

TAHER ASAD-BAKHTIARI

b. 1982, Tehran, Iran

Taher Asad-Bakhtiari offers a striking, contemporary take on hand-woven textiles and furnishings, mapping out a bold style of open-work tapestries which retool the kilim flatweaves and densely-knotted gabbeh rugs that have long defined his region's cultural traditions. Asad-Bakhtiari's fabric constructions are built around large-scale triangular patterning and crossed by striated bars and lines—minimalist forms which override the logic of warp and weft and recall landforms and the iconography of ancient civilizations, while nodding to the repeated geometries of mid-century avant-garde design and craft movement like those at Black Mountain College. Woven from hand-spun and naturally-dyed wool with the occasional inclusion of contemporary materials, these lace-like works seek to spur new creative wrinkles within a craft tradition dating back centuries.

While Asad-Bakhtiari's textiles honor his heritage in the nomadic Bakhtiari tribe's crafts and are realized in concert with today's artisans weavers, he is especially noted for his innovations in techniques and weaving methods. Many of his fabrics seem to breathe on their own accord, composed of airy weaves with almost translucent sections of exposed warps. Rippling and shimmering as light and air pass through their open network of threads, they uncover patterns within the fundamental crossbeams of the weaving process: the empty space between the overlay of threads.

Asad-Bakhtiari's resin-glazed oil barrel stools allow for a metamorphosis of form and context. A ubiquitous sight around Tehran at construction projects, over time the aluminum oil barrels acquire the scars, rust, and patina of endless use. The artist polishes them to underscore their humble beauty, compressing them and applying accents of gold before encasing them in lustrous resin.

Asad-Bakhtiari is a self-taught artist whose practice revolves around objects, textiles, and experiences. He studied in Canada and Switzerland and resides between Dubai and New York.