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LALLA ESSAYDI

September 6 - October 22, 2013



*Bullet #8, 2012*

Bullets Series

C-41 Print Mounted on Aluminum

30 x 40 Inches

This exhibition brings together six large-scale photographic works made from 2009 to 2012 and spanning five major bodies of work by Lalla Essaydi. In the earliest body of work, *Les Femmes du Maroc*, Essaydi establishes the primary conditions of her aesthetic investigations: she photographs women elaborately adorned in henna script. These works highlight the importance of writing in the creation of the self and of femininity, while exploring the passive eroticism of Orientalist painting. In her later series, *Harem* and *Harem Revisited*, Essaydi examines the relationships of women, privacy, and the fantastic architecture of the harem. The complex patterns of the tiled interiors, additionally adorned with elaborate fabrics, lend an air of display to these intimate spaces. Finally, in *Bullets* and *Bullets Revisited*, Essaydi crafts heavenly interiors from shining gold bullet cartridges. The women in these interiors sparkle, occasionally wearing bullets themselves, appearing larger than life and otherworldly. Like her construction of space in her previous works, Essaydi's use of bullet shells to create mesmerizing patterns alludes to the looming existence of violence outside of the frame of the image. This exquisite co-existence of beauty and danger, privacy and self-expression further explain the power of Essaydi's vision.

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Lalla Essaydi grew up in Morocco and began her art training while living in Saudi Arabia. She attended the L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris in the early 1990s. She received her BFA and MFA from Tufts University/School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1999 and 2003, respectively. Her work can be found in both private and public collections including The Louvre, The Smithsonian Museum of African Arts, and The British Museum. Recent exhibitions include *Lalla Essaydi: BOUNDARIES* at the Amelia Johnson Contemporary Museum in Hong Kong, *Les Femmes du Magreb* at the Orientalist Museum in Qatar, *Lalla Essaydi* at Edwynn Houk Gallery in New York, and *Universe* at the Sharjah Calligraphy Biennial in the United Arab Emirates. Essaydi is currently featured in *She Who Tells a Story: Women Photographers from Iran and the Arab World* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston through January 2014.

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