



Iranian Art, Women Spirit

Middle East Art Experiences

Exhibition Catalog

**Artists,
Artworks**

Introduction

This art exhibition, featuring works by three Iranian women painters, marks the inaugural collaboration between ITHAQUE Gallery and BAAT Institute. It highlights the artistic experiences of Middle Eastern women and underscores a shared commitment to cultural dialogue.

Located in Paris's Marais district, ITHAQUE Gallery is dedicated to fostering cross-cultural conversations and has a long history of showcasing artists from diverse backgrounds. BAAT Institute, which initially focused on Iranian artists, concentrates on the artistic experiences of Middle Eastern women. This exhibition, titled ***Iranian Art, Women Spirit***, is the second dedicated to Iranian women artists, following a previous showcase of 21 Iranian women artists in March 2024 at the Steigenberger Hotel in Frankfurt.

ITHAQUE Gallery is pleased to present this group exhibition featuring the latest paintings by Salimeh Motamedi, Tara Nazmalizadeh, and Zahra Sharif Kazemi on October 10, 2024. The exhibition demonstrates how these artists, through a diverse range of media and artistic languages, refine, capture, and reconstruct their dialogue with the viewer.



Sharareh Salehi,
The Curator

Sharareh Salehi is a Paris-based Iranian artist, art historian, curator, lecturer, writer, poet, and researcher. Her work is currently exhibited at numerous prestigious institutions worldwide, including the British Museum, the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, the Tunisian Ministry of Culture, the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage, the Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Foundation, and the Paris Municipality.

Since 1997, Sharareh has participated in over 61 international art exhibitions, including 25 solo shows. She has authored four books and published 69 articles on various aspects of art. Her accomplishments have earned her five renowned awards, including the Best Award at the 1997 China International Art Expo for her paintings.



Salimeh Motamedi

— 1962
Isfahan, Iran

Painter,
Founder of
Ghalamoo Academy,
Art Tutor

Education & Titles

- 2001 B.A. in Painting, Tehran Azad University, Tehran, Iran
- 2003 M.F.A. in Painting, Tehran Azad University, Tehran, Iran
- 2008 - 2024 Member of the Iranian Painters Association
- 2015 Founder of *Ghalamoo Academy*

Selected Solo Exhibition

- 2005 *Far away, there is a voice that calls me*, Banafsheh Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2007 Golestan Gallery, Tehran, Iran

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1997 & 1998 *Expression of Feelings*, Niavaran Cultural Center, Tehran, Iran
- 2001 - 2008 *Hundred Works, Hundred Artists*, Golestan Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2005 *Parhoon*, Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art, Isfahan, Iran
- 2006 *Global Peace*, Niavaran Cultural Center, Tehran, Iran
- 2006 *Contemporary Human and Two Figures*, Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Arts, Isfahan, Iran
- 2006 *Expo China* International Exhibition, Beijing, China
- 2006 4th International Painting Biennial *Islamic World*, Tehran, Iran
- 2017 *Junction*, Farrell Gallery, Paris, France
- 2017 Artem Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2024 *Painting Road* Art Tour, Paris, France - Frankfurt, Germany

About Salimeh Motamedi

Born in Isfahan in 1962, Salimeh Motamedi is a prominent Iranian artist who graduated with both bachelor's and master's degrees in painting from Azad University. She is an active member of the Iranian Painter Society and the Institute for Promotion of Visual Arts, collaborating with significant galleries inside and outside Iran. Motamedi's work has been featured in numerous group exhibitions, earning her multiple awards from prestigious national festivals.

Mysticism and Sufism permeate many of Motamedi's artworks, serving as central themes or underlying concepts. Her collections, such as *Unity in Diversity - Diversity in Unity* and those focusing on the Sama dance, reflect this influence. Some of her inspiration stems from more contemporary poets, such as Sohrab Sepehri. In her collection titled *Far Away, there is a Voice that Calls Me*, the inspiration is evident. This series demonstrates her ability to blend natural harmony with dynamic entropies, creating a unique symbolic language reminiscent of theatrical scenic design and jazz techniques by Kandinsky and Rothko.

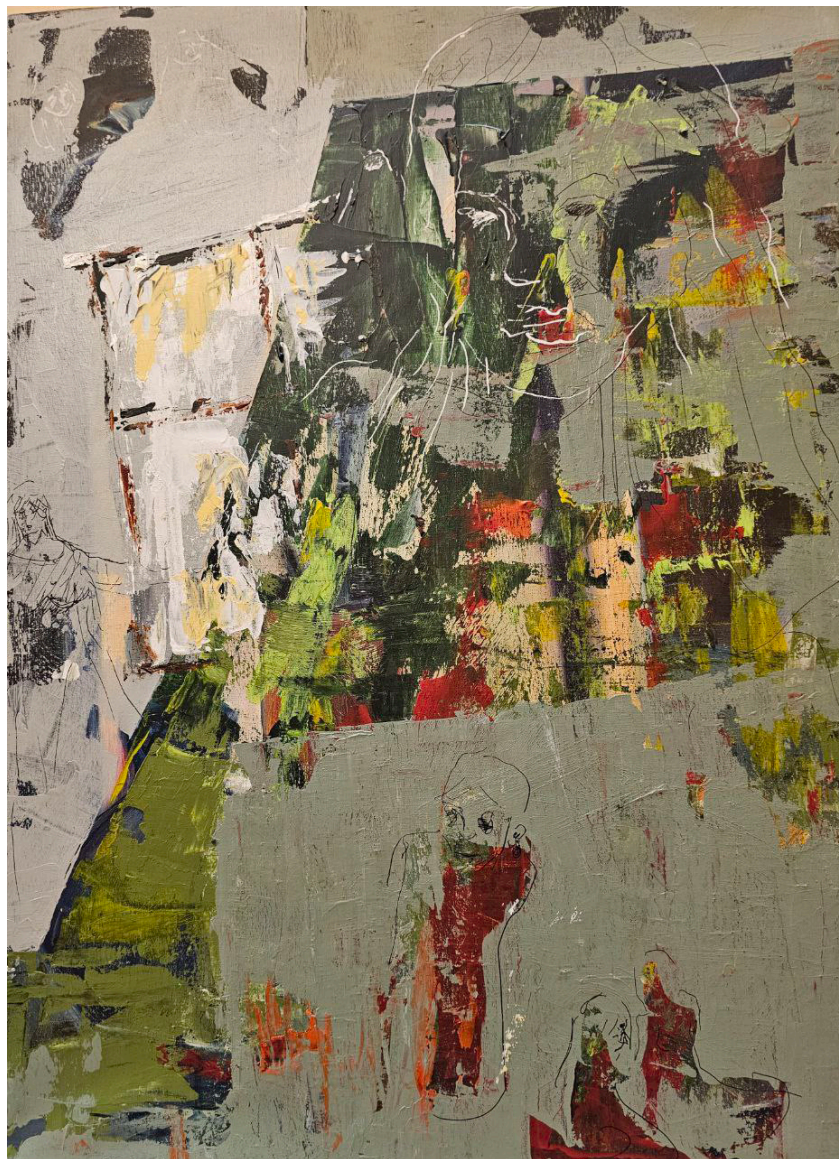
Beyond mysticism, Motamedi explores the struggles faced by women in society, using watercolor techniques and dark hues to convey their challenges.

Motamedi's use of color and light in her landscapes is comparable to the works of J.M.W. Turner, where the interplay of hues creates a powerful visual narrative. Like Turner, she evokes emotional and spiritual depth, capturing both the serenity and chaos of nature. Themes of life, creation, humanity, and existential journeys are prevalent throughout Motamedi's works, often reflecting contemporary issues. Her art resonates deeply with today's world, characterized by a strong emotional and spiritual aesthetic where landscapes serve as metaphors for the imaginary and the real.

A New Era

In this recent series, Salimeh's mind was filled with scenes from the society around her. Deeply influenced by the women's movement in Iran, which impacted everyone within the society, she was no exception. The use of colors, negative space, composition, and harmony differ from her previous works. This variation is typical for her, as she doesn't always follow a straight path, allowing her emotions to guide her brush and transform the elements she feels connected to.

The unrest of those days lingers in everyone's memory. She has aimed to capture this feeling with busy spaces, incorporating windows that show glimpses of light. Additionally, she used green to symbolize the sprouts of hope.



Untitled | 2023
Acrylic On Canvas | 70*50

Untitled | 2023

Acrylic On Canvas | 70*50



Untitled | 2023

Acrylic On Canvas | 70*50



Sama Collection | 2007

Acrylic On Canvas | 120*120

A Mystical Dance

The Sama dance, integral to certain Sufi sects, is deeply embedded in Iran's mystical literature, notably in Rumi's poetry. In her works, Motamedi captures the dance's fluidity and rhythm, symbolizing the seeker's spiritual ascent towards God. She strives for simplicity, seeking a form of mental depletion of heavy thoughts and a state of freedom, which the viewer can feel in the movements of the brush and the division between colors.



Sama Collection | 2007
Acrylic On Canvas | 150*150



Tara Nazmalizadeh

— 1975
Tehran, Iran

Painter,
Art Tutor,
Curator

Education & Titles

- 2017 M.A. in Art Studies, Tehran Azad University, Tehran, Iran
- 2020 Member of *Supernal Art* Association, Canada
- 2022 Director of the Visual Arts Department at *Arses Art*

Selected Solo Exhibition

- 2024 *Projection*, Guye Gallery, Tehran, Iran

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2015 Photography Group Exhibition, Gole Narges Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2016 Aghili Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2016 *Red*, Negar Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2017 *Peace Time*, Satura Art Gallery, Genoa, Italy
- 2018 *Persian Art*, Domus Romana Gallery, Rome, Italy
- 2018 *Soft Silence of the Arts*, meetiNG Art Gallery, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2019 *Opportunity*, Iranian Artists Forum Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2019 Faam Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 2019 *98+*, Afrand Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2019 *Amordad*, Afrand Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2020 *Wear a Mask!*, Cama Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2021 *UNESCO Club*, Niavaran Cultural Center, Tehran, Iran
- 2024 *Painting Road* Art Tour, Paris, France - Frankfurt, Germany

About Tara Nazmalizadeh

Born in Tehran in 1975, she is a distinguished Iranian artist known for her abstract and performance art. She began her artistic journey at the age of 13, when her unique abstract painting caught the attention of her professional art teacher, leading her to pursue art seriously. Despite societal and familial pressures to follow conventional careers in engineering or medicine, Tara remained dedicated to her passion for painting.

Her work primarily focuses on the theme of women, exploring feminine personalities' complexity and inner beauty rather than conventional skin-deep beauty. Her paintings are characterized by vibrant, curvaceous forms symbolizing femininity and often include elements that critique gendered views of women. Tara's approach to art is deeply personal and introspective, creating a space where she confronts her own thoughts and emotions.

Tara's innovative spirit extends to performance art, where she has conducted numerous successful performances. She places great importance on time and place in her work. In her recent exhibition, she has creatively incorporated the concept of time by using aluminum sheets in her canvases, which oxidize and change over time, visually representing the passage of time. This careful selection of materials and colors underscores her deep understanding of art's temporal dimension.

Throughout her career, Tara has faced many challenges but attributes her success to patience, perseverance, and continuous study rather than innate talent. Her profound interest in art history, color theory, mysticism, and religions profoundly influences her work and life. Despite the difficulties, she remains unwavering in her commitment to art, believing that she would have nothing without it. Tara's work is a testament to her resilience and dedication, making her a significant figure in contemporary Iranian art.

Descent into Earth

Projection is the dominant theme in the artist's works. From an existential point of view, man is thrown into the world and, subsequently, into life, and at the same time, into liberty and anxiety. In this setting, what matters most to the artist are two inevitably interlaced concepts: "femininity" and "temporality." Paintings, therefore, reflect the border between "the real" and "the imaginary," on the one hand, to further depart from absolute formalism and, on the other hand, as a context for the execution of paintings.

From the artist's statement for the *Projection* Exhibition



***Projection Collection* | 2022**

Mixed Media | 174*174

Projection Collection | 2022

Mixed Media | 120*120





Zahra Sharif Kazemi

— 1982
Karaj, Iran

Painter,
Calligrapher,
Art Tutor

Selected Solo Exhibition

2017 Sooreh Art Gallery, Karaj, Iran

Selected Group Exhibitions

2018 Rasoul Mehr Gallery, Karaj, Iran

2018 *Feeling of Colors*, Fajr Gallery, Karaj, Iran

2018 Arasbaran Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2019 Group Exhibition Curated by MahoMahi Gallery in Istanbul, Türkiye

2019 MahoMahi Gallery, Karaj, Iran

2021 Curator of the Group Exhibition *Negah*, Maharad Gallery, Karaj, Iran

2022 *Memorial of Iran Darroudi*, Goya Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2024 *Painting Road* Art Tour, Paris, France - Frankfurt, Germany

About Zahra Sharif Kazemi

Born in Karaj in 1982 in, Zahra Sharif Kazemi is a painter and calligrapher who has been teaching art for more than a decade. She has explored various techniques throughout her career but now focuses primarily on creating and teaching calligraphy art. Zahra has also actively participated in exhibitions both within Iran and internationally, and she curated a group exhibition in her hometown.

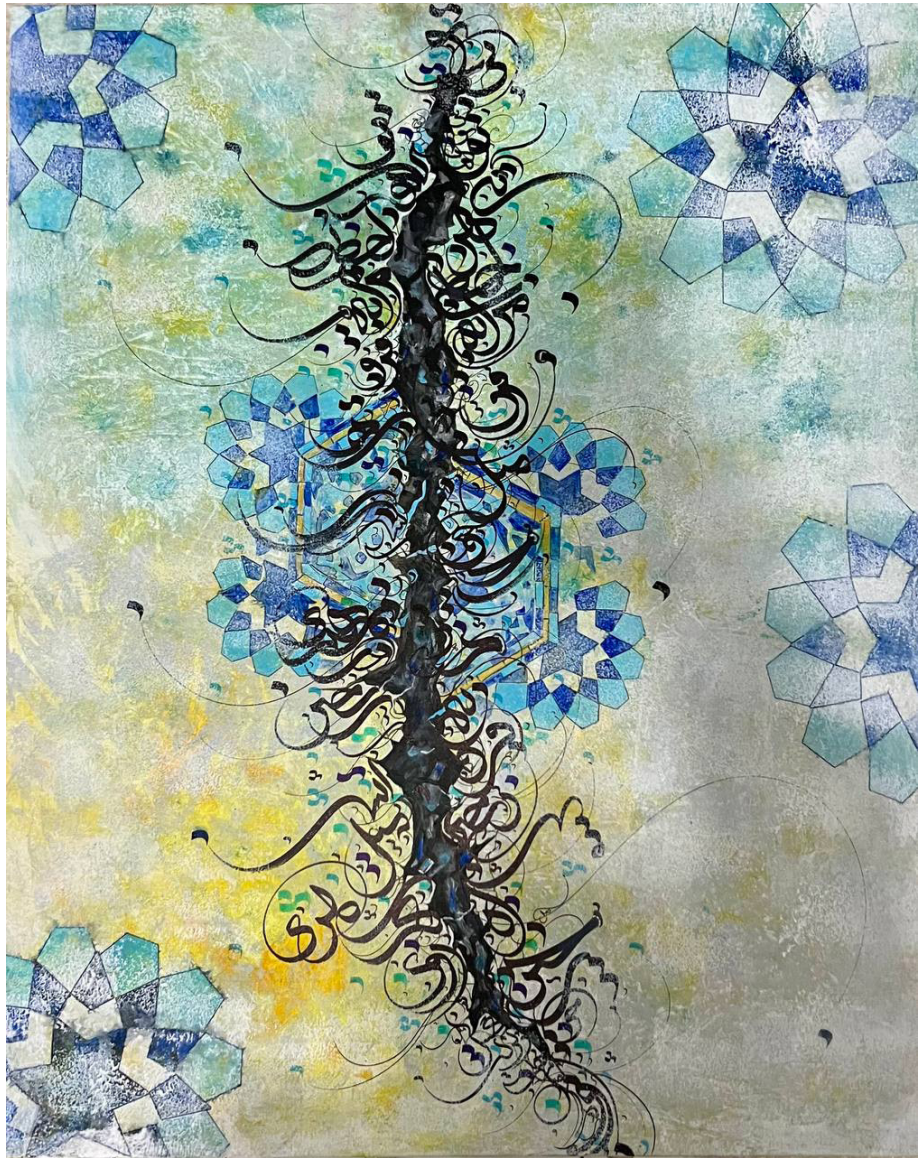
Zahra sees painting as a realm of dreams and a space for experiences not always found in life. Her passion for painting and calligraphy has been with her since childhood, though it remained a mere aspiration until an opportunity to pursue it professionally arose.

Now in her fourth decade, Zahra has dedicated the latter half of her life to the world of painting and calligraphy. She operates a small painting school in Karaj, Iran, where she inspires and instructs her students. Her recent works combine painting with Persian calligraphy, featuring colorful tiles illuminated by light, symbolizing freedom and liberation. Her use of turquoise-themed tiles reflects her deep attachment to traditional Iranian art, and her love for Persian poetry often influences her work, incorporating words borrowed from classical poems.

Zahra asserts that the happiest moments of her life are when she's painting, which is why she mainly uses bright and cheerful colors.

Dancing Letters

The Persian letters in these works appear to be flying and dancing. Poetry is an inseparable part of Iranian culture, and the artist's love for poetry is depicted through the flight of letters among the tiles. The turquoise-colored tiles are symbols of traditional Iranian architecture. Sometimes they appear faded and forgotten in these works, but they still shine in certain parts. In these pieces, the letters also symbolize a dialogue between tradition and the modern world.



Hope | 2023

Acrylic On Canvas | 100*80



Life | 2023
Acrylic On Canvas | 70*70



Light Craving | 2023
Acrylic On Canvas | 100*80

Women, Art, and the Persian Legacy

The millennia-old Persian civilization has bequeathed us a cultural and artistic heritage of exceptional richness, both in its diversity and rarity, forming a fundamental part of the regional and historical identity of its people today. Among the most important aspects of this culture, art and the role of women occupy prominent positions.

Regarding art, and particularly painting, it is essential to highlight its crucial role in expressing the Iranian mentality through the centuries. Painting has often served as a mirror of the beliefs, narratives, and dreams of Persian society. A striking example is Mani, the only prophet-artist in the world, who originated from Persia. His work combined spirituality and art, illustrating the cultural significance of painting in Iran.

As for the role of women, it is particularly emphasized in major literary works such as the ***Shahnameh*** or *Book of Kings* by **Ferdowsi**, a masterpiece of Persian literature and one of the most important epics in world history, following **Homer's *Iliad and Odyssey***. In this vast epic tapestry, women play remarkable and influential roles, reflecting their importance in Iranian culture throughout the ages. This narrative illustrates not only heroism and bravery but also the wisdom and dignity of Persian women, solidifying their place within the Iranian cultural heritage.

The *Shahnameh*, often considered the birth certificate of Iranian identity, accords women a fundamental status. Throughout its epic tales, women play major roles, appearing with dignity, beauty, and strength. Unlike Homer's *Iliad*, where female figures like Helen are associated with misfortune and war, in the *Shahnameh*, women embody grace, elegance, and wisdom, and their presence enriches the stories in a positive way.

The women of the *Shahnameh* bring depth and emotion to the tragic stories that fill the epic. For instance, without Tahmineh, the mother of Sohrab, the latter's death would not have had the same poignant resonance, and without Rudabeh, Rostam's mother, the tragedy of Rostam and Sohrab would not have had the dramatic

magnitude that has earned it worldwide fame. These women add nuance and color to the dark and heroic narratives, humanizing the dramas and offering a more complex emotional dimension.

With the exception of Sudabeh, a character marked by betrayal, the women of the *Shahnameh* embody transcendent figures, carriers of the values of a noble feminine culture. They are not only influential characters, but they also participate in transmitting ideals of wisdom, courage, and loyalty, contributing centrally to the epic.

After exploring the central role of women in the *Shahnameh*, it is fascinating to observe how these historical notions continue to resonate in contemporary Iranian society. The values of grace, wisdom, courage, and elegance embodied by the heroines of the *Shahnameh* are reflected in the position of Iranian women today, especially in the artistic domain.

Iranian women artists, heirs to this rich ancient culture, hold a remarkable position in contemporary creation. Their talent serves as a living testament to cultural continuity, where tradition meets innovation. These women, much like the female figures of the past, challenge expectations and redefine artistic boundaries

in a modern context. Their work draws from Persian heritage while adapting to the realities and challenges of today's society.

In a rapidly transforming society, Iranian women play a key role in the artistic scene, whether in painting, sculpture, photography, calligraphy, music, or cinema. They reinterpret the symbols and stories of the past while addressing contemporary themes such as identity, gender, freedom, and resistance, thus creating a dialogue between tradition and modernity. Their creations, enriched by this duality, not only reflect their talent but also their ability to be spokespersons for a culture in evolution.

The exhibition titled ***Iranian Art, Women Spirit; Middle East Art Experiences*** offers a fascinating insight into the contemporary art scene in Iran through the perspectives of women artists. This project highlights the works of three contemporary Iranian creators: Salimeh Motamedi, Tara Nazmalizadeh, and Zahra Sharif Kazemi.

Each of them, through her distinct style, explores cultural, social, and personal themes while offering a unique interpretation of the role of women in art and Iranian society. Their work reflects the richness and diversity of feminine experiences in the Middle Eastern context,

blending tradition with modernity. This exhibition is a vibrant testament to how these artists push the boundaries of artistic creation while engaging in a critical dialogue with the cultural and social structures that surround them.

It is remarkable to observe how **Salimeh Motamedi** incorporates Sufi concepts into her work. The spiritual dance, or Sama, is a fundamental element of Sufi tradition, symbolizing the quest for union with the divine. By translating these ideas through painting, Salimeh establishes a meaningful connection between ancient spirituality and contemporary artistic expression. This not only allows us to appreciate the richness of Iranian painting but also to explore profound themes related to mysticism and transcendence within this culture.

Tara Nazmalizadeh's paintings stand out with dynamic and fluid forms that evoke femininity while integrating critical elements of traditional representations of gender. Her artistic approach is deeply introspective and personal, creating a space where she questions her own thoughts and emotions. Through her work, she challenges gender stereotypes and offers a nuanced reflection on the identity and role of women in society.

Tara demonstrates remarkable mastery of

so-called “feminine” colors, using them subtly to enrich her artistic discourse. Her palettes of soft and delicate tones, often associated with femininity—such as pinks, purples, and mauves, sometimes accented with shades of blue and green—are far from being used in a stereotypical manner. On the contrary, she reappropriates these hues to imbue them with meaning and deconstruct simplistic views of femininity.

These colors, seemingly light at first glance, become powerful tools that enhance the complexity and depth of her works, expressing both the softness and strength, as well as the ambiguity of feminine experiences. Through this chromatic mastery, Tara manages to evoke the viewer's emotions while subtly raising questions about gender expectations. Her color choices contribute to a critical and aesthetic reflection on the visual stereotypes imposed on women, transforming what is often seen as a gendered code into a bold artistic statement.

Through the works of **Zahra Sharif Kazemi**, which blend calligraphy and painting, we discover a unique facet of Persian visual culture. The letters and words, imbued with poetic grace, seem to dance delicately against traditional architectural backdrops. This balance between the softness of forms and the harmony of colors reveals a new dimension of Persian calligraphy-

painting, enriched by the artist's feminine perspective.

The choice of turquoise, an emblematic color of Persian architecture, is central to her work. This deep blue, often found in the domes of mosques and Persian mosaics, becomes a strong visual signature under her brush. Zahra reinvents this hue, imbuing it with symbolism and creating a bridge between Persian heritage and the contemporaneity of her artistic expression.

Remarkably highlighted, this exhibition unveils the impressive mastery of the three Iranian artists, both in form and content. Each has developed a distinct artistic universe, marked by a personal style that reflects her unique vision of the world.

This event is a striking example of artistic diversity and the richness of perspectives, while emphasizing the unity and solidarity of Iranian women artists. The ITHAQUE gallery invites you to immerse yourself in this fascinating creative space, where tradition and modernity intertwine to reveal powerful and singular voices of contemporary Iranian art.

Dr. Sharareh Salehi

Curator

Femmes, Art, et Héritage Persan

La civilisation millénaire persane nous a légué un héritage culturel et artistique d'une richesse exceptionnelle, à la fois dans sa diversité et sa rareté, qui constitue aujourd'hui une part fondamentale de l'identité régionale et historique de ses habitants. Parmi les aspects les plus importants de cette culture, l'art et la place de la femme occupent des positions de premier plan.

En ce qui concerne l'art, et plus particulièrement la peinture, il est essentiel de souligner son rôle crucial dans l'expression de la mentalité iranienne à travers les siècles. La peinture a souvent servi de miroir des croyances, des récits et des rêves de la société persane. Un exemple marquant est **Mani**, le seul prophète peintre au monde, originaire de Perse, dont l'œuvre a combiné la spiritualité et l'art, illustrant ainsi l'importance culturelle de la peinture en Iran.

Quant au rôle des femmes, il est particulièrement mis en valeur dans des œuvres littéraires majeures telles que le **Shâhnâmeh** ou *Livre des Rois* de **Ferdowsi**, un chef-d'œuvre de la littérature persane et une des épopées les plus importantes de l'histoire mondiale, après **l'Iliade** et **l'Odyssée d'Homère**. Dans cette vaste fresque épique, les femmes jouent des rôles remarquables et influents, témoignant de leur importance dans la culture iranienne à travers les âges. Ce récit illustre non seulement l'héroïsme et la bravoure, mais aussi la sagesse et la dignité des femmes persanes, consolidant leur place au sein du patrimoine culturel iranien.

Le *Shâhnâmeh*, souvent considéré comme l'acte de naissance de l'identité iranienne, accorde aux femmes un statut fondamental. À travers ses récits épiques, les femmes jouent des rôles majeurs et sont présentes avec dignité, beauté et force. Contrairement à **l'Iliade d'Homère**, où des figures féminines comme **Hélène** sont associées au malheur et à la guerre, dans le *Shâhnâmeh*, la femme incarne la grâce, l'élégance et la sagesse, et sa présence enrichit les récits de manière positive.

Les femmes du *Shâhnâmeh* apportent de la profondeur et des émotions aux histoires tragiques qui jalonnent l'épopée. Par exemple, sans **Tahmineh**, la mère de Sohrab, la mort de

ce dernier n'aurait pas eu la même résonance poignante, et sans **Rudabeh**, la mère de Rostam, la tragédie de Rostam et Sohrab n'aurait pas eu l'ampleur dramatique qui lui a valu une renommée mondiale. Ces femmes ajoutent des nuances et des couleurs aux récits sombres et héroïques, humanisant les drames et offrant une dimension émotionnelle plus complexe.

À l'exception de **Sudabeh**, un personnage marqué par la trahison, les femmes du *Shâhnâmeh* incarnent des figures transcendantes, porteuses des valeurs d'une noble culture féminine. Elles sont non seulement des personnages influents, mais elles participent également à la transmission des idéaux de sagesse, de courage et de loyauté, contribuant ainsi à l'épopée de manière centrale.

Après avoir exploré le rôle central des femmes dans le *Shâhnâmeh*, il est fascinant de constater comment ces notions historiques continuent de résonner dans la société contemporaine iranienne. Les valeurs de grâce, de sagesse, de courage et d'élégance, incarnées par les héroïnes du *Shâhnâmeh*, se retrouvent dans la position des femmes iraniennes aujourd'hui, notamment dans le domaine artistique.

Les femmes artistes iraniennes, héritières de cette riche culture ancienne, occupent un rang

remarquable dans la création contemporaine. Leur talent est un témoignage vivant de la continuité culturelle, où la tradition rencontre l'innovation. Ces femmes, à l'instar des figures féminines du passé, défient les attentes et redéfinissent les frontières artistiques dans un contexte moderne. Leur œuvre puise dans l'héritage persan tout en s'adaptant aux réalités et aux défis de la société actuelle.

Dans une société en pleine transformation, les femmes iraniennes jouent un rôle clé dans la scène artistique, qu'il s'agisse de peinture, de sculpture, de photographie, de calligraphie, de musique et du cinéma. Elles réinterprètent les symboles et les histoires du passé tout en abordant des thèmes contemporains comme l'identité, le genre, la liberté et la résistance, créant ainsi un dialogue entre tradition et modernité. Leurs créations, riches de cette dualité, reflètent non seulement leur talent, mais aussi leur capacité à être les porte-parole d'une culture en évolution.

L'exposition intitulée **L'Art iranien, Esprit féminin: Expériences artistiques au Moyen-Orient** offre un regard fascinant sur la scène de l'art contemporain en Iran à travers les perspectives de femmes artistes. Ce projet met en lumière les œuvres de trois créatrices iraniennes contemporaines : Salimeh Motamedi, Tara Nazmalizadeh, et Zahra Sharif Kazemi.

Chacune d'elles, à travers son style distinct, explore des thèmes culturels, sociaux et personnels tout en offrant une interprétation unique du rôle de la femme dans l'art et la société iranienne. Leur travail reflète la richesse et la diversité des expériences féminines dans le contexte du Moyen-Orient, alliant tradition et modernité.

Cette exposition est un témoignage vibrant de la manière dont ces artistes repoussent les frontières de la création artistique, tout en engageant un dialogue critique avec les structures culturelles et sociales qui les entourent.

Il est remarquable de constater comment **Salimeh Motamedi** intègre les concepts soufis dans son œuvre. La danse spirituelle, ou *Sama*, constitue un élément fondamental de la tradition soufie, symbolisant la quête d'union avec le divin. En traduisant ses idées à travers la peinture, Salimeh établit une signification entre la spiritualité ancienne et l'expression artistique contemporaine. Cela permet non seulement d'apprécier la richesse de la peinture iranienne, mais également d'explorer des thèmes profonds liés à la mystique et à la transcendance dans cette culture.

Les peintures de **Tara Nazmalizadeh** se

distinguent par des formes dynamiques et fluides qui évoquent la féminité, tout en intégrant des éléments critiques des représentations traditionnelles du genre féminin. Son approche artistique est profondément introspective et personnelle, créant un espace où elle interroge ses propres pensées et émotions. À travers son œuvre, elle remet en question les stéréotypes genrés et offre une réflexion nuancée sur l'identité et le rôle des femmes dans la société. Tara démontre une maîtrise remarquable des couleurs dites "féminines", qu'elle utilise avec subtilité pour enrichir son discours artistique. Ses palettes de tons doux et délicats, souvent associées à la féminité, comme les roses, les violets, les violets-roses et parfois avec les nuances du bleu et du vert, sont loin d'être utilisées de manière stéréotypée. Au contraire, elle se réapproprie ces teintes pour les charger de sens et déconstruire les visions simplistes de la féminité. Ces couleurs, à première vue légères, deviennent chez elle des outils puissants qui renforcent la complexité et la profondeur de ses œuvres, exprimant à la fois la douceur, la force et l'ambiguïté des expériences féminines.

Grâce à cette maîtrise chromatique, Tara parvient à jouer sur les émotions du spectateur tout en évoquant subtilement des questionnements sur les attentes genrées. Ses choix de couleurs participent ainsi à une réflexion critique et

esthétique sur les stéréotypes visuels imposés aux femmes, transformant ce qui est souvent perçu comme un code genré en une déclaration artistique audacieuse.

À travers les œuvres de **Zahra Sharif kazemi**, qui mêlent calligraphie et peinture, nous découvrons une facette inédite de la culture visuelle persane. Les lettres et les mots, empreints d'une grâce poétique, semblent danser délicatement sur des décors architecturaux traditionnels. Cet équilibre entre la douceur des formes et l'harmonie des couleurs révèle une nouvelle dimension de la calligraphie-peinture persane, enrichie par le regard féminin de l'artiste. Le choix du turquoise, couleur emblématique de l'architecture persane, est central dans son travail. Ce bleu profond, souvent utilisé dans les dômes des mosquées et les mosaïques persanes, devient sous son pinceau une signature visuelle forte. Zahra réinvente ainsi cette teinte, la chargeant de symbolisme, et en fait un pont entre l'héritage persan et la contemporanéité de son expression artistique.

Remarquablement mise en lumière, cette exposition dévoile la maîtrise impressionnante des trois artistes iraniennes, tant dans la forme que dans le contenu. Chacune d'elles a su développer un univers artistique distinct, marqué

par un style personnel qui reflète sa vision unique du monde.

Cet événement est un exemple éclatant de la diversité artistique et de la richesse des perspectives, tout en soulignant l'unité et la solidarité des femmes artistes iraniennes. La galerie **ITHAQUE** vous invite à plonger dans cet espace créatif fascinant, où tradition et modernité s'entremêlent pour révéler des voix puissantes et singulières de l'art contemporain iranien.

Sharareh Salehi

Curatrice

ITHAQUE Gallery

ITHAQUE is a shared darkroom and art gallery that opened in 2020 in the heart of Paris's artistic district, *Le Marais*. The gallery offers international artist residency programs and has a partnership with Cité Internationale des Arts. ITHAQUE has showcased Iranian artists several times, including an exhibition of works from the Tehran-based publishing house StudioKargah in March 2022, and the works of young Iranian photographer Golara Jahanian in February 2024. The gallery has also initiated a photography competition for Iranian photographers on the theme of water in Iran, with the resulting works to be exhibited at the gallery in September 2024.

ITHAQUE was founded by French-Swiss photographer Alexandre Arminjon, who traveled to Iran three times in 2017 and 2022 to work on a long-term portrait of contemporary Iranian society. Alexandre's Iranian portraits were exhibited in the French National Parliament in March 2023 and are also part of the collection of the French National Library.

ITHAQUE



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BAAT Institute

BAAT Institute is dedicated to showcasing the vibrant and diverse artistic voices of Iranian women. It began its journey with the publication of ***Iranian Women Painters***, a book that was launched at the Steigenberger Hotel in Frankfurt, accompanied by a European tour featuring 21 Iranian women artists. This initiative marked a significant step in BAAT's mission to elevate and present Iranian female artists on an international stage.

The institute's ***Middle East Art Experiences*** project further extends this mission, aiming to foster global collaborations. By partnering with galleries worldwide, BAAT Institute introduces not only Iranian artists but also talent from across the entire Middle Eastern region, enriching the global art landscape.

As part of its commitment to the cultural and artistic community, BAAT Institute strives to be the voice of Iranian women artists, presenting their work at the highest level. Their efforts, reflected in their publications and exhibitions, represent a significant contribution to the ongoing evolution of modern art in the Middle East.



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