



**HOSEIN SHEIKH** (fourth from left) and **Golnaz Sheikh-Homayounfar** (third from left) with artists **Ali Askhar Safaian**, **Sarkis Vaspour**, **Reza Banquiz**, **Esmail Marzaie**, **Ebrahim Faraji** and **Abbas Jalali Sousanabadi** (in foreground) at the **Intercontinental Hotel** gathering last Wednesday. There were also samples of each artist's works.

## Paintings

by **JANET LAZARIAN SHAGHAGHI**

**TODAY IS** the opening of the group exhibition of five Iranian artists at the Shahr Gallery. The artists, whose works range from miniatures to surrealist paintings, are **Abbas Jalali Sousanabadi**, **Ali Askhar Safaian**, **Reza Banquiz**, **Esmail Marzaie** and **Ebrahim Faraji**. **Sarkis Vaspour** joins them as a guest artist.

Last Wednesday, Sheikh owner **Ms. Homayounfar** (**Golnaz Sheikh**) introduced the artists to the press in a luncheon at the Intercontinental Hotel.

The artists were asked to comment on the art situation

in the country these days. **Hosein Sheikh**, **Golnaz** uncle-painter who studied under the master **Kamal-ol-Molk** and who is now the director of the art school with the master's name, was present and he said that this time is not the time for true artists. "It is the time for the business-minded artists who know how to sell even if their works are very inferior".

**Ms. Sheikh**, on the other hand, complained of the unhealthy competition existing among the city's gallery owners. "The selection of works for the Bologna Exhibition has been corrupted by a jealous gallery owner", she cited as an example.

"If an owner of a gallery or an art patron really wishes to support less-privileged artists, he has to have enough guts and moral strength to face this situation", she

added.

The common complaint of the artists is that "if you don't find the right patron to support you, you just have to sit back and wait".

"Even government sponsored art galleries, which are supposed to give their fullest cooperation to artists without any returns, now ask for some commission. In fact, two of my works are still held at the **Takhte Jamshid Gallery** because I can't raise the **Rls. 30,000** I'm asked to pay", said **Ali Askhar Safaian**.

**Sousanabadi** said that in the Ministry of Culture and Arts where artists count for some support, clerks and typists are given more attention and respect than artists.

**Banquiz**, like the rest, hopes that the situation would improve for the benefit of artists as well as the general public. **1978**