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DLK COLLECTION

From one photography collector to another: a venue for thoughtful discussion of vintage and contemporary photography via reviews of recent museum exhibitions, gallery shows, photography auctions, photo books, art fairs and other items of sometime interest to photography collectors large and small.

MONDAY, JUNE 25, 2012

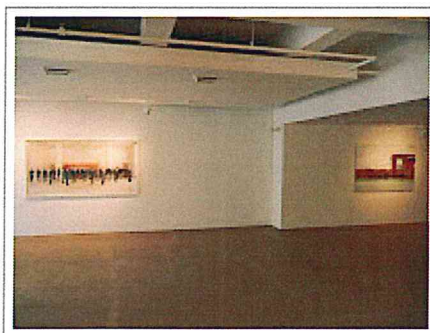
Mitra Tabrizian, Photographs @Heller

JTF (just the facts): A total of 7 color photographs, alternately framed in grey/white and unmatted or unframed, and hung against white walls in the single room gallery space. All of the works are c-prints made between 2006 and 2012. Physical dimensions range between 61x48 and 42x121, and edition sizes are 5+2AP. A recent monograph of Tabrizian's work, *Another Country*, published by Hatje Cantz ([here](#)), is available from the gallery for \$57. (Installation shots at right.)



Comments/Context: With the widespread use of the wall-sized, photographic *tableau*, the underlying form has become as predictable to contemporary viewers as the structure of a minuet or rondo would be to classical music listeners. It's a style that is big, and glossy, and staged, mixing elements of realism and fiction into a heady brew of subtly dissonant, often cinematic or surreal ideas, continually evolving down a genetic line that can be traced back to Wall, diCorcia, Crewdson and others. Standing where we are today, with hundreds of *tableaux* in the rear view mirror, we're no longer particularly interested in the mechanics of this now commonplace form, but rather in how and whether the artist has employed the approach to show us something we haven't seen before.

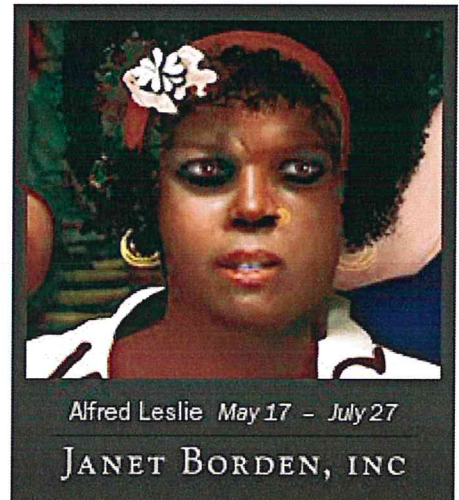
Iranian-British photographer Mitra Tabrizian's new works use the *tableau* form to examine the abstract idea of cultural and political dislocation, of being simultaneously both part of a crowd and entirely alone. In many ways an outsider to both of her homelands, she has taken this feeling of alienation and expressed it in scenes that are quietly tied down by invisible weights. Moving back and forth between settings in Iran and England, her subjects inhabit a disconnected version of seemingly everyday reality, passively enduring forces of isolation, oppression, and sadness. Tabrizian's groups of Tehran citizens and London bankers face in all directions,



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The Checklist

Which current New York photography shows are worth seeing? Use our most recent Checklist to plan your visit.

Archive

- ▼ 2012 (127)
 - ▼ June (20)
 - Milcho Manchevski, Five Drops of Dream @Yoshinaqa
 - Seung Woo Back, Memento @Doosan
 - Mitra Tabrizian, Photographs @Heller
 - High Line Billboard: Maurizio Cattelan and Pierpaolo...

each a solitary individual in the of expanse of the grubby desert (never far from the watchful eyes of the ayatollahs on the nearby billboard) or the polished marble of an anonymous corporate lobby. Even when clustered into bunches of people, there is a visible lack of cohesion, as if the situation was only temporary; while a mass of black clad women trudge along a dusty, soul-sucking road, there is no sense that they are unified by the circumstances. Her most recent images pare down the trauma to a single individual. Posed outside the empty, decaying factories of Leicestershire, solitary older men in dark suits ponder moss covered windows or fallen brick walls with a look of weary, resigned despondency, as if they were the only mourners at long overdue funerals.

Overall, Tabrizian has taken the *tableau* form and infused it with tough, deadpan desperation, a sense of resigned survival in the face of overbearing ruin. Her single frame narratives of dissociation are surprisingly lonely and forsaken, piling layers of subtle separation into something altogether more heavy and dispiriting.

Collector's POV: The works in this show are priced between £12000 and £40000 each (note the currency), based on size. Tabrizian's work has started to show up in auctions of Contemporary Arab and Iranian Art as well as in broader Contemporary Art sales in the past few years. Prices have ranged from roughly \$10000 to \$28000, but I haven't tracked the photography in all of these sales, so there may be more data points to consider when building up a relevant price history.



Rating: * (one star) GOOD (rating system described [here](#))

Transit Hub:

- Artist site ([here](#))
- Reviews/Features: ARTINFO ([here](#)), *New Yorker* ([here](#))

Mitra Tabrizian, Photographs

Through July 7th

Leila Heller Gallery

568 West 25th Street
New York, NY 10001

Posted by [DLKCOLLECTION](#) at [11:26 AM](#)

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[@Porter Contempora...](#)

Heinrich Kuehn and His American
Circle: Alfred Sti...

Rachel Perry Welty [@Richardson](#)

Image Object [@Foxy Production](#)

The Checklist: 6/14/12

Ulrich Gebert, The Negotiated Order
[@Winkleman](#)

Alfred Leslie, The Lives of Some
Women [@Borden](#)

Sigrid Viir [@Winkleman](#)

Richard Avedon, Murals & Portraits
[@Gaqosian](#)

The Checklist: 6/7/12

Lisa Kereszi, The Party's Over
[@Richardson](#)

Thomas Demand [@Marks](#)

Julia Fullerton-Batten, Persona
[@Jenkins Johnson](#)

Jim Dow in the food court at Grand
Central Termina...

JR on the High Line

▶ May (27)

▶ April (22)

▶ March (18)

▶ February (19)

▶ January (21)

▶ 2011 (263)

▶ 2010 (361)

▶ 2009 (461)

▶ 2008 (112)

Index

[1301PE Gallery \(1\)](#)

[303 Gallery \(8\)](#)

[A.D. Coleman \(3\)](#)

[Aaron Siskind \(6\)](#)

[Abelardo Morell \(3\)](#)

[Abstract Photography \(19\)](#)

[ADAA Art Show \(3\)](#)

[Adalbert Cuvelier \(1\)](#)

[Adam Clark Vroman \(1\)](#)

[Adam Fuss \(5\)](#)

[Adeela Suleman \(1\)](#)