

MARRY ME TO THE END OF LOVE | 23-30 JUNE 2012 |

[Cite internationale des Arts](#), Paris, France
The Arts Arena Event



Live Stream on Saturday 23 June 2012 6-9pm | Paris Timel amirbaradaran.com

AMIR BARADARAN announces a new interactive performance—his wedding to anyone and everyone he can convince to enter a temporary marriage (*Mut'ah/Sigheh*). This pronouncement of marriage also functions as an invitation, where participants are welcome to wed Baradaran's live sculpture and become an element in both Baradaran's body of work and the larger schema of performance art.

The collaborative performance is an attempt to introduce temporary marriage into the performance art lexicon and playfully question the recent and perplexing push by "progressives" to "include" same-sex couples in the definition of marriage. When asked about his lack of enthusiasm regarding gay marriage, Baradaran says, "it is ironic that to be considered progressive today, one must adopt a conventional attitude and conform to the confines of a failing conservative institution."

Baradaran's fascination with temporary marriage stems from its recognition that love and desire are temporal, shifting, and always changing. Moreover, *Sigheh* sheds light on the transactional aspect of any relationship. But above all, this Islamic edict, also known as "pleasure marriage," permits desire for desire's sake rather than for procreation. Baradaran asserts that, "although *Sigheh* may not be egalitarian at its core—for example, women must either be widowed or divorced to seek partners for pleasure—introducing *Sigheh* into conversations about marriage and sexuality throws the paradigm off kilter, just enough, to open up new understandings and lines of inquiry."

Marry Me to the End of Love builds on past projects such as [Frenchising Mona Lisa](#), which [Forbes magazine](#) characterized as a "rape" for using "guerrilla tactical maneuvers" to cover the daVinci painting in a digital "augmented reality" *hijab* made of the French flag. The paradox is that Amir Baradaran reintroduces the progressive concept back into the queer conversation by way of "backwards" Islamic customs and costumes, such as *hijab* and temporary marriage. Baradaran first introduced the idea of *Sigheh* when he [infiltrated Marina Abramovic's live sculpture](#), "The Artist is Present," at the New York MoMA and proposed marriage to her: "*I love your bodies of work... and I would love to be wedded to this body, here and now.*"

The multiple short-term marriages in this new project coupled with stereotypes of the perverse, violent, Muslim man show the discontinuities of self-identifying as gay and Iranian. The particularity and urgency of this conundrum is amplified because, in today's political landscape, the treatment of gays is utilized to justify America's impending war against Iran or to calibrate which people are "*Other*." Baradaran occupies the space between both. He is "The Other Artist" who is "Present" and also gay. Multiple temporalities and territories converge to suggest new and old ways of understanding desire and the body. This performance is an effort to interject in existing debates which seek to disarticulate desire from power, individual pleasure from collective corporal control over the body—the body here is both the physical body humans inhabit and the artist's own body of work.

Baradaran will enter temporary marriages with partners from all genders, ages, and orientations, thus subverting the religious, sexual, and cultural dichotomies that created it, that control and categorize the body—Baradaran's particular body and all its ambiguous glory.

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