

barbican art

The Curve

12 April - 3 June

Information 020 7638 8891

www.barbican.org.uk

IRANIAN

CONTEMPORARY ART





IRANIAN CONTEMPORARY ART

Iranian Contemporary Art celebrates innovation in Iran's vibrant culture. Showing a diverse range of media, from painting to video, this exhibition charts the development of the most ground breaking work of the last 40 years. Most of these works have not been seen outside Iran before.

cover image:
Untitled 1997
Koorosh Shishegaran
Collection of Tehran Museum
of Contemporary Art

left:
Rostam in Late Summer 1998 (detail)
Fereydoun Ave

overleaf:
Untitled 1998
Shadi Ghadirian
Collection of the artist

1960s and 70s

Visual art thrived in Iran in the 1960s and 70s during the economic boom years. Iranian artists created a bridge between contemporary Western art and artistic traditions in Iran.

Informed by Western sensibility, Spiritual Pop Artists - Saqqakhaneh - looked to popular votive art and pre-Islamic traditions to create works of great beauty and originality. Other artists rooted their modern art in the abstract forms of calligraphy.

In 1977 Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art was founded and acquired some of the best work by both Iranian and Western artists.

1980s to the present day

The 1979 Islamic revolution interrupted this artistic diversity. Images of women's

hair, male and female nudity were banned, sculptures of human and animal forms discouraged. Only after the Iran - Iraq war (80 - 88) and more importantly the 97 election, won by the Liberal wing of the Islamic Revolution, did a more sympathetic environment emerge. Tempered by the experience of war, and the tension between Islamic culture and modern life, Iranian artists created new types of art, using video, film and photography as well as more traditional media.

The unique and many voices of Iranian Art are because of - and in spite of - Iran's tumultuous history. Despite restrictions, indeed, even exploring the issues restrictions raise, artists have continued to create powerful work.

Curated by
Rose Issa and Carol Brown

Accompanying the exhibition is a 144 page book co-published by Barbican Art and Booth-Clibborn Editions. Price £19.95 available at Zwemmer Bookshop, Barbican Gallery, level 3

Exhibition organised by Barbican Art in association with the Iran Heritage Foundation and Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art. Supported by Balli Klockner plc with additional support provided by Asia House, Delfina Studios, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, the Iran Society and Visiting Arts.



IRAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION



BALLI KLOCKNER



Visiting Arts



Gallery Talks

12 & 19 May 1.00pm

Rose Issa Guest Curator

Informal talk in the exhibition.

Free admission

This exhibition is part of
Iranian Contemporary Art and
Culture in London 2001.

Other events at the School
of Oriental and Asian Studies

5 May Conference

**Beyond the lens, Beyond
the veil; Women in Iranian
Cinema**

4 May - 21 June Lecture Series
**The Discourse of Exile in
Post-Revolution Persian
Prose**

17- 19 May Conference
**Imagination Unbound
The Contemporary Poetry
of Iran and the Persian
speaking World**

For further information on
SOAS events call 020 7898 4330.
Updated information on all
events can be found at
www.iranheritage.org