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HALIM AL KARIM: 'BAGHDAD 1920'

(XVA GALLERY, DUBAI, UAE – 21 November 2009 – 13 January 2010) On 21 November, 'Baghdad 1920', an exhibition by Internationally-acclaimed Iraqi artist Halim Al Karim makes its debut in the UAE. 'Baghdad 1920' consists of two series, 'Liberators' and 'Witness from Baghdad', working together to deliver Halim's potent political message. Having witnessed himself in Iraq the violence manifest in urban society, here Halim challenges the political issues that remain unsolved in areas of prolonged conflict. As ever, Halim Al Karim's work makes a vivid impact upon us, both aesthetically and politically.



Halim Al Karim – Artist's Statement

My works dwell on the evolving mentality of urban society. I am concerned with ongoing and unresolved issues, especially as they relate to violence. I search through layers of collective memory and my personal experiences in that context. In this process the main challenge for me is to identify and stay clear of the historical and contemporary elements of brainwashing. Through these works I try to visualize an urban society free of violence. The out of focus images, imply an uncertainty of context, time and place. These techniques, which have become the hallmark of my work, are means to overcome the effects of politics of deception and, in turn, transform me and the camera into a single entity, seeking a greater truth.

Baghdad 1920:

This exhibition at XVA Gallery considers issues of deception in politics and looks at the way that certain politicians who legislate for war are influencing people away from the peace process and these themes are articulated through two new bodies of work: 'The Liberators' and 'Witness From Baghdad' each of which helps to inform the other. I want to remind viewers that if the occupiers remain and continue to play a decisive role in local politics while claiming to be liberators, the witness from Baghdad will never remain just a witness.



Halim Al Karim – Biography

Born in Iraq in 1963.

Lives in Denver, Colorado, USA and Dubai, UAE.

Education:

1983-1988 B.A. Ceramics, Baghdad Academy of Fine Arts

1996-2000 Gerrit Reitveld Academy, Amsterdam, Holland

Solo Exhibitions:

- 1992 Baladna Gallery, Amman, Jordan
- 1993 French Cultural Center, Amman, Jordan
- 1994 Schauer Gallery, Paris, France
- 1995 50x70 Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1996 L'Entretemps Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2000 Fibeitt Gallery, Amsterdam, Holland
- 2001 Princessehof National Museum of Ceramics, Leeuwarden, Holland
- 2003 Four Walls Gallery, Amman, Jordan
- 2004 Saifi Village-Quartier des Arts, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2005 Espace SD, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2005 XVA Gallery, Dubai, U.A.E.
- 2005 Gremillion Gallery, Houston, Texas, USA
- 2005 Robischon Gallery, Denver, Colorado, USA
- 2006 XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2007 Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, Boulder, Colorado, USA
- 2008 XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2008 Darr Alfenon, Kuwait
- 2009 Robischon Gallery, Denver, Colorado, USA
- 2009 XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE

Group Exhibitions:

- 1993 International Art Festival, Amman, Jordan
- 1994-2006 Salon d'Automne, Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1995 Salon des Art Decoratif – SAD, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1996 Parterre Gallery, Sommelsdijk, Holland
- 1996 Babel Gallery, Amsterdam, Holland
- 1997 Musee des Metiers de Mercure, Larochele, France
- 1998 Art Deco LA FIAD, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1998 Global Ceramics 1, Landsmeer, Holland
- 1998 Fleuris-98, Ede, Holland

1998 Agial Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
1999 Ceramic Millenium, Amsterdam, Holland
1999 Pictura, Dordrecht, Holland
2001 Contemporary Ceramics in Lebanon, AUB, Beirut, Lebanon
2003 Tegels, Corrosia Cultural Center, Almere Haven, Holland
2004 Ceramic Delft, Delft, Holland
2006 "Pinceaux pour Plumes", Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon
2006 Arteclásica 2006 - 3ª Feria de Arte Clásico Contemporáneo,
El Centro Costa Salguero, Buenos Aires, Argentina
2008 Radical Gallery, Switzerland
2008 Art Paris, Paris, France
2008 Art Paris, Abu Dhabi, UAE
2008 Asian Contemporary Art Fair, New York, USA
2009 Hong Kong Art Fair, Hong Kong
2009 Saatchi Gallery, London, England
2009 Arti Campi Gallery, Verona, Italy

Located in the historical part of Dubai, **XVA** is a vibrant art space that exhibits a stimulating array of contemporary paintings, sculptures and art installations. It exposes the works of regional and international artists and designers. Since 2003, XVA has been a meeting point for the cultural community of Dubai, contributing to raise the profile of the Emirate through a rich cultural programme, including the Bastakiya Art Fair which is hosted by the gallery. XVA also encompasses a boutique hotel and award-winning vegetarian café. Visit www.xvagallery.com

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