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Guiducci, Mark. "An Exclusive Preview of *Lotus*, Shiva Ahmadi's New Video Installation," *VOGUE* (June 2014)

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An Exclusive Preview of *Lotus*, Shiva Ahmadi's New Video Installation

by Mark Guiducci



Shiva Ahmadi, *Lotus*, 2013. Mixed media on aquaboard. Triptych, overall dimensions: 60 x 120 in. (152.4 x 304.8 cm)

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Leila Heller Gallery

As a Tehran-born, Detroit-based artist working in 2014, **Shiva Ahmadi** was bound to be concerned with politics whether she decided to address them in her art directly or not. With her latest work, *Lotus*, now on view at the Asia Society in New York City, she does just that. The nine-minute video—a new medium for the artist—adapts the Middle Eastern tradition of miniature painting into a single-channel animation, integrating images of bombs, grenades, and other representations of war into a depiction of the Buddha.

Based on Ahmadi's own 2013 triptych painting of the same name, *Lotus* was inspired by both the disappointing outcome of the so-called Arab Spring and the politics of her adopted hometown. "My work deals with abuse of power and corruption," Ahmadi says of the show, her first solo museum exhibition in New York. "For me it really doesn't matter where you live

—whether it is Iran, Syria, or Detroit. If the leader is not there to guide and save people, everyone will suffer.”

Lotus is on view at the Asia Society until August 3. Preview the animation below.



Shiva Ahmadi

Lotus (detail), 2014

Single-channel video installation

Edition 1 of 5

This work was commissioned by the Asia Society Museum, New York

Courtesy of the artist and Leila Heller Gallery

<http://www.vogue.com/culture/article/shiva-ahmadi-lotus-at-asia-society/#1>