

# Neil Beloufa

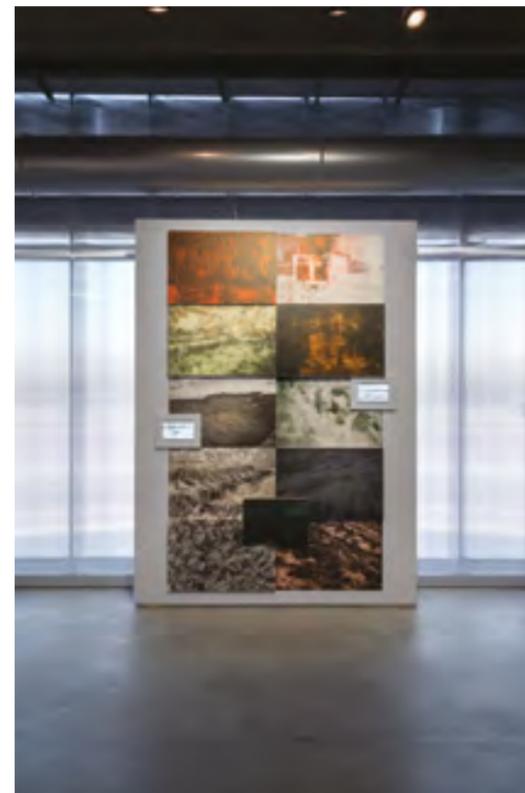
## Pejman Foundation / Tehran

When Neil Beloufa agreed to inaugurate the Pejman Foundation's future home, located in a former industrial building in downtown Tehran, currently undergoing reconstruction, one of his conditions was that the renovation should remain unfinished throughout the exhibition. In this way the artist continues to deconstruct political and economic systems, contesting their embedded hierarchies and contradictions.

Visitors are welcomed by a large metal grid over the main façade, along with a colorful collation of mundane, rationalized objects comprising rebar and resin. Perceiving a triptych of light boxes through the grid, we read "Yum" in graffiti mode. A consummate disruptor of conventions and stereotypes, Beloufa erases hierarchies of high and low, of respectable and popular culture, elevating scraps from the factory floor and elaborating sculptures inspired by domestic spaces.

Despite his feature-length film *Occidental* (2017), which recently screened at the Berlinale, the artist's filmmaking has tended to challenge traditional displays of moving image within larger installations. *The Analyst, the researcher, the screenwriter, the cgi tech and the lawyer* (2011) is reinstalled here in-situ, projected upward through a stack of Plexiglas panels observable from four different floors. By contrast, a new work, titled *Restored* (2017), looks at the codes underlying reality television. Filmed in a Qajar palace at Isfahan and merging Iranian cultural references with those of Western popular culture, the work forces us to confront our orientalist expectations. Young Iranians dress and behave as they might in any other TV series while a voice-over calling to mind Barack Obama problematizes their actions. The decision to film in black and white distances the viewer and, in a way characteristic of its auteur, veils the line between documentary and fiction. In an era increasingly defined by post-truth, this exhibition couldn't feel more relevant in place and time.

by Martha Kirszenbaum



From top, clockwise:  
 "Garage Triennial of Russian Contemporary Art"  
 Installation view at Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2017)  
 Courtesy Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow  
 Photography by Alexei Naroditskiy

**Paulo Monteiro**  
 "The outside of distance"  
 Installation view at Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo (2017)  
 Courtesy of the Artist and Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo  
 Photography by Kenji Takahashi

**Neil Beloufa**  
 Installation view at Pejman Foundation, Tehran (2017)  
 Courtesy of the Artist and Pejman Foundation, Tehran

