

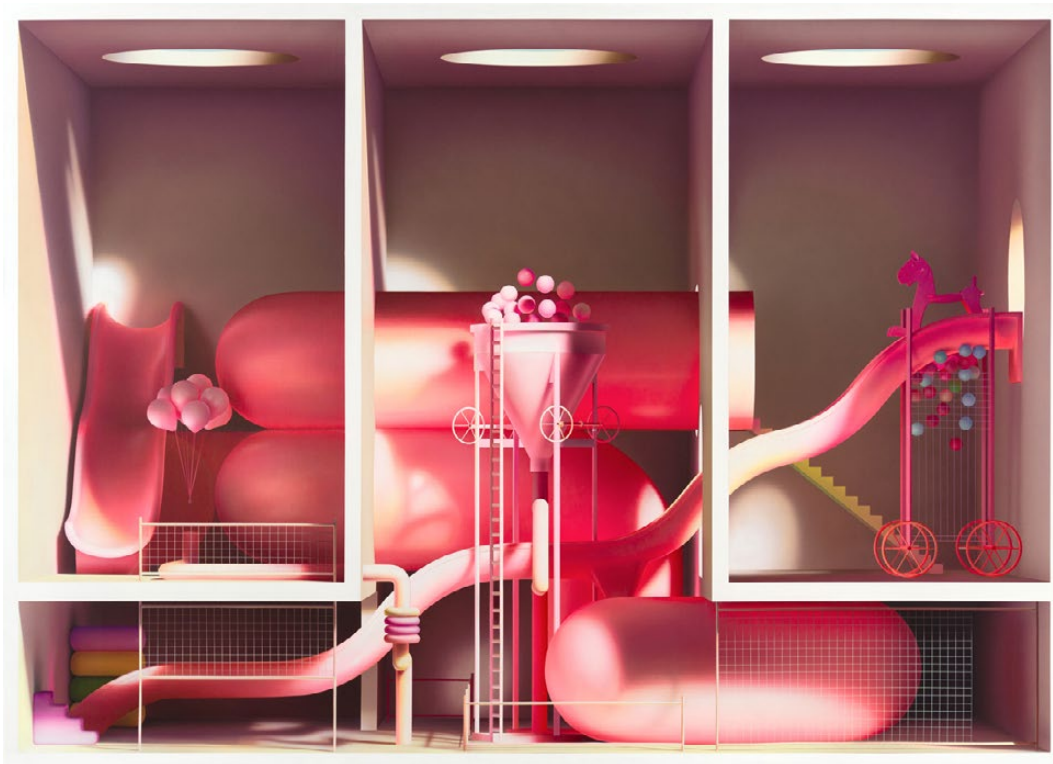
# GAGOSIAN

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**Gagosian to Present Paintings by Mehdi Ghadyanloo in New York**

**His First Solo Exhibition with the Gallery, Opening March 17**

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Mehdi Ghadyanloo, *The Unreachable Beauties*, 2022, acrylic on canvas, 70 7/8 × 98 1/2 inches (180 × 250 cm)  
© Mehdi Ghadyanloo

**NEW YORK, March 10, 2022**—Gagosian is pleased to announce an exhibition of new paintings by Mehdi Ghadyanloo in New York. Opening on March 17, this is the gallery’s first solo presentation of his work.

Ghadyanloo’s works envision a fictive architecture of playground slides, tubes, and ladders situated in shallow, walled spaces and lit from above by ocular skylights. Meticulously painted in acrylic and oil, their rounded forms are defined by dramatic chiaroscuro that represents the reflectivity, translucency, and opacity of polished steel, plastic, and other materials. The enigmatic paintings convey Ghadyanloo’s fascination with perspectival construction and illumination, and prompt metaphysical interpretations.

From Iran, Ghadyanloo established a public art practice by completing more than a hundred expansive trompe l’oeil murals on buildings throughout Tehran from 2004 through 2011. In 2016, he became the first artist since 1979 to be officially commissioned in both Iran and the United States with the completion of his *Spaces of Hope* mural at the Rose Kennedy Greenway in Boston. In 2019, he painted *Finding Hope*, a mural triptych for the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Building on the illusionism of his murals and their intensity of focus, Ghadyanloo’s dramatic works on canvas differ from them in their format, scale, and mode of address, bringing existential themes to the fore.

Ghadyanloo's imagined structures evoke memories of carefree childhood play, also suggesting both nostalgic reverie and utopian aspiration. His experience as a father whose career has necessitated extensive international travel with his children inspired him to consider playground equipment as a subject that transcends linguistic and cultural difference. The significance of these structures is complicated by their incompleteness and inaccessibility—some appear to have missing or unusable ladders and entrances, while the slides of others are unattached or blocked by chain-link fencing. One canvas features a cluster of ladders that support one another as they tower upward but fail to reach anything. In the exhibition's largest work, a group of interconnected chambers is occupied by a labyrinthine construction in shades of pink that melds industrial machinery with floating balloons, a hopper filled with balls, and a tall toy horse on stilts and wheels.

Depopulated, the scenes have an uncanny, dreamlike presence reminiscent of Giorgio de Chirico's empty plazas, René Magritte's paradoxical scenarios, and M. C. Escher's impossible spaces. Their complex geometries are equally inspired by his native Iran's rich traditions of painting, architecture, literature, and decorative arts, including the carpets he observed his mother weaving during his own childhood. Ghadyanloo grew up during the Iran-Iraq War (1980–88), and his sensibilities were shaped by wartime anxieties and the exigencies of life in the Islamic Republic. Rooted in the specificity of his own experience and imagination, his work presents a broadly accessible visual language that invites ludic exploration and reflection.

**Mehdi Ghadyanloo** was born in Karaj, Iran, in 1981. He lives and works in Frankfurt, Germany. Collections include the National Art Museum of China, Beijing; Long Museum, Shanghai; and Xiao Museum of Contemporary Art, Rizhao, China. He has completed public mural commissions internationally, including throughout Tehran (2004–11) and at the Village Underground, London (2015); Dulwich Museum, London (2015); University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (2018); Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Conservancy, Boston (2018); OK Center for Contemporary Art, Linz, Austria (2018); and World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland (2019).

#MehdiGhadyanloo

## **MEHDI GHADYANLOO**

Opening reception: Thursday, March 17, 6–8pm  
March 17–April 23, 2022  
976 Madison Avenue, New York

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