

88 Frames of Mohammad Ghazali's Eighty Eight

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Advisable considerations in the common photographic jargon in Iran have never been his concern. In the majority of his photo series, which he has presented over the years, he does not even determine the principles. Often, he seeks to document a reality, of which we are not aware, though his work has nothing to do with metaphysics. Why? For he does not ponder on what is beyond the possibility of experience. As his thought pattern follows the geography of Tehran.

He is by no means after emotional accountability, and thus he does not photograph people and has more to do with spaces. Mohammad Ghazali is the photographer of Tehran; one of the most significant figures in Iranian photography over the past two decades. Nevertheless, his photos of Tehran are not merely to get to know the city or a space in the capital.

Despite the ambiguous and inexplicable nature of most of his projects, his works have constantly offered -and will continue to offer- the likelihood of cultural theories in Iranian contemporary photography. He is active within a genre. The audience of his works is not the general public.

For us, his admirers, his photos of Tehran have always been a harmonica melody. Example? Recall that Friday afternoon, Khordad 21st 1395 in Iranian calendar, and the ten photographs of dissolved Tehran he placed on the tiling at Emkan Gallery, in one of the streets leading to 7th Tir square, what was he telling us!? The photos had no frame, rather quite narrow outlines, from zinc or tin, surrounded the covering glass with paper tapes, which resembled a restrictive pressure. Had you been eager to figure out where, in Tehran, a specific photo was taken, you would have had to read the locations in the back of each photo!

This means that he has a personal reading and has never seen necessary to answer to others. For in his works, photographer is neither a slave nor a presenter of descriptions of the nature, rather they create their own nature.

Here and now, that harmonica played by one's mouth has transformed into an instrument played through the abdomen, an accordion, and you would wonder: 88 frames in an accordion setting!

The way he looks at the city, in contrast to most other photographers of Tehran, is more cultural than historical. To him, photographs are to pose questions not to answer them! In his project, 'The Green House', for the very first time, he answers to the audience, after two decades.

At first, we merely see concrete blocks, the streets and roads which are empty, and cars with no passengers, none of which resembles Tehran in 2009, though the photos are of the election days in Tehran in 2009. This is a social project titled 'The eggs infused with green'. At the time, those who remember have seen that, in protest, people would throw eggs at the walls and buildings to leave a trace. A symbol of confrontation and an image of resistance. Mohammad claims, "since then I have been looking for the buildings which had been hit by eggs, they would illustrate the remnants of the identity of the age in which we live."

This the first time that the subject of election in 2009 is presented in a collection of photos bereft

of people and population, showcasing what people in a certain area thought.

At the time, tens of photographers were after certain subjects in the streets, though they weren't able to see the trees as the forest was too congested! This photographer, however, has undoubtedly presented massive populations without showing even a single human being.

Here, a number of his key photographic principles can be found: in his work, we can neither see any sort of certainty nor a photographic framework. He shows us the spatial features to be able to grasp the time, and tells us that every unrest has its own short-lived memory!

This collection follows several general trends in his photographic theory: between altruism and justice, in favour of the latter he turns a blind eye to the former.

Here, he is not an optimistic photographer any longer, and he displays such a fatigued Tehran that no matter how much we try not to remember we cannot.

Here, we can see a variety of representations of Tehran, Tehran further down and further up, margins of Tehran, central Tehran, western and eastern Tehran, he takes us back, and further back. He speaks of 'identity' and 'authority', without showing a single shadow of that time. You merely see photographs and walls which are wounded. This is how he pricks our fingers, no, our eyeballs and we suffer.