

Gelare Khoshgozaran
To Be the Author of One's Own Travels

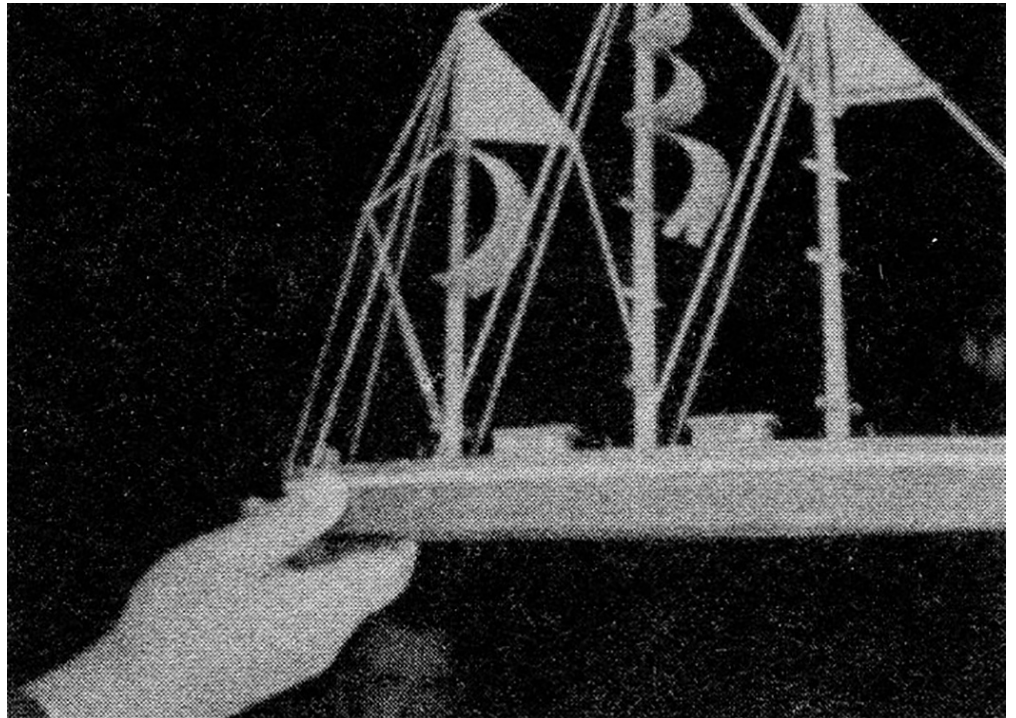
Exhibition dates:
23/06/23-06/08/23

Curated by Eliel Jones

Opening:
Thurs, 22/06/23
19:00-21:00

Times:
Mon-Sun, 12:00-17:00

Venue:
Delfina Foundation, London



Gelare Khoshgozaran, *Production still*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist

Delfina Foundation is proud to present the first European solo exhibition by its former resident, LA-based Iranian artist, writer, and filmmaker Gelare Khoshgozaran.

Born in Tehran in 1986 during the Iran-Iraq war, Khoshgozaran produces work that engages with the legacies of imperial violence. Through film and video Khoshgozaran explores narratives of belonging outside of the geographies and temporalities that have both unsettled a sense of home and make places of affinity uninhabitable.

Continuing her work into the effects of displacement, this exhibition will present three film works by the artist – two of which are new commissions – coming together as an expanded cinema installation that will speak to the personal impact of exile and its generative potential as a space to build transnational solidarity.

Delfina Foundation

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Shown for the first time in the UK, *To Keep the Mountain at Bay* (2023) is a short film shot on Super 8, which explores the figure of the mountain as a witness to experiences of displacement and exile. Conceived as an ode to Etel Adnan and her relationship to California, the film weaves together fragmented images and words that speak against the passivity of nostalgia and assimilationist propaganda.

Projected on loop through a prism, visually distorting the images will be Khoshgozaran's new hand-edit of a Super 8 film reel of the 1939 animation *Gulliver's Travels*. The exhibition draws its title from the original Jonathan Swift novel, a piece of literature fuelled by the gallivanting tales of 18th century upper-class English men – an imaginary that is stark in its contrast with the ongoing crisis of movement of vulnerable populations of the Global South who face the closed borders of Europe and North America.

Delving into the temporal, spatial and relational effects that these contemporary migratory movements have on the body and mind of the exiled, the third film presented will be an ambitious visual expansion of Khoshgozaran's 2022 essay, *The Too Many and No Homes of Exile*. Central to this newly commissioned work is an 'exile retreat' organised by Khoshgozaran in rural France with participants recruited from an international open call for individuals who are barred from returning due to border partitions, war, occupation, colonial settlements, fear of political persecution or other circumstances.

Khoshgozaran's discursive and participatory approach towards developing this new moving image commission is guided by a desire to create space for the convening of persons in exile across borders, languages, and histories. In the process, the artist seeks to create an adjacency to similar gatherings sparked by civil and global wars of the early 20th century – in particular, the convenings made possible by the radical hospitality of the Catalan psychiatrist Francesc Tosquelles. It was at the Saint-Alban psychiatric hospital where Tosquelles was the medical director that numerous international artists, writers, and thinkers escaped political persecution, and at times became involved with his vision for a type of 'anti-concentrationist' environment that integrated patients with the local community, involved them in meaningful work, and sparked their engagement and participation in various types of cultural production.

At a time of on-going urgent calls for the fulfilment of a politics of abolition of prisons and migrant detention centres, of occupations and expanded forms of carcerality, this multimedia installation will create a space to contemplate alienation, world-building, and the role of fantasy to cross boundaries and enclosures both literal and figurative.

Artist biography

Gelare Khosgozaran's work has been exhibited at the New Museum, Queens Museum, Hammer Museum, LAXART, London Short Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, Artspeak, Plug In ICA, and Museo Ex Teresa Arte Actual among others. Khoshgozaran was the recipient of a LACE Lightning Fund (2022), Graham Foundation Award (2020), the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award (2019),

Art Matters Award (2017), Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant (2016), and the Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant (2015). She received her BFA from University of Arts in Tehran, in 2009, and MFA from University of Southern California, in 2011. Gelare Khosgozaran was an artist-in-residence at Delfina Foundation during spring 2021.

Curator biography

Elieel Jones is an independent curator, writer and organiser based in London. He was recently the Curator of the Brent Biennial 2022, titled *In the House of my Love*, and Interim Head of Programmes for Metroland Cultures. Jones' research interests and methodologies stem from intersectional approaches to queer and feminist discourse and are guided by his involvement in direct community action and solidarity, such as through his organising work with Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants. Other curatorial projects include: *Queer Correspondence*, Cell Project Space, London; *do you host?*, Ujazdowski Castle CCA, Warsaw; *Acts of Translation*, Mohammed and Mahera Abu Ghazaleh Foundation, Amman; and *Experiments on Public Space*, Dallas Museum of Art, Texas. He has previously held curatorial positions at organisations including Cell Project Space and Chisenhale Gallery (both in London), where he has worked towards realising commissions of new work by emerging artists, including Alex Baczynski-Jenkins, Maeve Brennan, Luke Willis Thompson, Hannah Black, Lydia Ourahmane, Paul Maheke, Krzysztof Baginski, Carlos Maria Romero (AKA Atabey Mamasita) and Joseph Funnell, amongst others. Jones has written over a hundred pieces of criticism on contemporary art and performance for various international platforms and publications, including Artforum, Frieze, The Guardian, Flash Art, Mousse, Spike Art Quarterly, X-TRA and MAP. He is an Associate Lecturer in the MA Curating and Collections at Chelsea College of Art, London; a Trustee of PEER UK; and a Selection Committee Member for the LUX Moving Image Collection (2023-2024).

Public programme

A number of events will accompany this exhibition. Check the website for full listings: www.delfinafoundation.com/whats-on

Credits

This exhibition has been made possible thanks to support from: LACE - Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions; the Elephant Trust; Delfina Foundation's Network of Patrons for the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia; and the Gelare Khosgozaran Exhibition Circle.

Delfina Foundation: Exhibitions programme

Gelare Khosgozaran's exhibition marks the beginning of a succession of exhibitions at Delfina Foundation following a three-year hiatus, partially due to the pandemic. Delfina's exhibitions provide a UK platform to its international alumni artists and curators at a pivotal moment of their career. Past exhibitions have included the first London/UK solo exhibitions by Abbas Akhavan, Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, Ahmet Ogut, Ala Younis, Wael Shawky and Geumhyung Jeong.

Delfina Foundation's exhibitions are primarily presented in its purpose-built lower-ground floor 1,650 square foot space, created as part the 2014 expansion of its residency house, in Catherine Place, Victoria.

Other forthcoming exhibitions

Farah Al Qasimi (former Delfina Foundation artist-in-residence)
03/10/23-12/11/23

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Images and press pack

The exhibition lead-image can be found at tinyurl.com/to-be-the-author. Following installation, please also find documentation images on the same link. All image reproduction is conditional on use of captions and credit lines as found in file names.

Social media

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Delfina Foundation

Founded in 2007, Delfina Foundation is a London-based independent, non-profit foundation dedicated to facilitating artistic exchange and developing creative practice through residencies, partnerships, and public programming. As London's largest residency provider, Delfina has hosted over 450 artists, curators, and writers in residence from over 85 countries around the world, partnering with institutions, including Tate, V&A, ICA, Frieze, Chisenhale, Art Jameel, and Dhaka Art Summit.