*She wanted to go back to certain roots that she felt had been taken away from her, but at the same time, they were the one thing she didn't know how to regain. She could have everything- absolutely everything- but didnt know how to regain what she had lost within herself. ( From the book The last pomegranate tree by Bakhtyar Ali )*

This project was initially merged from a collaborative project called *Monument Zero* by Katayoon Barzegar. Monument Zero is the artist’s personal journey of the first International Women’s Day in Iran in 1979, following the call for mandatory hijab by the establishment of the Islamic regime.

The series took shape as three visual essays within a publication. My process for developing these essays was initially inspired by a documentary titled *Year Zero*, created by four French feminists who were invited to document the movement.

The photographs are rooted in storytelling, a narration inspired by the videos and images of the movement and a transition of wide-angle shots to intimate close-ups of the faces within the crowd, guessing their names and slowly recognizing them. This recognition wasn’t based on their concrete identities but instead, blended them with figures from my own lives: The mothers, sisters, or college friends. A sense of familiarity, yet seemed far away.

Slowly, looking at the handwritten banners brought back memories of my own experience making banners for protests. Seeing the hands holding the banners reminded me of the warmth of the hands of those in the protest, trying to protect me and each other, slowly turning to an echo in my ear: I’m here, don't be scared. This physical and emotional resonance became a bridge between past and present, between their experiences and mine.

It was this sensation, this bodily engagement that shaped the making of the images. I began to see the archive not just as a collection of historical evidence but as an intergenerational heritage that inspired me to use my hand in the creative process. I decided to use the tape printing technique. After immersing the paper in water, I used my fingers to gradually scratch away layers until the fragments of printed images on the tape were left behind. With these fragments I attempt to make a collage. Some tapes retained visible fingerprints, while other parts were more damaged. In this way, I aimed to create negative spaces to evoke imagination and encourage the audience to narrate the story in their own personal ways.