



Samira Abbassy: *An Autobiography & Other Confessions*

Vernissage: Saturday February 7th, 6 – 9 pm

Exhibition dates: February 7th – April 1st, 2015

XVA GALLERY, Al Fahidi Historical Neighborhood, Bur Dubai

XVA Gallery is pleased to announce the solo exhibition of Iranian born, New York based, artist Samira Abbassy. This is the first time Abbassy will exhibit her work in the UAE. The exhibition will open with a reception for the artist on Saturday February 7th, 2015, from 6-9pm. **She will be available for interviews and tours from the 5th - 9th February 2015.**

The exhibition will consist of oil paintings on canvas or gesso panel, accompanied by works on paper, from 2009-2014. Abbassy's works are very process based, exploring ideas of cultural identity as expressed through self-portraits and re-interpreted stories of her homeland. Abbassy states 'I use self-portraiture as a way of examining and defining myself in a constantly shifting cultural context. Although seemingly autobiographical, the figures are not me, but "the archetypal self". "The Self" is examined as a phenomenon which combines autobiographical, cultural, psychic and chemical aspects, in which events/ narratives become incorporated into or cause dismemberment of the body.'

About the Artist:

Samira Abbassy was born in Ahwaz, Iran & moved to London, UK as a child. After graduating from Canterbury College of Art, she began exhibiting in London. In 1988 she moved to New York to help establish & found the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts Studio Program NY, where she currently has lifetime tenure and is a board member.

Her NY solo show in 2007 was reviewed by Benjamin Genocchio in the New York Times and by Ariella Budek in Newsday. In Sept/Oct 2012, Nisa Qasi interviewed Abbassy for the Financial Times lifestyle section.

Her work is shown internationally and has been acquired for private and public collections, including: the **Metropolitan Museum**, the **British Museum**, the British Government Art Collection, the Burger Collection, the Donald Rubin collection (**Rubin Museum**, NY), the Farjam Collection, Dubai, the Devi Foundation, India & the Omid Foundation, Iran.

Her awards include: a Yaddo residency fellowship in 2006, a NYFA in 2007 & a Joan Mitchell Painting/Sculpture award in 2010 and a Pollock-Krasner award in 2014. In April 2012 she was the artist in residence at the University of Virginia & has recently been nominated for the Jameel Prize.

In September 2014 her work was included at the Istanbul Art Fair with the Todd Hosfelt gallery. Upcoming shows in 2015 include a solo show at the Bernstein Gallery, (Woodrow Wilson Schl,) Princeton University, as well as a solo show at XVA gallery, Dubai. Also in 2015, the work acquired by the Metropolitan Museum will be on show from Feb - May. Other group shows in 2015 include: "*Azadi va Edalet*": *Stories Retold by Contemporary Iranian Women Artists* at The Oglethorpe University Museum of Art - Atlanta, GA, and "*Bittersweet*"(curated by Jaishri Abichandani) at the Peabody Essex Museum, MA, as well as a curated show by Souhad Rafey at FiveMyles gallery, Brooklyn. Currently a bequeathment to the British Museum by Dr Diana Lipton is in process, which will be the museum's second acquisition.

About the XVA Gallery:

Established in 2003, XVA is one of the leading galleries in the Middle East that specializes in contemporary art from the Arab world, Iran and the Subcontinent. Exhibitions focus on works by the regions foremost artists as well as those emerging onto the scene. The gallery's artists express their different cultural identities and perspectives while challenging the viewer to drop prejudices and borders. XVA Gallery exhibits both locally and internationally; collaborating with galleries and participating in international art fairs, such as Art Basel Hong Kong, SH Contemporary, Singapore Art Fair and Abu Dhabi Art in 2014, in order to further expose Middle Eastern contemporary art.

XVA Gallery and XVA Art Hotel are located in Dubai's heritage district, now called Al Fahidi Historical Neighborhood. XVA founded and organized the Bastakiya Art Fair from 2007- 2010 as part of its commitment to raising the profile of contemporary art practice in Dubai. For three years XVA was located in DIFC, and has now expanded its premises in Al Fahidi.

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