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## AREFEH RIAHI

Arefeh Riahi's artistic research engages with the archive in its broadest sense, exploring non-archival modes of knowledge production. Through an interdisciplinary practice that intertwines narrative and performance, she investigates the potential of ephemeral fictions—spaces shaped by what is often referred to as the anarchive. The anarchive offers a way to interrupt dominant systems, dismantle singular ways of thinking, and open up spaces for resistance. In late 2024 and early 2025, Arefeh participated in the exhibition *My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon* at de Appel in Amsterdam. Her contribution explored patriarchal gender dynamics within traditional Iranian architecture, focusing on the *hashti*, a small reception chamber. Like Rosemary Mayer—who, in the 1970s, turned to public space as an alternative to male-dominated art institutions—Arefeh seeks spaces for resistance against patriarchy. For her, questioning institutional structures is a vital part of that process.

### WEBSITES

[www.deappel.nl/nl/archive/entities/1738-arefeh-riahi](http://www.deappel.nl/nl/archive/entities/1738-arefeh-riahi)

[www.deappel.nl/en/archive/entities/1738-arefeh-riahi](http://www.deappel.nl/en/archive/entities/1738-arefeh-riahi)

### MEMBER OF ARTISTS' INITIATIVE/COLLECTIVE/INCUBATOR

To See the Inability to See trio collective (Arefeh Riahi, Maartje Fliervoet, Martin La Roche Contreras)

## EDUCATION

2021 - Research group: Kenniskring- Lectoraat Art  
2022 & Public Space (LAPS) Amsterdam, Gerrit Rietveld Academie

2018 - Research Group: Making Things Public  
2019 Amsterdam, Gerrit Rietveld Academie

2013 - Master Artistic research Den Haag,  
2015 Koninklijke Academie van Beeldende Kunsten diploma

1998 - BA - Painting Azad University of Tehran,  
2002 Faculty of Art and Archie diploma

## EXHIBITIONS

2024 *My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon* De Appel Amsterdam The exhibition was a project by the collective To See the Inability to See and was an expansion of their publication project *My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon: A Porous Reader to Unguard the Garden*. It encompassed different realms. One consisted of artworks by the individual members of the collective which were developed alongside and parallel to the process of writing of the publication. A second realm included historical objects from personal collections that are related to the content of the publication. A third realm comprised other artists' works referenced in, or connected to the book. A fourth direction drew connections between the content of *My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon* and de Appel's Archive, as it is from this archive that To See the Inability to See first started writing on visibility and invisibility, inclusion and exclusion in archiving practices. The title is a direct quote from Derek Jarman, referring to his fenceless garden at Dungeness. Featured in the show were works by Arefeh Riahi, Martin La Roche Contreras, Maartje Fliervoet, Kader Attia, Kasra Jalilipour and Seba Calfuqueo, as well as a selection of historical objects. [www.deappel.nl/en/archive/events/1273-my-garden-s-boundaries-are-the-horizon](http://www.deappel.nl/en/archive/events/1273-my-garden-s-boundaries-are-the-horizon) Group

2022 Denunciation ACC Gallery Weimar, Germany [acc-weimar.de/ausstellungen/a/denunziation\\_-801.html](http://acc-weimar.de/ausstellungen/a/denunziation_-801.html) Group

2022 21st International Biennial "Small Paper Format" Musée du Petit Format d'Art Contemporain Nîmes, Belgium [www.museedupetitformat.be/blog/bi22](http://www.museedupetitformat.be/blog/bi22) Group

2022 21st International Biennial "Small Paper Format" Musée de l'Ardenne Charleville-Mézières, France [www.museedupetitformat.be/blog/bi22](http://www.museedupetitformat.be/blog/bi22) Group

2021 Architecture of Noise; Oscillation between knowledge and realities W139 Project Space Amsterdam [w139.nl/en/event/architecture-of-noise/](http://w139.nl/en/event/architecture-of-noise/) Group

2021 Die Ecke Arte Contemporáneo Santiago, Chile In collaboration with Martín la Roche we did the Autumn wall of the project: the

## PROJECTS

2024 As if...in that moment the city embraces women Moulage cours from G+N (Gerrit Uitenbogaard) Den Haag, NETHERLANDS Amsterdam, Netherlands [rietveldacademie.nl/en/page/28838/as-if-in-that-moment-the-city-embraces-women](http://rietveldacademie.nl/en/page/28838/as-if-in-that-moment-the-city-embraces-women) Six sessions programmed by Arefeh Riahi. Open to the public. This program was to raise greater critical awareness of the ongoing situation in Iran, and to provoke thoughts on this great opportunity to imagine a society otherwise — not only in Iran but across the world. Furthermore, it was to support conversations and reflections on the role of imagination as resistance — imagination as a gesture that cannot be surveilled by state authorities.

2024 Open Masereel Frans Masereel Centrum Kasterlee, Belgium Presentation/performance reading of *My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon* with To See the Inability to See

2022 Instruction to get lost Printroom Rotterdam, Netherlands [printroom.org/2022/12/10/16-12-22-journeys-across-archives/](http://printroom.org/2022/12/10/16-12-22-journeys-across-archives/) A reading/performance by To See the Inability to See (Arefeh Riahi, Maartje Fliervoet, Martin La Roche Contreras) as part of event series: Journeys Across Archives

2020 Uncertainty Seminar 2020: Care The Hague, Netherlands A Triangular reading performance by To See the Inability to See: Arefeh Riahi, Maartje Fliervoet, Martin la Roch

2019 Unplugged Festival 3rd Edition Helicopter Artist Initiative The Hague, Netherlands

2018 Exit Through the Art Books Hoogtij & Gallery Nouvelle Images The Hague, Netherlands A

	Muroescrito It is a visual poetry project on the outside of the project space for the fall 2021 <a href="http://www.dieecke.cl/proyectos/exp-art/muroescrito-otono-2021">www.dieecke.cl/proyectos/exp-art/muroescrito-otono-2021</a> Duo		Lecture/Performance as part of a performance program curated by Petra van der Schoot in Gallery Nouvelle Images as part of the HOLLA Festival
2020	2020 ROZENSTRAAT Amsterdam, Netherlands <a href="http://www.rozenstraat.com/event/2020/Group">www.rozenstraat.com/event/2020/Group</a>	2018	Unplugged Festival (2nd Edition) Helicopter Artist Initiative The Hague, Netherlands
2019	Un/folding Interventions de Appel Amsterdam, Netherlands <a href="http://deappel.nl/en/exhibitions/arefeh-riahi-un-folding-interventions">deappel.nl/en/exhibitions/arefeh-riahi-un-folding-interventions</a> Solo	2017	Unplugged Festival Helicopter Artist Initiative The Hague, Netherlands
2018	OA/AO (onder andere/among others) De Appel Amsterdam, Netherlands OA/AO (onder andere/among others) is a monthly series of screenings, presentations, and conversations at De Appel that focuses around a single work or object. For this edition OA/AO is taken over by the participants of the 2017-18 De Appel Curatorial Programme. Each curator has developed a single movement for the evening's programme, which will include performances, discussions, interventions, and presentations based on their ten month individual research trajectory around the themes of Conflict, Joy and Slowness The video work Nine-Fold-Object screened as part of the presentation of curator Jagna Lewandowska <a href="http://deappel.nl/en/events/oaao-onder-andereamong-others-with-de-appel-curatorial-programme-2017">deappel.nl/en/events/oaao-onder-andereamong-others-with-de-appel-curatorial-programme-2017</a> Group		
2018	Only the Morning Bird Treasures The Flower Garden REDCAT; Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater Los Angeles, California, United States <a href="http://www.redcat.org/exhibition/only-morning-bird-treasures-flower-garden">www.redcat.org/exhibition/only-morning-bird-treasures-flower-garden</a> Group		
2017	Peace, Place, Potential Peace Palace The Hague, Netherlands Lecture/Performance - the International day of Peace and Justice, ☒ and the Just Peace Festival, Peace Palace Solo		
2016	The Art of Humanity Pratt Institute the Rubelle and Norman Stifler Gallery New York, United States a representative selection of Imago Mundi Collection Group		
2016	Exit Gemak: All Arts Is Political GEMAK The Hague, Netherlands <a href="http://gemak.org/en/2015-10-22/exit-gemak-all-art-is-political">gemak.org/en/2015-10-22/exit-gemak-all-art-is-political</a> Group		
2015	The Great Escape Royal Academy of Arts The Hague, Netherlands Master Artistic Research Graduation Exhibition <a href="http://archive.kabk.nl/newsitemEN.php?newsid=1045&amp;cat=07">archive.kabk.nl/newsitemEN.php?newsid=1045&amp;cat=07</a> Group		
2015	Between...and Hiatus 1646 Project Space The Hague, Netherlands <a href="http://1646.nl/projects/the-ongoing-conversation-23">1646.nl/projects/the-ongoing-conversation-23</a> Solo		
2014	Locus, Iranian Artists Abroad Gemak The Hague, Netherlands <a href="http://gemak.org/en/2014-09-18/locus-upcoming-iranian-artists">gemak.org/en/2014-09-18/locus-upcoming-iranian-artists</a> Group		
2013	13th Delhi Photo Festival Amphitheater, India Habitat Center New Delhi, India Video Screening Group		
2012	What Lies Beneath (The Second Edition) Gallery Isabelle Van den Eynde Dubai, United Arab Emirates <a href="http://www.ivde.net/m/exhibitions/38/press_release_text/">www.ivde.net/m/exhibitions/38/press_release_text/</a> Group		

## INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES/RESIDENCIES

2022	Pompgemaal Den Helder Mondriaanfonds Den Helder, Netherlands <a href="http://www.regionoordkop.nl/15/08/2022/pompgemaal-open-dag/">www.regionoordkop.nl/15/08/2022/pompgemaal-open-dag/</a>
2019	de Appel Amsterdam Amsterdam, Netherlands Un/folding Interventions is an ongoing, research-driven presentation by artist-in residence in the archive of De Appel, Arefeh Riahi. The presentation unfolds in the format of daily actions, archive gatherings with event-based performances, as well as an ongoing yet constantly changing exhibition. <a href="http://www.deappel.nl/en/archive/events/992-">www.deappel.nl/en/archive/events/992-</a>

## SALES/WORKS IN COLLECTIONS

2012	Imago Mundi (Private Collection of Luciano Benetton) Italië
2012	Various private collections UK, UAE Painting and installation work sold to private collections

2008 Annemarie-Schimmel House (German Cultural Center, Lahore) and Vasil Artists Collective, Lahore Lahore, Pakistan

## PUBLICATIONS

2024 My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon: A Porous Reader to Unguard the Garden Book To See the Inability to See Netherlands My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon An Introduction The appearance of this publication is flexible, as is its multidirectionality. It is meant to be read by several readers simultaneously. Some sections of this work can be folded in a multiplicity of shapes, making it a performative document that focuses on an embodied, collective reading. Part of our writings for this publication come from texts written between Spring 1399 and Spring 1400 for the Remote Archivist, by invitation of de Appel, Amsterdam. Other fragments were taken from performative readings that took place at Stroom, The Hague (1400), de Appel (1398) and PrintRoom, Rotterdam (1401, based upon a contribution to an anthology of performance scores by Notes On Hapticity Collective). The collaborative writing of these texts naturally demanded the three of us to gradually merge into one voice, a transformative I. This changed in late 1400. We had started planning for a trip to Iran, to take place in Mehr 1401. The intention was to work on this book through the lens of traditional Iranian architecture. Yet, as events developed, each of us was confronted in a highly individual way with the possible implications of this journey. During our preparations, we realised we'd become personally involved with the borders we'd previously written about, albeit with more distance. In our minds, we increasingly embodied these boundaries and the violence they bestowed upon us. In the end, only one of us actually went. Being physically separated and not always being able to be in contact, we started writing each other secret letters testifying to our respective positions, sharing our fears, traumas and dreams. This brought us to a deeper understanding of our more private experiences, and eventually our collective writing came to embrace them all. We see this publication as an object through which we want to question the practice of archiving. We focus on archiving as a s/State of mind, rather than on those spaces generally called "archives" and their objects in captivity. This state is a mode of thinking with which we are each challenged on a daily basis, the mode of sticking to "the familiar," opposing change and "the unknown". We think momentarily interrupting this mode is crucial. To do so, we depart not from physical archives, but from (fictional) stories surrounding certain traditional Iranian buildings, the Persian garden and in particular an entrance room called the hashti...

2022 16/10/20 A project by Notes on Hapticity Collective Book Printroom To See the Inability to See Rotterdam, Netherlands [notesonhapticity.com/2023/08/04/16-10-20/](https://notesonhapticity.com/2023/08/04/16-10-20/) My contribution to this publication is a text written in

## REVIEWS

2025 Tuinen met bomen vol fruit - My Garden's Boundaries Are The Horizon in De Appel Zazie Duinker Amsterdam, Netherlands [metropolism.com/nl/recensie/tuinen-met-bomen-vol-fruit-my-gardens-boundaries-are-the-horizon-in-de-appel/](https://metropolism.com/nl/recensie/tuinen-met-bomen-vol-fruit-my-gardens-boundaries-are-the-horizon-in-de-appel/) In the exhibition My Garden's Boundaries Are The Horizon in De Appel, the collective To See the Inability To See investigates alternative methods of archiving. Zazie Duinker visits the exhibition and learns how the archive can be both enigmatic and open; as a constant dialogue between inside and outside.

2020 A fold in time Sophie Sanders Amsterdam [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.deappel.nl/fmp/](https://chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.deappel.nl/fmp/) Witness report - Arefeh Riahi - Un/folding Interventions

	collaboration with Martín La Roche Contreras and Maartje Fliervoet as part of our collective project: To See the Inability to See
2022	21st International Biennial "Small Paper Format" Catalog
2021	The Remote* Archivist de Appel Amsterdam To See The Inability to See: Arefeh Riahi, Maartje Fliervoet, Martin La Roche Contreras Amsterdam, Netherlands <a href="http://new.deappel.nl/en/pages/1862-series-01-to-see-the-inability-to-see">new.deappel.nl/en/pages/1862-series-01-to-see-the-inability-to-see</a> contribution to the first three issues of de Appel Archive newsletter in collaboration with Maartje Fliervoet and Martín La Roche Contreras (To See the Inability to See), distribution de Appel and Metropolis M - The Remote* Archivist is a recurring publication from the Archive of de Appel that can also be accessed while the reader is physically distant, or the archive is far away. The distance, and at the same time the fickle proximity of digital platforms is now translated into the tangibility of archivist messages
2019	Only The Morning bird Treasures the Flower Garden Book REDCAT (Roy AND Edna Disney/CalArts Theater) Los Angeles, California, United States Exhibition Catalogue
2016	MARCHIVE #4 Book Royal Academy of Arts The Hague, Netherlands A publication of The Master Artistic Research department
2015	Exit Gemak: All Art Is Political Book GEMAK, Vrije Academie The Hague, Netherlands <a href="http://issuu.com/gemakdenhaag/docs/151209_gemak_issuu">issuu.com/gemakdenhaag/docs/151209_gemak_issuu</a>
2014	Iranomutomorphosis.net - A book consisting of artworks created contemporary Iranian artists Book Fabrica (Communication Research Centre for the Benetton Group), Italy <a href="http://www.imagomundiart.com/artworks/arefeh-riahi-one-us-dollar">www.imagomundiart.com/artworks/arefeh-riahi-one-us-dollar</a> The presented artwork is part of Luciano Benetton's private collection

## AWARDS AND GRANTS

2024	As if... in that moment, the city embraces women Pro Kunstprojecten, Stroom Den Haag Den Haag, Netherlands
2024	My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon Mondriaan Fonds International Presentation Amsterdam-Belgium
2022	Art project Mondriaan Fonds Amsterdam Amsterdam, Netherlands
2022	design grant scheme Stimuleringsfonds Creatieve Industrie Netherlands
2019	Project subsidy professional art Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst Amsterdam, Netherlands
2016	Pro Invest Subsidy Stroom Den Haag The Hague, Netherlands

## SECONDARY ART-RELATED ACTIVITIES

2003 - 2009	Visual art writer, translator and illustrator for Tehran Avenue Magazine
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My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon, 2025



My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon, 2025



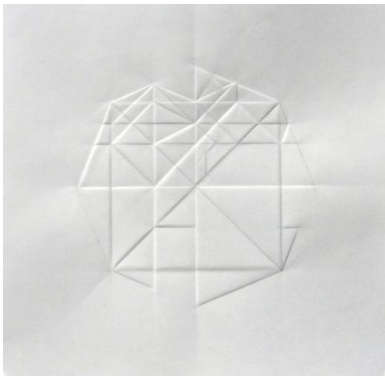
My Garden's Boundaries Are the Horizon: A Porous Reader to Unguard the Garden, 2024  
Artist book/object



Instruction to get lost, 2022  
Reading/performance



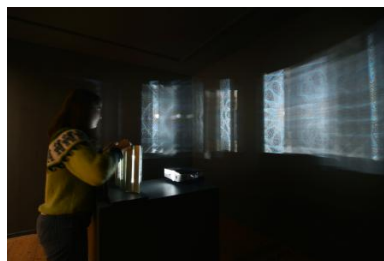
Twelve surfaces, nineteen folds, 2022  
cardboard, paper and color pencil



Study of the octagon in two dimensions, 2022  
folds on paper, 25 x25 cm



House of Secrets in Geometric Structures, 2021  
Installation



House of Secrets in Geometric Structures: The study of the octagon in three dimensions, 2021



Palindrome, 2021  
This project consists of a constellation of coalescent components — a site-specific performance in two parts, that left behind a residual installation, accompanied by a sound composition, printed material as a wall-installation and a video work.



Palindrome: Body and Borders, 2021  
performance and video, Duration: 20 minutes

