

Empty Spaces

The metropolitan city of Tehran, where I was born and raised to this day, has grown massively during the past decades. The city centre, which was once an administrative and commercial zone, started to transform to a cultural and artistic hub for youngsters and art lovers. The houses and buildings, which were abandoned as a result of the revolution, became the centre of attention. The reason was mostly the size and quality of their spaces comparing to the compact apartments where people can normally afford to live. Another more hidden reason is the desire of people to recognize their roots and their endeavour to get attached to a history that was about to be forgotten in the fast pace of urbanization.

Our family house was among the first buildings of this type to be renovated to become a forum for architects and urbanists. Located in the former uptown avenue of Tehran, where all ministries and headquarters are built, this house was designed by a renowned architect of Modern era, Vartan Hovanesian. As the best example of his residential projects, its preservation and revival seemed inevitable for the concerned. The house was sold in 2015 and its renovation began.

This collection consists of photos, which I took during the transition time: from our private home to a public building.

Exploring the corners of this house for the last time was a unique and rather difficult experience for me. I witnessed empty spaces; imagining all the lives that were lived during seven decades like a colourful and lively movie. And how it would look like if all generations of my family could gather together without having time dimension and limitation.

But all I could record - as an objective matter - are empty spaces with traces of past lives. Each image contains an object - old and rather useless - which tells a story when left to spectator's imagination. One could connect to these spaces with his/her own subjective experience and imagine a slot of life.