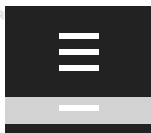


# SELECTIONS

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## FREEDOM FIGHTERS AT GALERIE JANINE RUBEIZ

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*By Selections Arts Posted 5 March, 2019*

*In ART, General*



Galerie Janine Rubeiz unveils “Freedom Fighters”; a new exhibition of works from artist and sculptor Leila Jabre Jureidini. The exhibition is curated by Racha Itani, and will be on display from February 27th until March 27th, 2019, at D Beirut.

Jabre Jureidini examines the traditional Islamic burqa, what it means to women, and their reasons to wear such garments (or discard them), while also investigating the wider perception that these religious garments create—both as an icon of religious doctrine, as well as a symbol of female agency.





Trump (2017-2018), acrylic on wood, 80x120cm

“As one that lived with a very open and liberal family, I wanted to see what happened and to talk to women who were different from me, just to get their own stories and see what each and every one of them had to go through,” the Lebanese artist told Selections. “Was she oppressed? Was she free to do what she wanted? Study, dress as she pleases, and not be under constraint as a woman? So I had to go on the other side and check it out, to challenge my own misinterpretation. You have this misconceived idea sometimes, of women who have the veil, who wear it or remove it. It’s always interesting to talk to them, challenging one’s own opinion.”

These sentiments inform the pieces that make up the exhibition, the most prominent of which are the

acrylic on wood paintings that make up the centrepiece installation. Viewed from one side, these images are all alike, depicting an identical, lone figure wearing a burqa, completely obscuring anything beneath. Viewed from the other side, however, these figures are revealed to be differing portraits of what may lie behind the burqa, both literally and metaphorically, as well as perceptions of the burqa.



Kamikaze, (2017-2018), acrylic on wood, 80x120cm

One such portrait is that of the President of the United States, Donald Trump, while another shows a figure in the infamous orange jumpsuit of the Guantanamo Bay detention camp. "Trump has become President because of what happened before Trump – Bush, et cetera – so it's like a reaction; Guantanamo also, a result of Bush's politics," said Jabre Jureidini, referencing the rise of Islamophobia in the West.

Some of these portraits, however, reflect criticisms of fundamentalist Islam. One portrait shows a woman wearing a suicide vest. Associations with misogyny and female oppression are also challenged through portraits of an unclothed 'macho' man and a battered woman. "She could be wearing this," says Jabre Jureidini, "and still be abused all day, but as long as she's covered, no-one will know the hidden side of it."

Below are video works from the exhibition done by the artist, courtesy of the Janine Rubeiz gallery:

*"Colorful Women" commissioned to Marie Rose Osta by  
Leila Jabre Jureidini*

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Try watching this video on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), or enable JavaScript if it is disabled in your browser.

*"Life" commissioned to Eddy Yazbeck by Leila Jabre Jureidini*

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*"Freedom Fighters" runs from February 27 until March 27, 2019, at D Beirut.*



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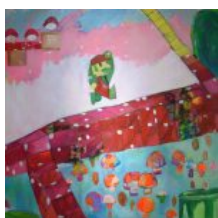
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