

The Armory Show 2025

**Nicky Nodjoumi
Pooya Aryanpour
Iman Raad
Mahsa Merci**

5-7 September 2025

**QASTAN
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The Armory Show 2025

Javits Center, 429 11th Avenue, New York, NY 10001
5 - 7 September 2025



PRESS RELEASE

At the Armory Show 2025, Dastan presents works by Nicky Nodjoumi (b. 1942), Pooya Aryanpour (b. 1971), Iman Raad (b. 1979), and Mahsa Merci (b. 1990). The presentation reflects on repetition and the lingering unease that arises from cycles of return and recurrence. Iman Raad's works feature faces shown in repeated sequences. This repetition creates a mix of familiarity and unease, suggesting that beauty can also carry a sense of disturbance when forms return with unsettling persistence. Nicky Nodjoumi reflects on power, history, and the repetition of human conflicts. His works present fragmented yet insistent imagery, recalling cycles of authority and resistance, and creating an atmosphere of quiet but unrelenting disquiet.

Mahsa Merci engages with portraiture through dense, impasto-like oil touches, where repetition lies in the very technique of layering paint. Her figures emerge with a deliberately uneven surface, their skin marked

by an unsettling texture that resists smoothness. Often depicted in makeup or drag, they seem to move beyond conventional ideals of beauty, evoking instead a charged atmosphere.

Pooya Aryanpour's sculptural work introduces a spatial dimension to repetition, where reflective surfaces and elongated forms establish an environment of both allure and unease. His approach embodies the psychological weight of recurrence as a formal and emotional condition.

About the Artists

Nikzad "Nicky" Nodjoumi (b. 1942, Kermanshah, Iran) is an Iranian painter based in Brooklyn, New York. He received his B.A. in Painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Tehran, and later earned an M.A. in Fine Arts from The City College of New York.

Nicky Nodjoumi, known for his large-scale figurative oil

canvases, skillfully combines historical and phantasmagorical imagery with sharp political commentaries. His compositions are straightforward, precise, and expressive, often featuring disintegrated portraits, disguised faces, clowns, and animals. Using storytelling, he piles bodies and body parts irreverently, challenging the connection between art and politics. Nodjoumi's works, influenced by social and political incidents, evoke a sense of fragmented narratives and the absurdity of power. His art has gained a significant following both in Iran and internationally.

Pooya Aryanpour (b. 1971, Tehran, Iran) is an artist, art instructor, and university lecturer based in Tehran. He studied Painting at Azad University of Tehran, where he obtained his M.A. in 1999. Known for his influence on Iran's contemporary art scene, his work has been extensively exhibited, both in Iran and at international biennials, gallery shows, art fairs, and institutional exhibitions.

Pooya Aryanpour sets out to remap and expand the architectural techniques of mirror-work (Ayineh-Kari) to craft ambiguous forms that simultaneously seem representational and abstract. His work focuses on creating mystery and suspense, exploring subject material rooted in the traditions of Iranian culture. In his paintings and three-dimensional work, traditional symbolism,

styles of narration, storytelling and folklore, Persian calligraphy schools, and their impact are utilized through cutting-edge approaches. His sculptural pieces often take the observer beyond their physical boundaries, as they create wide reflections that lead to plays of light, lines, and forms that create a sensory presence.

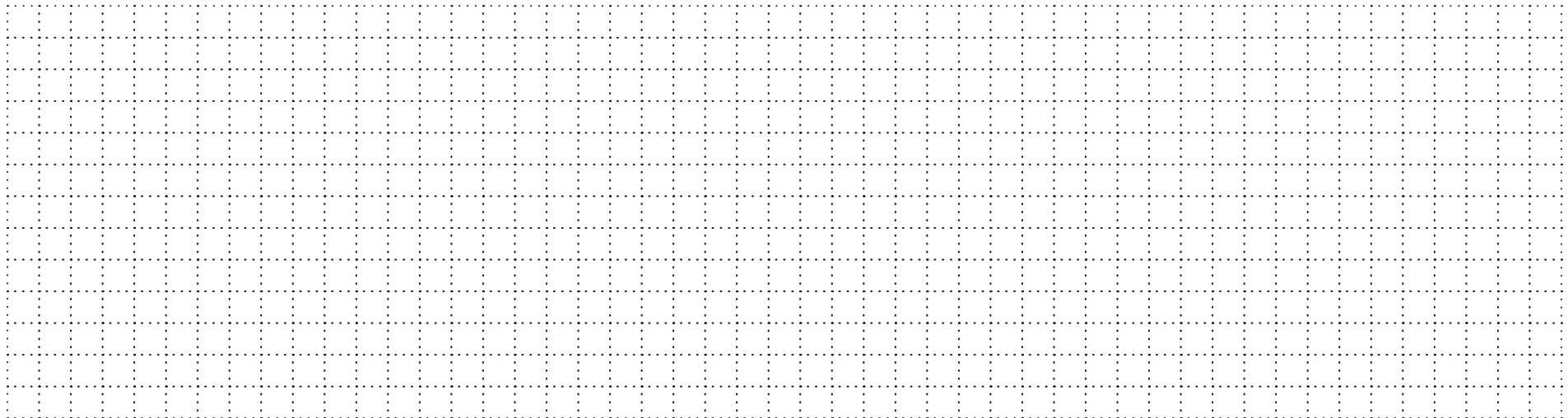
Iman Raad (b. 1979, Mashhad, Iran) lives and works in New York City. He holds an MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale University and a BE in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Sistan and Baluchestan. He is currently a resident of the Queens Museum Studio Program and an adjunct faculty at The Cooper Union School of Art.

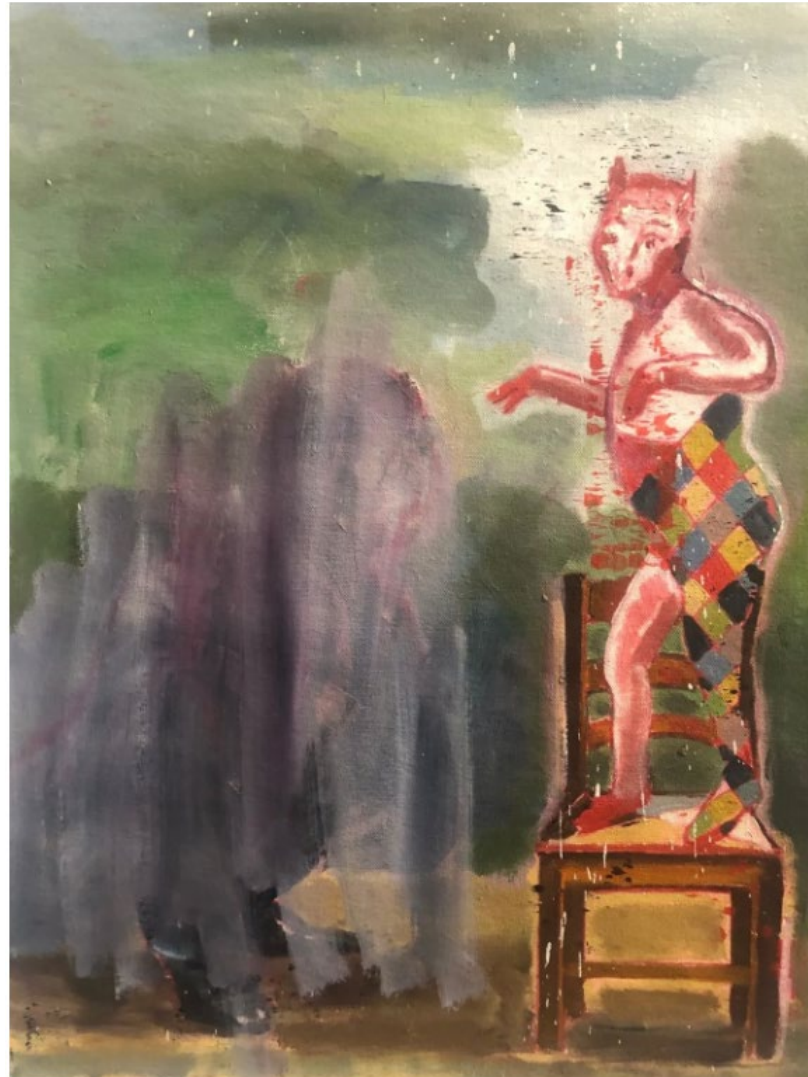
Raad works across a variety of media, including painting, drawing, embroidery, graphic design, and performance lectures. In these diverse works, he draws on influences such as Persian painting, Mughal painting, South-Asian Truck painting. He combines these local references with digital image culture and contemporary subject matter to create his work that ranges from small reverse paintings on glass to mural-scale wall installations. Using a vivid, high key palette, altered perspective, and repetition that mimics digital glitches, results in a riot of color and movement. Traditionally ornamental elements such as birds and flowers and still life subject matters such as fruits and candles are recalibrated into subjects

that carry narrative import and are given animate, unnatural presences. These are intertwined with social events and historical moments rendered in fantastical ways to draw in the viewer.

Mehsa Merci (b. 1990 Tehran, Iran) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Canada. She obtained her BA in Graphic Design from Tehran University of Art (2009), her MA in Painting from Azad University of Tehran (2014) and MFA from the University of Manitoba in Canada (2019).

Mahsa Merci works across a variety of media – painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, installation, and video – to reflect on marginal identities. In her landscapes, still life, and portraits, she goes beyond the “Norm”, as one of her untitled paintings reads, to bring forth direct sensual and tactile experience. The grotesque (“X Is Y”, “Be Careful, Everything Is Dangerous Here”, “Visa Versa”, “The Frozen Womb”, “The Grudge”), the obscene (“Hairy Triangle”, “The Lustful River”, “Let Me Grow” series, “Help”), and the bodily (“She”, “Half-naked”, “Let Me Grow”, “Touch Me”, “Frozen Hands”, “I Feel”) play a central role in her work. Her art finds people who are not often represented in society, especially her own experiences as an Iranian woman and a member of the LGBTQ+community. She wants her art to manifest themultiplicity of identities coexisting within an individual as well as challenge the way we think about beauty, texture, and gender.





Nicky Nodjoumi. *Bewildered*. 2023
Oil on canvas. 50.8 x 40.6 cm





Nicky Nodjoumi. *Inside Out*. 2022
Oil on canvas. 50.8 x 40.6 cm





Nicky Nodjourni. N/A. 2024
Oil on canvas. 50.8 x 40.6 cm



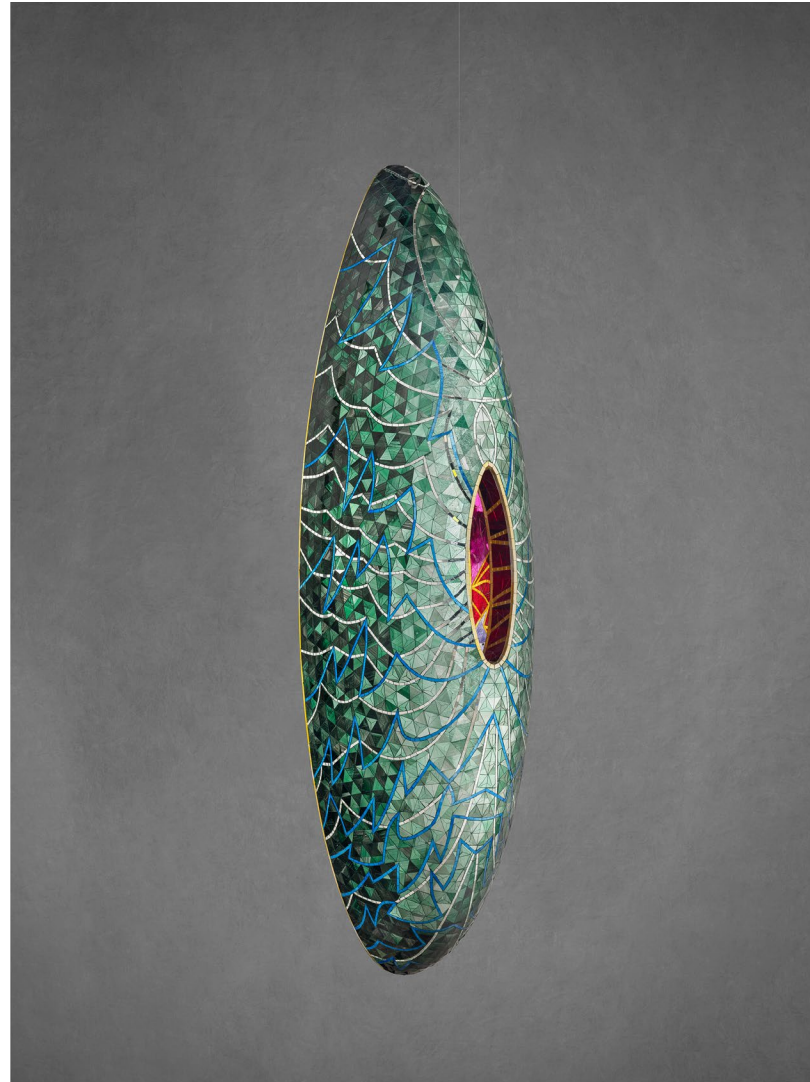


Nicky Nodjoumi. *Dancing No.2*. 2023
Oil on canvas. 50.8 x 40.6 cm





Pooya Aryanpour. *From "Fruit of Elysian" Series*. 2024
Kiln-fired dyed glass, mirror fragment and plaster on fiberglass structure with styrofoam core. 143 x 38 x 34 cm



Pooya Aryanpour. *From "Fruit of Elysian" Series*. 2024
Kiln-fired dyed glass, mirror fragment and plaster on fiberglass structure with styrofoam core. 143 x 38 x 34 cm. [Secondary image]





Pooya Aryanpour. *From "Fruit of Elysian" Series*. 2025
Kiln-fired Dyed Glass, Mirror Fragments on Fiberglass structure with Styrofoam core. 106 x 36 x 20 cm



Iman Raad. *Among the Palette of Fear and Fire and Flower (A Rosa 'Ispahan' as Twilight Falls)*. 2025
Acrylic on Unprimed Canvas. 186 x 125 cm





Iman Raad. *Fear Is No Mute, Neither Is Flower (A Foreign Pink Flower)*. 2025
Acrylic on Unprimed Canvas. 186 x 125 cm





Iman Raad. *Fear Is No Mute, Neither Is Flower (A Strange Yellow Rose)*. 2025
Acrylic on Unprimed Canvas. 125 x 84 cm





Iman Raad. *In a Mirror*. 2022

Acrylic Gouache on Tempered Glass, Handmade Marbled Paper, Book Folio, Aluminum Foil, Acrylic on Wooden Frame. 70.5 x 55.5 cm





Mahsa Merci. *Wet Light in Midnight (Artist's Portrait).* 2025

Oil, acrylic, handcut mirror, plaster, glue, hinges, nails on MDF. Open: 83.8 x 116.8 x 5.1 cm. Close: 81.3 x 58.4 x 5.1 cm





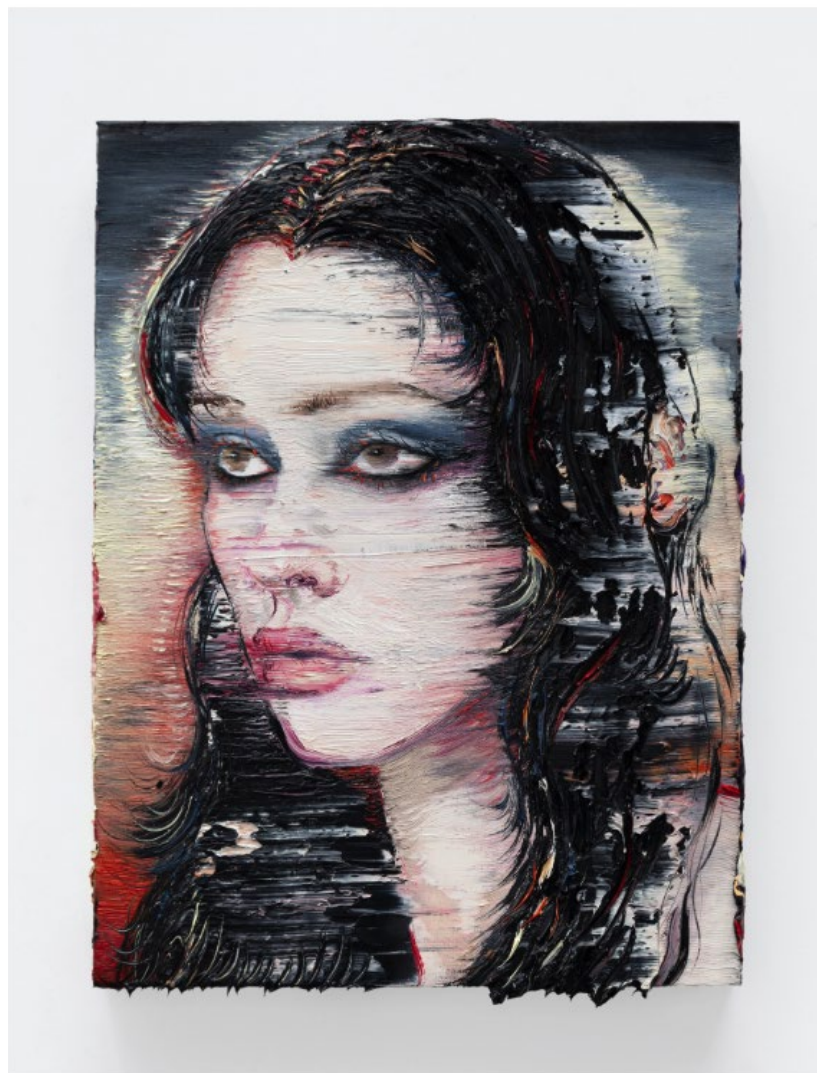
Mahsa Merci. *I Have Held a Yellow Needle for Six Years*. 2024
Oil on panel. 76.2 x 61 cm





Mahsa Merci. *I Am Carrying On, But I Can't Forget*. 2024
Oil on panel. 61 x 45.7 cm





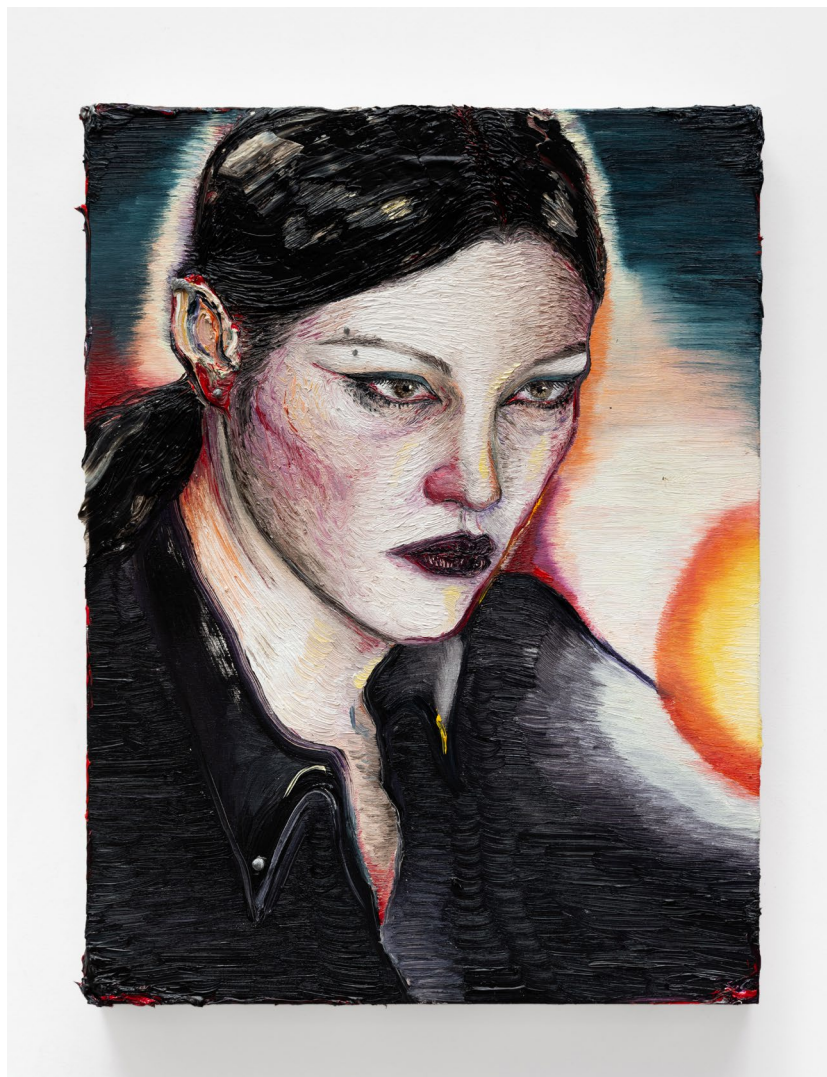
Mahsa Merci. *Ambiguous Purple*. 2025
Oil on panel. 40.6 x 30.5 cm





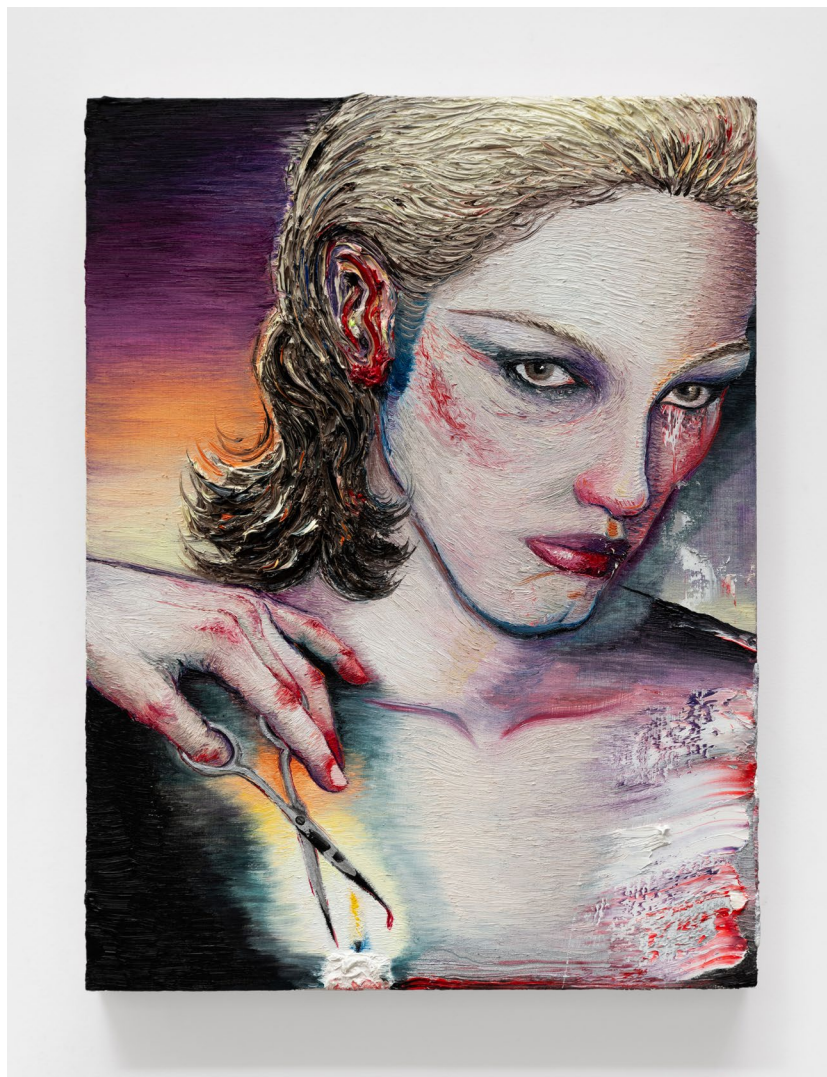
Mahsa Merci. *Ambiguous Purple*. 2025
Oil on panel. 40.6 x 30.5 cm





Mahsa Merci. *Burning the Shadow*. 2024
Oil on panel. 40.6 x 30.5 cm





Mahsa Merci. *Let the Fire Decide*. 2024
Oil on panel. 40.6 x 30.5 cm



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