

Presents an exhibition of manipulated photography and mixed-media collages by

RAMIN HAERIZADEH – *‘Today’s Woman’*

December 15, 2008 - January 15, 2009

Preview: Sunday, December 15 at 7:30 PM

An exhibition supported by Ruinart

Ramin Haerizadeh’s latest work tenaciously brings new life to familiar forms. With tremendous humour and a deft hand he has composed a new paradigm for artistic introspection with his elusively beautiful macro-scale self-portraits.

In each of the three series presented - Theater Group, Men of Allah and Today’s Woman, clear elements of his cultural heritage emerge as the elegant basis for his strong graphic sensibility. He playfully appropriates the traditional Persian ornamentation, patterns and compositions found in his country’s architecture, carpets, mirror works and miniature paintings. The static image rarely achieves the amount of visual energy that Haerizadeh imbues his digital canvases with, balancing an implied animation and textural warmth with the cold precision of his technical capacity.

Yet Haerizadeh does not dwell on his chosen material nor is he searching for a means to reintroduce the time-tested visual themes of a great civilization. His is rather a process distinctly removed from chronology and convention, a process that began with a collection of images called Theatre Group.

For this series, Ramin found inspiration in ‘Taaziye’ theatre, the religious plays popular during the Qajar period (and still active today during Ashura celebrations), whose particularity was that women’s roles were played by men, who are still considered the only sex suitable for the profession. One of the most popular scenes was the wedding of the prophet Mohammad, in which the character wearing the white bridal gown is, notably, a bearded man. Taking off on this farce, Ramin has placed his own portrait (himself a thickly bearded man) within the guise of a chador-clad female.

Combining his signature style of photo manipulation and his penchant for performance, the Men of Allah collection reaches to the foundations of his talent. A bizarre pastiche of images of Haerizadeh’s own face and body, Men of Allah blurs our conception of gender and form. Morphed faces are set atop bloated bellies and bearded faces scarcely concealed by brilliant swaths of patterned fabric.

Stemming from the artist’s desire to express the full range of his experiences, Haerizadeh’s arresting mixed-media collages in his latest collection ‘Today’s Woman’ are no less provocative. Leaving no stone unturned in the pantheon of modern Iranian society, his free-form arrangements play upon the subjects and covers of pre-revolutionary woman’s magazines. Employing his own images and drawings, he organizes symbolic details that provide clues to an underlying content. As a new body of work in a new medium for the artist, it is reassuringly faithful to Haerizadeh’s humorous but sharp criticism of the political and social situation in Iran today.

This upcoming exhibition eloquently captures Haerizadeh’s untamed creative force, one that has intensified markedly in recent years. To enter into Ramin Haerizadeh’s world is to risk dissection but, like seeing a strange shrouded beauty, it offers one a glimpse of a unique mind at work.

With the generous support of Pictet & Cie, B21 is happy to welcome Ramin Haerizadeh back in Dubai.

For general enquiries, hi-res images, artist CV or an interview please contact Tessa on 050 5025778/ tessa@b21gallery.com

About B21 Gallery

B21 Gallery opened its doors in November 2005 and is located in a warehouse in Al Quoz, an industrial area near the centre of Dubai. Since then, the gallery has showcased more than 25 exhibitions, all emphasizing the importance of risk-taking in contemporary art and challenging its visitors and collectors to unfamiliar terrain. Focusing on the emergent and innovative artists of the Middle Eastern region, B21's primary goal is to discover the future rising talent. As a nexus of such artistic development, B21 Gallery continues to provide unique opportunities for collectors.

Al Quoz 1, near The Courtyard, opposite Spinneys warehouse. Sat-Thu 10am-7pm; Fri closed.

About Pictet & Cie

Founded in 1805 in Geneva, Pictet & Cie is today one of Switzerland's largest private banks, and one of the premier independent asset management specialists in Europe.

Moreover, the bank is considered as one of the leading independent asset management banks in Europe. Pictet & Cie is a partnership owned and managed by seven general partners with unlimited liability for the bank's commitments.

B21 Gallery

Tel: 00 971 4 340 3965

info@b21gallery.com

www.b21gallery.com