



Milk, 2018, acrylic on canvas, 153 x 203 cm

SAMIA HALABY AT ART DUBAI 2019 SIMPLE COMPLEXITY – RIPE FRUIT AND SOBA NOODLES

20 – 23 March 2019
Booth F4

Ayyam Gallery is pleased to announce its participation in the 13th edition of Art Dubai from 20 – 23 March, 2019 at Madinat Jumeirah with a solo presentation by Samia Halaby

About the Show

Samia Halaby's newest body of work reflects on her current season of life; they are her ripest paintings yet, brimming with refined simplicity and intuitive complexity. They are a honing of her aesthetic journey to represent the

general in nature without any superfluity: a result of the decades of teaching herself to see. Yet, they hold an incredible variety of intricate moving parts, unplanned and difficult to explain, that twirl and swirl together like her favorite dish: a bowl of soft Soba noodles. This seeming contradiction itself embodies the simplicity and complexity of Halaby's latest work.

Continuing with her previous exploration of transparency and patterns, the artist intends to capture the simultaneous presence of shapes distinguishable by color that co-exist in one canvas and imitate her daily activities. By allowing semi-transparent layers to overlap and illustrate degrees of density and softness, Halaby provokes our consciousness to consider our interactions with social and physical environments.

Halaby's methodical compositions also introduce a blossoming component to her work, where the artist focuses intensely on how we perceive distance and location, examining division of space; moving towards and away from locations marked by visible or audible objects. This idea – which extended its first roots in her kinetic work of the 1980s – is most prominently explored in the large painting *Simultaneous Depth*, partially inspired by the geometry of Islamic panels and its elements, where she allows shapes to interpenetrate; to call and respond; reverberate; overlap and be repeated. In works as such, a general division of space controls the whole but the facture of each general section is composed of parts that echo one another within their location. Thus creating an invisible set of relationships that our eyes measure and our minds comprehend intuitively.

About the Artist

Born in Jerusalem in 1936, Samia Halaby is a leading abstract painter and an influential scholar of Palestinian art. Although based in the United States since 1951, Halaby is recognised as a pioneer of contemporary abstraction in the Arab world.

Halaby began her career in the early 1960s, shortly after graduating from Indiana University with a MFA in Painting. While teaching at the Kansas City Art Institute in 1964, she travelled to the Eastern Mediterranean as part of a faculty research grant and studied the geometric abstraction of the region's Islamic architecture, which has continuously factored into her work. During this time, Halaby launched a series of experiments that would initiate a career-long investigation of the materialist principles of abstraction: how reality can be represented through form.

Also influenced by the abstract movements of the Russian avant-garde, Halaby works with the conviction that new approaches to painting can redirect ways of seeing and thinking not only within the realm of aesthetics but also as contributions to technological and social advancement. This underlying notion has led to additional experiments in drawing, printmaking, computer-based kinetic art, and free-from-the-stretcher painting.

Halaby has been collected by international institutions since the 1970s, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of Art (New York and Abu Dhabi); Yale University Art Gallery; National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; Art

Institute of Chicago; Cleveland Museum of Art; Institut du Monde Arabe; and the British Museum.

Selected solo shows for the artist include Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2018); Ayyam Gallery Al Quoz, Dubai (2017); Birzeit University Museum, Ramallah (2017); Beirut Exhibition Center (2015); Ayyam Gallery London (2015, 2013); Ayyam Gallery Al Quoz, Dubai (2014); Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2011); and Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2010). She has participated in recent group shows at the School of Visual Arts, New York, USA (2017); Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2017); 3rd Qalandiya International Biennial (2016); Darat Al Funun, Amman (2015); the National Academy of Arts, New York (2015); The Guggenheim Museum, Abu Dhabi (2014); Broadway 1602, New York (2014); and Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris (2009).

From the 1960s until the late 1980s, Halaby taught at universities throughout the United States. She was the first full-time female associate professor at the Yale School of Art, a position she held for a decade. Her noteworthy contributions to American academia include a groundbreaking undergraduate studio art program that she introduced to art departments throughout the Midwest.

Halaby's writings on art have appeared in *Leonardo: Journal of Arts, Sciences and Technology*, *Jerusalem Quarterly*, and *Arab Studies Quarterly*, in addition to edited volumes, while her independently published survey *Liberation Art of Palestine: Palestinian Paintings and Sculpture in the Second Half of the 20th Century* (2002) is considered a seminal text of Palestinian art history. In 2017 Schilt Publishing released Halaby's *Drawing the Kafr Qasem Massacre while Palestine Books Inc published Growing Shapes: Aesthetic Insights of an Abstract Painter*. In 2014 Booth-Clibborn Editions published the artist's second monograph, *Samia Halaby: Five Decades of Painting and Innovation*.

About Ayyam Gallery

Founded in 2006, Ayyam Gallery is a leading arts organization that manages the careers of diverse established and emerging artists. Blue-chip art spaces in Dubai, a series of collaborative projects in the United States, Europe, Africa and Asia, and a multinational non-profit arts program have furthered the gallery's mandate of expanding the parameters of international art. With its widely respected multilingual publishing division and a custodianship program that manages the estates of pioneering artists, Ayyam Gallery has also contributed to recent efforts that document underrepresented facets of global art history.

Exhibition Facts

Exhibitions Dates: 20 - 23 March, 2019

Opening Times:

19 March (VIP Invite Only) & 20 March (Ladies Only)

21 March 2 PM – 9:30 PM

22 March 12 PM – 9:30 PM

23 March 12 PM – 6:30 PM

Location: Ayyam Gallery Booth F4, Madinat Jumeirah, Al Sufouh Road, Umm Suqeim

T: +971 4 323 62 42

Email: dubai@ayyamgallery.com

Website: www.ayyamgallery.com