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