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poticanje pitanja / razgovor sa shirin neshat raising questions / interview with shirin neshat

■ ■ Na vaš se rad gleda kao na dijalog između različitih kultura, odnosno različitih kulturnih i umjetničkih sredina. Moguće ga je razumjeti u zapadnom svijetu u kojem razlike između muškaraca i žena postoje čak i bez vela. Kritika vašeg rada je usmjerena na činjenicu da se žene s velom ne doživljavaju kao žrtve. Problem je, očito, daleko kompleksniji i obuhvaća niz pitanja, od pitanja patrijarhata do daleko specifičnijih pitanja kao što su feminizam i fundamentalizam?

Mislim da se usmjeravanjem pažnje na složenost muslimanske kulture i, naročito na složenost osobitosti muslimanskih žena, značajno rasvjetljava situacija. U čitavom mom radu od samog početka ženu karakteriziraju isključivo i jedino snaga i ponos. Ja ne želim oslabiti položaj žena u islamskom društvu. Ako ništa drugo, u svim je mojim videoradovima upravo žena ta koja ostavlja dojam buntovne, iznimno snažne i nepredvidive osobe. U ovakvoj vrsti feminizma vidim jedan koncept kulture koji nije tako površan. Meni veo nije toliko bitan; on predstavlja samo simbol. Mislim da su osobine i osjećaji žena koje žive u određenim uvjetima daleko dublji. Na jednoj filozofskoj razini moj rad pokušava prodrijeti iza klišea i iza površnosti. U otkrivanju kako ti ljudi žive uz svu tu represiju nalazi se jedna vrsta vrlo suptilnog oblika feminizma.

Sve nas na neki način zanima proučavanje muško-ženskih suprotnosti u miješanim društvima, a osobito u Iranu. Mi nudimo sociološko tumačenje toga kako to društvo funkcionira i svaki je projekt usmjeren prema tome. Svaki od mojih projekata nastaje uz kratku priču kojom se povezuju ideje s naglaskom na vizualnom i muzičkom elementu. Moji su radovi više objektivno nego subjektivno iskustvo u kojem bi se mogla nazrijeti priča.

■ ■ Odrasli ste u Iranu, a nakon toga ste otišli studirati i živjeti u SAD. Čitav vaš projekt zasnovan je na suradnji s glumcima, pjevačima i ostalim suradnicima iranskog porijekla. Je li vam poznato kako je vaš rad prihvaćen u Iranu?

Vrlo važan element mog filmskog rada upravo je suradnja s timom iranskih filmskih radnika: Ghasem Ebrahimian je direktor fotografije, Shoja Azari je pjevač u *Turbulent (Nemiran)*, Sussan Deyhim je pjevačica i skladateljica u svim mojim filmovima, a u *Turbulent* pjeva i sama. Ova mi je grupa ljudi bila neobično važna. Dok sam radila na konceptu, morala sam biti sigurna da imam ljude koji vjeruju u mene i koji podupiru pro-

● ● Your work has been considered as a dialogue between cultures both divergent cultural and artistic backgrounds. It is possible to understand the subject of your work in the Western world, where the contrast between men and women exists even without the veil. The criticism of your work is directed to the fact that veiled women are not considered as victims. Obviously, the problem is more complex, ranging from patriarchy to the more specific issues, such as feminism and fundamentalism?

I think that focusing on the complexity of the Muslim culture and particularly the complexity of the characteristics of Muslim women, sheds a good light onto the situation. In all of my work since the beginning, the women have never been characterised as anything other than extremely strong and proud. There is no intention on my part to undermine the position of the women in the Islamic society. If anything, I think that in all the videos the woman is the one who seems to be rebellious, extremely tough, and unpredictable. This is the type of feminism that I see as a concept of a culture that is not so superficial. To me the veil is not so important; it is just a symbol. But the characteristics and the feelings of the women who live in the conditions as they do are far more profound, and on a more philosophical level, the work tries to function beyond clichés and beyond superficiality. In revealing how these people function beneath all this repression there is another type of feminism that is very kind.

We are all concerned with the kind of gender studies that study male - female contrasts in mixed societies, and particularly in Iran. We offer a sociological reading on how that society functions and each project particularly focuses on doing so. Each of my projects is created with a brief narrative to integrate ideas with the emphasis on the visual and music. The projects are more an objective rather than a subjective experience where one could feel the narrative.

● ● You were raised in Iran and afterwards went to study and live in the USA. Your entire project is based on the collaboration with actors, singers and other collaborators of the Iranian origin. Do you have any information on how your work is accepted in Iran?

An important aspect of the production of my film-based work is the collaboration with a team of Iranian film-makers: Ghasem Ebrahimian is the director of photography, Shoja Azari is the male singer in *Turbulent*, Sussan Deyhim is the singer and composer of music in all my films, and in *Turbulent* she sang herself. This team of people was incredibly important to me. When I was developing



jekt pomažući mi da ga razvijem. Tako je stručnjak za filmsku fotografiju Iranac, tekstopisac je Iranac, urednik je Iranac, a svi oni žive u New Yorku. Imamo poteškoća s radom u Iranu, tako da obično angažiram profesionalne iranske glumce i odvedem ih u neku drugu muslimansku zemlju poput Maroka ili Turske. Za neke sam scene uzela domaće ljude, što je vrlo bitan ekonomski faktor za ova osiromašena društva. No moj će se sljedeći projekt snimati u Iranu.

Mislim da se o mom radu ne zna puno u Iranu jednostavno zato što ne postoji takva institucija ili umjetnički časopis koji bi o njemu pisao. Za većinu informacija ljudi saznaju preko Iranaca koji žive u inozemstvu.

■ ■ **Kako vi sebe doživljavate - kao iran-
sku ili kao američku umjetnicu?**

Sebe doživljam kao nekoga tko se nalazi negdje između. Kada sam započela s radom, u Iranu tada nisam bila već dugo vremena, tako da sam osjećala ogromnu prazninu. U stvari, mislim da na svoj raniji fotografski rad gledam kao na rad nekoga tko je daleko, ali koga se poštuje. Od 1990. sam počela putovati u Iran i ostale zemlje na Srednjem Istoku i budući da sad radim isključivo s iranskom zajednicom, tu prazninu više ne osjećam. Moj je rad postao daleko integriraniji i govori i o nekim aktualnim temama. Odmak je još uvijek prisutan, no kako ja živim u New Yorku i većinu vremena provodim na Zapadu, ne bi bilo u redu reći da sam potpuno u Iranu. Umjetnik koji živi u Iranu dao bi vam zasigurno potpuno drugačiju sliku iranskog društva nego ja. U to uopće ne sumnjam. No ipak, kao osoba koja se na neki način nalazi između dviju kultura, mislim da bih mogla dobro i na osobit način protumačiti i zapadnu i istočnu kulturu. Ja nisam umjetnik koji želi reći što je ispravno, a što ne. Mene to ne zanima. Ako ništa drugo, mislim da moj rad daje snagu ženama zbog same svoje prirode, ali ja nemam program u smislu političkog programa - mene to čak ni ne zanima jer sebe ne smatram niti aktivisticom, niti feministkinjom. Sve što mene zanima jest poticanje pitanja.

■ ■ **Došli ste u Ameriku, studirali ste na Zapadu, no nakon nekog ste se vremena odlučili vratiti svojim kulturnim korijenima. Zašto? Nekoliko ste godina radili u *New York Storefront Gallery of Art and Architecture* gdje ste se bavili proučavanjem specifičnog odnosa između arhitekture i kulture. Što vas je potaklo da se posvetite specifičnim pitanjima muslimanskog društva i problemima koji nemaju nikakvih dodirnih točaka sa zapadnom kulturom u kojoj živite?**

my concept I had to be sure I have a team of people who believe in me and who support the project helping me to develop it. So, the cinematographer is Iranian, the line-producer is Iranian, the editor is Iranian, and they are all based in New York. We have difficulties working in Iran, so I usually hire Iranian professional actors and bring them to other Muslim countries, like Morocco or Turkey. For some of the scenes I hired local people, which is an important economic factor for these impoverished societies. However, the next project which I plan to do will be filmed in Iran.

I don't think there is a lot of information about my work in Iran, because there is no such institution or art magazine. People mostly get information through Iranians living abroad.

● ● **Do you see yourself as an Iranian or an American artist?**

I see myself as someone in-between. When I started my work I hadn't been to Iran for a long time, so I felt a very large gap. In fact, I think I consider my earlier work - photographic work - as a work of someone who is distant, but still respectful. Since 1990 I have travelled to Iran and other countries in the Middle East, and as I am working entirely with the Iranian community now, I don't feel that gap any more. My work has become much more integrated and addresses much more some current topics. There is still a distance, but since I live in New York and spend most of my time out in the West, it would be unfair to say that I am completely in Iran. An artist living in Iran would surely give you a completely different reading of the Iranian society than I would. There is no question about that. But nevertheless, my position as someone who is kind of cross-cultural would give you a good understanding of both the East and the West and offer you this particular reading. I am not an artist who is interested in saying what is right or wrong. I am not interested in that. I think that at the end of the day my work gives strength to women just because of the nature of it but... I don't have an agenda in terms of a political agenda; I am not even interested in that because I don't consider myself as an activist or feminist. I am just interested in raising questions.

● ● **You came to America and you were educated in a Western college, but now after some time you have decided to go back to your cultural roots. Why have you decided to do this? You have worked for several years in the *New York Storefront Gallery of Art and Architecture* where you could concentrate on the specific relation between architecture and culture. How come that you have decided to turn to specific issues concerning the Muslim society and the problems far away from your Western surrounding?**



U stvari, bilo je to nakon što sam se vratila. Nije me bilo dugo vremena. Nakon revolucije nisam išla u Iran deset godina i onda sam otišla 1990. Kako me u Iranu nije bilo deset godina nakon revolucije, doživjela sam šok. To iskustvo povratka i uviđanja koliko se ta zemlja promijenila na mene je imalo ogroman utjecaj. Ali to nije bilo toliko zbog umjetnosti. U to vrijeme nisam bila umjetnički aktivna; umjetnost sam ostavila posve po strani.

■ ■ Zašto?

Jednostavno nisam nalazila ono što sam tražila. Kad sam diplomirala, preselila sam se u New York. Moj mi se rad u to vrijeme nije činio naročito zanimljivim, a s druge strane, komercijalna me umjetnost nije zanimala. Jednostavno nisam željela biti dio toga, a nisam mislila ni da imam nešto posebno za ponuditi. Stoga sam odlučila kako se želim odmaknuti od umjetnosti i otišla sam raditi u *New York Storefront of Art and Architecture*. To je za mene bilo najbolje obrazovanje, jer program nije bio tako komercijalno usmjeren i bio je zaista, poput *Kunsthalle*, posvećen umjetnosti, arhitekturi i drugim područjima. Tako smo, na primjer, stalno dovodili pisce, filozofe, znanstvenike i kritičare. Bilo je stvarno divno jer se sve temeljilo na istraživanju i izmjeni informacija. Konačni rezultat me nije zanimao toliko koliko sâm proces i iskustvo stavljanja same sebe u drugi plan te koncentriranja, gledanja i učenja od drugih ljudi i drugih područja. To je bilo fascinantno. Jednostavno sam odlučila da želim naučiti raditi i druge stvari i da želim pomoći drugima da pokažu svoj rad. Kad sam se negdje u to vrijeme vratila u Iran, shvatila sam da sam, iako se deset godina nisam bavila umjetnošću, intelektualno sazrela i da sam u jednom metodološkom smislu prošla kroz iskustvo radeći s velikim ljudima u galeriji *Storefront*. Kad sam konačno došla do onoga što mi je uistinu važno, odjednom se sve složilo. Bila mi je bitna kombinacija više stvari, ne toliko kao nekakav umjetnički program, nego više kao stvar osobnog zanimanja. Kao Iranki i kao zrelijoj osobi, jedno se u drugo uklopilo i odlučila sam napraviti vizualni rad koji će prenijeti neke od stvari koje sam naučila i iskusila. Bila sam također u poziciji da iskustvom istraživanja prostora i arhitekture s ideološkog gledišta, što se može vidjeti u mojim radovima.

■ ■ Namjeravate li snimiti film o odnosu muškaraca i žena na Zapadu i postoji li u tom slučaju neko gledište na koje biste nam posebno željeli skrenuti pažnju?

Ne samo o muškarcima i ženama, nego i o čitavoj zapadnoj kulturi. Mislim da će mi to

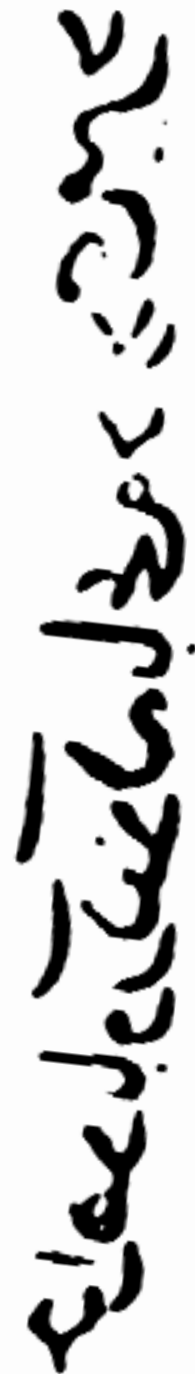
Actually, it was after I went back. I had been away for a long time. After the revolution I didn't go back for ten years and in 1990 I went back. Because I hadn't been to Iran for ten years after the revolution I was shocked. The experience of returning and seeing that place transformed had a big impact on me. And it wasn't so much because of art. At that time I wasn't active as an artist, I put aside art all together.

● ● Why did you do this?

I just didn't find what I was looking for. When I graduated I moved to New York and I didn't find the work I was doing very interesting and also I didn't want to participate in commercial art. I just didn't want to be a part of it, and I didn't feel I had something special to offer. So I decided I wanted to move away from art and went to work at the *New York Storefront of Art and Architecture*. This was the best education for me, because the program was not commercial and it was really - like the *Kunsthalle*, it was dedicated to art and architecture and other fields. Like for example, we constantly brought writers, philosophers and scientists and critics, and it was really amazing because everything was based on research and information. The final product wasn't so important to me as was the process, and this exposure, putting myself aside and just concentrating and looking and learning from other people and other fields was fascinating. I basically accepted that I wanted to learn to do other things and help others to show their work. When I went back to Iran by that time, although in ten years I hadn't made any art, but I had matured more intellectually and in terms of methodology I had such a great exposure looking at other great people at *Storefront*. When I came across the subject that was really so important to me then suddenly everything "clicked". It was a combination of subject matter that seemed important to me, not so much as an art agenda but more as a personal curiosity. As an Iranian, and more mature as a person, everything blended together and I decided to create a visual work that would somehow communicate some of the things I was learning and experiencing. I was also in the position to use the experience of exploring space and architecture from an ideological point of view, the elements that one can see in my works.

● ● Do you plan to make a film about the relationship between Western women and men, and if you do, is there some special point of view you would like to make us aware of?

Not just men and women but the Western culture altogether. I think that this will be an interesting challenge for me because obvious-



biti zanimljiv izazov, jer ću do tada očigledno prevesti kraju sadašnji rad, što nije daleko. Od 1993. radim na projektu koji se posebice bavi muslimanima, a kao umjetnik koji također živi na Zapadu, osjećam da bih se mogla početi baviti i nekim idejama koje se odnose na ovu kulturu. Općenito gledano, iako je moj rad usko vezan uz muslimane, krajnja mi je namjera stvoriti jedno univerzalno djelo. Gotovo se osjećam kao netko tko može govoriti o univerzalnim temama jedino ako je etnički specifičan. Naime, svi mi živimo na različitim mjestima i svi smo uvjetovani određenim sociopolitičkim i religioznim odrednicama, no svi smo mi ispod toga ljudska bića. Pokušavam pronaći tu nit ljudske duše i stanja koje preživljava unatoč svoj toj društvenoj kontroli. I nit ljudske borbe protiv autoriteta.

■ ■ Na vašim fotografijama i u filmovima zamjetan je interes za tijelo. Kada na svoje

ly I will have reached the end of my recent work and I am pretty close to that now. Since 1993 I have been working on this project that specifically embraces Muslim people and as an artist who also lives in the West I feel I could begin to tap some ideas that address this culture. In general, even though my work is very specific about Muslims, my ultimate intention is to create a universal work. I almost feel like someone who can only be universal if ethnically specific. What happens is that we all live in different places and we are all conditioned to particular socio-political and religious agendas, but underneath we are all human beings. What I am trying to do is to find that thread of the human soul and human condition surviving under this level of social control. And also human struggle versus authority.

● ● In your photographs and films you noticeably show an interest in the body.



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sl.2: S. Neshat, *Possessed*, 1998.
sl.3: S. Neshat, *Turbulent*, 1998.
sl.4: S. Neshat, *Rapture*, 1999.
sl.5: S. Neshat, *Turbulent*, 1998.
sl.6: S. Neshat, *Untitled (Rapture series - Women with Boat)*, 1999.



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vlastito tijelo ispisujete kaligrafiju, vi nam skrećete pažnju na njega; kada muslimanke nose čador, mi nismo odmah svjesni njihovog tijela koje se krije iza odjeće, ali na neki način osobu iza vela ne možemo tretirati kao da tijela nema. Kao umjetnik s iskustvom više kultura, koji je vaš odnos prema tijelu?

Svojim radom stvaram jedan okvir. Čak i ako tvrdim da nemam stav, način na koji oblikujem pitanje predstavlja moj stav. Tako je, na primjer, okvir mog rada vrlo minimalan i ja ne odstupam od pravila, no unutar tog ograničenog okvira činim puno, kažem puno, i to je moja tehnika. Mene zanima kako se s malo može reći puno. Ovo je teško objasniti, jer je to više vizualni fenomen. No, u tome leži ljepota iranske kinematografije, jer se naizgled ne doima

When you put calligraphy on your own body, you make us aware of it; when Muslim women wear chador, you are not immediately aware of their body, which remains hidden beneath, but somehow you can't treat the person behind the veil as bodiless. As a cross-cultural artist, how do you feel about the body?

In my work I create a framework. Even if I claim that I don't take a stand, the way that I frame a question - is my stand. For example, my framework is very minimal and I stay within the rules, but within that very limited framework I do a lot, I say a lot and this is my technique, my interest is how you can say a lot without showing much. It is difficult to explain this, because it's more of a visual phenomenon. This is however the beauty of the Iranian cinema because it doesn't appear as a

kao direktna kritika društva ili vlade, čak kad to u stvari i jest. Na najsuptilniji način ja ipak analiziram društvo. Postoji nekoliko elemenata koji to pokazuju - tijelo, veo, ponekad muzika, elementi s kojima sam se oduvijek igrala i koji puno govore.

■ ■ Kad na vlastito tijelo ispisujete kaligrafske znakove, je li to što je napisano važno? I što je s ljudima koji ne razumiju napisani tekst?

Mislite na moj raniji rad *Women of Allah* (*Žene Alaha*) iz 1993. Da, tekst je bitan, to je poezija koju su napisale žene i koja ima određeno značenje i odnos prema tijelu.

Prestala sam s tim zbog činjenice što većina ljudi ne razumije napisano. Dok sam se tim bavila, kao umjetnica nisam mogla misliti o publici. Potrebno je razmišljati o radu i o razlogu koji vas pokreće. U Africi ima sjajne umjetnosti koju neafrikanci nikad

direct criticism of the society or the government, even when in fact it really is. In the most subtle way I do analyse society. Within my work there are a few things that evidence this, the body, the veil, sometimes music, the things I have always played with, but the things which say a lot.

● ● When you put calligraphic signs on your body, is it important what is written? And what about people who don't understand writing?

You are referring to my earlier work *Women of Allah* from 1993, and yes, the writing is important, it is the poetry written by women and they all have significant meanings and relations to the body.

The fact that most people don't understand writing is why I don't do it any more. When I did those things, as an artist, I couldn't think about the audience. You have to



neće moći u potpunosti shvatiti. Meni je jednostavno nemoguće prevesti značenje djela. Nešto bi se izgubilo u prijevodima, čak kad bih to i pokušala učiniti. Dosta ljudi misli kako je to neka vrst dekorativnog rada. Meni to ne smeta, to sada će na mjesto teksta doći muzika, a muzika je univerzalna.

■ ■ Počeli ste kao klasični slikar, a onda ste se zainteresirali za određeni pristup prostoru i arhitekturi. Nakon toga ste započeli s korištenjem fotografije te filma kao svog medija. Je li to zbog toga što u procesu stvaranja filma prostor možete organizirati i prikazati na određeni način?

Postoje za to dva različita razloga. Fotografijom sam se bavila jer posjeduje jedan realizam koji mi se sviđa. Kada sam započela s onim fotografijama žena, nisam

think about your work and the reason why you are doing it. There is great art in Africa that non-Africans never completely understand. There is no way I could translate the meaning of the work. Something would get lost in translations, even if I tried to do it. And a lot of people look at it as a decorative kind of work. I don't mind that though but now music takes over the place of the text. And I think music is universal.

● ● You started as a classic painter, and then you got interested in a certain approach to space and architecture. Afterwards you started using photography and then film as your media. Is it because in the process of making a film you can arrange space and show it in a certain way?

There are two different reasons. I worked with photography because it has a sense of



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mogla misliti ni na što drugo, baš kao i kod slikanja. Fotografija mi se činila kao pravi medij. Nikad je nisam studirala, već mi je jednostavno "došla". Za film sam se odlučila jer me u tom trenutku fotografija počela zamarati. Moj se rad konceptualno mijenjao i postajao sve poetičniji, odnosno, direktno politički. Film i video mi se čine prikladnim zbog prirode tih medija. Oni omogućuju više neodređenosti, fluidnosti, omogućuju stvaranje kroz pokret. To je jedna druga vrsta dinamike. Fotografija je monumentalnija, vrlo određena i konačna.

Svaki put kad prolazim kroz veliku konceptualnu promjenu ideja, pri tome mijenjam i medij. Za fotografiju sam se odlučila dok sam slikala - jednostavno sam osjetila snažnu potrebu za prelaskom na fotografiju. Nakon što sam iscrpila čitavu ideju revolucije i žena i okončala tu seriju, došla sam do potpuno drugačije teme. Također sam osjetila iznimno jaku potrebu za prelaskom na video.

■ ■ U svojim zadnjim filmskim radovima sve se više bavite temama koje izgledaju bezvremenski. Narativna struktura, crno-bijela estetika i način na koji koristite muziku više su tradicionalni nego moderni. Osjećate li se zarobljeni poviješću i sjećanjima na svoje porijeklo?

Ne, osjećam se zarobljenije poviješću umjetnosti. Mislim da je za umjetnika zanimljivo ulaziti i izlaziti iz povijesti i današnjeg vremena. U mojim radovima možete osjetiti miris povijesti, uznemirenosti i tradicije, no oni su u isto vrijeme vrlo suvremeni. Jako me zanima kretanje nazad i naprijed, između vremena. U iranskom društvu još i danas je vrlo zamjetna pojava prakticiranja nekih starih ideoloških ideja. Zanimljivo mi je koračati između vremena, no u povijesti umjetnosti nalazim ograničenja, jer je na jedan način toliko fiksirana.

U kulturnom kontekstu je umjetnici poput mene iznimno teško predstaviti međunarodnoj umjetničkoj zajednici ideje koje po svojoj prirodi nisu zapadne. Na primjer, kad govorimo o mediju u kojem će rad biti predstavljen - npr. filmski medij u muzejskom kontekstu - prisutan je otpor jer se smatra da filmski medij pripada kinima. To za mene predstavlja izazov, jer mislim da je umjetnički svijet vrlo konzervativan.

■ ■ Kako postfeministička kritika reagira na vaš rad?

Općenito govoreći, žene cijene moj rad. Svaki put kad me netko upita jesam li feministkinja i ja kažem da nisam, neki se ljudi razočaraju. Samo zato što su žene u fokusu moje pažnje kao glavne protagonistice moga rada, ne znači da sam feministkinja. Mislim

realism that I like. When I started working on those images of women I couldn't think of anything else, like with painting. Photography seems like an appropriate media; I never studied photography but I really fell for it. I decided on the film because I had started to feel very frustrated with photography at that point. Conceptually, my work was changing and becoming more poetic, that is, directly political. Film and video seem very appropriate because of the nature of media; they allow more ambiguity and fluidity, they allow you to create through movement. There is a different kind of dynamics. Photography is more monumental, very fixed and final.

And every time I have a major conceptual change of my ideas, I also change the media. I decided on photography when I was painting, and I felt very strongly about the shift to the photography. When I exhausted the whole idea about revolution and women, and finished that series, I arrived to a completely different topic. I also felt a very strong shift to video.

● ● In your recent film works you are increasingly involved with topics which look timeless. Narrative structure, black and white aesthetics and the way you use music seem more traditional than modern. Do you feel trapped by history and memories connected with your origin?

No, I feel more trapped by the history of art. I think that it is very interesting for an artist to go in and out of history and modern times. In my works you can scent history, anxiousness and tradition, but it is also very contemporary. I am very interested in moving backwards and forwards, between times. In the Iranian society in particular you can see some very old ideological ideas which are still practised today. It is very interesting for me to tread between times but in the history of art I find limitations, because it is so fixated in one way.

To an artist like myself it's a real struggle within the cultural context to introduce ideas that are not western to the international world of art. So, in terms of the media to present work to - for example cinematic in the context of a museum - they are resistant because they think that this belongs to movie theatres. It is a challenge, because I think the art world is very conservative.

● ● How do post-feminist critics react to your work?

Generally, women appreciate my work. Every time someone asks me if I am a feminist and I say no, some people are disappointed. Just because I focus on women as main characters of my projects doesn't mean I am a feminist. And I think that the ideas of western feminism don't really apply to our

da ideje zapadnog femizma ionako ne odgovaraju posve našim idejama feminizma. Ja sam žena umjetnica, bolje razumijem žene nego muškarce, i zbog toga to radim. Ali to nije feminizam u smislu aktivizma. Općenito je oduvijek bio problem nedostatak žena u umjetnosti, tako da različiti ljudi cijene to što mogu čuti glas žena.

■ ■ Priče u vašim radovima temelje se na stvarnosti, a struktura filmskog rada uvijek je podijeljena na dva dijela i pokazuje dvije strane priče. *Turbulent (Nemiran)*, *Rapture (Ushićenje)*, i *Fervor (Žestina)*, vaši zadnji filmski radovi, prikazani su kao trilogija. Je li to bila i vaša namjera?

U *Turbulent* govorim o odnosu spolova prema muzici i o tome kako iranske žene u osnovi ne sudjeluju u doživljaju muzike na javnim izvedbama. Ovaj je odnos predstavljen u nizu "suprotnosti": prazno i puno gledalište, ženski i muški glas. Gledatelji se stalno moraju kretati između dviju strana, jednako kao i u filmu *Rapture* koji govori o problematici različitih muško-ženskih odnosa prema sociopolitičkim pritiscima. To se prikazuje kroz suprotne elemente kao što su priroda i kultura, predvidivo i nepredvidivo, pobuna i suglasnost.

Tema mog zadnjeg projekta *Fervor* jedno je vrlo važno pitanje - tabui koji se vežu uz ideju seksualnosti i želje. Zbog stalnog osjećaja krivnje, grijeha i društvene kontrole nad seksualnošću, ovi su osjećaji ljudima postali potpuno daleki.

Ova tri projekta nisu zamišljena kao trilogija. Jednostavno sam počela raditi na koreografiranom nizu slika koje bi mogle ispričati cjelovitu priču. Što se tiče mog pristupa u smislu medija, vrlo sam zainteresirana za jednu vrstu fuzije filmske i vizualne umjetnosti i mislim da sva tri djela to naglašavaju - narativna su, a kao filmski projekti nevjerojatno su vizualni u skulpturalnom i fotografskom smislu. Razbijanje slike na više od jednog ekrana još je jedan pokušaj da se uključi gledatelj dok promatraju neku od mojih instalacija. Na taj ih način potičem da prate priču na više od jednog ekrana. Tako, na primjer, u filmu *Rapture* uistinu ovisi o gledatelju hoće li zauzeti stranu i uključiti se u dijalog koji se odvija između dvoje ljudi. Također stvaram jednu vrstu priče koja više nije vezana uz jezik, već funkcionira na vizualnoj i zvučnoj razini. Jezik zahtijeva prijevod, a muzika je univerzalna i prelazi granice. Tako sam trenutno vrlo zainteresirana za to gdje bih stvarno mogla prenijeti filmske efekte u muzejski kontekst. Ovo je za mene podjednako važno kao i kulturni kontekst mog rada. ■

ideas of feminism anyway, so I am a woman artist and I relate to women more than men, I understand them better and that is why I do it. But it is not feminism in the way of activism. In general, it's always an issue of not having women in arts, so people from any background appreciate to have women's voice heard.

● ● The narratives in your work are based on reality, and the structure of your film work is always divided into two parts, showing two sides of a story. *Turbulent*, *Rapture* and *Fervor*, your recent film works, have been shown as a trilogy. Was it your intention to make them that way?

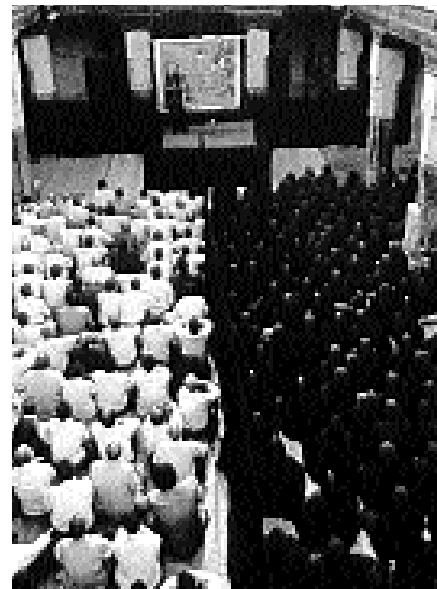
In *Turbulent* I am expressing gender relations to music and the way in which Iranian women are basically absent from the experience of music in public performances, presenting this relation through a series of "opposites": an empty and full theatre, a female voice and a male voice. Viewers have to constantly shift between two sides, like in *Rapture*, a film which brings up the question of female and male distinct reactions to socio-political pressures. I present them through opposite elements such as nature and culture, the predictable and non-predictable, rebellion and conformity.

My last project, *Fervor*, focuses on an important question - taboos surrounding the idea of sexuality and desire. Because of the constant feeling of guilt, sin and strong feeling of social control over sexuality, these feelings have become profoundly distant for people.

They weren't conceived as a trilogy, I just started making a choreographed sequence of images that may tell a complete story. The approach I take in terms of media I am very interested in the sort of fusion between the cinema and visual arts and I think all three works emphasise that, they are narrative, and as cinematic projects they are incredibly visual in terms of being very sculptural and photographic. Breaking the picture in more than one screen is another attempt to engage the viewer while watching one of my installations. I involve them to follow the story in more than one screen. For instance, in *Rapture* it really depends on the viewer to take sides and participate in the dialogue that is going on between two people. Also, I create a kind of narrative that is no longer tied to the language, but functions on the visual and sonic level. Language requires translation, but music is universal and crosses boundaries. So, at the moment I am very interested in where I can actually blend cinematic effects into the museum context. This is as important to me as the cultural context of the work is. ●



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sl. 7, 8: S. Neshat, *Fervor*, 2000.

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