

# Basic Detail Report



## **Title: Backsplash**

Date: 2010

Primary Maker: com.gallerysystems.emuseum.core.entities.RecordXPerson@29690

Medium: Acrylic, gesso, and glitter on wood panel

Description: "Backsplash" shows a melting New York cityscape in the shape of a mosque. The geometric, calligraphic, and floral patterning, as well as the many shades of blue, brings to mind beautifully decorated Iranian mosques. Ahkami, an Iranian-American, took inspiration from traditional Iranian ceramics when she chose to create textures by layering hardened gesso and acrylic onto a wood panel. She wanted to pay tribute to the celebratory and flamboyant nature of Iranians and, as a result, decided to include glitter in this painting. Ahkami says of her work: "While formally paying tribute to Iranian culture, "Backsplash" satirizes Iran's menacing image in the United States and the cartoonish brutality of Iran's theocratic regime. The melting mosque resembles a factory or power plant, with polluting smokestacks for minarets. It also evokes the 1960's horror film "The Blob". The force of the

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meltdown produces a green counter-wave in which miniature faces and hands of imperiled Iranian protestors are submerged. In this work, I deliberately combine a flamboyant exquisiteness with a cartoonish brutality to mirror the absurdly conflicting perceptions of Iran to which I have been exposed as an Iranian-American. Among Iranians, Iran is regarded as a source of immense pride and influence on world culture; within American contemporary culture, Iran is understood as a backward source of terror. I use the cacophonic, swirling patterning in Persian art as an expressive tool to convey the dizzying confusion I have experienced from being exposed to such opposite versions of Iran.”

Dimensions: 48 x 60 in.