

Coming at the end of a stunning presentation of works spanning several decades at this year's dOCUMENTA (13), the exhibition will be Adnan's first one-person show in New York. Comprised of oils on canvas dating from 2000, the paintings are small in size, replete with bright color and bold form. The focus of the majority of these paintings is the San Francisco Bay Area's Mount Tamalpais, the leitmotif of her visual work since moving to California in the late 1950s.

For Adnan, Tamalpais became a locus of constant attention, its pull generating painting after painting as well as a book-length essay, *Journey to Mount Tamalpais*, published in 1986. The book is a meditation on the aesthetic ramifications of painting the mountain, living under its constant gaze and the community of artists Adnan found in its shadow who encouraged her to paint. *Sea and Fog* elaborates many of the themes first developed there, and each painting can be understood as a highly compressed invocation of the experiences and ideas that Adnan's intervening books develop.

As Simone Fattal writes in her essay, *On Perception: Etel Adnan's Visual Art*, "Adnan's paintings play the role the old icons used to play for people who believed. They exude energy and give energy. They grow on you like talismans. They help in living everyday life. More often than not I have noticed that people who have Adnan's paintings will keep them in their innermost chambers, and not in their living rooms as *subjects d'art*. The quickness of their making, the fact that they are finished in one sitting, their compactness - with nothing diluted or lost joins to the happiness experienced while painting, the joy of using color. They reflect the praise of the universe, the experience of it, immersion in it, participation in its formation. No lamentation, no elegy. Love."

Etel Adnan was born in Lebanon in 1925 and lives and works in Paris and Sausalito, CA. Adnan is hailed as one of the most important living writers of Middle Eastern descent, and her work has been widely published and translated. Her early education took place in French schools in Beirut. Her father was a Turkish speaking Muslim from Damascus and her mother a Greek Christian from Smyrna. Living and studying between languages and cultures, she went on to study at the Sorbonne and also completed postgraduate work in philosophy at the University of California, Berkeley, and at Harvard University in the 1950s. She returned to Beirut in the early 1970s only to leave again in exile at the start of the Lebanese Civil War. Settling in Paris, she wrote *Sitt Marie Rose* in 1977, her influential novel about the war. She then returned to Sausalito where, at the base of Mount Tamalpais, she made her permanent home.

In addition to the inclusion of many paintings in dOCUMENTA (13), her contribution to that exhibition also included a film titled *Motion*, a large tapestry and her long used palette knife, displayed in a vitrine with objects from the National Museum of Beirut damaged during the civil

war. She was a dOCUMENTA resident artist and writer, conducting numerous talks and readings, as well as authoring volume #6 of the exhibition's notebook series, *100 Notes - 100 Thoughts*. Her prior solo exhibitions have been hosted by galleries in the United States, Europe and the Middle East, most recently at the Beirut branch of Sfeir-Semler Gallery in 2010. Also in 2010 Adnan participated in events at the Serpentine Gallery, London, organized by Hans Ulrich Obrist who, naming her one of his personal heroes, dedicated an issue of the journal *RES Art World/World Art*. Adnan's work has also inspired numerous works by playwrights, composers and filmmakers. Most recently The Otolith Group's film *I See Infinite Distance Between Any Point and Another*, was inspired in part by *Sea and Fog*.

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