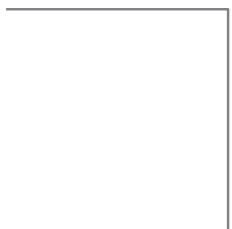
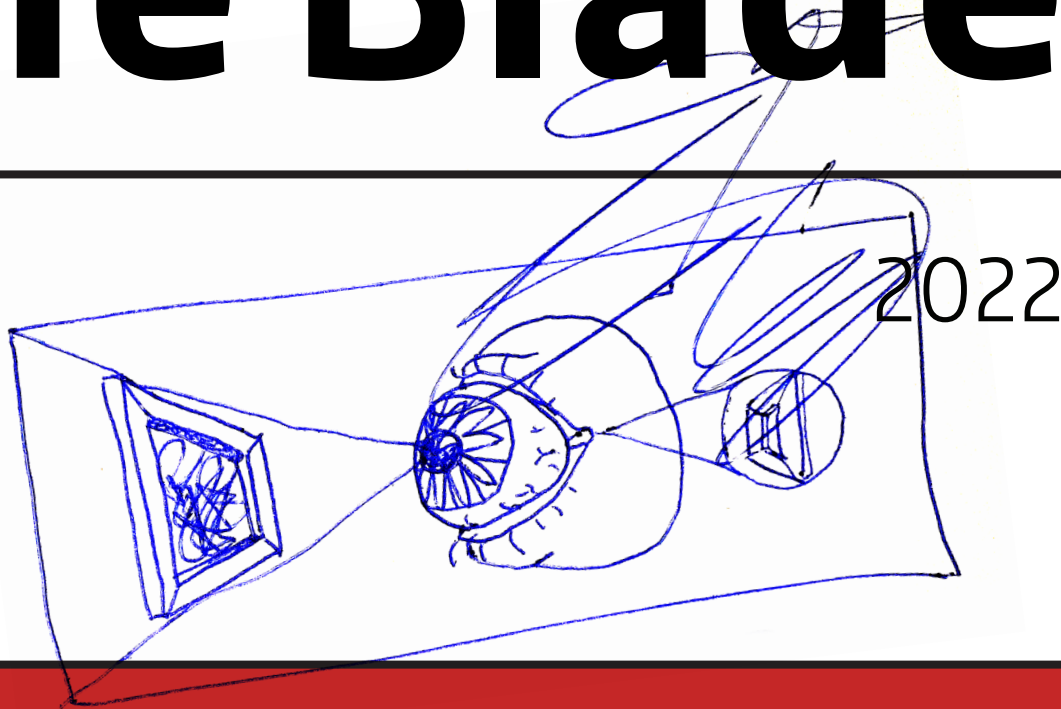


Soft Edge of the Blade



ҚАЗАҚСТАН
РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫ



2022

Soft Edge of the Blade

Dastan Gallery

2022



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Bahman Mohassess. Bita Fayyazi. Farah Ossouli
Farrokh Mahdavi. Fereydoun Ave. Ghasem Hajizadeh
Ghasemi Brothers. Hoda Kashiha
Charles Hossein Zenderoudi. Homa Delvaray
Mamali Shafahi. Mehdi Ghadyanloo
Mohsen Vaziri Moghaddam. Nasser Bakhshi
Nicky Nodjoumi. Parviz Tanavoli. Peybak
Reza Aramesh. Sam Samiee. Sahand Hesamiyan
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Dastan presents the first in a new series of exhibitions, called 'Soft Edge of the Blade', at Frieze's No.9 Cork Street in February 2022. This will be a 'Dastan: Outside' event, gathering a long list of contemporary Iranian artists.

The focus of this project is on how Iranian artists today deal, in their work, with different aspects of violence in its various 'soft', symbolic, hidden or underlying guises, common to the "Middle East". The outlook is not limited to the more obviously visible 'state' violence of war or political oppression. The intended scope is broader and more subtle, extending to numerous more insidious forms of 'soft' violence affecting Iranians today: migration and diaspora, identity and gender, patriarchy and family, the impact of the complexities of history on the day-to-day life of Iranians at home and/or abroad, the use of language – e.g. on social media – to disparage or oppress...

'Soft Edge of the Blade' allows UK audiences to continue exploring Iran's contemporary scene, with a focus on powerful themes of relevance and interest to global audiences.

Soft Edge of the Blade

The same faculties (senses) that bring us pleasure cause us pain and the same faculty (mind) that plans for our happiness formulates our suffering. Soft Edge of the Blade is an acknowledgement of this seemingly mutually exclusive duality. The soft edge of the blade is no less painful when it cuts but there is a difference and we want to explore this difference by looking at works of artists who may not even posit "violence" as their subject matter.

Soft violence is not the representation of the violence hence it rarely gives in to the politics of representation. It is the presentation of the violence in the metonymy and poetics of the make and the image. It is an invitation to experience the nuances of a concept as it has been experienced by a human subject. Through this arrangement works of an artist as a human subject is seen worthy of exploration and therefore the stereotypical

reading of the message is rendered irrelevant.

How does violence manifest softly? Do we even know that it has taken place? Do we need someone to point it out? Aren't we creating it by talking about it? We know that any conceptual treatment of violence runs the risk of dramatizing it. That's why works of art may serve us well here, because they come from another realm of inquiry, one that is beyond conceptualization.

So, the audience of Soft Edge of Violence is invited to not see violence, to even put it aside, when looking at these works. This is a playful invitation. Let us set aside our conceptual, habitual understanding of violence in all its manifestations and simply look. Perhaps in this way we will gain a deeper understanding as to the nature of suffering we see all around us.

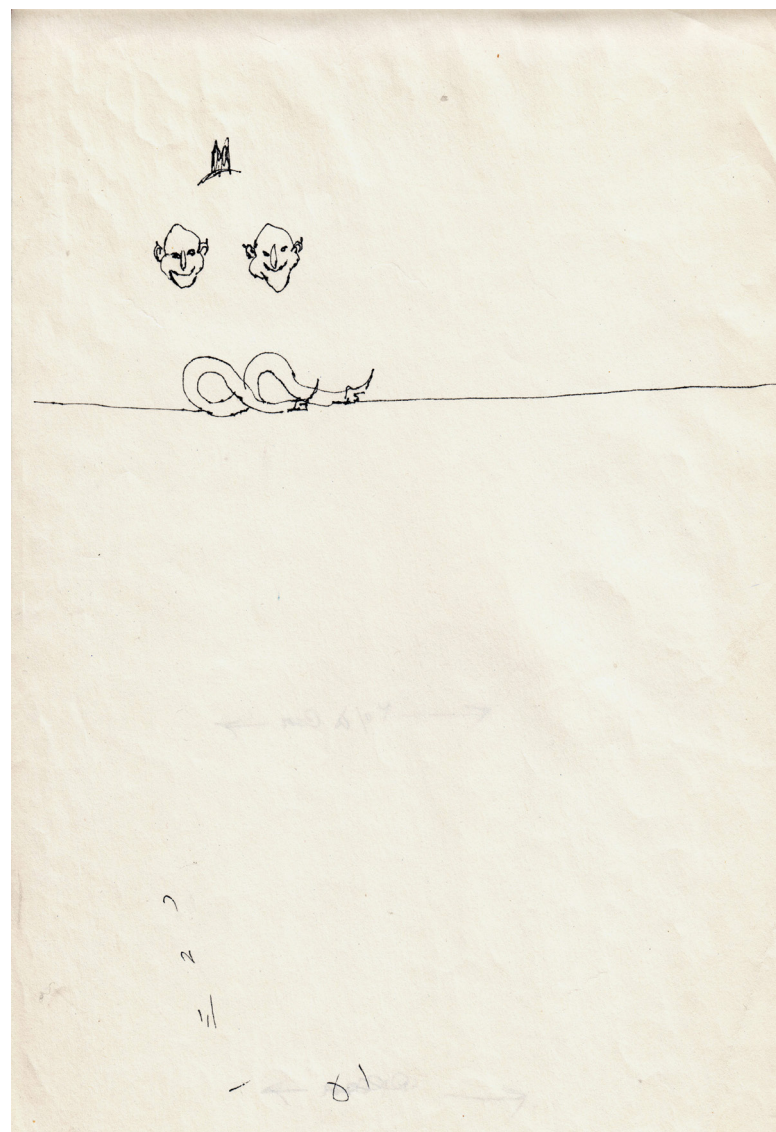
Let us NOT see violence where local hero/heroines are abandoned, bloody eyed, by their society • the pain of otherness in a world whose very existence is predicated on othering • subjected to rituals of exorcism • glorification of suicide for a cause • agglomeration of nostalgia in a box • thick layering of magmatic emotions • casting for the comradery of war • manhandling love • of love on fire • of erasing the undesirable from our lives • of many angels dancing on a pin • of a velvety heritage passed down into the future • of childhood interrupted • of tears turned into stone • of femininity kept behind doors and drapes • of lines that grow so enormous as to dominate our field of vision • of allegorical tales of salvation • of smashed/ collapsed/disintegrated faces with bulging eyes • of faceless personaggio in blank expression • of the mischievous incubus of lore • of homework for long winter nights • of great heroes long lost to sleep • of primitive masks glossed in sophistication.



ARTISTS

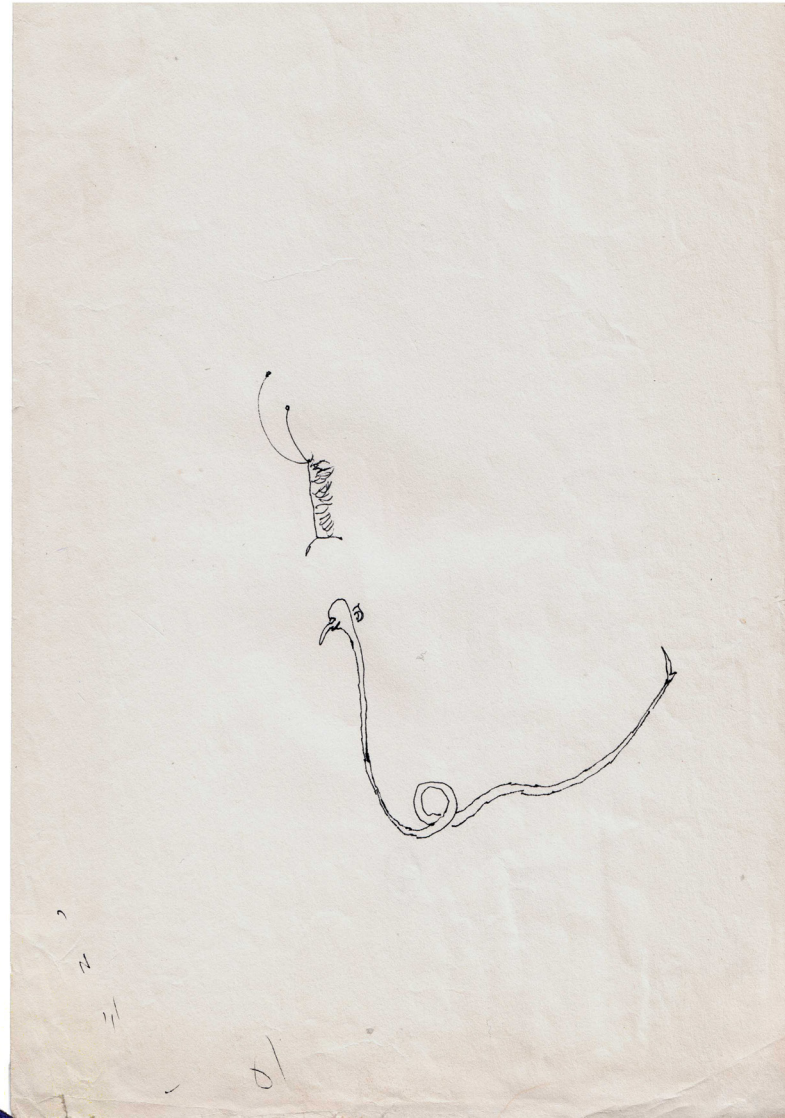
Ardeshir Mohassess

Ardeshir Mohassess (1938–2008) was a prolific, influential and internationally renowned Iranian artist. He graduated from the University of Tehran with a degree in Political Science in 1962 and soon became a full-time illustrator. Best known for his drawings, his cartoons and illustrations have appeared in various publications, including Keyhan-e Hafteh and Tehran Journal, as well as The New York Times and The Nation. Works of Ardeshir Mohassess have been shown in notable venues such as Musée d'Art Moderne and Asia Society Museum. They have been acquired by prestigious collections such as the Library of Congress and Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, and they have adorned the pages of more than ten books. Ardeshir Mohassess has influenced many Iranian cartoonists and illustrators, making it impossible to refer to the tradition of drawing and figurative painting in Iran without him. His career spanned over half a century, a century with decisive turns in Iran's socio-political environment.



Ardeshir Mohassess/Untitled from 1972_1973. Ink on paper. 33 x 20.5 cm

Ardeshir Mohasses's minimal line drawings playfully represent bodies, severed hands and animals that mingle around or act bizarrely in his "Shenasnameh" series. "I just like to be a reporter", he once famously said. Looking beyond the fragile and sometimes geometric lines in this series, "Shenasnameh" (i.e. "Identity card"), elements of social realism can be traced. These moving figures suspended in the whiteness of the paper speak of a century with decisive turns in Iran's socio-political environment.



Ardeshir Mohasses/Untitled from _Shenasnameh_ series
1351. Ink on paper. 33 x 20 cm

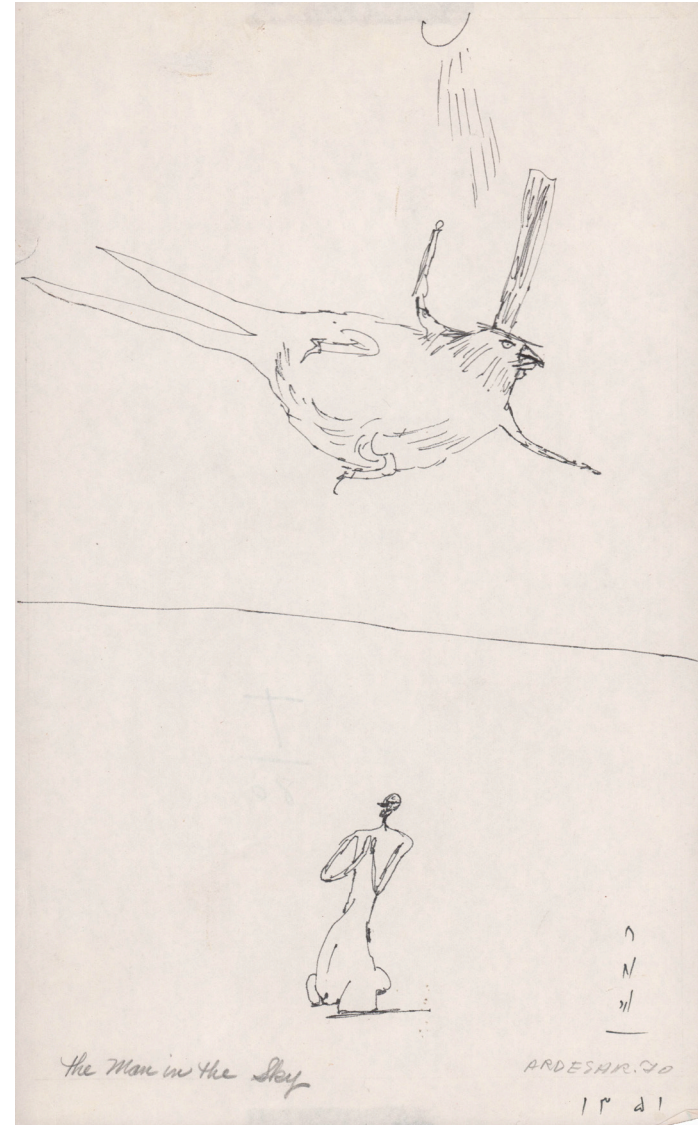


Ardeshir Mohassess/ Untitled from _Shenasnameh_ series
1972_1973. Ink on Paper. 20.7 x 33 cm





Ardeshir Mohassess/ Untitled from _Shenasnameh_ series
1972_1973. Ink on Paper. 25 x 20.5 cm



Ardeshir Mohassess/ Untitled from _Shenasnameh_ series
1972_1973. Pen on paper. 28.7 x 17.6 cm



Andisheh Avini

Brooklyn-based Andisheh Avini (b. 1974) uses painting, drawing, printmaking, and sculpture, often incorporating the traditional craft of marquetry, in his artistic practice. Avini explores the duality of his own identity by combining iconic Iranian 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.

Using a series of "Masks" (2015), Andisheh Avini creates a collection of Iran-African armor shield masks whereby he covers the wooden carved piece with Persian marquetry. Through African Imagery, Avini brings the Western avant-garde approaches to non-Western material culture, making critical commentaries on the

Andisheh Avini / Untitled
2015. Marquetry and Wood. 31.75 x 25.4 x 4.4 cm

cultural politics of “primitivism”, demonstrating how Western culture propagates its colonialist outlook. Marquetry, a refined Persian decorative inlaid pattern, coats the shamanistic carved wood. The marquetry invokes Iranian identity memories that the artist applies to African–Oceanica objects. The utilization of such trans-cultural objects throws fixed identity into a tailspin.



Andisheh Avini /Untitled
2015. Marquetry and Wood
40.6 x 22.9 x 6.4 cm



Andisheh Avini/Untitled
2022. Marquetry and wood
43.8 x 21 x 7 cm



Andisheh Avini / Untitled
2015. Marquetry and Wood
50.2 x 22.5 x 7.6 cm

Reza Aramesh

Reza Aramesh's work has been exhibited in both solo and group exhibitions most recently at Asia Society Museum in New York (2019), Met Breuer in New York (2018), SCAD Museum in Georgia Atlanta (2018), Akademie der Kunst Berlin (2016), the 2015 Venice Biennale, Art Basel Parcours 2017, Frieze Sculpture Park 2015 and 2017, and at Maxxi Museum in Rome (2016). He has orchestrated a number of performances and exhibitions in such spaces as Barbican Centre, Tate Britain and ICA, London. His works have entered public and private collections worldwide. Born in Iran, Reza Aramesh has been living in London since his teenage years. He holds a Master's degree in Fine Arts from Goldsmiths University, London (1997). Working in photography, sculpture, video and performance, Aramesh's profound understanding of the history of art, film, and literature is ever-present in his artwork. As a response to war reportage images from sources such as newspapers, online articles and social media, Aramesh de-contextualizes scenes of reported violence from



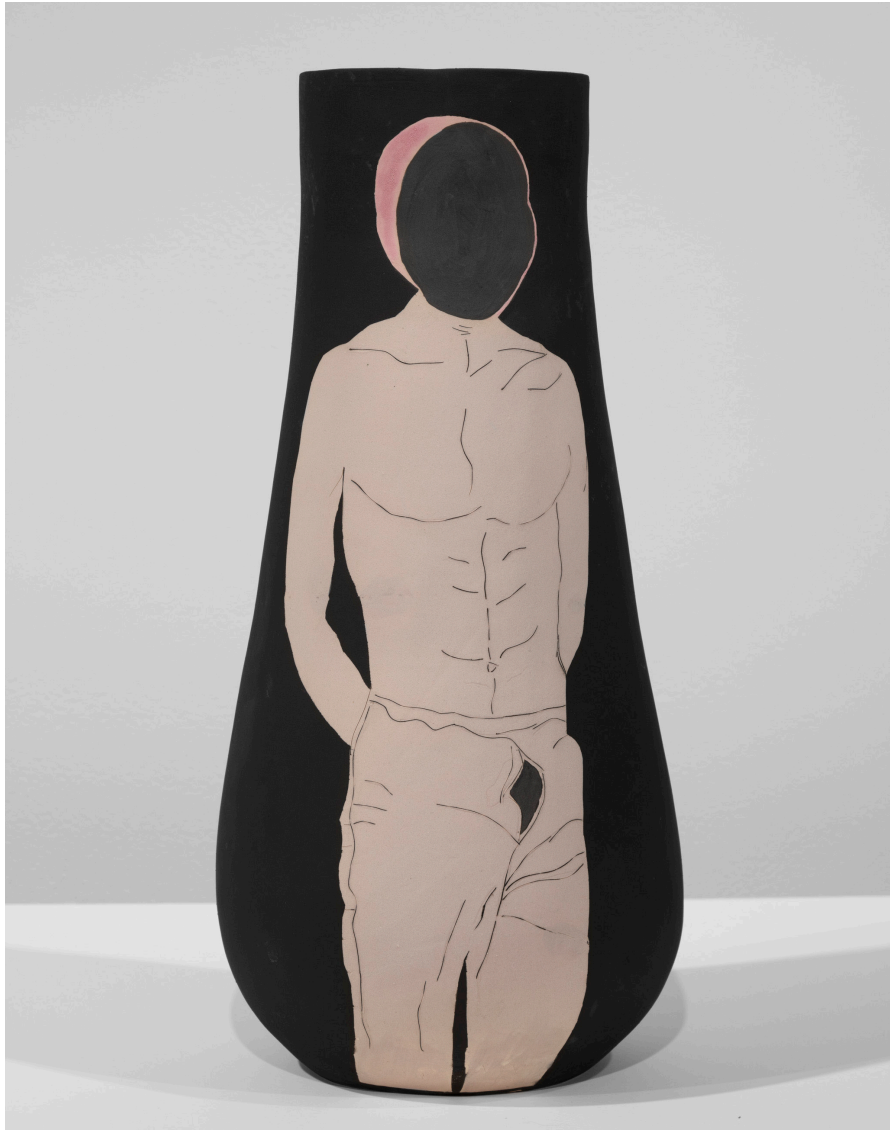
Reza Aramesh/Action 214.06_ At 4_19 pm, October 17, 2007"
2020. Terra Cotta and White Clay. 45.7 x 22.9 x 22.9 cm

their origins, exploring the narratives of representation and iconography of subjected body in the context of race, class and sexuality in order to create a critical conversation with the Western art history.

"We Do Not Dream Alone" is Reza Aramesh's series of pottery vases commissioned by Asia Society Triennial (2015). The Hellenistic vases of the UK-born Iranian artist brings an everyday life object, within a specific cultural context, into a contemporary symbol of civilization. Ancient Greek pottery, a form of low or kitsch art, allows the artist to develop a critical vision of the history of representation and political narrative transformed into a museum object. In "We Do Not Dream Alone" series, ancient pottery paintings have been replaced by body figures to establish a subjective cross-reference between classical art and how art is evolving today. By painting figures over the surface of the vases, as fragmented bodies, Reza Aramesh defines the human identity within a postcolonial world.



Reza Aramesh/ "Action 214.26_ At 2.41 pm, July 25, 2014"
2020. Terra Cotta and White Clay. 41.3 x 27.9 x 27.9 cm

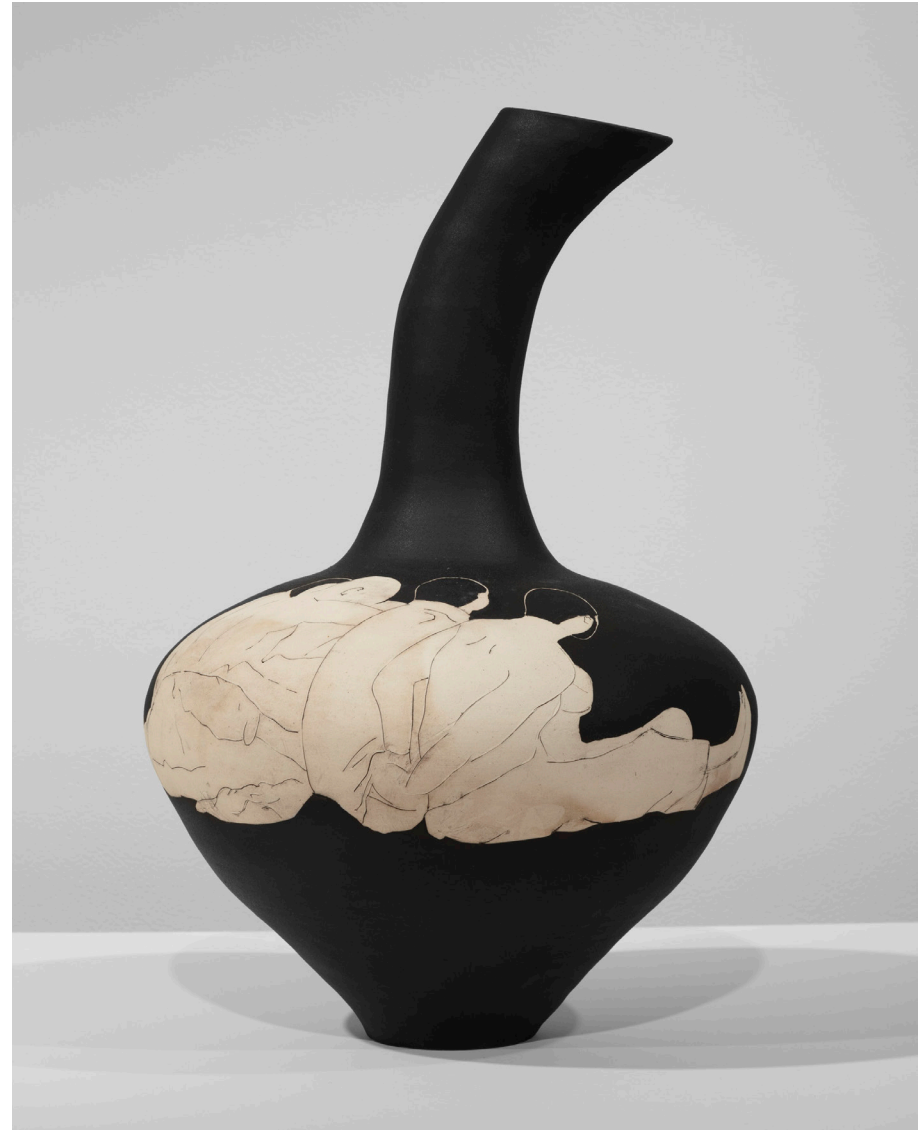


Reza Aramesh/ Action 214.12_ At 10 am, December 08, 1969
2020. Terra Cotta and White Clay. 45.7 x 19.1 x 19.1 cm





Reza Aramesh/ Action 214.29_ At 6_25 am, December 18, 2011
2020. Terra Cotta and White Clay. 34.3 x 34.9 x 34.9 cm



Reza Aramesh/ Action 214.07 At 2.13 pm, July 8 2015
2020. Terra Cotta and White Clay. 53.3 x 33.7 x 33.7 cm

Bitá Fayyazi

Bitá Fayyazi (b. 1962, Tehran) lives and works in Tehran. More than a sculptor, an installation artist, or ceramicist, engaged in some mystic relationship with her material, Fayyazi is an artist who works within a more performative and markedly social practice. Beginning in mid-1990s, her artistic interventions challenged the official definitions of art. Fayyazi struggled to show her work amidst an atmosphere of stuffy traditionalism, academicism, and the influx of 1990s conceptual art. She successfully entered 2000 pieces of ceramic "Cockroaches" into Tehran's 6th Biennial of Contemporary Ceramic Art, despite an attempt by several members of the committee to oust her work from the show. She cast and fired terracotta dogs ("Road Kill", 1998), modelled on dead dogs found on the highways in Tehran, and then placed her works on the streets around the city, much to the consternation of onlookers. Works of Fayyazi are collaborative by nature. She and her artist or non-artist colleagues use whatever material

is readily available to wrap and entwine, paint and cast sculptures made of the fabric of social participation. She reconstitutes the energies of the many toward an uncertain resolution. The final object becomes less important than the process – the collective doing, the love of doing – that preceded its creation. In addition to bringing her work to the streets and abandoned buildings of Tehran, Fayyazi has also presented major installations and performances internationally. She participated in the Iranian Pavilion at the 51st Venice Biennale in 2005 and has exhibited at La Maison Rouge, Paris (2016), Espace Louis Vuitton, Paris (2008 and 2010), the Museum of Modern Art, Freiburg (2007) and the Pergamon Museum, Berlin (2008), among others.

In this bronze sculpture, we see a prone, bespectacled, male figure with antlers preyed upon by symbiotic creatures stepping out of the figure's severed foot. As a process-oriented artist, Bita Fayyazi lets the quality of the material she uses affect the way a work develops materially and conceptually. Any form of conceptualization, thus, becomes a material to rework, revisit, reject, or reuse. While the title "Mischievous Incubus of Lore" (2012) invites a multiplicity of readings, it visually refuses to be triangulated.



Bita Fayyazi/ Mischievous Incubus of Lore. Bronze. 15 x 45 x 15 cm



Homa Delvaray

Homa Delvaray (b. 1981, Tehran, Iran) is a graphic designer vigorously engaged in all aspects of design, from posters to book design and visual identity. She has developed her practice to embrace installations, sculptures, textile arts, and artist books. The idea of resisting marginality and demanding centrality as an Iranian and a woman manifests itself in almost all of Delvaray's designs where she avoids cropping, frames the format with borders, and designs central or symmetrical compositions. Her highly embellished designs reclaim a central position that a traditional reading would label as feminine. Homa Delvaray not only questions the discourse of masculine/feminine and central/marginal but also challenges the viewers by positioning them in/out of a familiar or unfamiliar maze of narratives, meanings and interpretations.

Homa Delvaray/ Khâsh
2021. Fabric collage on board, wooden pulleys and steel bar. 260 x 230 x 25 cm

"Khash" ("The Itch Talisman") looks at how we invite superstition in our daily lives. It's a colorful adaptation of a rite called the "fence" or "ward-off" talisman, used, for example, during childbirth. Attendants use a sharp tool (a knife, a sword, a scissor) to ceremoniously etch a line around the childbearing mother, to protect her from spirits. Responding to such ritual superstitious, Agha Jamal Khansari, a prelate living in the Safavid era (16th to 19th century), replaced the word "fence" with "itch", satirizing this act and the gullibility of its believers. Delvaray has tailored Agha Jaman's vision and words to create a colorful patchwork that embodies the word "itch".



Homa Delvaray/ Khâsh
2021. Fabric collage on board, wooden pulleys and steel bar. 260 x 230 x 25 cm

Fereydoun Ave

Fereydoun Ave (b. 1945, Tehran, Iran) is an influential figure in the Iranian contemporary art. 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). Over the past five decades, he has taken on many different roles as 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 around the world.

Other than many notable private collectors, Ave's works have 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, Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, Cy Twombly Foundation and Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art.



Fereydoun Ave/ from *_Shah Abbas and his Page Boy_* Series
2015. Mixed media on patchwork of various fabrics. 263 x 133 cm. (Q-02-263.133 cm)



The two patchwork quilts thread and tread the dual penchant of Fereydoun Ave to crowd his frames with details (this comes, he says, from his Persian background) and to formally refrain from saying too much (driven by Ave's transnational observer status). Part of the artist's "Shah Abbas and His Page Boy" series, the two works appearing in the show throw a wet blanket over a cauldron of emotional cinders, indelible patterns of memory, and a desire to free them of constraints (established patterns).



Fereydoun Ave/from _Shah Abbas and his Page Boy_Series , . Mixed media on patchwork of various fabrics. 300 x 180 cm. (9Q-12-300-180 cm)

Farah Ossouli

Farah Ossouli (b. 1953, Zanjan, Iran) has achieved a unique fusion of techniques, materials, themes, and narrations during her thirty-year career as an artist. She has been a pioneer in introducing contemporary themes and ideas into miniature painting. Her works have been presented in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Iran and abroad and are held at major public collections including Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi; Tropen Museum, Amsterdam; Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Germany, and Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, Iran.

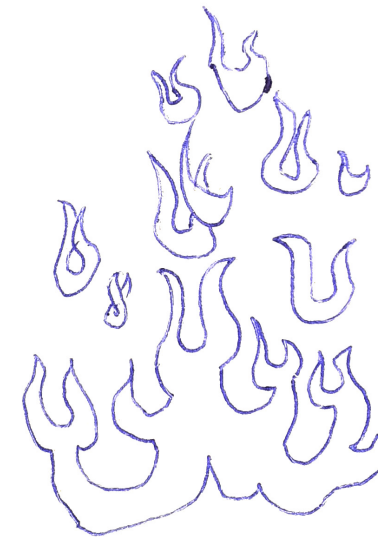


Farah Ossouli/How sweet to me that vanished season when with my friend I joyed! The remnant of my time wasted, and was of wisdom void
2003-06. Gouache on cardboard. 76 x 62 cm.jpg

Farah Ossouli is among the most accomplished female artists of her generation. Trained under Mahmoud Farshchian, a prominent modern Iranian miniature master, at the Tehran School of Visual Arts, she depicts her childhood fascination with Persian classical literature utilizing the meticulous and poetic visual style of Persian "negargari" (miniature). Osouli investigates the human condition and relations through the reoccurring parallels between Persian literature and contemporary life. The pieces presented here are two gouache paintings from 2003 and 2010 that best display her achievements in



Farah Ossouli/Put Your Gun Down
2010. Gouache on Cardbord. 75 x 75 cm



Nasser Bakhshi

Nasser Bakhshi (b. 1982, Tabriz, Iran) is a self-taught artist working across a variety of media. His work has been previously exhibited in more than ten solo exhibitions in Iran and abroad, as well as many group exhibitions in Tabriz, Tehran, Dubai, Istanbul, Antwerp, Warsaw, and New York.

Nasser Bakhshi has created a collection of memory boxes he calls "Black Box", one of which appears in this exhibition. Boxes of Bakhshi are filled with representational paintings, found objects, and knickknack associated with the collective memories and the passage of time. Such objects are considered as popular material which the artist uses in his practice of box making.



Nasser Bakhshi/Distant Whispers
2015. Box. drawing, painting and found pieces. 34 x 40 x 17 cm



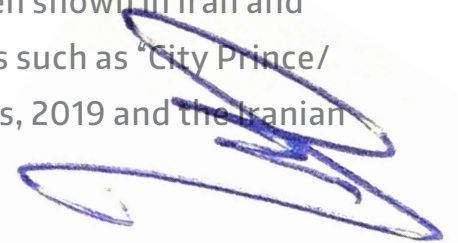
Nasser Bakhshi/ End of the Dream
2020. Painting, drawing, metal, glass, wood and found objects. 120 x 85 x 48 cm



Farrokh Mahdavi/ Untitled
2021. Acrylic on canvas. 162 x 142 cm

Farrokh Mahdavi

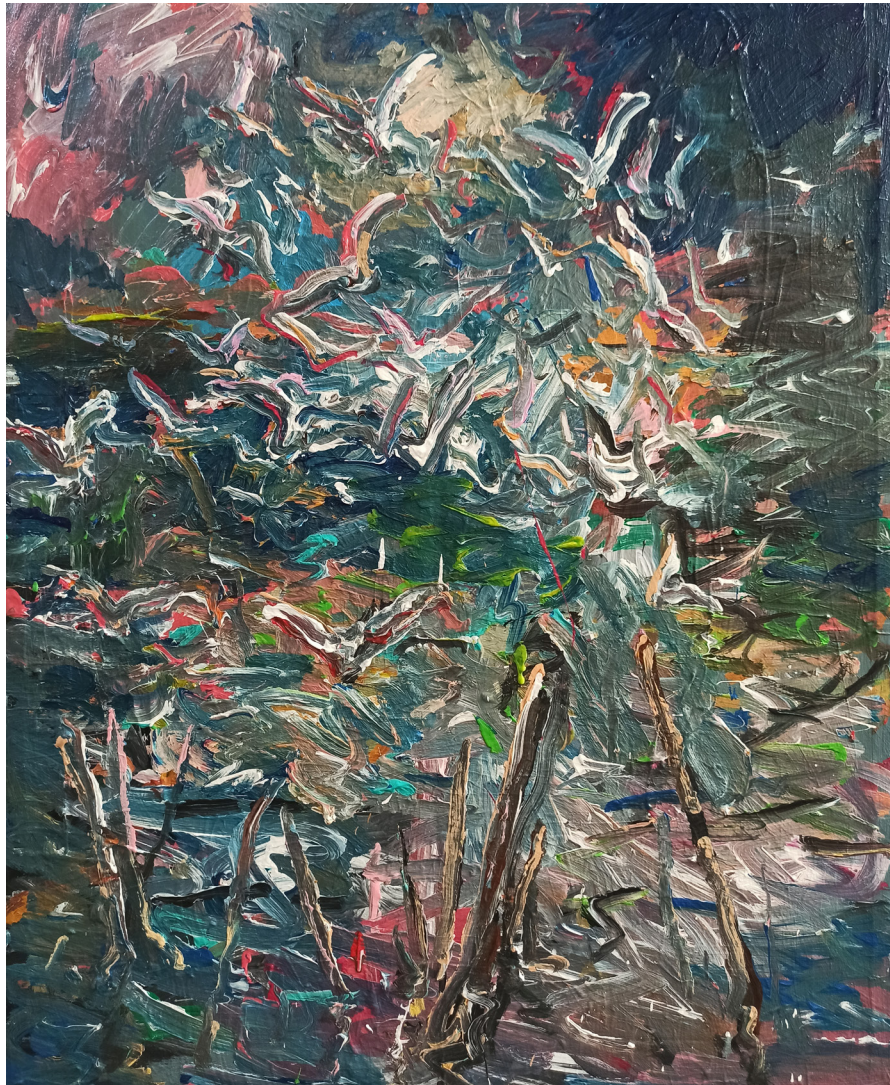
Farrokh Mahdavi (b. 1970, Tehran, Iran) is a prolific painter. His works can be distinguished through the use of unique pinkish hues. His technique aims to reach “a more material meaning” by “omitting the impurities”, defamiliarizing the well-known facial elements, and crossing over “cliché definitions”. His works emphasize the fleshy-pink color, a color that covers his figures and allows the rendering of “a more general depiction of human beings devoid of stereotypes of gender and of race”. The faces in Mahdavi’s work are reduced to such features as 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 to that as he believes it deviates from the main point. Farrokh Mahdavi’s works have been shown in Iran and abroad including major exhibitions such as “City Princesses” at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, 2019 and the Iranian Pavilion in Venice Biennale, 2015.



Pink, to Farrokh Mahdavi, is the color of the skin independent of gender or ethnicity. In these two paintings, pink imbues the faces of his characters with a primordial innocence. This is true not only of the figure that appears to be a child (we can't even be sure of that) but also the consternated adult in the act of shaving. Seeing the bulging, glassy eyes of these characters against the predominantly pink background draw our attention from a distance. Moving closer, the thickness of paint is felt as if on our own skin. A heavy innocence, to be sure.



Farrokh Mahdavi/ Untitled
2021. Acrylic on canvas. 200 x 160 cm



Ghasemi Brothers/Untitled
2021. Acrylic on canvas. 100 x 80 cm

Ghasemi Brothers

Ghasemi Brothers, a collective of Morteza, Sina and Mojtaba Ghasemi Sheelsar have been working together since 2015. They pursue their painting individually but when part of the collective, they work together on a single piece. Their collaborative work has been featured in “Red Room” (Dastan’s Basement, July 2016), “Red Room 2: Migratory Birds” curated by Roya Khadjavi (Elga Wimmer Gallery, New York, April 2017) and “Blue Room” at V-Gallery (A Dastan:Outside Project) in 2018. The trio work freely and without thematic or technique-related limits, giving them room to express themselves freely. Their approach has provided them with an ability to continue working together. In the beginning they worked to create a single discourse based around the themes and interests that they shared. Ghasemi Brothers gradually started to paint objects that were reminiscent of their native city, the coastal area of Bandar Anzali, and its ecology -- the Caspian Sea, rain, and the color blue.

The collaborative trio depicts a collection of heavily abstracted naturalistic landscapes in which the concept of “man against nature” rages within thick layers of oil. “As if we stare at the sea, we are not looking at the water, but an aggregation of volumes of water”, says Mojtaba, the younger brother of the trio. Inspired by daily visions of coastal life in Anzali (a bay-city in the province of Gilan), Ghasemi Brothers created this series of paintings. Each piece is the outcome of a collaboration. The stylistic tension between each of the members of the trio affects the overall world of the painting.





Ghasemi Brothers/Untitled, 2021. Acrylic on canvas. 185 x 249 cm

Handwritten text in blue ink, appearing to be a signature or a note, located in the bottom right corner of the page.



Ghasemi Brothers/Untitled. 2021. Acrylic on canvas. 50 x 70 cm



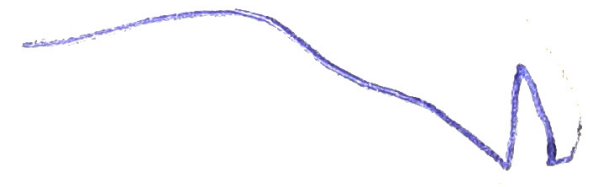
Bahman Mohasses/ Untitled (PERSONAGGIO)
1967. Oil on canvas. 80 x 60 cm

BAHMAN MOHASSESS

Bahman Mohasses (1930, Rasht, Iran – 2010, Rome, Italy) was a progressive painter, sculptor, and translator. Studying painting in his teenage years from Habib Mohammadi, he entered the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Tehran in Painting but didn't finish school. He was also a student of Jalil Ziapour, joined his Fighting Cock Society, and was, for a short stint, the editor of the Society's magazine, "Cock's Claws". Through the Society, he joined the modernist current in Iran and associated with many of its prominent figures, like Nima Yushij, Forugh Farrokhzad, and Sohrab Sepehri. In 1954, Mohasses went to Italy to study at the Fine Art Academy of Rome. He showed the works of this period in several group and solo exhibitions inside and outside Italy. He also participated in biennials like Venice, São Paulo, and Paris. Hoping to initiate a new movement, he returned to Iran in 1964. He held shows at the Iran-Italy Society and Iran Hall (Qandriz). Mohasses translated works of

European writers like Eugène Ionesco, Malaparte and Pirandello, and staged several plays. His works had political and cultural repercussions, which made him decide to move back to Italy in 1968. Mohasses' style of painting is coarse using a limited hue of colors (silent, cold colors). There are mythological as well historical/political references in his works, expressed in a tragic voice. Other than painting and sculpture, there are also drawings, collages, and prints remaining of him. Bahman Mohasses is among the best known and the most influential modern artists of Iran. His works are held in renowned museums and collections.

"Untitled (PERSONAGGIO)" by Bahman Mohasses (1967) fully reflects the artist's life-long study of the human condition and the body's disintegration as it drowns in vices, specifically after witnessing the atrocities of WWII. This anthropomorphic figure appears in many variations in the artist's different pieces. The solid torso and head is like a stone-carved sculpture, leaving us to meditate on its nature. Somewhere between a painting and sculpture, it resides in a green field suppressed by a somber dark sky.





Shayan Sajadian/ Bloody Eye
2020. NA. 50 x 50 cm

Shayan Sajadian

Shayan Sajadian (b. 1994, Shiraz, Iran) studied architecture at Shiraz University of Art and Architecture. He became acquainted with photography through architecture. After graduation, he pursued photography more seriously. He has focused on social issues and is currently working on social outcasts in Iran. He is also working on a documentary about an individual evicted from home and who lives around the historic site of Persepolis.

Exploring the world of local heroes/heroines, Iranian photographer Shayan Sajadian takes a series of portraits, directing his camera at residents of a community who live on the outskirts of Shiraz. Each snapped portrait has plenty to reveal to us. Shayan Sajadian knows these local heroes and heroines. He has lived with them. They look at his camera (us) fearlessly.



Shayan Sajadian/ Bloody Eyes. 2020. N.A. 50 x 50 cm

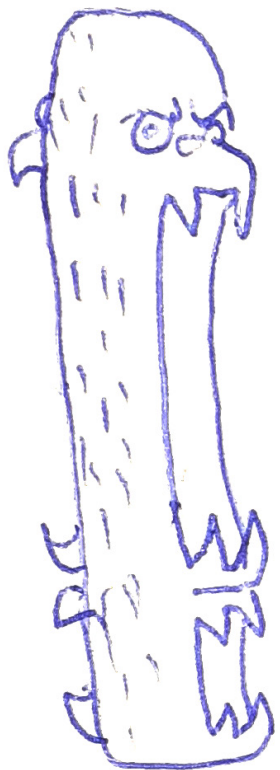


Mamali Shafahi/Heirloom Velvet
2021. Flocked epoxy on board. 121 x 84 x 10 cm

Mamali Shafahi

Mamali Shafahi (B.1982, lives in Amsterdam and Paris) is a filmmaker and video installation artist. His practice, varying from installation to sculpture and film, includes a deep fascination with the impact of emerging technologies on life and art. His early work in France, at the Paris-Cergy school of fine arts, focused on performance. He then produced a number of video installations, and his investigation of relationships between past, present, future, and new technologies.

These two reliefs are from the "Heirloom Velvet" collection is the latest part of the "Daddy Sperm" project that Mamali Shafahi started in 2012. In that project, he asked his father, Reza, a then-72-year-old former wrestler, to start making drawings. The artist was keen to observe if he could find a creative gene shared between them. Fascinated by the transformation he calls "the miracle of life", he explores the force of life and creation as it circulates between humans and from generation to generation. In this series, he investigates the mutations of identities and agencies -- mutations that simultaneously delineate and are delineated by social constructs. For him, the transformation of one drop of liquid into a creative subjectivity in a human body is a fair formulation of this miracle of life.



Mamali Shafahi/Heirloom Velvet. 2021. Flocked epoxy on board. 89.5 x 123 x 16 cm

Mehdi Ghadyanloo

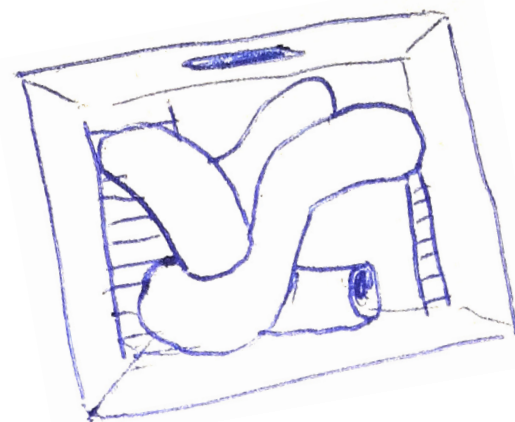
Mehdi Ghadyanloo (b. 1981, Karaj, Iran) received his BA from the Faculty of Fine Art of the University of Tehran (2005) and his MA in Film Studies from Tehran's Teachers College (Tarbiyat-e Modarres). He is a painter who lives and works in Frankfurt. Known primarily for his gigantic trompe l'oeil-style murals in central Tehran, Ghadyanloo has worked with a variety of media, including printmaking, sculpture, and paintings with surreal and minimalistic themes. Answering to an open call from the Municipality of Tehran, he painted over 100 gigantic murals between 2004 and 2011. In 2016 he became the first Iranian artist since the 1979 Revolution to be commissioned to complete a massive mural for the Rose Kennedy Greenway Project in Boston, US. Through his works, Ghadyanloo opens a window to life, one informed by his personal experience, portraying the landscapes of his youth, growing up around the agricultural fields on the outskirts of Tehran, his memories of Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), and his living experience as a public artist.

Although at times somber and even suggestive of a failed utopia, Ghadyanloo's work is about imagining a different landscape within the current state of affairs, of what remains glorious in gloomy times.



Mehdi Ghadyanloo/Untitled
2021. Watercolor on paper. 48.5 x 28.5 cm. (IMG_0150)

Ghadyanlou employs optical illusions of a three dimensional space in his paintings, a technique he carried over from his years as a muralist. His works are marked by the brilliant use of colors and meticulous rendition of objects and spaces: boxes containing playground equipment. There is always a shaft of light gleaming into the closed space. His surreal visual language influenced by Giorgio de Chirico and Magritte, together with his arresting aesthetics, explores isolation, memory, hope and joy. Untitled, 2021, a monochromatic watercolor rendition of a metallic spiral slide lit under the arch, showcases his prowess on a smaller scale.





Peybak/ XA LA 6
2020. Gesso, acrylic and pastel on cardboard in artist's frame. 34 x 28.5 x 3 cm



Peybak

Peybak (Peyman Barabadi and Babak Alebrahim Dehkordi, both b. 1984, Tehran, Iran) is the acronym of two artists who have been working together as a "unified duo" since December 20, 2001. They work on every piece together, each taking on different parts until they both declare it finished. Peybak's works are inspired by Persian poetry, mythology, and miniature painting. The duo have extensively presented their works in their home country and worldwide.

Peybak's intertwined creative process results in images with complex chronicles that bear references to Persian literature and mythology. The duo's use of sculpted frames and scenography, stages an immersive experience of the universe they create around the narrative of each show. The works presented at the exhibitions are personages taken from "Abrakan", a universe they have created throughout their career and have continually used as the world where their stories take place.



Peybak/ XA LA 11
2020. Gesso, acrylic and pastel on cardboard in artist's frame. 34 x 39 x 3.5 cm



Peybak/ XA LA 18
2020. Gesso, acrylic and pastel on cardboard. 29.5 x 32.5 x 3.5 cm

GHASEM HAJIZADEH

Ghassem Hajizadeh (b. 1947, Lahijan, Iran) lives and works in Paris, France. A graduate of Tehran School of Fine Arts (1967), Hajizadeh's work is a commentary on and a reimagining of socio-political events that have shaped Iran's history. His years of living outside the country has had little effect on this aesthetic pursuit, putting him beyond the once raging debate of Tradition vs. Modernity, which provoked many Iranian artists inside and outside the country, especially in the 1980s and 90s, to dedicate their time and attention to this duality. Using a mixture of techniques of watercolor, acrylic, gouache, pencil, and pastel, he bases most of his work on old photographs that have a story – be it historical or social – to tell. The influence of painting styles known as "coffeehouse" and "Persian miniature" can also be seen in the work of Hajizadeh. Hajizadeh has exhibited worldwide over the last 40 years and his work can be found in many of private and public collections, including Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, the National Museum of Seoul, the National Museum of Bangladesh and the International Museum of Naïve Art in France.



Ghassem Hajizadeh/ Photo de Souveni
2009. Mixed media on paper mounted on canvas. 90 x 60 cm

The three paintings shown in this exhibit highlight Ghassem Hajizadeh's aesthetic pursuit over the past four decades. One is based on famous photograph depicting revolutionaries just before Iran's Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911), another is a modern tavern scene in which a group of neighborhood hero/toughs are tightening their bond around a table, and the third is a depiction of three sharply-suited men posing for a camera in their office with a safari hat on the table. These paintings also put on display the artist's genuine fascination with the "origin of things" as it pertains to Iranian modern history.

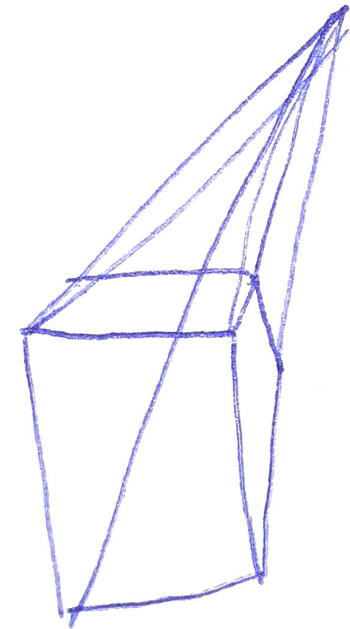


Ghassem Hajizadeh/ SATAR KHAN. 1991. Mixed media on wood. 70 x 101 cm

Nikzad Nodjoumi

Nikzad Nodjoumi (b. 1942, Kermanshah, Iran) is an Iranian-born, American painter. He lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He studied at the Faculty of Fine Art of the University of Tehran. Best known for his large-scale oil canvases (figurative paintings that seem to transmit a fractured political message) Nodjoumi's compositions are straightforward, precise, and expressive. Nodjoumi's works have been exhibited in various galleries and museums and are held in collections worldwide, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the British Museum in London, the DePaul Art Museum in Chicago, and the National Museum of Cuba.

Suspended in a cube, tied from below, the suited figure in one painting, is wielding a much bigger hand which controls the figure's movements from above. A marionetist become a marionette? How apt a visual description of the quandary of political power. In another painting, we see two more suited figures vying for control in utter disequilibrium. Nikzad Nodjoumi's characters have feet of clay. They appear on the verge of collapse at the same time that they continue to control and manage the protean situation in the world of the artist, the deconstructed world associated with imbalance.





Nicky Nodjoui/ Give Yourself a Chance
2020. Oil on canvas. 177.8 x 127 cm



Nicky Nodjoui/ Show Me the Wicked
2008. Oil on canvas. 215.9 x 165.1 cm

ALI AKBAR SADEGHI

Ali-Akbar Sadeghi (b. 1937, Tehran) is a renowned visual artist who started painting at a young age, first studying under Avak Hairapetian in high school and eventually entering the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Tehran. He worked as a graphic designer of posters, book cover, and packaging for many years before joining the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in 1971. The Institute was a thriving center for creative work and Sadeghi directed his attention to making animations and illustrating books. Sadeghi's work is inspired by the folk culture of Iran. His lively, spirited canvases and illustrations are where modern and ancient outlooks coincide.

Line plays a key role in the works of Ali Akbar Sadeghi. The entire visual field, in fact, seems to be under the line's magnetic pull. Sadeghi makes minimal use of color (his palette is limited) which gives his work a mysterious quality. The use of perspective follows the tradition of Iranian painting (miniature) in that surfaces, be they building facades, human or animal profiles, or parities, are placed next to each other. Scenes of everyday life, too, appear next to scenes of battle, monsters stepping out of allegorical tales and mythic creatures popping out of fables. Here and there, we can also see a factory smoke stack and a banner on which we read, "Applying for Visa Is Mandatory: No Vacancy. Admiral Roaming Monster".





Ali Akbar Sadeghi/ AS- dream 1
2019. Acrylic on canvas. 200 x 137 cm. (_21A6563)



Ali Akbar Sadeghi/ Noah The Demon
2018. Ink and acrylic on canvas. 197 x 148 cm. (AS_DEMON-NOAH_ACRYLIC ON CANVAS_200X150_2018)

Sam Samiee

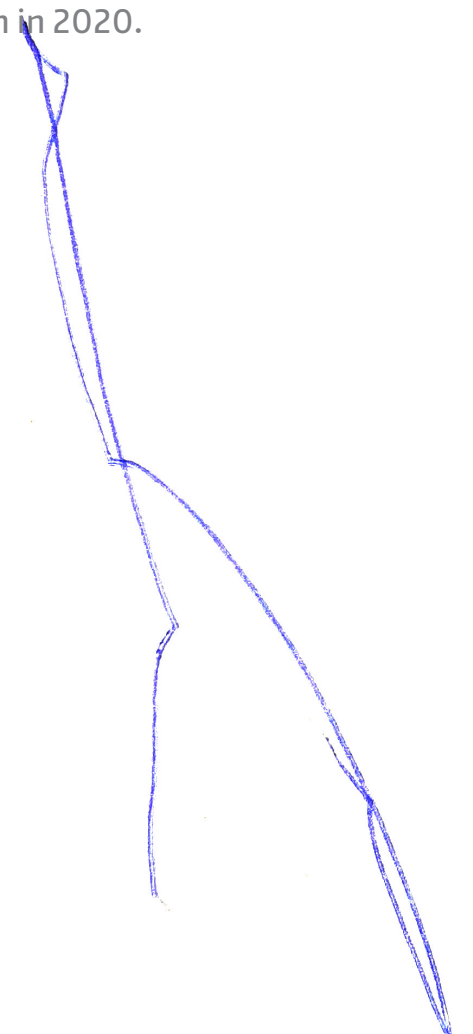
Part of the enigmatic title "Over Hussain's Mansion What Night Has Fallen" festoons over Sam Samee's painting to give it a celebratory air amidst the intense red of the poppy field and the nocturnal upper section and the nebulous bridge connecting them. The painting, the artist says, was a response to "Rooms Are Never Finished", a 12-act poem by Agha Shahid Ali, a Kashmiri poet who wrote it for the mourning of his mother, drawing from Pasolini, Ashura, Krishna, Urdu and Persian poems. It was composed at the height of conflicts in Kashmir in the 1990s. Borrowing a text from a literary work, the focus of many works of Samee, is the straw in the cob that connects the different elements of the painting. The text points to a poem but the poem itself goes beyond its signifiers to affect sensations. The word Hussain in the painting evokes the central tragedy of Shiism and summons a helix of emotions to the frame. The gestural smears, smudges, lines, and creases in his works on panel and fabric reflect his elaborate, labor-intensive method, in which he alternately builds up and ruins layers.



Sam Samiee/ Over Hussain's Mansion What Night Has Fallen (After Rooms Are Never Finished by Agha Shahid Ali). Acrylic on Canvas
2020. 130 x 110 cm. (Courtesy of Dastan Gallery and the Artist)

Sam Samiee (b. 1988, Tehran, Iran) is a painter, essayist, and psychoanalyst in training based in Berlin and Tehran. He finished Rijksakademie residency in 2015 and ArtEZ University of Arts and Design in 2013, where he was a lecturer of painting until 2020. His primary education in arts began at the University of Arts in Tehran. He is a jury member of the Dutch Royal Painting Prize from 2020 to 2024. In 2016 he was among the winners of the same prize. He synthesizes his heavy research on art history, Persian poetry, and psychoanalytic theories into studio practice that employs painting in multiple registers. The characteristic of his installations as extended paintings is the break from the tradition of flat painting and a return to the original question of how artists can represent the three-dimensional world in the space of painting as a metaphor for a set of ideas. He employs a range of painterly attitudes from oil paintings to iPad paintings, figuration, abstraction, the break of the rectangular frame, and usage of text among other methods. He has exhibited his works at the 10th Berlin Biennale, at Kunstmuseum, the Hague, the Parasol unit Foundation,

Manchester Art Gallery, Art Basel Hong Kong, and Liste Art Fair, among many other international presentations. Footnotes to Life, a monograph on his work awarded as a part of the Wolvecamp Prize for painting in 2018, has won the Best Dutch Book Design in 2020.



Hoda Kashiha

Hoda Kashiha (b. 1986, Tehran, Iran) is a graduate of painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Tehran (BA, 2009) and Boston University (MFA, 2014). Between 2007–2021 Hoda participated in different group shows in the USA, Tehran, Paris, Athens, Brussels, and Warsaw. Her most recent solo show was at Nathalie Obadia gallery in Brussels, Belgium. She received the Esther B. and Albert S. Kahn Award; Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center Rare Book Prize; Iranian Association of Boston Scholarship; and Boston University Women's Council Scholarship. She was a fellow at MacDowell Colony, Virginia Center for Creative Art and she received the Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant at Vermont Studio Center. She has participated in many group shows including City Prince/sses, Palais De Tokyo, Paris; "The Oil of Pardis", Balice Hertling Gallery, Paris; "Human Condition", Los Angeles; "New narrative, Storefront Ten Eyck", Brooklyn, NY; "New Talent Show", Alpha Galley, Boston, MA; "The World that is Full of

Anything", Sherman Gallery, Boston, Ma; Boston Young Contemporaries, 808 Gallery, Boston, MA; Mills Gallery, BCA, and 'Realities' at Emerson college gallery.



Hoda Kashiha/Untitled
2021. N.A. 100 x 70 cm



Hoda Kashiha/Erasing the World. 2021. Acrylic on printed canvas. 120 x 150 cm.

By manipulating her strokes into digital traces on the canvas, Hoda Kashiha creates a hybrid surface going back and forth between the visual materiality of digital and analog. These pieces, done in 2021, revolve around a single theme: All the layers seem to squeeze something out, trying to cover or deliberately erase the other layer. With her trademark sense of humor, she puts characters and visual elements in awkwardly distorted positions. Employing pop culture elements carried with abstract use of materials, her compositions are made out of rectangles which seem like they can move in whichever way, making a random incomplete whole.



Hoda Kashiha/ The Love Fire
2021. N.A. 180 x 150 cm. (IMG_1119)



Amin Montazeri/ Tear
2021. Acrylic, marker and ink on canvas. 100 x 70 cm

Amin Montazeri



Amin Montazeri (b. 1992, Tehran, Iran) creates elaborate illustrative paintings and drawings, featured detailed contemporary and universal readings of actual and mythological events. 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 the Persian miniature painting tradition. The illustrative nature of his drawings are counteracted by intricacies which give the works a layer of texturized abstraction.

Amin Montazeri's illustrative portrait of Medusa is a symbol of today's social consciousness within the context of power relations. Amin's rendition of the weeping, hideous face of the Gorgon brings an enigmatic sense to its viewers, as if they have to turn to non-animated objects or the turned-into-stone warriors for answers. Amin's Eikasteria Gorous (images depicting Gorgons or created by Gorgons) exposed the terror aroused by Power. Could it be that a head-on facing of this image is "your first triumphs over your archaic terrors?"

Ali Banisadr

"Born in 1976 in Tehran, Iran, Ali Banisadr lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. His work is currently on view at the Asia Society in New York in *Rebel, Jester, Mystic, Poet: Contemporary Persians*, a group exhibition with works by more than twenty artists from Iran and its diaspora (10 September 2021 – 8 May 2022). Recent institutional solo exhibitions include *Ali Banisadr: Beautiful Lies* at Museo Bardini and Palazzo Vecchio, both in Florence, Italy; *Ali Banisadr/Matrix 185*, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT and *Ultramarinus – Beyond the Sea*, Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece. His work is in major institutional collections including: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna, Austria; British Museum, London, UK; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Het Noordbrabants Museum, Den Bosch, Netherlands; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; The Metropolitan

Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA; Francois Pinault Foundation, Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italy; Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT."

"A painter of epic vistas and dazzling intricacies, Ali Banisadr creates complex, turbulent worlds whose syncopated rhythms corral a multitude of references from art history as well as allusions to our own turbulent times. In any single, expansive canvas one might sense the crystalline detail of the Persian miniature tradition, the muscular brushwork of Abstract Expressionism, the narrative dexterity of the early Dutch masters, the bravura technique of the Venetian Renaissance, or the libidinous glyphs of Surrealism, among others. These references reveal themselves not as static, sedimentary layers but as successive waves or currents, series of abstract and semi-abstract forms that flow together, intermingle or collide, submerging and resurfacing,



Hoda Kashiha/ The Love Fire
2021. N.A. 180 x 150 cm. (IMG_1119)

recast and transformed through an often-lengthy process of subtraction and addition. While up-close, elements of the artist's compositions may recall Boschian hybrid figures, from afar Banisadr's paintings, with their legions of strafing lines, arcs, blurs and smears of colour evoke, for example, grand world landscapes or the fractured and shimmering surfaces of our digital world."

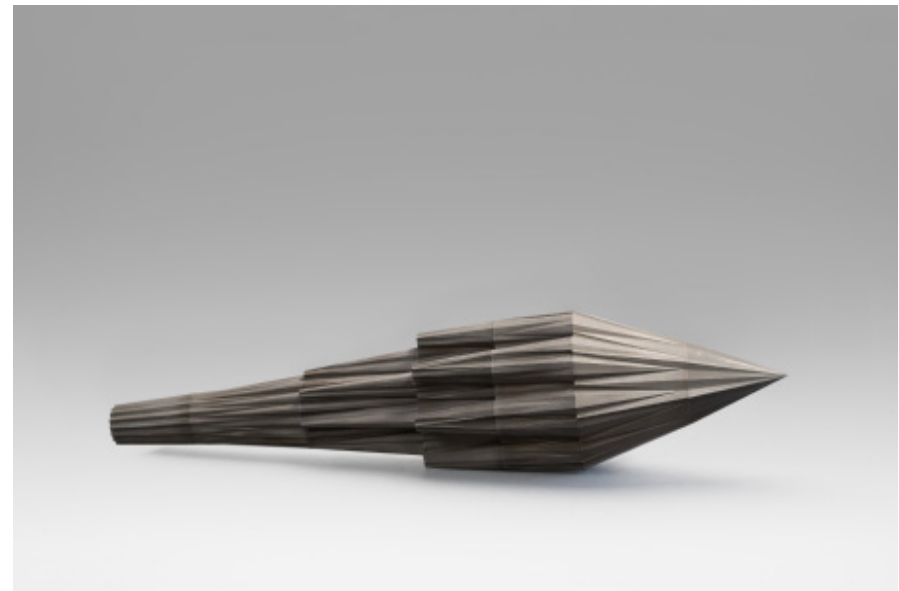
Victoria Miro



Sahand Hesamiyan

Sahand Hesamiyan (b. 1977, Tehran, Iran) studied Sculpture at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran (Tehran, Iran). His work has been exhibited in solo exhibitions in Tehran (Dastan's Basement; Sam Art -- A Dastan:Outside Project; Aun Gallery; 13 Vanak Street) and Dubai, UAE (The Third Line). Since 1999, his work has also appeared in numerous group shows in Iran, the UK, the USA, Italy, Mexico and Saudi Arabia. "Geometry", an ongoing curatorial project by Dastan, features extensive research on geometrical forms used in works by Sahand and a number of other Iranian artists. Sahand Hesamiyan has participated in six biennials and symposiums in Tehran from 2005 to 2014, including the 1st Sculpture Biennial for Urban Space in Tehran (2008). He has won numerous awards including the first prize at the Padide International Symposium of Contemporary Iranian Sculpture (2014), was a finalist for the Magic of Persia Contemporary Art Prize (2009) and shortlisted in Jameel Prize (2016). Sahand Hesamiyan's works are included in

Delfina Entrecanales Collection, The Samawi Collection, MAC Collection, and numerous international private collections. Sahand Hesamiyan currently lives and works in Tehran, Iran.



Sahand Hesamiyan/Kanoon I
2020. Steel. 40 x 9.5 x 9.5 cm

Sahand Hesamiyan's pieces are often immersive and interactive, investigating the geometric vocabulary of Islamic architecture. Using sheet materials such as steel, brass and cardboard, he creates geometric planes and forms to delineate an architectural idea within an architectural space. From monumental sculptures to small pieces, Hesamiyan produces works of varied scales and dimensions; thus presenting a spectrum of readings of the overlaps between architecture and sculpture. The two sculptures presented here ("Kanoon I" and "Kanoon II") are two elongated, horizontal works made of steel and created in 2020. They are examples of his works in smaller scales. "Kanoon", Arabic for the point of convergence, with two opposing cones of aligned vertexes and their fractured geometric surfaces that are ordered to conform to the contour of the mesh, challenges the universal notion of space as it is manifested in various loci, a central theme in Hesamiyan's work.



Sahand Hesamiyan/Kanoon II
2020. Steel. 24.5 x 9.5 x 9.5 cm





Bahman Mohassess/ Untitled (PERSONAGGIO)
1967. Oil on canvas. 80 x 60 cm

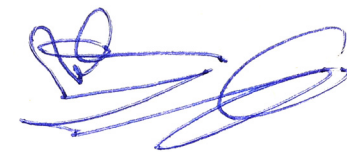
Mohsen Vaziri Moghaddam

Mohsen Vaziri Moghaddam (b.1924 – 2018) is acknowledged as a pioneer of Iranian abstractionism and a leading figure in the development of 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 today a standard academic text. During his lifetime, Vaziri was the subject of numerous exhibitions internationally, exhibited extensively at the Venice Biennial, and was collected by MoMA (NY). 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. Vaziri's work is characterized by a restless experimentation of form through materials -- deployed in his drawings, sand paintings, opto-kinetic sculptures, and painted aluminum wall reliefs.



Mohsen Vaziri Moghaddam/From *„Fear & Flight“* Series. 1987. Acrylic on canvas. 147 x 177 cm

"Fear and Flight" series was born out of Vaziri Moghaddam's well-known mobile sculptures. Once he had a smaller studio that could not contain these wooden sculptures, he started painting the series. These geometrical symphonies on canvas contain ongoing conflicts between the positive and negative spaces and are painted in warm and cold colors. The aggressiveness of the edges versus the fluid and organic shapes gave the series its name -- "Fear and Flight" -- as if sharp pointed forms on a white surface threaten the curved forms from one side. "Fear and Flight" started four years before the Islamic Revolution of Iran (1979) and continued for another fourteen years.



Parviz Tanavoli

Parviz Tanavoli was born in Tehran in 1937. Upon graduating from the Brera Academy of Milan in 1959, he taught sculpting at the Tehran College of Decorative Arts, and from 1961 - 1963 he taught at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. He then returned to Iran and assumed the head of sculpting department at the University of Tehran, a position he held for 18 years until 1979, when he retired from his teaching duties.

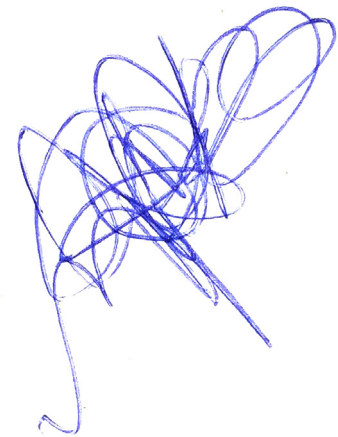
Since 1989 he has lived and worked both in Tehran and Vancouver, Canada. His latest solo exhibition was in 2019 at the West Vancouver Art Museum entitled "Oh Nightingale". Prior to that, he had another solo exhibition in 2017 at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art based on his Lions works and Lion collection.



Parviz Tanavoli/ Oh Heech
1973, Bronze, 228,6cm

Charles Hossein Zenderoudi

Zenderoudi was one of a group of artists who sought to develop a uniquely Iranian brand of modernism in the 1960s, one authentically local and not reliant on Western forms. The group was dubbed Saqqakhaneh—the Persian word for the decorated public water fountains that commemorate Shiite martyrs in Iran, which their works resemble. Though the artist’s visual references are culturally specific, his aims are universal. “Men the world over are identical and can all read my work,” Zenderoudi has said. “What matters is to achieve a harmony between the person who created it and the spectator.”





Charles Hosein Zendehtroudi/ My Telegram Got Lost
1967, oil on canvas, 100 x 70

Sina Shiri

SINA SHIRI (b.1991) is a photographer based in Tehran, Iran. His works focus on social issues primarily through photographic portraiture of vulnerable groups, circumstances and by the means of ambiguity. His works have been represented in exhibitions and festivals such as Photoville (2015), Les Rencontres de la Photographie d'Arles (2017), Cité Internationale des Arts (2019) and Middle East Now Festival (2020) and so forth.

"Analogous to the subject matter of my photographs, I have fixed my gaze upon people's dilemma and their endeavor.

A heavy snow gave rise to these scenes and confusion. I, as a member of a human society that habitually seems to beware, observed a trouble. I decided to record this state of uncertainty; a vagueness that is intensified by the snow fog that my strange fellow travelers and I encountered – at a slow pace to ponder upon."



Sina Shiri "Untitled", 2022



Handwritten signature in blue ink.