

GLADSTONE GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shirin Neshat "Games of Desire"

12 Rue du Grand Cerf, Brussels
September 3 through October 3, 2009

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by artist Shirin Neshat, her first presentation in our gallery in Brussels. Neshat's photographs and films synthesize the complex intellection surrounding the global construction of identity, as channeled through differences of gender, race, religion, and culture. In her early series of work, *Women of Allah* in which Farsi calligraphy mingled with politically bold imagery, Neshat has honed the craft of marrying striking visuals with thoughtful cultural critique.

In *Games of Desire*, her new body of work, Neshat continues using multi-channel film installation and photography to elaborate upon the ritual structures that define identity. While still questioning binaries such as man and woman or East and West, this new project situates itself in Laos eschewing the visual vocabulary of the Middle East. A two-channel projection explores the tradition of the lam, a Laotian custom of reciting courtship songs. In this fading tradition, now almost exclusively enacted by the elderly men and women who are its only torch-bearers, a man and a woman will sing-address each other, pitching woo until this exuberant brinksmanship of desire becomes a witty repartée of bawdy and charming improvisations. For this film, Neshat shows the men and women on separate channels facing each other so that the viewer becomes entangled in the joyous back and forth. She also captures the crowds of men and women who witness and encourage the performers. As the artist states, "Men and especially women seem to relish this opportunity to playfully transgress the strict codes that define gender roles and regulate sexual expression in their everyday lives." Along with the film, Neshat will present photographic portraits of the men and women embellished with the Farsi translations of the lam, linking the cultural traditions and political histories of Laos and Iran.

Shirin Neshat was born in Qazvin, Iran, and moved to the United States in 1974. She has been the subject of solo exhibitions at numerous museums, including Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City; Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Finland; Castello di Rivoli, Turin; Dallas Museum of Art; Wexner Center, Columbus; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Serpentine Gallery, London; Museo de Arte Contemporaneo in Leon, Spain; and the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin. Shirin has been included in Documenta XI, the 1999 Venice Biennale, and the 2000 Whitney Biennial. She was awarded the First International Award at 48th Venice Biennale, the Hiroshima Freedom Prize, and the Lillian Gish Prize. In 2008, her solo exhibition "Women Without Men" opened at the ARoS Kunstmuseum, Denmark; traveled to the National Gallery of Contemporary Art in Athens and it will open at the Kulturhuset Stockholm in the fall. She currently lives and works in New York. A fully illustrated artist's book will accompany this exhibition.

For further information please contact Sybille du Roy
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Opening hours : Tuesday - Saturday, 12-6 pm

530 West 21st Street
Huang Yong Ping, April 30 through July 31, 2009

515 West 24th Street
Basil Wolverton Curated by Cameron Jamie, June 20 through August 14, 2009