

# The Conference of the Birds



Opening November 14th, 2020  
a Solo Exhibition by  
**Mohammad Barrangi**

## PRESS RELEASE:

**ADVOCARTSY is pleased to present** *The Conference of the Birds*, an exhibition of modern printmaking techniques on handmade paper by Iranian U.K. based artist Mohammad Barrangi. The exhibition explores the epic Iranian mythical poem, Manṭiq-uṭ-Ṭayr, or Conference of the Birds, by Attar of Nishapur. This is the artist’s first solo exhibition with ADVOCARTSY and in the United States.

Barrangi’s successful merger of contemporary and ancient attributes transport the viewer to a timeless state, combining elements of the past, present, and future seamlessly in his masterful yet whimsical compositions.

This exhibition is timed in conjunction with the publication of ‘Simorgh’, a book illustrated by Mohammad Barrangi and published in Iran by Madreseh Publication. The exhibition includes many works as included in this book.

### ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The legend of The Conference of the Birds takes the form of an allegorical epic poem where a flock of birds are led by the wisest amongst them to journey through the seven valleys to seek Simorgh, the legendary figure they hope will serve as their sovereign. In the story, each bird represents a human fault which prevents man from reaching enlightenment. The journey is a treacherous one, claiming the lives of many along the way. Despite this, thirty birds make it to the abode of Simorgh, only to realize that they themselves are collectively the Simorgh. In Persian, Simorgh means “thirty” (si) “birds” (morgh). Through this adventure, they eventually come to understand that the majesty of enlightenment is like that of the sun, it can only be observed when reflected in the mirror, meaning that anyone who seeks it will also behold his or her own image.

The story of The Conference of the Birds is a universal one, it is a tale that any individual can find themselves in, but one that especially resonates with artist Mohammad Barrangi. Having left his homeland of Iran nearly 3 years ago, Barrangi feels a deep connection to the concept of migration, “something that birds and sometimes humans must do in order to survive.” Through his work, Barrangi reimagines traditional Persian folklore, imbuing each work with a modern energy that expands beyond mythology, echoing across various cultures and generations.

Barrangi’s distinct process consists of both modern and traditional methods, always beginning with the fabrication of his uniquely handcrafted paper. He then scours his digitized library of ink nib illustrations and vintage photographs to create compositions he will transfer onto the parchment, always experimenting until he sees what is in his mind reflected on the page. Barrangi uses photocopies and inkjet prints to create his layered works, employing simple technologies to transfer and to alter the scale of his images. Once this step is complete, the artist begins the meditative process of rubbing away the top layer of fibers to reveal the fairytale-like image underneath, a surprisingly elegant process captured in a variety of videos taken of Barrangi in his studio. Finally, the artist accents each work with traditional Iranian calligraphy— historically one of the most revered art forms in Persian culture.

### ABOUT MOHAMMAD BARRANGI

Born in the city of Rasht in northern Iran, Barrangi studied art in vocational school and university. Barrangi has exhibited widely across Europe and Asia, collecting various prizes along the way, and most recently placed two works in the permanent collection of the British Museum. In 2017, the artist came to the Art House in Wakefield, UK under the Studio of Sanctuary residency program. Barrangi moved to London in 2019 to continue his studies at The Royal Drawing Academy.

The soft power of Barrangi’s art mesmerizes the eye and grips the soul. At first glance, many assume they are viewing ancient artifacts of a bygone era when in reality, the artist began seriously making work in the last decade. By synthesizing elements of Persian calligraphy, storytelling, and his own unique sense of humor, the artist creates works that encompass a range of disparate visual motifs that build a bridge connecting different eras and cultures. His delicate works on paper simultaneously convey a sense of opulence and humility, while his large-scale murals realize these mythical beasts in all their otherworldly glory. Suspended in action or battle, the characters brought forth from the mind of the artist remind us of the perpetual motion, the constant migration, every living creature will experience throughout their life.

### About ADVOCARTSY:

ADVOCARTSY is a collaborative visual arts platform specializing in Iranian contemporary art.

### ABOUT THE SPACE AT ADVOCARTSY:

THE SPACE by ADVOCARTSY was launched in October 2017 as the permanent Los Angeles gallery space of ADVOCARTSY to further its mission of promoting Iranian Contemporary Art and as an extension of ADVOCARTSY’s ART BRIEF series, launched in Los Angeles in 2015.

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## Artist Biography

Mohammad Barrangi Fashtani is an illustrator and printmaker. Originally from Iran, he currently lives and works in London.

Barrangi's artworks combine elements of Persian calligraphy, storytelling and touches of humour. Using a unique creative process with handmade traditional calligraphy pens and a blend of mark making styles, Barrangi creates small pieces that are often expanded into large-scale murals. This transformation is achieved through an exploration of laser photocopying, collagraph, and collage. Fusing these elements in one process, the artist creates works that encompass a range of disparate visual motifs, each holding separate connotations of specific eras or cultures, but creating a unique cross-cultural style in combination. This otherworldly body of work is often inspired by ancient Persian scholars as well as the Persian Epic 'The Conference of the Birds' by Attar of Nishapur.

Barrangi regularly exhibits in the UK and internationally, and his work has been featured in multiple publications, festivals, and prizes. These include Muestra del IV Premi International, Tragaluz; Pressing Matters; Shape Open 2018: Collective Influence; Illustrate 2018, Portugal; Art TSUM, Kiev; Ratata Festival, Macerata; The 6th International Tokyo Mini-Print Triennial; Bologna Illustrators Exhibition 2018; Story Museum, Oxford; and Hafez Gallery in Saudi Arabia 2019. As of June 2019, two of Barrangi's works have been acquired by the British Museum for their permanent collection.

## Artist Statement

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*Masked Peacock*, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 11.75 x 16.75 in, \$4,000





Untitled no. 13, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 10 x 10 in, \$1,200



Untitled no. 32, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 17.5 x 12 in, \$2,500



Untitled no. 14, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 10 x 10 in, \$1,200





Untitled no. 60, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 19.5 x 19.5, \$4,000





*Untitled no. 2, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 9.25 x 12 in, \$2,000*





Saddle Up, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 18 x 12.5 in, \$3,500



Untitled no. 10, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 16.5 x 12 in, \$3,200





*Untitled no. 52*, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 8.25 x 11.5 in, \$1,800





Simorgh's Abode, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 13 x 18 in, \$3,800





*Falling*, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 13 x 9 in, \$2,200



*Reveal*, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 11.75 x 8.5 in, \$2,500





*The Conference of the Birds*, 2018, printmaking on handmade paper, 12.5 x 19 in, \$2,900





Simorgh Attar, 2018, printmaking on handmade paper, 8.25 x 11.5 in, \$2,750





Conference, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 12 x 9.25 in, \$2,600



Simorgh Attar, 2018, printmaking on handmade paper, 18.5 x 13.5 in, \$3,200





Untitled no. 41, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 13.5 x 18.75 in, \$3,200





*Untitled no. 54, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 12.5 x 17.5 in, \$2,800*





Untitled no. 53, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 9.5 x 12 in, \$2,600





Garden of Eden, 2016, printmaking on handmade paper, 16 x 12 in, \$3,200



Simorgh Attar, 2019, printmaking on handmade paper, 11.5 x 8.25 in, \$2,750





*The Conference of the Birds*, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 12 x 17 in, \$2,900





Untitled no. 38, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 11.5 x 16.5 in, \$2,900





Two Views, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 16.5 x 11.5 in, \$3,000



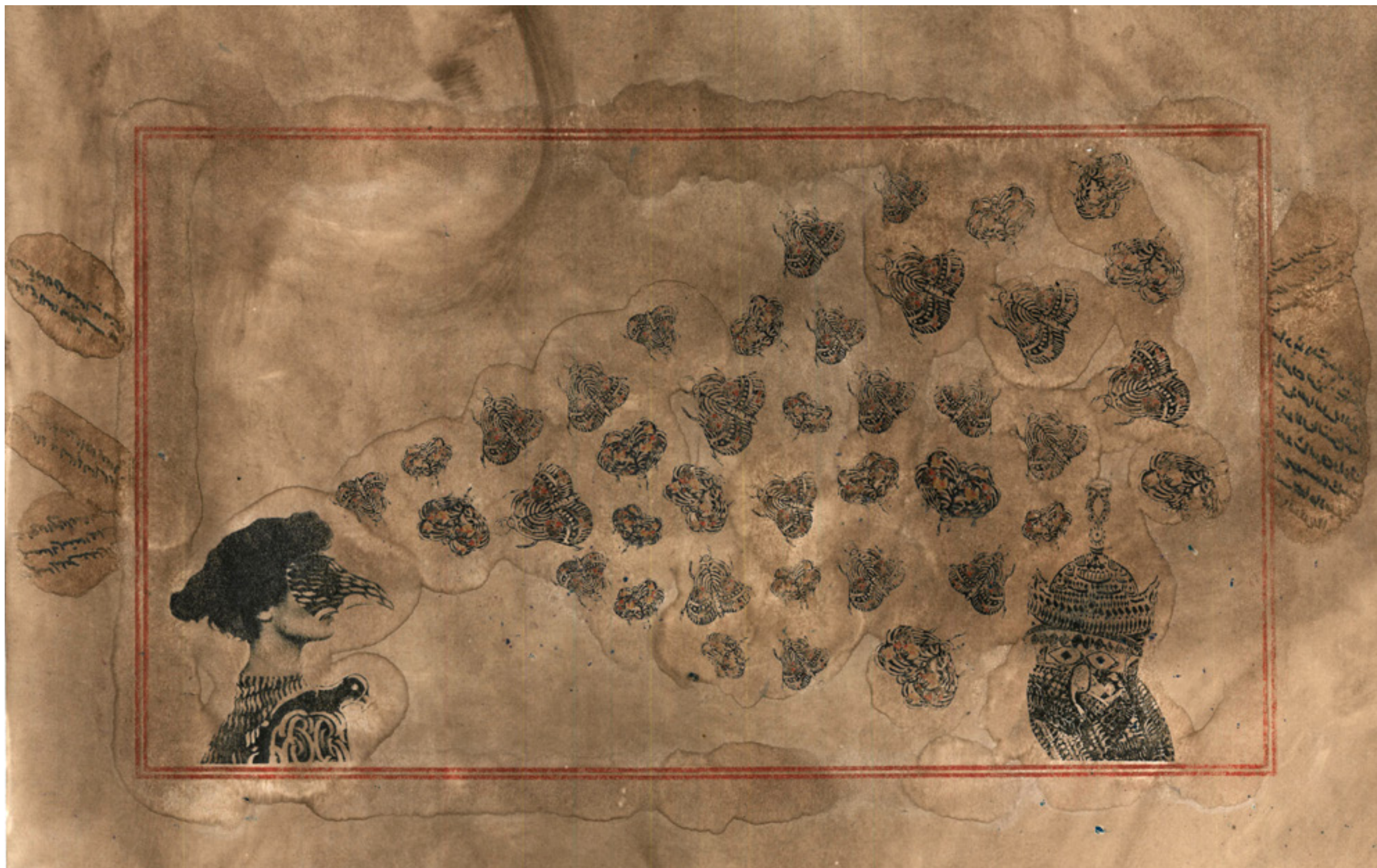
Bird Pyramid, 2019, printmaking on handmade paper, 16.75 x 11.75 in, \$3,200





*The Call*, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 15 x 20 in, \$3,600





*The Call*, 2020, printmaking on handmade paper, 15 x 20 in, \$3,600





*The Conference of the Birds*, 2020, printmaking on raw canvas, 63 x 112 in, \$17,000









*Migration*, 2018, printmaking on raw canvas, 106.25 x 63, \$15,000









*Untitled no. 61*, 2020, printmaking on raw canvas, 41 x 50, \$6.500









*I Am Not a Warrior*, 2019, printmaking on raw canvas, 90.50 x 51, \$12,000







Artist CV

Awards and Prizes

International winners Moscow 2020  
Third Prize, , Illustration Sharjah Children’s Book, 2019  
First prize, Illustration, COW International Design Festival, Ukraine, 2019  
Recipient of Honorary Diploma, 5th Tallinn Illustrations Triennial, Estonia, 2017  
First prize, Tragaluz IV international Award, Colombia 2017  
Honorary diploma from Image of the Book contest, fiction section, Russia, 2017  
First prize, Illustration, COW International Design Festival, Ukraine, 2015  
First Prize, Belgrade Illustration Festival, Serbia, 2009

Exhibitions and Events:

2019

live installation at the British Museum which is the beginning part of an exhibition called ‘Looking East’ – which will explore 500 years of the West’s long and complex interaction with the Islamic world, featuring objects from the Islamic Art Museum Malaysia and BM, including some exquisite examples of Persian art

The Conference of the Birds: Persian calligraphy workshop in London at British Museum

Solo Exhibition,Wonderland, Pedrami Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium  
Group Exhibition, Summer Art Bash, ADVOCARTSY, Los Angeles,, California  
Group Exhibition in collaboration with Madinah Hafez Gallery  
Biennial International Papermade Art Work Exhibition  
Palazzo Fogazzaro, Schio, Italia  
Exhibition Museum in Iași, the second edition of the International Singular Art Salon organized by the Cultural Association ANARTE, Romania

Exhibition in collaboration with Al Madinah Arts center

Curated by the unlimited commissions programme team, pitch & mix will take place for one hour during a broader day of disabled led discussions, offering unique insights into a wide range of work by independents and organisations across art forms. During this session,there will be 7 slots for 7 different artists or organisations to each pitch for up to 7 minutes .Delegates will have the opportunity to speak with the artist in both facilitated and informal networking sessions that happen later in the day.

2018

Eastern Bird workshop, Wakefield Cathedral, UK  
Interview with Pressing Matters magazines, UK  
Human Right EDU group exhibition of UNESCO, Italy  
Who Are We? Workshop and Commission, Tate Modern, UK  
Solo Exhibition, Wakefield Cathedral, UK  
The Kingdom of the Rose, homage to the female figure, France  
Invited to Peace Exhibition from reunification of north and South Korea,  
Tokyo International Mini-Print Triennial, Japan  
Ratata Festival, Macerata, Italy  
Fourth International Illustration Exhibition, Colombia  
Love International Exhibition, the Art TSUM, Kiev  
Finalist, Bologna Children’s Book Fair, Italy  
Collective Influence: Shape Exhibition, London  
Illustrate 2018, Portugal  
Bienal Internacional de Ilustração Solidária Ajudaris, Portugal

2017

Common Ground, curated by Juan DelGado for Platforma Festival, Vane Gallery, UK  
Selected cover album design, Art Think publisher, Italy  
Finalist of Third Golden Pinwheel Young Illustrators competitions, China  
Finalist of the Bridgeman Studio Award, England  
Finalist of the Hirosaki Apple Design Award, Tokyo  
Invited to the Dokdo`s peace poster exhibition, Korea  
Imagen Palabra Illustration Contest, Colombia  
The Migration Postcard Project, Bratislava  
The Pattern Design of Paper Festival- Korea, China and Italy  
International Arsenal Book Festival, Kiev, Ukraine  
Tutor of the workshop, IslamicAzad University of Lahijan, Iran  
Tutor of the workshop of “I will tell you from the east”, Post graduate students, Islamic Azad University of Ramsar  
Invited in one day workshop by United Nations for Disabled artists in Syria  
THAT’S A MOLE! Illustration Festival, Italy  
Nami Concours International Picture Book Festival, Korea

2016

Accepted in Golden Pinwheel Festival, China  
Accepted in the Bio-Art contest, South Korea  
Accepted in Turkey Printmaking Festival  
Accepted in Sharjah Dubai Printmaking Festival  
Accepted in 3th Nami illustration festival  
Participation in Alice Illustrations is (Always Time for Tea) - Europe Tour from 2015 to 2017.

International Festivals:

Fadjr Film Festival of 4th period in 2012 and 8th in 2016.  
Student yearbook (the semat publisher)  
Several Groups Exhibitions in Aria Gallery 2012-2016.  
Illustration Groups Exhibition in Mehrva Gallery 2016.  
Illustration Groups Exhibition in Koochebagh Gallery 2015.  
Printmaking Exhibition in Chav Gallery 2012.  
Illustration Groups Exhibition in Ou Gallery 2011.  
Illustration Groups Exhibition in Farzad Gallery 2016.  
Painting Groups Exhibition in Niyavaran Hall 2013-2015.  
Solo exhibition, Childrens Museum of Estonia, 2016-2017  
Group illustration exhibition with Viive Noor, Finland, 2017

Articles and Publications

Interview with Mohammad barrangi, Toi gallery, Los Angeles, 2020  
Interview with Hand magazine, 2020  
Interview and Book Publishing University of Zaragoza Spain, 2020  
Interview Mohammad barrangi, Post Oyko Magazine 2019 Turkey  
Printmaking Today in UK 2018  
Interview Mohammad barrangi: Bincole Meets The Illustrator in UK 2018  
Interview Pressing Matters UK 2018  
The Drawing that came from the East:  
Interview with Mohammad Barrangi, El Espectador, 2017  
My Dream | Mohammad Barrangi Fashtami, Art People Gallery, 2017  
Interview with TIMPUL the newspaper, Romania, 2017  
The status and role of traditional Persian art in book illustrations for children and adolescents, 2016

Murals

Mural Project Unlimited in the Central Wakefield Uk 2020  
Mural for Art Hostel, Leeds UK 2020

Published Works

Illustration for poetry book in Argentina 2018  
Illustration (In the Shadow of an Orange Tree) for publishers tragaluz editores in Colombia 2020  
Illustration Simorgh (Conference of the Birds) for publishers Madreseh

Education:

MA Royal Academy of Drawing, London 2019-2021  
  
Bachelor Degree in Graphics, Islamic Azad University of Tonekabon



