

Mirza Hamid

"Red earth pigment and water"

Zaal Art Gallery & Susa Art Gallery proudly present "Red Earth Pigments and Water", a collection of on-canvas paintings by Mirza Hamid. The artist used the red earth pigments and water in his 2024 "Mirza's Shelter" to paint the walls of an abandoned factory in Tehran.

What we see in these paintings are mostly human forms. The artist's emphasis on "red earth pigments and water" hints at a primordial relationship with his material that lies beyond or beneath the surface of the painting. Mirza Hamid's work exudes a formal simplicity found in children and prehistoric art. The presence of an ancient lamp, an ox tamed by a reed flute, a woman and man mingling in a dance, a Persian wild goat often depicted on earthen vases further lead us to a prehistoric connection. The artist sees himself as a heritage-holder, passing on the techniques that our foremothers and forefathers cultivated from earth and water.

For the past decade, Mirza Hamid has anonymously painted more than 500 murals, many of which have been destroyed by harsh climate conditions or municipal authorities. In addition to Tehran, Mirza has depicted images on street walls in Yazd, Khorramshahr, Abadan, and Rasht. He has also left his artistic mark on the war-torn ruins of Damascus. Though best known for his street murals and imagery on discarded objects found on the streets, Mirza's work has also been showcased in more formal venues. In 2023, he held his solo exhibition "The Origin of All Things" at the New Gallery at Basilica Hudson, which featured paintings and photographs of his city murals. In 2024, he presented another solo exhibition, "Mirza's Shelter," at Dastan: Outside Projects. Hosted in the courtyard and five salons of the former Forouzan Factory (once a refrigerator manufacturing plant), the exhibition showcased murals and displayed objects—none of which were for sale.