

# Laila Muraywid

Blood Deeper than Shadows



**Laila Muraywid**  
**Blood Deeper than Shadows**

**May 9th – June 25th 2009**

resin, iron,  
strass, glass,  
40 x 29 x 7 cm,  
2008

## Telescopic Shelters

### THE PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS OF LAILA MURAYWID.

In many ways, Laila Muraywid functions within a traditional framework of technical photographic concerns. Each decision made, light versus shadow, soft versus hard, sharpness versus blurriness and composition among others, is inextricably linked to and dictated by the work's subject matter: the body.

Muraywid's work is cyclical, with her photography both at the beginning and at the end of the cycle. Mostly known for her work with constructed jewelry, Muraywid refers to these objects as armor-like sculpture and her walkway displays as performances. With this in mind, the photographs, though finished works in their own right, read like intricate preparatory groundwork for the performance at hand: a storyboard unfolding some sort of obscure narrative. On the other hand, the works also read like the documentation of a fleeting and highly charged

moment: like remnants from a series of performative acts.

Muraywid's photographs are generally portraits of women in closed realms, away from the outside world. The artist further emphasizes this divide with diptychs of an indoor portrait, paired with a natural landscape devoid of people. The models are often wrapped in transparent flowing fabrics, with various parts of the body such as breasts, pubes or pregnant bellies slightly denuded; their faces partially protected by ornately sculpted shields, masks and screens.

As if melted onto the exhibition space from within the photographs, these fragmented artifacts are on display in their full form: they are large abstract irregular blobs propped up by rigid metal crutches. The surfaces of these works are comprised of resin, glass and other integrated

Laila Muraywid

Laila Muraywid

materials, all morphed into a seemingly ongoing surface. The softness of the figures in the photographs, contrasts with these coarsely textured props, which at times become extensions of the bodies, while at others interrupting and dividing them. In this way, the sculptures play a dual role oscillating between figure and ground, subject and architecture.

The dwellings inhabited by these women become safety zones of sorts, zones of reclusion. The bodies themselves offer endless possibilities of shelter within each crevasse and each fold: they retreat telescopically into themselves and into their own shadows. The relationship between the women remains open to interpretation, but there is an undeniable sensuality to the moments depicted.

hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas, triptych, each  
61 x 42 cm, overall  
61 x 126 cm, 2009,  
unique



The models are at times seemingly straining and contorting to remain within the frame, at others, they are highly posed, well centered within the cadrage, staring back at the viewer. This outward stare denies the viewer a voyeuristic sense of spectatorship, complicating the reading of the image.

The black and white photographs are often highly contrasted with dramatic use of lighting, and many of them are then hand painted. The approach is not unlike that of a renaissance painting, with a chiaroscuro effect created as a black and white underpainting, which is then glazed over with rich layers of transparencies to render flesh. Here the artist allows herself painterly gashes, drips and washes onto the flesh of the photograph, making the surface itself a signifier for bodily qualities.

Laila Muraywid's cyclical practice is portrayed in such a sense that her photographs feed into her performances, which are fed by her sculptural works; all of which are constructed around the body. The body itself however is a multi faceted, multi-function work of sculpture. It is at once an abode of sensuality and a shelter, it is inward retracting and outward gazing. It is these series of ambiguities and tensions that make the strength of Muraywid's photographic language: a language that simultaneously opens and closes numerous plots and narrative potentialities. It is a visceral language that leaves the viewer in a suspended state engaged in negotiations with regards to the role of the female body and its representations.

Haig Aivazian



[A KNIFE BETWEEN  
THE SINGING AND  
THE SILENCE]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
polyptych of 9  
photographs, each  
41 x 51 cm, overall  
123 x 153 cm, 2009,  
unique

[IT'S TIME THAT THE  
STONE STARTS TO  
LISTEN]

hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas, polyptych of  
8 photographs, each  
33 x 41 cm, overall  
132 x 164 cm, 2008,  
unique

Laila Muraywid

Laila Muraywid







[PLEASE DON'T  
FORGET]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
40 x 30 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5

Laila Muraywid

Laila Muraywid

[PLEASE DON'T  
FORGET]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
40 x 30 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5





[PLEASE DON'T  
FORGET]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
40 x 30 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5

Laila Muraywid

Laila Muraywid

[PLEASE DON'T  
FORGET]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
40 x 30 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5



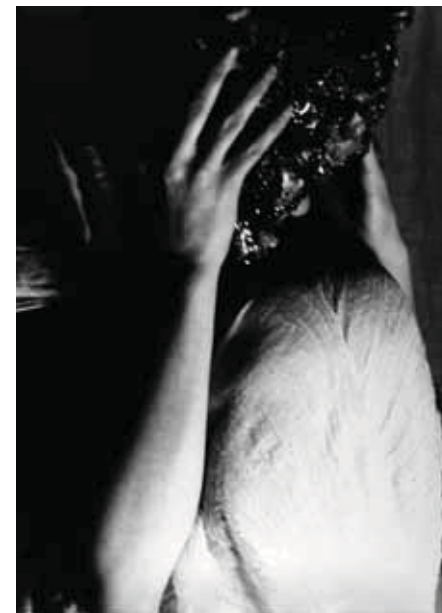
[PLEASE DON'T  
FORGET]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
30 x 40 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5



Laila Muraywid

Laila Muraywid



[THE FEAR OF NOT  
BEING HEARD]

black & white silver  
gelatin print  
triptych, each  
61 x 44 cm, overall  
61 x 132 cm, 2008,  
unique



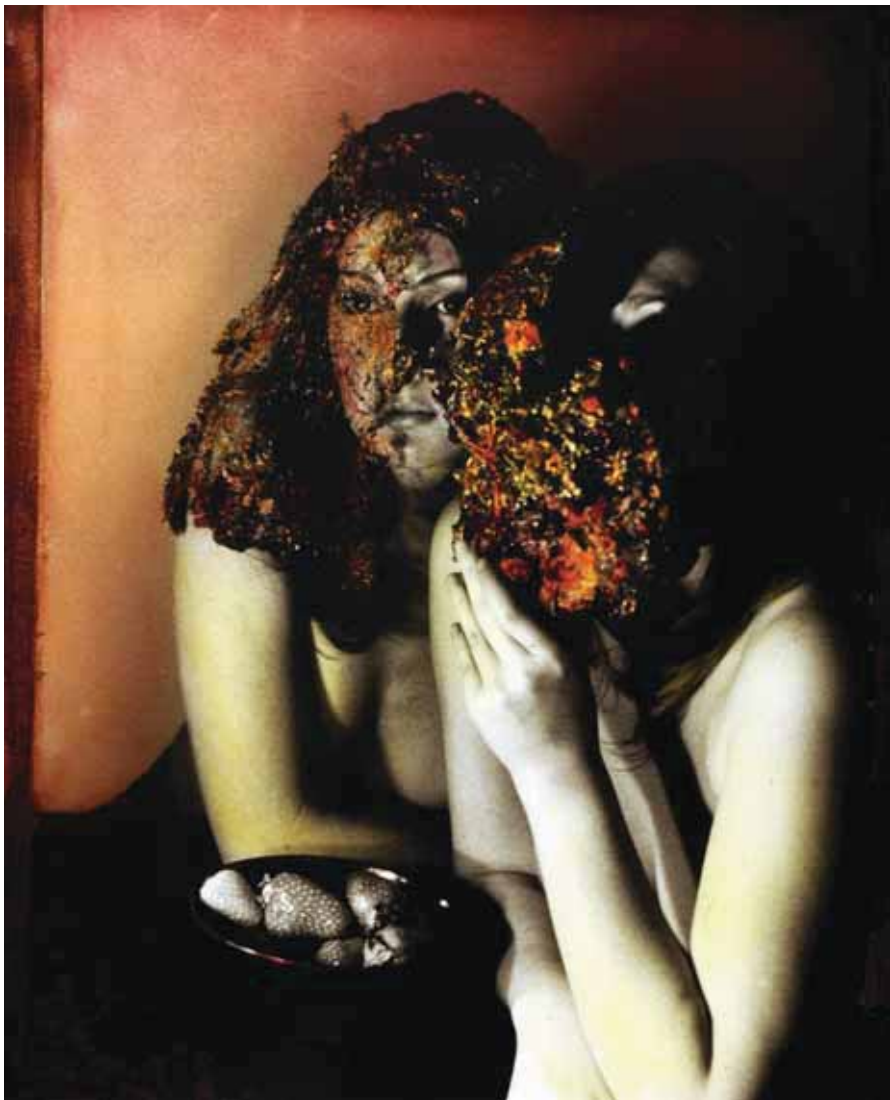
[THE NIGHT  
DOESN'T NEED ANY  
STARS]

black & white silver  
gelatin print  
triptych, each  
31 x 41 cm, overall  
31 x 123 cm, 2008  
unique

Laila Murraywid

Laila Murraywid





[ABSOLUTE SILENCE]

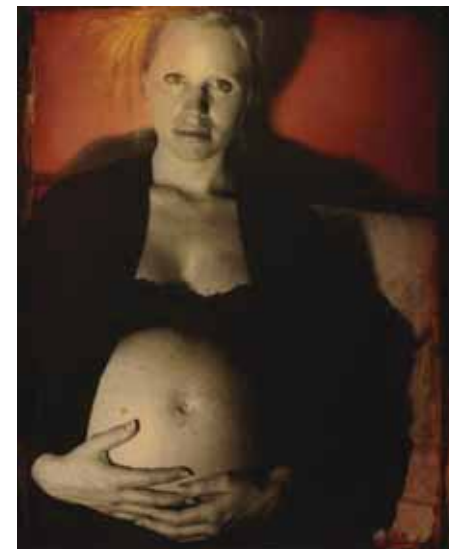
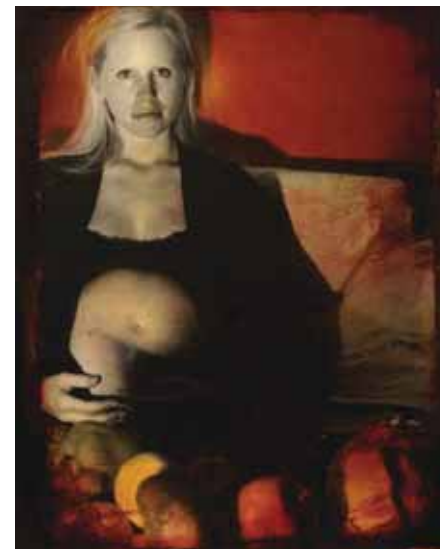
hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas, 41 x 33 cm,  
2008, unique

Lalla Muraywid

15 ■

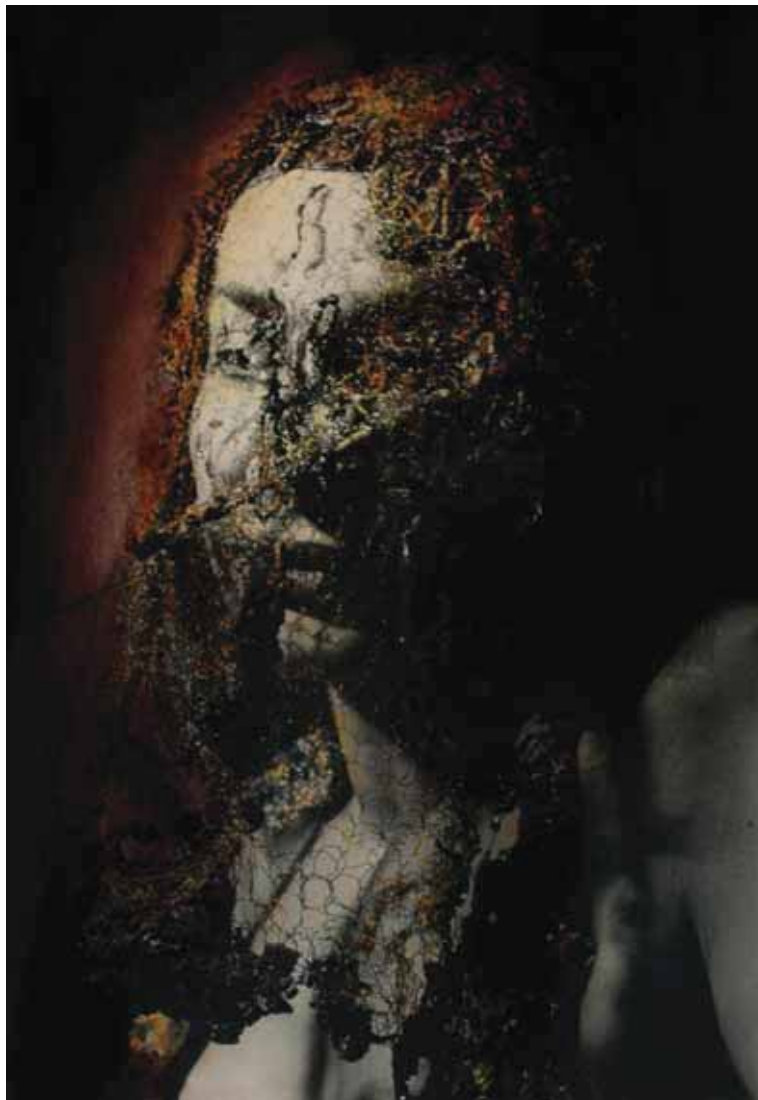
Lalla Muraywid

■ 16



[UN MUR  
D'AMOUR]

hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas, triptych,  
each 41 x 33 cm,  
overall 41 x 99 cm,  
2008, unique



[IN THE GARDEN OF  
DREAMS]

hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas, 41 x 33 cm,  
2007, unique



[EMPTINESS WILL  
ALWAYS FOLLOW]

hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas, 41 x 33 cm,  
2008, unique

[BLOOD DEEPER  
THAN SHADOWS]

hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas, polyptych of  
7 photographs, all  
30 x 40 cm, one  
piece 40 x 50 cm,  
2007, unique

Laila Muraywid

Laila Muraywid





hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas, diptych, each  
33 x 41 cm, overall  
33 x 82 cm, 2008,  
unique

Laila Murraywid

Laila Murraywid



[LES ANGOISSES  
HUMIDES]

hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas, diptych, each  
33 x 41 cm, overall  
33 x 82 cm, 2008,  
unique

Laila Murraywid

Laila Murraywid



[SILENCE AIGUISÉ]

hand-painted silver  
gelatin mounted on  
canvas polyptych of  
6 photographs, each  
40 x 33 cm, overall  
40 x 198 cm, 2008,  
unique

Laila Muraywid

Laila Muraywid



COMME CES  
MADONES]

black & white silver  
gelatin print  
41 x 61 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5



Laila Murraywid

Laila Murraywid

[COMME CES  
MADONES]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
41 x 61 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5





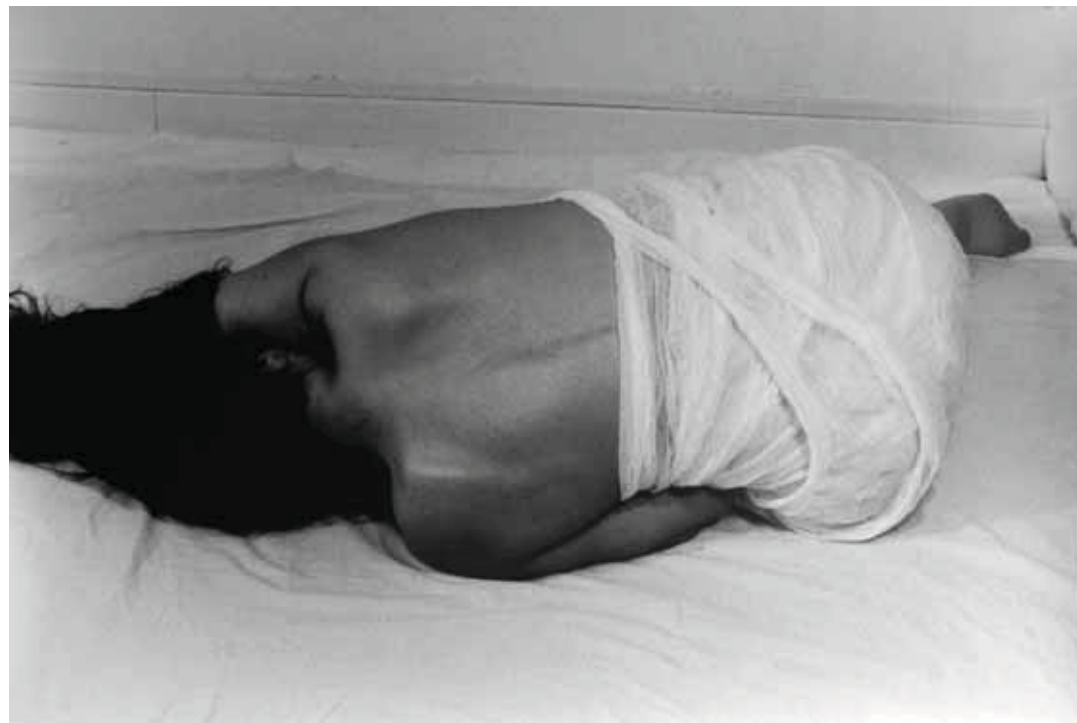
[BECAUSE WHITE IS  
THE COLOUR OF  
PATIENCE]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
41 x 61 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5



[BECAUSE WHITE IS  
THE COLOUR OF  
PATIENCE]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
41 x 61 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5



[THE GARDEN OF  
NOWHERE]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
41 x 61 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5



Laila Murraywid

Laila Murraywid



[THE GARDEN OF  
NOWHERE]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
41 x 61 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5



[THE GARDEN OF  
NOWHERE]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
61 x 41 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5

Laila Muraywid

Laila Muraywid



[A POEM THAT  
DOESN'T HEAL]

black & white silver  
gelatin print,  
60 x 42.5 cm, 2008,  
edition of 5



[THE WORLD OF  
MIRRORS NO. 3]

resine, iron,  
strass, glass,  
41 x 35 x 5 cm,  
2008

Laila Muraywid

Laila Muraywid

[FACE NO.1]

resine, iron,  
strass, glass,  
71 x 19 x 11.5 cm,  
2007







[FACE NO.3]

resine, iron,  
strass, glass,  
37 x 26 x 10 cm,  
2008

Laila Murraywid

Laila Murraywid



[CELUI QUI REVE SE  
MELANGE Á L'AIR]

resine, iron,  
strass, glass,  
54.5 x 29 x 6 cm,  
2008

# Green Art Gallery

GREEN ART GALLERY WAS FOUNDED IN 1995 AND WAS AMONGST THE FIRST GALLERIES TO EXHIBIT ARAB ART IN DUBAI. THE GALLERY PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN INTRODUCING MODERN ARAB ART TO THE CITY AND BEYOND AND IN NURTURING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CITY’S EARLIEST COLLECTOR BASE.

Promoting the works of the region’s generation of pioneering modern artists from across the Middle East and North Africa including Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, UAE, and Morocco, Green Art was also active in launching the careers of emerging artists during that period.

Artists represented during that period include Syrian pioneers Fateh Moudarres and Louay Kayyali, Iraqi artists Ismail Fattah and Dia Azzawi and Moroccan artist Hakim Ghazali. Many of these artists have now reached unprecedented recognition both regionally and internationally.

Leveraging its long and rich history in the market, Green Art Gallery will also begin to represent and showcase contemporary artists from the region.

In this manner the Gallery would become one of the few spaces whose knowledge and expertise has spanned the Arab art movement from modernism and will continue to promote the newest tendencies in the regional contemporary art practices.

Green Art Gallery aims to become not only an exhibition space, but also as a supporter and point of reference for the regional trends in modern and contemporary art practices.

**Opening Hours**  
Saturday - Thursday  
from 10 am until 9 pm  
Closed on Fridays

**Contact Info**  
51st Street, Villa # 23, Jumeirah 1  
P.O. Box 257 11, Dubai, UAE  
T: + 9714 3449 888  
F: + 9714 3447 449  
E: info@gagallery.com  
W: www.gagallery.com

Laila Muraywid

# Laila Muraywid

## 1956, Syria

Laila Muraywid was born in Damascus, where she graduated from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts before continuing her studies in Paris.

Alongside her photographic and sculpture practice, Muraywid is also a renowned fashion and jewelry designer where she successfully links the parallel worlds of haute couture and art.

She has previously exhibited at the Galliera Museum (Musée de la Mode in Paris) and most recently at the Waterhouse and Dodd's "Routes" group exhibition in London.

### Selected Solo & Group Exhibitions (1994-2009)

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 2009 | Musée Caudrésien des Dentelles et Broderies (upcoming), France          |
| 2009 | Breaking the Veil, Kennedy Center, Washington DC                        |
| 2008 | Routes, Waterhouse & Dodd, London, UK                                   |
| 2008 | Traversee, Art Paris, Paris, France                                     |
| 2007 | Fredric Moisan Gallery  |
| 2007 | Mediterranean Dialogues, St Tropez                                      |
| 2007 | Mediterraneo: A Sea that Unites, Italian Cultural Institute, London, UK |
| 2007 | Carte blanche to Joel Peter Witkin, Cite Internationale des Arts, Paris |
| 2004 | Performance and Exhibition at the Musée Galliera, Paris                 |
| 2003 | Breaking the Veil, Art Reach Foundation                                 |
| 2002 | Performance and Exhibition at the Musée Galliera, Paris                 |
| 1999 | The Museum of Decorative Arts, Paris                                    |
| 1997 | Defile and Exhibition of Jewelry, Institute du Monde Arabe, Paris       |
| 1994 | Forces of change, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington      |

### Collections

Institute du Monde Arabe, Paris, France  
Musée Galliera, Paris, France

Laila Muraywid

First published to accompany the exhibition

Blood Deeper than Shadows  
Laila Muraywid  
May 9th – June 25th 2009

Green Art Gallery  
51st Street, Villa # 23, Jumeirah 1  
P.O. Box 257 11, Dubai, UAE

© 2009 Green Art Gallery  
Texts copyright © the authors

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any storage or retrieval system, without the prior permission in writing from the copyright holders and publisher.

Photography of all works:  
Laila Muraywid

Designed by IMC Advertising LLC

Printed and bound by  
IMC Advertising LLC, Dubai, UAE

Cover image  
La Césure Des Heures  
Hand-painted silver gelatin mounted on canvas, diptych, each 33 x 41 cm, overall 33 x 82 cm, 2008, unique

