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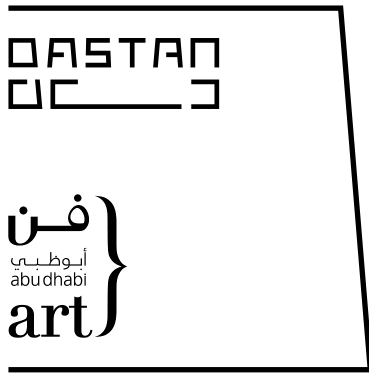
Abu Dhabi Art 2025
Date: 19 – 23 November 2025
Booth No: M9
Location: Manarat Al Saadiyat.

Dastan is pleased to announce its participation at Abu Dhabi Art 2025 with a solo presentation of recent works by Pooya Aryanpour (b. 1971), marking the gallery's fourth time returning to the fair. The 17th edition of the Abu Dhabi Art will be held from 19 to 23 November 2025 at Manarat Al Saadiyat.

Pooya Aryanpour sets out to remap and expand the architectural techniques of mirror-work (Ayineh-Kari) to craft ambiguous forms that simultaneously seem representational and abstract. His work focuses on creating mystery and suspense, exploring subject material rooted in the traditions of Iranian culture. In his paintings and three-dimensional work, traditional symbolism, styles of narration, storytelling and folklore, Persian calligraphy schools, and their impact are utilized through cutting-edge approaches. His sculptural pieces often take the observer beyond their physical boundaries, as they create wide reflections that lead to plays of light, lines, and forms that create a sensory presence.

Aryanpour's practice follows traditional roots, yet builds on centuries and layers. In his own words, "Throughout my research on traditional Iranian architecture and mirror-work, one of the aspects that never ceased to amaze me was how such works were restored and repaired. I studied restoration processes and techniques in detail. In many restoration projects, surface layers are removed and work begins at a deeper level. Whenever I visited sites that were being restored, I was always fascinated by how these deeper layers could take me closer to the spirit of the original time and work." These studies compelled him to create novel structures underneath mirror surfaces, many of which have been inspired by microscopic lifeforms, the human body, forms in the natural world, and traditional ornamentations.

Initially trained in paintings, his mirror-work surfaces follow many of his experimentations in improvisational drawing and painting: "When designing the patterns, I would make references to a wide variety of studies and observations that were based on things I had contemplated throughout my practice. Many of such references emerged from the world of my paintings—for instance, my studies on natural elements such as rivers, seas, plants and leaves, landscapes, cityscapes, and daily life, began to appear in the mirror-work designs, similar to the way they had appeared previously in my paintings. In addition to these, one of the most influential sources of inspiration for the designs was my studies on the traditions of Tazhib [illuminated manuscript]."*



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Pooya Aryanpour's triptych piece titled "The River" is the center of the presentation. The monumental triptych extends the artist's ongoing investigation into the structural and perceptual capacities of mirror-work by shifting its vocabulary toward fluidity. Here, he treats mirrored surfaces not as static ornaments but as kinetic fields. Long, flowing sculptural forms stretch across space like suspended streams. Thin blue lines run through them as if marking currents. Occasional red and green elements echo stones or aquatic plants. The forms bend, taper, and curve, holding a visual rhythm that recalls the slow movement of water across a landscape.

Rather than relying on the geometric precision and harmony associated with classical Ayineh-Kari, Aryanpour channels the organic irregularity of a riverbed. The mirrored planes catch and fragment surrounding light, generating drifting reflections that move with the viewer's position. This instability produces both representation and abstraction. A surface might read as liquid for a moment before dissolving into pure line and shimmer. The sculpture becomes diagrams of motion, suggesting flow without depicting it outright.

The conceptual approach in "The River" remains tied to Aryanpour's sustained engagement with restoration practices in Iranian architecture. His earlier reflections on "removing surface layers to reach the deeper spirit of a work" hold particular relevance here. These pieces behave like exposed substrata. They feel as if they reveal the unseen structures beneath classical ornament, filtered through studies of natural systems, microscopic formations, and the body's internal channels. The river becomes both motif and framework: a conduit, a connective tissue, a model for continuous formation.

Alongside "The River", four other sculptural works complete the booth's landscape, extending this logic into other natural archetypes. Two mountain-like forms rise with organic mirrored planes and their surfaces break light into sharp gradients that mimic geological pressure and stratification. They give the impression of landscapes caught at a moment of formation.

Two pieces, hung on the sides, from the long-standing "Fruit of Elysian" series, operate at a different register. Rounded mirrored bodies contain bursts of saturated color along fissures and seams. These elements suggest seeds, membranes, or internal pulp. While compact, they maintain the same tension between reflectivity and organic structure. Each piece behaves like a condensed organism, mirroring the viewer but implying a life within