

Hrag Vartanian

art, culture, photography, writing, ideas

Contemporary Iranian Art in New York

J A N U A R Y 1 3 , 2 0 1 0



This Saturday, I will be moderating a panel on contemporary Iranian art at the [Arario Gallery](#) in Chelsea. So stop by and watch me be brainy ... it's sexy, I swear.

The panel is in conjunction with the new exhibition, *The Promise of Loss: A Contemporary Index of Iran*, which is curated by Shaheen Merali.

Speaking about the show, Merali explains:

"The exhibition is a consolidation of many dashed hopes, a desire to build a shrine as well as to plant trees in the campus

condemned to destruction. The artists enable both a reading of the situation and encouragement to cross the distance where the bitterness of loss reigns within the national moral."

Artists in the exhibition include: [Samira Abbassy](#), [Iman Afsarian](#), [Asgar/Gabriel](#), [Masoumeh Bakhtyari](#), [Shahram Entekhabi](#), [Parastou Forouhar](#), [Shadi Ghadrian](#), [Babak Golkar](#), [Peyman Hooshmandzadeh](#), [Abbas Kowsari](#), [Mandana Moghaddam](#), [Amin Nourani](#), [Sara Rahbar](#), [Neda Razavipour](#), [Behrang Samadzadegan](#), [Rozita Sharafjahan](#), and [Jinoos Taghzadeh](#).

I got a sneak peak of the show last weekend and it offers a portrait of Iran very different from the one we are accustomed to seeing in the media. Most of the artists maintain a connection to Iran or live there, which means that the show isn't dominated by diasporan artists (which often happens in exhibitions like this). There is also a good mix of mediums and perspectives. One series I'd like to point out is the photographic series by Abbas Kowsari which depicts female recruits in an Iranian police academy (I've posted one of the images here). It is riveting, emotionally complicated and enlightening.

The show opens tomorrow (Thursday) night and I'll be in attendance ... stop by and say hi.

The Artist's Talk I will moderate takes place Saturday, January 16, 3pm at Arario Gallery: 521 West 25th Street.

Three participating artists (Samira Abbassy, Asgar/Gabriel, and Babak Golkar) will discuss their practice in and out of the current political context in Iran. They will be accompanied by Layla Diba, Independent Curator of Islamic Art.

Arario Gallery hours are Tuesday-Saturday 10-6pm and by appointment. Contact info@arariogallery.com for more information.

A Brooklyn Art Critic's Notebook

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More updates...

MY NOTEBOOK

After the rain. Sunday night at 23:01 (Taken with instagram) August 22, 2011

The fall of Tripoli (Taken with instagram) August 22, 2011

Scott Chasse's entry to the Hyperallergic tshirt... August 22, 2011

My Chelsea apartment, circa 2008 (Taken with instagram) August 21, 2011

Clubbing in Paris III (Taken with instagram) August 21, 2011

Clubbing in Paris II (Taken with instagram) August 21, 2011

Half Marilyn Monroe, half Mr T at N7th & Bedford (Taken with... August 21, 2011

These are all around the hood. (Taken with instagram) August 21, 2011

I've always wondered where I can get one of these bathroom... August 20, 2011

Storm moving in. (Taken with instagram) August 19, 2011

I'm so glad these street art versions of Manneken Pis have... August 19, 2011

Some humorous street art across the street from MoMA's... August 19, 2011

Resources for Male Survivors

Hrag Vartanian is editor of [Hyperallergic](#) and a member of the [Triangle Arts Association](#) board.

He's a Brooklyn-based writer and a critic and he writes a migrating street art column, [Re:Public](#), and maintains a tumblelog notebook, called "[A Brooklyn Art Critic's Notebook](#)." He tweets a lot.

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How do you pronounce Hrag?

My writings in the [Art21](#) blog, the [Brooklyn Rail](#), [NYFA's Current](#), and the [Huffington Post](#).

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+ [#TheSocialGraph](#) social media art show, Nov 2010 (16+ photos)

+ [On Display](#) exhibition, Aug 2010 (19 photos)

+ [Philip Johnson's Glass House Estate](#), New Canaan, Connecticut (26 photos)

+ [Prospect New Orleans](#) (P.1) (120 photos)

+ [Bushwick Open Studios 2008](#) (184 photos) 2007 (51 photos)

+ [Art Under the Bridge Festival 2008](#) in Dumbo (226 photos)



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Image caption: Abbas Kowsari, "Women Police Academy #12" (2008), C-print on Kodak Endura Metallic paper, 105 x 70 cm, courtesy Arario Gallery

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PREVIOUS: [Just How Angry are Street Art Haters?](#) | NEXT: [Picasso in Tehran\(photo\)](#)

[RESOURCES FOR MORE SURVIVORS](#)
August 15, 2011

This painting by François Boucher, "Le déjeuner (The... August 11, 2011

Marcel Jean's "Le spectre du Gardénia"... August 10, 2011

My view at the crossroads of Rue Mazarine, Rue Dauphine, Rue St... August 9, 2011

Antonio Corradini's stunningly beautiful "Femme... August 9, 2011

A bubble near the Centre Pompidou, Paris. This is my favorite... August 9, 2011

A fantastic cubist sculpture by Henri Laurens, "Le... August 8, 2011

Space Invader, in terms of #streetart, absolutely owns central... August 8, 2011

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