

WOMEN IN THE WORLD

TAGS: Lifestyle Art



Farideh Lashai: Painting Iran's Shifting Landscapes

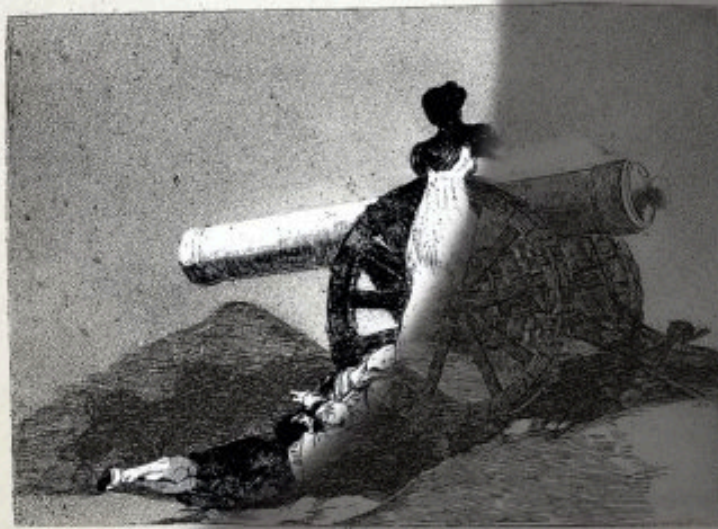
IN MEMORIAM

Revolutionary Iranian Artist Farideh Lashai Honored By Two New York Shows

APR 28, 2013 4:45 AM - BY THE DAILY BEAST

The late Farideh Lashai (1944-2013) was a woman of many talents—an author whose last novel wowed Iran's literary critics; a onetime translator of Berthold Brecht; a crystal designer for Riedel and Studio Rosenthal in Germany and Austria. She was also one of the Middle East's most prolific and influential female artists. Born to a prominent northern Iranian family, Lashai's paintings and mixed media installations

captured the shifting political and cultural landscapes of her tumultuous homeland: the Shah's last days, the chaos of the Islamic Revolution, nostalgia and loss and violence. She also made a point of reaching out to her fellow female artists, co-founding the Neda group, a collective of 12 Iranian women artists, in the 1990s. Her work can be found in major institutions such as the New York Museum of Fine Arts, LACMA and the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, and is being honored in two New York exhibitions, at the Leila Heller Gallery and the Edward Tyler Nahem Gallery, which run through May 4 and May 8, respectively. Among the pieces on display: her work "When I Count There Are Only You... But When I Look There Is Only a Shadow" (pictured).



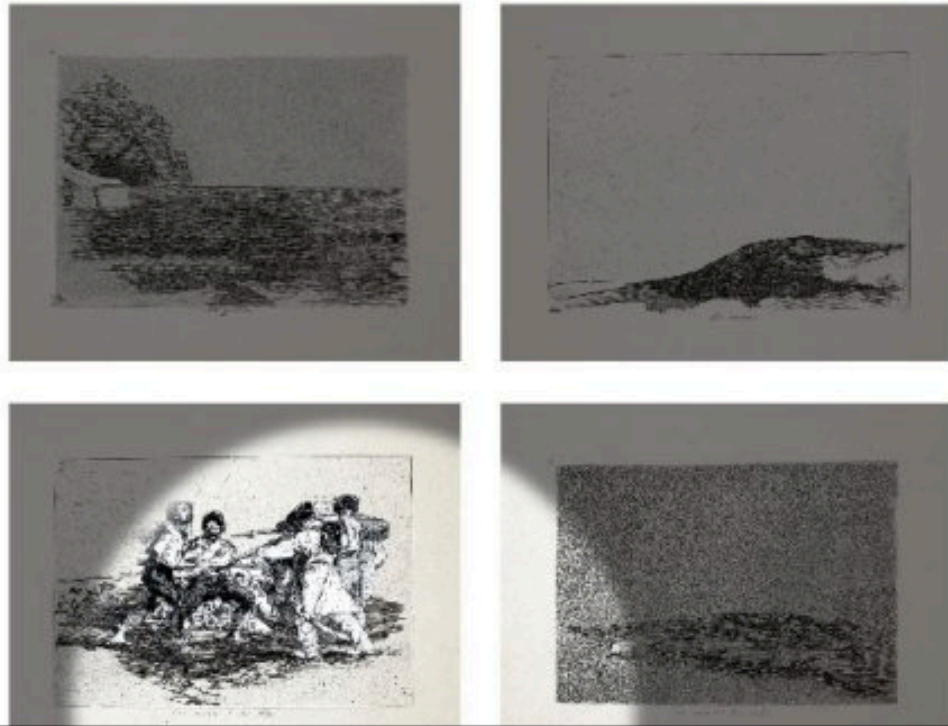
When I Count There Are Only You...But When I Look There Is Only A Shadow—Detail

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One of Lashai's recently completed works, 'When I Count There Are Only You... But When I Look There Is Only A Shadow' features 80 photo-intaglio prints taken from Goya's etchings for 'The Disasters of War' series. Her twist: Goya's violent figures have been spliced from the scenes, leaving only a background and a curious absence.



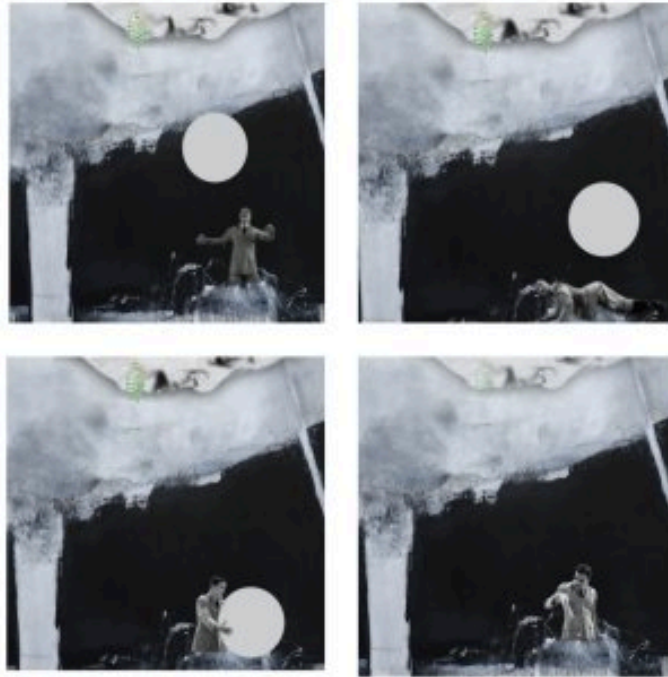
When I Count There Are Only You ...But When I Look There Is Only A Shadow—Detail II

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A detail from 'When I Count There Are Only You...But When I Look There Is Only A Shadow.'



El Amal

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In her 2011 work "El Amal" (Arabic for "hope" or "desire"), Lashai was inspired by Egypt's Arab Spring and Egypt's legendary grande chanteuse, Oum Kalthoum. In the piece, which incorporates animation and sound, Charlie Chaplin appears from a scene in *The Great Dictator*, dancing to Kalthoum's rendition of "El Amal," while the singer meditates resplendently above the scene.



Keep Your Interior Empty Of Food, You Mayest Behold Therein The Light Of Interior

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Inspired by Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, Lashai created a mixed media masterpiece entitled 'Rabbit in Wonderland.' Consisting of five distinct works and incorporating painting, video and sound, it takes on the flowering of, and disillusionment with, various ideologies in 20th-century Iranian society. Here, "Keep Your Interior Empty of Food, You Mayest Behold Therein The Light Of Interior" hints at the reign of the Ayatollahs.



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"Dear, Dear, How Queer Everything Is Today": Part of Lashai's 'Rabbit in Wonderland' sequence.



Dear, Dear, How Queer Everything Is Today—Detail

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In a close-up of “Dear, Dear, How Queer Everything Is Today,” Lashai depicts Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, the Iranian Prime Minister who nationalized the oil industry in 1952 and was overthrown with a CIA engineered coup in 1953.