

# CHARBEL SAMUEL AOUN

## MULTIDISCIPLINARY ARTIST

Born in 1980, Charbel Samuel Aoun holds a master's degree in architecture (2004).

During the following five years he worked as a conceptual designer in several architectural firms in Beirut and explored the fields of audiovisual and theatre. At the same time, he started creating a wild garden, combining hundreds of varieties of plants and trees.

Relation with nature and the architectural experience pushed the artist toward working with a variety of mediums such as wood sticks, manure, dust, and discarded objects.

Lebanon is very diverse culturally within the spatial dimension and emotionally through time. In each period social images tends to be both poetic and catastrophic.

That diversity resonates in the artist work through a variety of mediums from daily life uncovering emotions of the present as a trace of time and culture.

Several collectors and institutions such as the Royal Family of Emirates, Raymond Audi, Jean Marc Decrop, Abraham Karabajakian, and the Tate Modern museum collected the artist's work.

He is currently represented by Mark Hachem Gallery (Beirut-Paris-New York).

CHARBEL SAMUEL AOUN  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY ARTIST



WORKS  
2006 - 2014

# Out of Space

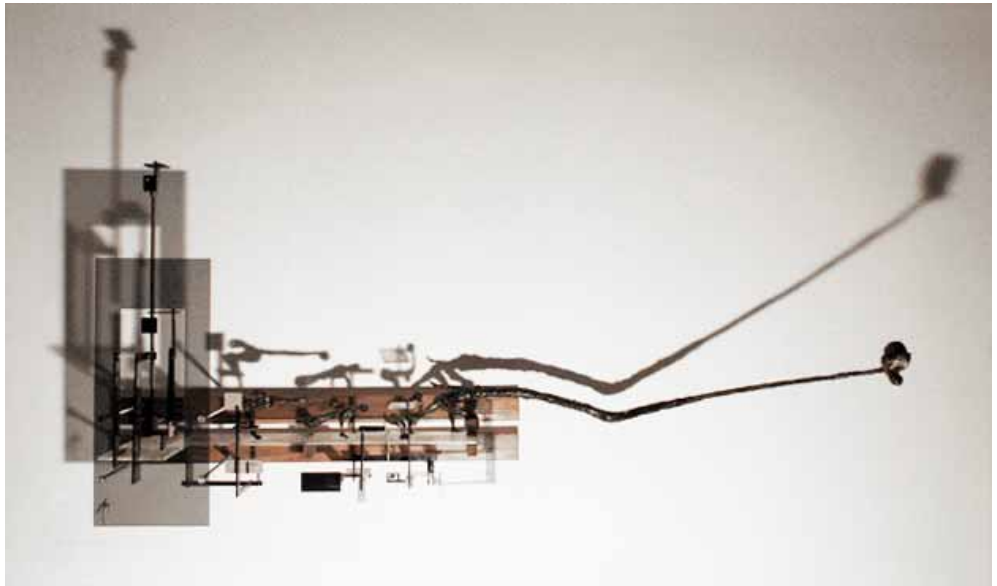
2006-2007

In 2006, Israel bombed Lebanon. Many Lebanese wanted to flee but most of them were unable to do so due to Visa issues. This highlighted the struggling human beings in their own spaces towards brutal happenings and more structured laws.

The work presented an assemblage of well-structured orthogonal spaces in which organic human like tortured creatures tried to get out. They were sculpted with fire (melted plastic) to express the suffering and death that were taking place, the color ended black due to the process.

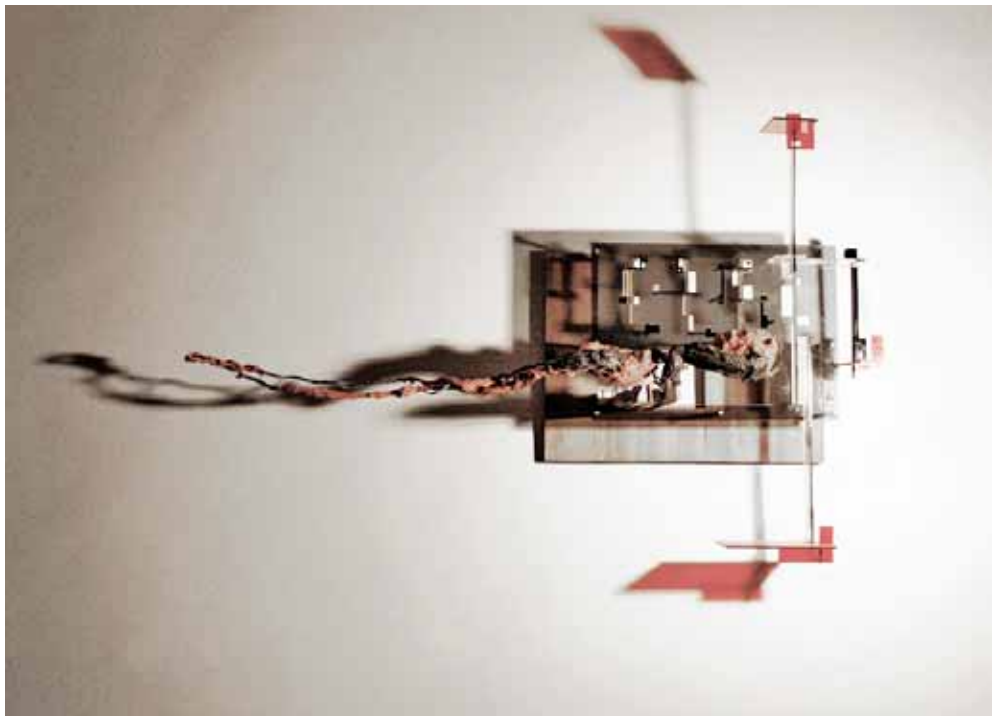
The spaces were created starting with a drawing software as AutoCAD then executed using Plexiglas and a laser cut machine in order to emphasize our modern societies in which human beings must be structured. The works were exhibited in the French cultural center in 2007.

# Out of Space



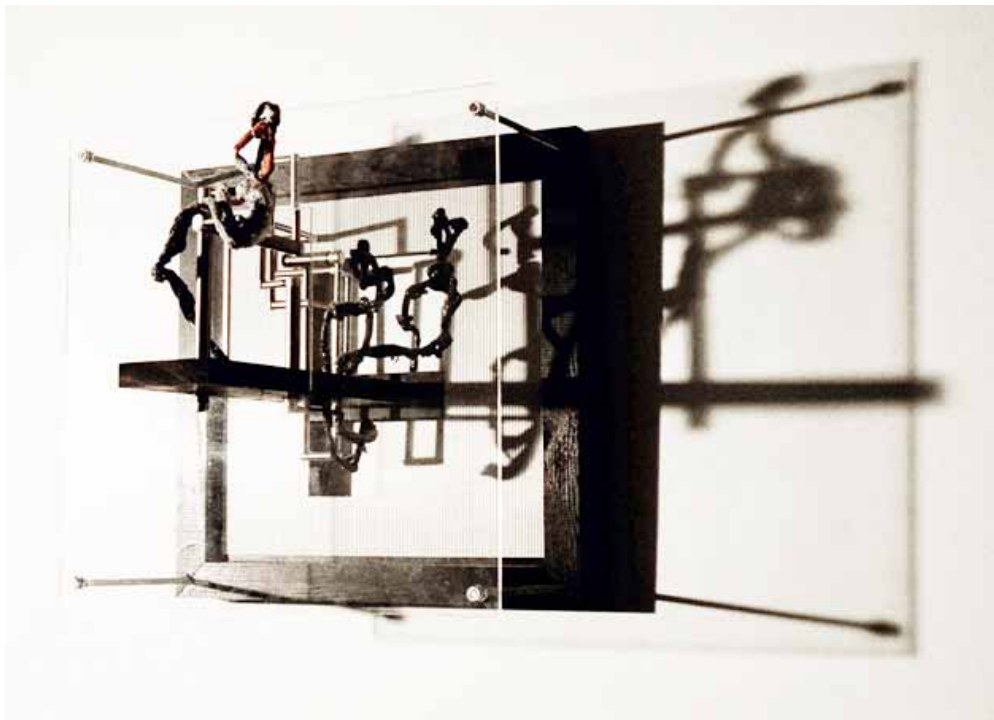
Untitled  
70x160x60cm  
2006

# Out of Space



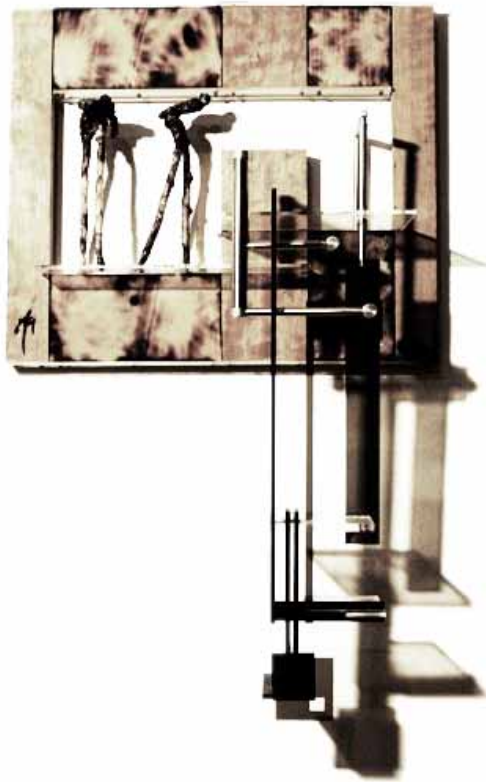
Untitled  
80x130x30 cm  
2006

# Out of Space



Untitled  
50x50x50 cm  
2007

# Out of Space



Untitled  
80x50x20 cm  
2006

# Beirut Mix

2009

In 2009, many building sites were newly put up in Beirut. Capitalism was at its peak. As is reaction to that, a series of paintings were made about the differences between the social classes of Beirut.

The artist also created a stop motion depicting the social classes' struggle, throughout installations in movement using old and new shoes.



## Beirut Mix



Concrete Invasion  
Paint on Canvas  
120x60cm  
2009



Carnivor Architecture  
Paint on Canvas  
120x60cm  
2009

## Beirut Mix



Underground  
Paint on Canvas  
120x60cm  
2009



Night-Life  
Paint on Canvas  
120x60cm  
2009

# Beirut Mix



**Watch Video** <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ohgqitzhfumsz0y/WE0xwBvZlx#h:null-social%20class.mov>

Social Class  
Stop Motion  
2009

# Pulse

2011

Right before the “Arab Springs”, and after visiting Egypt and Syria, a series of paintings was created in order to reflect the poverty and the social tensions of the mass population. A flow of people were invading the space of the canvas, all with an expression of misery and a desire of change.

This collection was exhibited at Artspace Gallery-Dubai beginning 2011.

# Pulse



Fragments of Society  
Paint on Canvas  
185x185cm  
2010



# Pulse



Transcendance  
Paint on Canvas  
185x185cm  
2010

# Pulse



Supper of Poverty  
Paint on Canvas  
135x200cm  
2010

# Pulse



Le Souci  
Paint on Canvas  
120x120cm  
2010



# Pulse



Dregs of Humanity  
Paint on Canvas  
135x200cm  
2010

# Lost Spring

2012

While the international media was still talking about Arab springs and people were going to more radicalism, the artist wanted to invite them towards another reality, that of nature, a “Lost Spring”.

Using natural medium such as cotton and wood sticks mixed with colors, the artist created atmospheres exploring the human emotions through nature: death, hope, survival, depression...

The work stands as a mirror of the society expressed in a different reality, one that has always been present in the aside. This collection was exhibited at SmoGallery-Beirut -2012.

# Lost Spring



Oreganum Syriacum  
Mixed Media on Canvas  
150x150cm  
2012

# Lost Spring



Blue Trip  
Mixed Media on Canvas  
200x200cm  
2012



# Lost Spring



The Wind  
Mixed Media on Canvas  
150x150cm  
2012

# Lost Spring



Imprint of Time  
Mixed Media on Canvas  
200x300cm  
2012

# Lost Spring



Rebirth  
Natural Wooden Sticks  
280x280x200cm  
2012

# 10453

## 2012

10453 is a play about life in 1km<sup>2</sup> of trash. It refers to the actual size of Lebanon (10,452 km<sup>2</sup> +1 km<sup>2</sup>).

The show was meant to be performed in the streets and is essentially very visual, focusing on daily behaviours and poetic scenes.

Charbel Samuel Aoun made the scenography and presented some images in collaboration with writer and director Camille Brunel.

The set was entirely made of discarded objects and materials.

10453 is a BIM Project production and was toured on the Seaside of Tyr, Saida and Beirut (Lebanon) in 2012.



10453



10453



10453 Final Scene

Watch Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGkQTe3MQ-A>

# Anti Carnivor

2012

As a reaction to an order placed by a designer for a burger restaurant in Beirut, who planned to hang a cow's head as part of the interior design, the artist wanted to bring the whole cow along with its atmosphere and its contextual material: he chose the cow manure as a statement against the image of cow as part of a diet. The work was refused and the artist kept the work.

# Anti Carnivor



Cow Manure  
120x60x60cm  
2012

# Friendly Gas

2013

Friendly gas was meant to be exhibited in Qatar at the Tasmeem design art fair-2013 (made in Qatar).

The artist decided to question the relation people have with gas, and therefore they were invited to smell it; an experience that produced fear and hesitation in societies where gas plays a crucial role in their economy. However, once they did smell, they discovered the scent of oud (old Qatary perfume). Its presence was meant to question the relation between the senses and also to contrast experiences from the past and the present in one single moment.

The installation was produced by Anima Gallery-Doha.

# Friendly Gas



# Garbagescape

2013

Garbagescape contrasts the modern human intervention with the pure state of Nature.

It points out the transformation of our landscapes due to our behaviour and reactions towards natural spaces. Shoes collected from the garbage mountain of Saida were used as a medium to gradually invade dead sticks' structures on 3 phases, then exhibited in glass boxes. Under these boxes one hundred plant of oreganum syriacum (aromatic native plant known as zaatar) were placed and contrasted with the visual of garbage (shoes).

Inside the middle box, two microphones were installed and they were connected to headphones. When the viewer put them, he discovers a track contrasting both sounds of nature and human interventions in the city (All sounds were registered In Lebanon).

The artist wanted to make from the contrast between human actions and nature a multisensory experience for the viewer.

Garbagescape was exhibited at Beirut Art Fair-2013.

# Garbagescape



Watch Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDstOjToKml>



# Voice of the Invisibles

2013

Twelve analog phones were hanged on a wall.

The phones were connected with a telephone exchanger linked to a computer with a software that triggers the calls. The software was able to manage 4 calls simultaneously.

During the time of the installation, the phones ring, the spectator picks up...then he's suddenly immersed in the voice of a person who is telling his story and testifying about moments in his life.

Amal, Fayçal, Caroline, Wadih, Khaled, Élies, Hana, Lina, Marie, Michel, Muhamad and Yussef are aged between 13 and 75. Most of them are Syrians or Lebanese from Syrian origins, and they allow us to listen to their stories. A family life, a love story, a present reality, a sad statement, a testimony; each of them has lived a drama, a tragedy. Each of them carries a scar, alive or asleep, connected to the reality of this region. These people testify about a reality they are no longer in control of...

“Voice of the Invisibles” was exhibited at Mediterranea 16-Young Mediterranean Artists Biennial.

Artistic collaboration: Camille Brunel

Software Design: Dr.Chafik Mokbel

# Voice of the Invisibles



Watch Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxv7iHHk1M4>

# From the Dust

2013

“From the Dust” is a collection of paintings made entirely of the dust collected in the streets of Beirut.

Ever since the war began in Syria, Lebanon has been quite affected. The conflict spread, and more than a million Syrian refugees, many families, children, and lonely men, are now invading the public gardens and staying in the streets of Beirut.

It is the dusty world of the people, the fear, the loss and the destruction, that the artist expresses.

He invites the viewer to enter the world of those refugees for a better understanding of War.

# From the Dust



Everything Lost  
Dust on Koran Papers  
200x100cm  
2013



The Last Moment  
Dust on Canvas  
200x100cm  
2013

# From the Dust



Le Penseur  
Dust on Koran Papers  
130x90cm  
2013

# From the Dust



Social Misery  
Dust on Canvas  
100x200cm  
2013

# From the Dust



On The Public Bench  
Dust on Koran Papers  
100x200cm  
2013

# You maybe Next

2014

With the rise of terrorism in the Middle East (Iraq–Syria- Lebanon), lot of explosions and terrorist attacks happened recently mainly in public places. Any identified parked car scared people as they became very cautious from potential bombs.

The installation is about sharing that fear. Using objects from daily life- objects people recognize-the artist recreate the experience of taking the risk.

A gas bottle is hanged from the ceiling oppositely above a fire stove. It gives the impression of a potential explosion leaving the viewer between looking at the exhibited object and running away from it.

That fear reintroduces the present social feeling of every person risking his life on the streets to survive.

P.s: after doing many tests and trials in a gas factory, physically there's no risk on the viewer. Still it generates that feeling as an experience.

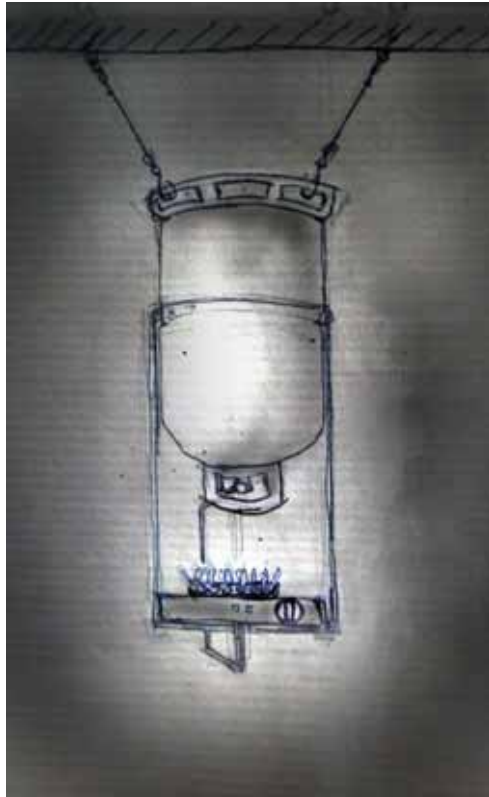
Technical description:

A gas bottle is hanged from ceiling with 4 thin metallic cables, around the gas bottle is attached 3 metallic strips that goes down to hold a gas stove.

The gas bottle is connected to the stove with a copper pipe that goes inside the bottle to reach the highest point avoiding being filled by gas liquid. The distance between the stove and the bottle is fixed on 40cm in relation to a maximum temperature of 60 degrees.



# You maybe Next



You maybe Next  
Installation - 2014  
work in progress

## **Solo Exhibitions:**

- 2012 Lost Spring – Smo Gallery-Beirut
- 2011 Pulse - Art Space Gallery, Dubai
- 2010 Flows – Art Lounge, Beirut
- 2009 Beirut Mix – Zico House, Hamra
- 2007 Out of Space – French Cultural Center-Beirut
- 2005 Demonstrations – ADG Art Center - Beirut

## **Collective Exhibitions:**

- 2013 Beirut Artfair- Garbagescape -Biel, Beirut
- 2013 “jeux de la francophonie-Nice”- representing Lebanon in painting-  
Special mention of the jury
- 2013 Biennale of Mediterranean artists-Voice Of The Invisibles-Ancone, Italy.
- 2013 Residency in Caos museum-Terni-Italy
- 2013 « twelve »-Mark Hachem artgallery-Beirut
- 2013 Tasmeeem Doha design fair-Friendly Gas
- 2012 Set design “10453-a story about life in 1km2 of trash”
- 2012 Beirut Artfair- Biel, Beirut
- 2012 Salon d'Automne – Beirut Exhibition Center-organized by Sursock Museum
- 2012 Ipanam-villa Zein, Beirut Downtown-organized by Hamazkayin Art gallery
- 2012 Pied D'oeuvres – Smogallery, Karantina-Beirut
- 2011 Art Expo, Istanbul
- 2010 Lebanese Art Diaspora – Beirut Dome, Beirut Downtown
  - Tribute to the Martyrs – Hamazkayin Art Gallery
  - Tear down the Walls – Art Space Gallery, Dubai
- 2009 Salon d'Automne – Sursock Museum
  - Raja Nehme Sertin Art Gallery
  - Culture and Identity – Haigazian University
- 2006 La Peinture des Architectes – Paul Guiragossian Museum
- 2004 Lebanese Young Talents Exhibition organized by the European Union.