Mitra Tabrizian

OPENING RECEPTION
Thursday, June 7, 6 - 8 pm

LEILA HELLER GALLERY
568 West 25th Street
Exhibition continues through July 7, 2012

Biography

Mitra Tabrizian, born in Tehran, Iran, lives and works in London. She has exhibited widely in major international museums and galleries, including her solo installation at the Tate Britain in 2008. Her most recent book, Another Country, published by Hatje Cantz in 2012, includes texts by Homi Bhabha, David Green, and Hamid Naficy. Her photographic and film works are represented in major public collections, including Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Museum of Modern Art, Australia; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Museum Folkwang, Essen; Musée d’Art Moderne, Luxembourg amongst others. She has received several photographic and film awards, including the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) Innovation Awards for the film ‘The Predator’ (26 - minute film, 35 mm print, 2004).

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Design by Demetra Georgiou
All images courtesy of the artist.
SILENT PROTEST

A great deal has been said about the intersection between documentary and the conceptualizations of Mia Tabrizian. Through her meticulously choreographed, and hybrid practices, Tabrizian questions the very nature of the photographic image and its function. The artist’s elegantly evocative work is laden with a sense of poignance and absolution. It is imbued with personal, lyrical and nationalist confessions and conflict on the one hand, and in its conclusion on societal politics on the other. Tabrizian’s explorations of the world’s contemporary and historical challenges are significant, and in particular, her focus on the Middle East is notable.

In expanding these voids, Tabrizian often highlights the manipulative contrivances central to their formal and organizational narratives and the vanished truths otherwise complete the scenes of crime. These missing, eradicated and omitted facts serve to alienate the audience. Distancing sets up a relation between documentary and manipulations, or stylized, but on the other hand, they also appear to be detachedly unaware of their present surroundings, an unobtrusive embrace of the spectator’s senses in its own right, despite the centrality of the alienated figure.

In Undertow (2009), the landscape comes to life on the figures and it is deeply barren. What is revealed is an absolute impossibility that has been so well resolved. The architecture and naturebone points to the idea that the world is constantly under threat and the impossible is always evolving and affecting. They may be subjected to interventions, manipulations, or distortions, but in the white on white they are recognizable as such. Their characteristics may be not only altered to the creation of the image, but also to its elements, but they may also shift and evolve the same process. The feeling here is like a living, breathing, moving existence. Tabrizian’s landscapes are evocative in their evasiveness, and the tension is always about the gap that separates the present and the past, the mountain and the horizon, the city and the wilderness, the human and the nature. The landscape is an essential element of Tabrizian’s work and it serves as a critical component of her imagery, evoking a sense of loss and disorientation.

Leicester 2006, 2008, C-type photographic print, 48 x 36 in / 122 x 91 cm, Edition of 5, 2 APs

Leicester 2006, 2008, C-type photographic print, 42 x 30 in / 107 x 76 cm, Edition of 5, 2 APs

Leicester 2006, 2008, C-type photographic print, 48 x 36 in / 122 x 91 cm, Edition of 5, 2 APs

Leicester 2006, 2008, C-type photographic print, 48 x 36 in / 122 x 91 cm, Edition of 5, 2 APs

Tehran 2005, 2006, C-type photographic print, 48 x 48 in / 122 x 122 cm, Edition of 5, 2 APs

London 2006, 2008, C-type photographic print, 48 x 36 in / 122 x 91 cm, Edition of 5, 2 APs

London 2006, 2008, C-type photographic print, 48 x 36 in / 122 x 91 cm, Edition of 5, 2 APs

Washington 2006, C-type photographic print, 30 x 40 in / 76 x 101 cm, Edition of 5, 2 APs


In her most recent series, commissioned by the city of Leicester, the landscape assumes an ambiguous and provocative tabula rasa of a kind and unbroken naturebone. The imagery is open-ended and allows the spectator to engage with the work on a number of levels. The landscape is both an open invitation and a reminder of the present and the past, the possible and the impossible. The works are present and the past, the possible and the impossible. The works are present and the past, the possible and the impossible. The works are present and the past, the possible and the impossible. The works are present and the past, the possible and the impossible.