

# E T E L ADNAN

Native to Lebanon and one of the pioneers of Contemporary Arab Art, Etel Adnan, studied philosophy in Paris and Berkeley and works as a writer, poet, artist, and culture journalist. Her reputation in art preceded her and led her to travel the world.

Central to her artistic journey was her retrospective at Documenta 13 in Kassel featuring thirty-eight paintings dating back to 1959. To be followed by a retrospective at the Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art in Qatar exploring the multidimensionality of her oeuvre: paintings, drawings, leporellos, tapestries, writings and films from the 1960s onwards, and a parallel exhibition at Claude Lemand Gallery in Paris

Writing

# MOuNtAins

Etel Adnan  
**Landscape**, 2014.  
Oil on canvas, 33 x 41 cm.  
Copyright Etel Adnan.  
Courtesy Galerie Claude  
Lemand, Paris



showcasing Adnan's most recent works in oils on canvas, works on paper and artist's books, both in the spring of 2014.

This autumn, another retrospective exhibition of the artist organised by the Modern Museum of Salzburg, Austria in cooperation with Claude Lemand Gallery, Paris entitled Etel Adnan: Writing Mountains will showcase the artist's lyrical paintings inspired by mountains closely linked to her surroundings - its history, present circumstances and future.  
- Claude Lemand



Etel Adnan, **La Montagne**, 2014.  
Aquarelle et encre de chine sur papier,  
52 x 70 cm.

Museum der Moderne  
Salzburg, Austria  
15 November 2014 - 8 March 2015

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

The Museum der Moderne Salzburg presents the first institutional exhibition in Austria of the multifaceted oeuvre of Etel Adnan.

Parallel to her activity as a writer, Etel Adnan began devoting herself to painting and drawing already in 1959. Her artistic spectrum is expanded by artist's books in the form of Leporellos, tapestries, room dividers, and Super 8mm films. In the exhibition at the Museum der Moderne Salzburg Adnan's paintings will be set in relation to her lyrics, and also her enthusiasm for music, which is reflected mainly in the Leporellos.

The artist is particularly fascinated by mountains, and they offer her a continuous source of inspiration for her small-format paintings and drawings: the Jabal Sannin east of Beirut, Mount Tamalpais north of San Francisco, or most recently, the hills of San Gimignano. At the same time, in Adnan's work an intense confrontation with Paul Cézanne and Paul Klee is clearly recognizable. In her sounding out of richly contrasting color variations and the borders of abstraction, Adnan's paintings look like soulscapes in which her poetic language finds visual correspondence. Throughout her entire life, the artist has criticized the world shaped by violence and confrontation and has reacted directly to the happenings within it—but also within her direct surroundings. Her works transgress linguistic, cultural, and geographical borders. They present facets of her identity which Etel Adnan considers a constantly changing process.♦



Etel Adnan, **Landscape**, 2014.  
Oil on canvas, 32 x 41 cm.  
Copyright Etel Adnan.  
Courtesy Galerie Claude Lemand, Paris.

Right:

Portrait of Etel Adnan by Simone Fattal, near Mount Tamalpais, California, USA. Copyright of the Photographer and the Artist

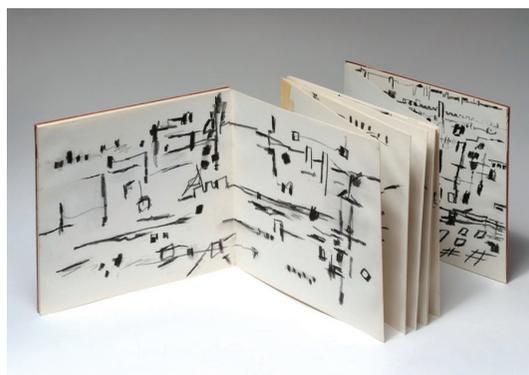


Below L-R:

Etel Adnan, **Journey to Mount Tamalpais** (Rihla ila Jabal Tamalpais), 2008. Watercolour and Indian ink on Japanese book, 30 x 567 cm.

Etel Adnan, **Paris Roofs from Jim's Windows**, 1977. Cahier japonais, 30 pages, 18 x 585 cm.

Etel Adnan - **Al-Sayyab, The Mother and the Lost Girl** (Al-Umm wal Ibnat al-Da'ira), 1970. Japanese book, 24 pages, 33 x 612 cm.



#### About Etel Adnan

Painter and poet, born in 1925, Etel Adnan is a Lebanese/American. She studied philosophy in Paris, Berkeley and Harvard. She writes poetry, essays, stories and plays. She's a painter, and makes remarkable artist's books. Her first exhibition happened in California in 1960, while she was teaching philosophy. She exhibited in the United States, England, France, Germany, and the Arab World. Many private and public collections have acquired her works. Public Collections: Washington (National Museum for Women in the Arts, World Bank Collection), Los Angeles and New York (Contemporary Crafts Museum), Paris (Institut du Monde Arabe), London (British Museum), Tunis (Musée d'art contemporain), Beirut (Musée Nicolas Sursock), Amman (National Royal Gallery), Doha (Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art). After spending the major part of her life in California, she resides now in Paris.

*'Among the various works I have produced, I have to mention particularly the artist's books that I started to make since 1964. They are Japanese "books" that are folded, made in Kyoto. I buy them in San Francisco, New York or Paris, in Japanese stores. I usually write on them poems from the major XXth century Arab Poets, mainly from Badr Shaker al Sayyab. I accompany these hand written poems with watercolours and drawings. I made a point of not using classical calligraphy, although it's an art-form I value extremely, in order to use my own hand writing for its very imperfection. The result is a real translation of the original Arabic poems into a visual equivalence. This Japanese format - where the paper unfolds - creates a horizontal plane that seems to be infinite, and that goes beyond the traditional frame of painted works. This way, the texts and the images are liberated. I would like to remind the reader that I have been the first Arab painter besides Shaker Hassan al Saïd to start a trend in Arab Art, the one concerning the use of personal, nontraditional and calligraphic writing, in Arab Art.'* -Etel Adnan