



ADVOCARTSY

MOKARRAMEH GHANBARI

VISIONS AND DREAMS

August 13 - August 30, 2025

ADVOCARTSY is a collaborative visual arts platform with the mission to elevate awareness and engagement among artists, collectors, and museums with a focus on Iranian contemporary art.

Curatorial Statement

Mokarrameh Ghanbari was a self-taught painter whose extraordinary vision emerged from the heart of northern Iran, where she lived her entire life in the village of Darikhaneh in Mazandaran Province. Born in 1928, Ghanbari had no formal training in art. Her creative journey began late in life, at the age of 63, when she spontaneously began to paint using natural dyes, discarded objects, and eventually poster paints—whatever materials she could find around her rural home. What followed was a luminous, deeply personal body of work that would position her as one of Iran’s most compelling outsider artists.

Ghanbari’s art defies conventional categories. Her vibrant, narrative compositions blend memory and folklore, the everyday and the mystical. Often featuring bold portraits of women, mythic figures, animals, and village scenes, her paintings are imbued with a sense of storytelling and dreamlike symbolism. The expressive power of her work lies not only in its striking color palettes and intricate detail but also in the emotional authenticity of its themes—loss, joy, resilience, and feminine strength.

Despite beginning her career in obscurity, Ghanbari’s work quickly attracted national and international attention. Her paintings were first exhibited publicly in 1995 at the Seyhoun Gallery in Tehran, launching a period of growing recognition. In 2001, UNESCO named her “Female Painter of the Year,” and she went on to exhibit in Germany, Switzerland, and France. Yet, Ghanbari remained rooted in her village, where she continued to paint until her death in 2005. Her house has since been preserved as a museum dedicated to her legacy.

Ghanbari’s practice stands as a radiant testament to the irrepressible nature of creativity. With no academic training or exposure to the global art world, she produced a visual language entirely her own—simultaneously vernacular and universal, intimate and archetypal. This exhibition honors Mokarrameh Ghanbari not only as a painter of rare vision, but as a cultural icon whose work continues to resonate far beyond the borders of her birthplace.

Artist Biography

Born in Iran in 1928, Mokarrameh Ghanbari was a self-taught artist who began painting at the age of 61, embodying a deeply personal, imaginative and expressive style. She quickly produced a prolific body of work with a distinct visual language, rich with folkloric symbolism, spiritual motifs, and autobiographical elements. Ghanbari's practice was so consuming, she even painted on the walls of her home when she ran out of paper.

Ghanbari became a defining artist of the Folk Art movement in Iran, and had her first exhibition at Seyhon Gallery, Tehran in 1995. Her paintings are characterized by bold, unrestrained colors and densely packed figures that convey a sense of movement, storytelling, and emotion. Inspired by Persian miniature painting, rural traditions, and her own dreams, Ghanbari's works depict scenes of love, family, and nature interwoven with mystical and historical themes.

A central theme in Ghanbari's art is the representation of women—often portrayed as strong, nurturing, and central to the unfolding stories in her compositions. As Ghanbari spent most of her life as a homemaker before discovering her passion for painting, her work reclaims a space for female narratives within the artistic canon, drawing from her personal experiences as a woman who defied societal expectations. Animals, angels, and mythical beings populate her paintings, creating an enchanting interplay between reality and fantasy.

Before her passing in 2005, the artist participated in ten other exhibitions and was awarded the jury prize at the Roshd Film Festival. In 2001, she was awarded Woman of the Year at the 12th International Conference of Iranian Women's Studies Foundation in Stockholm, Sweden. In addition, she was named the Female Painter of 2001 by the Swedish National Museum.



Mokarrameh Ghanbari
Untitled, 1990s
Mixed Media on Board
44 x 37.50 in (111.76 x 95.25 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari

Untitled, 1990s

Mixed Media on Paper

19.75 x 27.50 in (50.16 x 69.85 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari
Untitled, 1990s
Mixed Media on Paper
19.50 x 13.75 in (49.53 x 34.92 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari
Untitled, 1990s
Mixed Media on Paper
19.75 x 11.50 in (50.16 x 29.21 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari

Untitled, 1990s

Mixed Media on Paper

16.50 x 11 in (41.91 x 27.94 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari

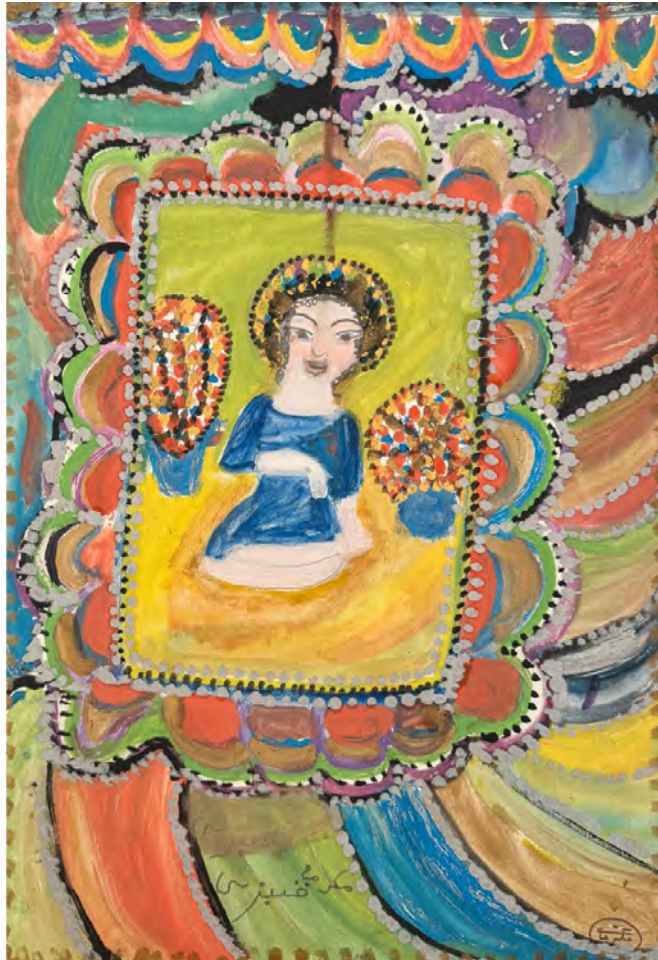
Untitled, 1990s

Mixed Media on Paper

15.75 x 12.50 in (40 x 31.75 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari
Untitled, 1990s
Mixed Media on Paper
11 x 17 in (27.94 x 43.18 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari
Untitled, 1990s
Mixed Media on Paper
19.50 x 13.75 in (49.53 x 34.92 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari

Untitled, 1990s

Mixed Media on Paper

19 x 13.50 in (48.26 x 34.29 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari
Untitled, 1990s
Mixed Media on Paper
19.25 x 13.50 in (48.90 x 34.29 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari
Untitled, 1990s
Mixed Media on Paper
19.50 x 13.50 in (49.53 x 34.29 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari

Untitled, 1990s

Mixed Media on Paper

13.50 x 19.50 in (34.29 x 49.53 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari

Untitled, 1990s

Mixed Media on Paper

19 x 13.50 in (48.26 x 34.29 cm)



Mokarrameh Ghanbari
Untitled, 1990s
Mixed Media on Paper
19 x 13 in (48.26 x 33.02 cm)