

Aziza Shadenova: My Cocoon Tightens – Colours Tease

8th June – 8th July 2022

Preview opening: 8th June 2022, 6-9pm

Exposed Arts Projects, 6 Drayson Mews, London, W8 4LY



Ainalaiyn Space presents *My Cocoon Tightens – Colours Tease*, a solo exhibition by Aziza Shadenova. Curated by Indira Dyussebayeva-Ziyabek from Ainalaiyn Space and generously supported by Exposed Arts Projects.

For her first solo exhibition for Ainalaiyn space, Shadenova crafts a symbolic language from her own memories, travels and traditions to explore the ways in which we are transformed by our experiences. Using the imagery and symbolism of the butterfly and the mirror throughout her paintings, textile works and installations, Shadenova considers the delicacies of memory and childhood, and the metamorphosis of our identities as we move through life.

The exhibition title derives from the opening line of Emily Dickinson's 1896 poem *From the Chrysalis* which narrates the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly. In the poem, the caterpillar senses the uncertainty of change as its "cocoon tightens" and "colours tease". Yet, the newly-birthe butterfly understands that its ability to nurture its "dim capacity for wings" with tenderness and time will guide it safely through its transfiguration.

Echoing the poem's narrative, the girls and women in Shadenova's paintings loosely recall the moments that shaped the artist's own identity. The memories explored in the exhibition are specific to Shadenova's life, particularly the architecture, traditions, and cultural history from her upbringing. While memories are often thought of as visual and cerebral, *My Cocoon Tightens – Colours Tease* explores the embodied and sensorial dimensions to the moments that make us. Like the caterpillar experiencing the tightening of the cocoon and the shifts in colour and light, Shadenova's works highlight the ways our bodies archive the past, perhaps in the smell of freshly-brewed tea enjoyed amongst family or the gentle touch of a parent braiding their child's hair.

Fragments of memory are installed throughout Exposed Arts Projects in ways that theatrically stage reflection, rumination and recollection for both artist and audience.

- ENDS -

For general enquiries and press enquiries, please contact info@ainalaiynspace.com.

--

About Exposed Arts Projects

Exposed Arts Projects is a think-and-do tank founded and run by Sasha Burkhanova-Khabadze that celebrates the power of arts-based research to produce an informed multidimensional perspective on the contemporary human condition. It is set to nurture an innovative, mindful and just society that is driven to explore the creative alternatives to the status quo.

www.exposedartsprojects.com | [@e_artsprojects](https://www.instagram.com/e_artsprojects)

About Ainalaiyn Space

Ainalaiyn Space is a nomadic arts project based in London, founded by Indira Dyussebayeva-Ziyabek. We work with international artists and curators, providing an equal opportunity for everyone, especially to those that do not have a major presence in Europe. With learning, research and experimentation at the centre of our practice, we work on a diverse range of projects which showcase contemporary art from an interdisciplinary perspective, covering science, architecture, literature, philosophy and other areas.

www.ainalaiynspace.com | [@ainalaiynspace](https://www.instagram.com/ainalaiynspace)

About the artist

Aziza Shadenova (b.1989) is a Kazakh artist born in Uzbekistan. She graduated from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in 2011. She now lives and works in Hastings, UK.

Aziza Shadenova was one of the few young artists featured in the Central Asian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale (2013). She has participated in group shows at Sotheby's; Moscow Biennale 2014; EMMA Espoo Museum of Fine Arts (Finland, 2016), HOME gallery Manchester, Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts; EXPO 2015, as well as exhibitions in Russia, France, Switzerland, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, Kazakhstan, Argentina and the UK.

"I define my practice as a visual poetry. The majority of my work is based around humour and absurdism involved in perception of life, memories, womanhood and immigration. My work often focuses on untangling of my roots and thoughts as an immigrant, a woman, a wife, an artist and as a human being. These are observations and engagements with the past and present, and an investigation of how it may reflect on the future. The challenge is to see beyond the chronology and capture something that has been left in the NOW. Nothing is outdated. I am trying to discover the beauty in the past because its outcome always leads to some new life."

Selected Collections:

LACMA, Los Angeles, USA

IADA - International Art Development Association, Kazakhstan/France

Moving Image London, UK

National Museum of Kazakhstan, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan

Upcoming Shows:

2023

Sharjah Biennial 15 'Thinking Historically in the Present' - Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Solo Shows:

2022

- My Cocoon Tightens- Colours Tease- Ainalaiyn Space, Exposed Arts Projects, London. UK

2018

-Textures of grieving - HOP Projects - Folkestone - UK

Selected Group Shows:

2021

-Protective Instinct - Artsuited, Almaty, Kazakhstan

-When Sh*t Hits the Fan, Guts Gallery, London, UK

-Here There Nowhere, Tselinny Center, Almaty, Kazakhstan

-Fireland, One Gee in Fog, Geneva, Switzerland

2020

-New Mythologies of Central Asia - Sapar Contemporary - New York - USA 2019

-Racing The Galaxy - Palace of Independence - Astana – Kazakhstan