

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In Memory of Farideh Lashai

It is It, and It is Only Now...

April 3-May 8, 2013, Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art, 37 West 57 Street, New York

Thus in Silence in Dreams' Projections

April 4-May 2, 2013, Leila Heller Gallery, 568 West 25 Street, New York



New York, New York (March 19, 2013), Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art (ETNFA) and Leila Heller Gallery will host a two-gallery exhibition in New York to celebrate the career of Iranian artist Farideh Lashai (1944 – 2013) featuring *El Amal*, 2011-2012, *Le Déjeuner au Park-e-Mellat*, 2007-2012, among others works, at Edward Tyler Nahem (April 3-May 8, 2013) and an extended version of *Rabbit in Wonderland*, 2010, at Leila Heller Gallery (April 4-May 2).

For over four decades, Lashai exhibited internationally in numerous solo and group exhibitions, with an expansive practice that ranged from crystal design for Riedel, Austria, and Studio Rosenthal, Selb, in her early career, to a lifelong devotion to painting and mixed media that knew no boundaries. Through her dynamic work, she created a compelling Iranian aesthetic in contemporary Middle Eastern art, inspiring artists at home and abroad. Throughout her career, Lashai captivated viewers with works that inhabit an ephemeral reality akin to the actual shifts of events through time and space. Through the amalgamated use of layered mediums such as video, painting, and sound, she brought to life transient movements of iconic figures and other characters projected upon striking paintings of nature, evoking a compelling sense of nostalgia and loss. Lashai's search for meaning in identity and self are revealed through a personal journey of navigating through the competing dissonant political and intellectual struggles present in her homeland.

The main gallery at ETNFA will feature two large connected works of art with projected animation and sound. *El Amal*, 2011, inspired by the Arab spring and the Egyptian revolt, is a projection in which Charlie Chaplin appears in a scene of *The Great Dictator*. The face of Oum Kolthum, the Grande Dame of Arab music, rises on top of the painting, majestic as a moon with her renowned emerald earrings hanging. The eyes of the singer are closed, as if she is ignoring the minuscule dictator under her watch, dancing in excitement to the tune of her song "El Amal", meaning "hope" and "desire" in Arabic.

This work is directly related to the second installation on view, *When I Count, There Are Only You...But When I Look, There Is Only a Shadow*, 2013, which features 80 photo-intaglio prints taken from Goya's *The Disasters of War* series of 82 etchings from which all of the violent figures and actions have been removed, leaving only Goya's backgrounds from each scene. These are then illuminated by a floating ball of light from *El Amal*. The work evokes a sensation of reminiscence of violence and atrocity, a horrific event in a specific location (Spain's invasion by the French), long past the event and yet universally understandable by those who have experienced war or other forms of violence. In this work, the recognizable backgrounds of Goya's etchings perpetuate cultural memory even as the actors upon it change or disappear.

Accompanying the exhibition will be a joint-gallery catalogue with an essay by Negar Azimi, Senior Editor of Bidoun magazine.

Lashai's work can be found in major private and public collections, including the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; Demenga Public Collection, Basel; Deutsche Bank, Commerz Bank, Frankfurt; National Museum of Fine Arts, La Valetta; Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH), Abu Dhabi; Devi Art Foundation, Delhi; and The Farjam Collection, Dubai, among others.