

Andrew Kreps
Gallery

22 Cortlandt Alley,
New York, NY 10013

Tue–Sat, 10 am–6 pm
andrewkreps.com

Tel. (212)741-8849
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Bibi Zogbé

Works 1938 - 1965

Organized by Carla Chammas
394 Broadway
May 17 - June 15, 2024

“It was not just an explosion of shapes, a choir of lines, a fanfare of colors. It was not only a plant world returned to its destiny of glorifying the creator. It was not only a paradise of Eden suddenly promoted by the slow movement of growth which animates it to the evolution of an animal or human fraternity. In each painting there was a superhuman drama of joy or pain, hope or distress, pride or weakness, love, hatred, the struggle of life and death.” - Charles Corm on Bibi Zogbé, 1947

Andrew Kreps Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of paintings by Bibi Zogbé (b. 1890 Sahel Alma, Lebanon, d. 1975, Mar del Plata, Argentina.) made between 1938 and 1965.

Born in Lebanon, Bibi Zogbé immigrated to Argentina at the age of sixteen, but would not begin to exhibit her work until the 1930s following the dissolution of her marriage. While Argentina would remain home for the majority of her life, frequent trips to Lebanon would allow for the country’s landscape to become her most persistent inspiration, creating vibrant and dense compositions of blooming and thriving plants, which led her to be known as “La pintura de flores” (the flower painter) throughout South America. Throughout, these works spoke to an ongoing quest for spring, as a metaphor for both artistic, and personal freedom. Her travels and bohemian lifestyle also introduced her to burgeoning modernist movements both in the Arab world, and Europe, befriending artists such as Tamara de Lempicka, which would further influence her work.

Zogbé would additionally develop a parallel body of portraits over the course of multiple visits to Africa in the 1940s, taking cues from Byzantine icons. Seated within the surrounding landscape, and humble in approach, she sought to humanize her subjects, while imbuing them with a certain grace and resolve to demonstrate a deep regard for womanhood. Often enlarging her subject’s eyes, which Zogbé saw as providing further insight into the sitter’s soul, they in turn became simultaneously human and symbol, exploring an intrinsic connection between the natural world and femininity.

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Bibi Zogbé's work is currently included in *Stranieri Ovunque – Foreigners Everywhere*, The 60th International Art Exhibition at La Biennale di Venezia, curated by Adriano Pedrosa and on view through November 24, 2024. Her work was widely exhibited in her lifetime. In the 1930s, her work was permanently installed in the Museum of Natural Sciences in Buenos Aires, and in 1947, Zogbé would be included in a group exhibition at the National Museum of Lebanon, where she was awarded the Lebanese Cedar-Medallion of Excellence. In 1948, her work would be the subject of a catalog published by the Lebanese government, for which she was the only female artist selected at the time. However, her status as an immigrant would prevent from being fully supported by either country, leading her work to later fall into obscurity.