

**MAJD ABDEL HAMID
«RESONANCES»**

**SOFÍA SALAZAR ROSALES
«IMAGÍNA TE VIVIR EN SUIZA
Y PERDERTE ESTO»**

15.3.-18.5.2025

The exhibitions show works by Majd Abdel Hamid (*1988 in Damascus/SY, lives and works in Paris/FR and Beirut/LB) and Sofía Salazar Rosales (*1999 in Quito/EC, lives and works in Amsterdam/NL). The artists share a poetic focus on themes of identity, time, fragility, and materiality. For their presentation at Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, they have developed new works, each finding their own references to resonate with in the local context.

Majd Abdel Hamid works with textiles and embroidery. His objects are distinguished by their minimalism and precision, creating small-scale worlds of philosophical depth. The artist who was born in Damascus deliberately chooses to work slowly. With impressive patience, he crafts detailed embroideries and cross-stitch works that embody a decelerated, profound reflection and a resistance to a fast-paced world.

His exhibition «Resonances» opens with a table installation displaying colourful Polaroid photographs alongside carefully embroidered pieces of linen and silk. These works serve as variations and colour studies inspired by the plant genus «Aeonium», whose ancient greek name means «everlasting». This resilient species, characterised by its thick leaves and unique geometry, can survive without water and thrives across diverse geographies. Over the past year, Majd Abdel Hamid has repeatedly encountered these evergreens - in a car park in Beirut, on a mountainside in Greece, on a balcony in Lyon, as a houseplant in Paris. Over the course of several weeks, the Palestinian artist observed a small specimen growing. This quiet yet persistent growth inspired him to translate the slow process into a motif (*Resonances motif* [1]). We can follow the growth of his motif throughout stitched variations and embroidered colour studies, until he arrived at the one that resonated with him most: three interlaced squares with stitch lengths of four, five, and six.

The series *Resonances repetitions* [2] takes up this motif and repeats it until patterns and compositions emerge. For Hamid, the beauty of embroidery lies in the practice of abstraction and the continuous act of simplification. As he puts it, it is a way of thinking about things without being too loud. The motif dissolves into the composition without requiring explanation or making a statement. The colourful, almost musical textile works are not about violence, destruction, or a specific territory; nor do they follow a defined representational intention. For Hamid, what matters is the material and the meticulous process - one that demands patience and careful attention, often for hours on end.

The postcards in the group of work *It's still too soon to leave* [4] speak of finding the texture of memory and preserve everyday impressions. The delicate plaster casts and intricate knot compositions float between places - a woven ribbon from Tunis, lace from Beirut, linen from Lyon, and knots that Hamid has embroidered onto cut-up airplane napkins. Without explicitly signifying displacement, these fabric fragments are the souvenirs Hamid collects from the places he has travelled. These works resonate with the textile history of St.Gallen, speaking to local «artisanal sensibilities» (Franco Bifo Berardi). Instead of industrial automatisisation, Hamid's practice aims for a «de-automatisisation of fabric». Concomitantly, he is already incorporating pieces of handmade St.Gallen embroidery in the works for his next exhibition in Dubai. For Hamid, resonances like these are a beautiful way to interact - always carrying a sense of arrival and new departures.

Arrival after departure is also a beginning moment of the exhibition «Imagínate vivir en Suiza y perderte esto» by artist Sofía Salazar Rosales. Working with an untameable variety of materials - glass beads, paraffin, epoxy, bronze powder, copper, polyester resin, fiberglass, vinyl glue, plant seeds, craft paper, concrete, colour pigments, oak wood, iron filings, gauze, plaster, cotton wool, or glass aggregate, to name but a few - Salazar Rosales creates large-scale installations. Her sculptures, which she refers to using the pronoun «she», often appear tired: Salazar Rosales sees them as fatigued presences, endeavouring to settle down in new places after a long journey.

They seek to set roots [8] consists of asphalt shaped like car tires, as if they the road surface had melted into them due to their constant movement. They beg for a moment of rest from underneath their newly gained heaviness. The protruding silicone-covered rods reference a building practice common in southern Europe and Latin America. These metal rods are often found atop unfinished buildings - sometimes unfinished because of economic reasons, but always with the intention of eventually completing the construction. Salazar Rosales' references span Ecuador, Cuba, Latin America, and Europe. The title alludes to a popular Latin American meme that humourously contrasts Switzerland - often seen as a very orderly country - with chaotic events happening in everyday life in Latin America.

On a broader scale, Salazar Rosales is interested in how our cities are built. *When the axial skeleton decides to speak & We are contextual and sentimental* [10] comes with a gesture of unveiling: a steel beam, a classic element of architectural modernism, usually hidden, that invisibly supports the spaces around us, now lies before us, weary and weak. She rests on bag-shaped forms, which reference routes of (colonial) export. Coconuts - used in the Cuban religion of Santería to communicate with ancestors - are cast out of solid iron. In Switzerland, coconuts are primarily seen as imported consumer goods. By remaking those forms of Santería infrastructure in an everyday material, they are transformed into objects that echo the urban elements found here, such as manhole covers or rain gutters outside the exhibition space.

The final exhibition room presents us with expansive ornamentation, such as *Miedo al otro* [11], which Salazar Rosales describes as baroque. The Ecuadorian-Mexican philosopher Bolívar Echeverría identifies an «ethos barroco» (baroque ethos), viewing such decorative excess as a form of resistance to the capitalist logic of utility and the expansive reach of Western modernity. Salazar Rosales consciously emphasizes crafts and the handcrafted element by leaving visible traces of her process, for example in the waxy curtains of *Mapeo del destierro* [12]. The traces of her movements are even more directly inscribed in *Dancefloor* [15], where she etched her dance steps and hand gestures into metal plates using chemical and rusting processes. Two dancers - palmleaf silhouettes made out of iron and oakum (*Escuchando sin tener que traducir más que en formas* [16 & 19]) - refer to the ongoing discourse in Switzerland regarding the ban on the «invasive» Ticino palm.

The artist grounds her reflections on global political issues as well as on a personal level. *No sé si fue la impaciencia de tanto esperar tu llegada* [14] emulates an earring made by her mother. Evoking pre-Columbian forms, it carries the colours of the Santería deity Eleguá, who opens new paths and was to accompany Salazar Rosales on her move to Lyon. The crossing of oceans also plays a central role in *They asked to stay* [18]. The languidly hanging bananas, involuntarily relocated as consumer goods, symbolise stories of violent resettlement. The net holding the bananas as a community was meticulously handcrafted by Salazar Rosales. Its beads transform into blue and white bracelets, which, in the Santería faith, stand for the goddess of the sea and can offer protection for the journey across the ocean. The bandage material inside the fruit further suggests care, healing, and the process of confronting the past.

The exhibitions «Resonances» and «Imagínate vivir en Suiza y perderte esto» emerge from moments of uprooting, travel, material precision, and aesthetic resistance. From this perspective, the meditative miniatures of Majd Abdel Hamid and the material poetry of Sofía Salazar Rosales both carry particular forms of attention to the intricate complexity of life.

EVENTS & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

OPENING

Friday, 14 March 2025, 6 p.m.

GUIDED TOUR ON TUESDAY

Tuesday, 18 March 2025, 6 p.m.

INTRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS

On site: Tuesday, 18 March 2025, 6 p.m.

Online: Thursday, 20 March 2025,
7 p.m. to 7.30 p.m., register via
vermittlung@k9000.ch.

ART SNACK

Thursday, 3 April 2025, 12.30 p.m.

Short guided tour and a snack

Admission: CHF 10/members CHF 7

No registration required

ART LUNCH

Thursday, 1 May 2025, 12 p.m.

Guided tour and lunch

Admission: CHF 25/members CHF 22

Register via rsvp@k9000.ch.

GUIDED TOUR ON SUNDAY

Sunday, 18 May 2025, 15 p.m.

WORKSHOPS FOR SCHOOL CLASSES

From 18 March to 16 May 2025. For more
information, see www.k9000.ch.

PRESS

You can find high-resolution images in
the press kit on our website under
Info/Press. For further questions feel
free to contact Giovanni Carmine
carmine@k9000.ch or Barbara Kiolbassa
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MAJD ABDEL HAMID (*1988 in Damaskus/SY) is based in Beirut/LB und Paris/FR. Solo exhibitions (selection): «Ode to the Sea», Marfa' Projects, Beirut/LB (2025); «Muscle Memory», Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow/SC (2022). Group exhibitions (selection): «Les voix des fleuves, Crossing the water», 17th Contemporary Art Biennial of Lyon, Lyon/FR (2024); «Memory Sews Together Events That Hadn't Previously Met», display of the Barjeel art collection, Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah/AE (2022); «Debt», Qalandiya International, Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center, Ramallah/PS (2018).

SOFÍA SALAZAR ROSALES (*1999, in Quito/EC) is based in Amsterdam/NL. Solo exhibitions (selection): «Simulacros de cimiento», EL CHICO, Madrid/ES (2024); «The Desire to Dance with Someone Who Is Not Here», ChertLüdde, Berlin/DE (2024). Group exhibitions (selection): «Les voix des fleuves, Crossing the water», 17th Contemporary Art Biennial of Lyon, Lyon/FR (2024); «Des lignes de désir», Palais des Beaux-Arts, Paris/FR (2024); «Pays rêvé, pays revers», Petite Galerie - Cité internationale des Arts, Paris/FR (2023).

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Tue-Fri 12-6 p.m.

Sat/Sun 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

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