

# LISSON GALLERY

## Press Release

### Shirazeh Houshiary

55 Main Street  
East Hampton, NY  
September 10 – 20, 2020

Lisson Gallery is pleased to present work by Shirazeh Houshiary in East Hampton. The exhibition coincides with the opening of a solo exhibition of work by the artist at Lisson Gallery in Shanghai (September 11 – October 24, 2020). ‘As Time Stood Still’ is her first presentation in the Chinese city, and encompasses a series of new works created and inspired by the artist’s experience of lockdown in the UK, where she is based. As with much of her work, these concurrent exhibitions are deeply personal and philosophical, exploring profound questions about perception and imagination, as well as the fundamental power of beauty.

In the painting on view in East Hampton, *Only a Flicker* (2016), a string of tiny penciled words overlay diaphanous clouds of light blue and violet pigments. To create these paintings, a mixture of water and pigment is poured onto the surface of the canvas to produce an enigmatic ground punctuated by pooling sediment and irregular apertures. Each word is precisely written, but they cumulatively become illegible, weaving around the picture plane to create intricate webs, which are then further interlaced with pigment. The ethereal atmosphere created within the painting defines the core ideas at the heart of Houshiary’s practice — striving to capture the intangible essence that underlies existence through the embodiment of profound abstract concepts.

Since its inauguration this summer, Lisson Gallery’s 1,000 square foot East Hampton space has presented exhibitions focused on both seminal, historic artworks and premiered new bodies of work. Previous artists on view include Stanley Whitney, Carmen Herrera, Anish Kapoor, Van Hanos, Joanna Pousette-Dart and Sean Scully. This focused format, in an intimate setting, recalls the origins of Lisson Gallery, which was established in 1967 in a storefront window on London’s Bell Street. The Long Island location of the new space joins Lisson’s two other galleries in the New York area, including the recent expansion to a second location on West 24th Street in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood.

The gallery will be open to the public Thursday to Sunday, from 11am to 4pm. The health and safety of visitors remains a top priority, and strict measures will be implemented in the space to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. A mask will be required for entry, and hand sanitizer will be provided. Please visit our website for further details about the guidelines and to schedule an appointment.

### About Shirazeh Houshiary

Since rising to prominence as a sculptor in the 1980s, Shirazeh Houshiary’s practice has swelled to encompass painting, installation, architectural projects and film. “I set out to capture my breath,” she said in 2000, to “find the essence of my own existence, transcending name, nationality, cultures.” Veils, membranes and mists are leitmotifs in

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work that tries to visualise modes of perception, spanning the scientific and the cosmic while drawing on sources as wide-ranging as Sufism, Renaissance painting, contemporary physics and poetry. Houshiary finds succour in the transformation of material: Arabic words, one an affirmation the other a denial, are pencil-stroked onto canvas so lightly, and clouded over by finely wrought skeins of pigment, that they morph in front of the naked eye and defy reproduction. So too, aluminium armatures and elliptical brick towers, charged with dynamic tension, appear different from every angle, as if negating their own presence; her commission for the East window of St Martin in the Fields, London, presents a cross, warped and spanning from a circular motif, as if reflected in water. “The universe is in a process of disintegration,” she says, “everything is in a state of erosion, and yet we try to stabilise it. This tension fascinates me and it’s at the core of my work” (2013).

Shirazeh Houshiary was born in Shiraz, Iran in 1955, where she attended university before moving to London, UK in 1974. She has a BA from Chelsea School of Art (1979) and lives and works in London, UK. She has had solo exhibitions at Lisson Gallery, New York (2017); Singapore Tyler Print Institute, Singapore (2016); The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin, Ireland (2007); Tate Liverpool, UK (2003); Museum SITE Santa Fe, NM, USA (2002); Islamic Gallery, British Museum, London, UK (1997); Magasin-Centre national d’art contemporain, Grenoble, France (1995); University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, USA (1994); Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (1993); Musee Rath, Geneva, Switzerland (1988); and in 2013, her exhibition 'Breath' was a celebrated Collateral Event of the 55th Venice Biennale in Italy. Major group exhibitions include Jesus College, Cambridge, UK (2017); Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini, Collezione Burri, Citta di Castello, Perugia, Italy (2016); University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, MI, USA (2014); Dayton Art Institute, Dayton, OH, USA (2011) and Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, USA (2007). She has also participated in numerous biennials including Cartagena deIndias, Colombia (2014); Kiev Biennale, Ukraine (2012); the 17th Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2010); and the 40th Venice Biennale, Italy (1982). She was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1994.

## About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Today the gallery supports and promotes the work of more than 60 international artists across two spaces in London and two in New York as well as one in Shanghai. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, Lisson Gallery pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Art & Language, Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Donald Judd, John Latham, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long and Robert Ryman among many others. It still works with many of these artists as well as others of that generation from Carmen Herrera to the renowned estates of Leon Polk Smith, Ted Stamm and Roy Colmer. In its second decade the gallery introduced significant British sculptors to the public for the first time, including Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Shirazeh Houshiary and Julian Opie. Since 2000, the gallery has gone on to represent many more leading international artists such as Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei, John Akomfrah, Susan Hiller, Tatsuo Miyajima and Sean Scully. It is also responsible for raising the international profile of a younger generation of artists led by Cory Arcangel, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Ryan Gander, Haroon Mirza, Laure Prouvost, Pedro Reyes and Wael Shawky.

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