

## ARTFORUM

**Nargess Hashemi****GALLERY ISABELLE VAN DEN EYNDE****Al Quoz 1, Street 8, Al Serkal Avenue, #17****January 12–February 27**

On first glance, the pen-on-graph-paper drawings in Nargess Hashemi's current solo exhibition, "The Pleasure in Boredom," appear to have been digitally designed. Yet close observation reveals many intense and intimate details in the Tehran-based artist's works, as she moves from the figurative to the abstract. This show calls upon viewers to study this shift in Hashemi's pieces—as she begins to consider, in more abstract ways, the essence of home in pieces that mark a departure from her previous domestic scenes in series such as "Stories From the Boudoir," 2008, and "Wrap Me Up In You," 2009–11.

**View of "The Pleasure in Boredom," 2014.**

Hashemi's "Home" and "Carpet" drawing series, as well as the two macramé works collectively titled *Rug* (both 2013) are featured in a large gallery. In her drawings, Hashemi borrows formal elements from both Iranian architecture and Persian weaving traditions, while in *Rug*, yarn appears as another way to doodle, which complements her works on paper. Hashemi's investigation and reinterpretation of illustrated poetry manuscripts in her monoprint series "Qajar," 2007, is also featured in this show. Depicting architectural backgrounds familiar from Safavid miniatures, "Qajar" is also a key reference point for "Home." Moreover, it highlights the artist's interest in spatial aspects as she shifts her gaze away from figures that are present in "Qajar."

In E. H. Gombrich's 1991 essay "Pleasures of Boredom," the art historian argued that doodling, or "free play of pen," appears as artistic practice only when rigid artistic standards are intentionally loosened. Hashemi's latest exhibition succeeds in finding playful new ways of experimenting with graph paper that results in diptychs, triptychs, and polyptychs. Moreover, surprising irregularities, such as minor errors and turn-about in patterns, here create a humane relationship between her works and viewers.

— *L. İpek Ulusoy Akgül*

All rights reserved. artforum.com is a registered trademark of Artforum International Magazine, New York, NY