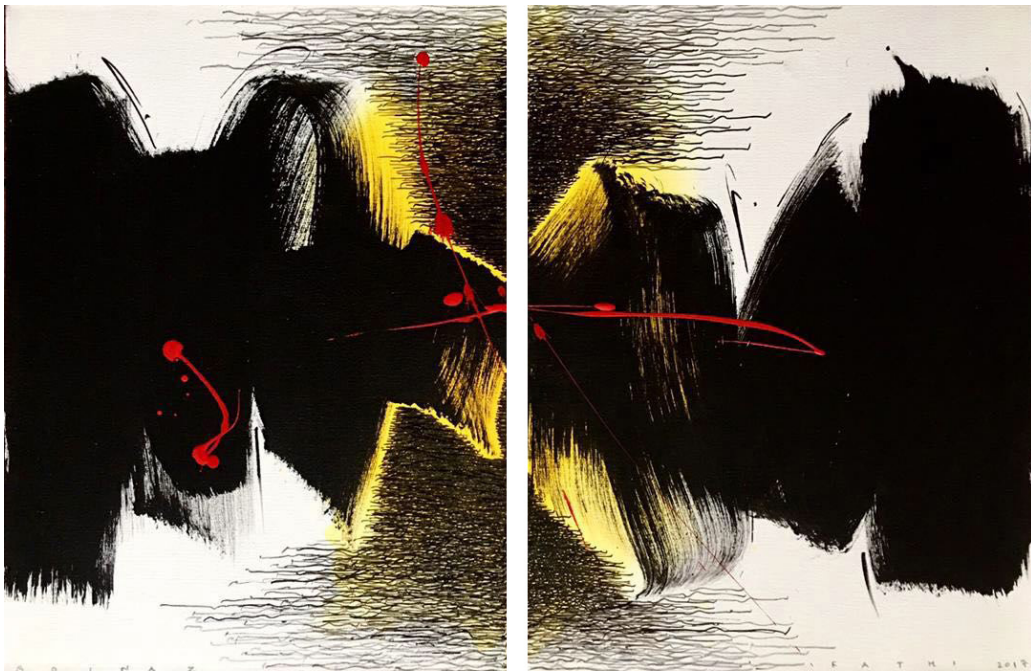


GOLNAZ FATHI

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Untitled, 2017, acrylic, pen and varnish on canvas, 15.75 x 23.6 inches/40 x 60 cm

Drawing on her extensive training as a calligrapher, Golnaz Fathi uses texts and letters as formal elements, transforming traditional calligraphy into a personal artistic language. She studied classical calligraphy before she established her own style of working, receiving a Bachelor of Arts in graphics from Azad Art University, Tehran, and completing further studies at the Iranian Society of Calligraphy.

Fathi works in fine pen, mostly on varnished raw, rectangular, polyptych canvases, in a limited palette of white, black, red and yellow. She layers the surface of the canvas with thousands of minute marks that echo the curvilinear forms of calligraphic letters and words. These intricate lines coalesce into minimalist compositions that can be read in multiple ways—as landscapes, electronic transmissions or atmospheric phenomena. She refrains from titling her works, which allows the viewer free reign to assign his or her own interpretation.

The basis of Fathi's practice is *siah-mashq*, a traditional exercise in which the calligrapher writes cursive letters across the page in a dense, semi-abstract formation. The letters aren't meant to form words or convey meaning, but rather strengthen the skill of the scribe. Fathi reinterprets this technique, drawing inspiration from Western and Eastern sources, including American Abstract Expressionism, as well as the work of Iranian and Middle Eastern modernists who pioneered the use of the written word as a pictorial element in the late 1950s and early 1960s. By skillfully combining these various elements, she has created a unique visual language with universal appeal.

Golnaz Fathi's works are in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Brighton & Hove Museum, East Sussex, England; Carnegie Mellon University, Doha; the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur; the Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore; the British Museum, London; the Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi; and The Farjam Collection, Dubai. In 2011, Fathi was chosen as a Young Global Leader Honoree by the World Economic Forum and in 2015, her painting *Every Breaking Wave (1)* was included in *Frontiers Reimagined*, a collateral event of the 56th Venice Biennale.

Born in Tehran, 1972 | Lives and works in Tehran and Paris

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