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**ADVOCARTSY PRESENTS  
PARASTOU FOROUHAR: PAPILLON: A SOLO EXHIBITION**



*The Blue Girl*, 2019-2023. Digital print on photo rag. 39.4 x 39.4 in.

***Papillon* opens to the public  
Saturday, January 20th, 2024, 5-8 pm  
at ADVOCARTSY's West Hollywood gallery,  
Located at 434 North La Cienega Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90048**

ADVOCARTSY is proud to present Parastou Forouhar: *Papillon* with a public opening reception on Saturday, January 20th, 2024 from 5-8 pm at ADVOCARTSY's West Hollywood gallery located at 434 North La Cienega Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90048. Exhibited are nine emblematic works from Forouhar's *Papillon* collection, a delicate use of form that encapsulates the haunting subjugation of the social order by oppressive forces of power. Forouhar will have a concurrent installation in the exhibition *Art Iran: Falling into Language* at Craft Contemporary in collaboration with Farhang Foundation, on view January 28 - May 5, 2024.

## Exhibition Statement

Parastou Forouhar was born in Tehran in 1962 and has been living and working in Germany since 1991. “My work is a critique of a familiar culture of ornament, which leaves so little room for individualism,” Forouhar says. “In ornamental structure, an overall principle is forced on the components; what doesn’t conform must be rejected and removed. I equate this with a totalitarian system, which also removes what damages the overall order.” Forouhar’s work blurs the boundaries between form and concept, biography and artistry. Its mastery lies in seamlessly weaving the personal, steeped in profound convictions, into a shared endeavor for the audience. Through her art, we are drawn into the sphere of violence, prompted to contemplate alongside her, to share in her indignation, and to endure as she has endured. Ultimately, Forouhar’s body of work stands as a testament to her belief, not in any otherworldly or divine system, but in the compelling influence of evidence—be it visual, verbal, or emotional—as a tool to transform the social order.



*Flight PS 752*, 2019-2023. Digital print on photo rag. 39.4 x 39.4 in.

In the *Papillon Collection*, the simultaneity of beauty and horror is masterfully encapsulated within the delicate guise of butterflies. In the graceful contours of their wing pairs, scenes of terror unfold, saturated with aggression and raw brutality: the subjects are bound, subjugated, executed. More about composition and understanding of the images Each butterfly is endowed with its own name, retrospectively embodying a historically significant event in contemporary Iranian history.

Among them is *Flight PS 752*, a poignant reference to the Teheran to Kyiv flight. On January 8, 2020, this flight witnessed the tragic downing of a fully occupied civilian aircraft of

Ukraine Airlines shortly after takeoff, struck by two surface-to-air missiles of the Islamic Republic. In Nayzar, a tribute is paid to the residents of the small town of Mahshar in southern Iran, who, faced with soaring prices, could no longer sustain their livelihoods. In November 2019, in protest, they blocked access roads to the oil refineries and were met with the full force of the state apparatus, seeking refuge in the nearby bamboo fields. Under the relentless onslaught of rocket fire, the swamp was stained crimson with their blood.

The wings in *Stained* are a poignant homage to the victims of repeated acid attacks. In Zankoshi, a grim allusion is made to the official honor killings of women, a testament to the deeply misogynistic stance of the regime. The butterfly *Dokhtar e Abi (The Blue Girl)* serves as a living memory to a devoted fan of the Esteghlal football club, who, despite the ban on women entering the stadium, defiantly donned the club's blue colors and simply yearned to attend one game. In an act of protest against an impending prison sentence, the girl ultimately set herself ablaze, becoming an icon of the protest movement. In *Haft Tappe Union*, the butterfly evokes the uprising of workers at a sugarcane factory in southwestern Iran. Following peaceful protests due to withheld wages in 2018, several representatives of the syndicate were arrested, laying the groundwork for a burgeoning labor movement in Iran.



L: *Stained*, 2019-2023. Digital print on photo rag. 39.4 x 39.4 in.  
R: *Haft Tappe Union* 2019-2023. Digital print on photo rag. 39.4 x 39.4 in.

These butterflies, extolled in Persian mystical poetry for their devotion and willingness to sacrifice, are transformed through intricate ornamentation into astonishingly aesthetically pleasing artifacts. Embodied by these butterflies are the ancient culture of Persia, its lofty poetry, and the cherished memories of home, security, and maternal love. Notably, the butterfly - known as "Parwaneh" in Persian - bears the same name as the artist's mother. However, in contrast to these positively charged associations, upon close examination of Forouhar's creations, it becomes evident that they are distinguished by nothing but a tragic beauty.



## **About the Artist**

Living and working in German exile since the 1990s, themes like the violation of Human Rights and the oppression of women are of major concern for the artist and activist Parastou Forouhar, who employs a powerful feminist language in her art. Her work blurs the boundaries between form and concept, biography and artistry.

With artistic techniques such as installation, graphic print or performative photography, Fourouhar engages with the positionality of the female body, and how diversity and ambivalence shape the meaning and ownership of the space in relation to gender, ethnicity and migration.

Her work has been widely exhibited around the world and is included in prestigious permanent collections, including The Queensland Art Museum, the British Museum, Belvedere in Vienna, the Museum of Modern Art in Frankfurt, the Deutsche Bank Art Collection and the Walker Art Center.



## **Exhibition Programming**

### **Public Opening Reception:**

Saturday, January 20th from 5-8pm

### **Exhibition On View:**

January 20 - March 9th, 2024

Regular Gallery Hours: Wed - Sat 11-5pm or by appointment

For more information or to request a preview catalogue, email [info@advocartsy.com](mailto:info@advocartsy.com).