

# LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

FARIDEH LASHAI

## 'THE TYRANNY OF AUTUMN' SILKSCREEN PORTFOLIO



Wednesday, April 20, 2016, 6-9 PM

Leila Heller Gallery Dubai I-87 Alserkal Avenue, Al Quoz 1, Dubai, UAE

Dubai, UAE—Leila Heller Gallery is pleased to present an exclusive presentation of Farideh Lashai's *The Tyranny of Autumn, Not Every Tree Can Bear Suite I*, a portfolio of 22 hand-painted Silkscreen prints and one original work from Farideh Lashai's seminal installation of the same name.

The installation *Tyranny of Autumn* was commissioned and produced for the *Gardens of Iran: Ancient Wisdom, New Visions* exhibition in 2004 at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art. Sharjah Art Foundation has reconstructed the installation for the first time as part of the Farideh Lashai retrospective. The installation is composed of four cylinder-shaped fences suspended from the ceiling. In these sheer columns small sheets of thin film hang. On each piece of film the image of a cypress tree is printed as well as poems from Hafiz about the celebrated cypress tree. Gestures of blue, green, red and yellow illuminate the Plexiglas cards hanging inside the cylinders. The retrospective was curated by Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi and is currently on view until 14 May, 2016.

The symbol of the cypress tree that survives the winter and remains green references a part of the Iranian identity and culture that has thrived amidst periods of foreign occupations and social unrest. The openness of the work invites the viewer to engage in a similar oscillation between the different senses that the work induces. One may search for a metaphor for paradise. This is expressed in the formal garden of palaces known as four fold gardens, that are represented in Persian carpets as four plots bounded by four watercourses. Perhaps one could read the four transparent columns in this installation as vertical rivers that are full of life with allusions to trees and flowers. Yet, another interpretation of the work could be that the image of the tree is a passageway to nothingness. By repeating the mantra of the cypress tree, thousands and thousands of times, its form melts into abstraction. Surrounded by the columns with the overturned cypress trees, the artist highlights the empty space and the perishing of collective memory. The anxiety induced by this scene of falling apart becomes an invitation to experience emotions of ecstasy and yearning. Here, the performance in this installation becomes a search for liminal spaces and ephemeral moments.

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The hand painted Silkscreen portfolio is produced by The Farideh Lashai Foundation and based on original drawings and materials by Farideh Lashai for the installation.

## About the Artist

Throughout a distinguished career spanning over five decades, Farideh Lashai (1944 - 2013) has always juggled with varying means of expression, without recognizing any frontiers that might confine her to a rigidly defined artistic identity. A graduate of Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna she worked as a crystal designer at Riedel Studios in Southern Austria, and then Studio Rosenthal in Selb, Germany. Crystal design became her basis for practicing sculpting later in her career alongside her main discipline of painting. Prior to her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts, she studied German literature in Frankfurt, Germany. Lyricism is the reigning characteristic in her works, whether it is painting, sculpture, writing, installation or a combination of animation, video and painting. She has had more than 25 solo exhibitions in Iran, Europe and the USA. She has taken part in international biennales and collective exhibitions such as the 18<sup>th</sup> Biennale of Sydney: all our relations (2012), *Identity Crisis: Authenticity, Attribution and Appropriation*, The Heckscher Museum of Art (2011) *Hope!* At Palais des Arts, Dinard (2010), *Iran Inside Out*, Chelsea Art Museum, NY (2009), Ludwig Museum, Koblenz (2005), and *Persian Gardens*, Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (2004). Her best-selling fictionalized autobiography, *The Jackal Came* (2003), was published in Iran, narrating the lives of three generations of women amidst the socio-political background of the Iranian society.

Her works can be found in major private and public collections such as the collections of Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles County Museum (LACMA), Centre George Pompidou in Paris, The British Museum in London, Sharjah Art Foundation, Demenga Public Collection in Basel, Deutsche Bank, Commerz Bank in Germany, National Museum of Fine Arts, La Valetta, Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH), Farjam Collection, Dubai and Devi Art Foundation in New Delhi.

## About the Gallery

Since its establishment over three decades ago in New York, Leila Heller Gallery has gained worldwide recognition as a pioneer in promoting creative dialogue and exchange between Western artists and Middle Eastern, Central and Southeast Asian artists. It has garnered a reputation for identifying and cultivating the careers of artists leaving a lasting impact on contemporary art and culture. Currently representing a diverse roster of Western and Middle Eastern artists, the gallery is also active in the American, European and Middle Eastern secondary art markets.

In November 2015, Leila Heller Gallery opened its first international location in Dubai's Alserkal Avenue. At 14,000 square feet, the state of the art gallery features three exhibition spaces, making it the largest gallery in the UAE. Showcasing leading regional and international artists, many of whom will be presenting their work in the Middle East for the first time, the gallery is dedicated to supporting the evolving practice of established artists.

## For Press Inquiries

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