

SPERONE WESTWATER
257 Bowery New York 10002
T + 1 212 999 7337 F + 1 212 999 7338
www.speronewestwater.com

Ali Banisadr

**Frieze New York, 5-8 May 2016
Randall's Island, New York, Stand A32**



Ali Banisadr, *Treasure*, 66 x 88 inches, 2016

New York, NY: 20 April 2016 – For Frieze New York 2016, Sperone Westwater will exhibit five new paintings by Ali Banisadr. The works on view display a world of imagination and mystery, reflecting the artist's childhood memories of the Iran-Iraq war, his current environment, and the history of painting. His light and playful painterly touch coupled with his unique visual vocabulary provokes the desire to explore the deep, unknown space of the ambiguous overall image.

Banisadr's paintings, which are neither totally abstract nor indisputably figurative, are inspired by sound, the underlying layer of his work. The artist clarifies: "When I paint, I hear a sound and that sound is the very thing that helps me compose the work." His unique compositions of organized chaos and color with a hallucinatory quality have prompted comparison to masterpieces by Hieronymus Bosch, Pieter Brueghel and Willem de Kooning, as well as Persian miniatures. Bosch's birds-eye view of the world intrigues the artist and inspires him to look at our society from a similar perspective.

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For Banisadr, painting is a means to visually reflect what he imagines between waking and dreaming, a state of quantum uncertainty. Guided by sound, he always starts with an abstract painting, slowly developing it into a narrative landscape of movement and color. He directs the more figural forms in his paintings, referring to them as “characters”, like a choreographer and composes a sequence of movement on the canvas. Even though his images combine a wide range of different elements, they have no central point or protagonist, thereby avoiding hierarchy to create equilibrium. Banisadr explains: “I always feel that even though the figures have a relationship with one another, they are also in their own world.”

Born in Tehran in 1976, Banisadr grew up during the Islamic revolution and the eight-year Iran-Iraq War. In 1988, he and his family left Iran to start a new life in California. In 2000, he moved to New York City where he currently lives and works. He received his BFA from the School of Visual Arts in 2005, and his MFA from the New York Academy of Art in 2007.

Since his first solo exhibition in 2008, Banisadr has exhibited in the United States and abroad. The artist’s work has been featured in recent group shows at the Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (SMAK) in Ghent (2010), Palazzo Saluzzo Paesana in Turin (2012), The Metropolitan Museum of Art (2012), Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles (2013), The Moving Museum in Dubai (2013) as well as in “Love Me/Love Me Not: Contemporary Art from Azerbaijan and Its Neighbors” at the 55th International Art Exhibition – Venice Biennale (2013). Banisadr’s works are in major public collections, including The British Museum, London; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Museum der Moderne, Salzburg. Banisadr had his first solo show at Sperone Westwater in 2014.

Gallery Contact:
Lucie Kessler
lucie@speronewestwater.com
+1 212 999 7337

Media Contact:
Justin Conner
justin@hellothirdeye.com
+1 917 609 8499