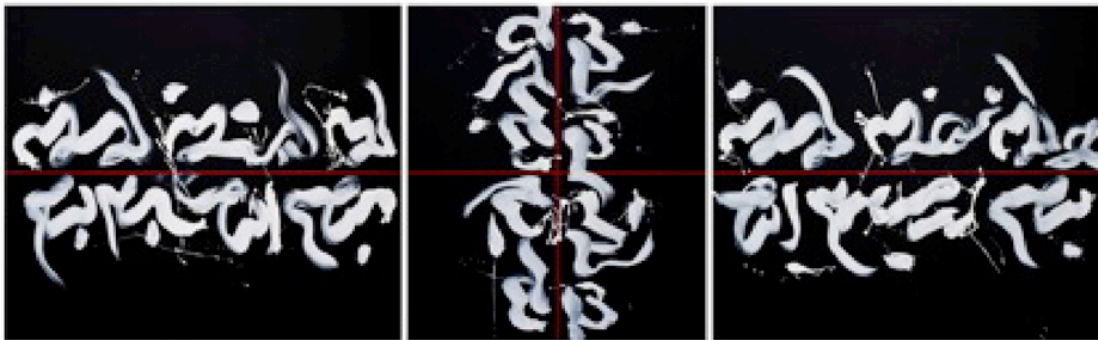


PearlLam Galleries

Pearl Lam Galleries presents
leading contemporary Iranian artist

GOLNAZ FATHI: THE LIVING ROAD



Untitled (2010), Acrylic on canvas (triptych), 144 x 470 cm

Exhibition Dates

15 September–10 November, 2013

Monday–Sunday, 10:30am–7pm

Press preview on **Saturday, 14 September, 3–5pm**

Opening reception on **Saturday, 14 September, 5–7pm**

Pearl Lam Galleries, 181 Middle Jiangxi Road, G/F, Shanghai, China 200002

SHANGHAI—Pearl Lam Galleries Shanghai will present the first solo exhibition of Golnaz Fathi in China, illustrating the growing interest worldwide in Iranian art, initiated by major exhibitions at the Barbican Gallery, UK; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; LACMA, Los Angeles; and the forthcoming exhibition 'Iran Modern' at Asia Society in New York. Fathi is an influential member of a thriving new generation of multi-disciplinary artists born in Tehran since the 1970s. Entitled **The Living Road**, and opening to the public on **15 September 2013**, the exhibition features 21 new works in a variety of media including pen on canvas, acrylic on canvas and LED light works, alongside two historic acrylic on canvas works which have been exhibited at Art Forum in Wiesbaden, Germany in 2011 and Tehran's pavilion at the Shanghai Biennale in 2012 respectively.

Golnaz Fathi's work draws on the discipline of Persian calligraphy reinterpreted through an abstract gestural style. Her work is also inspired by Abstract Expressionism and the work of Middle Eastern Modernists from the 50s and 60s who employed the written word as a pictorial element. Fathi's work has been collected extensively by major public and private collections including the British Museum, London; the Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi, India; The Farjam Collection, Dubai; and Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore.

The Living Road features a series of pen on canvas works inspired by the technique of Shiah Mashgh, which translates literally as 'black practice', the calligrapher's warm-up exercise whereby letters are repeated over and over again until the paper is entirely covered in black ink. Golnaz Fathi sees this process as the most artistic part of traditional calligraphy. She says: "My artistic aim has been to transform calligraphy from words into forms. I treat the letters as a form—I make them float or dance on my canvas. Like a journey of sorts, I take the words up and down, moving to different places that end nowhere. The origin comes from my meditations; perhaps sometimes it ends in stillness, a stillness that talks. They can be read as a visual meditation or a form of prayer. Being restricted by so many rules in traditional calligraphy made me break all the rules and treat the letters just the way I want to. This inspiration comes from my own culture. I am proud of my country's very rich cultural heritage which in turn has greatly inspired me." Amongst the other media represented in the exhibition, the light boxes particularly highlight the unique forms in Fathi's work as the glow of the letters and lines emerge from the bold black boxes.

Born in Tehran in 1972, the Islamic Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war were predominant elements in the background of Fathi's upbringing. The disturbing effects of these events cannot be dismissed from her work, which asks for pause and contemplation. She studied classical calligraphy at the Iranian Society of Calligraphy in Tehran, practicing writing Persian for up to eight hours a day for six years and is one of a small number of female Iranian artists to have trained at such a high level. She has received a number of awards including the Best Woman Calligraphist in Ketabat Style in 1995 by the Iranian Society of Calligraphy in Tehran, and was chosen by one of the juries at the Sharjah Calligraphy Biennale in 2011. She has also exhibited in museums and galleries in Hong Kong, New York, Paris, Dubai, Korea, Germany and London. In 2012, she was granted a residence permit in France and she currently lives and works in Tehran.

Golnaz Fathi

Golnaz Fathi was born in Tehran, Iran in 1972. Her work is transnational both in conception and execution, as it incorporates her extensive training in traditional Iranian calligraphy, graphic design, painting, and autobiography. Her paintings carry traces of meaning that have no known coded alphabet. The strength of her work stems from the drive to express emotions that cannot be pinned down into words. She has also exhibited widely in galleries and museums in South Korea, New York, Geneva, Dubai, London, Tehran, Paris, Chicago, and Padova. Her work is part of the permanent collection of Brighton & Hove Museum, England; Carnegie Mellon University in Doha, Qatar; Islamic Art Museum, Malaysia; Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore; The British Museum, London; Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi, India; Farjam Collection, Dubai; and The Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi, India. She has also received numerous fellowships and grants, including resident scholarships to study at Fabbrica (Treviso, Italy) and Cité Internationale des Arts (Paris, France).

About Pearl Lam Galleries

Founded by Pearl Lam, the Galleries' mission is to stimulate cross-cultural dialogue and cultural exchange between the East and West by establishing distinct and rigorous programming in each of its gallery spaces in Hong Kong, Shanghai and the forthcoming Singapore gallery.

Pearl Lam Galleries is dedicated to championing Chinese artists who re-evaluate the philosophy and perception of Chinese contemporary art, whilst also committed to presenting major exhibitions by international artists. Jenny Holzer and Yinka Shonibare are among the line-up of artists who will have solo exhibitions at the Galleries in 2013.

Pearl Lam Design shows works by established and emerging international designers including André Dubreuil, Maarten Baas, Mattia Bonetti, and Studio Makkink & Bey. They are invited to push the boundaries of traditional Chinese art and craft techniques and create new works that reflect their experiences in China.

Press Enquiries

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