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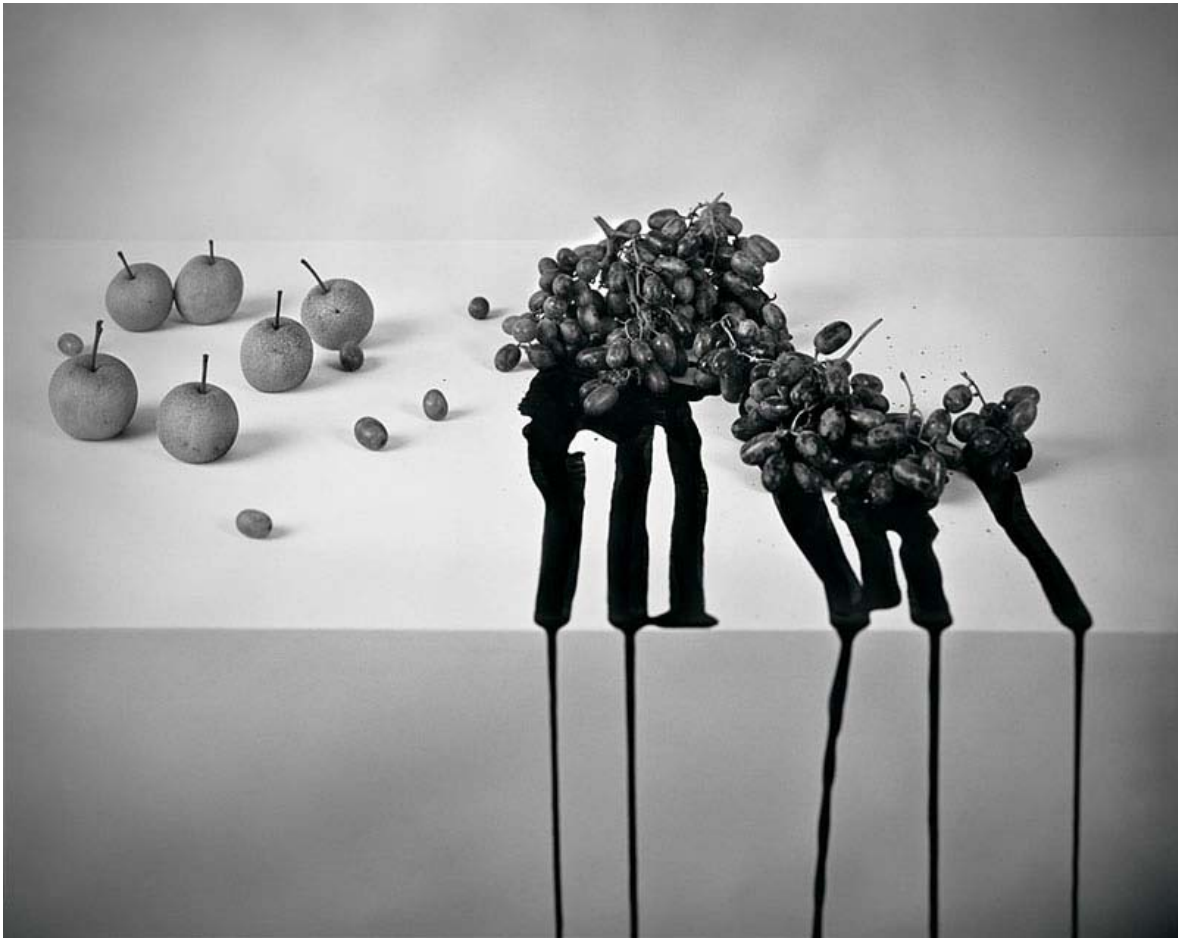


Amjad Faur, *After Gerome, After Gilo*, 2012.





Amjad Faur, *Frozen Woman*, 2010.



Amjad Faur, *Sykes-Picot*, 2013.

Amjad Faur, the Yin and Yang of Traditional Photographic Technology



Amjad Faur, *Two Walls* 2013.

The Invisible Hand Gallery
846 Pennsylvania Street
785-813-1803
Lawrence
Amjad Faur. *Future Ruins*
June 28-July 23, 2013

By **BLAIR SCHULMAN**

Amjad Faur's photographic works present both a masculine and feminine power shaped by a context of flowing mementos that gently reference the emotional significance of Sarah Charlesworth as well as the hyperrealistic style of Chilean painter Claudio Bravo.

However, it is the symbiotic content found throughout Faur's work that makes his images so intriguing. Even if I am reminded of others, Faur is neither paying homage nor exploiting these artists. Instead, he adds an original dynamic to an ongoing oeuvre that lends itself to a larger conversation about gender, history, perspective, time and space.

All of these prints were made as pigment prints. The images were shot on 8x10 inch negatives and scanned, then printed, with no digital manipulation. Unadulterated and carefully nuanced, each work offers a clarity that enables Faur's audience to respond with a sense of immediacy and satisfaction, even while you ponder their meaning.

Visiting Faur's work during early evening, as I did, a lot of strong, natural light poured into the Invisible Hand Gallery. The multi-paned window was reflected upon the glass of these prints, along with my own image, thus creating a double, and sometimes triple, layer of depth.

This light increases and prospers the already present multitude of perspective. *Roman Fresco* (2012) is one example and my personal favorite. It is not only the crispness of the images, but the four individual levels of dimension that begs you to touch the coins, flower, fruit, and water. The

lone plant tendril flowing right towards the water further illuminates each layer of definition. They also underscore a deeply rooted introspection that asks viewers to not see an image unto itself, but ask ourselves, "What will this image do to me? What IS it already doing?" Sykes *Picot* (2013) reaches me in a similar fashion.

It can be said that photographs do not have the depth or intimacy of a painted image, they are a fairly cut and dried presentation, void of nuance. With a painting (or any fine art) you are meant to see beyond what is before you and look as deeply as you can into the piece, discerning the brushstroke or pinch, deciphering movements the artist themselves might not have intended, but are nonetheless present.

With Faur, however, each movement is deliberate. The placement of every object is intentional and how his audience chooses to view them only lends itself to an appreciation of the content before us.



Amjad Faur, *Separation Wall*, 2010.





Amjad Faur, *Burning Bush*, 2010.

Female images, such as *After Gerone*, *After Gilo* (2012) and *Made in the Image of Extinction* (2008) postulate for us how one thinks about ideas of Middle Eastern beauty. Unlike the purely American aesthetic that craves symmetrical epochs of perfection, the tip of an eyelash or the divot of a lip is an antenna beckoning to other elements of beauty within the image that might not appear so obvious at the first glance. Then they emerge and each image provides its own individual symmetry, uneven or upending though it may be, but nonetheless present and making itself understood.

Faur's Jordanian heritage makes itself known in his subjects, but what is more obvious is seen in how he presents us with a deep respect for the female. Beyond the images of women, the placement of objects — meant to replicate details of larger Mannerist or Early Renaissance works — brings the eye inside folds of fabric or underneath the surface skin of fruit. Rather than an ejaculated image of testosterone and triumph, words like "supple" and "languid" more aptly describe the feelings one absorbs instead.

These palpable images reverse any compositional tensions that are also found in some of these images. *Separation Wall* (2010) and *Golgotha Ma'a lot Dafna* (2012), lead us towards an appreciation of content and technique that speaks to a strong sense of history.

This exhibition speaks to the conversion American curator and collector Sam Wagstaff achieved when he embarked upon his long collecting spree in the early 1970s of photographs by anonymous takers.

It was the pleasure in the mysterious documenter alongside the image itself that Wagstaff was so fond of and that is seen here with Faur. Although we know the creator, the mystery and the inherent boldness found in each image resonate very strongly.



Amjad Faur, *Roman Fresco*, 2012.



Amjad Faur, *We Trespass in Paradise*, 2008.



Amjad Faur, *Not-Even-in-Your-Own-Language*, 2008.



Amjad Faur, *Made in the Image of Extinction*, 2008.



Amjad Faur, *The-Fattened-Calf*, 2010.



Amjad Faur, *After Gerome, After Gilo*, 2012.





Amjad Faur, *Souvenir*, 2008.

Amjad Faur, *Golgotha, Ma'alot-Dafna*, 2012.



Amjad Faur, *Future Ruins*, 2010.



Claudio Bravo, *Circle*, oil on canvas, 1986.



Sarah Charlesworth, Red Scarf,
1983-1984.

