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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Iranian Artist to Feature Work at University of Hartford, Sacrifice Paintings in Public Burning**

(West Hartford) – An interactive art installation that centers around human rights and includes a public sacrificial burning of paintings will come to the University of Hartford this fall.

Iranian artist Minoo Emami is displaying her work at UHart’s Joseloff Gallery Sept. 21-Dec. 16 in “Minoo Emami: Under My Veil.” An artist talk will be held Sept. 21 at 5 p.m. in Wilde Auditorium on campus, with an opening reception 6-8 p.m.

Meanwhile, the campus’ Silpe Gallery will invite members of the public to help stitch together Emami’s early paintings and create a giant quilt Sept. 21 to Oct. 21. The quilt will go up in flames in the Harry Jack Gray Center quad at 2 p.m. on Nov. 11.

Emami has long endeavored to show solidarity with those fighting for human rights in Iran, while also bringing light to the physical and psychological trauma of war. The September opening of the exhibit also marks one year since the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, who died in Iran while detained for a dress code violation.

Carrie Cushman, director and curator of the Joseloff Gallery at UHart, says that Emami’s work connects to global struggles for women’s rights and social justice.

“After seeing Emami at a Boston gallery in 2019, her life story and art always stuck with me, and last fall when the protests were starting in Iran after Mahsa Amini died, I followed the unfolding social movement,” Cushman says. “I remembered Emami’s work and went for a studio visit.”

Currently living in Rhode Island, Emami was born in Iran, and grew up on the border of her home country and Iraq during the Islamic revolution. As Islamic law went into place, women’s rights were under threat, and a lengthy war with Iraq began. Emami later married a war veteran, and began teaching herself painting and drawing, with much of her work focusing on the leg her husband lost in combat, as well as the psychological trauma of coming of age in a war zone.

Well into her years as an artist, Emami came to the United States and attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University in Boston. Her work spans a multitude of mediums, and

also includes sculptures of prosthetics with varying materials, colors, and patterns. Each serves as a portrait that tells the story of someone injured in the conflict zone.

Motivated by their sacrifices, as well as the fight of women in her own country, Emami decided that she will burn her early “antiwar” works at UHart after they are stitched together into a quilt.

“Emami will be sacrificing her artistic identity,” Cushman explains.

The burning will fall on Veteran’s Day, as Emami’s work also focuses on veterans, military members, and all they give up as they serve.

The exhibit at UHart will include her early paintings and drawings, prints, photography, prosthetic sculpture series, videos, and new never-before-seen work related to the ongoing Iranian Women’s Rights Movement.

Emami will be at UHart often to hold workshops in print-making and ceramics with Hartford Art School students. Other academic programs across campus will incorporate the installation into their courses.

The exhibition and related programming are funded by a grant from the Connecticut Humanities Council and the Joseloff Gallery Programs Fund held by Hartford Art School Endowment, Inc.

## **About the University of Hartford**

*Spread across seven dynamic schools and colleges, the University of Hartford has been guiding the purpose and passion of students for over six decades. On our 350-acre campus alongside Connecticut’s capital city, approximately 4,000 undergraduate and 1,800 graduate students representing 48 states and 45 countries come together for a common purpose: to collaborate across different disciplines, diversify perspectives, and broaden worldviews. We’re a four-year private university focused on advancing the public good through meaningful connections within our communities. Our unique approach to comprehensive education gives us the critical perspectives that lead to impact change, regionally and beyond. With degree programs spanning the arts, humanities, business, engineering and technology, education, and health professions, we focus on doing the work that matters.*