



SORBONNE
UNIVERSITY
ABU DHABI

MARIA-VERONICA LEON

TASAAMU/TOLERANCE

THE PERPETUAL SENSE OF TOLERANCE AND PEACE

13 OCTOBER – 7 NOVEMBER 2019

The Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi is pleased to announce the solo exhibition by international artist Maria-Veronica Leon, TASAAMU/Tolerance, The Perpetual Sense of Tolerance and Peace, from October 13th to November 7th 2019 which is in alignment with the university's strategy to establish the values and principles advocated by the U.A.E.'s wise leadership. After her success at the "56 Biennale di Venezia" and MACRO, Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome, the artist, who lived and worked in Paris from 1998 to 2013, and now is based in U.A.E., will showcase a new body of artworks in relation to tolerance, including as well selected artworks from "56 Biennale di Venezia" in synchronization with this subject.

Inspired by the greatest women and men leaders of Peace and Tolerance in History, whose lives and missions helped their societies to understand human rights and make them a reality, the exhibition explores the historical transcendence of tolerance and its multiple appropriations in diverse cultures and societies through different generations.

This journey take us to our new generations and times, where the U.A.E. leaders are making this concept alive through their continuous efforts to create a contemporary State that is open and tolerant. The presence of Voltaire and Sheikh Zayed in the work of the artist as universal leaders for tolerance and hosts personalities of TASAAMU/Tolerance reinforce the dialogue between Western and Eastern World, contributing to one of the fundamental objectives of Sorbonne University: bridging civilizations.

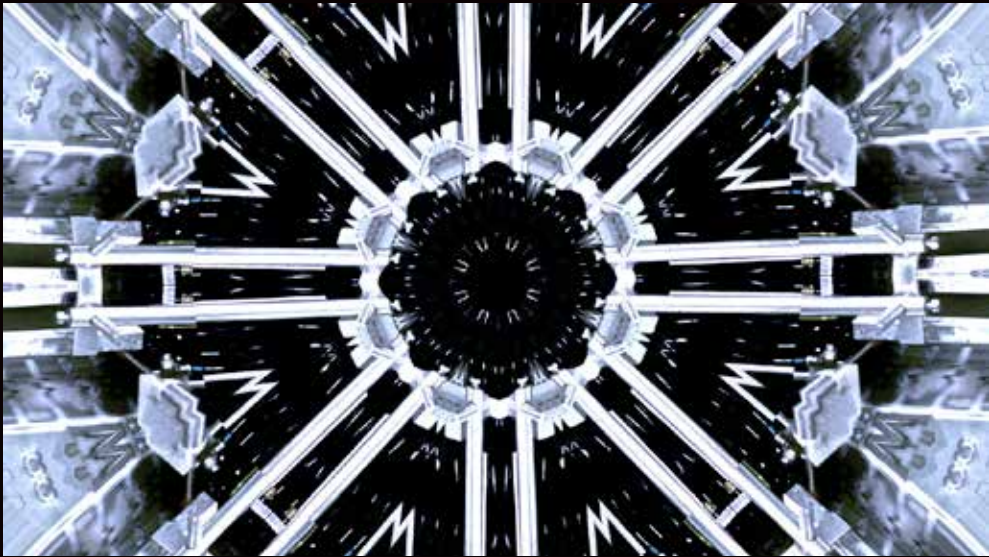
The multidisciplinary artist plays with scale and functions, transforming electronic and material objects into what she calls: "techno structures and landscapes" and "explosive galaxies or cyber dissolutions collages". Multiple techniques: drawings, collages, portraits, paintings, art videos, digital photography and audio-visual installations create a prolific avant-garde scenario. The exhibition itinerary starts, -since the artist considers diseased and disable people as the most tolerant of tolerants-, with the First Room: Mother Teresa's Room, the visitors come to terms with a portrait of Mother Teresa of Calcutta displayed in an installation with her patients in an "hospital room"; a gallery of patients in different medias; medical devices, pills and hospital appliances related to the process of healing. Second Room: Mahatma Gandhi's Room, a notable installation of Mahatma Gandhi' office, in which amidst his office furniture, his portrait and his bureau, from which we see a slideshow projection of chapters of his life, -images that comes from today's Gandhi Museum commemorative exhibition in New Delhi for his 150-birth anniversary-, reflecting the tolerant and pacific actions with which he got India's Independence. This room is a reference as well of the important presence of Indian population in U.A.E. The Third Room, Sheikh Zayed's Room projects the strong presence of the Father of the Nation and his vision of the U.A.E. future through his portrait and the spirit of the new Emiratis generations, contemporary symbols of development, knowledge and progress are displayed in different artworks; women having important roles in society, a vision that give a great taste of the contemporary tendencies and practices of the economy; solar energy and cyber-structures, technology and nature giving appointment each other to represent the diversity of the U.A.E. The Fourth Room, The Artist's Room is about tolerance seen through the eyes of an artist/philosopher, who reviews Art History inspired by "Les Enfants Terribles" by Philip Glass, and identifies intolerance related to innumerable artists and their artistic and personal practices, those that have been astonishing the world, like Van Gogh's cut ear. Maria-Veronica focuses on these characters and their usual ruptures of the codes, models and convictions, representing deafness and blindness in front of the irreverent voices, excessive and abusive exigencies of technology and the system, and breaking informatics equipment like TVs, phones, computers, she shows her "techno-assemblages", "techno structures and landscapes" and "explosive galaxies or cyber dissolutions collages", video and voices join the show.



"Self-Government"

Yourself and your imagination on mirror

80 x 120 cm - Dubai 2019



"Black Holes Devouring Industrial Net"
Photography on aluminum
197 x 109 cm - Dubai 2015



"Voltaire, The Mentor of Tolerance"
Oil on canvas - 150 x 100 cm - Dubai 2019



"The Pacific States
of Tolerance"
Acrylic on mirror
80 x 120 cm
Dubai 2019



"The Cure"
Art Video
Dubai 2019



"The Mechanics of Persistence"
Techno materials, acrylic, cards and cardboard on mirror.
80 x 120 cm - Dubai 2019



"Followers' Optics of Religions"
Acrylic, tempera and velvet on hand cut Arches.
91 x 71.2 cm - Dubai 2019



"Sheikh Zayed, The Dream of a Father"
Oil on canvas
150 x 100 cm - Dubai 2019



“Mother Theresa, The Unlimited Kindness of a Saint”
Oil on canvas - 162 x 130 cm - Dubai 2019



“Reaction to Narrow-Mindedness”
Gold leaf on photography on aluminium.- 25 x 35 cm - Dubai 2015- 2019



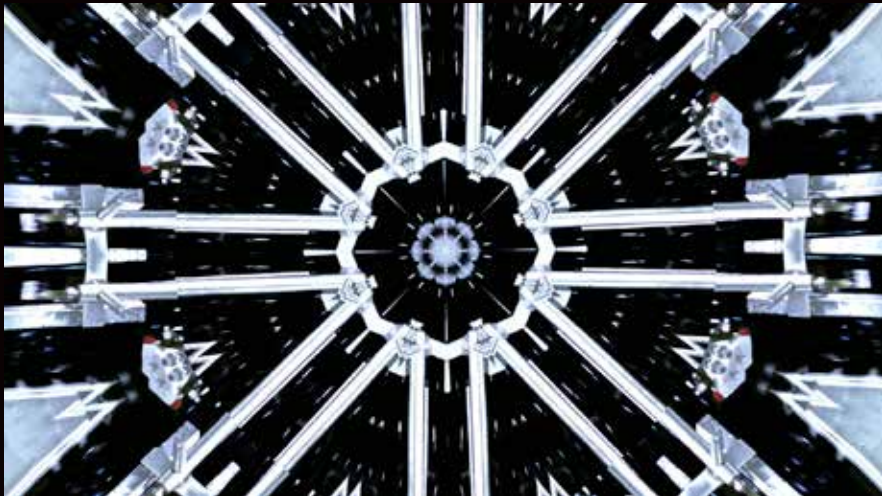
“The Relativity of the Cure”
Pills, medical strips, gold tempera and acrylic on Arches. - 61.9 x 47.9 cm - Dubai 2019



“Stress”
Collage: pills, coins, acrylic and gold leaf
on photography.
25 x 35 cm - Dubai 2015- 2019



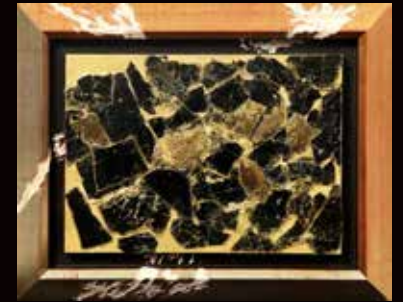
“The Peaceful Consciousness
of Generous Hands”
Gold leaf on photography on aluminium.
25 x 35 cm - Dubai 2015- 2019



“Shinny Regents Defending Water”
Photography on plexiglass.
196 x 110 cm - Dubai 2015



“Buy it!”
Photography on aluminum - 120.5 x 184 cm - Dubai 2015
Artist Collection, made for 56 Biennale di Venezia.



“Breaking Structures & Material Paradigms”
Acrylic and TV screen fragments on canvas.
45.7 x 60.9 cm - Dubai 2019



“Techno Landscape II”
Acrylic and TV screen fragments on canvas.
45.7 x 60.9 cm - Dubai 2019



"Cyber Dissolution"
Broken iPhone and TV screen fragments on Arches.
92.8 x 72.6 cm - Dubai 2019



"iPhone Eagle"
Collage: Iphone, techno materials
and gold leaf on photography Hannemuhle.
25 x 35 cm - Dubai 2019



"Golden Working Hands"
Photography on aluminium - 180 x 122 cm - Dubai 2015



"Gandhi, The Heroic Destiny of Tolerance"
Acrylic & Oil on canvas- 150 x 100 cm - Dubai 2019 - Artist Collection, made for SUAD



"Tolerance Navigation"
Collage: techno materials, acrylic and cardboard on mirror.
80 x 120 cm
Dubai 2019
Artist Collection, made for SUAD



“Communicating with Ancestors / The Process of Spiritual Healing”
Art Video & Audio Composition - 6” x 22” - Dubai 2015

María Veronica Leon Veintemilla represented her original country Ecuador at the 56th International Art Exhibition - la Biennale di Venezia. She became in 2016 the first contemporary woman artist from Ecuador to have a solo show in a museum in Rome, MACRO, Museum of Contemporary Art.

María Veronica born in Guayaquil, Ecuador; she lives and works in Dubai, where she became the first Latin American artist to have a solo show in U.A.E. and to be represented by a gallery in Dubai, U.A.E.(2014). From 1998 to 2013 she lived and worked in Paris, where she became as well the first contemporary woman artist from Ecuador to exhibit in a Parisian museum, Petit Palais/Museum of Fine Arts of Paris (2008). She was invited to make a solo exhibition at the Galliera Museum, Paris (2006), and selected by the Cultural Affairs Department of Paris for “La Nuit Blanche”(2004). As a multidisciplinary artist she works with drawing, painting, printmaking, video art, video installation, video-poetry, digital books, performance and portraits.

María Veronica The gold rush

Contemporary art is rediscovering gold, this exceptional material, fascinating in its lustre and splendour, which brought glory to Ravenna and was restored to use in art by Gustave Klimt.

In the 21st century, Louise Bourgeois, Anish Kapoor, James Lee Byars and many other artists boldly revive the tradition of the time of the pharaohs, an imperturbably enduring tradition: “gold is immortality” is the Brahmins’ constant refrain.

“Gold has no part to play in the mythologies of Homo faber.” The historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, spent his lifetime studying this question: “Gold is a creation of Homo Religiosus.” It was the first metal used by man, even though he could not use it to make tools or weapons. “Throughout History and technological innovations, from the use of stone to working bronze, then iron, and finally steel, gold has never played a part.”

Alchemists wanted to turn other metals into gold in order to cure their imperfections. Through this noble material, art touches on the sacred: “The essential symbolic value of gold has never been tainted despite the progressive desacralisation of Nature and human existence.”

There is red, black and lots of gold in María Veronica León’s work, the enigmas of her symbolic world exploding from their fiery fusion.

Yellows, greens and blue fuse in a variety of shapes, including squares, circles, trapeziums and pentagons; they splutter into triangles and even more elastic geometric shapes. Her line unfurls such an extraordinary tangle, what can you say?

María Veronica Leon’s work is disconcerting in its originality.

A willing secessionist, she eludes the golden nets she inherits from the Austrian painter who could easily have been her ancestor, but there are others before him, anonymous pre- Colombian artists from whom she gains this inheritance that binds her to the sun.

Her lyricism, freedom and courage make her different; a female artist whose attitude reminiscent of the mythical Penelope weaves her intrigues in the name of civilisation and peace.

Like the Homeric woman, she diverts her craft and directs it towards her own vital experience, thus transforming reality into legend and legend into a wonderful dream.

From the portraiture she has practised for years, she is moving towards her phantasmatic memory and from the likeness of the model to the probability of her adventure.

Like Munch, she emphasises the voluptuous language of lines, like Beardsley she loves luxury. Her lines meet, forming her abstract geometric shapes, and this is how she conceives cities, articulating their volumes by organised agglomerations of shapes. Civilisation has a horror of the void, but the black hole is lying in wait for it. If souls petrify in a world of stars, and numbers rule the world, humanity would have to start from zero.

When her palette darkens in a dramatic movement, incandescent colors evokes the Dantesque movement of the lava, deep, dark blue tries to calm the catastrophe, a draped silhouette stands out like a pyramid, and instead of the face, a star.

Ileana Cornea
Art critic and curator
Paris

