



Middle East Institute



## PEACEKEEPERS

By Thaer Maarouf & Jason Paul Tecson

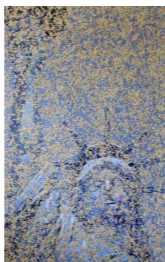
Opening 13 November at 7pm

Exhibition from 13 November 2014 to 10 January 2015

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**Sana Gallery**, Asia's premier contemporary Middle Eastern art gallery, is delighted to invite you to its first exhibition at its new premises, **63 Spottiswoode Park Road, Singapore 088651**.

An Introduction to the artwork will be given jointly by **Assaad W. Razzouk**, founder of **Sana Gallery** and **Mohamad Nazry Bin Bahrawi**, research Associate from the **Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore**.



**"Peacekeepers"** is a dialogue between South East Asia and the Middle East, featuring the piercing sculptures of Filipino artist **Jason Paul Tecson** paired with the cerebral paintings of Syrian artist **Thaer Maarouf**.

"My task, which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel--it is, before all, to make you see."  
Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim

In **"Peacekeepers,"** Sana Gallery's ground-breaking juxtaposition of the artwork of Philipino artist **Jason Paul Tecson** and of Syrian artist **Thaer Maarouf**, visitors are invited to discover the secret dialogue between South East Asia and the Middle East.

The exhibition investigates how artists from countries which seemingly couldn't be more different nonetheless converged their commentary on the universality of conflict through the concrete manifestation of symbols and a blending of familiarity with alienation, the ordinary and the extraordinary. To make us see.

**Jason Paul Tecson's** exquisitely detailed sculptures and **Thaer Maarouf's** expansive, cerebral paintings call for feelings and thoughts but never seem to define them clearly.

It's as if their very character seeks to normalize the darkness, leaving us with an impression, a mystery that appears in an oblique manner. To make us see.

Sometimes, both artists explore the line between conventional aesthetic boundaries and artlessness, leaving us uncomfortable, or mesmerised.

Both artists pierce through our obvious sense of security. The intention is not to make us upset, but the reverse: to allow unpredictability and complexity, by making the very nature of the art confrontational. To make us see.

From Spanish abstract painter and sculptor Antoni Tapies to German artist Anselm Kiefer, the art of **Jason Paul Tecson** and **Thaer Maarouf** evokes a distinguished lineage.

All four artists are indelibly marked by the turbulence in their countries during their lifetime, while exploring the infinite possibility of non-conventional material such as tissue, plastic, ropes and metal.

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**Jason Paul Tecson** works from formations of clay which he replicates as styrofoam maquettes before making the mold and then adding layers of plaster, fiberglass, industrial materials- or simply, refreshingly and spontaneously, what is available. He finishes his sculptures with coats of automotive paint.

Similarly featuring several different media, **Thaer Maarouf's** canvasses feature banknotes, fabrics as well as veiling techniques which, like Homer's flames in the Illiad, inspire us to create fire-breathing Chimeras with which to contemplate our responsibilities and interpret our lives and our world.

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At Sana Gallery  
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