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Artist Zad Moultaka to Represent Lebanon at
2017 Venice Biennale

Carol Civre, Friday, June 24, 2016

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Diluvio by Zad Moultaka. Courtesy of Zad Moultaka.

The composer and visual artist Zad Moutaka has been appointed to represent Lebanon at the 57th Venice Biennale, opening in May 2017, by the Lebanese Ministry of Culture.

Moutaka's began his studies at the Beirut Music Conservatory at a very early age. In his early 20s he enrolled in the Paris Conservatoire, and a few years later began an impressive career as a piano soloist. He ended his career as a pianist shortly after, however, to focus on painting and composition.

For Moutaka's work included in the 2017 Venice Biennale, the public can expect an interactive environment. His new piece, titled *Sacrum*, will be reminiscent of the prehistoric caves of Lebanon and France. Yet, as the curator of the pavilion Emmanuel Daydé pointed out, the work will not have historical relevance, but a "post-historical" one.

Moutaka's practice is heavily based on the integration of visual and audible language, as well as that of Western and Arabic ideological patterns. In his work, technology draws its roots to ancient times to comment on larger contemporary issues.

Sacrum will be installed in Chiesa Santa Maria della Misericordia, a prestigious site in the history of Venice. The installation, following Moutaka's background in music and expertise in composition, will include sounds as well as physical structures.

In the press release for the exhibition, Moutaka himself comments on the work's connection to the Middle East. According to Moutaka, the chaos and destruction plaguing the Middle East is due to man's fall from nature.



Painting by Zad Moutaka. Courtesy of Galerie Janine Rubeiz, Beirut.

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Many of Moultaqa's musical compositions have been performed at major music festivals, including Baalbek, Amsterdam, and Montreal.

His first solo exhibition was at Beirut's Galerie Janine Rubeiz in 2012. Since then, he has exhibited at the 2015 Venice Biennale and has two important shows scheduled in Paris, one for the Nuit Blanche at the [Palais de Tokyo](#) in 2016, and another at the Arab World Institute in 2017.

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