POWER

RARELY FALLS

Aida Wilde, London, UK

WITHIN

THE RIGHT HANDS

AIDA WILDE is an Iranian born, London-based printmaker/visual artist and educator. Wilde's diverse screen-printed indoor/outdoor installations and social commentary artworks have been featured on city streets and galleries around the world and are responsive works on gentrification, education, and equality. Wilde's academic career includes being an alumna of and associate lecturer and course director at the Surface Design and Foundation of Applied Arts at the London College of Communication, University of the Arts (2004-2015). Aida's serigraphs have been exhibited in and outside the UK at institutions including the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Women's Art Library, Goldsmiths, Vienna's Fine Art Academy, Somerset House, the Fitzwilliam Museum, and Saatchi Gallery. In this large-scale work, I reference my own experiences of displacement, loss, and trauma – having fled Iran during its war with Iraq (1980–1988), along with my mother and sisters – whilst connecting these with the experiences of countless others.

In the foreground of this street-based triptych, the hands of my mother and younger sister are raised in iconic gestures of resistance atop marble pedestals – on a monumental magnitude often reserved for celebrating men's histories. The bold text etched on the plinths arrest the viewer by invoking a direct call to reflection and action – slogans that echo Jenny Holzer's iconic street-based work: 'Power rarely falls within the right hands'; 'If you only knew how exhausting it is to be powered by rage'; 'There can be no Gods walking among us'.

My sister is the Iranian poet Ziba Karbassi. Here, I arm her hand with a quill, connecting my own streetbased public visual intervention to my sister's quiet – but no less powerful – poetic acts of resistance:

> From everyone More than everything From all More than everyone ever I believe in my own chest In the moment of the bullet¹

The background to the work is densely woven with the names of just some of the thousands of women and girls who have been murdered in the struggle against Iran's oppressive regime. In acknowledgement of the uprising sparked in 2022 by the unlawful death of Mahsa Amini, the names of Iran's manifold victims of gender violence rain down softly on the plinths and rise in a ghostly stream from the poppy fields at their base – honouring and humanising the untold women and girls lost to this ongoing state-sanctioned femicide.

This street-based triptych can be found on walls in London, Bristol, and Manchester. Produced for International Women's Day 2023 in collaboration with the wild posting company UNCLE and with creative direction from Olly Walker.

All photographs ©UNCLE.

NUART JOURNAL



ŀ

POWER RARELY FALLS WITHIN THE RIGHT HANDS





