

The Saatchi Gallery
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**UNVEILED: NEW ART FROM
THE MIDDLE EAST**

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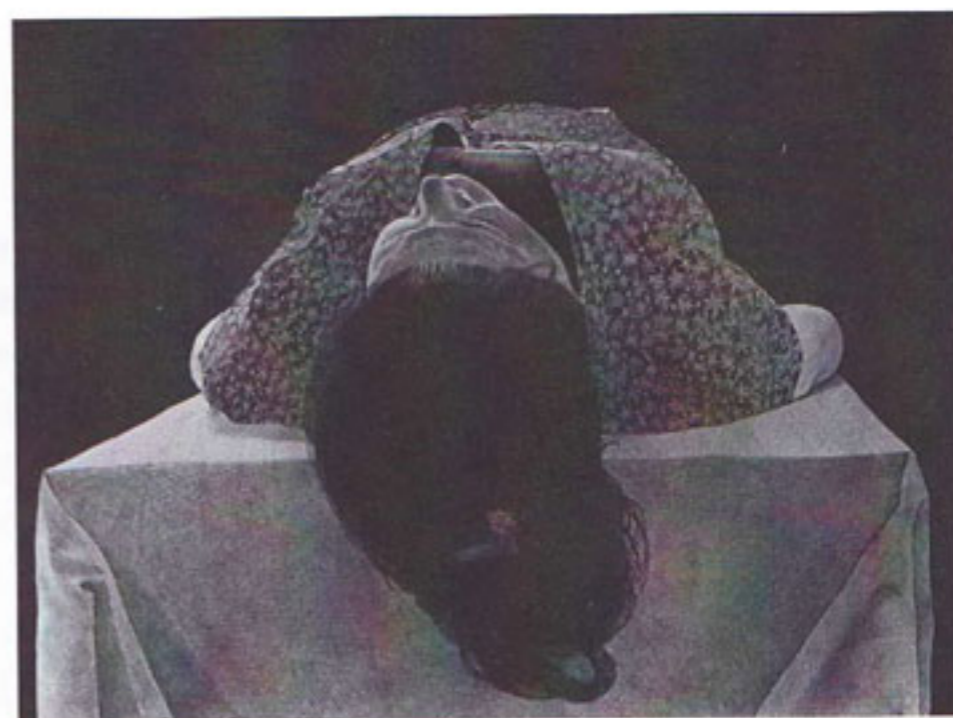
Gallery 9

Ahmad Morshedloo

Untitled 2008

Acrylic and pen on board 90 x 120 cm

Themes of gender and social inequality are predominant in Ahmad Morshedloo's work. In *Untitled*, he presents these with an introspective grace in an intensely detailed study of a woman reclining. The quiet simplicity of his subject becomes the focus of expansive meditation as his dense cross-hatching and delicately tangled gestures transform the surface into a microcosm of wonder, infusing his cold clammy palette with a sense of secluded energy. Extreme foreshortening is one of the most difficult technical skills in drawing and Morshedloo uses this forced perspective to create a hesitancy or confusion within this image, which initially appears alien and abstract. The black mass at the centre of the panel is her hair, which should always be kept covered; according to Iranian tradition it is a source of female power.



Ahmad Morshedloo

Untitled 2008

Oil on canvas 180 x 380 cm

In documenting contemporary Iranian society, Morshedloo considers his role as an artist as a tremendous responsibility and he approaches his paintings with both humility and criticality. Central to his practice is the notion of the subjectivity of the artist's vision. Every decision from what to paint to how condition. In *Untitled* his use of a variety of painterly styles insinuates both the public attitude towards and the personal consciousness of his subjects, with the man realistically represented in the centre, surrounded by women in various states of dissolve. Morshedloo articulates their faces with astonishing faithfulness giving each figure a sense of individual strength and dignity.



Jeffar Khaldi

Frozen 2007

Oil on canvas 230 x 260 cm

Khaldi doesn't consider himself to be a political artist; the themes in his work evolve from his own experiences and ideas and thus provide the most powerful material for making art. In his canvases, harsh realities become mixed with imagined scenes, confusing fact and fiction with a sense of nostalgia or dreams. His tableaux are equally beautiful and uncertain. In *Frozen*, a man is rendered mid-fall, his position beatific and Christ-like. In the distance encampments of tents line the landscape, reminiscent of Palestine's occupation.

