

# LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

## *Beyond the Seas there is a City*

By

Parinaz Eleish Gharagozlou



***My Own Seat At The Table, 2022***  
Mixed Media and Collage on Canvas  
156.21 x 182.88 cm

You walk down alleyways and dead-ends. You circle the squares and roundabouts of your memory.

You recognize the feel of the summer heat on your skin.

That is yours for ever.

Passing by an open window, you know the smell of the mid day meal cooking on a stove.

You are sure the fried onions would have a sweet taste on your tongue if you were called in to share the repast.

You should be in sync with the city's pulse, this beating heart that you sense against the soul of your shoes.

And yet.

And yet you see it cracking, crumbling, crashing.

For years now, for a long time. It is soundless, slow, steady. You are walking down narrow lanes, tree lined avenues and around street corners, all renamed reshaped.

Where there was a door there is gaping hole. Where there were windows, blind darkness within an empty frame.

A three legged chair abandoned to its fate, a stuffed bear for the alley cats.

Cities no longer in control of their past or their destiny, abandoned to the pillage of the greedy, of the small limited minds.

You walk down narrow lanes and pass by filigreed garden gates. You look for stories, memories contained within the walled ruins that were home to all that. And so much more than that. The heart and soul of the city.

And yet.

You find a city without borders a city with no past, no future. And you remember having read this:

*"If I see my city as beautiful and bewitching, then my life must be so too."*

- Orhan Pamuk, Istanbul: Memories and the City

-Parinaz Eleish Gharagozlou

Dubai, UAE – Leila Heller Gallery is pleased to announce artist Parinaz Eleish Gharagozlou's solo show '*Beyond the Seas there is a City*' opening on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

The series is about history and its relation to our future. When a society's link to the past is severed, it promises a rootless lot. With the systematic destruction of the familiar stories of a people, we will have no evidence and no memory to propel us toward a sane future. Eleish's works may provoke strong emotions of nostalgia in the viewer but it is not backward-looking. The goal of these works is to alert the viewer that, as a society, we need to be mindful of what has been handed down to us and preserve it for the next generation. Preservation of the past is an investment in the future.

#### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Parinaz Eleish Gharagozlou was born in Tehran to an Iranian mother (historian/publisher) and an Egyptian father (economist). She grew up in Tehran until high school and finished her diploma in Switzerland before coming to the US for her higher education. Eleish received a BFA in Film Production and Painting from Emerson College and the Museum of Fine Arts in 1981. She holds two MFAs: one in Film Production from Boston University and one in English Writing and Poetry from the University of New Hampshire. After graduation, Eleish worked in various areas of film production at different independent Boston film production companies. For five years she held the position of film and media coordinator at the French Library and Cultural Center, now merged with the Alliance Francaise in Boston. In 1993 Eleish moved back to Tehran where she had her own painting company Samarkand a Faux Real co., which specialized in faux finish painting. Eleish returned to the US after three years and started Damascus Dreams, a one man hand crafted jewelry design company specializing in work with ancient beads, before she began painting full-time. Eleish has published poetry in English and recently published a novel in farsi which is available in print and audio on Amazon, iTunes and related book stores as well as in Iran. Eleish and her husband Yahya Gharagozlou live most of the time in Boston, and part time Tehran. She has two daughters Leila and Homa. Her studio is located in Brighton MA.

#### ABOUT THE GALLERY

Since its establishment over three decades ago in New York, Leila Heller Gallery has gained worldwide recognition as a pioneer in promoting a creative dialogue and exchange between Western artists and Middle Eastern, Central and Southeast Asian artists. It has garnered a reputation for identifying and cultivating the careers of artists leaving a lasting impact on contemporary art and culture. Currently representing a diverse roster of Western and Middle Eastern artists, the gallery is also active in the American, European, and Middle Eastern secondary art markets. In November 2015, Leila Heller Gallery opened its first international location in Dubai's Alserkal Avenue. At 14,000 square feet, the state of the art gallery features three exhibition spaces, making it the largest gallery in the UAE. Showcasing leading regional and international artists, many of whom will be presenting their work in the Middle East.