

Theory of Survival



FABRICATIONS

A Project by Taraneh Hemami
September 5 – October 25, 2014



Morehshin Allahyari

Sanaz Mazinani

Ali Dadgar

Hushidar Mortezaie

Ala Ebtekar

Amitis Motevalli

Amir H. Fallah

Haleh Niazmand

Arash Fayez

Azin Seraj

Gelare Khoshgozaran

Taravat Talepasand

Architectural Design by H.Majd Design Group





FABRICATIONS is a pop-up bazaar inspired by a traditional Persian marketplace. Taraneh Hemami, in this latest iteration of her *Theory of Survival* project, invites twelve California-based Iranian artists to join her in engaging with Iranian political and cultural historical moments, exploring decades of collective activism and revolutionary actions inside Iran and in its larger diaspora. The artists of *Fabrications* transform, exalt and comment on the commodification of the graphic imagery of underground protest culture, exploring a web of connections between past and current radical movements across the globe.



THEORY OF SURVIVAL is Hemami's ongoing project exploring a rare and historical archive of underground publications of political dissent in Iran, belonging to the library of the Iranian Students Association of Northern California, active from 1964 to 1982. Publications and documents from the archive reflect Iranian and Bay Area history during the critical years between the CIA coup in Iran and the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution and from the civil rights movement in the US through the US Hostage Crisis.



THE FABRICATIONS BAZAAR is a site for gathering and exchange. Help yourself to tea and feel free to peruse or contribute to the library's growing collection of publications and archives. Artists will be on-site selling objects in their booths every Saturday. On Saturday, September 27 and Saturday, October 18, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM, the teahouse becomes a stage for performances, games and storytelling.



EVENTS

Opening Reception

Friday, September 5, 2014

7:00–9:00 PM

Saturday Bazaars

Saturdays, September 6–October 25, 2014

12:00–6:00 PM

Bargain, buy and share every Saturday. Artists are on site hawking their fabricated objects and discussing their work. Visitors can browse the library or bring books, materials and personal histories to share.

Night Markets

Saturday, September 27 & Saturday, October 18, 2014

6:00–9:00 PM

These evenings of marketplace activities include performances, music and readings by Bay Area artists inspired by current events and traditional bazaar and teahouse activities. Play backgammon with Gelare Khoshgozaran, watch a performance by Ali Dadgar, listen to a DJ set of revolutionary songs by Ala Ebtekar, see a traditional Persian Naghali storytelling performance by Arash Fayeze, amongst others.

#AsYouScrollDown

Morehshin Allahyari

Morehshin Allahyari's record store, *#AsYouScrollDown* is a digital and analog archive of recent political protest. Allahyari gathers digital evidence of the 2009–2010 protests in Iran known as the Green Movement. Each record includes the top 100 re-tweeted Twitter posts and the photographs most frequently shared on social media at that time. *#AsYouScrollDown* recalls a hopeful and traumatic moment in Iranian history, giving physical vinyl shape to a group of ephemeral images and words worth remembering.

Revolusign

Ali Dadgar

Ali Dadgar covers the walls of his bazaar space with signs inspired by slogans from English-language and Persian political protests. Hand made and one of a kind, his placards employ materials and techniques often used to create protest signs, including stencil, screen print, spray paint and marker. Purchase a Dadgar original for your wall or add a wooden stick and carry the message into the streets. Used in decorative, commemorative or functional contexts, the signs document a common language and symbolic alphabet of resistance movements.

MIXTAPES: VOL I & II

Ala Ebtekar

In an age when online stations and playlists are predetermined digital algorithms of tone, melody and rhythm, where do personal mixtapes fit in today? Assembled with care, thought and intention, mixtapes are the audio equivalent to love letters, historical manifestos or calls to action. As spans of magnetic tape, these cassettes don't allow listeners to skip to the next track with a swipe of the finger; rather, they

ask the listener to defer to a handcrafted and pre-established linear narrative. In this spirit, Ebtekar's project incorporates audio recordings of music from the 1979 Iranian Revolution with archival radio and television news coverage of the events recorded by his aunt, creating an audio platform to (re)consider the moment when the future of Iran was as hopeful as a high school mixtape.

Failure

Amir H. Fallah

As youth in America were turning on, tuning in and dropping out, the seeds of an altogether different revolution were planted in Iran. At the time of the American sexual revolution, it seemed the Western ideals of the Shah could take hold permanently, but just a few short years later, Iranian youth felt the burden of censorship and forced religious dress codes. *Failures* draws comparisons between these two revolutions with clothing that takes functional and aesthetic cues from both movements. Fallah's traditionally black headscarves and chadors are bleached with tie-dye patterns reminiscent of the Haight Ashbury hippie scene. Vibrant colors are replaced with violent splashes of bleach, yielding chaotic swirls of black and white patterns. The corrosive nature of bleach burns small holes in the scarves and chadors, creating a sense of decay while revealing what it seeks to conceal.

Why Are Wet Materials Transparent?

Arash Fayeze

(Performance)

Why are wet materials transparent? is a performative lecture based on fictional characters from the archives of pre-revolutionary Iran's student movement. The lecture is presented in the format of Naghali—an ancient storytelling performance. These epic

stories, told exclusively by men in cafes or open spaces in centuries-old tradition, narrate a story in verse or prose with a special and prescribed tone, feeling and expression. Fayez's invented characters are inspired by individual members of the many student activist organizations including the Iranian Student Association (ISA), Confederation of Iranian Students (CIS) and others. This performance exists as another iteration of the archive, in which fabricated documents are viewed as reflections of history.

Convergences

Gelare Khoshgozaran

Convergences is a backgammon board resembling two pages of a book, its background created from reassembled shredded documents. These are pages from the archives of the US Iran-Contra documents collected and restructured after the occupation of the US Embassy by the Iranian Revolutionary Students in 1980 Tehran. At the beginning of the game, the checkers are camouflaged and embedded in the background image. As the game progress, the checkers change position: scrambling, distorting and manipulating the image. This constant shifting of the "original" questions the immutability of a historical document.

As the most popular game among the Bazaaries—businessmen of the Bazaar—backgammon has long been an occasion for the exchange of thought, political opinion and debate among Iranian women and men. *Convergences* invites participants to play backgammon, converse and get competitive as they drink tea and reflect on the dissolution of a historical document before their eyes.

Conference of the Birds (Flags)

Sanaz Mazinani

Conference of the Birds (Flags) merges images from the Occupy Movement with images of the Arab Spring in a series of kaleidoscopic flags. Mazinani's work often focuses on the conceptual and formal limitations of photographs, exploring perception, repetition and representation through digital culture. By entwining images of these distinct movements, she creates a new banner encompassing the ideals of each group and symbolically tying the two together.

Dozd Bazaar: Bootleg Identities

Hushidar Mortezaie

Mortezaie's project is inspired by his father's treasure trove of ephemera from pre-revolutionary Iran, when he was a student activist. *Dozd Bazaar: Bootleg Identities* borrows its form from Iran's renegade thieves' markets. These bandit businessmen procure products without regard to morality or copyright ownership. For *Fabrications*, a mannequin standing in as the merchant/artist invites the visitor/customer to view a collection of objects, costumes and dismembered and disremembered heroes. Costumes and simulated identities of activists, celebrities and writers from the late 1960s to late 1970s are for sale as authentic orientalist trophies.

I Stand With

Amitis Motevalli

On January 2, 1979 a multi-coalition group of protestors marched 10 miles through Beverly Hills to the hillside home of Shams Pahlavi, the Shah's older sister. Shams and her 90-year-

old mother were exiled in the home for “safety” during the 1979 Iranian revolution. There were rumors that the Shah’s twin sister Ashraf was also in hiding in the Beverly Hills home.

Motevalli’s work is a reflection on the violence and arrests that followed these protests. After several conversations with members of this coalition (including members of the Los Angeles Iranian Student Association and non-Iranian protestors involved in Anti-Imperialist struggle), Motevalli draws connections between the 1979 act and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee’s stand off with the police in 1964 Mississippi, pairing seminal images from the two historical moments on large velvet flags.

2DIE4

Haleh Niazmand

Niazmand’s product line reassigns dissident iconography to the world of fashion. In doing so it creates a parody to highlight the co-option of activist histories and discourses in the current hyper-capitalist era. Niazmand’s clothing treads a line between honoring underground texts and images of a tumultuous past and diminishing their historical significance through their commodification.

Concurrency

Azin Seraj

Concurrency investigates the intersecting symbolic imagery and cultural iconography of Iranian banknotes from the Pahlavi period and the present-day Islamic Republic regime. By extracting, altering and weaving together the cultural icons, historical narratives and political messages found in the currency of each era, the resulting fictional banknotes appropriate and subvert identity

signs to highlight what remains and what is lost. As currency fluctuates worldwide, Seraj posits that the symbolic cultural and political message embedded in these pieces of paper retain power long after the regimes they represent lose authority.

Islamic Youth

Taravat Talepasand

Despite ongoing government censorship in Iran and accusations of “Westoxication,” an underground music scene continues to flourish. In this collection, Talepasand appropriates the 1990 Sonic Youth album “Goo,” changing the two characters to two women in chadors. Recalling youthful rebellion and a personal history of smuggling band shirts from the US to family and friends in Iran, Talepasand’s clothing line repositions Islamic culture within the context of rock and roll.

Theory of Survival Souvenir Shop

Taraneh Hemami

The *Theory of Survival* souvenir shop offers symbols of resistance and dissent as manufactured or handcrafted memorabilia and offerings. A communal table invites visitors to craft small projects using stencils and embroidery sets while invited guests and collaborators offer additional objects for exchange.

Southern Exposure (SoEx) is an artist-centered non-profit organization that is committed to supporting visual artists. Through our extensive and innovative programming, SoEx strives to experiment, collaborate and further educate while providing an extraordinary resource center and forum for Bay Area and national artists and youth in our Mission District space and off-site, in the public realm.

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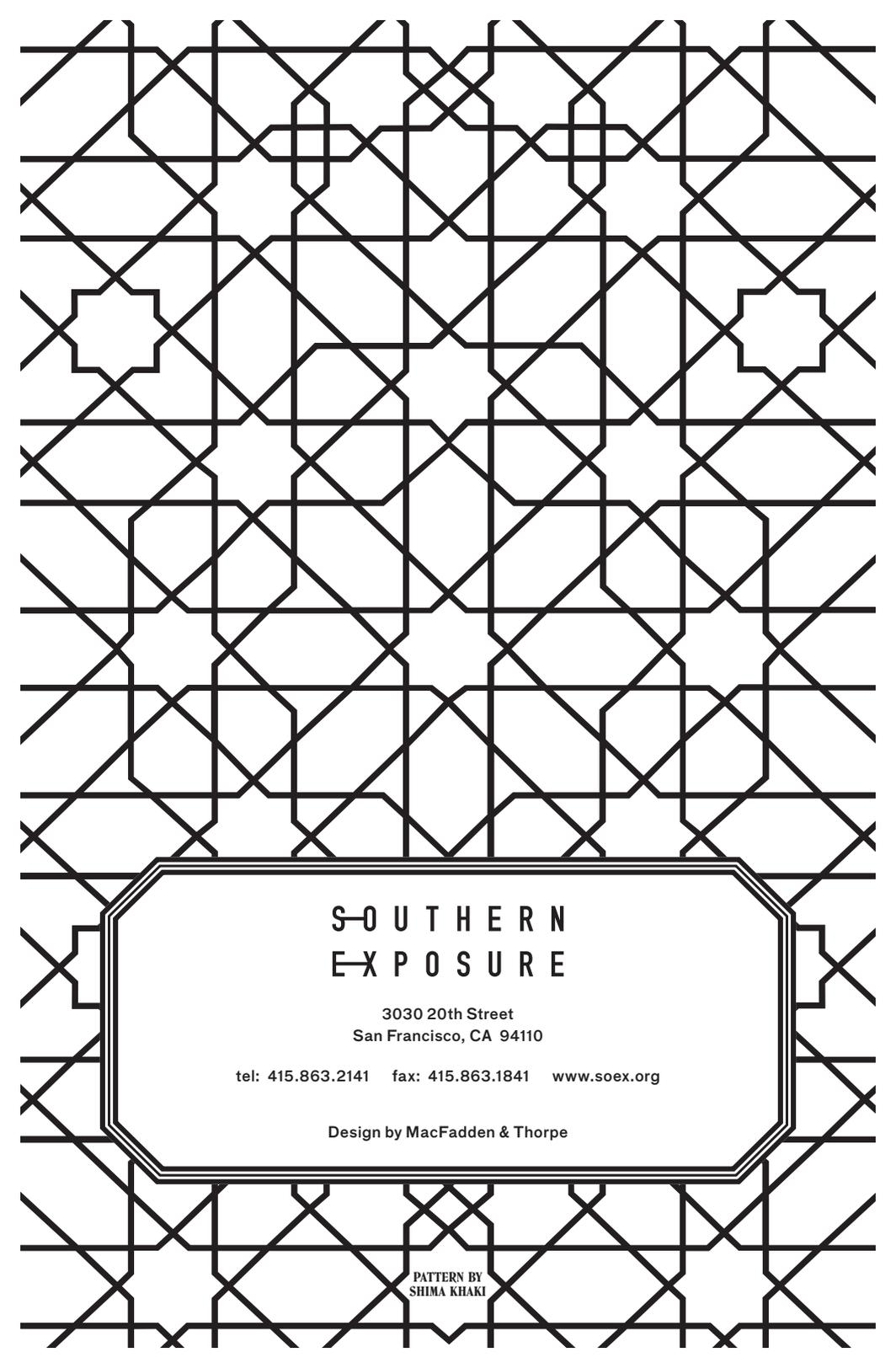
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