



# Oneness WHOLENESS

Nina Moaddel Art Advisory presents *Oneness Wholeness*: a major new exhibition featuring the transcendent work of French-Iranian artist Sassan Behnam-Bakhtiar at the Saatchi Gallery

There's something fleeting about the work of Sassan Behnam-Bakhtiar; something that seems to escape the eye just as you're about to pin it down. Consistently engaging whether abstract or figurative, his work draws upon photojournalism, Persian sculptural friezes and mosques, the decorative patterns and colour of the Middle East and self-portraiture. Now he brings together a new body of work that forms *Oneness Wholeness*, his first solo exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery, presented by curator Nina Moaddel.

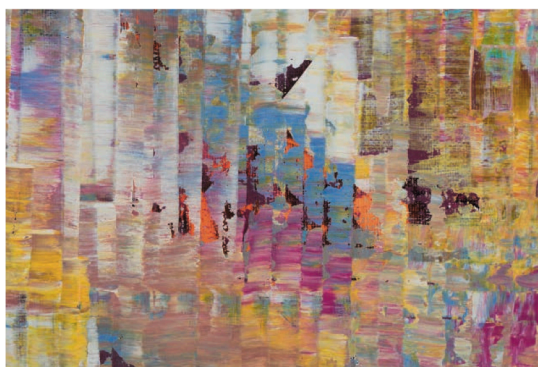
Born in Paris at the height of the Iran-Iraq War, Behnam-Bakhtiar moved to Tehran aged 10, and much of his output focuses on Persian culture and traditions. He is descended from the nomadic Bakhtiari tribe in the south west of the country, and large-scale paintings in the exhibition recall the Zagros Mountains that are the tribe's historical homeland. Sometimes meditative, but often with more than a hint of a political bent, his work manages simultaneously to be immediately relevant as a reflection of a rapidly changing area of the world, as well

as inextricably linked to a millennia-old visual tradition.

Behnam-Bakhtiar represents one of the first artists to showcase Iran to the West through Iranian eyes. With a background spanning both Iran and Europe, his is a rare perspective on a country with a young population, a volatile political situation, rich in culture and history, and prime for change and opportunity.

It is thanks to Moaddel that Behnam-Bakhtiar is returning for this—his second—UK exhibition. Iranian-born herself, Moaddel is an expert in contemporary Iranian art, and has curated exhibitions across Asia and Europe, including the Tehran pavilion at the ninth Shanghai Biennale. If her previous collaborations with institutions including Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, the ICA in London, the Kunsthal Rotterdam and the Royal Academy are anything to go by, *Oneness Wholeness* promises to be a tour de force in art that is outward-looking, contemporary and profound.

*Oneness Wholeness* at the Saatchi Gallery, May 15-27, 2018. [sassanbehnambakhtiar.com](http://sassanbehnambakhtiar.com); [saatchi-gallery.com](http://saatchi-gallery.com); [@sassanbehnambakhtiar](https://twitter.com/sassanbehnambakhtiar)



**PERSIAN FIRE**

Detail from *With Nobility, Courage and Strength, We Shall Select a New Path* (2017). Top: the artist at work