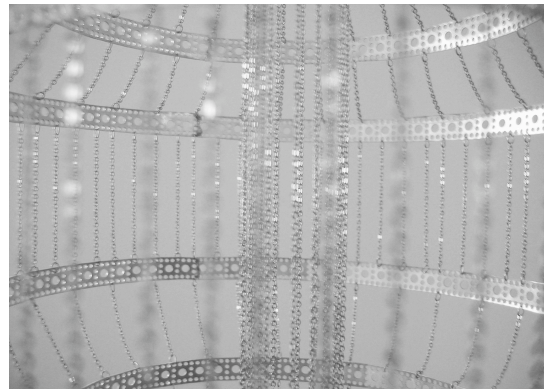


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Afruz Amighi *Cages*



January 21 – February 28, 2010

Opening reception Thursday, January 21 6-8pm

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is pleased to announce *Cages*, the first solo exhibition by Afruz Amighi. For this exhibition, Amighi presents 5 new sculptures that reflect the tumultuous political and social history of Iran.

Through intricate sculptures with surfaces that suggest beauty and decadence, Amighi creates a precarious balance in her work with forms that allude to underlying narratives of tension and conflict. In *Cages*, Amighi casts her unique perspective into the confines of Iranian social, political and cultural institutions through incorporating cage-like features into several works made from base metal chain, aluminum sheet metal and wire. The alluring and provoking facades reveal a power to ensnare and entrap, creating a realm in which violence and tranquility collide.

The installation *Cages* presents a collection of slender, bottomless cages that hang at different intervals in fighting formation. Mocking ornate chandeliers with their allusions to missiles and bullets, their numerical configuration represents the number of test missiles launched by the Islamic Republic of Iran over the past two years. Visually playing off of Weber's sociological concept of 'iron cages,' Amighi pushes this translation to represent the cage of Nationalism both in Iran and within herself.

The uneasy containment of such patriotism is further reflected in *Mesh*, a shawl-like fishing net rendered in base metal chain. *Mesh*, another manifestation of the cage, symbolizes the external and internal exoticisation of Iran, a phenomenon inspired from Western bias. By glorifying the ethos of this nation, we become ensnared and overcome by foreign prejudice. Amighi's cages expose such spectacle as mundane, our complacency and allowance to be entrapped, and Amighi's efforts to overcome this.

Afruz Amighi received her M.F.A from New York University in 2007. She is the recipient of the inaugural Jameel Prize awarded by the V&A Museum in London. The Jameel Exhibition will travel throughout the Middle East until 2011. Afruz Amighi will also be included in the exhibition *Light of the Sufis: The Mystical Arts of Islam* at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston this Spring. Afruz Amighi (born in Tehran, Iran 1974) lives and works in New York.