

Strand For Women

HOMA EMAMI

Short Biography Homa Emami

Homa Emami graduated in 1979 from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Tehran in the field of sculpture, emigrated to Germany at the end of 1985 and pursued further art studies from 1989 to 1993 at the Cologne Art Academy in the field of art and design. Since 1993 she has exhibited her works as a freelance artist in Germany and other parts of the world. She lives and works in Cologne and Brühl.

Homa Emami's artistic themes and concepts are presented as space-related art installations with mixed media and materials such as photography, painting, objects, and drawings. Themes such as archiving, storing, ordering and transience are reflected in her works.

Artwork Homa Emami

Homa Emami's artworks are an exploration of the boundaries between content, material and form, sculpture, and representation in space.

Her works are based on her personal life experiences, especially migration and the role of human beings in society and their living environment. In the same way, she challenges femininity and life at the heart of her works. She uses day-to-day, ephemeral, and fragile materials in her work, creating an associative space of her artistic philosophy, at the same time pointing to instability and vulnerability and on the other hand to resistance and stubbornness.

She uses basic materials, for example soil, dust, hair, eggshells, orange peels, seeds, shards, etc., which can be found in basic forms in her works. Her works are processual and refer to the representation of original experiences. In her arrangements, the artist is archiving, numbering, and ordering a collection of her past and serious works, she designs a root connection as well as a platform to speak out and connect individual experiences with social experiences.

Documents of Time

With her performative and processual drawing, the artist Homa Emami documents a kind of time track along a long painting, which is covered with strands of hair from women who have shown their solidarity with the feminist revolution in Iran at demonstrations.

The identity of these women can only be traced through the DNA of the strand of hair. Only the time and places of these protests/demonstrations are recognizable in the picture in coded form through coordinates.

The rhythmicity of the drawing is reminiscent of the enumeration of days gone by, as a method of preservation and documentation to bring the dream and desire for freedom into fulfillment after this long period of oppression.

By sculpturing the cut off hair, the artist emphasizes the importance of hair as a symbol of resistance, freedom, connection, and solidarity.

Longing for Freedom

With her hair chain object, the artist Homa Emami consciously refers to the current feminist women's revolution in Iran. Every year, women's hair grows by about 15 cm, and after 44 years of oppression, the result is a 660 cm long hair chain. With her art, the artist wants to set a sign for solidarity with the people in Iran.

SHIRIN NESHAT

Short Biography Shirin Neshat

Shirin Neshat is an Iranian-born artist and filmmaker living in New York. Neshat works and continues to experiment with the mediums of photography, video and film, which she imbues with highly poetic and politically charged images and narratives that question issues of power, religion, race, gender and the relationship between the past and present, East and West, individual and collective through the lens of her personal experiences as an Iranian woman living in exile. Neshat has held numerous solo exhibitions at museums internationally including the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, Texas; The Broad, Los Angeles; Museo Correr, Venice, Italy; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C. and the Detroit Institute of Arts.

Neshat has directed three feature-length films, *Women Without Men* (2009), which received the Silver Lion Award for Best Director at the 66th Venice International Film Festival, *Looking For Oum Kulthum* (2017), and most recently *Land of Dreams*, which premiered at the Venice Film Festival (2021).

She is represented by Gladstone Gallery in New York and Goodman Gallery in London.

Artwork Shirin Neshat

Sarah is part of a trilogy entitled *Dreamers*. It recalls the formal-aesthetics of Neshat's earlier video works, albeit with a different content. Where Neshat treated the gender relations in contemporary Iran in those earlier works, here she is looking at dreams as a state between consciousness and insanity. Each of the three video installations revolves around a young woman protagonist, following her on a hallucinatory trek in the form of atmospheric or surrealist images.

In *Sarah* Neshat shows a young woman wandering around in the forest. The forest shows signs of an intervention, but it is unclear whether these are signs of decay or the evidence of violent conflicts. The shorn pieces of hair which the woman discovers and the remains of an abandoned hearth could be taken as signs of a devastation. Associations with violence, mortality and death also occur as the woman meets a troop of soldiers marching by and a group of black clad women swinging an incense vessel. The wandering and the indistinct searching of the young woman find a final end with the idea of her own death on the banks of a body of water: While the woman slips in and disappears, the film image slowly dissolves.

Although Neshat specifies neither spatial nor temporal coordinates, operating instead with diffuse images and vague allusions, the work transmits a feeling of a world torn by conflict. At the same time, *Sarah* creates an allegory about the power of memories or a traumatic past that determines the protagonist's present, providing her with a framework.

PRUNE NOURRY

Short Biography Prune Nourry

Prune Nourry is a multidisciplinary artist. Last autumn, she made a giant army of sculptures in Nigeria about the Chibok girls, inspired by the 108 life size *Terracotta Daughters* sculptures she buried in China in 2015 in a secret place. She also just inaugurated a monumental pregnant woman in clay at Château La Coste in Aix-en-Provence, France, and is the first woman artist to be invited to exhibit an artwork inside the courtyard of the French National Assembly. In 2021, Nourry created *Projet Phenix* a show in the dark conceived for visually impaired people, and designed the set of *Atys*, an opera-ballet presented at the Grand Théâtre de Genève and the Opéra Royal de Versailles.

Artwork Prune Nourry

Prune is collecting hair strands since 2013. On March 8th, a collective artwork with hair strands received from all around the world will be unveiled, to show support to the #WomanLifeFreedom movement. This piece will offer the opportunity to visitors to contribute with their own hair, if they wish, during the week of the exhibition.

CIMA RAHMANKHAH

"I'm attracted to things that are neglected – to their otherness."

Short Biography Cima Rahmankhah

Iranian American artist Cima Rahmankhah currently lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. She received her MFA from Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, in 2012. The following year, she did postgraduate studies at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris. She works primarily in drawing and painting, de-contextualizing recognizable forms in scale and position to expose new narratives through unexpected perspectives. Selected recent solo and group exhibitions include Echoes of Many at Agency, Los Angeles; PAPA RAGAZZE! at Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles; International Sleep Disorder, Benzene Gallery, Hamburg, Germany; the Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg; the Fundación Canal de Isabel II, Madrid; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Puerto Rico; and the Museo Universitario del Chopo, Mexico. Her work has been published in Murder Magazine No.3 and in Contemporary Art Review LA.

Artwork Cima Rahmankhah

I use hair in my work since I'm interested in its convergence of identity, repetition, and texture.