

Press Release

Totems of Central Asia

Andakulova Gallery, Dubai in partnership with Freedom Finance Corp. is pleased to present Totems of Central Asia, an exhibition which brings together three artists from Central Asia - Almagul Menlibayeva (Kazakhstan), Dilyara Kaipova (Uzbekistan) and Said Atabekov (Kazakhstan).

It will be held at Foundry Downtown Dubai, from May 11- June 11, 2022.

The show highlights the works of Almagul Menlibayeva, Dilyara Kaipova and Said Atabekov and their NFT's.

The focus of the project is Central Asia - a unique geopolitical and cultural region, heir of ancient civilizations and the fabled Silk Road - which was mainly excluded from the international context during much of the 20th century.

The region, however, has survived utopias of social experimentation, the collapse of States, and environmental catastrophes of modern times.

Today, the art of the region in many international art spaces and aspects, can be said to be represented by artists such as A. Menlibayeva, D. Kaipova and S. Atabekov.

Their works are an unusual combination of tradition and innovation; the phenomenon of their originality is rooted in the very genius loci where they hail from.

You will form an idea of the contemporary art of the fabulous past centuries of this "terra incognita" via Totems, which allows one to immerse himself in the hoary world of the inhabitants of the nomadic steppes and the blaze of legendary ancient cities.

"Totems of Central Asia" is the result of a study of issues of globalization and identity that are relevant for the region – and the world – since it includes issues such as the preservation of national traditions, adaptation to the new global world order, and perhaps the temptations of Western standards.

The title of the exhibition refers to the concept of the totem, which was and is, present in traditional societies. A totem is a spiritual being with a life of its own; it is a sacred object, an object of worship and a symbol that serves as the emblem of a group of people, a family or a tribe.

In Central Asia, in the past and as in the present, people attribute supernatural powers to totems – their presence could make people tremble and fear as much as they awe and revere them!

Almagul Menlibayeva, Dilyara Kaipova and Said Atabekov work at the intersection of ancient and modern mythologies, combining magical rituals and symbols of modern society.

Dilyara Kaipova turns to local methods of artistic production (ikat), creating unique robes, with the inclusion of symbols of mass culture. Her approach is connected both with traditional textiles and with the expression of identity in the context of post-colonial discourse.

Videos and photos of Said Atabekov, in which hundreds of people on the move are involved such as crowds of nomads, not only cause admiration for ancient ritual games, but also make you think about games on a much more universal scale.

The use of digital photography techniques and print techniques allows Almagul Menlibayeva to create bold metaphors for the environmental problem. She reflects on the junction of tradition and resistance to the language of advertising, and the images and clichés of glossy magazines.

"Totems of Central Asia" is an understanding of what globalization means in the context of Central Asia, a land which is undergoing tremendous social and political change.

It enables the viewer to empathize with the thoughts of Central Asian artists about modernity, to understand their sensitivity to the sacred traditions of their people, as well as to enjoy their excessive originality and dissimilarity vis-a-vis accepted standards.

ABOUT ANDAKULOVA GALLERY

Andakulova Gallery, Dubai, is a contemporary art gallery whose objective is to promote Central Asia's contemporary visual arts. It serves as a platform to exhibit and support emerging to established contemporary artists from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (or the 'Stans') across a variety of media.

Founded by Natalya Andakulova, its higher purpose is to cultivate a dialogue between Central Asia and the Middle East by re-introducing the art of the 'Stans' to the artistic hub of Dubai. The gallery strives to build relationships between artists, writers, specialists and collectors.

ABOUT FREEDOM HOLDING CORPORATION

Freedom Finance Corp. provides financial services, retail brokerage, investment advisory, securities trading, investment banking and underwriting services in 13 countries worldwide.

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