

Far Near Distance: Contemporary Iranian Artists

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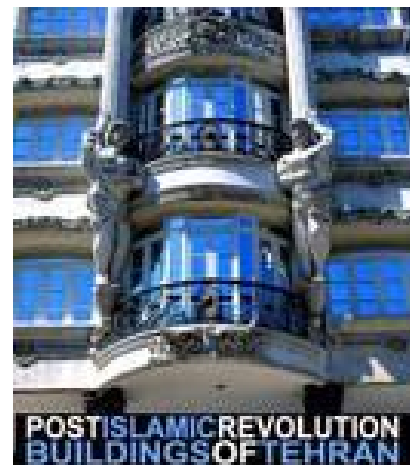
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For the very first time in Germany, *Far Near Distance* has brought together an overview of contemporary Iranian artists working not only in Iran but also in London, Paris and other European and American cities. The programme for the exhibition was developed in conjunction with Rose Issa, an Iranian-Lebanese curator living in London. As a specialist in the fine arts and films in the Middle East, she has combined a wide variety of artistic expressions which have emerged during the last few decades' polarisation and upheaval in the everyday Iranian life.



Far Near Distance presents the works of eighteen contemporary Iranian artists working in a wide range of expressions - film, video installations, theatre, literature and contemporary as well as classical music. It includes works by the already well-known artists such as Shirin Neshat, Siah Armajani, Parastou Forouhar, Abbas Kiarostami as well as by Sharham Entekhabi, Shadi Ghadirian, Ghazel, Kaveh Golestan, Khosrow Hassan Zadeh, Ali Mahdavi, Mehran Mohajer, Farhad Moshiri, Marjane Satrapi, Farkhondeh Shahroudi and Mitra Tabrizian.

Their works draw both from the long and distinguished Iranian artistic tradition as well as from the present realities and fuse together powerful symbols and metaphors to raise critical questions about contemporary life in their country. Remaining emotionally committed to their work, the artists use restraint, irony, sarcasm and humour to express the present contradictions and paradoxes and at the same time, blend reality, fiction and artistic innovation to express their creativity.



The film programme examines the emerging tensions between local traditions and global developments. The music programme presents classical Persian music as well as fusions of Iranian Sufi and folk music and rock and jazz, while the theatre presentations represent the lively scene through the Fajr theatre festival. Literature has always enjoyed a very high position in Iran. Drawing upon the centuries-old tradition of poetry of Rumi and Hafiz, the literature programme illustrates how recent Iranian authors have reflected upon contemporary society through social criticism, magical-realism and surrealism. Within the extensive conference programme, a number of curators, experts and artists will discuss the problems and possibilities of how best to represent arts of other cultures within a European context.

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