



PRESS RELEASE

# I. Bacchanalia

**LAUDI ABILAMA \* YAZAN HALWANI \* LEILA KUBBA KAWASH  
& BASSAM KYRILLOS**

A GROUP ART EXHIBITION PRESENTED BY PIDRAYA  
AT THE ESTATE OF IXSIR WINERY, KFIFAN  
MADFOUN EXIT ON THE NORTH HIGHWAY, LEBANON  
OPENING RECEPTION: SATURDAY 30 AUGUST 2014,  
3:30 P.M. TO 7:00P.M.

CURATOR: IRIS KRITIKOU

**Under the high patronage and in the presence of the minister of Culture H.E. Mr. Raymond Araygi, IXSIR and Mrs. Patricia Cherfan president of the social enterprise PIDRAYA, presented on Saturday August 30th 2014, a cultural, artistic and developmental opening reception for the group art exhibition “Bacchanalia” remaining until September 28th, 2014, in Batroun. Where a lot of people attended along with many officials.**

Among those present was the Bishop of Batroun Mounir Khairallah, Mr. Charbel Antoun, representing the Minister Boutros Harb, Mr. Wajih Toubia, the mayor of Batroun, Mrs. May Khalil, president of the Beirut Marathon Association and different social and financial figures.

This event was an opportunity to reaffirm the partnership with Beirut Marathon Association as part of the promotion for the "Banque du Liban Beirut Marathon", where two PRE statues "Positive Running Energy" were displayed.

"Bacchanalia" the group exhibition showcasing the works established artists **Laudi Abilama, Yazan Halwani, Leila Kubba Kawash & Bassam Kyrillos** and curated by **Iris Kritikou**.

The vision behind IXSIR is to reveal the best terroirs of Lebanon, some forgotten long since. Cultivated with respect to sustainable agriculture, IXSIR's vineyards are spread in the mountains of Lebanon, from Batroun to Jezzine, and culminate at an altitude of 1,800 m, making it the highest vineyard in the Northern Hemisphere. Winemaking occurs in a winery twice recognized as one of the greenest buildings in the world. IXSIR was established by friends with a common passion for wine and Lebanon.

The winery was named by CNN as one of the greenest buildings in the world having received many renowned international green awards such as the A+ Popular Award and a Green Good Design 2011 award. Earlier this year, it won the MENA Green Mind Award 2013.

The present partnership with PIDRAYA marks IXSIR's strong commitment to be increasingly involved with exquisite art and creation and to promote artists, as part of its social awareness and social responsibility programme. IXSIR derives from "Iksir" (Al-Iksir), the original Arabic word for "Elixir", a word common to many languages, defining the purest form of all substances, a secret potion that grants eternal youth and love.

**PIDRAYA** was founded by social entrepreneur Patricia Cherfan, as a visionary social enterprise promoting sustainable development. Considering Corporate Social Responsibility a form of corporate activism aiming at creating positive change, PIDRAYA engages in multifaceted projects, which encourage divergent thinking and society's advancement through arts, cultural events and active cross-sector partnership between public, private, nonprofit, for-profit, civic and government sectors. The present is a partnership with IXSIR that treats wine as something equally valuable as a rare **Cultural Artifact**. PIDRAYA takes its name from the Phoenician Goddess of Light.

"**BACCHANALIA**", featuring selected works by Lebanese artists Laudil Abilama, Yazan Halwani, Leila Kubba Kawash and Bassam Kyrillos, is the first of a series of important art events organized by Pidraya at the prestigious estate of IXSIR, with a scope of promoting established as well as emerging Lebanese

and international artists in an outstanding ground, thus creating a festive and multi-dimensional creative platform, accessible to all art lovers. Bacchanalia takes its name from a mythological festival in honour of Bacchus, the God of wine. By co-exposing selective works with one inspiring subject with a diversity of material, scale and symbolic approach, **Bacchanalia** aims to provide a creative dialogue both between the four eminent artists as well as between them and the viewer.

## **THE ARTISTS**

**The four participating artists** express different trends of the contemporary Lebanese art scene attempting to create a fruitful dialogue between various media and forms of artistic expression and to discover common points of interest. **Laudi Abilama** studied Arts and Media at the University College for the Creative Arts (Farnham, UK) and she is an internationally acclaimed visual artist, influenced in her work by Middle East popular culture and the way the Middle East and Arabism are being misrepresented in the West. Her works belong to international private and public collections. **Yazan Halwani** is a renown street artist, best known for embellishing Beirut with his large murals, using Latin and Arabic letters, calligraphy, geometry and portraits. **Leila Kubba Kawash** who was born and educated in Baghdad, graduated with a National Diploma of Art and Design from the Manchester School of Art and Architecture in the U.K. and later studied at the Corcoran College of Art in Washington DC. She has participated in several international exhibitions, including solo exhibitions in London, Athens, Washington DC, Abu Dhabi and Jordan, as well as touring exhibitions across the United States. Her works are in private and public collections internationally, including the British Museum, International Monetary Fund, Jordan National Gallery and Abu Dhabi Cultural Center, Audi Bank, Beirut Lebanon. Finally, **Bassam Kyrillos** is a sculptor widely recognised for his monumental works presented in many exhibitions in Europe, the Middle-East, China and the United States. His works belong to international private and public collections. Until 2005 he was vice president of the International association of the Visual arts. He is holding a Doctorate from the University Paris I Pantheon - Sorbonne.

## **THE CURATOR**

Iris Kritikou is Vice-President of the Museum of Greek Children's Art and independent art curator. She studied archaeology and history of art in Greece, Austria and the U.K. Having initially worked for two succeeding prestigious foundations between 1994-2004, since 2004 she has been working as independent curator in collaboration with museums, galleries, cultural institutions, organizations, numerous artists and art galleries both in Greece and abroad including the Academy of Athens; Benaki Museum, Athens; Hellenic-American Educational Foundation; Municipal Gallery of Chania, Greece; Heracleidon Museum, Athens; Moschandreou Gallery; Ex Convento San Cosma e Damiano, Venice; Greek National Tourism Organization; Museum of Contemporary Art of Shanghai (MOCA); Thessaloniki Center of Contemporary Art; City of Athens Technopolis; Hellenic-American Union, Athens; "Ermoupolia" Cultural Festival, Syros Island; Balkan Art Gallery of Kontia, Lemnos Island; Bellonio Foundation, Santorini Island; Gennadius Library, Athens; Sismanoglio Megaro, Istanbul; Holy Theological School of Halki, Turkey; "Melina" Cultural Center of the Municipality of Athens; Historical and Folklore Museum of Aegina Island; The "Angelos & Leto Katakouzenos" Foundation, Athens; *Dimitria*, Thessaloniki; Hellenic Culture Center, Berlin Annexe, Sismanogleion Megaron (Cultural Center of the Greek Embassy of Constantinople) -Istanbul, the Hadjioannou Collection Ianos Cultural Space etc.

She has been contributing introductory texts for numerous young and established artists. She regularly contributes articles on art and culture (City Press, Chronos Oro, Chronos Plus, Arttime, Highlights, hridanos.gr, e-poema.gr, Express, In2Life. gr, Insider, Bonjour, culturenow.gr, e.t.c.).

For many years she has been an active Member of Board to several museums, cultural foundations and institutions.

**Opening reception:** Saturday August 30, 2014, 3.30 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

**Exhibition from** August 30 to September 28, 2014

**Opening hours:** Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays 10.00 a.m - 4.00 p.m. / Wednesdays 10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. / Closed on Mondays

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For more information please contact PIDRAYA on [support@pidraya.net](mailto:support@pidraya.net),

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