



**ADVOCARTSY PRESENTS
A SOLO EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY FARIDEH LASHAI:
Studies for Crystal and Glass Design and other works**



Image courtesy of the Farideh Lashai Foundation

**FARIDEH LASHAI: Studies for Crystal and Glass Design and other works
Opens to the public Thursday, September 14th, 2023 6-9 pm
at ADVOCARTSY's West Hollywood gallery,
Located at 434 North La Cienega Blvd, West Hollywood, CA 90048**

Los Angeles-based Iranian contemporary art platform ADVOCARTSY presents a solo exhibition of works by the late Farideh Lashai.

One of Iran's most distinguished and prolific female artists, Farideh Lashai's multidisciplinary career spanned five decades from the 1960s to her untimely passing in 2013. This exhibition presents a limited edition portfolio of twenty-eight silkscreens, posthumously produced by The Farideh Lashai Foundation from the artist's original *Studies and Sketches for Crystal and Glass Design on Kalk Paper* while working at Riedel Studios and Rosenthal Studios in the 1960s. Lashai's practice as a glass and ceramic designer was foundational to her later work, which can be seen in the two paintings exhibited with video projection from her 2010 series, *Rabbit in Wonderland*.



Studies for Crystal and Glass Design, 2022, portfolio of 28 screenprints on Steinbach paper, edition of 50, 24.5 x 34.5 cm each

All are welcome to attend the public opening for Farideh Lashai at ADVOCARTSY's West Hollywood gallery on **Thursday, September 7th, 2023, from 6-9 pm**. No appointment will be necessary.

General Information

Public Opening: Thursday, September 14th, 2023, 6 - 9 pm

Exhibition Dates: September 14th, 2023 - October 7th, 2023

Gallery hours: Wednesday - Saturday 11-5 pm or by appointment.

For more information or to request a preview catalogue, email info@advocartsy.com.



Farideh Lashai with Professor Claus Riedel, 1968, images courtesy of the Farideh Lashai Foundation

Curatorial Statement

This presentation highlights a lesser-known facet of Farideh Lashai's practice: her work as a crystal designer and glass artist. On display is a constellation of twenty-eight silkscreens, faithful posthumous reproductions of her sketches and studies for crystal and ceramic design at Riedel and Rosenthal Studios in the 1960s. Complementing these silkscreens are twelve Rosenthal ceramic vases designed by Lashai during the same period, originating from a private collection. The exhibition concludes with two seminal video paintings from her *Rabbit in Wonderland* series, offering insights into the works created in the last decade of her life, when her seemingly silent gestural abstract paintings become charged with political, whimsical poetic narratives, bringing her role as an abstract painter and experimenter with new technologies closer to her persona as a politically engaged intellectual, writer and thinker.

In her celebrated career spanning five decades, Lashai was primarily known as a painter and yet she consistently played with varying means of expression without recognizing any frontiers that would confine her to a rigid identity. Lyricism is the prevailing characteristic in her work across mediums, whether it is painting, sculpture, writing, installation or a combination of animation and painting.

Lashai was born in Rasht, Iran, and at eighteen she left for Europe where she studied German studies at Goethe University Frankfurt, and later glass and crystal design at the Academy of Applied Arts, Vienna. In 1966 she went to work at Riedel Studio in Austria. Two years later, she had her first exhibition as a designer alongside Claus Riedel in Milan, while concurrently working as a designer at Rosenthal Studios in Bavaria. These vases, along with the silkscreen portfolio based on sketches and studies at the heart of this presentation are traces of that period and are foundational to Lashai's artistic career. In a biographical piece, Negar Azimi describes the lucent quality of the original vases "as a harbinger of later paintings to come, where very often an ethereal, almost translucent presence is juxtaposed to a heavier one." The same delicate experimentation with material continues in the interplay of the ephemeral, semi-transparent quality of video projection contrasting with the opacity of painting.

In addition to being a published poet, Lashai translated seven books, including three works by the German playwright Bertolt Brecht. In 2003 her best seller auto-fiction *Shal Bamu*, or *The Jackal Came*, was published in Iran, narrating the lives of three generations of women against the sociopolitical background of Iranian society. Their multi-generational reckoning with political unrest in the past century in Iran is seen through the lens of immigration and return during the Iran-Iraq war and critics have described her prose as a genre between painting and essay. In her 2013 Art Forum Online eulogy, Media Farzin writes: “*Shal Bamu* is a story about matrilineal memory within patriarchal society. Lashai was born into a prominent family from northern Iran, and her book traces their entanglement in nearly every political uprising of the past century”



Dear, dear! How Queer everything is today! Projected animated photographic images on painting, 200x200 cm

“I didn’t want this [bloody line of history] to pass from me to my daughter,’ Lashai wrote. ‘I wanted it to end with my generation; I wanted the next to give their hearts away freely—to not have their sleep disturbed, like mine, with the memory of a body dancing on the gallows, fragments of an image once reflected in my mother’s eyes.’”

In her final years, Lashai further experimented with animation and films that are projected on her paintings referencing iconic pieces of art, film and literature— such as Francisco Goya’s *Disasters of War*, Charlie Chaplin’s *The Great Dictator*, Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, Orhan Pamuk’s *My Name is Red*, Pier Paolo Pasolini’s 1966 film *Hawks and Sparrows* or a collection of Iranian Film Farsi or B movies of the 1970s— expanding her paintings as an elastic structure in time and space to articulate narratives that were now explicitly political.



In the last work from *Rabbit in Wonderland*, presented here, and the most poignant narrative of the series, we encounter the iconic image of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, embedded in Iranian collective memory walking with his back to us in his home in Ahmadabad under house arrest. The rabbit protagonist of the series, runs in panic around him and engages in Farideh's own voice in an existential monologue with his figure: "which road do I take?" as if his panic was everyone's, that of the universe, of "the time of the ruin of ideals."

Lashai has been widely exhibited internationally, such as at the Biennale of Sydney and Moscow Biennale, both curated by Catherin de Zegher and "The Spark is You" curated by Dr. Ziba Ardalán as a collateral event of the Venice Biennale and numerous museum presentations. Posthumously, her work was subject of two retrospectives *Towards the ineffable: Farideh Lashai*, curated by Germano Celant and Faryar Javaherian at the TMOCA in 2015, and *Farideh Lashai*, a major retrospective curated by Hoor Al Qasimi at the Sharjah Art Foundation in 2016. In 2017, a three-museum project, placing the work of Lashai alongside the work of Francisco Goya, was organized between the Museum of Fine Art Ghent (MSK, Ghent), Museo Nacional del Prado and the British Museum. Her works can be found in major private and public collections such as the collections of Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles County Museum (LACMA), Centre Georges Pompidou, The British Museum, Sharjah Art Foundation, National Museum of Jordan and National Museum of Fine Arts, La Valetta, amongst others.

About ADVOCARTSY

Launched in 2015, ADVOCARTSY is a contemporary art platform specializing in Iranian contemporary art. In June of 2021, ADVOCARTSY expanded gallery operations with a new exhibition space in West Hollywood.