

ART DUBAI



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DASTAN

Mossavar-Nameh
A Dastan Project
Art Dubai 2018
Booth C2

Curatorial Team: Hormoz Hematian, Aria Kasaei, Ashkan Zahraei
Concept: Hormoz Hematian
Booth Design: StudioKargah — Aria Kasaei
Structure Design and Production: Mohammad Hossein Gholamzadeh
Executive Consultant: Marco Djeremaghian
Associate Curator and Coordinator: Roxana Afkhami

More Information: <https://dastan.gallery/exhibitions/121/>

High-Resolution Images: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/1srIorm97mydats/AADYDYRZAtS4DPpfcFxDLQQRa?dl=0>

Vector Files of Dastan Logos: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2mk4xh067laihup/AABya00qWK-qG2UoiwssNwCDa?dl=0>

At Art Dubai 2018, Dastan presents its most recent incarnation of Mossavar-Nameh (lit. 'Book of Illustration') at Booth C2. Works by twentieth- and twenty-first-century Iranian masters Ardeshir Mohassess, Fereydoun Ave, Ali Akbar Sadeghi, Farshid Maleki, Farah Ossouli, and Nicky Nodjourni are presented along with pieces by more contemporary Iranian artists, including Pouya Afshar, Shahriar Ahmadi, Mohsen Ahmadvand, Mohammad Hossein Gholamzadeh, Mélodie Hojabr, Amin Montazeri, Peybak, Kour Pour, and Iman Raad, and complemented by a number of paintings from nineteenth-century Iran.

The current presentation of Mossavar-Nameh, which literally translates to 'Book of Images', has been inspired by the idea of binding the project into a book, and has been long in the making. This iteration of Mossavar-Nameh has been curated by Hormoz Hematian, Aria Kasaei, and Ashkan Zahraei. The concept was introduced by Hormoz Hematian, the structure designed and produced by artist Mohammad Hossein Gholamzadeh, and the visual identity and graphical elements designed by celebrated Iranian designer and StudioKargah's co-founder and co-director, Aria Kasaei.

One of the common aspects of all the artists presented in Mossavar-Nameh is their interest in books and book-making: From Ardeshir Mohassess' more than ten books of drawings to Farshid Maleki's recent publication* featuring his drawings and poems, Ali Akbar Sadeghi's several books of illustration to Nicky Nodjourni, Iman Raad, and Mélodie Hojabr published narrative drawings, Shahriar Ahmadi's vast library of literary and Sufi books from which he draws inspiration for creating his story-like panels, Fereydoun Ave's penchant for artist books, Farah Ossouli's narrative painting, and many more.

In the Safavid Period (1501-1722), known as the Golden Age of Persian Art, the ultimate artworks were works of architecture, carpets and books. While much has been written on the architectural wonders and carpets of the era, the literature on the Persian art of book-making has been relatively scarce. Both before and during the Safavid period, books were one of the most important mediums in which the close collaboration of the painter (Mossaver), the calligrapher (Khat'taat), the designer (Mozah'heb) and the binder (Sah'haaf), resulted in a single coherent piece.

This project has been inspired by the same interest in creating books and has been inspired by the Persian tradition and art of book-making. In Mossavar-Nameh, the idea of a single Mossaver (painter) has been replaced with incorporating the works of artists from several generations and media into three books. Basing its conceptual roots in the Persian art of book-making, the current project presented in Booth C2 at Art Dubai 2018, has demanded the same collaborative effort as its celebrated ancestors used to. In this incarnation, the curatorial team has tried to narrate the story through its selection and presentation of the artists (the Mossavers) hence taking the role of the Khat'taat or the calligrapher. This narrative (curatorial project) is designed by StudioKargah's Aria Kasaei who takes the responsibility of the Mozah'heb or the designer, and ultimately bound into three giant books by sculptor Mohammad Hossein Gholamzadeh, the Sah'haaf (binder), who embodies this presentation into the form of the books.

* 'Farshid Maleki', published by Emkan Gallery, Tehran, 2017

Mossavar–Nameh: Curatorial Concept

The curatorial concept of Mossavar–Nameh was designed through studying many twentieth- and twenty-first-century Iranian artists with regards to their sources of inspiration, themes, and techniques throughout their careers.

The criteria for including artworks/artists in Mossavar–Nameh Project fall into three broad categories: 1. Content; 2. Appearance/Form; and 3. The Artist. Each category consists of a series of subcategories detailed as follows:

1.1. Content—NARRATIVE The artist expresses ideas through illustration/visualization/animation of literary texts and narrativity using images that entail sequencing of the fictive events, either chronologically or arbitrarily

1.2. Content—SATIRE The artist uses techniques such as satire, parody, or comic exaggeration in order to portray sociocultural or sociopolitical issues and comment on them. In this course, the artist uses metaphorical language and other figurative techniques such as parody, fable, and allegory

1.3. Content—HISTORY & MYTHOLOGY The artworks are inspired by mythological history, sometimes mixed with actual history and politics

1.4. Content—VIOLENCE The artist portrays instances of patriarchal violence, war practice, male chauvinism and macho men in the artworks

2.1. Appearance—CARTOONISTIC The artist creates artworks that are cartoon-like in nature, expressed through illustration techniques or techniques inspired by illustration or its contemporary practices

2.2. Appearance—HISTORIC IMAGERY The artist refers to historical or literary texts such as myths, legends, religious stories, folk stories and employs of classical allusions and analogies

2.3. Appearance—INTERCONNECTIONS The artist invokes visual resources and cites artists, methods, and techniques from others

3. THE ARTIST The artist becomes part of a larger tradition of artists, hence in Mossavar–Nameh's research, the trends in their works become more significant than their biographical information

Mossavar–Nameh: Timeline

As part of its curatorial research, Dastan has sustained a particular interest in delving into potential lines of influence among Iranian artists of different generations. The most developed of Dastan's studies is "Mossavar–Nameh" (lit. 'Book of Illustrations') which started with "A Tribute to Ardeshir Mohassess" Exhibition at Sam Art and the publication of "Ardeshir Hyphen Seventeen Eighty Seven" Book (written by Dariush Kiaras, winner of Sarv–e–Noghrei award for best book design, designed by StudioKargah and Aria Kasaei, published by Dastan and Pejman Foundation), in January 2015. This was an archival exhibition of works on paper and print materials by the late Iranian cartoonist and illustrator Ardeshir Mohassess (b. 1938, Rasht, Iran — d. 2008, New York). These, which were the starting points of Mossavar–Nameh, soon spun off as a separate —but very much related— line of study, Ardeshir Project.

Later in the year, in October 2015, "Mossavar–Nameh", which was Dastan+2 debut show, became the first exhibition to put together artworks by a number of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Iranian artists based on a set of criteria defined as Mossavar–Nameh. These criteria were developed as a result of explorations into each artist's practice over the course of years in an effort to find common sources of inspiration and influence in their methods, styles, or schools. Since the scale of this endeavor could never be contained within a single gallery exhibition, this project has since been a work in progress.

Mossavar–Nameh as a project continued to show an exhibition of works by Farah Ossouli titled "Wounded Virtue" (Dastan+2, December 2015). In the exhibition, Farah Ossouli, a pioneer in introducing contemporary themes and ideas into Miniature Painting, presented a series of her recent Miniatures inspired by famous paintings of art history, Persian poetry, news and media, and violence in contemporary history.

In "A Show of Forty Drawings and Some by Iman Raad" (at the former building of Shirin Confectionary in Tehran, A Dastan:Outside Project, June 2015), which marked Raad's first solo exhibition in Iran, the artist indeed presented forty small drawings, but extended beyond those to draw on all the available walls in the almost 300sqm space. The exhibition was themed around Div, an ever-present character in the literature of our region, and used this mythological creature as the narrator of a fable that seemingly takes place in contemporary 'chaotic' Tehran.

Shahriar Ahmadi's work were presented at Dastan's booth in Contemporary Istanbul 2016 (November 2016). Ahmadi, who has collected a vast library through his years of reading and research, creates works often carry in themselves deep allusions to Persian myths, classical literature, mysticism, and religious stories. The presentation at CI 2016 included works from "1001 Nights" and "Good Soil" series, that were inspired by classical Persian literature and writing.

In December 2016, as part of Ardeshir Projects, Dastan+2 hosted the exhibition "Ardeshir: Stormy Weather", which included works from one of Ardeshir Mohassess' best-known periods of work, "Ardeshir and Stormy Winds". Simultaneous to the exhibition, "Ardeshir: Stormy Weather" book (winner of Sarv–e–Noghrei award for best book design, designed by StudioKargah and Aria Kasaei) was published by Dastan. The book included an updated year–book of Ardeshir's life written by Dariush Kiaras, with English translation by Sohrab Mahdavi.

The most recent presentation of Mossavar–Nameh was at UNTITLED, Art San Francisco 2017 (January 2017), during which Dastan hosted recent works by Iman Raad at its booth in the art fair. The pieces presented in the art fair were a series of "Gol–o–Morgh"–inspired paintings. They contained multi-layered allusions to traditional Iranian painting, tiling, and Persian Miniature, as well as references to graphic design and the printing industry. They highlight both the artist's cultural roots and inspirations, as well as his previous career in graphic design.

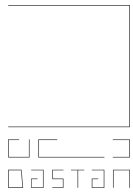
About Dastan

Dastan (est. 2012, Tehran, Iran) features an extensive and multi-dimensional program, focusing on the full spectrum of Iranian contemporary and modern art. Dastan's program includes Dastan's Basement, Dastan+2 and Dastan:Outside. In addition to hosting exhibitions, Dastan publishes artist books as well as monographs on Iranian art, features film screenings, performance projects and other events.

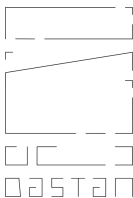
Dastan's original space, Dastan's Basement, was established in 2012 in Tehran, Iran. The Basement is dedicated to exhibiting emerging and experimental Iranian art. In October 2015, Dastan opened its first "standard" space, Dastan+2, within walking distance of the Basement to showcase works by established Iranian artists and masters.

Since the opening of its primary space, Dastan's Basement, Dastan has continuously hosted pop-up curated exhibitions around the city of Tehran under the title Dastan:Outside, including shows at Sam Art (in Sam Center Mall), V-Gallery, and the old building of Shirin Confectionary. The program features exhibitions that are usually site-specific and mostly involve experimental and non-traditional formats of exhibiting art.

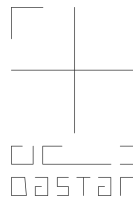
Dastan:Outside's newest temporary space, Electric Room, was opened in June 2017 in downtown Tehran right across Faculty of Fine Arts and Architecture. This 50-projects-in-50-weeks setup is hosted in an approximately 30sqm room. Each presentation focuses on concepts such as site-specificity, experimentation, and new approaches in artistic production, showcasing small experimental and research-based projects, including performance, exhibitions, small-scale events, and occasional single-piece exhibits. Electric Room's projects are predominantly defined by each artist's use of its spatial potentialities.



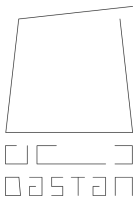
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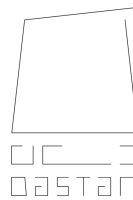
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#6 Beedar St, Fereshte St,
Tehran, Iran
Tel: +98 21 22031114



Dastan+2
2nd Floor, #8 Beedar St, Fereshte St,
Tehran, Iran
Tel: +98 21 26309645



V-Gallery (A Dastan:Outside Project)
Qalamchi Dead End, Felestin St. North,
Opposite Faculty of Art & Architecture,
Tehran, Iran



Electric Room (A Dastan:Outside Project)
Qalamchi Dead End, Felestin St. North,
Opposite Faculty of Art & Architecture,
Tehran, Iran

Please click on the following link to obtain vector files of Dastan logos:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2mk4xh067laiiup/AABya00qWK-qG2UoiwssNwCDa?dl=0>

Artist Biographies

Pouya Afshar (b. 1984, Tehran, Iran) is an Iranian artist who has been living in the United States since 2000. He has exhibited his work as an animator and visual artist throughout Los Angeles and United States at renowned locations such as Harold M. Williams Auditorium at the Getty Center, Bovard Auditorium at University of Southern California, Royce Hall at University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Santa Monica Art Studios, 18th Street Art Center, and numerous galleries and art fairs around the world. Afshar's meticulous draftsmanship combined with his cinematic training enables him to create culturally engaged images and place them into larger narratives replete with details from his own life and socio-political events happening around him.

Shahriar Ahmadi (b. 1979, Kamiyaran, Iran) is one of the most unique and important Iranian artists of his generation. His work has been featured in 15 solo exhibitions in Iran, the UAE and Switzerland, tens of group shows, art fairs, the Venice Biennale in 2015, and placed in numerous collections. Shahriar Ahmadi's works are both rich in technique and content, making them both authentic and original. He has collected a vast library through his years of reading and research, compiling resources for his artistic muses. Ahmadi's works often carry in themselves deep allusions to Persian myths, classical literature, mysticism, and religious stories, exploring many subjects as the artist wanders.

Mohsen Ahmadvand (b. 1982, Tehran, Iran) is a graduate of Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran. Ahmadvand is a disciple of the late Iranian drawing artist and cartoonist, Ardeshir Mohassess. His work has been featured in eight solo exhibitions in Iran, the USA, Hong Kong and the UAE, as well as numerous group exhibitions worldwide.

Fereydoun Ave (b. 1945, Tehran, Iran) is one of the most influential individuals in Iranian contemporary art and his prolific efforts have taken diverse aspects. He received his BA in Applied Arts for Theatre from Arizona State University, studied film at New York University, and studied at the University of Seven Seas (aka Semester at Sea). During his career, which spans over five decades, he has successfully taken many different roles including artist, designer, art director, collector, curator, gallerist and art patron. His artworks have been featured in many solo exhibitions along with hundreds of group shows in galleries and museums all around the world. As well as being purchased by many notable private collectors, Ave's work has been acquired by prestigious art institutions including The British Museum in London, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, Cy Twombly Foundation and Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMOCA).

Mohammad Hossein Gholamzadeh (b. 1986, Tehran, Iran) is a graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran. His work has been exhibited in two solo exhibitions at Dastan's Basement as well as several group exhibitions and international art fair presentations, including three editions of Art Dubai and one edition of Sydney Contemporary.

Melodie Hojabr (b. 1989, Paris, France), a self-thought artist, has developed a personal style that mixes illustration with painting, and derives inspirations from Persian miniature. Her paintings, on one aspect, are story-like, focusing on presenting the viewer with multi-layered and multi-temporal narratives. On the other hand, her precision in executing the works and use of vibrant colors, define her unique style.

Farshid Maleki (b. 1943, Tehran, Iran) is considered a master painter of his time, a valuable professor and a respected art critic. With over thirty years of professional practice and an illustrious teaching career at art schools in Tehran and Isfahan, he has irrefutably influenced and mentored successive waves of contemporary Iranian artists. Inspired by the characters and situations of daily life, his works are executed in vivid outbursts of drawing and paint. Expressive figures and objects form a distorted tableaux of his relationships. Maleki has exhibited in Iran throughout his career, most recently in a solo show at Hoor Gallery, Tehran, in 2014. He has held several exhibitions at the now-defunct Ghandriz Hall, a gallery recognised for its pioneering role in contemporary Iranian art movement. He participated in the Tehran Painting Biennial several

times and is in the permanent collection of the Tehran Museum for Contemporary Art.

Ardeshir Mohassess (b. 1938, Rasht, Iran — d. 2008, New York) was an eminent cartoonist, illustrator and painter who played a major role in the development of satirical cartoon and visual critique in Iran. He graduated from the Faculty of Law and Political Science at Tehran University in 1962. Before leaving Tehran, in 1976, for New York, where he stayed for the rest of his life, his work had appeared in many books, magazines, newspapers and gallery shows. The first retrospective of his works in the United States was held at Asia Society Museum, New York (2008).

Amin Montazeri (b. 1992, Tehran, Iran) creates elaborate illustrative paintings and drawings, featured detailed contemporary and universal readings of actual and mythological history. His allegorical approach and his sarcastic tone is an attribute of the development process of his themes, which involve human memory and social consciousness. Amin's delicate technique draws inspiration from Persian Miniature painting. The illustrative nature of his drawings are counteracted by intricacies which give the works a layer of texturized abstraction.

Nicky Nodjoui (b. 1942, Kermanshah, Iran) is an Iranian artist based in Brooklyn, NY. Earning a Bachelor's degree in art from Tehran University of Fine Arts before relocating to the United States in the late 1960s, Nodjoui received his Master's degree in Fine Arts from The City College of New York in 1974. Nicky Nodjoui's works are in several prominent institutional collections worldwide, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the British Museum in London, Guggenheim Museum in Abu Dhabi, the DePaul Art Museum in Chicago, and the National Museum of Cuba. In 2014, Nicky had a solo exhibition at the Cleveland Institute of Art titled *The Accident*.

Farah Ossouli (b. 1953, Zanjan, Iran), during her thirty-year career as an artist, has achieved a unique fusion of techniques, materials, themes, and storytelling, which has evolved into her personal style. She has been a pioneer in introducing contemporary themes and ideas into miniature painting. Ossouli's work has been featured tens of international exhibition and held at major public collections, including Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), USA; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA; Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi, India; Tropen Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Germany; and Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, Iran.

Peybak (Peyman Barabadi and Babak Alebrahim Dehkordi, both b. 1984, Tehran, Iran) is the pseudonym of two artists have been working together as the "unified duo" of Peybak since December 20, 2001. They start work on every piece together, working on different parts, until both declare it finished. Peybak's works are inspired by Persian poetry, mythology and miniature paintings.

Kour Pour (b. 1987, Exeter, Devon) is a British artist of part Iranian descent based in Los Angeles, CA. He received his BFA from Otis College of Art and Design in 2010. He lives and works in Los Angeles. In his work, Kour Pour is inspired by Persian carpet-weaving and Miniature painting.

Iman Raad (b. 1979, Mashad, Iran) started his career as a graphic designer, winning many national and international awards and becoming one of the most celebrated Iranian designers of his generation. Iman Raad's career in visual arts spans from painting and printmaking to sculptures, installations and performances. His works show both mastery in technique and diversity in approach and content, taking him to study his MFA at the prestigious Yale University School of Art. His art has been featured in tens of exhibitions in the USA, the UK, Europe, the Middle East and his homeland Iran.

Ali Akbar Sadeghi (b. 1937, Tehran, Iran) is one of the most well-known and prolific Iranian artists with a career spanning over six decades. A graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Tehran, throughout his career he has worked as painter, animator, director, illustrator, and teacher. Sadeghi's work has been featured in numerous international exhibitions and in February 2018, his retrospective was held at Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMOCA).