

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**  
October 2025

***Fariba Hajamadi: History is in the Caption***



Fariba Hajamadi, *Repose at the British Museum*, 2021, Ink on Bridal Satin 54" x 74" overall, work in 2 parts  
Courtesy of the artist.

**NOW OPEN**

**On View:** June 28, 2025–March 22, 2026

**Location:** UCR ARTS

**Fall Reception:** Saturday, October 11, 2025, 6-8 p.m

At a moment when debates over representation and institutional power dominate headlines, UCR ARTS presents *Fariba Hajamadi: History is in the Caption*, a solo exhibition that investigates how cultural, educational, and other institutions of power shape the narratives through which we interpret history and culture.

The exhibition brings together several projects by Iranian-born, American artist Fariba Hajamadi, whose practice blends photography and painting to create layered spaces that exist only in her imagination.

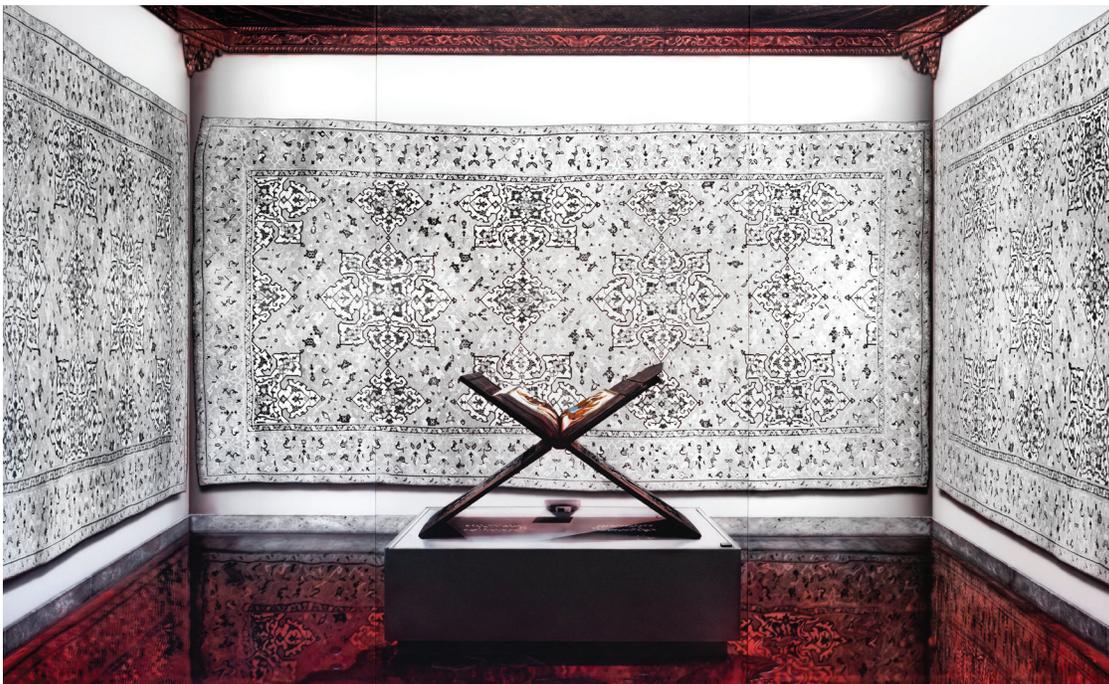
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Early photomontages from the 1990s—shown here for the first time in decades—combine photographs of traditional period rooms with fragments of newspapers reporting contemporary violence, underscoring the entanglement of beauty, power, and conflict.

New works on canvas mine the visual language of museums through photorealistic images that produce otherworldly effects and unlikely juxtapositions. In *Spilled* (2022), a blood-red pool of liquid reflects and distorts the intricate patterns of a centuries-old ornamental tapestry. In *Hagia Sophia with Gli* (2020), a mirrored, inverted view—resembling a photographic negative—appears impossibly through a doorway, with Gli, the internet-famous local cat, perched at its threshold.

“I began looking closely at institutions—art museums, historical monuments, history books, places where other cultures and histories are categorized and represented,” Hajamadi reflects. “I recognized that these presentations function not as impartial histories, but as constructed narratives. My work offers another version, another perspective—one that acknowledges its fiction while expanding the conversation.”

“Fariba’s work draws attention to the ways cultural institutions present objects from around the world as if their histories were neutral, when in fact they are often bound up with colonial violence and displacement,” says Joanna Szupinska, Senior Curator. “Her compositions insist that we look again to recognize how presentation itself can shape meaning and memory.”



Fariba Hajamadi, *Spilled*, 2022 oil and ink on canvas, 120 x 78 inches, work in 3 parts, Courtesy of the artist.

This exhibition culminates in a new site-specific installation, *Cranes, Crows, and the Sleeping* (2025). Terracotta and painted ceramic sculptures reproduce bullhorns and loudspeakers in an uncannily handmade way. Their forms echo in immersive wallpaper that reimagines French toile patterns with fantastical creatures and scenes from Iranian history. By combining the historical and the imaginary, Hajamadi creates an environment that confronts difficult histories while enveloping viewers in unexpected beauty.

Fariba Hajamadi (born in Esfahan, Iran) has exhibited internationally at institutions including the New Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; Musée d'Art moderne de Paris; and Museum Fridericianum, Kassel. She earned her BFA at Western Michigan University in 1980, and her MFA at the California Institute of the Arts in 1982.



Installation view, Fariba Hajamadi, *Cranes, Crows, and the Sleeping*, wallpaper with *Whispers* painted ceramic, Culver Center of the Arts, 2025. Photo by Nikolay Maslov/UCR ARTS.



Installation detail, Fariba Hajamadi, *Whispers*, painted ceramic, 2025  
Culver Center of the Arts, 2025.  
Photo by Nikolay Maslov/UCR ARTS.

*Fariba Hajamadi: History is in the Caption* is curated by Joanna Szupinska, Senior Curator, with support from Hannah Waiters, Curatorial Assistant. Exhibitions at UCR ARTS are supported by the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at UCR, and by the City of Riverside.

UCR ARTS is located at 3824 + 3834 Main Street, downtown Riverside.

Hours are Thursday + Friday, noon–5 p.m., and Saturday + Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m. • [ucrarts.ucr.edu](http://ucrarts.ucr.edu)

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