

TRAILS OF LIGHT

HELIDON XHIXHA

FIRETTI

CONTEMPORARY



Helidon Xhixha (B.1970), is an established contemporary artist who holds a prestigious role in the international contemporary art scene. His innovative vision and technique have been delivered through his monumental public art installations, where he redefines the relationship between a sculpture and its environment.

Helidon Xhixha is renowned for his many achievements and distinctive style which has generated worldwide recognition from critics in numerous countries. Xhixha holds an impressive portfolio of monumental installations permanently placed in significant locations around the world.

Over the last two years, Xhixha has tapped into the art scene of the UAE, placing monumental sculptures in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai, whilst working on other international projects across the globe, in collaboration with Firetti Contemporary.

In July 2021, Helidon Xhixha in collaboration with SHOT Magazine and Firetti Contemporary participated in a solo open-air exhibition titled Trails of Light. The exhibition was set within the stunning scenery of Costa Smeralda, a well renowned Italian seaside resort in Northern Sardinia. Through a display of 7 sculptures, Xhixha emphasized the importance of light as the main source of energy for all living organisms and the global ecosystem. Only with enough light is growth and life possible, being understood as the power of vitality and the fundamental source of life.





In August 2021, Firetti Contemporary in collaboration with Jumeirah Golf Estates (JGE), a world-class residential golf destination offering luxury homes and leisure facilities amidst two internationally-acclaimed championship golf courses, launched the continuance of IMPRINT, a solo exhibition of Helidon Xhixha held by Firetti Contemporary in March 2021. The installation of two monumental sculptures entitled ICEBERG and EARTH were placed within the JGE community, standing as an astounding manifesto in support of the awareness of Global Warming and the melting of polar glaciers, embracing the message behind IMPRINT. The collaboration and launch of this project was inaugurated under the patronage of Dr. Saeed Mubarak Kharbash Al Marri, CEO of Dubai Culture and Art Authority, for IMPRINT: Art for Public Spaces.

In December 2021, for the 50th Anniversary of the UAE, Xhixha's monumental sculpture Pillar of Fortitude had been placed at Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC), the leading financial hub for the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA). The sculpture is dedicated to the glorious celebration to mark the 50th National Day Anniversary as the nation commemorates its milestone Golden Jubilee. The sculpture measures 7 meters in height alluding to the numeric 1, representing the 7 Emirates of the UAE, standing tall and united, soaring upwards into the sky, towards a prosperous, limitless future. To further commemorate the anniversary of the UAE, The Triad by Xhixha was placed at The W, Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, the only hotel in the world to be located atop a Grand Prix racetrack.

In conjunction with the launch of Art Dubai, Xhixha participated in a sculpture park launched by DIFC titled A Harmony of Different Voices. The launch of the Sculpture Park presented viewers with 62 Awe-inspiring Artworks by Various artists and galleries from all over the world. The exhibition is ongoing till October 2022. For this occasion, Xhixha presents two monumental EclisseD'acciaio and The Moon.

Firetti Contemporary strives to continue to work on public art projects alongside Helidon Xhixha and is proud to announce the 2022 edition of Trails of Light taking place from July to September in Costa Smeralda, Italy.



WHEN DARKNESS BEGETS BEAUTY

ANNIE KURKDJIAN

FIRETTI

CONTEMPORARY

Unlike painters of her generation, Annie Kurkdjian does not portray literal representations of conflict, nor does she resort to idyllic escapism. Instead, her oeuvre is defined by a gentle, whimsical, painterly voice that unexpectedly and uncannily captures the full force and brutality of war and violence. As quoted by Kurkdjian: "I'm trying to express all that anger in paintings, because it's the most peaceful way to express anger, I think, art. It's like Post Traumatic Disorder, but I'm managing it in artistic ways. It's the best therapy."

Informed by academic studies on psychosis, Kurkdjian's paintings are playful yet darkly provocative, shrewdly embodying the fragility of humanity. The painterly voice that Kurkdjian found for herself consists of a dark, acrid world softened by warm earth colours. The despair sits beside a constant search for mercy and dignity, at times sensuous, at others exposing shame. Above all, Kurkdjian takes inspiration from life and its instabilities, carving out a world through her art even as she tries to fathom and make sense of it. "Surfaces become concave, legs stretch into arms and the eyes become fixed inwards, extending beyond the canvas, into unforeseeable places that are forbidding yet tempting and sensuous. The destination could be redemption, but might as well be loss and darkness."



What is the fondest memory of your childhood?

My father. His smell, his hands, his smile. He was brutally murdered when I was 12. Everything that comes from him is the fondest memory of my childhood. I keep all the objects he used, all the gifts he gave me, everything I was able to save related to him. Enough to create a museum.

How did art find you?

I could not have a very normal childhood because in my country there was war, my family was devastated. Too often I only had the white space of a paper to draw the things I dreamed of and couldn't have. I managed my frustrations this way and my friendship with white spaces has become very solid over the years. The white canvas became a refuge, a family, a shelter where I hid to protect and rebuild myself.

What does it mean to be free?

To be free is to have a reason to live which is also having a reason to die. To have something for which you are ready to give everything and from which you are ready to receive everything. This opens up space in front of us to spread our wings. Because we all have wings, but they need wide spaces.

Can anger be a positive feeling, in your opinion?

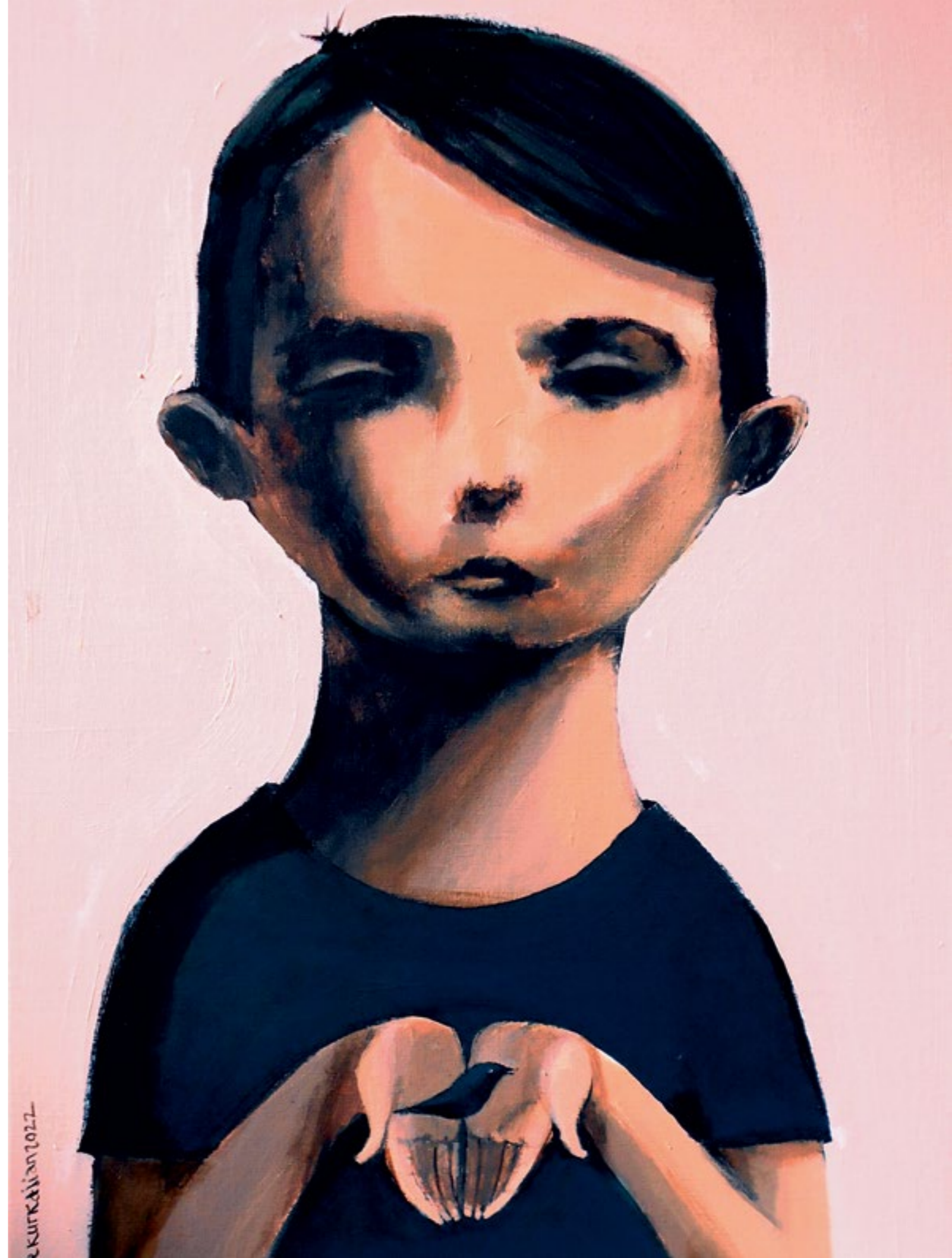
Anger cannot be a positive feeling, it can destroy us. But we can also use it as an engine to rebuild something better. One must have received a lot of love, have a healthy soul, to be able to use anger positively.

What gives you hope?

What gives me hope is the sense of duty, the desire to complete the task entrusted to me. The idea of bringing my part in this world, something that only I can and must do... and the love of doing it as well as possible.

What is the antidote to violence, in your opinion?

Beauty, Truth, and Goodness are the antidotes of violence. All three can be extremely violent too, terrifying if the soul is not prepared. But they liberate and heal. When Truth is out, lies enter a horrible agony. When Beauty puts its hand on disorder, there's also pain – just like in Botticelli's painting "Pallas and the Centaur". Beauty getting the horrified centaur by the hair. Just to establish harmony and peace in the end.





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