



SISSI FARASSAT

The Iranian artist, 39, who lives in Vienna, Austria, creates 'photo clothes' – images decorated with stitching and sequins – that are being exhibited at Art Dubai by Galerie Kashya Hildebrand.

My inspiration for the work shown in Dubai is...

My wonderful childhood in Iran. I grew up with five siblings in the city of Esfahan. The sequin pictures I'm exhibiting, *Esfahan Museum* and *Mosque 2*, which cost Dhs55,000 each, use green and blue, inspired by the colour, ornamentation and diversity of Iran. My father used to tell me a story about women who worked on one carpet all their lives, and I developed a fascination over these carpets. My sequin pictures take up to seven weeks to create.

My icon is... US photographer Nan Goldin. She takes photos of people in very real environments. I met her at the beginning of my career – she was very encouraging about my work.

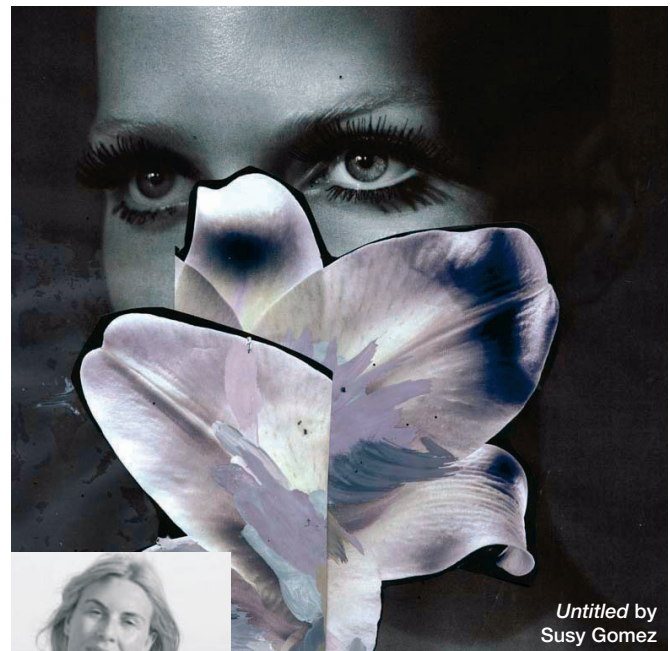
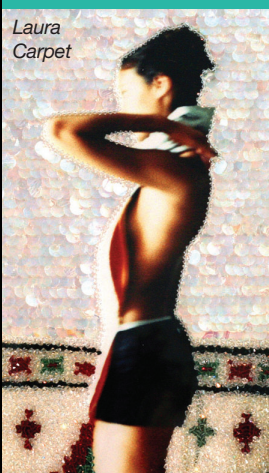
My most memorable project is... My self portraits. I can only occupy myself with things I can identify with and know very well, which is why my work often deals with myself in connection with my surroundings. I find the self-portraits of artists such as Cindy Sherman and Gilbert and George so inspiring.

My biggest influence is... The idea of a woman's private sphere. I was a fashion photographer for six years and enjoyed shooting models in natural poses in places they could relate to. My favourite fashion photographers are Jürgen Teller and Wolfgang Tillmann.

Looking to the future... In my new series, I've started to embroider only on the back of photos, so just the thread outlines of women in different positions (like pin-ups or in movements) are visible at the front. Only the buyer is able to open the frame and see the exposed person.

THE ART

Farassat draws on her Iranian heritage to produce detailed photographs embellished with sequins and stitching.



SUSY
GOMEZ

iving in Mallorca, the Spanish artist, 44, references designers including Chanel, Hermès and Martin Margiela in her work.

L My inspiration for the work shown in Dubai is... The influence and strength of my female relatives. I cast my aluminium dresses using original pieces from my wardrobe or from family and close friends, so they all have memories attached to them. The sculptures cost from Dh\$142,000 each.

My icon is... I don't have icons – I don't believe in them.

My most memorable project is... My larger-than-life Hermès Kelly bags, entitled *Por Amor*. They're three metres

across, made from leather and come in various colours. I see them as a metaphor for what we are able to “carry” in our lives for love.

My biggest influence is... Fashion trends are clear in many of my works, from my Valentino sunglasses and aluminium Chanel dresses to my Martin Margiela-inspired art. Fashion creates an image of women and I reinterpret that. I keep up to date with the latest collections by looking at fashion magazines and I also use photos from these in my artworks.

Looking to the future... I'm showing 25 photos at an exhibition at Malaga's Center For Contemporary Art in Spain in April. ■

THE ART

Gomez's work includes life-size sculptures of designer dresses, as well as fashion-inspired canvases and photos.

