

HAMZIANPOUR & KIA

*One Night Only*

Farzad Kohan

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May 08, 2023, 4 - 9pm

Hamzianpur & Kia Gallery is thrilled to announce "One Night Only with Farzad Kohan," a special event on May 8th, 2023, featuring a selection of Kohan's works exploring migration, memory, and community. Kohan is an Iranian-American artist based in Los Angeles, whose work has been exhibited internationally. His art is deeply rooted in his personal experience of migration, and his pieces often reflect the feelings of displacement, nostalgia, and cultural hybridity that come with leaving one's home and starting anew in a foreign land. The exhibition will feature Kohan's thought-provoking paintings and works on paper, inviting viewers to explore the complexity of the immigrant experience and the intersection of personal stories in shaping our collective history.

By painting over the pages of Javanan magazines, Kohan creates a powerful visual narrative that speaks to the experiences of Iranian immigrants. The use of Javanan serves as a bridge between the past and present, connecting the memories and experiences of the Iranian community with their current lives in the diaspora. This connection is vital for those who have experienced the trauma and displacement of migration, as it offers a sense of continuity and connection to their cultural heritage. Kohan's use of Javanan magazine in his art is also highly symbolic of the ways in which migrants often hold onto their cultural heritage in the face of assimilation. In this way, Kohan's art serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of preserving and celebrating cultural heritage. It is a celebration of the resilience and strength of migrants, who must navigate the challenges of assimilation while also holding onto the traditions and memories that shape their identity.

Kohan emphasizes form, making successive stages of art making analogous to diasporic experiences by combining diverse and opposing elements to create a cohesive final product. This process is revealed in Kohan's layered abstract works created through painting, collage, décollage, and sanding, resulting in built-up yet weathered surfaces that are both chaotic and methodical. This carefully crafted texture, paired with his use of bold bright colors against darker, more muted tones, is suggestive of the many layers of identity present within the individual. Through his use of diverse and intricate cultural elements, Farzad Kohan's art captures the nuanced and multifaceted nature of individuals' lived experiences, resonating with those who share similar experiences of navigating the complexities of cultural integration.

## **Biography**

Farzad Kohan's sculptures and paintings explore themes like love, migration, and identity, often incorporating appropriated media and found objects. Partially inspired by his personal history and surroundings, Kohan places emphasis on form, allowing the successive stages of art making to become analogous to diasporic experience, as diverse, sometimes opposing, elements are sampled, brought together, and accumulated. These apparent stages are integral parts of each finalized work. Kohan's formalistic process is revealed, for example, as he layers then strips abstract works through painting, collage, *décollage*, and sanding, creating built-up yet weathered surfaces that are at once chaotic and methodical. Allusions to the passage of time, gradual transformations, and hidden stories are found in the tactile details of his treated panels.

Text has also been central to Kohan's compositions, as he uses Farsi or Arabic script to add narrative elements. In *Love Letters*, a series of works on paper, he describes moments of longing and desire with poetic confessions that are written across the lower portion of his compositions. The artist's verses correspond with the colour schemes and textured surfaces of specific works, as abstraction is used to detail the different sensations of romantic love. With his most recent series of paintings, Kohan records the migration stories of others through excerpted texts or quotes that are written across the canvas in American typewriter font, as though creating an archival document. The forms of these untitled works are inspired by the very process of migration and reflect the difficulties of assimilation with techniques that attempt to unify repellent materials like oil and water based media.

Born in Tehran, Iran in 1967, Farzad Kohan lives and works in Los Angeles, California, where he first trained as a sculptor in the late 1990s. Kohan has held solo exhibitions at Maria Behnam Bakhtiar Monaco 2019, Tufenkian Fine Arts Los Angeles 2019, Ayyam Gallery Dubai, DIFC (2016, 2013) and Seyhoun Gallery, Los Angeles (2006). Selected group exhibitions for the artist include Arena 1 Gallery (Advocartsy), Los Angeles (2016, 2015); Mim Gallery, Los Angeles (2015); Ayyam Gallery, Beirut (2015); Francis Boeske Projects, Amsterdam (2015); ABRA Gallery, Los Angeles (2011); Human Rights Awareness Tour, USA (2008); J Ferrari Gallery, Los Angeles (2008); Eagle Rock Center for the Arts (2008); and Phantom Galleries, Los Angeles (2007).

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