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## Broken Promises, Forbidden Dreams

An exhibition of contemporary Iranian art - Introduction

4 - 8 October 2007

**Private View Saturday 6th October at 6.30 pm**

Art London, Royal Hospital Road, London SW3

An exhibition of contemporary Iranian art at Art London 2007, brings together a collection of over 100 paintings from some 30 Iranian artists, mostly living in Iran. These works express the environment of paradox, frustration and hope in which contemporary Iranian art thrives today.



### Organised by

Iran Heritage Foundation

### Sponsored by

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### Introduction

The title, 'Broken Promises, Forbidden Dreams,' expresses the paradox of frustration and hope which characterises the environment in which contemporary Iranian art thrives.

Hardly a day goes by without Iran being mentioned in the Western press. However, rarely does this coverage refer to the artistic heritage of the country and, perhaps with the exception of Iranian cinema, even less rarely to its contemporary art. Yet Iran currently has one of the most vibrant and productive art scenes in the Middle East. The Tehran Museum of Modern Art is flourishing and commercial galleries in the capital and elsewhere in the country regularly hold exhibitions of paintings, drawings, photography and sculpture.

In recent months, there has been an explosion of interest, led by the International auction houses, who are holding sales of Contemporary Middle Eastern art in Dubai, London and Paris. Western commercial galleries and dealers, realising the merit of these artists are rapidly following suit and this current ground-breaking exhibition at Art London, organised by the Iran Heritage Foundation, seeks to reinforce this exciting trend.

But why now this interest in Contemporary Iranian art? Born of a long visual and cultural tradition stretching back to pre-Islamic times, today's generation of Iranian artists, some of whom have Western training, are seeking to deconstruct, reconstruct and integrate formulaic and empiric rhetoric into new models of artistic expression. Where once calligraphy was the preserve of court artists and Qur'anic scribes, contemporary artists such as Golnaz Fathi and Farhad Moshiri have appropriated these symbols, at once depriving them of their textual meaning and cadence, and transforming them instead into a fully choreographed and rhythmic dance across the page. Photography, introduced into Iran in the 19th Century under Qajar patronage, forms the basis of collages in the work of Samira Alikhanzadeh, oozing with nostalgia, and at the same time laced with both melancholic and humorous connotations of the human condition. And such sentiments are graphically repeated in the several further images in the show.

It is perhaps this dichotomy of old and new, the strange and yet so utterly familiar which attracts a Western audience. Each work in this exhibition, whilst unmistakably betraying its traditional Iranian origins, simultaneously offers a fresh, raw and inspirational perspective on the world of its creators.

### Artists Exhibited

Iman Afsarian, Shahriar Ahmadi, Samira Alikhanzadeh, Maryam Amini, Pooya Arianpour, Ali Chitsaz, Mostafa Dashti, Kamran Diba, Azarnoush Ebrahimi, Yaghoob Emdadian, Negar Farajiani, Rana Farnoud, Golnaz Fathi, Neda Hadizadeh, Ahoo Hamed, Mohammad Hamzeh, Farid Jahangir, Alireza Massoumi, Omid Massoumi, Shohreh Mehran, Ahmad Morshedlou, Farhad Moshiri, Manouchehr Motabar, Negar Orang, Tanya Pakzad, Hamid Pazouki, Amir Rad, Bijan Rafaty, Anahita Rezvani-Rad, Rezvan Sadeghzadeh, Shideh Tami.

### Opening times

Thursday & Monday 11am-8.30pm  
Friday, Saturday & Sunday 11am-8pm  
For venue details and map visit [www.artlondon.net](http://www.artlondon.net)

### Enquiries

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