

GAZELLI ART HOUSE



© Aidan Salakhova; Portrait, 'Sophie-Lerock', 2020 | Bus Relief #9, 2014-2015

The Dust Became the Breath Aidan Salakhova

Private view: 29th April, 6-8pm (GMT)

Exhibition: 30th April – 6th June, 2021

Curated by Farah Piriye.

Gazelli Art House is pleased to announce the opening of an exhibition 'The Dust Became The Breath', featuring Aidan Salakhova (b.1964), the prominent Azeri artist. The exhibition is an important addition to the gallery's 10th year anniversary programme, celebrating its history and marking its inception in Baku, Azerbaijan in 2003. Mila Askarova (founding director) says, "we are very proud to have an international platform to showcase important artists from Azerbaijan and to give a voice to the region's history in the UK." The exhibition will debut a series of new artworks by Salakhova.

Curator Farah Piriye explains, "the exhibition's title, inspired by Nizami Ganjavi's 'The Treasury of Mysteries' (تذکره), an ethico-philosophical poem aimed at moral and spiritual guidance, likens dust to the ghosts of our pasts, as the exhibition navigates personal and collective experiences, confronting the challenging aspects of our histories in order to examine our present identities."

'The Dust Became The Breath' builds its narrative around the work of Aidan Salakhova, structuring a decadent discourse on cultural and sexual identity, religion and spirituality, traditional symbols and journeys taken inward. Despite censorship, Salakhova continues to create a controversial and radical body of work, constantly facing social and ethical challenges. Experimenting with implicit forms of time and memory, Salakhova's body of work elicits a sense of mysticism and transcendence, exploring the nature of feminine presence through time. It allows for simultaneous existence in multiple realities—internally and externally, in the past and present, experiencing and being experienced, while attempting to escape such constraints imposed by the principles of duality; feminine vs masculine, consciousness vs unconsciousness, guilt vs remorse, personal vs public, presence vs absence, past struggles vs present identities, the East vs the West.

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Going beyond time and space while challenging the persistence of patriarchy by focusing on powerful female personification, the exhibition sheds light on the artist's personal experiences, as untold stories and social stigmas take their rightful place in public discourse. In an almost Sufi manner, the dichotomy of I-other is transcended, becoming one universal non-duality.

Notes to Editors

Aidan Salakhova (1964) Graduated in 1987 from the Moscow State Surikov Institute of Fine Arts. In 2000, Aidan Salakhova became professor at the institute. In 2007 Salakhova became an Academician of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts. In 2011 she worked on the 54th Venice Biennale's Azeri pavilion. Highlight solo exhibitions include; (2016) 'Revelations: New Work by Aidan,' Saatchi Gallery, London, UK; (2016) 'Tears of Sorrow, Tears of Joy,' Wetterling Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden; (2012) 'Fascinans & Tremendum', MMoMA, Moscow and (2007) 'Red, Project with Yves Saint Laurent', State Centre of Contemporary Art, Moscow.

Nizami Ganjavi - one of the greatest representatives of the Persian literary tradition and allegorical poetry, who was born in the 12th century in Ganja (modern day Azerbaijan) is best known for his romantic epic work 'Khamasa' (1163-1197). His heritage is widely appreciated and shared by Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, the Kurdistan region and Tajikistan.

Farah Piriye - London and Milan based curator, co-founder of research led socio-cultural platform Zeitgeist19, focusing on art and sustainability. Graduated from Sotheby's Institute of Art (2011) and UAL: Central Saint Martin's (2017), in art history and curating.

About the Gallery

Gazelli Art House is a commercial gallery with a wide range of international artists, presenting a broad and dynamic programme to a diverse audience through global public projects and exhibition spaces in London and Baku. Gazelli Art House was founded in 2003 in Baku, Azerbaijan where it held exhibitions with Azeri artists. Having hosted conceptually interlinked off-site exhibitions across London, founder and director of Gazelli Art House, Mila Askarova, opened a permanent space on Dover Street, London in March 2012. In 2017, the redesigned gallery space reopened in Baku, with an ambitious annual program showcasing both local and international artists. Representing artists Aziz+Cucher, Derek Boshier, Stanley Casselman, Francesco Jodice, Recycle Group, Kalliopi Lemos, Niyaz Najafov and Giovanni Ozzola amongst others, the gallery has built a consistent and diverse program with artists working in sculpture, photography, painting, video, performance and virtual reality.

For further press information, images and requests please contact: press@gazelliarthouse.com