

## YAVUZ GALLERY | PRESS RELEASE | 21 JUL 2021

### *Seemingly Playful*

Mehdi Ghadyanloo, Farrokh Mahdavi, Asal Peirovi, Hoda Zarbaf

**Exhibition dates:** 29 July to 21 August 2021  
**Location:** Yavuz Gallery Sydney  
86 George Street, Redfern, NSW 2016 Australia

Yavuz Gallery Sydney is proud to present *Seemingly Playful*, a group exhibition featuring four Iranian artists that have never previously exhibited within Australia: **Mehdi Ghadyanloo**, **Farrokh Mahdavi**, **Asal Peirovi** and **Hoda Zarbaf**. With vastly different backgrounds and approaches, these four leading artists are united in their use of unconventional spatial composition, allegorical subject matter, domestic settings, and vibrant bursts of colour. The works build a caricature of contemporary life by depicting abstracted and surreal scenes from the everyday – a man shaving; a children’s playground; architectural elements from a house; a woman’s stockings. Through the exaggeration of small, quotidian details, personal truths are revealed that transcend cultural and geographic barriers. *Seemingly Playful* reveals fundamental human experiences of love, loss and longing.

#### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Mehdi Ghadyanloo** (b. 1981, Karaj, Iran) creates paintings with surreal and minimalistic themes that open a window into contemporary life in Iran. Ghadyanloo has painted over 100 gigantic murals throughout the country’s capital and is considered one of Iran’s leading artists. Growing up near the agricultural fields in the suburbs of Tehran, Ghadyanloo studied at Tehran University’s College of Fine Arts and graduated with a BA in 2005. He earned an MA in film studies from Tehran’s Teachers College (Tarbiyat-e Modarres). In 2016 he became the first Iranian artist to be commissioned in both Iran and the US since the revolution in 1979, when he completed a large mural for the Rose Kennedy Greenway project in Boston, USA.

**Farrokh Mahdavi** (b. 1970, Tehran, Iran) is amongst the most prolific painters of his generation in Iran, with his works being easily distinguished through the use of unique pinkish hues and his recognisable technique that features such as the eyes or the lips, and the rest are covered by thick layers of pink paint, accurately expressing the emotions of his characters. He tries to specify forms and conditions without directly depicting anything additional to that as he believes it deviates from the main point. Mahdavi’s work has been shown in Iran and abroad in major exhibitions including *City Prince/sses* at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, France (2019) and the Iranian Pavilion in Venice Biennale, Italy (2015).

**Asal Peirovi’s** (b. 1985, Sari, Mazandaran Province, Iran) paintings employ a wide variety of techniques and explore themes of memory, travel, scenography, and geometry. Her “Curtains” series are a combination of study and improvisation in which the artist’s creation of visual texture on fabric resembles the unpredictable behaviour of nature—an opportunity she uses as a context to add different layers of architectural elements standing in opposition to nature’s unpredictability. These architectural elements, inspired by historical Islamic-Persian structures and depicted in the colour palette and the perspective techniques of traditional Persian painting, invoke a myriad of elusive references that express the diversity which informs Peirovi’s visual perception. Peirovi is a graduate of Painting from Shahed University (BA, 2009) and Tehran Art University (MA, 2014).

**Hoda Zarbaf’s** (b. 1982, Tehran, Iran d. 2020) sculptural compositions are mainly made up of found ephemera that maintain individual human traces: discarded socks, YouTube videos, worn T-shirts, online sound sculptures, restock monitors, human hair, abandoned dolls, and throwaway furniture. Her absurd and uncanny work explores notions of memory by underscoring the absence of each items’ former owner. Zarbaf was born in Tehran in the early

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years of the Islamic Revolution and war. She received a BFA in Painting and MFA from the University of Tehran, and an MFA in digital Media from the University of Windsor in 2010. Her work has toured internationally to contemporary art spaces in Berlin, Hamburg, New York, Vancouver, and into museums including Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada and Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran, working closely with the curator Sanam Samanian over the course of her career. Zarbaf sadly passed away last year at the age of 37.

*Seemingly Playful* is presented in collaboration with Dastan Gallery, Tehran, Iran.

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**For inquiries and more information, please contact:**

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## Selected Images



Mehdi Ghadyanloo, *The Repetitive Joy*, 2021, acrylic and oil on canvas, 235 x 120 cm

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**Farrokh Mahdavi**, *Untitled*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 200 x 162 cm



**Asal Peirovi**, *On the Foothills of Alborz*, 2021, acrylic and ecoline on linen, 107 x 84 cm

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**Hoda Zarbaf**, *My Grandma's Waiting for Me*, 2016, old chair, textile, fibre stuffing, old monitor, mixed media, 128 x 115 x 93 cm

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