



**The 6th  
Tehran  
Contemporary  
Painting  
Biennial**

**8 Dec.2003- 8 Jan.2004**

Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art



This catalogue is a collection of the works displayed in the 6th Tehran Contemporary Painting Biennial. It is the first experience of the Society of Iranian Painters in organising such a large-scale exhibition in Iran.

The 6th Tehran Contemporary Painting Biennial was an attempt to provide the grounds for the fresh, young and undiscovered talents to express themselves and to present a new generation of artists who would be the harbingers of the future success. We also endeavoured to emphasise on the role that creative mind played in shaping the personal and mental experiences. Although we strove to benefit from artists and experts in the field to attain the biennial's objectives and to eliminate earlier shortcomings, we took pains to make this most significant event in the arena of Iran's visual arts as distinctive as possible compared to previous biennials.

One distinctive feature of this biennial is the adjudication process and the mix of the jury panel. By appointing an integrated jury panel and also inviting internationally renowned Iranian and foreign artists of other fields, we experimented an innovative approach in evaluation of artworks. Upon the initial announcement for the exhibition, the biennial secretariat was inundated with some 4768 slides by 1158 artists, among which the selection committee assorted more than 140 paintings by 102 artists after screening the slides in the first, and the actual artworks in the second stage. The works of 33 established Iranian painters were also displayed in the supplementary section of the biennial.

We hope that the initiative taken by the organising committee of the 6th Tehran Contemporary Painting Biennial, to organise the most significant visual arts event in the country, will inspire successful biennials in the future. We also hope that it can adequately present a broad scope of Iranian contemporary art to the world.

Society of Iranian Painters

Schools and styles, individual frameworks, and conventional and unconventional approaches in the modern world are no longer the most important or the only criteria for evaluation as they once were. No definition is the concluding and enduring definition anymore. Every minute, this world undergoes changes and faces a variety of paradoxes and incidents that are beyond wildest dreams.

These changes are not confined to socio-cultural domain. The magnitude of art makes these changes manifest themselves more plainly. More or less in every period, certain works of art come to be in the focus of attention, yet slowly but surely their values are questioned. Many are the works which turn pale over time and many are those which were once underestimated, but now are pondered over and reckoned as immortal.

Is it possible to deliver any comprehensive and enduring definition of art to fit into all ages, places and cultures? Is flawless assessment of the value of an artwork always achievable? We have to bear in mind that the truth is neither eternal nor perpetual. Ideally, each individual possesses only a share of the truth and no evaluation will ever meet the taste of every single person in the art community. Obviously, a number of artists will be in favour of or against these decisions and react accordingly. These objections must be greeted for when heightened, they can lead to a fresh blueprint for a new selection process. Likewise, debate and criticism must be accorded due attention, because they can give birth to new thought processes which can, in turn, move the art community forward.

Iranian artists have learned, throughout the turbulent history of their nation, to work hard to counterbalance the severity of nature and barbarous rulers tactfully. The visionary sphere of the Iranian artist has always been devoid of the real-life dilemmas, and if, in the course of history, he has distanced himself from the allegorical paradise within him, the exile has been transitory compared to the immensity of history.

Some people pass and others fail in every selection process. While some valuable works of art are discovered and applauded, many others remain neglected and unobserved, and this is the end result of every judgement. On the one hand, there have been many artists who never repeated their Grand Slam after being once awarded, on the other, there have been those who upon being rejected by colleges and art centres or remaining undiscovered, have made their way to competitions and contributed to the art world. Sometimes, an artist's innovation is in deviating from the norms set by art theoreticians and sponsors to deny him his freedom. No artist can ever create an invaluable and immortal piece of art unless he sets himself free from conventions, established traditions, collective sense, common taste, and musts and must nots. Every exhibition is a bid to challenge and every biennial is a visual feast that incites artists to become active and art communities to become more energetic and hopeful, but the main concern for every artist should be creating works of art; time is the principal and ultimate judge.

Farah Ossouli  
Chairperson  
The 6th Tehran Contemporary Painting Biennial





افسریان ، ایمان  
بدون عنوان  
رنگ روغن روی بوم  
۱۰۰x۱۲۰ سانتیمتر  
**Afsarian, Iman**  
Untitled  
Oil on canvas  
100x120 cm.