

# **S**tates of Being in **A**bstract



**D a n a N e h d a r a n**

**A**ida Izadpanah



**M**asoume Moghadam

## Roya Khadjavi Project

In collaboration with **Asia Contemporary Art Week (ACAW)**.

**Date:** October 25<sup>th</sup> to November 6<sup>th</sup> 2016

**Opening Reception:** Tuesday October 25<sup>th</sup> 6-9 pm

**Press and VIP:** Tuesday October 25<sup>th</sup> 5-6 pm

**Artist talk:** (Dana Nehdaran & Aida Izadpanah ) Thursday October 27<sup>th</sup> 6 pm

**Opening Hours:** 11 am to 6 pm | Sundays 12 to 6 pm

**Place:** Elga Wimmer PCC Gallery

526 West 26<sup>th</sup> street, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor #310 - New York, NY, 10001

**Curated by: Roya Khadjavi | Contact:** [Roya.khadjavi@gmail.com](mailto:Roya.khadjavi@gmail.com)

The 11<sup>th</sup> edition of **Asia Contemporary Art Week (ACAW)** New York is a season-long platform (September 8 to November 18) connecting over 40 New York and Asia based art institutions to present cutting-edge exhibitions, innovative projects, provocative dialogues and festivities citywide, culminating in ACAW's signature art forum **FIELD MEETING Take 4: Thinking Practice** on Nov 11 & 12<sup>th</sup> hosted at Guggenheim Museum and Asia Society. For a complete ACAW agenda visit: [acaw.info](http://acaw.info)

Roya Khadjavi Projects is pleased to announce its first exhibition of abstract works, featuring three young painters from Iran: Aida Izadpanah, Masoume Moghadam and Dana Nehdaran. *States of Being in Abstract* aims to explore the memories and emotions conveyed in painting, rather than focus on its literal execution. It is through this exploration that the artist's state of being is revealed, be it autobiographical or a critique of the society in which they live.

Masoume Moghadam works with cardboard, an easily available material that satisfies the spontaneity with which she works. Unlike most abstract paintings, her works are small in scale and prompt her viewers to take a more intimate look into each painting's delicate qualities. Influenced by the character of Majnoon in Nezami Ganjavi's epic Persian poem, her works embody the turmoil of love. Like Majnoon, her thoughts are tangled and her being tortured. Vibrant colors take hold of every inch of the surface through agitated lines and swirling gestures. The layers of thick paint hint at a complex mood, an inner turmoil, and an almost unbearable state of being. Shapes resembling tornadoes, flames and graffiti further amplify this feeling of unease and loss of control. Through the metaphor of love, Masoume has allowed form to forego its representational function and run wild with emotion. By working in abstraction, Masoume is able to expand the limits of the apolitical and address the state of disarray that her generation faces.

Unlike Masoume who is consumed by the present, Dana Nehdaran uses abstraction to highlight the ways in which past and present weave together in both conflict and harmony. Dana's works are a balancing act, made evident by his belief that "the past provides the structural skeleton for the future", and that change is inevitable and hope a reality. It is for this reason that he has chosen New York as his muse, a forever changing city for which he has tremendous admiration. The persistence of old iron rebar, beams, storm-water covers and other ironwork amidst New York streets enthrall Dana.

Roya Khadjavi

His works are tremendously laborious and are grounded in his desire to resurface the rusty patterns of the city. With a mélange of iron powder, paint and water, among other materials, he recreates the processes of rusting and decay that are all too familiar to New York. Never sure of the finished product, Dana waits patiently and adjusts his mediums until they reach a desired state.

For artist Aida Izadpanah, abstraction is the purest form of artistic expression, as it “relies less or not at all on the mental processing of representation”. Through color, texture and space, she ignites movement and energy to create “a transcendence of the kinds of boundaries that divide the self and others, past and present and matter and energy”. Her works are “textured field paintings”, that by demoting the purely representational, prompt the viewer to engage and decode the many layers for themselves. Aida names her series after their completion. They are descriptions of what she experienced throughout the creative process. “In Revelation 4, we see many forces at work: dark and light, near-but-not-quite-complementary colors, an imbalanced compositional space with receding and emerging elements. These and other elements are factors in the experience of the work, but they are not the work itself, nor its experience. These choices are beyond right and wrong, but they are telling of our values. Transcendence 9 is precisely this kind of microcosmic reflection on the historical landscape, a sign of both something past and a present energy. Rust, erosion, and verdigris—the breaking down of boundaries, which would divide us if taken too literally, but which may be repurposed toward opposite aims.” Aida’s paintings follow the natural ebbs and flows of a life cycle, and dance the line between meditation and agitation.

As Pollock once said: “Painting is self discovery. Every good artist paints what he is.” Through abstraction, these three artists have created a circumstance of self-meditation to cope with the uncertainty of being.

## Aida Izadpanah

Artist Statement

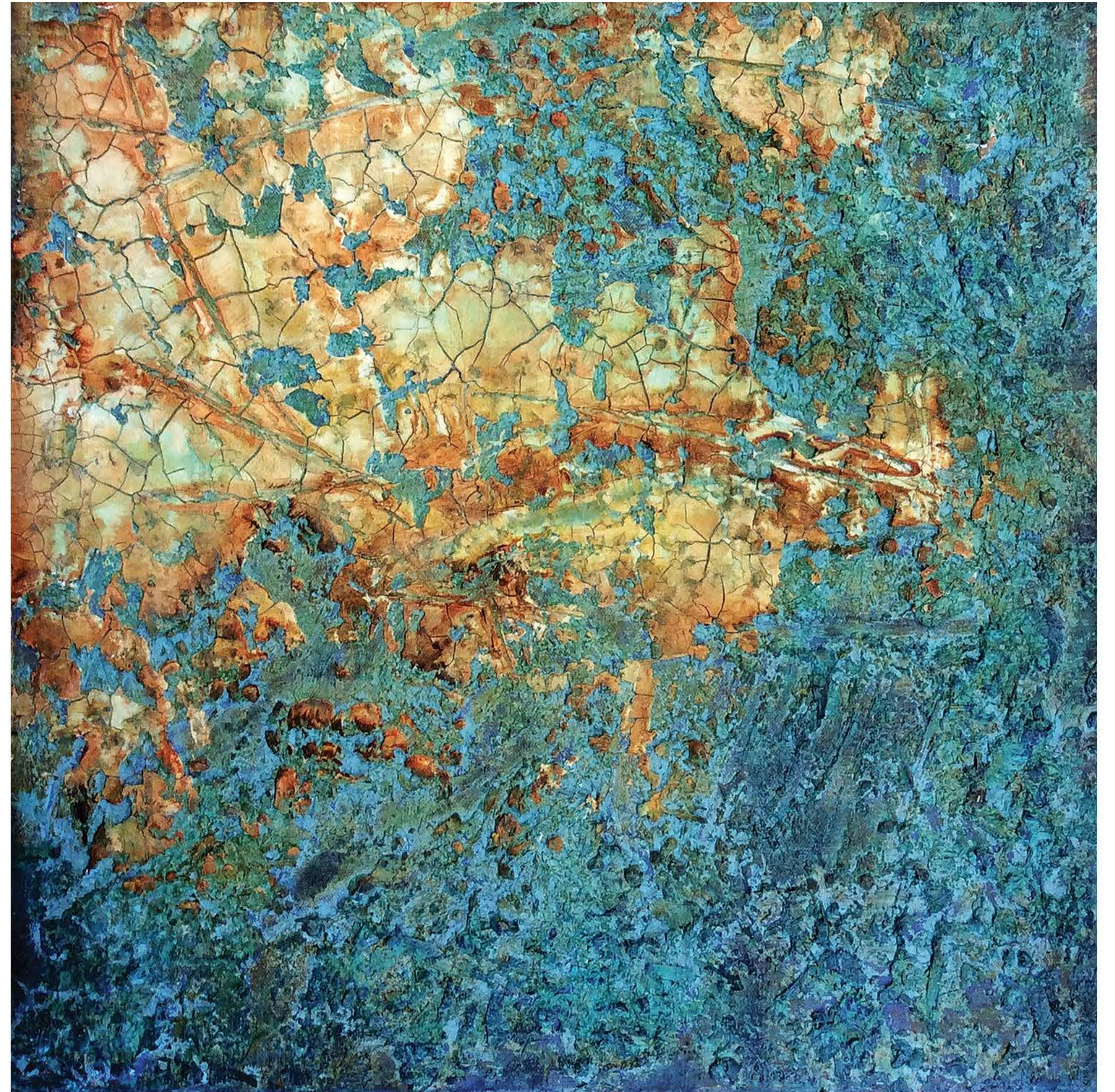
Making art is not a separate activity but a way of living for me. Over time, this was no longer a choice but just a fact, as I am constantly involved in processes of thinking about and creating my next projects. In part, this is because I derive inspiration and even materials from my immediate environment wherever I am. Over nearly twenty years of making art, I have developed a diverse repertoire of media and styles, including acrylic, oil, mixed media, and porcelain painting. I see my abstractions as texture-field paintings that are deeply associated with the passage of time. I am very attracted to the layering of textures, so I incorporate a lot of mixed media in these pieces, including for example, sand, pebbles, and various binding mediums. 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 my work also aspires to a natural state of presence and acceptance. These 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 describe my mixed media paintings as meditations on itselfness.



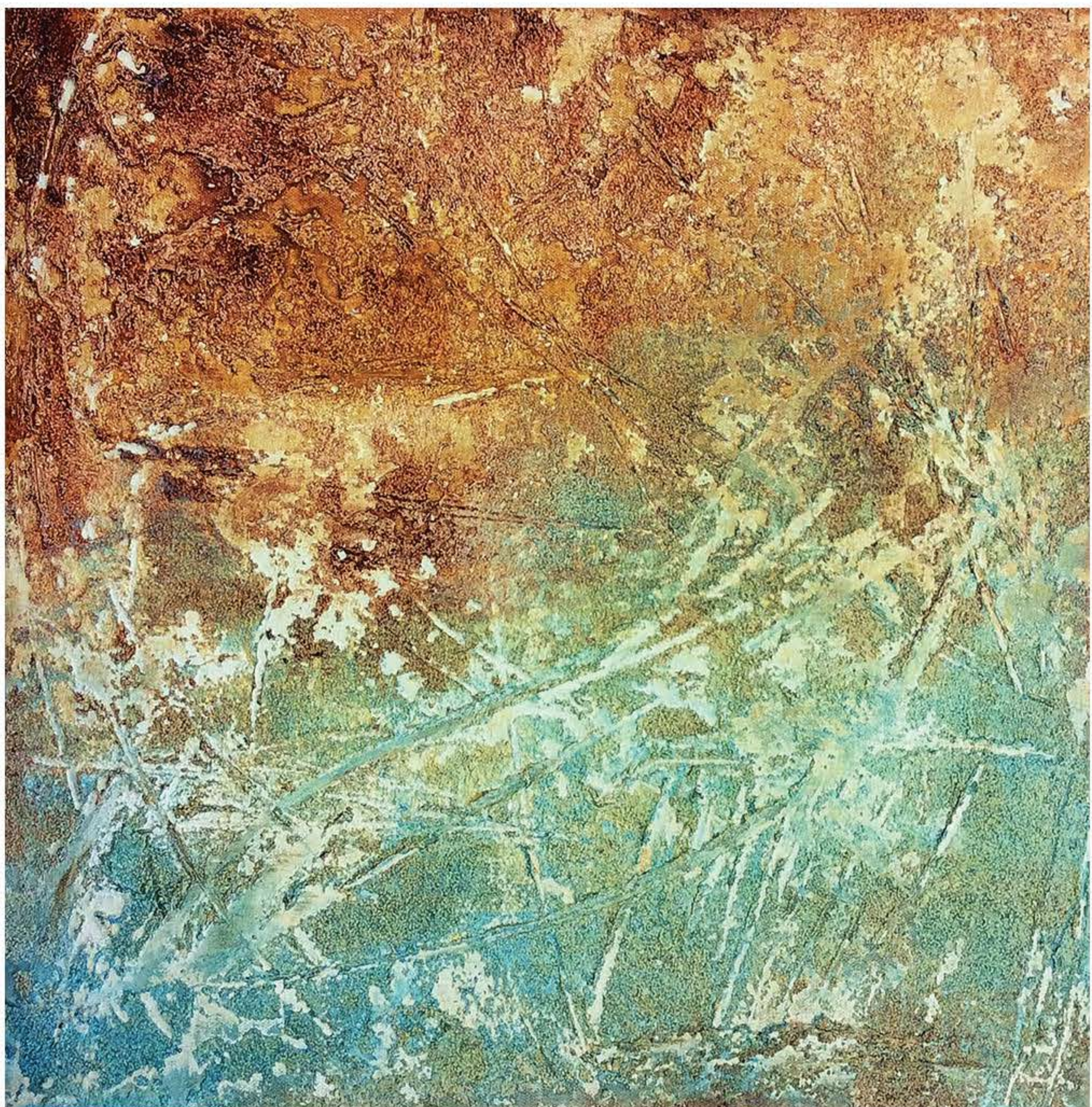
Revelation 8  
Acrylic mixed media  
on canvas  
117 x 132 cm  
2012



Transcendence 8  
Acrylic mixed  
media on canvas  
46 x 46 cm  
2014



Transcendence 9  
Acrylic mixed media on canvas  
46 x 46 cm  
2014



Transcendence 7  
Acrylic mixed media on canvas  
46 x 46 cm  
2014



Transcendence 2  
Acrylic mixed media on canvas  
101x76 cm  
2014



Revelation 4  
Acrylic mixed media on canvas  
117 x 132 cm  
2012





Revelation 2 1  
Acrylic mixed media on canvas  
178 x 178 cm  
2013



Detail

Dana Nehdaran's is interested in the process of painting and how it can mirror the 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 Fe 26 (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.

Dana Nehdaran

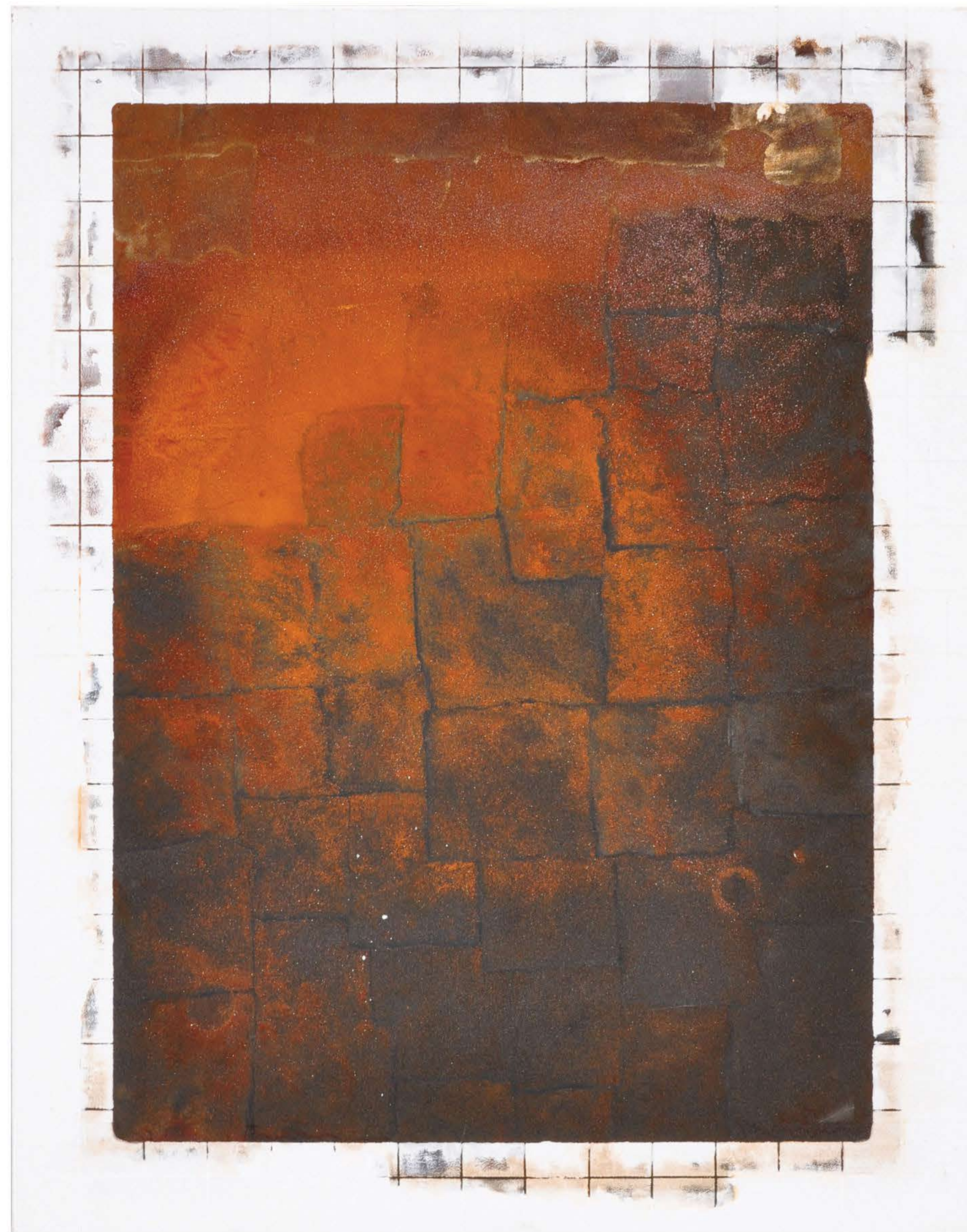
Artist Statement



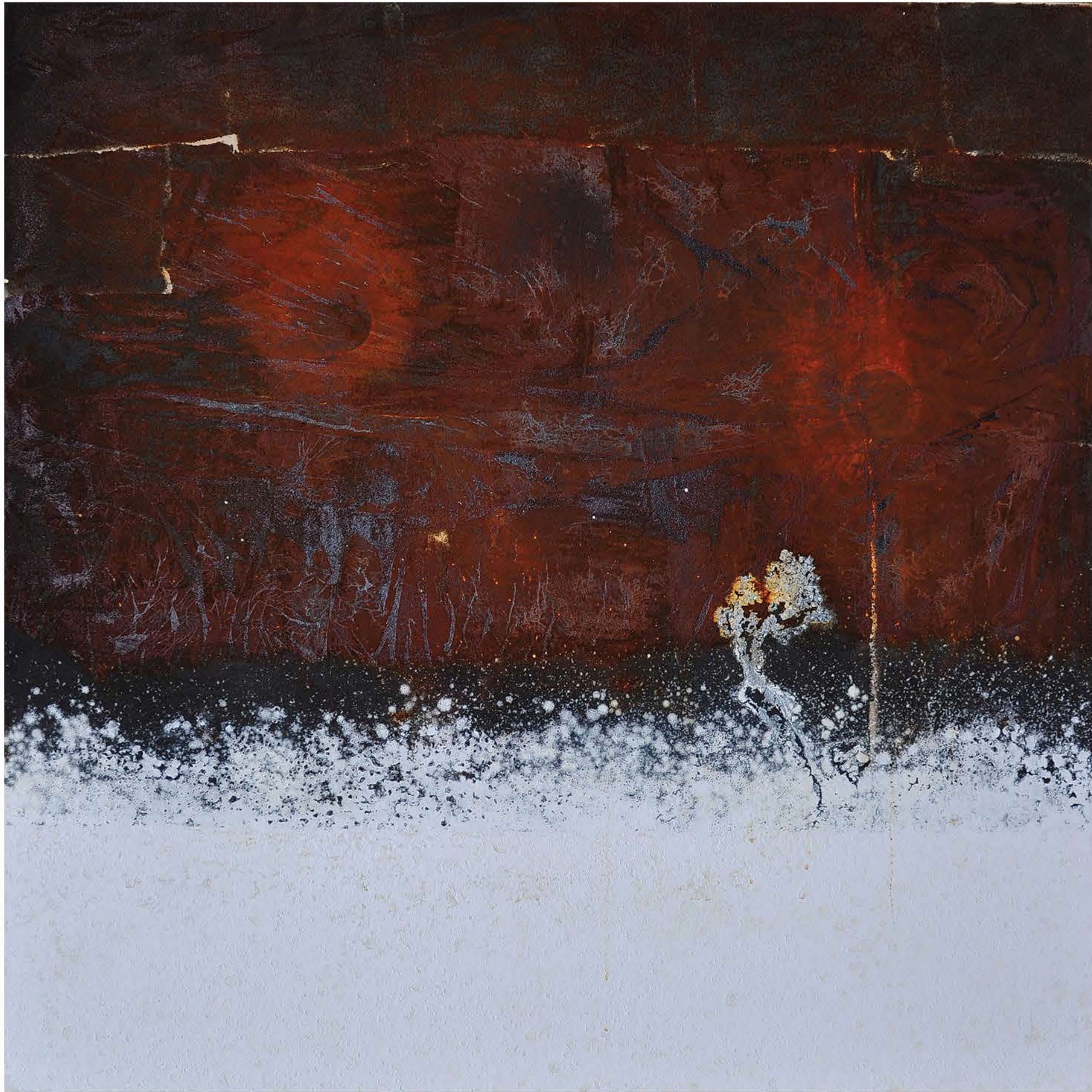
Untitled - *Fe 26 series* - Iron powder, Vitral and Acrylic on canvas - 122 x 153 cm - 2015



Untitled  
*Fe 26 series*  
Iron powder and oil on canvas  
122x153 cm  
2015



Untitled  
*Fe 26 series*  
Iron powder and Acrylic on canvas  
153 x 122 cm  
2015



┌ Untitled  
Fe 26 series  
Iron powder and oil on canvas  
122 x 122 cm  
2016



┌ Untitled  
Fe 26 series  
Iron powder and oil primer on canvas  
153 x 122 cm  
2016



Untitled work`s - *Fe 26* series - Iron powder, oil, Vitrail, Acrylic on canvas  
50x40 cm - 2016



Untitled work`s - *Fe 26* series - Iron powder, oil, Acrylic and cement on canvas  
50x40 cm - 2016

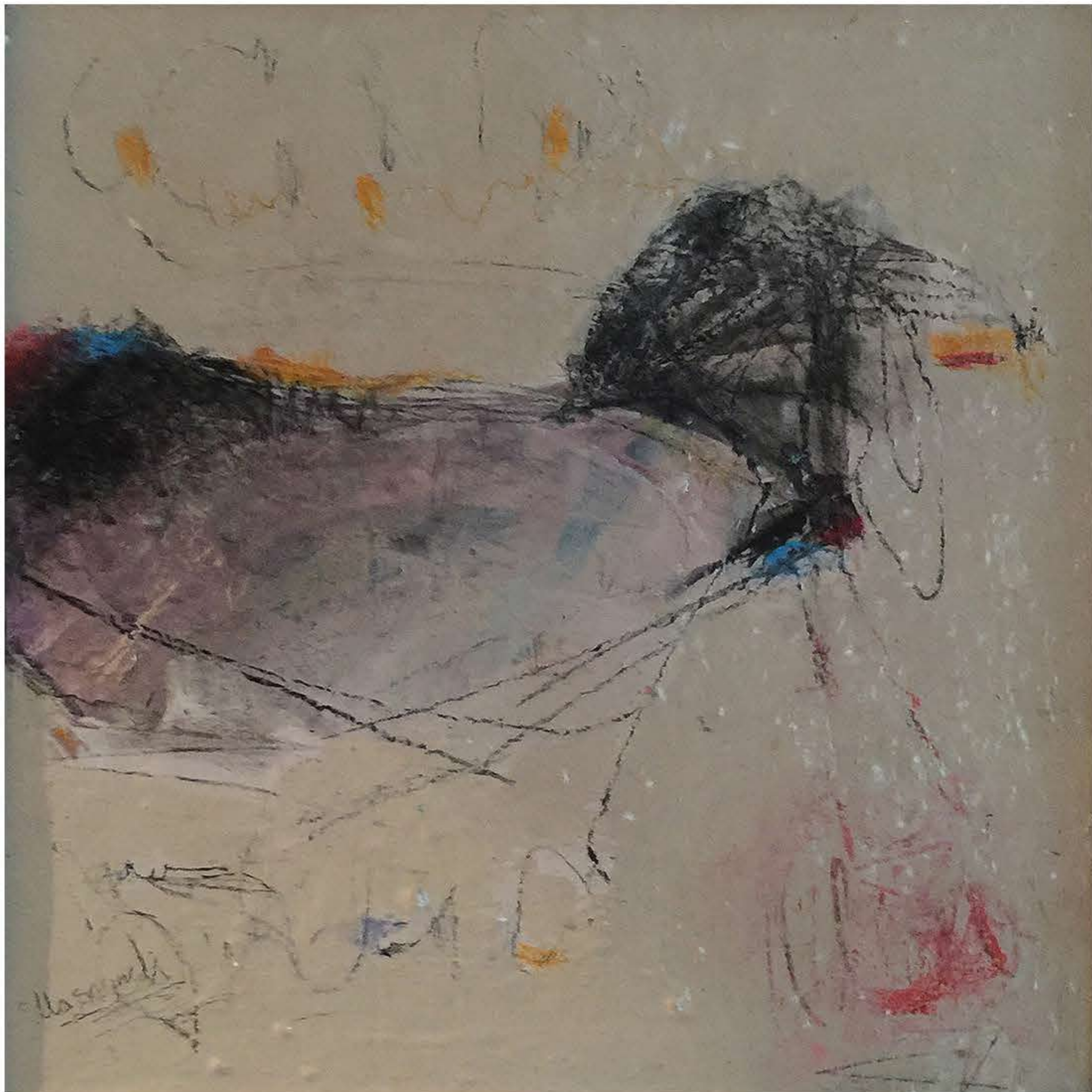


Untitled - *Fe26* series - Iron powder, Acrylic  
on canvas - 60x30 cm - 2015

My inspiration in this body of work came from the famous love story of Leily and Majnoon, the Persian Romeo and Juliette, written by Nezami Ganjavi, the greatest twelve-century romantic epic poet of Persian literature. He too like me lived in an age of both political instability and intense intellectual activity.

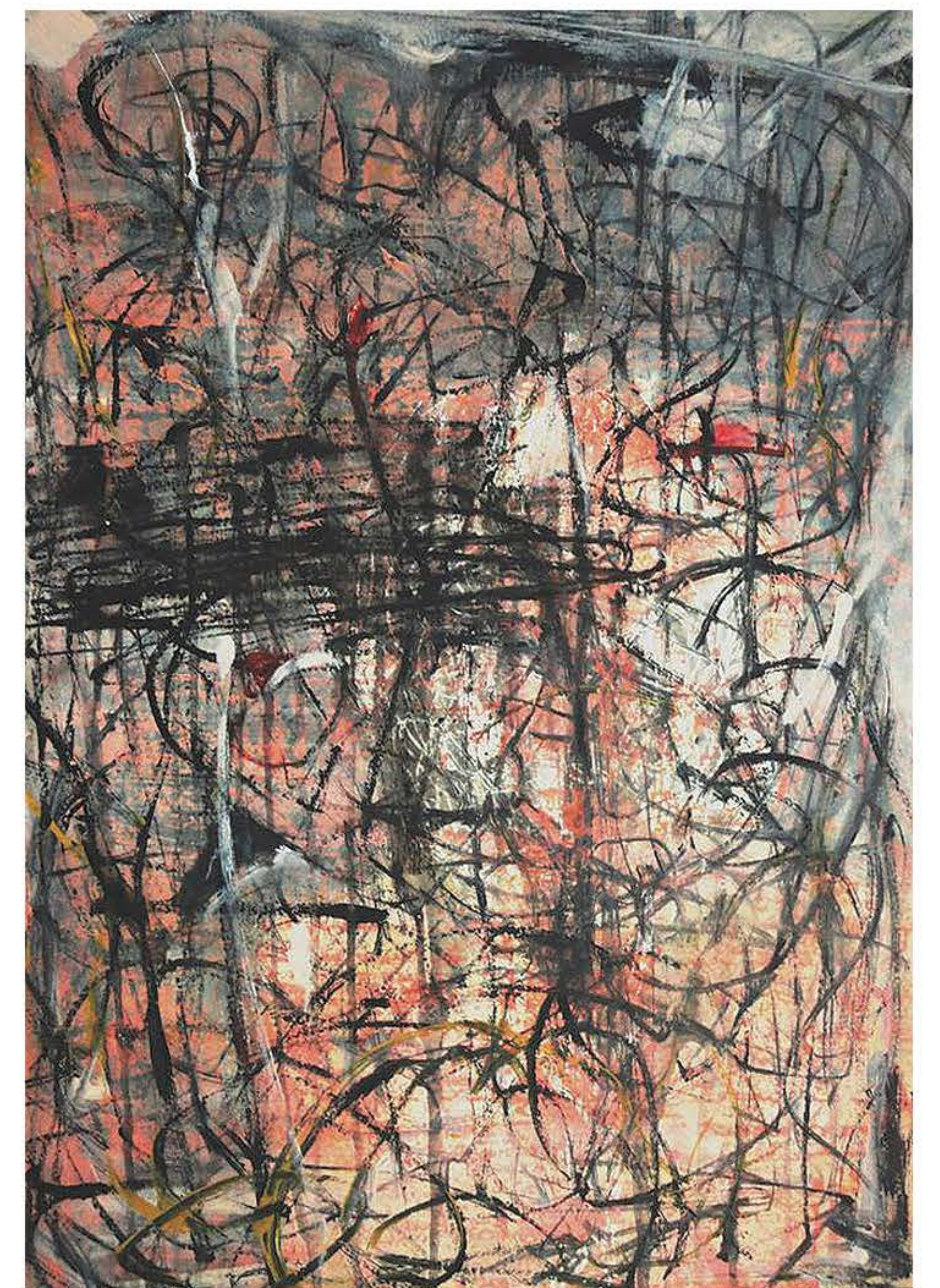
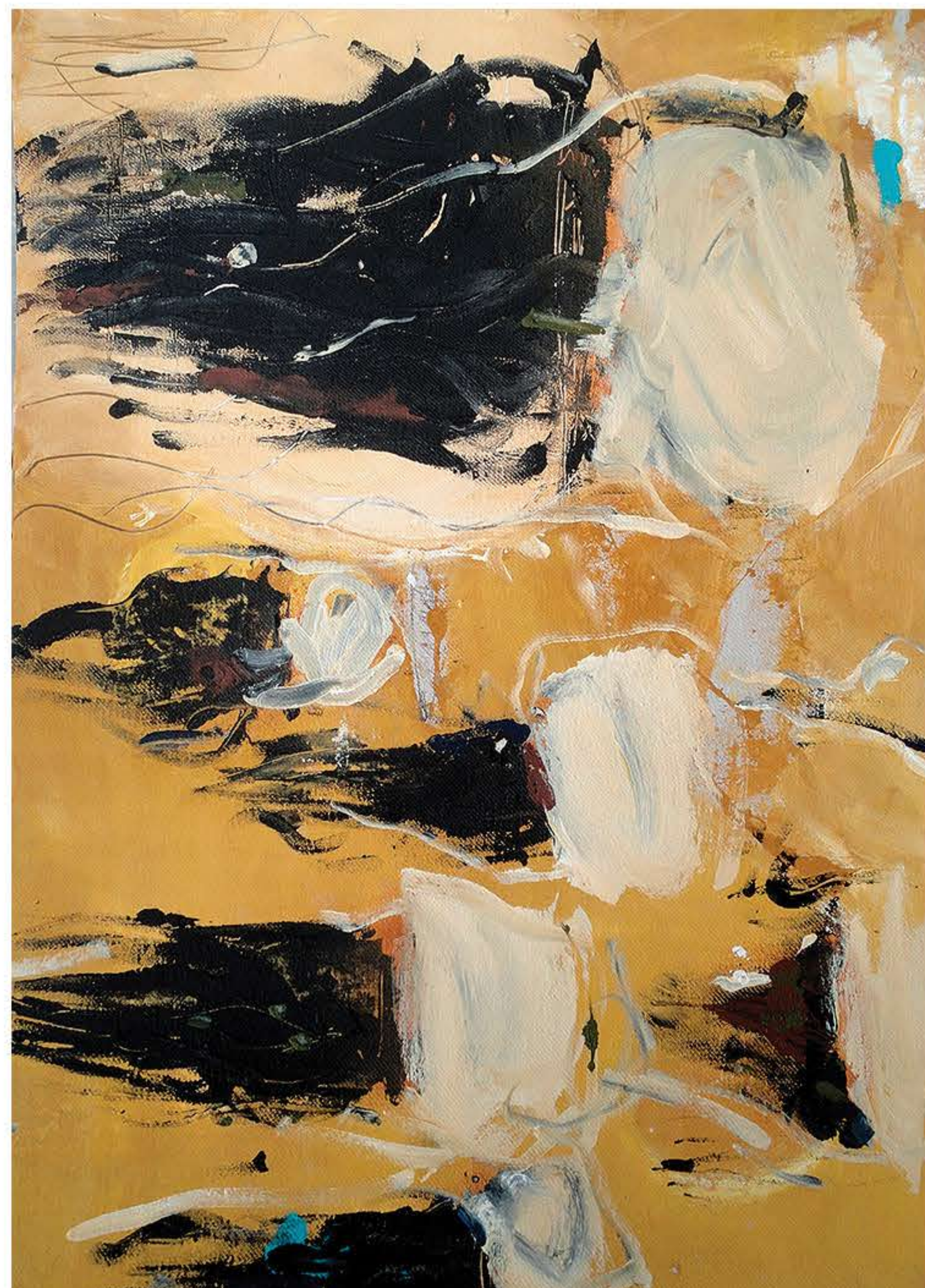
.... It is impossible to delay writing. I want to write my text with the emptiest of feelings, while surrounded by shapes, lines, and paper. I feel a jolt inside me as if I am transported back to a world I had left behind.

Love is a whisper void of excitement, colorless and silent. The lines and forms are interpretations of pain and the inner turmoil of a slave to the love he carried for years on his back. Beyond these lines and colorful commotions, lies an inquisitive look relating the pain to the wondering thoughts of today's society. These are the beginning of thoughts transformed into images ... This untitled body of work refers to the socially alienated character of Majnoon(the deranged lover).

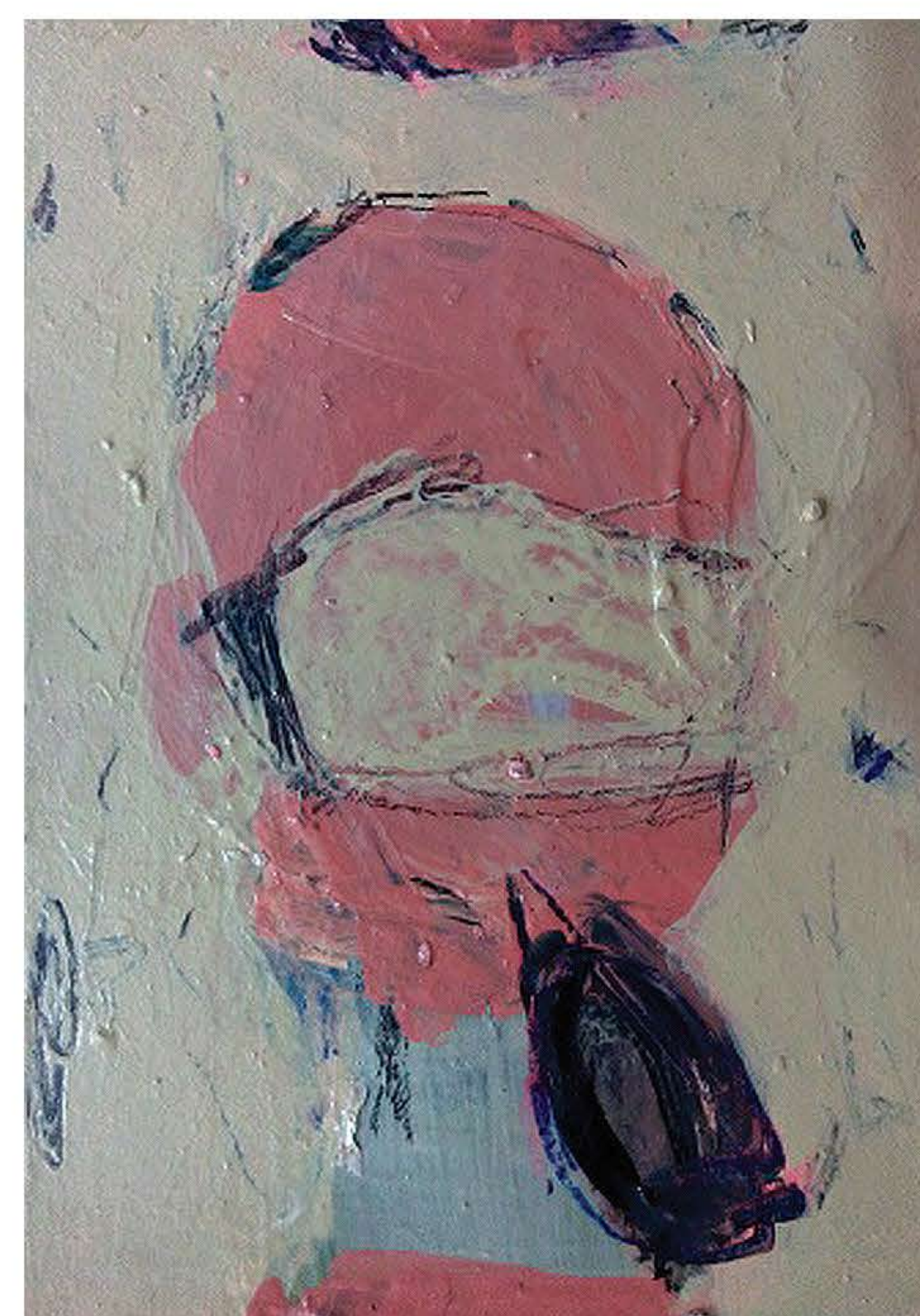
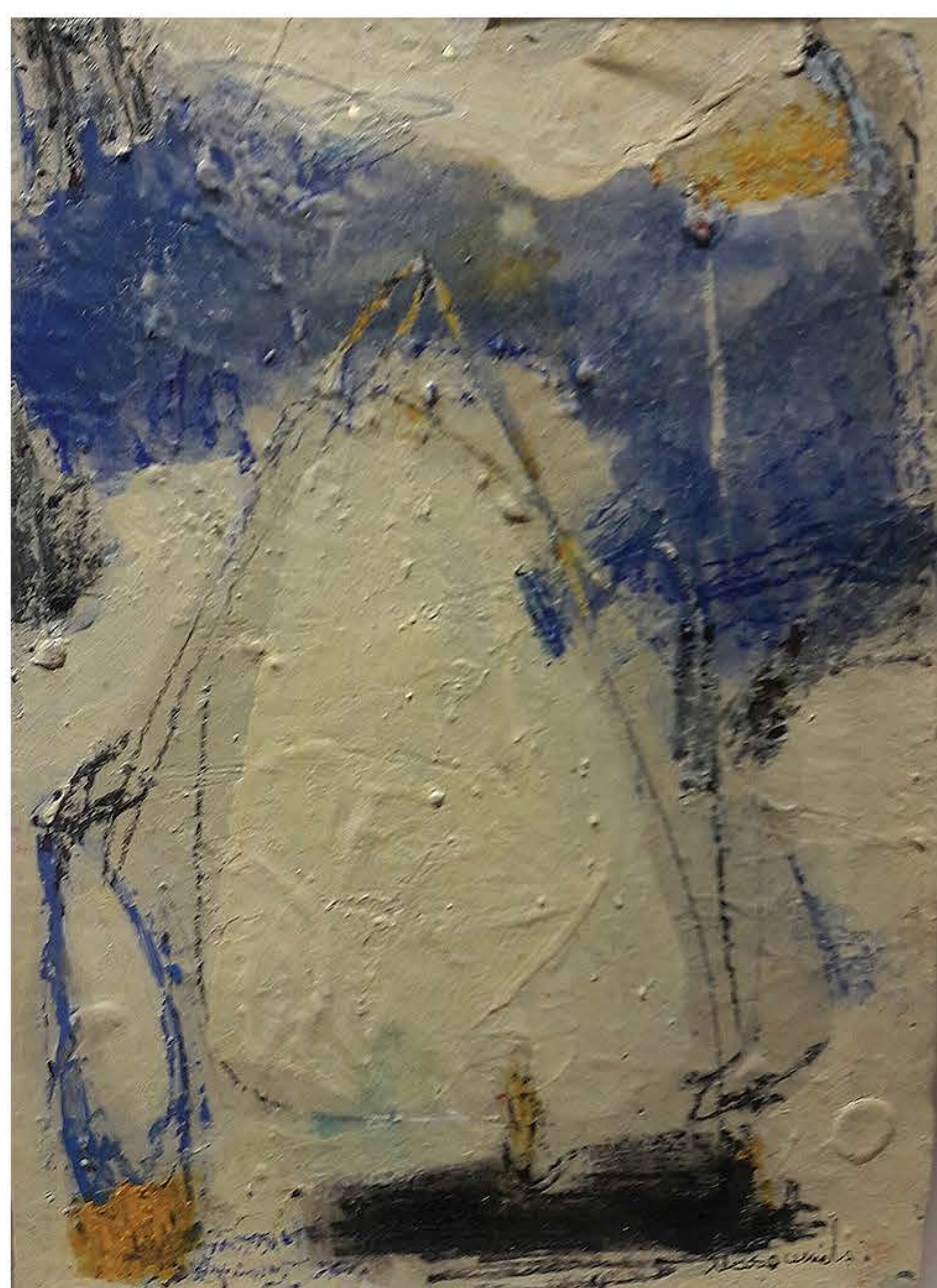
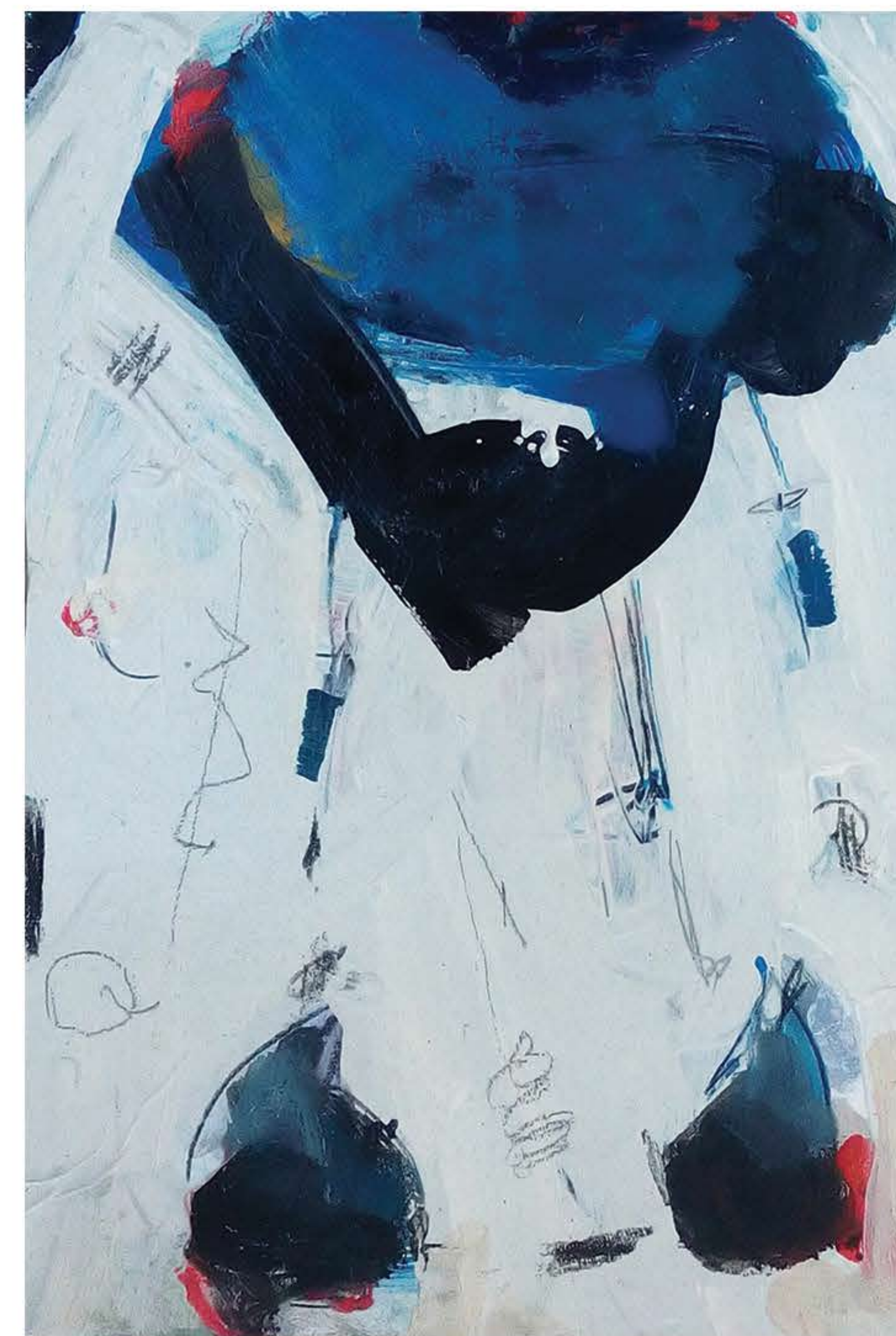
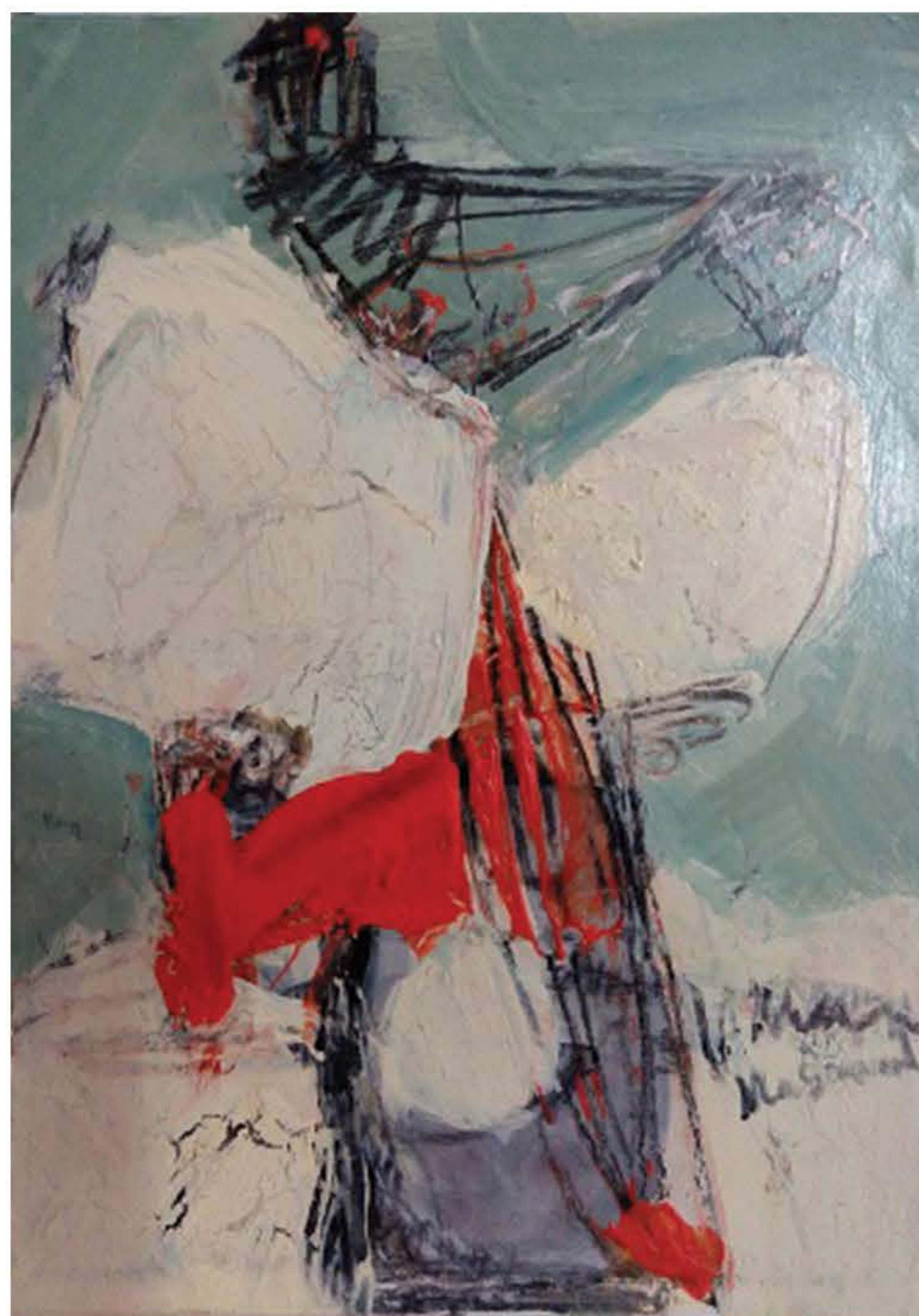


Untitled works - Acrylic, charcoal and ink on cardboard - 48 x 48 cm - 2016





Untitled works - Acrylic, charcoal and ink on cardboard - 50x70 cm - 2016



Untitled works - Acrylic, charcoal and ink on cardboard - 25 x 20 cm - 2016

A portrait of Aida Izadpanah, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, wearing a black top and a necklace with a small diamond pendant. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a textured, reddish-brown wall.

**Aida Izadpanah** (b. 1978, Tehran) lives and works in New York City, specializing in large-format mixed media and porcelain painting. She holds a Ph.D. (2012) in Environmental Psychology from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and a Master's in Urban Planning (2003) from Tehran University. She was a Teaching Assistant in mixed media at The Art Students League of New York from 2012-14. Solo exhibitions include Transcendence (New York City, 2015) and Revelation (Los Angeles, 2013). Recent group shows include Art Brief II: Iranian Contemporary North America (Santa Monica, 2016), In The Abstract (Setauket, 2016), the 73rd Annual Exhibition of Audubon Artists (NYC, 2015); Global Perspective (Bridgehampton and Riverdale, 2015) Affordable Art Fair (NYC, 2014), and the 100th Annual Exhibition of the Allied Artists of America (NYC, 2013). Awards include Fantasy Fountain Fund painting fellowship in Paris, France (2014), cover story in Lines from the League magazine (2014), distinction and exhibition of Revelation 26 by Chief Curator & Director of Collections of the National September 11 Memorial Museum (2013), and the Jeffery Berman Director's Award in Collage or Mixed Media, Audubon Artists (2012).

## Aida Izadpanah

### EDUCATION

Ph.D. – Environmental Psychology, 2012

The Graduate Center of the City University of New York

Artist Summer Institute, 2013

Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and Creative Capital Development  
Mentorship – Painting, Mixed Media

Bruce Dorfman, Art Students League of New York, NYC, 2007-2013

### SOLO PAINTING EXHIBITIONS

Transcendence, Narthex Gallery, New York, NY, May-July 2015

Revelation, Seyhoun Art Gallery, West Hollywood, CA, Dec. 2013

### GROUP PAINTING EXHIBITIONS

- In The Abstract, Gallery North, Setauket, NY, July-Aug. 2016

- Art Brief II: Iranian Contemporary North America, Advocartsy, Arena 1 Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, June 2016

- 73rd Annual Exhibition of Audubon Artists, Incorporated, Salmagundi Art Club New York, NY, Oct.-Nov. 2015

- Global Perspective, Elisa Contemporary Art, Bridgehampton and Riverdale, NY, Nov.-Jan. 2015

- Affordable Art Fair, Elisa Contemporary Art, New York, NY, Apr. 2014

- Alwan for the Arts Auction, Shirin Gallery, 511 West 25th St., Suite 507, NY, NY, June 2014

- 100th Annual Exhibition of the Allied Artists of America, The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South, New York, NY, Nov. 2013

- 71st Annual Exhibition of Audubon Artists, Incorporated, Salmagundi Art Club (online due to gallery repairs), Oct.-Dec. 2013

- Manhattan Borough President's Offices Exhibition, 1 Centre Street, 19th Fl., New York, NY, July-Aug. 2013

- Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery Red Dot Exhibition, Art Students League, 215 West 57th Street, New York, NY, June 2013

- Gramercy Neighborhood Associates Annual Arts Exhibit, The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South, New York, NY, Feb. 2013

- 99th Annual Exhibition of the Allied Artists of America, The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South, New York, NY, Nov. 2012

- 70th Annual Exhibition of Audubon Artists, Incorporated, Salmagundi Art Club (online due to gallery repairs). Award-winner, Oct.-Dec. 2012

- Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery Annual Exhibition, Art Students League, 215 West 57th Street, New York, NY, 2009-2013

- Union Square Artists Organization Open Studios 2010, 32 Union Square East, New York, NY, May 2010

- 12/12: Arts United for Iran, West Chelsea Building Studio 520, 526 W. 26th Street, New York, NY, Dec. 2009

- Union Square Artists Organization Open Studios 2009, 32 Union Square East, New York, NY, Sept. 2009

### DISTINCTIONS

- Sing for Hope Pianos project – Commissioned Selectee, NYC, Spring 2016

- "Revelation and Transcendence." Cover story of LINES from the League magazine, Fall 2015

- Fantasy Fountain Fund Scholarship, sponsoring a month of painting in Paris, France – Scholarship Winner, July 2014

- Painting Revelation 26 chosen among 1,900 submissions by Jan Seidler Ramirez, Chief Curator & Director of Collections of the National September 11 Memorial Museum, for online exhibition by Curate NYC, Nov. 2013

- The Jeffery Berman Director's Award in Collage or Mixed Media, Audubon Artists Incorporated – Recipient, 2012 Annual Exhibition

- Women's International Leadership Program, International House, New York City – Scholarship Winner, 2006-2007

- Member: Art Students League of New York, Allied Artists of America, New York Artists Equity Association

### INSTRUCTION

In-Studio Porcelain Painting Instruction, New York City, 2009-present

Private and group classes, all levels

Children's Art Workshop and Art History Instruction (freelance), 2015-present  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Asia Society, Children's Museum of Manhattan

Art Students League of New York, New York City, 2012-2014

Teacher Assistant to Bruce Dorfman, Mixed Media class

The Isabel O'Neil Studio Workshop, New York City, June 2012

Porcelain Painting Instructor

### BOOKS AUTHORED

- A Humanitarian Rhetoric of Multimedia Representations of War-Affected Children. In Progress, expected 2017. (In English)

- Child, Play and City: Processes, Principles and Criteria for Planning and Design of Children's Play Spaces. Tehran: Shahrdariha, 2004. (In Persian)



Dana Nehdaran was born in the Iranian neighborhood of Chaharbagh on the anniversary of his maternal grandfather's death in 1982. He took his given name, Rahmatollah, from his grandfather who was an art, antique and rare gem merchant; however, he has always been known by his Persian name, Dana, meaning wise. His grandparents' home held a marvelous collection of paintings and antiques, and his mother and father were arts aficionados, traveling the world to view noted institutional and residential collections. As a child, Dana took great wonder and inspiration from this family's passion for art and became motivated to study painting after discovering an uncle's discarded box of art supplies at his grandmother's house. His mother recognized his passion and talent, nurtured by sharing images from her world travels, and enrolled Dana in private art classes with Hassanpour, a well-known artist who taught Dana fundamentals of art that would eventually lead him to study painting at the Sooreh Art University in Shiraz. The most recent series of Esther's Children was shown in Tehran, Dubai and Los Angeles. Of the more than eight series that Dana has created, all have a focus on the tension between past and present. Dana has been a member of the Iranian Painter Association from 2007.

PHOTO BY: Dariush NehdaraN

## **DANA NEHDARAN (B. 1982)**

### Education

2007 - BA Painting, Sooreh University, Shiraz, Iran

2002 - Associate degree, Carpet design, Isfahan, Iran

### Solo Exhibitions

2013 - Esther's children, Rira Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2011 - Esther's children, Shirin Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2010 - My Mona Lisa, Nar Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2008 - The Inside Layers, Morteza Momayez Gallery,  
Iran Art Organisation, Tehran, Iran

### Group Exhibitions

2016 - States of Being Abstract, New York, New York

2016 - Art Brief II: Iranian Contemporary North America,  
Los Angeles, California,

2016 - Untitled, Smash Gallery, San Francisco, USA

2016 - On Figures, Vista Gaallery, Tehran, Iran

2016 - The Young Artist, Sareban Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2014 - Third Tehran Auction, Parsian Azadi Hotel, Tehran, Iran

2014 - Eraser, Shirin art center, Tehran, Iran

2013 - History Game, Etemad Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2013 - Second Tehran auction, Parsian Azadi Hotel, Tehran, Iran

2012 - WONDERLAND, Shokouh Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2012 - First Tehran auction, Parsian Azadi Hotel, Tehran, Iran

2012 - Opening RIRA gallery, Dubai, UAE

2012 - Jinn (painting), Seyhoun Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2012 - Haft Negah (painting), Farhangsara Niavaran, Tehran, Iran

2012 - Magic of Persia, Art Exhibition & Auction Gala,  
Salsali Private Museum, Dubai, UAE

2012 - Iranian Contemporary Artist (painting),  
Middle East Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2011 - 1st Modern & Contemporary Visual Art Auction, Tehran, Iran

2011 - Cutting Edge Artists (painting),  
Mellat Cinema Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2011 - Iranian Painter Association (painting),  
Contemporary Arts Museum, Isfahan, Iran

2011 - The first Tehran painting market: Barg Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2011 - little dancer (painting), Henna Art gallery, Tehran, Iran

2010 - Young Avant-garde (painting), Mellat Cinema Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2010 - Encyclopaedia Iranica (Charity Art Exhibition), New York, USA

2010 - Auto-portraits II, Silk road gallery, Tehran, Iran

2010 - Untitled (painting), Art Center, Tehran, Iran

2010 - Untitled (painting), Neel Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2009 - 1001 Colours (painting), Canvas Gallery, New York, USA

2009 - Colours for the Green (painting), Mellat Cinema Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2008 - Global Generation Freiburg Group Exhibition, Freiburg, Germany

2008 - Untitled (painting), Nar Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2007 - Photography Expo, Esteqlal hotel, Tehran, Iran

2007 - Eternal Papers (photography), Contemporary Arts Museum, Isfahan, Iran

### Professional Experience

2010/2013 Graphic design for Ofogh-E-Bina Journal  
(Tehran Jewish Committee)

2008 - Painter for stage/set for feature film, 'The Remember', Iran

2007 - Painter for stage/set for TV series, The Forbidden Fruit, IRIB, Iran

### Membership

2007-Present - Member of the Iranian Painter Association

### Competitions

2012 - Selected for 9th Image of the year Festival, Short Film  
Category for 'Last Supper' Iran Art Organization, Tehran, Iran

2011 - Selected for short list of MOP CAP, Traffic gallery, Dubai, UAE


2008 - Selected for Damoonfar Festival, Tehran, Iran

2006 - Selected for Damoonfar Festival, Tehran, Iran

### Awards

2004 - Winner of Special Prize in Persian New Year Photography, Isfahan, Iran

2003 - Winner of Special Prize in Sketching, Hafezieh Competition, Shiraz, Iran



**Masoume Moghadam** was born in Tehran /Iran and received her associate degree in painting from Jahad Daneshgahi. She studied painting with Iranian masters Shahriar Ahmadi and Hamidreza Jadid among others and sculpture with Guity Seif her mentor. Masoume's work has both Iranian and Western influences and she admits being a great admirer of Zenderoudi, Arabshahi, Kazemi, and Rouhbakhsh as well as Twombly, Pollock and Rauschenberg. She loves to work on cardboard and canvas and her mixed media works include the use of pastel and acrylic paint as well as pencil and charcoal. Masoume's works have been exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Iran. In 2016, her solo exhibitions at Gallery 26, and the Niavaran Cultural Center in Tehran got her the recognition she deserved. Since 2012 her work has been exhibited in the Arasbaran art fair and Tehran's Biennale where she was the recipient of letters of appreciations from the organizing committee, as well as Laleh , Toba and Ariva Galleries in Tehran/Iran. Masoume lives and works in Gohardasht/ Karaj.

## **Masoume Moghadam** (Born in Tehran/Iran)

### Education

2005 - Associate Painting degree from Jahad Daneshgahi Junior Art college .

### Solo Exhibitions

2016 - Untitled, Niavaran Cultural center, Tehran , Iran.

2015 - Untitled, Gallery 26, Tehran, Iran.

### Group Exhibitions

2016 - Participated in Tehran Biennale: Graphic Design, Laleh Gallery, Tehran, Iran.

2016 - Participated in Tehran Biennale: paintings, National Museum Gardens, Tehran, Iran.

2016 - participated in the Exhibition of small paintings: Toubi Gallery, Tehran, Iran.

2015 - Participated in the Painting Exhibition, Givar Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2015 - Participated in the Exhibition of small paintings: Aria Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2012 - Participate in Tehran Biennale: Painting: Saba Gallery, Tehran Iran



**Roya Khadjavi** is an independent curator and cultural producer based in New York. Through the Roya Khadjavi project, she has largely focused on the work of young Iranian artists working both in Iran and beyond its borders, seeking not only to support their artistic endeavors but to also facilitate awareness and cultural dialogue between artistic communities. In 2014, Khadjavi co-curated *Portraits: Reflections by Emerging Iranian Artists*, featuring emerging artists born, raised and educated in Iran, followed by *Between Invitation and Intrusion: A Conversation in Form* in 2015.

In 2016 she curated the warmly received exhibition *Strappa: Dialogue and Performance* followed by the groundbreaking exhibition *IRAN X CUBA: Beyond the Headline* which brought the works of 18 Cuban and Iranian artists together for the first time in New York. Since 2008, she has actively led exhibition committee efforts around the art of the Middle East for institutions including the Guggenheim Museum and the Asia Society, where she sat on the steering committee of the critically acclaimed *Exhibit Iran Modern* (2013). Khadjavi co-founded the Institute of International Education's Iran Opportunities Fund, and currently serves as president of the board of New York-based non-profit Art in General.

For her pioneering efforts to advance, support, and promote international education she has been honored with the Women's Global Leadership Award by the Institute of International Education, and an Order of Academic Palms (Chevalier dans L'Ordre des Palmes Académiques), by the French Minister of Education.



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