

PRESS RELEASE

## **Rising star Farshad Farzankia's first museum exhibition at ARKEN**

**Iranian-born artist Farshad Farzankia has taken the Danish art scene by storm and is attracting international attention. His colourful, imaginative paintings hark back to century-old traditions while also taking a critical look at our own time. On 19 June, the acclaimed artist will open his first museum exhibition at ARKEN Museum of Modern Art just south of Copenhagen, Denmark.**

A rapidly rising star, Farshad Farzankia has achieved great recognition in Denmark and internationally with numerous solo and group exhibitions to his name. This summer, Farzankia's artistic practice will be unfolded in a museum exhibition for the first time with the opening of *Farshad Farzankia – If I Stand* at ARKEN. The solo show features 24 paintings, drawings and silkscreen prints, several of them created especially for the exhibition.

Born in the Iranian capital Tehran in 1980, Farzankia arrived in Denmark at the age of nine when his family fled their home in the wake of the Iranian Revolution. He trained as a graphic designer and worked for a number of years in the field until eventually choosing to dedicate all his time to painting in 2016. Since then, things have moved fast.

### **From poetry to pop art**

Farzankia's paintings are radiant with poetic poignancy and vitality. The works are full of motifs, figures and characters that bring a wide range of narratives into play – about identity and self-image, freedom and movement, about fake news and philosophy. Farzankia draws inspiration from our present-day swirling torrents of digital imagery, from poetry and film art, popular culture and a wide variety of artists – from Asger Jorn to Andy Warhol. Yet Farzankia's art is entirely his own.

### **Into the realm of painting**

Farzankia's works raise highly topical questions about what it means to live in a globalised world where personal experiences and constant currents of images make life dynamic and changeable. In his paintings, a range of different cultures, times and places appear side by side, interspersed with personal memories and symbols. Each painting is like an open-ended scene or isolated incident from a film, inviting audiences into new, alluring worlds rich in imagery, language and culture. *Farshad Farzankia – If I Stand* is on show at ARKEN from 19 June 2021 to 27 February 2022.

The exhibition is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated catalogue (in Danish and English) featuring contributions from senior curator and head of collections Dorthe Juul Rugaard, poet Peter Laugesen, author Shëkufe Tadayoni Heiberg, author and art critic Kristian Vistrup Madsen and more.

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