



Pavilion of Iran

at the 56th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia

The Great Game / Iranian Highlights

curated by **Marco Meneguzzo, Mazdak Faiznia**

Organization **FFF Faiznia Family Foundation – Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art**

opening **6th May 2015, 6 pm**

The Great Game

Iran, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Central-Asian Republics, Kurdish Region: art, artists, and culture from the heart of the world.

The idea of this exhibition comes from the consideration that the geographical area of these Countries is, in fact, a **historically unique territory, its destiny indissolubly** linked by its historical and cultural situation: around these places there took place, and still takes place, what since the XIX century has been known as "**The Great Game**" for supremacy in Asia. A tangle of political, economic, religious, and social situations also finds an expression and interpretation in the art produced in these places, and it is this that the exhibition proposed for la Biennale Arte 2015 hopes to show through the work of some **forty artists** working in the region and who are particularly aware of social-political questions.

The exhibition demonstrates the centrality of this question and how it is perceived and reestablished by an international public through the language of contemporary art; it has already been expressed in major international shows, but it is still hampered by the genuine existential difficulties of those who have first-hand experience of a tangle of contradictions: a precise mirror-image of what could be the linguistic outcome of globalization. So this is not an overview of the art of these countries - which by now, at least for some of them, is well known - but is a **genuine conceptual "thrust"** into one of the places that is an everyday and superficially - considered protagonist of the media.

The show's chosen theme obviously implies that these works have been chosen from among those that most meaningfully approach the problems under analysis: for this reason we have undertaken a great deal of prior research - even *in loco* - about the availability of works that are indispensable for the subject of the exhibition, while also privileging, however, **the metaphoric aspect of the complexity of the culture and the forces in play** (as a result, among the artists are those who could superficially be defined as "abstract", and the "handwriting" element of these cultures has also been considered as being of fundamental importance).

Iranian Highlights

The section presents the work of four Iranian artists: **Samira Alikhanzadeh, Mahmoud Bakhshi Moakhar, Jamshid Bayrami** and **Mohamed Ehsai**, from different generations, genders, and expressive tendencies and instruments, who in this case are brought together by their will to display the wealth and complexity of Iranian art, which by its very nature is cosmopolitan, receptive, and accommodating as well as aware of its own cultural heritage. This is an exemplary homage - necessarily exemplary in form, as there are many, many more than these four current Iranian artists - to a culture that is perfectly integrated in contemporaneity and the ways of globalization.

Artists

Iranian Highlights

Samira Alikhanzadeh, Mahmoud Bakhshi Moakhar, Jamshid Bayrami, Mohamed Ehsai

The Great Game

Lida Abdul, Bani Abidi, Adel Abidin, Amin Aghaei, Ghodrattollah Agheli, Shahriar Ahmadi, Parastoo Ahovan, Farhad Ahrarnia, Furat al Jamil, Rashad Alakbarov, Nazgol Ansarinia, Reza Aramesh, Alireza Astaneh, Sonia Balassanian, Mahmoud Bakhshi Moakhar, Wafaa Bilal, Mehdi Farhadian, Shadi Ghadirian, Shilpa Gupta, Ghasem Hajizadeh, Shamsia Hassani, Sahand Hesamiyan, Sitara Ibrahimova, Pouran Jinchi, Amar Kanwar, Babak Kazemi, Riyas Komu, Farideh Lashai, Farokh Mahdavi, Mehrdad Mohebali, Ahmad Morshedloo, Huma Mulji, Azad Nanakeli, Jamal Penjweny, Imran Qureshi, Sara Rahbar, Rashid Rana, Atefeh Samaei, T.V. Santhosh, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Wahid Sharif, Walid Siti, Mohsen Taasha Wahidi, Mitra Tabrizian, Parviz Tanavoli, Newsha Tavakolian, Sadegh Tirafkan, Hema Upadhyay, Saira Wasim.

Pavilion of Iran

Cannaregio, Calle San Giovanni, 1074b, Venezia

From 7th May to 22nd November

Opening 6th May 2015, 6 pm

Free entrance

Opening hours: 10 am – 6 pm

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