

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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*Sleepless* by Vered Lahav  
10 Oct 2009 – 23 Jan 2010  
Wolverhampton Art Gallery

The contemporary photographer and installation artist Vered Lahav has been commissioned to create six new artworks to be premiered at Wolverhampton Art Gallery in her solo exhibition *Sleepless* on display from Saturday 10 October 2009.

*Sleepless* presents new commissions alongside a selection of previous works from the last two years in a site-specific exhibition of photography, film, drawings and three-dimensional objects providing viewers with a powerfully emotive environment.

Subtle references to the relationship between gender and identity and the use of objects are clearly visible in her new commissions such as *Anatomy of Time I*, a single photograph of a white paper envelope containing children's milk teeth wrapped in a white lace handkerchief, which looks to tackle issues of innocence. A significant new series of six photographs called *The Lovers I*, shows books with yellowing paper purchased from charity shops, inscribed with sentimental messages from lover's written opposite the bleak reality of the price of the book. Here the relationship of the material in the photographs is important, where they show a record of past and present romantic exchanges. Finally, in the series entitled *Scrimshaw*, a Dutch word meaning to 'waste one time' and a craft adopted by whale men in the 1800s, Lahav reflects on the whalers voyages taking a contrasting woman's perspective of a personal passage and journey, looking at issues of femininity and traditional craft methods, continuing the ideas of innocence.

Lahav's work explores two contrasting yet corresponding elements of the modern city, that of the 'maker' (the architect) and the 'user' (dweller). *Sleepless* presents new artworks into this environment through investigating three core elements – buildings, women and men. By acting as a social observer of these themes, she challenges traditional perceptions of female and male individuality and relationships and their interaction with the urban environment. She is interested in telling stories of fantasy and reality, which suggest personal histories of individuals and families as well as universal themes such as childhood, myth, memory and desire. The title of the exhibition *Sleepless* refers to insomnia as an analogy for the inability to access a place of security, rest and recuperation.

Lahav is best known for her beautiful photographs and unusual installations, where her notion of 'less and less image can give more and more meaning' through her use of pure stark white simplistic yet complex compositions. As with her previous work, *Sleepless* can be defined as a form of mixed-media collage, where the relationship between the placement of the images and objects in a three dimensional space is important. The exhibition exists less as individual components and more as a whole because of the specific dialogues that have been constructed between each image and object.

Head of Curatorial Services, Marguerite Nugent, said,

'Vered Lahav combines beautifully subtle works which challenge her audience to think about issues of femininity, migration and cultural differences connected to alternative lifestyles. It is incredibly exciting for Wolverhampton to receive new commissions. This exhibition will reveal Vered's ability to create a number of works relating to different topics, through the use of sculpture, film, installations and photography which create a powerful and emotive experience for the viewer.'

A brand new book called *Sleepless*, a retrospective insight into the work of Vered Lahav and this exhibition, produced, designed and published in-house by Wolverhampton Art Gallery, will be available to purchase from the Gallery shop at the beginning of September 2009 for a special exhibition price of £10.95 (usual price £17.95). Included within this publication are essays by Carol Mavor, writer and Professor of Art

History and Visual Studies at the University of Manchester, Professor Mark Durden, Professor of Photography at Newport School of Art, Media and Design, and a Q&A conversation between Vered Lahav and Kate Pryor-Williams, Exhibitions Curator at Wolverhampton Art Gallery.

Join us at Wolverhampton Art Gallery on Wednesday 28 October 2009 to celebrate the launch of the exhibition and the new publication *Sleepless* from 5.30pm to 8.30pm where Lahav and Carol Mavor will be available for interview. Refreshments will also be provided. This will also be in conjunction with the opening of the exhibition *Moma Pop* by Jann Haworth. *Sleepless* will be on display until the 23 January 2010 and from there the exhibition will be touring the UK.

Vered Lahav graduated from the Royal College of Art in 1998 and since then has been successful in receiving awards from the Shapira Foundation and the Avi Fellowship along with being awarded numerous Arts Council grants and the prestigious Clore scholarship. Her work has been exhibited widely both nationally and internationally. Past exhibitions have been in Hamburg, Jerusalem, London, Bath, Tel Aviv, Manchester, Birmingham, Osnabruck and many other venues. She has achieved solo exhibitions nationally and internationally, including *In Vivo In Vitro* at Stillwerks, Hamburg, *The Children's Room* at Hakibbutz Gallery, Tel Aviv, *A Boy in a Woman's body* at Mac, Birmingham, *Légendes* at BCA Gallery, Bedford, and a large retrospective exhibition of work from 1992 – 2002, *Moonshine Tales and Other Stories* at Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum.

## ENDS

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### Notes to Editors:

- More information about Vered Lahav can be seen on her website at [www.veredlahav.com](http://www.veredlahav.com)
- Wolverhampton Art Gallery is open Monday – Saturday, 10.00am – 5.00pm. Free Entry.
- Wolverhampton Art Gallery is part of Wolverhampton Arts + Museums service, funded by Wolverhampton City Council. It receives additional funding as a Regularly Funded Organisation of Arts Council England and from the Museums, Libraries Archives Council through Renaissance in the Regions West Midlands.
- Renaissance is the Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA) Council's £150million programme to transform England's regional museums. For the first time ever, investment from central government is helping regional museums across the country to raise their standards and deliver real results in support of education, learning, community development and economic regeneration. A network of 'Hubs' has been set up in each English region to act as flagship museums and help promote good practice. Alongside the Hubs, MLA Regional Agencies and Museum Development Officers are providing advice and support, Subject Specialist Networks have been set up, and national museums are sharing their skills and collections to ensure Renaissance benefits the entire museums sector. Renaissance is helping museums to meet people's changing needs - and to change people's lives.
- Arts Council England works to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives. As the national development agency for the arts, we support a range of artistic activities from theatre to music, literature to dance, photography to digital art, and carnival to crafts. Great art inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves, and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2008 and 2011, we will invest £1.3 billion of public money from government and a further £0.3 billion from the National Lottery to create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.