

# SASKIA NEUMAN GALLERY

Dimen Hama Abdulla

*Lie Fallow*

07.11 – 19.12.2024

To be waiting and wanting. Searching for something new to begin while waiting in rest. More often used in a pejorative context, to lie fallow — is understood to be unproductive, idle, unused and unresponsive. However, the English language is bellowing with double meanings, analogies and plethora of explanations.

Lying fallow or to lie fallow is a sequence of words derived from the explanation of how to cultivate land for farming. Allowing farmland to lie fallow for a season, in wait, to be used and cultivated the next farming term, thereby giving the land time to rest and nurture itself. The land is plowed, broken up and harrowed, although left untilled and unsown, to conserve soil moisture, and ultimately providing respite for the earth to reset, readying itself for another harvest.

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Dimen Hama Abdulla is a play-write. She is a dramaturg. She is a writer.  
She is a visual artist.

She is a painter. She is a sculptor.

A wordsmith who has also mastered the brush and pastel.

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Born in Kurdistan, Dimen Hama Abdulla came to Sweden at the age of six, after having, together with her family, fled the region, via Pakistan. Her family: mother, father and six siblings, settled in a small community just outside of Uppsala, a middle-sized city, north of Stockholm, Sweden. The experiences, and in certain instances trauma, endured from both being uprooted from her home, and subsequently placed in a foreign country, has left a mark. Although not always apparent in her work, the artist carries the weight and plight of migration and with that shoulders the responsibility of storytelling.

Dimen drew and painted frequently as a child, encouraged from a very young age to engage in her talents and passions. She did this with extraordinary depth.

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After applying and being accepted to The Royal Institute of Art she studied Fine Art/Studio Practice, she later continued her education at The Stockholm University of the Arts, gaining a degree in drama and dramaturgy. Her debut, a monologue titled *On All Fours*, played at the Stockholm city theater, a revered institution, was met with great praise. Dimen has since written countless plays, monologues and texts, which have been raised in various theaters across the Nordic region, and in continental Europe.

Throughout her career as a playwright and writer Dimen always painted. Using visual art as a private language to engage with a more hidden aspect of her artistic practice. To the artist, *Lie fallow* symbolizes a pause, a time of reflection, regrowth and the opportunity to gain strength and perspective. For Dimen, despite success, many aspects of her life have centered around survival, the ability to keep your head, metaphorically and physically above water. Where others have perhaps had the grace and luxury of time and pause, the urgency in which the artist has lived has spilled into every crevice of her being.

*Lie Fallow*, proposes a new chapter. The exuberant joy and lightness in which she engages with painting and drawing is evident throughout the visual language displayed in her work. However, more importantly, it is also in the ease she discusses her process, creating a continuous dialogue with each work. Painting, drawing is second nature to the artist, a first love that has remained, even grown stronger. Creating a myriad of puzzles with each stroke, Dimen employs French, Vermeer handmade dry pastels in varying thickness, creating an extension of her own hand in the lines drawn on the thick Fabriano Artistico 300 gram, 100 percent cotton sheets of paper. The choice of materials is paramount to the artist, having tried and tested a variety of paints to find the ultimate tools to carry her expression. The exhibition brings years of study to the forefront, as Dimen's very personal practice becomes public. Examining an intricate private relationship to the visual arts via a selection of both large and smaller scale drawings. The artist uses painting to describe her drawing practice, as the painterly approach to paper and dry pastel is palpable.

Throughout the exhibition words are formed from images, the abstract becomes representational, formative even, the surreal evolves into reality and emotion is evident throughout.