



## Newsha Tavakolian: *Look*

Tenacious and multi-talented, [Newsha Tavakolian](#) is a self trained photographer who started her career as a photojournalist at the age of 16, working for a newspaper in her hometown of Tehran, Iran. By 2001, she was represented by Polaris Images, covering war, revolution, and natural disaster throughout the region; her work published by nearly every major publication, including Newsweek Magazine. In recent years, her focus has shifted away from reportage, which became increasingly difficult within the climate of restraint and censorship in Iran, to a practice more involved in art and documentary photography.

*Look*, her most recent project, is a multimedia composition resulting from many months of work and contemplation. Tavakolian was inspired to create the series by the film *The Yacoubian Building*, an immensely successful motion picture based on a book by the same title, a roman à clé critiquing post revolutionary Egypt through the intertwined narratives of residents living in the same apartment building. With a cast comprised of her friends and family, she unfolds a visual chronicle of the melancholy and isolation symptomatic of a frustrated generation of Iranian youth.

*Look* began with my desire to look deeply into the lives of people around me whom I have known for over ten years, and who live in my building. I wanted to bring to life the story of a nation of middle class youths who are constantly battling with themselves, their isolated conformed society, their lack of hope for the future and each of their individual stories. Over a period of six months, at 8 pm, I fixed my camera on a tripod in front of the window where I had watched the same view of the city for ten years. I tried to capture a moment of each of their stories, within the frame of a window looking out onto the cold concrete buildings which surround us daily.

[Thomas Erben Gallery](#) in New York City presents *Look*, Tavakolian's first solo exhibition in the US, opening today, and on view through May 11.