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Fearless, the Next Wave of Iranian Art at Total Arts, Dubai.

Posted on [April 27, 2016](#) by [SIXPILLARS](#)



(https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_2732.jpeg) Until April 30th you can walk into a space hidden in Dubai's industrial district and examine a series of works that collectively point out how outdated mainstream curatorial considerations often is, of what is being made in the field of Iranian art today.

Not exactly outsider art, nor art that necessarily consciously rejects the mainstream the exhibition instead displays samples by artists whose work is consistently true to itself. One would have to look deeper into each artist's body or work to fully understand the show, in the meantime, the gallery gives us a survey of these artists who 'work silently.'

One of the oldest galleries in the UAE, Total Arts was established in 1992, and relocated to The Courtyard when the building was completed in 1998. Total Arts' roots were in the Dubai Art Centre begun in 1981 by The Courtyard architect Dariush Zandi, then the only art institute then operating in Dubai.

For this reason conflicting starts dates for the gallery appear online.

Recognised as pioneering spaces, both the gallery and The Courtyard were founded as a creative platform at a time when the Dubai art scene was at its inception. Since then, both have become established as interdisciplinary spaces for learning, collaborating and

(https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_2725.jpeg) experimenting. Total Arts itself is an in-between space for artistic and intellectual collaboration, which actively encourages dialogue between established artists and collectors, emerging artists and students from across the Gulf region, particularly Iran, where the Courtyard architect and gallery director are from and the UAE, where they have been operating for many years. The gallery hosts regular lectures, workshops and film screenings around the exhibitions as well as artists' talks.

We put a series of questions to artist and gallery director Shagayeq Arabi about the current show.

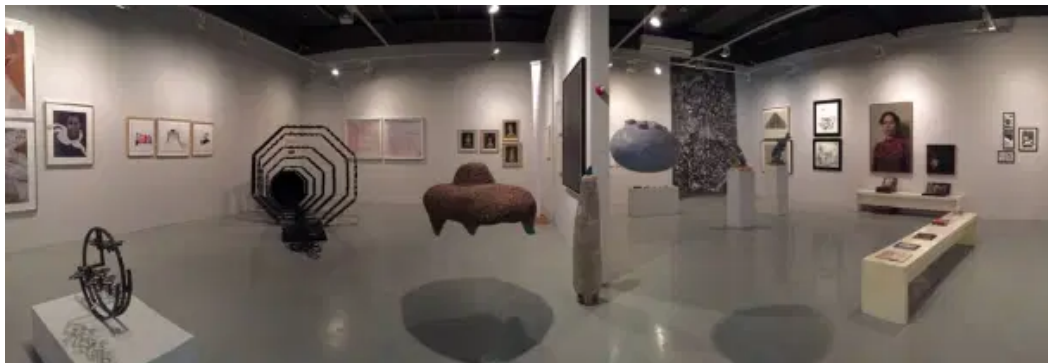


How did you select these artists, did you collaborate with the three galleries in Iran who are hosting the other parts of the show, please expand on the means?

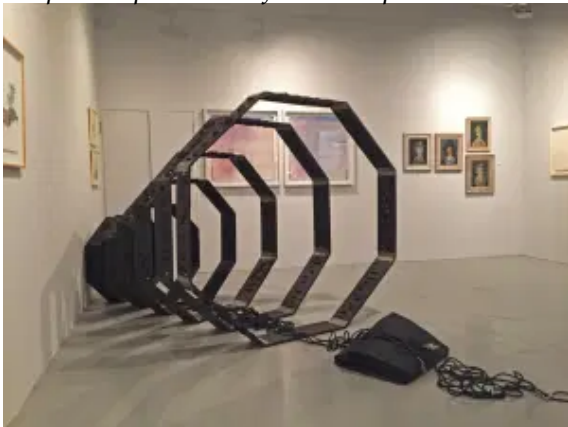
Fearless is about 33 artists from Iran who have been continually working, tirelessly, regardless of the market's flux because they are manically obsessed with what they do. These 33 artists were expressly chosen to span different generations.

Established Iranian artist Fereydoon Ave

(<http://artasiapacific.com/Magazine/65/WrestlingWithHistoryMysticalAndMasculineFereydoonAve>), who was on the selection panel and has been long-involved with Total Arts in various ways, says:



(https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/12525319_1015630378507393_1043050643372560771_o.jpg).



(https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/12898415_1015630541840710_386327884326176465_o.jpg).



(https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/fearless10494801_1007349589335472_4807033270889716506_n.jpg).

"It is always hard choosing 33 artists from so many unsung heroes but it has to be done so apologies for not having enough space to include every one"

We have been following many of these artists for a while and quite familiar with their work and their

(https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_2729.jpeg) progress, however a couple of them were newly discovered for this exhibition. Fearless opened simultaneously with the same artists in three galleries in Tehran – Araan Projects, Lajevardi Foundation and O gallery- to give visibility to their fearless approach to making and creating.

Several of the artists were already represented by the host galleries.

Does 'working despite the market' mean these artists are often not selling work, and would that be a good indicator that they are outside the market? If not, how do we assess if an artist is bending their work to market forces or not? It is recognised that in the



(https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/12022437_1015630568507374_1836037479489043629_o.jpg) art world artists do adjust their work to certain trends to become 'bandwagon artists'. Is unpopular or underground a good way of describing those outside of the market? If not, how would you describe them?

These are artists courageously pursuing their addiction to work in spite of the market, not in accordance with it.



There is no age specificity for be

(https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_2734.jpeg) ing an obsessive courageous lunatic working silently.

"None of these artists have had media or market attention because of their obsession with work and not personal hype so I am glad to champion them." In a time and space where nothing changes fundamentally to keep on working on personal visions is fearless and to see fear as the only real censorship is to come out of the shadow.

The idea that someone who is now 75 can be part of 'the next wave' is as commendable as it is true. How could we define this next wave, because often we are slavishly told that new wave means the next generatio

(https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_2715.jpeg) n, a fact which ignores not only that more experienced people can be innovators that will impact a scene, but also that young people study classical forms, or are Imitative or stuckist in their approach.

Yes, you've said it all. 'Fearless' is not a generationally-defined exhibition but is instead shaped by artists who display the obsessive need to express first hand their own vision. More experienced artists, ones who have lived for longer, are in fact more courageous because they feel the temporary nature of time, whereas younger people are fearless, perhaps reckless that way, by virtue of their youthful energy and their need to be iconoclastic.



Total Arts has put on some very distinct shows, does it get the recognition it deserves? What has caused it to / to not receive this recognition. Perhaps it is *Fearless* in its own right?

We are garnering the recognition we need on our own terms. We are not trying to satisfy the market and the commercial aspect of the art world, that's why we are the in-between space in Dubai. We fill a gap between commercial galleries, cultural institutions, universities and museums, hence our programming is the way it is.

Total Arts (<https://www.facebook.com/totalartsuae/>) is open Saturday to Thursday 10-6pm.



Total Arts at the Courtyard is pleased to present:
Fearless: the next wave of artists from Iran

14 March- 30 April 2016

Fearless is about 33 artists from Iran who have been working and working regardless of the market's madness because they are manically obsessed with what they do. These 33 artists have been expressly chosen from various generations (25 to 75 years old). There is no age for being an obsessive courageous lunatic working silently. In a time and space where nothing changes fundamentally to keep on working on personal visions is fearless and to see fear as the only real censorship is to come out of the shadow.

Fearless will open simultaneously with the same artists in Dubai and three galleries in Tehran - Aaraan Projects, Lajevardi Foundation and O gallery- to give visually to fearlessness.

The full list of artists whose works are represented in the exhibition comprises Sara Abbasian, Sasan Abri, Nasser Bakhshi, Reza Bangiz, Afshan Daneshvar, Habib Farajabadi, Soussan Farjam, Nariman Farokhi, farhad Gavzan, Kasra Golrang, Mohamad Hossein Golamzadeh, Vahid Hakim, Hadi Hazavi, Mehrdad Jafari, Ebrahim Kadem- Bayat, Nogol Mazloumi, Arsia Moghadam, Amir Mohamadzadeh, Omid Moshksar, Kaveh Najmabadi, Zahra Navaie, Farokh Nooroney, Mehrdad Pournazarali, Sepehr Mesri, Mohamad Pirati, Ali Razavi, Ashkan Sanei, Baktash Sarang, Sadegh Sadeghi-pour, Sharvin Shahrokh, Parissa Tayebi, Mohamad Reza Yazdi and Hossein Ali Zabehi.



Address: Sheikh Zayed Road (E11), Al Qouz Industrial Area1, Street 4b,
(In between Times Square Center & Al Tayer Motors Showroom)
Courtyard building, Tel: 04 347 5050, totalart@courtyard-uae.com

(<https://sixpillarsarts.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/fearless-unnamed.jpg>).

Artists whose works are in *Fearless* are:

Sara Abbasian

Sasan Abri

Nasser Bakhshi

Reza Bangiz, Afshan Daneshvar

Habib Farajabadi

Soussan Far-jam

Nariman Farokhi

Farhad Gavzan

Kasra Golrang

Mohamad Hossein Golamzadeh

Vahid Hakim

Hadi Hazavi

Mehrdad Jafari

Ebrahim Kadem-Bayat

Nogol Mazloumi

Arsia Moghadam

Amir Mohamadzadeh

Omid Moshksar

Kaveh Najmabadi

Zahra Navaie

Farokh Nooroney

Mehrdad Pournazarali

Sepehr Mesri

Mohamad Pirati

Ali Razavi

Ashkan Sanei

Baktash Sarang

Sadegh Sadeghipour

Sharvin Shahrokh

Parissa Tayebi

MohamadRezaYazdi

Hossein Ali Zabehi.

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