

# LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

Seaman, Anna. "Egyptian artist Ghada Amer talks of Earth.Love.Fire." *The National* (December 13, 2015).

## TheNational

### Egyptian artist Ghada Amer talks of 'Earth.Love.Fire'



Egyptian artist Ghada Amer with her work *The Blue Bra Girls* (2012). Courtesy Leila Heller Gallery

**The ceramic work in *Earth. Love. Fire* brings a new dimension to your thread paintings. Was this your intention?**

My intention was to try something different and explore a new medium. Each medium I explore always brings a new dimension to my art practice in general, and not only to my paintings. Each medium makes you think in a different way and you have to adopt a different approach. This is very enriching, both artistically and conceptually.

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## **Is it true that you will not return to this medium?**

I was lucky to be able to spend two years as a resident at Greenwich House Pottery, using all their facilities and help. Ceramics is a highly technical medium, and if I do not have the infrastructure, it will be difficult for me to continue. At some point I will apply to different residencies but I need to give myself some time off first. These two years have been a period of such intense discovery and exploration and I need to digest all that. But, no, I am certainly not done with that medium – at least I hope not.

## **Even in the vast gallery, your portraits draw the viewer in. What is it about the female face and figure that attracts you as an artist?**

The portraits are part of this series of word-paintings that I started in 2012, where I would draw the portrait of different ladies with a feminist quote from men or women. The quotes had to be empowering for women and not critical of men. In the ceramics, I concentrated on portraits only – I am very attracted to facial expression. This is what I focused on.

## **The ceramic acts as a transition between the canvas works and the large metal sculptures – would you agree with that?**

I do not think that is true. The large metal sculptures were completed in 2010 and I finished this particular series in 2013. The word-paintings came after the metal sculptures, and then the ceramics. I would say the work is a consequence and not a transition. I am hoping to develop some of the ceramic sculpture into metal works – this will be my next exploration.

## **You said that you were “anxious” to see how the show would be received in Dubai. What has the feedback been like?**

I am still anxious. I did not stay long enough to know the real feedback. I will know in five years – if people still remember that show, it will mean that I did well. My first show in the Arab world was in Egypt, and it did very poorly in terms of sales. However, the people who saw it still remember it now and the people who did not buy, regret it. You only know the result of a show after a considerable amount of time.

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