

WHEN COLOUR MEETS SOUND

BY MIRIAM DUNN 05-2017

Conflicts around creativity have clearly made way for cross-inspiration and harmonious co-existence in a new solo exhibition of works by the artist and musician Walid Nahas

While a new solo exhibition highlights Walid Nahas's passion for both music and art, it also relays the message loud and clear that he has found a way of channelling his creativity across both disciplines simultaneously and harmoniously.

A classically-trained pianist and self-taught artist, Nahas admits there were times in the past when he thought he might have to choose one field of work over the other.

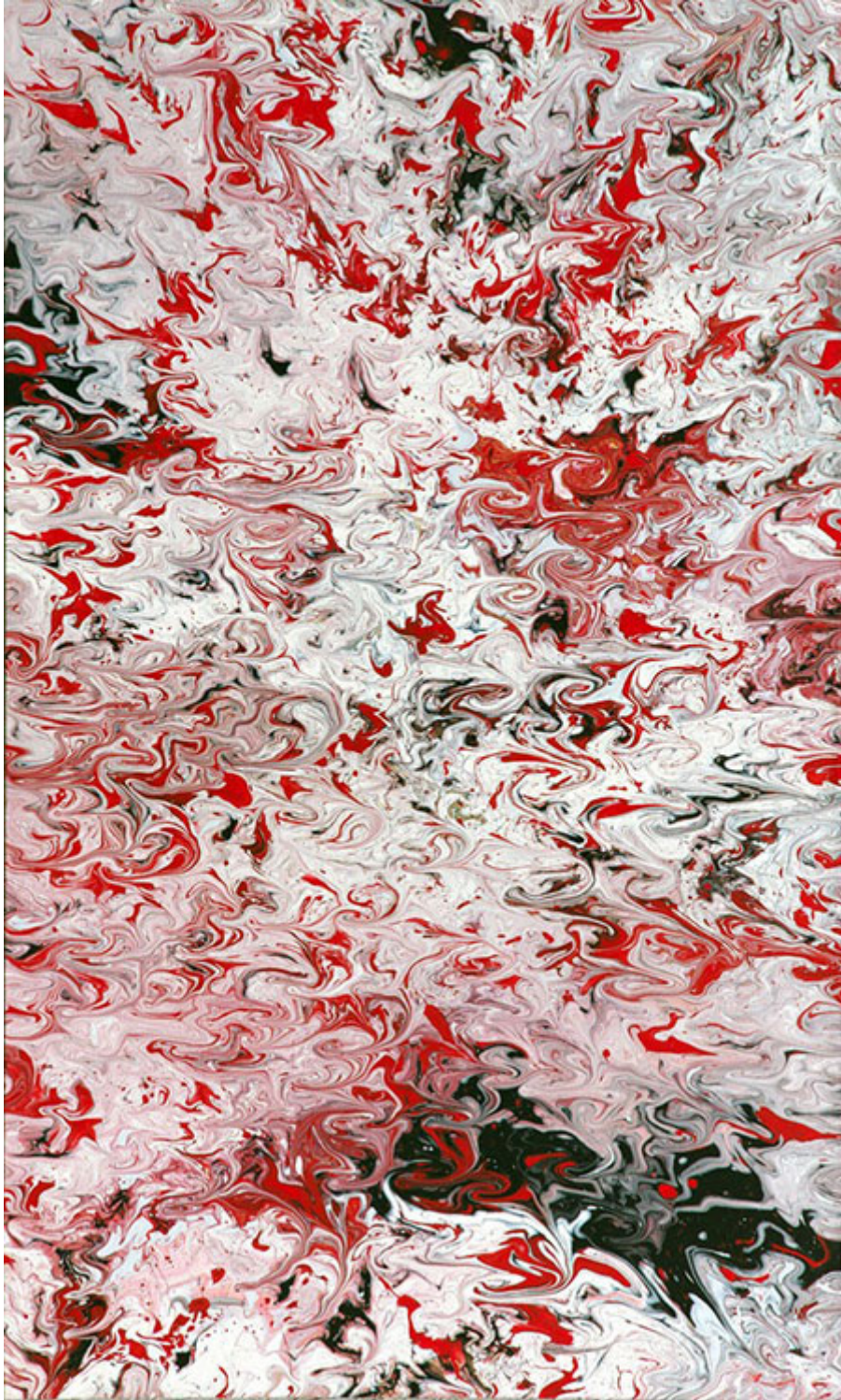
"On occasions, it felt like my music and art were competing with each other, which was a real struggle for me," he acknowledges. "Eventually, after much thought, I decided to try to pursue both at the same time."



Senses in Motion, 2015, acrylic on canvas, 130 x 70 cm

Titled 'Senses in Motion', Nahas's latest exhibition, which takes place at Artspace Hamra, marks the outcome of that decision and more, in many ways, serving as evidence that his talents are reconciled, co-existing peaceably and feeding off each other.

Marking Nahas's second solo show, 'Senses in Motion' explores the relationship between colour and sound, which, he says, has been a central theme throughout much of his career and a quest he continues to explore.



Motion 2, 2016, acrylic on canvas, 190 x 110 cm

The exhibition, which is made up of 16 large-scale works, has been described as interactive and multi-sensory, enfolding its audience from the outset.

"I've discovered a great deal of similarity between colour in art and sound in music over the years," he explains. "The colour spectrum has much in common with the range of notes on a musical instrument, in that some complement each other, while others clash, relaying different emotions and levels of intensity."

Nahas first began learning to play the piano aged just nine, some years before he also decided to start taking his art more seriously. Today, he composes, performs and paints, usually alternating his projects, which could be a music album, concert or exhibition.



Senses 1, 2015, Acrylic on canvas, 90 x 120 cm

While his music has a romantic, melodious feel to it, showing the influence of composers such as Chopin, Debussy and Saint-Saëns, his art, in contrast, gravitates towards expressionism.

Nahas explains that he felt abstraction to be the most suitable genre for studying the relationship between colour, sound and movement, which was so important to him. "I found myself drawn to the young abstract expressionism movement, the work of artists such as Kandinsky and Pollock, in terms of both technique and philosophy. I was fascinated by the emotional intensity that it encompassed," he says.



Motion 7, 2017, Acrylic on canvas, 180 x 240 cm

His technique involves the use of acrylics, which he dilutes to achieve the fluidity and movement that are hallmarks of his work. "If I dilute the paint too much, I lose the colour, whereas if it's not sufficiently diluted, I don't get the dynamism I'm looking for, so there are plenty of challenges," he admits.

The assimilation of cultures prompted by moves between France, Canada and Lebanon, also plays a part in Nahas's work, alongside the questions around identity that being an immigrant and time spent travelling produce.

Nahas concedes that his current show has been something of a labour of love, four years in the pipeline and involving "a lot of trial and error", but also hugely satisfying. "It's really nice to share my paintings with the public, I've been looking forward to it and I can't wait for the feedback," he says.

'Senses in Motion'

Artspace Hamra

Runs until June 23rd 2017