

Mehdi Farhadian

SANCTUMS OF DECISION

SEPT 8 - OCT 2, 2016

OPENING SEPTEMBER 7, 7-9PM



Truce 2016. Acrylic on canvas. 51 x 71 in. / 130 x 180 cm

Richard Taittinger Gallery is honored to present *Sanctums of Decision*, the first solo exhibition in the United States of Iranian artist, **Mehdi Farhadian**.

Having represented Iran in the 2015 Venice Biennale, Farhadian is broadly recognized as a leading artist of the new contemporary scene of Tehran.

The artist's intricately detailed portrayals of interior spaces and gardens integrate abstract and figurative features to create dreamlike, visually stunning scenes, inhabited by people and animals engaged in enigmatic acts. Farhadian's personal style fuses realistic, expressive and fictional narratives, providing a potent vehicle for his highly personal subject matters. This typically demonstrates his deep concern for Iranian contemporary history.

This exhibition features Farhadian's recent work, which encourages a reconsideration of figurative painting in contemporary art. Drawing from the lushness of nineteenth-century European painting traditions and imbuing them with local specificity, ethereal qualities, and distinctly Iranian elements, these paintings reinvigorate representational art while simultaneously ushering beauty back into contemporary painting.

Farhadian adapts techniques formerly found in historic photography as a tool for painting, similar to the work of Scottish painter, Peter Doig. The latter used photographs to create "disorienting Magical Realism." The two artists both aim to draw from the mnemonic devices deployed through photography without creating paintings that resemble photographs.

Like the motivations shared by many photographers and Doig, the imagery that Farhadian endeavors to expose is that of his utopic self, peace for humanity. Perhaps the most poignant of Farhadian's paintings in *Sanctums of Decision* to make this case is *Truce* (2016). The work depicts two moments occurring simultaneously: a hunting scene and the aftermath of war, the exchange of truce being drawn within the King's pavilion. The scene is one of two narratives but of like symbolism. The viewer is required to imagine what might be happening inside the pavilion adorned with crowns. A happenstance that is signified by the deer and panther that lay upon the frozen earth; a "royal crown" flower blooms beside them. All is eerily quite as the peacemaking process begins.

Art Critic, Behnam Kamrani, writes of the artist's recent work, "In his paintings, Farhadian follows an enjoyable narrative coupled with freshness. Without intending to be pessimistic, these works are not naïve either, because in this narrative, a terrifying glory is awaiting us, a delightful terror!"

Mehdi Farhadian (b. 1980) has an MFA from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Tehran University. Select exhibitions include ART CAPITAL (Comparison), Grand Palais, 2016, Paris (France); The Great Game, Iran Pavilion, La Biennale di Venezia 2015, Venice (Italy); Magic of Persia, Royal College of Arts, 2011, London (UK); and Iran Inside Out, Chelsea Museum, 2009, New York.

FOR PRESS INQUIRIES

Please contact: tennae@richardtaittinger.com
#mehdifarhadian #sanctumsofdecision

R I C H A R D
T A I T T I N G E R
G A L L E R Y

T +1 (212) 634-7154

F +1 (212) 634-7155

info@richardtaittinger.com

154 Ludlow Street

New York, NY 10002

www.richardtaittinger.com