SARA ABBASPOUR

Sara Abbaspour (b. 1990, Mashhad, Iran) is an Iranian artist whose photographic practice unfolds between the United States and Iran. Initially trained in urban planning before turning to photography, she has developed a visual language in which portraits, landscapes, and fragments of everyday life come together in a form of quiet poetry. Her images explore the relationships between individuals and the spaces they inhabit and move through, between the intimate sphere and the public realm, personal memory and collective history. She photographs territories and bodies in states of transition, at the threshold between the familiar and the strange, the visible and what remains latent. In Floating Ocean (2019–2024), produced in Iran, she offers a sensitive reflection on a generation living through profound transformations within Iranian society. Rather than adopting a direct documentary approach, Abbaspour favors ambiguity, ordinary gestures, and suspended moments. Her work thus considers the ways in which the intimate can become political without ever losing its sense of mystery. A graduate of the Yale School of Art, she is currently Assistant Professor of Photography at the University of New Mexico. She was awarded the PhMuseum Women Photographers Grant and the CENTER Project Development Grant in 2024, and was selected for the Aperture Portfolio Prize in 2025. Six of her works are now held in the permanent collection of The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York.

Sara Abbaspour (n. 1990, Mashhad, Irán) es una artista iraní cuya práctica fotográfica se desarrolla entre Estados Unidos e Irán. Formada inicialmente en urbanismo antes de dedicarse a la fotografía, ha desarrollado un lenguaje visual en el que retratos, paisajes y fragmentos de la vida cotidiana se articulan en una forma de poesía silenciosa. Sus imágenes exploran las relaciones entre los individuos y los espacios que habitan y atraviesan, entre la esfera íntima y el espacio público, la memoria personal y la historia colectiva. Fotografía territorios y cuerpos en estados de transición, en el límite entre lo familiar y lo extraño, lo visible y aquello que permanece latente. En Floating Ocean (2019–2024), realizada en Irán, ofrece una mirada sensible sobre una generación inmersa en las profundas transformaciones de la sociedad iraní. Lejos de adoptar una aproximación documental frontal, Abbaspour privilegia la ambigüedad, los gestos cotidianos y los instantes suspendidos. Su obra reflexiona así sobre la manera en que lo íntimo puede adquirir una dimensión política sin perder nunca su parte de misterio. Graduada por la Yale School of Art, actualmente es profesora adjunta de fotografía en la University of New Mexico. En 2024 recibió el PhMuseum Women Photographers Grant y el CENTER Project Development Grant, y en 2025 fue seleccionada para el Aperture Portfolio Prize. Seis de sus obras forman parte actualmente de la colección permanente del Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) de Nueva York.

IPSO FACTO
STUDIO

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EDUCATION

2025 Bufet libre (La casi una década de Fuera de carta). Exposición colectiva . Madrid.

2019 MFA Photography, Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT

2016 MA in Photography, Department of Fine Arts, University of Tehran, Iran

2013 B.Sc. in Urban Planning Department of Architecture and Urban Engineering, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran

AWARDS

2025 Shortlisted for the Aperture Foundation Portfolio Prize

CSR Grant, University of New Mexico, NM

2024 First prize for the PhMuseum 2024 Women Photographers Grant, Bologna, Italy

Project Development Grant, CENTER Santa Fe, NM

Research Allocation Committee Grant, University of New Mexico, NM

SEED Grant, University of New Mexico, NM

Juror's Choice Award, Context 2024, Chicago, IL

ARTISTS TALK

2023 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM

2022 California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA

2021 Yale School of Art's Alumni Panel, New Haven, CT
Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY
The City College of New York, NY
California State University, Long Beach, CA

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SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2025 Webs of Significance, Group Exhibition at the Turchin Center for the Visual Arts, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC

AIPAD Photography Show 2025, represented by the Aperture Foundation, New York City, NY

Photovogue Milan, Represented by PhMuseum as the recipient of the first prize for the 2024 Women Photographers Grant, Milan, Italy

Garden, Group Exhibition curated by Justine Kurland, Sharpe Walentas Studios, 20 Jay street Studios, Dumbo, NY

2024 Co-curator for the TASVIR Research Exhibition, Northlight Gallery, Phoenix, AZ (FeatUring works of 59 Artists)

Layer Play- Collaborative Lithography Exhibition, Tamarind Institute, Albuquerque, NM

Context 2024, Filter Photo Festival, Filter Space Gallery, Chicago, IL

2023 Of Fervorous Bodies, Harry Wood Gallery, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

2022 Faculty Exhibition, California State Summer School of the Arts, CalArts, Valencia, CA

2021 Overlap, Erstererster Gallery, Berlin, Germany
25 Photographs, Pioneer Work, New York, NY
Architecture of Elsewhere, Gallery Perchée, Curated by Bianca Abdi-Boragi, Online Exhibition

2020 Emerging Photographers, IGAVEL auctions, New York, NY

2019 Delirious Cities, Aperture Foundation, New York, NY
Transcript, Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York, NY (link)
Yale MFA Photography 19', Yale School of Art MFA Photography Thesis Show, Green Hall Gallery, New Haven, CT

2018 Words Cannot Express, Yale School of Art Second Year Exhibition, Green Hall Gallery, New Haven, CT
Labyrinths (Virtual Reality Exhibition), IEEE GEM Conference, Galway, Ireland

2017 Yale School of Art First Year MFA Exhibition, Green Hall Gallery, Yale School of Art, New Haven, CT
White (solo exhibition), Radin Gallery, Mashhad, Iran

2016 Urban Photography; Psychogeography (solo exhibition) graduate photographic Thesis Exhibition, Tehran Gallery, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

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PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS

2025 A Shimmering Portrait of Contemporary Iran by Haleh Anvari, Aperture, NY
Portraits of Transition: Sara Abbaspour's Poetic View On Iran
by Lucia De Stefani, PhMuseum, Italy

2023 Cadre Gallery Magazine, Interviewed by Hasti Zahiri (link)
Cruzada's Intuition, Harry Gamboa Jr., self published, ISBN9798371019790
(contributed as a performer)

2021 Ain'tBad Magazine, April 7, 2021 by Sydney Gillum

2020 Lumpen Magazine, Issue #137
60 WRD/MIN Art Critic Review, February 2020

2019 Delirious Cities by curator Brendan Embser, Aperture Blog Feature, July 2019
Transcript, Yale School of Art, New Haven, CT

2018 MATTE Magazine, Best Students 2018 Anthology, Issue #49



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