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## Faces of a Revolution



Soheila Sokhanvari (b. 1964) was born in Shiraz, Iran, and moved to Britain as a child, a year before the Pahlavi regime was overthrown. She mixes Islamic patterns, western pop and classical paintings to create a profound tribute to Iranian women before and after the 1979 revolution. *Rebel Rebel*, originally commissioned by Barbican, London, makes its debut in Denmark and is the artist's first solo show in the country. It presents 21 portraits of famous Iranian women, including Vida Ghahremani, the first woman to be kissed in an Iranian film; Forough Farrokhzad, a modernist poet; and writer Simin Dāneshvar.



After the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the formation of a conservative Islamic clerical rule, women faced inconceivable challenges: to renounce their public careers or to be forced into exile. Sokhanvari says: "In

my art, I illuminate collective relationships through the stories of individuals. To tell the story of pre-revolutionary Iran, I decided to focus on some of the country's most famous women. Images of women are used as symbols of Iranian political ideologies: the stories told in the West about their lives are all about veiling orders after the revolution – I wanted to tell a different version. The women selected are all performers: they were the most visible, and therefore also the ones most clearly silenced after 1979.”



Sokhanvari's exhibition is truly dynamic, presenting a the significant courage of female icons. Their faces are mirrored on mesmerising prismatic glass objects that fill the space with spears of light. There is also a soundtrack of mid-20th century Iranian singers, which in itself is powerful, as women in Iran today cannot sing in public. *Rebel Rebel* is beautifully curated, timely and relevant, given the current political situation in Iran. It invites viewers to reflect and debate, as the world waits to see what's going to happen next.

Soheila Sokhanvari: *Rebel Rebel* | ARoS, Aarhus | Until 2 June

aros.dk

Words: Shirley Stevenson

All images:

Installation view: Soheila Sokhanvari – *Rebel Rebel*, ARoS Aarhus Artmuseum. STAR (2022): Design and concept: Soheila Sokhanvari. Technical design: Jflemay Architecture and Design. Photo: Mads Smidstru © ARoS 2024

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### Marina Abramović

*Marina Abramović: The Artist Is Present* is the first major retrospective of the groundbreaking performance artist, which opened in spring 2010 at MoMA.



### Technological Expressionism

A new exhibition *Pro Tools* by digital artist Cory Arcangel at the Whitney explores the relationship between cultural production and digital technology.



### Redefining Expectation

Child's play and the macabre world of Annette Messager appear in a retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia.

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