

THE SHOW ROOM

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PRESS RELEASE

Hengameh Golestan: Witness 1979
4–27 September 2015

Preview: Wednesday 2 September, 6.30–8.30pm

Exhibition opening hours: Wednesday to Saturday, 12–6pm

As part of this year's Communal Knowledge programme, acclaimed Iranian photographer Hengameh Golestan will present her work in an exhibition and events programme which will offer a unique opportunity to rediscover this important female photographer.

Hengameh Golestan, born in Tehran in 1952, has worked between 1974 and 1984 documenting life in Iran, in particular the lives of women and children, domestic and everyday life. For the past twenty years Golestan has lived in London as a neighbour of The Showroom, and this project, involving many photographs never seen publically before, is the outcome of a conversation that has developed over several years.

Developed and co-curated with The Showroom and artist and researcher Azadeh Fatehrad from the Royal College of Art, the project focuses on Golestan's Iranian Revolution photographs from 1979 including her documentation of the 8th of March 1979 when more than 100,000 women came into the street to stand against the compulsory hijab ruling. Golestan photographed groups of women from every profession including nurses, students, artists and mothers, protesting on the streets of Tehran.

Unable to show these images in Tehran, photographs from the series will be printed large-scale and presented informally on the walls of the gallery space and on the outside of the building. Images will also take the form of archive material to be handled by gallery audiences as well as participants of the public events programme, integral to the project, which will run alongside a series of workshops with local girls' and women's groups.

Through a process of active engagement, this extraordinary body of work will be opened up in a context that will allow discussion and reflection on many of the issues raised by the images including gender, protest and representation.

Picking up on many of the themes familiar to The Showroom's programme, and urgent in the world at large, the project addresses this important moment in Iranian history and its many resonances today.

Public Events programme:

- Saturday 5 September 12am-5pm: Symposium 'When does a Revolution Start? Part I' at The Showroom. Speakers include Professor Reina Lewis, Professor of Cultural Studies at London College of Fashion (LCF) artist Sandra Schaffer and Hengameh Golestan in- conversation with Azadeh Fatehrad.
- Monday 7 September, 6.30-9pm: Screening Hidden Faces by Kim Longinotto at the Royal College of Art, lecture theater 1, Kensington Campus.
- Saturday 19th of September, 2-5pm Symposium 'When does a Revolution Start? Part II' at The Showroom. Speakers include Dr Ziba Mir-Hosseini, Professorial Research Associate, Centre for Islamic and Middle Eastern Law at SOAS London, Shahin Nawai, founding member of the largest women organisation after the 1979 Iranian revolution, artist Nooshin Farhid's and a screening of her film *Shallow Water, Deep Skin*.
- Wednesday 23 September 6-8pm reading group at The Showroom, facilitated by Azadeh Fatehrad and Louise Shelley.
- Sunday 27 September 2-4pm open discussion with Hengameh Golestan, Azadeh Fatehrad, The Showroom and Justice for Domestic Workers around issues of gender, protest and representation.

- ENDS -

Notes for Editors:

- For further PRESS information and images please contact Chloe Nahum at Rees & Company on chloe@reesandco.com or + 44(0)20 3137 8776.
- The project is supported by the Royal College of Art and through The Showroom's Communal Knowledge Programme. Communal Knowledge is supported by The Paul Hamlyn Foundation, The John Lyons Charitable Trust, City Bridge Trust, the City of London Corporation's Charity, and The Showroom Supporters Scheme.
- Hengameh Golestan (b. 1952, Tehran) is a pioneer among Iranian women photographers and has documenting life in Iran photographing women and children, instances of family and everyday life. During the revolution she captured moments of rebellion on the part of women. Her practice has seen her travel extensively to towns and villages in Iran and Rojhelat (Iranian Kurdistan) and she has exhibited in Iran, Germany, Turkey, France, UK and Syria amongst others. Her recent show was at Paris photo of 2013. She also assisted her late husband Kaveh Golestan on a number of his photography projects. www.hengamehgolestan.com
- Azadeh Fatehrad (b.1981, Tehran) is an artist and researcher currently based at the Photography Programme of the Royal College of Art, London. Her research engages with the feminist history of Iran from 1909 to the present. Her projects explore still and moving image archives investigating the ways in which the feminist movement has been expanded among urban middle class women in her home country of Iran. Fatehrad has exhibited her work internationally in London, Vancouver, New York, Tehran. www.azadehfatehrad.com
- The Showroom's ongoing programme Communal Knowledge has developed a unique approach to forging long-term relationships with a wide range of local residents and groups through collaborations with artists and designers. Projects aim to generate playful and experimental avenues for critical reflection on issues at stake in The Showroom's neighbourhood.



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