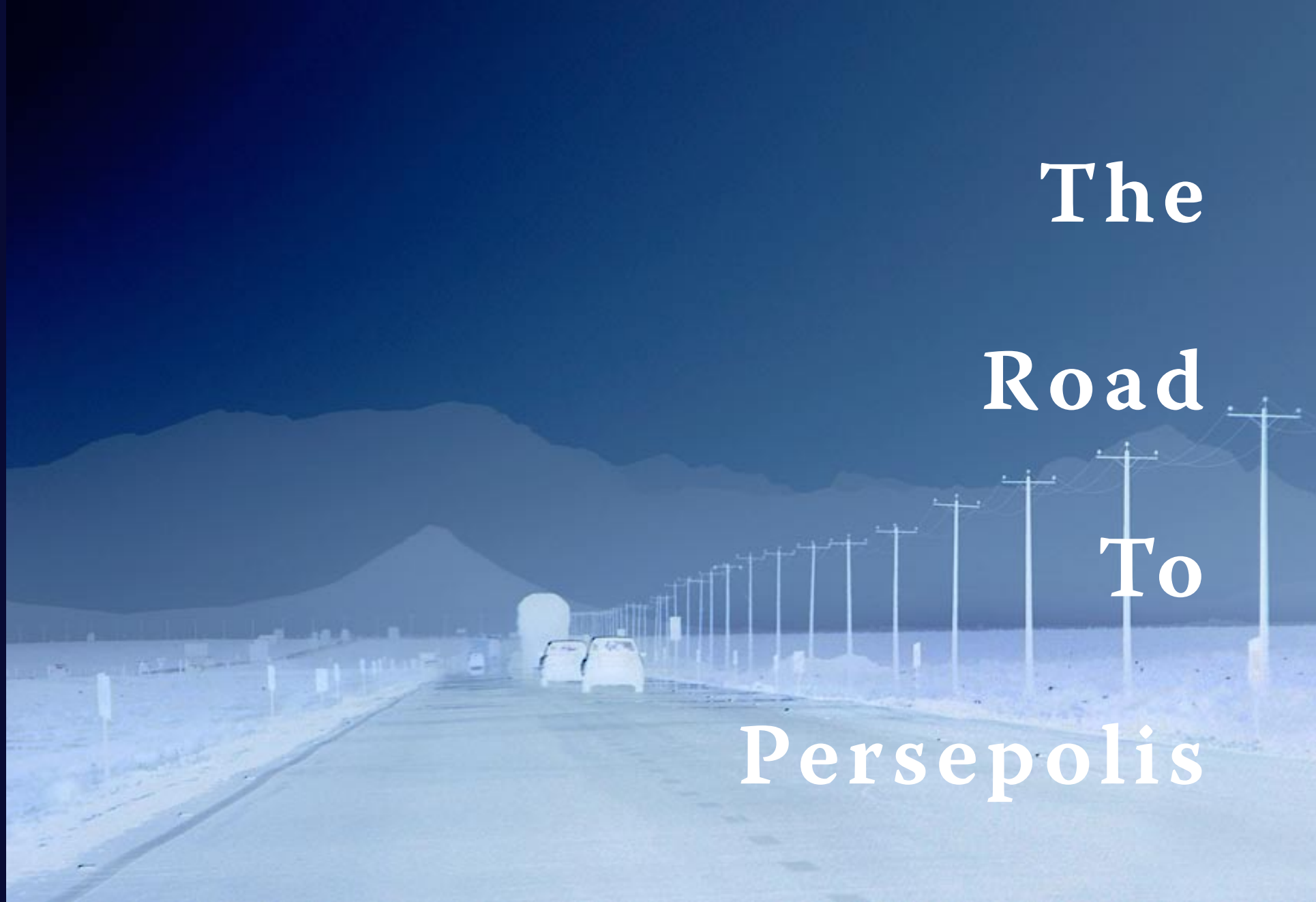


The

Road

To

Persepolis





The Road to Persepolis

*Travelogue Occurences
by Gilles Massot*

Alliance Française of Singapore

12 to 29 January 2011

Soundscape by Damien Lock

La Route de Persépolis

*Evènements de Voyage
par Gilles Massot*

Alliance Française de Singapour

du 12 au 29 Janvier 2011

Paysage sonore de Damien Lock

This body of work was conceived following an invitation to visit Iran, a nation that holds the remains of some of the greatest moments in humankind history. Yet, because of the political and diplomatic situation currently associated to the name of this country, the idea of the trip was at once highly attractive and a little unsettling. The visit of Persepolis became the exciting purpose of the trip but its organisation was also somehow a subject of concern. Reyhaneh, the Lasalle student who had invited me, insisted that everything could be easily taken care of. The idea of the journey oscillated between the splendours of the various Persian empires and the much talked about rigour of the Islamic republic, the dreams of a fantasized past and the reality of today's society as reported by the media.

The work, and particularly its title, was also influenced by two classics of travel literature, *L'Usage du Monde* by Nicolas Bouvier (1963) and *The Road to*

Cette série photographique trouve son origine dans une invitation à visiter l'Iran, une nation qui garde le souvenir de nombreux sommets de la civilisation humaine. Du fait de la situation politique et diplomatique épineuse qui caractérise ce pays depuis plusieurs décennies, l'idée de ce voyage était à la fois attrayante et un peu inquiétante. La visite de Persépolis devint rapidement le but excitant du voyage mais son organisation laissait planer plusieurs points d'interrogations. Reyhaneh, l'étudiante Iranienne qui m'avait invité, m'assurait que tout cela ne poserait aucun problème. Mais le voyage oscillait entre deux perceptions opposant les splendeurs des divers empires Persans et la trop célèbre rigueur de la nouvelle république islamique, les rêves associés à un passé fantasmé et la réalité de la société contemporaine telle qu'elle est présentée aujourd'hui dans les médias.

Ce travail, et plus spécialement son titre, est aussi influencé par deux

Oxiana by Robert Byron (1937). These books describe travel experiences on the roads of Iran, the later driven by a search for the splendours of Islamic architecture before World War II and the former as a 1950s travel adventure that announced the hippy quest of the 1970s.

By the end of the journey, the ambivalent sensation experienced during its preparation had become reality. On arrival, a custom officer had with a hint of suspicion described my Kodak films as being "American", but the people I subsequently met were fantastically hospitable and generous. The austere chadors dominated the streets but I also noticed that fashionable ladies had developed a style of their own. Indeed everything had been no problem as my student promised, yet my last night in Tehran was spent stuck in her family's home due to street demonstrations following the election held the day before. Everything had turned out as I expected and yet at the same time its opposite had also manifested itself. Reality and imagination had walked all

classiques de la littérature de voyage, *L'Usage du Monde* de Nicolas Bouvier (1963) et *The Road to Oxiana* de Robert Byron (1937). Ces deux livres décrivent des expériences de voyages sur les routes de l'Iran, voyage en quête des splendeurs de l'architecture islamique peu avant la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale dans le cas du second, et journal de voyage de deux aventuriers des années 50 qui préfigure la quête des hippies des années 70 dans le cas du premier.

A la fin de mon séjour, les sensations ambivalentes des préparations étaient devenues réalités. A mon arrivée, un douanier avait décrit mes films photographiques comme étant «américains » sur un ton suspicieux, mais les gens rencontrés s'étaient révélés remarquablement généreux et accueillants. Les tchadors austères dominaient le paysage de la rue, mais les jeunes élégantes déployaient des trésors d'ingéniosité pour rester à la mode. De fait, tout s'était déroulé sans problème, mais ma dernière soirée à Téhéran me vit cloîtré dans l'appartement familial de Reyhaneh du fait des démonstra-

the while hand in hand. It is this contrasting parallel that I eventually chose to express by pairing dreamy timeless images taken using a Brownie camera with reversed lens and digital shots of contemporary Iran.

The presentation of those “travelogue occurrences”, visually recorded during a trip of close to 2000 km across the Iranian desert in just about a week, was further enhanced by a soundscape especially created by Damien Lock.

Gilles Massot
13-11-2010

tions violentes qui s'étaient déclarées dans l'après midi suite aux élections de la veille. Tout avait été à la fois exactement ce que j'attendais et son exact contraire. Réalité et imagination s'étaient tenues par la main tout au long de la route. C'est ce contraste que j'avais de façon plus ou moins prémonitoire choisi d'illustrer en optant au début du voyage pour une technique combinant le rêve intemporel des images faites avec un vieux Kodak Brownie à optique renversée et les images documentaires digitales de l'Iran contemporain.

La présentation de ces « événements de voyage », enregistrés tout au long d'un voyage de près de 2000km à travers le désert Iranien complété en une semaine était accompagné d'un paysage sonore spécialement créé par Damien Lock.

Gilles Massot





- Persepolis (continued)
- 1991-1992: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 1992-1993: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 1993-1994: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 1994-1995: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
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 - 2013-2014: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2014-2015: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2015-2016: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2016-2017: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2017-2018: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2018-2019: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2019-2020: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2020-2021: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2021-2022: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2022-2023: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2023-2024: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran
 - 2024-2025: The Road to Persepolis, Tehran, Iran



The Road to Persepolis

Travelogue Occurrences by Gilles Meest

The Road to Persepolis is a travelogue of occurrences in Iran, a country that has been the subject of much international attention. The author, Gilles Meest, is a Dutch journalist and photographer who has spent a significant portion of his life in Iran. The book is a collection of his travelogue, which is a series of short stories and photographs that describe his experiences in Iran. The book is divided into two main parts: the first part is a collection of short stories, and the second part is a collection of photographs. The book is written in a style that is both informative and entertaining, and it provides a unique perspective on Iran and its people. The book is a must-read for anyone who is interested in Iran and its culture.



RTP 1

Pavillon Ahmad Shâhi, Palace Niâvaran, Téhéran
Palace Sâhebqarâniyeh, Palace Niâvaran, Téhéran

Pavilion Ahmad Shâhi, Niâvaran Palace, Tehran
Sâhebqarâniyeh Palace, Niâvaran Palace, Tehran



RTP 2

Champ de blé le long de la route de Téhéran à Isfahan
Rue Naser Khosrow, district du bazar, sud de Téhéran

Wheat field along the road from Tehran to Isfahan
Naser Khosrow Street, bazaar area, Southern Tehran



RTP 3

Architecture islamique à Isfahan
Ecole religieuse Molla Abdollah, Place Naghshe Jahan, Isfahan

Islamic architecture in Isfahan
Molla Abdollah Religious School, Naghshe Jahan Square, Isfahan



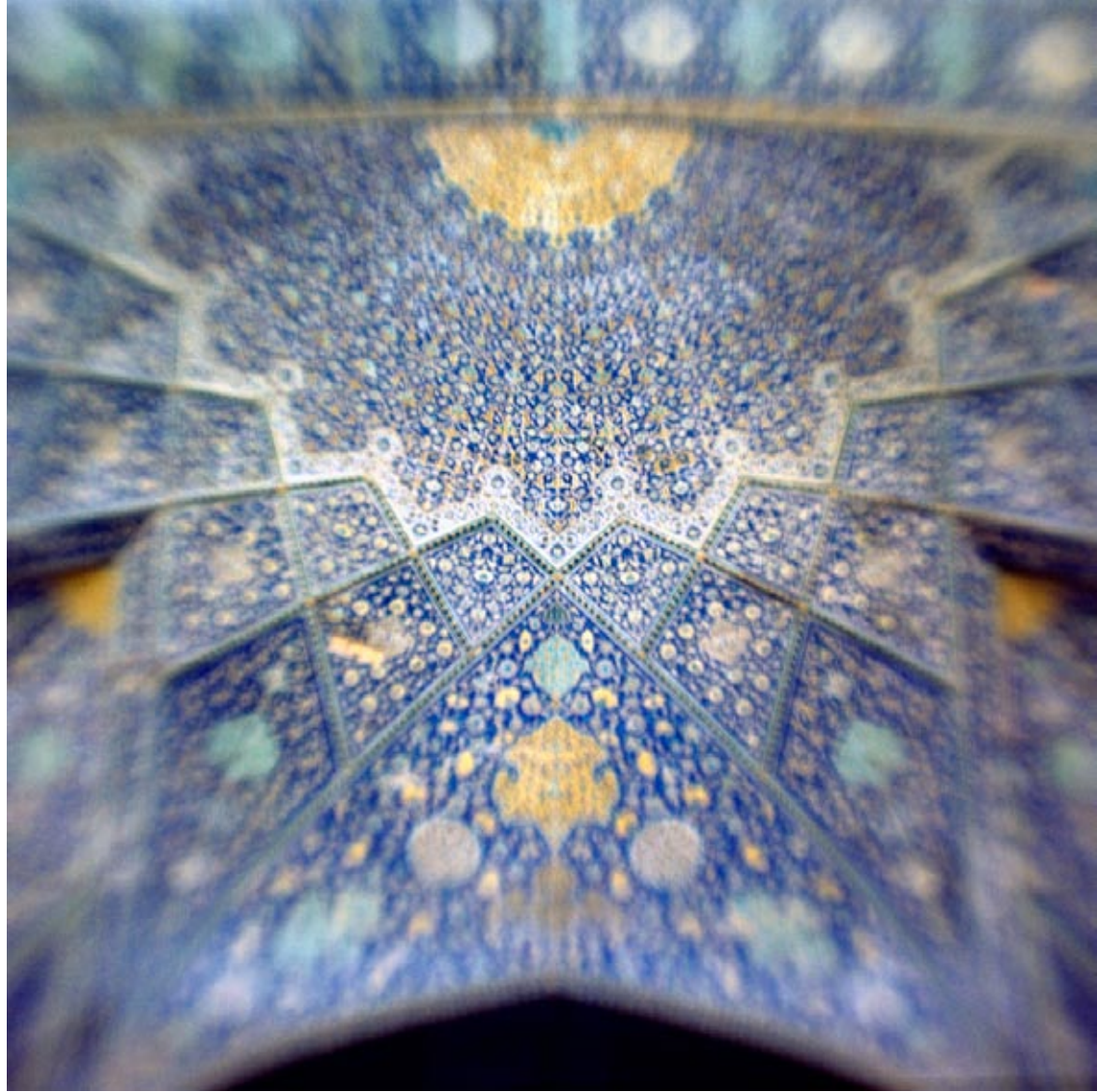
RTP 4

Mosquée du Sheikh Lotfollâh, Isfahan

Ecole Religieuse Molla Abdollah, Place Naghshe Jahan, Isfahan

Sheikh Lotfollâh Mosque, Isfahan

Molla Abdollah Religious School, Naghshe Jahan Square, Isfahan



RTP 5

Jardin d'Eram, Shiraz

Madrasa, Masdjed-e-Djâme, Mosquée du Vendredi, Isfahan

Eram Garden, Shiraz

Madrasa, Masdjed-e-Djâme, Friday Mosque, Isfahan



RTP 6

Si-o She Pol, le Pont aux 33 Arches, Isfahan
Boutique de hijab, Vieux Bazar, Isfahan

Si-o She Pol, 33 Arches Bridge, Isfahan
Hijab Shop, Old Bazaar, Isfahan



RTP 7

Route de Isfahan à Shiraz

Route de Isfahan à Shiraz, à l'entrée de la ville nouvelle Manzarieh

Road from Isfahan to Shiraz

Road from Isfahan to Shiraz, at the entrance of new city called Manzarieh



RTP 8

Route de Isfahan à Shiraz
Route de Isfahan à Shiraz

Road from Isfahan to Shiraz
Road from Isfahan to Shiraz



RTP 9

Porte des Nations, Persépolis, Shiraz
Entrée des visiteurs, Persépolis, Shiraz

Nations Gate, Persepolis, Shiraz
Tourist entrance to Persepolis, Shiraz



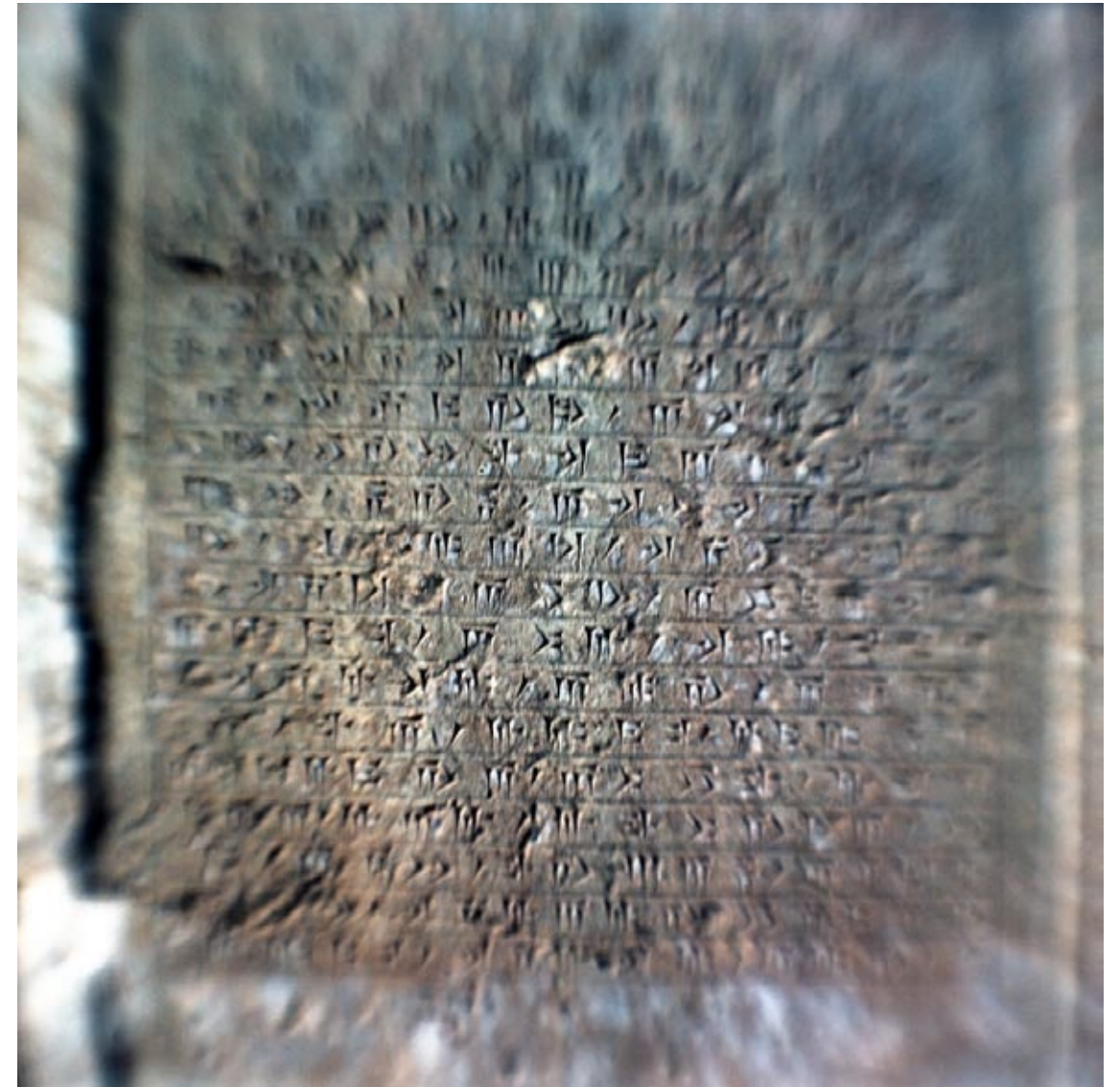




P 1

Ecriture cunéiforme Achaéménide ou Vieux Persan

Achaemenid cuneiform script or Old Persian



P 2

L 'Apadana ou salle du trône

The Apadana or throne hall



P 3

le Roi Achéménide donnant audience à un envoyé Mède,
bas-relief dans le palais de Xerxes I^{er}

The Achaemenid king giving audience to a Median envoy,
bas-relief in Xerxes I palace



P 4

Une colonne de l'Apadana

A column from the Apadana



P 5

La Porte des Nations

The Nations Gate



P 6

Palais de Darius Ier

Palace of Darius I



P 7

Palais de Darius Ier

Palace of Darius I



P 8

Tombe d'Ataxerxes II

Grave of Ataxerxes II



P 9

Hall des Cents Colonnes et tombe d'Artaxerxes II

Hundred Columns Hall and grave of Ataxerxes II



P 10

Soldats Persans, escalier nord de l'Apadana

Persian soldiers, northern stairway of the Apadana



P 11

Soldats Persans, escalier nord de l'Apadana

Persian soldiers, northern stairway of the Apadana



P 12

Envoyés payant tribut, escalier est de l'Apadana

Envoys paying tribute, eastern staircase of the Apadana



P 13

Lion dévorant un taureau, un bas-relief du Palais de Darius I^{er},
un symbole du Nowruz Zoroastrien,
le nouvel an Persan célébré le jour de l'équinoxe de printemps

Lion devouring a bull, a bas-relief in Darius I palace,
a symbol of the Zoroastrian Nowruz,
the Persian New Year celebrated on the day of the spring equinox



P 14

Lion dévorant un taureau, un bas-relief du Palais de Darius I^{er},
un symbole du Nowruz Zoroastrien,
le nouvel an Persan célébré le jour de l'équinoxe de printemps

Lion devouring a bull, a bas-relief in Darius I palace,
a symbol of the Zoroastrian Nowruz,
the Persian New Year celebrated on the day of the spring equinox



P 15

Le roi Achéménide et son serviteur,
encadrement de porte dans le palais de Darius I^{er}

The Achaemenid king and servitor, door frame in Darius I palace



P 16

Le disque ailé de Ahura Mazda,
représentation symbolique Zoroastrienne

The winged disk of Ahura Mazda,
a Zoroastrian symbol





RTP 10

Jardin et Palais d'Eram, Shiraz

Une boutique du bazar vendant les jupes traditionnelles Ghaqai

Eram Garden and palace, Shiraz

A shop in Great Bazaar in Shiraz selling traditional Ghaqai skirts



RTP 11

Céramiques du mémorial d'Hâfez, Shiraz
Touristes iraniens, Mémorial d'Hâfez, Shiraz

Tile work in Hâfez memorial, Shiraz
Iranian tourists in Hâfez Memorial, Shiraz



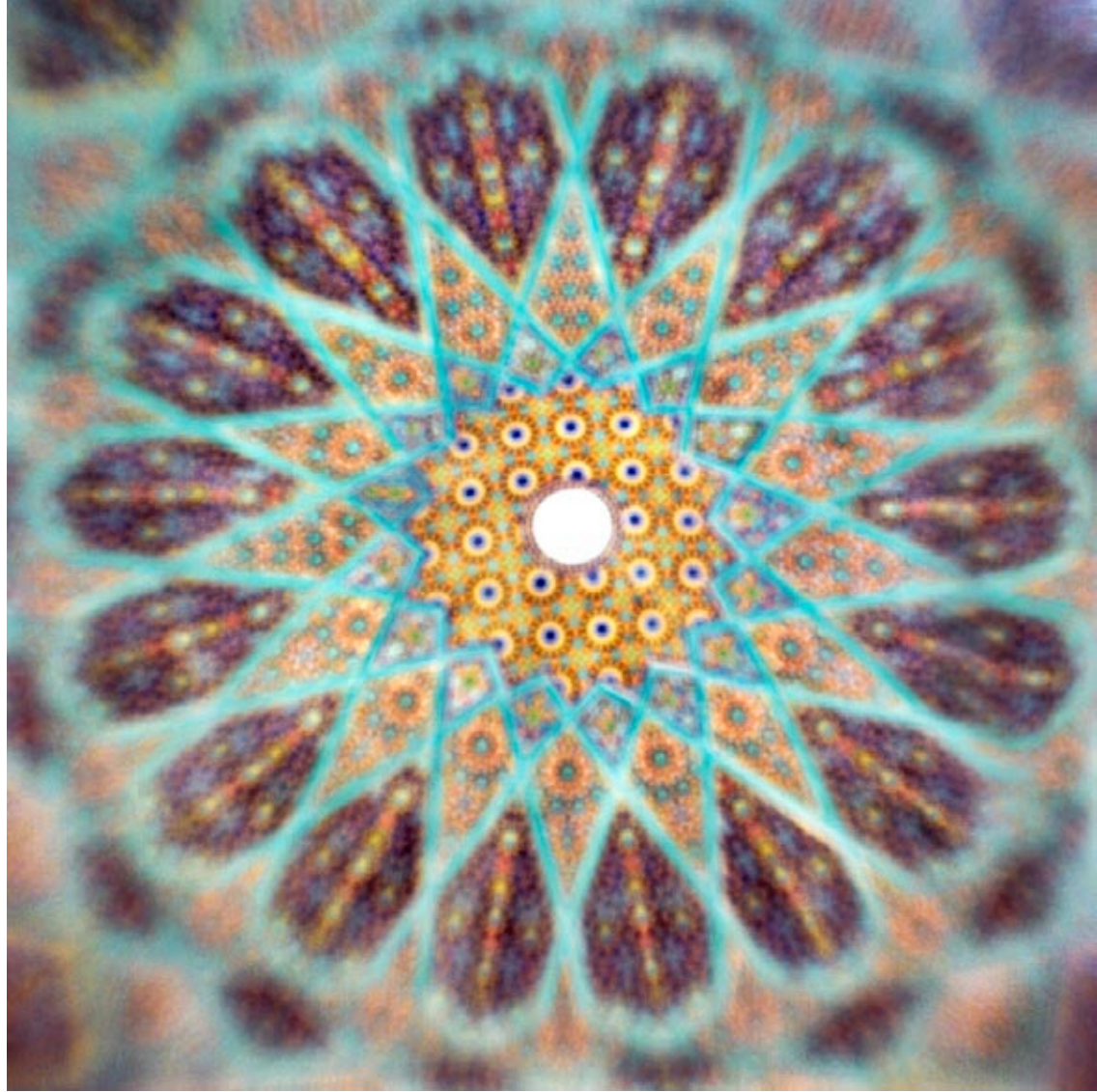
RTP 12

Mosaique à Shiraz

Maajon, un mélange de miel et noix

Mosaic in Shiraz

Maajon, a mixture of honey and nuts



RTP 13

Mural en marbre, Palais du Golestan

Modèles en cire, un ambassadeur français rencontrant le roi Karim Khân-e Zand,
citadelle Arg-e Karim Khân, Shiraz

Marble mural in Golestan Palace

Wax models, French Ambassador meeting with King Karimkhan-e Zand,
citadelle Arg-e Karimkhani, Shiraz



RTP 14

Un caravanseraï près de Shiraz, construit pendant la Dynastie Safavi (1501-1736)
Route de Shiraz à Isfahan

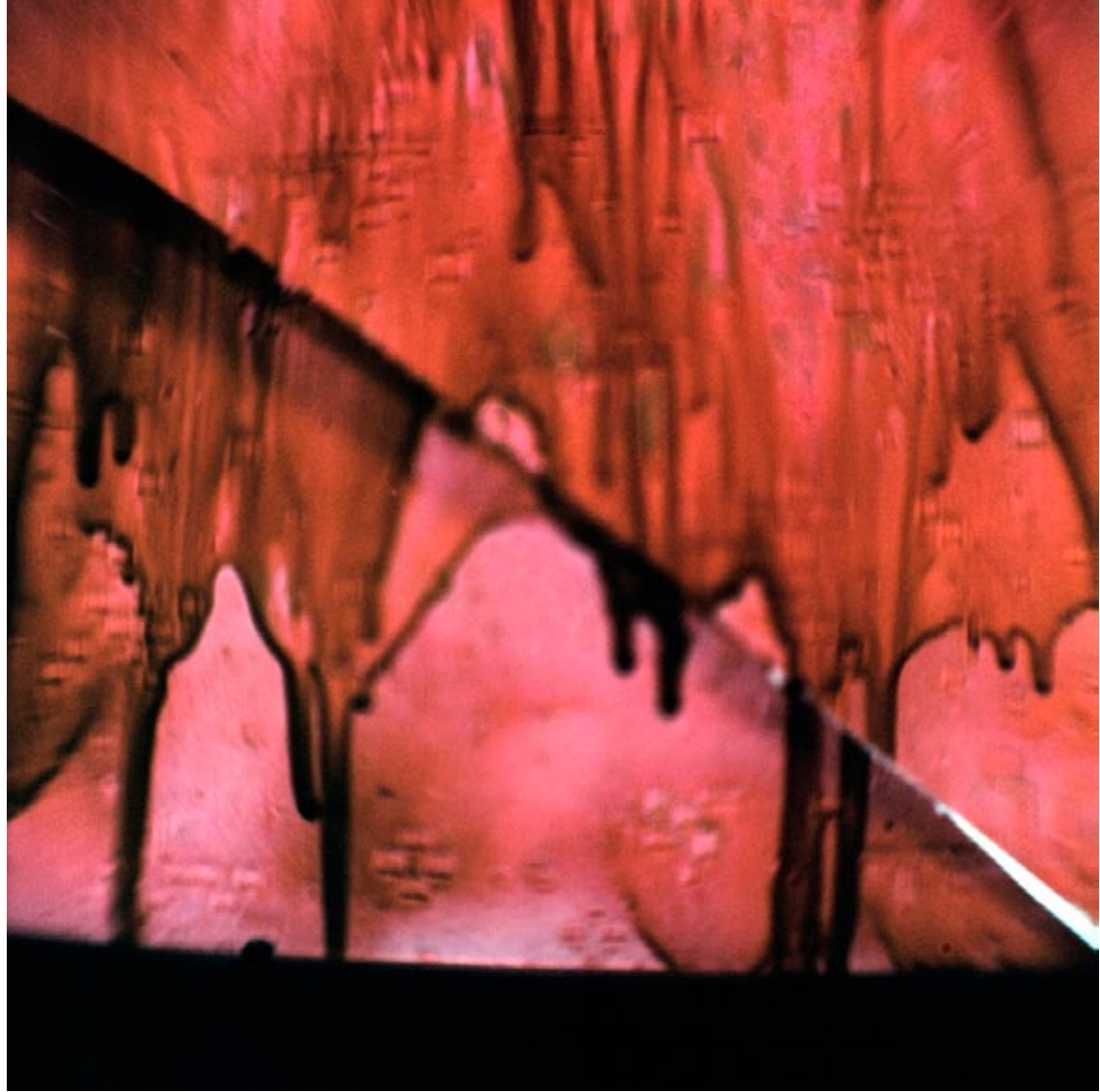
A caravanseraï near Shiraz, built during Safavi Dynasty (1501-1736)
Road from Shiraz to Isfahan



RTP 15

Une porte de toilette sur la route d'Isfahan à Shiraz
Une boucherie, Isfahan

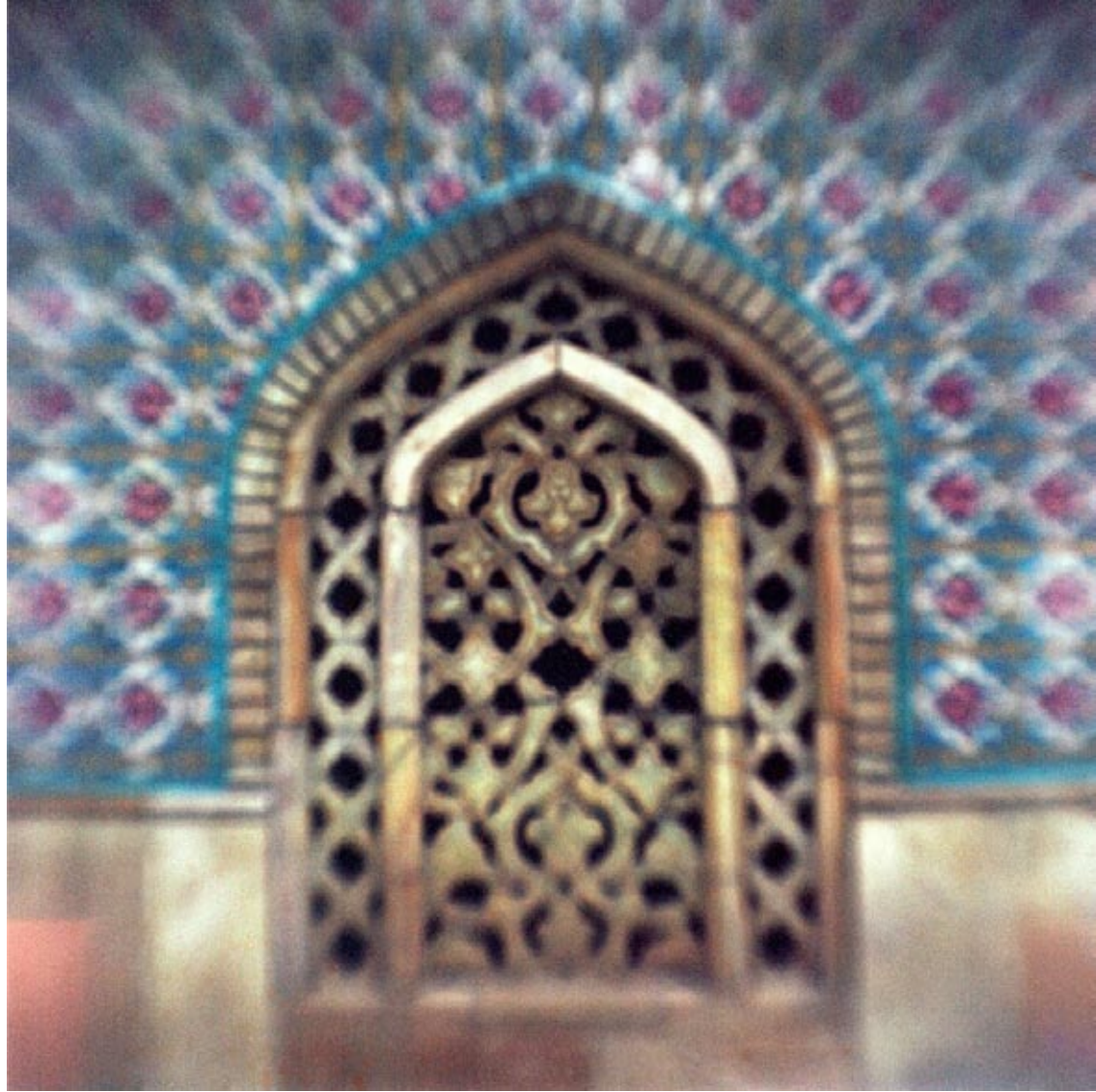
Door of a toilet along the road between Isfahan and Shiraz
A butchery, Isfahan



RTP 16

Fenêtre du Palais du Golestan Palace, Téhéran
Palace d'Ali Qapu, Isfahan

Window in Golestan Palace, Tehran
Ali Qapu Palace, Isfahan





S 1 Iwan oriental, Mosquée-e-Djâme, Mosquée du vendredi, Isfahan

Eastern Iwan, Masjed-e-Djâme, Friday Mosque, Isfahan

S 2 Roses, sur la route d'Isfahan à Shiraz

Roses, on the road from Isfahan to Shiraz

S 3 Lignes électrique sur la route de Téhéran à Isfahan

Electric lines along the road from Tehran to Isfahan



All works 70x70cm and 48x39cm except P4 to P16, various sizes

Special thank you to Karen Lim for her thoughtful guidance

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