

Contemporary Arts Forum:

# East Meets West

with Seterah Shahbazi

By ANDRIA WATSON / CASA

**IMPRESSIONS OF SYMBOLS AND IMAGES IN CULTURE AND MEDIA** are examined in Seterah Shahbazi's multi-layered, multi-faceted exhibit at the Contemporary Arts Forum which runs through May 11th.



Seterah Shahbazi

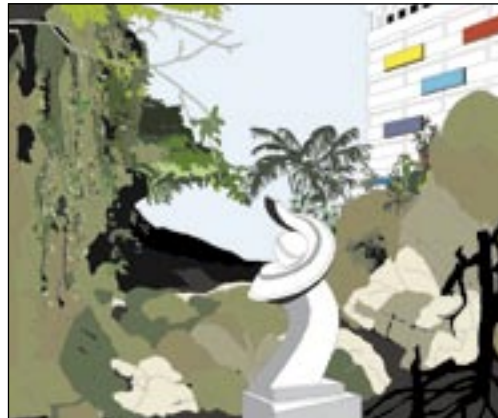
"We are surrounded by a flood of advertisements and symbols in the media. We think we understand the meaning, but I think sometimes we misread the messages," explained Shahbazi.

"This show plays with the surface of our perceptions."

Using a compilation of textures including lacquered wood, prints, ink-jet prints, placards, platforms, theatrical tableaux, and canvas, Shahbazi transforms approximately 30 images from magazines, newspapers, and billboards. The images act as filters for what could be charged psychological states, a collective memory, mediated news items, or just a fleeting banal scene. Shahbazi employs these

images as actors on a stage.

Born in Tehran, Iran in 1978, Shahbazi moved to Berlin, Germany when she was seven. Interested in reading and art at an early age, and raised by a supportive artistic family, at 19 Shahbazi decided to study Scenography, later focusing on the structure and content of her work rather than theatre set design. Her current installation at CAF is reminiscent of her early studies in Berlin, but subtly prompts viewers to question their thoughts and responses to the volume of media impact.



Public Sculpture by Seterah Shahbazi



Whenever Installation by Seterah Shahbazi

"I think it's important to share culture through art. In other countries like Iran, you can't always say what you want. Art is necessary in so many places because of the need to articulate those feelings and ideas in some other way," Shahbazi shared. "On the other hand, you have to be careful with the images you choose, because it leaves a lot of space for misunderstanding."

"The installation at CAF pushes barriers of what an Iranian woman's art is supposed to be," Shahbazi added. "I want it to be the viewers' responsibility to re-evaluate generalizations and assumptions."

CAF is located at 653 Paseo Nuevo and is open Tu- Sat 11-5pm, and Su 12-5pm. For information, call 966-5373.



Secret Affinities by Seterah Shahbazi