

Afaf Zurayk (Lebanon, b. 1948)

...a breath

Constant

all that is movement

There is a gentle contradiction that flows through the work of Lebanese painter and poet Afaf Zurayk, a constancy and yet continual movement that grows and flourishes in the complex folds and spaces of her paintings and her words.

White canvas holds, a line moving with and against, a sparse, caring motion. There is an endlessness to the spaces that Zurayk deftly shapes, a glimmer of emergence, then disappearance, re-emergence, a quiet skimming of the surface of form, experience and emotion, then again submergence, coming up again as if for air, breath. This is how a life might be described, all of life.

While this work enters with such lightness, as if alighting at the very corner of thought, yet if confronted, or perhaps just looked at squarely, the experience deepens, continues, gives more, does not disappear in the moment, recedes only to return.

This doubling, the glimpse and the continuation, the constant and enduring, the light and ephemeral.

To know the way to depth from light and back again.

The subtle and mutable line

the material life.

In the words of Zurayk,

containing the darkness and contained by it.

Afaf Zurayk is a Lebanese American artist, writer and educator. Her artistic and writing practices seek transparency in depicting the color of light, guiding the audience through turbulence towards acceptance. Zurayk graduated with a B.A. in Fine Arts (with distinction) from the American University of Beirut in 1970 and earned an M.A. in Fine Arts from Harvard University. Zurayk has exhibited her art extensively and has been reviewed in The Washington Post, the Washington Review, Al-Hayat and L'Orient-Le Jour among other publications. Her art is in the collections of the British Museum, London, UK; Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE; the Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon; and Darat al - Funun, Amman, Jordan. She is represented by Saleh Barakat Gallery in Beirut, Lebanon.

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AZK-339
Untitled
Mixed media on canvas
70x100 cm
2025

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AZK-341
Untitled
Mixed media on canvas
70x100 cm
2025

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AZK-342
Untitled
Mixed media on canvas
70x100 cm
2025