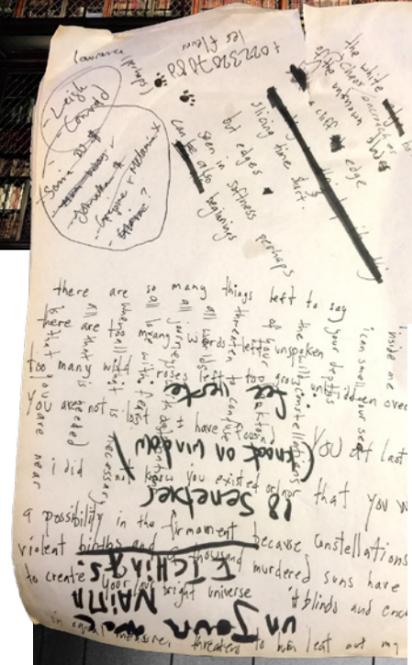


"We have been fortunate enough to spend hours with Her Majesty and our respect, admiration, and affection for her grows every time. She is such a presence in our lives that our four collective children seem to have come to think of her as a remote grandmother of sorts, and often casually refer to 'The Empress' in conversations, as if we were all about to pop 'round for tea. Actually, Viola and I think the children would quite enjoy Her Majesty's delicious sweets ... not to mention all her wonderful stories. It's not hard to see why Iranians all over the world see the Empress as a mother figure. She cares deeply for the people of Iran, takes such an interest in their individual wellbeing – and will even, if necessary, split her tea cake with you." – Miranda Darling

WHAT'S FOUND

Miranda Darling and Viola Raikhel-Bolot began Vanishing Pictures Productions to unbury the stories of women who have changed the course of history. Here they reveal the making of their first volume, published by Assouline. *Iran Modern: The Empress of Art* tells the tale of Iranian empress and art collector turned exile, Her Imperial Majesty Farah Pahlavi.

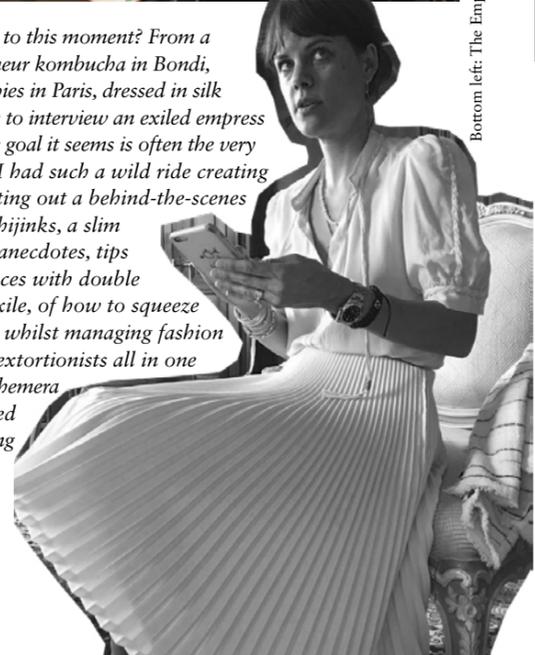
WORDS Miranda Darling & Viola Raikhel-Bolot



If it is not the rational which manages the world but forces of affective, mystical or collective origin which guide men. The seductive promptings of these mystical formulas are all the more powerful in that they remain rather ill defined ... immaterial forces are the true steers of combat.
Gustave Le Bon 1916



"How had we gotten here, to this moment? From a conversation over a de rigueur kombucha in Bondi, to outsmarting potential spies in Paris, dressed in silk and pearls, and on the way to interview an exiled empress ... The journey towards the goal it seems is often the very best part of all. Viola and I had such a wild ride creating this book that we are putting out a behind-the-scenes book about our imperial hijinks, a slim paperback full of stories, anecdotes, tips and transcripts; of dalliances with double agents, the protocols of exile, of how to squeeze a year's work into a week whilst managing fashion houses, film makers, and extortionists all in one day – all the fascinating ephemera of the things that happened along the way to publishing Iran Modern."
– Miranda Darling



Bottom left: The Empress Farah Pahlavi and Andy Warhol, 1977. GETTY IMAGES. All other imagery courtesy of Miranda Darling and Viola Raikhel-Bolot



"... We are in Paris, seated waiting to be received by Her Imperial Majesty Farah Pahlavi ... In front of us is a magnificent coffee table filled with more sensory delights than we can process as we anxiously await her arrival. Iranian pistachios, dried mulberries and figs, ancient Persian artefacts, Andy Warhol's hairbrush, trinkets from ancient civilisations all resting gently next to the embroidered linen napkins, our tea glasses and a magnificent tray of cakes from the renowned French pâtisserie Pierre Hermé. A silver tray filled with pink macaron type cakes decorated with velvet red rose petals and raspberries. We are both in awe of everything around us and take it all in. Eating was the last thing on either of our minds. Well the interview went beautifully, we even went off script. A lot of this meeting you can find inside our book Iran Modern. This was to be the first of many meetings with the Empress ..."
– Viola Raikhel-Bolot

