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Iran: a Place of Complex Emotions, Memories, Ideas—and Hope—as Depicted by Leading Photographers, Writers and Visual Artists

Mark Batty Publisher releases “Urban Iran,” a portrayal of everyday life that international and diplomatic circles don’t often see, giving voice to the people who live and work there today

Contact Joel Samberg for review copies, author interview requests or other information at 1.973.857.8070, media@markbattypublisher.com. Information on “Urban Iran” is also available online at http://www.markbattypublisher.com/servlet/book_view?number=68

New York, NY, October 10, 2008 — Mark Batty Publisher, a leader in distinctive books covering the graphic and communication arts, has released an absorbing new volume that probes the complexities of everyday life in contemporary Iran. “Urban Iran,” a selection of slice-of-life essays and images by writers and artists who live, were born, or have returned to the beleaguered yet optimistic nation, effectively documents how the Western media influences the way much of the world views Iran. The book also explores how those often-misunderstood impressions impact the way Iranians see themselves, particularly in the creative arts.

Several distinct yet unified segments form a comprehensive portrait in “Urban Iran” that is at once intimate, discerning, surprising and remarkably diverse. They include:

- Novelist Salar Abdoh relaying how his adventures driving a Puegot 206 hatchback in and around Tehran were emblematic of a “split in the personality of the country . . . what makes Iran so difficult to describe to non-Iranians.”
- Tehran-based photographer and designer Karan Reshad offering images of markets and the country’s burgeoning graffiti scene, most notably the work of A1ONE.
- Articles from the magazine “Bidoun” that delve into discussions of Tehran’s largest housing complex, trends with regard to Iranian facial hair, and the country’s underground heavy metal music scene.

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- Designer and art director Charlotte Noruzi discussing the books she had as a child in Tehran and how their effects remain with her today, resulting in her current exploration of the state of publishing and illustration in Iran today.

“The youth in Iran have a lot to express these days,” writes photographer Sina Araghi in one section. “They use art as a way to channel their thoughts, anxieties and, at times, frustrations—and for that, art in all of its forms serves a great purpose in today’s Iran.”

“The strong pull of tradition will always exist against the momentum of progressive thoughts, of moving forward and beyond restraints,” writes Noruzi in another section. “Part of Iran’s tradition has been a denial of reality, witnessed under many regimes. Nevertheless, it seems through the cracks in the cement laid down time and again by these regimes, seeds of expression and creation sprout and flourish despite the dim oppressions that surrounds and stifles.”

“Urban Iran” celebrates this contemporary wave of creative blossoming that is now seen as part of a growing national resource of innovation and inspiration, borne from history but standing alone today, and beautifully unique.

About Mark Batty Publisher

Mark Batty Publisher is an independent publisher dedicated to making distinctive books on the visual art of communicating, showcasing the visual power and innovation of contemporary culture in all of its varied poses. Today, the visual comes at us from more places than ever, and its dissemination is faster and more advanced every year. Books from Mark Batty Publisher capture this acceleration on the pages of every book. Affordable, well designed, thoughtfully created, and produced to last, MBP books are artful products that readers want to hold onto forever. For more information, visit www.markbattypublisher.com.

“Urban Iran”

Charlotte Noruzi, Salar Abdoh
Street Graphics and Urban Art

128 pages

7 ¾ x 10 inches

Color throughout

Casebound

ISBN: 978-0-9799666-1-3

USD \$27.95

November 2008