



XVA Gallery Presents 'Eternal Love' by Halim Al Karim

New body of work from acclaimed Iraqi artist to address the elusive notion of love through a multi-disciplined approach

18 March 2013, Dubai, UAE – XVA Gallery, DIFC is pleased to announce its forthcoming exhibition by Halim Al Karim; 'Eternal Love', a solo show comprising an unseen photographic body of work from 2010 from the world-renowned Iraqi artist. In what represents a fresh new direction, the artist will mix his lesser-known medium of sculpture with photographic works in one series, bringing both together to create an interactive space for viewers.

Whilst Halim Al Karim has certainly dealt with love as a theme before, most notably in his 'Hidden Love' series (2009), this particular body of work focuses on love that engulfs the individual and the people that find it in their lives. Crucially, it also focuses on those that do not find this and how it leaves them. Al Karim has chosen to create life size photographic works, portraying their relationship with love. The 'Eternal Love' series follows Al Karim's established photographic technique, creating images that are usually large-scale (220 x 100 cm), and purposefully obscured images of human figures.

The sculptural works will mirror the photographic works in size and imagery, and will punctuate the space, thus inviting the viewers to engage fully within the exhibition and to consider this complex emotion for themselves. The sculptures will be figurative; the concept behind their creation is that they act as the antithesis of the photographic works.

Halim Al Karim is well known throughout the Middle East for his signature photographic style and his thematic concerns, such as politics, love and oppression; and it is impossible to discuss his work without also discussing his life. Al Karim lived through much persecution and turmoil, living alone in the Iraqi desert for three years to avoid military service under Saddam Hussein's regime, followed by separation from his family and friends and on to a life of uncertainty and asylum. This experience has clearly informed the artist and the works produced to date.

Meagan Kelly-Horsman, Director of the XVA Gallery comments "Al Karim's shows always elicit a hugely positive response for the gallery and we are very excited to be able to be the first to show his latest body of work. Love is a notoriously tricky and elusive notion and we look forward to inviting visitors to fully explore and engage with their emotions through Halim's work."

Halim Al Karim comments, "In the Eternal Love series I am tracing the existence of Eternal love in my lost memory, in order to survive in my hidden life. My work is my way of resisting harm and harsh reality, through all my work I try to keep my nine hearts alive, to surround my self with love, because I believe that this is the only way I can keep myself

from violence. Also, this is a way to contain my personal life, to contain the beasts and monsters inside me."

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'Eternal Love', a solo exhibition
Opening 18 March 2013
XVA Gallery, Building 7, DIFC, Dubai

About the XVA Gallery

Established in 2003, XVA is one of the leading galleries in the Middle East specialising in contemporary art from the Arab world and Iran. Its rigorous exhibition programme includes works by emerging, mid-career and established artists who are responding to their local environments in thoughtful and provocative ways. XVA offers art consultancy services, providing expert consultancy and full project management for companies and individual requirements in art.

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