

Joyce Overheul (1989)

Utility Box on Enghelab Street

2019

In 2019 Joyce Overheul stayed at the Aria Residency in Tehran, Iran. It was there that she took the photograph that would provide the basis for this tapestry.

The junction box in the tapestry was used during the 2017 demonstrations by the Girls of Enghelab Street, as they protested against the compulsory hijab and the clothing restrictions that apply (to women) in Iran. On 27 December 2017 Vida Movahed stood on top of the junction box, tied her headscarf to a stick and waved it in front of the crowd. She was subsequently arrested. Her action prompted the Iranian government to install a canopy over all junction boxes, so that demonstrators could no longer climb on top of them.

Everywhere that there is now a canopy over a junction box, there was once a protest. They are the silent remains of the past. In this tapestry, Overheul pays tribute both to these places and to people (women and men, all over the world) fighting for their rights.

The tapestry was made entirely by hand, using approximately 36 metres of red organza, 20 metres of embroidery silks, 10 glass beads and almost 400 metres of nylon yarn.