

Mana Contemporary Presents:

Amy Khoshbin:
The Myth of Layla

September 25, 2016 — November 12, 2016



Video still from Amy Khoshbin, *The Myth of Layla*, 2014-

Public reception:

September 25, 2016, from 1PM-9PM.
Performance at 3PM.

Additional Performances:

October 8 at 4:30PM
October 15 at 6PM, followed by an artist talk moderated
by Carmen Hermo, Assistant Curator, Elizabeth A. Sackler
Center for Feminist Art, Brooklyn Museum

JERSEY CITY, NJ, August 28, 2016—Mana Contemporary is pleased to present *The Myth of Layla*, a new performative installation from Iranian-American artist Amy Khoshbin. The work is situated in Mana's newly-launched BSMT gallery.

The protagonist of Amy Khoshbin's exhilarating new piece is the charismatic and conflicted Layla, a Middle Eastern activist living in a SciFi, not-too-distant future: a big-brother media conglomerate called The Network runs the US government and is at war with a fictionalized

Middle Eastern country akin to Iran. Daily life is heavily controlled. The natural environment has become too dangerous, and citizens are forced to stay indoors. Their only contact to the outside world comes through screens, with content produced by The Network. Recognizable media-manipulation tactics prevail: fear of the Other, violence, and propaganda presented as reasonable safety-measures. With these themes, Khoshbin directly confronts the issues of political ideology and celebrity-obsessed media. When we meet her, Layla has created a powerful anti-war video, which has become too popular for her own good. The Network comes knocking.

Taking satirical cues from the absurd structures of reality TV, Khoshbin presents a backdrop of projected videos, outrageous colorful costumes, and elaborate handmade props. Viewers become part of the piece, captured by running cameras and screened during the performance. (These will be later developed into long-form videos, which will be screened in the BSMT space.) Khoshbin creates a dramatic parallel universe that echoes our own, vividly demonstrating the dangers of media control.

About Amy Khoshbin

Amy Khoshbin is a Brooklyn-based artist who combines many disciplines: performance, video, collage, costume and sound. Her work has been presented at BAM, Abrons Arts Center, The Invisible Dog Art Center, The Stone, and festivals such as River to River, South by Southwest and Maker Faire. She has completed residencies at The Watermill Center, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Workspace Residency 2014-16, Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada, Team Effort! in Glasgow, Scotland, and at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. She received a Rema Hort Mann Foundation Community Engagement Grant and is one of Creative Capital's On Our Radar recipients for *The Myth of Layla*. She has collaborated with Laurie Anderson, Karen Finley, Tina Barney, and poets Anne Carson and Bob Currie, among others. She is currently in residence at Mana BSMT from July 2016 - January 2017. For more information, visit www.tinyscissors.com

About Mana Contemporary

Founded in 2011, Mana Contemporary is a leading arts destination dedicated to celebrating the creative process. Headquartered in a former tobacco warehouse in Jersey City, Mana unites artists' studios, exhibition spaces, and ancillary services in a single location, facilitating conversation and collaboration among its burgeoning creative community. Together with its sister campuses in Chicago and Miami, Mana serves as a lively center for all members of the art world. Mana Contemporary is home to the Richard Meier Model Museum, Ayn Foundation, the International Center of Photography, The Florence Academy of Art, Gary Lichtenstein Editions, Eileen S. Kaminsky Family Foundation, Armitage Gone! Dance, Keating Foundry, Shen Wei Dance Arts, Mana Urban Arts Project, and many others. For additional information, please visit manacontemporary.com.

About Mana BSMT

The Mana BSMT is a collaborative environment that combines artist-driven programming with studios and workspace. It is also home to two residency programs: the Mana Residencies, directed by curators Ysabel Pinyol and Karline Moeller, and the new Mana BSMT Residency.

The Mana BSMT Residency invites artist-curators to assemble a group of artists to work in the open-plan studio space in Mana's basement. Participants are encouraged to curate their own programming, shaping the collaborative culture of the BSMT. They receive access to shared resources on the Mana campus, and are introduced to the many artists, gallerists, collectors, and curators who are part of the Mana community. To learn more, visit manabsmt.com.

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