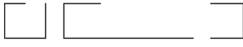
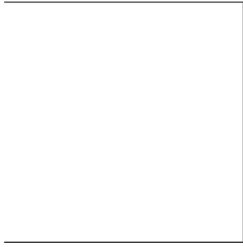


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Dastan is pleased to announce its participation at Abu Dhabi Art 2024 with a group presentation of works by Mohsen Vaziri Moghaddam (1924 – 2018), Behjat Sadr (1924 – 2009), Massoud Arabshahi (1935 – 2019), Leyly Matine Daftary (1936 – 2007), Parviz Tanavoli (b. 1937), Ali Akbar Sadeghi (b. 1937), Parvaneh Etemadi (b. 1945), Fereydoun Ave (b. 1945), Farah Ossouli (b. 1953), Bita Fayyazi (b. 1962), Y.Z. Kami (b. 1956), Mehrdad Mohebali (b. 1960), Reza Aramesh (b. 1970), Farrokh Mahdavi (b. 1970), Pooya Aryanpour (b. 1971), Andisheh Avini (b. 1974), and Taher Assad-Bakhtiari (b. 1982), marking the gallery's third time returning to the fair. The 16th edition of the Abu Dhabi Art will occur from 20 to 24 November 2024 at Manarat Al Saadiyat.

Dastan's presentation focuses on exploring the dialog between matter, material, and abstraction. The presentation brings together these works of the above-mentioned artists to present a reading of how they, in their study as well as practice, transcend into abstraction and how their physical materials influence, allow and address such explorations.



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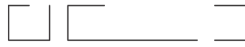
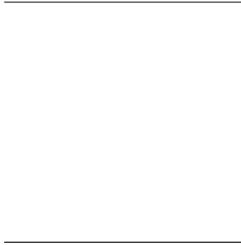
**Pooya Aryanpour** (b. 1971, Tehran, Iran) is an artist, art instructor, and university lecturer based in Tehran. He studied Painting at Azad University of Tehran, where he obtained his MA. in 1999. He has been an active artist, instructor, and curator over the past three decades.

Since the 2000s, Pooya Aryanpour has made use of mirrors in his sculptures, a practice made popular by artist Monir Farmanfarmaian in the early 1970s. Aryanpour's studies of Qajar's (19th-20th century) mirror works have given his work a reflective character. His works can also be considered interactive and conceptual as they fleetingly reflect the image of their viewers. Large size sculptures are covered with tiny mirrors that change color with a shift in lighting, multiplying what they reflect. The plurality of images thus reflected has a spiritual dimension – mirror works are used in places of worship throughout Iran. The multiplicity of images shatters the individual's ego to arrive at a devotional unity. Aryanpour has been created from many materials and in abstract form in widely different sizes.

His work has been extensively exhibited, both in Iran and at international biennials, gallery shows, art fairs, and institutional exhibitions, namely the sculpture biennial in Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (2017), Sophia Contemporary Gallery (London, 2016), and "Gone with the Wind" (Kahrizad Sugar Factory, Tehran, 2022).

**Parviz Tanavoli** (b. 1937, Tehran, Iran) is a well-known Iranian contemporary artist whose work has gained attention beyond Sculpture – his specialized medium – across a variety of disciplines. His collection of various Iranian artifacts has influenced many of his works and those of his students and researchers. He graduated from the Brera Academy of Milan (1959). He taught sculpting at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (1960) and the Tehran College of Decorative Arts (1961-1963). He was the head of the sculpting department at the University of Tehran, a position he held for 18 years until 1979 when he retired from his teaching duties. Since 1989, he has lived and worked both in Tehran and Vancouver, Canada. His latest solo exhibition, "Oh Nightingale" (2019), was held at the West Vancouver Art Museum.

Parviz Tanavoli is considered a leading figure in "Saqakhaneh," an artistic movement to which many Iranian contemporary artists of the 1970s adhered, using artifacts, designs, and motifs of popular art forms in Iran to speak to contemporary issues. Sculptures of Tanavoli are rife with objects and forms detached from their original context and given a new sense, most famous among these his iconic "Heech" sculptures. Meaning "nothingness" in Persian, "heech" has a cosmological history whose calligraphic form takes its viewers into a meandering world of contemplation. Heech was also a commentary on the evolution of contemporary art in Iran, a response to the growing tendency of visual artists of the 70s to follow trends in Western art by borrowing from their traditions of image-making. Tanavoli's collection of Iranian artifacts is part of his artistic discourse. Through the collection, which has spanned over five decades, he has studied the ways artisans in the Iranian plateau interacted with their environment. He published many books detailing his collections and held a major exhibition at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art ("Parviz Tanavoli and the Lions of Iran," 2017) in which he placed



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his paintings and sculptures next to rugs, jewelry, locks, water fountains, and designs bearing the mark of a lion. As such, Tanavoli has a central place in the visual history of Iran, to which he has devoted his life and creative input.

**Andisheh Avini** (b. 1974, New York) is an artist who uses painting, drawing, printmaking, and sculpture, often incorporating the traditional craft of marquetry in his artistic practice.

Andisheh Avini explores the duality of his own identity by combining iconic images like Persian calligraphy, decorative motifs, and portraiture with occidental concepts of minimalism and abstraction. Avini's approach speaks to a larger globalized society of nomads, the displaced, and the wayfarer, reflecting a contemporary multicultural experience to which many can relate.

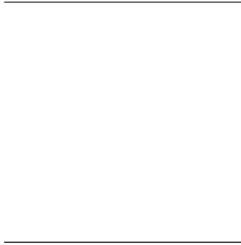
**Reza Aramesh** (b. 1970, Iran) focuses on photography and sculpture. He currently lives and works in London, a city he moved to at the age of 15. He received his MFA from Goldsmiths University, London (1997).

Working in photography, sculpture, video, and performance, Reza Aramesh's understanding of the history of art, film, and literature is ever-present in his artwork. As a commentary on war reportage, for example, Aramesh takes images of violence appearing in newspapers, online articles, and social media out of their original context to explore the narratives of representation and iconography of subjected body apropos race, class, and sexuality. His work, as such, is a critical engagement with Western art history.

He represented Iran at the 56th Edition of the Venice Biennale and has exhibited worldwide including the UK, France, China, USA, Dubai, and Iran. He has orchestrated several performances and exhibitions in institutions including the Barbican Centre, Tate Britain, and ICA, London. Other projects have been staged in public squares, nightclubs, and industrial warehouses.

**Parvaneh Etemadi** (b. 1945, Birjand, Iran) is a painter who has worked with various techniques for more than five decades. She is best known for paintings of lifeless nature. Born in Birjand she moved to Tehran with her family when she was six. When her high school teacher, the famous Iranian writer Jalal Al-e Ahmad, saw one of her sketches on the margin of a book, he introduced her to painter Bahman Mohassess. Etemadi is Mohassess's only direct student. She inherited her taste, she says, from Mohassess and her audacity from Al-e Ahmad.

Parvaneh Etemadi has depicted domestic scenes and ordinary objects from everyday life with simple, concise, and sometimes poetic language. In her paintings, form supersedes narration and expression. Etemadi can discover beauty in things – bottles, wooden pestles, and vases – that may not appear beautiful at first glance. From simple colored pencils to hard cement, she makes use of a wide range of tools in her paintings. Her encounter with the canvas reflects her creative and daring spirit. In 1967, Etemadi enrolled in the School of Fine Arts but later withdrew. Less than two decades later, she joined the artists of the Qandriz Hall, where she was the only woman member. Her first exhibition at this venue took place in 1968. Transitioning



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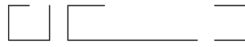
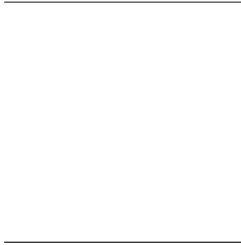
toward formal experimentalism in the late forties, Etemadi created notable works — simple, abstract paintings of lifeless nature on a rough cement texture. "I turned to draw lifeless nature," she says of this period, "placing the painting in another layer under the figures and motifs, engaging the viewer with a familiar shape while adhering to my accepted principles." In the 1970s, she established "Studio Parvaneh," where she held painting classes. She has influenced many artists, like Avish Khebrezadeh and Sadeq Tirafkan, with her unique teaching style. In the 1980s, she experimented with colored pencils, forming her distinct identity by incorporating repetitive visual elements. In the first decade of the new millennium, she made use of collage techniques. This was her fourth artistic period. "Daughter of Shah Paryan" is one of her series from this period. She also experimented with ceramics in conjunction with calligraphy. In her latest artistic phase, starting with the exhibition "Once Upon a Time" (2004), she drew inspiration from Iranian myths, offering a critical perspective on contemporary society. She is an artist who actively shapes her narrative through every evolutionary phase of her artistic life. She was the subject of a documentary film, "Parvaneh" (2019), by Bahman Giarostami.

**Behjat Sadr** (1924, Arak, Iran – 2009, Corsica, France) is among the first female artists and university lecturers of Iran. She graduated in Painting from the University of Tehran (1954). She was an active presence in the international visual art scene beginning in the 1960s. Having studied in Italy, she became interested in abstraction and created her first series of works between 1961 and 1966.

Sadr is known for using a palette knife on canvases that create impressionistic visual rhythm, movement and geometric shapes. Black dominates a major part of her work. She uses blotches to create dynamic patterns. By placing paint directly on the surface of the work and removing paint with a knife countless times, she arrives at the familiar visual structure of her paintings. Sadr was also a photographer and known for her collages.

**Massoud Arabshahi** (1935–2019) is a prominent Iranian painter and sculptor. A leading figure in contemporary art within Iran, Arabshahi's artistic journey commenced during his youth under the guidance of Mahmoud Olya and continued at the School of Fine Arts with mentorship from Shokouh Rezaei. His deep-seated fascination with ancient Iranian art fueled his commitment to designing, researching, and studying objects, myths, and ancient patterns displayed in museums. Throughout the 1940s, Arabshahi actively participated in biennials in Paris and Tehran, as well as numerous group exhibitions, showcasing his artistic prowess. Following a period of concentrated study with professors such as Karim Emami and Hossein Kazemi at the School of Decorative Arts in Tehran, he earned his MA in Architecture in 1968.

Renowned for skillfully blending elements of modern abstract art with the geometric designs in traditional Iranian architecture, Arabshahi's works incorporate abstract lines, textures, and colors. These paintings and sculptures re-imagine well-established patterns, myths, and cultural elements in architectural layouts. Drawing inspiration from Achaemenid and Assyrian art as well as Babylonian inscriptions, Arabshahi's fusion of two-dimensional and three-



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dimensional patterns places him within the Saqakhaneh School. In 1982, Arabshahi emigrated to France and later to the United States, where he played a role in constructing the Hollywood Hall in Los Angeles. He returned to Iran in 1992 to be involved in several public art projects, including the Mirdamad Expressway, the Soil Mechanics Laboratory, the Islamic Summit Building, and the Bar Association Building.

**Farrokh Mahdavi** (b. 1970, Tehran, Iran) taught himself painting before studying with master painters and cultivating his passion for the medium. He lives and works in Tehran.

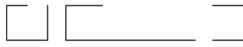
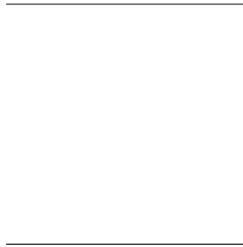
Canvases of Farrokh Mahdavi can be distinguished through unique pinkish hues. His technique aims to defamiliarize the well-known facial elements in a face. The fleshy-pink color of the artist's figures allows the rendering of "a more general depiction of human beings devoid of stereotypes of gender and race." The faces in Mahdavi's work are reduced to features like the eyes or the lips, and the rest are covered by thick layers of pink paint, hinting at the emotional world of his characters. He tries to specify forms and conditions without directly depicting anything additional, as he believes it deviates from the main point.

**Taher Asad-Bakhtiari** (b. 1982, Tehran) is a self-taught artist whose practice focuses on but is not limited to objects, tapestries, and experiences. After studying multimedia and management in Canada and Switzerland, Taher opened a creative agency in Tehran and later New York City. He has developed several bodies of work, including "the tribal weave project," a multi-tiered and ongoing reimagination of tribal artifacts, and "recovered barrels," a metaphorical conceptualization of crude oil containers. Taher lives between Tehran, Dubai, and New York.

**Y. Z. Kami** (b. 1956, Tehran, Iran) is a renowned Iranian painter and sculptor based in New York, USA. Having received his diploma from Tehran School of Fine Arts (1955), he studied philosophy at the University of California at Berkeley (1976) and went on to a BA (1980) and MA (1982) from Sorbonne University in Paris.

Y.Z. Kami's work spans painting, drawing, collage, and sculpture, examining the tension between physical form and spiritual essence. His large-scale portraits—often created with sfumato techniques on linen—reflect a meditative quality inspired by Byzantine and Fayum art, capturing subjects with open or lowered eyes to explore interior life. In his abstract pieces, Kami draws from architecture, geometry, and poetry, blending Eastern and Western influences. Early exposure to Persian poetry and European masters shaped his artistic vision, which evolved through studies in philosophy in Paris and subsequent work in New York.

Notable series include *Endless Prayers*, which incorporates religious texts in spirals, and *Domes*, inspired by sacred architecture, symbolizing a journey from darkness to light. His *Night Paintings* use indigo to create fluid, biomorphic forms, while recent work like *Messenger IV* portrays themes of transition and is part of MoMA's collection. Kami's art is held in prominent museums, including the Met and Guggenheim, and he has exhibited globally, with major retrospectives in the U.S., Italy, and Spain.



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**Bitā Fayyāzi** (b. 1962, Tehran) lives and works in Tehran. More than a sculptor, an installation artist, or a ceramicist engaged in some mystic relationship with her material, Fayyāzi is an artist who works within a more performative and markedly social practice.

Fayyāzi has been active in art for around 30 years. As her involvement in art developed, she became interested in teamwork and collaboration. She actively engages in collaborative and performative projects with artists and individuals with no artistic backgrounds. By embracing such interactions, she explores the power of shared creativity, fostering meaningful connections and broadening the boundaries of artistic expression. Throughout the years, working together with others has become an integral and cherished part of her practice. This approach has shown to be more valuable, often surpassing the outcome itself.

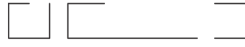
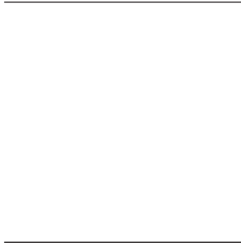
**Leyly Matine-Daftary** was an iconic Iranian artist of the modern era. Part of a first generation of students who went abroad to pursue their arts education, she studied painting and sculpture at the Slade under Lucian Freud. She returned to Iran in 1959 and lectured at the Fine Arts Faculty of Tehran University until 1965, where her contemporaries included Bijan Saffari and Houshang Kazemi. At the same time, she began to make the work that she would come to be known for—flat brightly rendered canvases marked by a taut and deceptive simplicity. In their conjuring the inner lives of everyday objects, they occasionally evoke Japanese Shijo painting. Matine-Daftary tended toward people and still lives in her art, and yet to characterize her as a mere

figurative painter would be misleading; traditional ideas about pictorial space were jettisoned as she used blocks of color in both foreground and background to create new dimensionalities. Her works were exhibited in the second, third, and fifth Tehran biennials, taking an award at the fifth. Her first solo exhibition was at Tehran's Borges Gallery in 1966. Matine-Daftary's works have been showcased in solo and group exhibitions both inside and outside of Iran.

**Mehrdad Mohebali** (b. 1960, Tehran, Iran) is a Tehran-based artist. He graduated in Painting from the University of Tehran.

In the works of Mehrdad Mohebali, usually done in large formats, people are executed in a manneristic fashion. His early surreal scenes gave way to portraits of familiar political figures and scenes from art history next to those of the painter and ordinary people. His use of intense colors, lighting, and the poses of his subjects imbues his works with affectations and distortions.

His work has been exhibited in solo and GROUP EXHIBITIONS in Iran and internationally; including at the Lajevardi Foundation in Tehran (2016), the 2015 Venice Biennale, the Salsali Private Museum in Dubai (2012), the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (2004 and 2001), and the Tokyo Museum of Contemporary Art (2002).



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**Fereydoun Ave** (b. 1945, Tehran) is an influential figure in Iranian contemporary art. He received his BA in Applied Arts for Theatre from Arizona State University (1964), studied Film at New York University (1969), and attended the University of Seven Seas (aka Semester at Sea, 1964). Over the past five decades, he has taken on many different roles as an artist, designer, art director, collector, curator, gallerist, and art patron.

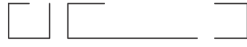
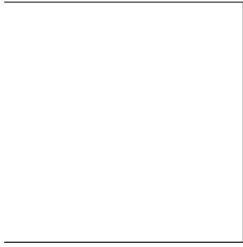
The art of Fereydoun Ave is a freehanded engagement with a personal ethos informed by larger cultural influences. He ceaselessly reflects on various facets of his relationship with age, myths, plants, elements, seasons, moods, and heredity. He takes inspiration from the art of Iran, which tends to use the entire surface of the canvas, and the Western penchant for minimalism, which leaves large swaths unattended. Fereydoun Ave's joint projects with artists, galleries (including Dastan), and institutions are an integral part of his practice, finding expression in his role as a curator, gallerist, and collector.

**Farah Ossouli** (b. 1953, Zanjan, Iran) is a painter working and living in Tehran. She received her BA in Graphic Design from the University of Tehran, where she taught between 1972 and 1987. She founded DENA, a female art collective that has organized over 30 exhibitions since 2001. She is a member of the Society of Iranian Painters.

Farah Ossouli achieved a unique fusion of techniques, materials, themes, and narrations during her forty-year career as an artist. She has been a pioneer in introducing contemporary themes and ideas into miniature painting. The latest collections of Farah Ossouli are based on classical European paintings (by Delacroix, Goya, David, Manet, Titan, Rembrandt, and Ingres, among others), chosen by the artist based on their historical and conceptual relevance vis-à-vis the manifestation of violence in our world today. By transforming the medium (Persian painting) and figures (female holding the torch), Farah Ossouli is presenting the viewer with a new way of looking at the events taking place around us.

**Ali Akbar Sadeghi** (b. 1937, Tehran, Iran) is an iconic figure in Iran's art history, celebrated for his various contributions across multiple artistic disciplines. An established master known around the world, he continues new directions in his art. He graduated from the Fine Art Faculty at the University of Tehran during its golden age, a time when many remarkable Iranian artists flourished. Sadeghi blended elements and motifs of traditional Iranian painting with modern art, creating a unique visual language that has been a source of influence for young artists across generations.

Ali Akbar Sadeghi started his artistic career as an illustrator. He worked with various newspapers and magazines, including the "Asia" newspaper. He designed several movie posters and created stained-glass murals for Tehran's Roudaki Hall. Alongside other artists, he co-founded the Film and Animation Department at the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in 1970. He illustrated numerous books, winning first prize in Asia's best illustrations category for "Hero of Champions," created several animations, and participated in more than 50 film and book festivals.



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In 1977, he set aside filmmaking to make painting his primary medium. Considering himself a storyteller, paintings of Sadeghi are intricately detailed, bustling with energy and characters, and they are often large-scale. His colorful, dream-like narratives draw from the Qahveh-Khanh ("Coffee-house") painting traditions, Iranian miniatures, and Western surrealism. Self-portraiture holds a special place in his wide range of paintings and sculptures. His strong presence as a storyteller demonstrates his focus not only on reviving traditions but also on personalizing the histories of both Iranian and Western art. With this approach, he weaves the past and the present, the real and the fantastical, and the visual and the sociopolitical together to create works that keep the viewer's gaze engaged indefinitely.

**Mohsen Vaziri Moghaddam** (1924 - 2018) is acknowledged as a pioneer of Iranian abstractionism and a leading figure in developing contemporary Iranian art. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome. He was also an educator, opening the way for many to-be artists to go beyond the limits of established ways. His "Drawing Method and Painting Guide" (1981) is a standard academic text today.

He is widely recognized for works spanning five decades, from the painterly abstracts of the 1960s to the hard-edged geometry of the sculpted and painted aluminum wall reliefs of his later years and, most importantly, his articulated sculptures in the 1970s that he later developed with plexi glass in the 2010s. Vaziri's work is characterized by a restless experimentation of form through materials -- deployed in his drawings, sand paintings, articulated sculptures, and painted aluminum wall reliefs.

During his lifetime, Vaziri was the subject of numerous exhibitions internationally, exhibited extensively at the Venice Biennial, and was collected by MoMA (NY). Most recently, as a tribute to the 100 years of his life, the Mohsen Vaziri Moghaddam Foundation initiated a project of over 20 nationwide exhibitions celebrating his life and legacy.