



Westbeth Gallery

55 Bethune Street - New York, NY 10014

www.westbeth.org

PRESS RELEASE

FATEN GADDES – HALWA

JULY 2nd – JULY 27th, 2025

Opening Reception: Wednesday July 2nd, 2025 from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Sunday from 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Artists' Talk: Thursday July 17th, 2025 at 7:00 PM – 8:00PM

The Westbeth Gallery is pleased to present four solo shows by the artists: Avri Ohana, Faten Gaddes, Masha Neverova, and Tami Luchow. These artists, all of whom now live in the USA, come from four continents. While they represent four different cultural backgrounds, visions, and concerns, they recognize in each other the courage and opportunity to pursue their individual freedom of expression.

HALWA is a deeply personal exhibition project, born in response to the violent destruction of a previous installation in Tunisia, which was burned down in 2012 by religious extremists. Thirteen years later, the artist revisits this lost work, not to reconstruct it, but to use it as the foundation for a new creation: HALWA. This new body of work takes the form of a performative and sculptural installation, blending the intimate, the political, and the commemorative. Three sculptures inspired by punching bags symbolize damaged bodies bearers of both pain and resistance. The installation includes archival materials, fragments of past works, videos, and a filmed performance. Through this piece, Faten Gaddes addresses violence against women, imposed silence, and the mechanisms of resilience. The title halwa, meaning “sweet” in Arabic, is an ironic reference to a statement made by a former Islamist Minister of Culture, who once said that “art should be sweet.”



Halwa Sculpture, wire, resin & survival blanket @fatengaddes. Westbeth.

ABOUT THE ARTIST Faten Gaddes, born in Tunisia in 1974, is a Franco-Tunisian artist based in New York. Trained as an interior designer she soon dedicated herself to her passion for photography which she pursued alongside her professional career before committing to it fully. Her work is firmly rooted in the “duty of remembrance”, with strong political and social dimensions. Alongside her HALWA project, she is currently developing a photographic and film-based project entitled Itinerary, created in collaboration with Native American communities. This project explores themes of transmission, history, and reconciliation.

In February 2020, Faten Gaddes was part of the New York City Artist Safe Haven Residency program: This initiative is led by a coalition of organizations working to safeguard free expression, and includes Artistic Freedom Initiative, Residency Unlimited, Westbeth Artists Housing and The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation.

Faten is a member of the Visual Art Association based in Tunisia. Her work is part of the permanent collections of the Tunisian government, the French Agency for Development, the Pierre Berger Foundation, the Luciano Benetton foundation, the Moleskine Foundation, The Kamel Lazaar Foundation, and various collectors in Tunisia and abroad.

ARTIST TALK – THURSDAY JULY 17th, 2025 AT 7:00 PM- 8PM

As part of her solo exhibition HALWA at Westbeth Gallery, Faten Gaddes will lead an Artist Talk featuring two invited speakers: the curator of the exhibition; Valérie Hallier and the Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director of the American organization Artistic Freedom Initiative (AFI); Ashley Tucker who will serve as the main moderator.

This organization is one of the institutions that supported the artist in the development of HALWA in New York, through a coalition of American initiatives committed to artistic freedom.

This three-way conversation will revisit the genesis of HALWA, a work created thirteen years after the burning of a previous installation by the artist in Tunisia. HALWA is a poignant and political response to that event, combining performance, sculpture, and archival material in a deep exploration of memory, the body, violence, and healing. The word halwa, meaning “sweet” in Arabic, echoes the infamous statement that “art should be sweet” a phrase that Faten reclaims with power and irony.

The Artist Talk will offer an open space for dialogue, reflection, and transmission where artistic expression confronts contemporary issues of memory, resilience, and creative freedom.

Learn more about the work’s destruction and its political impact

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DT6QtccMq4MXPwrTBktMyKNk_iHdvb87/view

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