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For immediate Release:

Aphrodite Désirée Navab *Super East-West Woman: Forty Pillars*

September 6 – October 1, 2011 *Opening Reception: Thursday Sept. 8th, 6-8pm*

SOHO20 Chelsea Gallery
547 West 27th Street, Suite 301
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In her solo exhibition *Super East-West Woman: Forty Pillars*, Aphrodite Désirée Navab performs as a pillar, marking each of her forty years of life. Like the sculpted female figures, the Caryatids, of the Acropolis' Erechtheion in Athens (421-407 BC), *Super East-West Woman* is both the literal column and the metaphorical support, carrying the weight of her Greek and Iranian heritage on her head: a history of both war and peace. In each of the ten photographs of the installation, *Super East-West Woman's* veiled back is linked to the reflection of her face in the glass of the retired Tramway cabins of her permanent home in the United States which has severed diplomatic relations with Iran. These cabins have been replaced by new ones that are busy taking passengers back and forth on cables suspended in air from Manhattan to Roosevelt Island in New York City. The 20 instances of *Super East-West Woman* in the photographs are reflected in mirrors, creating 40 representations of her. The installation re-enacts the architecture of the Chehel Sotun (*Forty Columns* in Farsi, 1664 AD) palace of Navab's native city Isfahan, Iran, where 20 actual columns meet 20 reflected columns in a pool of water in front of the palace, creating 40 columns in the imagination and giving it its name. After thirty years of taking Navab back and forth since she relocated from Iran as a ten year-old, the Tramway has become her portable Chehel Sotun, the exiled palace of a nomad.

Super East-West Woman performs as a modern Caryatid supporting a Chehel Sotun in the air, carrying the political histories of war and peace of her three identities. Just as her chador (*Islamic veil* in Farsi) turned into a cape, allowing her to fly in earlier series, *Super East-West Woman* transcends being a stationary column into a ferry-woman who takes her passengers back and forth, between East and West. The installation invites a third space for re-imagining our conceptions of passive and active, past and present, real and unreal, life and art, presentation and re-presentation, personal and public history, and relations between Iran and the USA.

Aphrodite Désirée Navab is an Iranian and Greek artist and writer based in New York City (born in Isfahan, Iran 1971). She uses visual art and writing to investigate transnational issues in art and culture. In 2004 she completed an Ed.D. doctorate in Art Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. She received her BA magna cum laude in Visual and Environmental Studies from Harvard University in 1993.

For more information please contact the gallery at 212.367.8994 or soho20@verizon.net



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