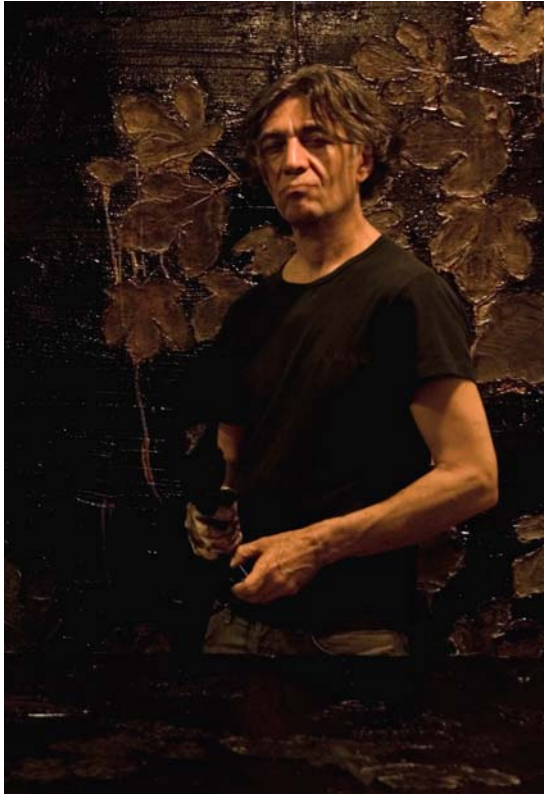


REZA DERAKSHANI

Iranian, born 1952



Derakshani's forced migration from Iran in 1983 ended his teaching career but led to a blossoming of his art which progressed towards an exploration of the natural world and more recently a return to his Persian heritage. His life's work is impressive in its range of media and techniques, which include sculpture, painting, calligraphic art and music.

In our exhibition *Routes II* we are focusing on Derakshani's paintings, which employ heavily textured surfaces and bold brush strokes. He builds his surfaces using a base of roof tar and then adds layers of encaustic and transparent colours and various other materials. The resulting contrasting areas of luminosity and opacity evoke a sense of poetic rhythms and musical harmonies. The musicality evident in his painting was commented on by Susan Babaie, a visiting scholar at the Getty Research Institute. She writes "Although he is a skilled calligrapher in the traditional styles of Persian cursive scripts, he writes into painting, or paints writing, to evoke through the abstract forms of legible letters and words the rhythms of reading, and of singing. The sounds of the words in his paintings

are more audible than the content of the text is recognisable or even legible."

Derakshani is one of the region's most sought-after artists. Recently his paintings were exhibited in the acclaimed *Iran Inside Out* exhibition at the Chelsea Art Museum in New York, and also in *Three Artists*, in Dubai. Previously he has been in many international group exhibitions in Iran and USA. His auction career is in its infancy, with only six works having appeared. Despite this, the results have been very impressive, with *Gold fig - Black fig* achieving \$102,000 in November 2008.

Brief Biography

Derakshani's received his first artistic commissions at the age of nine. He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Tehran in 1976, and continued his studies at the Pasadena School of Art in California. Upon his return to Iran, he taught at the University of Tehran and the School of Decorative Art and Graphic Design. He returned to the United States after the Islamic Revolution for a period of more than 20 years. Although Derakshani's forced migration in 1983 put an end to his teaching career, it led to a period of intense and productivity that has continued unabated to this day.

Derakshani's creativity is by no means limited to purely the visual arts, he is also a well known vocalist, multi instrumentalist, composer and performer. These talents are often combined in performances, particularly during his opening nights, where his music serves as a compliment to his art. Derakshani's career also includes a variety of collaborations with renowned international musicians, poets and dancers

Reza Derakshani's work has been exhibited and collected internationally. His collectors include Sting and Trudie Tyler, Mirrella Haggiag, Fereydoun Ave, Mona Hauser, Isabelle Van Den Eynde and Dr Farjam.