

Press Release

Exhibition from April 3 to September 20, 2020

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NAIRY BAGHRAMIAN

COUDE A COUDE

┌ Over the last two decades, Baghramian has created sculptures, photographic works, and drawings that explore the relationships between architecture, everyday objects, and the human body while challenging preconceived ideas of functionality, decoration, abstraction, domesticity, and feminism. Baghramian's sculptural work proudly displays protuberances and cavities, blobs and spills, limbs and prosthetics, to put under pressure traditional questions of volume, mass, form, and theatricality that have shaped the history of sculpture.

Her works are drawn from materials as diverse as steel, glass, silicon, resin, cork and leather, and often allude to familiar objects abstracted and reconfigured in precise and innovative new forms, conjuring through their reinvention fragments derivative of various fields of association –from the anthropomorphic and industrial, to fashion, theater or interior architecture, their history and the ideological undercurrents hold particular interest for the artist.

For her first museum exhibition in France titled *Coude à Coude*, Baghramian enters into a dialogue with the architecture of Carré d'Art with a selection of works specifically formed for this exhibition. Spanning several exhibition rooms the walls, thresholds and passageways of the display parcours become living protagonists as well as the works themselves. If the sculpture usually presents itself autonomously from its surroundings and uses the exhibition space like a pedestal, Baghramian reaffirms the marginal, the liminal and the transitional sites of space, attaching her sculptures to the architectural structure of the institution and questioning conventional connotations of spatial perception and its hierarchies. The work *Das Hübsche Eck*, 2006, for example, directs its mirrored side of a screen-like structure to the partition wall of two exhibition rooms, while on the back an enigmatic staircase leads into this very wall that obscures the view. *Grosse Klappe*, 2008 similarly, is neither boundary nor threshold, occupying the virtual line between two spaces, whereas *French Curve*, 2014 *Off the Rack*, 2014, and *Dwindler, Low Tide*, 2017 utilize extremities to wind their way fluidly from one room to another. And in the earliest work, on view, *Trennwände mit Ohrringen (Anna, Martha, Vartuhi) (Partitions with Earrings (Anna, Martha, Vartuhi), 2004)* reverses expectations with structures dressed of fabric, the metal becoming the accessory.

Nairy Baghramian b. 1971 in Isafahan, Iran is a visual artist living and working in Berlin since 1984. Her work has been the subject of monographic exhibitions in an array of institutions, including MUDAM, Luxembourg (2019); Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (2018); SMK, Copenhagen (2017); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2016); S.M.A.K, Ghent (2016); Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2015); Museo Serralves, Porto (2014); the Art Institute of Chicago (2014). Baghramian also participated at Skulptur Projekte Muenster (2017 / 2007); documenta 14 in Kassel and Athens (2017); Lyon Biennale (2017); Berlin Biennale (2014 / 2008); 54th and 58th Venice Biennale (2011/2019).

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