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این آرزوی منم خرابی کنی

How Dare You Have Such a Rubbish Wish

A first-person ghost-ride into the suppressed world of women in Iranian pre-revolutionary popular cinema.



UK- IRAN

72MIN

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Cinematographer

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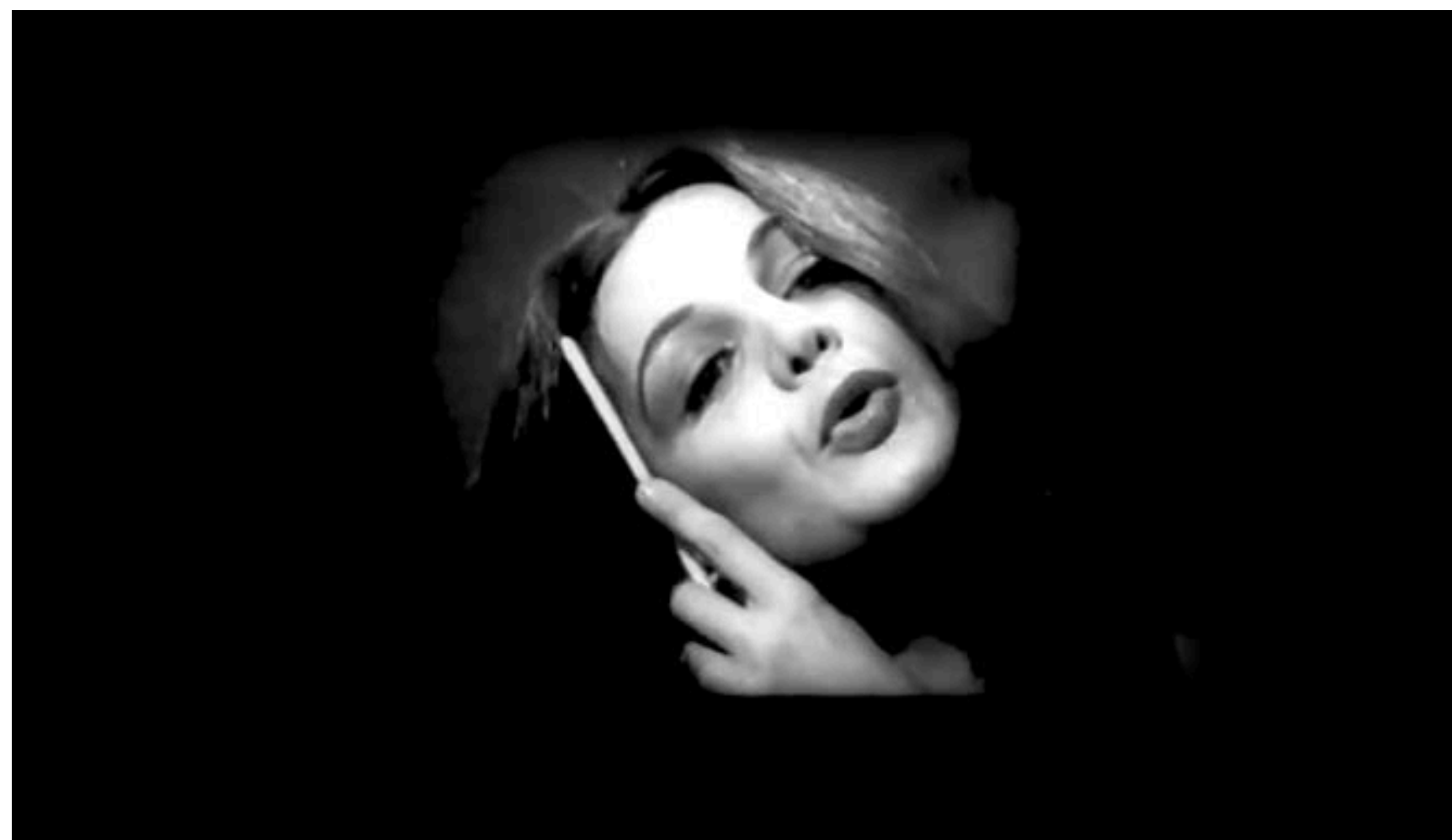
C0-Producer

BEHDAD ESFAHBOD, MANIA AKBARI

How Dare You Have Such a Rubbish Wish is a first-person ghost-ride into the suppressed world of women in Iranian pre-revolutionary popular cinema. It's a bold and unique journey through the eyes of someone who has worked in that cinema as both director and actor. This unique story has never been told before by the people who became the subject of Iranian cameras' intense gaze: the women. Hence, *How Dare You Have Such a Rubbish Wish* is both a celebration of a troubled and much exploited "freedom" that Iranian women were offered after the Second World War and a detailed analysis of the representation and participation of them in that euphoric period of change. This is a tale of liberation, exploitation, emancipation and eventual suppression which will be told with the help of nearly 100 clips from films which are all banned in their country of production. Like the world in which they had appeared, the women of Iranian popular cinema saw themselves banned and out of work after the 1979 revolution. This film reclaims them as agents of change and progress and not, as it's been the dominant narrative so far, mere "victims". Instead of a linear historiography, the film will focus on the female bodies in movement which together document a violently suppressed history which continues to influence today's Iran. The film will demystifies the pre-revolutionary Iran and the role women played in it but also seeks the roots of the violent rejection of women in post-revolutionary country in images which were captured decades prior to ayatollahs taking power. It's a film which would go behind the veil, revealing what's hidden underneath in a journey covering nearly 90 years moving images in modern-day Iran. Employing an essayistic approach, the film will be daring and revisionist in its re-evaluation of the role women had in shaping modern Iran and the many contradictions of playing such role. How much of it was personal choice and how much of it a false image, this film aims to answer. *How Dare You Have Such a Rubbish Wish* will be conceived as a poetic, collage-like, personal and visually rich reconstruction of a time lost and buried.

www.maniaakbari.com

www.rubbishwish.com



Short Synopsis

The dialogue of a body with its pictorial memory; the dialogue of a body with its realised masculine and patriarchic view in pre-revolution cinematic image and expanding that image in our day-to-day reality. A cinematic letter of a body to the historical masculine view of image and retrieval of confiscated and controlled bodies to be released in history.



A reply to the pictorial history that fixated feminine body and being in the public eye through controlling and confiscating them. To set oneself free of that history and using feminine body and referring to the nature, Mania Akbari challenges the recorded images of feminine beings in the patriarchic cinema of Iran pre-revolution era. Through a pictorial letter, she heads for a war against a cinema which defines and records the woman with its patriarchic ideological view. She has realised the feminine definitions and features in reality.



Mania Akbari

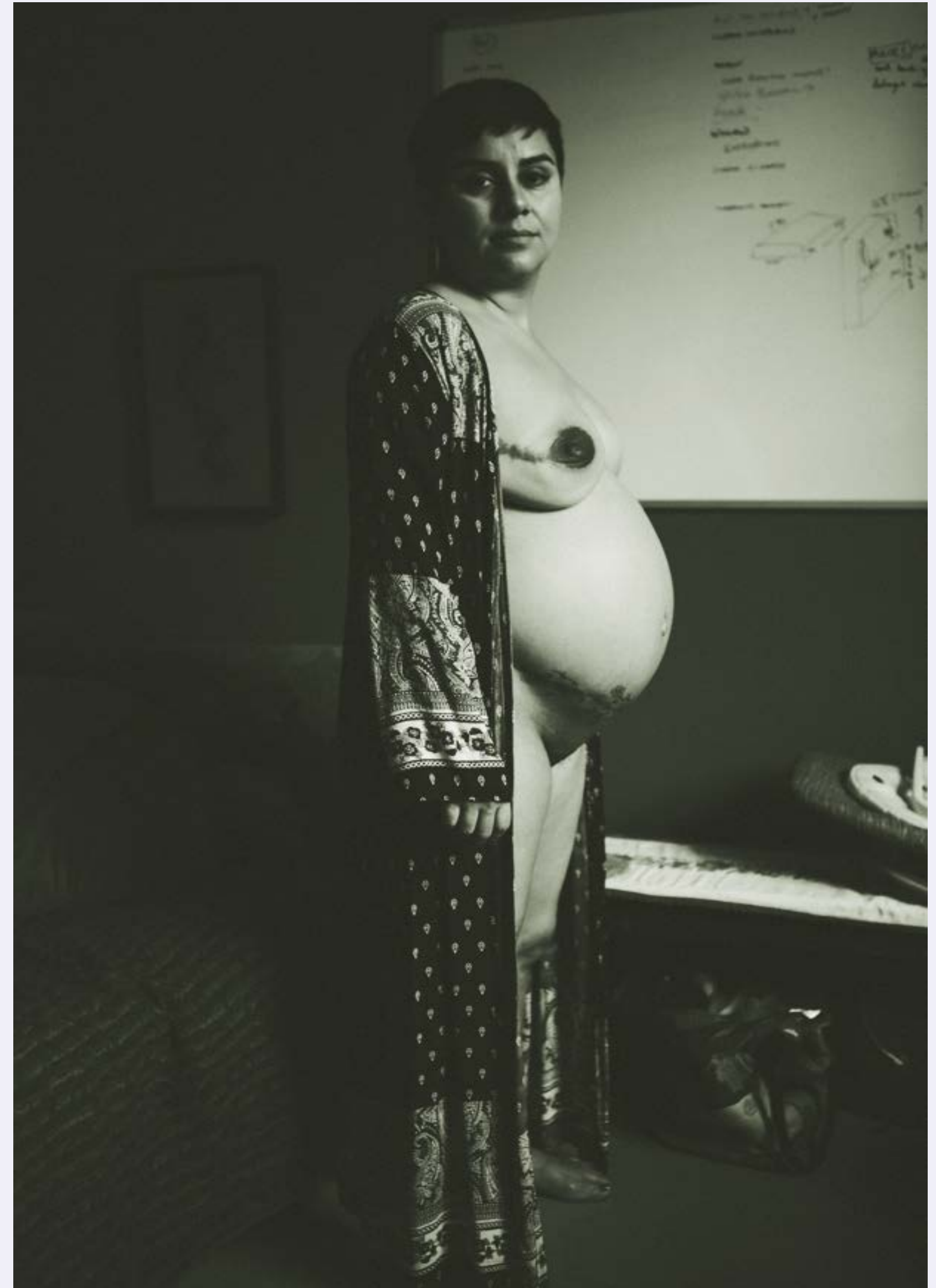
Mania Akbari (b. Tehran, 1974) is an internationally acclaimed intersectional feminist artist and filmmaker who gained early recognition in the Iranian underground art scene, seeking freedom beyond censorship. During the digital cinema revolution in Iran, she transitioned from a painting career to the camera as a mode of storytelling. Akbari delves into the webs of body politics, by documenting personal narratives through the female gaze as a form of empowerment encouraging critical reflection on bodily oppression and suffering. Concerned with the socio-political traumatising of female-identifying bodies, Akbari transforms lived experience into an act of resistance by uncovering hidden historical and cultural memory and examines the transgenerational transmission of trauma. Weaving through the relationship between the camera and the body, Akbari identifies the body as a metaphor, as a political message with a revolutionary capacity against the patriarchal status quo. Led by a therapeutic approach, Akbari's practice is often collaborative and participatory. Akbari works with other women to question the ways their bodies are positioned and valued in society, and to explore the relational confluence of embodied memory and gendered violence. Drawing on accounts of sexual assault, abortion, pregnancy, illness, body image, gender, and sexuality through archival material and biopolitical fiction, her films generate dialogues between past and present, between trauma and reflexive healing.

Akbari is committed to highlighting the invisible, with a fierce defiance against heteronormative socialisation. Her distinct filmmaking process reframes how we view personal and national histories and produces radical potentialities for women to regain control of their bodies through sharing, talking, and listening. Selected film awards include Feature Film (Digital Section), Venice International Film Festival (2004) for *20 Fingers* (2004); New:Vision Award (2019) at CPH:DOX, Copenhagen, Denmark and FIPRESCI International Critics Award (2019), Flying Broom Festival, Ankara, Turkey for *A Moon For My Father* (2019).



Mania Akbari

Mania Akbari is an Iranian filmmaker and artist, whose works explore women's rights, marriage, sexual identity, disease, embodiment, body and trauma, body image, body politic and histories of personal, social, and political trauma. Her style, in contrast to the long tradition of melodrama in Iranian cinema, is rooted in the visual arts and autobiography. Because of the taboo themes openly discussed in her films and her opposition to censorship, she is considered one of the most controversial filmmakers in Iran. Her artistic activities, as a painter, started in 1991 when she took part in various exhibitions in Iran, as well as abroad. She was later exposed to the cinema, working as a cinematographer and assistant director on documentary films by female Iranian filmmaker Mahvash Sheikholeslami. Akbari directed her debut film, a short documentary called *Crystal*. In 2004, she wrote, acted in and directed her first feature-length film, "20 Fingers", which won best film in the Venice Film Festival's Digital Cinema section. In 2007, Akbari was diagnosed with breast cancer, and her struggle with the disease became one of the key themes of her films and artworks. From 2007 to 2010, Akbari worked on numerous photography-based works that were featured in various galleries around the world, while she kept making documentary and fiction films until 2011. Since settling in London, various international retrospectives of Akbari's films have drawn attention to her cinema, among which retrospectives at the BFI, the Oldenburg International Film Festival and the Danish Film Institute are the most notable. Her films have screened at festivals around the world and have received numerous awards including the German Independence Honorary Award, Oldenburg (2014), Nantes Special Public Award Best Film (2007) and Best Director and Best Film at Kerala Film Festival (2007), Best Film and Best Actress, Barcelona Film Festival (2007). Akbari was exiled from Iran and currently lives and works in London, a theme addressed in "Life May Be" (2014), co-directed with Mark Cousins. This film was released at Karlovy Vary Film Festival and was nominated for Best Documentary at Edinburgh International Film Festival (2014) and Asia Pacific Film Festival (2014). Akbari's latest film "A Moon For My Father", made in collaboration with British artist Douglas White, premiered at CPH: DOX where it won the NEW: VISION Award 2019. The film also received a FIPRESCI International Critics Award at the Flying Broom Festival, Ankara. In 2021 she made *DEAR ELNAZ* a documentary in memory of PS752 that screened at HotDocs, IDFA, DOXA, and the Sheffield Film Festival. In 2022 she made the film "How Dare You Have Such a Rubbish Wish" and screened at IDFA and POFF film festivals.).









Behdad Esfahbod

Behdad born and grew up in Sari, Iran, to a family of printers and typographers. He started learning computer programming at the age of nine, and since then went on to work at Red Hat, Google, and Facebook. In 2020 he quit the corporate world to pursue his passion in the arts and culture.



A body, as an object and subject in a philosophical, phenomenological, anthropological and archeological perspective, provides the base for a cultural setting. It is in constant bilateral relationship with its surrounding environment. Body's relationship with the past and history, which is the cause of its transformation, provides the grounds for a cultural, political and social interaction. Our bodies are meaningful political forms which are being transformed along their lifespan. In other words, our bodies typically step beyond their skin, flesh and bones and revive a cultural base inside and outside themselves under the influence of the surrounding world. Bodies can not only impact its surrounding world in terms of human events and incidents but is also impacted by them in the same form and manner. Through studying bodies, their historical, scientific and cultural memories can be attained; a body's experience can be figured out. Human body can be a representation of a person's experience, and their historical, political and cultural memory which influence the cultural structures and behaviors of a body's living system. This leaves signs in a body that can be identified and studied through anthropological and archeological methods. The body that changes to a display scene for cultural, political and symbolic elements, the body that carries a historical language, the body that identifies a concept of geography, lines and borders, the body that reconstructs its sexuality, the body that maltreats and is maltreated, is constantly being transformed and reproduces its own identity. We are within our bodies yet far apart. The cultural meaning of a human body is different in each geography considering the history of the land it belongs to with all its environment's forms, architecture, past and contemporary surroundings which creates a different communication language.

In each society, the feminine body is dependent on the social, urban, living and environmental restrictions and controls. In the geography of Iran, the body of a woman is considered as a taboo in the social, cultural and religious setting; and hence, studying and viewing feminine body is typically seen as a source of crisis. Visual language is another type of body's relationship with its surrounding world. The body that stands at its farthest points of imagination comprehends its bodily image after looking at images or representations of human figure. It imagines its figurative image in interwoven forms and completes the representation of its own body. We see our own eyes in others' eyes. We understand our own bodies by observing and understanding others' bodies. Cinema is the narrator of our body organs and our body organs are the narrators of stories. Considering the social restrictions and the rigid presence of censorship and tendency to control women and feminine body in Iran, attending to subjects of feminine body in cinema faces abundant restrictions both in terms of form and content.

Mania Akbari







Jacques Lacan points out that a child sees its real form after looking at its image in the mirror, whether it be the mirror in its literal sense or another person depicting you to yourself. The image in the mirror comforts the child as it does not have an utter image of itself. The child thinks every part of its body belongs to others. In just a similar way, cinema -- acting as a mirror of the society -- constructs torn images of our bodies into a complete figure within us through visual identification. A woman's body entangled within the control and influence of patriarchic society has entailed religious and ideological definitions and interpretations; women have no complete image of their bodies through cinema. Therefore, women in Iranian Cinema are women with abstract bodies being presented through a controlling patriarchal perspective rather than the real objectivity of that body.

What can be seen and heard in the image of cinema entails an aesthetic – political message. The presence of women and their bodies has always been controlled by the superior forces who use that presence for the purposive ideologically-treated aesthetics in order to realize their purposive beliefs in the body of society.

Iran cinema, which is nowadays more similar to political projects, definitely acts to confiscate visual meanings in such a way to push ideological, political and social objectives outside the image industry within the social setting. Signifying feminine body is also serving the same objectives rather than feminine body's essence, nature and substance. Studying the presence and behavior of feminine body in the images and storytelling's of pre-Islamic Revolution cinema, we address activist bodies who create a superior concept and challenge profound concepts despite the masculine control and patriarchic views.

Mania Akbari



Festivals & Screening

How Dare You Have Such a Rubbish Wish (2022-2023)

45e Festival International de Films de Femmes de Créteil 2023

24TH Flying Broom Film Festival in Ankara Jun 2023

Sinematek Istanbul Jun 2023

Sheffield Film Festival Jun 2023

Barbican, London, March 2023

Woman's International Day in Amsterdam 2023

Human International Film Festival in Oslo- Norwegian 2023

WhiteChapel Gallery, London, Uk Feb 2023

DocPoint Film Festival, Helsinki Feb 2023

Gothenburg Film Festival, Sweden Jan-Feb 2023

Black Movie Film Festival, Swiss, Geneva Jan 2023

CinemaTeket Denmark DFI, Jan 2023

POFF Film Festival, December 2022

IDFA Film Festival, World premiere, December 2022





*The personal, physical and political interweave via celluloid strips in London-based Iranian writer-director Mania Akbari's **How Dare You Have Such a Rubbish Wish?** Primarily an idiosyncratic survey of pre-Revolutionary cinema in Akbari's native land, it probes the big-screen presentation of women at a time when the plight of Iranian females is in the global spotlight as never before. Premiering in the edgy Envision competition at IDFA Amsterdam, this intricately complex but accessible essay-film will ride its topicality to plentiful further festival play.*

'How Dare You Have Such A Rubbish Wish': IDFA Review
BY NEIL YOUNG 17 NOVEMBER 2022



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'How Dare You Have Such A Rubbish Wish': IDFA Review

BY NEIL YOUNG 17 NOVEMBER 2022



How Dare You Have Such a Rubbish Wish: this feminist Iranian essay film pulls no punches

This important film by Mania Akbari, an Iranian exile based in London, compiles dozens of clips of Iranian women in popular cinema from the silent era up until the 1979 Islamic Revolution to make an impassioned statement of female agency.

7 December 2022

By Carmen Gray

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چطور جرأت
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HOW
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