

CLOSE-UP

Farhad Moshiri

March 19 – April 28, 2018

The Third Line is pleased to present *Close-up*, Farhad Moshiri's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery. Following the artist's first US-based museum solo, which was held at The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh last year, Farhad returns to the UAE with a new body of hand embroidered works.



Farhad Moshiri, *Girl with ruffle skirt*, 2018, Hand embroidered beads on canvas on board, 165 x 153 cm

Close-up includes new works produced in 2018, as well as two portraits from 2014 that have never been shown before. All of them employ Farhad's signature technique of hand-embroidering beads to form reproductions of photographs. The imagery moves between the real and the imagined, and much of the style of working continues to provide a critical commentary on the East-West dichotomy, which is ever present in the artist's practice. The exhibition includes several works that reference western popular culture rendered in the time-consuming tradition of Iranian craftsmanship, providing a humorous but poignant juxtaposition on the fastness and slowness of time.

Special to this show is the addition of new works that, for the first time, use Farhad's own photographs as subject matter. These can be found in the monochromatic *First Snow* series which illustrate Farhad's photos of a heavily snowed-in landscape outside of his studio in Lavasan, a city near Tehran. This change in image sourcing marks a subtle shift in the way the artist employs visual vocabulary in his work, blurring the lines of representation from the two different worlds – those from his photographs, and those existing in the found images.

Due to the stark black and white contrast and the zoomed-in view, the works in the *First Snow* series appear as abstract renditions at first, and are evocative of ink drawings. This style harks both to the artist's early fascination with Abstract Expressionism as well as his later work with Iranian calligraphy. It is through navigating the viewer's position from the canvas that the image appears, sometimes suddenly, of tree boughs and branches stripped off their leaves and weighed under soft mounds of fresh snow. These works are created with pearl beads that lend a dreamlike luminescence to the images.

The surfaces of these canvases – both coloured and monochromatic – allow a glimpse into the physicality of the work, breaking down the observable into three dimensional beads which are limited

in their colour gradient scope. Much like the dot-matrix printing of newspaper photos and comic book illustrations, a recurrent theme in pop-art, these also connect to Farhad's fascination with the idea of pixelation that he encountered in Iran while browsing through censored images.

Close-up brings together these inspirations and curiosities that Farhad has spent much of his career engaging with and moves forward embracing the poetics of the artist personal vicinity. In this way, this exhibition allows moments of deliberation, fantasy and quiet introspection.

The exhibition is accompanied by an e-catalogue which includes an insightful and previously unpublished conversation between Hans Ulrich Obrist and the artist.

In the screening room, a conversation about Farhad's practice recorded at Art Basel Miami 2017 will be shown. Moderated by Dr. Shiva Balaghi, the panel includes José Carlos Diaz, Chief Curator, The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Dina Nasser Khadivi, Independent Curator and Art Consultant, Geneva; and Mitra Abbaspour, Independent Curator, New York.

About Farhad Moshiri

Farhad Moshiri was born in Shiraz, Iran in 1963. Living between Tehran and Paris, Farhad has developed a personal language in which he discusses commonalities in Iranian and Western cultures.

Farhad's first solo museum exhibition *Go West* opened at the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh in October 2017 while past solo exhibitions include *First Snow*, Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Salzburg, Austria (2018); *Snow Forest*, Galerie Perrotin, New York, USA (2017); *Float*, Galerie Perrotin, New York, USA (2014); *My Flower*, Hyundai Gallery, Seoul, South Korea (2014); *Shukran*, The Third Line, Dubai, UAE (2011); *Love is Not Everything*, Farjam Foundation, Dubai, UAE (2011); and *Nothing Serious*, Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Salzburg, Austria (2010).

Farhad's recent group exhibitions include *Rebel, Jester, Mystic, Poet: Contemporary Persians*, Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, Canada and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA (2017); *Heaven and Hell. From Magic Carpets to Drones*, Boghossian Foundation – Villa Empain, Brussels, Belgium (2015); *One Way: Peter Marino*, Bass Museum, Miami Beach, FL, USA (2014); *Safar/Voyage: Contemporary Works by Arab, Iranian and Turkish Artists*, Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver, Canada (2013); *Love Me, Love Me Not: Contemporary Art from Azerbaijan and its neighbours*, The 55th International Art Exhibition (Collateral Event), Venice Biennale, Italy (2013); *The World Belongs to You*, François Pinault Collection, Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italy (2011); *Iran Inside Out*, Chelsea Art Museum, New York, NY, USA (2009); and *Words Into Art: Artists of the Modern Middle East*, British Museum, London, UK (2006).

Farhad also participated in the 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art at the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia (2009) and in the 6th Sharjah Biennial, Sharjah, UAE (2003).

His works are housed in the collections of The British Museum, London, UK; Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar; the Virginia Museum of Fine Art, USA; and François Pinault Collection, Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italy.

About The Third Line

The Third Line is a Dubai-based art gallery that represents contemporary Middle Eastern artists locally, regionally and internationally. The Third Line also hosts non-profit, alternative programs to increase interest and dialogue in the region.

Represented artists include: Abbas Akhavan, Ala Ebtekar, Amir H. Fallah, Arwa Abouon, Babak Golkar, Farah Al Qasimi, Farhad Moshiri, Fouad Elkoury, Golnaz Fathi, Hassan Hajjaj, Hayv Kahraman, Huda Lutfi, Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, Laleh Khorramian, Lamya Gargash, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Pouran Jinchu, Rana Begum, Sahand Hesamiyan, Sara Naim, Sherin Guirguis, Shirin Aliabadi, Slavs and Tatars, Sophia Al-Maria, Tarek Al-Ghoussein, Youssef Nabil and Zineb Sedira.

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