

Pi Artworks İstanbul: Saeed Ensafi

Love, Hate and Edit

17 June – 10 July 2015

Iranian artist Saeed Ensafi opens his first solo show in Turkey at Pi Artworks İstanbul. The artist has lived between Tehran and İstanbul for the last three years and his work has previously shown at *Tehran Calling London/ London Calling Tehran* project at London Print Studios, London (2013); Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin (2012); *Dialogue* exhibition at University of Chicago (2010); and Andenken Gallery in Denver, USA (2009).

The word 'war' has different meanings for the different generations of Iranians. It has a dramatic effect on each person; reminding some of a loss and others of heroic stories, while for others war is a part of life. Besides the struggle of civilians against the oppressive regime, the great war between Iran and Iraq between 1980-1988, caused the death of almost a million people as well as spread destruction on a scale that is difficult to recover from. Generations of people, including Ensafi, grew up in the post-war era and have experienced its aftermath as well as the myths and narratives that came out of the catastrophe. The city of Tehran, where the artist has lived and worked for years is, even today, still full of pictures of the country's martyrs.

The traces left behind by the people who have suddenly left our lives is the key reference point, which Saeed Ensafi's work comes out of. In his solo exhibition titled *Smile Brother*, which took place last year at Homa Art Gallery (Tehran), Ensafi tracked the traces of people who lost their lives during the war. While some of these people become heroes, most of them were forgotten. In his assemblages through the cut- up photographs he found in several family albums, Ensafi focuses on the growing gap that appears after a significant loss. Their faces cut out from the family photos, these people turn into silhouettes without certain identity. *Love, Hate and Edit* is a continuation of this story. On the other hand in this show, the artist's stories become more personal and even familiar.

Ensafi draws attention to the sharp and upsetting effect of facing a cutout photograph while looking through a family album. The artist fills the gaps in these albums with several stories. Simultaneously, he gives the audience a chance to reflect their own feelings and meaning to these gaps. Ensafi enriches his assemblages that are composed of found photos, with his own drawings, laceworks and many other elements referring to certain cultural traditions.

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Saeed Ensafi was born in 1974, Iran. He graduated from Azad University Department of Graphic Design in 2002, Tehran. In 2005 he completed his masters degree in Illustration at the same university. The artist opened six solo exhibitions in Tehran between the years 2001 and 2004. Besides his solo projects, his works had been exhibited at international organisations such as "Tehran Calling London/ London Calling Tehran" (London, 2013); "Right-to-Left", Kunstquartier Bethanien (Berlin, 2012); "Eyeballing", Ankara Contemporary Arts Centre (2012); "Wheel" (Berlin and St. Petersburg, 2010); "Dialogue", University of Chicago (Chicago, 2010); and Andenken Gallery (Denver, 2009). Ensafi has participated in several graphic design and illustration biennials and exhibitions in Italy, Poland, Czech Republic, Portugal and Iran. The artist founded a school called "Illustrative Today" in 2015 and he has been teaching the art of illustration there.

Pi Artworks was founded by Yeşim Turanlı in 1998 in Istanbul and for the past 17 years, has been introducing Turkish and international artists to the primary market. Since its founding, Pi Artworks has been committed to showcasing the best of Contemporary Turkish and international art to Istanbul's growing art scene, alongside providing an international platform for its roster of artists to showcase their work. The gallery is located at the famous historical Mısır Apartmanı in Istanbul and in October 2013 Pi Artworks London opened on 55 Eastcastle Street, in the heart of London's bustling Fitzrovia.

Saeed Ensafi: *Love, Hate and Edit*

Pi Artworks Istanbul

Mısır Apartmanı 163/4 No:13 Kat:4 İstanbul

June 17th – July 10th, 2015

10.00 – 19.00 (Except Sundays)

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