

## MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

### RAHA RAISSNIA

“I have to tell you, I learned filmmaking more from painters and musicians than from filmmakers,” director Béla Tarr has confessed. Reversing his cue, Raha Raissnia learned to paint from filmmakers and musicians rather than painters. Years spent at Anthology Film Archives left her well-versed in the cinematic avant-garde, and her projection performances often involve collaborations with experimental musicians Aki Onda and Charles Curtis. Above all, Raissnia’s work aspires to the temporal and experiential condition of music—suggestive, ambiguous, abstract.

Over the past decade, the artist’s paintings, drawings, and films have unfolded within a permutational, self-reflexive structure. In her earlier work, the artist presented dense, architectonic black and white drawings and paintings that appeared to echo a certain postwar European abstraction. Rather than deferring to gesture, however, Raissnia orchestrated these scapes by steadily tracing a configuration of intersecting and overlapping vectors in space. In her self-titled exhibition at the gallery in 2009, a hybrid 16mm film and 35mm slide projection occupying one wall provided a glimpse into the expanded cinema practice that informs the artist’s two-dimensional work.

The artist’s films, drawings, and paintings are closely imbricated: paintings are contrapuntal compositions catalyzed by film stills, transferred faintly onto the surface of the panel and elaborated upon with oil and gesso. Her films echo this archaeological process, constructed from fragments of earlier work and structured as overlapping pairs of 35mm slide and 16mm film projections. Raissnia’s drawings and collages, likewise comprised of image transfers, with Sumi ink and compressed charcoal, examine this relationship of mutual influence. All are guided by the materiality of their media.

Raissnia’s densely textured work draws in equal measure on the gestural and photographic, the figurative and abstract. As her films render these boundaries ambiguous through layers of manipulation and reference, so too does her two-dimensional work present a world that contains aspects of both but belongs properly to neither. It features passageways to indeterminate locations and irrational architectures. “My paintings brought abstraction to the vision I captured from the world on film and now the films are bringing elements of reality into my paintings,” Raissnia says. Her viewer is left with the (impossible) task of excavating the two.

Raissnia’s work is structured permutationally, permitting levels of signification and interpretation to coexist in, to quote Roland Barthes, a “multi-layering of meanings which always lets the previous meaning continue, as in a geological formation, saying the opposite without giving up the contrary.” In his text, *The Third Meaning*, Barthes suggests that neither still nor film exceeds, precedes, nor fully contains the other. The same can be said of the still and moving image in Raissnia’s multifarious body of work—the two are placed in perpetual counterpoint.

*Raha Raissnia (b. 1968, Tehran, Iran) received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1992 and her MFA from Pratt Institute in 2002. In the interim, her interest in avant-garde filmmaking led her to work at Anthology Film Archives (1995–1999), where she has also exhibited. Raissnia presented a solo exhibition of new work in 2017-18 at the Drawing Center (New York). In 2016, her work was the subject of a solo presentation at the Museum of Modern Art (New York). In 2015, Raissnia’s work was included in All the World’s Futures, 56th International Art Exhibition, curated by Okwui Enwezor, Venice Biennale. Previously, her work has been featured in exhibitions at White Columns (New York), Access Gallery (Vancouver), the Museum of Contemporary Art St. Louis, Khastoo Gallery (Los Angeles), Thomas Dane Gallery (London) and The Kitchen (New York), among others. Recent solo shows were held at The Drawing Center (New York), Ab/Anbar Gallery (Tehran), Galeria Marta Cervera (Madrid), Galerie Xippas (Paris), and the Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art (Isfahan, Iran). Raissnia’s projection-performances, often undertaken in collaboration with Aki Onda and Panagiotis Mavridis, have been held at the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), REDCAT (Los Angeles), Arnolfini – Center for Contemporary Arts (Bristol, UK), the Drawing Center (New York), Issue Project Room (New York), Emily Harvey Foundation (New York), and OKLÀ event series (Montreal), among others. Raissnia’s sixth one-person exhibition at Miguel Abreu Gallery will take place in January 2019.*

# MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

## RAHA RAISSNIA

Born in 1968, in Tehran, Iran  
Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York

## EDUCATION

**2002**

MFA, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY

**1995-99**

Internship, Anthology Film Archives, New York

**1992**

BFA, The School of The Art Institute of Chicago, IL

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

**2019**

*Galvanization*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York (forthcoming)

**2018**

*Canto*, Galeria Marta Cervera, Madrid, Spain

**2017**

*Alluvius*, The Drawing Center, New York

**2015**

*Selected Works: Raha Raissnia*, Ab/Anbar Gallery, Tehran, Iran  
*Aberration*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York

**2014**

*Vioi*, Galeria Marta Cervera, Madrid, Spain

**2013**

*Series in Fugue*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York

**2011**

*Early Spring*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York

**2010**

*Glean*, Galeria Marta Cervera, Madrid, Spain

**2009**

*Shorthand of Sensation*, Galerie Xippas, Paris, France

**2008**

Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York

**2006**

*Stele*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York  
*Anemophily*, Galerie Xippas, Paris, France

**2005**

*Aphelion*, Thomas Erben Gallery, New York

**2004**

*Epitaphios*, Thomas Erben Gallery, New York  
Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art, Isfahan, Iran

**2003**

Court House Gallery at Anthology Film Archives, New York

**2002**

Court House Gallery at Anthology Film Archives, New York  
Thesis Exhibition, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY

**GROUP EXHIBITIONS****2019**

*Deep Focus: Blackout*, Kunsthal Rotterdam, Netherlands (forthcoming)

**2017**

*As World Colliding*, Dirimart Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey  
*Sedentary Fragmentation*, curated by Kimia Maleki, Heaven Gallery, Chicago, IL  
*In Between: Contemporary Iranian Art (Part 1)*, curated by Shahram Karimi, Mana Contemporary, Jersey City, NJ  
*EXTENDED COMPOSITIONS*, Art Centre Pasquart, Biel, Switzerland  
*STAGNES: Three positions. Six directions. Chapter III: construction-destruction-reconstruction*, organized with r/e projects, König Galerie, Berlin  
*Abraaj Group Art Prize Exhibition*, curated by Omar Berrada, Art Dubai, UAE  
*Pattern Recognition*, Galerie Xippas, Paris  
*We need to talk...*, Petzel Gallery, New York, NY

**2016**

*consensus*, Signal, Malmö, Sweden  
*Bienal de Cuenca*, curated by Dan Cameron Cuenca, Ecuador  
*Off Screen*, Microscope Gallery, Brooklyn, NY  
*Summer installation of works by gallery artists*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

**2015**

*All the World's Futures*, 56th International Art Exhibition, curated by Okwui Enwezor, Venice Biennale, Italy  
Frieze New York, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY  
FIAC, Miguel Abreu Gallery, Paris, France  
Art Basel Miami Beach, Miguel Abreu Gallery, Miami, FL

**2014**

*A Politics of Drawing: Proposal for a Method of Transformation*, curated by Philip Glahn and John O'Connor, Heimbold Visual Arts Center, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY  
Art Basel, Miguel Abreu Gallery, Basel, Switzerland

Frieze New York, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

*Looking Back – The 8<sup>th</sup> White Columns Annual*, selected by Pati Hertling, White Columns, New York, NY

### **2013**

Frieze New York, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

*Encyclonospace Iranica*, curated by Mohammad Salemy, Access Gallery, Vancouver, Canada

### **2012**

Frieze New York, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

ARCO Madrid, Marta Cervera, Madrid, Spain

*Book Week II: In Translation*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

*accrochage*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

### **2011**

*John Zorn Presents the Obsessions Collective: Works by Artists of Extreme Interest*, Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York, NY

Art|Basel|Miami Beach – Art Galleries, Miguel Abreu Gallery, Miami, FL

*Next Wave Art*, curated by Dan Cameron, BAM, Brooklyn, NY

*There are two sides to every coin, and two sides to your face*, Galerie Xippas, Paris, France

*A Place to Which We Can Come*, curated by Serra Sabuncuoglu, Saint Cecilia's Convent, Brooklyn, NY

*New York to London and Back: The Medium of Contingency*, Thomas Dane Gallery, London, UK

### **2010**

*Engaging the False Mirror*, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, curated by Gilian Rappaport, St. Louis, MO

*The Alchemy of Things Unknown and a Visual Transformation on meditation*, Khastoo Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

### **2009**

*Herd Thinner*, curated by David Hunt, Charest-Weinberg Gallery, Miami, FL

*Leave No Trace: Ridges, Troughs & Phantom Limbs*, ISCP, Brooklyn, NY

*Don't Perish*, Leo Koenig Inc., New York, NY

*Stip/Stripe*, Emily Harvey Foundation, New York, NY

*Practice vs. Object*, organized by Margaret Liu Clinton, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

### **2007**

*Late Liberties*, John Connelly Presents, New York, NY

*Form As Memory*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

### **2006**

*Holy Land: Diaspora and the Desert*, curated by Joe Baker & Lara Taubman, Heard Museum of Native Cultures and Art, Phoenix, AZ

*Hands Up / Hands Down*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

### **2005**

*Shangri-la Annual Benefit*, Dieu Donne Papermill, New York, NY

*Report from NYC*, Susquehanna Arts Museum, Harrisburg, PA

*Mechanisms*, curated by Duk Ju L. Kim, Heaven Gallery, Chicago, IL

*Mystery History*, curated by Warren Holt, Broadway Gallery, New York, NY

### **2004**

*Spatial Reflections*, curated by Warren Holt, Gallery 456, New York, NY

*Annual Fine Art Auction Brooklyn*, Dumbo Arts Center, Brooklyn, NY

*Art on Paper*, Weatherspoon Art Gallery, Greensboro, NC

*Art Forum*, Berlin, Germany

**2003**

*Art Forum*, Berlin, Germany

**2002**

*Beyond the Gates*, Art in General, New York, NY and Williamsburg Art and Historical Center, Brooklyn, NY  
(simultaneous two-part exhibition)

*Secrets*, Pat Hearn, NY

*Urban Dreams*, curated by Melina Finkelstein, The Drawing Room, Point Reyes Station, CA

**2001**

*Art is a Spirit that Never Dies*, curated by Jonas Mekas, M8A Contemporary Art Gallery Den-Hag, The Netherlands  
*Pratt MFA*, curated by Charlotta Kotik, Puck Building, New York

*Works on Paper*, curated by Melina Finkelstein, The Drawing Room, Point Reyes Station, CA

**2000**

*Paintings*, curated by Matt Gonzales, Adobe Gallery, San Francisco, CA

**FILM & PERFORMANCE / INSTALLATION**

**2019**

*Mneme II & Galvanoscope*, Raha Raissnia/Panagiotis Mavridis, part of *Deep Focus: Blackout*, International Film Festival Rotterdam, Kunsthal Rotterdam, Netherlands (forthcoming)

**2018**

*Raha Raissnia: Expanded Film Performances*, REDCAT, Los Angeles, CA

*Essential Cinema – Live Scores to Films by Maya Deren, Marie Menken, and Raha Raissnia*, Music by John Zorn,  
National Sawdust, Brooklyn, New York

*Raha Raissnia & Stom Sogo with musical accompaniment by Panagiotis Mavridis*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York

*Raha Raissnia/Panagiotis Mavridis*, part of *OK LÁ*, Stationnement Éthel, Montreal, QC, Canada

*Longing*, Ann Arbor Film Festival (Films in Competition), Ann Arbor, MI

*Freeway I*, Raha Raissnia/Charles Curtis, The Drawing Center, New York

*Nadir 2*, Raha Raissnia/Panagiotis Mavridis, The Drawing Center, New York

**2017**

*Mneme 3* and *Nadir*, Raha Raissnia/Panagiotis Mavridis, part of the *Syros International Film Festival*, Syros, Greece

*Free Way (Part II)*, part of *Dreamlands: The Color of Light*, organized by Chrissie Iles, Whitney Museum of  
American Art, New York, NY

**2016**

*Nadir 2*, Raha Raissnia/Panagiotis Mavridis, part of *Dreamlands: Expanded*, organized in collaboration with the  
Whitney Museum of American Art, Microscope Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

Raha Raissnia/Panagiotis Mavridis, part of *Perpetual Motion*, San Francisco Cinematheque, San Francisco, CA

*Mneme 3* and *Nadir*, Microscope Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

*Modern Mondays*, The Museum of Modern Art, NY

*Basement Performances*, curated by John Zorn, The Drawing Center, NY

**2015**

*Holotype Editions Showcase*, E.Δ.Ω., Athens, Greece

*Mneme*, part of *Render Series*, MoMA PS1 Printshop, Queens, NY

**2014**

*Briggan Krauss' The Need v.3*, The Firehouse Space, Brooklyn, NY

*mpld: sottosopra/Vioi 3*, Raha Raissnia/Gill Arnò, part of *Slide Slide Slide*, Microscope Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

*NHK'Koyxen*, Raha Raissnia/Aki Onda, Arnolfini - Centre for Contemporary Arts in Bristol, UK

*Litany*, Raha Raissnia/Panagiotis Mavridis, part of *A Particular Kind of Solitude: An exhibition inspired by writings of*

*Robert Walser*, curated by Serra Sabuncuoglu, Elizabeth Street Garden, New York, NY

Raha Raissnia/Aki Onda, Outpost Artist Resources, New York, NY

*Interzone*, Raha Raissnia/John Zorn, The Stone, New York, NY

**2013**

Raha Raissnia/Aki Onda, part of *Ten Years Alive on the Infinite Plain*, ISSUE Project Room, Brooklyn, NY

**2012**

*As If Someone Erased Outlines*, Raha Raissnia/Aki Onda, Emily Harvey Foundation, New York, NY

Slide and film projection performance with the Search & Enjoy choir conducted by Dalius Naujo, part of *Surface Affect*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

Raha Raissnia/Aki Onda, part of *And Up Pears L the S*, Emily Harvey Foundation, New York, NY

**2011**

*Pulso Iraniano, fotografias & videos, energia de uma nova geração revelada*, curated by Marc Pottier, OI Futuro-Flamengo, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

*Brick and Mortar International Video Art Festival*, curated by Christoph Cox, Greenfield, MA

*Cosmography*, Raha Raissnia/Briggan Krauss, The Kitchen, New York, NY

**2010**

*Film Screenings and performances*, curated by Jonathan Thomas, Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis, MN

**2009**

Raha Raissnia/Charles Curtis, Galerie Xippas, Paris, France

**2008**

Raha Raissnia/Charles Curtis, *Kill Your Timid Notion Festival*, Dundee Contemporary Art Festival, Scotland

**2007**

Raha Raissnia/Charles Curtis, Tonic, New York, NY

Raha Raissnia/Charles Curtis, *Tank* film series, Collective Unconscious, New York, NY

**2006**

Raha Raissnia/Charles Curtis, Xippas Gallery, Paris, France

Installation, Xippas Gallery, Paris, France

The Stone, New York, NY

Raha Raissnia/Charles Curtis, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

**2005**

Systems with Briggan Krauss, Anthology Film Archives, New York, NY

Raha Raissnia with Nightwatch, ISSUE Project Room, Brooklyn, NY

## 2004

Systems with Briggan Krauss (performance series), Thomas Erbin Gallery, New York, NY  
Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art, Isfahan, Iran

## CURATION

### 2003

Saatchi & Saatchi, Harlem Art Project, New York, NY  
Court House Gallery at Anthology Film Archives, New York, NY

### 2002

La Miroiterie Gallerie, Paris, France

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 2018

Berg, Tatiana. "Must-See Art Guide: Madrid," *Artnet News*, February 22

### 2017

Hatfield, Zack. "Raha Raissnia," Critics' Picks, *Artforum.com*, December  
"Raha Raissnia," Goings On About Town: Art, *The New Yorker*, December  
Schultz, Charles. "In Conversation: Raha Raissnia with Charles Schultz," *BrooklynRail.org*, December 13

### 2016

Ringborg, Theodor, "~~Consensus~~" Critics' Picks, *Artforum.com*, October  
Moyles, Amber, "Interview with Raha Raissnia," *DrawingCenter.org*

### 2015

Cruz, Milton, et al., *Raha Raissnia: Selected Works*, Tehran: Ab/Anbar Gallery (exhibition catalogue)  
Jeppesen, Travis, "Reading Capital in Venice," *Art in America*, September  
Smith, Roberta, "Art for the Planet's Sake at the Venice Biennale," *The New York Times*, May 15  
Roerig, Tim, "Raha Raissnia," *All the World's Futures: 56th International Art Exhibition. La Biennale di Venezia* (exhibition catalogue)

### 2014

González Panizo, Javier, "Raha Raissnia: La imagen y su exceso," *BlogeArte.com*, July 16

### 2013

Liotta, Jianne, "Raha Raissnia," Artists on Artists, *BOMB Magazine*, Issue 136, Winter  
Bosco, Roberta. "El arte sin velo de las creadoras iraníes," *El Pais*, April 21

### 2011

"Raha Raissnia, Early Spring," *Time Out New York*, June 11  
Barragán, Paco, "Raha Raissnia," *ArtPulse*, Winter

### 2010

González Panizo, Javier, "Arte, imagen y tiempo expandido," *Arte10.com*  
Vozmediano, Elena, "La película plástica de Raha Raissnia," *El Cultural*, December 10  
Folguera de la Cámara, Ana, "Raha Raissnia en la Galería Marta Cervera," *Revistaclavesdearte.com*, November 23

"Raha Raissnia," *Art.es*, December

**2009**

"Shorthand of Sensation," *Paris-Art.com*, April 15

**2008**

Eva Díaz, "Raha Raissnia," *Modern Painters*, November

Ben La Rocco, "Raha Raissnia," *The Brooklyn Rail*, October

Martha Schwendener, "Raha Raissnia" *The New Yorker*, October 1

John Haber "Painting as Subtext" *John Haber's News and Views*, October 16

Sarah Schmerler "Afternoon Delight: LES Art Scene's a Sunday Surprise" *New York Post*, September 27

Stephanie Buhmann "Fall frontier on the Lower East Side: New dimensions of digital art and installations," *The Villager*, Vol. 78, No. 17, September 24-30

**2007**

Adrian Dannatt, "Raha Raissnia," *Flash Art International*, No. 252, Jan-Feb

Aaron Yassin, "Painting Epitaphios and Performing Systems," *New York Arts Magazine*, May-June

**TEACHING**

**2014 – present**

Adjunct Professor of Drawing, Parsons The New School for Design, New York, NY

**2010 – 2014**

Adjunct Professor of Drawing, City College of New York, NY

**GRANTS AND AWARDS**

Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 2014

Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grants to Artists Award, 2011

Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 2008

Pratt Institute Delacroix Award for Painting Excellence, 2001

Vermont Studio Center Fellowship, 1999

Dodd's Travel Grant, Travels to Italy, Spain, and France, 1998

**COLLECTIONS**

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, 2018

The Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 2017