

Zohreh Valiary

Master's

Department of Art & Design,
Faculty of Arts

Image created in Edmonton, Alberta

The Girls of Enghelab Street

Honourable Mention

An often-cited example of a country with a highly restricted society is Iran. Iranian women's history is a labyrinthine road of darkness, patriarchy and suppression. After the invasion of Muslims, women started losing their equal rights, and the situation continued to be more or less the same until the end of the 19th century when some movements started to happen toward the emancipation of women. These movements, that still are going, on have a long way to go to reach the goal of equal rights and freedom for women in my motherland.

I based "the Girls of Enghelab Street" on the action of Vida Movahed, a young Iranian woman who, on December 27, 2017, stood on a platform in Enghelab street in Tehran, tied her white hijab (a symbol of protest against mandatory hijab created by Masih Alinejad, the founder of the online movement "My Stealthy Freedom"), to a stick, and waved it at the crowd until the authorities arrested her. After Vida Movahed's action more women started doing the same to show their union and support for the movement. Twenty-nine women were arrested in the two months leading up to February 2018.

The aim of my research is to explore how visual communication design might provide a medium through which one can foster awareness and build empowerment in my target audience of young, educated Iranian women, aged eighteen to twenty-five.