

**Letitia Gallery announces it will open in Beirut, Lebanon
1 February – 31 March 2018**



Eileen Cooper, *In The Moment* from Love-in-Idleness series, 2015, oil on canvas, 92 x 122cm, courtesy the artist

Letitia Gallery is a new contemporary art gallery dedicated to facilitating discourse around culture in the Middle East, opening on the 1st of February 2018 in Beirut, Lebanon.

Founded by Mohamad al Hamoud and Annie Vartivarian, the gallery has evolved from years of private collecting within the Middle Eastern region. The 100 sq. metre gallery space is located within the vibrant Hamra neighbourhood of Beirut that is also home to a number of key contemporary galleries who seek to inform and develop the already active Lebanese gallery scene. The space offers an ideal location for both local audiences and international visitors to discover new artists, and to gain a deeper understanding of the breadth of their practice through curated exhibitions.

The gallery's inaugural exhibition *Under the Same Moon* showcases a series of new and existing canvases and print works by British contemporary artist Eileen Cooper OBE RA opens on the 1st of February 2018. Cooper draws inspiration for her new works from her perception of Beirut's position as a safe harbour and Lebanon's history as a country with a depth of cultural heritage and rich natural beauty. Her canvases offer an exploration of Lebanese myths amidst a landscape bathed in the diffused light of the warm, visceral Middle Eastern sun. These new works sit in conversation with a selection of Cooper's existing works that showcase her legacy as a magic realist artist exploring the transformative nature of a single moment. Her work comes from an unapologetically female perspective, resulting in work that is simultaneously bold and tender

Eileen Cooper, artist;

I feel very lucky to have met wonderful people who gave me the unexpected opportunity to visit Beirut. After a short but intense trip, I knew I wanted to make a group of paintings as a response to this experience. I was left with an overwhelming sense of the history and beauty of Lebanon. In particular the extraordinary landscape, the magnificent Cedars and ancient mythology, this seemed like a great place to start. I'm always looking for new subjects, new inspirations.

Annie Vartivarian, the gallery's founder comments;

We are delighted to be welcoming Eileen Cooper to take part in our inaugural exhibition. With the opening of this new space we aim to widen Beirut's already burgeoning art scene to include critically acclaimed international artists such as Cooper and later Ahmed Badry, Alejandro Ospina and Nathaniel Rackowe.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Letitia Gallery

Based in Beirut in the vibrant Hamra neighbourhood, Letitia Gallery is a contemporary art gallery focused on encouraging global engagement with contemporary art in Lebanon through the contextualisation of both local and international artists and their work in the global art environment.

Under the direction of Annie Vartivarian, the gallery has a strong ethos of collaboration and has worked closely with leading international curators from around the world to discover artists for its programme. The gallery works on a project-focused model that looks to nurture the growth of regional artists from the MENA region as well as showcasing international artists in Lebanon within a programme of four to five exhibitions a year.

Letitia Gallery offers both local audiences and international visitors the opportunity to discover artists from the region and to gain a deeper understanding of the breadth of their practice through public programming that includes: talks, off-site projects, commissioning new site-specific installations and supporting cultural initiatives in Lebanon and the region.

About Eileen Cooper

b. 1953 in Glossop, Derbyshire, UK, Eileen Cooper lives and works in London, UK.

From 1971 to 1974, Cooper attended Goldsmiths College and later went on to graduate from the Royal College of Art in 1977. During the 1980s, she quickly became established and exhibited widely. Cooper became Royal Academician in 2000 and, in 2010, was elected Keeper of the Royal Academy, becoming the first woman in this role since the Academy was founded in 1768.

Alongside developing her practice as an artist, Cooper has taught part-time as a visiting artist and educator in numerous institutions including St Martins School of Art, Royal College of Art and the Royal Academy Schools.

She has held solo exhibitions in The Fine Art Society, London, UK (2017); Wolfson College, Cambridge, UK (2016); Galerie Miro, Prague, Czech Republic (2016); Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK (2015); Art First Gallery, London, UK (2013, 2010, 2009, 2007); Art First Projects, New York, US (2003, 2002); and Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, UK (2000).

She has participated in group exhibitions including *The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition*, London, UK (2017); *Drawn Together: Artist as Selector*, Jerwood Gallery, Hastings, UK (2014); *Encounter*, The Royal Academy in the Middle East, Doha, Qatar (2013) and The Royal Academy in Asia, Singapore (2012); and *The Outsider: British Figuration Now*, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, Italy (2001).

Exhibition Details

Title: Eileen Cooper: *Under the Same Moon*

Address: Tour da Saroula, Hamra, Beirut, Lebanon

Website: www.letitiagallerybeirut.com

Dates: 1 February – 31 March 2018

Private View: 1 February 2018

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm, Saturday 10am to 5pm

Admission: Free

Facebook: [LetitiaBeirut](#)

Instagram: [LetitiaBeirut](#)

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