MARJAN MOGHADDAM

24 MARCH — 22 APRIL 2023

OPENING RECEPTION

THURSDAY, 23 MARCH, 6 — 8PM

"Glitch is something that extends beyond the most literal technological mechanics," suggests the curator and writer Legacy Russell in her 2020 publication, *Glitch Feminism*. "It helps us to celebrate failure as a generative force, a new way to take on the world." Put another way, glitch creates productive ruptures in the power dynamics of contemporary digital culture, challenging the superstructures that dictate what technology is, how it should be used, and who it is for. To glitch is an act of resistance; it is a type of world-building, a means of ghosting binaries and creating alternative systems in the process.

Since 2016, the Iran-born digital artist Marjan Moghaddam has developed *#ARTHACKS*, a mixed-reality series expanding on the power and poetics of the glitch within the global art economy. Building on the artist's decades-long practice that integrates world-building and digital embodiment, *#ARTHACKS* takes aim at the financial heart of the art world: its fairs. Devised in real time within the three-day framework of each fair, Moghaddam's *#ARTHACKS* are made visible through augmented reality (AR) technologies. The technicoloured anthropomorphic beings disrupt the logics of the art world through their feminist and activist interventions.

Presented in Annka Kultys Gallery's phygital space, Moghaddam's most recent series of *#ARTHACKS—FOR FREEDOM PART I* (2022), *FOR FREEDOM II* (2022), and *THE AMERICAN HUSH* (2022)—are located within real and imagined art fairs. The artist borrows from footage of the fairs shared online as well as conjuring speculative art events with the popular text-to-image AI tool, Midjourney. Within these interventions, Moghaddam's distorted and hallucinogenic 3D CG figures, which the artist refers to as Chronometric Sculptures, take over sales booths and blackjack tables, even utilising the polished concrete floors between gallery outposts as their own personal runway. Often set to remixes of the Persian protest song Baraye by Shervin Hajipour, Moghaddam's *#ARTHACKS* bring the activist potential of art to the realm of mixed-reality.

From New York to Basel, Miami Beach to London, Moghaddam disrupts the economic and social operations of global art events with her augmented posthuman creations. Taken together, Moghaddam's *#ARTHACKS* speak to the artist's adept integration of glitch aesthetics, meme culture, and AR technologies to center urgent political movements within the often depoliticised atmosphere of contemporary art fairs.

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BIOGRAPHY

With an expansive practice that's equally rooted in art history and emergent technologies, Marjan Moghaddam creates digital animations that critique and destabilise the conditions of the present. Drawing from a vast conceptual repertoire that spans chaos theory to glitch feminism, the artist leverages the power of motion capture, augmented reality, and other technologies in an experimental process that's as playful as it is powerful. Moghaddam's celebrated series #ARTHACKS and #GLITCHGODDESS sees the artist infiltrate the capitalist logics of the international art fair model with wily posthuman protagonists, democratising exhibition spaces through digital embodiment and mixed reality media.

Moghaddam's ongoing #ARTHACKS series, initiated on Instagram in 2016, have earned the artist international recognition, with Whitewall Art declaring the artist to be "the definition of digital fine arts" and the Examiner heralding her as "the First Lady of Animated Painting". Integrating politics and play through digital embodiment, the series merges Moghaddam's skills as a 3D animator with situated interventions into the social and economic landscapes of contemporary global art fairs. Accruing millions of views on social media, the series aims to democratise exhibition space while injecting a critical dialog into the typically apolitical environment of the international art market. Recently, the series has extended its focus to the ongoing Women, Life, Freedom movement in Iran, as well as the recent attacks to women's reproductive rights within the United States and abroad.

Born in 1961 in Tehran, Iran, and based in New York, Marjan Moghaddam earned her BFA in 1993 from the State University of New York, followed by her MFA from Long Island University in New York in 1999. She is a tenured professor of digital art (CG, Animation, and XR) at LIU Brooklyn, NY. Moghaddam's groundbreaking work has been recognised through numerous grants and awards from The Rockefeller Foundation, New York Deprartment of Cultural Affairs, Brooklyn Arts Council, and the Experimental Television Fund, among others.

Moghaddam has exhibited widely in galleries, institutions, and art fairs, including commissions from the Smithsonian Museum, Snap 3.0, and the city of Oslo. Moghaddam's institutional presentations include a solo show at the Museum of Contemporary and Digital Art in Decentraland, Proof of Art at Francisco Carolinum Museum in Linz, Austria, the first NFT-based institutional exhibition. Moghaddam is a highly active and influential figure in the NFT space, with major drops and presentations at international platforms, galleries, and fairs including ANNKA KULTYS PHYGITAL, Vertical Crypto Art, NFT Gallery, Unit London, Vellum LA, LA Art Show, SuperRare, Superchief NYC, Art Basel Miami Beach, and the Armory Show in New York.

She has received commissions from the Smithsonian Museum, Snap 3.0, and the cities of Vancouver, Orlando, and Oslo, and was an artist-in-residence at Adobe (2019) and SuperWorld (2017). Moghaddam has been hailed as the "Picasso of Digital Painting" (ArtNet) and was named as one of Forbes top AR creators in 2019.

For all press enquiries, please contact Lauren or Annka
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Opening Hours: Wednesday — Saturday, 12 — 6pm