

PRESS RELEASE
PILAR CORRIAS PRESENTS
TALA MADANI
'MANUAL MAN'
11 MAY – 18 JUNE 2011

PRIVATE VIEW: TUESDAY 10 MAY, 6–8PM

GALLERY OPEN: MONDAY – FRIDAY 10AM–6PM, SATURDAY 11AM–6PM



Tala Madani, *Chinballs with Flag*, 2011. Oil on linen. 40.6 × 30.5 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Pilar Corrias Gallery

Pilar Corrias Gallery is delighted to present 'Manual Man': an exhibition of new work by Tala Madani.

Madani works with painting and stop-motion video animation to create playfully rendered, cartoonish situations loaded with violence and machismo. Her second solo exhibition at the gallery forms an introduction to a significant new body of work concerned with the manual and the staged.

Notions of theatricality pervade painterly scenes of base behaviour. Urine here is a recurring motif and it is notable that in ancient Iranian dream interpretation to dream of piss signals that great power and fortune will be bestowed upon the dreamer. Madani's men however appear destined for no such fate engaged here in darkly comic power games in works such as *Head Game*, and *Strangulation by Stained Glass* (all works 2011).

The 'Manual Man' appears in Madani's new works in reference both to the trace of the artist's hand, and to the two-dimensional nature of the men engaged in pointedly humorous attempts to instruct themselves. Ideas of façade and staging found in references to archaic painted boards of amusement parks in *Chinballs with Flag* are further developed in a number of works partly derived from a drawing by Daumier entitled *Human Wave Machine*. Madani here extends the pictorial possibilities of the theatrical trick of creating the illusion of a wave on stage to the wider connotations of the human wave attack as an offensive military tactic.

In 'The Manipulated Man' (1971) – a controversial pamphlet written in defiance of the Women's Liberation Movement's 'monopoly of opinion' – Esther Vilar argued that 'Men have been trained and controlled by women, not unlike the way Pavlov conditioned dogs, into becoming their slaves.' To what extent is the two-dimensional 'Manual Man' responsible for his own fate? Madani's powerful mise-en-scène hints at social constructions as a possible source of their misfortune, ultimately though the answer is left indeterminate.

Born in Tehran in 1981, Madani lives and works in Amsterdam and New York. Since receiving her MFA from Yale University School of Art in 2006 she has exhibited extensively to widespread critical acclaim. Recent exhibitions include *Speech Matters*, Danish Pavilion, 54th Venice Biennale (2011); *Greater New York*, P.S.1 MoMA (2010), *Liverpool Biennial*, Liverpool (2010); *The Future of Tradition*, Haus der Kunst, Munich (2010); *The Symbolic Efficiency of the Frame*, 4th Tirana International Contemporary Art Biennial, Albania (2009), and *The Generational: Younger than Jesus* New Museum, New York (2009).

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