

Exhibition: GHADA AMER
IVAM Centre Julio González
September 9th to November 7th 2004

Curator: Teresa Millet

Organised by: Institut Valencià d'Art Modern IVAM

Sponsored by:



From 9th September to 7th November, the Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (IVAM) presents an exhibition sponsored by Bancaja of the Egyptian painter Ghada Amer that includes a selection of unpublished drawings made between 2003 and 2004, images of some of the gardens that the artist has designed since 1997, about twenty-five embroidered paintings dated between 1992 and 2003 and the sculptures *Barbie aime Ken*, *Ken aime Barbie* (Barbie Loves Ken, Ken Loves Barbie), 1995, *Private Rooms*, 1998 and *Encyclopedia of Pleasure*, 2001.

Her interest in discovering a woman's way of painting led Ghada Amer to use embroidery in her work, substituting needle and thread for the paintbrush. Amer selects the images of her paintings from press cuttings, sentences out of great books, pornographic photographs or advertisements exalting the everyday life of Western woman, sews them onto the canvas

and concentrates on the iconography and goes on to pay special attention to complex combinations of colour and line.

The artist often tries to use the embroidery and loose thread ends like an abstract brushstroke which also forms an integral part of her work, thus creating a crossbreeding between painting and sewing.

Amer goes from the confining limits of canvas to interventions in public spaces in the form of gardening, which, like embroidery, is an activity associated with a woman's universe. The artist creates gardens by experimenting with the same ideas as in her painting, such as love, loneliness, women and sexuality, albeit with entirely different media and structures.

In her work, Ghada Amer allows a continuous enriching dialogue to be established between male and female, between East and West, and vindicates female pleasure as a theme in contemporary art, following in the footsteps of artists like Hannah Wilke, Carolee Schneeman and Mary Kelly.

Ghada Amer (Cairo, Egypt, 1964) studied at the *École des Beaux Arts* in Nice, the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the *Institut des Hautes Études en Art Plastique* in Paris. She was artist in residence at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, in 1996, and at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1999. In 1997 she received the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant in New York and in 1999 the UNESCO award at the 48th edition of the Venice Biennial. At the present time she lives and works in New York.

The catalogue published on the occasion of the exhibition reproduces all the works shown and images of the gardens that the artist has been designing since 1997, and contains critical texts about her work by Rosa Martínez and Jan-Erik Lundström and an interview with the artist made by the curator of the exhibition, Teresa Millet.