



## [Black Trace] Sadegh Khalife

December 1 - 15, 2023

SARAI Gallery is pleased to present *Black Trace*, Sadegh Khalife's first solo collaboration with SARAI Gallery as part of the *Pasitigris Projects*. In the *Pasitigris Projects* SARAI focuses on artists from southern cultures. The exhibition features the artist's recent acrylic and oil paintings and works on paper.

Throughout his career, Sadegh Khalife (b. 1983) has been influenced by the geography and history of the oil-rich regions of southern Iran, as well as his experiences working in the industry. The artist often incorporates familiar features of the southern Iranian landscape, such as oil extraction facilities and pipelines, into his work. Khalife's paintings explore the social and environmental consequences of oil extraction, but he does so not as a neutral observer, but rather as a fierce critic.

In the paintings of the *Black Trace* series, Khalife depicts ominous black masses that symbolize death and annihilation. These black clouds starkly contrast with the beauty of the surroundings and living beings, posing a threat to their existence. In one of the paintings of this series, the oil pipes form a cage that traps a migrant bird, while a menacing black cloud looms ominously above it.

In the works on paper, the artist has depicted only fragments of pipes and industrial facilities against a white background, deliberately omitting other elements. When viewed alongside the paintings, these pieces evoke photographs that capture murder weapons found at crime scenes.

*Black Trace* opens on Friday, December 1st, and will be on view until December 15, 2023.

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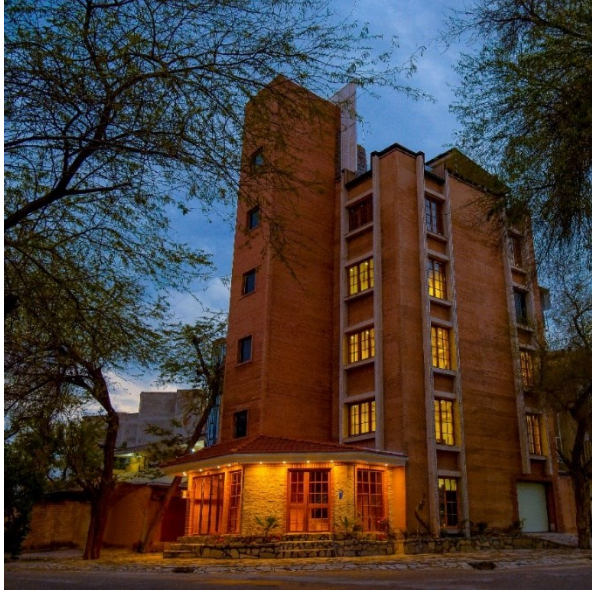


[www.saraigallery.com](http://www.saraigallery.com)



[saradipour.art](https://www.instagram.com/saradipour.art)

# SARÂÎ سَرَای



**SARAI Gallery** is a contemporary gallery specializing in Middle Eastern art. Founded in 2018, SARAI Gallery represents bright emerging and young regional talents including Iranian and Pakistani artists internationally, helping them achieve their potential both in recognition and value by organizing exhibitions and joint events, and publishing works by artists. Moreover, since 2020, SARAI has introduced Khor Art Initiative, an annual art prize for local artists, reviewed by a high-profile international jury. SARAI Gallery has been participating in top art fairs around the world including Art Dubai 2020-21 and 2023, The Armory Show 2021-2022-2023 (winning the Presents Booth Prize in 2021), KIAF 2021-22, Abu Dhabi Art 2022-2023, Untitled Art Miami Beach 2022 and 2023, Expo Chicago 2023, Art Brussels 2023, and Taipei Dangdai 2023 among others, making it one of the youngest galleries to appear on such competitive platforms. SARAI Gallery's main exhibition space is located in Mahshahr, Iran, where we host shows throughout the year, while under Karavan Projects, SARAI organizes collaborative shows with selected galleries and institutions at home, particularly in Tehran, as well as in major art capitals across the globe including Cromwell Place, London. Our LA-based office handles US and international affairs.



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# SARÂÏ سرای



**Sadegh Khalife** (b. 1983) is a self-taught painter born and based in Shushtar, Khuzestan province, in southwestern Iran, and the founder and director of Shavadoon Gallery. He has held several solo exhibitions and participated in numerous group shows and art festivals across the country including The 9th Fajr Festival of Visual Arts at Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (2016), and The 11th Annual Persbook Contemporary Art at Iranshahr Gallery, Tehran (2022). His most recent solo exhibition “Imagination Breaking” was held at Sareban Gallery, Tehran (2021).

Khalife’s keen interest in machinery as forms, and abundant references to systems and part-industrial hybrids in his visual language come from his 17 years of work in the industrial sector. Khalife’s art is nurtured and guided by the collective memory of the local people who have witnessed turbulent times from the rapid industrialization of their land to the devastation of a long and tragic war and the deep marks left by these events on a once-rich and diverse environment and its famously warm and generous people. Khalife's deep environmental and social concerns are reflected in the confrontation between rigid machines and structures, and the vulnerability of nature and humanity.



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