FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CHAR SOO

At the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery

Opens 6pm, Friday 7 October
Runs 8 October to 10 December 2016

A new exhibition at the University of Western Australia’s Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery is set to transport audiences in the beating heart of an Iranian grand bazaar.

Opening 6pm Friday, and running from 8 October to 10 December, Char Soo is an immersive four-screen projection that fills the gallery’s largest display space with the sights and sounds of a bazaar in the city of Arak, Iran.

Iranian-born Australian artist Hossein Valamanesh’s video installation, produced in 2015 in collaboration with his son Nassiem, films all sides of the intersection, or char soo, of a four-sided Iranian bazaar. Viewers are left to contemplate movement, human interaction and the passing of time.

Char Soo is also a metaphor for Iran, a country that has been subject to invasion, religious and cultural interaction of centuries.

UWA Chief Cultural Officer Prof Ted Snell said, “In commissioning this work, we wanted to bring Perth audiences a truly immersive experience

“Watching four stationary camera shots, the viewer is immersed in the grand bazaar’s scenes and sounds. In the midst of colourful goods from myriad shops and the bazaar’s traditional architecture of pointed arches, brick ceiling and a tiled pool, the viewer is able to follow the movement of people from screen to screen.

“The camera is fixed so as not to dictate what the viewer sees, but to simply observe as the artist did.

“The absence of narrative, zooming, panning, tilting and voice-over make the notions of time and movement particularly prominent. You see people go about their day, some in a rush and others leisurely, and the centuries-old architecture coexists with modern clothing and neon signs.”

The exhibition is one of three opening at the gallery on Friday. It joins Kelly Doley: Things Learnt About Feminism, a provocative and unapologetically contradictory investigation of feminism today, and Saltwater Mapping, which explores how humanity has mapped the WA coastline through cartography, songlines and stars.

Char Soo will be presented at the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery from 8 October to 10 December. It will officially open at 6pm, Friday 7 October in the presence of the artist.

A selection of images can be found here.

**About the artist**

Hossein Valamanesh was born in Iran in 1949 before immigrating to Australia in 1973. His work combines cultural elements from both countries and, while deceptively simple, is imbued with cultural meanings and personal associations, playing on imagination, memory and emotion. With minimum manipulation of raw resources, he is able to create elegant works with maximum emotional impact while also asking philosophical questions about life and existence.

Carriageworks, Adelaide Film Festival, Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art and the University of Western Australia present Hossein Valamanesh in collaboration with Nassiem Valamanesh: Char Soo, 2015, Produced by Felix Media.

**For media enquiries and interviews contact:**
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The Cultural Precinct maintains an extensive library of professional-quality photography. To request an image, contact Clare McFarlane on 08 6488 7806 or clare.mcfarlane@uwa.edu.au
Hossein and Nassiem Valamanesh on location in Arak, Iran, 2014
Photograph by M Reza Jahanpanah, courtesy the artist and GAGPROJECTS | Greenaway Art Gallery, Adelaide.

Setting up cameras in the grand bazaar intersection in Arak, Iran, 2014
Photograph by Nassiem Valamanesh, courtesy the artist and GAGPROJECTS | Greenaway Art Gallery, Adelaide.