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2024-25 NYC Proposal

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Divine Violence / Jin, Jîyan, Azadî (ژن، ژیان، ئازادی)

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Jin, Jîyan, Azadî (ژن، ژیان، ئازادی), which means woman, life, freedom in Kurdish, is not just a slogan; it is a discourse that comes to light again with the killing of a woman, Mahsa Amini, at the age of 22 by morality police in Iran to define the freedom actions of the women's indistinct role in Islamic state. Women in the Middle East always fight over their lives, freedom, and feminine and national identity against oppressive Islamic regimes and imperialist patriarchy. The state of sacri-fication references philosopher Agamben's concept of "bare life" and "homo sacer" in case of detaching from and pushing out of life. This situation is being legitimized, and a state of exception occurs. The death of Amini, in fact, was the sacri-fication of the woman, the bio-political body which is being sanctified and cursed. The sacri-fication of a woman appears as an (Islamic) religious punishment in which the victim is seen as the property of God. In other words, the finger cut by the Sharia doesn't hurt (just like the killing of the witch). However, the action ignited the feminist revolutionary struggle in Iran.

This exhibition seeks to investigate the emancipatory action for women's lives and freedom from post-revolutionary Iran to today in the Middle East through ordinary and extraordinary states of everyday life. Moreover, trajecting from the Islamic to the feminist revolution, this exhibition will provide an alternative reading of Middle Eastern history through the lens of Islamic feminism and feminist solidarity. Also, the controversial role of Middle Eastern women in the Islamic world will be criticized. It will reinterpret the narratives as well as the realities, testimonies, and distorted memories in Islamic feminist history in the Middle East, the geography of violence.

The exhibition intends to bring together an artist-lawyer, a researcher-curator, and an archiver-artist-architect who stand opposite the feudal, sexist, and patriarchal structure and have similar stories they have witnessed to reinterpret Islamic feminist history through women's liberation actions. With a performative approach, the researcher-curator will examine the factors, regimes, and movements that prepared the country for the Islamic revolution and; accordingly, will discuss the indistinct role of women in the Middle East and Islamic religion. With a videographical approach, the artist-lawyer will indicate how the sacri-fication of women in the Middle East becomes legitimized and how this situation is integrated into society, starting from Islamic rule to modern law. With a visual approach, the archiver-artist-architect will present the state of women's sacri-fications and their fight over the patriarchy and oppressive regimes through an

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archival and documentary approach. Cumulative, documentary, archival, and expressionist approaches will be used to shed light on Islamic feminist history through the cracks. This exhibition will be a collective knowledge production of the artist-lawyer, archiver-architect, and researcher-curator who grew up in the Middle East and are willing to reveal their latent oppressed stories.

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