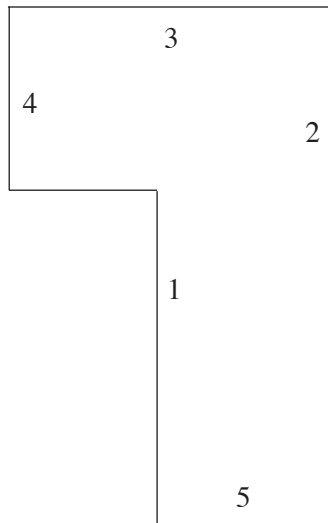


Francis Irv

Osama Al Rayyan

Poets or Poems

March 26 - April 26, 2025



1. Osama Al Rayyan
Untitled
2025
Oil on canvas
31.5 x 20.875 inches
80 x 53 cm

2. Osama Al Rayyan
Untitled
2025
Oil on canvas
55.125 x 63 inches
140 x 160 cm

3. Osama Al Rayyan
Untitled
2025
Oil on canvas
27.5 x 20.875 inches
70 x 53 cm

4. Osama Al Rayyan
Untitled
2025
Oil on canvas
55.125 x 47.25 inches
140 x 120 cm

5. Osama Al Rayyan
Untitled
2025
Oil on canvas
37.75 x 34.5 inches
96 x 88 cm

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Francis Irv is pleased to announce the opening of Osama Al Rayyan's *Poets or Poems*. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery and his first in New York.

Can a painting be a poem and its author a poet?
Can a painting be a poet and its subject a poem?
Can a painting be a poem and its subject a poet?
Can a painting be a poet and its author a poem?

The paintings of Osama occupy this ambivalence. The formal structure of the work and the figures that populate it have no separation. There is no before and after, no setting, no narrative, no dialect of allusions. Yet, there are precise elements that make the paintings: There is speed, or what we perceive as speed, and the confidence in their making—the paintings are built. Then, there is air; things breathe, but an air that has crystallized, a very dense air, like honey or resin turning into amber.

For this show, straight lines have surfaced more prominently. They delimit a space, offering a more defined perspective. Often, we are on the other side; the lines cut the space horizontally, turning into a wall or containment device. The lines keep us out or keep them in. The lines are a formal expedient, looking as if they were used to clean up the brush from loaded color or just to slice. I think they are purely ways to deal with the space of the canvas—and the artist, when asked, was of the same opinion. But as much as the structure and the subjects have such a strong bond, this cannot be said about the viewer who sits outside while the figures in the paintings turn their backs, or just look away.

- Giangiacomo Rossetti

Osama Al Rayyan (b. 1995, Damascus) lives and works in Basel. Selected solo exhibitions include Braunsfelder, Cologne (2024); Mendes Wood DM, Brussels (2024); Galleria Federico Vavassori, Milan (2022, 2021); Magic Stop, Lausanne (2022). Selected group exhibitions have been held at Francis Irv, New York (2024); Ex-Cinema Eldorado, Lausanne (2023); Kunsthalle Zürich, Zürich (2023); Mendes Wood DM at d'Ouwe Kerke, Retranchement (2023); suns. works, Zurich (2022); Galleria Federico Vavassori, Milan (2022); Sonnenstube, Lugano (2022); Kunsthau Baselland, Basel (2021 & 2019); Riverside, Basel (2021).