

etel adnan

*album à dessins*

nov. 6 – 24, 2017

central library  
unam - universidad  
nacional autónoma de  
méxico, mexico city

opening  
monday, nov. 6 – 1 pm

#eteladnan  
#sonoral28

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tue – thu, 11 am – 6 pm  
fri – sat, 11 am – 4 pm

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"Abstract art was the equivalent of poetic expression; I didn't need to use words, but colors and lines. I did not need to belong to a language-oriented culture but to an open form of expression."

– Etel Adnan

kurimanzutto is proud to present *Album à dessins*, an exhibition project by American-Lebanese artist Etel Adnan in collaboration with Sfeir-Semler Gallery, presented in the Biblioteca Central of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Following her project for Sonora 128, a selection of her drawings will be shown inside the building that hosts one of the murals that most inspired her during her visit to Mexico City in 1957, the mosaic composition created by Juan O'Gorman for the library's façade.

Adnan began painting in the early 1960s. Widely known for her poetry, novels and plays, she moves fluidly between the disciplines of writing and art. Over the course of the 1960s, Adnan moved away from purely abstract forms and, in 1964, discovered 'leprellos', Japanese inspired paper concertinas, accordion-folded sketchbooks in which she could mix drawing with writing and poetry. The continuation of alternative modes of art production on paper are prevalent here: the sketchbook becomes the medium.

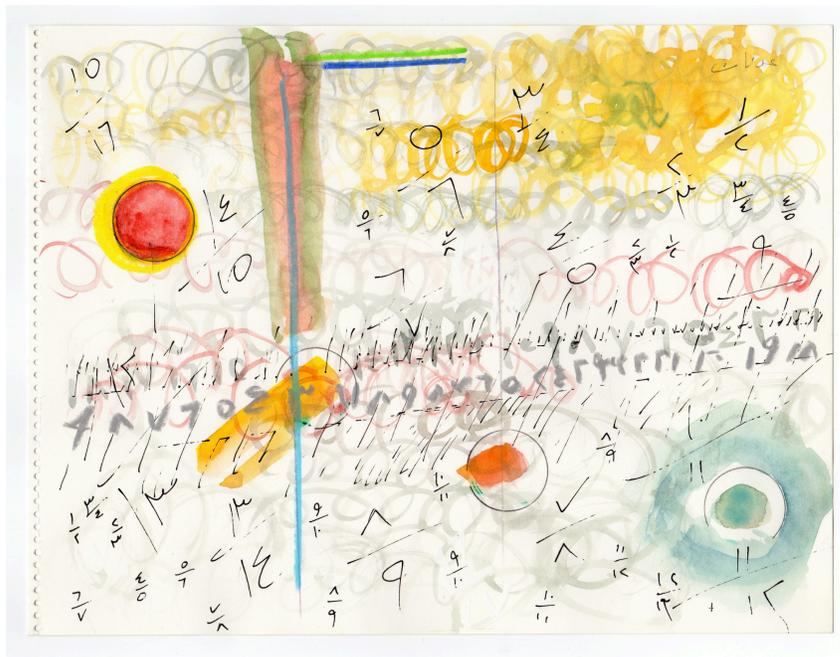
The *Album à dessins* (1990) are a series of drawings taken from these sketchbooks where she mixes occidental and arabic calligraphy, drawing and watercolor as a means to express her poetic universe through visual art. Adnan's use of language transcends its specific medium, as a poet she has utilized English, Arabic and French in her texts; as an artist she employs abstraction and vibrant forms to escape the boundaries of a specific tongue, thus communicating in the instant. The sketchbook applies the linear orientation of Japanese folding books and takes inspiration from a rich repository of literary sources.

about the artist

Etel Adnan was born in 1925 in Lebanon, and lives and works between Paris and Beirut; she is considered a leading voice of contemporary Arab-American culture. Adnan studied philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris, at Berkeley and Harvard. From 1958–1972, she taught philosophy at Dominican University of California, San Rafael, where she then took up painting and dedicated herself to poetry.

As a reaction to the Lebanese Civil war, Adnan wrote her famous novel *Sitt Marie Rose* in 1977. Awarded the France-Pays Arabes Award, it has since been published in more than 10 languages. Her paintings also rose to prominence following their exhibition at Documenta 13 in 2012. In addition, recent solo exhibitions include the Institut du monde arabe, Paris (2016), The Serpentine Sackler, London (2016), Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2015), Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Austria (2014) 'Etel Adnan in All Her Dimensions' at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar (2014) and the Whitney Biennial, New York (2014).

Adnan has received numerous awards for her contribution to culture, including, in 2014, France's highest cultural honor, the Ordre de Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres.



Etel Adnan, *Untitled no. 7*, 1990. From the series *Album à dessins*  
Courtesy of the artist and Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Beirut / Hamburg and kurimanzutto, Mexico City.

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