

Artist Statement – Shirin Jafarizadeh

خیال (*khiāl /xə.jɑ:l/*) - “imagination” or “fantasy.” It is often used when talking about something that exists in the mind but not in reality. This word is rich in poetic and mystical connotations. It implies a sense of creativity and mental imagery that goes beyond mere logical thought. In Persian literature, خیال is often used to convey a sense of otherworldliness or a dreamlike state.

As an Iranian artist living abroad, my lived experience exists at the intersection of dualities. In my work I depict moments where خیال and reality coexist, dissolving the boundary between inner experience and external reality. A space where the unconscious leaks into present consciousness, and the past and present exist simultaneously. A space between belonging and estrangement. I explore how these disparate worlds contradict, collide and dissolve into each other. Taking the viewer on a journey, through this space, which interweaves memories of emotionally charged experiences, to examine how psychological turmoil and diaspora alter perceptions of reality. My process becomes a self-exploration, a journey to redefine my identity and navigate my path within a new environment, while being deeply isolated from past connections because of the ongoing sociopolitical tensions in my home country.