



## Hazem Mahdy: An artist who gives his arm for a unifying message

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From afar, Hazem Mahdy's photographic artworks draw you in. They follow abstract shapes, similar to Islamic geometry or mandalas from the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, but up-close they reveal themselves to be repeated images of his own arm, rotating around a central point.

Named *Atman*, a Sanskrit term meaning soul, the show encapsulates Mahdy's intention to allow the viewers to explore themselves.

"The reason I use my body is because this is me in my purest form; it is the most genuine expression I can give. There are no masks, no cover-ups and there is no hiding," he explains.

While choosing this form as material, he also made a concerted effort to access the most spiritual part of his consciousness when creating the art – entering a deep meditative state before beginning each piece.

"Ideally these are all transient moments of the purest form of myself that created every single one of these," he says. But even if you don't understand or adhere to the principles of meditation, Mahdy's art is for everyone.

"I've explored Buddhism and Hinduism and Islam and Christianity and there are so many similarities between them – a basic message that is the same. I am trying to bring together the concept that there are no separations between us and everyone else."

"At the end of the day," says Mahdy, "the viewer can see what they feel and their minds can float around freely within it; that's what I want."

This is Mahdy's second solo exhibition at Carbon 12; the first was held in December 2012.

• *Atman* runs until June 10 at Carbon 12, Alserkal Avenue in Dubai