

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) as well as included in the 13th Bienal de Cuenca, and in 2015 her work was included in All the World’s Futures, curated by Okwui Enwezor, for the 56th International Art Exhibition, Venice Biennale. Previously, her work has been featured in exhibitions at The Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles), 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 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), Kunsthall Rotterdam, Arnolfini – Center for Contemporary Arts (Bristol, UK), the Drawing Center (New York), Issue Project Room (New York), Emily Harvey Foundation (New York), and OKLA (Montreal), among others. Raissnia’s sixth one-person exhibition at Miguel Abreu Gallery was on display in the winter of 2019. Her work is held in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art (New York), the Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles), the Pejman Foundation (Tehran), Colección

INELCOM (Madrid), the Pinault Collection, and The Museum of Old and New Art (Tasmania). Selected Works: Raha Raissnia, a monograph dedicated to her work, was published by Ab-Anbar Gallery in 2015.

Raissnia's work was included in Greater New York at MoMA PS1, New York, in 2021-2022, and is currently on view in Singing in Unison: Artists Need to Create on the Same Scale That Society Has the Capacity to Destroy, curated by Phong H. Bui and Cal McKeever of the Brooklyn Rail, at Ricco/Maresca, New York. Her forthcoming solo exhibition will be held at Empty Gallery in Hong Kong opening in Fall/Winter 2022.

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

2022

Empty Gallery, Hong Kong, China (forthcoming)
Sequence 8: one work, one or two weeks, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York

2020

Remain, Galeria Marta Cervera, Madrid, Spain

2019

Galvanization, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York

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

2022

Singing in Unison: Artists Need to Create on the Same Scale that Society Has the Capacity to Destroy, Part 4, Curated by Phong H. Bui and Cal McKeever, Ricco/Maresca New York, NY

Thingamajig, AB-ANBAR, London, UK

2021

Greater New York 2021, Moma PS1, Long Island City, NY

RE:REPRESENTATION - Part II, curated by Dan Cameron, Jonathan Ferrara Gallery, New Orleans, LA

30 ans déjà! #2, Galerie Xippas, Paris, France

Ensemble, Chateau Shatto, Los Angeles, CA

List IV – Another Perspective, O Gallery, Tehran, Iran

Regroup Show, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, NY

2020

Long Live Modern Movement, CSS Bard Hessel Museum, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY

To Jonas with Love, Ki Smith Gallery, New York, NY

2019

The Foundation of the Museum: MOCA's Collection, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA

Scrapbook (or, Why Can't We Live Together), Microscope Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

The Projective Drawing, curated by Brett Littman Drawing Lab Paris, France

A Rain of Light & Death, 17Essex, New York

Blackout, curated by Julian Ross Ambika P3, London

International Film Festival of Rotterdam / Deep Focus: Blackout, Kunsthal Rotterdam, Netherlands

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 8th 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**

Galvanoscope 4, Microscope Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Performance with Panagiotis Mavridis and Dalius Naujokaitis, part of *Presents for Jonas!*, Microscope Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Mneme II & Galvanoscope, Raha Raissnia/Panagiotis Mavridis, part of *Deep Focus: Blackout*, International Film Festival Rotterdam, Kunsthal Rotterdam, Netherlands

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 *OKLA*, 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

2019

Kotecha, Shiv. "Raha Raissnia," *Art In America*, April

Wiley, Chris. "Raha Raissnia," *Frieze*, No. 202, April

Turner, Matt. "Blackout: sliding out of obsolescence," *Sight & Sound*, February 28

Clifford, Benjamin. "Raha Raissnia: Galvanization," *BrooklynRail.org*, February 12

"10 Art Events to Attend in New York City This Week," *ARTnews*, January 7

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

Díaz, Eva. "Raha Raissnia," *Modern Painters*, November
La Rocco, Ben. "Raha Raissnia," *The Brooklyn Rail*, October
Schwendener, Martha. "Raha Raissnia" *The New Yorker*, October 1
Haber, John. "Painting as Subtext" *John Haber's News and Views*, October 16
Schmerler, Sarah. "Afternoon Delight: LES Art Scene's a Sunday Surprise" *New York Post*, September 27
Buhmann, Stephanie. "Fall frontier on the Lower East Side: New dimensions of digital art and installations," *The Villager*, Vol. 78, No. 17, September 24-30

2007

Dannatt, Adrian. "Raha Raissnia," *Flash Art International*, No. 252, Jan-Feb
Yassin, Aaron. "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 Modern Art, New York

Colección INELCOM, Madrid, Spain

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA

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

Pejman Foundation, Tehran, Iran

Pinault Collection