

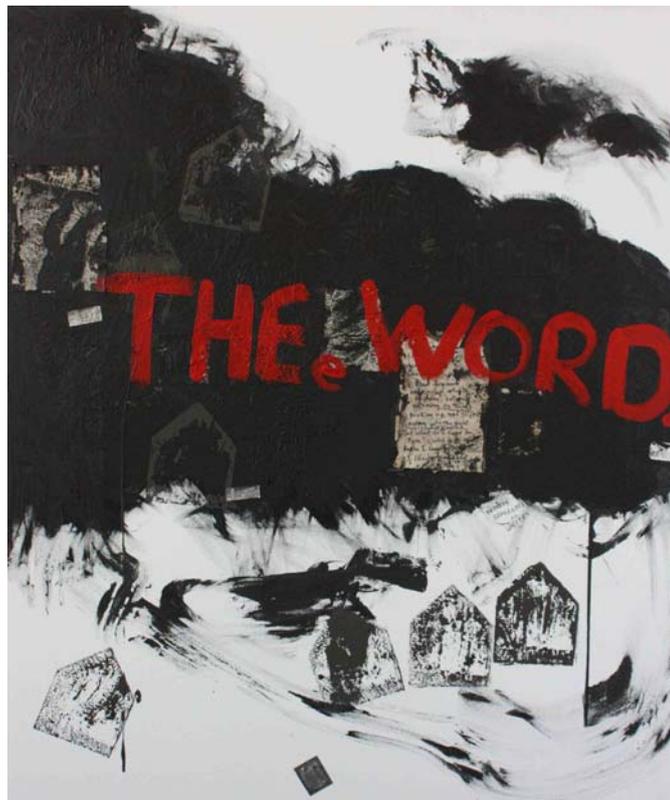
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UNSPOKEN MARKS, UNSPOKEN WORDS

(XVA GALLERY, DUBAI, UAE – 26 September- 22 October 2009) Unspoken Marks, Unspoken words is an exciting double exhibition by Dubai-based American artist Nelda Gilliam. This innovative solo show demonstrates the impressive scope and versatility of this well-respected XVA artist.

'Unspoken Marks' is a series of abstract canvases, perfect in their completeness, yet ostentatiously spontaneous in their creation. The canvases express the diversity in application of the artist's use of different media, with the artist glorying in an expressive flow of her own energy. 'Unspoken Words' is a series of conceptual canvases, which highlight our self-restraint in vocalising our emotions and thoughts. Many canvases are collages incorporating old texts, captions and images chosen by Gilliam for their personal meaning to her, lending us a direct insight into her own experiences.



Nelda Gilliam -

Nelda currently lives and works in Deira, Dubai and has been resident in the UAE for eleven years. Hailing from Texas originally, Nelda has exhibited work in Saudi Arabia, Texas, USA and the UAE. Nelda has been exhibiting at XVA gallery since the gallery opened in 2003, and has exhibited annually in the Bastakiya Art Fair since its inception. Nelda is also a Director of Gallery 76, an art space located at the Dubai International Art Centre, providing a venue for new and aspiring Emirates-based artists to show their work to the general public.

Biography

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Nelda Gilliam – Artist's Statement:

I have used the house shape in my work for many, many years, as a symbol of my spirit and the place where I dwell - to me it represents all of humanity's soul. The houses have been used in this context to

portray the destruction of the soul that can come with repressed words. So for the theme 'Words Unspoken' I have used the house symbol combined with words to say in essence, that we as people, as a society, as a community, we do not speak from within our souls; we do not say what we feel inside; we do not give enough information about ourselves – we hold back, both emotionally and spiritually. Perhaps this is a continuation from our childhoods, when we were often told not to speak – and so we remain silent in adult life. I am conveying the idea we should be freer with our inner voices, and lose the fear of revealing ourselves. With greater thoughtfulness we should connect to those closest to us by being more truthful with our words: Words have the power to destroy or heal, and it is often the latter we forget. For me 'Marks unspoken' is about the energy that comes from within me. I place the marks on the canvas according to my feelings and how I feel inside: When I am energetic or experiencing fear the marks become more decisively placed as I feel the need for order, whereas the more spontaneous and free-flowing marks stem from my relaxed and calmer moods. So essentially these canvases represent a portrait of my emotions. These works are particularly powerful for me, as I tend to express myself more clearly in marks than in words.



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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