



THIS IS NO FANTASY

ARA DOLATIAN | In Between Forms

[Statement](#)[Works](#)

In Between Forms presents a new body of sculptural works by Ara Dolatian inspired by Mesopotamian female deities, queens, and poetic traditions. Moving between human, animal, and divine states, the exhibition explores hybridity, transformation, and the unstable body through feminist and queer readings of ancient histories.

[View works \(19\)](#)

“The sculptures oscillate between relic and living body, sacred object and contemporary form, holding both loss and transformation in balance.”

'In Between Forms' draws on Mesopotamian female deities, queens, and poetic traditions to explore unstable states between human, animal, and the monstrous. Inspired by the voice of Enheduanna and the devotional intensity of *The Exaltation of Inanna*, Ara Dolatian reimagines ancient modes of invocation as contemporary acts of material and embodied transformation.

Across the exhibition, bodies resist fixed categorisation, moving fluidly between genders, species, and temporalities. Influenced by feminist and queer readings of Mesopotamian history, the works understand identity as constructed, relational, and continually shifting. Hybridity emerges not as harmony or synthesis, but as rupture: exposing the ways identities are imposed, undone, and reconfigured through systems of power.

The monstrous becomes a productive and generative force within the work. Rather than symbolising fear or abjection alone, these hybrid figures reclaim forms historically cast as excessive, unstable, or threatening. Horns, wings, talons, and ceremonial adornments destabilise distinctions between human, animal, and divine states, proposing transformation itself as sacred.

A restrained palette of white and gold structures the exhibition materially and conceptually. White evokes archaeology, fragments, and displaced relics, while gold signifies divinity, luminosity, and excess. Together, these surfaces allow the sculptures to oscillate between ruin and elevation, relic and living body.

Throughout the exhibition, the sculptural body becomes a site of negotiation between myth and materiality, ancient history and speculative contemporary form. The works remain deliberately unresolved, holding transformation as an ongoing process rather than a fixed state.

Ara Dolatian: In Between Forms

Dolatian's new body of work, *'In Between Forms,'* draws on Mesopotamian female deities, queens, and poetic traditions to explore unstable states between human, animal, and the monstrous. Through sculptural works that move across genders



Ara Dolatian, In Between Forms, 2026

Bodies in Transformation

Across the exhibition, bodies resist fixed categorisation.

Figures shift between human, animal, and divine states, occupying unstable forms that challenge systems seeking to stabilise identity and power.

Hybridity becomes a space of rupture and continual becoming rather than resolution or synthesis.



Ara Dolatian, Holy Woman, 2026. Earthenware, glaze, lustre, 35x13x14cm, Photo: Brigid Cara Reid

Divinity, Horns, and the Sacred

The recurring presence of horns draws from ancient Mesopotamian visual language, where horned crowns signified divinity. In Dolatian's sculptures, horns emerge as bodily extensions that blur distinctions between human, animal, and sacred forms, marking transformation, authority, and proximity to the divine.





Ara Dolatian, Wind, 2026, Earthenware, glaze, lustre, 46 x 19 x 19 cm, Photo: Brigid Cara Reid

Relic and Living Body

Presented in white and gold, the sculptures oscillate between archaeological relic and living body. White evokes plaster casts, fragments, and displaced artefacts, while gold signifies divinity, excess, and luminosity. Together, the restrained palette creates tension between fragility and authority, ruin and elevation.

The Monstrous as Resistance

Dolatian approaches the monstrous as a generative site of resistance rather than as a source of fear or abjection. Hybrid bodies challenge patriarchal systems that marginalise queer, non-conforming, and unstable identities. Surfaces shift between smooth skin and reptilian textures, suggesting figures caught in ongoing transformation.



Ara Dolatian, Queen of all lands, 2026, Earthenware, glaze, lustre, 39x19x19cm Photo:Brigid CaraReid

Between Armour and Ornament

The sculptures carry a heightened performative presence, evoking the charged atmosphere of a runway while resisting the consumptive logic of fashion.

ornament, protection and exposure.



Ara Dolatian, Sing, 2026, Earthenware, glaze, lustre, 33 x 11 x 11 cm., Photo: Brigid Cara Reid

Ancient Myth Through Contemporary Form

Drawing on figures such as Inanna, Ishtar, and Ereshkigal, the exhibition revisits ancient mythologies through speculative contemporary forms.

Bird-like talons and winged bodies recall Mesopotamian imagery such as the Burney Relief, reactivating ancient visual language through sculpture and material transformation.



Fluidity and Non-Binary Forms

The figures remain deliberately ambiguous, moving between masculine and feminine states while resisting fixed interpretation.

This instability reflects Mesopotamian understandings of identity as mutable and contingent. Here, fluidity becomes a form of agency and refusal against imposed systems of meaning.



Ara Dolatian, Queen of Queens, 2026, Earthenware, glaze, lustre, 42x26x26cm Photo: Brigid Cara Reid

About the Artist: Ara Dolatian

Ara Dolatian is a multidisciplinary artist whose sculptural practice explores mythology, embodiment, and transformation through feminist and queer perspectives.

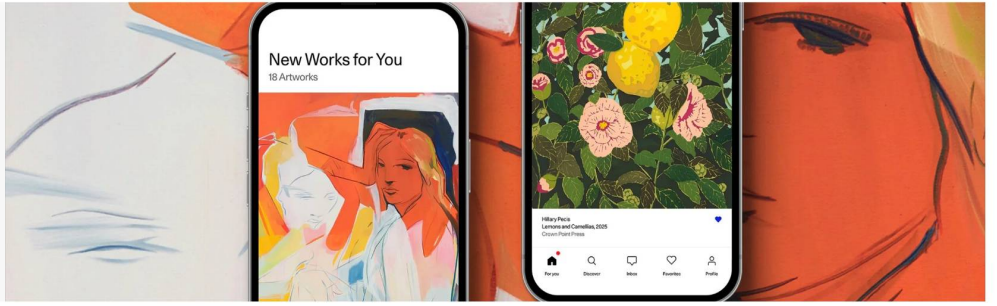
Drawing on ancient histories and speculative forms, their work examines unstable identities, material excess, and the body as a site of continual reconfiguration.



Ara Dolatian, In the studio, Photography: Simon Strong

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