

GALERIE NATHALIE OBADIA

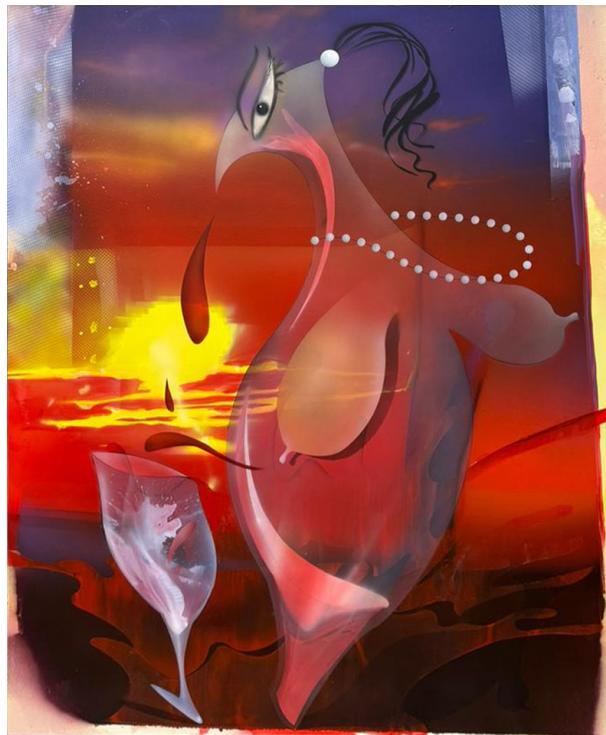
PARIS - BRUXELLES

Hoda Kashiha

The Tale of a Pot's Voyage That Longed to Become Human

January 30 — March 28, 2026

Space II
3, rue du Cloître Saint-Merri, Paris 4^e



Drink, Drink until the Red Flows Everywhere like Blood
from the Trail of that Crimson the Sun Slowly Rise, 2025
Acrylic and pastel on canvas

Galerie Nathalie Obadia is pleased to present five new paintings by the Iranian artist Hoda Kashiha. The canvases in this new body of work echo one another, like chapters of an initiation narrative. For the first time, the artist is drawing from the imagery of eighteenth-century Indian miniatures — not as simple ornamentation, but as a symbolic language, capable of harnessing resistance and transformation. This new direction is inflected through a contemporary digital aesthetic with surrealist flourishes, neither diminishing the political significance of the works.

Born in Tehran in 1986, Hoda Kashiha grew up in the last years of the Iran-Iraq war, a period which art critic Lillian Davies characterizes as flashes of a “dangerously fragmented narrative”¹. This experience of rupture has had a lasting impact on her work: her paintings are constructed from dispersed and dissected forms of narration, motifs appearing and disappearing like layered memories. Inspired by the Iranian artist Behjat Sadr — who affirms that one must use everything that might express the emotions of our times, tearing and collaging pages from magazines, endlessly inventing new tools² — Hoda Kashiha has developed a practice where memory and invention are tightly intertwined. Her studies at the Tehran University of Art, under the strict regime of censorship, then her exchange at Boston University in 2014, where Dana Frankfort encouraged her to shift from drawing to painting, refined her relation to images and narrative. In 2016, she returned to Iran, where she currently lives and works, regularly travelling between Tehran, Paris and New York.

This international mobility has subsequently allowed Kashiha to deepen her knowledge of art history, discovering Indian miniatures and the art of Kangra, notably in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Derived from the *Pahari* tradition, the Kangra art style elaborated a highly finessed pictorial language, known for its

¹Lillian Davies, “Shadows They Cast,” in *Hoda Kashiha: Slipping on Fragmented Shapes*, Milan: Mousse Publishing, 2025.

²Behjat Sadr, remarks from 1995 quoted by Lillian Davies, “Shadows They Cast,” in *Hoda Kashiha: Slipping on Fragmented Shapes*, Milan: Mousse Publishing, 2025, who refers to the press release for the exhibition Behjat Sadr, Balice Hertling, Paris, 5 April – 1 June 2019.

refined mark-making and powdery colour palette. It explores the expression of the shringara, the “original rasa”³ of Indian aesthetics, associating the experience of love with a range of affective states. This sensibility, both intimate and universal, resonates with Kashiha’s own visual language: rather than just a formal reference, the miniatures become her poetic foundation.

Making this heritage her own, the artist puts forth a new reading: in Kashiha’s oeuvre, colours intensify while objects overcome their function, shifting into characters. The vase occupies an important place in these new works: both ritual object and receptacle of the supernatural in folk tale, it transforms into a feminine figure, between body and object. The voluptuous form of these figures also originates in a primordial gesture: clay modelling. When practised in a meditative state, the making of pottery allows for a direct relationship with materiality, movement and thought coming together in the same choreography.

An animistic dimension reveals itself in her paintings: each object becomes a narrative element, steeped with affect. Referring to both art history and popular culture, these objects are incarnated through the artist’s constantly transforming personal aesthetic. Kashiha takes distance from the traditional motifs of Indian miniatures, exploring the metamorphosis and emancipation of these figures. The house, a symbol of refuge and retreat, gives way to unstable metaphors, like flowers in a storm. In one of the works from this series, a woman’s torso bends towards the flower, exposed to violent winds. Petals and draped fabric resist the gust, suspended in a precarious equilibrium. The flower becomes the symbol of metamorphosis, combining beauty and violence, fragility and tenacity. Here, natural forces do not overwhelm the characters: they reveal their capacity to dwell in the torment.

This exhibition thus marks a turning point in the work of Hoda Kashiha, the artist affirming the possibility of a renewed equilibrium: a world where we move forward, desire and transform ourselves, both towards and against the sky.

³In classical Indian aesthetics, a *rasa* (“flavour” or “essence”) designates a universal emotional experience felt by the spectator. According to the *Nātyāśāstra*, there are nine of them, including *Śringāra* (love and desire), which is considered to be the origin of the other aesthetic emotions. This approach is echoed in Western painting (from the Baroque period to Romanticism), where colour, light and composition translate and provoke affect.

Born in Tehran, Iran, in 1986, Hoda Kashiha lives and works in her hometown.

Graduating with a degree in painting from the University of Tehran in 2009, Hoda Kashiha earned her master’s degree at Boston University in 2014. She lived in the United States until 2016, receiving scholarships and several awards, including the MacDowell Colony Fellowship in Peterborough, the Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant awarded by the Vermont Studio Center, and the Esther B. and Albert S. Kahn Career Entry Award from the Boston University College of Fine Arts. In 2024, she participated in the *Residency Unlimited* program in New York.

In 2022, Hoda Kashiha held her first institutional solo exhibition at Passerelle, Centre d’Art Contemporain (Brest, France). Since then, her work has been featured in numerous solo exhibitions, including *The Tale of a Pot’s Voyage That Longed to Become Human* at Galerie Nathalie Obadia (2026, Paris, France), *Violence of Beauty* at Parallel Circuit +2, Dastan Gallery (2025, Tehran, Iran), *Another World Is Waiting for Us* at Galerie Nathalie Obadia (2023, Brussels, Belgium), and *I am Here, I am not Here* at Galerie Nathalie Obadia (2022, Paris, France).

Hoda Kashiha has also participated in many group exhibitions, including *The Imaginary Made Real*, curated by Paul Laster, at Berry Campbell Gallery (2024, New York, USA); *Prospect* at Parallel Circuit, Dastan Gallery (2023, Tehran, Iran); *Soft Edge of the Blade* with Dastan Outside Projects (2022, London, UK); *City Prince/esses. Dhaka, Lagos, Manila, Mexico City and Tehran* at Palais de Tokyo (2019, Paris, France); *Human Condition* at Metropolitan Medical Center (2016, Los Angeles, USA); and *Unexposed* at Tour & Taxis (2012, Brussels, Belgium).

In 2025, Hoda Kashiha’s first monograph was published by Mousse Publishing (Milan), featuring an interview conducted by Loïc Le Gall and an essay by Lillian Davies. Her works are included in both institutional and private collections, notably the Commonwealth Hotel, Boston and the Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center (Boston, USA).

Paris Saint-Honoré

Sophie Kuijken
February 12 – March 28, 2026

Rosson Crow
April 9 – May 30, 2026

Paris Cloître Saint-Merri

Shirley Jaffe
January 30 – April 25, 2026

Jérôme Zonder
May 21 – August 1, 2026

Paris Cloître Saint-Merri - Espace II

Hoda Kashiha
The Tale of a Pot’s Voyage That Longed to Become Human
January 30 – March 28, 2026

Romana Londi
April 7 – June 2026

Brussels

Viswanadhan
January 15 – March 14, 2026

Shirley Jaffe
March 26 – May 23, 2026

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