**Press Release**

Beirut Contemporary Art Gallery, Rua Ferragial 3, 1200-182 Lisbon, is pleased to announce its current exhibition.

**Urbanscape**

Elie Rizkallah

**Exhibition Dates**

January 12th – March 12th 2022

**Meet the artist**

Thursday, February 17th, 5pm

We welcome press, friends and our general public to join us meeting the artist from Lebanon over a glass of wine and informal talks.

 **Modernist architecture in art:**

**Between contemporary monument of a utopian society and archive of past ideals**

Elie Rizkallah exhibits his trademark perspective on architecture: Sharp, architectural angles evoke the impression of realistic representation, the reduction of shapes, materials and colors performs an abstraction underlining the minimalist, functional and socio-politically revolutionary, and perhaps utopian, philosophical core of modernism, while the main subjects are sculpted out of organic surroundings, more of a mere indication rather than representation, hinting at transition, creating a surrealistic interspace; there but not really there.

Rizkallah catches the dualism of modernist architecture oscillating between longevity and impermanence. While buildings exist in flux due to environmental and socio-cultural change, the, at the given time for modernist structures always high-tech, long-lasting materials and the given architectural philosophy, aiming at building a sustainable future for a humane society, create this particular tension.

In contrast to the actually dysfunctional, mostly decaying modernist constructions in war-wounded Beirut that Rizkallah mainly paints, his viewpoint reveals living sculptures of the philosophy modernist architecture expresses. As such, they are accessible in their materialization as public or private spaces, whereas their Beauty lies between their ingeniously engineered functionality and the core values they proclaim: Design for a society in which humankind faithfully shares the Hope and Belief in prosperity, referring to a collective context as much as to an individual one.

“The architectural space is the space where the human being does beautiful things, it is where we can think and propose our social and political ideas. One cannot imagine being human without architecture”.

**About Us**

Beirut Contemporary Gallery was founded in spring 2020 by Rasha Salah and Joachim Liebscher, promoting and exhibiting Contemporary Art and Artists from the Middle-East and North-Africa.

**About the artist**Born and raised in Deir el Kamar in Lebanon, a small city surrounded by architectural treasures of the 17th century, Elie Rizkallah is also a musician of Classical Arabic Music.

His work is inspired by the Bauhaus school of architecture and by 1950s and 1960s modernist movements in general, and particularly by modernist villas, schools and factories in Beirut.

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