

# PIPPY HOULDSWORTH GALLERY

## AYAN FARAH



Ayan Farah, *Maps*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London (2016)

Ayan Farah's work records the physical and ephemeral traces of far-reaching geographical locations. Farah repurposes pieces of linen and jute, often sourced from nineteenth-century homes, by dyeing them with natural pigments such as indigo and marigold, usually grown herself, before exposing them to long periods of sunlight in the open air. Often taking months or even years to complete, the resultant bleaching lends her work an ephemeral quality that manifests both the passing of time and the essence of the location in which they were made.

In her patchwork paintings that she refers to as 'Maps', Farah incorporates scraps of excess fabric salvaged from the production of older paintings, stitching them together to create one multi-faceted piece that comprises materials spanning both time and place. Built intuitively, each of these works reflects the sustainable nature of Farah's practice and how the artist actively engages with natural processes in order to make her paintings.

Farah's mode of working is particularly inspired by the iconic *Earthworks* show at Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, in 1968, which featured artists such as Robert Smithson, Walter de Maria and Michael Heizer. Lauded as ushering in land art, the exhibition included a selection of Smithson's 'non-sites', works that highlighted the geographical source of the natural materials from which they were made, and also their repositioning in the removed context of the gallery or museum where they became legible as art. In the same vein, Farah establishes a continuum between the outside world and the gallery space by encompassing raw materials collected from far-flung locations, often mixing her dyes with mud from the Dead Sea, terracotta from Mexico and clay from Sweden. Even though her paintings hang flat on the wall, the artist seeks to emphasise the three-dimensionality of the works and their relationship to the space and the body of the viewer.

Farah was born in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates in 1978 to Somali parents and grew up in Stockholm, Sweden. She lives and works in London, UK. She received a BA in Fashion Design from Middlesex University (2003), a Postgraduate Degree from Central Saint Martins College of Arts and Design (2006), followed by an MA in Painting from the Royal College of Art, London (2012).

## PIPPY HOULDSWORTH GALLERY

Recent exhibitions include *Maps*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London (2016); Kadel Willborn, Düsseldorf (2016); *Notes on Running Water*, Almine Rech Gallery, Brussels (2014); *Le musée d'une nuit (script for leaving traces)*, David Roberts Art Foundation, Fondation Hippocrène, Paris (2014); *PROXIMA*, Museo Británico Americano, Mexico City (2014); *The Figure in the Carpet*, Bugada & Cargnel, Paris (2014); *Xtraction*, The Hole, New York (2013); *Alchemy*, The Arts Club, London (2013); *Wanderlust*, Contemporary Art Society, London (2013) and *Girlfriend material*, The Standard, Los Angeles (2013). In 2013, she was awarded the Eilean Shona Residency in Scotland, and was artist in residence at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm from 2012-13.

Farah will be part of *Ravelled Threads*, Sean Kelly Gallery, New York, June-August 2018; *The London Open*, The Whitechapel Gallery, London, June-August 2018; and will be subject of a solo exhibition at Sammlung Klein, Eberdingen-Nussdorf, July-December 2018.

# PIPPY HOULDSWORTH GALLERY

## AYAN FARAH

Somali / Swedish

Born in 1978, Sharjah, UAE

Lives and works in London, UK

### Education

- 2012** MA Painting, Royal College of Art, London  
**2006** Post Graduate Degree, Fine Art, Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London  
**2003** BA Fashion Design, Middlesex University, London

### Solo Exhibitions

- 2018** Sammlung Klein, Eberdingen-Nussdorf  
**2016** *Maps*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London  
*Ayan Farah*, Galerie Kadel Willborn, Düsseldorf  
**2014** *Notes on running water*, Almine Rech Gallery, Brussels  
**2012** *Ayan Farah*, Vigo Gallery, London  
**2009** *Flash Herring (Observatory for Northern Light)*, University Centre In Svalbard, Svalbard

### Group Exhibitions

- 2018** The London Open 2018, Whitechapel Gallery, London  
Ravelled Threads, Sean Kelly Gallery, New York  
*In the Eye of the Beholder*, Tarble Arts Center, Charleston  
*Textile Abstraction*, Casas Riegner, Bogota
- 2017-18** How It's Made, Carl Kostyál, Stockholm
- 2017** *From a distance*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London
- 2015** *Ayan Farah, Max Lamb, Chris Succo*, Almine Rech Gallery, London, UK  
*Dans un Intérieur. Meubles, oeuvres murales et textiles d'artistes*, Almine Rech Gallery, Brussels
- 2014** *Le musée d'une nuit (script for leaving traces)*, Fondation Hippocrène, Paris  
*Dans un Intérieur. Meubles, oeuvres murales et textiles d'artistes*, Almine Rech Gallery, Paris  
*Infinitude*, Roberts & Tilton, Los Angeles  
*Proxima*, Museo Británico Americano, Mexico City  
*Shakti*, Brand New Gallery, Milan  
*The Figure in the Carpet*, Bugada & Cargnel, Paris  
Soho House, Berlin, Germany  
Robert Blumenthal Gallery, New York
- 2013** *All that remains is here*, Galleri Mejan, Stockholm  
*Xtraction*, The Hole, New York  
*Alchemy*, The Arts Club, London  
*Wanderlust*, Contemporary Art Society, London  
*Girlfriend material*, The Standard, Los Angeles
- 2012** *Ululation*, Vigo Gallery, London  
*Summer Show*, Patrick Heide Contemporary Art, London  
*MA Degree show*, Royal College of Art, London  
*The Constance Fairness Award*, The Constance Fairness Foundation, London  
*The Alchemist's day out*, Park Central Hotel, New York

### Residencies

- 2013** Eilean Shona, Scotland  
**2012-13** Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm  
**2009** The University Centre in Svalbard, Svalbard  
**2007** Creative Collaboration, Reykjavík

### Collections

David Roberts Art Foundation, London  
Saatchi Gallery, London