



In her first solo exhibition in Berlin, Iranian-American artist Shirin Neshat introduces two new works: *Mahdokht* (2004) and *Zarin* (2005). The two film installations mark the beginning of what is to become a five-part feature film entitled *Women without Men*. The novel of the same name by Shahnush Parsipur was published in Tehran in 1989, soon after which it was banned due to its daring, liberal style and the author arrested.

Shirin Neshat's latest series of films signals her entry into the realm of feature filmmaking and consolidates the mythological turn taken by her work in *Tooba* (2002). After Parsipur's provocative allegory of life in contemporary Iran, Neshat's newest poetic vision traces the lives of five women who find themselves in a garden of ephemeral paradise having followed fraught and laborious paths to arrive there.

Born in 1957 in Qazvin, Iran, Shirin Neshat moved as a teenager to the USA to study art, five years before the revolution overtook her country in 1979. Her first return to her home country in 1990, her encounter with a land so culturally, politically and socially altered in the period of her absence, inspired the photos of *Women of Allah*, a series whose loaded symbolism and captivating minimalism were highly provocative. A selection of works from this series is on view in the Berlin exhibition, as is the film *Rapture* (1999), which explores the interstices of gender and Islamic culture, an examination of cultural uprootedness and exile.

Her film installations have appeared at Documenta 11 (2002) alongside many of the major international biennales from Sydney to Kwangju to São Paulo. In 1999 she was honored with the Golden Lion award at the 48th Biennale of Venice in 1999, and in 2004 she was awarded an honorary professorship at the Universität der Künste, Berlin.

Concept & Coordination:

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