



[The Sound of Not Breathing]

March 8 - 18, 2024



SARAI Gallery is delighted to announce the inauguration of its new space in Tehran, Iran, with the exhibition, *The Sound of Not Breathing*. The show will feature a variety of contemporary Iranian artists including Amir Jadidi, Amin Noorani, Bijan Akhgar, Samila Amir Ebrahimi, Mohammad Khalili, Jaleh Akbari, Samaneh Samimi, Vali Javadi Azar, Ali Jahangard, Abbas Nasle Shamloo, and Hesam'aldin Rezaei.

Curated by Payam Khalili, the show delves into the artists' unique interpretations of landscape painting, a genre traditionally associated with vibrant colors and idyllic depictions of nature. In contrast to this conventional approach, the works in this exhibition present a stark and introspective vision of the world around us. The show unites these artists in their poignant exploration of the destructive impact of human activity on the environment. Utilizing a subdued palette and somber imagery, the works serve as a warning against the potential consequences of our actions. They compel viewers to confront uncomfortable truths about the future of our planet, urging us to consider the potential apocalyptic consequences if current trends continue unchecked. This exhibition serves as a powerful call for reflection and action, prompting us to reconsider our relationship with the natural world and strive towards a more sustainable future.

SARAI is also deeply honored to revive the legacy of the influential artist Hesam'aldin Rezaei (1960-1998) through this exhibition, showcasing a selection of his works after a considerable hiatus.

Hesam'aldin Rezaei (1960-1998) was a prominent Iranian painter who studied at the prestigious Tehran School of Fine Arts. He also had the privilege of learning from renowned masters like Samila Amir Ebrahimi, Shahab Moosavi Zade, and Aydin Aghdashloo. In pursuit of further artistic development, he relocated to Germany in 1984, where he earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees at the esteemed Berlin University of the Arts.

Rezaei's artistic career blossomed as he exhibited his works both outside and inside Iran, including within the second and third National Contemporary Painting Biennial (1993-1995). Upon returning to his homeland, Rezaei embarked on a captivating exploration of his cultural heritage, focusing on the evocative beauty of ancient buildings and native landscapes. His abstract-expressionistic approach culminated in two critically acclaimed series: The Caravanserai and the Abyaneh series, which stand as testaments to his artistic brilliance.



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SARAI Gallery is a contemporary gallery specializing in Middle Eastern art. Founded in 2018, SARAI Gallery represents bright emerging and young regional talents including Iranian and Pakistani artists internationally, helping them achieve their potential both in recognition and value by organizing exhibitions and joint events, and publishing works by artists. Moreover, since 2020, SARAI has introduced the Khor Art Initiative, an annual art prize for local artists,

reviewed by a high-profile international jury. SARAI Gallery has been participating in top art fairs around the world, including Art Dubai 2020-21 and 2023, The Armory Show 2021-2023 (winning the Presents Booth Prize in 2021), KIAF 2021-22, Abu Dhabi Art 2022-2023, Untitled Art Miami Beach 2022-2023, Expo Chicago 2023-2024 (Announced), Art Brussels 2023-2024 (Announced), and Taipei Dangdai 2023 among others, making it one of the youngest galleries to appear on such competitive platforms. SARAI Gallery's main exhibition spaces are located in Mahshahr and Tehran, Iran, where we host shows throughout the year, while under KARAVAN Projects, SARAI organizes collaborative shows with selected galleries and institutions at home and in major art capitals across the globe, including Cromwell Place, London. Our LA-based office handles US and international affairs.

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