

ADVOCARTSY

DARIUSH NEHDARAN

artist statement:

There is never a dull moment. I often surprise myself with what I say and what I do! This is what I enjoy most and I try to create those same experiences for others. Through my photography and videos, I direct an improvised story in real time but record it through a manipulated frame. In a way, this is to add more spice and complication so that when the audience looks at that captured moment, they can come up with numerous interpretations of my work.

For me, following the rules is an anathema. I like to delve into reality, discover and expose it in ways that would always allow me to create an individual and alternative interpretation. I believe that one can always and some newness in the routine of one's life. My own photographs reveal something new to me every day and by using paradox, I add to their mystery by creating a dream world where rules don't apply. I think an upside down image makes total sense for example, because I believe that we can make our own rules.

biography:

Dariush Nehdaran, born in Isfahan/Iran in 1984, is a contemporary visual artist who fearlessly defies the rules in order to bring multiple and complex meanings to his work. Through rhythmic juxtaposed images containing a variety of perspectives, he constructs a world between dream and reality and plays with clarity and depth to suggest an alternative way of seeing things. Throughout his childhood, Dariush suffered from poor eyesight, but chose not to wear glasses to avoid the stigma of getting bullied. During that time, he experienced and viewed the world in a blurry and ambiguous way. When he became a teenager, the use of his grandfather's camera enabled him to see the world clearly for the first time in his life. The fact that he saw the world blurry through his own eyes and clear through the lens of the camera and the printed images has driven him to explore the subject of amphibology as the main topic in his work. By doing so, he has created a unique style that demands his viewers' attention and focus as part of the resolution in his work. Nehdaran currently lives in San Francisco but has expanded his art internationally. His photographs and video works are available both in public and private collections worldwide including the Armando Reverón Contemporary Art Museum in Caracas-Venezuela 2018, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in the US 2016, and the Salsali Private Museum in Dubai-UAE 2012. Dariush is the recipient of multiple awards including the Nikon International Photo Contest in Japan 2015, the Hamghadam Photo Festival in France 2010, and the 7th Image of the Year Festival in Tehran 2010.



The Biker's View Series:

A couple of years ago I bought a motorcycle. The front windshield of it was full of stickers with religious writings and prayers. It was as if the owner had wanted to see his deepest religious beliefs every day in front of him, between reality and himself. This idea fascinated me at that time and caused me to study every windshield of every motorbike I saw in the streets. It was like the owners had many uses for this small piece of glass; some even used it as their calendar, phone book, and many other similar things. This made me to use my artistic tool of expression, i.e. my camera, to capture these unique uses, which still remains a hobby of mine when walking around the city streets.



The Stopper Series

A stopper from an old wine decanter brought back memories of my childhood and gave life to this series of photographs. In Persian literature wine is somehow portrayed as the source of enlightenment and the path to clarity, coherence and knowledge but also this elixir characterizes pleasure and oblivion, obscurity and blurriness. The stopper is an object that stops the wine from pouring out. It is therefore able to directly manage the liquid's effect on the mind. The more you pour the more blurry things get creating an alternative way for us to see the world around us. In these photographs, the stopper covers a specific part of the image and blurs the rest. The juxtaposition of the blurriness and clarity creates three different layers in each image, the Stopper itself, what is inside the stopper and the blurry background offering a parallel universe. Loving gymnastics as a child was probably the reason why I have been fascinated by seeing things upside down. One of my all-time favorite poses was the handstand since it offered me a different view of everything. When pictures are upside down, they provide more for the viewer. By rotating my images I try to give them an infinite meaning and by starting this conversation, I re-evaluate the relationship between right and wrong, up and down, back and forth... and like the Persian poet Hafez allow each interpreter to have his own understanding of the subject. In this series my glass stopper has the power of showing everything upside down, but I still chose to rotate the images one more time to allow the stopper to narrate the story. These additional rotations trick the viewer into seeing an upright image through the stopper when scientifically one should see an inverted picture. By doing so, I invite my viewer to see the world in an alternative way, and I encourage him/her to discover the ambiguities and uncertainties found in our surroundings. What makes the stopper even more interesting to me is its circular shape and the paradox it creates through the images it captivates. Like life, a circle has unlimited turns. It keeps turning until it is stopped, but ironically here, my Stopper does not keep turning. It is meant to stop the liquid from flowing. I like playing with the rules. Maybe, there is no right and wrong or good and bad. Everything in life can be seen differently through different eyes. It is up to each of us how we choose to interpret this infinite cycle.



The Life of Shadows Series

“When we stand, they fall. When we sit, they crumble. When we walk, they shiver. And when we sleep, they whirl... Face the wall, your back to the window, look through the window while waiting for the sun to shine again, waiting for us to appear again... then we can mingle with the Zebra stripes on the pedestrian crossing, and melt in the gray asphalt of the road, lest a car drives over them. But we never wait. We crawl in between the cars, and dance on the zebra crossing. By the time we make it to the other side of the road, they are finished. They change names and colors, and melt in the dark night. But we are still alive. Far from the gray human world, we turn the wheel of life; we live and grow in our pitch black world.”

In this body of work, unlike the multi-dimensional humans, my shadows are single-dimensional. The shadows simply show what they are. By flipping and rotating the images, our real lives are replaced with those of the shadows; but despite the distorted reality, the shadows are distinguishable. They are now the real images.

Untitled - Life of Shadows series (4/5+2AP), 2011, Digital photography on Gelatin Silver Print, 30 x 45 in, \$5,500

Part of LACMA's permanent collection as of 2016

