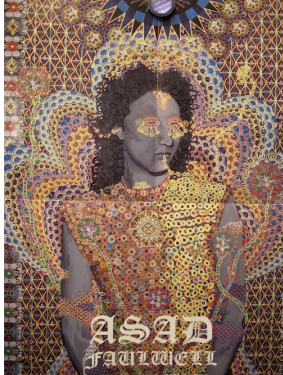


HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE

Yasmine Mohseni

Beyond the White Cube: Asad Faulwell in the Studio

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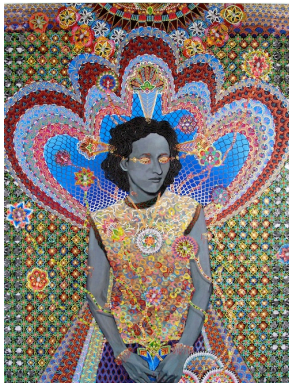


Asad Faulwell's painterly style draws from traditional Islamic art but his treatment of the canvas and the subject matter is rooted in a contemporary context. Faulwell looks to his Iranian heritage, invoking Middle Eastern history and motifs. The decorative patterning of Persian carpets, Islamic mosaics and geometry provide the stylistic framework for his latest series, *Les Femmes d'Alger*, a nod to Delacroix's painting of the same title. Faulwell was inspired by the iconic 1966 film *The Battle of Algiers*, about Algeria's 1962 war of independence from France. In the film, a group of female suicide bombers infiltrate the French parts of Algiers to set off bombs within the colonial strongholds of the city. Faulwell spent months researching the topic, finding photos and bios on these women. He incorporates

their photos and portraits in large-scale canvases that are at once beautiful and horrific. Flat, colorful and patterned backgrounds are punctuated by female figures veering towards abstraction. With ashen-hued skin, gray tears and stripes radiating from their eyes and mouths, these are not actual human figures but vestiges of what were women. Often, these women are wounded and bleeding but Faulwell does not judge them. Are they heroes or villains? You decide.

Yasmine Mohseni: Tell me about your upcoming exhibition.

I will have new work in a group show at Kravets/Wehby in New York opening late February. I also have a solo show with them opening in May. And I currently have work in the show *To Live and Paint in L.A.* at The Torrance Art Museum.



Describe your style.

I would say my work is very detail oriented and dense with highly saturated color. It's not visually subtle, I have kind of an-everything-including-the-kitchen-sink approach to painting. My work has a base relief quality and I incorporate a lot of different thicknesses with paint as well as collage. I think it tends towards symmetry, but I am trying to include a bit more chaos in the work lately.

Why did you become an artist?

I always wanted to be an artist from the time I was very young. I can't explain exactly why, I just feel like it's something I need to do. If I wasn't doing it as a career, I'd still be making work in my spare time. It is a frustrating process, [it takes] a lot of the time but immensely rewarding at times too. I wouldn't trade it for any other life



