

An abstract painting by Vian Sora, featuring a complex composition of organic, branching forms in shades of orange, yellow, and green, set against a background of deep blue, red, and green. The overall effect is one of intense, layered color and intricate detail.

VIAN SORA

End of Hostilities

October 26 - December 9, 2023

DAVID NOLAN GALLERY

24 East 81st Street New York NY 10028 212 925 6190 davidnolangallery.com

David Nolan Gallery is delighted to announce Vian Sora: *End of Hostilities*, the artist's first solo exhibition in New York, on view from October 26 through December 9, 2023. The exhibition will include both paintings and works on paper, primarily made within the last twelve months, that demonstrate Sora's unique vocabulary of gestural abstraction through her deft handling of form and singular application of color.

Sora initiates each work with a controlled chaos, covering surfaces in a barrage of fast-drying spray paint, acrylics, pigments and inks, using whatever is within arm's reach – brushes, sponges, paper, nylons, spray bottles or even the force of her own breath – to create passages of intricate texture that might be described as delicate if not for the intensity of color they comprise. The associations they evoke range from the earthly (desiccated land, wood grain, animal pelt), to the celestial (gaseous cloud formations, swirling interstellar dust), to the biological and grotesque (networks of capillaries, fragments of bone).

Over this visual bewilderment, Sora carves out forms with exacting control, using a small flat brush to apply an opaque layer of paint, usually in two or three distinct and saturated hues, occasionally with a gradated effect. Through this process, a peculiar sort of optical trickery occurs as the opaque sections recede to the background and cause the textured base layer to be viewed as foreground elements.

Sora is highly intentional in the shapes she calls forth from the confusion, as in *Verdict* (2022): on the left side of the canvas, she creates the suggestion of a figure, perhaps a woman, with a pink face and golden garments; to the right, a more ominous form – a black crow, or maybe a raven – threatens to overtake the human figure in its exaggerated size. Abstract patches of pink and white and black swirl around them, as if whirling, subconscious hauntings, yet Sora is able to assert a sense of composure and assuredness with the soft curves of azure blue she carves into the textured background.

Many of Sora's works take on the characteristics of landscapes, with clearly demarcated horizon lines, gradient skies and a profusion of bloom- and foliage-like shapes; in interviews, the Baghdad-born Sora has recalled with fondness the hours of her childhood spent among the roses and pomegranate shrubs of her grandmother's garden in that ancient, fertile crescent. With her 2023 painting *Eden*, shapes are sharply defined and present more clearly as tropical foliage or a bird's plumage, with textures that recall stars scattered across the cosmos. Still, Sora leaves plenty of room for ambiguity and darkness, as when joyful memories of home are tainted with the painful knowledge that one can never return there.



Vian Sora (b. 1976, Baghdad, Iraq) has lived and worked in Louisville, Kentucky since 2009. She received a BS from Al Mansour University in Baghdad, Iraq in 2000 and studied printmaking at the Istanbul Museum of Graphic Art in Istanbul, Turkey in 2007. Sora's work has been presented in solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally including the Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; Contemporary Arts Center (CAC), Cincinnati, OH; Sharjah Biennale, Sharjah, UAE; Imoga Istanbul Museum of Graphic Art, Istanbul, Turkey; Japanese Foundation Culture Center, Ankara, Turkey; and the Baghdad Art International Art Festival in Iraq; as well as the KMAC Triennial, Louisville, KY; Grinnell Museum of Art, Grinnell, IA; and U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Washington D.C., among others.

Her work is included in the collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; Dar El Cid Museum, Kuwait City, Kuwait; KMAC Museum, Louisville, KY; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; Grinnell College Museum of Art, Grinnell, IA; Ministry of Culture Contemporary Collection, Baghdad, Iraq; the Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, OH; Fidelity Art Collection, Boston, MA, as well as numerous private collections.



Verdict, 2019-2022
oil on canvas with mixed media
85 x 60 x 2 in (215.9 x 152.4 x 5.1 cm)
(VS8842)





Supralunar, 2023
oil on canvas with mixed media
60 x 48 x 2 in (152.4 x 121.9 x 5.1 cm)
(VS8841)





Euphrates, 2023
oil on canvas with mixed media
60 x 67 x 2 in (152.4 x 170.2 x 5.1 cm)
(VS8844)





Eden, 2023
oil on canvas with mixed media
60 x 48 x 2 in (152.4 x 121.9 x 5.1 cm)
(VS8840)





Oasis IV, 2023
acrylic and ink on paper
30 x 22 1/2 in (76.2 x 57.1 cm)
(VS8872)



Shipwreck I, 2023
acrylic and ink on paper
30 x 22 1/2 in (76.2 x 57.1 cm)
(VS8873)



Oasis I, 2023
acrylic and ink on paper
30 x 22 1/2 in (76.2 x 57.1 cm)
(VS8870)



Oasis III, 2023
acrylic and ink on paper
30 x 22 1/2 in (76.2 x 57.1 cm)
(VS8869)



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