



SUMAC SPACE AN INITIATIVE DEVOTED TO CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICES OF THE MIDDLE EAST, SHOWS ITS SEVENTH DIGITAL EXHIBITION *DEAR FRACTURED STONES*.

THE EXHIBITION IS ON-VIEW AT WWW.SUMAC.SPACE FROM NOVEMBER 22nd, 2021, TO JANUARY 18th, 2022; Curated by Baharak Omidfard.

Dear Fractured Stones,



Mojtaba Amini Vooria Aria Aidin Bagheri
Azin Haghighi Tarlan Lotfizadeh Mahmoud Maktabi
Shirin Mohammad Mitra Soltani
Nazanin Noroozi
Curated by Baharak Omidfard 22.11.2021 - 18.01.2022

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Azin Haghighi, from the Series *Dream zone*, 2018

The exhibition *Dear Fractured Stones*, brings together a group of artworks exploring the nature of stone as material, as medium, and as metaphor. The exhibition will highlight the theme – (re)collect/(re)connect – one that demonstrates a variety of artistic strategies for repairing and re-establishing connections. Fractured stones can be understood as former parts of larger units whose connections are currently broken. A reparative attitude would thus allow these fragments to come together to form a unit, a whole.

Dear Fractured Stones, assembles nine artists from Iran and the Iranian diaspora. Although the presented works combine diverse art practices, they all share visual and content-related references to the themes of collection and archive. In this sense, fractured stones – whether depicted through installation, photography, as objects, or in painting – are transformed into condensed information carriers capable of absorbing and storing unknown narratives and, thus, of making such narratives visible. Behind each transformation lies an intention not only to not forget but also to actively remember. Such an approach shapes one's self-image and worldview, and the selected works explore individual and collective memories, offering expanded insights into site-specific culture, history, politics, and mysticism, as well as into rituals connected with tomb culture and the occult.

What references to our present day and to our lived environment are contained within the idea (re)collect/(re)connect, and which strategies might serve as reparative in the context of an artwork?

Formal and playful in syntax, *Dear Fractured Stones*, refers to the standard salutation of a letter and thus suggests a communicative exchange, one in which the fractured stone now has a chance to reply.

PARTICIPANT ARTISTS

Mojtaba Amini, b. 1979, Sabzevar, Iran. Lives and works in Tehran.

His art tells of his childhood memories and near-death experiences and how these have subsequently merged into our collective history. Amini works with materials from his home environment, including turquoise (mineral), rubble and stones, and animal waste such as camel leather and hair.

Vooria Aria, b. 1979, Sanandaj, Iran. Lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

According to his biography, he focuses on topics such as migration and homeland. In one of his more recent works, Aria examined traditional graves in Sanandaj. Aria works exclusively with raw materials such as slate and hemp rope.

Aidin Bagheri, b. 1991, Tehran, Iran.

His views are informed by his education in sociology, and his art projects can be understood as visual essays which criticize the norms and values of a changing society. Bagheri works in a research-oriented manner and utilizes diverse media.

Azin Haghighi, b. 1986, Tabriz, Iran.

His photographic works are poetic reports of critical social situations. In his works, Haghighi depicts anonymous people such as mineworkers and jobseekers and tells of their customs, their rituals, and their territories.

Tarlan Lotfizadeh, b. 1984 Tehran, Iran.

Her art practice is founded in aspects of physical time. She generates her work material from a wide variety of sources, including elements from literature, film, and archive. Lotfizadeh works in an interdisciplinary and project-related manner.

Mahmoud Maktabi, b. 1985 Tehran, Iran.

Love is a central theme in Maktabi's works, and it is through this lens that he encounters the world and focuses on nameless lovers. Maktabi employs his own body for his artistic interventions as well as using the natural laws embodied in stone, earth, water, and air.

Shirin Mohammad, b. 1992, Tehran, Iran. Lives and works in Berlin, Germany.

Using historical events as her basis, she mixes documentary and fictional narratives in such a way that new constellations and worlds are formed. Mohammad works across different media and sources a range of material from both archives and through research.

Nazanin Noroozi, b. 1985, Tehran, Iran. Lives and works in New York, USA.

Her art tests the reliability of archives, which, although themselves under the influence of volatility, are still capable of shaping our collective memories. Noroozi works with family photos, found pictures of environmental disasters, and low-fidelity graphics from early computer games.

Mitra Soltani, b. 1988, Shahrekord, Iran. Lives and works in Tehran.

She deals with female identity in the context of universal structures and patriarchal societies.

In her most recent works, Soltani has made use of biographies, newspapers, and broken natural stones as important materials.

CURATOR

Baharak Omidfard is a curator with both an artistic and academic background. She holds a bachelor's degree in visual communication from Tehran University of Art, Iran, and was later awarded a bachelor's and master's degree in art history from the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany, with a focus on modern and contemporary art. In her academic work, Baharak Omidfard has extensively explored the topic of "farewell" in contemporary art. She has curated exhibitions of experimental art in Germany, France, and Switzerland. She received a curatorial grant from Rhineland-Palatinate and has gathered work experience in several museums. Currently, she is interested in the interface between art and public spaces, and her most recent research deals with artistic and research methods of "connection" and "disconnection".

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