



NEWS RELEASE

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Telfair Museum of Art presents
Persian Visions: Contemporary Photography from Iran

Exhibition offers insight into contemporary Iranian life

[Savannah, Georgia] — This summer, the Telfair Museum of Art presents *Persian Visions: Contemporary Photography from Iran*, on view from June 10 – August 31, 2009, at the Jepson Center for the Arts. The first survey of contemporary Iranian photography to tour the United States, *Persian Visions* consists of fifty-eight works of photography and video by renowned Iranian artists. Complementing the exhibition, the acclaimed Iranian film *Half Moon* will be shown on July 23 at the Jepson Center, presented by Reel Savannah Film Group.

“With works ranging from landscapes to portraits to composited imagery, this diverse and penetrating exhibition is, in many ways, a study of opposites—traditional vs. modern, private vs. public, authority vs. deference, exposure vs. obscurity,” said Telfair curator Holly Koons McCullough.

“Yet it is the juxtaposition of inward and outward that ultimately proves most revealing. Seemingly betraying a preoccupation with surface and *external* appearance, these arresting images introduce us to an intriguing world which few Westerners ever experience—the *internal*, or psychological, terrain of contemporary Iran.”

Among Iran’s most celebrated photographers, the twenty artists represented in the exhibition use the medium for cultural expression and self-exploration. Several of them lived abroad and experienced Western culture before returning home to re-experience and document their own culture. While foreign photographers—inevitably assuming an outsider’s perspective—frequently depict the Iranian people and customs as mysterious and exotic, the artists included in *Persian Visions* offer an intimate and unique glimpse of life in their native country. Given President Obama’s efforts to reignite an international exchange and social dialogue between the U.S. and Iran, as well as the recent focus on the art and culture of Iran, this exhibition is particularly timely—providing a rare and revealing view of contemporary Iranian experience.

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To complement the *Persian Visions* exhibition, on July 23 the Reel Savannah Film Group will present a screening of the contemporary Iranian film *Half Moon* (2006) by Iranian-Kurdish director Bahman Ghobadi. The film will be held at 6:30 pm at the Telfair's Jepson Center for the Arts. Admission is \$6, cash only. For more information, go to www.reelsavannah.org.

Persian Visions was developed by Hamid Severi for the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran, and Gary Hallman of the Regis Center for Art, University of Minnesota, and toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, D.C. This exhibition was made possible in part by the ILEX Foundation, University of Minnesota McKnight Arts and Humanities Endowment, and the Department of Art, Regis Center for Art, University of Minnesota.

About the Telfair

Located in the heart of Savannah's historic district, the Telfair Museum of Art is the oldest public art museum in the South. It is comprised of two National Historic Landmark Buildings—the Telfair Academy and the Owens-Thomas House—and the contemporary Jepson Center for the Arts. With three unique buildings housing three distinct collections, the Telfair bridges three centuries of art and architecture.

Images available upon request.

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The Telfair Museum of Art is supported by its members, with partial support of the annual operating fund provided by the City of Savannah and by the Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly.

The Telfair Academy is located on Telfair Square at 121 Barnard Street, Savannah, GA. The Jepson Center is also located on Telfair Square, just steps from the Academy building, at 207 W. York Street. The Telfair's Owens-Thomas House is located at 124 Abercorn Street on Oglethorpe Square. General admission (which includes a one-time visit to each of the Telfair's three sites) is \$15 for adults; \$12 for seniors, military personnel, and AAA members; \$5 for K-12 students; children under 5 are free. Members are always admitted free.

The Telfair's Jepson Center for the Arts and Telfair Academy are open Sunday 12-5 pm, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Tuesday-Closed, and Thursday 10 am-8 pm. Call 912.790.8880 for Owens-Thomas House hours or visit www.telfair.org. Museum sites are closed some holidays.

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