



**An Article by A. V. (764 words, 4 min. read)**

### **A New Artistic Landmark in Beirut**

Beirut's art scene continues to expand with the opening of a new, spacious venue for Kalim Bechara Art Gallery. Located in the heart of the city, this modern and inviting space is dedicated to showcasing contemporary and modern art from the Arab world. With its elegant design and ample room for artistic expression, the gallery provides an immersive experience for visitors, allowing them to engage with each artwork in a meaningful way.

On February 21, the gallery hosted the opening of Nayirie Keuteklian's solo exhibition, *Into The Light*, a visually rich and imaginative presentation that perfectly complemented the gallery's vision. The event took place in an atmosphere full of color and fantasy, drawing art enthusiasts and collectors eager to discover the work of this promising young artist.

### **A Journey of Transformation**

Keuteklian's work explores human transformation, focusing on the shift from innocence to a more complex understanding of life. Her paintings are filled with symbolism, using elements such as young girls, bubbles, candies, and lollipops to represent childhood and purity. However, beneath these delicate motifs lies a deeper, more introspective layer, reflecting personal growth and self-discovery.

One of the most striking aspects of her work is the presence of large, expressive eyes, which give her figures a dreamlike and reflective quality. This subtle surrealism invites viewers into an imaginative yet thoughtful world, where emotions and memories intertwine.

### A Blend of Color and Charcoal

One of the standout pieces in the exhibition features a young girl with striking blue hair, dressed in a soft yellow gown. She holds a matryoshka-like doll, revealing a smaller version of herself inside—a powerful metaphor for self-exploration and transformation. The background is a surreal landscape filled with floating islands, candy-like trees, and a pink sky, reinforcing the artist's signature blend of fantasy and deeper themes of personal evolution. The painting's soft pastel tones contrast beautifully with its sharp details, showcasing Keuteklian's refined technique in oil painting and egg tempera.



In addition to her vibrant paintings, Keuteklian also presented a series of charcoal drawings, which offer a different perspective on her artistic vision. These monochrome works strip away color, focusing instead on line, form, and emotion. The absence of color emphasizes the introspective quality of her figures, highlighting their delicate expressions and intricate details. Through these pieces, she demonstrates her versatility as an artist, seamlessly transitioning between rich, layered color compositions and raw, expressive sketches.



## Blending Tradition and Contemporary Expression

Keuteklian's artistic approach is deeply rooted in both classical and modern techniques. Inspired by pop surrealism, she incorporates oil painting and egg tempera, bridging the gap between historical artistic traditions and contemporary expression. Her process is intuitive, allowing each layer of paint to guide the next, resulting in pieces that feel organic and continuously evolving.

Her ability to merge these different influences makes her work offer a fresh perspective while maintaining a connection to traditional craftsmanship. This balance between past and present gives her paintings a timeless quality, making them both visually engaging and emotionally resonant.

## A Promising Artistic Voice

Despite being at an early stage in her career, Keuteklian has already begun making a name for herself in the Lebanese art scene. She holds a master's degree in sacred art from USEK, where she studied artistic traditions in depth, and she has participated in several artistic workshops that have contributed to shaping her unique style.

In 2019, she held a solo exhibition dedicated to Byzantine iconography, demonstrating her ability to master historical techniques. Over the past two years, she has taken part in collective exhibitions, steadily gaining recognition for her distinctive artistic voice.

Beyond her own creative work, Keuteklian has been involved in painting restoration at BeMA Museum since 2017, playing a role in preserving Lebanon's artistic heritage. This experience has further enriched her understanding of materials and techniques, influencing her approach as a contemporary artist.

## A Beautiful and Imaginative Exhibition

Kalim Bechara Art Gallery's new space provided the ideal setting for Keuteklian's world of fantasy and introspection. The exhibition, *Into The Light*, filled with pastel tones and vivid colors, created an enchanting atmosphere that captivated visitors. The artworks, with their delicate details and underlying depth, invited the audience to reflect on themes of innocence, change, and personal growth.

With this exhibition, Nayirie Keuteklian has positioned herself as a promising young artist, one whose work is both visually engaging and conceptually rich. As she continues to explore new artistic directions, her ability to blend tradition with contemporary creativity suggests a bright future ahead.