

**OPAL HEART
MOTHER OF SPELL
WHISPERS TO MY SOUL:**

**THE GREAT OWL
SPIES THE DIVINE
SKULL CUP FOOL
OF SILVER SKY**

**DREAM
MY SECOND EYE
DREAM**

**MOTHER OF ALL
SINGS EASTERN ELEGY
SLEEPWALKS
SQUARES THE CIRCLE**

**THE LIGHT THAT IMMIGRATES
DWELLING IN GOD
WITH WATER OF THE BLACK MOON
FILLED MY PALM**

SPELL, PRAY

**MATTER MY MIND
MIND YOUR SOUL**

**RETURN ME,
HOLY ROTATION**

**Ala Dehghan
Spring 2022**

**ALA DEGHAN
HOLY ROTATION
June 22–July 29, 2022****Opening reception:
Wednesday, June 22, 6-8pm**

Ala Dehghan's artworks live outside the reach of habitual recognition. Their images arrive through a dream-like state—accessed both through the realm of sleep and in the spontaneous flow of painting. Dehghan references these experiences in an atmospheric sense, relaying dream logics and emotional terrains that in her works come to create a world of their own. Dehghan's early training in medieval Persian miniature painting and illuminated manuscripts remain at the heart of her art making, as do her ongoing personal study of esoteric knowledges, the literature of premodern spiritual psychology known as mythology, and the long history of Iranian folklore. The works in *Holy Rotation* deliver autonomous worlds within worlds: a constellation of between-spaces that knows dreaming to be a *real* dimension and likewise wonders at the illusions of reality; producing a mirror of painting as a pure metaphor for dreaming, and dreaming as a pure metaphor for painting.

Dehghan once described "painting" as a "pain-thing." For her, most of all, painting is a healing act. Principles of light and color are channels for connecting mind with matter with spirit. Throughout her work, love is an act that emerges from the divine, springing from that same place as grief, sharing the same quality as light does dark. Just as the sun gives its light to the moon and gives the moon her shadow, the moon receives and absorbs this light, carrying it through the night. In this flow she seeks out each individual detail, bonded to deeply unconscious and emotional senses, tending to them as they perfectly reveal themselves. Luminous picture frames adorn and protect every image, embraced by golden murals that treat the architectural presence of the wall as the paper of a book. Both reference the method of tashir, in which the margins of pages become their own theater of figures, trees, animals, and other forces of nature and magic. Through all these evolutions, *Holy Rotation* delivers a return to self, an eternal formation.

Ala Dehghan received her MFA in Painting & Printmaking from Yale University; MA and BFA in Persian Miniature Painting from Tehran University and Alzahra University in Tehran. She has presented solo and collective work at the Queens Museum, The Kitchen, Leslie Lohman Museum, the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at NYU, Kai Matsumiya, Thomas Erben Gallery, Alyssa Davis Gallery, Stellar Projects, and Sargent's Daughters in New York; Vox Populi in Philadelphia; The Delfina Foundation in London; Thaddaeus Ropac Gallery in Paris; and Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran, among others. She founded 17 Essex gallery at the same address on the Lower East Side (2016-2021).

Allen & Eldridge is located downstairs at James Fuentes gallery, presenting atmospheric introductory exhibitions and collaborations. Following its first generation of programming from 2015-2017, the space relaunches in the summer of 2022 with a series of solo and group projects programmed by the gallery and invited curators and led by Laura Brown.

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