

12MIDNIGHT

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REZA ARAMESH , LEILA HELLER GALLERY and D.A.P.
ANNOUNCE THE PUBLICATION OF

12 MIDNIGHT

New Illustrated Volume, Featuring Texts By Milovan Farronato, Media Farzin, and Eugenio Viola, Documents The Critically-Acclaimed, Multi-venue Sculpture Installation, Presented In New York City In 2013



An installation view of *Study for Action 123*, one of the *12 Midnight* sculptures, at Marquee nightclub in New York City, May 2013.

U.S. Book Launch To Be Held Friday, September 19, 2014, from 6 pm to 8 pm, at Printed Matter In New York City

London, England (August 13 2014)–Reza Aramesh, Leila Heller Gallery and D.A.P. are pleased to announce *12Midnight*, the new illustrated volume which documents the critically-acclaimed, multi-venue sculpture installation presented by Aramesh in five venues around Manhattan (Marquee, No. 8, Santos Party House) and Brooklyn (Bossa Nova Civic Club, Sugarland) during Frieze Week in New York City In 2013. Published by Damiani and distributed by D.A.P., the book features over 150 pages of images (installation views, behind-the-scenes snapshots, archival press and war reportage photography), in addition to the artist’s collages, cutouts, and inserts created exclusively for the book. The writers Milovan Farronato, Media Farzin and Eugenio Viola have all contributed essays responding to Reza Aramesh’s *12Midnight* project.

As Milovan Ferronato, curator and director of Fiorucci Art Trust, writes in his introduction, *12 Midnight* is “created on the occasion of a specific exhibition and an offbeat project. Shunning the legitimization of art and its ad hoc spaces, Aramesh has preferred to present his most recent polychrome wooden sculptures at midnight (and for a duration of a month) in five different New York nightclubs. A courageous choice...”

“Midnight is a moment of contradictory transformations. Night is already turning into day, but may also just be

beginning,” writes art historian Media Farzin. “Midnight is a sociable hour for nightlife celebrants, a time of lessened inhibitions and more playful intimacies. The hours between midnight and dawn seem to invite more than their share of urban violence; this is the time when accidental or deliberate crimes most often seem to happen. Activities requiring discretion are usually planned for these hours—say, the execution of death row inmates. And it was around midnight that many viewers encountered Reza Aramesh’s “12Midnight.”

“In a daring operation of aesthetic substitution,” observes critic and curator Eugenio Viola In his essay “Aramesh has drawn on the bloodless pathos that pertains to the tradition of wooden sculpture to present his dying soldiers in a contemporary version of the ancient martyrs. The value bestowed on the material is emphasized by the faithful revival of the technique of woodcarving, while the brilliant coloring is meticulously obtained through the skillful use of glazing. The formal result is extremely disconcerting: Aramesh’s soldiers seem to be suspended in a limbo between past and present; they are contemporary icons in which the classical pose, the ivory tones and the fixity of the gaze becomes expressions of a timeless beauty, frozen in a dramatic and perpetual immobility.”

While on view in New York City, *The Art Newspaper*, in an article titled *Casualties of Clubland*, described the sculptures of *12 Midnight* as being “saintly apparitions.” *The Daily Beast* called the project, in particular the sad, lingering air around *Dying Iranian Soldier, 1987*, “Powerful” and “haunting ... a poignant series of installations forcing the viewer to confront assumptions about violence, culture and sex.” The site further noted that “The men depicted in the sculptures are erotic not only in their physique and pose, but also because Aramesh has designed them to be viewed through a box with holes -- evoking an illicit feeling associated with pornography or peep shows, provocatively questioning how people in the modern world experience war through media.”

About Reza Aramesh

Reza Aramesh was born in Iran and currently lives and works in London. He completed his MA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths College in 1997. Influenced by art history, film and philosophy, and working in photography, sculpture, video and performance, Reza Aramesh draws on mass media imagery, typically of recent wars and armed conflicts. This source material is recreated in a wide range of works, all of which he has recently titled “Actions”. These works re-enact scenes working with non-professional performers, or drawing on centuries old traditions of craftsmanship resulting in immaculately presented sculptures of wood or marble. Aramesh manipulates both space and time to create generalized and therefore universally valid images of humanity and its relationship with violence. Reza Aramesh's photographic, sculptural, video and performance works have accrued international acclaim, and have been exhibited worldwide including the UK, France, China, USA, Dubai and Israel in institutions such as London's Royal Academy of Arts, Barbican Centre, Tate Britain and ICA.

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