

## Nicelle Beauchene Gallery

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### **AFRUZ AMIGHI**

*The Hidden State*

October 30- December 23, 2011

Opening reception Sunday, October 30, 2011

[The Hidden State] Within All Forms

-- written by Afruz Amighi

The architecture of power: the monument, mosque and palace, captivate and seduce. The architecture of apathy and despair, the refugee camp, makes no entrance into the imagination. Together they form a seamless landscape of extremes.

This exhibition is a shrine to both extremes. Three panels, composed of woven polyethylene, the material used to construct refugee tents, represent the stages in the Sufi journey towards love: purification, self-annihilation and union. The chandelier and the butterfly replace the traditional imagery of the candle and the moth. Peacock feathers, symbolizing pride, are transformed into daggers spearing a human heart, thus obstructing its path towards selflessness. Motifs and patterns from the Alhambra, the Shah-e-Cheragh Mosque and the Natanz dome among others, emerge as testament to the beauty and solace found in the architecture of power. Their overwhelming presence recedes as the monumental dematerializes into shadow.

Graphite drawings depict make-shift refugee camps newly sprouted along the Syrian Turkish border. Inspired by photographs of the camps and based on a sculptural installation of the tents built in my studio, the drawings reference a reality commonly perceived as temporary. They lack ephemerality and look like structures made out of stone. The supposed impermanence of the refugee camp solidifies.

Through architectural depictions, the distance between monument and camp breaks down as one form gains what the other has lost. Illusions of power lose their stronghold.

Afruz Amighi received her M.F.A. from New York University in 2007. She has shown internationally at the V&A Museum, London; The National Museum, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; The National Museum, Damascus; Beiteddine Palace, Lebanon; Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization, UAE; Sakip Sabanci Museum, Istanbul; La Villa des Arts, Casablanca, Morocco; and Museum of Fine Art, Houston. Her work is in permanent collections at the V&A London; MFA Houston; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bristol Museum, UK; and the Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi. Amighi will also be included in an upcoming exhibition 'Doris Duke's Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape and Islamic Art' at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York. The exhibition will travel to the Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach and to the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University. Amighi was born in Tehran and lives and works in Brooklyn.