

HALIM AL KARIM

B. 1963 in Nafjat, Iraq

Halim Al Karim was born in 1963 in Nafjat, Iraq. He currently lives and works in Denver, USA and Dubai, UAE. In 2011 Halim was selected to represent Iraq in the Venice Biennale. His work has been widely exhibited at venues such as the Saatchi Gallery, London, UK, The ZKM Museum of Contemporary Art, Karlsruhe, DE, The Paul Klee Museum, Bern, Switzerland and The Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, Boulder, Colorado. Halim's work is also part of numerous public collections, including the Saatchi Gallery, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, UK, The George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, Texas, USA, The Royal Association of Fine Arts, Jordan, Arab Museum of Contemporary Art, Doha, Qatar and L'Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA), Paris, France, amongst others.

In his works the Iraqi artist copes with his formative experiences during the first Gulf War. Opposing Saddam's regime he refused the military service and had to hide in the desert, living for almost 3 years in a hole. He only survived through the assistance of a Bedouin woman who took care of him and taught him about gypsy customs and mysticism. The experience of violence, the loss of freedom as well as the mystical tradition of Sufism, which emphasizes the individual and pure relationship to God and consciousness, influenced his personal reflections.

Since 1985 Halim Al Karim has been developing the "Hidden" series, the concept which incorporates "al-batin", according to the Islam one of the 99 names of Allah. Reciting the name "al-batin" is regarded to have the benefit of seeing "the truth in things". Al Karim processed in his works the experience of hiding, withdrawing, the isolation and solitude, how memories finally become blurred and disappear and the extreme psychological stress. Therefore he titled them with "Seclusion", "Lost Memory" or "Schizophrenia". The media of photography is deliberately chosen due to its non-physical qualities: a medium, which quite literally creates an image of light, capturing the transient and interwoven nature of time and memory. Over many years he has been remained true to his formal concept by creating portraits of anonym as well as from famous personalities; some in extreme close-ups others in busts, but always with unsharped contours. Later on he used silk to outline the aspect of uncertainty, representing a transcendental portal to the subconscious and the artist's insight that inner retreat is the only way to preserve humanity from brutal acts of violence.

EDUCATION

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

1996-2000 Gerrit Reitveld Academy, Amsterdam, Holland

SELECT SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2013, *Eternal Love*, XVA Gallery, UAE

2013, *Eternal Love*, solo booth ART13, London

2013, *Halim Al Karim: Witness from Baghdad*, Artspace, London, England

2012, *Hidden*, Galeri Merkur, Istanbul, Turkey

2012, *Halim Al Karim*, Galerie Imane Farès, Paris, France

2012, *Hidden Goddess*, Nuova galleria Morone, Milan, Italy

2012, *Schizophrenia*, AB Gallery, Luzern, Switzerland

2012, Art Paris Art Fair, Galerie Imane Farès, Paris, France

2011, Contemporary Istanbul Art Fair, Istanbul

2011, XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2011, NYU, Abu Dhabi, UAE

2010, *Witness From Baghdad*, Darat Al Funun, Kuwait

2009, XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2008, Darat Al Funun, Kuwait

2008, XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2007, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, Boulder, USA

2006, XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2005, Robischon Gallery, Denver, Colorado, USA

2005, Gremillion Gallery, Houston, Texas, USA

2005, Espace SD, Beirut, Lebanon

2005, XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2004, Saifi Village-Quartier des Arts, Beirut, Lebanon

2003, Four Walls Gallery, Amman, Jordan

2001, Princessehof National Museum of Ceramics, Leeuwarden, Holland

2000, Fibeitt Gallery, Amsterdam, Holland

1996, L'Entretemps Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

1995, 50x70 Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

1994, Schauer Gallery, Paris, France

1994, French Cultural Center, Amman, Jordan

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1992, Baladna Gallery, Amman, Jordan

SELECT GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2013, Obscura, Amelia Johnson Contemporary, Hong Kong
2012, Arab Express: The Latest Art From The Arab World, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
2012, Artspace London Opening
2011, Contemporary Istanbul Art Fair, Turkey
2011, Iraqi Pavilion 54th Venice Biennale, Venice Italy
2010, Nujoom: Constellations of Arab Art from the Farjam Collection, Dubai, UAE
2010, Peripheral Vision, Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE
2010, Stux Gallery, New York, USA
2010, Red Line Gallery, curated by Robishon Gallery, Colorado, USA
2010, Milan Art Fair, Milan, Italy
2010, Aspen Art, Colorado, USA
2010, Behind the Mask, The New Art Gallery, Walsall, England
2010, IF Galleria, Paris
2009, Saatchi Gallery, London, England
2009, Bastakiya Art Fair, Dubai
2009, Paul Klee Museum, Bern, Switzerland
2009, Crossings Traversees, Rabat, Morocco
2009, Hong Kong International Art Fair, Hong Kong
2009, Arti Campi Gallery, Verona, Italy
2009, Art Abu Dhabi, UAE
2008, Art Paris, Paris, France
2008, Art Paris, Abu Dhabi, UAE
2008, Asian Contemporary Art Fair, New York, USA
2008, Radical Gallery, Zug, Switzerland
2006, Pinceaux pour Plumes", Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon
2006, Arteclásica 2006 - 3º Feria de Arte Clásico Contemporáneo,
El Centro Costa Salguero, Buenos Aires, Argentina
2004, Ceramic Delft, Delft, Holland
2003, Tegels, Corrosia Cultural Center, Almere Haven, Holland
2001, Contemporary Ceramics in Lebanon, AUB, Beirut, Lebanon
1999, Ceramic Millenium, Amsterdam, Holland

1999, Pictura, Dordrecht, Holland
1998, Art Deco LA FIAD, Beirut, Lebanon
1998, Global Ceramics 1, Landsmeer, Holland
1998, Fleuris-98, Ede, Holland
1998, Agial Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
1997, Musee des Metiers de Mercure, Larochelle, France
1996, Parterre Gallery, Sommelsdijk, Holland
1996, Babel Gallery, Amsterdam, Holland
1995, Salon des Art Decoratif – SAD, Beirut, Lebanon
1994, Salon d'Automne, Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon
1993, International Art Festival, Amman, Jordan

AWARDS

2010, Nominee, Sovereign Art Prize, Hong Kong, China
2003, Sursock Museum Prize- Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon
2001, Jury Prize for painting - International Cairo Biennale, Cairo, Egypt
1998, Ceramics Special Mention - Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon
1995, Ceramics Special Mention - Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon
1994, Sculpture Special Mention - Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Arab Museum of Contemporary Art, Doha, Qatar
Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE
Darat Al Funun, Amman, Jordan
Farjam Foundation, Dubai, UAE
The George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, Texas, USA
L'Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA), Paris, France
Royal Association of Fine Arts, Amman, Jordan
Saatchi Gallery, London, England
Sovereign Art Foundation, Hong Kong
Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon
Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK
Weng Art Foundation, Krefeld, Germany

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PUBLIC COMMISSIONS

2002, "Harbour of the Soul" - Bronze Sculpture - H460cmXW460cmXD6cm

Royal Tropical Institute-Amsterdam, Holland

2001 "An Oriental Dog's Dream" - Ceramic Mural -H250cmxW400cm.XD6cm

Lootsstraat – Amsterdam, Holland