

Rearranged: Selected Works from 1998 to 2014

Bitā Fayyazī

Preview 15 September, 2014

16 September – 23 October, 2014



Head of Horns 4, 2014
Mixed-media, yarn, used
packaging, galvanized tubing
and fiberglass
25 x 110 x 35 cm

Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde is pleased to present *Rearranged: Selected Works from 1998 to 2014*, a survey show and reinterpretation of the career of Bitā Fayyazī, conceived by Rokni and Ramin Haerizadeh.

Rather than regard Fayyazī as a sculptor, installation artist or ceramicist, engaged in some mystic relationship with her materials, *Rearranged* refers to several iconic moments in the artist's career to describe her performative and markedly social practice.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, Fayyazī's artistic interventions challenged the official definitions of art that were often circulated in Tehran at that time. Fayyazī struggled to show her work amid an atmosphere of stuffy traditionalism, academicism, and the influx of '90s conceptual art from abroad. She entered 2,000 ceramic cockroaches into Tehran's 6th Biennial of Contemporary Ceramic Art, despite an attempt by several members of the committee to oust her work from the show. She cast and fired terracotta dogs ('*Road Kill*', 1998), modelled on dead dogs found on the highways in Tehran, and then placed her creations onto streets around the city, much to the consternation of onlookers.

These early works – simultaneously performance and installation – are documented in the exhibition with 3-dimensional collages, videos and ceramics created at the time. Yet what these works retain in presence is, primarily, the residual process that they emerged from, as well as the encouraging force that they had on generations of young artists in Tehran.

Each of these works has its roots in a form of participative social sculpture: Gathering whatever materials are readily available, Fayyazi also gathers together artists and non-artistically-inclined collaborators who can wrap and entwine, paint and cast. She reconstitutes the energies of a multitude of people toward an uncertain result. The final object becomes, therefore, less important than the process – the collective doing, and the love of doing – that preceded its creation.

Flocks of sculpted crows have appeared in a number of the artist's interventions, from a condemned house in Tehran (*Experiment 98*) to a bus stop in Beirut; several of these crows are included in *Rearranged* and peer hungrily at the viewer. The exhibition also features a trove of objects from an in-progress, site-specific project in Tehran that is of Fayyazi's typically ambitious scale: working with residents of a neighbourhood in Tehran to fill the halls and ornate rooms of a historic house with handmade, thread-wrapped figurines, composed of cast-off materials or industrial scrap.

In addition to bringing her work to the streets and abandoned buildings of Tehran, **Bita Fayyazi** (b. 1962, Tehran) has presented major installations and performances internationally. She participated in the Iranian Pavilion at the 51st Venice Biennale in 2005 and has exhibited at, among others, Espace Louis Vuitton, Paris (2008 and 2010), the Museum of Modern Art in Freiburg (2007) and the Pergamon Museum, Berlin (2008). She has exhibited in two group exhibitions at Thaddaeus Ropac Gallery, Paris, notably in *Be Crowned with Laurel in Oblivion* (2010) with Rokni and Ramin Haerizadeh. *Rearranged* is her third solo exhibition with Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde.

Fayyazi's new book, *Iran: Iranomutomorphosis.net*, created in partnership with the Luciano Benetton Collection, details the artist's extended research and curatorial project to engage a new generation of Iranian artists. The book is currently available from the gallery.

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