

# **AMIDST SHADOW AND LIGHT**

## **Contemporary Iranian Art and Artists**

Edited by  
**Hamid Keshmirshakan**

## 6. Paradigms of Paradise in Contemporary Iranian Art<sup>1</sup>

Faryar Javaherian

**M**an's existence begins in a metaphoric garden and ends in a metaphysical garden. All religions have described heaven as an ineffably beautiful garden. In Christian cosmogony, Man was created in Eden, a garden where all plants and animals were living; in other words, the most bountiful garden of nature. But he was expelled from it for sinning. So, from primordial times, the garden is imbued with a sense of purity and innocence. Ever since that time, Man has endeavoured to recreate that ideal, imaginary garden as paradise—for believers of all creeds (Figure 1).

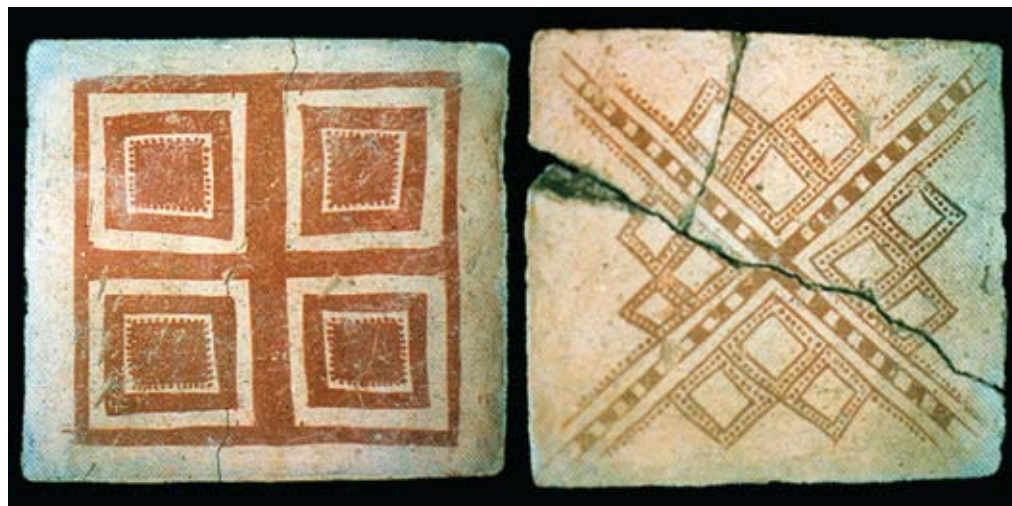
The garden is the dream place, the utopia or no-place. Although totally artificial—since it is man-made—it intends to create a perfect slice of nature. The garden is full of paradoxes, in its outer and inner meanings, its concept, form and aims. In all its dimensions there is a latent contradiction. In Iranian cosmogony, two rivers cross each other at a right angle and divide the world into four quarters. This paradigm of the four quarters (or corners) of the world is translated into the *chahār-bāgh* (four gardens) in garden design and the *chahār-tāq* (four vaults) in architecture, whereby the unity of heaven and earth is expressed by the transformation of the square into a circle, and the placement of a dome on pendentives in the most elaborate form of the *chahār-tāq*. In garden design, this unity is symbolised by a grand and often very shallow pool that reflects the sky (Figure 2).

The old Pahlavi word *pardīs* (enclosed area) found its way into many Indo-European languages to mean 'paradise'. In 2004, while curating the *Gar-*



1. Nicolas Poussin, *Garden of Eden*, 1660-1664, oil on canvas, 117 × 160 cm. Louvre, Paris

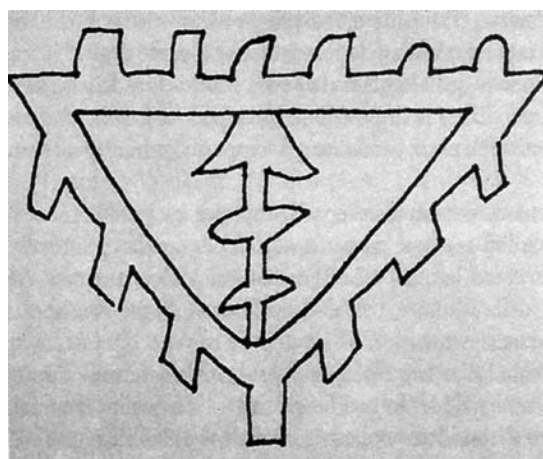
2. Four-fold designs on tiles found at Bābā Jān site, east Azerbaijan, Iran, eighth century BCE



*dens of Iran: Ancient Wisdom, New Visions* exhibition, I found studies of Elamite seals dating from 3000-3500 BCE excavated by Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948) and have also, following more recent excavations, come across a proto-Elamite seal depicting a simple *pardīs* dating from 5000-6000 BCE (Figure 3). Although garden historians point to the Egyptian gardens of 12000 BCE as the first earthly gardens, I still have hopes of finding new archaeological evidence of their existence in the Iranian plateau before those dates, since 90% of Iranian archaeological sites are still await excavation.<sup>2</sup>

The paradise described in *Avesta*<sup>3</sup> is also a fourfold garden, very similar to heaven as described in the *Qurʾān*. Henry Corbin shows how much Islam, and especially duodecimal Shiism, have borrowed from Mazdean beliefs. He coined the expression ‘imaginal world’ to translate *ʾālam-i misāl*. In Iranian Sufism, everything in heaven has its corresponding image in the world below, and between these two worlds there is another inter-world to which initiates have access and where they can ‘see’ the images of the world above. This ‘imaginal world’ is like a dream-state or trance where the initiates, and certainly authentic artists, come into contact with heaven.

The paradigm of the Iranian garden<sup>4</sup> also comes from this imaginal world and it is based on a perfectionist geometry, differentiating it from the chaotic nature which surrounds it. In Figure 4, we see a typology of the various geometric forms of Iranian gardens, where the plans are all drawn to the same scale. In spite of the strict geometry, there is a lot of diversity, both in plan form and, especially, in size.



3. Elamite *pardīs* with single pine tree

In Figure 5, we see two Italian gardens which also are *chahār-bāghs*: the Qua-

drelle Gardens of the Palazzo Pagano and the Botanical Gardens of Portici. Indeed, the Iranian garden's globalisation began some twenty-five centuries ago and has reached a vast expanse of land from Spain to India.

The Iranian garden is an ideal landscape which is at once the image of an inner spiritual representation of paradise and the very real space of the garden, made of plants and buildings. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger says that existence, as indicated by the German word *Dasein*, is spatial.<sup>5</sup> In fact, he says that there is an old German word *Buan* which meant 'dwelling' as well as 'being'. One can hardly imagine

being without being-in-a-space. The most important aspect of the Iranian garden is the being-in-it or *hāl*, in which one experiences a sort of mystical participation with universal Being. The purpose of the Iranian garden is to take man closer to heaven by allowing him to experience an earthly representation of it.

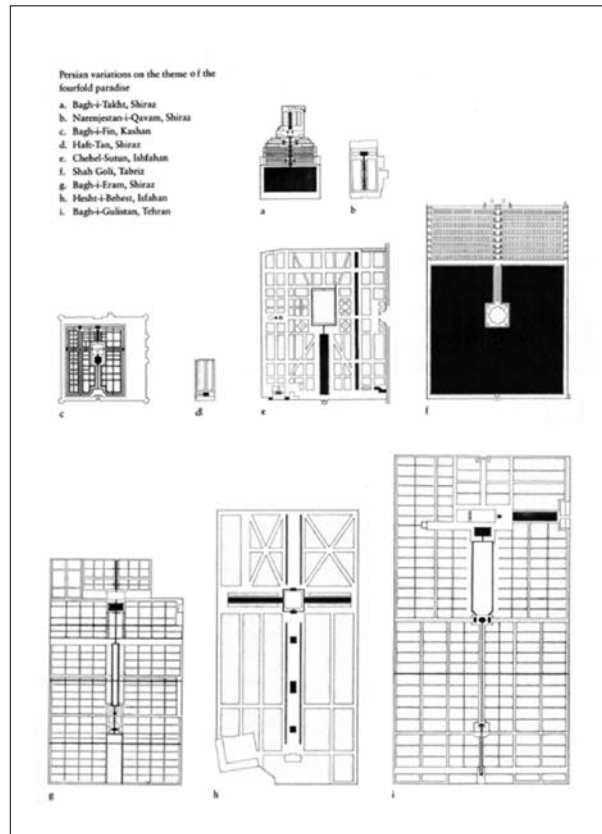
Try to imagine what Mohammad Taqī Khan, the ruler of Yazd in the 19th century, must have felt like when he sat in his *hashī* building and looked through the coloured-glass window of its octagonal room in his Dowlatabad garden (Figure 6).

Aesthetically, the material which the Iranian garden is made of basically comprises seven elements which all are very sensual. The first and foremost is water, the most sacred and precious element in our landscape (Figure 7).

The second element is the trees, plants and flowers which entirely depend on the gardeners' vigilance for their life and for producing any kind of greenery (Figure 8).

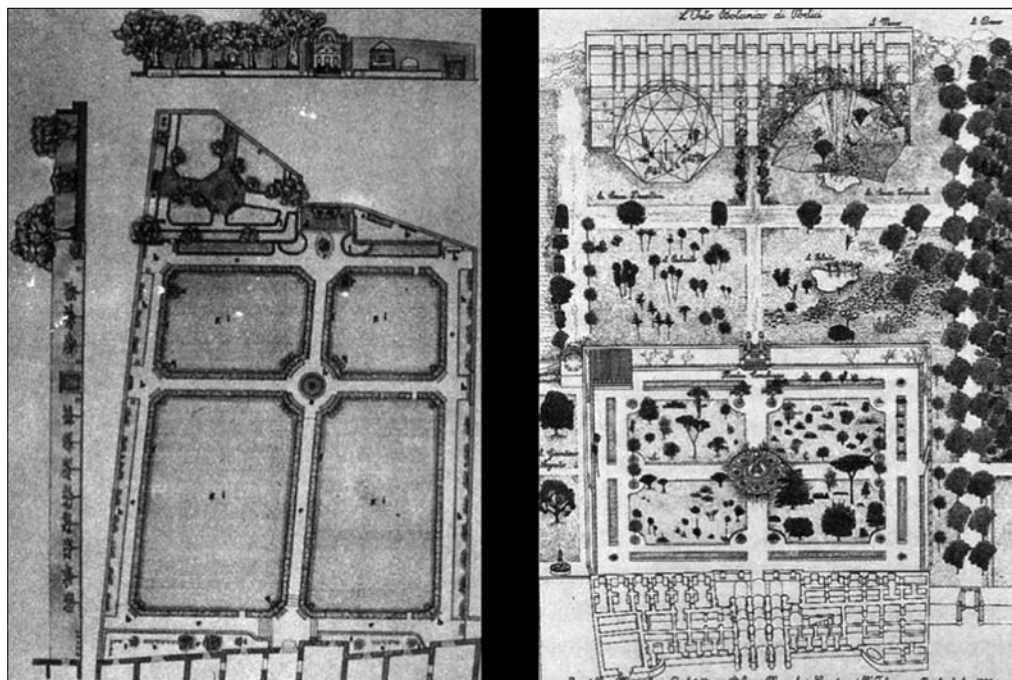
The third element is the architecture or built elements and especially the main pavilion of the garden. Figure 9 is its most poetic embodiment: the Chihilsutūn—slender to the point of being almost immaterial, it looks like the tents kings used for picnics which are often depicted in Persian miniatures.

The fourth element is the sky—which has a special quality in the whole of Iran—and



4. Plans of various Iranian *chahār-bāghs*, source: Charles Moore, *The Poetics of Garden*

5. Two Italian *chahār-bāghs*, 19th century, source: Donatella Mazzoleni, *Nature, Architecture, Diversity*

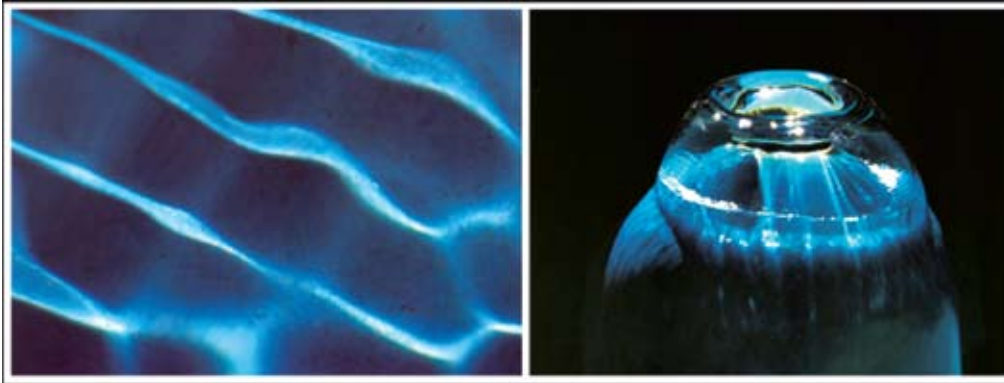


of course its reflection in the main pool of the garden, a subject which has been written upon copiously, for this is the place where heaven and earth attain unity (Figure 10).

The fifth and sixth elements are the sounds and smells of the garden, their most celebrated expressions being the song of the nightingale and the perfume of the Mohammadi rose, thus completing the aesthetic experience of the Iranian garden.



6. Octagonal building of Dowlatabad Garden, Yazd, 18th century



◀ 7. Details of Pool in Fin Garden, Kashan, 17th century, photograph taken by Mohammad-Reza Javadi

Finally, what constitutes the seventh element and enhances the aesthetic dimensions of the garden, is the *hāl* or sense of ‘being’ which finding oneself in that space creates, and which was alluded to at the beginning. The spirit of the place—the garden—transcends all the aesthetic and sensual experiences and transforms them into a quasi-religious feeling.

Ever since man was chased out of paradise, he has experienced a nostalgia for returning to it. But this is not a bitter nostalgia; it is more like the sweet memories of childhood. I want to come back to this notion of purity and innocence which is inherent in the garden. In both archetypal Christian and Islamic gardens, at the centre of the garden stands a fountain which, on a metaphorical level, distributes milk and honey, the basic nutrients of childhood. In the Bible as well as the Qu’rān, the garden represents the site of ideal love, both heavenly and earthly.

In *The Meaning of Aesthetics*, Reid says that our response to landscape begins with a simple sensory enjoyment of nature. This experience is then increased by some objective understanding of what one experiences, *ie* knowing the names of the plants and birds, and the myths and legends which have created the garden. And finally this experience of nature becomes a sort of spiritual experience, though not one connected to any particular religion; rather, it is an experience of ‘the wisdom and spirit of the Universe’, as William Wordsworth expressed it.<sup>6</sup>

All gardens have this universal aspect, especially the two gardens of Ur: the Japanese garden, itself derived from the Chinese garden but elevated to new heights, and the Iranian Garden. These two archetypes have generated all the other types of gardens in the world, and each is a reflection of the vision of the world of these two cultures and their creation mythologies. The way we conceive the garden is also no doubt a reflection of ourselves. It is with this perspective that some contemporary Iranian artists were asked to create their personal gardens at the dawn of the 21st century.

Whenever we feel that we are losing something, it becomes more precious to us. The theme of the exhibition (*Gardens of Iran*) means just this: that we have lost touch with ‘nature,’ our acute senses for natural elements, and our wisdom in how to treat water. We have now reached an era of the glorification of the ugly.

Shahryar Ghadimi shows this evolution in his photographic essay covering 2500 years of garden design in Iran. The film that Bahman Kiarostami<sup>7</sup> has made on the preparation of the exhibition is also based on the same concept. The film begins with images of the Fin Garden, Iran's most majestic classical garden, in Kashan, and ends with the plastic trees that one can see in abundance in all the city squares and parks of Iran. The Iranian garden was supposed to be the lyrical poem (*ghazal*) in the poetry of Iran's natural landscapes.<sup>8</sup>

The tension between Man and nature, which invariably exists in all landscapes, is at the root of all human creativity. It is not so much religion which defines a nation's culture as the various people who adapt the religion to the natural landscape they live in. This broad name-Islamic art-which Oleg Grabar coined in *The Formation of Islamic Art*<sup>9</sup> and which covers an area from beyond India to Spain is simply inadequate, because when we look at the art of this vast region, there are too many other factors at work which have nothing to do with Islam. For instance, as Amin Maalouf says, if you want to know something about Algeria, reading ten volumes on Islam will not help much, but thirty pages on colonisation will.<sup>10</sup>

In Iran the main discourse of art criticism has been based on the dichotomy between tradition and modernity, which is quite sterile. In his 1965 collection of essays, the American critic Lionel Trilling mentions the etymology of 'tradition' in order to better understand the concept. 'Tradition' comes from the Latin *traditio* which means 'crossing,' and from which also comes the French verb *traverser*. He says that what eventually become traditional are the timeless values which cross generations and endure. And from there



8. A 500 year-old cypress in the Ashraf Gardens on the Caspian, Behshahr, 17th century, photograph by Shahryar Ghadim

he links tradition to 'authenticity'.<sup>11</sup> Hamid Keshmirshakan also mentions (in his introduction to the conference) 'authenticity' as one of the main criteria of artistic evaluation.<sup>12</sup>

According to the Dehkhoda Encyclopedia,<sup>13</sup> the *sunnat* tradition in Farsi comes from two roots: one is the adjective *sunnī* or *ahl-i sunnat*, meaning 'orthodox', the other is the noun *sunan*, meaning 'rules and laws'. But I suggested to one of our encyclopedists, Kamran Fani, the possibility that *sunnat* could be derived from *sinn* (age), in which case *sunnat* would mean 'longevity' and have the same etymological basis as tradition. He said that that is quite possible and needs further research to find precedents



in literary texts. So let us assume that works of art which are seminal and generative of other works of art are bound to be authentic and therefore ageless or timeless, and eventually become traditional.

‘Authenticity’ has the same root as ‘author’, so for a work of art to be truly authentic means that there must be an author behind it with some theoretical and philosophical basis for it.

In order to better understand some points about the relationship between theory and art, I would like to make a detour on Safavid art and one of its lesser-known philosophers, Mīrfindiriskī. It is my belief that the Safavid period is the beginning of Modernism in Iran and coincides with the secularisation of Iranian art. There are three reasons for this:

One is that Shah Tahmasp (1514-1576) used Shiism to rally the dissenting provinces and unite the country, and later Shah Abbās did whatever it took to strengthen Shiism as the state religion in order to keep the country united. However, drawing down religious issues into the petty matters of daily life is bound to de-spiritualise any religious feelings the people might have. Given the harsh tales of repression that Shah Abbās is famous for, there must have been dissenting feelings even if, on the surface, people followed the rules of conduct imposed by the state. But their real beliefs were different from those of the rulers, especially among free-spirited artists and thinkers, who saw their very existence threatened by the stifling atmosphere of the country and fled more and more to India which was known for its exceptional tolerance of thought and creeds.

The second argument comes from architecture in which we witness a movement from introversion to extroversion. Whereas before, the dome was meant to create an inner space with a small opening to gaze at heaven—no one was supposed to look at it from above—in the Safavid period the exterior treatment of the dome became of utmost importance, because the Shah was going to look at two of them, Sheikh Lutfullāh and Shah Mosque, from his ’Ālī Qāpū Palace. In fact, the external decorations of all architectural elements became more and more elaborate, as if the importance of inner meaning and truth shifted in favour of outward appearance.

The third argument comes from the relationship of Sheikh Bahāī and Mīrfindiriskī. Mir Abu’l Qāssim Sadr al-Dīn Findiriskī, known and abbreviated as Mīrfindiriskī, was a Sufi saint who wrote a few short treatises. His most voluminous book is a translation of, and commentary on, the *Mahabharata*, for he often travelled to India—once staying for seven years—and knew Sanskrit very well. He was a yogi and a vegetarian, and thus never went to Mecca for he could not stand the killing of the sacrificial lamb. He wrote a treatise on mathematics, one on the movements of the spheres, one on social sciences, one on

◀  
9. Chihil Sutun Pavilion,  
Esfahan, 17th century



music, and a long poem. In the treatise on music, he criticises Fārābī for having written so much on music and never practised it. So it must be assumed that Mīrfindiriskī himself practised music and played an instrument. His good friend, Sheikh Bahāī, who was the sheikh al-Islām or religious leader of the period, issued a *fatwā* that music was no longer a prohibited form of art. Thus we have the music chamber with all its acoustic sophistication in the ‘Āli Qāpū Palace, and the musicians’ niche at the end of the pool in Chihilsutūn. Experts in acoustics say that a vast expanse of still water carries sound waves over a long distance. Yahya Fiuzi, a contemporary Iranian architect who has done a lot of work on concert hall design, first mentioned that the pool in Chihilsutūn was not only there to unite heaven and earth, but also for the benefit of the Shah and his entourage who would sit on the *ivān* (or porch) of the Chihilsutūn and could clearly hear the concert given by the musicians sitting a hundred metres away at the other end of the pool.

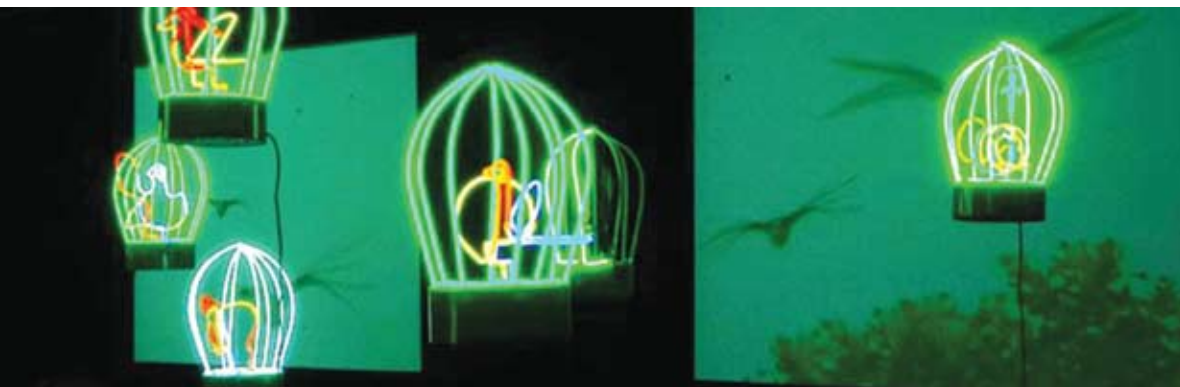
These three small arguments clearly point to the Safavid era as the Renaissance of Iranian art and a return to pre-Islamic paradigms, and in a way the beginning of modernity in Iran. All great movements of art go hand in hand with new philosophical theories, or sometimes with a revival and reinterpretation of old ones.

It is clear that most art forms reached their peak in the Safavid period, and my next area of research is trying to establish links between Mīrfindiriskī’s philosophy and Sheikh Bahāī, his architect friend’s conception of Esfahan. Undoubtedly the most beautiful classical gardens of Iran belong to this period.

It is with this assessment of authenticity, which erases the dichotomy between modern and traditional, and the strong linkage between philosophy and art, that seven works from the exhibition are being reviewed: they cover a range from the most literal repre-



▶  
10. Reflecting pool of the Chihilsutūn, Esfahan, 17th century



11. Parviz Tanavoli, (detail)  
*Bāgh-i Sīmurgh*  
 (Garden of the Phoenix), 2004,  
 neon installation and  
 video on two screens,  
 15 minutes

sensation to the most abstract, but they all have a scenario and strong concept which give them shape.

There were thirty artists who participated in the above-mentioned exhibition and I could not possibly review all the works here. So, although I am most grateful to all of them, I am sorry for not discussing their works in this essay.

Parviz Tanavoli (b1937), one of the founding fathers of the *Saqqā-khāneh* School, never disconnected his works from Iranian culture: be that the ancient-royal or popular-religious-which Siah Armajani (b1939)<sup>14</sup> calls ‘Shah ’Abdul’azīm culture’-calligraphy and carpet designs, or mysticism. And yet, he has always remained at the cutting edge of avant-garde art in Iran.



There is always a close connection between dissent and avant-garde art, so instead of turning to ‘Attar’s *Conference of The Birds* or Mowlānā’s (Rumī) tale of *The Parrot and the Merchant* (which Sheila Blair spoke and wrote about with such passion)<sup>15</sup> I would like to turn to the mischievous playfulness that is always present in Tanavoli’s works and constitutes the primal energy which keeps him creative.

The humour of *Garden of the Phoenix* (Figure 11) is in the conference the birds are watching: the hoopoes imprisoned in neon cages are watching the seabirds fly on two film screens with a background of Greek music, Greece being the cradle of democracy. So there is a political irony, but there is also a philosophical statement that perhaps all these neon flashes, representing modernity, instead of bringing us freedom, have rather entrapped us in a prison.

12. Farshid Mesghali,  
*Shīrīn va Farhād* (Shīrīn and  
 Farhād), 2004, installation,  
 pastel on papier-mâché and  
 wire sculptures, 400 × 1000 cm

13. Abbas Kiarostami,  
*Bāgh-i bī Bargī* (The Garden of  
 Leaflessness), 2004, installation,  
 PVC, digital imaging, grass,  
 dried leaves and mirrors,  
 500 × 500 cm



Although very modern in all of his works, whether graphics, painting or sculpture, Farshid Mesghali has always turned to the magical world of Persian miniatures and lithographs for his inspiration (Figure 12). His are postmodern works with a literal transposition of traditional elements used in a novel way and in a new context. For the exhibition, he has used the story of Shīrīn and Farhād in Nizāmī's *Khamsa*, where Farhād sees Shīrīn for the first time while she is bathing. More than anything else, this work succeeds in creating a mood which is similar to the sense of being one feels when present in the garden. The small canal he created, hung down from the ceiling and reflected in the pool of oil by the Japanese artist Noriyuki Haraguchi (entitled *Matter & Mind* and part of the permanent setting of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art) resembled more that of a Venetian gondola than a *jūb* (spring). Often, while going up or down the ramp of the Museum, I saw young couples holding hands, alternately looking at the work, then at themselves, unmistakably in the mood for love. So the ecstasy one feels when contemplating miniatures is also conveyed here.

The emotional impact or, rather, shock of the installation by Abbas Kiarostami (b1940), *The Garden of Leaflessness* (Figure 13), was tremendous. People approached these tree trunks thinking they were real, and once they were close enough to realise they were just plastic pipes covered with digital photographs of tree bark they gasped and laughed at having been fooled. Kiarostami himself says that 'our society is better equipped to deal with the artificial than with real stuff.' This work reminds me of a poem by Hölderlin quoted by Heidegger in *Poetry, Language, Thought*:

And to each other they remain unknown  
 So long as they stand, the neighbouring Trunks.<sup>16</sup>

Rilke's poetry also constantly refers to the existential isolation of man. In one of his poems, he compares two people who are in love to trees which stand by each other and grow together, but never lean on each other. Indeed, if Kiarostami had looked up at the trees and shown the branches and foliage, then inevitably he would have had to see how

they intricately intertwine; but the trunks are standing alone side by side, and the title of the work comes from a poem by Mehdi Akhavan Saless (1928-1990) who himself borrowed it from a poem by Mulānā (Rumi):

Barren of leaves, in the garden of his love,  
Like a rose, I tear away my robe, lusting for his love garden.<sup>17</sup>

With the same title as Kiarostami's work, *Garden of Leaflessness*, a poem by Akhavan Saless is more explicit:

My garden  
Tightly embraces its sky,  
And the cloud  
Wrapped in a cold, dank fur coat.

Garden of leaflessness,  
Solitary, day and night  
Pure silence of melancholy

Its instrument, rain,  
Its song, the wind.  
Its garment, rags of nakedness...

Can you say the barren garden is not beautiful?<sup>19</sup>

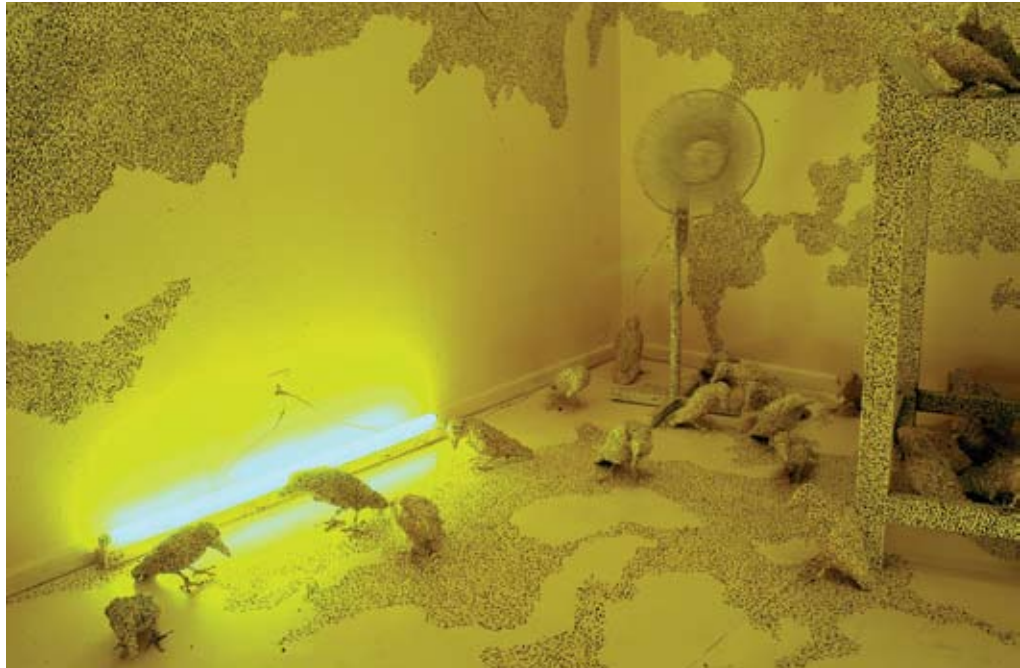
And the poem ends with this line:

Autumn, king of the seasons, parades in the garden.

▼ 14. Shirin Neshat,  
*Mahdokht*, 2004,  
video art on three screens,  
13 minutes 15 seconds



15. **Bitā Fayyāzi**, *Sukūt-i zard-i zard-i nargis* (Yellow, Yellow Silence of Narcissus), 2004, installation, painted ceramic sculptures and house objects, 300 × 300 cm



16. **Behrooz Darash**, *Shab dar Bāgh-i Irānī* (Night in the Iranian Garden), 2004, installation, space, light, thin wire, 100 × 200 × 100 cm



Kiarostami is undoubtedly our most mystical contemporary artist who turns everything that he touches into pure poetry. But the interesting aspect of this installation is its realistic and down-to-earth representation of the Iranian garden in which the five-point planting of trees—a principle which has been forgotten by most contemporary gardeners – is strictly respected. The reflection *ad infinitum* created by the four mirrors is also one of the strongest metaphors in the traditional garden, for—although limited by walls—it tries to offer the illusion of an unlimited landscape.

The video by Shirin Neshat (b1957), *Mahdokht* (Figure 14), was not made especially for the exhibition, but we were very grateful to have it since it fitted the theme. This is the first of five episodes of an adaptation of Shahrnosh Parsipour's book *Women Without Men* (published in 1989) where five women abandon their daily lives and take refuge in a garden in Karaj (a resort outside Tehran), and tell their stories to each other. The first story is that of Mahdokht who is sterile and wants to plant herself in the garden in order to become fertile. The allusion to the poetry of Forough Farokhzad (1934-1966) is obvious. It is a very sensuous work, with a lot of precedents in Tarkovsky's aesthetics and a feminine way of looking at nature and Mother Earth. She has attempted to take us into the inner world of Mahdokht's mind while looking at the mysterious landscapes of Morocco, which are similar to some Iranian gardens, and has thus succeeded in overlapping the two worlds of the human mind and nature.

Bitā Fayyāzi has always relied on repetition in her works, creating a special rhythm and a surrealist space in them. Here, in her work en-

titled *Yellow, Yellow Silence of Narcissus* (Figure 15), she has made up a tale which is her own scenario: the virgin Narcissus-‘Nargess’ is a girl’s name in Farsi—is swept away by the *Dīv* (beast) and kept prisoner for a hundred years. Finally she manages to escape from her prison, but is transformed into the yellow flower which reproduces in great numbers. There are many children’s stories in Iranian culture similar to the one she has written, and perhaps that is why there is a naïve, childish—*ie* pure and innocent—aspect to the space that she has created as her inner garden. The yellow silence is sometimes disturbed as the wind of the revolving electrical fan hits the chimes, producing an ironic note in this enchanted world.

Behrooz Darash (b1942) is an accountant who has turned to art in his fifties. He is a very cerebral artist who claims a natural connectedness to the world of Persian miniatures. For him, memories of the garden are more important than the real garden of trees and plants, and it is for these memories that he feels a bitter nostalgia. In his work *Night in the Iranian Garden* he wants to convey to the spectators the feeling that we have lost everything that was represented by the garden, and only these meaningless, abstract and miniaturised shapes are left to us (Figure 16).

Farideh Lashaei (b1944) also has a scenario for her installation entitled *Not Every Tree Can Bear The Tyranny of Autumn* which shows the garden imprisoned in four cylinders where images of trees hang down (Figure 17). Her work is full of paradoxes, as the garden is, and as modern life itself is. The seasons are clearly represented by the four colours of the trees which hang like leaves inside the wire mesh cylinders, pointing out that everything good about the garden is stifled and vanishing, especially since the trees she has painted on these translucent films are cypresses, symbols of immortality. But then she has



17. Farideh Lashaei, *Na har dirakht tahammul kunad jafāy-i khazān* (Not Every Tree Can Bear The Tyranny of Autumn), 2004, installation

framed every cypress with a couplet by Hafez, which expresses a glimpse of hope:

The tyranny of autumn, not every tree can bear  
Devotion to the cypress's unique persistence I bear<sup>20</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> This essay is based on the Exhibition of *Gardens of Iran: Ancient Wisdom, New Visions* held in the TMOCA in 2004, curated by the author. (editor's note)

<sup>2</sup> This is according to Seyyed Mohammad Beheshti, former Director of Research of Iran's Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organisation.

<sup>3</sup> The Avesta is a collection of the sacred texts of the Mazdaist (Zoroastrian) religion. (editor's note)

<sup>4</sup> Here it refers to the concept of traditional form of the Persian of garden. (editor's note)

<sup>5</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein und Zeit*, translation by Joan Stambaugh (New York, 1962): 146.

<sup>6</sup> L.S. Reid, "Meaning of Aesthetics", in *Nature Architecture Diversity*: 154.

<sup>7</sup> Bahman Kiarostami, son of the renowned Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami, made a documentary film based on the concept of the Exhibition in 2004. (editor's note)

<sup>8</sup> Mohammad Beheshti, speech in Gardens of Iran conference at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, organised by the author, October 2004.

<sup>9</sup> see Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art* (New Haven and London, 1972). (editor's note)

<sup>10</sup> Amin Maalouf, "Les Identités Meurtrières", in *Livre de Poche* (Lgf) (1998): 77.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Rowe, speech in the Regeneration of Traditional Urban Fabric conference at the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism, organised by Pirouz Hanachi, April 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Introduction to the Barakat Trust conference Contemporary Iranian Art: Modernity and the Iranian Artist, Oxford, 11th and 12th July 2005. (editor's note)

<sup>13</sup> see Tehran University edition, 2006. It is also now digitally available. (editor's note)

<sup>14</sup> Iranian-born artist who is residing in the United States. For an analysis of his works see Rose Issa's essay: "The Fabric of Life and Art: The Emergence of a New Aesthetic Language". (editor's note)

<sup>15</sup> for more details see Sheila Blair, "Tanavoli", in *Gardens of Iran: Ancient Wisdom, New Visions* (Tehran, 2004): 224-225 (editor's note)

<sup>16</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York, 1971): 13.

<sup>17</sup> Mulānā, *Dīvān-i Shams*, verse no. 13009, ode no. 1224, translated by Zahra Partovi

<sup>18</sup> Mehdi Akhavan Saless, *Selected Contemporary Poetry*, ed. M. Kazemi, translated by Zahra Partovi (Tehran): 475.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Hafez, *Dīvān*, translated by the author.