

For Immediate Release

LAYLAH ALI

January 15 - February 19, 2005

Opening Reception Saturday, January 15, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

303 Gallery presents our second one-person exhibition of paintings by Laylah Ali.

In her latest series of gouache paintings, Laylah Ali turns her attention to the individual figure. As in her "Greenheads" series, the subjects of Ali's portraits are entirely fictitious but hint at histories that are all too real. Some wear warrior gear, protective goggles, and prominent headdresses while others have scars and small cuts on their faces. Their wounds and accessories obscure identification and beg the questions: Who are these figures? Vanquishing aggressors? Hapless bystanders? Or weekend warriors posing for pictures?

The new characters "stand alone" in Ali's individual portraits but, taken together, they also imply a shared alternate universe, one governed by a mysterious, unseen hierarchy. In this bleak, blue-skied world, Ali's characters endure or perhaps perpetrate, bizarre and brutal acts not depicted in their portraits but not entirely erased either. Collectively, the paintings weave a fragmented narrative that shifts its focus from individual figures to the world they inhabit, and back again.

Laylah Ali opened a one-person exhibition of paintings and drawings at the Contemporary Art Museum of St. Louis, MO in December 2004. She was included in the 2004 Whitney Biennial of American Art, New York, and in 2003, in the Venice Biennale, Italy. Ali has had recent one-person exhibitions at the Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN and the Atlanta College of Art Gallery, Atlanta, GA. The artist published a 40-page book of her work for Projects 75 at the Museum of Modern Art, NY in 2002, and received the Regione Piemonte Prize from the Fondation Sandretto Re Rebaudengo per l'arte in 2001.

303 Gallery represents the work of Doug Aitken, Laylah Ali, Edgar Bryan, Anne Chu, Thomas Demand, Inka Essenhigh, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Karel Funk, Maureen Gallace, Tim Gardner, Rodney Graham, Mary Heilmann, Karen Kilimnik, Liz Lerner, Florian Maier-Aichen, Kristin Oppenheim, Collier Schorr, Stephen Shore, David Thorpe, Sue Williams, and Jane and Louise Wilson.

303 Gallery is open Monday - Saturday from 10 am - 6 pm. For further information please visit us at www.303gallery.com or contact Lisa Spellman or Mari Spirito.