Lala Meredith-Vula
LALA MEREDITH-VULA

Lala Meredith-Vula was born in Sarajevo in 1966 to an Albanian father and an English mother. She came to Britain in the 1970s.

She studied Fine Art at Goldsmiths’ College, London University (1985-88) and was awarded a Yugoslav scholarship at Pristina University, Kosova (1988-90).

Her first show was in Damien Hirst’s landmark exhibition “Freeze” in London (1988), notably launching the YBAs (Young British Artists).

She has represented Albania in the Venice Biennale, (1999 and 2007). She has exhibited nationally and internationally with many solo shows including at the Photographers’ Gallery, London, Germany, Italy and Albania. She has also exhibited in many group shows in the UK, USA, China and in Europe.

She will be exhibiting at the Kosova National Gallery in March 2015.

She is currently a Reader in Art and Photography at De Montfort University.

www.lalameredith-vula
Artist Statement

Normally people hide their contradictions. In this exhibition I wish to show mine in work made over the past three decades. I want to unify all the elements of myself in my art work. It is like a jigsaw puzzle for the viewer to piece together....

Extract from Looking at Culture: Some remarks on Shifting Borders by Ian Jeffery

We are aware of the existence of tradition. At least we remember that our parents had a certain way of doing things and that their lives were structured differently to our own.

It is, though, hard to grasp that tradition properly, and hard to see it in other than sentimental terms. Normally it is presented as no more than tradition, as picturesque recollection. Lala Meredith-Vula, taking pictures in Kosova and in Albania, areas with a surplus of tradition, has decided to make use of the idea and to apply it as a template for the present. We know, when we think about the past in which our parents lived, that it is in some respects better than the more complicated present which we inhabit, but we usually leave it at that and get on with our lives.
DANCING FOR ALBANIA

Where does the ethnic idea have its point of gravity? In her very early pictures from Albania Lala Vula found the perfect figure for the ethnic idea in the shape of those wooden tripods used in those parts for the storage of hay. The structures survived as skeletons and the grass dispersed. Later on she took exceptional pictures in a women's bath house on the eastern edge of the country. In that place communal washing laid bare and enhanced the national body. Subsequently the photographer became interested in national costume, with its suggestions of dressing up and of folklore and of revivalism.

Costume and folklore may eventually have been as strange to natives as it was to outsiders. It certainly carried with it the idea of alienation or of being distant from the roots of the culture. The bathhouse photographs, by contrast, show the culture unselfconsciously still in action. The haystacks, going further back, present the basic facts of the culture put together in a primal symbol – an ornamented tripod.

Lala Vula’s pictures show the evolution of a culture terrifically speeded up. It begins in ancient fields and in a bathhouse that might have been familiar to Homer’s travellers, say. By the end of the process even the recent Communist past has begun to feature as antiquity. The idea of that particular culture has been diffused by regime change and diaspora which has associated contemporary Albanians less with Botrynt and all those ancient sites than with car washes in the UK. The performance with which the artist ends this cultural saga shows another outcome of dispersion as the artist presents herself, just as she is, a one-person representative of what looks from the evidence around her like a far-away place, almost become legendary. She could be a captive dancing around a camp fire for the entertainment of sceptics who have barely heard of such distant peoples.

Ian Jeffrey
FOLK ART    SEX FANTASY    KOSOVA MYTHS    LONDON DIARIES
Shifting Borders
Southwell Minster

Silver gelatin print

Shifting Borders
Kosova

Silver gelatin print
Travellers: Southwell Minster
1984
Giclée print from negative

Shifting Borders: Albania
2006
Giclée print from negative
Rape seed fields
Southwell, Nottinghamshire
2006

Giclée print from negative

15th Century Ottoman Bridge
Vushtrri, Kosova
2006

Silver gelatin print
From *Haystack Series 1989-2015*
No. 1

*Haystacks Kosova*
2006

Silver gelatin print
Are you everybody?
Kosova after the war, 1999
No. 1
Silver gelatin print

From Haystack Series 1989-2015
No. 2
Silver gelatin print
Shifting Borders
Dombashawa, Zimbabwe  2007

From **Haystack Series**  1989-2015
No. 3

Silver gelatin print
Bunker dump
Rinas, Albania. 2006

From Haystack Series 1989-2015
No. 4

Silver gelatin print
Destroyed Serbian House
Kosova  2006
Silver gelatin print

Bondsteel NATO army camp
Kosova  2006
Giclée print from negative
Are you everybody? Kosova after the war 1999 No..2

Silver gelatin print
Personality Explored  1988
    No. 1

Giclée print from negative
Personality Explored  1988
No. 2

Giclée print from negative

Personality Explored  1988
Nos. 3 & 4

Giclée print from negative
**Bathers** 1994-6
No. 1

Giclée print from negative
Bathers 1994-6
No. 2
Giclée print from negative
Bathers 1994-6
No. 3
Giclée print from negative
Bathers 1994-6
No. 4
Giclée print from negative
Women and Water 1996-2000
No. 1

Giclée print from negative
Women and Water 1996-2000
No. 2

Giclée print from negative
Women and Water 1996-2000
No. 3
Giclée print from negative

Women and Water 1996-2000
No. 4
Giclée print from negative
Folk Art, Sex Fantasy, Kosova Myths, London Diaries
De Montfort University, Conference, June 2014

Video stills from performance (14 minutes)
GX is proud to present works by Lala Meredith-Vula.

Established in 2001, GX is a fine art gallery specialising in contemporary figurative and abstract artists. Located in a 1500 sq. ft. Grade II listed building the gallery is within walking distance of Camberwell Arts College, South London Art Gallery and Goldsmiths’ College. The gallery represents a roster of artists specialising in group exhibitions and focused solo shows.

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