

## A favourite work

*Freelance journalist and the 'Magic in Monaco' attendee, Donna Miles-Mojab, discusses her favourite art from the Magic of Persia 2017 exhibition held in Monaco.*



*Niloufar Banisadr , Voiles Aux Vents No 1, 2012. Inkjet printing on Baryta Paper, 78x 110 cm. (note the above image is not for publication without the approval of the artist)*

I had the good fortune of sitting next to Niloufar Banisadr on the bus that took us to a magnificent dinner sponsored by Sassan and Maria Behnam-Bakhtiar as part of the Magic of Persia 2017 exhibition and fundraising event in Monaco.

Niloufar has the rare quality of being a patient listener. She has a calm demeanour and her quiet energy and passion surface only when she talks about her work.

I had seen Niloufar's "Voiles Aux Vents No 1" at Kamil Art Galley the night before and was immediately struck by its powerful impact.

The work has the important quality of planting itself firmly in your head- like an unforgettable scene from a movie.

The veil protruding from an open window comes out like a silent scream: there is no clear voice, but you sense a distinctive psychological undertone that dances between restful and disturbing.

The restfulness comes from the softness of the depicted fabric. It resides in the strong sense of liberation that has allowed the fabric to escape from its confinement and fly freely out of the open window.

This invites us to reflect on the joyous flight that our own spirit can take if we were not trapped inside economic and belief systems that seek to control and restrict us.

The disturbing element is in the sense of displacement.

What is meant to shield and protect (the veil) is shown displaced from its usual position and purpose, evoking a sense of vulnerability and anxiety.

There is also the stress of the loss of purity: what is clean and untouched is now exposed to the dirty outdoors and therefore at the risk of contamination.

The work has a visual stillness- of the type that can be found in some of David Hockney's work. It is as though the stillness came before the photograph was taken.

I love "Voiles Aux Vents No 1" also for making us curious about what lies inside, and for the endless narratives and possibilities it conjures up in our head.

Is someone having a quiet siesta inside the room or are there lovers making passionate love? Who lives there? Is there a bookshelf inside? A desk? A rug? Where is this room? What time and what month is it?

Niloufar is a talented artist with a strong sense for arresting images.

Thank you Magic of Persia for introducing me to Niloufar and many other talented Iranian artists whose works I enjoyed and admired greatly.

We need art to help us live and die better. Without it, we cannot flourish mentally or spiritually.