



Golnaz Fathi, *When the rain comes we can be thankful*, 2021  
Mixed media on canvas, 170 x 130 cm.

## **Golnaz Fathi: No rain will put out this fire**

27<sup>th</sup> April – 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2023

October Gallery presents *No rain will put out this fire*, a new solo exhibition of boldly gestural paintings, layered with meaning, by the renowned Iranian artist, Golnaz Fathi.

Golnaz Fathi is an influential member of an invigorating group of contemporary artists that, over the last two decades, has come to prominence in Iran. Fathi is further distinguished in being one of only a handful of women trained to the highest levels within the traditional school of Persian calligraphy. While fully conscious of the dramatic potential of calligraphic forms and privileged to have been selected for inclusion in the exclusive assembly of traditional calligraphers, Fathi made a conscious decision to pursue a career as a contemporary artist. Since then, true to her instincts, she has rigorously followed an impulse towards abstraction, even as it leads her beyond the boundaries of conventionally codified scripts. This overlapping of a vital, modernist abstraction with traditional, calligraphic refinement is to be found in many of her previous pen-and-ink works.

Many of Fathi's new works on canvas show sections that appear as shades of black or grey, until closer examination reveals them to be dense networks of finely inked lines, randomly interlinked. Whereas apparent meaning resides in legible script, here the sheer accumulation of overwritten lines obliterates all possibility for simple, straightforward interpretation, challenging the viewer to discover entirely novel orders of significance.

Overlaying these interweavings of black and white lines at different scales, Fathi adds in bright swatches of primary hues, creating vibrant contrasts that seem to reference intense personal feelings about life and the complex interrelationships that link people and places. Red, always a strident marker of life and vitality, confronts various blues—perhaps signifying water and hope—shot through with its complementary of bright, chrome yellow, suggestive both of warmth and the raging fire of the sun. In harmony with the total absence of any legible signs, these inscrutable colour combinations operate as subliminal hints, sounding potent chords that resonate well beyond the limits of ordinary language and literal definition.

Fathi herself notes: 'The "scripts" found in these works are intended to be utterly illegible. I often overwrite markings that sail close to suggesting meanings, to ensure they remain unreadable; that does not imply they are utterly unintelligible. Only the act of writing is performed; the purest essence of spontaneous improvisation.'

It takes a certain courage to engage with these enigmatic works by Golnaz Fathi. Her canvases speak directly to the intuitive, unconscious mind, evoking empathetic responses that exist inside us all, even if we are only dimly aware of their hidden presence and powers.

For information contact Alana Pryce Tojcic and for press images click the Dropbox below:  
<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/aiaqbq717bs5vjrv1aq83t/h?dl=0&rlkey=xuf4sp2tsygr74jz1sns923vh>

**Gallery Talk:** *Golnaz Fathi in conversation with Sussan Babaie, Professor of Islamic and Iranian Arts, The Courtauld Institute of Art.*

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023. Time: 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Tickets: £5.00

Iranian artist Golnaz Fathi will discuss her new body of work in the exhibition *No rain will put out this fire*. The talk examines the artist's career, creative process and artistic practice beyond the boundaries of pure calligraphic forms...expanding into the gesture of modernist abstraction.

Book tickets on Eventbrite: <https://fathi-talk-2023.eventbrite.co.uk>

Private View RSVP on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/private-view-golnaz-fathi-no-rain-will-put-out-this-fire-tickets-599589256607>

Exhibition:	<i>Golnaz Fathi: No rain will put out this fire</i>
Dates:	27 <sup>th</sup> April – 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Private View:	Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> April, 2023, 6 – 8.30 pm
Venue:	October Gallery 24 Old Gloucester Street London WC1N 3AL
Telephone:	020 7242 7367
Opening hours:	Tuesday – Saturday, 12.30 – 5.30 pm
Admission:	Free
Website:	<a href="http://www.octobergallery.co.uk">www.octobergallery.co.uk</a>
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Nearest tubes:	Holborn/Russell Square
Buses:	19, 25, 38, 55, 168 and 188