

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

For Immediate Release

Leila Heller Gallery To Expand to 25th Street in Chelsea, New York

Inaugural Exhibition *Firooz Zahedi: Elizabeth Taylor in Iran* September 22 – October 29, 2011

Photographs of the Screen Legend in Iran in 1976

Opening Reception in Chelsea on Thursday, September 22, from 6 to 9 p.m.



Elizabeth Taylor/Odalisque I, 1976, printed 2011, C-print, 32 x 46 inches (81.3 x 116.8 cm).
Courtesy the artist and Leila Heller Gallery, New York

New York City – Leila Heller Gallery, formerly known as LTMH Gallery, is expanding to Chelsea to a 3,500 square foot ground floor space at 568 West 25th Street between 10th and 11th Avenues. The space, in the heart of Chelsea’s gallery district, will be designed by the New York City-based architectural firm Hariri + Hariri. Leila Heller Gallery will launch an ambitious program of contemporary exhibitions in the new Chelsea space, while focusing on 20th-century work at the Gallery’s current uptown space at 39 East 78th Street between Madison and Park Avenues.

The inaugural Chelsea exhibition, *Firooz Zahedi: Elizabeth Taylor in Iran*, on view from September 22 - October 29, 2011, will present forty extraordinary photographs that reveal an insider’s look at Zahedi’s experience of traveling with the screen legend to Iran in 1976. The

series includes stunning images of the late icon posing in odalisque costumes and fashionable chadors. An opening reception will be held in Chelsea on Thursday, September 22, from 6 to 9 p.m.

The photographs in *Firooz Zahedi: Elizabeth Taylor in Iran* were recently on view at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) from February 26 - June 12, 2011, and have been loaned by LACMA to the Gallery for this exhibition. Before the exhibition at LACMA opened, Elizabeth Taylor said, "Seeing these photographs brings back fond memories of my visit to Iran, a country blessed with a rich and colorful culture that dates back many centuries." The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue with an essay by Linda Komaroff, Curator of Islamic Art and Head of the Department of Ancient and Islamic Art at the LACMA.

Today, Zahedi lives in Los Angeles and is well-known for his portrait work for major publications such as *Vanity Fair*, *Town & Country*, *Esquire*, *InStyle*, and *Time*. He started his career in photography in New York during the mid-1970s working with Andy Warhol and *Interview*.

Uptown, Leila Heller Gallery will exhibit *Marcos Grigorian: Earthworks* from September 27 – October 29, 2011. Thirty earthworks created between the early 1960s and 1980s by the Iranian-Armenian artist Marcos Grigorian (1925-2007) will be on view in the artist's first solo exhibition in New York City since 1985, and the first solo show of the artist's work since his death in 2007. The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an introduction by Fereshteh Daftari, a New York-based independent curator and former curator at The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

In the 1950s, Grigorian created a monumental mural titled *The Gate of Auschwitz* consisting of 12 canvases at 6 x 10 feet each. Deeply immersing himself in the work, and the horrific nature of the theme, Grigorian, in the early 1960s, began his series of *earthworks*, canvases and multimedia pieces using dirt as the primary medium. Years ahead of his time, Grigorian's experimentation with earth, straw, and paint predate later work by American, European, and Japanese artists. Grigorian is represented in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

While Leila Heller Gallery is well known for showing work by Middle Eastern and Turkish artists, the Gallery also represents artists from Europe and the United States and recently added a number of artists to their roster, including the American artist Rachel Hovnanian, Turkish artist Kezban Arka Batibeki, Iraqi artist Ayad Alkadhi, and UK-based German artist Al Braithwaite. Leila Heller Gallery will also be representing the estate of the prolific Iranian artist and caricaturist Ardeshir Mohasses (1938-2008) who had a solo exhibition at Asia Society New York in 2008. The Gallery has placed a number of important works in public and private collections in the Middle East.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

From November 3 – December 23, 2011, Leila Heller Gallery in Chelsea will offer an exhibition of self-portraits entitled *The Masque and the Mirror*, curated by artist Shirin Neshat, and including work by Andy Warhol, Ardeshir Mohasses, Cindy Sherman, Nan Goldin, Matthew Barney, Youssef Nabil, Francesco Clemente, YZ Kami, Marcos Grigorian, Marina Abramovic,

Shoja Azari, Robert Mapplethorpe, and Shahram Karimi. In October at the uptown location, Leila Heller Gallery will show work by American and European modern and contemporary masters.

Leila Heller Gallery will participate in a number of upcoming art fairs this fall including, Art Platform – Los Angeles, Art Beat Istanbul, Abu Dhabi Art, and Contemporary Istanbul.

ABOUT LEILA HELLER GALLERY

Founded in 1982 by Leila Taghinia-Milani Heller, Leila Heller Gallery has established a worldwide reputation in contemporary and modern art. Known for an active and innovative exhibition schedule, the Gallery shows paintings, works on paper, sculpture, installation, and video from international contemporary artists to modern and post-war masterworks, with a specialization in artists from the Middle East.

With an emphasis on discovering and cultivating new talent, the Gallery presents at least three imaginative thematic exhibitions a year for which it invites outside curators, and also presents numerous tightly focused solo exhibitions with work from both prominent figures on the international stage and emerging artists. Leila Heller Gallery has the distinction of presenting the first viewings in New York City of work by contemporary artists who have developed important international reputations.

For over 25 years, the Gallery's mission has been to inspire dialogue among collectors, curators, artists, and critics. With its long-standing commitment to creating linkages between Eastern and Western culture through art, the Gallery is well known in the burgeoning Iranian, Turkish, and Middle Eastern art market. The Gallery places a strong focus on its educational mission, publishing frequent catalogues and organizing symposia and lectures.

Leila Heller Gallery

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