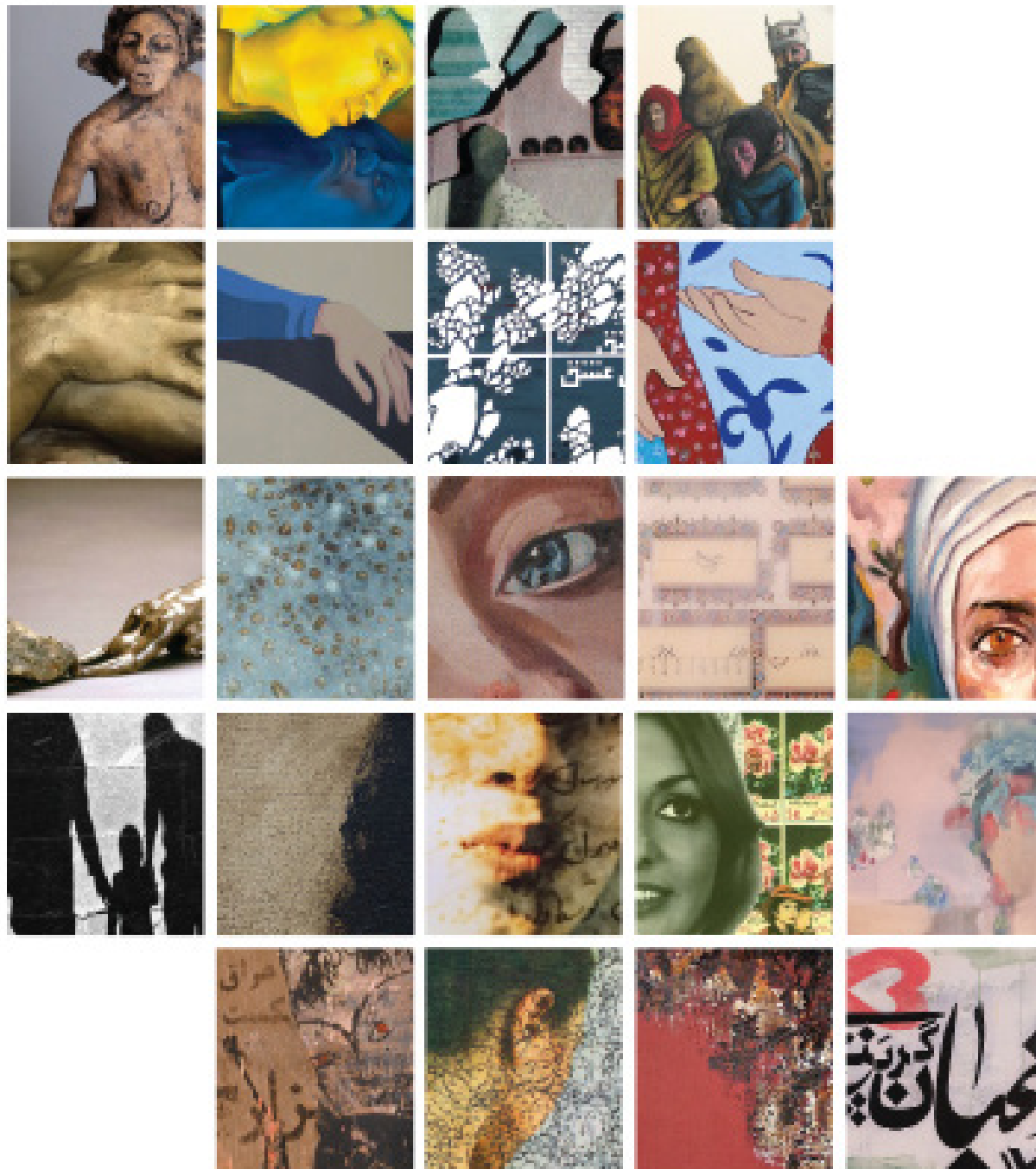


ADVOCARTSY
PRESENTS

ART BRIEF IV:

Iranian Contemporary San Francisco



IN PROUD COLLABORATION WITH



ADVOCARTSY is a collaborative visual arts platform with the mission elevate awareness and engagement amongst artists, collectors, and the fine art community, with focus on Iranian contemporary art.

ADVOCARTSY's *ART BRIEF* series provide a concentrated opportunity to introduce artists of Iranian heritage to the Iranian community and the community at large. The first three *ART BRIEF* initiatives were held in Los Angeles. The *ART BRIEF* series is designed to build community and to build bridges between communities, but also to demonstrate the breadth of expression and meaning characterizing the art of Iranian-American artists. ADVOCARTSY presents its fourth public initiative of a multi-artist show entitled *ART BRIEF IV: IRANIAN CONTEMPORARY SAN FRANCISCO* and thus expands its efforts to Northern California.

ART BRIEF IV: IRANIAN CONTEMPORARY SAN FRANCISCO explores the diverse ways artists of Iranian background in diaspora create and define 'Iranian Contemporary Art'. The works exhibited speak to the various artistic reactions and reflections to the realities of identity formation in diaspora, the pain and joy of exile, the call of nostalgia, and the fragmentation of the self.

ADVOCARTSY is proud to collaborate with Moms Against Poverty (MAP) as its official community and fundraising partner for *ART BRIEF IV: Iranian Contemporary in San Francisco*. This collaboration will bring about Northern California's support of the Iranian art community as we fundraise for MAP's important and inspiring mission. MAP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2008 by a group of individuals, who believe that, every child deserves a chance to thrive in this world regardless of where they are born. MAP is collaborating with ADVOCARTSY to help build a bridge between art and charity, where art serves a charitable cause and charity supports Iranian artists. Ten percent (10%) of net sales during this event will be donated to MAP.

MAP's mission is to nurture and educate underprivileged children to their fullest potential, so that, one day, they can contribute and lead within their own communities; thus breaking the cycle of poverty. MAP is dedicated to serving underprivileged children in Iran, the U.S and around the world. MAP has long strived to bring awareness to artists from Iran and other countries to the community while promoting its cause of serving children in need.

Momsagainstpoverity.org

Advocartsy.com

Pouya Afshar

Pouya Afshar is an alumnus from the California Institute of Arts Character Animation department and is a graduate of University of California Los Angeles Graduate Department of Film and Television focusing in Animation and Digital Media. He has exhibited his work as an animator and visual artist throughout Los Angeles and United States at renowned locations such as Harold M. Williams Auditorium at the Getty Center, Bovard Auditorium at University of Southern

California, Royce Hall at University of California Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Santa Monica Art studios, 18th street Art Center, and numerous galleries and art fairs around the world. Pouya has presented his research at Stanford University, Harvard University, University of Southern California, School of Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and Residency Unlimited NY. He is also the recipient of a Create Economy Grant in the state of Massachusetts as well as a Fulbright Scholar award. Pouya is the creator, character designer and producer of the animated series "Rostam in Wonderland" and the co-creator of IPA2PA comics. He is currently an assistant professor of art and Design at University of Massachusetts, Lowell. (Boston)

Displaced II
2018
Soft Pastel on Paper.
62 by 33 inches



THE CHARM OF THE UNFAMILIAR / COMPLIANCY OF THE DISPLACED

The West has been developing a preoccupation with the "exotic" ever since it gained economic dominance over the so called "third world." It began with an ethereal characterization of the "eastern seductress" in the Western renaissance into a patronizing fixation on "the unprivileged other from the war zone" in the late 20th and early 21st century. In the age of modern capitalism, circumnavigation of the "first world" spatially by migrants along with the fantastical travelogues of the colonists created a platform for "exoticism" to evolve within and penetrate the popular culture. Generally, in the arts and entertainment, this exoticism is justified by the host cultures and its agents due to the void of cultural assimilation among the displaced groups of migrants, a behavioral adaptation that makes racial gap comprehensible for the Western Art consumer. This patronizing Western attitude encourages the appropriation and consumption of one culture by another. It creates a moment of pressured immersion by the migrant into a different, generally dominant cultural attitude that lays the foundation for using the guest culture as an inverted mirror. This type of exoticism can inflect popular culture but because the host culture sees itself differently, it sees the guests/migrants differently as well. It will create a platform for the opulence of fantasy, which reinforces a denial of indigenous agency, depicting the guest/migrant culture as mysterious, intense, or elusive. When this approach fixates itself within the dynamics of the relationship between the host and the guest, it leaves no other options for the guests other than the compliancy in normalizing this microaggression towards themselves and their respected culture.

The idea of being socially normalized as deliverance for the guest culture boosts the call for eroticizing its characteristics by the host culture. In other words, it legitimizes the transformation of these cultural characteristics into vindictive fantasies of the third world.

Adapting or assimilating the guest culture as an extension rather than an independently functional branch of the society dismantles the inherent character of the guest culture for the benefit of understandability by the host's consumer culture. In this structure, the transition from a value-centric worldview to a user-based mentality is adopted by the displaced group that eventually uncovers a significant cultural "otherness", less fearsome to the host.

My project, "THE CHARM OF THE UNFAMILIAR / COMPLIANCY OF THE DISPLACED" is a fictional improvisation on the story of the displaced. It follows the narrative of a group of migrants that relocate into an abandoned city that had once been an amusement park. The displaced in this narrative, are hybrid personas, some real, some mythical. Each carries a background story that has transformed their physicality in different forms and shapes. They need to adapt to their new habitat, finding a purpose in life within this Coney Island-esque setup, fighting to maintain their personalities and their characteristics.



Pouya Afshar
Displaced I
2018
Soft Pastel on Paper.
65.5 by 33 inches

Samira Akbari

Samira Akbari has a bachelors degree in sculpture and MFA from Academy of Art in San Francisco University for an MFA Program. Her work often explores the experience of women and the human condition. (San Francisco)

My work talks about the universal female experience by retelling my own stories. It documents how I became who I am and how different environments have shaped me. I use a symbolic language and the human body to show my experiences at different times and places. I find that the resulting work investigates the cycle of joy and pain. It also talks about the influence of culture and architecture in making us who we are. Simply put, the frames represent the structures of the society and the body parts are the results of it, they have struggled to get out of frames or fit themselves inside of it.



Obsession
2018
Ceramic
30"x20"



Insecurity
2018
Bronze
30"x20"

Afsoon

Afsoon works with her own collection of vintage images to create illustrious collages. Through a combination of techniques, Afsoon's rich, and often playful, works reflect the merging of East and West, allowing the audience to find the familiar and foreign. Afsoon's works have been extensively exhibited and can be found worldwide in prominent collections and museums, including the British Museum, Los Angeles County Museum and Berger/YSL Collection, among others. (London)

Fairytale Icons

As a child I was told many fairytales of beautiful princesses and brave heroes. They faced life's challenges and always emerged happy and victorious. I believed in fairytales. My chosen icons lived expectantly, hoping, wishing, dreaming. They were loved, admired and fulfilled many of their hopes and dreams. But what happened to them in the end? Did these fairytale icons really live happily ever after? And if not, what chance do we have of a fairytale ending?



Googosh II Roses (6/8), 2010, Archival Print on Somerset Artist Paper, 16.50 x 23.40 in



Forough Poetbird (6/8), 2009, Archival Print on Somerset Artist Paper, 16.50 x 23.40 in



Afsoon
Forough Poethands (6/8)
 2009
 Archival Print on Somerset Artist Paper
 16.50 x 23.40 in



Afsoon
Freedom Fighters (6/8)
 2010
 Archival Print on Somerset Artist Paper
 16.50 x 23.40 in



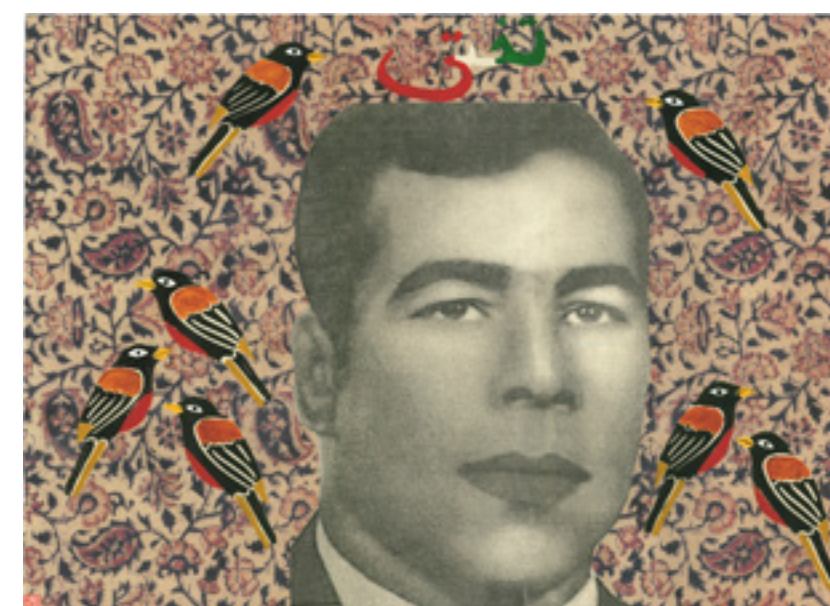
Afsoon
Nasserdin Shah (6/8)
 2010
 Archival Print on Somerset Artist Paper
 16.50 x 23 in



Afsoon
Forough Adam and Eve (6/8)
 2009
 Archival Print on Somerset Artist Paper
 16.50 x 23.40 in



Afsoon
Googoosh III (6/8)
 2010
 Archival Print on Somerset Artist Paper
 16.50 x 23.40 in



Afsoon
Champ Birds (6/8)
 2010
 Archival Print on Somerset Artist Paper
 16.50 x 23.40 in

Watercolouring the Dreams by Afsoon



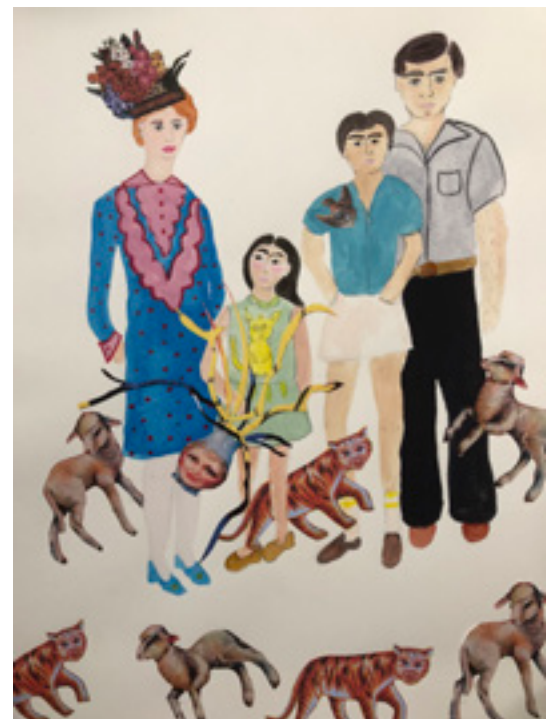
"We Are Our Choices"- JP Sartre
2017-2018
Watercolor and paper collage on Arches paper
12 x 9 in



Distant Cousins
2017-2018
Watercolor and paper collage on Arches paper
12 x 9 in



First Day of School
2017-2018
Watercolor and paper collage on Arches paper
12 x 9 in



Family Dynamics
2017-2018
Watercolor and paper collage on Arches paper
14 x 10 in



The Ticking Biological Clock in the Barren Land
2017-2018
Watercolor and paper collage on Arches paper
14 x 10 in

Ali Dadgar

Ali Dadgar is an experimental artist working across performance, image, text and object based media. Dadgar holds an MFA in Art Practice from UC Berkeley and a BFA from California College of Arts and Crafts. His work explores personal and shared experiences of alienation, loss and duality often in playful and varied forms of expression. (San Francisco/Bay Area)

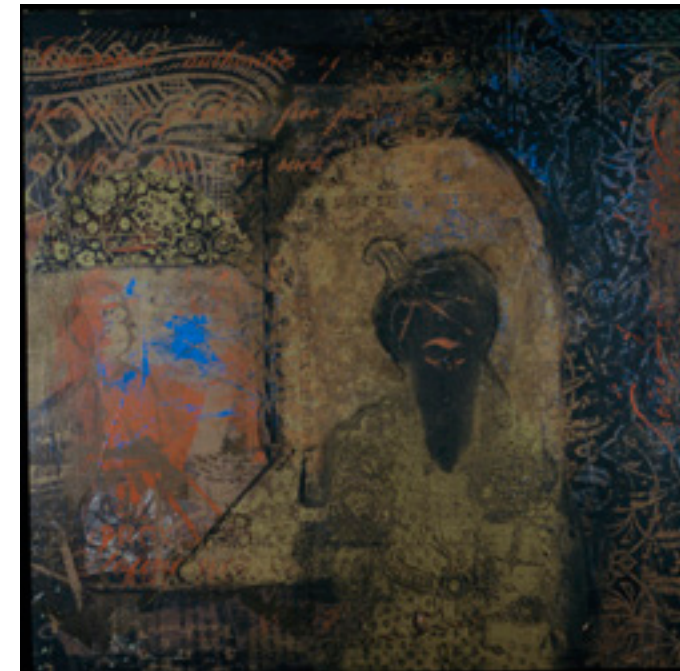
Inspired by Pre-Islamic and Islamic Iranian art and design, American Modernism and popular culture, this series animate unpredictable dialogues between past and present, East and West.

Driven by images, personal and found, letters and newspaper articles, religious and historical icons and relics of popular culture make up the visual vocabulary. The style has emerged from a rather extensive scope of influences that include Iranian miniature and court paintings, Rembrandt, Jasper Johns and Andy Warhol. Being located within such different visual traditions is not only about a fusion of eastern and western conventions, but entails a negotiation of various historical and aesthetic relations.

The tension and interplay between abstract graphic field and representational subjects, for example, convey feelings of displacement and dislocation. Up close, the paintings reveal a more textured effect while, paradoxically, the overall impression remains graphic. Some pieces display an elusive transparency; what glistens silver or gold at first, shifts to admit light and form. There is also a prominent affection for the printed text in this series, from Persian calligraphy and Arabic prayers, to Latin and Hebrew text.



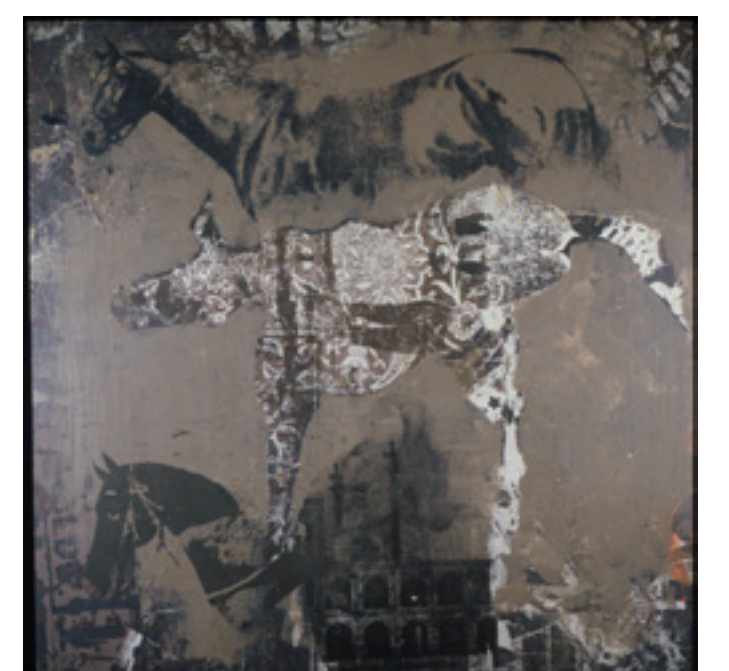
top left:
Kurd Mother
Acrylic/mixed media on Wood
24" w x 24" h x 2.5" d
2010



bottom left:
Fatih Ali Poet
Acrylic/mixed media on Wood
24" w x 24" h x 2.5" d
2010



top right:
Talking Heads
Acrylic/mixed media on Wood
24" w x 24" h x 2.5" d
2010



bottom right:
The Horse
Acrylic/mixed media on Wood
24" w x 24" h x 2.5" d
2010



Turkish Delight
 Acrylic/mixed media on Wood
 24" w x 24" h x 2.5"
 2010



Creed
 Acrylic/mixed media on Wood
 24" w x 24" h x 2.5" d
 2010

Taraneh Hemami

Taraneh Hemami engages in diverse strategies including installation, object and media productions, collective and participatory projects as well as curation to explore themes of displacement, preservation, and representation. Her projects transform materials of history, archives of images and information into timelines, patterns and maps that draws connections between contradictory narratives. She received a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Painting & Drawing from the University of Oregon, Eugene (1982) and a Master of Fine Arts in Painting (Distinction) from the California College of the Arts, Oakland, California (1991). She lives in San Francisco, and exhibits, lectures, teaches and curates internationally. (San Francisco)

Absence Series #C2-- AP
2018
Pigment Print on fiber paper
12 x 12 in



Absence Series #P2-- AP
2018
Pigment Print on fiber paper
12 x 12 in



Absence Series #C1-- AP
2018
Pigment Print on fiber paper
12 x 12 in



Absence Series #P3-- AP
2018
Pigment Print on fiber paper
12 x 12 in



Absence Series #F4-- AP
2018
Pigment Print on fiber paper
12 x 12 in



Absence Series #F5-- AP
2018
Pigment Print on fiber paper
12 x 12 in



Absence, 2013-2016

Mementos of past and present, mingle within layers of collected photographs of Iranian immigrants. Bodies, individually or in groups, are cutout from landscapes, cityscapes, interiors, exteriors. What remain are multi-layered fragments of place; intimate spaces: a living room, a bed, backyards— or public settings: schools, a bridge, a brick road. Spaces alter, spaces grow into one another, spaces go on living, transforming continually to their next form. Silhouettes of the invisible hover over the spaces they once occupied. Displaced, their absence heightens the sense of their presence. They live beyond their physical tangible worlds, weaving strands of multitude of places into new meaning.

Kaveh Irani

Kaveh Irani works in painting, collage, sculpture, and sound installation. Creating dynamic, mixed media artworks, Kaveh examines the concepts of identity, diaspora, and topophilia. Imbuing objects with significance of their origins, he brings disparate things together in ways that explore how they do and do not resonate with one another. Kaveh received his Bachelor Degree in Fine Arts from Emily Carr University and his Masters Degree from California College of the Arts. (San Francisco)

Kaveh Irani's works often take up the immigrant experience, transporting us out of the US entirely. Imbuing objects with significance of their origins, he brings disparate things together in ways that explore how they do and do not resonate with one another. His assemblage works call up the space of travel through the use of fabrics, acrylic paints, spray paint, and other elements that suggest another time and place, evoking remembered or misremembered moments and states of being.



(from left to right) *Wonder, Hand on Shoulder, Hands*. 2018. 36" x 48" each. 2018. Cement on canvas, Acrylic paint, Spray paint, photo transfer, Epoxy, Gold, Bronze powder, Iron powder

Aida Izadpanah

Aida Izadpanah specializes in large-format mixed media and porcelain-sculptural painting. She holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Psychology from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Aida's work focuses on the passage of time, dynamics of energy, and the mindful sense of presence. She regularly exhibits in solo and group shows around the country and internationally. Among her awards are a painting fellowship in Paris, France and artist in residency at Stony Brook University. (New York City)

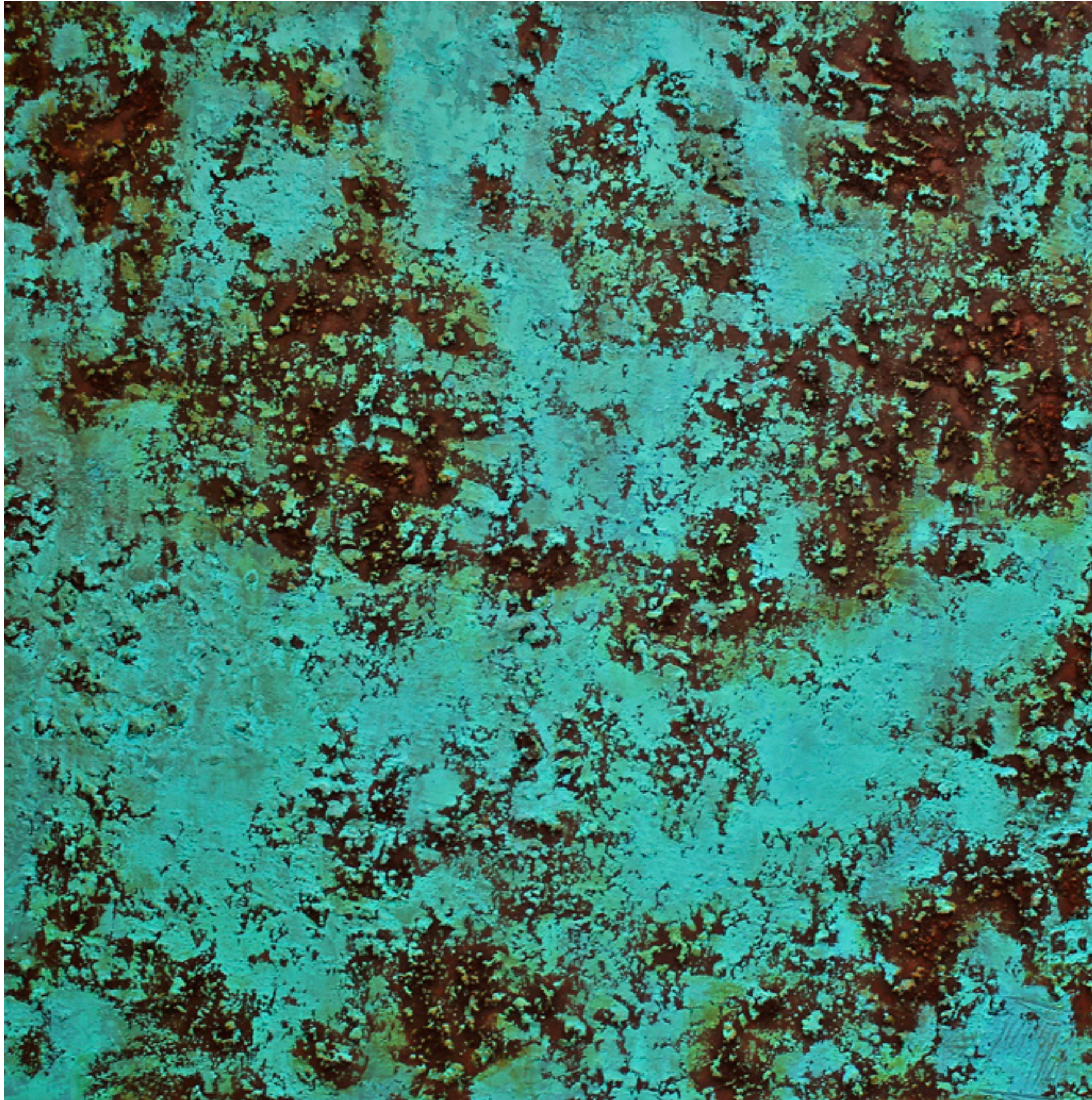
Revelation Series

I call my abstraction work texture-field paintings. They are deeply associated with the passage of time and therefore, inevitably, with diverse contexts. In my opinion, abstraction is the purest form of artistic creation; it powerfully affects viewers because its immediacy does not rely on mental processing of representations. I am very attracted to the layering of textures, so I incorporate a lot of mixed media in these pieces, including for example, sand, various binding mediums, and my hand-made, painted, and fired porcelain creations. My paintings engage in the movement of energies through color, texture, and space. They are characterized by restless practices of scraping and carving away at impressions of incompleteness, yet these works also aspire to a natural state of presence and acceptance. They might be thought of as responses to a primary essence of experience, as Persian poet Sohrab Sepehri describes it: "Words should be washed to become the wind itself, the rain itself." I like to think of my mixed media paintings as meditations on itselfness.

The Revelation series is the emotional and visual vestige of meditations encompassing canvases in acrylic, cement, spackle, sawdust, and other mediums. The deliberate interplay of these constructive elements with the deconstructive phenomena they evoke offers encouragement in the face entropy's indifferent forces: to accept but not assent to the constant degeneration of matter and meaning. These works both comprise and inspire an intimate engagement with the aesthetic experience of time, whereby sanctuary may be attained in the beauty of the present moment that is innocent of its own passing. These effects emerge directly from and speak to experiences of displacement, whether of the Persian diaspora—as in my own case—through migration more generally, or from alienating episodes anyone might experience in the course of their sentient existence.



Revelation 3
2013
acrylic mixed media on canvas
72 x 68 in



Revelation 18
2013
acrylic mixed media on canvas
70 x 70 in

Shahram Karimi

Shahram Karimi's paintings portray the dilemma of the contemporary bicultural Iranian who seeks his historical and personal identity by wedding his personal past with contemporary form. Each one of Karimi's paintings relates a fragment of his memories and national history, each a piece of his personal past. Karimi exhibits his works internationally, and is a curator and art critic. (New York)

Shirin Neshat On the Works of Shahram Karimi

'In an era when Globalism has become an integral aspect of the post modern man's experience, the Iranian born artist, Shahram Karimi, living in Germany, truly represents such trans-cultural currents and realities in the context of contemporary art. His aspirations are at once rooted in his personal cultural history such as the traditional Persian Miniature paintings, his subsequent life in exile and exposure to the history of abstract, minimal and conceptual art of the West. Karimi has arrived at a unique form which combines both aspects of seemingly diverse cultures in an artistic language which transcends the boundaries of such localities. Karimi's paintings follow the same principals as those of classical Persian Miniature paintings, mainly in respect to the absence of perspective.

The use of narrative elements and inscription of text over imagery and his minimal abstractions of visual iconography bind him to Western art. Poetry plays a major role in Karimi's creative vocabulary. He expands on the rich tradition of poetry which has been recognized as the most vital aspect of Iranian culture. As a poet, in an unprecedented way, he incorporates verbal and visual metaphors in parallel forms to provoke and express distinct emotions. In his exploration into the realm of media, Karimi makes a video which in my view becomes an extension of his paintings and poetry. In this video, shot in Egypt, the artist offers a new experience for the viewer. One senses an obscure travel through Karimi's paintings. The strength lies in the ultra simplicity, raw and casual use of camera to capture the aura of the spaces that he encounters. There is an immediate emotional response to these spaces that suggests the notion of 'absence' of human body and the presence of a 'place' which remains. Karimi's most recent adventure into installation art is yet another poetic gesture with deeply humanistic and political edge, treated with the same level of abstraction and modesty. Here portraits of 'shoes' become reminiscent of the 'absence' of the physical body. This work suggests a new direction for a 'global' artist who is seeking a delicate balance between Persian aesthetics and Western expression to arrive at an art which becomes truly universal.'

Shirin Neshat



Untitled
2015
mixed media on fabric
48" w x 66" h



The Garden is My Skin
2018
mixed media on fabric
40" w x 55" h



Shahram Karimi
Suitcase I
2018
Oil paint on found suitcase
14 x 25 x 7 in



Shahram Karimi
Suitcase II
2018
Oil paint on found suitcase
15 x 23 x 6 in



Shahram Karimi
Suitcase I (back)
2018
Oil paint on found suitcase
14 x 25 x 7 in



Shahram Karimi
Suitcase II (back)
2018
Oil paint on found suitcase
15 x 23 x 6 in

Simin Keramati

Simin Keramati is a multidisciplinary artist working with social-political themes presented through painting, drawing, video art and new media. She received her Master of Fine Arts from Tehran Art University and is the Winner of the Grand Prize from the Khaka International Biennial 2004. Her paintings often address themes of identity, diasporic experience, and social issues. (Toronto)

You are a Bad Girl Series

In this series I am portraying various images of ordinary girls in their unusual daily gestures, with heads cut out by the upper edge of the frame, or faces covered with hands wearing big rings and/or huge and glamorous sunglasses. In some of the art works you'll find the girls turning their back to the audiences. The series *You are a Bad Girl* is criticizing the look of the society into the private life of a girl. At the time I was targeting the Middle Eastern look into the private lives of women. In all these paintings, I have been avoiding any kind of cliché for the outfit or the gesture of each of the girls/women, I have painted.

Simin Keramati



You're a Bad Girl 3
2009
Acrylic on canvas
59 x 59



You're a Bad Girl 2
2009
Acrylic on canvas
59 x 59

Dana Nehdaran

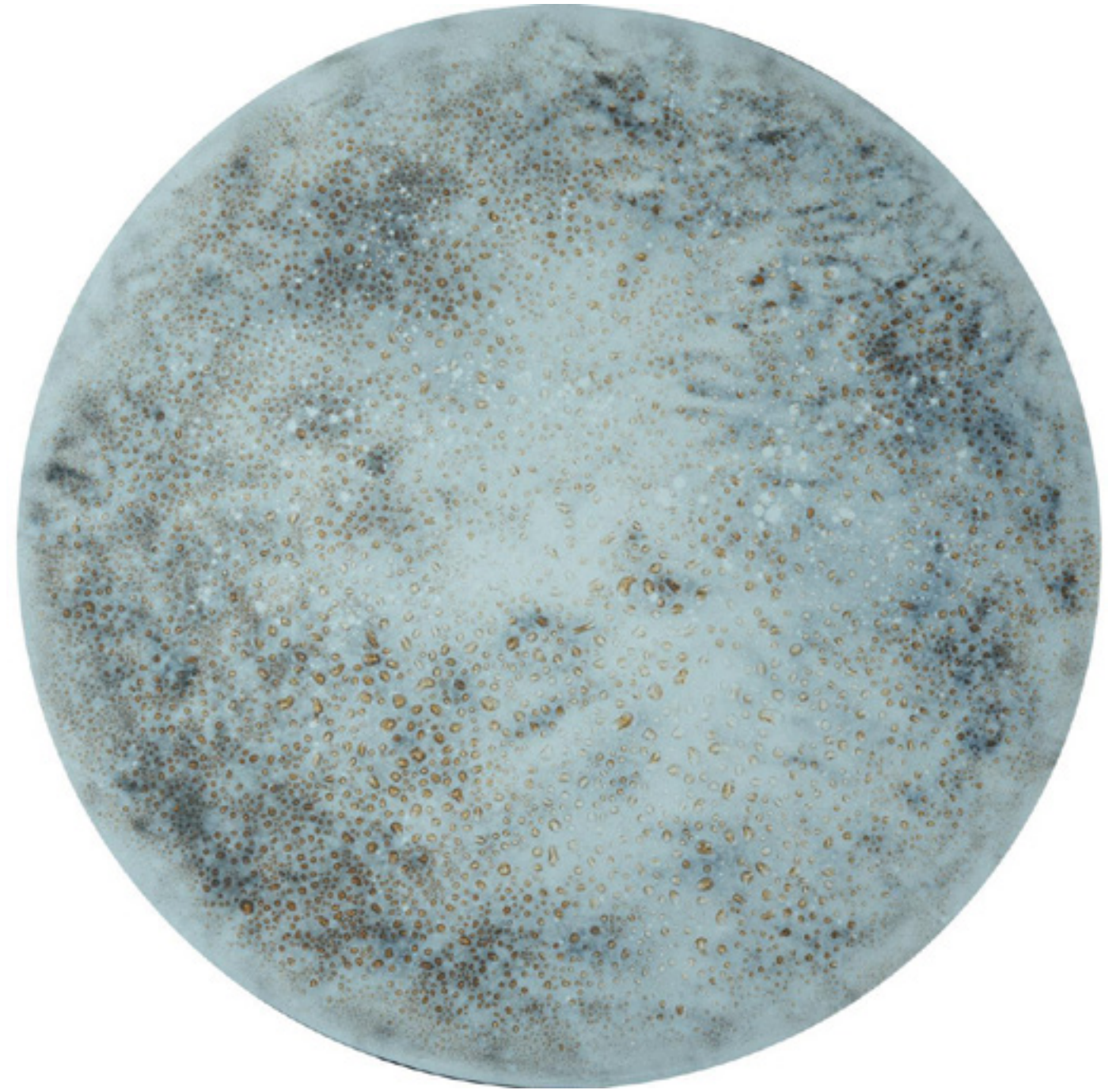
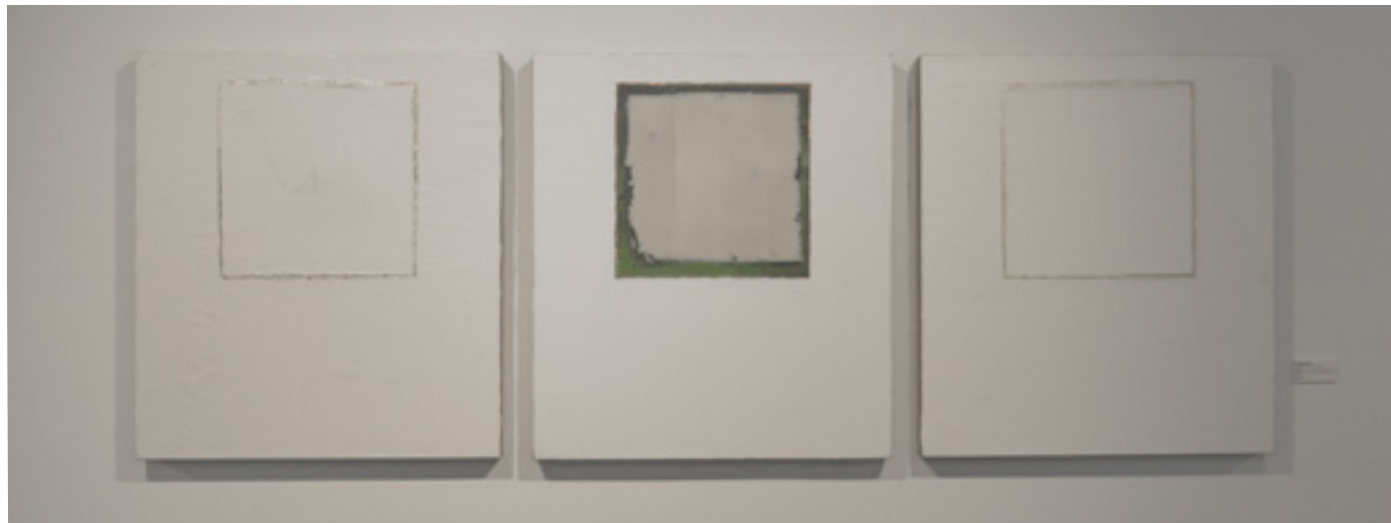
Dana Nehdaran studied painting in Iran and recently migrated to New York. Nehdaran's portraits captivantly capture the nostalgia and historical past, seamlessly connecting the past to contemporary culture. He uses abstraction to highlight the ways in which past and present weave together in both conflict and harmony. (New York City)

Fe26 Series

Dana Nehdaran is interested in the process of painting and how it can mirror historical flows. In the past he has addressed this directly through his choices of subject matter - historical photography that is the visual core of the series *Esther's Children*. It is during the work on this set of paintings that he discovered a more subtle and material history of iron. Oxidation allowed him to create images that fade into the canvas: unstable surfaces that betray a deeply personal relationship to the images of the past. The current series take this material exploration one step further. Upon his arrival in New York, Dana was surrounded with old iron rebar, beams, storm-water covers and other ironwork that is the backbone of the city.

It is the ordinary visual language, full of rust and beautiful imperfections. It is the most direct manifestation of the history of the city, the structure and the process that can be accessed by mindful observation of the everyday experience. Titled *Fe26* (the chemical symbol and atomic number for iron) this new body of work is created in a dialog with his new surroundings. This time, references to photography are gone and what we are left with is documentation of the meticulously controlled process of oxidation. The basic element shows both the history of the creation of the paintings and references its larger geographical context.

Fe26 Series-Three Squares
2017
Oil and Iron powder on linen
60 x 60 in



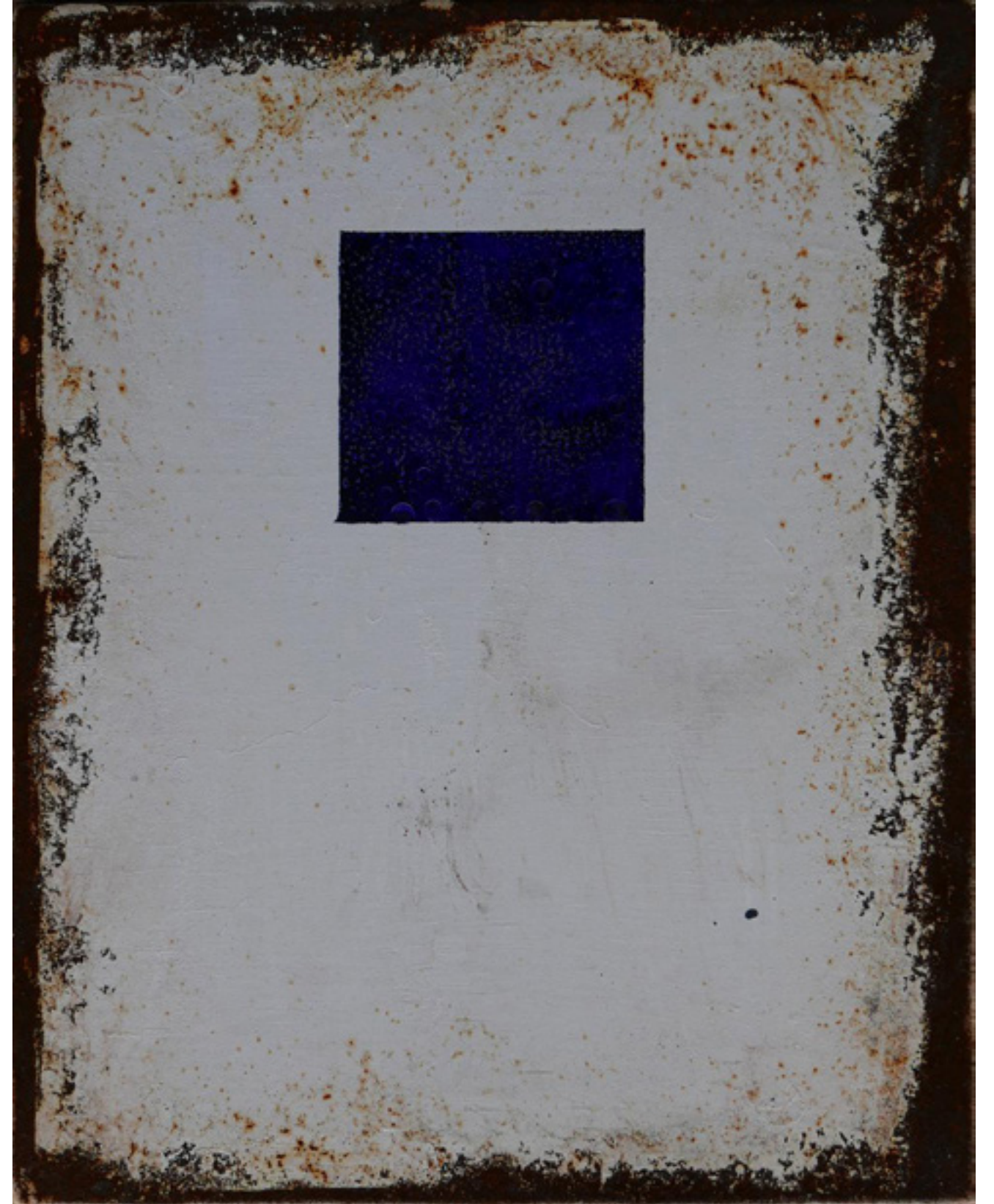
Fe26 Series
2017
Oil and Iron powder on linen
60 x 60 in



Fe26 Series-A Square II
2017
Copper powder, oil and epoxy on canvas
20 x 16 in



Fe26 Series-A Square I
2017
Copperleaf, oil and epoxy on canvas
20 x 16 in



Fe26 Series- Blue Square
2016
Iron powder, oil and vitrail on canvas
20 x 16 in

Dariush Nehdaran

Dariush Nehdaran's photography captures intimate moments suspended in time. He aims to turn spectators into participants, drawing them into contemporary Persian culture. His photographs and video works are available both in public and private collections worldwide including the Armando Reverón Contemporary Art Museum in Caracas-Venezuela 2018, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in the US 2016, and the Salsali Private Museum in Dubai-UAE 2012. (San Francisco)

The Life of Shadows

"When we stand, they fall. When we sit, they crumble. When we walk, they shiver. And when we sleep, they whirl... Face the wall, your back to the window, look through the window while waiting for the sun to shine again, waiting for us to appear again... then we can mingle with the Zebra stripes on the pedestrian crossing, and melt in the gray asphalt of the road, lest a car drives over them. But we never wait. We crawl in between the cars, and dance on the zebra crossing. By the time we make it to the other side of the road, they are finished. They change names and colors, and melt in the dark night. But we are still alive. Far from the gray human world, we turn the wheel of life; we live and grow in our pitch black world." In this body of work, unlike the multi-dimensional humans, my shadows are single-dimensional. The shadows simply show what they are. By flipping and rotating the images, our real lives are replaced with those of the shadows; but despite the distorted reality, the shadows are distinguishable. They are now the real images.



*The Shelter -
The Life of Shadows Series
(2/5)
2017,
Digital photography/Gelatin silver print
30 x 45 in*

The Stopper

A stopper from an old wine decanter brought back memories of my childhood and gave life to this series of photographs. In Persian literature wine is somehow portrayed as the source of enlightenment and the path to clarity, coherence and knowledge but also this elixir characterizes pleasure and oblivion, obscurity and blurriness. The stopper is an object that stops the wine from pouring out. It is therefore able to directly manage the liquid's effect on the mind. The more you pour the more blurry things get creating an alternative way for us to see the world around us.

In these photographs, the stopper covers a specific part of the image and blurs the rest. The juxtaposition of the blurriness and clarity creates three different layers in each image, the Stopper itself, what is inside the stopper and the blurry background offering a parallel universe.

Loving gymnastics as a child was probably the reason why I have been fascinated by seeing things upside down. One of my all-time favorite poses was the handstand since it offered me a different view of everything. When pictures are upside down, they provide more for the viewer. By rotating my images I try to give them an infinite meaning and by starting this conversation, I re-evaluate the relationship between right and wrong, up and down, back and forth... and like the Persian poet

Hafez allow each interpreter to have his own understanding of the subject. In this series my glass stopper has the power of showing everything upside down, but I still chose to rotate the images one more time to allow the stopper to narrate the story. These additional rotations trick the viewer into seeing an upright image through the stopper when scientifically one should see an inverted picture. By doing so, I invite my viewer to see the world in an alternative way, and I encourage him/her to discover the ambiguities and uncertainties found in our surroundings.

What makes the stopper even more interesting to me is its circular shape and the paradox it creates through the images it captivates. Like life, a circle has unlimited turns. It keeps turning until it is stopped, but ironically here, my Stopper does not keep turning. It is meant to stop the liquid from flowing. I like playing with the rules. Maybe, there is no right and wrong or good and bad. Everything in life can be seen differently through different eyes. It is up to each of us how we choose to interpret this infinite cycle.



*Persepolis -
The Stopper Series (2/5)
2017,
Digital photography/Gelatin silver print
30 x 45 in*

Ardalan Payvar

Ardalan Payvar draws inspiration from deconstructive typography and works to incorporate elements of its composition into his abstract, calligraphic works. Fragmenting traditional and contemporary type, Ardalan finds ways to balance and fuse them together without sabotaging the integrity of either realm, combining formal studies in Graphic Design, Fine Art, Persian Calligraphy and his artistic intuition. (Berkeley)

With a background in traditional Persian calligraphy and having studied the Western tradition of graphic design and art, Ardalan incorporates elements of modern typography and composition in combination with traditional calligraphic forms and finds ways to balance and fuse them together without sabotaging the integrity of either realm. Drawing inspiration from deconstructive typography and abstract expressionist painting, he takes words and phrases from old poems and sayings, fragmentates them into individual letter forms, and meticulously rearranges them to create whole compositions. Working in layers, Ardalan constantly switches back and forth between painting and collage, continuously marking his canvas with expressive and spontaneous paint drips and strokes while carefully cutting and pasting fragments of modern and traditional letter forms to create his carefully preplanned compositions. Throughout this process, he is constantly trying to find ways to make the spontaneous and planned interact and co-exist. Through this process of deconstruction and reconstruction, Ardalan makes the messages of these otherwise clichéd and sentimental sayings relatable to contemporary sensibilities which are often unsentimental, rational and even ironic. In a way, Ardalan is attempting to reclaim these old poems that carry valuable and potent universal and philosophical messages and to appropriate them in a modern and Western context.



Hejran diptych
2018
Acrylic, Paper and Masking Tape, on Wood Panel
36" H x 72" W

Bahar Sabzevari

Bahar Sabzevari is an Iranian artist exploring identity through self-portraiture, narrative painting and video art. In her most recent series of self-portraits, she questions the Iranians' tendency and obsession to praise the past. She received her MFA in painting at the New York Academy of Art in 2018 and she has been the recipient of the Central Academy of Fine Arts Residency in Beijing, China summer of 2017. (New York City)

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MiniaSaur
2018
Oil on linen
36 x 24 in



Glory
2018
Oil on Linen
30 x 24 in



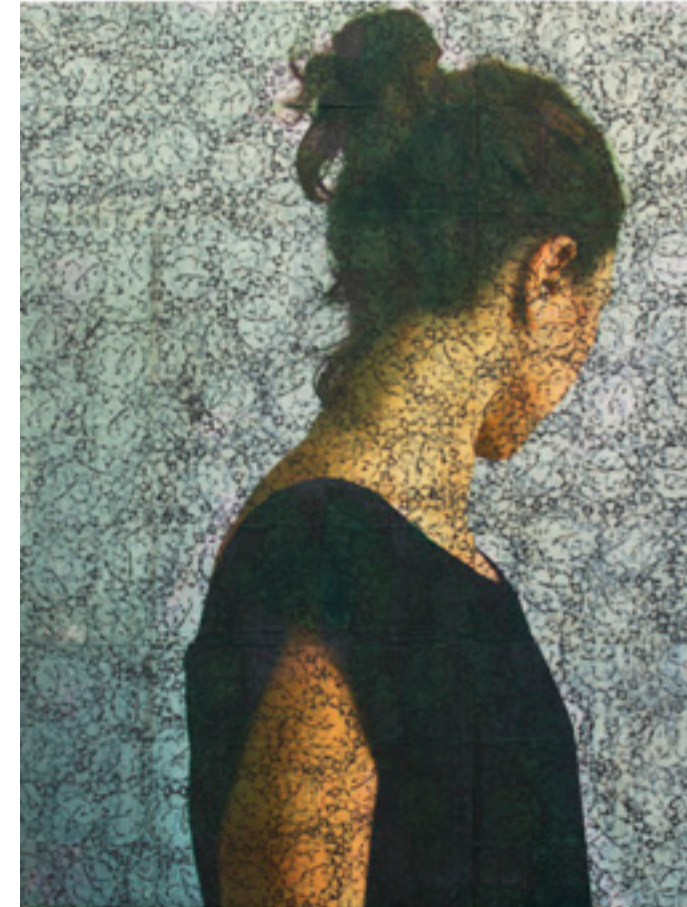
Ancestors
2018
oil on wood panel
11 x 14 inch

Sepideh Salehi

Sepideh Salehi works in various mediums and utilizes different processes ranging from painting, drawing to printmaking, photography, video art and animation. Her works revolve around the poetics of the veil as well as stories from her country of origin. Her work has been exhibited and showcased internationally. (Washington D.C. and New York City)

Mohr Portrait Series

My individual work spans printing, photography and video, animation, and revolves around the poetics of the veil as well as the stories from my own country of origin. My work primarily relies on paper, from which I create videos, collages, drawing, photography and painting. The manual process is seminal to my language and identity as an Iranian woman; however, the topics I explore, namely the power, the violence, the identity straddling national borders and cultures, as well as the role of women in our contemporary world, raise questions that refer to a more universal way of thinking. The concept of covering up, hiding and privacy are all of interest to me. Utilizing writing and words as a form of drawing is one way I find my imagery. These drawings emerge from a union between the immediacy of line and the direct and literal communicative properties of writing. I have also used the traditional Muslim prayer stone as a starting point. I borrow the etched images on the prayer stones to create patterns through rubbing and printing. The repeated images of the stones create a rhythm leading me in the end, to an imagery revealing layers upon layers. They form a pattern, echo words that become evident through this deliberate meditative work process.



Mohr Portrait 2 (1/3)
2017
Photograph on wood panel with frottage on Japanese paper
48 x 36 in



Mohr Portrait 3 (1/3)
2017
Photograph on wood panel with frottage on Japanese paper
48 x 36 in

Hadi Salehi

Hadi Salehi is a master of the art of analog photography. Salehi's images capture diverse portraits that are nostalgic, powerful and soft, leaving a haunting quality that lingers in the psyche. He seeks to create a collective awareness and be a cultural messenger through his images. His career now spans almost 40 years and has closely photographed cultural innovators like Keith Haring. He is a graduate of Art Center College of Design, Pasadena. (Los Angeles)

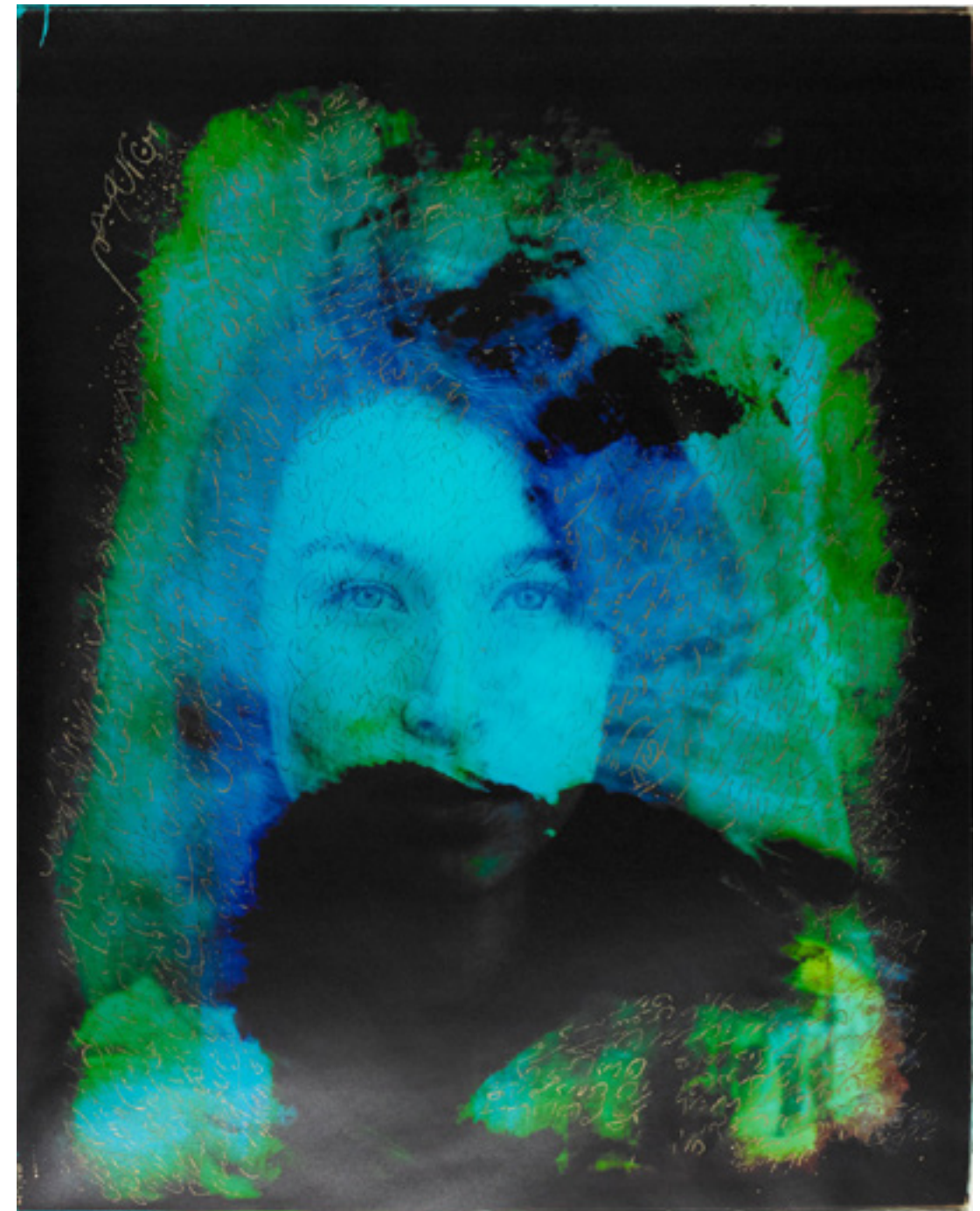
Hadi creates in layers, he is always experimenting with the developing process of each photograph. Using a myriad of antique cameras, Hadi's work begins with an analog portrait of his subjects, followed by the manipulation of those images. Hadi carefully pulls each photograph apart in their base negative form, and applies emulsion in a painterly fashion to create spontaneous and dynamic effects to the ink of the photograph. Through this layering of positives and negatives, text and imagery, Hadi creates imagery that is unique and soulful, and as modern as it is vintage.



Boocheh 1/4
2008
Type C Analog Print with Layered Negative Writing
40 x 30 in



Hadi Salehi
I am that Morning
2009
Type C, Analog w/Indian Ink handwriting
30 x 24 in



Hadi Salehi
I am that Morning
2009
Type C, Analog w/Indian Ink handwriting
30 x 24 in

Rebecca Setareh

Rebecca Setareh has garnered international attention for her sculpture work, harmoniously integrating rock and bronze. Her work examines the experience, strength of the female experience in a creative process that represents the struggle of life itself.
(Los Angeles)

Each of Rebecca Setareh's works strive to capture a figurative moment in time - a kind of emotional landscape. In choosing to work with bronze and rock, Setareh addresses society's tendency to delineate and separate; to categorize and label the world. Her work attempts to break through these illusory disparities. The contrast between the smooth, fluid lines of the bodies and the natural rock actually creates a sense of unity and oneness. To Setareh, this contrast is the struggle of life itself. As Setareh searches for the rock that will pair with the body of each individual piece, it becomes obvious that the humanly created world and nature can find an equilibrium.



The Prayer (8/12)
Bronze
6 x 29 x 5 in



Me and My Body 5/12
Bronze
19 x 12 x 8 in



Layed Back
Bronze and rock
11 x 12 x 10 in

Shilla Shakoori

Shilla Shakoori's diverse artistic expression springs from an exploration of the synthesis between native and adopted cultures. Shakoori's works are strongly influenced by Iranian philosophy and myth. Her work often reflects a meditative process of cutting, sewing and incorporating language and forms. (Los Angeles)



Blue, 2018, mixed media on paper, 26.5 x 39.5



Red
2018
mixed media on paper
30 x 22

Central to Shakoori's practice is the investigation of language as both a graphic process and a cultural signifier. Working in a variety of media, including painting, drawing and sculptural installations, Shakoori's work incorporates Persian script as a means to investigate the legacy of Persian culture, a heritage that continues to influence her as a contemporary artist practicing in America. Her work draws on diverse sources ranging from Rumi's poetry to the painting of Paul Gauguin and Marc Chagall, while also engaging with the works of contemporary painters such as Alexandra Grant, with whom she shares a commitment to experimenting with the use of text as imagery.

In her painting Shakoori juxtaposes figurative illustration and abstracted forms. Shakoori reworks her canvases through a collage like process, cutting and sewing them back together by hand to open up a meditative space contemplating the creative process as a whole. Texture is another key element to Shakoori's work. In her paintings layers of paint create a sense of depth and a record of the action of her hand.

It was through exploring Rumi's vast world of poetry that Shakoori started to fully connect to her cultural heritage. For Shakoori, the influence of Rumi's poetry transcends national borders and ethnic divisions and a synthesis between native and adopted cultures is ever present in Shakoori's work. Through her use of Persian and English text, her embrace of abstraction and figuration, illustration and gesture, and text and image, Shakoori highlights dualities in a harmonious and balanced manner thus capturing a mystical presence in her work.

Kamran Taherimoghaddam

Kamran Taherimoghaddam is a multi-disciplinary artist whose work illustrates social and political stories. His paintings and videos have been exhibited in museums, galleries and art fairs in Iran, Italy, France and USA. (Washington D.C. and New York City)

Men at Work Series

My minimalist approach to form explores issues of conformism and marginality in today's society. The faceless and often deformed subjects represent the loss of identity by forces of assimilation or coercion. "Men at Work" is an abstract, painted, personal documentation and chronology of events depicting scenes of violence and human rights abuses that would leave no spectator unchanged. A series of equal-sized, starkly-drawn wood blocks, form a multi-layered archive of graphic events. Here, I desperately but faithfully trace the memories of psychological shock and repression back to their emotional origins, where they were severed.



Men at Work series
2013
mixed media on wood panel
8" x 11" each

Taravat Talepasand

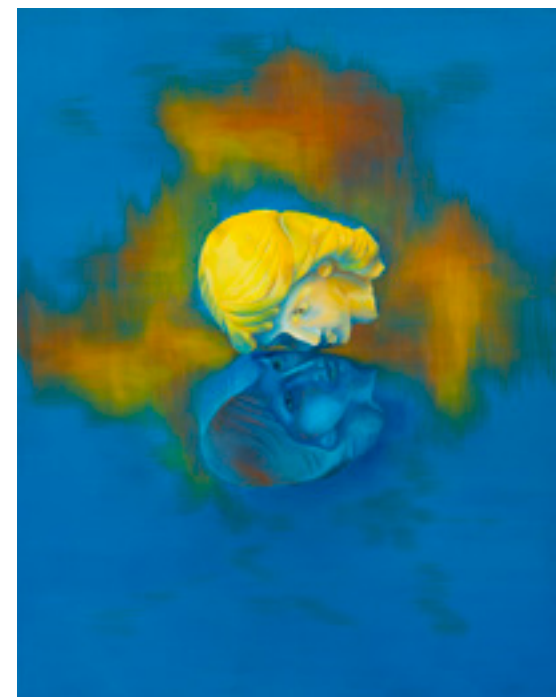
Taravat Talepasand's interdisciplinary practices draw on realism to bring focus to an acceptable beauty, exploring its relationship with art history under the guise of traditional Persian painting. Her interest is in painting the present, which is intrinsically linked to the past, making it easily understood by the Iranian and indicative of assumption for the Westerner. She is currently the Department Chair of Painting at the San Francisco Art Institute. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and is in permanent collections of the De Young Museum; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; and the Orange County Museum of Art, Orange County. Taravat was included in the 2018 Bay Area Now 8 at the Yerba Buena Center of the Arts and the recipient of the 2010 Diebenkorn Fellowship at the San Francisco Art Institute. (San Francisco)



La Réfraction Sanctionnée II
2012
Egg Tempera on linen
20 x 16 inches



La Réfraction Sanctionnée I
2012
Egg Tempera on linen
20 x 16 inches



La Réfraction Sanctionnée III
2012
Egg Tempera on linen
20 x 16 inches

La Réfraction Sanctionnée Series

The troubled parallels and hopeful differences between Iran, its women, and the Arab Spring are issues of freedom, dignity, and social justice. When religious conservatism is combined with sexism, classism, and ethnic and religious discrimination, as well as neoliberal economic policies, the battle for democratic rights and social justice becomes even more precarious. As a woman from Iran living in America, Talepasand explores how women navigate the geographic and physiological boundaries between East and West, revealing women's bodies and perspectives becoming surfaces imprinted with the uncertainties of political and social upheavals. Paying close attention to the cultural taboos identified by distinctly different social groups, particularly those of gender, race and socioeconomic position, her work reflects the cross-pollination, or lack thereof, in our "modern" society. Taravat's dedicated work ethic suggests a wry joke about her studio practice, which is characterized by labor-intensive and often repetitive processes of painting, drawings, and sculptures to bring a focus on an acceptable beauty and its relationship with art history. The human figure often found in her work is a treacherous place between narrative and introspection: "To create art, it is imperative for me to be vulnerable. Torment and twist—extract the truth from issues with which I need to deal. However, I believe that art has to possess an element of courage in order to provoke change—socially, intellectually and morally, most notable, in a world where ideas of culture, political and intellectual activities are evolving, but not without conflicts affecting generations to come."

Shadi Yousefian

Shadi Yousefian's mixed media work reflects and addresses issues that touch on universal themes such as loss, dislocation, alienation, and reinvention. She received both her Bachelor's (2003) and Master's (2006) of Fine Arts in photography from San Francisco State University. Shadi's work engages personal and social issues of contemporary life, particularly, cultural identity and the immigrant experience. Her work has been exhibited internationally and is in the permanent collection of The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). (Bay Area)

Subsistence series (2018)

In most of her works, Shadi has been dealing with the concepts of identity, immigration, and separation from one's homeland. In this series, Shadi is exploring a part of her identity that is shaped by her cultural heritage. In her previous series such as Letters and Memories series, she has examined her identity by cutting up her old letters and album photos into fragments and rearranging them in new forms, making them unreadable and unrecognizable. Through that process, she has shown how memory fails to preserve the details of the past, yet maintains a totality of feelings and emotions that have been embedded into ones being. To create the Subsistence series, Shadi takes a similar approach, this time going through books of Persian art and calligraphy (which represent a part of her cultural heritage) cutting the pages into small fragments and pasting them in a new arrangement on wooden panels. A coat of beeswax and a layer of epoxy resin poured on top of these panels further distances the viewer from these once perfect and meaningful calligraphic scripts. These scripts which have once served as the backbone of a nation's cultural identity are now merely abstract and partly blurred shapes and lines, still pleasing to look at but impossible to decipher.



Subsistence 1
2018
Paper, Beeswax, and Epoxy Resin on Wood Panel
36" x 36"



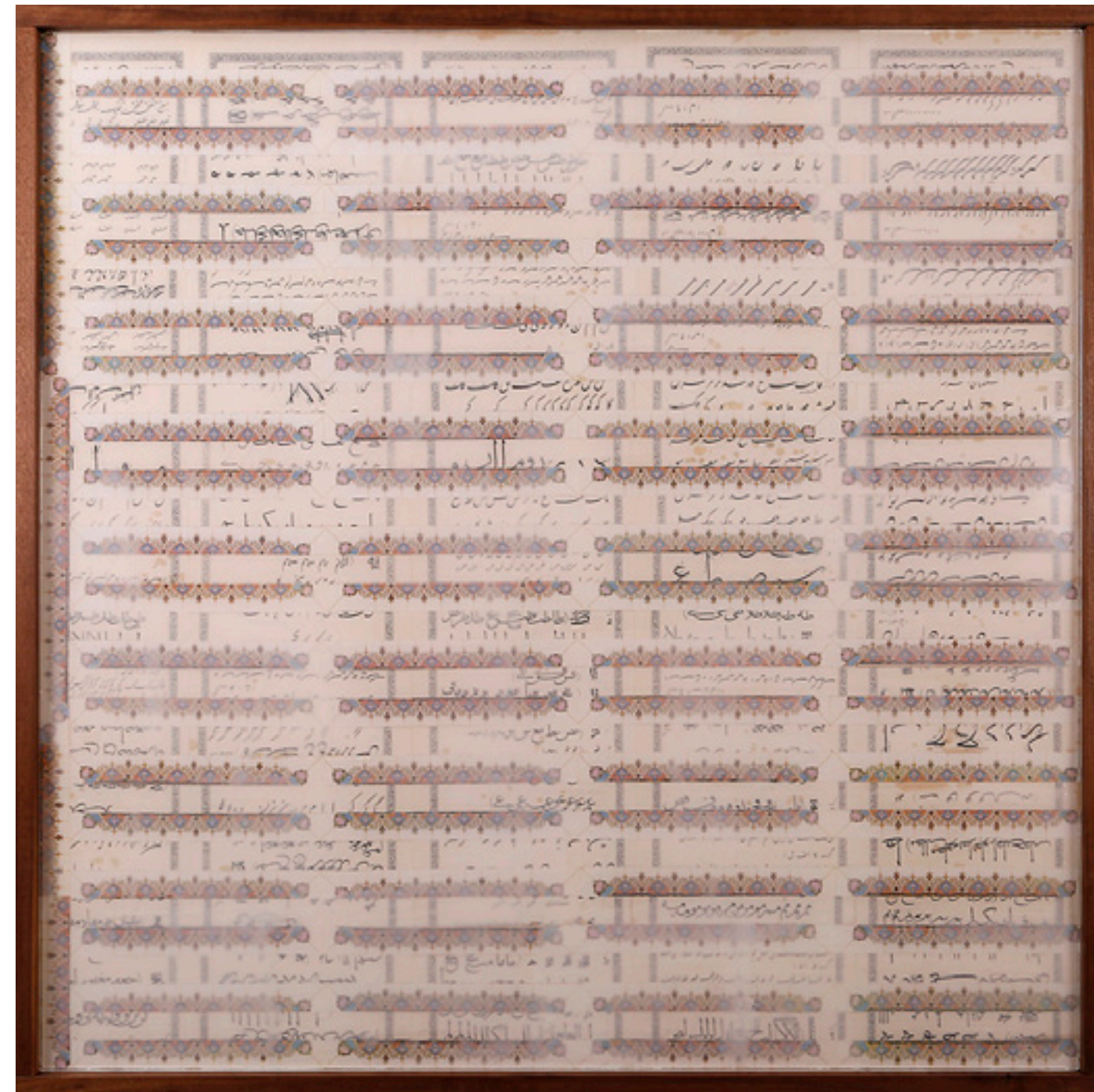
Subsistence 2
2018
Paper, Beeswax, and Epoxy Resin on Wood Panel
36" x 36"



Subsistence 3
2018
Paper, Beeswax, and Epoxy Resin on Wood Panel
36" x 36"



Subsistence 4
2018
Paper, Paraffin Wax, and Epoxy Resin on Wood Panel
36" x 36"



Subsistence 5
2018
Paper, Paraffin Wax, and Epoxy Resin on Wood Panel
36" x 36"

Farnaz Zabetian

Farnaz Zabetian paints manifestations of daily life, exploring the struggles of Eastern women as they are forced to navigate social taboos and ideals since birth. Her symbolic and expressive portraits of these women depict their private thoughts and yearnings, as well as their perceived relationship with the rapidly modernizing world. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including Sondouzi Art Museum of Tehran in 2008; the Saad Abad Museum of Tehran in 2009; and the Peninsula Museum of Art in Burlingame in 2017. (San Francisco)

The prevalent discourse of modern societies, with its focus on concepts such as evil, war, and destruction, pushes people further and further inside themselves, preoccupying them with mental and psychological struggles. The modern person is always trying to create a bubble around him, to isolate himself against the insecure world around and create a safe space. The result of this isolation, however, is nothing but personality disorders and psychological dreamscapes. The melancholic mood of the modern person comes from this putting a distance between the self and the society, and from retreating inside, which sparks internal mental battles. It is as if a school of beta fish, known for fighting, are eating the person's mind in an eternal war, ruining everything. The beta fish in this painting are metaphors for this never-ending war zone in the modern person's mind as it moves toward its collapse. The fish represent beautiful fighters that isolate the human soul in a bubble of fantastical thoughts and dreams, eating it away, and leading to its internal demise.



Seduced
2018
oil on linen
62" x 62"

Avideh Zahedi

Avideh Zahedi's sculptures translate two-dimensional drawing techniques into three-dimensional figures, working to extract information from the expressed emotion and movement of her subjects and use them to represent inward states of being. (San Francisco)

My sculptures express movement and emotion that I feel in myself and observe in others. I study outward gestures and mannerisms to get a physical sense of inward state of being. With each sculpture I represent one moment of the human condition. The elongated, foreshortened and exaggerated features in my sculpture result from translating the two-dimensional drawing techniques I learned in life drawing classes to three-dimensional sculpture. These two figures were inspired by 'Sugar Shack', Ernie Barnes' painting shown in the TV series 'Good Times', which I watched in my early years in the US.



Good Times #1
2018
High fire ceramic and
black stains
19 x 12 x 9 in



Good Times #2
2018
High fire ceramic and
blue stains
14 x 10 x 8 in

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