

TOUCHSTONE GALLERY

406 7th Street, NW 2nd Floor • Washington, DC 20004
Phone 202.347.2787 • Fax 202.347.3339
www.touchstonegallery.com • touchstonegallery@verizon.net
Wed-Fri 11.00-5.00 • Sat-Sun 12.00-5.00



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
The Annexes at Touchstone Gallery
April 10 - May 4, 2008

"ZaMZaM Arts: Figurine" Exploring the Muslim female experience post-9/11

Opening Reception: Friday, April 11th 6 - 8:30pm

**Featuring works by Laura Falzon, Sangbin Im, Richard Jochum,
Kevork Mourad, Aphrodite Desiree Navab, and Sarah Siddiqui.**

ZaMZaM Art's **Figurine** brings together 6 artists influenced by Malta, Armenia, Canada, Iran, South Korea, Pakistan, Austria, Syria, and Greece exploring the post- 9/11 experience of women of the Muslim tradition living in the United States. The female form as shape and symbol unifies the diverse media in the works consisting of painting, photography, installation, poetry, and music.

The cultural identity of people throughout the world is more fluid now than ever before as different human traditions, cultures, and ways of life are increasingly intertwined. ZaMZaM Arts seeks to provide a positive direction and space for this exchange by exploring tradition and culture through the arts, and nurturing a forward-moving cultural identity. ZaMZaM Arts does innovative and cutting edge work that aims to inform, inspire, and unite the global citizen.

Sangbin Im, a visual artist and Fulbright Scholar who has studied at the Seoul National University, Yale University, and Columbia University and has exhibited worldwide, partners with musician **Laura Falzon**, a former principal flute of the National Orchestra of Malta and Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio grant recipient, and **Sarah Siddiqui**, ZaMZaM Arts Artistic Director. The trio collaborate on a unique collection that melds imagery with music and poetry, navigates socio-cultural representations, and explores the range of emotions experienced by a Muslim woman working near ground-zero.

Kevork Mourad, a member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road ensemble whose work has been widely exhibited in Armenia and the United States, is drawn to the beauty of the feminine figure and the way it is hidden or revealed. In this series, Kevork explores an exaggeration of one aspect of life both before and after 9/11: the idea of standing out by remaining hidden, and of blending in by being revealed. The labyrinthine lines in the works reflect the connectedness of all, and echo the curves of Arabic calligraphy, which to Kevork hint at the curves of the female form.

Aphrodite Désirée Navab, an Iranian-Greek-American artist-scholar, whose work has been featured in over seventy exhibitions and film screenings throughout the world and **Richard Jochum** a Visiting Scholar from Austria and Artist in Residence at Columbia University together create a Super East-West Woman. Aphrodite takes her *chador* (Farsi for Islamic covering) and turns it into a *cape*. The Superman figure of popular Western culture is transformed into a Superwoman whose chador turns into a cape of agency. She pokes fun at herself, her two cultures, and the ludicrous situations in which her life, between East and West, has placed her. Cultural displacement has not left her incapacitated; rather, it has given her the capacity to live out her healing vision.

For more information please contact Ksenia Grishkova at touchstonegallery@verizon.net

Images: Figurine 11 by Sangbin Im, Going Towards the Azure by Kevork Mourad and Super East-West Woman by

