

FARAH OSSOULI

Ossouli was one of the first artists to appropriate miniature painting as an authentic, personal, and contemporary means of portraying women's lives. After the 1979 Iranian revolution and during the three decades of cultural isolation that followed, she searched for a meaningful form of self-expression; she found it in the rich tradition and refined beauty of Persian paintings, architecture, and decorative arts. In particular, the impassive expressions of miniature figures suited her vision of her female and male protagonists.

Ossouli's work draws on her wide-ranging background in, experience with, and passionate involvement in painting, photography, film, animation, graphic design, literature, and theatre. Born in 1953 in Zanjan, Iran, she graduated from the Tehran High School of Fine Arts (Honarestane Honarhaye Ziba) in 1971 and received her B.A. from the Department of Fine Arts (Daneshkadeye Honaryae Ziba), Tehran University, Iran in 1977. After 1979, she and the many other artists who remained in the country during the period of post-revolutionary cultural isolation were forced to reexamine their identities. This reexamination propelled Ossouli to pioneer the revitalization of miniature painting, which was one of the many genres she had studied in art school.

Today, she occupies a prominent position as an artist in Iran not only because of her unique artistic style and prodigious production of works but also because of her active involvement in Iranian contemporary art. For example, she was a co-founder of the first women's art group (DENA) in 2001, which introduced three generations of Iranian women artists to the art world both in Iran and abroad through workshops and travelling exhibitions. Two of her most recent major shows were held at the Ludwig Museum in Germany and the Imam Ali Museum of Art in Iran. She has also exhibited across the Middle East, Europe, Africa, North America, and Asia.

In addition, Ossouli advises graduate students on their art theses, curates national and international exhibitions (including the 6th Painting Biennial of Tehran in 2003), and regularly mentors young artists in juried showcases.

Her works are widely collected. Most recently, her work was acquired by:

The Metropolitan Museum Of Art, New York, United States
Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi, India
Bank Of Pasargad, Tehran, Iran
Imam Ali Religious Arts Museum, Tehran, Iran
Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, Iran
Tropen Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Germany
Koran Museum, Tehran, Iran