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OUT OF CHARACTER

a solo exhibition by artist & animator Pouya Afshar

Opening Reception: January 12th, 4-7 pm

Closing Reception: January 26th, 4-7 pm

The SPACE by ADVOCARTSY

924 S. San Pedro St. Los Angeles, CA, 90015.

Parking Available on Premises.

This event is free and open to the public.



*Iranian Constitutional Revolution (Mashrooteh Irani), (1/5+3AP), 2019, Digital Print on Eco Canvas, 24 x 54 in.
Images courtesy of ADVOCARTSY and the artist.*

(Los Angeles, California—January 12th, 2020) Downtown Los Angeles Iranian contemporary art platform ADVOCARTSY is pleased to present OUT OF CHARACTER, an exhibition of limited edition digital drawings by artist and animator Pouya Afshar exploring some of Iran's most influential historical figures with a whimsical twist. The public reception will be held Sunday, January 12th from 4 to 7 pm.

ADVOCARTSY is thrilled to present this diverse body of work by Pouya Afshar which exemplifies his range and depth of knowledge in history and Iranian culture as well as his masterful art of character design and storytelling.

OUT OF CHARACTER is Pouya Afshar's second solo exhibition with ADVOCARTSY. Elegantly combining historical research with unflinchingly honest caricatures, Afshar reminds us of the power and knowledge begging to be discovered within our pasts. "Artists are the ones recording the history," states Afshar matter of factly, a sentiment that is echoed again and again within each work.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION + THE ARTIST



Shahr-E-Ghesseh, (1/5+3AP), 2019, Digital Print on Eco Canvas, 29 x 54 in.
Images courtesy of ADVOCARTSY and the artist.

OUT OF CHARACTER surveys nearly 30 unique characters from more than 300 years of Iranian history. Shahs, empresses, political figures, military commanders, and Persian mythical creatures are among those depicted in this expansive series.

Digitally drawn with a light-hearted hand, these limited edition works encourage viewers to proverbially crane their necks to garner fresh insight into the lives and personalities of previously opaque public figures. “I am implementing fictional characterizations of these individuals within the audience’s mind regardless of the reality. My intention is to build these characters from the inside out, investing them with a past and a persona only hinted at in the history,” says Afshar “For the creation of these characters, I tend to concentrate more on the refinements than general aspects. I intend to re-imagine their roles within specific time periods of our contemporary culture and crystalize the clichés about them. I intend to creep up on my audience, hinting on the importance of reviewing the history and how characters carry the weight of its narrative.” Through caricaturesque stylization, Afshar summons colorful, multi-faceted identities from the black and white pages of textbooks and seeks to undermine our traditional means of understanding the past. In doing so, history becomes more approachable, less daunting, and ultimately more engaging.

An alumnus of the California Institute of Arts Character Animation department and a graduate of the University of California Los Angeles Graduate Department of Film, Pouya Afshar currently serves as an assistant professor of art at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. Afshar’s multidisciplinary background informs all the work he creates, regardless of medium. Pouya Afshar is the creator, character designer, and producer of the animated series “Rostam in Wonderland” and the co-creator of IPA2PA comics. Most recently, Afshar wrote and illustrated a graphic novel entitled “TEHRAN,” which follows the story of a 6-year-old non-binary child living in Tehran and aims to create a platform for dialogue about gender, sexual identity, human rights, and youth well-being in Iran.

As an artist whose diverse practice ranges from illustration to animation to oil painting, the common thread within Pouya Afshar's expansive body of work is storytelling. Afshar states, "In storytelling, it is imperative to understand a character's personality and behavioral tendencies in order to capture an appealing characterization of that persona within the narrative structure. One has to live, breathe, and feel the surroundings alongside the characters he/she creates." going on to describe his intention behind the series, Afshar claims, "For me, within this context, I intend to restructure real personalities visually and create a new persona. In a way, I am distorting history by projecting these characters through a humorous lens." Journeying from works that depict specific individuals within Iranian history to works that draw on famed Persian mythology and literature, **OUT OF CHARACTER** invites viewers to consider how the past has influenced the present and further, how the present influences our understanding of the past.



Left: *Zahir-Ol-Doleh*, (3/5+3AP), 2019, Digital Print on Eco Canvas, 22 x 18 in
Right: *Anis*, (2/5+3AP), 2019, Digital Print on Eco Canvas, 22 x 18 in
Images courtesy of ADVOCARTSY and the artist.

ABOUT ADVOCARTSY:

ADVOCARTSY is a collaborative visual arts platform specializing in Iranian contemporary art.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/advocartsy/>
Instagram: @Advocartsy

ABOUT THE SPACE BY ADVOCARTSY:

THE SPACE by ADVOCARTSY was launched in October 2017 as the permanent Los Angeles gallery space of ADVOCARTSY to further its mission of promoting Iranian Contemporary Art and as an extension of ADVOCARTSY's ART BRIEF series, launched in Los Angeles in 2015. The 1,800-square-foot-space is ideally situated in the heart of Downtown LA's Fashion District.