

LA CAJA BLANCA presents **Newsha Tavakolian** (Tehran, Iran, 1981)



**La Caja Blanca** is proud to present Newsha Tavakolian's second solo show in Spain. Currently considered to be one of the most representative contemporary artists from the Middle East, Tavakolian's career began in the field of photo documentary. By the time she was 20, her work was widely acclaimed by international audiences through collaborations with the likes of *Time Magazine*, *Newsweek*, *Stern*, *Le Figaro*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Der Spiegel*, *Le Monde*, *NRC Handelsblad* and *National Geographic* which increasingly relied on her to bring images of Iran, Iraq, Siria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Pakistan, to the West.

Her career in *in Contemporary Fine Art* began when the Iranian authorities annulled her press pass following the publication of one of her most compelling stories in the *New York Times*, covering the so called "Green Revolution" following the Presidential Elections. "Listen", her first artistic project, comprised a series of portraits conjuring images of contemporary Iranian Women which defied Western stereotypes and Middle Eastern clichés alike, positioning Tavakolian as one of the most eloquent and influential voices emerging from the new generation of female artists in Asia. Her work is currently in major private and public art collections including LACMA (US) and Victoria & Albert Museum (UK).

"**Look**", presented at La Caja Blanca in June 2014, is an intimate yet highly charged portrait of Iran at a turning point in the country's convulsive history.

**Artist:** Newsha Tavakolian (Teheran, Iran, 1981)

**Exhibition dates:** June - August 2014

**Address:** La Caja Blanca, Calle Can Verí 9, Palma de Mallorca 07001, Baleares, España.

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**Special thanks to our collaborators:** Aaran Gallery, Tehran (Iran).

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**Some words by the artist on the exhibition:**

*As a photographer, I try to draw attention to the little ornaments lost in this maddening world. I want to shed some light on what is more often than not forgotten, because the world is flooded with hard news all the time. The things that I want to show have long been melted into the texture of a crowded world. This time, closer than ever and in my own house. I fixed my camera on a tripod; in front of the window where I'd watched the same view of the city for ten years, a city that I don't know if I love or not. A window that opens on to many other windows that are all closed and I cannot see into. This is the story of others. The others that I know and their stories. I have captured moments from their stories in this room and within the frame of a window that looks upon the cold and hazy view of My City.*

...

*When I shot these images, it was a dark time in Iran's history ...It was a time of extreme pressure on the public, especially on the youth, who were all struggling under the imposed restrictions.*

**About the artist:**

The story of Tavakolian is one of resilience, the search for excellence and success when faced with adversity. She left school at 16, after struggling with classic academic education due to her dyslexia, and began working as a junior photographer for the Iranian women's daily Zan-e Rooz, and other reformist newspapers. Her reputation grew steadily, positioning her as one of Tehran's few female photojournalists, who focussed on women's issues. As relations between the Iranian Governmental and international media deteriorated, access to the Middle East for foreign media became increasingly restricted, demand for the photo-essays of a young journalist who reached to some of the most conflictive territories including Iran-Iraq border, Pakistan, Yemen, Siria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia... grew steadily. Her work was published by some of the most influential western media including National Geographic, Le Monde, The New York Times, Newsweek, and Time Magazine. The power and beauty of Tavakolian's work, and her refusal to depict Middle Eastern society within the limited margins of western stereotypes, garnered her international acclaim. Her award-winning 2006 photo essay, *Women in the Axis of Evil*, responds to George W. Bush's characterization of Iran, and other work since that time seeks to contradict the western media's narrow depiction of Iranian women and their lives.

In 2009, the Iranian authorities cracked down on journalists who were covering the public protests against the Presidential Elections, forcing the photographer off the streets. Unwittingly what initially appeared to be undefeatable censorship catapulted Tavakolian into a new field of work: Contemporary Fine art photography, in a vibrant and rich circuit where she became one of the most eloquent and influential voices emerging from the Middle East. Tavakolian's work is currently held in some of the most reputable private and public collections including the LACMA (Los Angeles, US) and Victoria & Albert Museum (London, UK). Her work is currently on show in Somerset House (London), the exhibition entitled "The Burnt Generation". The artist will be offering a conference on the project "Look" at Whitechapel Gallery (London) in July 2014.

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