



MANOU ART PRESS RELEASE – September 3 2015

POP GOES STOCKHOLM: THE RETURN

Iranian contemporary artist returns to Stockholm for expo at Hotel Diplomat, where he once lived, as son of the Iranian Ambassador.

Iranian artist Manou Marzban, known as Manou, and Hotel Diplomat, one of Stockholm's leading private owned hotels, announce a three week exposition of the artists' works with the opening night being October 1, 2015.

What makes this exposition unique is the fact that between 1970-1974, Manou's father was the Iranian Ambassador to Sweden. His Excellency Ambassador Manoutcher Marzban lived with his family at Hotel Diplomat.

"I grew up in that hotel, and have the most amazing memories. My brother and I would often leave the Ambassadors floor and venture into the lobby. My parents hosted grand events. We met the most unbelievable people, politicians, rock, film and sports stars, diplomats of all levels, members of the royal family and so on" says Manou.

However, the reality was that Iran was slowly moving towards a revolution and turmoil so there was constant threat of terror. "We had a body-guard called Ludwig, with a German shepherd. Our walks in the park was always a little tense as there were threats to my father."

That threat became a reality on March 8 1974 when the Iranian embassy, adjacent to the hotel, was stormed by left wing militant students and Ambassador Marzban was taken hostage. He and others were held for several days. The hostage situation made worldwide news and was especially tense because a few months before, the Yugoslav ambassador to Sweden had been taken hostage and killed in Stockholm.

“I remember sitting in dark rooms with the curtains drawn, and police everywhere. Outside was a frenzy of TV cameras and security people. Meanwhile, my brother and I didn’t know if we would see our father again. I passed the time entertaining him with my doodles” the artist recalls.

“I think just coming back to Stockholm is special, but to be able to do a show in the same place I used to call home? The same place I first dreamt of being an artist? That’s pretty unique if you ask me, especially after the Iranian Revolution and all the obstacles we faced.”

Marie Mattson, who works with artists at Hotel Diplomat adds that “[ADD QUOTE]

Manou’s art has gained global attention in the past decade and he is deemed as one of Iran’s leading European based contemporary artists. Recent press has called his work, “a whirlwind of chaotic energy” (Al Arte Magazine, 2015), and “engaging and intriguing, never too sad or too serious” (Huffington Post, 2014). Le Monde mentioned him as the “The Persian Banksy” in 2013. An interview with US media in 2012 stated “his character is so large, so generous, and so vibrant that people find themselves happy in his company. His enthusiasm is contagious” (PBS America, 2012).

The exposition will run from October 1-15, 2015.

About the artist:

Manou is from Iranian and Georgian origins. Born in Geneva, he traveled throughout his childhood due to his fathers' role as a diplomat. He excelled at art, but studied film in university and eventually got an MBA. Corporate life followed with Microsoft. By 2010 Manou had started to create unique pieces that were getting attention in France with private collectors. Manou's first series of works, called 'Streaks', got instant recognition for the bright use of acrylics, bright colors and clever use of spectrum changing lights to showcase the works. Manou's art is infused with symbols from popular culture as well as his native country of Iran. Manou reinvents Persian and other iconic imagery by injecting them with a fresh pop culture take, making Manou's work exude energy and provocation. His works vary from abstract to pop to portraits. Through his vibrant color building, Manou engages with his audience and tells a story. Each canvas – or in some cases table tennis tables, old TVs, furniture – has a myriad of narratives interwoven to reflect the artists' strong opinions on history, politics and popular culture.

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About the hotel

The classic Hotel Diplomat is situated in the heart of Stockholm between the financial district and the natural scenery of Djurgarden. Diplomat's modern interior was designed by renowned architect Per Öberg. Hotel Diplomat is a privately held deluxe hotel, and get its name from being the residency to several embassies including Iran.

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PHOTOS :

Featured at expo – Ping Pong Table 2 (2015)



The artist and a signature piece



The artist with Empress Farah Diba to his right and his wife Roxane on his left, Gallery Nicholas Flamel, Paris 2013



Ambassador Marzban taken hostage on Match 8 1974 next to Hotel Diplomat



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