

GOHAR DASHTI – FRAGILE, HANDLE WITH CARE

Opening: February 8, 2018
February 8 – March 24, 2018
curated by Silvia Cirelli



From 8 February to 24 March 2018, the gallery Officine dell'Immagine Milan is proud to present the third solo exhibition dedicated to Gohar Dashti (Ahvaz, Iran - 1980), one of the most interesting artists of the contemporary Iranian scene.

Curated by Silvia Cirelli, the exhibition will show the recent projects of this talented artist, presented in an Italian exclusive. Having distinguished herself in recent years with exhibitions at prestigious international Museums such as the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, the Kadist Art Foundation in Paris, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Victoria and Albert Museum in

London, the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago and the National Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rome, Gohar Dashti is reconfirmed as one of the leading lights of contemporary Middle Eastern photography.

Always attentive to comparisons with socio-cultural themes, identity, behavioural and geopolitical issues that affect not only contemporary Iran - to which it is certainly linked - but which affect current cultural history in a direct way, Gohar Dashti translates into her art the precariousness of a historical moment marked by the sense of eradication, a lack of communication between people and the need for belonging.

The creative approach of this young photographer reveals an authentic and emotional essentiality that brings human vulnerabilities to the fore. This takes place through a lexical sophistication that is strictly wedded to implicit autobiographical connotations, and a bold and incisive creative symmetry, where the aesthetics of allegory are a constant focal element.

Fragile, handle with care, the title coined for the exhibition by the Gallery, collects her latest photographic series, artistic projects where the human presence we are accustomed to in Gohar Dashti's work is completely abandoned. In fact, we no longer find that human component with almost moving emotional morphology. Now, it is the overpowering and, at the same time, precarious force of nature that takes centre stage, a nature that seeks to regain its role, to restore to humankind that long-lost cultural memory.

In the series "Home", the nucleus of the show, this identity balance offers settings of sublime refinement, forgotten places that continue to absorb the melancholy power of nature. A vital energy with uncontrollable intensity seems to want to fill a silent void, creeping into every hidden corner, as if its roots had finally freed themselves from any constraint.

In "Still Life", also from 2017, the artist enhances the consistency of the natural world, this time, however, deconstructing its form in order to offer a more personal and intimate physiognomy. Plants and branches of various kinds are therefore broken, crumbled, and then shown in new "garments", a new beauty that is almost more human than vegetable. Dashti's reinterpretation of the vital manifestations that time produces on nature itself, remains dominant in the work "Aliens", a series of Polaroids that betray the incommunicability between humankind and nature, as if we were invariably unable to dialogue, to listen to nature's voice

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Gohar Dashti was born in Ahvaz (Iran) in 1980. She currently lives and works between Tehran (Iran) and Boston (USA). Graduating in 2003 from the Fine Art University of Tehran, she subsequently received her M.A. in Photography in 2005. She has participated in numerous artist and scholarship residencies, MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, NH, USA (2017), DAAD award, UdK Berlin, DE (2009-2011); Visiting Arts (1 Mile2 Project), Bradford/London, UK (2009) and International Arts & Artists (Art Bridge), Washington DC, USA (2008).

She has exhibited with important museums internationally – such as the National Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rome (2017) the San Telmo Museum in San Sebastian (2017), the Florida Museum of Photographic Arts, Tampa, Florida (2016), the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (2015), the Mart in Rovereto (2015), the Australian Center for Photography in Sydney (2015), the Institut des Cultures d'Islam in Paris (2015), the Sharjah Art Museum (2014), the Hong Kong Art Center (2014), the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo (2013), the Fine Art Museum in Boston (2013), the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art and the Grimmuseum in Berlin – as well as festival and biennale participations – including Les Rencontres d'Arles Festival (2017), the Beijing Photo Biennial, Foto Istanbul (2014), the Asian Art Biennial (2013), the Fotofestival of Oslo (2013), Le Printemps de Septembre Toulouse Festival (2012) and the Paris Photoquai (2009).

Her works feature in important public collections, such as those of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; the Museum of Fine Art in Boston; the Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), Chicago; Kadist Art Foundation in Paris; the Cleveland Art Museum; the National Gallery of Art, Washington; the Getty Research Center, Los Angeles; the Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority of Dubai and the Devi Art Foundation, Gurgaon (India).