

LALA MEREDITH-VULA



FOLK ART

SEX FANTASY

KOSOVA MYTHS

LONDON DIARIES



# Lala Meredith-Vula

**GXGALLERY**

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## LALA MEREDITH-VULA

Lala Meredith-Vula was born in Sarajevo in 1966 to an Albanian father and an English mother. She came to Britain in the 1970s.

She studied Fine Art at Goldsmiths' College, London University (1985-88) and was awarded a Yugoslav scholarship at Pristina University, Kosova (1988-90).

Her first show was in Damien Hirst's landmark exhibition "Freeze" in London (1988), notably launching the YBAs (Young British Artists).

She has represented Albania in the Venice Biennale, (1999 and 2007). She has exhibited nationally and internationally with many solo shows including at the Photographers' Gallery, London, Germany, Italy and Albania.

She has also exhibited in many group shows in the UK, USA, China and in Europe.

She will be exhibiting at the Kosova National Gallery in March 2015.

She is currently a Reader in Art and Photography at De Montfort University.

[www.lalameredith-vula](http://www.lalameredith-vula)

## FOLK ART, SEX FANTASY, KOSOVA MYTHS, LONDON DIARIES

### Artist Statement

Normally people hide their contradictions. In this exhibition I wish to show mine in work made over the past three decades. I want to unify all the elements of myself in my art work. It is like a jigsaw puzzle for the viewer to piece together....

Extract from *Looking at Culture: Some remarks on Shifting Borders* by Ian Jeffery

We are aware of the existence of tradition. At least we remember that our parents had a certain way of doing things and that their lives were structured differently to our own.

It is, though, hard to grasp that tradition properly, and hard to see it in other than sentimental terms. Normally it is presented as no more than tradition, as picturesque recollection. Lala Meredith-Vula, taking pictures in Kosova and in Albania, areas with a surplus of tradition, has decided to make use of the idea and to apply it as a template for the present. We know, when we think about the past in which our parents lived, that it is in some respects better than the more complicated present which we inhabit, but we usually leave it at that and get on with our lives.

## DANCING FOR ALBANIA

Where does the ethnic idea have its point of gravity? In her very early pictures from Albania Lala Vula found the perfect figure for the ethnic idea in the shape of those wooden tripods used in those parts for the storage of hay. The structures survived as skeletons and the grass dispersed. Later on she took exceptional pictures in a women's bath house on the eastern edge of the country. In that place communal washing laid bare and enhanced the national body. Subsequently the photographer became interested in national costume, with its suggestions of dressing up and of folklore and of revivalism.

Costume and folklore may eventually have been as strange to natives as it was to outsiders. It certainly carried with it the idea of alienation or of being distant from the roots of the culture. The bathhouse photographs, by contrast, show the culture unselfconsciously still in action. The haystacks, going further back, present the basic facts of the culture put together in a primal symbol – an ornamented tripod.

Lala Vula's pictures show the evolution of a culture terrifically speeded up. It begins in ancient fields and in a bathhouse that might have been familiar to Homer's travellers, say. By the end of the process even the recent Communist past has begun to feature as antiquity. The idea of that particular culture has been diffused by regime change and diaspora which has associated contemporary Albanians less with Botrynt and all those ancient sites than with car washes in the UK. The performance with which the artist ends this cultural saga shows another outcome of dispersion as the artist presents herself, just as she is, a one-person representative of what looks from the evidence around her like a far-away place, almost become legendary. She could be a captive dancing around a camp fire for the entertainment of sceptics who have barely heard of such distant peoples.

Ian Jeffrey

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**Shifting Borders  
Southwell Minster**

Silver gelatin print

**Shifting Borders  
Kosova**

Silver gelatin print







**Travellers : Southwell Minster**

1984

Giclée print from negative

**Shifting Borders : Albania**

2006

Giclée print from negative





**Rape seed fields**  
**Southwell, Nottinghamshire**  
2006

Giclée print from negative

**15th Century Ottoman Bridge**  
**Vushtrri, Kosova**  
2006

Silver gelatin print





From **Haystack Series** 1989-2015  
No. 1

Silver gelatin print

**Haystacks Kosova**  
2006

Silver gelatin print







From **Haystack Series** 1989-2015

No. 2

Silver gelatin print

**Are you everybody?**  
Kosova after the war, 1999  
No. 1

Silver gelatin print







From **Haystack Series** 1989-2015  
No. 3

Silver gelatin print

**Shifting Borders**  
**Dombashawa, Zimbabwe 2007**

Silver gelatin print





From **Haystack Series** 1989-2015

No. 4

Silver gelatin print

**Bunker dump**  
**Rinas, Albania. 2006**

Silver gelatin print







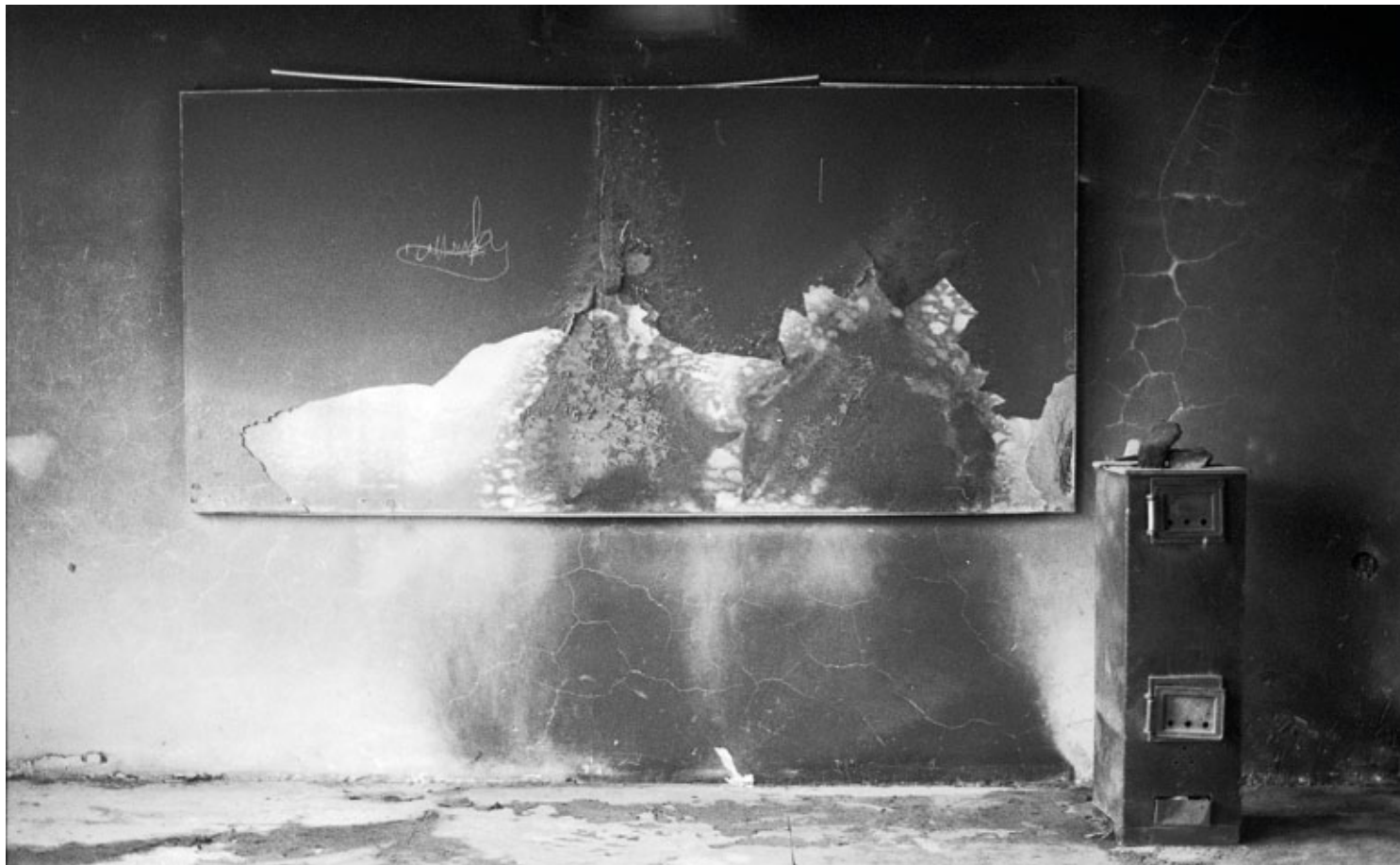
**Destroyed Serbian House**  
Kosova 2006

Silver gelatin print

**Bondsteel NATO army camp**  
Kosova 2006

Giclée print from negative





**Are you everybody?** Kosova after the war 1999 No..2

Silver gelatin print

**Personality Explored** 1988  
No. 1

Giclée print from negative







**Personality Explored 1988**

No. 2

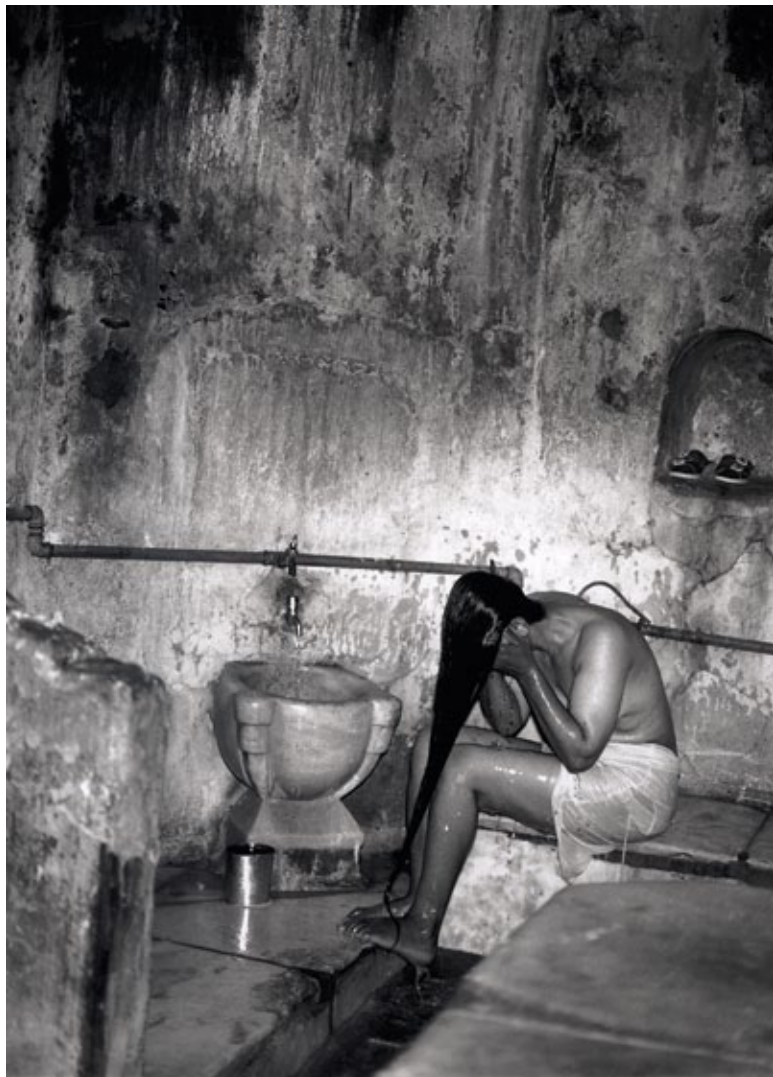
Giclée print from negative

**Personality Explored 1988**

Nos. 3 & 4

Giclée print from negative





**Bathers** 1994-6

No. 1

Giclée print from negative

**Bathers** 1994-6  
No. 2

Giclée print from negative





**Bathers** 1994-6

No. 3

Giclée print from negative

**Bathers** 1994-6  
No. 4

Giclée print from negative







**Women and Water** 1996-2000

No. 1

Giclée print from negative

**Women and Water** 1996-2000  
No. 2

Giclée print from negative







**Women and Water** 1996-2000

No. 3

Giclée print from negative

**Women and Water** 1996-2000

No. 4

Giclée print from negative







**Folk Art, Sex Fantasy, Kosova Myths, London Diaries**

De Montfort University, Conference, June 2014

Video stills from performance (14 minutes)

GX is proud to present works by Lala Meredith-Vula.

Established in 2001, GX is a fine art gallery specialising in contemporary figurative and abstract artists.

Located in a 1500 sq. ft. Grade II listed building the gallery is within walking distance of Camberwell Arts College, South London Art Gallery and Goldsmiths' College.

The gallery represents a roster of artists specialising in group exhibitions and focused solo shows.

GX Framing ([www.gxframing.com](http://www.gxframing.com)) offers museum-quality bespoke framing.

*For enquiries and sales please contact*

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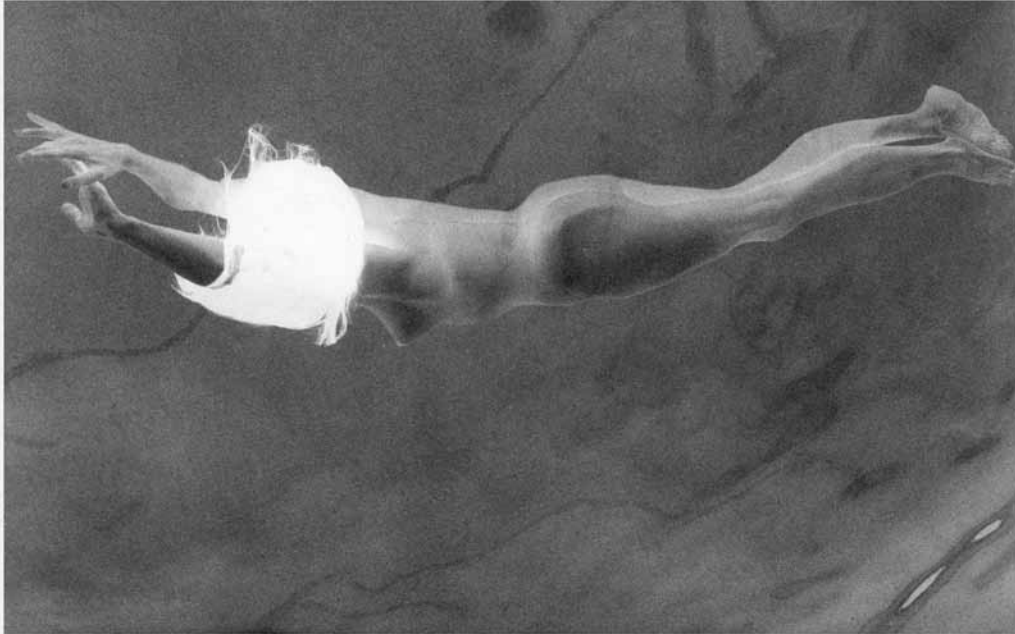
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