TANNAZ Farsi
Tyranny stops life.

2019

Rug made in Iran, grit, steel, vinyl, archival inkjet print, rug petals
130 x 40 x 10 in

Study for Weaving, 2020
Archival inkjet print
45 x 30 in

Satellite (Fort Bragg “Mid-East”), 2017
Screenprint on acrylic, steel
53 x 14 x 15 in

Study for Weaving, 2020
Archival inkjet print
45 x 30 in

Security lights
Dimensions variable

Satellite (Fort Bragg “Mid-East”), 2017
Screenprint on acrylic, steel
53 x 14 x 15 in

Study for Weaving, 2020
Archival inkjet print
45 x 30 in

Security lights
Dimensions variable
The names of Iranian women poets, novelists, filmmakers, artists, educators and activists. The scale of the The Names is large, its script angular as it wraps along the gallery walls; the effect echoes kufic calligraphic inscriptions on the walls of classical Islamic architecture. Spelled out in a gold metallic, the names catch the light and cast a shadow on the wall. An exploration of the relationship between form and content is threaded through Farsi's art. "It's important to me that my work engages with social and historic structures," she explains. "I build upon historic forms to create visibility and to extend the scope of ideas into the future." Farsi recasts historic tropes of Islamic art into contemporary meditations on her own positionality as an artist and as an immigrant. This impulse marks a shift in her artistic practice, a turn to the personal, an ongoing creative reflection on her own experiences as an immigrant living in an attenuated space between Iran and the United States, between here and there, between past and present.

Farsi's artworks are part of an ongoing dialogue, a probing search for new perspectives on fundamental questions. During an exhibition at Linfield Gallery, her sculpture Names was hung above a floor installation titled Units of Movable Earth (2017). The movable garden features 1000 species of tulips growing from bags of earth. Farsi researched the specific kinds of tulips that grow in the wild in Iran. The tulip also gestures to the history of those objects such as site, labor, and innovation. "I wanted in some way to think about our own family's history in relation to immigration. It feels like there's a distinct break, that a part of who we were is being lost," Farsi says. The cherished family heirloom in Iran became a photograph that was sent to the U.S. and then was transformed again into a handmade object by the artist. "It is so easy for immigrants to not have a past in the U.S.," she says softly. "How do we keep our stories from disappearing? There is too much erosion, too many silences inherent in immigration. I think about how art can be a means of witnessing and contesting the silence."
TANNAZ FARSI
b. 1974. Lives and works in Eugene, Oregon
2014 Hallie Ford Fellow

Tannaz Farsi’s configurations of objects and images address the complicated networks around the conception of memory, history, identity, and geography. Drawing from cultural objects, feminist histories, and theories of displacement evidenced by long-standing colonialist and authoritarian interventions into daily life, her project-based works propose a different means of representation regarding non-western subjects and objects that obstruct singular and conventional means of identification.

Her work has been exhibited at venues including SFAC Galleries, San Francisco, California; Portland Institute of Contemporary Art (PICA) and Disjecta Contemporary Art Center, Portland Oregon; Pitzer College Art Galleries, Claremont, California; Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma, Washington; the Urban Institute of Contemporary Art, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, Wilmington, Delaware; and The Sculpture Center, Cleveland, Ohio. She has been granted residencies at Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, MacDowell, and the Rauschenberg Foundation among others. Her work has been supported through grants and awards from the Oregon Arts Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, University of Oregon, and the Bonnie Bronson Fund.

Units of Movable Earth, 2017
1000 species tulips (Humilis Violacea, Linifolia, Turkestania, Clusiana Chrysantha, Eichleri, Orphanidea Flava, Schrenkii, Polychrome, Clusiana), soil, vinyl
Dimensions variable
Hallie Brown was born in 1905, outside of Tulsa, in Indian Territory that would become the state of Oklahoma. She supported herself as she earned a bachelor’s degree at East Central University and taught in Oklahoma before her parents moved their family to rural Oregon. In 1935 Hallie married Kenneth W. Ford and together they established Roseburg Lumber Company in the midst of the Great Depression.

Hallie Ford was drawn to art all her life, specifically the accessibility of artmaking. She took classes with the painter Carl Hall at Willamette University in Salem, and painting became a central part of her life. Her philanthropy established and supported key Oregon visual art museums and universities.

After Hallie’s death in 2007, The Ford Family Foundation’s Board of Directors honored our co-founder by establishing a Visual Arts Program. The first element of this program was the Hallie Ford Fellowships in the Visual Arts, awarded since 2010. Through these unrestricted fellowships, we seek to make significant awards to visual artists who have worked to establish their voice and craft.

Another of our goals is to help support the ecology that builds connections and capacity in the visual arts community of our state. As the Fellows become the focus of exhibitions throughout the world, they bring more attention and support to their Oregon peers. We are certain that Hallie Ford would be pleased to see how both individual artists and the visual arts community in Oregon have flourished since the establishment of this program in her honor.

We could not be more excited each year to bring new Hallie Ford Fellows into this family, and to share their work with you.

Anne C. Kubisch
President, The Ford Family Foundation

The Hallie Ford Fellowships are the flagship element of The Ford Family Foundation Visual Arts Program. The Foundation commits to an ongoing relationship with our Fellows through exhibition support, convenings, and professional development opportunities. In addition, the Visual Arts Program offers grants to visual artists for unanticipated career opportunities; supports artists-in-residence programs in Oregon and nationally; brings curators and arts writers from outside the region to Oregon for studio visits and community dialogue; commissions arts writing and publication; supports exhibitions, catalogues and other forms of documentation for Oregon artists; and awards grants to enhance exhibition spaces.

The Foundation is pleased to partner with the Oregon Arts Commission, University of Oregon, Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA), Portland State University, Reed College, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA), Creative Capital, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, United States Artists, and the artists and visual arts organizations of our state.

The Ford Family Foundation was established in 1957 by Kenneth W. and Hallie E. Ford. Its mission is “successful citizens and vital rural communities” in Oregon and Siskiyou County, California. The Foundation is located in Roseburg, Oregon, with a Scholarship office in Eugene. For more information about the Foundation and its Visual Arts Program, visit www.tfff.org.