

Exhibition Title: May All Tears Be Followed By A Smile

Artist: Róza El-Hassan

Curator: Péter Bencze

Venue: Longtermhandstand, Budapest

Duration: 30 May – 27 July 2025

Photo: Áron Weber

Tags: @roza.elhassan @longtermhandstand @everybodyneedsart

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Text: Péter Bencze

May All Tears Be Followed By A Smile

In May all tears be followed by a smile, Róza El-Hassan brings together past and present in a deeply personal meditation on grief, responsibility, and the quiet endurance of hope. The exhibition begins with a return to one of her earliest works, Mourning (After 9/11), a delicate drawing of a figure whose eyes are obscured by stonelike teardrops. This early gesture of sorrow becomes the conceptual spark for the exhibition's new central series, Tearhead: a group of raw, wooden, almost art brut-like sculptural heads that gaze toward one another in silent mourning, echoing both shared loss and fragile solidarity.

Throughout the gallery, El-Hassan interweaves media with her signature sensitivity, new small glazed ceramic works appear modest in scale, yet offer powerful reflections on the fractured world we inhabit. They suggest not only the persistence of beauty, but also the resilience of care.

At the entrance, Collective Sin, a black, seven-figure sculpture acts as a somber threshold, confronting the viewer with the burden of collective responsibility. Nearby, Untitled (Two Happy Collaborators), a simple but potent drawing, affirms El-Hassan's long-standing commitment to activism, collaboration, and the belief that change begins with shared action.

Spanning decades, the exhibition forms a quiet yet determined statement: to build peace, to hold hope, to take small steps; each act a form of resistance, each tear, perhaps, the beginning of a smile.

About the artist: Róza El-Hassan is a Hungarian-Syrian artist whose work traverses sculpture, drawing, installation, and activism. Born into a multicultural family, she spent parts of her childhood in Syria and Germany before settling in Hungary in the 1980s. Her practice has long engaged with the political and ethical urgencies of our time, from refugee crises and climate justice to everyday acts of empathy. Since her debut at Aperto '93 at the Venice Biennale, El-Hassan has exhibited internationally at

institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art, Chicago; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Secession, Vienna; and Kunstmuseum, Basel. She continues to shape a deeply committed and uniquely humane artistic voice.

Péter Bencze