

CENTRE A'S FALL 2013 EXHIBITION REFLECTS ON LIFE WITHIN THE GATED SAUDI ARAMCO HEADQUARTERS

Centre A announces its Fall 2013 exhibition, "Minutes from a Second Story," by Hajra Waheed.

VANCOUVER, BC (September 4, 2013) – Centre A: Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art is delighted to host Montréal-based artist Hajra Waheed's solo exhibition, "Minutes from a Second Story". Born in Calgary, Waheed was raised within the gated headquarters of Saudi ARAMCO, the largest transnational oil corporation in the world and home base to 25% of the world's oil exports. "Minutes from a Second Story" is a comprehensive body of work that includes video and mixed media works on paper that reflect upon Waheed's experiences of growing up in ARAMCO's gated compound.

Centre A is proud to commission a new body of small format video works titled *The Video Project* (2012), which reflect broadly on everyday life in the Gulf region. Also on exhibit are mixed media works on paper including *The Scrapbook Project (2010-11)*, a 34 page visual diary that recuperates and reconsiders an important period of Gulf history, between the end of the Cold War and beginning of the first Gulf War.

"It was during my most formative years, that I began studying this place with a discerning eye. I realized how critical it was/is to begin to make better sense of this rather strange lived experience," states Waheed. "Though it is by no means the basis of all of my work, the experiences that I had there have played a profound role in the many narratives I continue to explore today."

Haema Sivanesan, Executive Director, Centre A states, "Waheed draws on personal experience to critique, in part, restrictions on the use of photography in Saudi Arabia and its impact on the popular imagination. Her work explores how the absence of photographs constitutes a loss, and her practice is intriguing for how it seeks to recuperate this loss, dealing with issues of memory, absence, isolationism and the negotiation of a profoundly different world view on the production and display of images."

"Minutes from a Second Story" is the second exhibition to be held at Centre A's new gallery space in the heart of Vancouver's original Chinatown block. The exhibition will be on display from September 13 - November 2, 2013.

Information:

September 13 – November 2, 2013

Gallery hours: Tuesdays – Saturdays, 11am – 6pm

Preview reception: Friday, September 13, 2013 7pm – 10pm

Public Programs:

Visiting International Speaker

Hammad Nasar, Head of Research and Programmes

Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong

Thursday, September 19, 2013

7pm

Djavad Mowafaghian World Art Centre

Room 2555

Goldcorp Centre for the Arts

Simon Fraser University

149 West Hastings Street, Vancouver.

Presented with the support of SFU Woodward's Cultural Unit, Vancity Office of Community Engagement and the Contemporary Art Society of Vancouver.

Hammad Nasar is a curator and writer, and recently moved to Hong Kong as Head of Research and Programmes at the Asia Art Archive, where he plays a strategic role in developing AAA's collection and shaping initiatives, partnerships and programmes that generate new thinking around the material in the collection and about the art of the region. Earlier, he co-founded and was Curatorial Director of the London-based arts organization Green Cardamom. He was a Fellow of the Clore Leadership Programme, Research Fellow at Goldsmith College, and Arts Director for the UK's Festival of Muslim Cultures (2006-07). His recent projects include: *Safavids Revisited* at the British Museum (2009); *Where Three Dreams Cross* at the Whitechapel Gallery, London (2010); *Beyond the Page: Miniature as Attitude in Contemporary Art from Pakistan* at the Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena, CA (2010) and *Drawn from Life* at Abbot Hall Gallery & Museum, Kendal, UK (2011). His ongoing curatorial projects include *Lines of Control: Partition as a Productive Space* (2005-ongoing) and *Mashq: Repetition, Meditation, Mediation* (2009-ongoing). Prior to entering the art world, Nasar worked as a management consultant and banker.

Nasar will speak on questions of geography, region and nation with insights into developments in contemporary art from West Asia or the "Middle East", and with relation to the current exhibition at Centre A, "Minutes from a Second Story" by Hajra Waheed.

Asia Art Archive is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to documenting the recent history of contemporary art in Asia within an international context. Founded in 2000, AAA is widely regarded as one of the world's leading public resources for contemporary art in Asia. It continues to grow through a systematic program of research and critical engagement.

Minutes From a Second Story | Artist Talk

Hajra Waheed, artist

moderated by Michael Filimowicz, Faculty Director of Interdisciplinary Program (Philosophers' Café) in Lifelong Learning, Simon Fraser University.

Saturday, September 21, 2013, 3pm

Co-presented by the Philosophers' Café, Simon Fraser University

Minutes From a Second Story | Panel Discussion

Laura U Marks, Dena Wosk University Professor,
School for the Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University, and
Dima Alansari, film-maker, producer, community activist
in conversation with Haema Sivanesan

Saturday, October 12, 2013
3pm

Hajra Waheed's art practice responds to strictly imposed restrictions on photography during her years growing up in Saudi Arabia. This panel discussion examines histories of aniconism in the Arab-Islamic world, and its tense relation to visual cultures and photo-practices that are ubiquitous in the West. This discussion will consider the role of photography and film/video with relation to the rise of modernity in the Gulf region, with implications for questions of history, memory and the imagination.

About Centre A: Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art

Centre A is the only independent, not-for profit gallery dedicated to supporting and advancing the understanding of contemporary Asian art. Established in 1999, the gallery has presented the works of over 300 Canadian and international artists and has produced over 80 original projects. Centre A is committed to the research, production, presentation, and interpretation of contemporary Asian art, foregrounding a range of diverse contemporary artistic practices

Centre A provides a platform for art that engages and educates, promoting critical thought and reflective experiences. The Centre's gallery space, in the heart of Vancouver's Chinatown, welcomes artists and visitors from diverse backgrounds.

Centre A makes a significant contribution to Vancouver's cultural landscape by contributing to the cultural infrastructure of the city, with a view to positioning Asia within the Canadian imagination.

Centre A gratefully acknowledges the support of:

The Canada Council for the Arts, the BC Arts Council, BC Community Gaming Grant program, the City of Vancouver, Cultural Services, and the generosity of our patrons, donors, members and volunteers.

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Available for comment on "Minutes from a Second Story":

Centre A Executive Director: Haema Sivanesan

Artist: Hajra Waheed

To arrange an interview with any of the above, or for media requests and further information please contact:

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