

## **The Ruins**

### **Mustafa Hulusi**

Private View: Wednesday 11 November, 6-9 pm  
Dates: 12 November - 18 December 2009  
Hours: Thursday - Sunday, 12-6 pm or by appointment

Civic Room is pleased to present *The Ruins*, a solo show by Mustafa Hulusi, comprising of an installation of three Roman Goddess statues, *The Salamis Women*.

Black polished marble versions of the original white statues found at the Roman ruin of Salamis on the eastern coast of Cyprus, Hulusi's modern day facsimiles are thrown into contrast by the white walls of the gallery. The artist's switching of colour from white to black marks a separation from the past and creates a new context in which to understand the pre-existing forms.

Hulusi mines his childhood memories of living in Cyprus to recall family summer holidays playing amongst the ruins.

Knowledge has been lost as to why the original Salamis statues came into existence and for what deities they were created. Archaeology sets out to recapture and unravel this loss but, more often than not, the process reveals more about contemporary needs than it does a genuine reading of the past. Were it not for the market created for these artefacts by the 18th and 19th century colonial conquests of the Orient, for example, many of the works would have remained in situ. Here they would have furnished us with a more useful tool to understand the cultural and political context from which they sprang.

At Civic Room, *The Ruins* are presented within the context of conceptual art and it is their re-appropriation from antiquity that sets about attempting to reverse the historical precedent.

Throughout the history of Empire - the emergence and collapse of classical Greece and Rome, Arab or Byzantine iconoclastic purges and Western European colonial looting - the essence of humanity's myriad cultures has been made manifest and gained permanence in art objects. The ravished yet asexual corpses of the *Salamis Women* tell a story of human history and power; a telling that may well be the final purpose of art.

This exhibition has been produced with the support of Icon Art Services.

Civic Room is an artist run space. To see our programme of exhibitions, please visit our website:  
[www.civicroom.org.uk](http://www.civicroom.org.uk)