

Another Utopia

by Fatemeh Rezaie & Nina Mokhtarbaf



Location: CITY OF GOLD | Altenessener Str. 77 | 45141 Essen

Duration: 08.03.2023–18.03.2023

Exhibition Opening: 08.03.2023 at 18:00 h

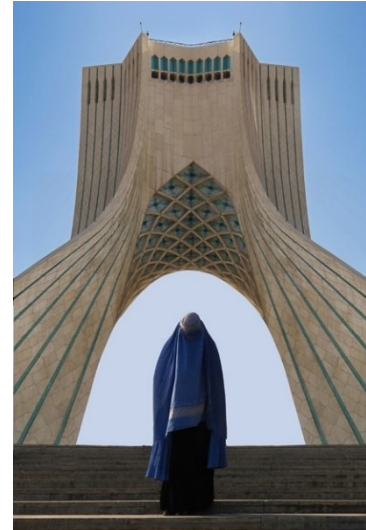
Opening hours: daily 16:00 – 19:00 h



Ajenda (2021–2022), The Stranger

Fatemeh Rezaie

After the Taliban took power in August 2021, many people were forced to flee Afghanistan. In particular, women had to leave their homeland because of the threat of persecution and the exposure to acts of revenge and violence. Many women went into hiding because of their previous positions, opinions, and political and social activities. The ones who decided to leave their home are now stranded in a new environment, facing challenges that include having to cope with new social and economic roles, different community structures, and the lack of familiarity with the working practices.



At the same time, they seek to reconstruct familiar lifestyles because their wearing of the hijab is not accepted by the new society.

In this sense, women are both agents of change and sources of continuity and tradition, but in the new society, they cannot have both. Therefore, they either try to find a new identity or stay at home away from society, isolated with their old way of thinking.

As a photographer, Fatemeh Rezaie decided to depict this issue, with the goal of expressing the problems that exist even after emigrating from Afghanistan.

Biography:

Fatemeh Rezaie was born in Afghanistan. She is an artist and a documentary photographer. She received her BA in photography from the University of Art in Tehran, Iran.

In 2019, she participated in the “Two Cities Project” between Tehran and Dortmund, sponsored by DAAD. The project brought together Iranian and German artists for a symposium, an exhibition, and workshops. Fatemeh Rezaie has had several exhibitions on Afghan women and members of the Afghan diaspora in Iran. Her current project focuses on Afghan women who migrated to Iran due to the takeover of the government by the Taliban and the establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan with its rigid laws and confinement for women to remain in their homes.

A battle of Life

Nina Mokhtarbaf

Daily battles are one aspect of the young female athlete's daily life.

Shabnam Shahrokhi is a woman who has proven that hard work, determination, and hope are always the factors of success.



Shabnam was born into a large extended family in 1981. As long as she was living with her family and her strict father, she was not able to start her professional career.

She started kickboxing at the age of 26 and met Picasso, a professional kickboxer fighting in the German league, who became her coach. Individual awards earned during her career include a silver medal at the international championships in Spain in 2013, a silver medal at the international championships in Portugal in 2014, and a silver medal in mixed martial arts. Although Shabnam is a mother and has a busy personal life, she had to prioritize and focus on getting physically ready to participate in a 2017 competition.

In her job as a women's sports photographer, Nina Mokhtarbaf has noticed that female athletes need something that goes beyond hard work and training to win. Not only do female athletes lack support, but they are also struggling hard to participate in competitions on their own.

Shabnam is always trying to be the best she can be, and she looks forward to a future where women can make their paths easier through the continued efforts of the women before them.

Biography:

Nina Mokhtarbaf is an Iranian photographer living in Germany. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in graphic design from Azad University in Iran.

Since 2009, she has participated in a number of group exhibitions. After two years of experience in photojournalism, she started focusing on documentary photography practice in 2017. Her photo series "Battle of Life," which shows the life of an Iranian female boxer, was a candidate for the 2017 Sheid Prize in Iran. She also showed the same series at the Tbilisi History Museum as part of Kolga Tbilisi Photo Week.