

# Portfolio-Work Samples

Robert Farid Karimi

Below are photos and links for my work. There is explanation for all the work on this document.

Links are in blue at the end of each description



## Pickles and Hopscotch

Mixed media installation, 2023 (Honolulu Museum of Art), 2019 (Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery)

Lead Artist/Hopscotch Court creator/Pickle maker/Art Director/Game Designer/Writer

In Pickles and Hopscotch, I allegorize the game of hopscotch as a metaphor for migration and assimilation. The integration of the process of pickling alludes to the shame often linked with these journeys. As participants follow the symbolic trajectory of going from “home” to “heaven” on the hopscotch path, they are invited to consider immigrant experiences, with the objective of avoiding obstacles along the way. The installation ended after the pickles fermented for the duration of the exhibition, and audience members ate together and shared stories of food for survival, and food, games and recipes they brought a long on their immigrant journey.



## Once we honor and lift the weight we fly then we got to deal with the cages of racism

Game installation, Participatory experience, game cards, laminated game spaces in gallery space

Cal State Dominguez Hills Art Gallery, 2019

Lead Artist/Graphic Designer/Game Designer

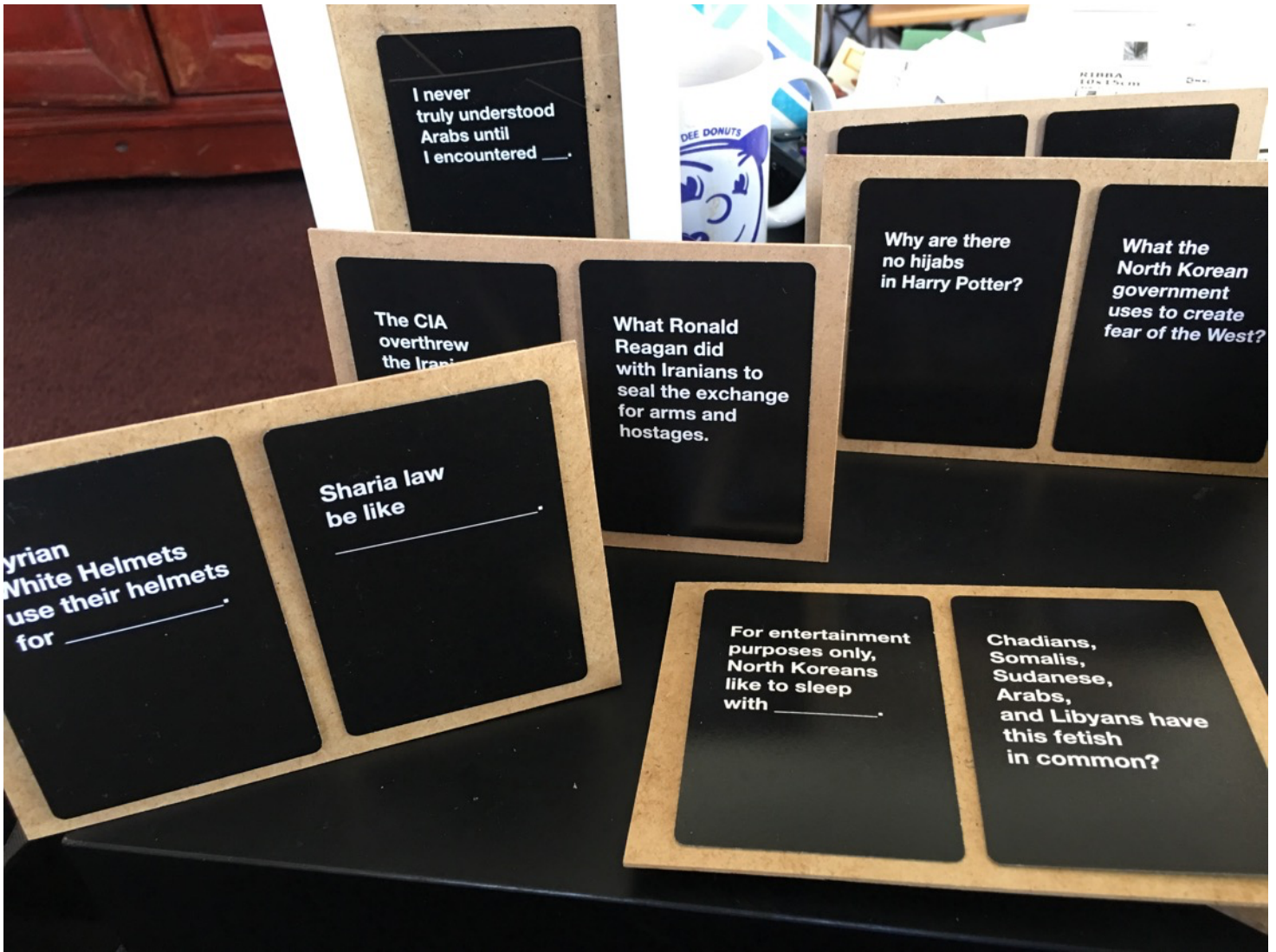
A reimagining of Mexican artist José Guadalupe Posada's goose game where participants play a Chutes & Ladder type game in a gallery that critiques border policies focused on Central American immigrants. Players, are given silver wings to play the role of migrating geese. A referee, The Arbitro officiates in a soccer uniform and hands out red cards, yellow cards, and green cards, as players go from square to square to make it to their migration home. Photos of players were not taken so players could play the game freely without worry of any federal agency gaining access to the geese's images for future deportation.



## **I and I/Man O Man: Solidaridad**

Participatory experience, Archival paper (36" x 22"), metal rack, hangars, baseball cap, foamcore, paper, wood  
Cooper Building, Los Angeles, CA 2018.  
Graphic/Interactive Designer /Hat Designer

Posters/t-shirts designed to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Memphis sanitation strike and change the term to the Farsi word "man" (which means I) to make the posters a declaration of Rastafarian oneness and explore the relationship between the Civil Rights movement and the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Instructions provided with installation give participants opportunity to put their own declarations to add to the movements.



## The Question Poem Playroom Expansion Pack - detail

(1 of 2)

Participatory Installation; Card Game Poker Size Playing Cards, Wooden Frames; Size (4 x 6)

Cooper Building, Los Angeles, CA 2018.

Graphic Designer/Writer/Game Designer

I created Cards Against Iranians, Syrians, Iraqis, Somalis, Yemenis, Libyans, Afghanis, Sudanese, Chadians, North Koreans, & Venezuelans (CAISIS) a satirical expansion pack for Cards Against Humanity (CAH) – the largest game played in the US. The pack uses CAH's system as foundation to critique Trump's Muslim Ban. Using deck as focal point, brought together cards to create Neruda-like question poems to show different way to play with game's racist mechanic.



## **The Question Poem Playroom Expansion Pack - installation**

(2 of 2)

Participatory Installation (20x 10ft); Card Game Poker Size Playing Cards, Wooden Frames (4x6)

Cooper Building, Los Angeles, CA 2018.

Experience Designer/Graphic Designer

Using the Cards Against Iranians, Syrians, Iraqis, Somalis, Yemenis, Libyans, Afghanis, Sudanese, Chadians, North Koreans, & Venezuelans (CAISIS) as focal point, a game room created for participants to play the game in the center of the installation. Live performances were curated during the exhibition a dialogue around the Muslim Ban, an open mic poetry reading, a game night, and lecture/performance around the game's creation.



## **\_\_\_Against\_\_\_:Cards against Iranians, Syrians, Iraqis, Somalis, et plus**

Game Performance: Tehran Tacos (abgushte koobideh, garbanzo vegan mix, tortillas, cabbage, etc.), wood, plastic buckets, Guatemalan tablecloths, burkini, red Farsi 3 hats, aprons, card deck, vinylsigns  
 FLUX Foundation Exhibition, Ford Amphitheater loading dock, Los Angeles, CA, 2018

Using the Cards against Iranians, Syrians, Iraqis, Somalis...game deck, game night inside a loading dock created for French curator's vision of interactivity and play. Players play game, eat, listen to Israeli DJ spin Arab/Persian dance music, while Arab/Persian Comedians challenge players to make fun of them. Karimi wore burkini and shorts because they are banned in France and Iran, respectively. Chicanx Chef serves Tehran Tacos; lights were designed by local lighting designer to create festive mood in area usually used for taking out the trash or delivering sets and furniture.



## To Protect and Serve: Police the Police (A Broken Game)

Cards, Game Box, Game pieces, Table, Cardboard Boxes, Game Performance  
 Undisclosed locations, 2017-2019  
 Commissioned by USC Games

Role: Graphic Designer/Game Designer/Game Writer

A 3 player role-playing board game where each player takes a role of someone at a police stop: a police officer, the community member they stop, and an observer. The officer and the community member work to earn each other's trust through the game's mechanics. The officer must stay alive, not make a false arrest or brutalize the community member, and the community member's goal is to leave the situation alive. The game created in response to the rise of police brutality in the US, was play tested with LAPD, and Los Angeles youth. Karimi coined the concept "broken game" because as he playtested he discovered that players began telling their stories of their relations with police while trying to correct the game's mechanics. The game is kept "broken" to facilitate this conversation.



<https://bit.ly/LumpiaCampesinaNew>

## Lumpia Campesina

One Channel Video, 2018; 8 min.

Written, directed, co-produced by Robert Karimi

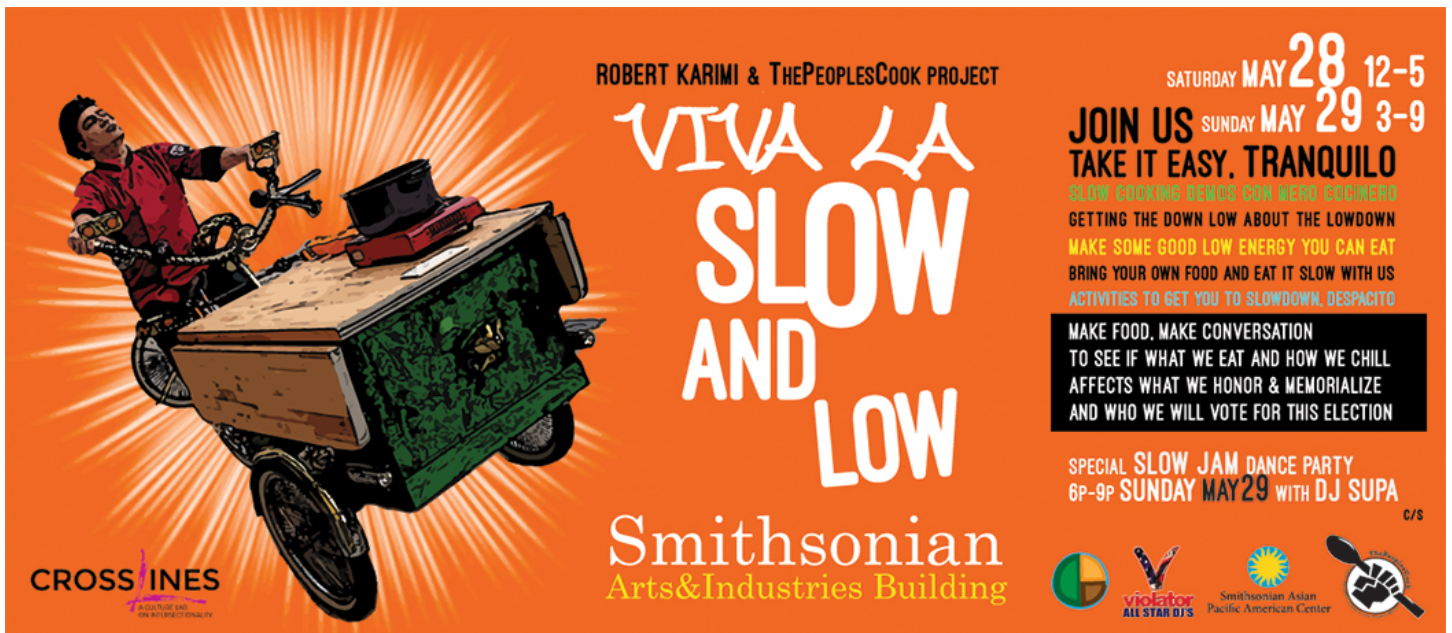
Produced by Xylophone Films and ThePeoplesCook Project

Famed culinary icon Chef Stache interviews the legendary quixotic Iranian-Guatemalan cook, Mero Cocinero, who traces his love for a special Filipino dish by taking us back to the San Francisco Bay Area of his teenage years. At a birthday party of his junior high friend, Mero faces the alienation, awkwardness and isolation of being the only Iranian-Guatemalan at the party. While the DJ spins 80s dance hits, young Mero learns how to transform his alienation into a recipe for empowerment. Afterwards, local folk hero Tita Betty joins Mero to break down the recipe so the audience can make it themselves.

Lumpia Campesina is a cinematic interpretation of a comedy routine from Robert Karimi's satirical comedy cooking show called The Cooking Show.

The film contains a participatory component where audience members eat the dish during or after the movie screening.

Part of ThePeoplesCook Project (2009- 2022)



<https://vimeo.com/250216620>

## Viva La Slow and Low

Participatory Installation; Tables/Bikes/Food/Utensils/Low Rider Kitchen Cart  
 Smithsonian Arts&Industries Building, 2016  
 2 days; 1000 people served

Viva La Slow and Low a trans-disciplinary installation/experience that honors low rider culture and cultural food memory as a metaphor to discuss how what we memorialize defines what nourishes us. An experience centered around the LowRiderBicycleKitchenCart to honor our abilities to eat slow & close to the earth with ingredients we already have. Participants created PelotasdePower: energy bars (designed with Food Scientist) with grains from Latin America, Asia & Africa, listened to DC activists while eating Persian burrito. All activities designed Sunday to get people to chill, think, be together, remember their roots, and think about how their food and pace affects how they vote in the 2016 election.

Part of ThePeoplesCook Project (2009- 2022)



<https://youtu.be/kxsx-wExFsI>

## Viva La Cook: 7th Street Market Installation

Interactive Experience

stationed inside the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Market in Charlotte for a 2 month residency at McColl Center

Participants cutting with knives on the LowRiderBicycleKitchen Cart, 2015

Interactive Designer, Performer

The instruction: anyone could use a knife and cut to make “Grandma’s Radish Dip For The People.” The youth took the knives; the adults panicked, and the youth took ownership of the food, while adults marveled that young people (mainly Latinos and African Americans) held knives – and we ended up discussing food and also how these adults see the youth of this community. The unifying theme of TPC had been activation, thus each project title begins with “Viva La” which translates as “long live...” to provide a unifying language that ties these different efforts with varied but connected outcomes towards delicious-ness, together. Each ‘Viva La’ project reinforces and multiplies my commitment for balanced well-being.

Part of ThePeoplesCook Project (2009- 2022)



<https://vimeo.com/channels/thepeoplescook/69855237>

## **ThePeoplesCook Project ASU Residency**

Interactive Experience

Arizona State University Nutrition Kitchens, 2014

Invited by Arizona State University professors to take the technology of ThePeoplesCook Project to teach promotoras (health coaches) and nutritionists how to be more engaging with at-risk communities when talking about Type 2 Diabetes, using playfulness and performance techniques.

Part of ThePeoplesCook Project (2009- 2022)



<https://vimeo.com/149971538>

## **Viva La Soul Power: Feed and be Fed**

Interactive Performance – Curated Exhibit Pop Up Restaurant

Location: Entire building; Theater; Sections of Gallery

Intermedia Arts – Minneapolis and Columbia College, Chicago, 2012-2013

The video link: A 9 min review of the 2 hour experience. Different interactive components for a 6 room pop-up restaurant/journey that devolves into an interactive platform to get audiences to share their cultural food stories with each other while eating a 5 course meal secretly based on medical guidelines for a balance plate from culturally based recipes. Curated the set of the pop-up, asked them to create Day of the Dead installations where audience can take something, and get something (Feed & Be Fed).

Pictured: Exhibition became the pop-up restaurant Viva La Soul Power at night, and was used by students of Columbia College by day

Part of ThePeoplesCook Project (2009- 2022)



## LGBTQA Torta

Interactive Installation: Lettuce, Beans, Guacamole, Tomato, Queso, Ally herb, Bread, tables, chef hats, aprons  
Whole Foods, SF, Philadelphia; Intermedia Arts, Minneapolis, other clandestine locations, 2009-2011

A live performance disguised as food demonstration to spark discussion about constitutional amendment for gay marriage in MN. This performance toured throughout the US where Chef character exclaims "we are marrying these ingredients. Some people say they are illegal. I say no, they are delicious!" This led to confrontations where some decried, in a SF Whole Foods no less, that they shouldn't be forced to eat a gay sandwich.

Part of ThePeoplesCook Project (2009- 2022)



<https://vimeo.com/151323056>

## Farid Mercury

Interactive Rock Concert Solo +DJ Performance

Shotgun Theater; Teatro Diana, Guadalajara; National Performance Network Festival, 2008-2009

Performance, 78 minutes, 3:44 min clip

A documentary performance piece, part concert, part performance art, guided by Farid Mercury - a hybrid drag queen Iranian-Guatemalan karaoke version of Freddy Mercury, about how Persian immigrants change their identity to gain power in situations where they were rendered powerless. I interviewed Iranians across the diaspora to talk about Persian male identity post 9/11, and wove together their words, while utilizing the ultimate mask that tied many Iranian males globally – the changed name – and used the most famous Persian Farrokh Bulsara, lead singer of Queen, and a Parsi (of Persian ancestry from India) who changed his name to Freddy Mercury and transformed himself. I wanted to create a concert atmosphere, so that the audience's participation was immediate, and they had a role: concertgoers.