has developed an artistic practice that encompasses video, photography and performance to find new ways of apprehending his environment and experiences. The foundations of his work are informed by his training as a musician, and Kazem is deeply engaged with developing processes that can render transient phenomena, such as sound and light, in tangible terms. Often positioning himself within his work, Kazem responds to geographical location, materiality and the elements as a means to assert his subjectivity, particularly in relation to the rapid pace of modernisation in the Emirates since the country's founding.

Kazem was a member of the Emirates Fine Arts Society early in his career and is acknowledged as one of the 'Five', an informal group of Emirati artists – including Hassan Sharif, Abdullah Al Saadi, Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim and Hussain Sharif – at the vanguard of conceptual and interdisciplinary art practice. In 2012, he completed his Masters in Fine Art at the University of the Arts, Philadelphia. In recent years, he has participated in several group shows at the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (2017), Guggenheim New York (2016), the Yinchuan Biennale (2016), Sharjah Biennial (2015), Gwangju Museum of Art (2014), Fotofest Biennial in Houston (2014), Boghossian Foundation (2013), and Mori Art Museum (2012), amongst others. In 2013 he represented the UAE's National Pavilion at the Venice Biennale with an immersive video installation entitled *Walking on Water*, curated by Reem Fadda, and in 2015 he showcased works from the *Tongue* series at *1980 – Today: Exhibitions in the UAE*, curated by Hoor Al Qasimi. His works are held in the collections of the British Museum, London; Guggenheim Abu Dhabi and New York; Mathaf, Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha; Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah; Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah; Vehbi Koç Foundation, Istanbul; King AbdulAziz Center for World Culture, Dahrhan among others.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue comprising an essay by Fawz Kabra entitled *Infinite Angles*

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