

Shabahang Tayyari

« Siyâvash's teardrop »

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Siyâvash's teardrop

I start with black, Indian red and jade green, and continue with blue. I finish with beige or goose-head green. Slowly, as I get closer to the final stages, I start to obsess over whether I have adequately defined the borders of each color or not; whether I have used each as independently as possible. I would not like any color to hold a grudge against me. My job is to distinguish and delineate. I would like the black *fritillaria imperialis*, or the inverted tulips as they are called in Iran, to know that I know that it does not fancy being with spotted pinks. I would like no fire to devour the flames of another fire. I would like all of us to burn in the fire that we started ourselves. Even in hell we must start our own fire.

But the wave wishes to sprawl over the fire. It knows that it can win the fight. I accommodate the wave somewhere in the midst of the flames, without causing the fire offence. They fill in for each other's voids. I fill in the empty spots. I would like no open question remaining. Each shape and every form are independent and informed in their territory. None feel superior to others; except the *fritillaria imperialis*, who has every right to. It has sacrificed its life. These colors and borders are all a celebration, a feast for the tulips, for their turning upside down.

The stigmas are jewels, tears and pearls; black pearls. Those sweethearts who only appear in tales of sailors are impossible to touch, they are mere legends. But our story of the *fritillaria imperialis* is entirely different from the tales of sailors with all of their treasures, talismans, and curses. Our *fritillaria imperialis* is solid. Much like the Arch of Ctesiphon, it has sustained injuries but it does not fall. Our tulip, if burned in flames, will be reborn like a phoenix. The phoenix will turn upside down for freedom, falling down on itself and its blood, and grow from its ashes and fire; again, and forever. It flows into the field and the desert; blood does not fade into the earth; nor will fire disappear into the land. It will be reborn. It will harness life. It will vitalize youth. It will never end, this cycle.

Note: In Persian mythological history and folklore, it is believed that the *fritillaria imperialis* was once an upright lily, but once it witnessed the murder of the legendary Persian prince Siyavosh, it bowed its head to respectfully weep for the martyrdom of the innocent hero.

Text by Shabahang Tayyari

Translated from Persian into English by Ashkan Zahraei

Shabahang Tayyari (b.1987, Khalkhal, Iran) is a Karaj-based artist & writer. What he offers ends up appearing simultaneously both anxious and hopeful, innocent and corrupt. His artistic strategies are witty, poetic and dark; they employ game tactics and clever manipulation of texts, ideas, images, and meaning, merging together the provocative and the delicate.

He has presented solo exhibitions at Delgosha Gallery Tehran (2016 2017) ZKU Berlin (2018) Raf Projects Berlin (2016) Etemad Gallery Tehran(2014) and Maryam Fasihi Harandi Gallery (2011). His work has recently been included in group shows at Balice Hertling Paris and Giardino Segreto in Milan among others.

He serve as director of Delgosha Gallery Tehran 2016 to present.