

## 5 Not-to-Be-Missed Los Angeles Solo Shows



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**Amir H. Fallah: Remember My Child...** (<https://www.shulamitnazarian.com/exhibitions/34-amir-h.-fallah-remember-my-child.../>)

September 12 – October 31, 2020

Shulamit Nazarian

One of the most fascinating figurative painters working today, Amir H. Fallah (<https://www.artandobject.com/news/artist-amir-h-fallahs-mesmerizing-portraits>) brings a sense of graphic design—a skill he picked up from founding, editing, and publishing the DIY lifestyle zine-turned-magazine *Beautiful Decay* from 1996 (when he was just sixteen) until 2013—to his rich, visual narratives. Creating biographical portraits from the things people own, he merges a knowledge of Western art and culture with the pattern-based language of Islamic art to construct something completely fresh and spirited. In his new series of large-scale paintings, the Iranian-American artist explores the immigrant experience through the personal histories of his family to construct life lessons to pass down to his young son.

“Each painting starts with a line of text and that line of text is my starting point for finding imagery—the iconography to use in the painting,” Fallah explained in a recent video for the COLA 2020 Artist Focus Series. “Everyday I started this practice of sitting down at our dining room table, which is now covered in plastic—a kind of makeshift art studio—and my son and I will have some creative projects to do. I’ll start making these small works on paper that are based on some of the sketches that I have for the larger paintings and he will do some sort of art and craft project. It’s been really interesting because so much of the work is about raising a child and passing on your values to him.”

The painting *Science Is The Antidote, Superstition Is The Disease* is a puzzle-like piece that mixes Americana with Islamic mythology (<https://www.artandobject.com/news/how-islamic-world-influenced-western-art>) and an old map of the world, while *They Will Smile To Your Face* simulates the composition of an enlarged Persian miniature with imagery from science and art centered around a birdcage with one bird that is caged and another that’s free. *Remember My Child, Nowhere Is Safe* layers imagery of a maiden spilling wine and black and white hands holding a symbolic plant, placed in front of a floral rug that’s blocking a floor plan of a structure, which is sided by a picture of Columbus being greeted by Native Americans and an hourglass measuring time.

Three large tondos combine painting and collage to give the blended histories a global perspective that’s embellished by a rich variety of flowers and plants encircling glowing fields of color. Offering a Garden of Eden-type of paradise, they provide hope for a peaceful future, where all of the cultural elements tossed together might live in sync.

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