



**AWARD-WINNING PHOTOGRAPHER DINA GOLDSTEIN TO EXHIBIT
PHOTO TABLEAUX SERIES EXAMINING THE WAY
FAITH IS EXPERIENCED AND SHAPED BY CONTEMPORARY FORCES
Gods of Suburbia Opens April 14, 2016 at South Main Gallery in Vancouver**

Vancouver, B.C. APRIL 4, 2016 – What if Gods lived among us? What if they were subject to unemployment, homelessness, drug addiction, consumerism, vanity or loneliness? In her provocative and compelling solo exhibition *Gods of Suburbia*, award-winning photographer Dina Goldstein explores religious faith within the context of modern forces such as technology, science and secularism. The 11 piece series plays with narrative and religious iconography in order to communicate how organized belief has become twisted within a global framework driven by greed. The project challenges the viewer – religious or secular – to embark on a journey of self-reflection as they contemplate the relevance of dogma in modernity.

Over the past decade, Dina Goldstein has emerged as a leading artist among the Pop Surrealist movement that values satire, humour, kitsch and comic narratives to address artistic and social concerns. In 2014, Goldstein was awarded the Prix VIRGINIA, a yearly juried prize given out in Paris to recognize the most outstanding international female photographer. And *Gods of Suburbia* was recently shortlisted for the prestigious SONY World Photography Awards to be chosen later this year. Her two previously published fine art collections – *Fallen Princesses* and *In The Dollhouse* – present alternative narratives for pop cultural characters. Belle undergoing cosmetic surgery, Rapunzel dealing with the cancer and hair loss, Barbie suffering a mental breakdown and Ken coming out as gay. Goldstein's series have attracted widespread international media attention and academic commentary as well as many solo and museum exhibitions. *Gods of Suburbia* was recently featured at Art Souterrain in Montreal and at the Miami Art Fair.

“I was drawn to the keen intelligence and humanity in Dina's work,” says Don MacMillan, co-owner of SOMA Gallery. “Her images spark people to consider the truth and trouble and meaning of their own lives as seen through her satirical lens.”

Born in Tel Aviv, Israel, Dina Goldstein immigrated with her parents to Vancouver in the mid-1970s. Unable at first to speak English and unused to the cultural differences she observed, Goldstein learned to create her own place in this new cultural milieu. In her early career, she worked as an editorial and documentary photographer focusing on outsider or marginalized communities. Her early series *Trackrecord*, which featured vividly-styled denizens of Vancouver's Hastings Park Racetrack, began her shift to a more conceptual approach to photography.

"The personal truths that people both reveal and hide in themselves is fascinating to me. I now use large-scale photo tableaux to open up a conversation about where we are in contemporary society. Despite the purposeful theatricality and comic edge to my work, the meaning of each image is much quieter and more intriguing as you consider it fully. I've found that many people react viscerally – and emotionally – to my work. But I get lots of feedback about how the images resonate with people as they see themselves in my characters." - Dina Goldstein

Gods of Suburbia places its theological and philosophical characters in contemporary settings dealing with real-world issues. Suburbia becomes a metaphor for a place we all share. Elohim (the Hebrew God) is struggling financially, the Hindu deity Ganesha is subject to schoolyard bullying and Buddha is just another hipster consumerist buying over-priced produce (at Wholey Foods) as if that is the way to spiritual "goodness". Goldstein's *Last Supper* recreates "history's most famous dinner party" in the middle of Vancouver's drug-ravaged Downtown Eastside to portray society's treatment of its most vulnerable. Other Vancouver locations also serve as the backdrop for Goldstein's work which has been exhibited throughout Canada, Europe and Asia. ***Gods of Suburbia*** also includes representations of Darwin, Satan, Scientology's Xenu and the prophet Muhammad (seen from behind trying to teach a class of distracted students). The collection of 11 photographs will be presented in a large light box format.

Gods of Suburbia opens Thursday April 14 at 7PM at SOMA Gallery as part of the 2016 Capture Photography Festival. [SOMA Gallery](#) is located at 279 East 6th Avenue and the exhibition runs from April 14 to April 30, 2016. Dina Goldstein will give an Artist Talk – *The Art Of Photo Tableaux and The Making of Gods Of Suburbia* – on Saturday April 16 at 2pm at SOMA Gallery.

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