



American Federation of Arts

For Immediate Release

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS INAUGURATES NEW LECTURES SERIES, AFA ArtTalks FEATURING SOME OF TODAY'S MOST INFLUENTIAL FIGURES IN THE ART WORLD IRANIAN PHOTOGRAPHER AND VIDEO ARTIST *SHIRIN NESHAT* OPENS THE SERIES WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2003

New York, NY, (January 27, 2003) — **AFA ArtTalks**, a lecture series developed and presented by the American Federation of Arts (AFA) features a series of discussions with some of the most influential figures in the art world today, including artists, collectors, museum directors, curators, and gallery owners. AFA ArtTalks will open with Iranian photographer and video artist **Shirin Neshat** on Wednesday, February 12, 2003 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the American Federation of Arts, 41 East 65th Street, between Madison and Park Avenues, in New York. Admission is \$15 and \$10 for AFA members and students with valid ID. Seating is limited, and reservations are recommended. For reservations, please call 212-988-7700 ext. 41.

In addition to its exhibition program—one of the most comprehensive in the country presenting on average, up to ten different exhibitions at more than fifty museums annually—the AFA organizes educational programming and is a long-time advocate of the visual arts. Building on the success of the AFA Directors and Curators Forum, which are both geared to professionals in the museum community, AFA ArtTalks expands the organization's programming to the wider public, providing an opportunity for intimate and informed dialogue between the speakers and the audience.

"We would like to provide opportunities for in-depth conversations about topics that are relevant in today's art world," states AFA director Julia Brown. "We believe that there is an interest in direct intellectual exchange between the individual artist and the public. ArtTalks will provide an open forum for artists and art enthusiasts to discuss and share what we think about the arts."

Shirin Neshat lives and works in the United States. Her work explores issues of Islamic society, especially the position related to women. Against the backdrop of her native culture, she creates works that communicate universal ideas about loss, meaning, and memory. Neshat's most recent work comprises films in the form of dual video projections with images projected on opposing walls. Neshat's new film, *Soliloquy* (1999), which she directed and acted in, tells the story of a Muslim woman who is in constant negotiation between traditional and present-day values of life.

For nearly a hundred years, the **American Federations of Arts** (AFA) has originated and developed traveling art exhibitions in partnership with member museums both in the United States and abroad. Under the leadership of director Julia Brown, the AFA serves the museum community via its exhibition, education, and professional development programs, including its Directors Forum, Curators Forum, and the AFA ArtTalks. Current and upcoming AFA exhibitions include *The Sensuous and the Sacred: Chola Bronzes from South India; Degas and the Dance; Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art from The British Museum*; and *Millet to Matisse: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century French Painting from Kelvingrove Art Gallery, Glasgow*. For additional information visit the AFA's Web site at www.afaweb.org.