

*Artnet News*  
22 June 2021

## artnet®news

### Studio Visit

## Iranian Painter Shirazeh Houshiary Explains the Benefits of Painting on the Floor, and Why Nothing Is More Abstract Than Nature

We caught up with the artist at her West London studio.

**Naomi Rea**, June 22, 2021



Shirazeh Houshiary. ©Shirazeh Houshiary, courtesy Lisson Gallery.

For Shirazeh Houshiary, being close with nature is key. Even her West London studio is located right by the woods so she can listen to birds and keep in tune with nature's ebbs and flows.

Houshiary moved to London in 1973, leaving her native Iran to study art. Her installations, paintings, and sculptures often take inspiration from Eastern culture, poetry, and mythology.

Her profile rose alongside some of the U.K.'s most prominent sculptors—such as Anish Kapoor, Tony Cragg, and Richard Deacon—in the 1980s, and she was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1994.

To create the five works in her latest solo exhibition, “Pneuma,” now on view at Lisson Gallery in London, she placed her supports flat on the floor and poured water mixed with pure pigment onto canvas, before meditatively layering inscriptions on top of the forms.

We spoke to the artist about connecting with nature, the joys of ambiguity, and what taking long walks along the river can do for her practice.



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Pneuma* (2020). ©Shirazeh Houshiary, courtesy Lisson Gallery.

**What are the most indispensable items in your studio and why?**

My books are very important and they are scattered on the floor of my studio. I am always dipping in and out of them throughout the day.

**What is the studio task on your agenda tomorrow that you are most looking forward to?**

I work for long periods of time on the painting on the floor of my

studio. Tomorrow is an exciting time, as I will place the work on the wall for the first time. After a long period of focused observation, my gaze will be unfocussed tomorrow and looking at it in its totality.

**What kind of atmosphere do you prefer when you work? Do you listen to music or podcasts, or do you prefer silence? Why?**

Sometimes I listen to music but recently it is the birdsong outside of my studio that has captivated me. There are a lot of trees around my studio and many bird species visit during the day, especially in spring. I found connecting to nature is important, as it always reminds me of my place within it.



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Pieta* (2021). ©Shirazeh Houshiary, courtesy Lisson Gallery.

**What trait do you most admire in a work of art? What trait do you most despise?**

I admire ambiguity and despise literalness.

**What snack food could your studio not function without?**

I love vegan chocolate and always keep a box in the fridge.

**Who are your favorite artists, curators, or other thinkers to follow on social media right now?**

At the moment I am reading writers such as Stuart Kauffman (*A World beyond Physics*) and Fritjof Capra (*The Web of Life*) to expand my understanding of the world.



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Enigma* (2020). ©Shirazeh Houshiary, courtesy Lisson Gallery.

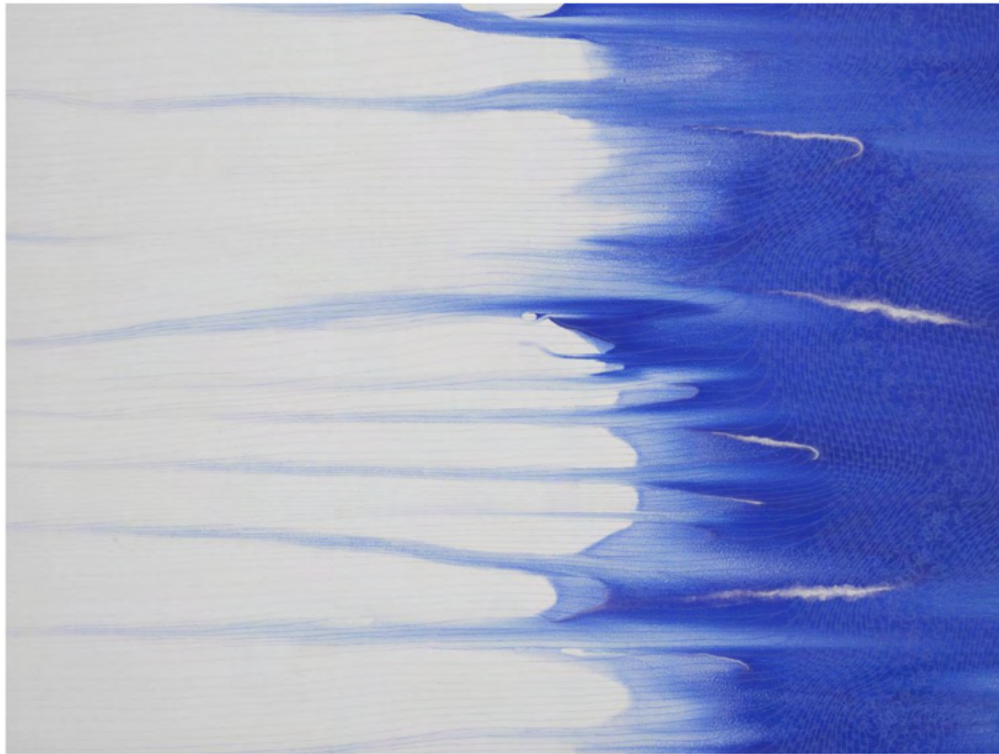
**When you feel stuck in the studio, what do you do to get unstuck?**

I go for a long walk along the river and contemplate the reflected light.

**What is the last exhibition you saw (virtual or otherwise) that made an impression on you?**

I made a virtual tour of abstraction and calligraphy at Louvre Abu Dhabi and found the relationship between words and marks and images both fascinating and inspiring. It reminded me of the first marks made by homo sapiens in Africa 100,000 years ago.





Shirazeh Houshiary, *Pneuma* (2020). ©Shirazeh Houshiary, courtesy Lisson Gallery.

**If you had to put together a mood board, what would be on it right now?**

The pandemic has made a huge impact on our lives with much of the year in lockdown, and my priorities have shifted. My mood board is the large studio window with the same dimensions as my paintings. To look out to the woods and the wildlife beyond, I realize that nothing is more abstract than nature.

*"Shirazeh Houshiary: Pneuma" is on view at Lisson Gallery, Cork Street, London, through July 31.*

Visual Arts **✓ Added**

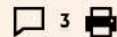
## The women redefining sculpture

Yorkshire Sculpture Park shows how female sculptors from Barbara Hepworth to Phyllida Barlow have been breaking the mould



© Lupton Clark's Visuals 2019/20

Jackie Wullschläger MARCH 10 2021



“Sculpture is not rape,” the British sculptor Barbara Hepworth reminded art critic Robert Hughes when he marvelled that she was so petite. “People . . . still think of sculpture as a male occupation. There is this cliché, a sculptor is a muscular brute bashing at an inert lump of stone.”

*Breaking the Mould: Sculpture by Women Since 1945*, an Arts Council exhibition launching at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, tells the exhilarating story of what happened when that cliché unravelled and British sculpture came, by the 21st century, to encompass such things as rotting flowers — Anya Gallaccio’s wilting gerberas pressed between vintage doors, “can love remember the question and the answer” — or dog chew and soap, as incorporated into Holly Hendry’s cement and plaster body cross sections “Gut Feelings”. Rose Finn-Kelcey’s “God’s Bog” is a jesmonite toilet twisted into a seashell. Laser-cut limbs pasted with pin-up photographs splay like an open book in Anthea Hamilton’s “Leg Chair (Jane Birkin)”.

In this company — extrovert, explicit, teasing out queasy metaphors for bodily sensations and physical decay — Hepworth’s beautiful, smooth, lustrous pierced abstract form “Icon” (1957), the earliest major work here, looks like a remnant from another civilisation.



Margaret Organ's 'Loop' (1978)



Sarah Lucas's 'NUD CYCLADIC 7' (2010)

Towering over YSP's presentation, the biggest, rowdiest piece will be "Untitled: dunce", Phyllida Barlow's three-metre, ramshackle assemblage of roughly painted plywood boards topped by what looks like an enormous brown paper bag. Anti-heroic, slapstick, messy, this tottering parody of the heft, rigour and grand statements of traditional sculpture is part of a long debate. "Because you're a woman, I'm not that interested because by the time you're 30 you will be having babies and making jam," sculptor Reg Butler informed Barlow in 1963. "Apart from Barbara Hepworth, name a woman sculptor, let me tell you, there are none."

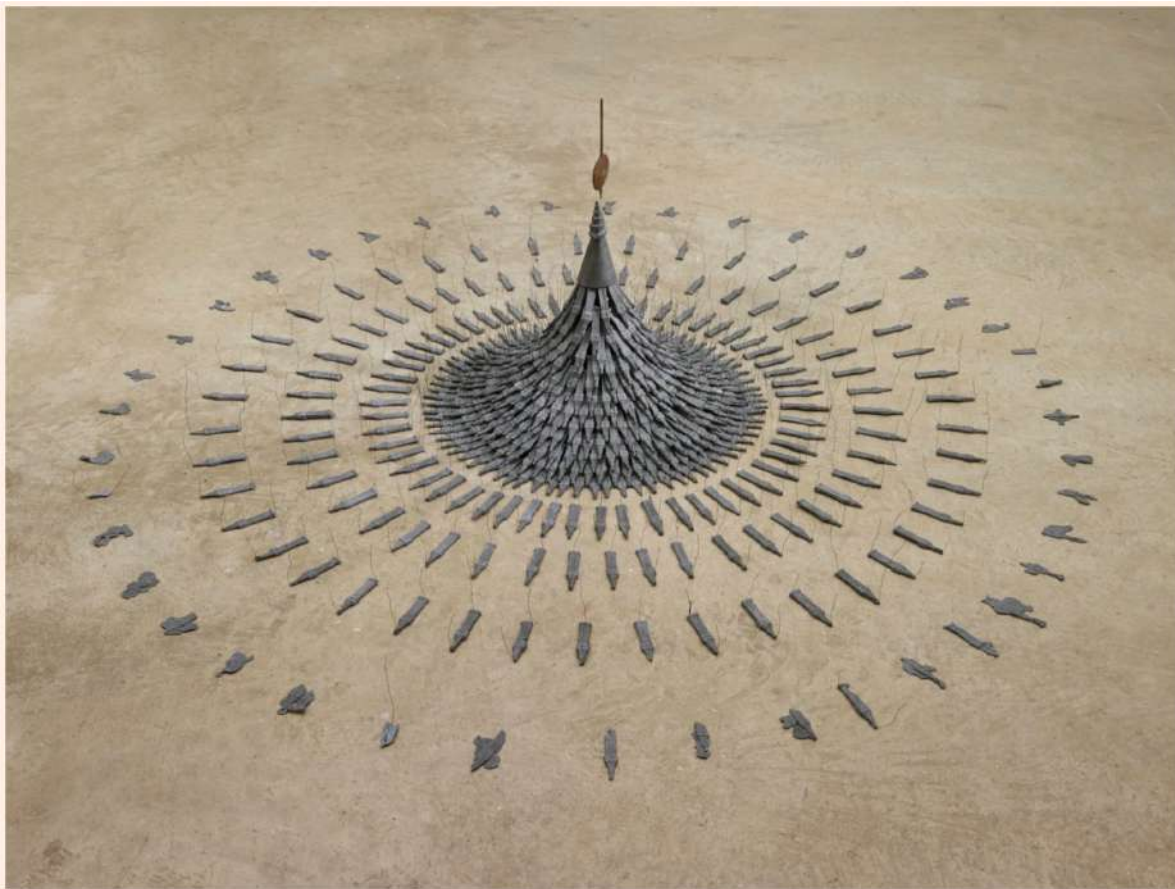
“

**Across half a century, women's innovative use of ephemeral or natural media revolutionised the idea of what art could be**

Who is the dunce now? Hepworth hated being labelled a female artist, but the collision of feminism with minimalism and conceptual art in the 1960s-70s insists that postwar sculpture is narrated in gender terms — even, in part, as revenge drama. In 1961 a Slade tutor told Jann Haworth that “the girls were there to

keep the boys happy. It wasn't necessary to look at the portfolios of the female students . . . just at their photos.” Haworth's response was to adopt the “sarcastic choice of cloth, latex and sequins as media . . . a female language to which the male students didn't have access.” In her “Calendula's Cloak” the suggestion of a life-size figure emerges through stitched scraps of brightly patterned fabric: soft, homespun, handcrafted.





Cornelia Parker's 'Fleeting Monument' (1985)

Across half a century, women's innovative use of fabric and other ephemeral or natural media — paper, wax, earth — revolutionised the idea of what art could be: something draped, stacked, layered, sewn. In the 1970s Margaret Organ wrapped paper around wire to make delicate forms precariously balanced between wall and floor such as "Loop": "gentleness in sculpture is invariably stronger than [an] aggressive facade," she said. By 2010 Sarah Lucas was brutalising the refinement: her "NUD CYCLADIC" series of stuffed, bulging nylon stockings suggesting tangled, writhing limbs, uncannily resembling marble, mocks classical statuary.

Lucas and the Young British Artists came of age in the 1980s, when a pioneering generation of women were subverting sculpture into anti-monumentality — at a period of frantic aggrandising, often via industrial fabrication, by male sculptors on both sides of the Atlantic (Antony Gormley, Anish Kapoor, Jeff Koons).



Elisabeth Frink's 'Head' (1959) © Marcus J. Leith Photographer



Barbara Hepworth's 'Icon' (1957) © Anna Arca



Jann Haworth's 'Calendula's Cloak' (1967) © Anna Arca

Cornelia Parker lay hundreds of three-inch models of Big Ben flat on the floor, then marshalled them into the cone “Fleeting Monument”, thrusting (phallic) linearity transformed into an elegant curving spiral. Helen Chadwick’s “Ego Geometria Sum” staged her autobiography in everyday objects — font, pram and, here, gym vault: “The Horse, aged 11”. Shirazeh Houshiary evoked archaic settlements crossed with strange animal forms in the fragile clay/straw “Listen to the Tale of the Reed”, assimilating Persian poetry (“ever since they cut me from the reed bed, my wail has caused men and women to weep”) into long, low pieces that seem to cling to the ground, eternal yet an image of environmental threat and transience.



The most significant British art work of the 1990s has disappeared: Rachel Whiteread's "House", a cast of the interior of a demolished Victorian terrace house — the domestic as public art, the solid as a ghost. "House" was destroyed in 1994. *Breaking the Mould* features from that year Whiteread's "Untitled (6 Spaces)": voids cast from the spaces beneath domestic chairs using translucent resin — as light and glowing as the forms are tough and heavy. The work has minimalist austerity but a human touch and the shimmer of process and memory, traces of everyday past lives imprinted on worn surfaces.



Shirazeh Houshiary's 'Listen to the Tale of the Reed No.3' (1982)



Anthea Hamilton's 'Leg Chair (Jane Birkin)' (2010)

Whiteread won the Turner Prize in 1993 — a time when, as she told me tartly some years later, "the prize still meant something". She was the first woman to receive the award. In the 1990s, Tate director Nicholas Serota commented: "Quite suddenly it seemed that art could be young, female and directly connected to the viewer's daily experience."



Rose Finn-Kelcey's 'God's Bog' (2001) © Anna Arca

Developments since have been paradoxical. As YSP director Clare Lilley says, continuing market and gallery differentials between male and female artists still impose limitations on making — a "bronze ceiling" — because "object-sculpture is by its nature materially and spatially assertive, so a sculptor needs logistical and material support". But institutional power is moving towards women, with worrying levels of new conformism. From the vast possible range of British artists of any genre or gender, three white female conceptual sculptors — Lucas, Barlow, Cathy Wilkes — were selected to represent Britain at the last three Venice biennials. Wilkes' and Lucas' presentations were notably weak.

“

**One might consider the way in which women sculptors helped to take sculpture off the plinth . . . reduce it in scale . . . make it in new materials**

The Arts Council, as choices for YSP demonstrate, has a good though not flawless record of acquiring art that comes to matter. But today it is increasingly ignoring work outside what have become conceptual norms. Hepworth looks marooned in this show, but her medium of carving is thriving beyond it. Emily

Young's eloquent stone female heads, enfolding an impassioned ecological/geological outlook, for example, are a staggering omission from this account of British women's sculpture.

“What is special about sculpture by women?” Penelope Curtis asks in an excellent catalogue essay. “Are we looking at something that can be described in its own terms? I think it is dangerous to do this . . . nevertheless, one might consider the way in which women sculptors helped to take sculpture off the plinth . . . reduce it in scale . . . make it in new materials.”



Holly Hendry's 'Gut Feelings (Stromatolith)' (2016)



Alison Wilding's 'Untitled' (1980) © Anna Arca

Now these battles are won, we could also consider a greater inclusiveness of female artists, with no gender agenda other than that, as Hepworth argued, “the sensation of being a woman presents yet another facet of the sculptural idea”.



LISSON GALLERY

Harper's Bazaar  
March 2021

HARPER'S BAZAAR

MARCH 2021

INTELLIGENT, INSPIRING, INIMITABLE

www.harperbazaar.com/uk

Harper's

MARCH  
2021  
£5

BAZAAR

Wear your heart on your sleeve  
THE POWER OF PROTEST DRESSING

Carey Mulligan  
The GOOD GIRL GONE BAD

Belle de jour  
EFFORTLESS PARISIAN BEAUTY

The FASHION ISSUE

JW ANDERSON,  
FIFTY SHADES OF PINK  
& A DEEP DIVE INTO  
THE SPRING COLLECTIONS

03 >  
771751 159132  
H BEAST 9



# BAZAAR

TALKING POINTS

Edited by HELENA LEE

## BREAK THE MOULD

Eileen Agar's pioneering surrealist works go on display. Plus: a new exhibition pays homage to 5,000 years of Iranian creativity; a debut novel celebrates friendship in unexpected forms; and contributors share their reflections on Lunar New Years past

*'Erotic Landscape' (detail)  
(1942) by Eileen Agar*



# SHINE A LIGHT

A new exhibition at the V&A illuminates five millennia of rarely seen Iranian wonders

By CHARLOTTE BROOK

'A place that can warm your heart one day and break it the next.' This is how the writer Anthony Bourdain once described Iran, a country whose art, design and culture is being explored in all its glory at the V&A this spring. The exhibition, which roams through generations, genders, media and millennia, promises to move visitors in a similarly profound way.

'People always point out this enormous contrast between Iran's vibrant creativity and the news headlines,' says the show's associate curator Ina Sarikhani Sandmann. 'But there is a bigger story to tell. There is currently a major cultural flowering happening, with many brilliant contemporary artists, so it's great to highlight the work in the context of their country's ancient civilisation. We're trying to demonstrate the variety of voices there have been, and are, in Iran.'

It's true that the current cohort of Iranian – especially female – artists is producing particularly compelling work, some in direct response to the country's political unrest, others focusing on philosophy, nature or poetry. Yet the political is personal, and the V&A is demonstrating that, far from being silenced or specialist, Iranian art has the power to affect, challenge and inspire us all.

One such example is by Shirin Neshat, who lives in exile in New York. Her two-screen video installation *Turbulent* (1998) contrasts

a male and a female vocal performance. 'While this work tackles the issue of gender identity directly related to Iranian culture, I've always felt it held a deeper resonance that went beyond specificities,' she says. 'It touches people with the power of its music, and the universality of its theme – which evolves around issues of discriminations, alienation, rebellion and conformity.'

Inclusivity and connecting with a wider audience are also important to the Turner Prize-nominated Shirazeh Houshiary. Now based in London, the installation artist aspires to create 'a space shared by all humanity'. 'The idea of nationality can be corrosive,' she says. 'My works do not feel Iranian or British – for me, those terms are spurious.' Her sculpture *Pupa* (2014), a twisting vortex of glimmering amethyst glass and mirror-polished steel, depicts nature's life cycles. 'My own journey reflects this loop, where movement and change are a continuum,' she observes.

So they are, too, for the textile sculptor Bitá Ghezelayagh who was born in Italy, grew up in Iran, studied in Paris and now lives and works in Britain. The fact that this UK exhibition is happening at a time when Iran is politically isolated and under heavy international sanctions is, she says, 'simply extraordinary'. 'As a traveller between East and West, I can only count on institutions around the world to perpetuate cultural exchange and a desire for closeness,'

she reflects. 'Iran has a youthful population that longs to present itself to the outside world with integrity.' This 5,000-year retrospective, in its exceptional scope and beauty, is a good start. □

*'Epic Iran' is at the V&A (www.vam.ac.uk) until 12 September.*

Above: 'Pupa' by Shirazeh Houshiary (2014). Below centre: Tala Madani's 'Making Faces' (2008)



PHOTOGRAPHS: © SHIRAZEH HOUSHIARY, COURTESY LISON GALLERY; © ESTATE OF BAHMAN MOHASSES; © AVISH KHEBREZADEH, COURTESY OF FONDATION VOLUME (ROME); © COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND PILAR CORRIAS, LONDON; © ESTATE OF PARVIZ KALANTARI, COURTESY METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK; © THE SARIKHANI COLLECTION

PHOTOGRAPHS: CALEB AZUMAH NELSON, ESME ALLMAN, CHRISTINA QUARLES, CAREFULLY TAUT, 2019; COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND PILAR CORRIAS, LONDON; © ESTATE OF PARVIZ KALANTARI, COURTESY METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK; © THE SARIKHANI COLLECTION

## MEMORY LANE

Caleb Azumah Nelson describes how rosy reminiscences of south-east London have the power to unite a community

I'm in the business of nostalgia, of time travel. I want to ask, was anyone in Peckham during the early 2000s? And if so, do you remember my Auntie's shop, on Choumert Road? She stocked everything that people away from home, trying to build something here, needed. Yams and plantain and kenkey and fufu powder, garden eggs and okra and scotch bonnets, dried fish by the box, Supermalt by the crate. She would send stuff back home too, allowing people to ship pieces of themselves for their loved ones to hold. Even though the walls of her shop no longer exist, sometimes when I'm walking down that very street, I find myself overcome with something like melancholy, like mourning, or like joy.

In south-east London, we're a hopeful bunch. I think this is because small miracles are a daily occurrence. Like springtime, sunshine, blossom falling from the sky, walking from my family home to Bellingham train station, the music in my ears interrupted by the double beep of a horn, a car pulling over as the slow dawn of recognition washed over my features. Out clambered Adrian, all smiles and joy, and after a playful greeting, we found ourselves looking back, back, back, tapping each other with urgency, asking, do you remember, do you remember? We exchanged timelines and histories, mourned our silliness, mourned our youth. Memories of

ago, when I was tired in that way that sleep can't solve, just tired, and I was mourning my silliness, mourning my youth, and I took a bus from Bellingham to Deptford, to a darkened room where live jazz rang off into the night, I know the people gathered there were also in the business of nostalgia, of time travel, and with each movement, forward, back, forward, back, we were not just remembering but forging ahead, building new routes, taking in new miracles. I knew this before a friend introduced me to another woman and we spoke of south-east London, where our world begins and ends. I knew this before this new friend pulled me into a tender embrace and told me how glad she was we had met, and we split away, not taking each other's details but somehow knowing we would meet again. And by some miracle, a couple of months later, we did, and now we meet often, all smiles and joy and laughter, and after a playful greeting, we find ourselves looking back, back, back, tapping each other with urgency, asking, do you remember? Maybe these aren't miracles but signs of a hopeful community, one that dismantles solitude. Regardless, I know that when the time comes to split, I might find myself overcome with something like melancholy, like mourning. Something like joy. □

*'Open Water' by Caleb Azumah Nelson (£12.99, Viking) is published on 4 February.*



Right: Caleb Azumah Nelson. Above and left: his photographs of friends and family

## ART NEW FORMS

A trio of female artists with bold creative visions

### Emma Talbot

Talbot's films *Four Visions for a Hopeful Future* will be shown on rotation at 20.21 each night in March on the screens at London's Piccadilly Circus. [www.circa.art](http://www.circa.art)



### Christina Quarles

Quarles' paintings convey what she describes as 'the experience of living in a body rather than looking at a body'. 'Christina Quarles: In Likeness' is at South London Gallery from 19 March.



### Ruth Asawa

The American artist's first public solo exhibition addresses the role of art in society. HL 'Ruth Asawa: Citizen of the Universe' is at Modern Art Oxford from 12 February.



Clockwise from above: Bahman Mohasses' 'The Beach' (1966). 'All the White Horses' by Avish Khebrezadeh (2016). 'Parvizi Kalantari's 'Still Life', from about 1959





## 想象力是人类与世界的对话螺旋

### 对话伊朗裔艺术家施拉泽·赫什阿里

访谈 + 撰稿\_沈奇岚(策展人、作家)

施拉泽·赫什阿里(Shirazeh Houshiary)仿佛是这个喧嚣时代的诗人,在众生喧哗时,专注于自己的小宇宙。从伊朗出发,赫什阿里在伦敦成了艺术家,在20世纪80年代就获得了英国最重要的当代艺术大奖——“特纳奖”的提名。她的创作体裁涉及绘画、装置、建筑、电影等多种媒介,在创作中常常使用面纱、薄膜、迷雾等意象。她阅读广泛,热爱物理学和宇宙学,也研究苏菲主义、文艺复兴时期的绘画和当代诗歌。

从2020年2月到年底,我与赫什阿里的通信持续了将近一年。于我而言,这是去年最重要的一件事。她的信总像智性的光芒,安慰着我的心灵。她在给我的第一封信中如是写道:

“这是一个奇怪的时代,想做作品并不容易……也不容易让人意识到我们是谁。我的做法一直是在孤独中更好地工作……光是帮助我们看到和理解我们周围世界的媒介,通过我们的想象力,它变得更加强烈和明亮。我已经明白了,我们的想象力是如何成为人类与世界的螺旋式的对话。”

您如何定义雕塑?

施拉泽·赫什阿里:“雕塑”一词来自拉丁文,意思是“用固体材料雕刻或切割出来”。雕塑最早是由石器时代的人想象出来的形式,比如西班牙北部阿尔塔米拉洞穴的壁画,并由此表达他们的所思所想。从那时起,许多文化都有类似的想象,并在石头或木头上留下他们的痕迹。

准确地说,我的雕塑作品更接近建筑的语言——因为我将材料组装起来并编织在一起,创造出结构,而不是从实体中切割出来。而这些结构与大自然通过重复和突变创造的有机和非有机系统有着紧密的联系。

您对时间有很深的理解。在您看来,如何在雕塑中控制时间?

施拉泽·赫什阿里:正如我提过的,结构是我的关注点,结构内在地揭示了时间,不管是相对稳定、持久的,还是不稳定、短暂

的。正如亚里士多德所说:“时间是变化的尺度。”而结构是在空间/时间中舞蹈的一种形式。

您是如何创作一件雕塑作品的?

施拉泽·赫什阿里:我的雕塑作品是成系列的……一个雕塑作品启发了下一个雕塑作品。开始,我用手绘制运动轨迹的草图,并尝试想象这些动作从二维到三维的样子。我的助手会在电脑上生成这些三维图像,然后由我来处理所有的细节。我试图捕捉连续运动中的本质运动,而不是静态的实体形式。光线和透明度在其中起着很大的作用,在这个过程中,非物质变成了隐形的物质——这是一个漫长而费力的过程,如果几何形状太过极端,那么作品就会坍塌。

当大部分问题解决后,我会请制作的工人看一下。我必须接受失败是理解和创作过程的一部分,因此必须改变这些波纹在空间的运动。

您为什么选择绘画作为您最重要的实践之一？什么效果是绘画能达到但雕塑达不到的？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：在我职业生涯的早期，我创作的雕塑比绘画更多。后来，我的雕塑作品规模越来越大，不得不更多地与制作工人合作。这个过程带来了工作方法与作品本身的距离感，这引发了我二维作品的发展。首先，我会选择创作纸上作品，然后是在画布上创作。我一直在寻找一种亲密的创作体验，而雕塑的创作过程和我自己的距离有些遥远。

能描述一下您的绘画创作过程吗？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：多年来，我一直在发展这个过程，并且这个过程一直在变化。我绘画时，是将画板平放在地板上创作的。我制作并使用铝板来承受我的重量，因为我需要处在画面之中。这很重要，因为它使我和画面有近距离的亲密感，类似于当有人靠近你，你感觉到他们的呼吸落在你的皮肤上。这就是我与每幅画的亲密距离。

我使用颜料和水来创作画面的第一层，让水通过它的波纹和褶皱来表达自己。在这个阶段，我让无意识来主导整个过程……就像意识被无意识引导一样。画面的第二层是标记的绘制或生成，它们的运动受到第一层的影响。第三层和第四层则综合了所有东西，并在绘画空间中创造出推和拉的感受。

绘画创作有助于我发展对雕塑、动画和视频装置的想法，并为其提供信息。它们是种子，发着芽，向着各个方向生长。

您在2010年创作作品《叹息》（*Sigh*）时，用铅笔反复书写文字，使文字变成了线条和星云。阿拉伯文书法对您的创作有什么启发吗？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：这两个字（“我是”，“我不是”）是用阿拉伯文写的，因为它们是我小时候最早学写的文字。我对书法本身并没有兴趣。我只用两个字，因为它们的意义和形式感觉更原始，当两个字交融在一起时，指向的是感觉（星云）和理解（线条）的统一。

您似乎试图让文字在画面中“溶解”，是对逻辑和语言的抵抗吗？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：是的，这两个文字在画面中“溶解”，是为了抵抗语言和我的世界的限制。或者换一种说法，这是对心智界限的抵抗。

您不画具象作品。为什么具象的绘画对您没有吸引力？我感觉您是一个没有国界的艺术家，所以一定有超越文化传统的原因。

施拉泽·赫什阿里：你说的很对，这和我的文化传统没有关系。我觉得抽象是对想象、经验和意义的极度浓缩。与其说抽象是拿走或减少，不如说图像要求我们将概念、记忆、联想和存在的意义浓缩，使之成为一种经验的纯粹体。抽象不是远离生活，而是可以穿透现象和经验的本质和核心。

在抽象艺术中，人们并没有把故事投射到图像上……而是由图像来揭示它的叙事。我们可以在音乐中体验到类似的东西，它直接把听众与艺术家的感受联系起来。



您的创作受到文艺复兴时期艺术的影响。您曾说祖尔巴兰（Francisco de Zurbarán）的《圣维罗妮卡的面纱》给您很多启发。为什么？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：《圣维罗妮卡的面纱》对我影响很大。在这幅画中，祖尔巴兰跨越了客体和主体的二元性——场域与图像同样重要。我对文艺复兴时期绘画的兴趣在于构图固有的动态结构，而不是任何叙事。这些结构和感觉在艺术中持续存在，并超越了时间和空间。

您是如何在绘画中捕捉时间和存在的？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：时间是一个难以捉摸的现象。亚里士多德曾提出“时间是变化的尺度”，我的理解是，变化意味着运动。人类只有在过去、现在和未来的时间中自由移动，才能成为有意识的人，但这需要我们运用想象力来体验对未来的记忆和对过去的预测。这种运动的自由对意识的成长至关重要。这些想法都蕴含在我的作品结构中。

您说您的艺术更多地关乎感知。您是如何感知无形的世界，并把它带给观众的？如何捕捉和传递无形无状的信息？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：我们的认知决定了我们对世界的看法。要认识到，这是我们生物尺度的结果。宇宙有千万种尺度，而我们只意识到一种尺度。这教会我不要固定自己的观点，允许相对性和不确定性在这种理解中发挥关键作用。我用透明和不透明、远和近的细微差别来揭示不存在稳定的世界，只有不断变化，万物流变。世界就像一条不断流动的河流，而不是客观现实。是我们的



施拉泽·赫什阿里，《双奏2020》，雕塑  
© Shirazeh Houshiary 致谢 Lisson Gallery

想象力在看得见的事物中寻找看不见的意义，这正是人与世界对话的螺旋。

您是如何把隐形的东西变得可见的？比如，在《心灵与物质2020》（*Mind and Matter 2020*）中，您是如何构造画面的？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：不可见的东西只能想象，但看不见。然而它不是不存在。它预先存在于可见的事物之中。想象力在可见的世界中表达着一种不可见的意义。梅洛-庞蒂写道：“意义是不可见的，但不可见者并不与可见者相矛盾，可见的事物有一个不可见的内部结构。”在我的画作《心灵与物质2020》中，通过对线条、色彩和质地的隐藏秩序的表现，提取了心灵所洞察的图景，就像骨髓刺激着骨骼的生长。

创造跨感官的感知是您的目标还是工具？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：我们是具有身体性的生命。我们生活在我们的身体里，通过感官来了解这个世界，所以跨感官的感知是我们唯一的工具，即使它是有限的。我们必须使用它，否则，我们就

会成为迷失方向、失去身体性的生命。这可能会成为一个问题，因为如今我们正通过技术更多地走向虚拟世界。

谁/什么最能激发您的灵感？

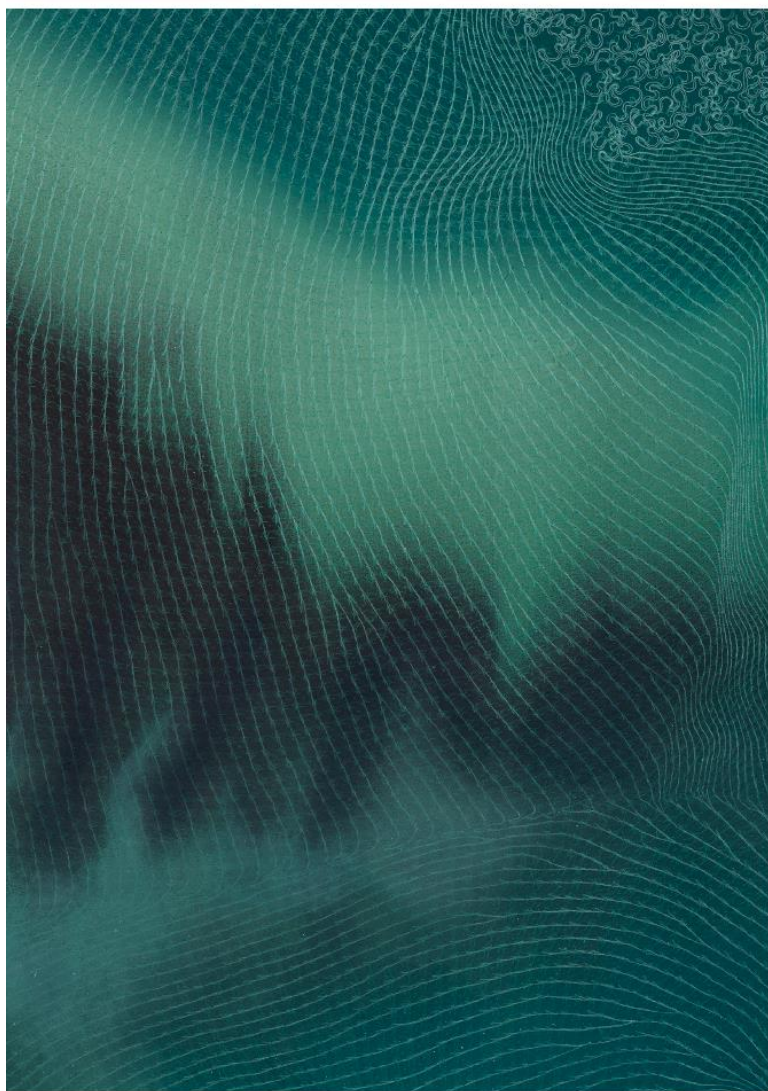
施拉泽·赫什阿里：是光的本质和混沌中的创造力给了我巨大的启发。

苏菲主义对您的创作有否影响？据我所知，您很喜欢东方智慧。

施拉泽·赫什阿里：苏菲主义对我确实有影响，但我的兴趣是多样的，因为我永远充满好奇心，一直在学习。宇宙如此浩瀚，你需要用好几辈子的时间才能参透它的深意。来自东方的思想和智慧一直陪伴着我，本质上它是在关系中寻求现实，在谦逊中寻求智慧。

您1992年的作品《圣洁的围墙》（*The Enclosure of Sanctity*）的灵感来自诗人鲁米的写作。我也喜欢他。您是如何与他的作品结缘的？您也钟爱中国唐代诗人寒山的诗作，今后会不会创作一些





施拉泽·赫什阿里，《大图景2020》（局部），绘画  
© Shirazeh Houshiary 致谢 Lisson Gallery

受寒山启发的作品？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：我从小到大读了鲁米的很多诗歌，小时候父亲帮助我理解了它的深邃和复杂，最终也理解了它所倡导的简单和清晰。

在这个对于很多人来说时间似乎停止了的时期，寒山的诗歌让我很有感触。他的文字表达了存在的美好和简单：

有鸟五色纹，  
栖桐食竹实。  
徐动合礼仪，  
和鸣中音律。  
昨来何以至，  
为吾暂时出。  
倘闻弦歌声，  
作舞欣今日。

在疫情封城期间，我并没有被外界事件所干扰，而是透过工作室的窗户看向窗外的树林，找到了慰藉。就在这里，所有的关系和思想，亦即宇宙的进程，无所不在，这让我感慨人类的短视。

您在作品中提到了量子物理学。您的创作与量子物理学有怎样的关系？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：我们是有身体性的生命，由于身体的构造，我们只能在单一尺度内体验世界。量子物理学揭示了宇宙中有许多框架和尺度，而在我们的感知和常识范围内，我们几乎没有能力理解它们。我们必须训练我们的心智，超越二元论的思维——这是我们大脑构造方式的产物。

应把宇宙的进程看作一个创造与毁灭并行的永恒之舞。正是由于这种宇宙的流动与自然法则和谐振动，形式短暂地在时空中上升为物体，存在片刻，然后消失。即使在它们短暂存在的过程中，物体也不是实体，而是一团模糊的旋转粒子。这种舞蹈是我们看不到的，因此我们体验到的是一个稳定的世界。而这种舞蹈正是



施拉泽·赫什阿里：《心灵与物质2020》，绘画  
© Shirazeh Houshiary 致谢 Lisson Gallery



施拉泽·赫什阿里：《膨胀2020》，绘画  
© Shirazeh Houshiary 致谢 Lisson Gallery

我作品的核心。



我在您的作品《大图景2020》（*The Big Picture 2020*）中感受到了强大而黑暗的能量，这个作品与我们2020年的处境有关吗？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：是，也不是。之所以说是，是因为我是在封城的焦虑中创作了这部作品。之所以说不是，是因为暗能量是宇宙的物质，随时随地都在。

《双重奏2020》（*Duet 2020*）这个雕塑作品看起来很轻盈，很快乐，在形式上是否比较难实现？作品名中的Duet是否意味着对某种秩序的接受？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：《双重奏2020》既投射出秩序，也投射出无序，且要揭示它们之间的联系。它的形式很难实现，因为每根“丝带”的路径都有很多褶皱和角度的变化。最好的办法是看实物，而不是通过图像来观察。

为什么在《膨胀2020》（*Swell 2020*）和《心灵与物质2020》中都出现了“洞”的意象？洞的背后是什么？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：“洞”是在我绘画的过程中自行出现的，它们已经作为我作品的一部分存在很长时间了。通过它们，我学会了刺穿存在的面纱，就像渴望穿透黑洞去了解黑洞之外的东西及其规律。它们是对完全未知的隐喻，对我来说，它们是绘画作品中最激动人心的构图部分。

您怎么看待人类的未来？记得您曾强调过不确定性的美，能否给这种不确定性一个形式？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：人类的未来一直是不确定的。不确定性就蕴含在宇宙的结构中。它就像一个褶皱的折叠，汇聚了很多不同的方向，人们可以选择褶皱折叠中的任何一条路。对我来说，这种折叠就是对不确定性的表达。

当您还是小女孩的时候，您的梦想是什么？她是否知道自己现在成了那个读着奇岚的信的施拉泽？

施拉泽·赫什阿里：每一滴启程的水滴，离开雪山时都不知道自己的道路，却相信河流会把它带向大海。如果与河流及蜿蜒的道路做斗争，会产生痛苦和不快。我曾是那颗水滴，相信这段旅程。当它汇入大海，就不再有水滴了，它融入了浩瀚的海洋——这片智慧之海啊，是我们大家最终相遇之地。但现在，此刻，我们是不同的水滴，试图完成相似的旅程。这就是在读着奇岚的信的施拉泽。

我们还没有谈及死亡。您对死亡的想象是什么？您害怕那个时刻吗？您对死亡的态度是什么？不知为何，我觉得您的每一件作品都包含着死亡的维度。

施拉泽·赫什阿里：我总是说，不了解死亡，就无法了解生命。它们是一体的，是不可能分开的。我不害怕死亡。我们在通往死亡的旅途中，并不意味着走向毁灭，而是走向改变。这个世界上没有什么东西会出现或消失，即使形态会发生改变，但新的形态总会从旧原子中诞生。①





## 赫什阿里 皮肤是唯一真实的边界

疫情暴发后……时间似乎停止了,但大自然是苏醒的,树木和鸟儿都充满生机,长期遭受人类攻击的自然,如今正在康复中……如果人人都意识到节制消耗,这对我们的星球会有所助益  
最佳状态下,人类可以成为高贵的诗人;处于最糟情境时,我们每个人的里头都住着一头20万年来从未开化的残暴成性的野兽

本刊记者 李乃清 发自上海 编辑 雨僧 rwyzz@126.com

“宇宙就是一个不断瓦解的过程，一切都在腐蚀，但我们依然尝试着稳定它们的状态。这种张力深深吸引着我，是我创作的核心。”

秋冬之际，伊朗裔英国艺术家施拉泽·赫什阿里（Shirazeh Houshiary）在上海里森画廊举办她在中国的首次个展“时间于此”（As Time Stood Still），展出了她在疫情肆虐期间创作的多件作品。

《波涛》、《寓言》、《喀迈拉》、《大图景》和《思绪与物质》等五幅新画作，生动地表现了艺术家眼中瞬息万变的世界。这批画作多由铸造铝合金、亚克力调和颜料与铅笔完成，绘出赫什阿里最擅长的螺旋形态——和风轻拂下树叶的微微颤动，令我们重新认识生命和自身蜉蝣般的存在。

10月下旬，赫什阿里接受本刊记者邮件专访，分享了她在疫情期间的经历与感受，以及她对东西方文化的理解。

“居家隔离期间，我常常观察窗外的树木花草，发现自然能给人以安慰，让我定睛于此地此刻存在之美，体悟生命的律动和我们在世上朝露般的短暂存留。这样一个简单行为，能带来巨大的愉悦，它渐渐成为我日常生活的某种仪式，帮助我感恩周遭之美。”

展览现场还有一件赫什阿里的雕塑新作《二重奏》，灵感来自她两年前的敦煌之旅。作品穿透屋顶和墙壁，亚光精细涂层的红、蓝铝合金“丝带”如水纹一般相遇、交叉、联结，从不同角度观看，雕塑螺旋和律动的方向也会相应改变。赫什阿里指出，作品中交织的“丝带”动机，穿越千里，与敦煌莫高窟中那些描绘风神、星神，以及飞天或空中天体的壁画有共通之处。“我正在尝试以连续动作而非静态固体的形式来捕捉动态。光线与透明度在其中发挥了重要作用，非物质在此间变成了物质的隐形。”

赫什阿里1955年生于伊朗设拉子。“我的出生地是一座与丝绸之路相连接的城市，在我还是孩童时，我就被丝绸之路的故事和传说深深吸引，那不只是一条商贸往来之路，更是文化、科技交流的‘超级高速公路’。”

赫什阿里生于一个知识分子家庭，父亲是

建筑师兼音乐家。“父亲精通波斯文化、诗歌和艺术，他的兄弟研究西方哲学，并且将许多尼采的著作译成了波斯语。”

上世纪70年代，伊斯兰革命前夕，年少的赫什阿里远渡重洋抵达英国，后在伦敦切尔西艺术学院获得学士学位。《纽约时报》曾将她与同时期崛起的伊朗流亡艺术家诗琳·娜夏特（Shirin Neshat）等人对比报道。当娜夏特以最直接的方式在作品中指涉自己的伊斯兰女性身份时，赫什阿里探讨的却是那些“不只以人类为中心的事物”的边界与矛盾。

“身份是一个衍生出来的概念，并非真实存在。我们每个人都拥有比身份更微妙的特点。”赫什阿里表示，比起不同种族与文化之间的边界，她更关注内在与外在、意识和无意识、有形与无形等二元关系，她曾指出——“皮肤是唯一真实的边界。”

上世纪80年代初，赫什阿里以雕塑作品登上国际艺术舞台，后成为一名涉猎绘画、影像等多种媒介的艺术家，1994年获“特纳奖”提名。

赫什阿里早年的雕塑作品给人以沉重、粗粝、尖锐的观感，近年作品则显得轻盈柔和。面纱、薄膜、迷雾构成了她作品的主要元素，她希望以此对各种不同的感知模式进行可视化



《二重奏》雕塑 2020

呈现。

赫什阿里从小就对科学充满兴趣，日后受到量子力学理论影响，认为一切都具有流动性，此外，她还研究过萨满教、苏菲派等宗教哲学，最终在艺术创作中找到一条“融合感觉和知识”的途径。

赫什阿里在材料变形过程中找到了创作的核心元素：两个阿拉伯词语，一个表示肯定，一个表示否定，用铅笔浅浅绘于画布上，覆以精心加工的一缕缕颜料，以肉眼可见的方式发生形变……

赫什阿里最著名的作品，是为伦敦圣马丁教堂东窗特别创作的像泉水般流淌的十字架，她将绘画转译到玻璃表面，设计了一个中央带有扭曲椭圆的“网格”窗户，当光照进来，仿佛有种垂直的动能，呼应十字架的悲怆寓意。

赫什阿里总结自己的创作：“我努力捕捉自己的呼吸，试图超越名字、国籍和文化，寻找自我存在的本质。”

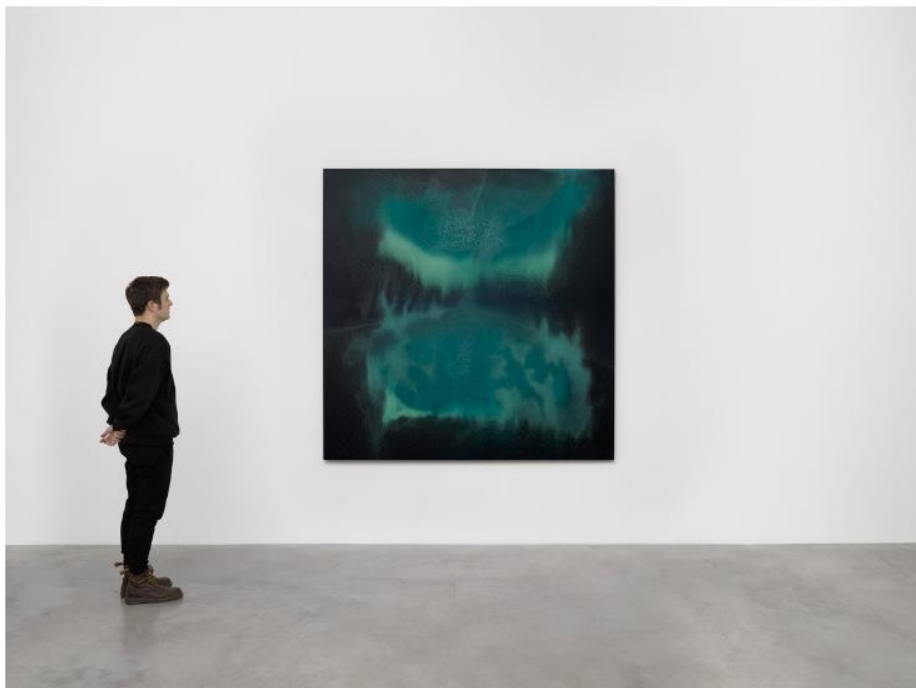
人物周刊 赫什阿里

## 隔离：时间似乎停止了，但大自然是苏醒的

这次展览取名“时间于此”，经历今年的疫情，你对时间的认知是否发生某种变化？居家隔离期间你的作息与创作是怎样的？

一切都来得很突然，疫情暴发后，我的各种活动不是取消就是延后，包括我今年4月在纽约的展览，所有行程安排变为空白。我发现这既是某种解放，也带来各种挑战。居家隔离期间，我必须在没有助理的情况下独自在工作室创作，我不得不学习与时间建立关系，重获自由。

我的世界缩为一片小小区域，但我发现了它的浓稠度和亲密感。我通常清晨5点醒来，迎着日出沿泰晤士河徒步前往工作室，大自然成了我的伴侣，我享受黎明时的这段路程，空



《大图景》2020



气澄澈，天色湛蓝，伦敦少见这样的面貌。时间似乎停止了，但大自然是苏醒的，树木和鸟儿都充满生机，长期遭受人类攻击的自然，如今正在康复中。通过观察自然，宇宙万物运作，自渺小细微至浩瀚无垠，彼此的关联得以揭示。如果人人都意识到节制消耗，这对我们的星球会有所助益。

❶ 这次展览现场有幅《大图景》，使用了大片绿色间杂黑色，叙利亚诗人阿多尼斯曾告诉我，阿拉伯世界认为绿色是吉祥的颜色，他们的语言中有种表达“绿色地死去”，代表寿终正寝。不知你在创作这幅作品中使用绿色描绘的是怎样的“大图景”？

❷ 早在农耕文明出现之前，大自然就已存在，经由光合作用，植物有了绿色生命，从前的人都明白这个道理，他们群居狩猎，过着游牧生活，但他们敬畏自然，知道生命力的源头所在。我画这幅《大图景》是对我们人类与自然关系的再次确认，追寻那个塑造我们各种文明的原始力量。

❸ 疫情触发了你哪些新的思考？

❹ 隔离为我们设置了限制，而我意识到自然也有不可侵犯的界限，但我们总是试图越界，由此只是给我们自己制造了各种问题。我们的大脑和身体都受到各种生理限制，我们必须拥抱这些限制，意识到终极智慧乃是谦卑。我相信，当明白谦卑是种智慧时，我们才能影响这个星球的未来。

❺ 这次展览中有一幅《波涛》，让我想起几年前你在新加坡创作过“我们内在的河流”等作品，可否分享下“内在的河流”这个概念的源起及呈现？

❻ 河流是道路与旅行的比喻，“我们内在的河流”意指人生之旅迂回曲折地穿越时空，直至抵达无限智慧的终极目标。人类就是从这样一趟旅程开始的，种种文明兴起，发展出各种语言。因为语言影响着认知、情感和记忆结构，我选择不同文化背景下的话语，以此探索它们如何形塑这种文化的进化和认知，找出它们的关联性。



《波涛》局部 2020

❶ 听说你非常喜欢海德格尔，你如何理解他的名言：“人诗意地栖居在大地上”？

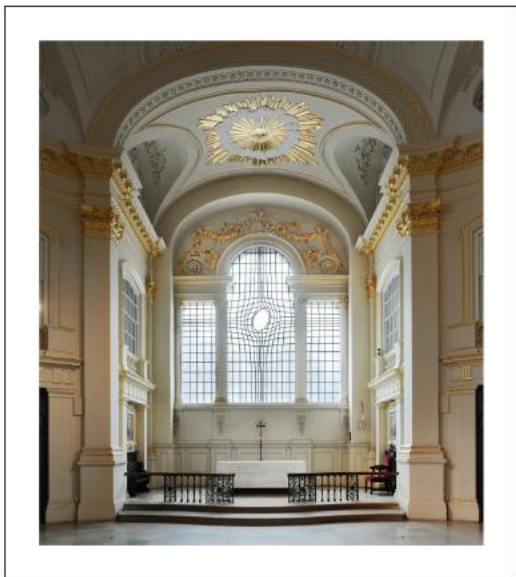
❷ 最佳状态下，人类可以成为高贵的诗人；处于最糟情境时，我们每个人里头都住着一头 20 万年来从未开化的残暴成性的野兽。

“洞口”，真正冒险的开始

❸ 说说你作品中经常出现的那些“洞口”？灵感源自何处？这让我想到童话《爱丽丝梦游仙境》里的兔子洞，又联系起人们常常讨论的“黑洞”。

❹ 我们所处的世界大多是由流动的波浪组成，而非坚硬的石头。这些波浪好比宇宙的织物，在时空中流动。某些时候，这些波浪织物中出现“洞口”，这个点就是我们面对未知的地方。“洞口”作为某种标志性的存在，多年来持续出现在我的作品中。据我的经验，未知领域是所有事物的基础，好比《爱丽丝梦游仙境》里的兔子洞，那才是真正冒险的开始。

❺ 你从小就对科学充满好奇，后来又受到量子力学的理论影响，科学对你的艺术创作有何影响？



《东窗》2008

❶ 如果说科学帮助我们理解并掌握知识，那么艺术和诗歌赋予我们生命以意义。我们必须兼顾两者，由此认识自我和世界。我觉得作为艺术家，我可以将感受和知识融合起来。

❷ 可否具体介绍下伦敦圣马丁教堂东窗那件作品的创作灵感？作为一位波斯文化背景的艺术家的受委托呈现基督教元素的作品时何有具体考量？

❸ 伦敦圣马丁教堂东窗那件作品的具体创作灵感，来自于17世纪西班牙画家弗朗西斯科·德·苏巴朗（Francisco de Zurbarán）的那幅《圣罗尼卡的面纱》。窗户的正中心是一个椭圆，四散开去的扭曲的线条回应了十字架上的受难张力。另外，这个形象也可视作揭示黑洞的运动或者其他文化象征。重要的是，这样一扇窗户提供了某种宇宙维度，每个人都可以望着它从中发掘出自己的理解。我是一名交互使用双语的跨文化艺术家，我的身份不是固化特定的，因此，我能进入各种文化语境下的不同宗教。

❹ 2013年威尼斯双年展上，你同样拿出一件极具宗

教包容性的作品《呼吸》说说那件视频装置的创作？

❶ 装置作品《呼吸》是一件表面被黑毛毡覆盖的长方形结构，经过一条通道可进入其中一个昏暗的白色空间，当中四壁分别有一个屏幕，各自播放着佛教、基督教、犹太教和伊斯兰教的人声颂唱，声音与图像结合，捕捉了声音表演者一开一合的呼吸。当观众靠近屏幕时，仿佛能通过对宇宙的一瞥而感受到自身超越性的存在，而当站在空间中央，如同站在了宇宙中心，所有的声音汇聚起来，提示着人类共同分享的节奏。当观众处于装置外部并绕其行走时，由于音效减弱，观者会听到单独的声音，此时，每面黑墙就成为了某一文化传统的独特记忆，观者能在装置外部感受到各种文化之间的差异。这件装置不是为了突出神性，而是为了提示我们人类共处一张织网之中，彼此互相关联。

❷ 你曾提及流亡经历对你的艺术创作起了关键作用。

❸ 我在伊朗革命之前很早就离开了那里，大约20年前回去过一次，发现整个社会完全变了，我并不喜欢这种体验。尽管我说波斯语，但那里的人说话的方式以及表达的内容于我是陌生的，交流变得困难。经受压制后的人们，没有思想和表达的自由，没有基本权利，个人观点也得不到尊重。我怀着悲伤离开了伊朗，觉得自己是个局外人，决定再也不回去了。自由是每个人的基本权利，政府应该保证人民的权利，否认这种权利是对文明社会的压制。

❹ 古往今来的女性艺术家和她们的作品，有没有你特别欣赏的？

❶ 我欣赏艾格尼丝·马丁（Agnes Martin）的作品以及她的思考方式，我也欣赏乔治亚·奥基夫（Georgia O'Keeffe）在作品中对欲望的表达和她对大自然的爱。

## 中国文化，贴近我心

❶ 听说你儿时就接触过敦煌艺术，2018年的敦煌之行和你此前的印象及期待一致吗？



❶ 在4至13世纪，来自世界各地的游人聚集于此，这里是各种语言、宗教、食物和风俗的大熔炉。我被戈壁和塔克拉玛干沙漠深深吸引，甚至可以想象并听到许多个世纪以前商队骑着骆驼穿越无人沙漠抵达敦煌时大风呼啸的声音……那定是一种神奇的经历！

当我亲眼见到莫高窟的洞穴和庙宇，那种神奇的体验并不亚于从前的传说。我还记得，自己被壁画的光辉与上面斑驳的颜料迷住了，那些颜料来自丝绸之路上的不同地方。这些色彩仿佛在向我倾诉，阿富汗的天青石、中亚的绿松石和中国的孔雀石。同样令人感到震撼的还有飞天的画像，他们弹奏着音乐在空中飞舞，展现出各种曼妙姿态并且处于不停的运动中，你无法只定睛于某个点而忽略下个画面，变幻莫测的形象深深嵌在这些惊艳绝伦的壁画之中。

❷ 你曾表示：“对我而言，其他文化如同一面镜子，折射出我自己。”你也表示对东方文化颇有亲近感。



《喀巴拉》2020

❸ 当我们无意了解某种文化时，我们的认知也受到限制。让我着迷的是，接收其他文化时，我们的知识结构和理解力都会得到扩张和提升。所以我一直认为，其他文化如同一面镜子，经由我自己的认知和信仰折射，将帮助我克服无知和偏见。我的世界观深受当今科学知识及万物相关联理念的影响。而这种互通的理念深植于东方文化的哲学传统中。我对东方文化一直以来都颇有亲近感，尤其是中国古代诗歌和绘画。中国文化贯穿我的人生，贴近我的内心。

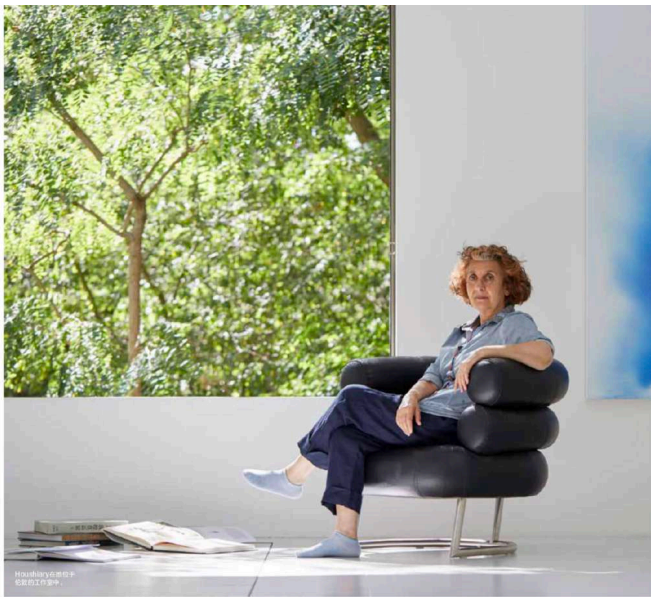
❹ 听说你对中国诗歌也颇有研究，哪些中国文人的作品曾深深打动你？

❶ 居家隔离期间，我常常透过工作室的窗户观看外面的树木花草，我从大自然中得到慰藉。这段时间我开始读唐代诗僧寒山的作品，他描绘自然的手法、面对风景的冥想给了我许多安慰。他在作品中写道，“岩前独静坐，圆月当天耀。万象影现中，一轮本无照。廓然神自清，含虚洞玄妙。因指见其月，月是心枢要”，传达出他对于光影本质的认识。寒山透过这首诗，借物喻境，烘托出他超然自得的心的证境。在另一首作品中，他写下“助歌声有鸟，问法语无人”。对我而言，他的作品让我直面宇宙的轮转运行。

❷ 你曾在艺术作品中引用过鲁米的诗歌，借用了他诗作中“山峦、风声、回响”等意象，哪些波斯诗人对你产生过影响？

❶ 鲁米、哈菲兹、萨迪、莪默·伽亚谟等人的诗作自幼年起就陪伴着我，且一直关联着我的人生之旅。通过不同时期重读他们的作品，我对人生意义有了不同层次的理解。在此，我想引用13世纪波斯诗人萨迪的诗句：“亚当子孙皆兄弟，兄弟犹如手足亲。造物之初本一体，一肢罹病染全身。为人不恤他人苦，活在世上妄称人。”这首诗是萨迪人道主义思想的集中体现，现已作为座右铭悬于联合国总部大楼入口，成为国与国之间和平共处的行为准则。我想，今天的世界，更需要这样一种四海之内皆兄弟的全球视野。





在英国国家美术馆、国家肖像馆对面,伦敦特拉法加广场东北角,伫立着圣马丁教堂(Saint Martin-in-the-fields Church)。这座圣公会教堂是美国王室救济民团的指定教堂,也被誉为“大英永远敞开的教会”。这里古典和现代现场演奏,一直吸引着音乐爱好者慕名而来。不同于传统天主教堂的彩色玻璃窗教画,圣马丁教堂的东墙上镶嵌着一幅雕塑——把仿佛泉水流淌的十字架,用不锈钢和玻璃装置而成,透明的玻璃方柱逐渐雾化,形成白色的十字中心,光影经过它粗细各异、宽窄四围、白昼和夜晚分别来看,会是两种截然不同的

的景观。该项目于2008年完工,为的是修补一届经历二战摧残的窗户,让原本昏暗的建筑结构重见天日。这件作品出自雕塑家Shirazeh Houshiary之手,暗喻不断瓦解的自然宇宙——一切都在慢慢消逝,但人类依然尝试着稳定这种变化——两者之间的抗衡与张力便是她创作的精神核心。

家和音乐家的父亲曾让她选读理科,她也认真考虑过专攻数学,但最终还是选择了艺术之路。她的作品探讨了哲学、宇宙学、诗学、物理学和宗教,创作媒介包含绘画、装置、建筑、电影等,融入了伊斯兰教苏非主义和艺术复兴美、伊斯兰中传达着一个抽象的概念——无论是什么国籍、语言、文化、信仰背景,人类存在在本质的为超越已知的身份。

上世纪80年代,Houshiary与Anish Kapoor、Richard Deacon和Tony Cragg一并被称为英国新生代先锋雕塑家,也是他们当中唯一的女性。1984年,



STAY  
IN  
ISOLATION

## 闭关所得

原文：黃俊傑

颜料和金属材质的结合。重要的是作品和观众之间那片灵动的空间。我希望这次上海的展出能够给人带来一种抽象的体验。”

在本次展出的作品中, Houshary 对感知、想象力和美的本质等问题进行了更深刻和深入的探究。通过对世界正经历着的重大事件, 譬如气候变化以及动物角对人类社会生存状态进行反思, 为公众提供了一个难得的窗口, 启发人们对于自然环境的破坏、五感障碍等——《波湾》(Swell)、《寓言》(Parable)、《思维与物质》(Mind and Matter)、《喀拉》(Chimera) 和《大显摆》(The Big Picture) 在全球各地都引起了好评。此外, 这一作品也与阿诺德·夏克尼特所创作的《铅笔完成》, 并从以往的立体转为平面, 描绘她最为擅长的概念艺术——如何理解平面的微妙面, 令我们重新思考自身以及身体所处的存在。

两年前, Houshiary 经历了教派的皈依。当时, 她应中央美术学院之邀对活艺术家的意义、她的创作和“控制”之艺术表现和宗教的含义。她的那些“信仰”作品, 精神气质和宗教符号的风神、星神、飞仙和空中天体, 在物质上打造出了非物质的神韵。作品《二重奏》(Duet) 就是典型的例子, 它穿越星尘和暗礁, 表现了绝对而非静态的物体, 红色和深蓝色是它前哨的标识, 拉近与观众的距离。从不同角度观看, 雕塑蜿蜒和律动的方向也会相应改变。交叉黏贴涂层的铝合金承重如水波纹一般相碰撞, 又柔、联结、同时又轻巧轻盈, 透露出比物理更为深远的时空之意味。

Houshiary一直对敦煌兴趣浓厚,“十多年前,我第一次看到这些壁画丰富的时候就已经非常地惊奇。因为我之前从来没有看到过这些颜色。它们本身的华丽光芒足以映照结实的洞穴,一天中某个特殊的时刻,阳光会穿透岩洞落在这些色彩上,而当你身处大漠中,会以为你已经误入了一个消失的国度。莫高窟和敦煌的戈壁戈壁带给Houshiary很多灵感,使其成为她绘画和雕塑艺术中的新语言。”“我的作品选材和配色都是灵感所致,但我一直很喜欢孔雀石绿,这种颜色是地球的颜色。所以毋庸置疑,我的创作与敦煌有着千丝万缕的关联。”

疫情期间,Houshiary像很多人一样,常透过窗户观察室外的树木和花草。“人们不喜欢这种约束,所以总会一直向外寻找。”封锁之下,或许她的意识形态产生了微妙变化,找到了观察世界和自己的其他角度。因此,一些全新的创作手法随即呈现,并将出现在未来的作品中。在本应(T)中文版之邀所拍摄的肖像中,Houshiary身后的那幅作品,即可被看作她创作新系列的序言。

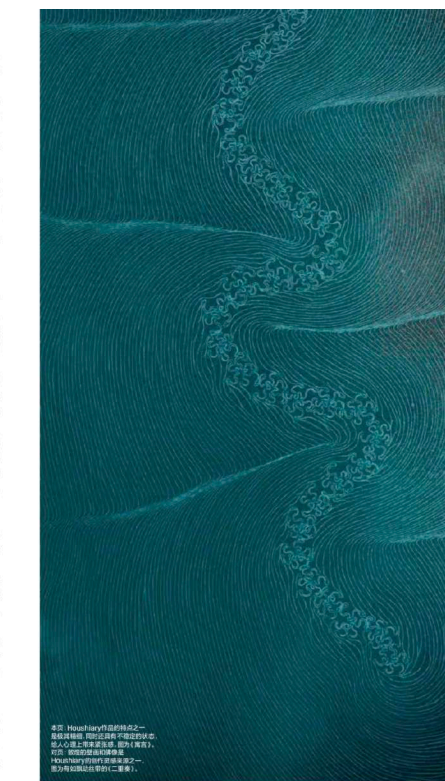
因为疫情，Houshiary第一次脱离助理独自创作。她发现自己对画幅的考量变得尤为慎重——她住日的右屋都以“大规格”为理想，比如大的展馆、大的作品。

大的尺度,但却忽视了简单和适度,以至于忘记了自己面前的这片空间。“如果真的要自我表达,人们不一定需要大的举动。从细微处着眼,也能展现出真实的自己。我们也必须学着接受我们自己的局限性,并为之和谐共处。这次疫情也是一样,我们无法理解很多事情,更别提到去控制。我的作品中应该也会反映出来这种对自身局限的清醒认识。如果没有这次巡演,恐怕我的作品会变得很不一样。”

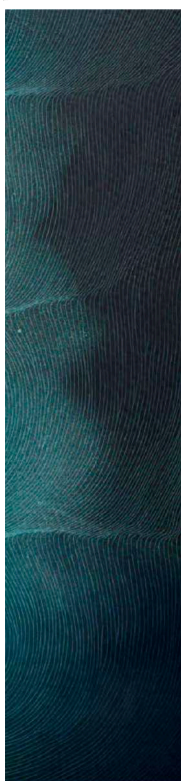
另一个为Houshany带来创作灵感的是美国诗人惠特曼，他虽然在美国知名度不高，却被上座纪六、七十年代美国“垮掉的一代”的嬉皮士奉为东方诗圣。惠特曼喜欢把思想熔铸成岩石上刻下的诗同深邃的英语诗Houshany。同时，她翻译了惠特曼，她读了惠特曼的译本，中文为“岩前独静坐，圆月当天窗。万象影现中，一色本无差”。听歌时听比Houshany更实际——明！不确定的幻象似乎比一切写下来的修易，而“洞”洞的便是清幽的宇宙——人们向来自来水的自我，实际上没有什么确定的。诗中提及的人类自我，以及抗拒了恶意的天性，正是Houshany试图通过作品表现的。

真而这一年，Houshy写信给我们已经无法回到过去。我们必须接受自己的现状，面对现实和现实法。一切都要重新开始。我们站在了一个新的起点，变量必须从混乱中，需要改变，包括替代一代人的思想，成为我们这个时代的重要。我们不能单凭救一个物种，而是全球的物种，因为我们是互相联系的——一种物种死，其他都要受到牵连。自1945年，Houshy开始重新审视自己身处的环境，以及自我定位。他对中国历史毫无头绪，这阻碍了他对中国的语言学习和理解。对过去的无知使Houshy的哲学和语言与西班牙语 C、艺术、文学等毫无关系。这是其实现抱负的障碍。非事件性事件的故事，这都是他最熟悉。我们如何从喜爱和崇拜的祖国的囚徒中他挣脱了。我们回到中国，从自己身上找到意义。这次我们做了很多依赖于自己的事情，同时注重资源，而不是作生意。我们回到中国只通晓汉语只是为了摆脱美，而不是回到美国来省自。

1979年伊斯兰改革期间,年少的Houshiary逃离重洋来到陌生的国度生活。她曾被《纽约时报》与同一时期崛起的伊朗前卫艺术家比较报道,如著名的伊朗女摄影师Shirin Neshat和伊朗画家Amir H. Fallah。对于月份这个名词,她其实没有加思索的照搬看作“身份是一个衍生出来的概念,并非真实的存在,而每个人都拥有比身份更为微妙的特点。”人类二十万年前走出非洲,穿过亚洲走向欧洲和美洲大陆,经历若干年的迁徙,在Houshiary看来,我们的身份其实从根源上一直随着身体身份而流动,从某阶段身份分离




本页: Houshiliary作品的特点之一  
是极具模糊,同时还具有不稳定的状态  
地人心理上来紧张感。图为《寓言》。  
对页: 强烈的壁画和漆像是  
Houshiliary的创作灵感来源之一。  
图为有如埃及古画的《二重奏》。



Houshiary的作品通过触动感官,令观众自发产生思考,因而也被艺术评论家们称为拥有“感知的语言”。她那如同书法般的画风,表达着对于自我和存在的探讨。

因为社交隔离的缘故，Houshiary如今已经独自工作五个多月。为她拍摄肖像的摄影师是疫情爆发后在工作室接待的首位客人。为了彼此的安全考虑，她最终决定在线上会议软件Zoom会面。镜头中Houshiary一头卷发，戴着金丝眼镜，温柔亲和，身后的墙上贴着自己作品的照片，她连连感叹道：“口罩、手套和两米的社交距离真是显而易见，我们都是有血有肉的人呢，特别

联结是我们的天性。那能这样交流呢？希望能早日研制出疫苗，好想念之前以茶会友的日子。”对于这中国的新展，她说：“作品本身并不重要，它们只是



与此同时,经历移民也给Houshiary带来了令难以忽视的影响。她在18岁时离开自己的祖国,此后一直在面对和适应文化的异同。Houshiary把语言作为文化记忆的重要组成部分。“我们必须学习不同的语言,地球其实没有想象中那么大,和浩瀚的宇宙相比我们渺小得好像一个点。语言在这其中举足轻重,依你来讲汉语,我生来就爱说波斯语。语言好比比重中依

幅图案,随着新语言的加入,在原有图案的基础上不断修饰,对自我的认知也逐渐充实,人生随之变得更为“丰稔”。这也是Houshiary所理解的人类不断消解的过程,或许我们无法准确描述这一过程,但这些“记忆”已经被深深地刻在人类的基因之中,并表现于行止之上。

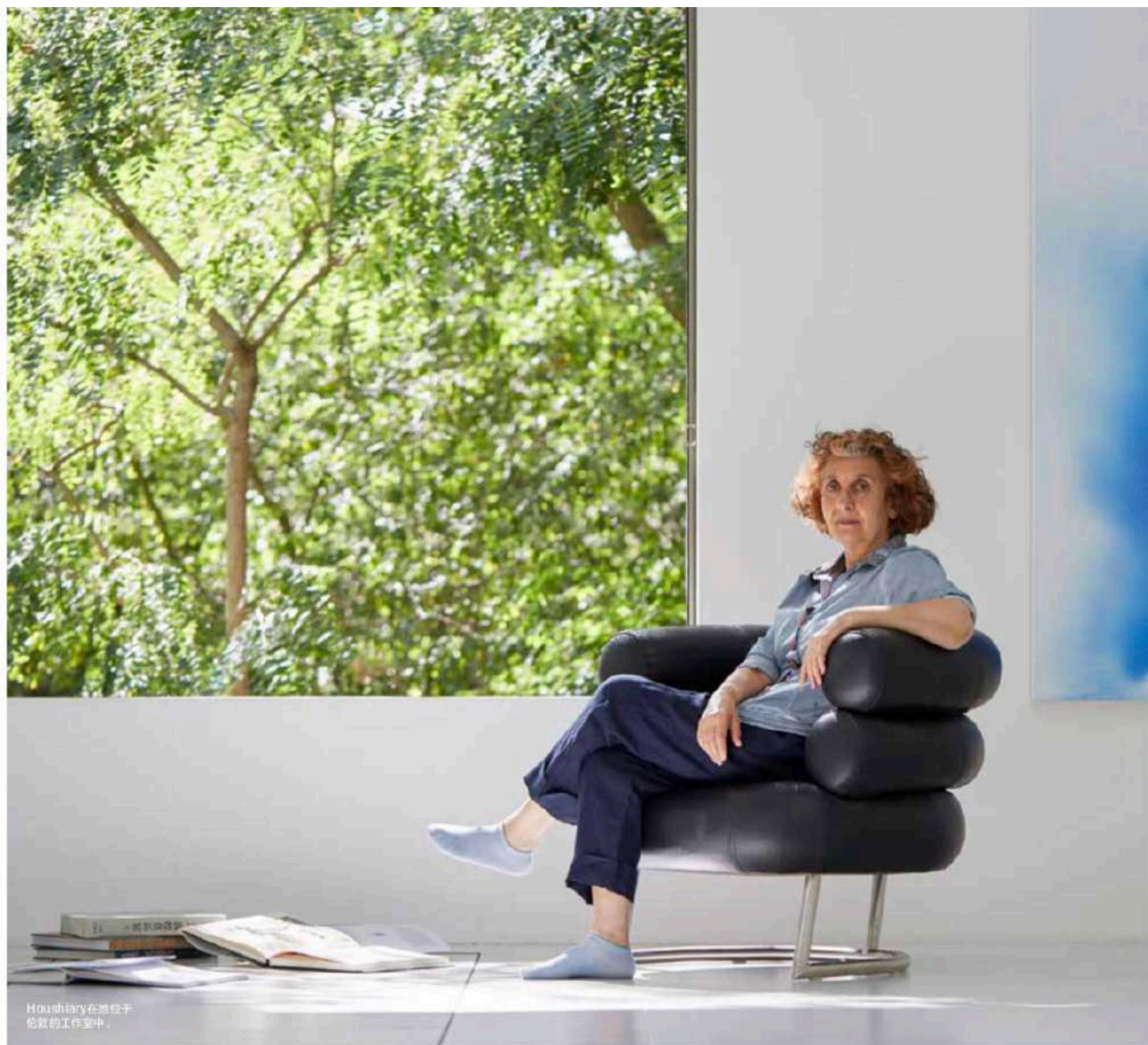
除了语言,文字也是记忆的一部分,它之于当代艺术并不是一个陌生的元素。不同于传统的组画构造,Houshiary将文字以画面的形式交织串联在一起,成为一种更为抽象但富有质感的图景,营造出一种难以捉摸的微妙氛围。同时,她又将被波斯文化的审美与西方艺术工艺巧妙地融为一体。Houshiary拒绝赘述,她的作品通过触动感官,令观众自发产生思考,因而也被艺术评论家们誉为“感知的艺术”。她现居美国加州的圣迭戈。

风,表达着对于自我和存在的探讨。过去的六年间, Houshary倾向于采用更为极简而又充满不确定性的创作手法,以影射宇宙的混沌与万变;从制作多维度、整齐有序的大型立体雕塑,转向描绘抽象的二维平面。一层又一层的木藤料在流动中叠加,修饰又轻敲出线条,近看时,边缘的纹理清晰而精细。宇宙的宏观和微观共存于这些作品中,没有明确的朝代——到底是描绘,还是刻画——营造了一种对于时空原型的体验。

令Houshiary始料未及的是,这种创作过程也让她开始不断思索:人们的真实情感是流动的,犹如液体颜料一般在意识的边界游走,现实世界也是如此,人们必须格外地小心。世上最糟糕的事莫过于民族主义,它是战争的始作俑者,被用作武器攻击其他的种族。因此,Houshiary认为民族主义是人类最需要摒弃的想法。

“我们只有竭尽全力地连成一体，才能结成一张大网。为了争夺南亚次大陆，分属两个阵营的身份是目光短浅的算法。身处21世纪，很多人持有混合的身份，甚至父母都来自世界不同的国家。人们不应执于既定的身份和国界。”Houshiary说，当务之急在于认识自我和相互沟通。道理也很简单，在我们失去家园之前，一定要深刻地意识到一个事实：那就是我们居住的家国并非简单的英属（British）或印度（Indian）而是整个地球。





Houshiary在她位于伦敦的工作室中。

在英国国家美术馆、国家肖像馆对面，伦敦特拉法加广场东北角，伫立着圣马丁教堂（St Martin-in-the-Fields Church）。这座圣公会教堂是英国王室救济民众的指定教堂，也被誉为“大门永远敞开的教会”，这里的古典和爵士现场演奏，一直吸引着音乐爱好者慕名而来。不同于传统天主教堂的彩色琉璃宗教画窗，圣马丁教堂的东窗上镶嵌着一幅雕塑——一把仿佛泉水般流淌的十字架，由不锈钢和玻璃装置而成，透明的边缘向内逐渐雾化，形成白色的十字中心，光影透过它照进教堂，灵气四溢。白昼和夜晚分别来看，会是两种截然不同的

景观。该项目于2008年完工，为的是修补一扇经历二战摧残的窗户，让原本昏暗的建筑结构重见天日。这件作品出自雕塑家Shirazeh Houshiary之手，暗喻不断瓦解的自然宇宙——一切都在慢慢消融，但人类依然尝试着稳定这种变化——两者之间的抗衡与张力便是她创作的精神核心。

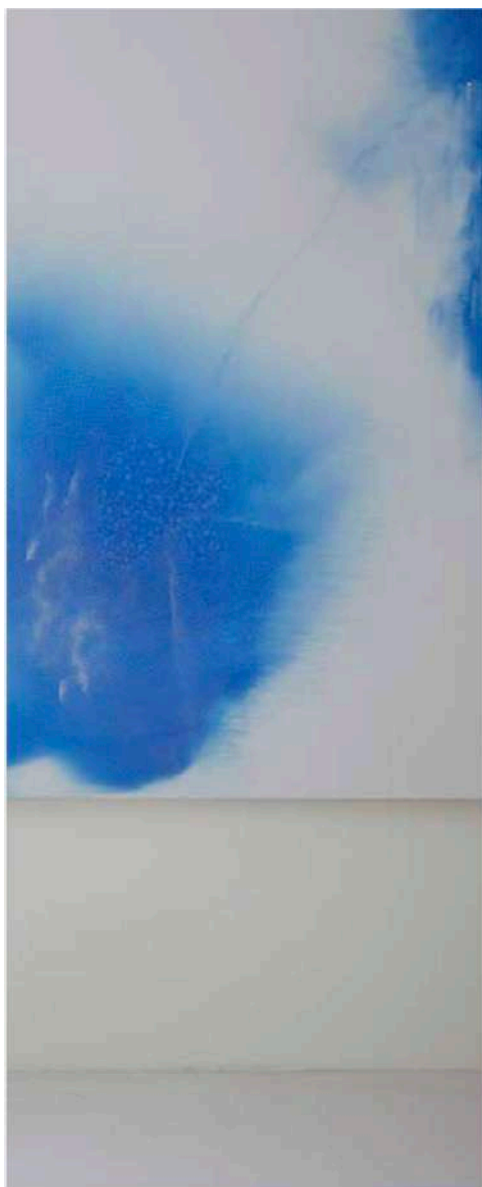
Houshiary生于1955年的伊朗设拉子，1974年前往伦敦的切尔西艺术学院（Chelsea College of Arts）就读，后在卡迪夫艺术学院（Cardiff School of Art）担任学者和教授。Houshiary天生对数字敏感，她身兼建筑

家和音乐家的父亲曾让她选修理科，她也认真考虑过专攻数学，但最终还是选择了艺术之路。她的作品探讨了哲学、宇宙学、诗歌、物理学和宗教，创作媒介包含绘画、装置、建筑、电影等，融入了伊斯兰教苏菲主义和文艺复兴美学，并集中传达着一个抽象的概念——无论是什么国籍、语言、文化、信仰背景，人类存在的本质是为了超越已知的身份。

上世纪80年代，Houshiary与Anish Kapoor、Richard Deacon和Tony Cragg一并被称为英国新生代先锋雕塑家，也是他们当中唯一的女性。1984年，

所有照片版权© Shirazeh Houshiary 所有，并蒙其许可授权使用





## STAY IN ISOLATION

### 闭关所得

视野越是被禁锢，我们越是渴望看得清楚，  
因为这是生存之道。

撰文：张俊杰

她的英国首展在里森画廊(Lisson Gallery)举行：十年后，她与Antony Gormley一道提名透纳奖，最终惜败；2018年，她被授予“亚洲创变者奖”(Asia Game Changer Award)。Houshiary的作品在世界各地的著名艺术圣地与盛会展出，包括纽约古根海姆博物馆、大都会艺术博物馆和现代艺术博物馆，伦敦泰特美术馆及巴黎蓬皮杜艺术中心。今年9月中旬至10月末，她在上海里森画廊的个展“时间于此”(As Time Stood Still)，将目光对准了疫情，作品的灵感源于她在这期间的经历与感想。

因为社交隔离的缘故，Houshiary如今已经独自创作五个多月。为她拍摄肖像的摄影师是疫情爆发后她在工作室接待的首位客人。为了彼此的安全考虑，我们最终决定在线上会议Zoom会面。镜头中Houshiary一头卷发，戴着金丝眼镜，笑容柔和，身后的墙上贴着历年作品的照片，她连声叹息道：“口罩、手套和两米的社交距离简直是噩梦，我们都是血肉有内的人类，接触、沟通、联结是我们的天性，哪能这样交流呢？希望能尽快研制出疫苗，好想念之前以茶会友的日子。”对于远在中国的新展，她说：“作品本身并不重要，它们只是一些

颜料和金属材质的堆砌。重要的是作品和观众之间的那片灵动的空间，我希望这次上海的展出能够给人带来一种抽象的体验。”

在本次展出的作品中，Houshiary对感知、想象力和美的力量等问题进行了更为亲密和深入的探究。面对世界正在经历的重大转型，“时间于此”以一种独到的视角对人类当下的生存状态进行反思，为公众提供了一个难得的机会，启发世人对于自然环境的感激和敬畏。五幅新画作——《波涛》(Swell)、《寓言》(Parable)、《思绪与物质》(Mind and Matter)、《喀迈拉》(Chimera)和《大图景》(The Big Picture)生动地表现了瞬息万变的世界。这一批作品多由铸造铝合金、亚克力调和颜料与铅笔完成，并从以往的立体转为平面，描绘她最为擅长的螺旋形态——和风轻拂下树叶的微微颤动，令我们重识生命以及自身蜉蝣般的存在。

两年前，Houshiary游历了敦煌的佛窟。当时，她应中央美术学院之邀对话艺术家喻红，探讨敦煌佛窟和“丝绸之路”之于艺术和宗教的意义。她的那些“丝带”作品，就神似敦煌莫高窟中的风神、星神、飞天仙女和空中天体，在物质上打造出了非物质的神韵。作品《二重奏》(Duet)就是典型的例子，它穿透屋顶和墙壁，表现了律动而非静态的物体，红色和深蓝色丝带前后飘荡，拉近与观众的距离。从不同角度观看，雕塑螺旋和律动的方向也会相应改变。亚光精细涂层的铝合金条状有如水波纹一般相遇、交叉、联结，同时又巧妙轻盈，透露出比物理存在更深层次的空间之美。

Houshiary一直对敦煌兴趣浓厚，“十多年前，我第一次看到这些壁画书籍的时候就已经非常地惊奇，因为我之前从来没有看到过这些颜色。它们本身的绚丽光芒足以映照暗黑的洞穴，一天中某个特殊的时刻，阳光会穿透岩洞落在这些色彩上，而当你身处大漠中，会以为自己误入了一个消失的国度”。莫高窟和流动的戈壁无疑带给Houshiary很多灵感，进而成为她绘画和雕塑艺术中的新语言，“我的作品选材和配色都是灵感所致，但我一直都很喜欢孔雀石绿，这种颜色是地球的颜料。所以毋庸置疑，我的创作与敦煌有着千丝万缕的关联。”

疫情期间，Houshiary像很多人一样，常透过窗户观察室外的树木和花草，“人们不喜欢这种约束，所以总会一直向外寻找。”封锁之下，或许她的意识形态产生了微妙变化，找到了观察世界和自己的其他角度，因此，一些全新的创作手法随即显现，并将出现在未来的作品中。在本应《T》中文版之邀所拍摄的肖像中，Houshiary身后的那幅作品，即可被看作她创作新系列的序言。

因为疫情，Houshiary第一次脱离助理独自创作。她发现自己对画幅的考量变得尤为慎重——她往日的布展都以“大规模”为理想，比如大的展馆、大的作品、

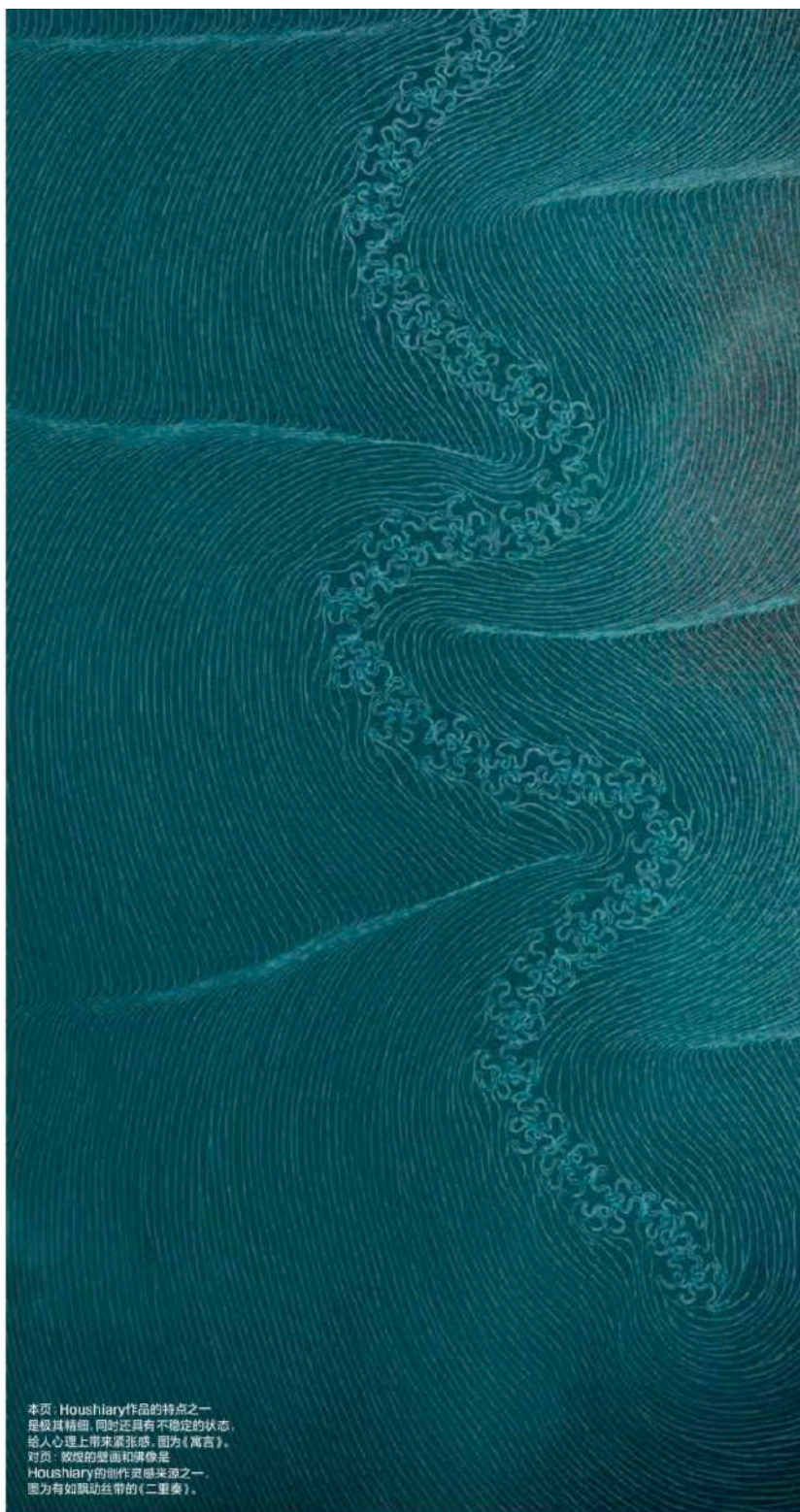


大的尺度,但却忽视了简单和适度,以至于忘记了自己面前的这片空间。“如果真的想要自我表达,人们不一定需要大的举动。从细微处着眼,也能展现出真实的自己。我们也必须学着接受我们自己的局限性,并与之和平共处。这次疫情也是一样,我们无法理解很多事情,更别提去控制。我的作品中应该也会反映出来这种对自身局限的清楚认识。如果没有这次隔离,恐怕我的作品会变得很不一样”。

另一个为Houshiary带来创作启发的是盛唐诗人寒山,他虽然在国内知名度不高,却被上世纪六七十年代美国“垮掉的一代”的嬉皮士奉为东方诗圣。寒山喜欢将思绪刻在墙壁或岩石上,他的诗词深深触动了Houshiary。采访时,她翻开诗集,读起了一首诗的英文译版,中文为“岩前独静坐,圆月当天耀。万象影现中,一轮本无照。廓然神自清,含虚洞玄妙。因指见其月,月是心枢要”。诗中所写令Houshiary感同身受——明月不确定的幻象好比当下一切出于未知的格局,而“洞”指的便是浩瀚的宇宙——人们向来喜欢确定的事物,但实际上没有什么确定的。诗中提及的人类的自我忽视,以及近忧大于远虑的天性,也正是Houshiary试图通过作品展现的。

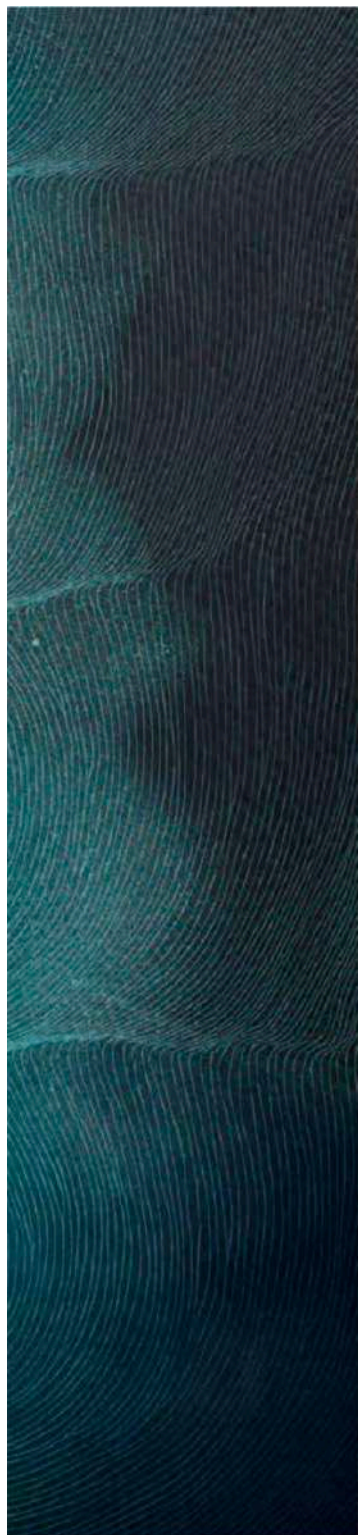
直而这一年,Houshiary笃信我们已经无法回到过去,人们必须改变自己的认知,除了面对现实,别无他法。“一切都在变得静止。或许人们在考虑经济利益,改变也必须出现”。在她眼中,需要改变的,包括年轻一代,他们需要意识到挽救生命和地球的重要性。“我们不能单纯拯救一个物种,而是全球的物种,因为我们都是相互联结的——一种灭绝了,其他都要受到牵连。”自30岁起,Houshiary开始重新审视自己身处的环境,以及自我定位。成功对于她来说日新无足轻重,这也解释了为何她的名声远不及同辈来的响亮。对于未来的展望,Houshiary神情坦然却语重心长:“艺术、哲学和美学都是自我实现的良好途径,而非野心勃勃的事业线。这些都是镜花水月,也是为何我如此喜爱寒山诗歌的原因。他的诗提醒了我们回归本我,从自己身上找到意义。这次隔离也赋予了很多属于我自己的时间,而非往常源源不断的创作任务。我们在时空之间往返匆忙只是为了逃离现实,却空不出时间来自省。”

1979年伊斯兰改革期间,年少的Houshiary远渡重洋来到陌生的国度生活。她曾被《纽约时报》与同一时期崛起的伊朗流亡艺术家比较报道,如著名的伊朗女摄影师Shirin Neshat和伊朗画家Amir H. Fallah。对于身份这个话题,她其实没有如渲染的那般执着,“身份是一个衍生出来的概念,并非真实的存在。而我们每个人都拥有比身份更为微妙的特点。”人类二十万年前走出非洲,穿过亚洲走向欧洲和美洲大陆,经历了若干的身份。在Houshiary看来,我们的身份其实从未被定义,而国籍和身份趋于固化,从某种程度会导致自



本页: Houshiary作品的特点之一是极其精细,同时还具有不稳定的状态,给人心理上带来紧张感。图为《寓言》。  
对页: 敦煌的壁画和雕像是Houshiary的创作灵感来源之一,图为有如飘动丝带的《二重奏》。





Houshiary的作品通过触动感官,令观众自发产生思考,因而也被艺术评论家们称为拥有“感知的语言”,她那如同书法般的画风,表达着对于自我和存在的探讨。



我闭塞和压抑。

与此同时,经历移民也给Houshiary带来了令人难以忽视的影响。她在18岁时离开自己的祖国,此后便一直在面对和适应文化的异同。Houshiary把语言看作是文化记忆的重要组成,“我们必须学习不同的语言,地球其实没有想象中那么大,和浩瀚的宇宙相比,我们渺小得好像一个点。语言在这其中举足轻重,比如你生来讲汉语,我生来说波斯语。语言好比意识中的一幅图案,随着新语言的加入,在原有图案的基础上做出修饰,对自我的认知也逐渐充实,人生随之变得更为妙趣横生。”这也是Houshiary所理解的人类不断演化的过程,或许我们无法准确描述这一过程,但这些“记忆”已经被深深地刻在人类的基因之中,并表现于行为之上。

除了语言,文字也是记忆的一部分,它之于当代艺术并不是一个陌生的元素。不同于传统的组词造句,Houshiary将文字以画面的形式交织串联在一起,形成一种更为抽象但富有质感的图景,营造出一种难以名状的微妙氛围。同时,她又将波斯文化的审美与西方当代艺术巧妙地融为一体。Houshiary拒绝赘述,她的作品通过触动感官,令观众自发产生思考,因而也被艺术评论家称为拥有“感知的语言”。她那如同书法般的画

风,表达着对于自我和存在的探讨。过去的五六年间,Houshiary倾向于采用更为极简却又充满不确定性的创作手法,以影射宇宙的混沌与万变;从制作多维度、整齐有序的大型立体雕塑,转向描绘抽象的二维平面。一层又一层的水颜料在流动中叠加、修饰又轻碰出线条,近看时,边缘的纹理清晰精细。宇宙的宏观和微观共存于这些作品中,没有明确的指代——到底是描绘,还是刻画——营造了一种对于空间氛围的体验。

令Houshiary始料未及的是,这种创作过程也让她开始不断思索:人们的真情实感是流动的,犹如液体颜料一般在意识的边界游走,现实世界也是如此,人们必须格外地小心。世上最糟糕的事莫过于民族主义,它是战争的始作俑者,被用作武器攻击其他的种族。因此,Houshiary认为民族主义是人类最需要摒弃的想法。“我们只有竭尽所能地连成一体,才能结成一张大网。为了抢夺而制造战争,分崩离析显然是目光短浅的做法。身处21世纪,很多人持有混合的身份,甚至父母都来自世界不同的地域。人们不应执着于既定的身份和国界。”Houshiary说,当务之急在于认识自我和相互沟通,道理也很简单,在我们失去家园之前,一定要深刻地意识到一个事实:那就是我们居住的家园并非简单的英国、中国或伊朗,而是整个地球。■



LISSON GALLERY

IDEAT

September 2020

# IDEAT 理想家

CONTEMPORARY LIFE



Madame  
Priceless

Spécial

Madame Priceless

不是谁的缪斯

Emmanuelle Simon、翁菱、林芳璐

Constance Guisset 以温柔拥抱世界

Patricia Urquiola 多元矿物质

Lifestyle & Trips

Dublin 戏色彩 纳艺术

San José 崭新的一天

全国邮发代号：46-379

ISSN 2096-0093



9 772096 009205

0 9>

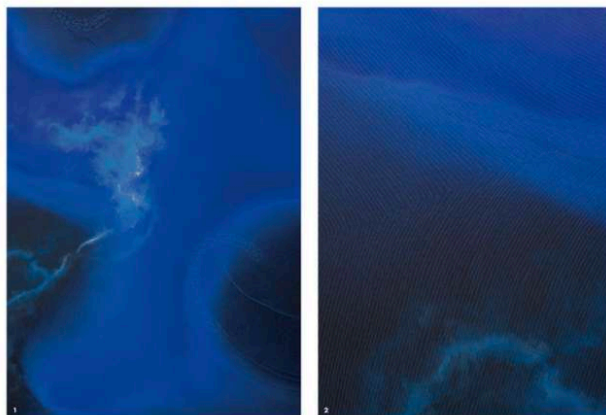
Nº 065 - September 2020 - RMB 35 , HKD 60

## Shirazeh Houshiary 剧变中的冥想之舞



记得曾有一段活动影像记录过伊朗女艺术家施拉泽·赫什阿里(Shirazeh Houshiary)的创作瞬间:红色的颜料与水,被她倒入玻璃碗中,两种物质融合后,再被倾倒在一片纯黑色的画布上。“这是我进入混乱的方式,混乱。或者说,一个机会。”施拉泽·赫什阿里如此说道。

撰文 Ag / 编辑 卡卡



即使我们在施拉泽·赫什阿里完成的作品前会惊叹笔触的精细与优美的排布,但她实质却是在一种“混沌的秩序”下展开她的工作,或者说,在这样一种现实漩涡的中心展开她在浩瀚的冥想与隐秘的创造。在那幅画作《Genesis》(创世)中,水、颜料、画布、空气、重力、沉积物、不规则的孔,所有的事物在虚空背景与独特的际遇下形成了存在之处的图像。在这每一个无与有、呼与吸间停顿的时间里,都是有关存在的大图景——如同此次在森画廊在上海所展出的她在疫情期间的作品《The Big Picture》(大图景)所示,意识的轨迹之网与藉由生命的旋转舞动,包裹又解放、连接又离散,其作品始终贯穿着这种二元的张力与瞬息变幻的特质。

在此次《施拉泽·赫什阿里:时间于此》的中国个展上,艺术家的五件新作揭开面纱,其中一件雕塑作品《Duet》(二重奏)彰显了艺术家创作的内在语言学形象,两个波斯字母作为悖论之美的原型,并以各种方式交融、转写与变形,那两个字母一个表示肯定,一个表

示否定,代表“不在”(Absence)与“存在”(Existence)。如观察仔细,我们会发现这组字母的形象处处藏身于她的作品中,时而以明显的体感出现在《Duet》或《Eclipse》(蚀)这样具有空间感的雕塑作品中,时而又以幼细隐晦的铅笔痕迹残存于画布上,轻覆以半透明的颜料,浓淡不定地渗透扩散,或使用沾有颜料粉末的粉扑,仔细抹压着这交叠的秘密气象,仿佛是在为宇宙的肌肤上妆。

施拉泽·赫什阿里的画作,远望时,如宇宙星云般瞬息抽象,近观时,则如肌肤纹理与层次般细腻与立体,如同一组存在之客的生命密码。

推拉的、变幻的、舞动的、亲密的、流淌的、轻盈的、层叠的、交织的、冥想的、疗愈的、暗涌的、呼吸的、悖论的,一切生命之重都在一层轻如薄纱的呼吸面上神秘地呈现。

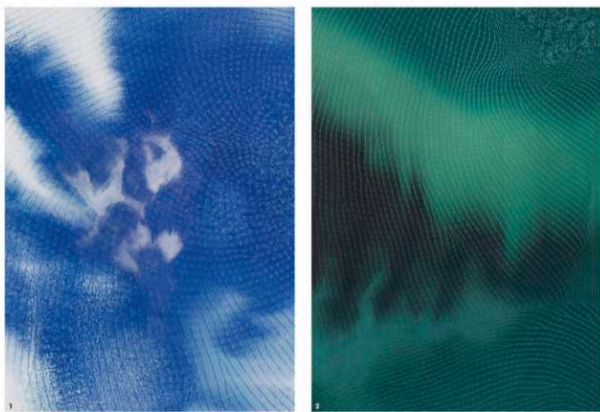
想要单从任何一种外部的知识、身份、艺术类别、哲学或信仰进入她,都显得有些片面而肤浅,施拉泽·赫什阿里的创作并非带着不同文化分野的印痕与

左图/施拉泽·赫什阿里(Shirazeh Houshiary), 40年代开始以雕塑家的身份获得瞩目,此后她的实践逐步横跨绘画、装置、建筑、电影等多种媒介。

1/ Shirazeh Houshiary, Chimera, 2020

2/ Shirazeh Houshiary, Chimera, 2020

3/ Shirazeh Houshiary, Chimera, 2020

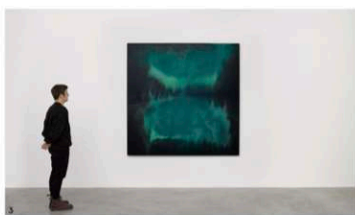


气息,却最终找到了暗合中合一但超越一切既有形式与观念的密切内核。

施拉泽·赫什阿里于20世纪80年代开始以雕塑家的身份获得瞩目,此后她的实践逐步横跨绘画、装置、建筑、电影等多种媒介。其最著名的户外雕塑作品《String Quintet》(弦乐五重奏)是五条缠绕上升的不锈钢雕塑,我们可称它为《Duet》(二重奏)的同一乐曲的不同编曲版本。

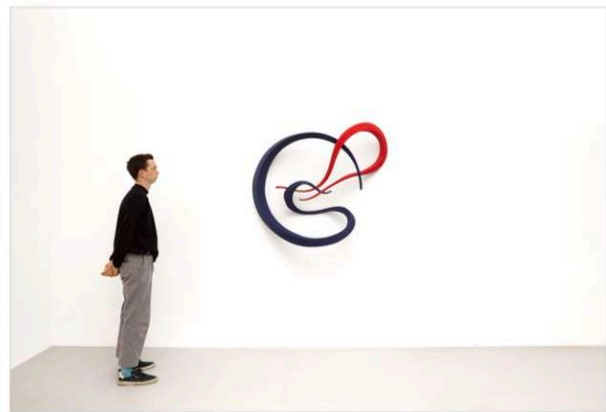
在一天的目光变幻中,雕塑的本体、阴影以及两者之间的交织与延伸,重新标定了时空的弹性。“这件作品不是在描述对象,而是描述多维的空间,它所占的体积远大于其实际的质感。”回响、投射,关系的变幻,展现了生命瞬息即逝的无限本质,但这无常与不定本也是美,这也是对道的无限性,或者说无限(Infinity)的一种模拟。

这种螺旋共绕的状态后来在其一系列的铝铸形雕塑中获得了更彻底的确证——更接近于DNA的生命双螺旋结构的形态,比如之前的雕塑作品《The Ebb》(退潮)或《White Shadow》(白阴影)。



施拉泽·赫什阿里表示:“宇宙就是一个不断瓦解的过程,一切都在崩解,但我们依然尝试着稳定它们的状态。这种张力深深吸引着我,也是我创作的核心。”

从不同角度观看这些砖塔会呈现不同的形态,它传达



了一种既矛盾又和谐的状态,一个不忘自我若定同时又在不断重塑轴心的过程。

雕塑在一种被光与色充满的通透材料中回旋起来,连同另一件雕塑《Birth of Light from Shadow》(从阴影中来的生之光)的同心圆,或画作《Blue Hour》(蓝色时光)中三个独立旋转却相触的点,它们一起揭露了艺术家内在的背景。

作品中黑与金的用色,涉及到炼金术中黑土转化为黄金的象征,以回旋舞的方式消解周遭对境的方法以获得心灵与宇宙的连接,轴心在持续稳定和加速离心力的共同作用中产生出一种另外的效应——圆心被抽空,画面中三个点成为无色的留白点,圆心不在原来的地方,不在里面,而在这组关系的最外部,白色网格离心或白色弧线,外部的白色弧线连接相邻的彼此,同时延伸至无限的两面直至胸膛交叠于无限的黑暗,蓝色作为恒定静止的底色承托着一切的发生。

不同的极性意义被融合在同一种东西中,这次展出的新作《Chimera》(噬尾蛇)也暗合着这样一种构成法,

Chimera一词源自古希腊神话,意即是一种拥有狮头、羊身蛇尾的吐火怪物,与此同时,这个词还有另一个释义是“妄想”,与同色系的《Blue Hour》所展现的内在神定状态有所不同,Chimera 庞然的蓝色形象更如同此时此刻的世界。

在另一幅展出的新作《Mind and Matter》(心灵与物质)之中,其实这也是艺术家一直关心的内与外的界限也是连接处的“皮肤”象征的另一种表述。这幅画作不论从形象上还是语义上都让我想到另一幅作品《Rift》(裂痕),《Mind and Matter》是蓝色的分离,更为形而上的忧伤,《Rift》是红色的分离,更为血肉感官的激情,两者的背景都是留白的纯净与虚空。

两幅作品都以同一种几何的构造展融合与分离的两面一体,二分法与痛苦的关系,也同时是与旋律或美的关系。来到屏障的连接与破除之地去感知艺术家所反复提及的“混乱与机会”,在动荡展出的虚空中,也藏着毁灭和创造的奇点,藏着一切可能性的种子与新生的舞蹈。

1/ Shirazeh Houshiary, Mind and Matter, 2020

2/ Shirazeh Houshiary, The Big Picture, 2020

3/ Shirazeh Houshiary, The Big Picture, 2020

本页 / Shirazeh Houshiary, Duet, 2020



## Shirazeh Houshiary 剧变中的冥想之舞



记得曾有一段活动影像记录过伊朗女艺术家施拉泽·赫什阿里 (Shirazeh Houshiary) 的创作瞬间: 红色的颜料与水, 被她倒入玻璃碗中, 两种物质融合后, 再被倾倒在一片纯黑色的画布上。“这是我进入混乱的方式, 混乱, 或者说, 一个机会。” 施拉泽·赫什阿里如此说道。

撰文 Ag / 编辑 卡卡





即便我们在施拉泽·赫什阿里完成的作品前会惊叹笔触的精细与优美的排布，但她实质却是在一种“混沌的秩序”下展开她的工作。或者说，在这样一种现实漩涡的中心展开她内在浩瀚的冥想与隐秘的创造。在那幅画作 *Genesis*（创世）中，水、颜料、画布、空气、重力、沉积物、不规则的孔，所有的事物在虚空背景与独特的际遇下形成了存在之处的图像。在这每一个无与有、呼与吸间停顿的时间里，都是有关存在的大图景——如同此次里森画廊在上海所展出的她在疫情期间的所作 *The Big Picture*（大图景）所示，意识的蚕丝之网勾勒出生命的旋转舞动，包裹又解放、连接又离散，其作品始终贯穿着这种二元的张力与瞬息变幻的特质。

在此次《施拉泽·赫什阿里：时间于此》的中国个展上，艺术家的五件新作揭开面纱，其中一件雕塑作品 *Duet*（二重奏）彰显了艺术家创作的内在语言学形象，两个波斯字母作为悖论之美的原型，并以各种方式交融、转写与变形，那两个字母一个表示肯定，一个表

示否定，代表“不在”（Absence）与“存在”（Existence）。如观察仔细，我们会发现这组字母的形象处处藏身于她的作品中，时而以明显的体感出现在 *Duet* 或 *Eclipse*（蚀）这样具有空间感的雕塑作品中，时而又以幼细隐秘的铅笔痕迹浅着于画布上，轻覆以半透明的颜料，浓淡不定地渗透扩散，或使用沾有颜料粉末的粉扑，仔细抹压着这交叠的秘密气象，仿佛是在为宇宙的皮肤上妆。

施拉泽·赫什阿里的画作，远望时，如宇宙星云般氤氲抽象，近观时，则如肌肤纹理与层次般细密与立体，如同一组存在之雾的生命密码。

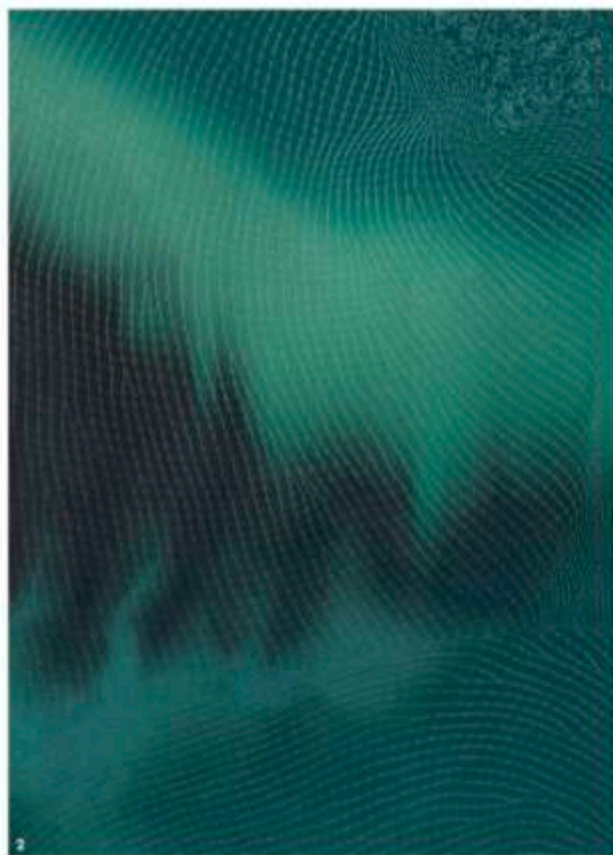
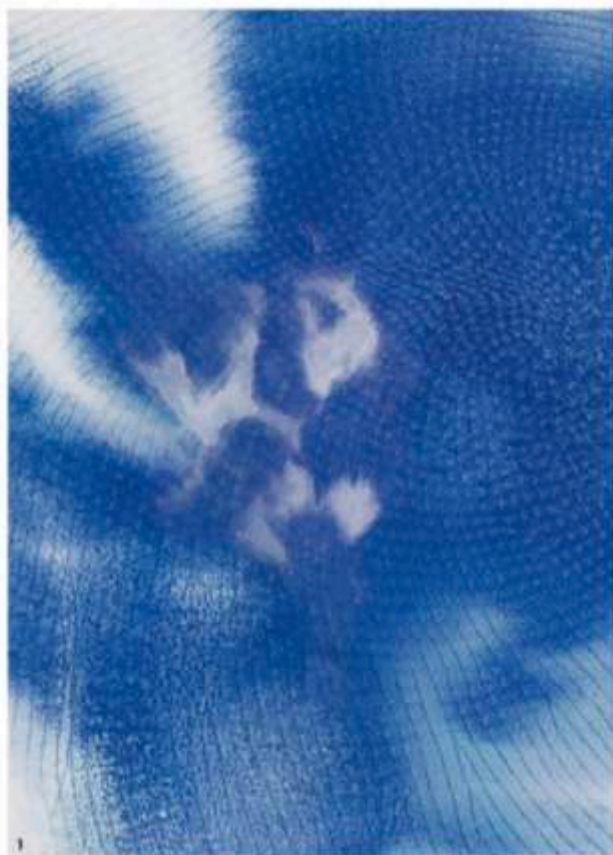
推拉的、变幻的、舞动的、亲密的、流淌的、轻盈的、层叠的、交织的、冥想的、疗愈的、暗涌的、呼吸的、悖论的，一切生命之重都在一层轻如鸿毛薄纱的界面上神秘地显现。

想要单从任何一种外部的知识、身份、艺术类别、哲学或信仰进入她，都显得有些干涸而匮乏。施拉泽·赫什阿里的创作刺穿并携带着不同文化分野的印痕与

左图 / 施拉泽·赫什阿里（Shirazeh Houshiary），80年代开始以雕塑家的身份获得瞩目，此后她的实践逐步横跨绘画、装置、建筑、电影等多种媒介。

1/ Shirazeh Houshiary, *Chimera*, 2020

2/ Shirazeh Houshiary, *Chimera*, 2020

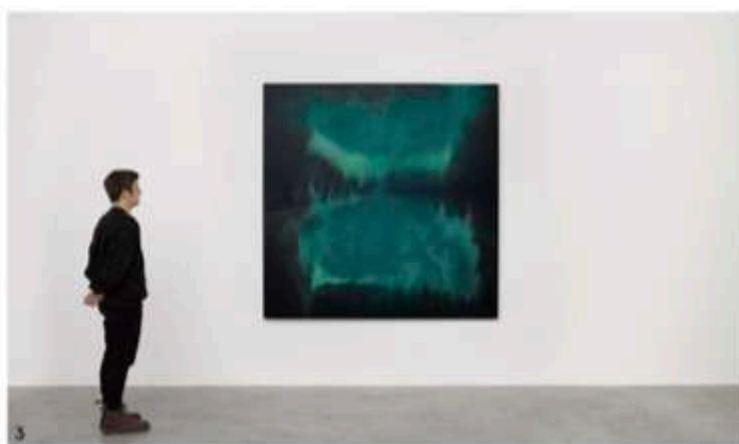


气息，却最终找到了暗中合一但超越一切既有形式与观念的原初内核。

施拉泽·赫什阿里于 20 世纪 80 年代开始以雕塑家的身份获得瞩目，此后她的实践逐步横跨绘画、装置、建筑、电影等多种媒介。其最著名的户外雕塑作品 *String Quintet*（弦乐五重奏）是五条缠绕上升的不锈钢螺旋带，我们可视它为 *Duet*（二重奏）的同一乐曲的不同编制版本。

在一天的日光变幻中，雕塑的本体、阴影以及两者之间的交织与延伸，重新标定了时空的弹性。“这件作品不是在描述对象，而是描述多维的空间，它所占的体积远大于其实际的质量。”回响、投射、关系的变幻，展现了生命稍纵即逝的无常本质，但这无常与不定本也是美，这也是对道的无限性，或者说无极（Infinity）的一种模拟。

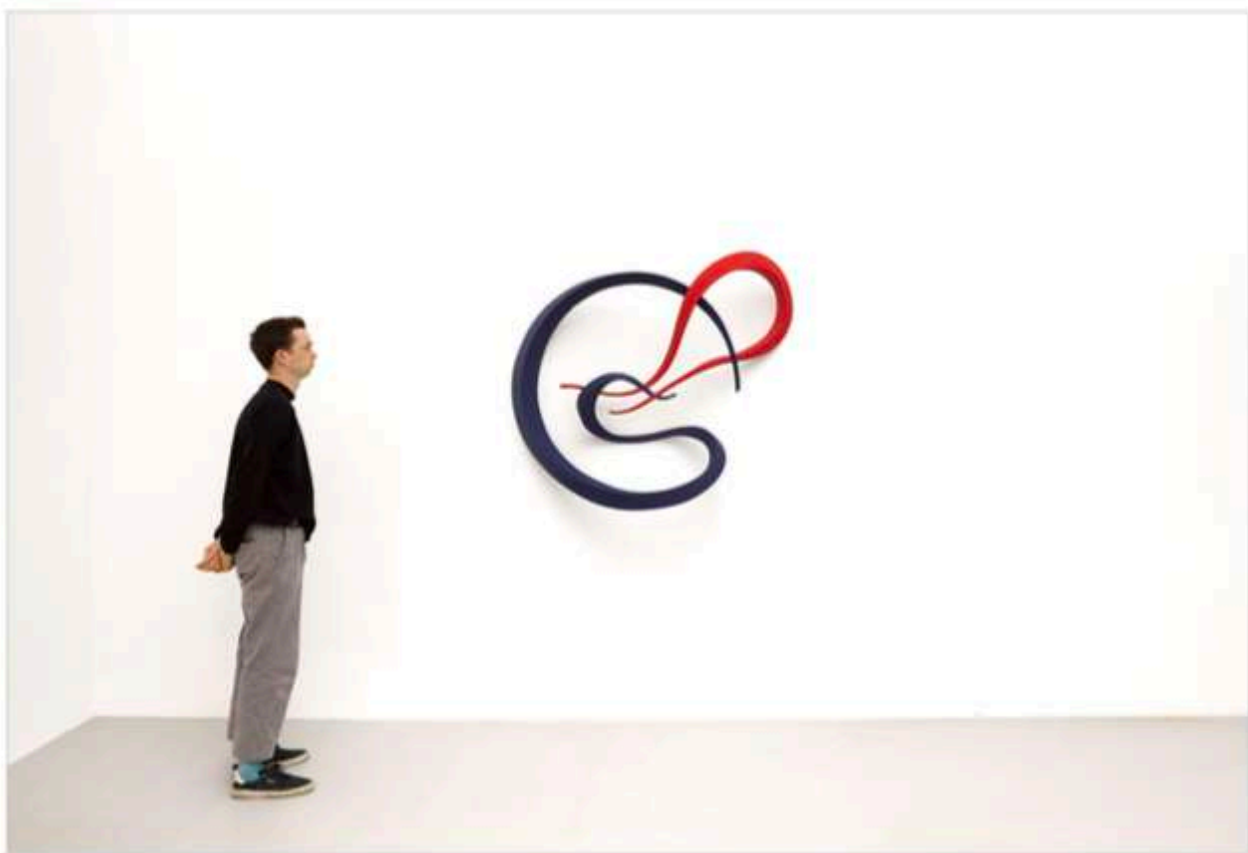
这种螺旋共绕的状态后来在其一系列的铝砖塔形雕塑中获得了更彻底的填充——更接近于 DNA 的生命双螺旋结构的拟态，比如之前的雕塑作品 *The Ebb*（退



潮）或 *White Shadow*（白阴影）。

施拉泽·赫什阿里表示：“宇宙就是一个不断瓦解的过程，一切都在腐蚀，但我们依然尝试着稳定它们的状态。这种张力深深吸引着我，也是我创作的核心。”从不同角度观看这些砖塔会呈现不同的形态，它传达





了一种既矛盾又和谐的状态，一个不忘自我否定同时又在不断重塑轴心的过程。

雕塑在一种被光与色充满的通透材料中回旋起来，连同另一件雕塑 *Birth of Light from Shadow*（从阴影中来的生之光）的同心圆，或画作 *Blue Hour*（蓝色时光）中三个独自旋转却相连的点，它们一起展露了艺术家内在的背景。

作品中黑与金的用色，涉及到炼金术中黑土转化为黄金的象征，以回旋舞的方式消解周遭对境的方法以获得心灵与宇宙的连接，轴心在持续稳定和加速离心的共同作用中产生出一种另外的效应——圆心被抽空，画面中三个点成为无色的留白点，圆心不在原来的地方，不在里面，而在这组关系的最外部，白色网格离心成白色波线，外部的白色波线连接相邻的彼此，同时延伸至无限的画外直至晦涩交叠于无限的黑暗，蓝色作为禅定般宁静的底色承托着一切的发生。

不同的极性与意义被融合在同一种东西中，这次展出的新作 *Chimera*（喀迈拉）也暗含着这样一种构成法。

*Chimera* 一词源自古希腊神话，意思是一种拥有狮头羊身蛇尾的吐火怪物，与此同时，这个词还有另一个释义是“妄想”，与同色系的 *Blue Hour* 所展现的内在禅定状态所不同，*Chimera* 庞然的蓝色形象更如同此时此刻的世界。

在另一幅展出的新作 *Mind and Matter*（心灵与物质）之中，其实这也是艺术家一直关心的内与外的屏障也是连接处的“皮肤”象征的另一种表述。这幅画作不论从形象上还是语义上都让我想到另一幅作品 *Rift*（裂痕），*Mind and Matter* 是蓝色的分离，更为形而上的忧郁，*Rift* 是红色的分离，更为血肉感官的激情，两者的背景都是留白的纯净与虚空。

两幅作品都以同一种几何的对流展现融合与分离的两面一体，二分法与痛苦的关系，也同时是与旋律或美的关系。来到屏障的连接与破除之地去感知艺术家所反复提及的“混乱与机会”，在动荡撕扯出的虚空中，也藏着毁灭和创造的奇点，藏着一切可能性的种子与新生的舞步。

1/ Shirazeh Houshiary, *Mind and Matter*, 2020

2/ Shirazeh Houshiary, *The Big Picture*, 2020

3/ Shirazeh Houshiary, *The Big Picture*, 2020

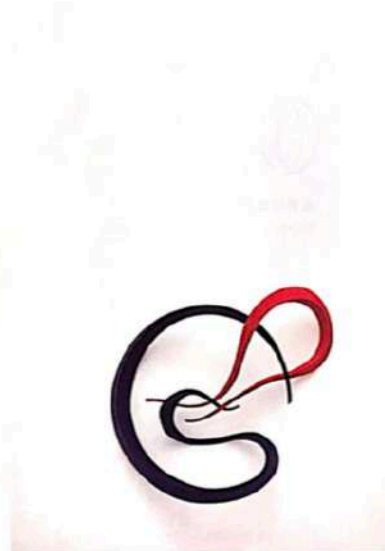
本页 / Shirazeh Houshiary, *Duet*, 2020

Modern Weekly  
10 October 2020

## 周末 世界新公民读本 MODERN WEEKLY 画报

18 / 19

EXHIBITION



远观望老

施拉泽·赫什阿里,《浪漫》,2020 Shirazeh Houshiary; 蓝白画廊提供

施拉泽·赫什阿里,《二重奏》,2020 Shirazeh Houshiary; 蓝白画廊提供

施拉泽·赫什阿里肖像,蓝白画廊提供

Shirazeh Houshiary, Commission for St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, 2008 Shirazeh Houshiary and Pip Horne

## SHIRAZEH HOUSHIARY

时间停留在这里

伊朗艺术家施拉泽·赫什阿里(Shirazeh Houshiary)的绘画常常会让人“错过”:远远望一眼,或者在简介上看到小图,都会有一种印象淡漠的感觉;但如果切实站在她的作品面前,那些似乎在流动的线条、很难找到边界的颜色、以及埋藏在最细节中的文字,都会立刻改变原有的观感,细节瞬间拖住了时间,仿佛停留在这刻。

编辑—杨杨 撰文—SZ 设计—木谷 供图—蓝白画廊

在施拉泽·赫什阿里的首个中国大陆个展上,雕塑作品《二重奏》(来自雕塑系列 ribbon sculpture)第一眼就会抓住观众的关注:红蓝两色的“丝带”交织在一起,以灵动的姿态组成了飘逸的形状,从不同角度看去,“丝带”都呈现出不同的样貌,宛若“飞天”——事实上,这正来自于施拉泽前年从敦煌壁画中获得的灵感。“我从小就对丝路很感兴趣,不同的文化,在这个瞬间各种奇妙的想法产生了。”施拉泽这样形容那次为期6天的敦煌旅程,“沙漠中曾有很多绿洲,许多都消失了,但敦煌留下来了。”她为在莫高窟洞窟中看到的精美壁画和佛像而深深陶醉,“这是这里特有的,不会在印度,也不会其他地方,这里的佛像是中国人画的,这是不同的能量场。”

在一望无际的沙漠里,施拉泽看到了最激烈的色彩,“一切都在风化,没有东西能够静止,太阳带来的干燥与水源带来的生命力,这里的人们要虔诚佛教,这也是他们的生活,他们的创作受到环境的影响。”就像施拉泽自己一直以来都喜欢使用蓝色与绿色,她惊喜地在古老的敦煌艺术中也看到这些常用色彩,在她看来,这就像是一种与古老的、另一种文化的连结。“我喜欢这里的极端性,不曾发生过什么,都是非常激烈的,从未见过这样的色彩,是属于丝路的。”

从数学到艺术

1955年,施拉泽出生于伊朗的色拉子城,父亲是一名建筑师和音乐家,而她自己



则热爱数学与物理。但在19岁时选择去英国读艺术，“我不想生活在数学家的思维模式和精神世界里。”她这样说。但数学与物理仍然以另一种方式留在她的艺术创作中：密集、严谨的细节无处不在，这使得她的绘画和雕塑都富含着一种物理性。

施拉泽的作品随着她理念的变化而一直在变化着，从早期创作偏向于使用泥土、枯草等简陋材料，后来慢慢扩展到金属、锌、黄铜等等。从1984年她在里森画廊伦敦空间的首次个展可以看出，在这个阶段，施拉泽的艺术理念围绕“亲自动手”以及“将不同文化和领域的符号带入创作”。

到了上世纪90年代，施拉泽的雕塑作品渐渐变得越来越大，她希望观众可以沉浸到她的作品中去，获得直观的体验。同时，她也经历了困惑与低迷，囿于自我身份认知的迷惘。此时她的作品也渐渐脱离事物的描绘，而进入现象学。这一时期经常使用到“折叠”的概念，“产生的缝隙就是真理所在的地方”——意指变化与行动才是真理，不存在静态的模式。从她的雕塑作品，比如常用的漩涡的形态和不断动态的过程，也能看到这种思考的发展。

进入新千年后，施拉泽的创作也迈入了新的阶段，绘画重新成为创作重心。“我的雕塑作品体量越来越大，需要依赖其他人才完成。”她说，而这和之前她“亲自动手”的理念有了隔阂。相比之下，绘画则是更为亲近的创作模式，在绘画过程中，她一直试图寻找亲密感，甚至于想要捕捉呼吸和耳畔轻语的感觉。

### 美的根本力量

施拉泽的作品探讨哲学、宇宙学、诗歌、物理学和宗教，涵盖了绘画、雕塑、装置、建筑项目和电影等多种媒介。

2008年，受英国伦敦圣马丁教堂委任，施拉泽完成了“东窗”：那是位于教堂一面的大型窗户，她只是稍微用曲线把窗户改变了一下，在隐隐的十字中心，光线从曲线组成的不规则圆形中透过，观者就像进入了另一个时空，充满了可能性。曲线也是施拉泽在创作中最常用的元素，在她看来，曲线是最自然的东西，是世界的真理，反而直线才是人为的，因为直线代表效率。

也是在这一时期，她开始了从两个文字开始的创作模式——阿拉伯文“存在”、“不存在”作为最早的结构，然后再一层一层进行创作。在此次个展中的最新作品中，远看蓝色或绿色画面如星空浩瀚，走近才发现，画面中细密的曲线由密密麻麻的阿拉伯文“存在”、“不存在”组成。

数学、物理、哲学、文化、艺术，对于不同领域的思考也在她的作品中有充分反

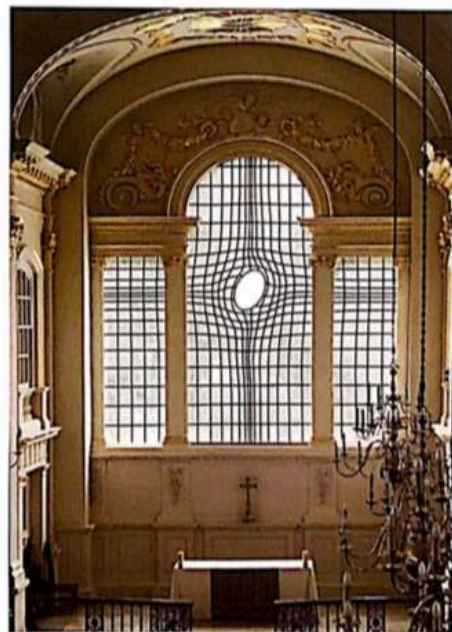
映：此前在威尼斯双年展上，她带去了一件装置作品，置身其中，人们可以同时听到四个不同宗教的音乐，渐渐地，会发现不同的呼吸的节奏融为一体——这也是施拉泽本人对于世界不同文化的理解。也正是这种理念，促使了她的敦煌之旅。“他们的感知和我们是不一样的，带着另一种对世界完全不同的理解，而艺术就是穿越时空的能力。”她说，“我们所生活的世界，了解自己所处的时代和进步的过程，这很重要。”

施拉泽几乎站在“确定性”的对立面。在她的理念和作品中，都充满了不确定性。曾有人问道，要如何构造流动，如何捕捉无形？施拉泽回答，“存在可以由不存在显现，反之亦然。”就像她在敦煌的沙漠中看到某个艺术创作时说，“如此干燥的环境，如此残酷的物质，但如果太阳不在这个角度，就不会有这个作品。”她用语言和作品表达——如果无法理解死亡，就无法理解生命。

时间重新回到当下，此次展出的一系列最新作品，灵感来源于施拉泽隔离期间在英国的经历：“隔离期间，当时间近乎静止，当死亡充斥周围，是美拨动了多数人的心弦。自然之美，是和风轻拂下树叶的微微颤动，美是对生命以及我们蝴蝶般存在的认知。”她说。在五幅强有力的新画作——《波涛》、《寓言》、《心灵与物质》、《喀迈拉》和《大图景》中，她表述了周遭氛围的瞬息性，标记与稍纵即逝的图案相叠加，彼此舞蹈和交织在一起。所有作品均于2020年完成。

在里森画廊上海空间墙上的红蓝两色的《二重奏》，那仿佛是另一种极致的飞天，是施拉泽穿越了漫长时空与敦煌莫高窟艺术的一个对话。可以从不同的角度、不同的文化自由解读，就像在个展之前，施拉泽在邮件中说到了寒山的诗：

可笑寒山道，而无车马踪。  
联溪难记曲，迭嶂不知重。  
过露千般草，经风一样松。  
此时逢处，形同影何从。



## 特别报道 SPECIAL REPORT

### 里森画廊

开学季的一鼓作气

里森画廊在2020年的上半年原有十分多元的计划，因为疫情将调整活力投入到线上项目的设计与开发，尽可能改善公众的线上观展体验。原本的计划推迟到9月，开学季对里森而言将是一鼓作气发大招之时。



RR:《罗博报告》

D: 董道蕊，里森画廊上海总监

RR: 上半年销售情况如何？

D: 我们原计划今年上半年在中国和其他亚洲地区举办十分多元的项目，包括 Cory Arcangel 和 Antonio Calderara 的个展、香港巴塞尔和一些艺术家的美术馆展览。因为疫情这些都推迟了，目前我们计划在9月份全面重启这些项目。与此同时，里森的团队一直忙于支持全球项目，并在多个线上项目持续发力。目前在亚洲市场得到了十分积极的反馈，我们会在秋季继续一鼓作气。

RR: 与纽约和伦敦相比，今年上海空间的销售情况如何？

D: 上海空间在全球销售总量中所占比例相当之大，且在不断增长中。

RR: 目前增加的预算和削减的预算分别是哪些方面？

D: 与其说预算增减，不如说是重新分配。里森将原先用于艺术展会和实体空间的财力与人力资源转移到开发数字项目及工具，用以支持画廊团队与客户的对接。

RR: 线上展厅反响如何？

D: 我们看重展览体验的重要性，花费大量时间，通过沉浸式视频或照片装置，尽可能地带来实体观展的体验。我们大力推广让更多人登录到网站上观看展览并为之互动。目前，里森已经举办了3次线上展览，分别是罗德尼·格雷斯姆、刘小东和斯坦利·惠特尼，均得到了非常积极的反馈。

RR: 是否有借助直播等线上工具助力销售？

D: 我们一直在思考如何增加新的获客，每个平台都有自己的优势和





Courtesy Lisson Gallery, photography Alessandro Wang

目标用户，我们希望根据不同的项目找到最适合的方法。

RR: 从目前的销售中是否感觉到什么不同于以往的趋势?

D: 由于不能亲自到现场体验工作，人们更容易被熟悉的艺术家作品吸引，尤其是那些他们对材料和工艺已经有所了解的作品。

RR: 最近二级市场形势大好，是否给一级市场带来信心?

D: 我们一直对一级市场有信心，致力于将里森代表艺术家的作品放置在好的收藏序列中。

RR: 下半年有何规划?

D: 9月我们会非常忙碌，上海空间将呈现艺术家施拉泽·赫什阿里(Shirazeh Houshiary)在中国的首次个展，展出5幅新画和1件新雕塑，灵感均来自她过去3年来造访中国的经历。她是个被低估的艺术家。随后是朱利安·奥佩(Julian Opie)的新作展，肯定会广受好评。另外还有很多代理艺术家会参与一些群展和美术馆项目。



Shirazeh Houshiary, Mind and Matter, Pigment and pencil on white Aquacryl on canvas and aluminum, 120cm x 120cm x 5.5 cm, 2020, ©Shirazeh Houshiary Courtesy Lisson Gallery



Shirazeh Houshiary, Swell, Pigment and pencil on black Aquacryl on aluminum, 30cm x 30cm x 4cm, 2020, ©Shirazeh Houshiary Courtesy Lisson Gallery



Shirazeh Houshiary, Parable, Pigment and pencil on black Aquacryl on canvas and aluminum, 120cm x 120cm x 5.5 cm, 2020, ©Shirazeh Houshiary Courtesy Lisson Gallery

## 近期展览

### 施拉泽·赫什阿里中国内地首展“时间于此”

2020年9月12日至10月24日，里森画廊即将呈现艺术家施拉泽·赫什阿里(Shirazeh Houshiary)在上海空间首次个展。此次将展出一系列最新作品，灵感来源于艺术家隔离期间在英国的经历。展览“时间于此”亲密而富有哲理性，深刻探讨了有关感知、想象力，以及美的根本力量等问题。正如艺术家所述：“隔离期间，当时间近乎静止，当死亡充斥周围，是美触动了多数人的心弦。自然之美，是和风轻拂下树叶的微微颤动，美是对生命以及我们赖以存在的认知。”

此次展览紧随艺术家2018年的中国之旅，赫什阿里考察了“丝绸之路”上被联合国教科文组织列为世界文化遗产的敦煌莫高窟。在这次旅行中，赫什阿里应中央美术学院之邀，与艺术家喻红进行了对话，对敦煌莫高窟作为艺术和宗教场所的历史“丝绸之路”

的意义以及赫什阿里幼年期对该地域故事的浓厚兴趣等诸多话题进行了探讨。

施拉泽·赫什阿里80年代开始以雕塑家的身份获得瞩目，此后她的实践逐步横跨绘画、装置、建筑、电影等多种媒介，以作品探讨哲学、宇宙学、诗歌、物理学和宗教。一直以来，施拉泽·赫什阿里始终致力于通过作品诠释深刻的抽象概念，即，存在的本质——超越任何已知的身形式，无论国籍、语言，还是文化、信仰。

展览：施拉泽·赫什阿里：时间于此

展期：2020年9月12日至10月24日

地点：里森画廊，上海市黄浦区虎丘路27号201室

开放时间：周四~周六，上午11点~下午6点，或预约参观

### Capturing motion when beauty strikes a chord

Tan Weiyun

IRANIAN-BRITISH artist Shirazeh Houshiary's first exhibition in China "As Time Stood Still" is to open next Saturday at Shanghai's Lisson Gallery, featuring a series of new works inspired by her experience in the United Kingdom during the coronavirus lockdown.

The exhibition is deeply personal and philosophical, exploring profound questions about perception and imagination, as well as the fundamental power of beauty.

"As time stood still through the lockdown and with death all around, it's beauty that strikes a chord with most of us," Houshiary said. "Beauty in nature and the movement of trees as the breeze ruffles its leaves. Beauty is the awareness of life and our ephemeral existence."

The exhibition follows the artist's trip to China in 2018, including a visit to Dunhuang's Library Cave, a UNESCO World Heritage site on China's Silk Road.

During the trip, Houshiary was invited by the Central Academy of Fine Arts to an in-depth dialogue with artist Yu Hong, where they discussed the history of this artistic and religious site, the significance of Silk Road and Houshiary's early interest as a young child in stories from this region.

Since the 1980s, she has sought to embody profound abstract concepts, namely the very essence of existence — transcending any form of perceived identity from nationality, language, culture or beliefs — through her work. The mediums she works with include painting, sculpture, installation, architecture and film.

Born in Shiraz, Iran, in 1955, Houshiary moved to London in 1974. In the 1980s, galleries around the world began exhibiting her work — from the Venice Biennale in 1982 to a 1994 nomination

for the Turner Prize, considered the British art world's highest honor.

Her first solo exhibition at Lisson Gallery took place in 1984. In 2018, Houshiary was awarded the Asia Society's Asia Game Changer Award, which honors people making positive contributions to Asia's future.

Her work is included in prestigious public collections worldwide, including New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art and Guggenheim Museum, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and London's Tate.

"As Time Stood Still" is a pertinent reflection of our current state of existence, with visual commentary on this period of global transformation but from an alternative perspective. The exhibition presents a rare opportunity to observe what has arisen in the pandemic's wake — a sense of appreciation and gratitude for natural surroundings.

"As the lockdown has continued, I haven't been distracted by events and have found solace in looking through the window of my studio into the woods beyond," she said. "Here, all relationships and ideas that make up the cosmic process can be seen, and I am reminded how shortsighted humanity can be."

In five powerful new paintings created

this year — "Swell," "Parable," "Mind and Matter," "Chimera" and "The Big Picture," Houshiary mirrors the passing nature of the atmosphere around people, overlaying markings with fleeting patterns that dance and weave around each other. Along with these works, a new sculpture "Duet" uses a wall as its stage. Its red and dark blue ribbons recede and advance, gesturing to draw the viewer closer.

"I am trying to capture motion in continuous movement rather than in a static, solid form," she said. "Light and transparency play a big part in this, where the immaterial becomes the invisibility of the material."

Houshiary also noted the similarity of the intertwining ribbon motifs in these works to those found in Dunhuang's Mogao Caves that depict wind or star gods, as well as flying apsaras and celestial beings that charge across the many murals.

#### "As Time Stood Still"

Date: From September 12-October 24 (closed on Sundays and Mondays). 11am-6pm, or call 6333-0206 to make appointments for special tours given when the gallery is closed to the public.  
Venue: Lisson Gallery  
Address: 2/F, 27 Huqiu Road



Shirazeh Houshiary's sculpture "Duet" — Courtesy of Lisson Gallery



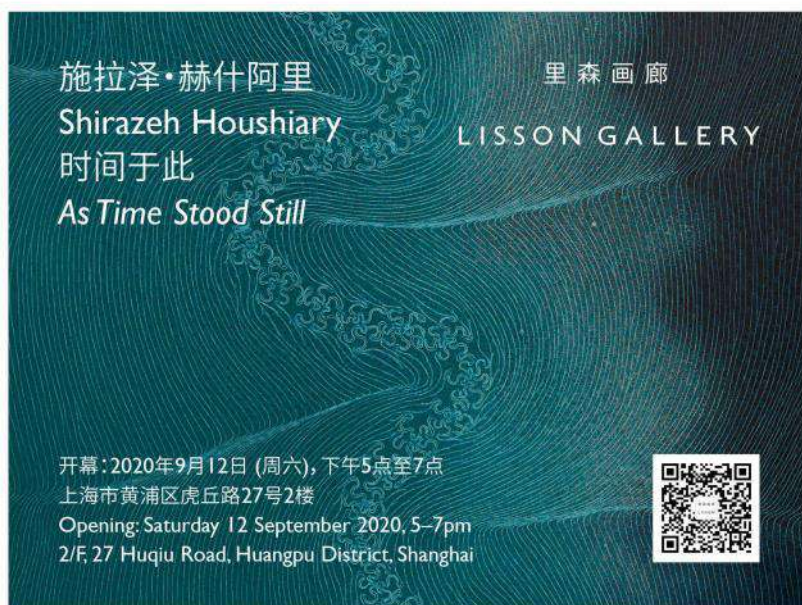
## 隔离时期对“美”的重新挖掘：伊朗裔艺术家赫什阿里中国首展将启



南方都市报·南都文化  
原创 2020-07-23 19:20



南都记者获悉，伊朗裔英国艺术家**施拉泽·赫什阿里 (Shirazeh Houshiary)** 的中国大陆首展将于9月12日在里森画廊上海空间开幕。此次将展出一系列最新作品，灵感来源于这位传奇艺术家隔离期间在英国的经历。



赫什阿里是国际最受瞩目的伊朗裔女艺术家之一，生活在伦敦，身世传奇，是一位差点成为数学家的艺术家，1994年特纳奖提名，2018年Asia Game Changer Award获得者。作品中可以找到苏菲神秘教、文艺复兴、物理学、宇宙学、诗歌等元素，也有她两年前在敦煌莫高窟的灵感。新作是针对今年伦敦的隔离期间所作的，重探四维宇宙，是特殊时期对“美的根本力量”的重新挖掘。



施拉泽·赫什阿里 (Shirazeh Houshiary)

正如艺术家所述：“隔离期间，当时间近乎静止，当死亡充斥周围，是美拨动了多数人的心弦。自然之美，是和风轻拂下树叶的微微颤动，美是对生命以及我们蜉蝣般存在的认知。”

此次展览紧随艺术家2018年的中国之旅，赫什阿里考察了“丝绸之路”上被联合国教科文组织列为世界文化遗产的敦煌佛窟。在这次旅行中，赫什阿里应中央美术学院之邀，与艺术家喻红进行了对话，对敦煌佛窟作为艺术和宗教场所的历史、“丝绸之路”的意义以及赫什阿里幼年时期对该地域故事的浓厚兴趣等诸多话题进行了探讨。

自上世纪八十年代以来，赫什阿里始终致力于通过作品诠释深刻的抽象概念，即存在的本质——超越任何已知的身份形式，无论国籍、语言，还是文化、信仰。**赫什阿里的作品探讨哲学、宇宙学、诗歌、物理学和宗**



教，涵盖了绘画、雕塑、装置、建筑项目和电影等多种媒介。她于1955年出生于伊朗设拉子，1974年移居伦敦并登上国际舞台，曾于1982年参加威尼斯双年展，1994年获“特纳奖”提名。2018年，赫什阿里被授予“亚洲创变者奖”。她的作品被收录于全球著名的公共收藏中，包括纽约现代艺术博物馆、巴黎蓬皮杜艺术中心、纽约古根海姆博物馆、纽约大都会现代艺术博物馆和伦敦泰特美术馆等。



Shirazeh Houshiary Mind and Matter 2020



Shirazeh Houshiary Swell 2020

“时间于此”是对人类当前生存状态的切时反思，以独到的视角，对这一全球转型期提出了看法。展览是一个难得的机会，引导观众观察因疫病大流行而生发的一切：对周遭自然环境的感激与敬畏。

在与作家、评论家、策展人沈奇岚的交谈中，赫什阿里说道：“随着居家令的持续，我并未因任何事件涣散精力，从工作室窗外的树林中得到慰藉。在那里，构成宇宙过程的所有关系与思绪无处不在，并提醒着我人类的短视。”



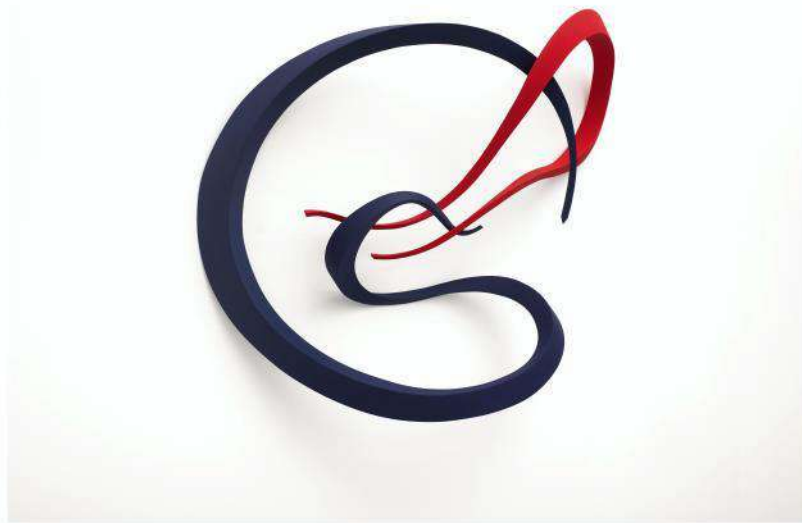


Shirazeh Houshiary The Big Picture 2020



Shirazeh Houshiary Chimera 2020 Pigment and pencil on black Aquacryl on canvas and aluminium 190 x 190 x 5.5 cm ©Shirazeh Houshiary Courtesy Lisson Gallery\_006

在五幅强有力的新画作——《波涛》《寓言》《思绪与物质》《喀迈拉》和《大图景》中，赫什阿里表述了我们周遭氛围的瞬息性，标记与稍纵即逝的图案相叠加，彼此舞蹈和交织在一起。**所有作品均于2020年完成。**



Shirazeh Houshiary Duet 2020

此外，雕塑新作《二重奏》以墙为舞台；红色和深蓝色丝带前后飘荡，有意要将观众拉近。“我正在尝试以连续动作而非静态固体的形式来捕捉动态。光线与透明度在其中发挥了重要作用，非物质在此间变成了物质的隐形。”赫什阿里还指出，这些作品中交织的“丝带”的动机，穿越千里之外，与敦煌莫高窟（480至1250）中发现的那些描绘风神、星神，以及飞天仙女或空中天体的壁画有共通之处。

编辑：朱蓉婷

文化 艺术 阿里 上海

南方都市报





## 施拉泽·赫什阿里：「时间于此」

里森画廊 上海空间

2020/09/12 ~10/24

上海市黄浦区虎丘路27号2楼

展览将展出一系列最新作品，灵感来源于艺术家隔离期间在英国的经历。「时间于此」亲密而富有哲学性，深刻探讨了有关感知、想象力，以及美的根本力量等问题。如艺术家所述：“隔离期间，当时间近乎静止，当死亡充斥周围，是美拨动了多数人的心弦。自然之美，是和风轻拂下树叶的微微颤动，美是对生命以及我们蜉蝣般存在的认知。”



[点击图片查看展览详情](#)

# LISSON GALLERY

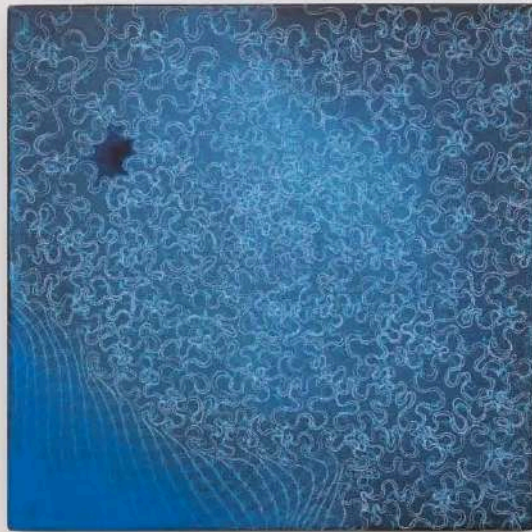
Artnet

22 July 2020

隔离期间的创造：赫什阿里在大陆首次个展如何映射宇宙之美？

原创 artnet新闻 artnet资讯 昨天

## artnet® 新闻



施拉泽·赫什阿里，《波涛》（Swell），2020，铝制平面上施Aquacryl底漆、涂料和铅笔绘制，30 x 30 x 4 cm © Shirazeh Houshiary图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery



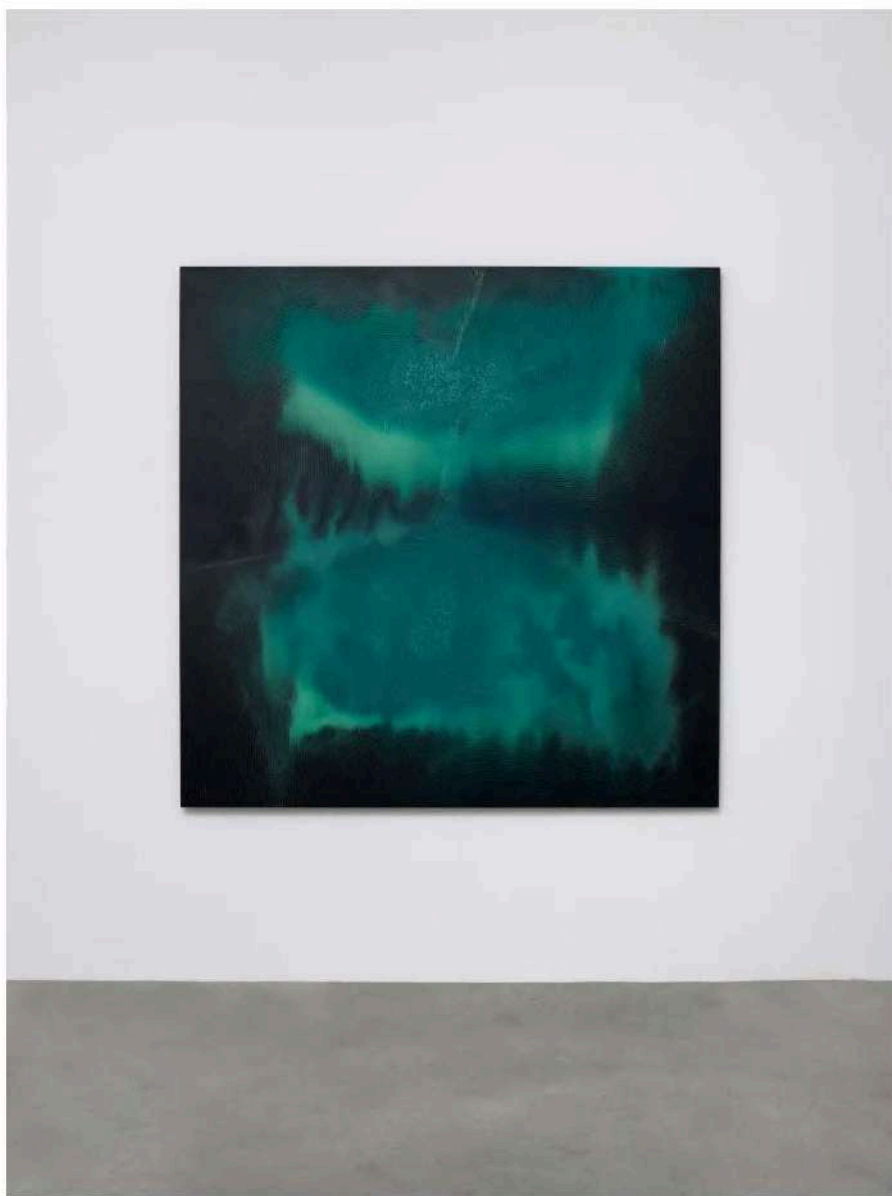


“隔离期间，当时间近乎静止，当死亡充斥周围，是美拨动了多数人的心弦。自然之美，是和风轻拂下树叶的微微颤动，美是对生命以及我们蜉蝣般存在的认知。”

——施拉泽·赫什阿里

**2018**年，伊朗裔英国艺术家施拉泽·赫什阿里（Shirazeh Houshiary）踏上了一场将会影响她创作人生的旅程，造访了“丝绸之路”上被联合国教科文组织列为世界文化遗产的敦煌石窟。在这次旅行中，赫什阿里应中央美术学院之邀，与艺术家喻红进行了一场对话，探讨了对敦煌石窟作为艺术和宗教场所的历史、“丝绸之路”的多元文化意义，以及赫什阿里幼年时期对该地域故事的浓厚兴趣等诸多话题。

正是这场旅行，让赫什阿里对中国文化的理解更深一步。在艺术家自述中，她不仅提及冰川、沙漠、绿洲的极端风景如何为古今艺术家触发灵感，更援引了莫高窟中绝美的诗句：“一切有为法，如梦、幻、泡、影；如露，亦如电，应作如是观。”



施拉泽·赫什阿里，《大图景》（The Big Picture），2020，布面和铝制平面上施Aquacryl底漆、涂料和铅笔绘制，190 x 190 x 5.5 cm © Shirazeh Houshiary

图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery

赫什阿里于1955年出生在伊朗，1974年移居英国伦敦。作为一名雕塑家，赫什阿里在1980年代已在全球艺术界声名鹊起。之后，她不断拓展创作媒介，开始将触角伸到绘画、装置、建筑项目，甚至电影的领域。她曾经这样形容自己的心路历程：“我开始捕捉我的气息，以此来发现自己存在的本质——超越姓名、国籍和文化。”





施拉泽·赫什阿里肖像 © Shirazeh Houshiary  
图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery

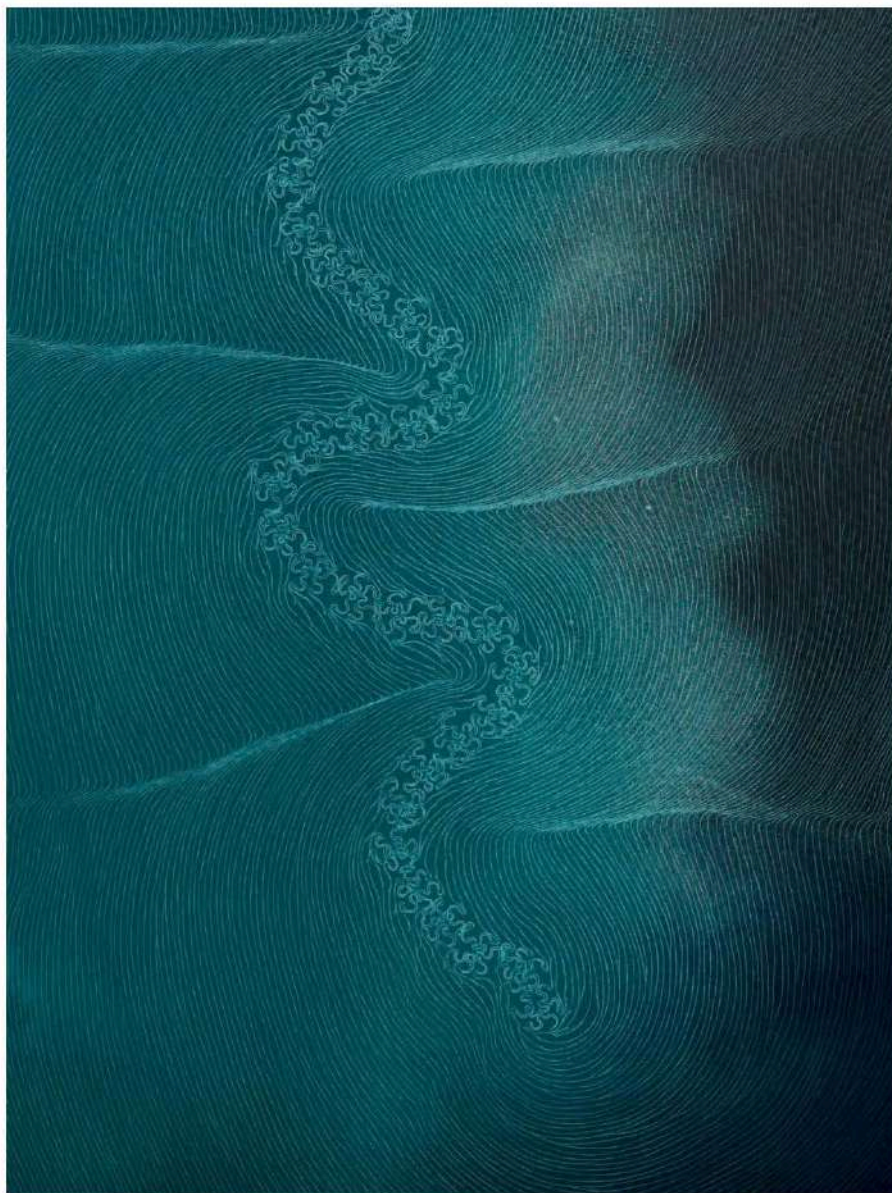
面纱、薄膜、迷雾构成她作品的主要元素，作品在吸收科学、宇宙学为灵感的同时，也融入伊斯兰教苏菲主义、文艺复兴时期绘画、当代物理学和诗歌等广泛元素。《纽约时报》曾如是评价她的创作：“她模糊的抽象绘画唤起了银河系、宇宙和来世。”

2020年，新冠疫情肆虐全球，居家隔离的赫什阿里回溯梦境般的敦煌之旅，创作出一系列全新作品。



施拉泽·赫什阿里，《寓言》（Parable），2020，布面和铝制平面上施Aquacryl底漆、涂料和铅笔绘制，120 x 120 x 5.5 cm © Shirazeh Houshiary  
图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery





施拉泽·赫什阿里，《高言》（此为细节图），2020，布面和精制平面上施Aquacryl底漆、涂料和铅笔绘制，120 x 120 x 5.5 cm © Shirazeh Houshiary  
图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery

9月12日，里森画廊（Lisson Gallery）将揭幕这位艺术家在中国大陆的首场个展。此次将展出一系列最新作品，灵感来源于艺术家隔离期间在英国的经历。展览“时间于此”亲密而富有哲学性，深刻探讨了有关感知、想象力，以及美的根本力量等问题。

“时间于此”是对人类当前生存状态的切时反思，以独到的视角，对这一全球转型期提出了看法。展览是一个难得的机会，引导观众观察因疫病大流行而生发的一切：对周遭自然环境的感激与敬畏。



施拉泽·赫什阿里，《思绪与物质》（Mind and Matter），2020，布面和铝制平面上施Aquacryl底漆、涂料和铅笔绘制，120 x 120 x 5.5 cm © Shirazeh Houshiary

图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery





施拉泽·赫什阿里，《思绪与物质》（此为细节图），2020，布面和铝制平面上施Aquacryl底漆、涂料和铅笔绘制，120 x 120 x 5.5 cm © Shirazeh Houshiary  
图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery

在与作家、评论家沈奇岚的交谈中，赫什阿里说道：“随着居家令的持续，我并未因任何事件涣散精力，而从观望工作室窗外的树林中得到慰藉。我在那里看到，构成宇宙过程的所有关系和思想无处不在，并提醒我看到人类的短视。”在与artnet的对话中，她分享了这场疫情带来的更多领悟，“这场疫情让人类理解到我们只是自然的一部分，而试图统治它是很愚蠢的。谦卑是最大的智慧，节制能让我们无须承受毁灭。”赫什阿里认为，我们还需要学习在全球层面上如何合作来解决全球性的问题。

在孤独中创造其实是艺术家的常态。赫什阿里不由得想起了从前的艺术家在瘟疫中幸存的创作故事，例如遭遇了1630年意大利大瘟疫的作曲家克劳迪奥·蒙特威尔第（Claudio Monteverdi），当时居住在威尼斯，在瘟疫结束后为感恩节仪式而创作了一曲美丽的弥撒。“我在隔离期间一直在听这首曲，因为它令人振奋并且有着深刻意义。尽管这件作品有许多黑暗的部分，但它的主题是围绕着超越性的——即生之力量战胜了死亡，”赫什阿里说道。

在五幅均于2020年完成的崭新画作中——《波涛》、《寓言》、《思绪与物质》、《喀迈拉》和《大图景》——赫什阿里为我们周遭氛围的穿越性提供了镜像，标记与稍纵即逝的图案相叠加，彼此舞蹈和交织在一起。雕塑新作《二重奏》以墙为舞台，红色和深蓝色丝带前后飘荡，有意要将观众拉近。



施拉泽·赫什阿里，《二重奏》（Duet），2020，铸铝雕塑、涂色，112.8 x 130 x 40 cm © Shirazeh Houshiary  
图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery





施拉泽·赫什阿里，《二重奏》（此为细节图），2020，铸铝雕塑、涂色，112.8 x 130 x 40 cm © Shirazeh Houshiary  
图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery

“我正在尝试以连续运动而非静态固体的形式来捕捉动态。光线和透明度在其中发挥了重要作用，非物质在此间变成了物质的隐形。”赫什阿里还指出，这些作品中交织的“丝带”的动机，穿越千里之外，与敦煌莫高窟（480至1250）中发现的那些描绘风神、星神，以及飞天仙女或天体的壁画有共通之处。

里森画廊星光熠熠的代理名单中包括玛丽娜·阿布拉莫维奇（Marina Abramović）、托尼·克拉格（Tony Cragg）、卡门·埃雷拉（Carmen Herrera）、安尼施·卡普尔（Anish Kapoor）、朱利安·奥培（Julian Opie）。

Opie) 以及肖恩·斯库利 (Sean Scully) 等在内的许多一线知名当代艺术家，而这次将国际背景丰富、亮相过威尼斯双年展、曾获“特纳奖”提名的赫什阿里带到上海，是“后疫情时代”重启当代艺术交流的大动作。

里森画廊亚洲总监董道兹 (David Tung) 谈到：“我们其实在18个月以前就开始筹备这场展览了，在这段时间里世界已经经历了重大的改变。在最近的一期播客中，赫什阿里谈到了最近的大流行疫情如何影响了她的思想和艺术创作，最后总结概述了存在与不存在、生与死之间的动态张力。我们通常将这些状态视作静态的，而它们之间的相互作用却是赫什阿里实践的核心。”



施拉泽·赫什阿里，《喀迈拉》(Chimera)，2020，布面和铝制平面上施Aquacryl底漆、涂料和铅笔绘制，190 x 190 x 5.5 cm © Shirazeh Houshiary  
图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery





施拉泽·赫什阿里，《时间于此》（此为细节图），2020，布面和铝制平面上施Aquacryl底漆、涂料和铅笔绘制，190 x 190 x 5.5 cm. © Shirazeh Houshiary  
图片：Courtesy Lisson Gallery

今年，美术馆久闭大门、艺博会纷纷取消、线下展览一再推迟……而当2020年匆匆快进至只剩四分之一，世界仿佛有了起色之时，我们应该也已累积了足够的勇气，来回头凝视“时间于此”的模样。

**\*施拉泽·赫什阿里中国大陆首展“时间于此”将于2020年9月12日-10月24日在里森画廊（上海市黄浦区虎丘路27号2楼）展出。**

# sculpture

A PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE CENTER



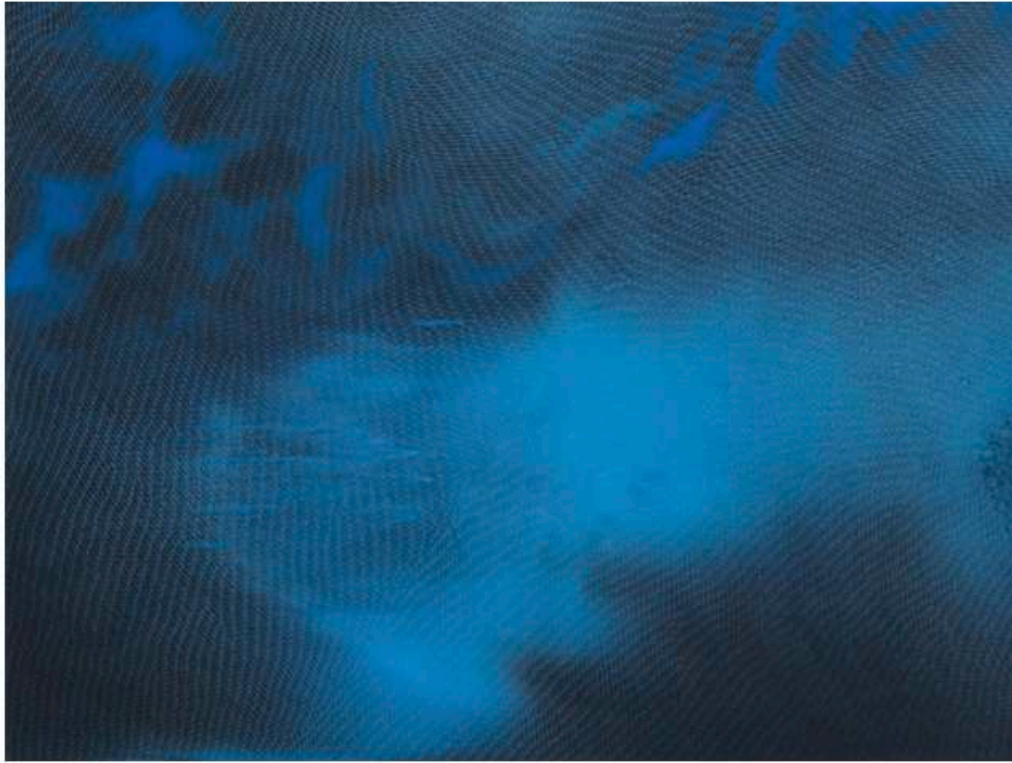
*Twilight (detail)*, 2016. Cast glass and stainless steel, 140 x 67 x 31 cm. Photo: Dave Morgan, Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul

## A Conversation with Shirazeh Houshiary



In her paintings, sculptures, animations, and site-specific installations, Iranian-born artist Shirazeh Houshiary often employs a process of meticulous repetition in order to create forms reminiscent of webs or networks. While her paintings weave together minute lines of words in Arabic script, generating abstract waves in pictorial space, her newest sculptures, built from glass bricks, physically twist around themselves to create helix-like forms in space. The works, regardless of medium, experientially question the effects of movement and depth on our experiences of time and space. Houshiary's upcoming solo exhibition at [Lehmann Maupin](#) in New York, originally scheduled for May 2020, will be presented in 2021. Below, the artist discusses works in that show and her current daily studio practice in London.





*Gegenschein* (detail), 2018. Pigment, pencil, and black aquacryl on canvas and aluminum, 190 x 270 cm. Photo: Dave Morgan, Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul

***Sculpture* magazine: Your paintings and sculptures both employ a repetition of elements, evoking networks or webs. What is the value of repetition for you?**

**Shirazeh Houshiary:** In the last few decades, scientists have discovered that objects are not made of space-time or matter, energy, light, or anything else. There is no basic stuff of the universe—phenomena are ephemeral and mere rising waves in the stream of existence. So physical reality is insubstantial and ultimately composed of sets of fields. It is this repetition that seems to provide the threads for it. To create webs and networks is to interconnect everything, both living and non-living.

***Sculpture:* You create sculptures using anodized aluminum, glass, and cast glass bricks. How did you first come to use bricks, and why?**

**SH:** Bricks are essentially the building blocks, or skin, of our civilization—we use them to assemble or weave shelter, an enclosure which protects us. Glass, by its transparency, it will enmesh both surface and depth, and glass bricks fuse inside and outside simultaneously.

The glass bricks are made at Studio Berengo in Murano, Venice. I design the shapes and sizes of the bricks and the studio casts them.

***Sculpture:* Can you tell us about some of your newest works, including the wall-hung sculptures?**

**SH:** For my upcoming exhibition at Lehmann Maupin, I am showing three new glass works, all made of glass bricks. *Twilight* and *Aura* are inspired by the shape of the seed pod as it spins and falls to the ground, fulfilling its becoming. These two works are various shades of white, while the other is in shades of black. They rotate to reveal their forms. It is as if they were in a perpetual dance around one another, a dialogue between inside and outside.





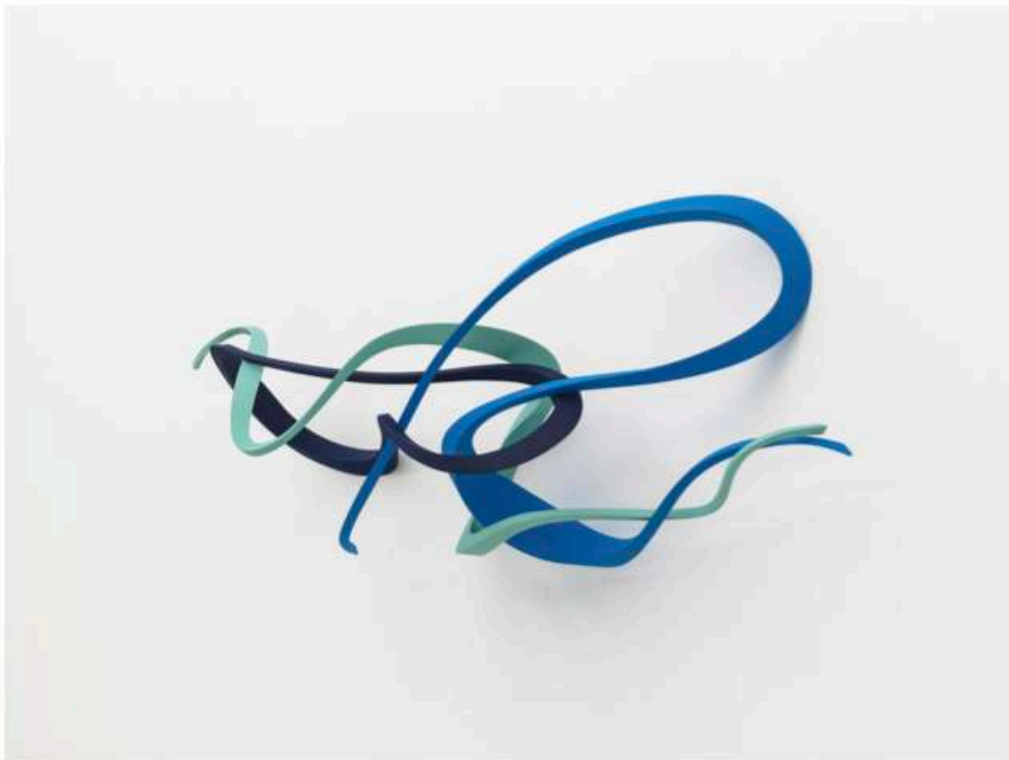
*Twilight*, 2019. Cast glass and stainless steel, 140 x 67 x 31 cm. Photo: Dave Morgan, Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul

I am also showing a glass tower, *Origin*, again made of glass bricks. It has an elliptical footprint that divides in two: on one side I arranged clear glass bricks, and on the other side I placed smoky-black and semi-opaque bricks. The layers of bricks rise and rotate to create two ribbons of transparent and opaque surfaces. At the fission of its form, the inside space and outside skin dissolve into one another, revealing both presence in absence and absence in presence.

The exhibition will also include two wall sculptures in painted cast aluminum and bronze. These works will merge both sculptural and pictorial spaces in their composition. Their ribbons and loops use the wall as stage to challenge the viewers' physical and psychological space and to reveal how we inhabit time, in *Order of Time*, and space, in *Strange Loop*.

**Sculpture:** You've noted your interest in Islamic architecture "and its use of light and color, reflection and water, which conspire to dematerialize the shape of a building, allowing it to dissolve into its surroundings." How do you understand your sculptures in relationship to the space they occupy?

**SH:** The sculptures are marked by a chiasmus of visibility and invisibility and by the use of nuance in transparency and opacity. By projecting a combination of order and disorder in the space they occupy, they encourage the experience of illusion and dreams through reflection and fusion, and suggest forms that dematerialize and dissolve into their surroundings.



*The Order of Time*, 2019. Powder-coated cast aluminum, 72.405 x 170.407 cm. Photo: Dave Morgan, Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul

**Sculpture:** What natural forms or phenomena inspire you?

**SH:** Water and light have inspired me. Both phenomena help us to understand the world around us by their interference.

Right now in London, we have no pollution—I see blue sky every day. That's quite unusual for us. Nature has an extraordinary ability to heal itself very quickly.

**Sculpture:** What is a typical studio day like for you?

**SH:** I start very early, as I like to read for one hour before working either on my paintings or developing new ideas for the sculptures. My days are usually full of events and experimentation, and I have found play very helpful in developing new methods.

It's not a very good time because a lot of people are suffering, and you can't help but be affected by it. But as artists, we have always been working in the studio on our own—that's not new. At the moment, I wake up in the morning and have nothing in my diary, which is amazing. It's quite beautiful in some ways because it has given me a lot of time to read and to think, which we don't usually have because we are running around too much.





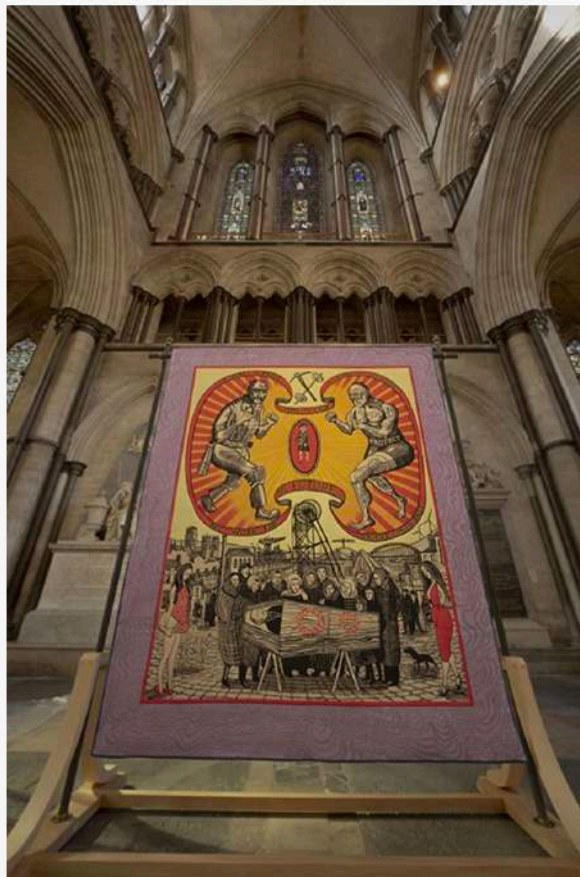
THE ART NEWSPAPER

## Salisbury Cathedral marks 800th anniversary with virtual show featuring Mark Wallinger and Grayson Perry

Works were installed throughout the historic building before lockdown


GARETH HARRIS

8th May 2020 20:00 BST



Grayson Perry's *Death of a Working Hero*, installed in Salisbury Cathedral Ash Mills

The largest-ever contemporary art exhibition held at Salisbury Cathedral, one of England's oldest churches, has moved online amid the coronavirus pandemic via a virtual show that includes works by Mark Wallinger, Grayson Perry and Shirazeh Houshiary.

The [online exhibition](#)  allows viewers to move around the cathedral, which holds one of the four surviving copies of the Magna Carta. The sophisticated virtual device gives visitors confined to their homes under lockdown the chance to home in on works located throughout the building, from David Mach's *Heaven* series of collages (2011) in the refectory to Wallinger's video *Threshold to the Kingdom* (2000). Pieces from the cathedral's permanent collection—sculptures by Dame Elisabeth Frink, Dame Barbara Hepworth and Helaine Blumenfeld—have also been incorporated into the exhibition.

The show marks the 800th anniversary of the laying of the cathedral's foundation stones. "Eight hundred years ago, people pitched up at the site and achieved something extraordinary," says Jacqueline Creswell, the exhibition's curator and Salisbury Cathedral's visual arts advisor. "I want to ask: what is it about human beings that can inspire such creativity? The exhibition was conceived as a celebration of the human spirit and human endeavour, manifested through the faith and skill that drove the builders and their community on."



Eduardo Paolozzi's *Daedalus* BNPS Zachary Culpin



The virtual platform launched on 28 April, the day the foundation stone was laid 800 years ago and a month after the show was halted due to the coronavirus outbreak. “We started installing 5 March, but by 15 March we began to get concerned,” Creswell says. “I called in the technical team and began to consult the clerk of works.”

She hopes to keep the works in situ until early 2021, giving visitors the chance to see them in the flesh after lockdown measures are lifted. “I don’t think the digital platform can compensate for the beauty of art, but we are trying to engage people in a different way. We hope to keep the exhibition until after Easter next year, with the exact date to be confirmed,” she says. The Wiltshire-based ScootZooma Foundation and Osborne Samuel gallery in London are among the financial backers.

Visitors can in the meantime savour works sited outside the cathedral, including *Large Reclining Figure* (1983) by Henry Moore and artist Danny Lane’s dramatic *Stairway* piece (2005), a glass and steel staircase that rises towards the cathedral spire.

“Physically glass is many times stronger than concrete, or even granite, under compression,” Lane says. “I proved this in the 1980s and wanted to use it architecturally as a bridge. When sculpture works, it is transdimensional—doing and meaning many things on different levels.” The work is produced in an edition of six, one of which is owned by the Portuguese collector Joe Berardo.



Danny Lane's Stairway BNPS Zachary Culpin





## After the hyperlink broke, they answered 5 questions about the crisis and the future in different cities

Apr 20, 2020 TANC



The new coronavirus outbreak that spread from Wuhan to China and the world in early 2020 is also part of the global ecological crisis in recent years. In the face of a series of humanitarian crises, economic turmoil, and political disputes triggered by the new ecological crisis, the response and actions of everyone, every social organization, and even every country at this time will affect and shape our future.



According to the order in which the pictures appear: Qiu Anxiong, "The New Classic 3", 2013-2017, provided by the artist; London Underground, picture from unsplash; people with masks on the border, picture from unsplash

We sent our questions to artists, gallerists and art professionals from different countries and regions, and soon received Irish artist Sean Scully, Chinese artist Qiu Anxiong, born in Iranian artist Shirazeh Houshiary, art market experts Wu Kejia and Georgina Adam, curation director Greg Hilty of London Lisson Gallery, and independent curator Answer by Paul Moorhouse, CEO of The Anthony Caro Studio. Some people answered the questions one by one, while others answered the questions in their own way.

❶What do you think about the hyperlinks formed by globalization in the past two decades ?

❷What changes will the local art ecology and global cultural environment face in the next ten years?

❸In this round of global crisis, what do you think is the core of your country? What is the problem? What are the common problems facing the world is that?

❹ in the new international environment, different cultures how to cross the isolation, exchanges and communication?

❺ you (or your institution) will be how to think and respond to the current ecological and political, Changes in the cultural environment?



**Sean Scully Sean Scully**

**Artist, born in Dublin, Ireland, now works and lives in New York, USA, Barcelona, Spain and Munich, Germany**

"In the past 100 years, we have hurt the mother of nature.

We all have our own countries, and they are all involved in global economic disputes. The defeated country is our habitat, and the breath of nature remains. Now, the natural habitat has to reject us.



Some American experts say that Joe Biden will be nominated for a Democratic presidential candidate. If the epidemic caused by the new coronavirus intensifies, Trump will lose the election. If the epidemic is not too serious: Trump will win the election. Our destiny is in the hands of bacteria and viruses, that is, in the hands of nature. Therefore, nature is God, and God will determine our destiny. always like this.

If we are united, we can all survive. If we are not united, we will not survive. "



**Wu Kejia**

**Art market expert, born in Wuhan, Hubei, now lives in New York**

"On March 15, 2020, Vittorio Gregotti, known as the " Father of Italian Modern Architecture ", died of the new crown virus at the age of 92." Architect News "magazine (The Architect's Newspaper) said that Gregory's departure marked the end of an era.

With the spread of the new crown around the world, this 100-year plague has infected more than 2 million people and killed more than 140,000 people. It seems to confirm that Freeman Dyson, a professor at the Institute of Advanced Studies at Princeton University, in 2007 The "misfortune of the 21st century". This confrontation between humans and viruses may essentially reflect humanity as a species, but it is only part of the long evolutionary process of the earth and the natural vulnerability of this species. Looking back at the outbreaks of viruses in the past few months in the world, the speed and damage have far exceeded our expectations. It must be said that human



misleading guidance has accounted for the overwhelming factor. When the world is facing the tragic scene of such a prairie situation, the mutual attacks and accusations of various countries continue to escalate, and populism is very popular-in the process of human development, there have been mental states that abandoned the disputes between different ethnic groups and resisted the natural crisis , It seems rarely seen.

In 1606, a major plague broke out in London, and Shakespeare's troupe was forced to stop performing. During the quarantine period, he completed the writing of three scripts of "Lear", "Macbeth" and "Anthony and Cleopatra". Shawon borrowed King Lear to expose the pathology of British society in the early 17th century: violence, deception and hypocrisy. After more than four hundred years, what revelation does it give us to reread Shakespeare?

When the new crown crisis continues to spread, in addition to data modeling and technical interpretation of pathology, perhaps the most important question we should think about is: Where is the future of humanity?

Two days after Gregory 's death, his former student and American architect Paul Seletsky issued a eulogy letter to his mentor: "I will miss you, Vittorio. You are the guide , Respect the teacher, sometimes a kind father. Architect Louis Kang said that the building is the material form of light. You are the luminous body among them. "

The huge crack that broke out in this building of the global society today may be the reason for letting in the light. "



## Qiu Anxiong

### Artist, from Chengdu, now based in Shanghai

❶ Globalization is not something that has only occurred in the past two decades. It has begun in the era of great navigation. After the publication of Theodore Levitt's business paper "Globalization of Markets" in 1983, the term "globalization" has expanded Politics, as well as the entire cultural field, in the past two decades, the popularization of information technology and air transportation has accelerated its evolutionary process. China has rejoined this process after reform and opening up, and it has played an increasingly important role. It should be said that capital is the fundamental driving force of globalization. Capital needs a free-flowing environment to maximize profits, then globalization is the best choice, but globalization brings about the overall concentration of wealth, and the differentiation between rich and poor is more serious. No matter whether it is the United States or Asia, people in the lower and middle classes have not benefited. Workers in developed countries have lost their job opportunities, while workers in developing countries have lost their health in sweatshops. They can only earn enough money to make a living. Physically unable to continue to work, they are abandoned, and the destruction of health and the lack of financial income will make their lives later very miserable. Where capital has swept through, regional wealth and even the wealth accumulated by the entire country for many years have been swept away, which has caused more poor people in many regions, and the Matthew effect has become universal. The solidification of transnational strata will be more serious. Whether the rich in China or the rich in the United States live in a spatial dimension, are educated in the same prestigious schools, live in the same five-star hotel, and take the same business class, but all The poor people will have different ways of poverty, and there is no condition for free flow, as Tolstoy said: happiness is always similar, but unfortunately different.

❷ Art in the global capital chain, the logic is the same, the differentiation of the rich and the poor in the art circle will continue, the art fair will become more and more important, and the biennale will become more and more boring.

❸ Populism, nationalism, ecological crisis, and the root cause are the globalization of capital. You can also say that globalized capital is another virus. The problem for China is how not to fall into the trap of Latin Americanization. The global problem is how to preserve a place of survival, rather than colonizing Mars, which is also a dream that very few talents are qualified to dream.

❹ The epidemic is a crisis or an opportunity. The national political level may enter a mutual assistance mode or a closed isolation mode. Cultural exchange should not be interrupted. Internet social media will become a tool for sharing information globally, but it will also be With the existence of the Toban, monitoring is easier, and public opinion manipulation is also easier. Perhaps what is waiting for us in the future is neither a communist society nor a democratic society, but a technological slave society.



⑤ As an art worker, you may not immediately respond to what is happening right now. Art is not the same as news, nor politics. Art cannot change and solve the current problems. It may take some time to digest and understand, think and brew. I have imagined the current situation in my previous works, but now I still work according to my established ideas and rhythm.



**Greg Hilty**

**Curation Director of Lisson Gallery, London, now based in London**

① Taking the cultural field as an example, globalization has greatly changed the relationship between culture and the political and economic system, mainly because the balance of power has changed, and it has shifted from Europe and America to more countries, especially China. In terms of culture, it has not been possible to view the world from a Western perspective since 2008. Of course, there are still some people who stick to the rules. This was the case before, and it is still the same. Their views are obviously not comprehensive. More comprehensive cultural mutual trust contains rich potential: deep similarity, unlimited diversity and particularity, and more complex and rich human nature. All in all, it's exciting. However, a global perspective may not always be successfully constructed. It also faces huge obstacles such as educational background, interests, prejudice and so on, as well as various problems caused by economic activities. The sustainable development of the global economic and political system has not been successfully established. We have to adopt austerity policies, and now we have to face the epidemic, which will lead to further cultural austerity. This situation is not only sad but also very dangerous. Anyone with a heart of tolerance is responsible for protecting and expanding the global perspective as much as possible.

② In the future, we will see many inevitable changes in the field of culture. Museums are still the center of gravity of the art world, but new ways must be found to obtain adequate financial support. Education, medical care and other fields require more capital investment, and the support for museums will be reduced accordingly, and they will face more intense competition.

In terms of galleries, the widespread dissemination of information will continue to benefit the art market — such as making it easier to find fans of artists around the world — but globalization may change the original pattern. Emerging markets will emerge, such as Africa and India, as well as China that has already emerged. Each emerging market will breed a unique ecology and culture. The composition of collector groups will also change, becoming more diverse, younger and more international; at the same time, online platforms will also promote more activities and transactions. Similarly, because people are increasingly worried about the risks of international travel, art fairs may need to adjust their strategies, such as replacing new physical exhibitions with new technologies such as virtual reality.

③ In addition to economic uncertainty and ups and downs, the collapse of the ecosystem will lead to the collapse of the social system. As the simplest response, totalitarianism is rampant, and there are wars for resources ... It may be too early to say that, But we will see soon.

④ At present, the market interests of the global economic system and the political interests of mutual cooperation are gradually decreasing, and it is time for a complete transformation. At the same time, we must establish and maintain a platform to enhance mutual trust and sharing of culture and promote creative thinking, so that we can continue to survive.

⑤ We will take root locally and look globally. If necessary, we will come forward. The Tate Museum's leadership of British art around climate change is an example of active participation. We will listen to and spread the voices of artists whose unique and outstanding contributions define the meaning of humanity.





**Georgina Adam** **Georgia Adam**

**Art market expert, author of "The Dark Side of Prosperity: The Surplus of the 20th Century Art Market"**

❶ has many positive meanings. Globalization has increased mutual understanding among countries in the world and highlighted the concerns of other countries. In the art field, artists are more likely to gain more audiences than their predecessors.

❷ Close communication around the world leads to the risk of art homogenization-artists can see what people around the world are doing, and may tend to follow the trend to create works that are easy to achieve commercial success, rather than following their own traditions and cultures. I often see works of art around the world very similar to the works of today's successful artists. I am also worried that the art gallery system will be polarized into a few large-scale galleries with global influence, and there is no space for small and medium-sized galleries. I also worry that art will be absorbed by the fashion and luxury industries.

③ Everyone should unite. We are all responsible for reducing carbon emissions, reducing plastics and food waste ... It may be said that the countries that are blocking borders are doing these things, and the epidemic spreading on a large scale has forced people to change their business models and reduce travel ... but we are seeing the reality Before the change, everyone has a long and hard way to go.

④ Via the Internet! The obstacles are all physical, of course, some countries have cut off the Internet. But the information can continue to spread.

⑤ The current political environment is very worrying, populism is intensifying, today 's leaders of many countries have terrifying authoritarian qualities, and government credibility has been destroyed in many ways (some cases are reasonable, politicians prove themselves It really is not trustworthy), the reputation of the media has been wiped out, the judicial system has been attacked, and the political discourse has been extreme. They are all high-profile "dog whistle", leaving no room for the middle point of view.

What can people do? 1. Do n't react without thinking — pay attention to checking the source of each piece of information; 2. Participate in political activities by supporting moderates; 3. Slightly change your lifestyle and pay more attention to ecological changes.





**Paul Moorhouse Paul Moorhouse**

**Independent curator, CEO of The Anthony Caro Studio, he has served as senior curator at both Tate Gallery and National Portrait Gallery**

"Globalization is not a new phenomenon. Population movements, exchanges of ideas and trade interactions across distant geographic distances are as old as the exchange itself. These activities have greatly enriched the human experience. Who has not benefited from commodities that come from outside of their own lives? Whether they are in the form of thought or material. However, at the same time benefits also come with costs.

Globalization has entered a new stage in the 21st century, generating a large number of new opportunities and bringing about terrible potential consequences. The decline in international travel costs, the expansion of the Internet, and the growth of global trade seem to make people believe that a tightly connected open world has taken shape. We look forward to traveling as much as we want, and experiencing other cultures for ourselves. Digital technology has opened a virtual window for a wider experience of the world, and has further consolidated this mindset.

However, globalization, which was supposed to foster value systems, has increasingly become a threat. In theory, international interactions that break through geographic boundaries are an important force for improving the quality of life. In fact, the increasing traffic and the daily movement of individuals and groups inevitably sacrifice the ecological environment, while at the same time creating irresistible temptations.

The world's material and cultural resources are the common property of mankind. With the increase of the world's population, demand will also increase significantly. However, unrestrained demand has brought unbearable pressure on the earth's ecological and cultural system. Although unpleasant, the conclusion is clear: we cannot continue to indulge in a worldview on demand. We must find new ways of communication and interaction, and share world resources.

Until recently, it was considered impossible to alleviate the pressure of travel on the earth. The spread of the new coronavirus changed everything. At present, the health crisis that has swept the world has demanded terrible costs and presented difficult challenges; and it has drastically changed expectations that were justified not long ago. In a surprisingly short period of time, the desire to travel as much as you want immediately collapsed. The impact is profound. In extreme cases, it represents restraint and inconvenience: it is no longer possible to travel unrestrictedly to destinations that are fascinating. In another extreme case, the suspension bridge for cultural and economic exchanges has been pulled up, and the experience and financial fields will face far-reaching potential consequences. The quality of life will be affected, and it is not known to what extent.

However, the frustrating development also produced unexpected insights. People have recognized the impact of international travel on the ecological environment before, but refused to make changes. There is a view that international travel cannot be reduced at all: the economic consequences of reducing international travel are terrible and unbearable; compared to this, the consequences of ecological damage are secondary. However, international travel has now decreased. Our sky becomes more transparent, and if it continues, the earth's environment will become better. However, reducing international travel does not mean ending the interaction, but inspiring other forms of interaction.

In the field of culture, the situation is very complicated. International trade can be done digitally, but people are reluctant to give up visiting destinations that can expand their horizons and bring enjoyment. Face-to-face cultural exchange cannot be replaced. For example, the need to exhibit art around the world cannot be zeroed out. For our art ecosystem, the flow of people and works of art is crucial and has been deeply embedded in expectations.

However, the crisis caused by the new coronavirus shows that the passenger flow can be managed, and as long as there is sufficient motivation and necessity, it can even reduce it. This is not to say that overcrowded attractions are to be closed, but the feasibility of controlling passenger flow is beyond doubt. The ingenious virtual exhibition mode can provide a pretty good experience. Although images will never replace reality, virtual reality can be used as a substitute; in the field of culture, this technology is still a resource that has not been well developed and utilized.

Faced with huge resistance in managing passenger flow, changing the way we interact with world culture also requires a very jumping imagination. However, it is ethical to limit visits to fragile places of interest and reduce the artistic susceptibility of mobile fragility — if possible, while also providing virtual reality alternatives — and we cannot ignore these options. We should start thinking, exploring, and communicating in new ways. "





**Shirazeh Houshiary Shirazeh Houshiary**

**Artist, born in Iran, now lives in London**

"The entrance to the United Nations Headquarters is inscribed with a verse from the famous Iranian Persian poet Saadi Shirazi of Shiraz in the 13th century. In my opinion, this poem explains who we are.

**All the heirs of Adam are the same body and limbs,**

**It is the creation of the same ontology.**

**Any pain can be felt everywhere.**

**If you do n't feel the pain of others,**

**It cannot exist in the name of man.**

**All of the sons of Adam are limbs of one single body,**

**Having been created of one essence.**

**When the calamity of time effects us with pain in one part of that body**

**All the other parts feel it too.**

**If you fail to feel the pain of others**

**Deserve not the name, human being. "**

# LISSON GALLERY

*The New York Times*  
8 March 2020

**The New York Times**

## As Tensions Rise With Iran, So Does Interest in Art It Inspired

This year, several museums in the United States will feature works by Iranian artists in exile.



Shirazeh Houshiary at her studio in London. Ana Cuba for The New York Times



By Farah Nayeri

Published March 8, 2020 Updated March 12, 2020



*This article is part of our latest [special report on Museums](#), which focuses on the intersection of art and politics.*

LONDON — The Iranian artist Shirazeh Houshiary works out of a luminous studio in a leafy corner of southwest London. Her misty abstract paintings evoke the galaxy, the cosmos, the afterlife. To make them, she floods the canvas with water, pours pigment over it and draws tiny marks over the dried surface.

“Abstraction is one of the most sophisticated ways of coming to feeling, like a piece of music: You have tone, color, rhythm, so many things that touch you right inside,” she said in a recent interview at her studio, where she tiptoed around in striped socks. “I really want to get to the core of what I don’t know. And what I don’t know fascinates me more than what I know, even about myself.”

Ms. Houshiary, who moved to London in 1975, is one of a number of Iranian-born artists to have solo exhibitions in the United States this year. Her show, titled “A Thousand Folds,” at the Lehmann Maupin gallery in New York opens April 30.

Like many of her peers, she left the country around the time of the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and settled in the West, as political conditions in Iran made it hard for artists to live and work there. While she steered clear of figuration, other artists in exile have tackled political themes by representing veiled women and religious fervor in their work. Among them is the video artist and photographer [Shirin Neshat](#), who is based in the United States and whose retrospective just ended at the Broad in Los Angeles and opens in February 2021 at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. With the animosity between the governments of the United States and Iran now at a peak, these representations are finding a bigger platform in American museums and galleries.



Joanne Heyler, founding director of the Broad, said in an email that when Ms. Neshat's retrospective was in the planning stages, she hoped it would "lead to a wider reflection on the history of the United States and Iran as well as on the contemporary immigrant experience." She noted that Ms. Neshat, who now works in New York, was initially based in Los Angeles, a city with the largest population of Iranians outside Iran (half a million Iranians live across the United States), and many shared the artist's experience of leaving their country around the time of the revolution and the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. "The events of that time were seismic and continue to impact global events, yet it is a story not well known by Americans, especially younger Americans."



"Gegenschein" (2018) by Ms. Houshiary. Shirazeh Houshiary, Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong and Seoul

Ms. Houshiary, who was nominated for the prestigious Turner Prize in 1994, moved to London to escape Tehran — the "colorless" capital that her family had moved to — and school, where teenage classmates displayed a sudden thirst for revolution that she did not



share. She enrolled in art school and became drawn to minimalist sculpture, and in her degree show, she exhibited an enclosure of darkness and light that drew coverage from The Financial Times. Soon afterward, she signed on with London's [Lisson Gallery](#). Her best-known work to date is a stained-glass window inside a London landmark: the church of [St.-Martin-in-the-Fields, off Trafalgar Square](#).

The year of the revolution, another future member of Iran's artistic diaspora was born in Tehran: Amir H. Fallah, a figurative painter now based in Los Angeles. Because of the political turmoil in Iran, Mr. Fallah had a much more unstable childhood. He grew up at the height of the Iran-Iraq war, when aerial bombings often forced families to take refuge in bunkers stocked with cans of food.

When the family decided to move to Austria, they entrusted their savings to a distant relative who ran off with the money, leaving them stranded for two years in Turkey. "We went from middle class to abject poverty overnight," he recalled in a telephone interview.

Settling in Virginia, the family eventually regained its former status. After graduating from the University of California, Los Angeles, Mr. Fallah started exhibiting in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates in 2005. His first large-scale exhibition is at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tucson, Ariz., through May 3.



An installation view of "A Path Set In Stone" (2017) by Amir H. Fallah. Amir H. Fallah, via MOCA Tucson



"I don't feel 100 percent anything, really, and I feel like I'm in a state of limbo, which is fine with me: I think that's where richness lies," he said of his multiple cultural identities. As a dark-skinned Iranian, he said, he suffered racism. "A lot of Iranians get a cultural pass because they can pass off as white, but I never had that experience," he said.

His acrylic paintings are decorative and ornate, a bridge between two worlds. "For me, it's interesting to mash up a detail from a Persian miniature or a Persian rug with a 1980s skateboard graphic, or references to graffiti art or graphic design and pop culture, because that's kind of what I am," he explained.

In his earlier body of work, faces are concealed with a bandanna or a scarf. "When you can't see somebody's physical features, then you have to focus on the other things around them," he said. "It goes back to my own identity. People are always misreading me because I'm dark-skinned. That's kind of where this comes out of."

Mr. Fallah said the art world was focused on "areas it's been neglecting," such as African-American and Latino artists, and "some of that does trickle down to Iranian artists. But honestly, I haven't seen a big boom."

In the international auction world, prices of Iranian modern and contemporary art are not comparable to their Western counterparts. The most expensive work by a living Iranian artist is Parviz Tanavoli's bronze sculpture "The Wall (Oh Persepolis)" (1975), which sold in 2008 for \$2.84 million. Other modern artists popular with collectors include Monir Farmanfarmaian, Siah Armajani (who had a show at the Met Breuer last year) and modern masters such as Bahman Mohassess and Leyly Matine-Daftary.

Roxane Zand, Sotheby's deputy chairman of the Middle East and Gulf region, said that the early 2000s brought "a sudden attention" toward Iranian art but that the 2008 global financial crisis led to a market correction. The situation today is more normalized, she said.



She noted a growing gap between artists of the diaspora and those living in Iran, where economic hardship, sanctions and a collapsing currency mean that artists are unable to buy colors or canvases, or to have their work exhibited by Tehran-based gallerists at international fairs.

The Iranian-born collector Mohammed Afkhami — who will exhibit works from his collection of contemporary Iranian art at New York's Asia Society in October — said that when he started making acquisitions in 2005, “Iranian art collecting was an exclusively Iranian affair among Iranians.”

Today, Iranian artists are represented by top international galleries, and they are in the collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, the British Museum and the Pompidou Center, he said. Yet, “we are still in the early stages of that diversification away from purely Iranian patronage,” he added.

L I S S O N   G A L L E R Y

*Art Review Asia*  
Spring 2019

## ArtReview Asia

Artist Project by Shirazeh Houshiary

Shirazeh Houshiary is presenting work  
in *Love is Metaphysical Gravity*, Lisson Gallery,  
Shanghai, 22 March – 11 May

# Textures on the Edge of the Gobi

*Text and images by Shirazeh Houshiary*

We are born from this rocky earth and our arts are born from the landscape we inherit and inhabit.

Between the deserts of the Gobi and Taklamakan in northwest China lies Dunhuang, or 'City of Sand'. The city was a vital resting point for merchants and pilgrims travelling through the region and played a key role in the passage of Silk Road trade to and from China. An ancient site of Buddhist activity and learning, Dunhuang is surrounded by numerous grottoes and caves, including those at Mogao and Yulin. The most famous is the small oasis at Mogao, where east-facing cliffs overlook a flowing river and rolling sand dunes that extend beyond like ocean waves.

Between the fourth and fourteenth centuries several hundred hand-carved caves and grottoes were created at Mogao. Many reveal exquisite wall paintings and sculptures that depict the multiculturalism and multiethnicity of the Silk Road during the 1,000 years that Dunhuang remained a vibrant hub of exchange. The location would eventually become known in China and beyond as a place of unrivalled beauty, sanctity and knowledge. It is a most magnificent experience to encounter these frescoes where one can transcend time and space.

The subtle colours and shifting textures of desert sands, the glacial waters flowing from the surrounding mountains and the flora of the oasis intensify the experience that is Mogao. Water becomes liquid light at midday and blue to turquoise by dusk, and the vegetation of the oasis oscillates between jade and malachite. These colours had a significant impact on the artists who painted the frescoes.

The Mogao caves also contained thousands of scrolls and religious texts, including the jewel that is the Diamond Sutra, the world's first printed book. One of its poetic verses reveals the experience of the desert landscape poignantly.

*Thus shall you think of this fleeting world:*

*A star at dawn, A bubble in a stream,  
A flash of lightning in a summer cloud,  
A flickering lamp, a phantom and a dream.*

一切有为法，  
如梦、幻、泡、影；  
如露，亦如电，  
应作如是观。

Translated by Kumārajīva from Sanskrit to Chinese in the fourth century



Yulin Grottoes



Yağan landform

Gobi Desert



Mogao Grottoes (Dunhuang Cave 220)



Fragment of great wall (Western Han Dynasty)



The Mingsha Temple



Brick with dragon design (Five Dynasties)



Taklamakan Desert

Yadan landform



Mogao Grottoes (Dunhuang Meditation Cave 285)



# LISSON GALLERY

*Financial Times*  
8 February 2019

## FINANCIAL TIMES

FT Series Frieze LA 2018

Collecting

+ Add to myFT

### Iranian-born artist Shirazeh Houshiary: 'Numbers are beautiful to me'

Ahead of a solo presentation at Frieze LA, the artist talks about maths, art and what links the two

Rachel Spence



© Jasper Fry

The secluded London studio of Shirazeh Houshiary foxes my Uber driver entirely. But I shouldn't be surprised that the Iranian-born artist is off-grid. Among a heap of volumes that litter her studio floor is *Reality is Not What it Seems* by [Carlo Rovelli](#), the quantum physicist whose luminous texts explain why Newtonian laws of space and time can only take us so far.

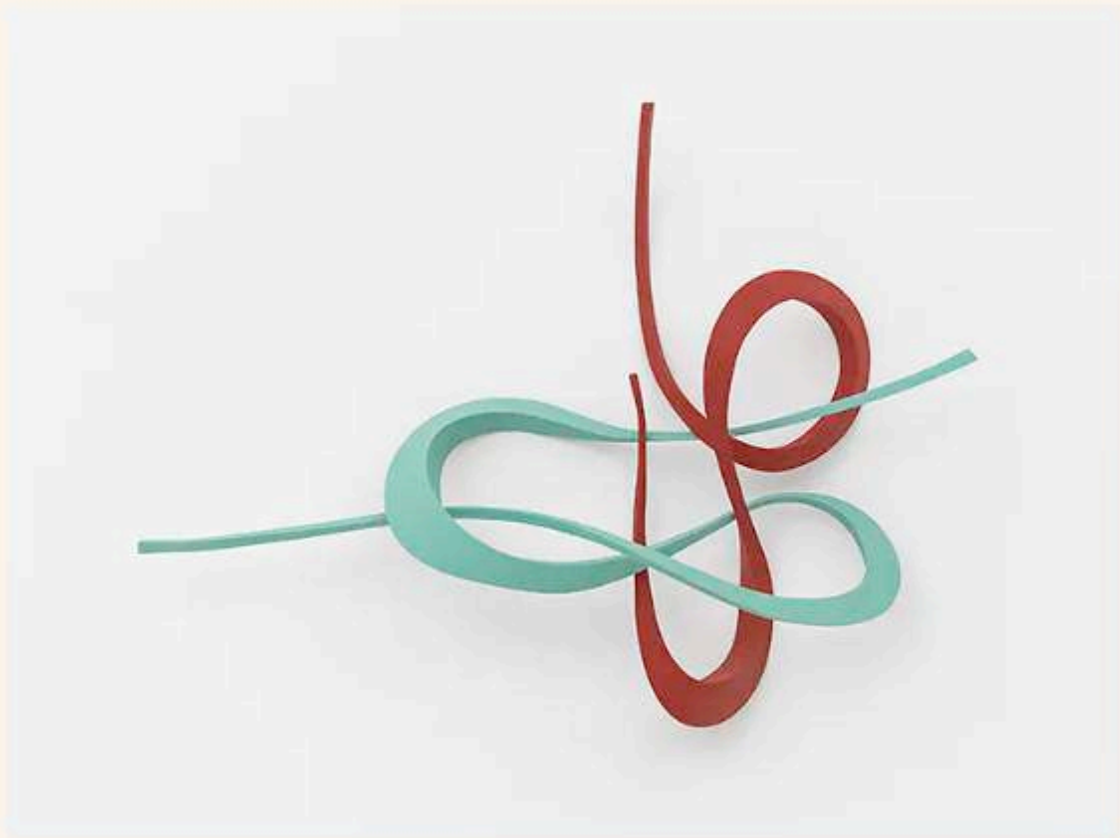
With her bright, bespectacled eyes framed by a halo of auburn curls, Houshiary emits her own radiance. After a flurry of mutual sorries — me for lateness, her for elusiveness — we plunge into a three-hour discussion of remarkable intensity. Yet even as we peregrinate through art, science, philosophy and politics with detours through Rovelli, Shakespeare, Derrida, Chaim Soutine and cave painting, Houshiary's innate sweetness remains undimmed.

"I'm going to make you something called Happy tea," she exclaims once we have settled in her large, white-walled studio. She returns bearing not only the beverage but also a box of strikingly luxurious vegan chocolates, then describes herself as a "vegetarian who sometimes eats fish".

In truth, her real appetite is for ideas. "My desire is to bring the laws of nature, the laws of physics, into my work, because I feel it can't be just me. It's not enough; I need something else," she says, gesturing at a painting on the wall. Entitled "Blurring", from a distance it looks like a gauzy lapis-hued chimera emanating out of a black void. But on closer scrutiny, the smoky apparition resolves into delicate strands of blue pigment that entwine and separate as if spelling out an indecipherable code.

"Blurring" is one of four new paintings and two sculptures she has made for her solo presentation at the stand of Lehmann Maupin at Frieze LA this week. It is the first time she has made work expressly for an art fair. Such a commercial destination seems at cross purposes with her ethereal character. "I am fed up with art fairs. They are so ubiquitous," she admits, echoing the sentiments of many contemporary artists.





Houshiary's 'The Oracle' (2018)

But the monograph presentation, which was suggested by Lehmann Maupin, suits her better than having “one sculpture or painting in a fair so that people only get a taste” of her work. With no restriction on theme or style, her show will allow people to experience the “whole vocabulary” of her work. “It’s only for three days but that’s not much different from theatre or dance,” she muses, suggesting that the pop-up nature of a fair gives the art a performative quality.

One hopes visitors pause long enough to give paintings such as “Blurring” serious contemplation. It was created using her signature method of pouring mineral pigment mixed with water on to canvas before “working” the pigment into patterns of her own devising, first in pencil and then with silk, cotton wool and brushes.

In keeping with others in the same series, “Blurring” hides a clandestine inscription of two words in Arabic. “One says ‘I am’ and the other says ‘I am not,’” Houshiary reveals.

“Only the laws of mathematics can explain it,” she admits when I ask her if she can elucidate why she has chosen the two opposing statements. “Think of one as ‘I am being’ and minus one as ‘I am not being’. What links them? Zero. Only zero has the potentiality of being both so this painting is trying to capture the energy of zero.”

It comes as little surprise to hear that Houshiary seriously considered becoming a mathematician. “Numbers are beautiful to me,” she says. “They come to me very easily.”

Ultimately she chose art over science because “it contained everything. It was not specialised. I didn’t just want to live in the mind as mathematicians do.”



Shirazeh Houshiary's busy but organised desk at her studio © Jasper Fry



Although her father — “an architect and musician” — hoped she would become a scientist, he fostered her capacity for independent choices. Touchingly, she credits him with “whatever I have”, adding that he taught her “to look, to understand, to not judge and not have preconceived ideas. To not believe what anyone tells me.”

Unable to connect with the radical ideas of revolution swirling through 1970s Iran — she grew up first in Shiraz then in Tehran — Houshiary moved to London in 1974 and enrolled at the Chelsea School of Art. By 1982, she had joined Lisson Gallery, whose practitioners commanded the radical heights of the contemporary art world. Ostensibly she was part of a new generation of British sculptors such as [Anish Kapoor](#), Richard Deacon and Tony Cragg, yet Houshiary always felt an outsider.

“I was too many wrong things,” she says with a dry laugh. But as she describes the experience of being a woman from the eastern hemisphere in what was, save for Kapoor, essentially a western “boys’ club”, it’s clear that for all her success, those early decades were lonely.

Today, her curriculum boasts a galaxy of solo shows at Lisson, Lehmann Maupin and others, plus numerous participations in international events including the Venice and São Paulo Biennales, while her work is in major collections such as Tate, MoMA and the Guggenheim. In 1994, she was shortlisted for the Turner Prize when it was won by Antony Gormley.



Buckets full of pencil sharpenings, organised by colour © Jasper Fry

Most importantly, she has achieved inner serenity. “I wanted to be part of something. I wanted affirmation,” she says of her younger self. “Now I’ve transcended that. It doesn’t matter to me.”



Her quest for self-acceptance dovetails with the journey of her practice. “In my thirties, I began to be very disappointed with something. Maybe the art world was not what I thought it was,” she recalls. “I sat in my studio trying to understand who we were and who were not.”

That exploration led her to the concept of “the fold”, which is fundamental to her art. She explains it as “a hinge or space” that acts as “the gap where reality is. Where you exist and don’t exist.”

Serendipitously, we have journeyed back to one of the sculptures that will also grace Lehmann Maupin’s LA booth.



Houshiary's 'Lunate' (2018), which appears at Frieze LA

Entitled “Lunate”, it is made from small glass bricks cast on Murano in a translucent caramel hue that fluctuates constantly in the light. Laid one on top of another by Spanish studio Factum Arte — whose digital knowhow has made it the first port of call for many contemporary artists — the glass nuggets defy their material hardness to fold around their centre in a spiralling motion. When I peer within, the sense of spin and light evokes the cosmic suck of a star plunging into a black hole or the double helix of DNA.

For Houshiary, the sculptures encapsulate her realisation that “we are never sitting still. Everything is constantly shifting and moving, like being on the waves of the sea. That’s one of the ideas we get from Carlo Rovelli — the concept of waves. My work deals with that fluidity, that intangible space.”

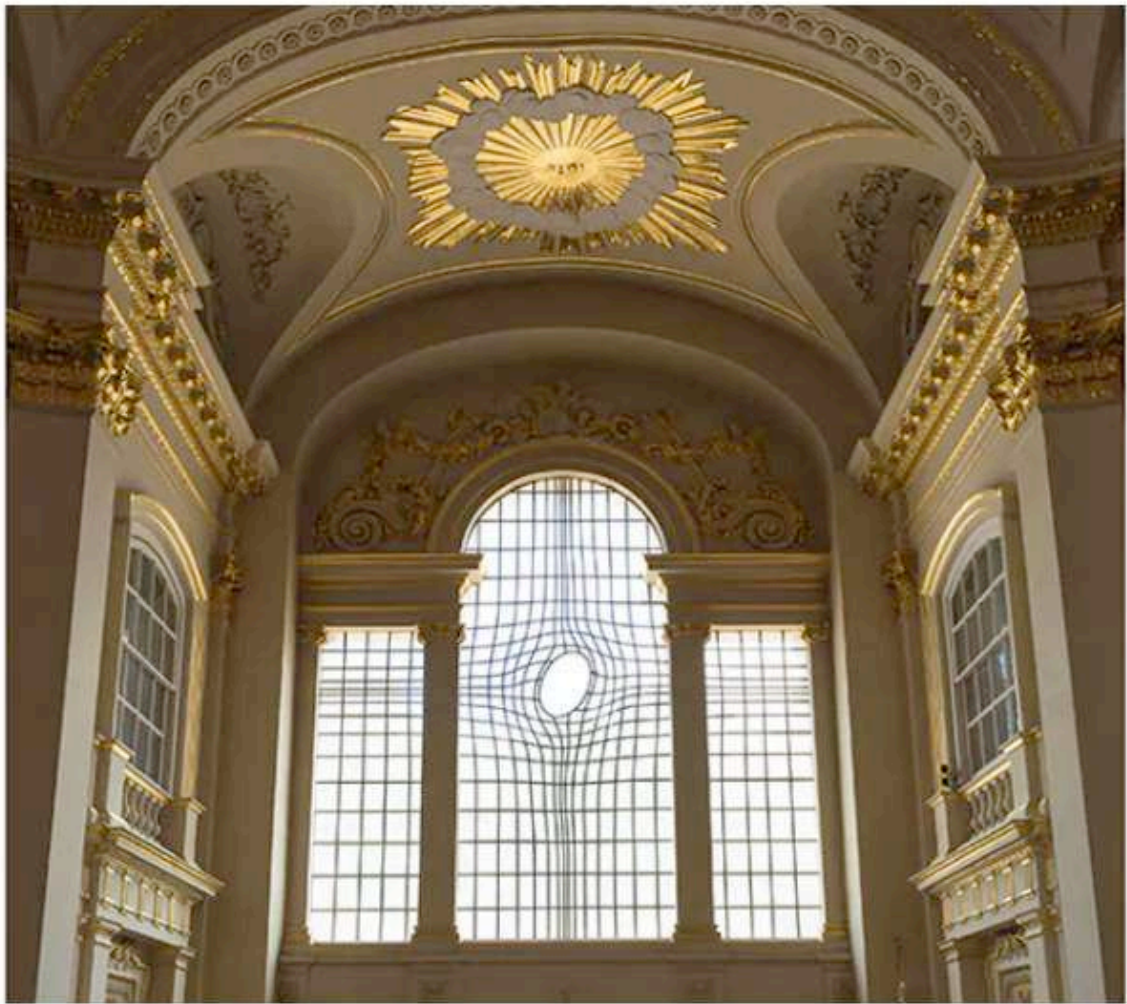


# LISSON GALLERY

*The Spectator*  
December 2018

## THE SPECTATOR

### St Martin-in-the-Fields: the 'Church of the Ever Open Door' Mark Mason



*Light fantastic: Shirazeh Houshiary's east window*

St Martin's really did once stand in the fields, just as nearby Haymarket was a market selling hay. But the church has moved with the times. In 1924 it hosted the first ever religious service to be broadcast live. You might have expected Westminster Abbey or St Paul's to get the nod, but neither wanted it — many in the religious establishment thought it would be wrong to transmit divine

worship over the airwaves, as people might listen in pubs. Dick Sheppard, St Martin's vicar at the time, was delighted to receive a letter saying that people in one south London pub had tuned in. Not only had they sung hymns for the first time since childhood, they'd discussed his sermon over their beer.

Sheppard also got the better of George Bernard Shaw. He asked the playwright if he would contribute an article for the *St Martin's Review*. Shaw responded that he wouldn't write for a 'silly parish magazine'. When Sheppard said he'd publish the response without comment, Shaw supplied a proper article within days.

The saint who gave the church its name was the third bishop of Tours. One day, approaching the gates of Amiens on a cold winter's day, Martin saw a beggar wearing very few clothes. Cutting his cloak in two, he gave half to the man. Martin is now the patron saint of beggars, and the church is known for its work with the homeless. Dick Sheppard labelled it the 'Church of the Ever Open Door'. In the 1920s, when the church let the homeless sleep in its crypt every night, a warden explained why they never judged anyone a scrounger until they'd fed them: 'You can't expect to hear the truth on an empty stomach.'

The church also has longstanding links with the peace movement. They can't have been very happy when, in 1914, a bomb was planted in one of the pews, supposedly by the suffragettes. It destroyed a window dedicated to W.H. Smith (yes, that W.H. Smith). Since 2008 the church's eastern window has been warped, a deliberate installation by the artist Shirazeh Houshiary, who says her work symbolises the fact that 'everything is in a state of erosion'. My favourite reminder of that comes down in the crypt, which is now a café, where you can read the gravestones at your feet. One runs: 'Remember, Man as thou goest by/ As thou are Now, so Once was I/ As I am Now, so must thou be/ Prepare thyself to follow Me.'

In 1871 St Martin's was the venue for the wedding of the tallest married couple ever — she was 7ft 11in, he was 7ft 7in, the vicar was a diminutive 6ft 3in. More recently the church has become famous for its memorial services. In 2001 it was Douglas Adams's turn, his friend Richard Dawkins reminding everyone how proud Adams had been that 'I was born in Cambridge in 1952 and my initials are DNA'. The next year came Spike Milligan's. The comedian had once told Harry Secombe: 'I hope you die before me because I don't want you singing at my funeral.' Secombe did die first — but his son brought the St Martin's house down by playing a recording of his father singing 'Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer'.



# OCULA

OCULA CONVERSATION

## A conversation with Shirazeh Houshiary

Artist

Diana d'Arenberg | Hong Kong | 17 May 2018



Shirazeh Houshiary. Photo: Dave Morgan.

**Shirazeh Houshiary** was born in 1955 in Shiraz, an Iranian city known for its rich literary and art history. She came to **London** in 1974 to study at the Chelsea School of Art—five years before the Iranian Revolution broke out. It was her sculptural works that first garnered attention in the 1980s, and which also earned her a Turner Prize nomination in 1994, along with Willie Doherty, **Peter Doig**, and **Antony Gormley**. Although she was part of the New British Sculpture movement at that time, Houshiary's body of work encompasses much more than sculpture, extending to painting, video installations and in more recent years, virtual reality.



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Genesis* (2016). Pigment and pencil on black Aquacryl on aluminium. 190 x 540 cm. © Shirazeh Houshiary. Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London/New York. Photo: Dave Morgan.

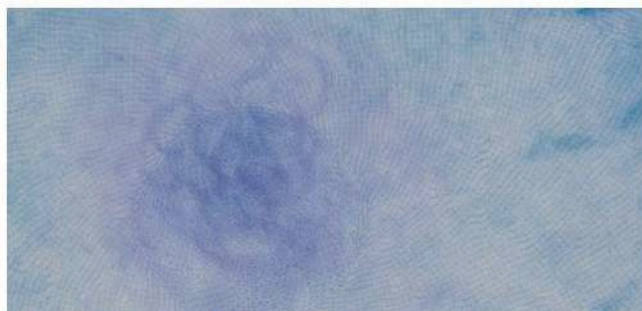
Houshiary's paintings bristle with contradictions. *Genesis* (2016), is a molten pool of black and red pigment and pencil on aluminium, which hints at both creation, as the title suggests, and destruction. *Veil* (1999), a monochromatic acrylic paint and graphite work made up of layer upon layer of pigment both reveals and conceals, giving the impression of both translucence and solidity; it initially appears completely black, but on closer inspection a square form emerges that recalls Malevich's iconic *Black Square* (1915). Unsettling, calming, metaphysical and mystical; these are demanding and time-consuming paintings that can take several months to complete. Laying the canvas horizontally on the floor, Houshiary pours washes of pigment on them before moving to layers of detailed textures in pencil or paint, some feather-like and others like liquid ripples. Much like water and pigment, breath is a central element in Houshiary's practice. 'I set out to capture my breath', she said in 2000, to 'find the essence of my own existence, transcending name, nationality, cultures.'



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Veil* (2005). Digital animation. Screen dimensions: 71 x 116 x 14 cm. © Shirazeh Houshiary. Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London/New York.

From breath and water, Houshiary creates a universe where forms dematerialise and materialise in a veil of colour and repetitive forms. Her work connects shamanism with science, and poetry with physics, drawing a balance between chaos and order. 'The universe is in a process of disintegration', she said in a 2013 interview with [Lisson Gallery](#); 'everything is in a state of erosion, and yet we try to stabilise it. This tension fascinates me and it's at the core of my work'.

Mark Rothko once said that his colour field paintings should be viewed from a distance of 18 inches, in order to dominate the viewer's field of vision and thus create a feeling of contemplation and transcendence. Much the same could be said of Houshiary's work. From a distance, her detailed monochromatic paintings resemble the cosmos, or microbial matter under a microscope. It is only once you step closer that the patterns in her compositions reveal themselves to be minuscule writings: Arabic letters that swirl, undulate, and dissolve into washes of colour. Some works resemble soundwaves, nebulae, or the movement of gas as it disperses through the air; they quiver and vibrate, giving the impression of atmospheric phenomena and energy that appears barely contained within the frame of the canvas.





Shirazeh Houshiary, *Soar* (2015) (Detail). Pencil and pigment on white Aquacryl on canvas and aluminium. 190 x 190 cm. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York/Hong Kong. Photo: Dave Morgan.

*Soar* (2015) is a haze of blue and violet pigment on canvas, across which 'I am' and 'I am not'—one an affirmation of self, the other a denial—are repeated in pencil in Arabic, pulsing across the surface until they dissolve into a thin veil of clouds. Words play a great role in Houshiary's work; with the simplest repetitive gesture of writing a simple self-affirmation (or denial), she creates a space in which different layers of consciousness both exist and emerge. The order of our language, philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein proposed in the collection of fragments of his works, *Zettel*, arises out of chaos and nothing. So too, Houshiary's work suggests, does our understanding of self.

I spoke to Houshiary about her practice in Hong Kong in March 2018, where Houshiary was being honoured with Asia Society's Asia Arts Game Changer Award alongside Subodh Gupta, Ju Ming, and Park Seo-Bo.



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Eclipse* (2015). Aluminium. 150 x 64.2 x 37 cm. © Shirazeh Houshiary, Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London/New York.

**What kind of art were you initially making when you moved to London?**

In Iran, I was more interested in theatre, so the change was dramatic. My real art education was in England. As an art student, I was making a lot of installation art and experimenting with light—it was about how you can intervene in the environment on a large scale. That's how I started, and I moved to sculpture from there; and from sculpture I moved into everything—painting, sculpture, film. I hated these boundaries after some point, because I think these are all artificially created by us. When you're involved with a visual experience, you will experiment with very different tools, and each tool allows you to discover a new vocabulary. Because the tool is new, it gives you a new vision and revitalises the process.

**Your sculptures are like three-dimensional versions of your paintings. What is the relationship between them?**

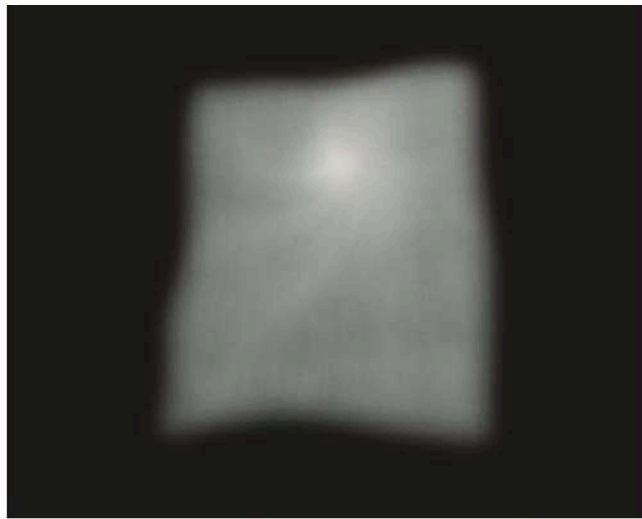
There is a connection. And I make film too—animation films on computer, because I'm also interested in the virtual world or the world that doesn't exist, and where the role of the body is in that. In my paintings, the role of the body is very clear, and in my sculpture the body is present. It's really about understanding your position and moving from one experience to another, because all these experiences are available to us as human beings. We are each inside a body—we cannot deny that. We understand the world through our senses, eyes, and ears; and we are constructed in a particular way that limits our vision of the world outside. So, it all affects the way we see the world.

The more we try to see the world on a different level, for example, by seeing it through a virtual lens or through your body or your mind, maybe then you can glimpse a reality. Stephen Hawking once wrote in his book that we are like gold



fish in a glass bowl. The gold fish's vision of the outside world is distorted because he sees the world through that glass. This is our condition too—we see the world through our glass, which is our senses, our bodies; even our ethics and moral structure. These are all limitations. So how do we see the nature of our reality when nature has created us with limitations? In a way, to go from one way of looking to another—say, from two-dimensional to three-dimensional to no dimensions or infinite dimensions—allows me to maybe glimpse at something that is in between all these stages.

The paintings are more of a field, the sculptures are more of an architectural body—but my paintings are definitely a field. I think fields are very powerful. I was studying the quantum world, and how tiny electron quads are affected by a beam of light, completely distorted and affected by a field. We don't even realise that our body is affected by a powerful field of energy all over the world. You're sitting here before me but you're nothing but energy, and I'm nothing but energy. Even our minds are energy. My paintings have that dimension: creating a field in the vision of the viewer.



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Veil* (2005). Digital animation. Screen dimensions: 71 x 116 x 14 cm. © Shirazeh Houshiary. Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London/New York.

**The expression of opposing forces encapsulates your work very well. Your work is very much about binaries.**

Yes, because if you look at my paintings you see these two sentences, 'I am' and 'I am not': they are two opposing forces that are a condition of who we are. Our existence and the universe is constantly in dialogue and not divided. We have a space between the two that is in constant collaboration. To be certain and to be uncertain is part of the same story, but we only take the one side. We like the certainty of existence and being sure about the economy, politics, society, our opinions, who we are. We look for certainty, but if you accept uncertainty as part of the same story you will see that your whole perception changes.

**Your paintings require a lot of repetitive gesture and concentration. The words 'I am', and 'I am not' are pencilled in over and over—it seems almost ritualistic.**

I'm interested in this idea of process and ritual and your experience of it in the work. In a way, I'm trying to understand my own existence in relation to the world around me. I'm trying to dig deep down into primordial sources of myself. This is why I think process and ritual is a way of framing; for me to understand all of this. Because if I didn't understand, it would be reflected on the surface of my work for the viewer to experience. That surface is purely a reflection of my understanding of what I have been going through. It cannot just be an intellectual activity. This is a combination of intellectual activity and physical activity—it's both. It's almost like being a scientist, you experiment to understand what the nature is of what you are trying to understand. What is energy? What is matter? Who am I in all of this? Where is reality? Do I see the nature of truth or do I not see? I have to understand all of this to make a work.



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Blue Hour* (2017). Pigment and pencil on black Aquacryl on canvas and aluminium. 190 x 270 cm, © Shirazeh Houshiary. Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London/New York.

#### **Ritual has been instrumental in building community and civilisation.**

Yes, shamans did that. This is why image-making is part of the evolution of our brain, in a way. The shaman wanted to connect to the world of spirit, to something bigger than himself. He found his own limitations in his own existence, just like that goldfish in the glass bowl. His perception is completely distorted and he has to connect to something else to have a connection to the outside world. This has always been the role of art, I think: to connect to something universal so that it can connect to other people.

#### **Is this why you leave your works quite ambiguous and open?**

People can take whatever they need out of it. They don't have to necessarily understand what I'm trying to get at, but it's a reflection of them. I become a mirror for them to see themselves and find their own way through this conundrum of 'I am' and 'I am not'—of the polarity of our existence.

The linking of the small to the large is what I enjoy more than anything else. From different distances, you're more aware of this field—it's more ethereal on the surface. The moment you come close it's a tiny structure that is very concrete. So, both illusive and concrete, fragile and strong. They exist simultaneously and I'm trying to show that sometimes our understanding of the world is very limited, because we cannot see that opposing forces are continuously in collaboration. They dance together, they are not separated. We are the ones who separate it. And that's why we have a lot of problems and tension in our lives and in society.



Shirazeh Houshiary, *The Ebb* (2017). Glass and mirror-polished stainless steel. 135 x 118 x 118 cm; *Slow Time* (2017). Pencil and pigment on black Aquacryl on canvas and aluminium. 190 x 190 cm (left to right). Installation view: *Nothing is deeper than the skin*, Lisson Gallery, New York (3 November–22 December 2017). Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery.

**Can you discuss the importance of water as a medium in your work?**

It's a necessity for life. Water flows, just as society flows. Culture flows and shifts and changes. Ideas and thoughts shift and change. I like the movement of water because it flows and cannot be fixed. If you understand the nature of water—that it constantly changes—then you understand that everything changes. Everything is in a state of flux—nature, the world, us with it. But we don't realise that. We create fixed stories about ourselves, our cultures, and there is a tension there. We like to fix everything because it feels more secure. We have a home, stability, a context and narrative, but these are all artificial. You have to go with this flowing movement. It's hard for us to do that. We struggle with it.

**Is making the intangible tangible part of what you are trying to do in your art?**

Yes, I would like to say that for me what is intangible and invisible is more important than what is visible and tangible. The intangible seems to be something that is more appropriate to want to grasp, for me. And the world around me, actually. The much bigger picture.



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Desire* (2004). Black Aquacryl, white pencil, and ink on canvas. 49.85 x 49.85 cm. Installation view: *Long, Winding Journeys: Contemporary Art and the Islamic Tradition*, Katonah Museum of Art, Katonah (25 February–17 June 2019). © Shirazeh Houshiary. Private collection. Courtesy Katonah Museum of Art. Photo: © Margaret Fox.

**Tell me more about your VR work. Does it allow you to better navigate around these limitations?**

Yes, but it does also have its own limitations. I've been working with VR since 2003 so I was really working with it from its inception. In 2003 we had very little, actually. I did quite a bit of work with breath on the video screen. For *Breath* (2003), I choreographed breath from four different vocalists from four different heritages. I tried not to use the technology as a space of emptiness, but as a tool to reach for what is intangible and inaccessible to my senses. There is an awful quality of VR that offers you emptiness.

**Escapism?**

Yes, I'm not interested in that. It's a cliché. But what is interesting about it is that you can connect to things that you have no access to; that you can't understand because you're limited by your senses. Perhaps with this medium you can connect to something very powerful that you cannot find within your ordinary experience in your physical body. It's a difficult area, I have to be honest. I have only done five pieces up to now—and I'm making the last one now. I've been struggling for five years to get it right. It takes me two to three years to do one work and they're very short—five to seven minutes maximum. The virtual can be quite useful to convey certain experiences if it's handled well and not turned into some sort of kitsch spectacle. I just try to use the media available to me to convey what I feel but is sometimes difficult to express through other media.







Shirazeh Houshiary, *Breath* (2003). Four-channel video. Installation view: *Everything at Once*, the Store Studios, London (5 October–10 December 2017). Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London/New York. © Shirazeh Houshiary. Photo: Jack Hems.

I remember seeing *Breath* (2003) seven years ago in London at Lisson Gallery (*No Boundary Condition*, 12 October–12 November 2011). That was my first encounter with your work.

I made *Breath* in 2003. It was one of the pieces I showed at the Venice Biennale in 2013. I wanted to see who I was—the closer I was to the mirror the less I was able to see, but when I stepped away from it I could see my breath.

This is interesting in relation to Lacan's concept of the 'mirror stage', when an infant recognises itself in the mirror, which in turn gives rise to the affirmation of the self; the 'I' or 'I am'. Except here you are no longer able to see, or recognise the self. It's the breath you see instead, not the reflection.

Exactly. I discovered that Einstein did a similar thought experiment about human identity. Einstein said, 'If I moved at the speed of light, what would I see when looking into the mirror?' He wouldn't be able to see an image of himself because the light wouldn't have time to go back and hit the mirror and reflect his image back. He realised it wasn't fixed. I didn't initially know about this experiment; I to see, but when I stepped away from it I could see my breath.

This is interesting in relation to Lacan's concept of the 'mirror stage', when an infant recognises itself in the mirror, which in turn gives rise to the affirmation of the self; the 'I' or 'I am'. Except here you are no longer able to see, or recognise the self. It's the breath you see instead, not the reflection.

Exactly. I discovered that Einstein did a similar thought experiment about human identity. Einstein said, 'If I moved at the speed of light, what would I see when looking into the mirror?' He wouldn't be able to see an image of himself because the light wouldn't have time to go back and hit the mirror and reflect his image back. He realised it wasn't fixed. I didn't initially know about this experiment; I only discovered it a year ago, yet I've been talking about it for the last 10 to 15 years.

My experiment was really about identity—whether it is a fixed proposition or whether it is shifting constantly. I realised that it is constantly shifting, and the agony of humans is that they don't like that, and we are constantly trying to fix it. The conflict is huge, and on the individual level it's also a crisis, because identity cannot be fixed. It's impossible, but that is the nature of it. Einstein realised he could not fix it; the speed of light is always stable—light would not be able to come back and hit the mirror so he would have a void.

Everything else in this universe is related to this idea of fixity. Fixity and change shift constantly in relation to each other. But we are only aware of the fixed, not the shifting process. We get surprised about how much we don't understand. We think time exists, but actually in this process time doesn't exist—it's movement that gives the sense of time. Perhaps it's heat that gives us a sense of change; and when it's cool, it changes. Change is time.





Shirazeh Houshiery, *Breath* (2003). Installation view; Collateral Event of the 55th International Art Exhibition—la Biennale di Venezia (1 June–24 November 2013). © Shirazeh Houshiery. Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London/New York. Photo: Ken Adlard.

**It's funny to think about mirrors in an art fair context. Reflective art works attract scores of people who look at their image on the surface of them, taking selfies.**

Our biggest problem is that we want to fix that image in the mirror, and there is nothing there. That's why we're attracted to shiny art. It is a desperate affirmation that we exist. It's the uncertainty we don't like.

**You once stated, 'I set out to capture my breath, to find the essence of my own existence, transcending name, nationality, cultures.' Your works emphasise the similarities between people. That we all strive for the same thing, understanding of the self, our place in the world.**

Yes. You will begin to see within yourself and the world around you the same thing constantly at work. Then your prejudices drop. That allows you to get rid of prejudices, intolerances. They are a part of all of us and there is so much intolerance in the world we're living in. This is the problem today, even in a democratic country like the United States, and England with Brexit. So much intolerance has surfaced. It doesn't matter where you are. We have to dig down to the source of intolerance.

We're all unique and the same. It's like a drop of water. All the droplets in the ocean are different, and yet they are the same. They are each individual droplets, but each shape is unique. It's quite amazing. I was shocked when I discovered this, that each droplet has got a particular shape. No two droplets are the same.



Shirazeh Houshiery, *Coming and going* (2017). Pigment and pencil on white Aquacryl on aluminium. 190 x 270 cm. © Shirazeh Houshiery. Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London/New York.

**Just like every snowflake is individual.**

Yes. Can you imagine that? Yet, they all have the same structure. Water is an amazing substance. In my work, from afar the paintings look like the cosmos, but actually when you get up close to them the patterns reveal themselves. They have their own identity, like a fingerprint. Our fingerprints are all different. You know where they come from? When we are in the uterus of our mother in a watery environment, the water has left a pattern on our skin.

**That's incredible.**

Yes, it is! It's not the same pattern, ever. Before we even take our first breath in the world, the memory of the time in our mother's uterus is imprinted upon us. And when I understood this I was completely overwhelmed by it. We have so much to learn about who we are. And this is part of our identity. The fingerprint is the only thing that doesn't change. Our face and bodies change, but not our fingerprint.

**You engage so much with physics in your work. Did you ever want to be a scientist?**

I did actually. But I loved art too much. —[O]



Text  
April 2018

今天Art Basel，已無力看節的重點電影。今天的展覽和昨天Art Basel買的，都是草間彌生、奈良美智、Damien Hirst、趙……和Art Basel同於會比，大名藝術家作品數於Art Basel。

Art Central創立時，走不同於Art Basel的「來，還是要順應市場」，Indiana的Love雕塑便各有一座。兩個藝術布了今屆入場人次，萬，Art Central則超過場人次新高。從數字上畫的決定。

## 之福

藝術盛在三月舉旅客，來到晚都有精彩的藝術節

的藝術家、觀眾，以及行業如技術人員、行政說是好事。觀眾自然是術家趕創作趕應酬，一心血被埋沒在成千上萬對於技術人員，三月的，但之後無以為繼……山大道名言：有量才有門當局者迷，不如聽聽門怎麼說。



《The Ebb》，2017  
© Shirazeh Houshiary  
Courtesy Lisson Gallery  
Photography: Elisabeth Bernstein



《East Window》，2008  
© Shirazeh Houshiary  
Courtesy Lisson Gallery  
Photography: James Morris

## Shirazeh Houshiary： 藝術若單純追求樂趣 是沒有意義

Art Basel這個級數的藝術博覽，其中一個好處是吸引大量出色的藝術家於此地聚腳，Shirazeh Houshiary是其中之一。

生於伊朗的Shirazeh Houshiary，是著名的藝術多面手，繪畫、雕塑、拍片樣樣皆能，這次來港除了參與Art Basel，出席畫廊安排的活動，亦因為她剛獲亞洲協會香港中心頒發「亞洲藝術創變者大獎」。

Shirazeh說：「我一直透過創作思考我們的身份，究竟我們是誰。世上沒有另一個物種會思考這個問題。」身份，是一個很普遍的問題，有些人一輩子對此無思無感，樂得清閒，一旦開始發掘問題的答案，就如打開了潘多拉盒子。Shirazeh坦言：「潘多拉盒子有打開的必要……在昨天的講座，有人問：Art is for pleasure or for political change？對我

而言，藝術若單純追求樂趣是沒有意義的。藝術是在於make difference。我相信藝術可以扭轉成見。」Lisson Gallery於Art Basel選展她的大幅作品《Flicker》（2017），不以構圖取悅觀眾，而是嘗試觸動你的思緒。

請她談談Art Basel這類場合的貢獻，Shirazeh似乎明白記者沒說出口的憂慮，「We are the one, we can change。」現居英國的她，明白伊朗的處境和其他國家有參照之處。「Art Basel和Art Central這類藝展是一個平台，讓我可以發言、討論，令世界各地的人都能注視我們討論的議題。」







## 周育正： 視覺藝術結合表演藝術 是一個趨勢



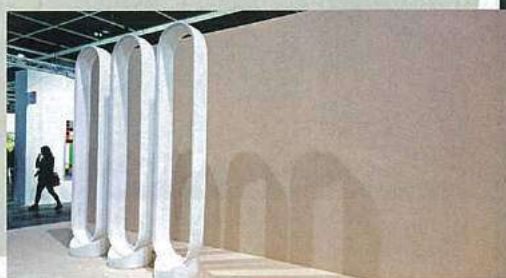
- 039 -

近年看到不少視覺藝術結合表演藝術的作品，來自台灣的藝術家周育正認為：「這的確是一個趨勢，我的表演都是很簡易的，就是最低綫的表演，很日常的。」

在Art Basel現場所見，就是一個姐姐不斷在清潔巨型的碗碟筷子，旁邊則有一個名牌吸塵機械人在巡邏。周育正說：「作品其實很簡單，就是從居家打掃出發，維護日常環境衛生。當初在上海聽到一句話：做衛生。衛生，是用做的。在台灣我們叫：清潔打掃。做衛生，我覺得『做』這個動作很有趣。」於是有了這組作品《刷新、犧牲、新衛生、傳染、清新、機器人、空氣、家政、阿姨幫、香煙、Dyson、現代人》。碗筷超大，周育正說：「表演需要劇場感。而且這次是和品牌合作（著名吸塵機和風筒品牌），像商展只是用我的方

式來說明。像車展會有車子有說明，最後有人會講話。我是將商展的部分元素造型化來處理。」

「這個作品，其實在上海和台灣是要透過App預約。像預約去畫廊看展覽，只是預約的是清潔服務。這個作品的特殊性是，使用者自己付費，自己預約，自己表演，而這個表演其實是生活中的事情。」讓家務成為表演，讓商展成為作品，在Art Basel這個空間上演，份外有解讀趣味。這組巨型餐具背後，還有三座無葉風機的雕塑。



vanityfair.com  
7 March 2018

VANITY FAIR

FROM THE MAGAZINE

## The Hirshhorn Museum Welcomes New Masters

Director Melissa Chiu is highlighting contemporary works by women and putting politically and socially charged exhibits on display. As New York artist Pat Steir put it, “The time of women is coming.”

→ by A.M. HOMES

MARCH 2018



Hirshhorn Museum director Melissa Chiu, back row, fourth from left, surrounded by artists recognized at the Hirshhorn Gala, photographed at NeueHouse Madison Square, in New York. Left to right: (1) Lorna Simpson, (2) Katharina Grosse, (3) Tatiana Trouvé, (4) Mary Weatherford, (5) Mickalene Thomas, (6) Meredith Monk, (7) Melissa Chiu (Hirshhorn Museum director), (8) Pat Steir, (9) Mary Heilmann, (10) Sarah Sza, (11) Michael Rovner, (12) Haegue Yang, (13) Nairy Baghramian, (14) Dana Schutz, (15) Shirazeh Houshiary, (16) Kiki Smith, (17) Njideka Akunyili Crosby, (18) Rachel Feinstein, (19) Wangechi Mutu, (20) Taryn Simon, (21) Guerrilla Girls, (22) Susan Rothenberg, (23) Ai Jing. Photograph by Gina LeVay.



Melissa Chiu, the director of the Hirshhorn Museum since 2014, has put the buzz back into Washington, D.C.'s staid art scene. The driving force behind back-to-back critically acclaimed exhibitions that dived full on into the politically and socially challenging questions of our times, Chiu—a native of Darwin, Australia, and a scholar of contemporary Chinese art—is the first non-American to head the museum, a part of the Smithsonian Institution. “My coming from elsewhere allows me a fresh perspective on the importance of this democratic society,” she says. “We are interested in the idea of ‘What does a museum of modern contemporary art do today?’ We are in this extraordinary transitional moment between the 20th and 21st century, and it is art museums that can help people understand this transition.”

Inspired by last year's **Women's March** on Washington, Chiu gathered the **leading ladies of the art world** in New York last winter to celebrate the Hirshhorn's commitment to gender equality and to honor women artists across borders and across generations. “Over the last three-odd years we've had solo projects by Yoko Ono, Yayoi Kusama, Bettina Pousttchi, Shana Lutker, Shirin Neshat,” says Chiu, “and we've made a number of important acquisitions.”

There was a unique frisson in the air as the artists, many of whom had never met one another, came together for this photo shoot. This group demonstrates the fierceness and gravitas of multiple generations of women artists—defiant, unstoppable—all believing in the transformative power of art. “When a society is discovered, dug up, what they dig up is art. That's how we read who we were—in art,” says New York artist Pat Steir. “The time of women is coming.”

LISSON GALLERY

Text  
Text

# BLOUINARTINFO



Shirazeh  
Houshiary  
Ceramic, 2016-17  
Glass and mirror  
polished stainless  
steel, 266.637 x  
20 cm

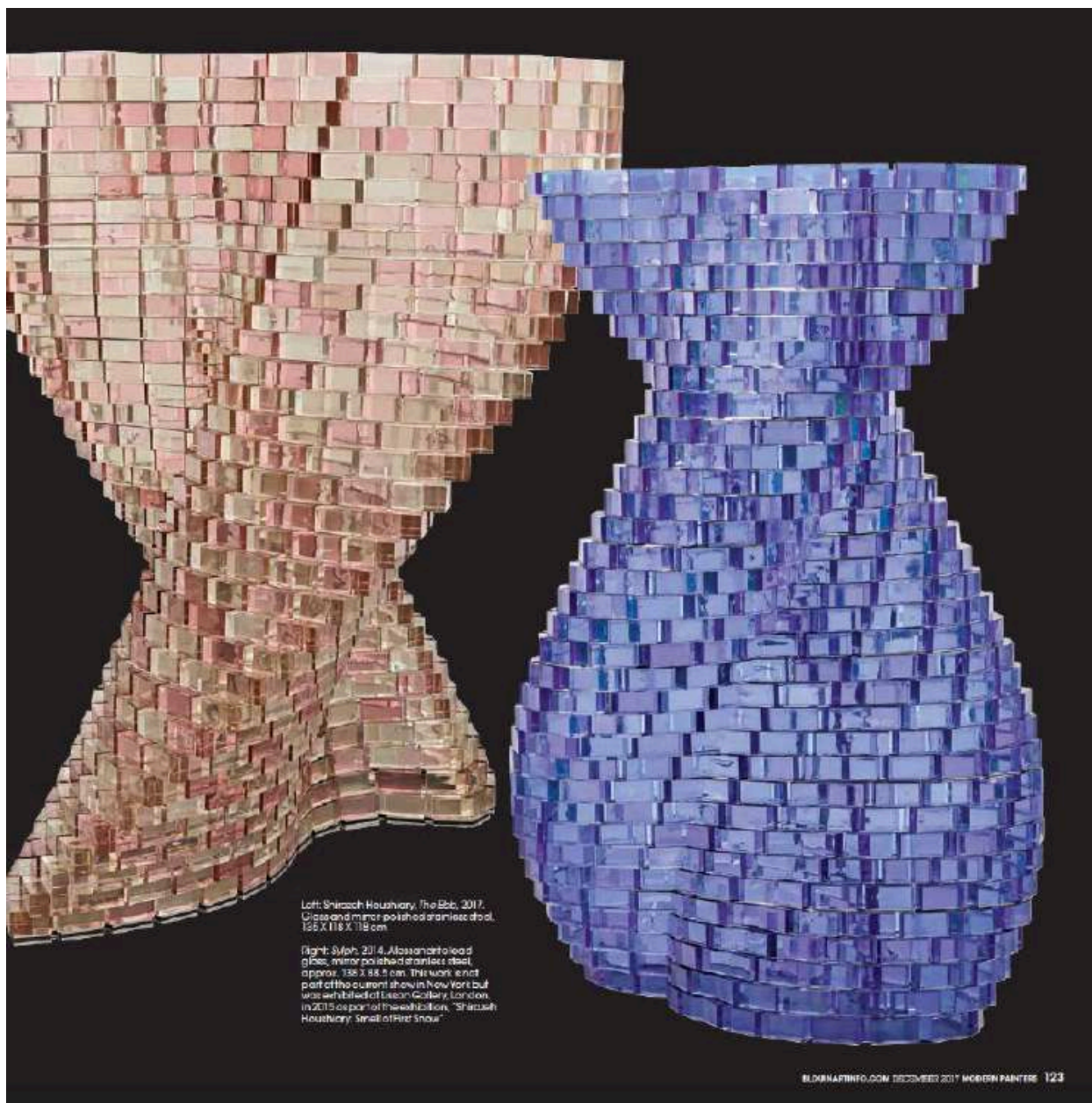
## SHIRAZEH HOUSHIARY TESTING BOUNDARIES

IN HER FIRST NEW YORK  
SHOW WITH LISSON  
GALLERY, SHE EXPLORES  
THE CONCEPT OF  
IDENTITY THROUGH THE  
METAPHOR OF SKIN

BY ANYA HARRISON



THE FACE AND FACING PAGES © SHIRAZEH HOUSHIARY COURTESY LISSON GALLERY



Left: Shirazeh Houshary, *The Egg*, 2017.  
Glass and mirror-polished stainless steel.  
136 X 118 X 118 cm.

Right: S/leh, 2014, *Massimo to lead glass*, mirror-polished stainless steel.  
approx. 136 X 88.5 cm. This work is not  
part of the current show in New York but  
was exhibited at Essex Gallery, London,  
in 2015 as part of the exhibition, "Shirazeh  
Houshary: Small of Her Show."





Shireen Hashmi

PHOTO BY KATY MORAN, COURTESY LIBBY GALLIN

**S**hirazeh Houshiary first rose to prominence in the 1980s as part of New British Sculpture, a loose

group that included Anish Kapoor, Richard Deacon, Tony Cragg and Antony Gormley. Whether working in painting, sculpture, installation, across architectural projects or film, Houshiary's practice is deeply concerned with trying to capture and visualize modes of perception and being. Her work has been exhibited at the Venice Biennale; MoMA in New York; the Sydney Biennale; Cundon Arts Centre; and Magasin-Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Grenoble; and she was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1994. Her exhibition "Nothing Is Deeper Than The Skin" (through December 22) brings together new painting and sculpture, and is her first show with Lisson Gallery in New York. MODERN PAINTERS spoke with Houshiary on the eve of

the show's opening.

**You were born in Iran but moved to England to study art. What was that experience like?**

I first came to London in 1974 to study art at Chelsea School of Art. During my studies it became difficult to return to Iran because of the Revolution, so I stayed and have been here ever since.

At art school, at least at the time, you were left very much alone to figure out your own identity. I was at Chelsea with Anish Kapoor and Bill

Woodrow, both of whom were a few years ahead of me, but was experimenting a little bit in isolation at first. I then became more involved with the group of New British Sculptors in the 1980s, although I never really felt part of it. At the beginning, I was the only woman, and it was generally a very male group. The early 1990s was not an easy time to be a woman artist, and the 1970s were impossible.

I met Nicholas [Lugsdail, Lisson Gallery's founder] in 1982 and have been showing

**AT THE BEGINNING, I WAS THE ONLY WOMAN, AND IT WAS GENERALLY A VERY MALE GROUP [NEW BRITISH SCULPTORS]. THE EARLY 1980s WAS NOT AN EASY TIME TO BE A WOMAN ARTIST, AND THE 1970s WERE IMPOSSIBLE**

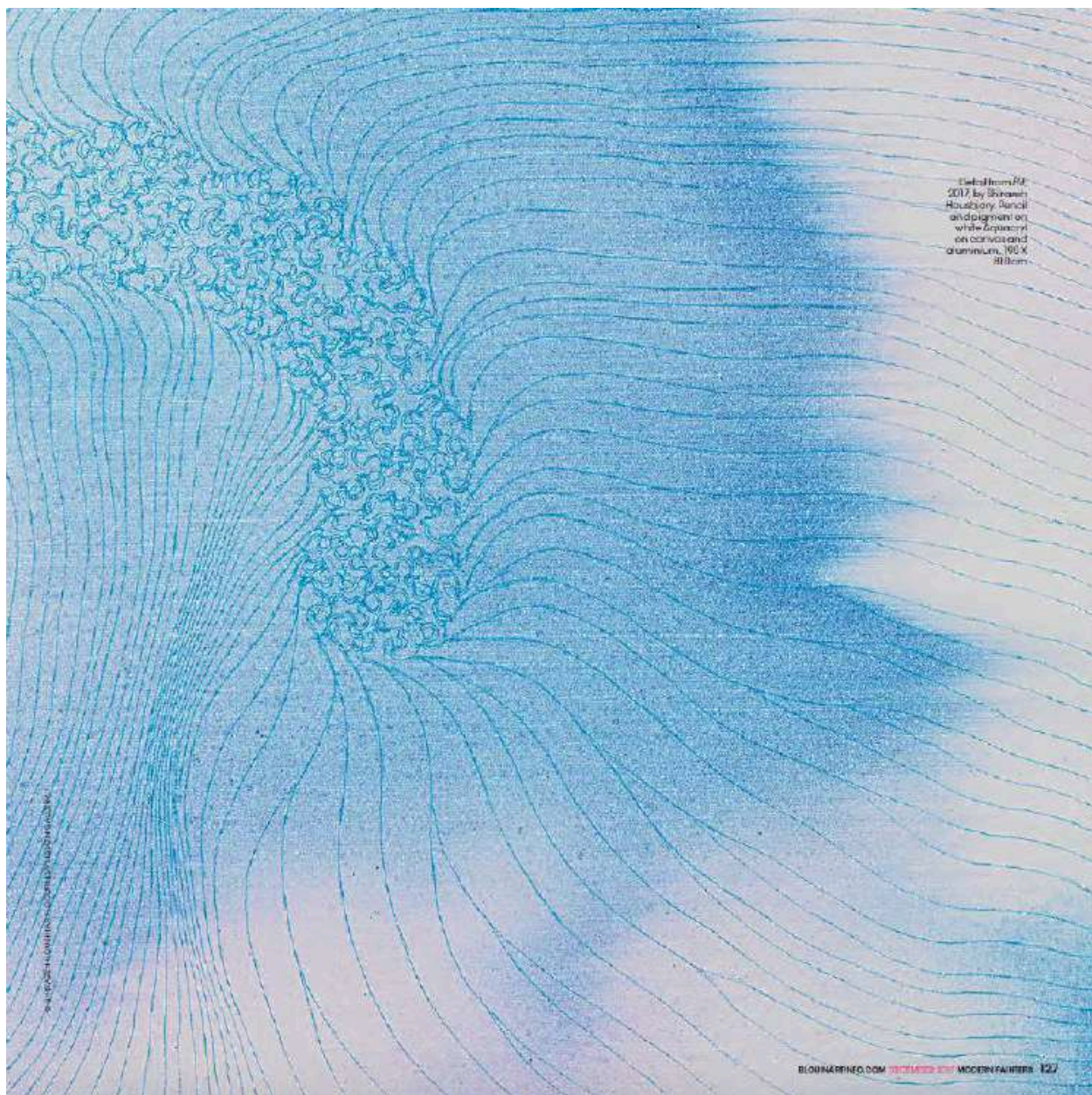




A detail from  
Boundary's  
Embrace, 2016  
Pigment and pencil  
on black Aquapanel  
aluminum, 100 x  
540cm

© SHIZUKA OISHIYAMA/CONTEMPORARY ARTS





Untitled (from 2017)  
2017 by Shiroshi  
Hasegawa. Acrylic  
on canvas and  
aluminum, 100 x  
100 cm.

www.shiroshi-hasegawa.com



Shirosh Hachiyari, Phase, 2016, Pigment and pencil on white Acrylic on aluminum, 190 X 270cm

ARTIST'S ROOMS COURTESY OF THE GALLERY



with the gallery since 1982. This type of long-lasting relationship is very special because our thinking and intellectual ability evolve in relation to the people that surround us. We're not isolated but part of a continuum, and it's the interaction that makes us who we are.

**What's your working process?**

The body of work in this exhibition differs from earlier pieces because I've allowed chance to come into play. Previously I've been stricter, in control of production, and aware of my rational consciousness because I was concentrating on my own self and energy. Here I wanted to invite the unconscious — perhaps a difficult word to use because there are many layers of consciousness involved in producing a work of art. I wanted to include an element of chance, which would allow me to see deeper into the nature of reality. Our understanding is limited, and sometimes we need to rely on accident to make us see more clearly.

## THE WORK IN THIS EXHIBITION DIFFERS FROM EARLIER PIECES BECAUSE I'VE ALLOWED CHANCE TO COME INTO PLAY... HERE I WANTED TO INVITE THE UNCONSCIOUS... PERHAPS A DIFFICULT WORD TO USE...

The footprint of the sculptures, which is the result of me dropping an elastic band on the floor, is an act of chance and accident — very much like our own existence. This moment of chance is then balanced by precise calculations as I create twisted layers of this footprint, shifting each one by four or five degrees — any more and the whole thing will collapse.

Similarly, I have incorporated water in to the paintings. I place the canvas, which has a backing of aluminium, horizontally on the floor and flood the surface with pure water and pigment. The pigment, which is heavy like river sediment, settles while the water just moves across the surface and leaves traces like in "Flit" (2017), a

huge triptych, where it dances across the whole canvas. Both water and glass are amorphous materials that can take any color or shape.

**What role does language play in your work?**

I incorporate words in Persian because that's my mother tongue, which allows me to move beyond meaning to a primal level. In earlier paintings, words were tools to keep my mind still. My interest in words stems from the fact that they are a manifestation of breath, an element that we all share but forget about. I have a piece on show in London (as part of "Every Thing At Once"), "Breath," which deals with our interconnection as humans on the level of breath. With that



I ALWAYS FELT THAT TO  
BE A POLITICAL ARTIST  
IN RELATION TO MY  
NATIONALITY OR RACE  
WAS TOO SIMPLISTIC.  
INSTEAD, I WANT A DEEPER  
UNDERSTANDING OF  
MYSELF AS A HUMAN BEING

work I'm interested in looking at the reason we don't see ourselves as part of the same story — even though each civilization is a layer of our story as humans. At the same time, my work is very experiential. As Wittgenstein said, "What can be shown cannot be said." That's why I make art.

**How important are titles for you?**

In "Nothing Is Deeper Than The Skin" I'm dealing with the concept of identity, and skin in this respect is very powerful. We understand more through our touch than through our eyes. Identity isn't fixed. Skin is the only real boundary between the outside world and who we are. The rest — nationality, culture, religion — is all created by us. The works in this show are the

story of skin. "Exuvia" is glass brick sculpture means a snake's skin; if a snake can't shed its skin, it dies. Another sculpture, "Chrysalis," refers to skin as a cocoon, which offers protection in which to grow. In the show I'm trying to explore different aspects of what skin means — it's individual, sensual, it offers protection and it's political.

**What else interests you and informs your work?**

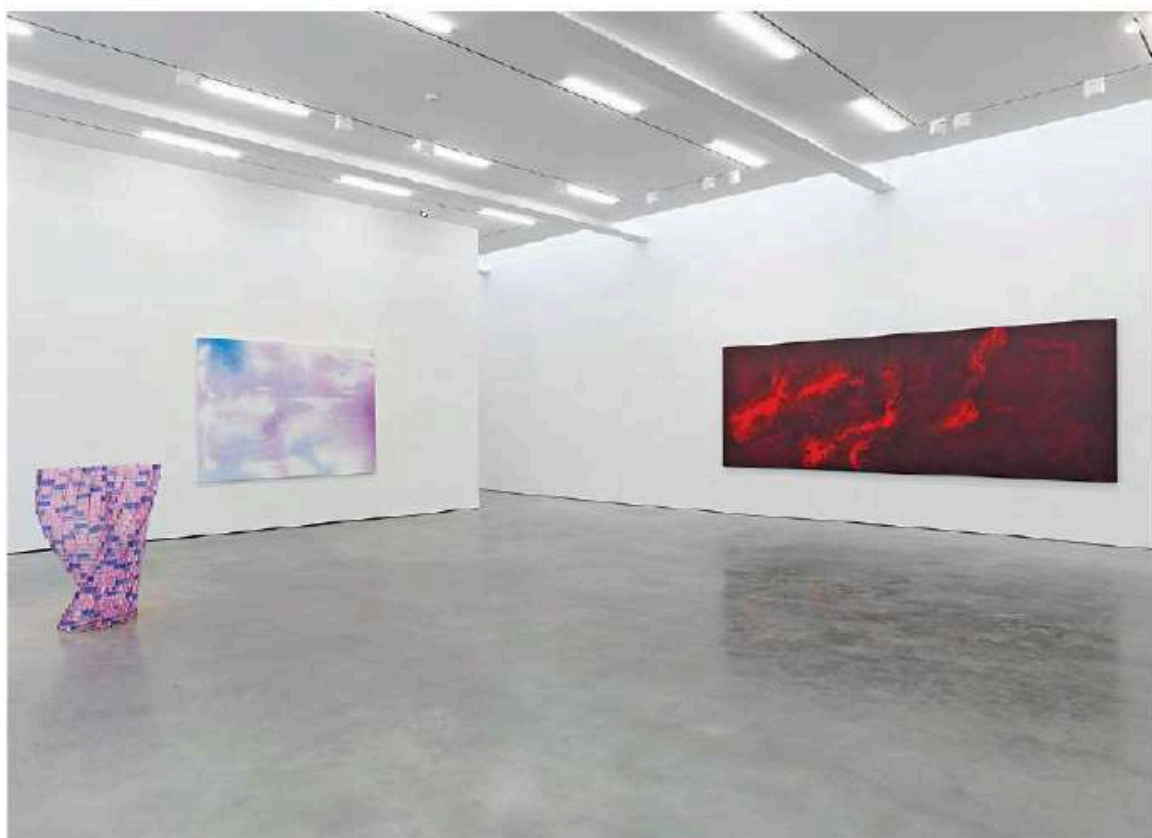
I find maths very beautiful as it's about thought experiment. Art and science are not so far apart because both disciplines are inquiries into the nature of who we are and what we are about, albeit from different angles. Einstein came to understand his theory of relativity in relation to space, light and time; I have come to

understand mine in relation to race, nationality, culture and heritage.

I love Renaissance painting for the intensity of the colors. The Italians were very good at color, which is why I make my glass bricks for the sculptures in Murano.

**Do you consider yourself a political artist?**

By definition, we all are. As artists, irrespective of the period in which we practice, we are reacting to our time. However, I don't believe "political" means that I make direct, literal work. I want to understand the nature of certain perceptions and change them, rather than just provide people with information. I always felt that to be a political artist in relation to my nationality or race was too simplistic. Instead, I want a deeper understanding of myself as a human being. That's why time is important to me. As humans we have a short-term memory. I'm interested in long-term memory and I think that's where we can make a difference. **EW**



REPRESENTATION: COURTESY  
YOUNG JEFFREY

Installation view of  
Shirazeh Poozesh's  
*Nothing is deeper than  
the skin of Usen*,  
New York.

LISSON GALLERY

Text

# Forbes

## **Shirazeh Houshiary, "Nothing Is Deeper Than The Skin," At Lisson Gallery (24th Street), New York**

Some 7,500 light-years away from earth is the Carina Nebula. It is an immense cloud of gas and dust where, to quote NASA, "a maelstrom of star birth and death is taking place." The nebula has a stellar nursery full of fledging stars, a hospice for dying ones and a graveyard for the dead. The Hubble telescope captures and sends detailed observations back to earth, which are rendered into vivid visualizations. The NASA video, *Celestial Fireworks: Star Cluster Westerlund 2*—<http://hubblesite.org/video/26/science>—almost simulates an encounter with the work of Shirazeh Houshiary. It suggests not only the cosmic, but also the infinitely small.

Born in Shiraz, Iran in 1955, Houshiary moved to England five years before the 1979 Iranian revolution. Once settled in London, she studied at London's Chelsea School of Art (now Chelsea College of Art and Design). She has interpreted her Persian cultural background through historical European visual culture and contemporary Western art media. Since the 1980s, Houshiary has been associated with the New British Sculptors, a group which includes Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon and Anish Kapoor. These artists have all earned considerable support from curatorial and collector communities. In 1994, Houshiary was nominated for the Tate Gallery's Turner Prize, along with Willie Doherty, Peter Doig and Antony Gormley.

Not only have birthplace and gender set Houshiary apart from her peers, but she has also distinguished herself with a prominent, parallel interest in painting. Without relying on technological tools or software gimmickry, Houshiary has seemingly animated the inanimate in her wall works, nearly imitating a celestial



skyscape. Step close. Step in. Surrender. Succumb. The experience swallows you whole. You will be enraptured.

Laura Bushell, a London filmmaker who specializes in shorts about artists and the arts, has made a neatly packed film interview with Houshiary that accompanies the exhibition

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKk6ALL1nGg>). *In the studio with Shirazeh Houshiary* demystifies the artist's intent and technical processes. Both are straightforward. Initially, Houshiary uses Aquacryl—a fluid, transparent paint—mixed with water to create a foundation surface, which she calls “the first opening to this world of chaos and movement.” The foundation, a ground, flows with a visual liquidity of ripples and waves of suspended pigment. The surface is entirely natural, the result of chance pours and splashes. Over these foundational surfaces Houshiary makes her own deliberate, pencil marks, creating a tension between the precise and imprecise. Between chance and choice, “That’s where life happens,” says Houshiary.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Studio International*  
21 December 2017

## studio international

Lilly Wei



### Shirazeh Houshiary: ‘We can’t fix our identity or our borders, the only real border is our skin’

Houshiary talks about evolution, Einstein and shamans, and how her work involves thinking in other dimensions.

Nothing is deeper than the skin, London-based multidisciplinary artist Shirazeh Houshiary’s current exhibition at the Lisson Gallery in New York, combines aesthetics and the history of art, physics and poetry as a way to express her recurrent theme of a universe in flux, in disintegration. These works, characteristically, are of extraordinary delicacy, their ephemerality possessing a fey distinctive beauty that seems on the verge of transformation. It is this state of precarious balance that provides the perceptual and psychological tension that is the essential source of their charisma, like the moment, perhaps, between the inhalation and exhalation of breath.



*Installation view of Shirazeh Houshiary: Nothing is deeper than the skin at Lisson Gallery New York. © Shirazeh Houshiary; Courtesy Lisson Gallery.*

Houshiary was born in Shiraz, Iran in 1955, where she attended university before moving to London in 1974. The following is an edited excerpt of a conversation between the artist and Lilly Wei at the gallery.

**Lilly Wei: You went to London from Iran in 1974? Was that a political decision?**

**Shirazeh Houshiary:** No, I was too young and Iran was different then. It was a free society even if we had a shah. People don't realise that democracy isn't acquired just like that; they have to learn what it is. My father said that democracy was like a bicycle. You had to learn to ride the bicycle. So many countries have suffered because they don't understand that. Changes come slowly; different cultures require different evolutions. I've learned that. I live in Britain and it's had a democracy for some time, but they had many problems before it was established.



*Shirazeh Houshiary. The Ebb, 2017. Glass and mirror-polished stainless steel, 53 1/8 x 46 1/2 x 46 1/2 in (135 x 118 x 118 cm). © Shirazeh Houshiary; Courtesy Lisson Gallery.*



**LW: Did you plan to stay in London?**

**SH:** At that age, you live in the moment. I went to London to Chelsea School of Art (now Chelsea College of Arts) and stayed because Iran had a revolution in 1979. I couldn't go back. I might have been killed in that society, since I would not have been able to keep silent and the new Islamic republic was a very brutal regime.

**LW: And what did you study?**

**SH:** I was interested in theatre at first, then moved into visual arts. It happened very naturally.



*Shirazeh Houshiary. Genesis, 2016. Pigment and pencil on black aquacryl on aluminium, 74 3/4 x 212 5/8 in (190 x 540 cm). © Shirazeh Houshiary; Courtesy Lisson Gallery.*

**LW: Chance, you have said, is important to you?**

**SH:** Yes, it is very important to me – and more and more so. John Cage, who based his work on chance, is my favourite artist. He is like Einstein – they are both special people who think in other dimensions. Chance not only exists in nature but also in history, in science, in art. In the Altamira caves [in the north of Spain], humans created images more than 35,000 years ago. I try to understand why they did it. It has to do with the neurological system in our brain. We have a spectrum of consciousness unlike other species. So why did we make images? Because it is social. Art is a social activity that creates patterns of social structures, of rituals.



*Shirazeh Houshiary. Phase, 2016. Pigment and pencil on white aquacryl on aluminium, 74 3/4 x 106 1/4 in (190 x 270 cm). © Shirazeh Houshiary; Courtesy Lisson Gallery.*

**LW: So the basis for our need for art is neurological, embedded in our consciousness?**

**SH:** It is responsible for the way our brain has evolved and this evolution has determined how we create society and its structures. And with that, our predecessors have always felt that there was the supernatural. They were also able to project imaginatively. So the human race has evolved through making images to what it is today. Making art has played a powerful role in our system of evolution; we don't realise how essential it is. Even our sciences are based on that kind of imagination. Whether shaman or astrophysicist, it is the same curiosity that leads us to penetrate what is beyond what we see and know. There is no difference.

**LW: What drives your curiosity?**

**SH:** It is to understand who I am. How do I describe myself in relationship to the world? What is my identity?

**LW: How would you describe or define identity?**

**SH:** Many years ago I did a thought experiment about identity. I looked into the mirror to see what I would see and saw no image of myself. But my breath left a vapour on the surface of the mirror. I tried to see if there was anything I could grasp, and the vapour evaporated. This was a thought experiment that tried to understand how we define ourselves. And there is the well-known thought experiment Einstein conducted, which was beautiful. He wondered if he would see his reflection when looking into a mirror while travelling in a train at the speed of light – and this is where his theory of relativity came from. While I am not a physicist or a mathematician or Einstein, we were both thinking imaginatively, our thought experiments are reveries, imaginative visualisations. My thought experiment was similar, trying to understand that there is no fixity. Identity is constantly changing, so if it is constantly changing, how do we define ourselves? And that's one of our problems. We constantly try to fix ourselves and there is a clash between reality – what's outside – and our psychology – what's inside.





*Installation view of Shirazeh Houshiary: Nothing is deeper than the skin at Lisson Gallery New York. © Shirazeh Houshiary; Courtesy Lisson Gallery.*

**LW: So hence the title of your show, Nothing is deeper than the skin?**

**SH:** Yes. We can't fix our identity or our borders (borders are artificial, like borders between race and country), the only real border is our skin. The skin is the first border between the external world and us; it separates and connects us. We feel heat and cold, we see through our skin more than through our eyes. It is very powerful; sometimes it protects you from the outside world, sometimes it has to be shed otherwise you die inside. Sometimes the skin is like a chrysalis that transforms. It is politically charged. We judge people through skin. Our identity is determined through fingerprints, skin. Everything changes but this doesn't change.

**LW: And breath was a recent subject of your work also.**

**SH:** Yes, and now skin, so breath and skin. I'm dealing with a spectrum of consciousness and trying to figure out why we are the way we are and why we create so many boundaries and separations, why we make so many problems for ourselves. Scientists such as Einstein go beyond the immediate phenomena, even beyond commonsense. It is very shamanic.

**LW: Do you think that's your role also?**

**SH:** Yes, it's a very powerful one if you are able to delve into the spectrum of consciousness, not just the rational. There are so many layers of consciousness beyond the rational and irrational.

**LW: Would you discuss the sculptures in this show?**

**SH:** I always make sculpture but I don't like to be or do just one thing because it becomes too narrow. I like the difficulty of seeing the world on many levels, as two dimensional, then three dimensional, then as material, then as animation that is completely digital without space or materiality. It helps me to understand the world we live in. When you look through different windows, you understand that the window that you had been looking through is not the only one. They are not fixed and when looking through many windows, you see and make something more real.



*Shirazeh Houshiary. Exuviae, 2016-2017. Glass and mirror-polished stainless steel, 112 1/4 x 14 5/8 x 15 in (285 x 37 x 28 cm). © Shirazeh Houshiary; Courtesy Lisson Gallery.*

**LW: And this work, *Exuviae* (2016-2017)?**

**SH:** It's named for the skin of the snake that is left behind. We leave our skin behind so ideas can change, like the skin of a reptile has to change since otherwise it will die. I use Murano glass to make these blocks. I'm interested in building blocks and I use these blocks to construct as nature does and as the computer does. They are fragile, brittle and transparent and the



corrugations they make suggest the skin of a snake. I like glass because it is like water. It is silicon-based and immediately becomes cool so that the atoms don't have time to crystallise, and that makes glass more transparent. That's why it has the viscosity of liquid, of frozen water.

**LW: You also talk about how water is so important to you.**

**SH:** I am fascinated by the idea of water. It can take any colour and any shape. Absence and presence intersect and they are not separable. I see it like a skin. The water has accidental piercings and the skin has accidental piercings to connect us to the world. The universe, your body, it is all water. We are made mostly of water. It is the genesis of everything, but doesn't have any form itself. I like the idea of the amorphous quality of water.

**LW: And the paintings?**

**SH:** These paintings are organic, not mechanical. They are very simply made; I do it all by hand. People are shocked when I tell them. I get on the floor and use fingers, pencils, cloth – very simple tools. I hardly ever use a brush. It is done by pouring and fingers. I want to do something organic. I call this “process” since we don't use the word “supernatural”. Process is a more scientific term. I also use the term ritual; it is a ritual.



*Shirazeh Houshiary. Flit, 2017. Pencil and pigment on white Aquacryl on canvas and aluminium 74 3/4 x 318 7/8 in (190 x 810 cm). © Shirazeh Houshiary; Courtesy Lisson Gallery.*

**LW: Would you talk a little about the process you used to make Flit (2017). It's enormous.**

**SH:** Yes, it's a triptych and it is the first time I have made such a big painting. I poured water over the entire surface, leaving marks. Then my own mark-making had to collaborate with that of the water. It is a ritual of tangled energies and creates the painting. I need both agitation and calm, not just one. Once I get into this state of mind, my concentration is immense. This took three months to complete, working every day, from morning until evening.

**LW: You often refer to time.**

**SH:** I'm very interested in how time has a very different meaning when we look outside of ourselves and we must do that. We are not the centre of the universe. We are tiny things on a tiny planet among millions of galaxies. But I think we are inevitably coming closer together, evolving together; I am fascinated by this.

• Shirazeh Houshiary's exhibition *Nothing is deeper than the skin* is at the Lisson Gallery, New York, until 22 December 2017.

LISSON GALLERY

Text  
Text

Harper's  
**BAZAAR**  
ARABIA







The

*The practice of Iranian-born,*

PRESENCE

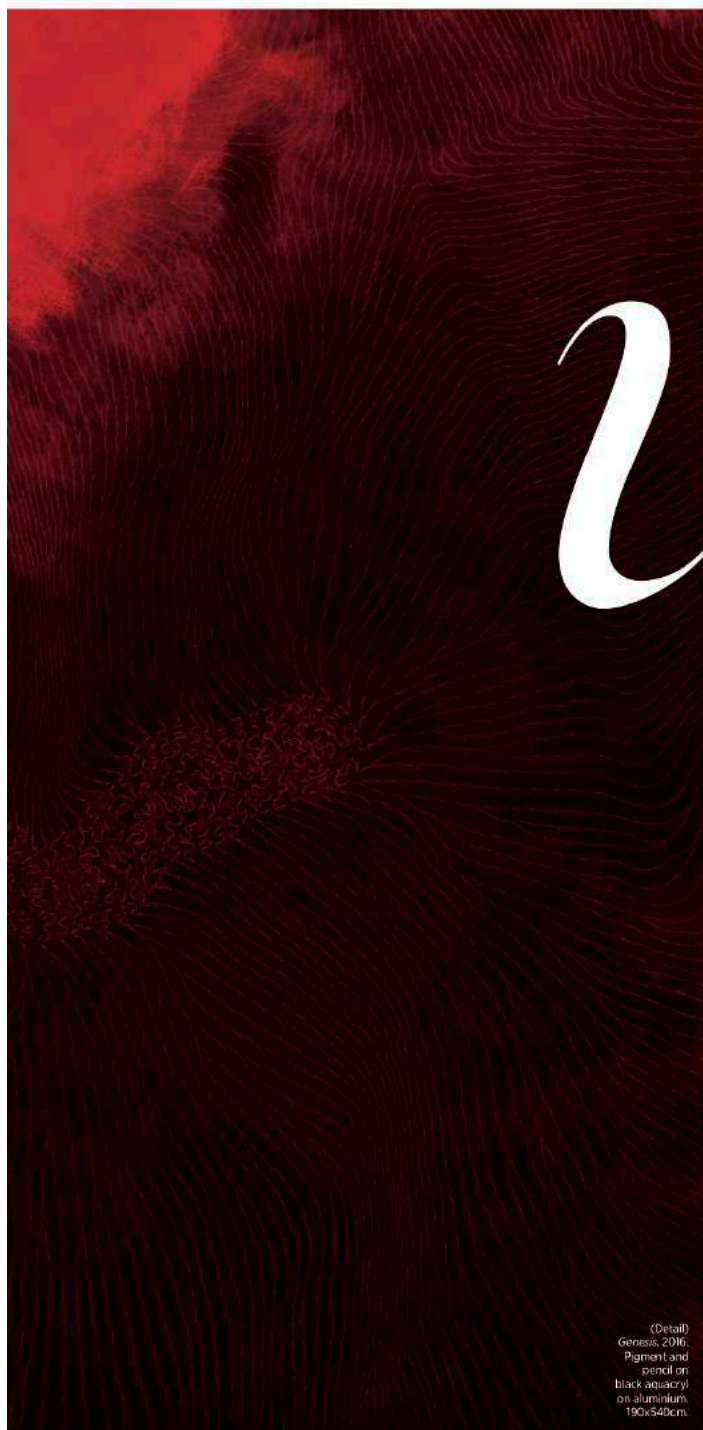
*UK-based **Shirazeh Houshiary** delves into states of existence, its constant*

of

*state of flux, and the*

BREATH

*need to look beyond fixed boundaries, writes Katrina Kufer*



(Detail)  
Genesis, 2016.  
Pencil and  
black acrylic  
on aluminium.  
190x540cm.

Whether sculpture, painting, architecture, film or installation, Shirazeh Houshiary's practice is marked by a sense of fragility and effervescence. What should be rigid, upright geometric forms reminiscent of helical strands appear more like gentle, organic undulations (*White Shadow*, 2005, or *Flux*, 2013, shown at the Venice Biennale). Tonal gradients of inconsistent yet repetitive patterns seem as though they are dissolving in slow motion into their larger backdrops (*Deluge*, 2012, or *Quiver*, 2008). Despite being tangibly captured, each of her works look as though they are mere moments from disappearing—and this is because Houshiary aims to capture her breath.

Sufism and physics play into her minimalist works—faculties that likewise endeavour to express and explore the transcendent essence of the self and experience. "Clearly identity and place are important to every one of us in shaping our being," explains Houshiary. "To breathe is to be, and to speak is to deliver breath." Breath, in her mind, is a fundamental of human existence and, she adds, "is identified with consciousness, locating both thought and feeling." Houshiary may have emerged onto the London sculptural scene in the 1980s alongside Tony Cragg and Anish Kapoor, but since 1992 she has been manipulating two-dimensional mediums to capture the intangible and incorporeal by posing questions such as, "Who am I? Where have I come from? What is the significance of being here?" Even her base in London, where she has lived and worked since leaving Iran in 1974, taps into this mode of blurred boundary thinking—she has expressed her fondness for the light in England, stating, "It's very bleary and hazy. There's no edge to things." This sensation is mirrored in taking inspiration from Turner, Monet, Rothko or Francisco Zurbarán's *Veil of St Veronica* (1635-40), featuring the imprint of the face of Christ on cloth. "The painting moves me because it seems the distinction between subject and object disappears," she says.

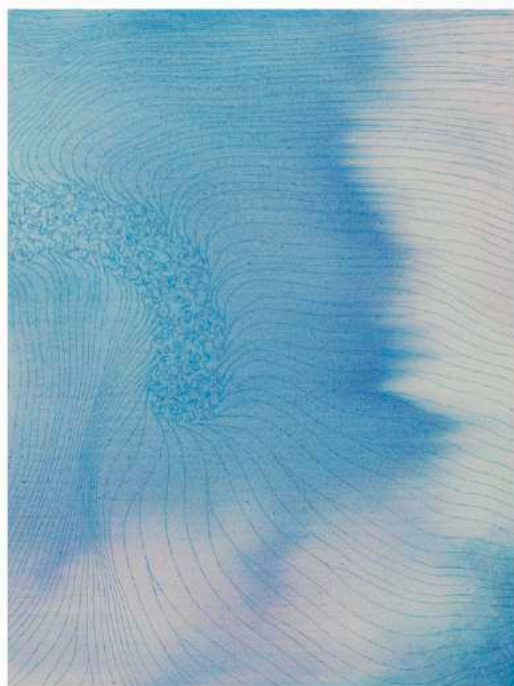
The focus on the formal qualities and leitmotifs such as veils, membranes or mist within each work allows the 1994 Turner Prize nominee to transcend stereotypes that can override artists with Persian or Arab backgrounds. Houshiary doesn't deny her heritage, although has returned only twice, and admits that she has strong memories as a child of her father's "musician, writer and poet friends, who regularly visited and I used to eavesdrop on their discussions about arts and life." Though she spent many of her traditionally 'formative' years in Shiraz, attending university there before attaining a BA from the Chelsea School of Art, London, her works go beyond initial aesthetic references



## The ARTIST



This image and below: *Fit*, 2017. Pencil and pigment on white Aquacryl on canvas and aluminum, 190x810cm.



to Islamic geometries and Sufism. They even surpass the terms 'spiritual' and 'metaphysical'—which she dislikes—and actively resists the human tendency to want to fix interpretations. This merely causes friction, she implies. "I would say my concerns reflect on how our destiny is shaped by the way we see the world," she clarifies. "Our perception is not fixed and is constantly in a state of flux. My approach is to look through many different windows so that I can get a glimpse of what connects us and gain a better understanding of the world and ourselves, rather than looking through a particular dogmatic viewpoint." Noting that seeing the whole is more challenging, whether of a culture or continent, "We are at a tipping point in rescuing our planet from the divisions and artificial boundaries," she says. "As John Cage said: 'In removing boundaries is the preservation of the world.'"

Houshiary includes a mix of repetition, fusion and chance in her typically six-month artistic process—through which a sense of calm emanates to the visitor. "In my most recent paintings, I have placed the canvas on the floor and a mixture of water and pigment is poured onto it," she explains. "I drain the water to leave sediment, creating the first trace of chance. Then over this layer I inscribe rigorous marks: the repetition of two words, one of affirmation (I am) and the other of denial (I am not)." Continuously overlapping them to the point of indecipherability where the entirety of the canvas is covered, Houshiary's second layer embodies precision, while the third layer fuses both to "attempt to unite the chaos with control," she says, a process which allows for true infinite possibilities. "The process is a collaboration between the spontaneous and the pre-planned, between the unconscious and the conscious."

The result, whether *The East Window* (2008), a luminous twisted oval cross on a window at the St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London; *Breath* (2004), a black felt structure emitting the inadvertently harmonious cadence of chants from Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam installed in Manhattan and now owned by MoMA and the Guggenheim; or the eight-metre triptych, glass or 'ribbon' sculptures on show at Lisson Gallery in New York (3 November–23 December), each concretely incite contemplation. Houshiary, however, would prefer that any transcendental associations be omitted, offering a sensorial description of her *oeuvre* with, "You are kneeling at the edge of a lake and its surface is still with no ripples. You slowly immerse your hand into it and you feel the atoms of water bouncing and vibrating as the cold water from the deep fuse with the warm water above creating turbulence just below the surface." ■

[lissongallery.com](http://lissongallery.com) [shirazehhoushiary.com](http://shirazehhoushiary.com)

© Shirazeh Houshiary. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery.



"WE ARE AT A TIPPING POINT IN RESCUING OUR PLANET FROM THE  
DIVISIONS AND ARTIFICIAL BOUNDARIES. AS JOHN CAGE SAID:  
"IN REMOVING BOUNDARIES IS THE PRESERVATION OF THE WORLD."  
- Shirazeh Houshiary



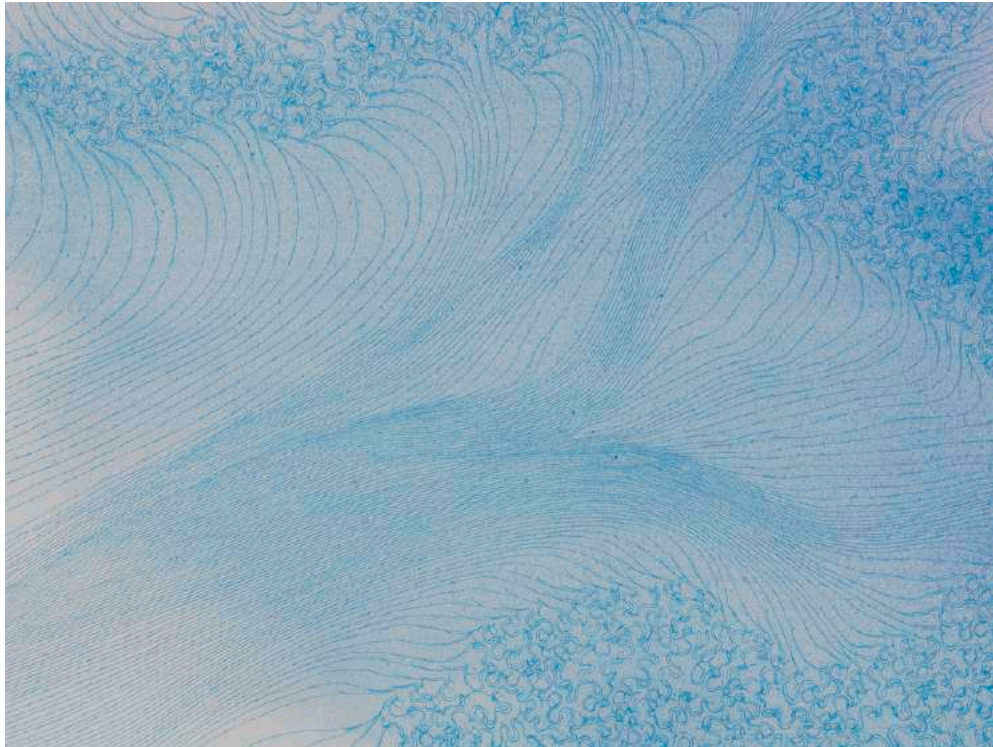
S/20A, 2014.  
Alessandrite lead  
glass, mirror polished  
stainless steel.  
138x88.5cm.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Blouin Artinfo*

10 November 2017

## **Shirazeh Houshiary's 'Nothing is Deeper than the Skin' at Lisson Gallery, New York**



Lisson Gallery presents [Shirazeh Houshiary](#)'s "Nothing is Deeper than the Skin" at its New York venue.

Shirazeh Houshiary's "Nothing is Deeper than the Skin" investigates the friction between the conscious and unconscious, control and chance, reflecting on the physical and immaterial qualities that shape art and human life. It brings together new paintings and sculpture, including her largest painting to date, a triptych of more than eight meters in width. It also marks the artist's first show with Lisson in New York, and her 9<sup>th</sup> exhibition with the gallery. In new sculptures comprised of a twisting arrangement of glass bricks, Houshiary further explores the notion of transparency and the possibility of transcending three-dimensional space. Each brick, whilst an essential element in the construction of the work, also functions as a sign of absence or void, suggesting the quality of boundlessness.

Shirazeh Houshiary (b.1955 in Shiraz, Iran) attended university before moving to London, UK in 1974. She has a BA from Chelsea School of Art (1979), and lives and works in London. She has had solo exhibitions at Singapore Tyler Print Institute, Singapore (2016); The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin, Ireland (2007); Tate Liverpool, UK (2003); Museum SITE Santa Fe, US (2002); Islamic Gallery, British Museum, London, UK (1997); Magasin-Centre national d'art contemporain, Grenoble, France (1995), University of Massachusetts Amherst, US (1994); and many others. She has also participated in numerous biennials including Kiev Biennale, Ukraine (2012); 17<sup>th</sup> Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2010); and 40<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, Italy (1982). She was nominated for Turner Prize in 1994.

*The exhibition is on view through December 22, 2017 at Lisson Gallery, 504 West 24th Street, New York.*



LISSON GALLERY

*Wall Street International*

**Text**

# Wall Street International

## Shirazeh Houshiary

3 Nov — 22 Dec 2017 at Lisson in New York, United States

8 NOVEMBER 2017



In her latest exhibition, Shirazeh Houshiary investigates the friction between the conscious and unconscious, control and chance, reflecting on the physical and immaterial qualities that shape art and human life. Bringing together new paintings and sculpture — including her largest painting to date, a triptych of more than eight metres in width — *Nothing is deeper than the skin* marks the artist's first show with Lisson in New York, and her ninth exhibition with the gallery.

Skin functions as a membrane, a barrier but also a soft boundary between the human body and the outer world. It is the conduit to the primeval sense of touch — the first line of defence against friction and conflict — but equally it is exposed to warmth, light and the pleasure of embrace. The works in *Nothing is deeper*

than skin explore the complex relationship between the interior and the exterior, manifesting permeability and flux in their mercurial surfaces composed of pigment, pencil, aluminium and glass.

Whilst an intricate and involved process is a recognised feature of Houshiary's work, in the new paintings she introduces an unparalleled level of chance. To create these paintings, a mixture of water and pigment is poured onto the surface of the canvas to produce an enigmatic ground punctuated by pooling sediment and irregular apertures. Over this layer, the artist's hand is introduced through rigorous mark-making, in some paintings manifesting as words — Houshiary's frequent pairing of an affirmation and a denial — and in others as lines creating a steady abstraction that radiates its own frequency and energy.

In new sculptures comprised of a twisting arrangement of glass bricks, Houshiary further explores the notion of transparency and the possibility of transcending three-dimensional space. Each brick, whilst an essential element in the construction of the work, also functions as a sign of absence or void, suggesting the quality of boundlessness. The sculptures' helical forms, created through the careful rotation of each layer at precise angles to produce a spiralling effect, are at once vigorous and evanescent, their materiality appearing to stretch and pull into infinite space, exemplifying the interplay between form and formlessness that is the essential tension of Houshiary's work.

LISSON GALLERY

eText

artnet®

## Watch Chaos and Precision Collide in Artist Shirazeh Houshiary's New Show at Lisson Gallery

The British-Iranian artist embraced chaos and chance to create the new paintings on view at the gallery's New York outpost.



Shirazeh Houshiary's new series of paintings don't look like the product of chaos, but they are.

At least that's how the artist describes it. On view now in her exhibition "Nothing is deeper than the skin" at [Lisson Gallery](#) in New York, Houshiary's canvases are layered with broad swirls of pencil, pigment, and watered-down aquacryl. However, the effect—a marbled sky or a slow-moving eddy—evokes calm movement more than chaos.

That's because the chaos refers to the process, not the product, as the artist explains in a video for the exhibition. "These new works are very different from previous ones in the sense that I use water and pigment as the start of the painting to open up a window to the chaos, or what I call a 'chance.'"

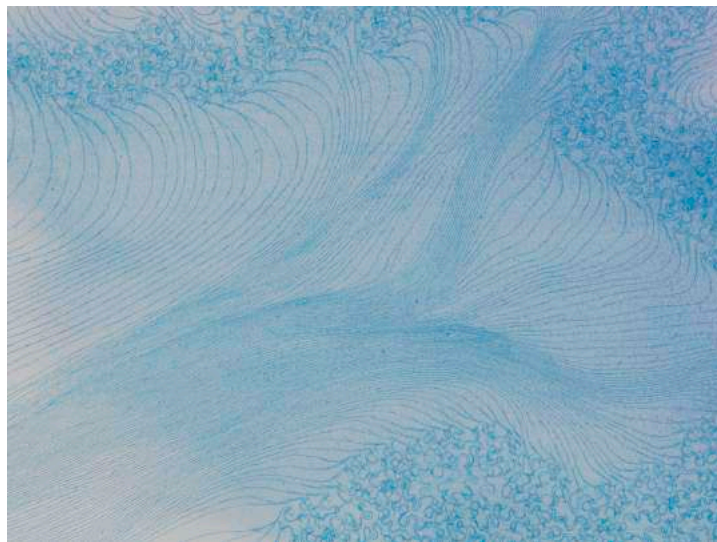




Embracing the element of chance is part of Houshiary's continued exploration of the gossamer line between reality and the unconscious. It's a theme that courses throughout much of her practice, which has come to encompass painting, sculpture, and installation.

"Often people talk about my work being metaphysical, or symbolic," she says. "I would say they are neither metaphysical nor symbolic. They are purely experiential. [They're not about] a representation of the form, but the actual pulsation of the form."

"Nothing is deeper than the skin" is Houshiary's eighth exhibition with the gallery, but her first in New York. The show features the artist's largest painting to date, a triptych that measures more than 25 feet wide, as well as a series of her helical aluminum sculptures.



*"Nothing is deeper than the skin" is on view at Lisson Gallery in New York from November 3 to December 22, 2017.*

*Evening Standard*

1 December 2016

Also online: <http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/arts/tate-britain-turns-the-christmas-tree-tradition-on-its-head-this-year-to-mark-festive-commissions-a3409661.html>

## EveningStandard.

### NEEDLE DROP UPSIDE-DOWN CHRISTMAS TREE MARKS FESTIVE TATE COMMISSIONS

IT'S starting to look... well, something like Christmas at Tate Britain.

This dangling tree, created by artist Shirazeh Houshiary, has its roots exposed and covered in gold leaf. It forms a centrepiece for a series of festive commissions including works by artists such as Antony Gormley and Anish Kapoor.

Houshiary said: "I would like us to contemplate that the pine tree is one of the oldest species and recognise the roots are the source of its continued stability, nourishment and longevity."



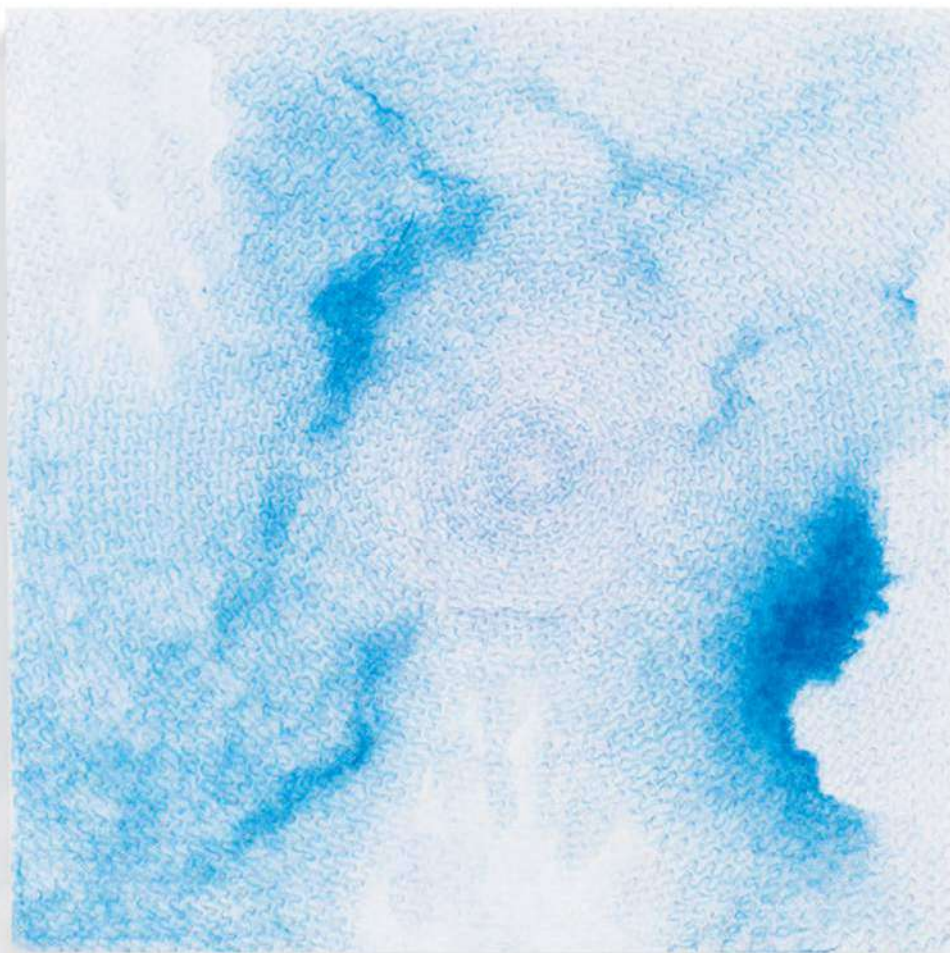
JEREMY SELWYN

**T MAGAZINE** | A PICTURE AND A POEM

# An Artist and a Poet on the Dream of Immortality

By T MAGAZINE NOV. 13, 2015

*The artist Shirazeh Houshiary gives form to the poet Monica Youn's wistful imagining of a celestial body — one that promises immortality just before slipping out of reach.*



"Tune" by Shirazeh Houshiary, 2015. Courtesy of the artist and Lehmann Maupin Gallery, 2015. Pigment and pencil on white aquacryl on aluminum. Poetry editor: Meghan O'Rourke. Art editor: Gay Gassmann



## BLACKACRE

one day they showed me a dark moon ringed  
with a bright nimbus on a swirling gray screen  
they called it my last chance for neverending life  
but the next day it was gone it had already  
launched itself into the gray sky like an escape  
capsule accidentally empty sent spiraling into the  
unpeopled galaxies of my trackless gray body

— MONICA YOUN

---

### Monica Youn Reads “BLACKACRE”





## Where I Work

# Shirazeh Houshiary

TEXT BY SIMON FRANK, PHOTOGRAPHS BY BENJAMIN HAYWOOD

**Talking abstraction, Renaissance art and why the transcendental is overrated with the Turner Prize-nominated British-Iranian artist**



Shirazeh Houshiary in her studio in London.

During London's morning rush hour, as commuters crowd train platforms and stream toward the city center, I head in precisely the opposite direction, traveling to the placid southwestern suburb of Barnes, home to Shirazeh Houshiary's studio. The site of a wetland conservation center—rather than the sort of postindustrial decay sometimes associated with artists' studios—Barnes's juxtaposition of city and nature is an oddly appropriate fit for an artist whose abstractions across various media are at once intense and calming, suggesting something beyond a standard urban setting.

Born in 1955 in Shiraz, a major city in southwest Iran traditionally known for its art and literature, Houshiary has been in London since 1974, based in varying neighborhoods before settling into

her current studio in 2008. The Chelsea College of Arts graduate first attracted wider attention for her sculptures in the 1980s, and more recently has been celebrated for projects such as *East Window* (2008), the playful and esoteric permanent installation of cross-shaped etched glass and steel in London's renovated St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church, and her 2003 four-channel video installation, *Breath*, which juxtaposes chanted prayers from major world religions. The Turner Prize nominee—in 1994, for her installations *Enclosure of Sanctity* (1992-93) and *Licit Shadow* (1993)—is sometimes presented as an Iranian artist, but doesn't see her work as innately bound to a single nationality. "I'm actually a Londoner. I've lived here most of my life," she says, smiling as she shares her love for England's capital, before adding, "Quite frankly, I like to be a nomad."

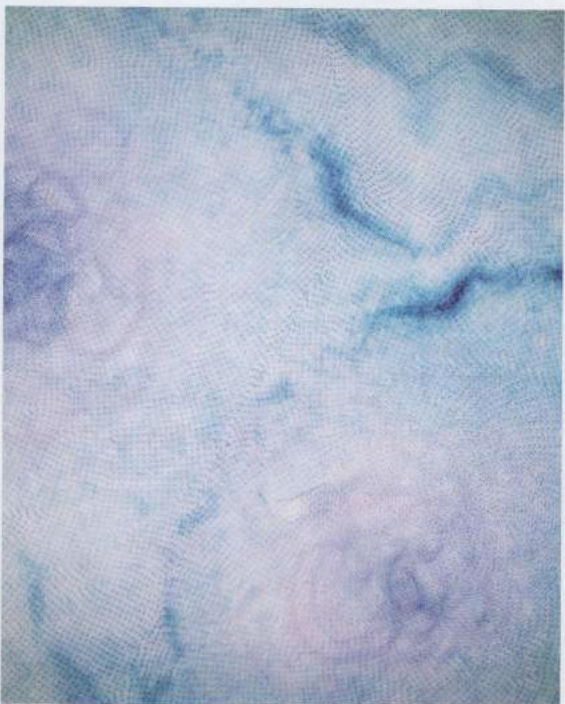
Even a wanderer needs a home base, and Houshiary's can be found down a quiet residential lane in the modest-looking brick building that her studio shares with her husband Pip Horne's architecture practice. Her workspace spreads over three expansive floors organized by media. Videos and installations are created in a small basement; she makes sculptures with the help of an assistant on the slightly more workshop-like ground floor; and she creates her detailed paintings on the airy, high-ceilinged top floor. The structure was discovered by Horne and refurbished by the couple to let the surroundings in through skylights and a large window in the back of Houshiary's painting space, overlooking a tranquil wooded area.

"There are not many artists here," admits Houshiary, as an interplay between somber cloud cover and bursts of sunshine play out over her canvases. Petite and dressed casually in clothes

that echo the cool colors of her work, she enthuses about Barnes's proximity to London, its gardens and the beauty of her daily walks along the Thames. She grows more animated as she discusses her work. "I have an obsession, and this obsession is quite powerful, and it's very useful. But you don't want to not have another life—because that's not good," she says with a laugh, after recalling moments when she had to be "dragged out" of the studio at the end of the workday.

It is easy to see how Houshiary can get caught up in her work. Her large-scale paintings, most of them measuring more than a meter in height and in width, take two months of daily work to complete. "Nobody realizes how physical these are," she sighs. She works with the canvases placed on the floor, first pouring a wash of pigment over them, and then building up intricate feather- or scale-like textures through pencil or paint. The pencil shavings tidily collected in bowls on her desk speak to the exhaustive work that goes into each piece. Pointing out a painting, *Soar* (2015), a two-by-two-meter wash of cloud-like blue clusters, which would soon after be sent overseas for an upcoming show at Lehmann Maupin gallery's branch in Hong Kong, Houshiary explains that piece's texture comes from repeatedly writing two Arabic phrases—"I am" and "I am not"—until they vanish into the canvas. Microscopic and abstracted, the form created by the words resembles chain-mail armor rather than text. "These words are not about meaning, because actually they dissolve, you can't really read them. But they're more about . . . the contradiction of saying 'I exist,' 'I don't exist,' like breathing," she explains. "I mimic, in a way, the inhalation and exhalation of breath. That's why they are pulsating like a generative force."





(This page)  
The artist's painting *Sour* (2005).

(Opposite page, top)  
The artist's painting *Flux* (2003), including a portrait of Piero della Francesca's *Madonna Del Parto* (c. 1450–75), an inspiration for her work.

(Opposite page, bottom left)  
The artist's sculpture *Flux* (2003), made of glass bricks, a by-product of Houshary's artistic process occupy a corner of her desk.

(Opposite page, bottom right)  
The artist's sculpture *Flux* (2003), made of glass bricks, a by-product of Houshary's artistic process occupy a corner of her desk.

#### Considering the ethereal,

organic feeling that Houshary evokes through these paintings, as well as the spiraling, ascending shape of her glass and metal

sculptures, there is a tendency for writers to reach for words like "spiritual" and "transcendental" when describing her work. Such descriptions have "become very banal now," she laments. "My work is actually very physical," she says. "I'm very interested in our senses, our sight, our hearing. We are [each] in a body ... Out of my body, I don't exist."

While there is undeniably an intangible quality to Houshary's work that reaches beyond daily experience, her range of inspirations is far wider than reductive ideas about spirituality.

The austere white walls of the studio's top floor are countered by a pile of books casually strewn in a corner, ranging from a collection of ancient Chinese poetry to a volume of paintings by Spanish Baroque artist Francisco de Zurbarán. "I spend my life looking into things and trying to understand," Houshary elaborates. "I'm not just fascinated by making art, but I'm also fascinated by nature by science." Searching for a postcard of Renaissance

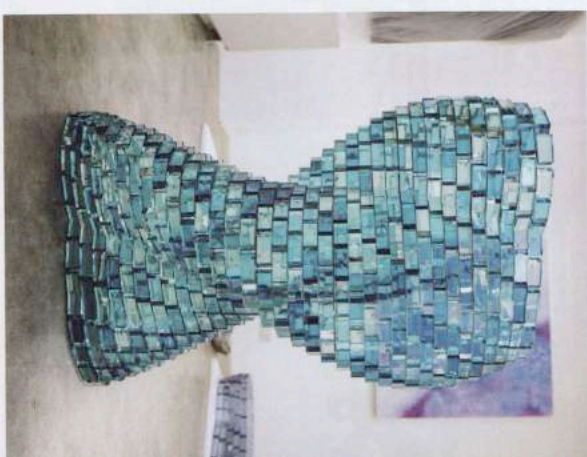
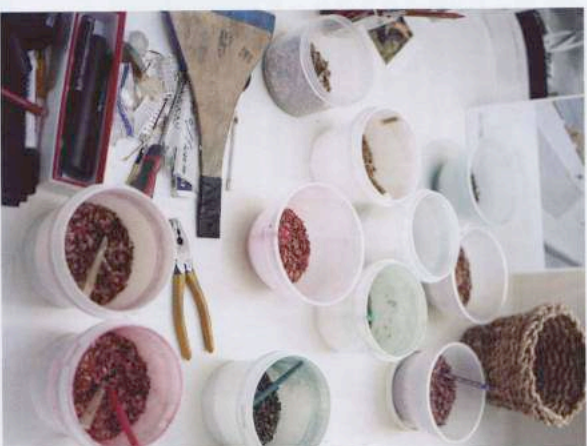
#### artist Piero della Francesca's

*Madonna Del Parto* (c. 1450–75), she recounts how moved she was seeing the painting in Italy. "It still vibrates ... there's so much tenderness. European paintings of religious subjects may appear to be an unlikely reference point for Houshary's non-figurative work, yet as she explains it, she's trying to move beyond the "narrative" of traditional art while retaining the "the colors, the structure," and the human touches that grant it emotional resonance.

In a similar manner, Houshary's sculptures draw on equally

disparate influences, from the genesis of their inspiration to the very materials used. The twisting helix-like shape of *Flux* (2003), which reaches the observer's eye-

level, was inspired by the outline of a randomly dropped elastic band. The sculpture is composed of anodized glass bricks made in Italy, though Houshary has previously used aluminum blocks for similar pieces. She has been experimenting with the subtle, varying tones possible with blue- and purple-tinted glass, yet the root symbolism of the brick has remained constant. "These are human," she says, holding up a glossy blue brick measuring roughly





ten by four centimeters. "We have created shelter by this building block, just as we have created sense out of words."

Music also figures in Houshiary's creative world. Classical melodies softly emit from speakers in her painting room as we walk down to the basement, where she brings out a scale model of the sculpture *Chord* (2014), a piece she hopes to eventually transform into a public installation roughly 12 meters tall. A smaller version, also titled *Chord* (2015), appeared earlier this year at London's Lisson Gallery, which has mounted regular exhibitions of her work since hosting her first solo show in 1984. Five ribbons of dark metal intertwine as they reach upward, reflecting, she says, both the chord's fundamental role in music and the way in which sound is "actually completely chaotic."

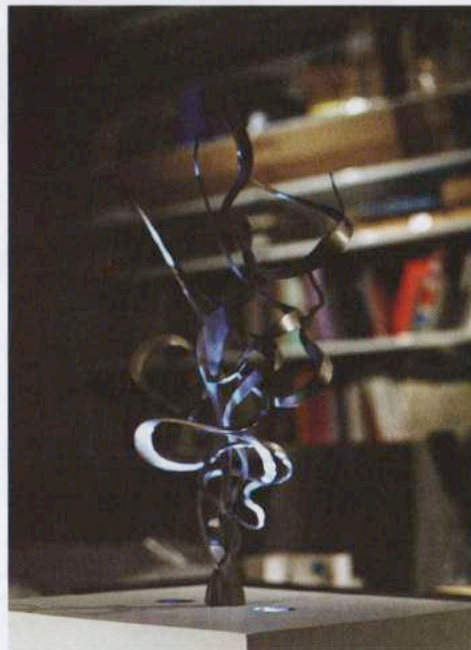
While turning on a projector to demonstrate how moving-light displays could open up *Chord* for collaborations with artists, dancers and musicians, Houshiary discusses the role of technology in her work. A computer sits at her desk among books, postcards and small trials

on paper. Though she steers away from a high-tech sheen in the finished product, she's not averse to using computer design programs or 3-D printing to model new pieces. Preparing for her September residency at the Singapore Tyler Print Institute when we meet, she outlines her plans to layer papers with text in various languages to respond to the city's multicultural makeup, and then place the assemblages in backlit Perspex boxes to reference computer screens' current monopoly on communication. "If you take the technology, it's just a tool—what makes us human is our feeling," she offers. "If you have that quality . . . you can use any tool." Fittingly, Houshiary has managed to capture a distinctly human quality across varied media, from wall-covering canvases to monumental sculptures and video installations, creating a genuine connection through subtle and delicate work built on organic forms and shared experiences.

See our website for Arabic and Chinese versions of this article.  
يمكنكم قراءة ترجمة عربية لهذه المقالة في موقعنا على الانترنت.  
瞭解此文章的中文版本請參閱我們的網站

(Top)  
A model of the proposed piece *Chord* (2014), which Houshiary hopes to integrate with an interactive lighting system.

(Bottom)  
The rear window on the studio's top floor offers a view of the surrounding neighborhood's lush greenery.



# ARTNEWS

PROFILES — MAY 2013



## SHIRAZEH HOUSHIARY: 'LIKE THE DARK SENSES BEING REVEALED'

BY Elizabeth Fullerton POSTED 05/22/13 7:00 AM

Mystical and metaphysical, Shirazeh Houshiary's sculptures, paintings, and animations explore the very nature of existence

[f Share](#) 139
 [t Tweet](#) 39
 [Pinterest](#) 1
 [ShareThis](#) 1579

With light streaming in through large skylights and classical music filling the space under the vaulted roof, the Iranian-born artist [Shirazeh Houshiary's](#) immaculate white London studio feels more like a chapel than an artist's workspace. Entering the building, the visitor has the sense of stepping out of time. It is a fitting setting for an artist whose paintings, sculptures, and animations are profoundly meditative and concerned with the metaphysical.

This ambience derives partly from Houshiary's own quiet composure and partly from the nature of her work. "I'm trying to really get beyond what we experience with the three-dimensional senses we have, because we see the world in a limited way. Much of reality is what we don't see," says the artist, who was born in Iran and came to Britain in 1974.

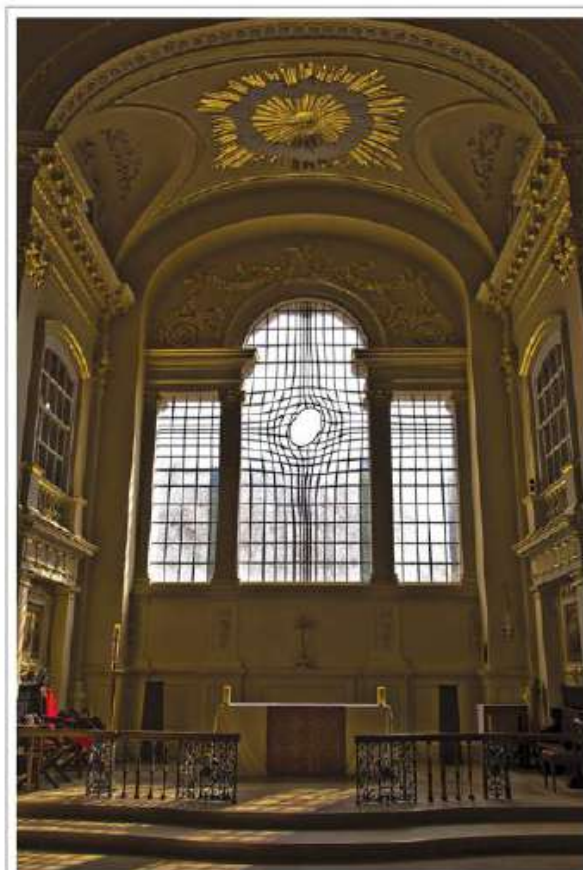
Houshiary, 58, does not practice any religion and dislikes such labels as "transcendental," yet her work has an undeniably spiritual quality, overtly so with installations such as *Breath*, a white glazed-brick tower emitting chants from four religions that was erected in Battery Park in Manhattan in 2004, and her 2008 *East Window* for St. Martin-in-the-Fields church in Trafalgar Square in London.

Despite these prominent projects and her participation in a steady stream of international exhibitions, Houshiary has a low public profile. This too may have to do with the nature of her output. "Shirazeh's work has a quiet power to attract contemplation—it's slow burn," says Vivien Lovell, director of the art consultancy *Modus Operandi*, which organized the commission for *East Window* and the altar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, both awarded to Houshiary and her British architect husband, [Pip Horne](#).



Shirazeh Houshiary. "I don't want to fit into any category," she says. "I want to be an individual."  
SHANNON OKSANEN/COURTESY THE ARTIST AND LEHMAN MAUPIN, NEW YORK AND HONG KONG





Houshiary and Horne's window for *St. Martin-In-the Fields*, London, 2008.  
DAVE MORGAN/COURTESY LEHMANN MAUPIN, NEW YORK AND  
HONG KONG

On the walls of the upper floor of the studio hang two recently completed canvases in mottled purples, radiant whites, blues, and black, destined for her solo show in November at [Lehmann Maupin Gallery](#) in New York. Poetic and primeval, these works at once suggest exploding galaxies in vast swirling cosmic spaces and the ribbed contours of minute cellular structures—like satellite pictures of tumultuous weather patterns or microscopic images of skin tissue.

One canvas, titled *Dark Senses*, in dusty purple on black, is bisected by a vaporous trail of handprints, marking a departure for the artist—an attempt to capture the elusive quality of human presence through physical touch. “It is almost like some hand mark that is really touching something very distant like the universe, like the dark senses being revealed,” says Houshiary.

Creating the paintings is an act that involves the artist’s whole body, as she moves around within the reinforced canvas on the floor, overlaying several coats of pigment, on top of which she traces an intricate filigree in pencil. The combination produces a smoky, layered effect that gives the illusion of dimensions beyond the flat picture plane.



For the past 20 years, she has been weaving a silvery web across all her paintings. It is made up of two words in Arabic repeated thousands of times: "I am" and "I am not." Crushed together, so minuscule as to be indecipherable, the words embody the duality of existence in the same way as the yin and the yang. "It's the overlapping of the two words, being and not being, life and death," explains Houshiary. "It's not about meaning. The relationship between the absence and presence is unknowable and leads to infinite possibility."

The paintings take two to six months to create—perhaps another reason for Houshiary's low public profile. "You're aware when you see the work of the amount of time that's put into each one and that's given back to you when you're looking at it; the mark making almost denotes time," says Jenni Lomax, director of the [Camden Arts Centre](#), which gave Houshiary a solo show in 1993.

Finished paintings are shipped only at the last possible moment, because Houshiary likes to live with them and learn from them. "They have their own presence and they teach me a lot," she says.

Nominated for the [Turner Prize](#) in 1994, Houshiary began her career as a sculptor and came later to painting and multimedia installation. In the 1980s, she was linked to the so-called [New British Sculptors](#) such as [Anish Kapoor](#), [Richard Deacon](#), and [Tony Cragg](#), but unlike many of them, Houshiary has eschewed the limelight.

Collected by museums ranging from [Tate](#), the [Museum of Modern Art](#), and the [Guggenheim](#), she has taken part in major group shows worldwide and had numerous solo exhibitions at the [Lisson Gallery](#) in London and [Lehmann Maupin](#) in New York, which both represent her, and where her paintings go for \$30,000 to \$300,000, sculptures \$150,000 to \$500,000, and animations \$50,000 to \$250,000. But she has yet to have a retrospective at a big-name institution.

Despite the fashion for identity politics among some curators, Houshiary refuses to ally herself with any ethnic group. While her textual patterns have been compared to Arabic calligraphy and her ritualistic creative process has been seen as an embodiment of Sufism, the mystical strand of Islam, she is fiercely resistant to attempts to classify her art and is careful about the shows in which she takes part.

Indeed, the only time a flash of anger ruffles her calm demeanor during several hours in the studio is when she talks about Tate's interpretation of her work *Veil* (which the museum owns) as a reference to the *chador*, the all-enveloping black robe worn by many Muslim women. "That's all they can see of the people who come from the Middle East—they have to be oppressed," she says. "I don't want to fit into any category. I want to be an individual, with a mind and ideas, who can connect to the bigger picture of who we are as human beings."

Born in Shiraz in 1955, Houshiary went to school and university in Iran. Even in her native country, she says, she felt like an outsider, wanting no part of the brewing revolution that erupted in 1979, five years after she moved to England to study at the [Chelsea School of Art](#). She has returned to Iran only twice; the lack of democracy, in politics and in the home, depresses her.

"I don't want to deny my roots. My Persian heritage is definitely there," she says. "It's not something I need to defend or fight for. It's just **there**." But she feels more connection with her adopted country than with her homeland.

She has been with her English husband since they met as students in the 1970s. They share the studio in the leafy West London suburb of Barnes, walking there from home every day along the Thames, far from the industrial east where most of London's artists live.

The studio, designed by Horne, reflects the scope of Houshiary's activities, with the upper loft space dedicated to painting, the ground floor to sculpture, and the basement to animation. In the entire building, virtually the only traces of her roots are a pair of Persian slippers and a book on the Sufi mystic poet Rumi, nestled in her crowded shelves among scientific tomes by Stephen Hawking, poetry by Keats and Rilke, and numerous books on art, with subjects ranging from Kazimir Malevich and Barnett Newman to Velázquez. On the floor of the studio, more books—on Leonardo da Vinci, Piero della Francesca, and Francisco de Zurbarán—lie open or in piles alongside computerized sketches for sculptures in coral, rust, and turquoise.

The art historian Mel Gooding sees a strong resonance in Houshiary's abstract painting and sculpture in terms of rhythm, structure, and color with the works of many Renaissance masters, despite their predominantly religious subject matter.

"I was aware with Antonello da Messina and Fra Angelico especially that she was clearly looking, as she does all the time, at the Western European tradition of painting," Gooding says. "We are not talking about any kind of Christian imagery, we're talking about a set of formal ideas that has to do with an art that seeks revelation rather than description."

The concept of the veil is in fact fundamental to Houshiary's work, but it has nothing to do with Islam, women, oppression, or Christian marriage ceremonies. Veils, shrouds, and membranes are a recurring motif; for her, the veil is the skin separating the human interior and exterior, and it is also a metaphor for perception, representing a barrier that needs to be broken through for us to achieve awareness of our being.

"My recent work has had a lot of quality of rupture and piercing and chasm, so it's like a quest to go beyond the veil that stops us seeing through," Houshiary says, pointing to her painting *Chasm*, due to appear in November at Lehmann Maupin, with a milky spatial mist over a black background punctured with intense blue gashes that draw in the viewer.