

Bahar Noorizadeh: *The Debtor's Portal*

Bahar Noorizadeh is internationally recognised for a practice that fuses economic theory with gaming technology, experimental film and collaborative performance. Her surprising work envisions the ways in which capitalism reshapes and mutates time, space, and bodies, capturing futurity through finance treated as sensorium, medium, weapon, belief, and vehicle.

Co-curated by The Otolith Collective and Sophia Yadong Hao, this exhibition had its first iteration at Cooper Gallery, University of Dundee, and is now restaged at The Showroom to focus on two key works that evoke the monstrous yet delicious mutation of finance, urbanism and mediation under conditions of drastically advanced capitalism.

The film installation, *Free to Choose* (2023), is an unexpected hybrid: a 'financial science-fiction opera' set in a vertiginous future Hong Kong, conceived and designed by the artist in collaboration with Waste Paper Opera and Rudá Babau. Extrapolating from Yanis Varoufakis's *Talking to my Daughter: A Brief History of Capitalism*, Noorizadeh envisions the global credit banking system as a time-travel machine that is delirious, dystopian, rigorous and riotous. Narrated by the American Nobel economist Milton Friedman (1912-2006) – who believed neoliberal systems were the surest route to a prosperous and free society – *Free to Choose* conjures a luminous CGI vision of a vividly disorienting future megacity populated by unpredictable inhabitants. Staged within an installation of mirrors that envelope the viewer within an ever expanding visual field, *Free to Choose* offers a surreally inflected and unsettling take on a future underwritten by dystopic capitalism.

Further within the gallery the sculpture *The Space of Flows* (2021) spatialises a scene from *Free to Choose*; projecting a fragment of video over an imploded 3D-printed automobile in mid-time travel, pulled apart by temporal forces it cannot survive. The car is an avatar that recurs throughout Noorizadeh's work, narrating the economic cycles of bubble, boom and bust, shifting its shapes to glorify the ages of Fordism, post-Fordism, Teslism and Muskism.

Exploring the tensions between artistic vision and financial speculation, *The Debtor's Portal* interrogates the systems at play between capitalism and imagined co-authored futures. In doing so, it proposes that fictions that attempt to intervene in the futures of economic and historical justice must contend with the imaginaries materially insured by infrastructures of financial speculation and capital.

The Debtor's Portal is amplified by *Reuter in Tehran* (2026), a live performance originally conceived by Noorizadeh for Cooper Gallery, which is now redeveloped in collaboration with London-based musician and sound artist Mhamad Safa. Staged as a horroristic dialogue between an anomalous financial auditor and Baron Reuter, the concessionaire of the first imperial bank in Persia, Reuter in Tehran retraces the symptoms and the signs of a financial contagion initiated by the pathogen of the European central banking system. *Reuter in Tehran* will be performed at The Showroom on 10 December 2026, please book tickets via The Showroom's website.

In close dialogue with Noorizadeh's 2026-27 mural commission, *In Mortua Manu / In A Dead Hand*, which wraps around The Showroom's exterior, a series of workshops, discussions, listening sessions, and community led programmes will coalesce around her alternative pedagogical and curatorial platform Weird Economies, which Noorizadeh founded in 2021. For further information and details of upcoming events please visit: theshowroom.org.

Bahar Noorizadeh, born in 1988 in Iran, examines the relationship between art and capitalism and their entangled moral, social and organisational technologies. In her practice as an artist, theorist and filmmaker, she investigates the histories and the futures of economics, from ancient monetary systems to cybernetic socialism and neoliberal finance, and the techno-fictions underpinning geopolitical relations and logistical infrastructures. Noorizadeh is the founder and organiser of Weird Economies, a multi-authored platform dedicated to radical economic imaginaries. Her work has appeared at the Guggenheim Museum NYC (2024), Taipei Biennial (2023), Venice Architecture Biennial (2021), Transmediale Festival (2020, 2022), Tate Modern Artists' Cinema Programme (2018) and Geneva Biennale of Moving Images (2018) among others. She is the co-editor of the e-flux special issue on Iran (May 2024) and has contributed essays to n+1, e-flux Architecture, Journal of

Visual Culture, and Sternberg Press; and anthologies by Duke University Press and MIT Press. Noorizadeh completed a PhD in Art at Goldsmiths, University of London. She is currently teaching in MA Geo-Design at the Design Academy Eindhoven and is a resident artist at the Rijksakademie (2026-2027).

baharnoorizadeh.com

The Otolith Collective is a London-based artist-led organisation founded by Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun that supports intergenerational and intragenerational art practices through research-led projects, writing and process-based development. It fosters environments for discourse and collaboration by co-commissioning artists, curating exhibitions, programming screenings and organising public programmes with a wide range of local and international institutions and organisations. The Otolith Collective's platforms take the form of workshops, reading groups, panels, book launches, listening sessions and publications.

otolithgroup.org

Sophia Yadong Hao is Director & Principal Curator of Cooper Gallery, University of Dundee. Working internationally, Hao characterises the curatorial as a rhizomatic praxis capable of transforming exhibition making into a testing ground for radical futures. Notable curatorial projects include *NOTES on a return* (2009), a re-contextualisation of performance art from 1980s Britain; *Of Other Spaces: Where Does Gesture Become Event?* (2016–2017) that evokes the ethos of feminism for an alternative politics in culture and society; and *The Ignorant Art School: Five Sit-ins Towards Creative Emancipation* (2021-25) a five-phase exhibition programme examining histories and future possibilities of creative pedagogy as a radical emancipatory praxis. Hao is founding editor of the digital publication *What I am Reading Now....* Her publications include *Of Other Spaces: Where Does Gesture Become Event?* (2019), *Hubs and Fictions* (2016), *A CUT A SCRATCH A SCORE* (2015), and *NOTES on a return* (2010). Hao was named one of The List's Hot 100 in 2024: The Most Influential Scottish Cultural Contributors.

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The Debtor's Portal is a touring exhibition co-curated by The Otolith Collective and Sophia Yadong Hao, first produced by Cooper Gallery, DJCAD, University of Dundee. Originally funded by Creative Scotland, University of Dundee, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art Centenary Trust and Arts Council England. Free to Choose was originally presented at FACT, Liverpool in collaboration with The Otolith Collective in 2025. The exhibition at The Showroom is organised by Curatorial Fellow Rose of Sharon Leake.