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ECHOES IN BLUE
AN EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY IRANIAN ART FROM TEHRAN
OPENS OCTOBER 16 THROUGH NOVEMBER 14, 2010
AT JAMES GRAY GALLERY, BERGAMOT STATION, LOS ANGELES

*Los Angeles, CA – September 16, 2010 – **Echoes in Blue**, an exhibition of contemporary Iranian paintings, provides a vibrant and thought-provoking view of life within the boundaries of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Curated by Iranian-born **Homa Taraji**, in association with **Dr. Alireza Sami Azar**, former director of Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art and a consultant to **Christie's**, this show features 10 artists living and working in Iran today and is intended to introduce their work to Americans. The show runs from **October 16** through **November 14, 2010** at the **James Gray Gallery** in Los Angeles, with an opening reception on **Saturday, October 16 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.***

Though the Iranian government requires that artists refrain from topics like religion and politics, **Echoes in Blue** clearly reflects the life struggles that exist in the long-lasting revolutionary state. The title is from a poem by the renowned Iranian female poet **Forough Farrokhzad** (1935-1967), in which she reminisces about the echoes of blue in Isfahan, a world-famous Iranian city with hundreds of historic structures, built primarily in blue tiles. The poem, like the exhibition, is a reflection of Iranian culture.

"The timing is right to bring contemporary Iranian art to the attention of an international audience to demonstrate that despite the repression of women and art, Iranian artists of both genders have flourished." said Homa Taraji.

Since 2007, the field of Iranian modern and contemporary art has grown exponentially on the international art market. Iranian artists have dominated auctions organized by leading auction houses such as **Christie's, Sotheby's**, and **Bonhams**, selling at record highs. This has propelled Iranian artists to an international level and **collecting their art is now a very attractive investment.**

"I have been a gallery owner for 35 years. I try to promote young artists, like the Iranians I find so interesting now. I was lucky enough to sign five of them before they began getting a lot of attention in the media. There's something exciting going on in the art world in Iran today," says Austrian art dealer and gallery owner, **Thaddaeus Ropac.**

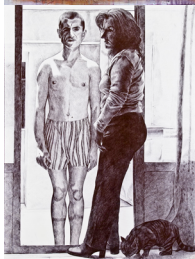
Artists featured in ***Echoes in Blue*** include:



Hossein Khosrojerdi, who participated in the **Venice Biennial** in 2003, portrays characters with no identity, struggling to maintain their Persian identity in contradiction with the imposed Islamic System.



Amirhossein Zanajni depicts the ruins of once spectacular historical buildings, symbols of Iranian heritage, which has been subject to destruction by the imposition of strict Islamic rules.



Ahmad Morshedloo captures ordinary people in what seems to be an eternal "waiting" mode; given up, indifferent and bored; filled with ennui they are just "waiting."

There are many other beautiful abstract and modern pieces in this exhibition, which reflect the texture of this rich culture and the existential challenges of life in Iran.

About Echoes in Blue

Echoes in Blue is organized and curated by Homa Taraji, co-founder and Executive Director of **The American Foundation for Contemporary Iranian Art (www.afcia.org)**, a non-profit organization for promotion of contemporary Iranian art in the U.S. Taraji has established working relationships with art dealers and galleries in Tehran and a broad base of artists whose work she represents in the U.S. In parallel with the arts, Ms. Taraji is a senior engineer at the Aerospace Corporation in El Segundo, CA, where she develops and manages domestic and international customers for space systems technology. She began her career as a software engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, working on space missions. Prior to Aerospace, she was the Manager of Information Systems at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

Ms. Taraji is available in Los Angeles for interviews. Photos of the artists' works are available on request.

About The James Gray Gallery

The James Gray Gallery (www.jamesgraygallery.com) is located at the Bergamot Station, 2525 Michigan Avenue, #D4, Santa Monica, CA 90404, Phone: 310.315.9502. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Sunday 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Mondays by appointment. For more information on the exhibit call 310.489.2417.