Ali Akbar Sadeghi

DASTAN

LOST LIFE LOVE



LOST

Ali Akbar Sadeghi The Complete Works

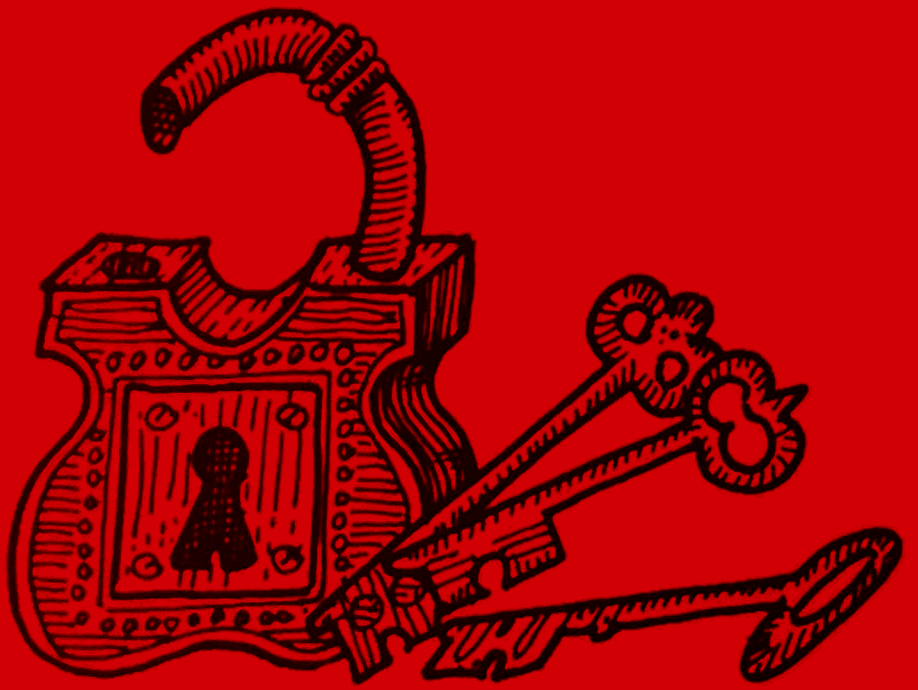
Poems

Dedicated to Tomorrow



INTRODUCTION

The Lost Book is an anthology of Ali Akbar Sadeghi's poetry, written between 2005 & 2006 during his bout of severe depression, when he was unable to paint.
The poems were composed after the
"Nail" series. The sense behind his poetry is to be naive about the world. Each poem is accompanied by a small drawing based on elements from the poems.
Front Page - Typography for the word "Lost" by Ali Akbar



Bring in the keys and open the locks. Break the bars off the doors and windows. Throw away all the locks. Melt them down. Foundries will make locks no more. Open the doors and windows and let fresh air carry you to meadows. Then bring the fresh air back to your streets and homes. Don't pick the flowers; rather, plant them in your gardens. Shatter the flowerpots so that flowers are no longer imprisoned. No one will come to steal them, for everyone has flowers in their homes.

Give them pure water and to us they will say, "Look at us! See how beautiful we are!" They share their happiness with us; their fragrance fills the corners of our solitude. And no more will mankind feel a zeal for sin. The whips are thrown into the Well of Wayl! We'll rub ointment on the oarsmen's backs and carry them aboard, for the wind will take us to the shores of redemption, and the sea will aid our journey back home where all the doors and windows are always kept open and the sentry kiosk is empty, for Heaven has no doors at which to appoint guards. Humans are innocent. They will step into Your Paradise, all beautiful and adorned with white blossoms.

And the sky will cry out no more, "Oh Man! Do not sin!" The sky will be blue and spotless for eternity, and rivers will peacefully join the sea to meet the fish. We have torn out our nets so no more will the fish be captured by us. The guns are filled no more with powder or cartridges lest a flight land with regret, and the deer are free. There is no trap; the mines are all swept. Foundries build locks no more; carpenters make bars no more; and the word lie is erased from books.

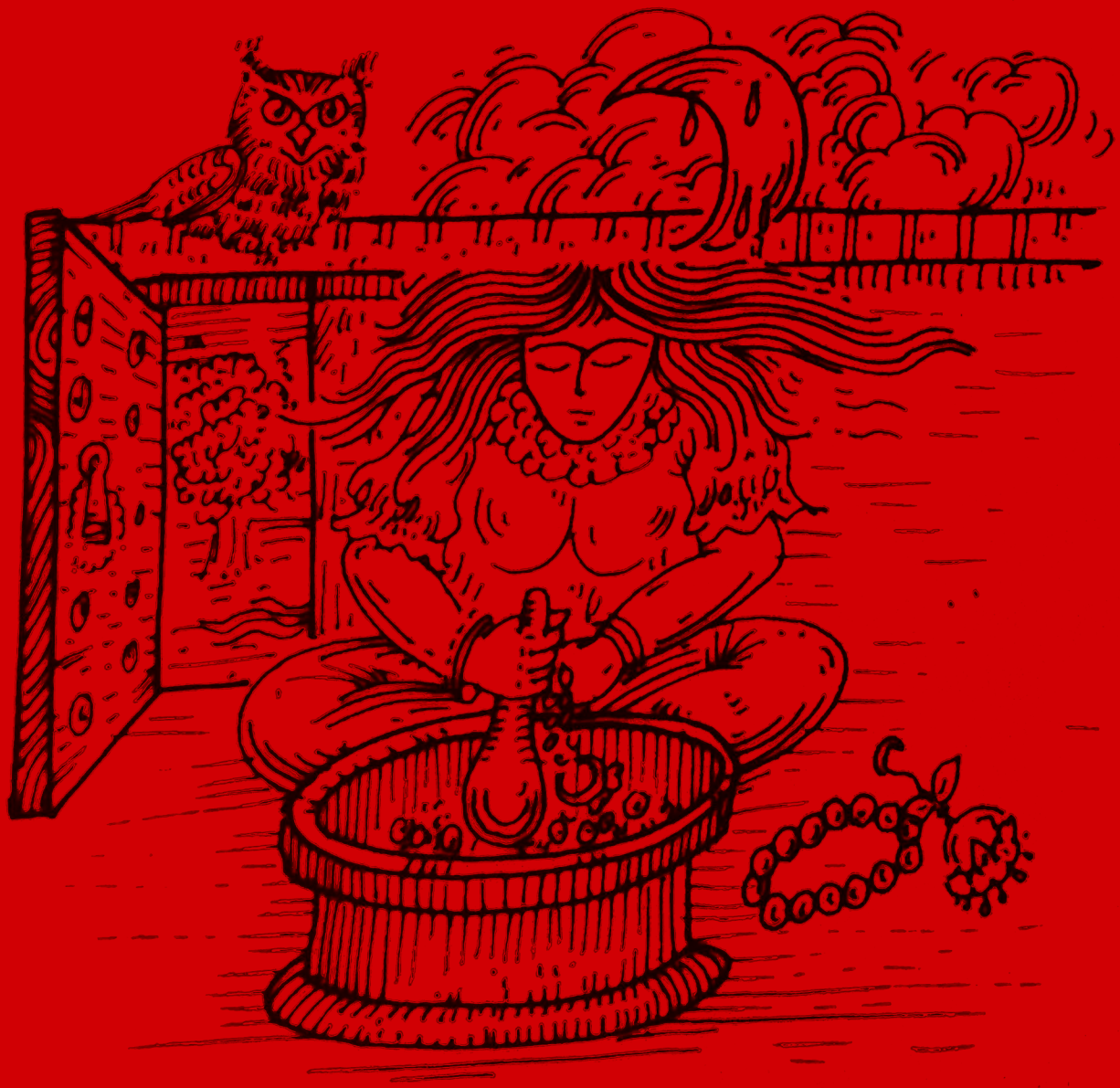
1 - The name of a deep well in Hell.



Oh Star, you impregnate the sun with many more suns while you yourself turn to dust in the galaxy and fertilize your pollen and numerous stars that are lonesome, twinkling and yearning for birth. I see a spider who has woven his web and washed his hands, waiting for a guest to bring him a bouquet of tuberoses to celebrate his rebirth, but executioners disrupt the birthday party. They tear the cobweb and forbid the lighting of candles.

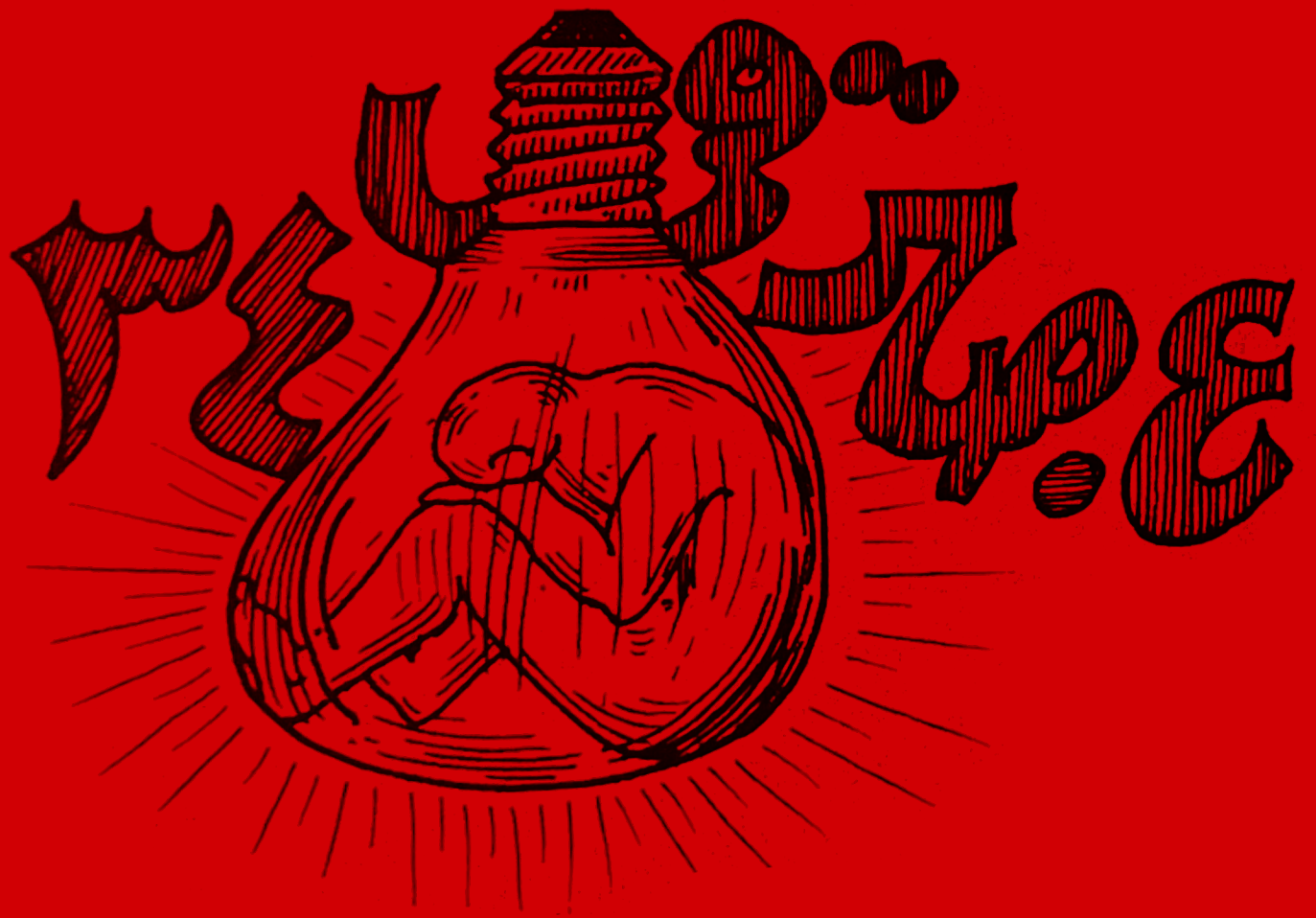
The spider molders while awaiting his guest that is enchained in the executioner's jail. The kids are crying to swim in a tank filled with their tears. They will sail to the end of the sea to celebrate another birthday with their fathers somewhere away from the executioners, and they will dance and cavort and light candles. Ahriman conspires with the executioner to inseminate Iblis who waits for many more Satans to come and sow the seeds of violence in man's heart and reap regret for loving. I walk the footpath and weep for the star that decays in his loneliness. There is no one to weep over his tomb.

My eyes are blinking and can behold no more the unadulterated sun as it shines on frozen flowers melting them, like blacksmiths blowing into their forges to heat the swords that are to wash the plain with the blood of a pigeon that has forgotten how to fly.



The old man walks the alley carrying a piece of Sangak bread to take a morsel to his table and from the throat to the soul, hoping for the day his wife grinds lead in the mortar instead of gold. How exhausted I am! The door to the house is open, but I am powerless.
Only one step remains to death. The owl cries atop the wall, "Get inside so I can carry you to your eternal abode." I am frightened by the shadow where no light shines to replenish my hope for life in the crimson dusk. I see darkness is coming, and the monster of the night is beating on the roofs. The muted drum throws the bitterness of wine that it holds in its hands to the wind to splash over the withered geraniums that are going to moonlight's party, to splash its green blood over the moon's face, so that it begins to grow. I bite a red apple to assault her and shed tears of remorse. From the ovaries of an apple we build a jungle with apples in seven colors. We remove our carpets from their looms so that the executioner would never desire to hang my thoughts. I will smash my cage beneath a hammer so that prisons are forgotten, and I am free and unbound on mountains to multiply a hundred times the echo of my voice, singing the song of nothingness, for the world has come to an end. The tempest grumbles no more so that you can caress me, give me hope for life, and kiss my lips good night.

1 - (In Persian the word 'dar' means both 'loom' and 'gallows')


۳۶ عبرت

I sent my soul to picnic on the ruddy rocks at dawn to write about the hafte bijar sour pickles of thought, as how toothsomely it relies on Arash's bowstring to dart toward the farthest legendary tree and divide my border by three, half of which to land on the ruins of the land of my imagination upon an eastern caliphate so that I may perceive freedom in my fancy's jail and perceive and conceive of pearls and distribute my paternal estates among sisters. I sense the void of brothers as I must keep watch in booth number 34 and present my visitor's card to you. I think of the souls, of all the Ali Akbars. Every soul thinks of Ali Akbar and calls Ali Akbar, Ali Akbar, for there are many Ali Akbars. I have lost myself among the Ali Akbars until they call for me. I get lost among the souls.

I am a soul, living in a vacuous lightbulb to splash light over you while you continue along your path according to the inscription on the ruddy rock. How sweet is the syrup of love! A moment per kilo, and I haven't the means to buy a moment. I, myself, am the syrup of love, on the farthest star, where a lone creature thinks of oxygen. I know that I am but a single dot in the universe, and l wish to travel from one point to another, towards zero degrees, yet I am always at a hundred degrees and I boil in perpetuity. No more are homemade Korsis set up. Everyone is thinking of the parliament's seats and wants to determine our destiny. They say tomatoes are so good for the skin. The picture in the frame of fancy smiles at us and says, "One day you will be in the hands of someone who will bury you and who will urge them to spatter well-sieved soil on him, because he dreams of butterflies".

1 - A Korsi (meaning chair or seat) is a square table covered by a blanket with a brazier under it to heat the legs and body. Korsi is also used to refer to the seats in Parliament from whence came the poet's intended Pun.



On this white peak sits a black bird totally within gun-reach. Something well-shaped is needed to redden this white snow, and we'll create a canvas with red and black and white, just when a sun wanted to give birth to a star, but couldn't. They exploded her side with a billion worlds so that she could have a caesarian delivery. Three stars were born, but one of them was said to be born deformed. They said, "It looks like the Earth," and man will return there to cultivate the seeds of sin. They exterminated it so there would be only one Earth in the universe, and sin would increase over time so that one day the world is fertilized by sin and cannot give birth to another sin, so that you and I, comfortable in our genes, can travel peacefully to a star whose waters are potable and black. There we will find a lizard that donates its tail to us as it tries to seduce us with the promise of eternal life. I'll read your image through the mirror that's as murky as iron. Your other images, on two 35-mm reels of negatives are about to fade away, and you're blackening them in the darkroom of your mind with a red lamp lit in it, and there will be no escape. Now turn on the lamp and you will see that the whole world behind your white glasses is ruling the darkness saying, "Your shift is over." Now it's time for the day to break, so that I can take a sip of my noon prayers in the absence of a lamp. What a felicity is light for a mole who can only palpate his lair.

LIFE

Dedicated to Yesterday

Foreword

Ali Akbar Sadeghi is a key figure in the context of Iranian Modern and Contemporary arts. He has practiced in many artistic fields and influenced many genres and artists. The initial idea of this book was to put a spotlight on his many diverse artistic activities. He was born in 1937 and studied art in the critical and revolutionary 1960s in Tehran University of Fine Arts. In the 1970s he produced animations and illustrations and by the time of 1978 revolution, got back to his studio and started his solitary painting journey. The Life Book is a survey of Ali Akbar Sadeghi's seminal works, which molded his artistic aesthetics over two decades, resulting in substantial reforms in the history of Iranian art. In this era, he experimented with various media and techniques such as graphic design, vitrail, film, etc., and re-examined many different genres and schools of art. Reviewing this phase of his activities reveals certain aspects of the artistic and sociological history of Iran during the 1950's to late 1970s.

ARTISTIC CHRONOLOGY

At the age of seven he attended Jam Elementary School. From his early school years he showed great passion for painting and using any tools he found to create new paintings. During this time, he received a few issues of "Life" and "Time" magazines from his uncle and their images left a deep and lasting impression on him. His father was a technical operator at the printing house of Iran's National Bank, and brought Ali Akbar print samples, which he used to create copies from. He gradually became interested in handicraft and worked in a carpentry workshop for a period of time.

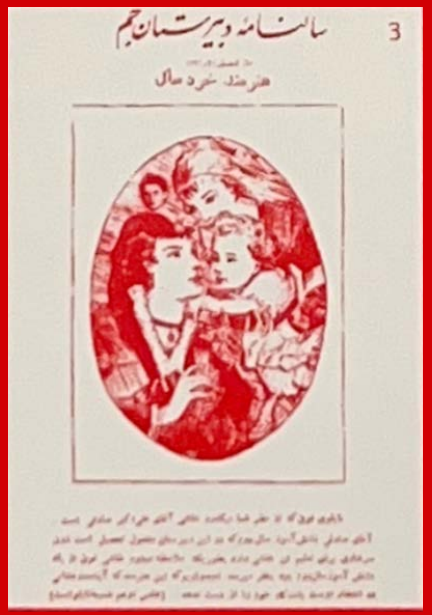


1 - Ali Akbar Sadeghi at the Top. Posing Pyramid with Fellow Student for Celebration of Hakimzadeh School, Tehran, 1946

He attended Jam High School. Around age 12 he expressed interest in literature, Persian mythical stories and novels such as "The Black Tulip" and "The Count of Monte Cristo" that greatly influenced him. It is also during this time that he saw a peddler storyteller portraying images of a religious ritual where a man's body is being hacked; this deeply moved him. He received his first painting commission in 1952 and in the same year began working as Nasrollah Afjei's assistant and becoming acquainted with oil paint. He also became engaged with school performances and makeup. In 1953, he designed his school's theatre hall. He learnt watercolour under the supervision of Avaak Hayrapetian but due to the coup of that year, his course remained unfinished until a month later when classes resumed again. During this time, he also worked with Aidin Aghdashlou on colouring Hayrapetian's postcard orders. He also began earning money from painting Chinese terracotta plates. He won the first prize in a painting competition in his school. In 1954 he worked as an illustrator and title organizer for Asia Newspaper.





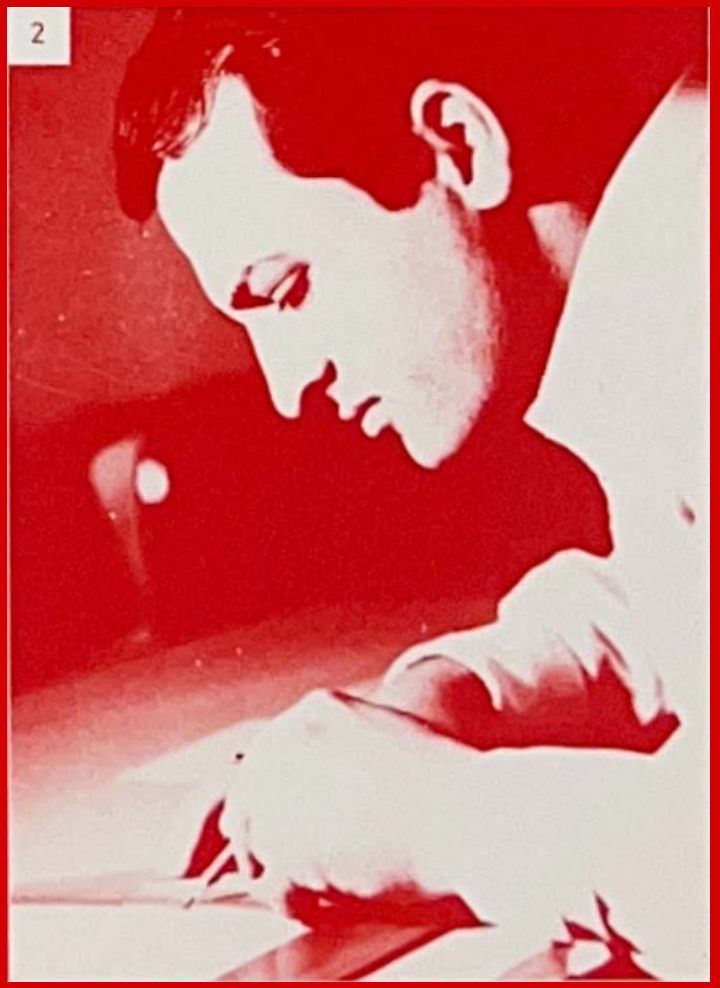




1- Ali Akbar Sadeghi Copies a Painting, 1954
2- Seated on the left, Ali Akbar Sadeghi Won the First Prize of Jam High School Painting Competition, 1957
3- Ali Akbar Sadeghi's Painting in Jam High School's Annual Magazine, 1953
4- Cover Design for Malekeh Etezadi's Novel "Letters that Never Reached Him", 1957

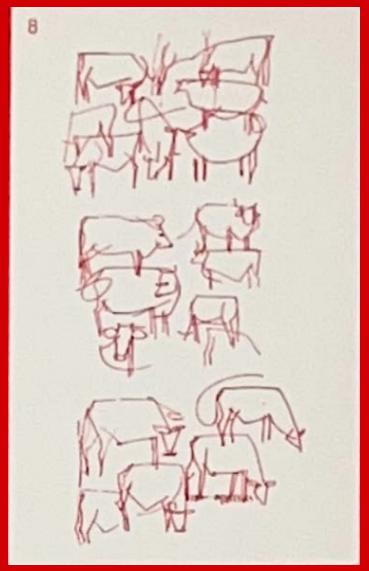
In 1957, Ali Akbar Sadeghi, Mahmoud Bassiri and Nasrollah Afjei opened "Atelier 7" in Tehran's Shah-Abaad passage mall. In the same year, Sadeghi passed Tehran's Fine Arts university entrance exam and entered university with the intention of earning his Fine Arts degree. He made his first theatre marquee for the second release of Mehdi Raees Firouz's movie "Vagabond" in 1958. He designed his first vitrail painting, with a 24-square-meter area, in 1959. For a couple of years his main profession was designing film theatre marquees and vitrail paintings. In those years, he also worked as a graphic designer for a variety of Iranian magazines and companies and designed several movie posters. In 1965, he married Ashraf Bani Hashemi. In 1967 he painted a polyptych vitrail for Roudaki Hall and in the same year, moved from "Atelier 7" to establish "Vitrail Gallery" on Pahlavi Street. In 1969 he graduated from university and joined the military service. Later the same year he became a father to his first son, Afshin.

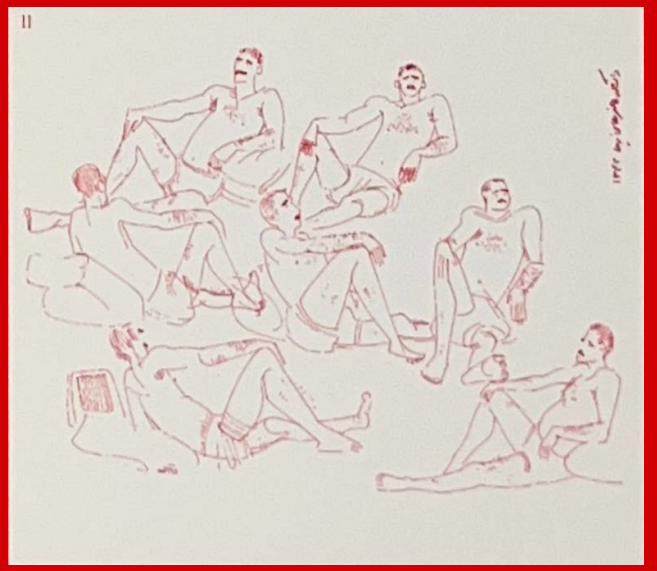




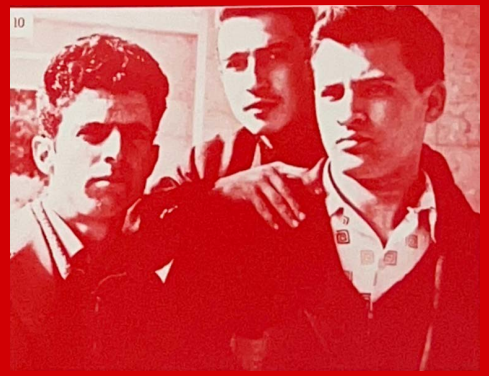
1- Study for a Portrait, Mixed Media on Paper, 1960's
2- Ali Akbar Sadeghi in His Studio, 1960











7- Left to Right, Abbas Kiarostami, Ali Akbar Sadeghi, Bagher Tabesh and Sohrab Jajormi, Tehran, 1960

8- Study of Cows, Pencil on Paper, 1960's

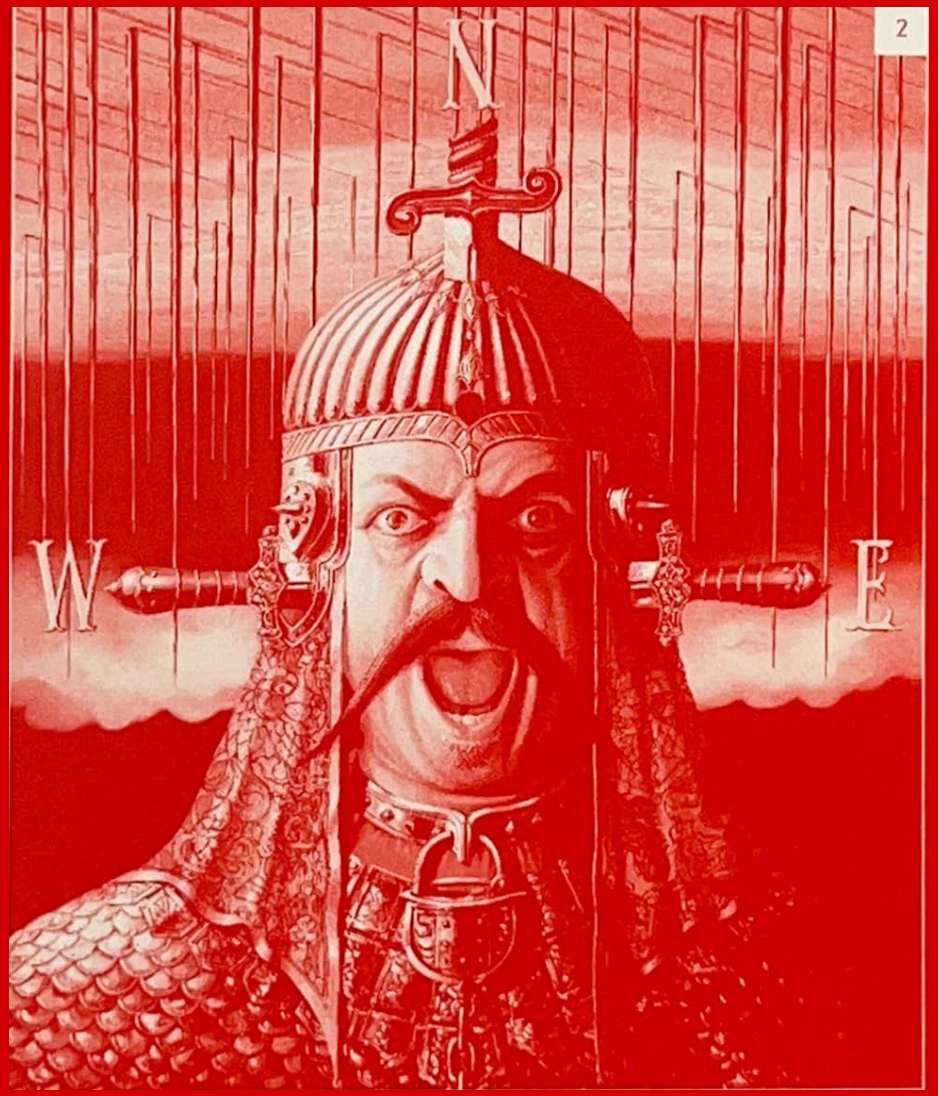
9- Ali Akbar Sadeghi at the Age of 32, Military Service, 1969

10- From Left to Right, Manouchehr Motabar, Mohammad Reza Jodat and Ali Akbar Sadeghi, Tehran University of Fine Arts. 1959

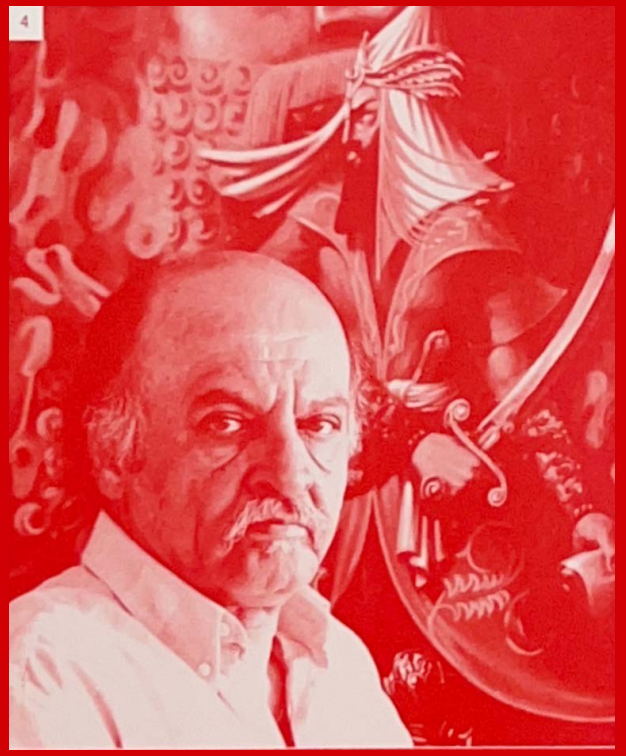
11- Study of Figures, Pencil on Paper, 1960's

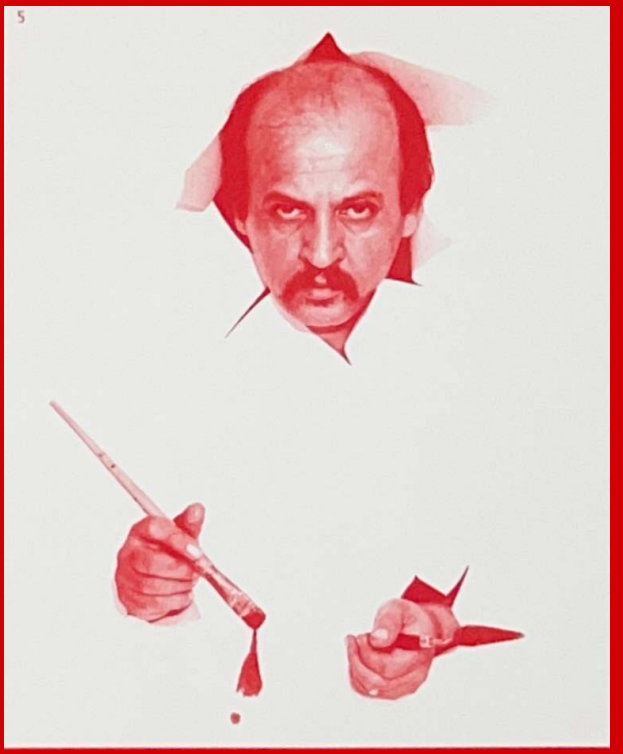
Due to the Iranian revolution of 1979, he stopped working for the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. During this time he began working on a series of oil paintings with the title "Myth and Math" and changed Vitrail Gallery's name to Sabz Gallery. In 1983, his third son, Ashkan, was born. In 1985, he illustrated a book entitled "Victory" for the institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. In 1987, he began working on his watercolour series and continued with this extensive collection until 2000. In 1989, 'Sabz Gallery' changed from being a studio to an art gallery presenting works by prominent and emerging artists. In 1990, he was awarded with the Leipzig Book Award for the design of "Contemplation is the Best Worship". In 1992, his collection of drawings was published in a book entitled "Alphabets" with the philosophical analysis of Nader Ebrahimi. In 1998, his collection of oil paintings was published in a book entitled "Ali Akbar Sadeghi".





1- Study for Rectangle, Pencil on Paper, 1987
2- Radius, 70x50 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2000







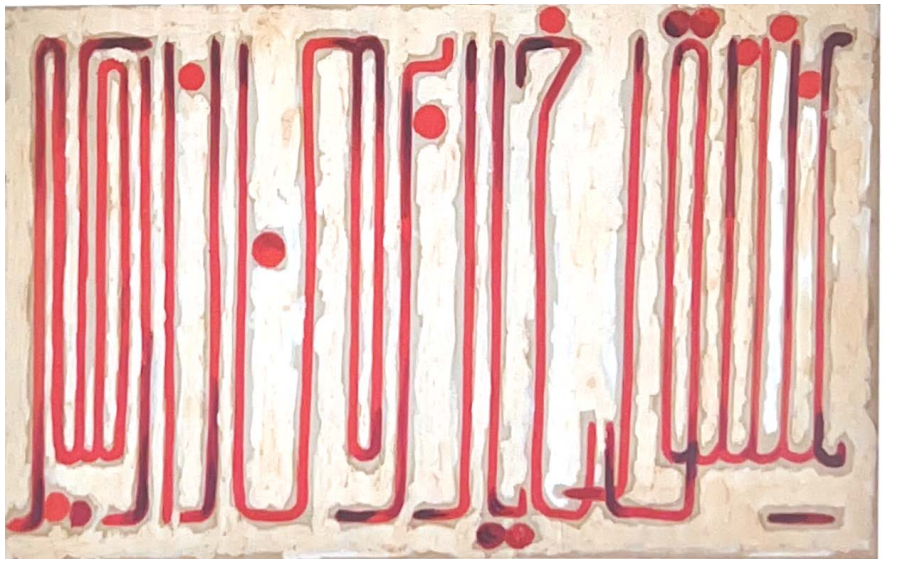
3- Separation, Watercolour on Cardboard, 40x50 cm, 1988

4- Ali Akbar Sadeghi in his studio, Tehran, 1990s

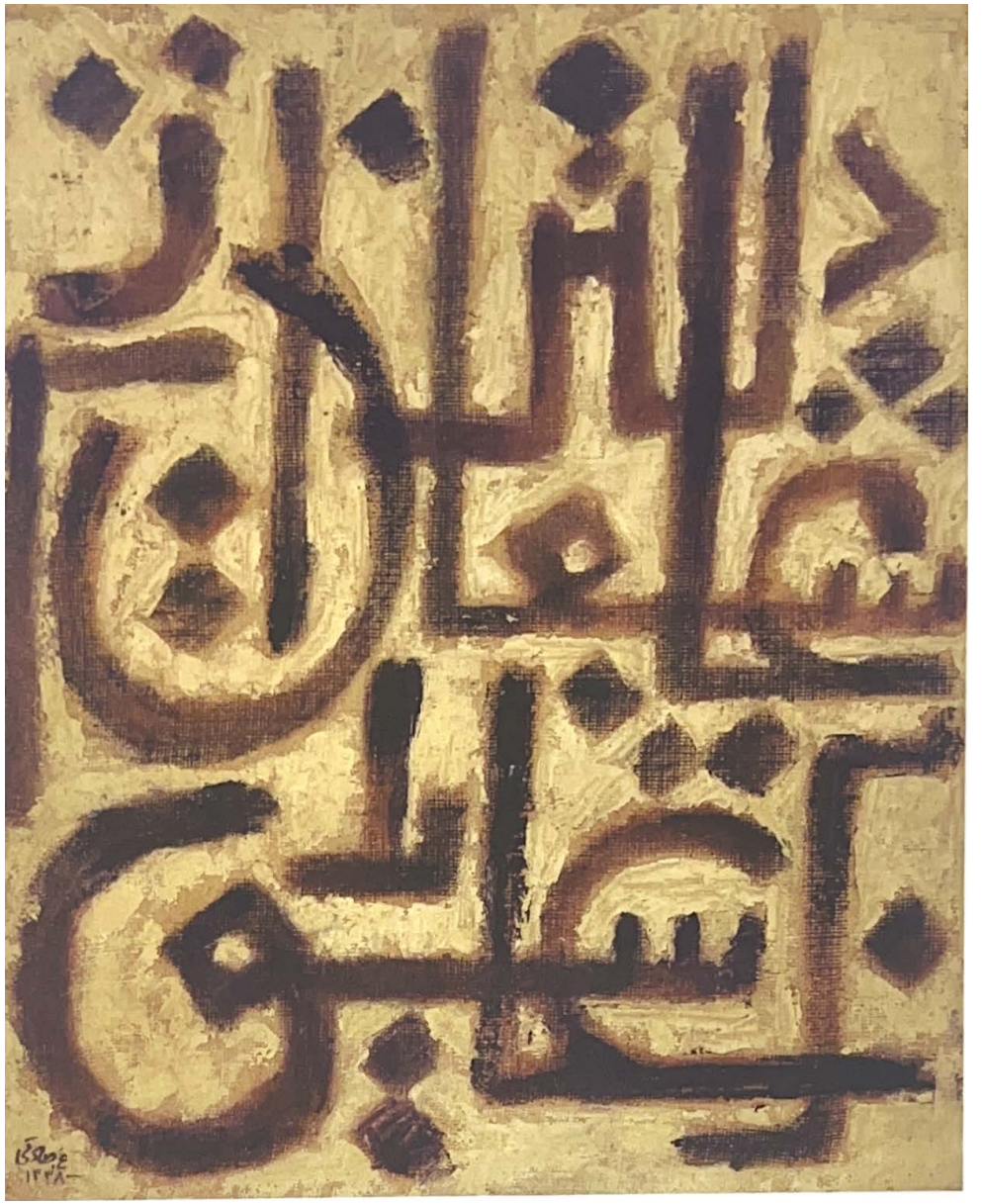
5- Ali Akbar Sadeghi, Sabz Gallery, Tehran, 1980s, Photo by Malek

EARLY WORKS

Sadeghi's early works show his passion for imagery and his talent for painting as a teenager and young student. He was influenced by the visual standards of his time: imported goods from America and Europe and their visual criteria, miniatures, and later by what he saw in art history books.



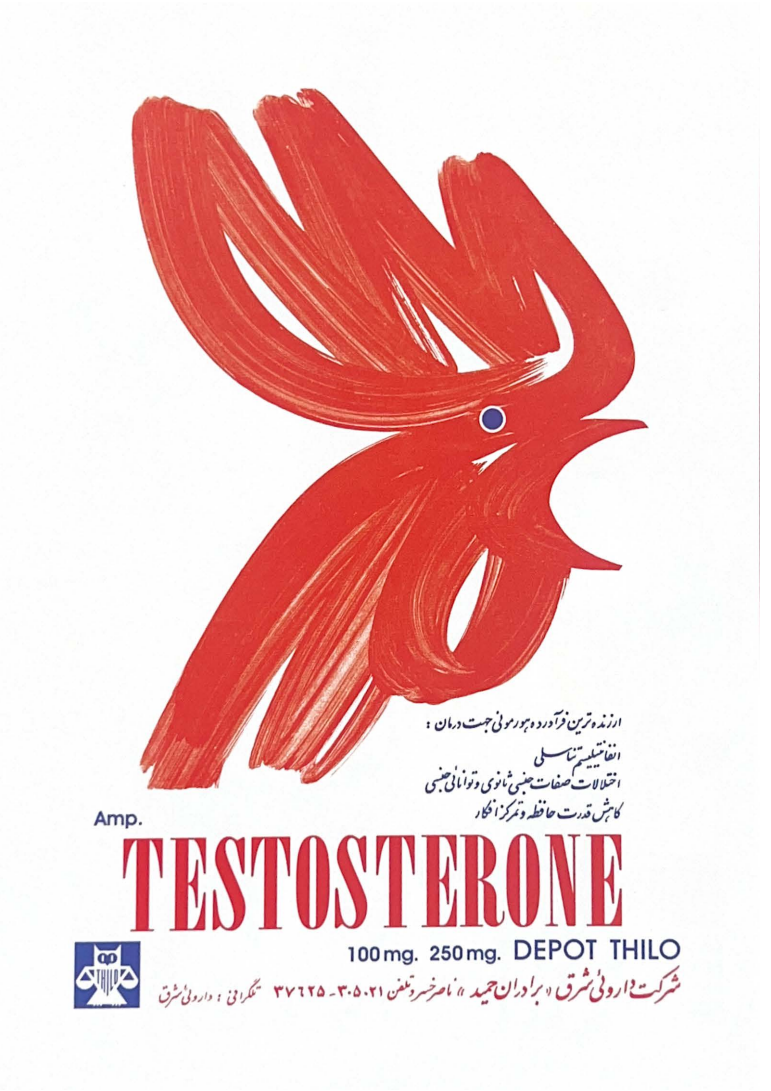
"Composition"
1959
Oil on Cardboard
25 x 39 cm



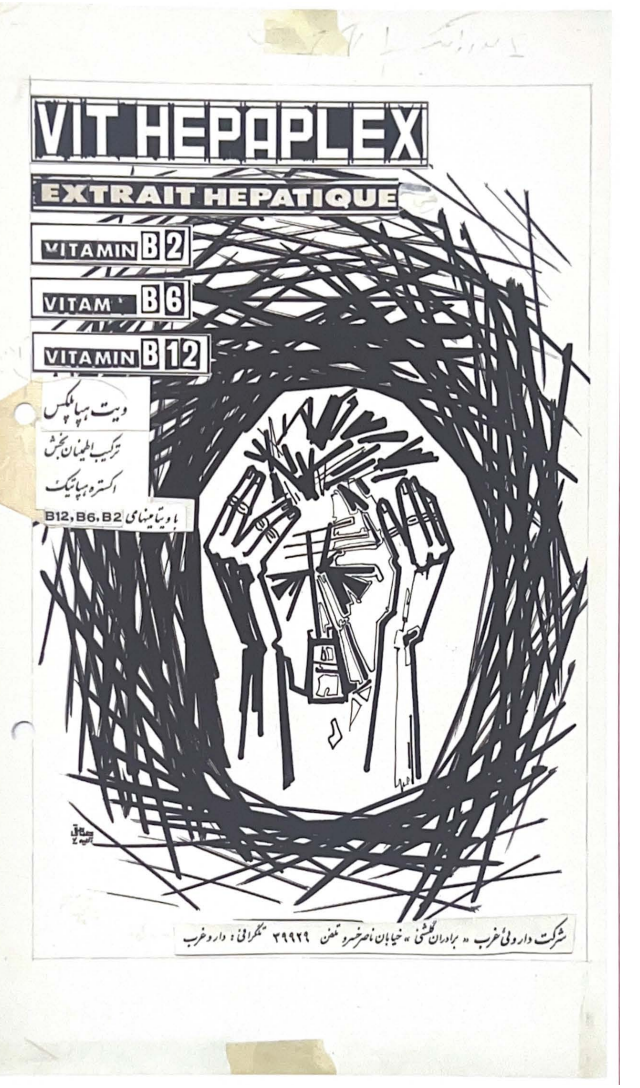
"Composition"
1959
Oil on Canvas
67 x 54 cm



"Still Life"
1960
Oil on Canvas
50 x 70 cm



"Testosterone". 1963
Product Advertisement



"Vit Herpalex". 1964
Product Advertisement

MURAL FRESQUE

Sadeghi's mural fresques followed the same trend of production as his Vitrails.He was approached and commissioned by many institutions and organizations to design fresques. The pieces were initially designed in a small scale and then executed on location. Some of these have been destroyed over time and only their original sketches survive.



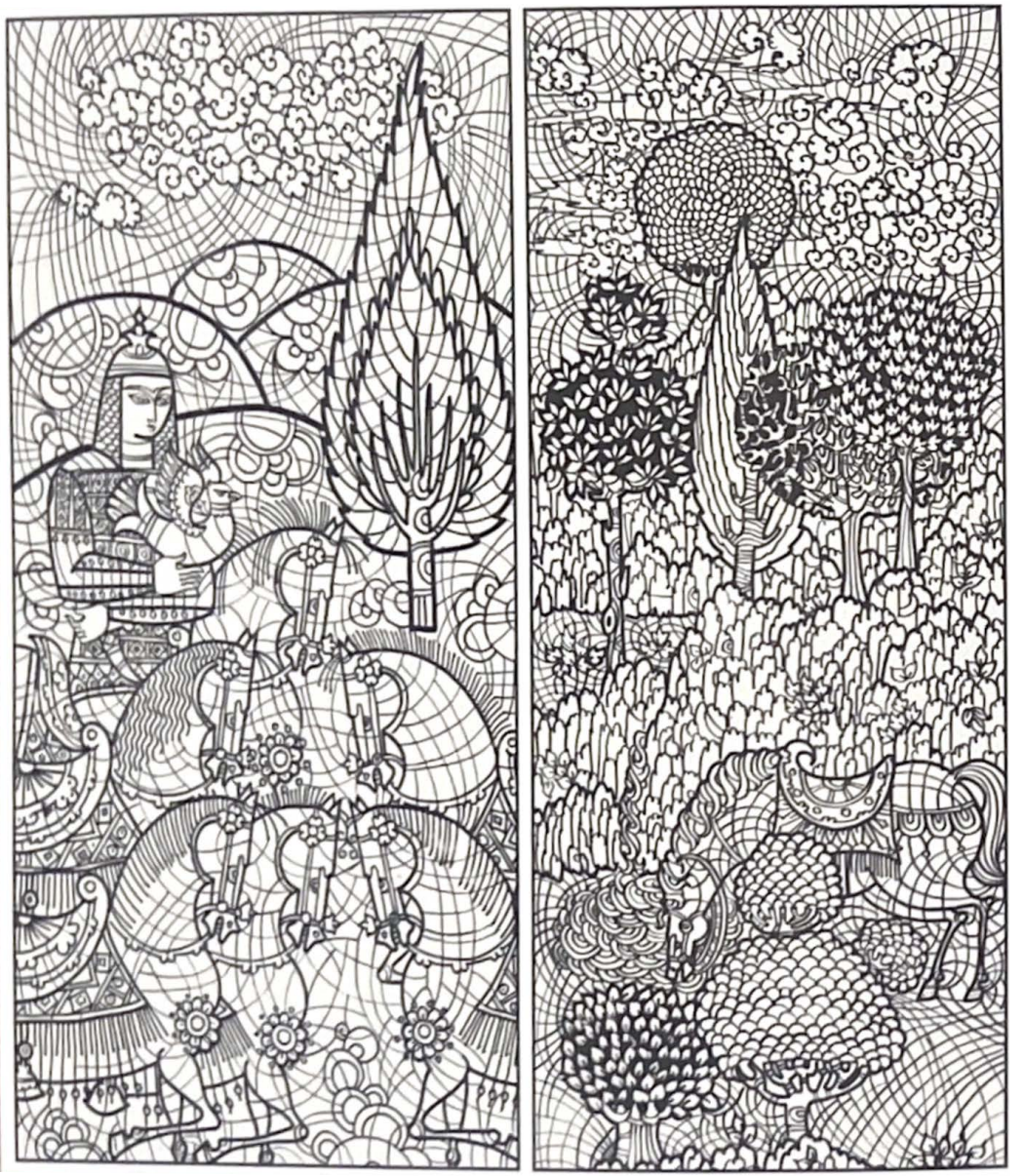


"Esfandiar Fresque sketch" 1978
Pencil on paper
10 x 30 cm [Detail]



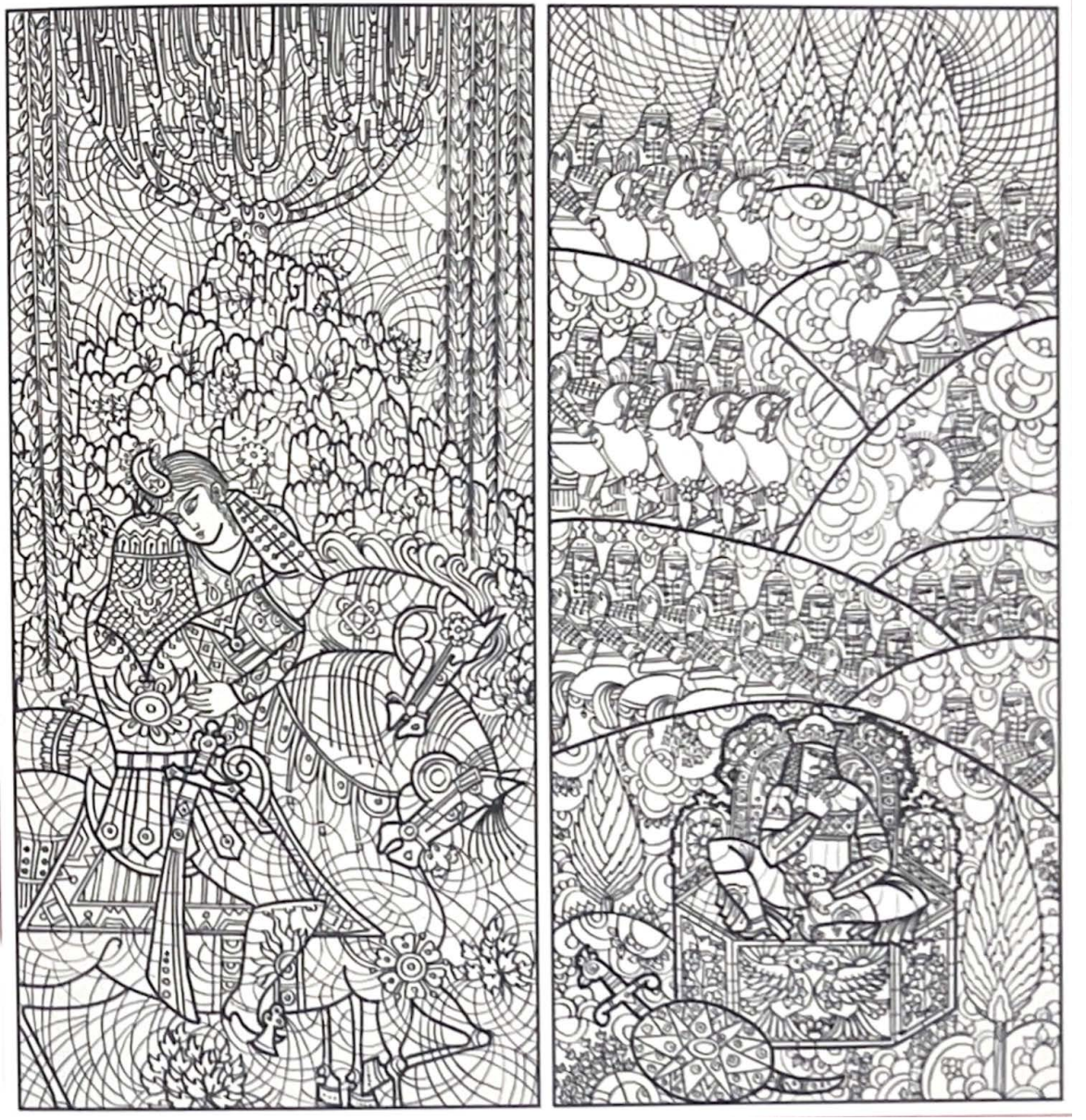
"Yazd Saderat Bank Fresque Sketch"
1972
Watercolour on Cardboard
20 × 40 cm [Detail]
Original Execution on Carved Wood 200 × 400 cm

Vitrails were the very first body of work that introduced Ali Akbar Sadeghi as an artist. The interesting approach in the process of the production of these series was that like in the Renaissance era, they were based on commission. Sadeghi had many small scale designs for vitrail that were painted with opaque colors to create a stained glass ambience in his studio and clients used to order their piece based on those drawings. To create the outline for each composition, he mixed ashes with black industrial color used in construction and filled the empty spaces of the designed composition with vitrail paint on glass.



"Ceasefire"
Study for Vitrail
1970
Ink on Paper
28 x 14.5 cm

"Riderless"
Study for Vitrail
1970
Ink on Paper
30 x 10 cm



"Midnight"
Study for Vitrail
1970
Ink on Paper
32x16 cm

"Farewell"
Study for Vitrail
1970
Ink on Paper
31 x 15.5 cm

BOOK ILLUSTRATION

Sadeghi illustrated many books for the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults and a few other publications. These illustrations, typographies and illuminations were mostly based on traditional Persian miniatures and Persian Islamic book designs.



"Hero of Champions III"
1970
Illustration



"Hero of Champions VIII"
1970
Illustration



"Hero of Champions V"
1970
Illustration

ANIMATION

Sadeghi's skills and practices in design and painting blossomed in his animation films. He used his ability and knowledge of painting and art history to produce a mixture of stylized miniatures, psychedelic aesthetics and pop colors to express his epistemology of the world in the 1970s, and a peaceful hippiesque spirit is traceable in all of his films. He made six movies for The Institute for Intellectual development of Children and Young Adults and later, an animated commercial advertisement for Melli Bank.

A Brief History of Animation in Iran

The history of animation in Iran spans three generations and three distinct periods:
I. The initial period, beginning in the late 1950s, during which the first Iranian animations were produced in Iran Ministry of Art and Culture of that time, guaranteed some facility for a few people who were interested in making animation, resulting in a few productions. Later, in the early 1960s, Nosratollah Karimi who studied animations in Czechoslovakia joined them and took charge of this animation studio.
II. The second period, beginning in late 1969, which put forth its first productions in 1970 from the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults.
III. The third period, which began after a long standstill entitled Cultural Revolution and eventually began a revival in the late 1980s and the early 1990s.
In the second period, the initial encounter of interested young people with international artistic animations was through the annual event of International Film Festival for Children, established in 1966. Before that there was only a chance of viewing Hollywood short animations or Walt Disney features, but with this event, their eyes were opened to the works of artists such as Norman Mc Laren, Jiri Trnka, Raoul Servais, Karel Zeman, Alexander Alexeieff, Borivoj Dovniković, Bruno Bozzetto, and Ivan Ivanov-Vano. After a successful fundraising in 1969, the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults inaugurated its cinema department and in 1970 they presented 7 films, 4 of them were animations.
Sadeghi made his first animation, "Seven Cities" in 1971.
Noureddin Zarin Kelk, a prominent animator from the Institute says: In the southern wing of The

Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, on the floor below that of the Executive Director, there was a simple large room where, between 1973 and 1978, films like "Boasting", "Rook", "The Sun King" and "Zal and Simorgh" were born on thousands of sheets of paper and celluloid. Sadeghi earlier directed two other films, " Seven Cities" and "Flower Storm" in an amateur condition for The Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. In the adjoining room, Farshid Mesghali was making animated films in his own nonconformist, modern way. In the eastern wing on the same floor, on one side was Abbas Kiarostami's room and on the other stood the studio of Nafisseh Riahi. Between them was a workshop where I was similarly occupied making animated films.
It was in that building, and on that floor, that I became acquainted with Sadeghi and his works. Initially, our acquaintance was limited to encounters in corridors or in our mutual rooms, but we were both so often absorbed in our works that sometimes days would pass during which I heard his loud, cheerful voice without seeing his face. Then came the last days and nights of our films, the long shooting hours with the mammoth Oxberry camera and sound superimposition in recording and mixing studios. Together we passed sleepless nights, together we exhaustedly bumped into walls, and together we finished our films.
During those years, lively, boisterous Sadeghi, with a stature and eyes just like those in his paintings, went on making his animated films with rare perseverance and insistence. In that period of feverish work, Sadeghi produced at least one film a year, participated in innumerable foreign festivals and was awarded various prizes.
The style of Sadeghi's animated films is the same as that of his book illustrations, his early stained

glass works and later his oil paintings: green-eyed, joint-eyebrowed heroes and supernumeraries clad in sumptuous Qajar attire, often covered with shining metallic weapons, but always wearing profusely embroidered garments and existing in colourful spaces filled with refinements. Sadeghi was so faithful to his pictorial style that, even when the scenarios of his films were not written by him, the production ended the same as his stylized Qajar miniatures, which bore the seal of Ali Akbar Sadeghi in his books and paintings. Sadeghi learned animation in no school and from no professor.

Solely relying on his inherent learning capabilities, technical skills and incomparable perseverance, he plunged into this arena and meticulously proceeded on the rugged road of success.

One must perhaps say that, far beyond film making, Sadeghi has other talents, which can only be perceived after long years of familiarity.

In conclusion, let me tell you a delightful anecdote I heard about Sadeghi's first animated film: "... The clamour of applause, whistles and shouts filled the cinema.

The film had ended and a man was standing on the scene, under the dazzling spotlights, facing the audience and waving to them Perhaps you want to know what all the excitement was about. It was about the production of the film just shown on the screen. What was the film's title? Ali Akbar Sadeghi's "Seven Cities" And Ali Akbar Sadeghi was just the green-eyed man joyfully waving to the crowd from the scene" O The narrator, Abbas Kiarostami thus continues: "Once the projection began, the audience was faced with a hero whose every deed was heroic (or was supposed to be), except that he limped. But the philosophical complexity of the story, which was by Firouz Shirvanlou, the declamatory prose of M. Azad, who had written the texts of the film, and the enthralling voice of

Ahmad Shamlou who, had voiced the narration of the film, had altogether created such an atmosphere that the audience, intentionally or unconsciously, had accepted the hero's limping as one of his heroic attributes rather than a defect.
Our story ends here, but the funny part is that some time later, in the English reference book Sadeghi had used, the walking sequence after which he had modelled the motions of his hero was found to bear the caption "Limping man".

Nosratollah Karimi: Iranian animator, director and visual artist, born in 1924
Noureddin Zarin Kelk: Iranian animator and graphic designer, born in 1937
Farshid Mesghali: Iranian graphic designer, plastic artist and animator, born in 1943
Abbas Kiarostami: Iranian film director, born in 1940
Nafisseh Riahi: Iranian animator, graphic designer and visual artist, born in 1943 and died in 2000
Qajar: an Iranian royal dynasty of Turkic origin, which ruled Persia (Iran) from 1785 to 1925
Firouz Shirvanlou: Iranian curator and entrepreneur and the first manager of The Institute for Intellectual development of Children and Young Adults, born in 1938 and died in 1988
M. Azad: Iranian poet, born in 1934 and died in 2006
Ahmad Shamlou: Iranian poet, writer and translator, born in 1925 and died in 2000



LOVE

Dedicated To Today

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Ali Akbar Sadeghi is a key figure in the context of Iranian Modern and Contemporary art. He has practiced in many artistic fields and has influenced many genres and artists. The initial idea behind this book is to put a spotlight on his many diverse artistic activities. He was born in 1937 and studied art in the critical and revolutionary era of 1960’s in Tehran University of Fine Arts. In 1960's he produced many graphic designs, vitrails and mural fresques. Since 1971, he produced animations and illustrations mainly in Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. After 1978 revolution, he got back to his studio and started his abstinent painting journey until today. The Love Book is a survey of Ali Akbar Sadeghi's Paintings, starting with the series "Myth and Math" which took about three decades to be finished. His other series of works such as Coalition, Nails, and Rebirth... gives a precise insight to artist's fantasmatic surreal world.

ARTISTIC CHRONOLOGY

The inhabitants of the Imaginary Planet

On this imaginary planet, the poet, the mystic, the painter and the sage are very much alike, because they all enjoy the same water and air and breathing under the sun of imagination and mysticism. So, it is no wonder that in Sadeghi's paintings, you find a sage who has reached serenity, in his flowers and apples, you sometimes meet the pensive stare of a scholar pondering upon man's existence in life, love and death. You can perceive an idyllic mood and occasionally a wild frenzy transports him to the realm of strange dreams and nightmares, which are mystical transgressions in a visual mold. At other times, he is a painter who cares for nothing but his love for the lines, colour, space and composition of this special world, as in most of his still lifes, created only out of the temptation of the motion of colour in space. In visual terms, Sadeghi's oil paintings can be divided into several categories. He has created numerous paintings with particular elements. For example apples, trees, clouds, horses, horse riders, paladins, women, masks, water, boats...

He plays with a theme or concept along time, depicting its dimensions and qualities in various ways. At one time he paints the subject-an apple or a boat-in relation with another object within a pictorial ensemble; at other times he sets it by itself alone at the centre of his canvas, as though he were picking every detail of his elaborate paintings one by one, exposing them to revealing light and dissecting their innards. Apples occupy a prominent place in his works, appearing each time in a different colour and with a different meaning. Here it signifies life, there it symbolizes love, elsewhere it is a metaphor of natural balance, yet elsewhere it is a hermetic world the painter is enthusiastically tempted to crack open. His golden apples, which bring together infinity and the moment, are different from aggressive apples which seem to descend upon us from another planet. When a red apple rolls in

a petrified forest, its motion is the animation of hope, the dynamic colour of life, artistic life at the heart of a rockland, the presence of love in an improbable environment. He paints each of these apples in blue, green, yellow or red, as he wishes. It may be splendid and beautiful or bitten and used. Sometimes it is lost amid pebbles, yet again it soars crowning hilltops. At times we see it supporting its own tree, its mother planet, as if it is the meaning of life. The painter is not yet done with it. He shows it in the company of a book, in a light shining from behind bars. He makes it the soaring target of archers on horseback. He hides its chastity, as that of a maiden, under a veil. He makes it emerge from inside an egg.

He makes it the heart of his painting, spreading its imperative rule in the air. From the apple's appearance, the painter turns to its inside, applying the knife. He makes the cut pieces of the apple bleed.Here a drop and elsewhere a bowlful of blood gush forth. The apple cries out its protest and yearning for liberation. As one in pain, it raises a commotion. It becomes the crowning tower. It falls to the ground. It cracks open, sometimes one of its sections appearing as a moonlit night, another half a brick wall, and still another a panel of tile work, an apple from which more blossoms grow out. An apple that is reborn, strewing joy in its endearing motion, spreading perfume across the world, conquering the universe.

This treatment can be pursued at length in each of the painter’s various themes, in which he has indulged in all sorts of plays, be it a boat, water, fog, the sea or a woman. But these are better seen than described, and what I have said merely indicates how the painter's mind functions, how untiringly he puts the subject to the ultimate pictorial test, creating yet one more amazing world out of a simple element.





"Layers"
2000
Oil on Canvas
50 x 70 cm



"Graph"
1996
Oil on Canvas
76 x 61 cm



"Similitude"
1983
Oil on Canvas
60 X 45 cm



"Punctuate"
1980
Oil on Canvas
50 X 100 cm





"Division"
1977
Oil on Canvas
70 X 50 cm



"South"
2000
Oil on Canvas
70 X 50 cm

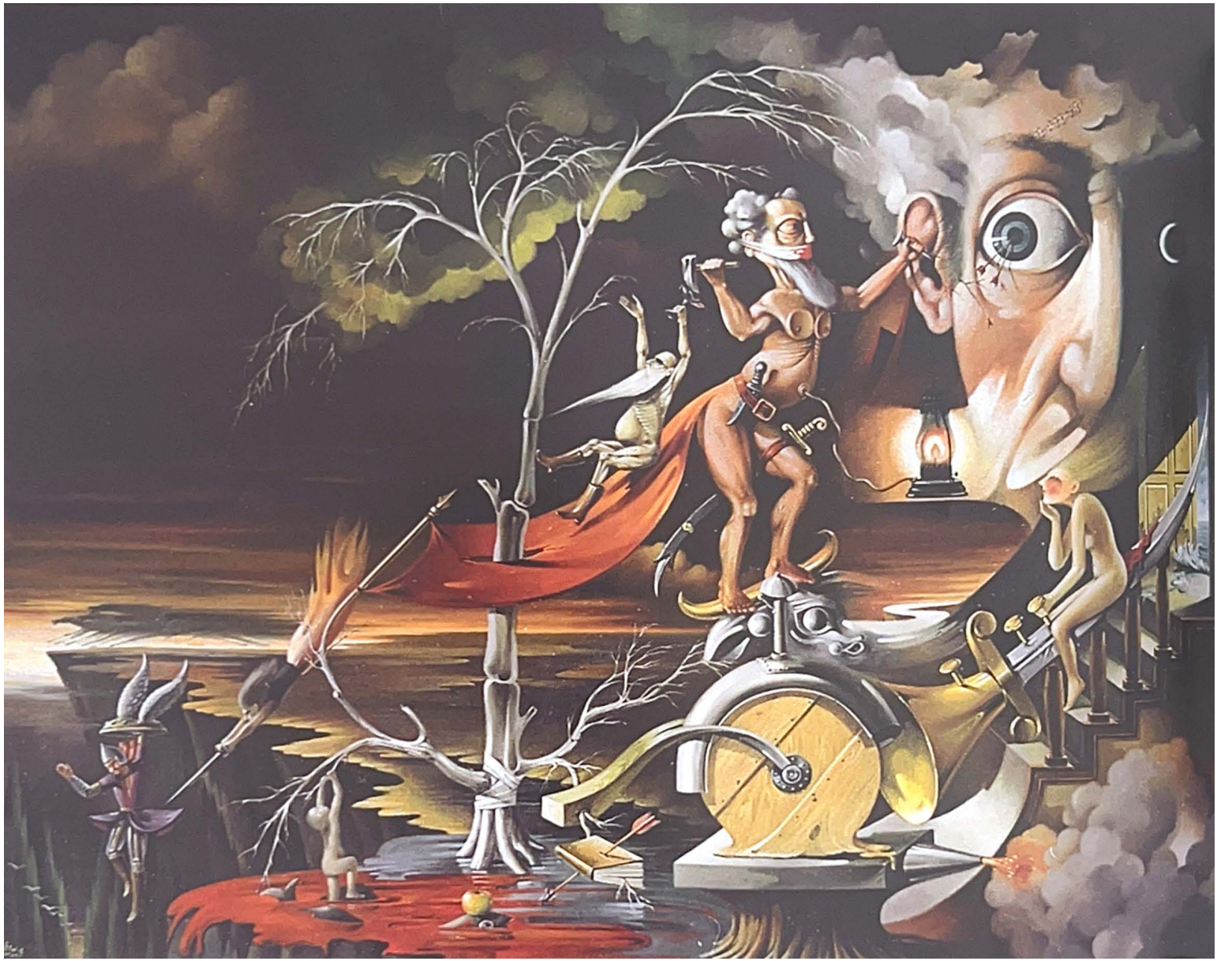


"Season"
1981
Oil on Canvas
121 X 76 cm

SOPHISTICATED TECHNIQUE

Sadeghi masterfully applies painting devices in the most appropriate places. He is able to construct and execute whatever he intends and this technical ability is the upshot of sixty years of endless activity in various fields of visual arts, half of which have made up the foundations of his works in the past two decades. This technical skill often astonishes the painter's audience, which does not displease him. He has paintings which can be viewed under various orientations. In fact, these are multiple paintings on one canvas. In some of his paintings, this skill has structurally perfected the work, although this is not always the case, occasionally giving way to unnecessary sophistication. In "Symmetric" his aesthetics reached its perfection: a terrace is visible which continues to the horizon. Three groups of three red-clad figures sitting under green umbrella-like trees engaged in some mysterious ritual. The left end of the painting is bounded by a wall which also covers part of the

ceiling and casts its shadow on the terrace. The wall has an eye-pleasing colour and a solid regularity. Past the abrupt interruption of the wall, a space of simultaneous day and night decked with light wisps of cloud is visible, and a grayish wall on the right is covered with shadows and coloured patches which turn into a tree-covered landscape, captive under a sky of bricks when the frame is viewed sideways in one direction. In the opposite direction, the clouds are raining on a closed architecture and pulling down the entire land scape. This technique has been used in some of Sadeghi's paintings and shows his mastery in balancing various compositions and playing with the interplay of volumes. This technical skill always tends toward natural representation and adornment. The painter insistently takes care of whatever is depicted in his paintings to be exact, natural and as beautiful as possible; the window is painted in away that even an expert carpenter cannot find a flaw in it; or the ribbon encircling the mummified apple involves no wrong fold. Attention to details is indispensable in this type of work, but it may be asked whether profuse adornment and sophistication can be considered an organic necessity. In several of his recent paintings, this decorative beautification has been intensified.



"Fear"
1981
Oil on Canvas
80 X 120 cm



"Sun"
1980
Oil on Canvas
140 X 140 cm





"Decimals"
1988
Oil on Canvas
119 X 89 cm



"Beginning"
1982
Oil on Canvas
121 X 76 cm

BEGINNING

Reviewing the work from bottom up we observe figures, colors, and connections: A tall tower with spears upon its walls sits at the edge of a three-tiered landscape. A stream of water separates the tower from the rest of the site like a moat. Three temporary wooden bridges connect a passageway at the base of the tower to the land across. A grove of trees can be seen in the background, and the land continues to the foreground up to a spinning easel, upon which the partially clothed artist is illustrating a world greater than his own.

A prehistoric skull on the artist's right-hand side holds a lamp with which the artist must see the invisible painting overhead. The lamp, which is without light, also acts as a support for the artist's hand, to keep both the painting and the artist from being smudged. The artist is adding the final touches to the profile of a mythical dinosaur skull that looks like parts of a human skull from the front. The spear-like ribs of the animal make up half of a weeping man's moustache, while the other half makes the body of a spotted fawn. These imagined moustaches sit upon the open mouth of a wild animal - perhaps a tiger - observing a herd of deer. The deer are searching the desert for water, and ahead of them they can see lizards, frogs, fish and whales. At the other end of the canvas is a large

fish trapped on a hook. Across from Sadeghi's jean-clad left leg, a piece of red velvet fabric may be a reference to a performance about to come (or perhaps already happened). The lower part of the canvas starts with the tower on the right, followed by the moat, the artist, the dinosaur skeleton, and the wild animal's mouth, leading to the desert filled with insects and animals on the left hand side. The presence of the fish and shark in the left (west) may be reminiscent of a dark, invisible sea. Amidst the darkness we see two brightly worried eyes, and in the background an abundance of trees in the light of dawn. The eyes have a questioning, worried look. In front of the eyes is a large blooming rose with fresh petals, lit by the shy early morning sun. An opening in the ground out of which smoke drifts to the sky, enhances the body-like form of interconnected natural elements. The wooden easel in the center of the canvas holds a painting of a woman clad in blue, with a dragonfly in her hair. The woman, who is a close resemblance of the artist's wife, is holding a thick book and on its cover is the image of a fetus or an alien being. Her hand also forms the nose of a weeping, mustached man. A silver oval curve, with a hazel-colored blossom makes up the man's right eye. The details continue within each other: the pupil of the man's eye is a black fish holding a pearl in its mouth and the tear is in the shape of a dead fish. A creature floating between a frog and a snake has the replica of the woman's dragonfly over its lips, as well as the mirror image of the pearl (or bubble) depicted in the man's eye, on its nose. The woman is kindly holding the man's hand on her skirts. Parallel to the instrument that forms the man's arm a fishing rod holds a bait in front of a trapped fish. All through the painting parallel events in structure and form, artistically and imaginatively creates balanced composition and narrative in the work.

A zebra circles the painting of the woman like a spirit. The tail of the animal is seen on the left side of the frame, and behind it is a chessboard with apparently glued on pawns and horses. On the right hand side the zebra's head sticks out beyond the frame, and one of its ears is adorned with a red flower. Like a sculpted form the zebra's ear becomes one with the head of the angry, startled man. In the lower section of the work, an apple, which is an ever-present element in Sadeghi's art, connects the central section of the canvas with the area above the man and woman. A worm-eaten apple sits next to a basket of summer fruits reminiscent of decorative still lifes. The main subject of the upper part of the work is a black eagle flying among white clouds. Above these, black clouds foretell a storm. A redheaded prehistoric bird with the body of a man flees the darkness. An orange cloud in a familiar natural shape contrasts the darkness in the upper part of the scene. A pleading hand rises from the orange cloud toward the darkness above, ominously warning of the long night to come, which will take over the future of mankind, animals, and nature itself. The terrifying eagle portends the coming darkness. Apart from a Freudian and Jungian interpretation, the work can also be reviewed from a social point of view. The connection between the images can be analyzed from a philosophical perspective appreciated by followers of postmodernism. But my intention by describing the details of this work is to outline the similarities between a mystic storyteller like Khaje Gisoo Deraz (the long-haired man) with a contemporary Iranian like Sadeghi; who are both imaginative artists inspired by a culture ingrained in the east over the centuries, one using words and the other images. In this land of one thousand and one nights, where imagination takes form differently than it does in the west, sometimes artists use complex, labyrinthine ways to express their surrounding context. This

form of expression is not a contrived form of art, but a natural act. It does not belong to the past or the present, but has a history as long as Iranian imagination. Its trace can be found in ancient myths, stories, and folklore, in mystic rituals, and in miniatures and poetry. This form is not related to European surrealism, or the magical realism of Latin America. It belongs to this region and is related to its neighboring lands. Yet at the same time, every work of art is also connected to all that came before it and all that will follow it. Complex internal and external interrelationships can always be found in creative works of art.



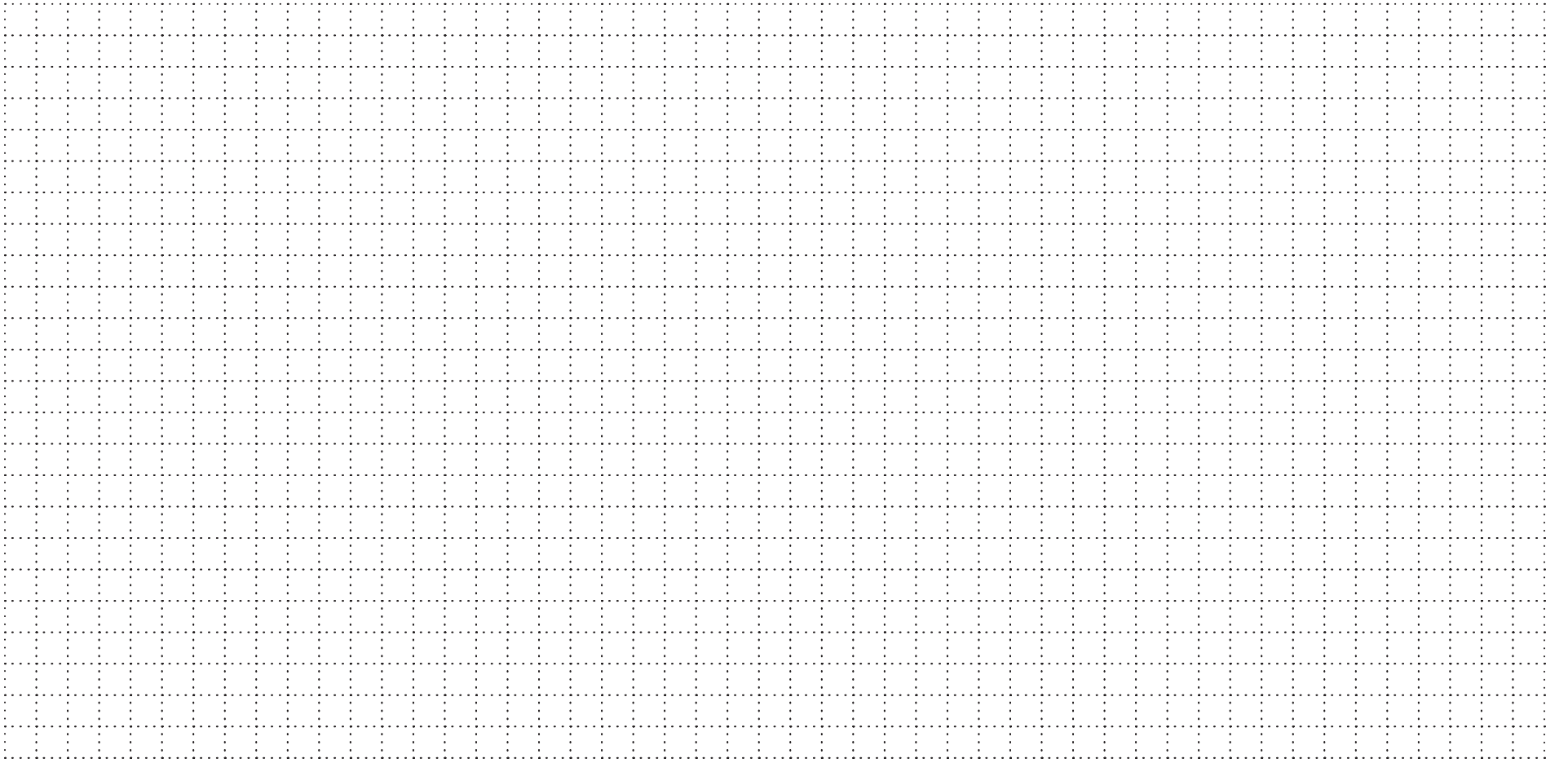
STRUCTURES AND SIMILARITIES

We noted that structural similarities are visible between some of Sadeghi's works and those of Bosch and Brueghel. The "Triangle" is an example. Similar to legendary fantasies with several heads and legs, a crouching creature with three joint bodies is depicted at the centre of the painting, each with a head looking in a different direction, one gazing toward the viewer and the two other worriedly stare either way. One of these creatures is inclined toward peace, poetry and legends, because it is holding a book, which appears to be the Shahnameh. On the page it is holding open, a title describing the

creation of the world is visible, and on the opposite page, a man is seen beheading another. Under the effect of the epic poem he is reading, he has drawn its sword, but from the handle on, the sword gradually changes into a spoon, which makes the creature appear as a fake hero. Of course, this character, which deals with books, could not have become a full-fledged warrior by reading epic tales, and its ineffectual ferocity is well depicted by its helmet, which, instead of a steel crest, is surmounted by a cage in which a white pigeon is peacefully resting. The comic aspect of this creature, with its peaceful mind, useless sword and hopeless shouting, contrasts with that of its red-clad sibling facing us. This one has brutally flung its sword, cutting a metallic empty pitcher in two. Meanwhile, a hatch has opened on its chest giving way to a marionette which is staring stupidly at the whole absurd scene. In its other hand, instead of a shield, the fierce red-clad creature is holding a tray on which a plate of pomegranates is visible. A green flower pot stands on its shoulder. Is he not as ferocious as he seems, although a creature has grown out of his red attire, which is threading a needle with spiky wire to sew him a fringe? In fact, the presence of this second sibling bears a contradiction: with one hand he deals violently with his sword and with the other he presents a tray of pomegranates. The third sibling wears a helmet atop with a turquoise-coloured flower and completes the joke with a fried egg he has cooked on the edge of his helmet. He too brandishes a sword -as though they all have to- but his has turned into a slide down which a marionette is gliding in astonishment. Who is this tripartite monster, this aggregate of triplets reading a book about the creation of man? Is this title not an extrapolation of his existence? A man whose integrity of existence has been thrown into turmoil by conflicting forces, so that his in-herent good and evil features have alienated and turned him into a ridiculous being.

This existential contradiction is clearly conspicuous in the objects and creatures which make the background: firstly, translucent, ghost-like marionettes, thinly scattered at the bottom of the painting and growing in number toward its top. By their actions, these marionettes evoke legendary friendly or treacherous dwarfs. One marionette is holding the pitcher for the sword to slice. Another is spinning for his friend to mend his coat. They are not always the prey but also have a disruptive action. A shadow-like marionette is sawing off the red-clad figure's foot, which has turned into vegetal roots. Another marionette, casting away its ghost-like appearance and acquiring materiality, is striking the tray of pomegranates with a club. One is blowing a horn while pierced through by a sword. Snakes are raising their heads from inside his horn. Another is swinging while suspended from the sword turned into a spoon. Yet another is sliding down the sword of the conqueror. But, besides these marionettes, other creatures are involved in the background of this nightmare: beginning on the right hand side of the painting, the viewer's eye follows a beheaded eagle chasing two headless pigeons, a pair of frightened deer running away from both the fire and the eagle, a pair of horses sunken to their necks into the chessboard, two apples from which worms are wriggling out, and a bird casually perched on the pommel of the sword, before reaching the centre of the painting, where stands a tree and a locked gate whose key hangs beside it. At the middle of the gate, there is a metallic hatch with iron bars behind which the crescent of the moon is imprisoned. Past the gate, the night continues, with the three pyramids flying on wings of their own and corresponding with the three headless birds. In this painting, numbers acquire cryptic importance: three red-clad figures, three pomegranates, three birds, three pyramids, four fish escaped from the sea and flying over the landscape, two deer, two horses, two apples... at the end of the night and the day at once.

The upper part of the painting represents the night and a hellish environment, while the lower part embodies a tranquility. We see a meadow with lush trees unrelated to the charred stubs in the upper part and return to the book's title concerning the creation of man and become immersed in the painter's Manichean view and his image world in which conflicting forces have broken down the wheel of life.





"Area"
1993
Oil on Canvas
120 X 90 cm

LIMIT

In his "Limit", we see a roaring man rushing forth while holding a book in his left hand and brandishing a sword in his right hand. He bears all the features of aggressive hordes who have invaded our country. But this red-clad warrior has met no opponent with whom to measure himself. The motherland and the people, disguised as a mythological sculpture, cover the entire space, enfolding the historical conqueror. In a sense, this is temporal history rushing forth to fight non-temporality; although it can cause a slight disturbance in the space of Ahura-Mazda, the mobile and fluid roots of this firm space ultimately digest it. Sadeghi does not believe in history and believes that ethnic fabrications of mankind's history are despicable. He laughs sarcastically at absurd wars, whether at the individual level -as the four warriors slaying each other- or in its collective forms -as in his Area or 'Cube"-, and this anthropocentric outlook preserves him from ethnically oriented vulnerabilities. In the landscape of his canvases, conquerors are powerless, because owing to the brevity of their opportunities, they are ever defeated by boundless eternity. In his "Limit", the subject is represented in vivid, brilliant colours and further accentuated against the dark green and gray background. In reality, what organizes the composition is the context, not structural necessities concerning the location of images. Of course, once he is done with the main

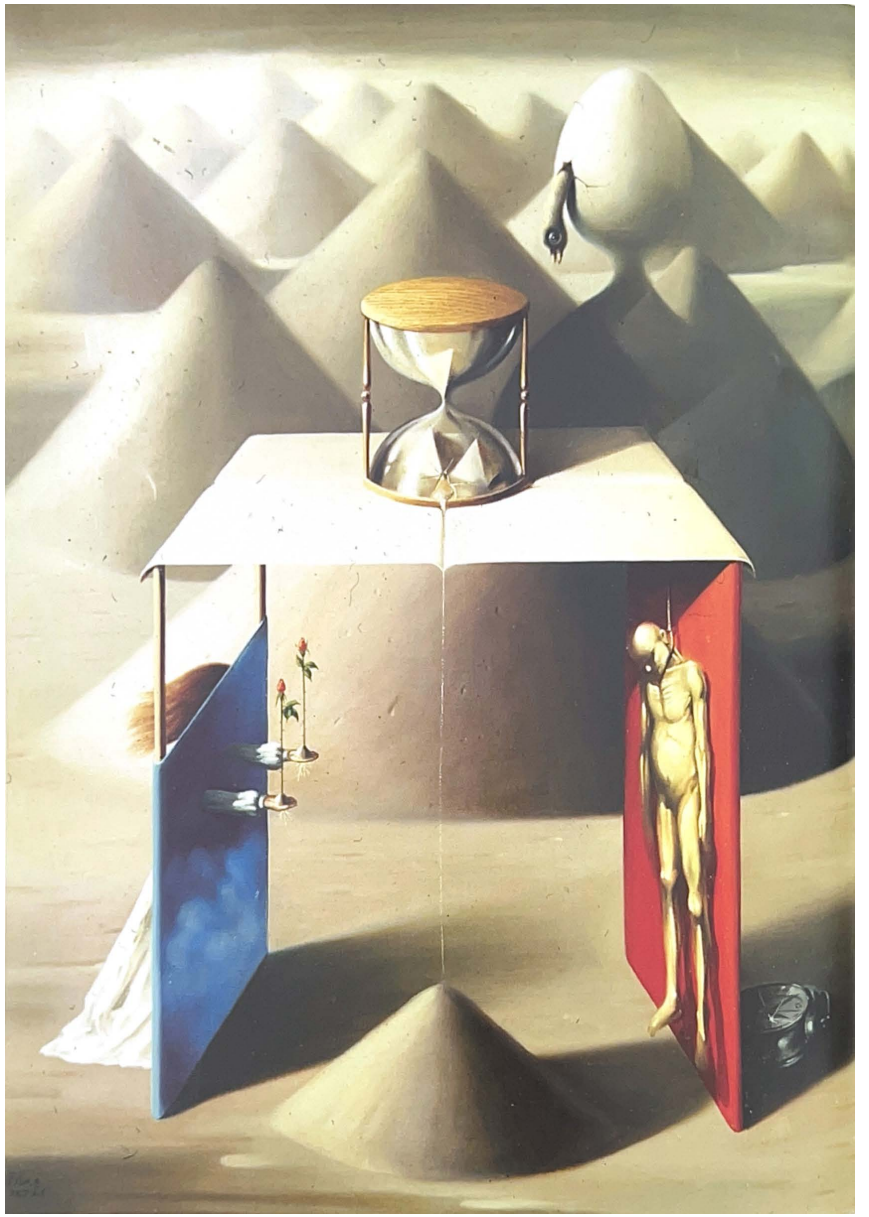
task of creating his subject, the artist does consider artistic proportions, giving a balanced appearance to the space of his canvas by daubs of paint or secondary images and background patterns. Sometimes these secondary images appear on the canvas as much as is needed to achieve perfect harmony between the lines and coloured surfaces. Occasionally these patterns and figures saturate the painting, to the extent that the viewer is lost amongst a forest of contexts and images. Apparently, he had learned pictorial saturation from Dali and the agitated universe of Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Brueghel. Resorting to religious narratives, popular legends, myths and dreams, and exercising imagination, Bosch and Brueghel moved forward to their wondrous worlds' full pictorial capacity.By metamorphosing and hybridizing objects and animals, combining contrasting elements, disfiguring human figures and upsetting conventional time and space, they created worlds metaphorically descriptive of their time's social realities and the immoral human relationships which, they thought, were leading the world to its end. Sadeghi moves forward as far as his imagination will take him, even if the architecture of his painting is immersed in a Rococo space filled with decorative details, which serve no organic purpose. Later, when he becomes acquainted with the works of René Magritte, he reaches the stage of purifying the space of his axial images. His apples attest to this pictorial conciseness, which constitutes his personal syntax. The further he goes, the less abundant lines and colours become, and this structural conciseness reaches the point where colours are used metaphorically and lines appear as allusions and allegories, particularly in his watercolours, which are considered some of his greatest achievements.



"Limit"
1992
Oil on Canvas
121 X 70 cm



"Table"
1992
Oil on Canvas
124 x 74 cm



"Geometry"
1987
Oil on Canvas
76 X 61 cm



"Lozenge"
1988
Oil on Canvas
61 X 46 cm



"Array"
1996
Oil on Canvas
70 X 50 cm



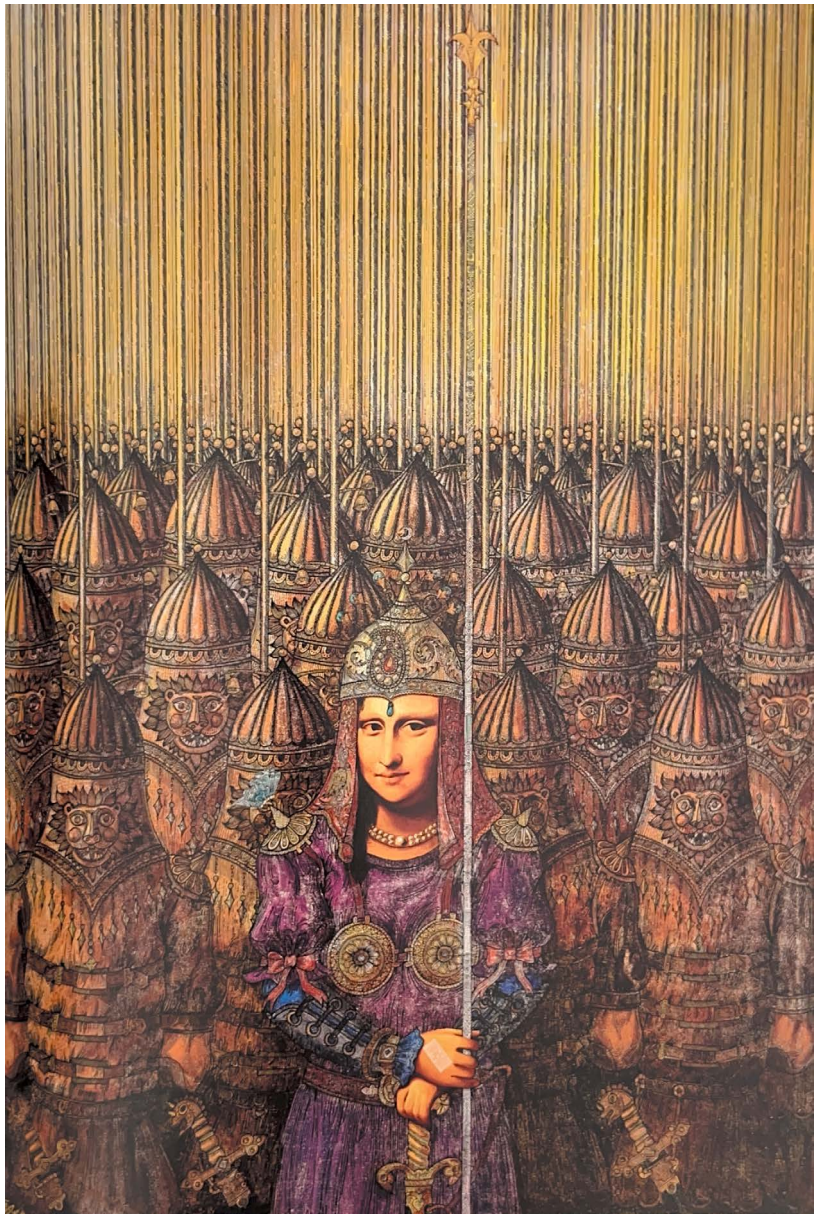
"Cube"
1993
Oil on Canvas
120 X 90 cm



"Coordinates"
1978
Oil on Canvas
70 X 50 cm



"Mustached"
1998
Oil on Canvas
70 X 50 cm



"Mona Lisa: The Warriors" 2012
Oil on Canvas
120 X 90 cm



LEGEND, LYRICISM AND EPIC

Sadeghi looks upon history but does not believe in it. He is a history-watcher rather than a historiographer, just as he is a legend-observer and not a legend painter. He sees the world as a legend others have discovered. It is in such an attire that he has found reality, or become involved in it. He makes no judgment on this conflict. He only records what he observes. To make a judgment is up to the viewer. He likes people and is familiar with their folklore. He looks upon their superstitions and rituals, their customs and beliefs. He records without judging, for he does not see himself as separate from them.

Sometimes he looks at the world lovingly, as a dream of crystal and tears. Look at the house with its window emitting a stream of fog toward the lush green valley. This is a materialized paradise of lyrical peace untainted with sadness, or at the painting in which a building is visible between the grass and the fog, with columns and arcades of the substance and colour of air, perceptible but inaccessible. Sometimes the epic recorder is saddened at the fate of heroes who, like Don Quixote, have set foot in the world at the wrong time. Occasionally fairies appear in his paintings beside or against monsters and devils. He does not flee into the past. Time is eternal and the past and the future happen conjointly with the ephemeral present. The simultaneity of non-contemporary eras gives him the opportunity to reflect unhindered with conventional divisions of time, alongside ordinary men -who are unbounded by temporal and spatial constraints-, and to ultimately deplore their fate with deep love.



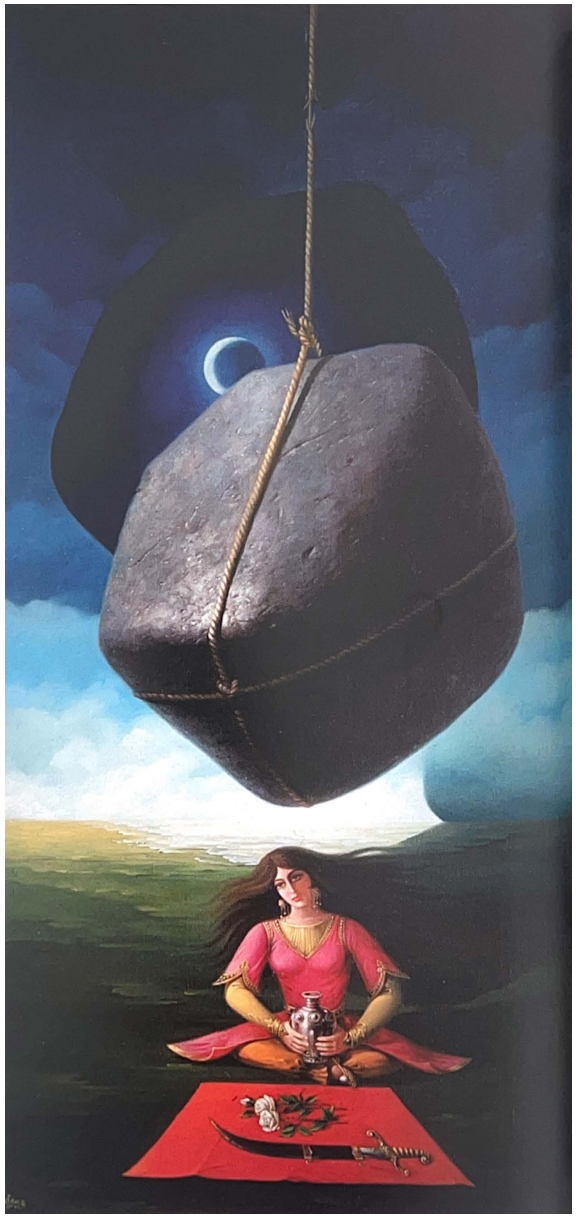
"Square"
1983
Oil on Canvas
50 X 40 cm



"Sinful"
2000
Oil on Canvas
100 X 60 cm



"Invade"
2003
Oil on Canvas
60 X 45 cm



"Parallel"
1983
Oil on Canvas
121 X 60 cm



"Perpendicular"
1986
Oil on Canvas
60 X 45 cm

COLLOCATION



"Algorithm"
1987
Oil on Canvas
120 X 90 cm



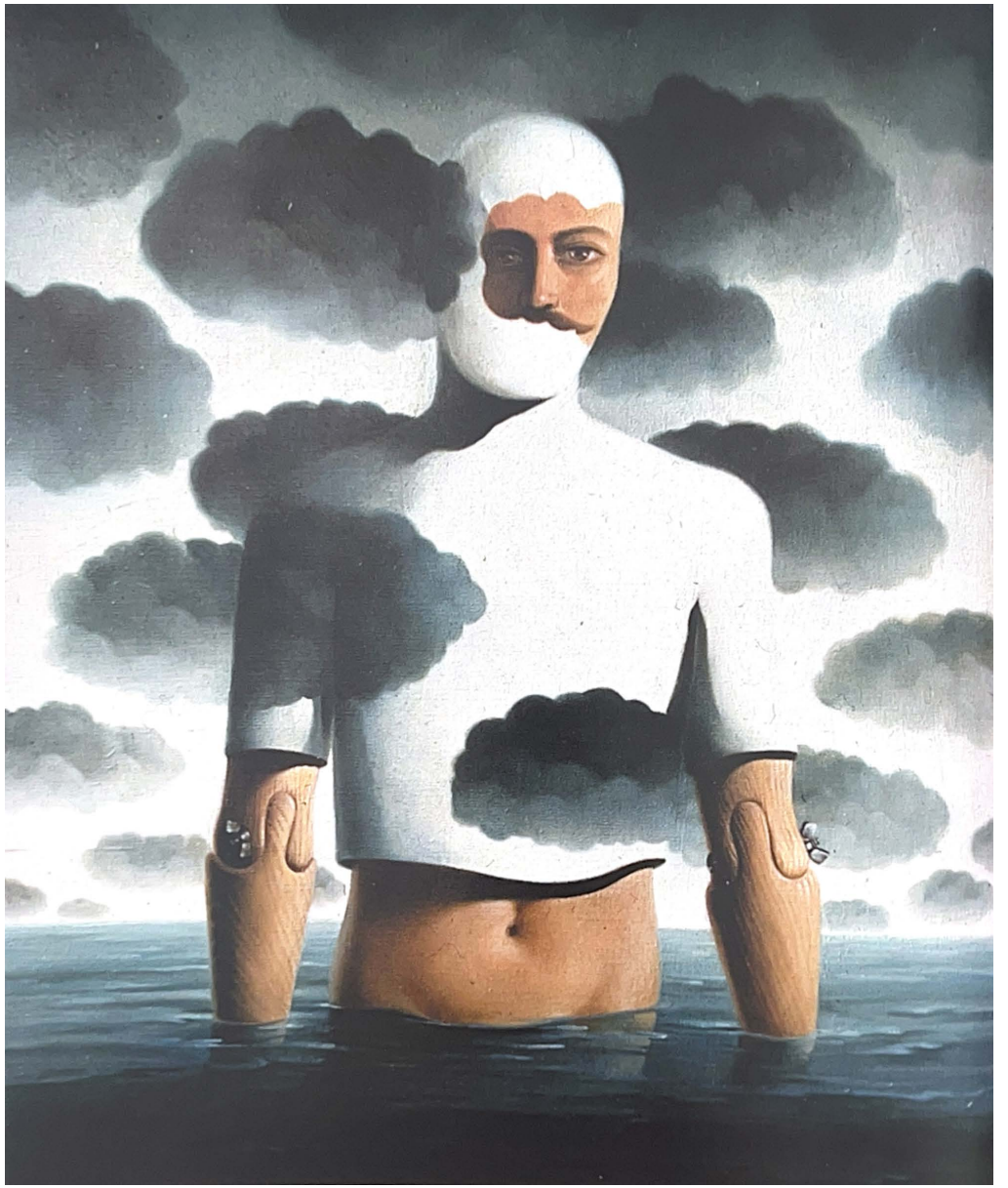
"Cylinder"
1993
Oil on Canvas
76 X 61 cm



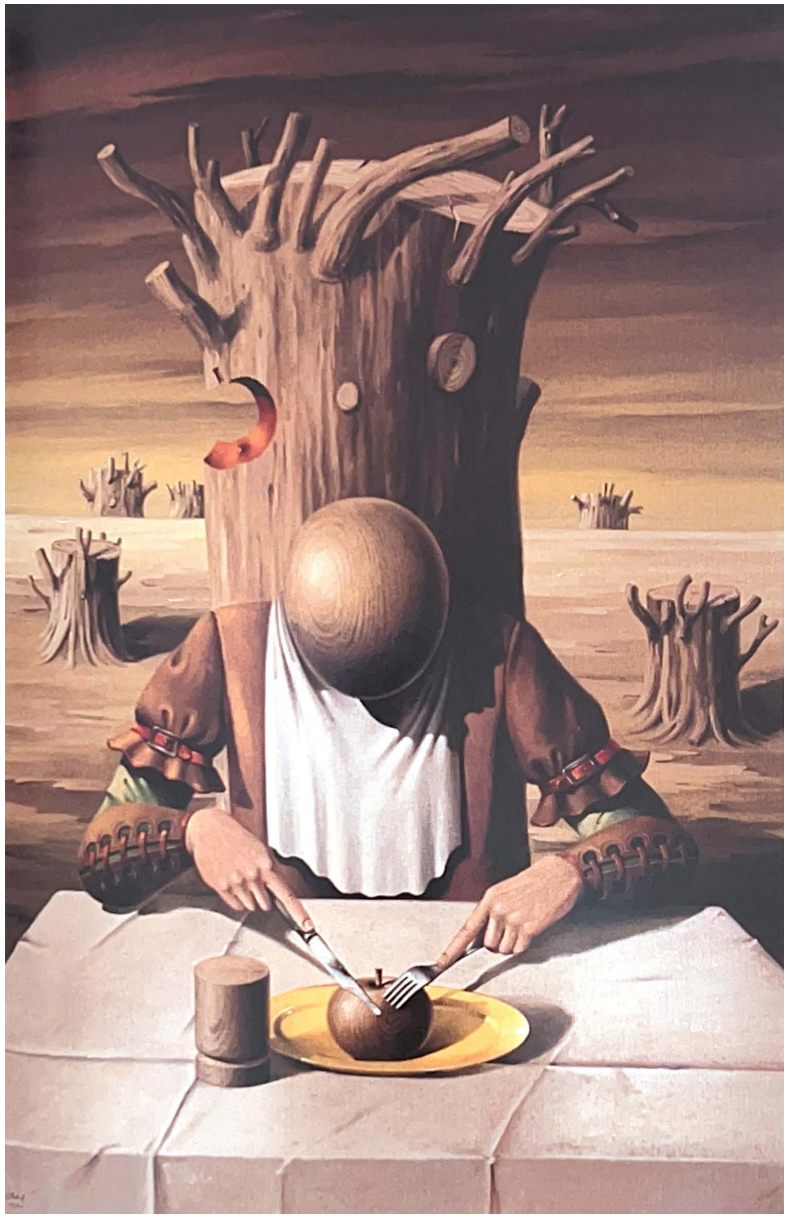
"Exchange"
1982
Oil on Canvas
70 X 100 cm



"Thinker"
2004
Oil on Canvas
70 X 50 cm



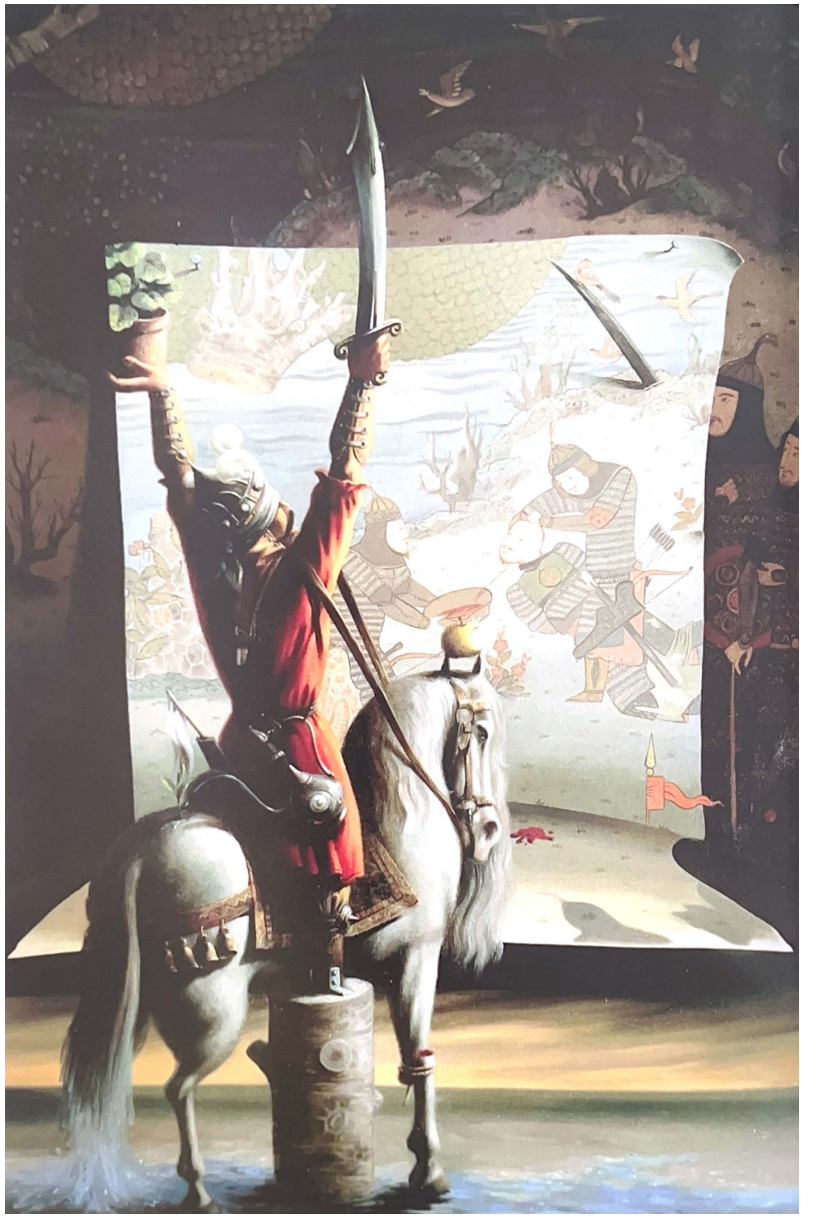
"Radical"
1983
Oil on Canvas
91 X 61 cm



"System"
1981
Oil on Canvas
75.5 X 60 cm

HUMORISTIC MIND

Sadeghi faces the surrounding reality with humour and, unbelieving in history and its current clichés, takes refuge in a superior reality where the logic of dreams, inversion, displacement, ambiguity and grotesque space rules. In the universe of his imagination, nightmarish dreams unfold in which the world is affected with displacement and inversion, rather than being established upon the usual and obvious order everyone takes for granted. We see a perfect example of this nightmarish world in his Area. A soaring fortress is visible above which a fake sun shines. The sun is engraved on the shield of a warrior who has flipped as he is being cut in two by a sword. The symbol of the fortress' inhabitants is an apple and a white flag of peace with a blazing trail. Hot and cold water taps are installed on the body of the fortress. On the ramparts, a group of men clad as fishermen—undoubtedly due to the muddy water—are fighting or extracting lemon juice and offering flowers. At the foot of the fortress, taking advantage of the temporary calm in the war, each of the invaders on with whatever he was doing before. In the words of Mow-lavi "Nations' wars like children's quarrels be!"



"Prism"
1991
Oil on Canvas
76 X 61 cm



"The Edge"
2000
Oil on Canvas
70 X 50 cm



"Second Chapter"
1993
Oil on Canvas
75 X 60 cm

FOLD

In his evocative paintings, Ali Akbar Sadeghi draws on the rich traditions of Persian art but adds to them a surreal edge that involves dizzying spatial manipulations and startling combinations of real and fantastical objects, producing breath-taking kaleidoscopes of colour and form. A master storyteller, the varied Persian sources of Sadeghi's tales range from historical Persian iconography including swords, horses, gardens and warriors, intricate decorative motifs and patterns taken from classic rugs, to the compositions of archetypal Iranian miniatures and portraits, particularly those of the Qajar dynasty. But Sadeghi's inspiration from the cultural heritage of Iran is not just aesthetic; the presence of Persian sagas and legends, epic poems and philosophies, and even the teachings of Gnosticism loom large in his work. While Sadeghi has undoubtedly been motivated by the varied artistic forms and schools of thought of his country, his productions have undeniable links to the automatic art of Max Ernst and De Chirico, among others. Considered by some to be Iran's Dali and by himself to be simply a narrator, Sadeghi's paintings give a 20th/21st Century edge to the typical Iranian story or image.
In Fold, Ali Akbar Sadeghi has turned a generic miniature, a symbol of the heritage of Iran, upside down Besides the visual effect that this produces -a confusing space where the viewer has no bearings- the upside down miniature could be read as the inability of Iran's cultural legacy to coexist with modernity. As an extension of this reading, the nails that appear in the painting could be referring to how Irani-

ans are weighed down by or nailed to their history. Ironically, the nails that pin them to their past are absurd. This is because, firstly, these nails do not meet at any point with the miniature, in other words, with Iran's history, and because, secondly, they superficially rest on the surface rather than dig into it. Both of these elements may be alluding then to the irrelevance of Persia's legacy today. Alternatively, the nails in Sadeghi's painting can be seen as a symbol for modernism. In this case, modernity dominates over history which floats in its shadows in the background. Modernity is what is right-side up and what is understandable. But even so, once again, the lack of contact between the two suggests the absence of continuity. Whichever way the work is read, the result is a visually arresting commentary on the need for a revised understanding of the past, of what is modern, and of the bridges that ought to be built between the two.



"Evolution"
2000
Ink and Acrylic on Canvas
70 X 50 cm



WHISPERS

Iran the Land of Mehr

As the sun (Mehr) shines on Iran, everything gains a brilliant shadow. As the sun crosses over this land, a galaxy of light and color covers our lives. Iranians float in a sea of bright colors. But like a school of fish swimming in the ocean, sometimes those who are involved in their quotidian lives, remain unaware of their surroundings, until they are removed from it. The magical light and shadow and colorful patterns of this land can be found in the design of a Safavid era miniature, a penholder of the Qajar era, and the canvas of a contemporary artist. Just as they can be seen in the colorful curves of tiles and rugs; in golden, silver, and clay vessels; in metal, glass, and stone objects made by master craftsmen; in the arches and vaults of caravanserais and schools; in the perfumed glory of Persian gardens; in the joyful colors of spice bazaars; in apple, pomegranate, and grape stalls; and in the mysterious hues of the sky, mountains, trees, deserts and the sea. Artists, poets, and authors have each discovered and attempted to express this world of light and color in their works. But the color and light expressed on the canvas of an Iranian artist differ from artists of other countries. This difference is because of the sun's angle as it shines on this land; the range of hues from its deserts to its mountains and seas; how dreams and miracles intersect with the daily lives of its peoples; and because of Iran's Mehr, which is the sun, love, the golden month of autumn, the divinity of promises and light, and an ancient culture based on love and light. In his watercolors, Ali Akbar Sadeghi has expressed Iran's Mehr in a variety of ways: in the colors of its desert architecture; in the azure blue of its domes and minarets; in the matte background of its Achaemenid reliefs; in its tombs, citadels and pigeon towers; in the beautiful geometry of its ancient cities; and a colorful paradise of flowers, birds, fruit, victuals, and gloriously designed dishes from Sialk and Marlik. This artist has tried to combine places as well as objects, the country itself as well as symbols of its people's lives, in a creative and unique way, each aspect completing the other. His compositions have a collage-like

quality. He places a large cluster of grapes over gifts sent by other countries to the king's court; portrays ceramic vases the color of the ocean or a rug-like sky covering a city; paints an apple that is a light fixture for a series of stalls under a bridge, or the keystone of a stunning ancient architecture, depicts the shadows on a wall that turn into floral patterns on a rug, or still life of pomegranates, apples, pears and grapes that merge with views of Iran. He gives meaning to each work by expanding its spatiality, and accentuates it by including a sense of mystery, a bit of sarcasm or some witticism. But Sadeghi is not only interested in his subject matters. He is also interested in exploring the medium of watercolors, which requires speed and mastery, where the slightest mistake in line or color can ruin the entire piece. The artist attempts to match God's creations on his canvas and the purity and lightness of our surrounding hues, by using colors that can never be reproduced, in compositions that can not be revised. The three apples in the foreground of "Spindle and Fruit" is a great example of this virtuosity. These three fruits or three colorful volumes, or better yet these three creations, show how simple yet impossible it is to use watercolors to create something that can have no existence outside of this medium; somewhere between reality and the colorful world of dreams, suspended between being and nonbeing. Sadeghi used to make watercolors for fun, but now, his watercolors are equal to his oil paintings in depicting a world where he rediscovers his motherland in unusual compositions of a still life and landscapes. His masterful use of colors in impossible yet simple forms is the culmination of an experience he began in some of the final works included in his book, "Whispers". This book is the outcome of Sadeghi's love for Iran, his motherland, and painting, which is his second home.



"Blossom"
1995
Watercolour on Paper
50 X 40 cm



"Fortress"
1994
Watercolour on Paper
50 X 40 cm



"Ritual of Spring"
1998
Watercolour on Paper
50 X 40 cm



"Fall"
1998
Watercolour on Paper
50 X 40 cm

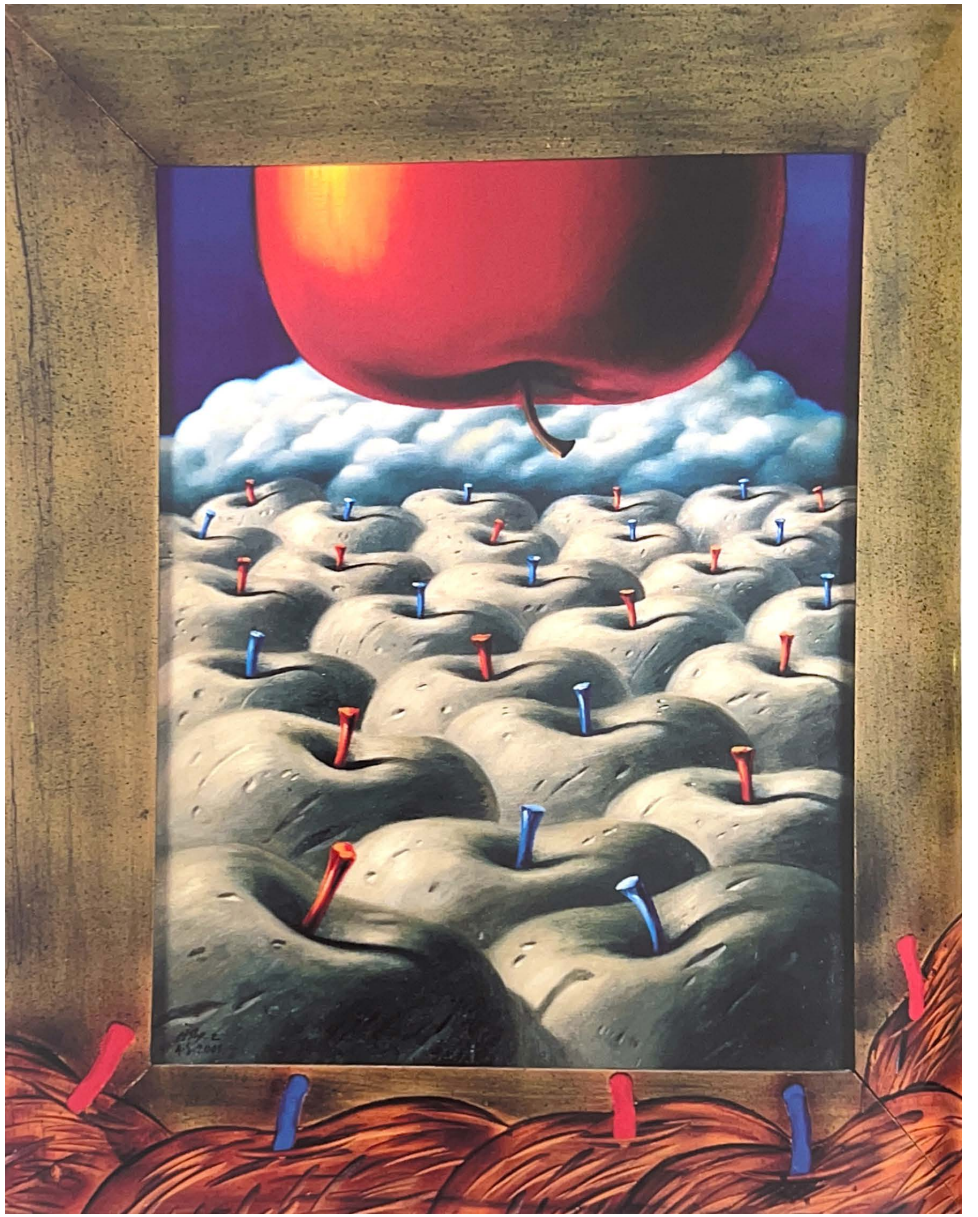
COALITION

General, your tank is a powerful vehicle
It smashes down forests and crushes men
But it has one defect: It needs a driver
General, your bomber is powerful
It flies faster than a storm and carries more than an elephant
But it has one defect: It needs a mechanic
General, man is very useful
He can fly and he can kill
But he has one defect: He can think

Bertolt Brecht
Germany (1898-1956)



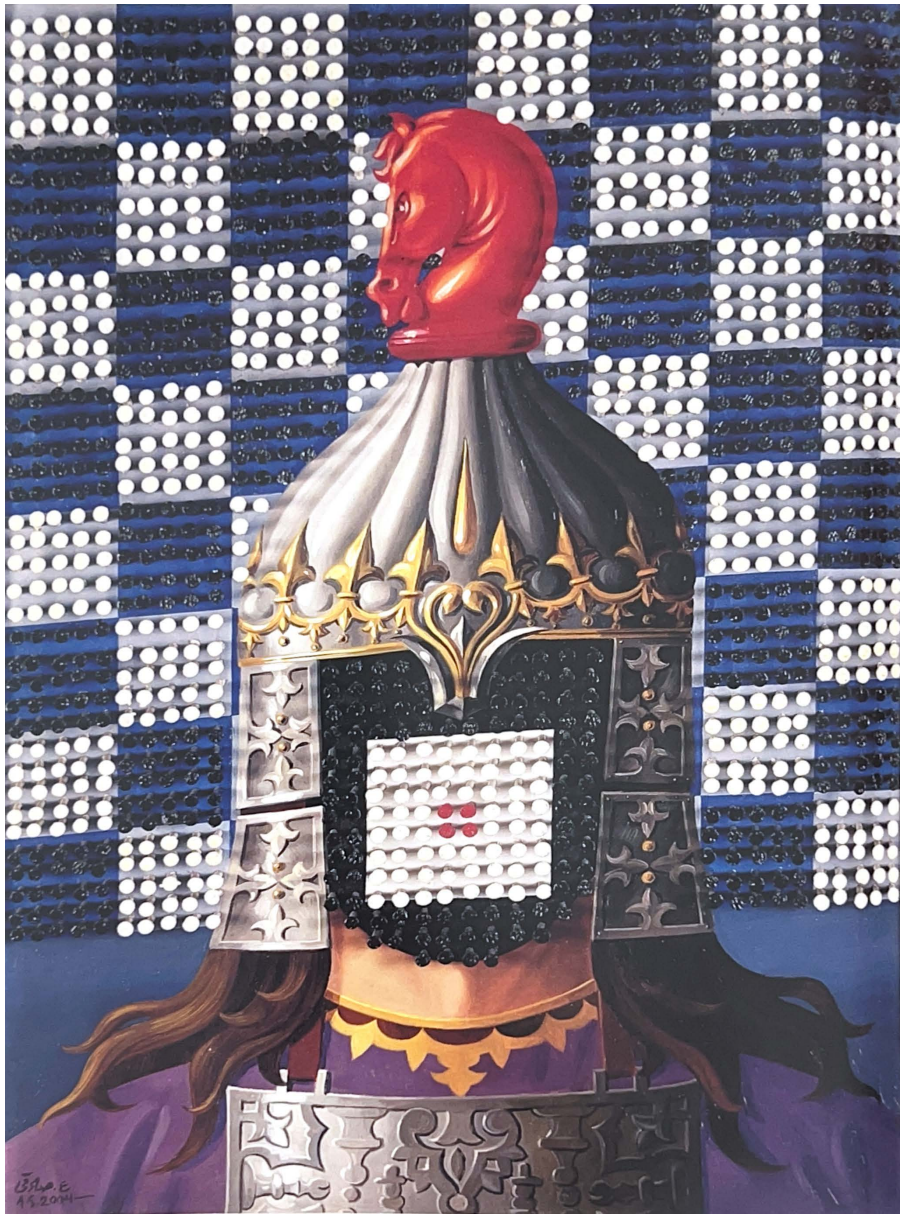
"Coalition VI"
2002
Oil On Canvas & Carved Wood
60 x 50 cm



"Coalition XII"
2001
Oil On Canvas & Carved Wood
60 x 50 cm

NAILS

Nails perhaps was the result of Ali Akbar Sadeghi's spiritual transformation. As an adolescent he worked at a carpentry workshop and learnt the craft, which he has referred to on various occasions throughout his career. Nails is a continuation of the artist's experimental approach in art making, adding nails to his iconic subjects as elements which both have personal nostalgic references while at the same time combining installation, painting, subject and the notion of what we contemplate as a 2D image. In these thought provoking works the artist has covered his historic figure's faces with nails. The artist recalls that he was going through a severe emotional period while he was hammering nails into the faces on his canvases. One wonders whether he was torturing himself by pushing nails into his own face.



"Knight"
2004
Oil On Canvas & Nail on Wood
60 x 50 cm



"Positive"
2004
Oil On Canvas & Nail on Wood
60 x 50 cm

REBIRTH

Rebirth is Sadeghi's effort to fall in love with painting once again. After a few years of depression when he was not able to pick up his brush to paint, Sadeghi came back to push his paintings' boundaries by spinning canvases and questioning the direction and composition of an art work. His style in this body of work is a flashback to his earlier works from the 1970s, which are more stylized, bright and colorful and joyfully sharp. This style was developed and resulted in his many other collections. The works can be described as similar to phantasmagoric dreams, intensified by the 20th century surrealist art movement and characterised by incongruous juxtapositions with fantastic imagery under the realm of Iranian iconography and of Persian cultural motifs, signs and myths. The splendid compositions present a kaleidoscope of colours and emotions.

The work done in these pieces is naive and without common ornaments and decorations, it is a simple and pure use of volumes and colors.The work sometimes becomes almost abstract, an unembellished display of light and hue. Sometimes the two sides of the painting are balanced against one another in different colors. In this period other elements such as teacups, breakfast tables, and butterflies join the artist's familiar apples, roosters, fish, trees, and the sea. These brightly colored elements are placed freely upon geometric, regular patterns (that are created through symmetry, repetition and replication). The result looks simple, as if a reaction against

the detailed, exactitude of miniatures and classical art that came before him. From the beginning when he made his first illustrations and animations, this artist paid particular attention to repetition and replication both aesthetically and meaningfully. In his latest pieces he has been able to create works that are familiar to the viewer by focusing on simplicity, a witty sense of humor, and prominent use of bright colors and flowing lines. The symmetry and connectivity within the canvases allows for the creation of free flowing squares, whose movement within the piece does not disrupt the overall stability of objects, creatures, and seasons in this world without gravity.



"The Hud Fish"
2007
Oil On Canvas
70 x 50 cm



"Patient"
2007
Oil On Canvas
70 x 50 cm



"Black & White"
2007
Oil On Canvas
70 x 50 cm

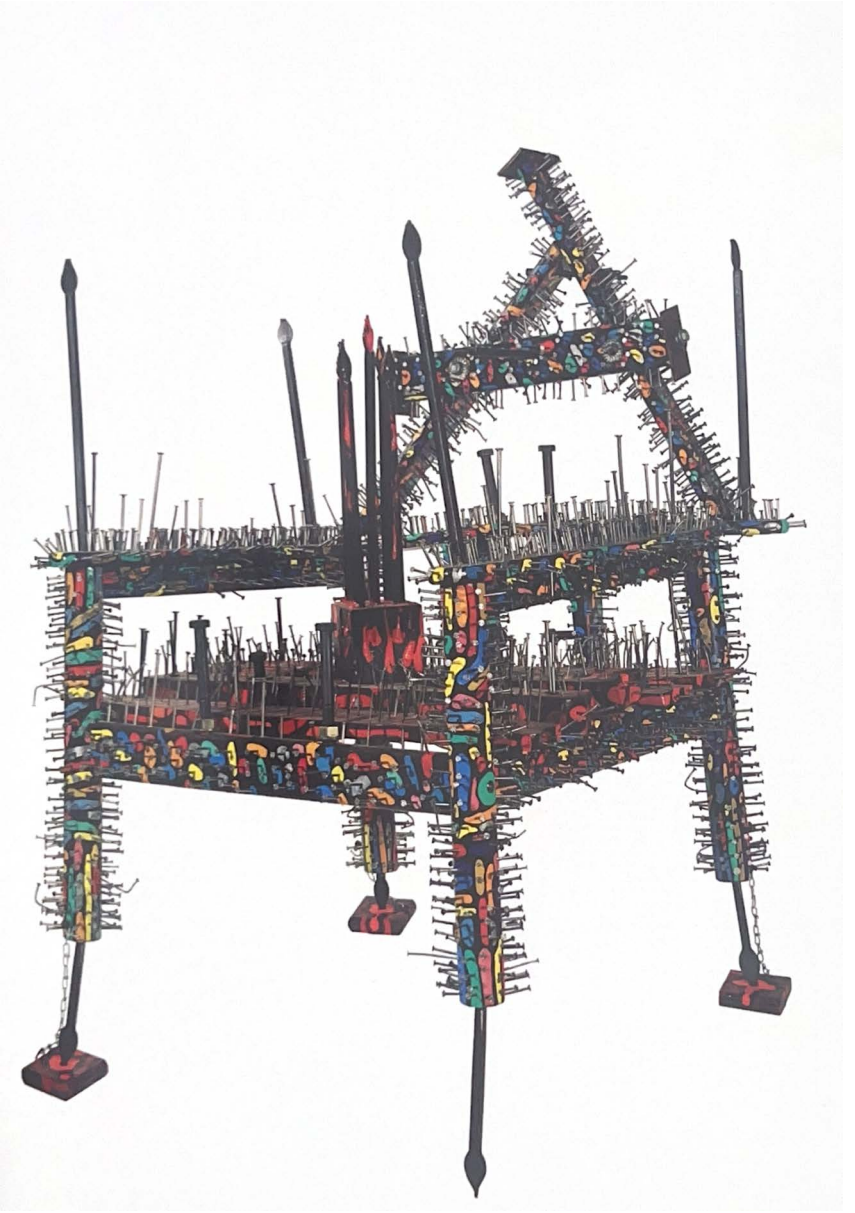
THE GAME

Being in a state of depression, Sadeghi could not paint between the years 2005 to 2006. Meanwhile he was writing poems (The Lost Book) and trying to depict the scenes and acts he used to paint in a literary format. Aside from those poems, Sadeghi became interested in using found objects to make art. Worn out shoes, old flower pots and vases, broken chairs all became his blank canvas and he expressed his craftsmanship skills to transform them into art pieces. His sentimental approach in this body of work is significant; he tries to ascend all the junk and rubbish he finds into a sublime state. Again Sadeghi's black humour disseminates strong as a hung jacket or peculiar chess boards. The humor that penetrates Sadeghi's work and life can be seen in many of his paintings. Sometimes it is hidden in the texture and structure of the work, other times it is in plain view, and every once in a while it becomes the main subject matter, such as his painting of a coat, his chair of nails, and his cactus. The humor in these works is the result of out of place objects, surprising events, or a witty critic of the artist himself or the social conditions of his place and time. It is possible to create multiple timelines by using symbols and objects from different times in the same setting. Moving instruments and characters from one era into another disrupts time, and there are many instances of such acts in painting, cinema, and literature. But creating multiple settings is a less common practice, which is possible to depict in cinema and

paintings. Sadeghi's work has many instances of multiple timelines and settings, where the equilibrium between time and space is disjointed and the impossible becomes possible in an imagined world. Recalling the past into the present tense, or flinging the present into the world of myths and fables happens very smoothly in Sadeghi's works, and the viewer doesn't find the resulting timelessness and placelessness jarring. The juxtaposition of several unlikely settings on one canvas is a pleasant innovation that the artist has attempted time and again.



"Dining Set - Alls Fork"
2004
Stainless Steel Forks
on Wooden Board and Oil on Canvas
90 x 90 cm



"The Chair II"
2009
Assemblage
83 x 85 X 115 cm

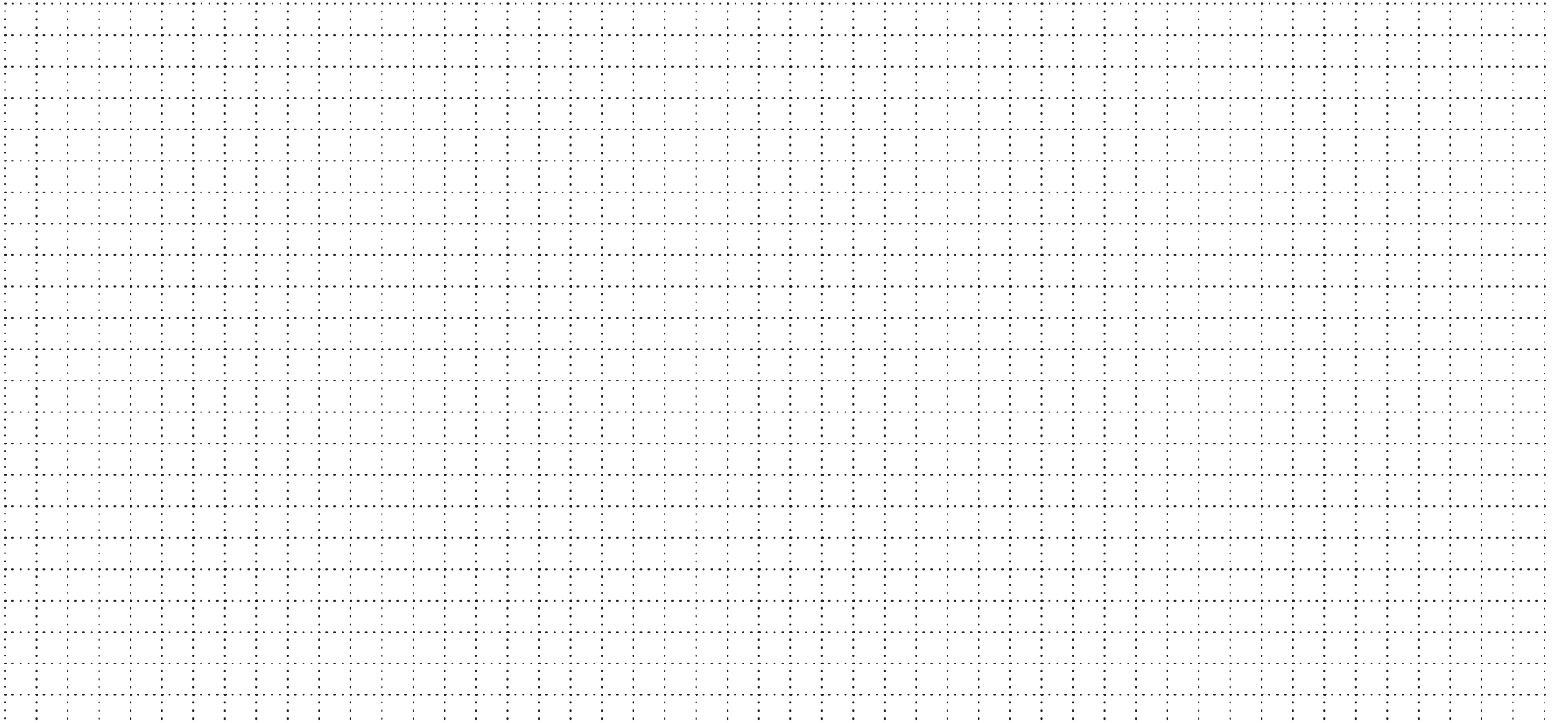


"The Jacket"
2008
Assemblage
20 x 70 X 115 cm

LOVE WAR

Sadeghi's works are inundated with narration, stories of endearment and heroism, some as sweet as legendary love stories and some as vicious as old Persian accounts of bereavement and war. Love & War is also a selection of pieces directly inspired by Ferdowsi's The Book of Kings (Shahnameh). The Love & War series were created in early 1970. He set these series aside at that time due to a career shift from being an illustrator to an animator. However, in 2005 he went back and was inspired by the Love & War series and began retouching those scenes again. They eventually became the backbone of his new series like "Camouflage" and "Unwritten". The mutual foundation in many of the pieces of "Love and War" is the act of killing. This act can happen in a melodramatic love scene or in an ideological war. The act of killing is portrayed as a primitive ritual in this body of work and reminds one of Georges Bataille s quote: "In feuds and duels, and in war, it is a man's death that occurs, although the law forbidding killing

is earlier than the distinction felt by man between himself and the larger animals. Indeed, this distinction comes quite late. To begin with man saw himself as like the animals and this attitude persists to this day in hunting peoples with their primitive man is, no less than duels, feuds and war, a form of transgression. This idea is also pictured in works from "unwritten" where we see battlefields and hunting scenes in a grotesque setting.





"Chanter"
1978 - 2010
Ink & Acrylic On Card Board
98 x 98 cm



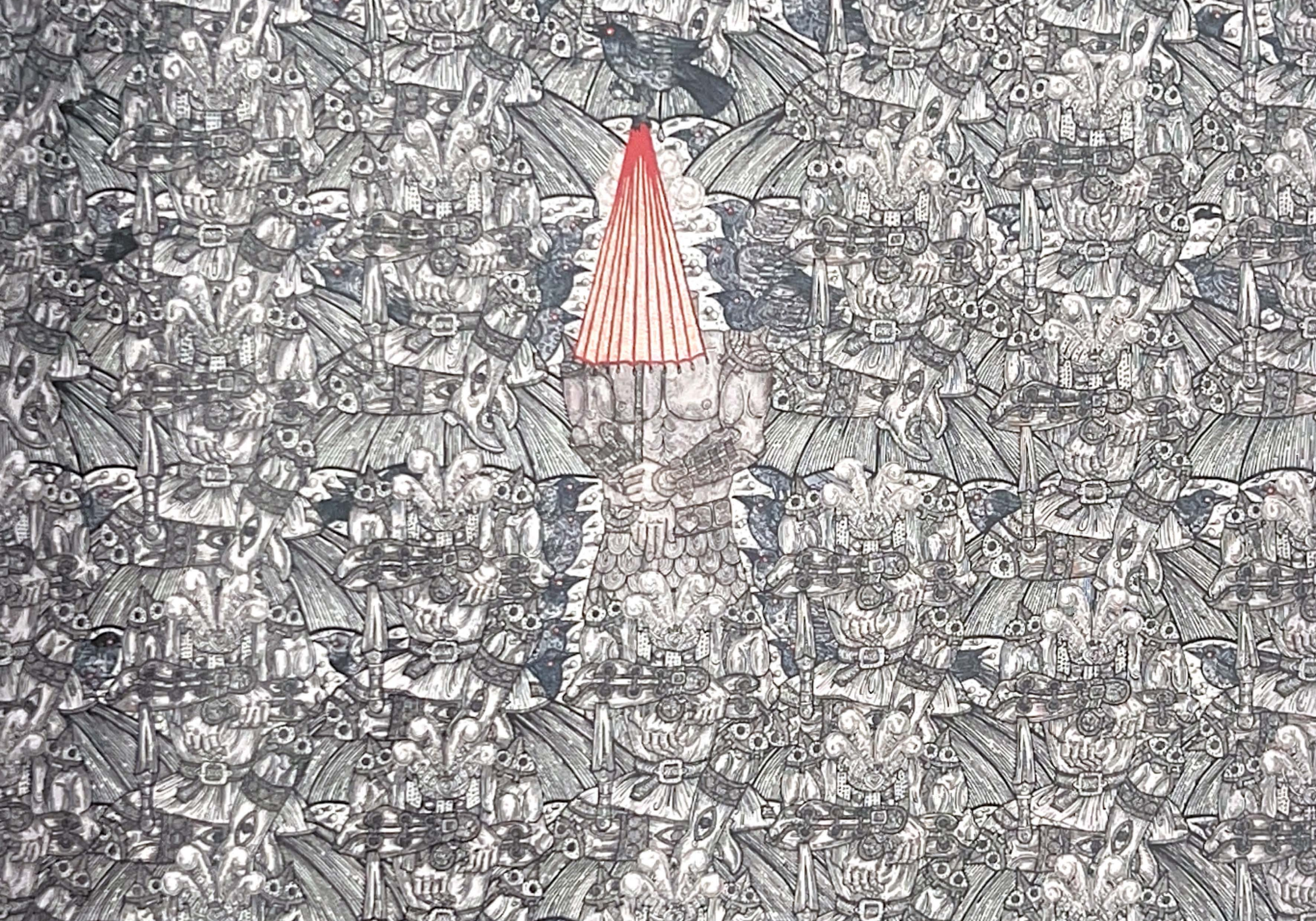
"Sacrifice"
1977 - 2009
Ink & Acrylic On Card Board
95 x 69 cm

CAMOUFLAGE

Death is the most terrible thing of all and the greatest strength
is demanded to keep death's work going.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel 1770-1831

In these series, Clusters of soldiers holding folded or unfolded umbrellas are metaphorically trying to be hidden from an external world. Here is Pleasantville where the heroes of the artist do not appear to be fighting the evils of the world, they are either frozen in time or seem to be engaged in their own internal conflict and banishment. Camouflage was painted during a critical time in the history of the 21st century when destruction implied the synthesis of power. The heroes of the painting, are sterile and barren as an antithesis to the destructive thesis. The meticulous detailing, intricate scenes and the subject matter - often heroes in full gear - follow the traditions of miniature battlefield and war painting. At close inspection all warriors are in one way or another self-portrait.



ORDER AND DISORDER WITHIN A GEOMETRIC

Order allows us to expect objects and characters in recognizable relationships. In the world of communications the power of governments and public opinion leads us toward a regulated sense of order. It is clearly easier to control people in a familiar, regulated setting. However artists by nature desire unfamiliarity. True artists constantly seek to find a new sense of order - not necessarily disorder - something I will call "beyond order". Even though Sadeghi is drawn toward a harmonic geometric order, and uses regular repetitions in his aesthetics, nonetheless, he sometimes disrupts the order within this geometric arrangement, and this is particularly clear in his works that include shades and umbrellas. In one painting he intentionally creates disorder by causing an exception amidst regularity; and elsewhere the exception becomes an order in itself, with another added element disrupting the new order. Creating order out of the exception and vice versa is a recent approach that has occupied the mind of the artist, and is a reminder of how nothing is definite and everything relative. In one painting he depicts rows of open umbrellas with an armor wearing mythical warrior sitting underneath each. The umbrellas cover the heads of the warriors, and almost hide rows of birds sitting on the ground. The painting has a rigid order that is broken by the presence of the standing, half naked commander, holding a red umbrella. The element that causes the disruption is of the same "material" as the rest of the work, yet in its placement and depiction it creates an exception. In another painting showing the misery of the warriors in winter, the umbrellas do nothing to protect them, and are instead filled with snow. The closed red umbrella of the commander emphasizes his incompetence. The birds sitting on the umbrellas may portend the dark future of these warriors returning from battle. The next painting de-picts the conflict and balance between order and disorder. Ancient warriors half dressed in ar-mor and the other half naked, stand at attention under gray

umbrellas in Maymana and Meysareh. Their commander is visible in front at the intersection of a stream filled with fish, with birds sitting alongside. This situation is reminiscent of a ludicrous war in a ridiculous context. Elsewhere open, half closed, and fully closed umbrellas in dark blue and hazel look like flowers at dawn or dusk.Their number and rhythm creates the structure of the composition. Warriors, fish, and crows placed in orderly or disorderly fashion upon this geometric structure depict a situation not at war, and not entirely at peace. In the last two paintings, blood flows from many of the ancient warriors who have been cut in two, not by an external foe, but by their internal misery. Their ridiculous, yet rigid order was their murderer. This sarcasm is not a sign of the artist's hatred, but his sense of solidarity with the victims of the various wars in our world. What caused the extermination of many people was their lack of knowledge about their context and its hidden fluctuations.

SPACE FILLED WITH CREATION

At one of his recent exhibitions Sadeghi pointed to a painting of umbrellas and said, "For this painting I drew more than a million lines. I worked eight or nine hours a day for three straight months, without a single break". I said, "In these works you've gone from the bright, colors of your previous exhibitions, to monochromes". He laughed. I continued, "The main thing about your work, and particularly this exhibition, is that the canvas is filled with figures, hues, and lines, with not the smallest bit of blank space". He replied, "This is a habit of mine. I can't stand empty spaces. I have to fill them with shapes and symbols". I asked, "Why?". He said, "I can't help it. It's what drives me". I would like to reiterate what I said before. In their imagery of battles and feasts from the Shahnameh and Khamseh (Quintet) of Nizami, Iranian artists used utmost care, delicacy, and detail because they believed these books would remain in libraries of kings for centuries to come, and they would keep the artist's name alive for eternity. The

calligrapher would write the text and leave twenty to fifty pages to be illustrated by artists from the king's library, who were responsible for illustrating manuscripts. At times the artists were obliged to fit long excerpts of the story in a single page. Given the beautiful manuscripts formerly illustrated throughout history, the artist was expected to create work that would surpass what came before him. Therefore he used any opportunity to display all his talent and technique in the few pages available to him. The pages would get filled with figures, colors, and shapes, and even the stones making a mountain would end up looking like people, monsters, and animals. Each Part of the scene would contain technical details, with the overall architecture of the piece based on mathematical and geometric logic. Another contributing factor to these works was that the Iranian artist considered his work equivalent to a holy task - on par with the creation of the world. Therefore, according to his traditional and religious beliefs, he saw perfection in profusion and plentitude. In our classical art (similar to Indian classical art) this tradition can be seen in works of miniature, etching, embossing, marquetry, inlay, carpet weaving, as well as tile work. And it stands in contrast with traditional Chinese and Japanese illustrations which value empty spaces that allow shapes and forms room to breathe. This predilection for filling the entire space of the work with shapes and symbols can also be found in modern Iranian art. Sadeghi has been influenced by traditional Iranian illustrations in his training, and is also aesthetically drawn to fully detailed, delicate work. As such, he can’t let go of even the smallest empty space on his canvases, or the various possibilities for creating visual connections between different elements on it. Another driving factor behind this predisposition may be his sense of humor or desire for testing his viewer's intelligence. He feels responsible for depicting all that goes through his imagination on the blank canvas in front of him. It is in this white world that gradually attains shape and color, that he seeks his true

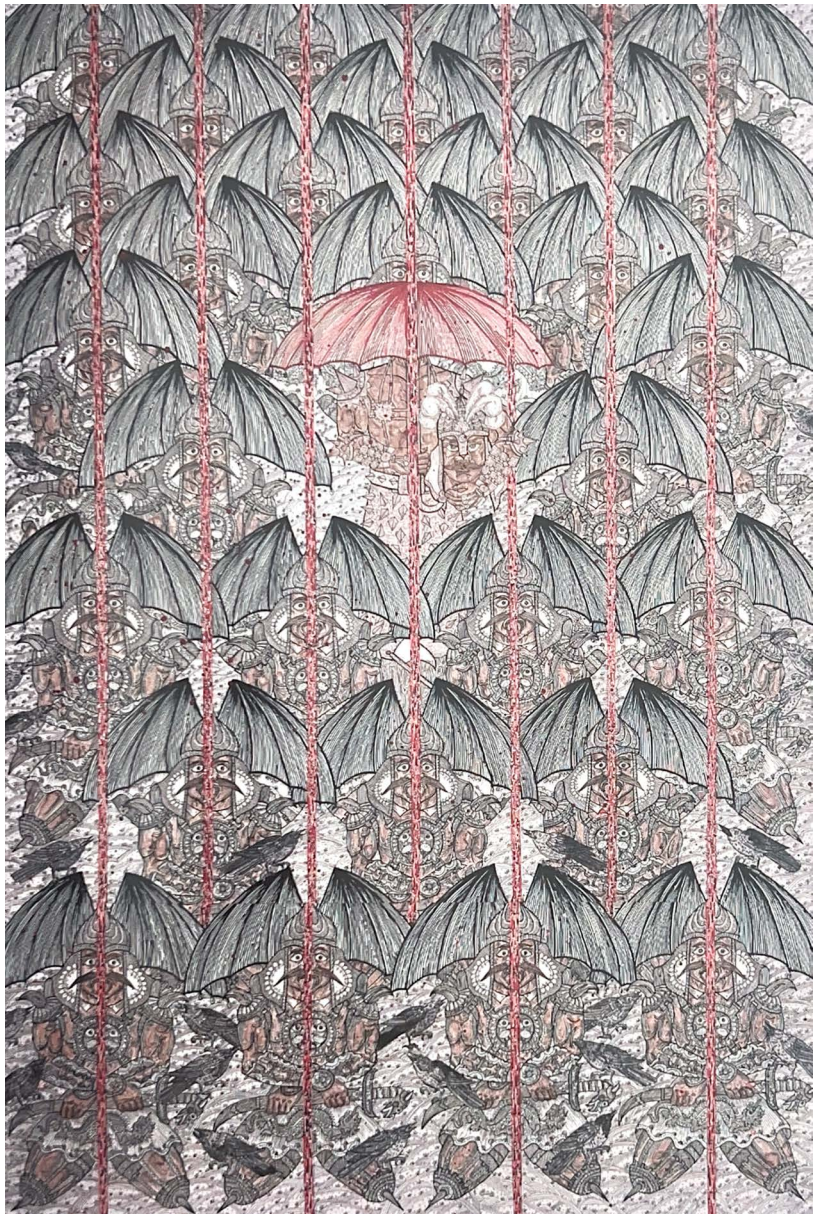
life, his greater life. It is here that he lives, enjoys, breathes, and becomes free, happy or sad, floating in his mythic world, proceeding line by line, shape by shape, and hue by hue. His world never ceases. As soon as one work is done, he starts on a new one in order to be able to leave the cold, soulless world outside, and move into his own world, spending time with his wine bearers, his warriors and mythic figures, in prairies filled with trees, horses, flowers, stones, and apples. Of course the unpleasantness of the world he has fled still remains with him and is depicted on the canvas too: wars, metamorphosis and mutilation, individual and collective nightmares, the destruction of all that could be good and beautiful. Death is waiting everywhere, it can even be found in his most light-hearted works.



"Camouflage I"
2010
Ink & Acrylic On Card Board
150 x 100 cm



"Camouflage VIII"
2011
Ink & Acrylic On Canvas
150 x 100 cm



"Camouflage IX"
2011
Ink & Acrylic On Canvas
150 x 100 cm



TRAVEL PIECES

A Personal Narrative of a Collective Unconscious

The artist recalls: "Drawings of champions and warriors were scattered on the front seat. A robber trying to steal the car becomes curious and looks through them. After returning to the car the artist finds a letter: 'Wanted to take your car, but seeing your drawings I realized you're a decent guy. I took one as a souvenir'. This event is believable if you realize that the collective unconscious of our people has been structured by the stories Sadeghi retells on his canvases. The Iranian viewer is familiar with these stories and their characters. By placing these characters in different settings the artist attempts to make them less familiar, but not to the extent that they become unrecognizable to our collective recollection. Up to the time of the Constitutional Revolution, it was common for artists to use the day to day sayings and

lives of ordinary people as the subject matter of their works. Initially this was done as a copy or true likeness. But gradually the artist would take what he had learned, and add his own contributions, resulting in a piece that was both familiar and new at the same time. (Another characteristic of Sadeghi's work that has its roots in the history of Iranian illustration). For instance in miniatures of the Shahnameh, artists in each era would include personages of their own time among mythical characters and settings of the story. During the time of the Mughal Empire Keykavoos has Mongolian features, while during the Safavid era, he looks like a Qizilbash spiritual leader. This practice continued up to the time of Sani ol-Molk, when the illustrator of One Thousand and One Nights depicts Harun al-Rashid and Ja'far Barmaki as Nasser-el-din Shah and Amir Kabir. The purpose of this practice was twofold: on the one hand it pleased the King to be depicted as a lasting, mythical figure. And on the other hand, it served the artist who was unfamiliar with the Abbasid period and did not know the proper dress and ornamentation of their royalty, so naturally he applied the visual context of his own time to that of the past. Sadeghi humorously moves people and objects from one era to another, and consciously creates a situation that is amusing and serious at the same time. A situation that replicates the intended era exactly, but cleverly includes objects and tools from other times.

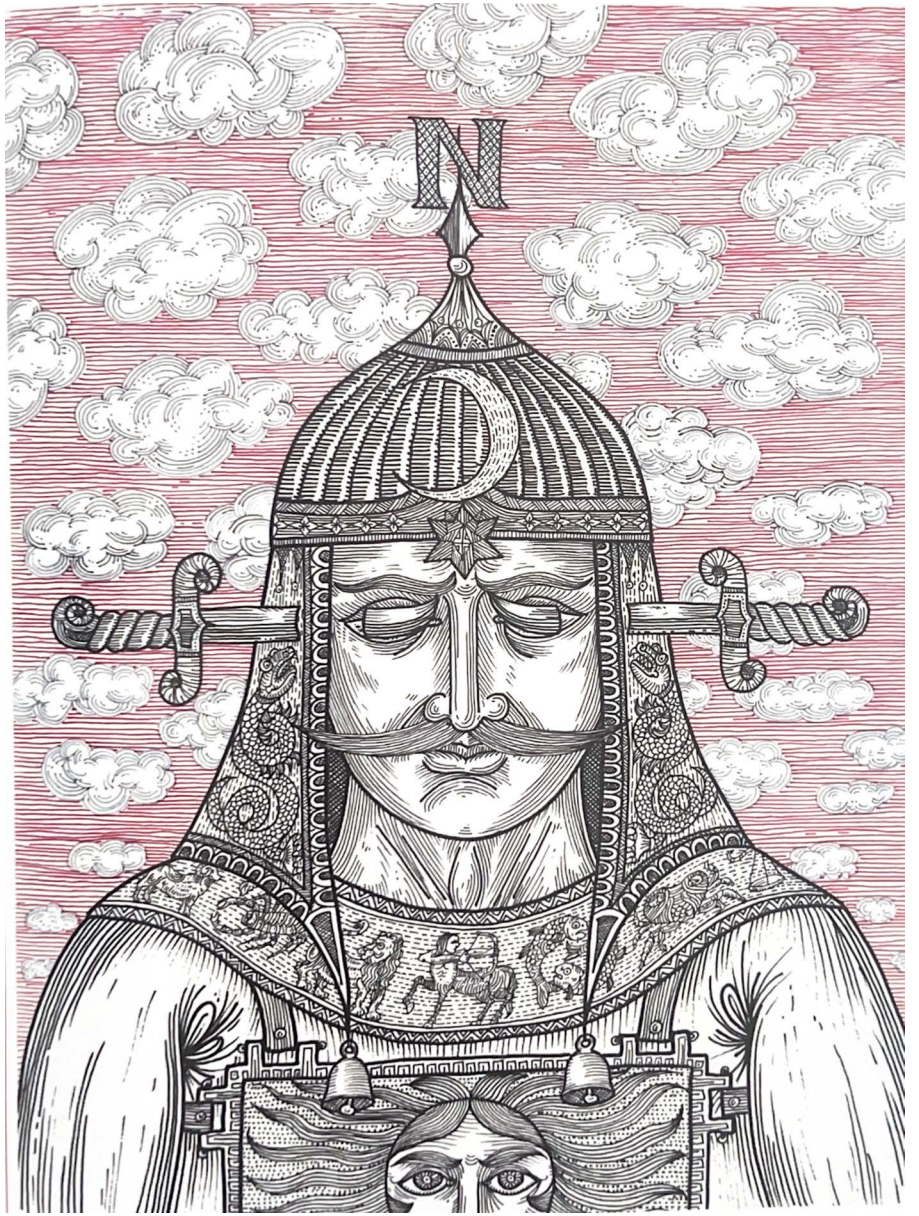




"Travel Piece II"
2010
Ink On Paper
36 x 28 cm



"Travel Piece V"
2012
Ink On Paper
36 x 28 cm



"Travel Piece XVI"
2010
Ink On Paper
36 x 28 cm



UNWRITTEN

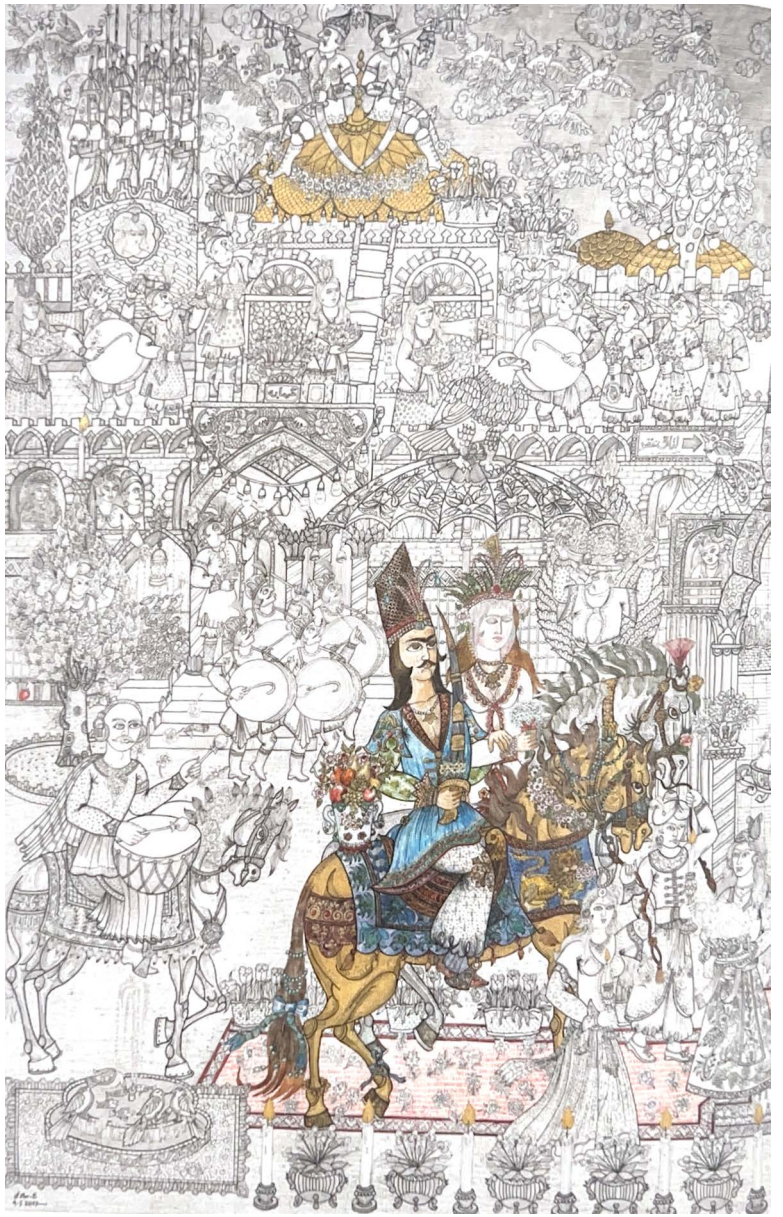
The Unwritten series includes nine works that like a full-length mirror reflect Ali Akbar Sadeghi's worldview over several decades of artistic work. In a way this series can be seen as a culmination and combination of several periods of the artist's career. Before reviewing and analyzing these works, one must first describe how the artist's modern world came to be, and how it connects with Iran's ancient myths and culture. Almost concurrently with Sadeghi's graduation from the School of Fine Arts at Tehran University, a well known group of Iranian modernists began to move in a new direction, integrating folk aesthetics with international modern achievements. This eventually resulted in two new forms of Iranian modernism: Saqqakhaneh, and Naghashi-Khat (calligraphy-painting). Some of Sadeghi's paintings include elements of the Saqqakhaneh School; nevertheless, in the history of Iranian art, he is not considered part of this movement. Sadeghi even avoided using calligraphy in the heavily nationalized atmosphere of the 1960s, yet his works consistently have a local character, seeking a national identity, without being part of any particular movement of Iran's visual art scene. The main feature of the Unwritten series is the use of a great number of cultural icons and symbols, as well as references to Iranian narratives. Most of these symbols primarily refer to miniatures, lithographs, and Coffe House Paintings. They also allude to stories from classical Iranian literature as well as

cultural folklore. Without question Sadeghi has a great understanding of Iranian art in different historic periods. The perspective he uses in some of the works in the Unwritten series is influenced by Iranian paintings that concurrently depict different places and times. This is particularly true of "Four Gardens", and "Forbidden Love". In this style, the artist delicately depicts two or more events in order to create a multi layered, polyphonic narrative. Perhaps this is a type of insightful cubism, only present in Iranian painting. In his depiction of animals he is reminiscent of the illustrations of books such as "Kelileh o Demneh", and perhaps "Sovar ol Kavakeb". And at times his images evoke poetic hunting scenes. The other important characteristic of these works is the artist's use of different "types" in his portrayal of the people present in his works, which is similar to historic miniatures. Sadeghi made self-portraits during many of his different periods, particularly his Myth & Math Series. But in this series, except for the piece depicting the artist's seventy-fifth birthday, he does not use self-portraits at all. Instead, like it was common to do in miniatures, he uses different facial "types" to depict different levels of society, as well as different characters. For instance he uses particular types to depict kings, soldiers, dancers, musicians, and the like, without much concern for naturalism. Overall, Sadeghi has been influenced by miniatures in different phases of his career, whether making animations, or creating graphic design, illustrations, or paintings. In addition to the influence of traditional Iranian painting, an analysis of Sadeghi's style in the Unwritten series also reveals the artist's preoccupation with Persian lithographs. Lithography replaced handwritten calligraphy texts during the reign of Fathali Shah Qajar. Initially lithography books did not include any illustrations. But given the tradition of book illustration in Iran, and the audience's predilection for these types of books, very soon illustrations were added to lithographs as well. Colored lithographs were never printed in Iran. Illustrated books, like Sadeghi's monochrome images in this

series, included monochrome hatchings. Most of the portraits in the Unwritten series are done in this technique, therefore the use of color in these works is limited, and almost none have any tonality. It should be noted that readers of lithograph books would sometimes "color in" the illustrations by hand. The result would be something similar to the use of color in "Wedlock" and "King's Ballet". At the same time that lithographs were being printed in Iran, Coffee House Paintings were also becoming popular. In fact after traditional painting and lithographs, Sadeghi's third source of inspiration is Coffee House Paintings, particularly in their structure and content. The large size of the pieces in this series -disregarding the detailed characteristics of miniatures present in them- make the work similar to large Coffee House Paintings canvases, which unlike illustrated books, are intended to be seen from the front and at a distance.



"Love Garden"
2010
Ink, Gold & Silver Leaf on Card Board Mounted On Wood
190 X 170 cm



"Wedlock"
2013
Ink, Gold & Silver Leaf on Card Board Mounted On Wood
150 x 300 cm

LOST IN FAME

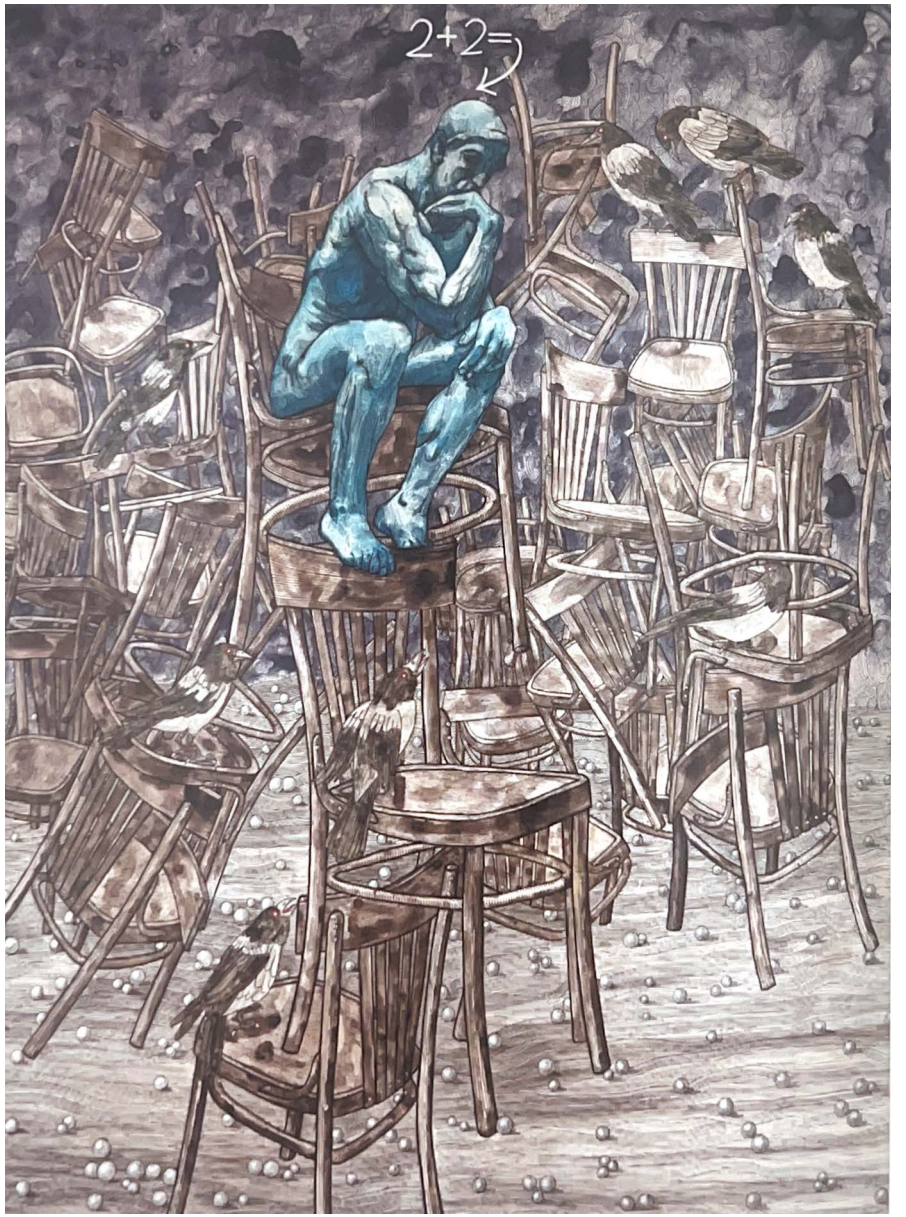
The most recognizable element of these series is the presence of world famous sculptures by artists such as Picasso, Degas, Rodin, Michelangelo, Henry Moore and the painting by Munch, "The Scream" in which Ali Akbar's signature characters starts to manipulate their existence. One censors nudity and one crushes its surroundings. The other metaphor in this body of work is an invasion of western culture of Iranian intellectuals which is represented by clusters of Polish chairs. "Polish chairs" have been for decades an element of Tehran's intellectual cafés. This cultural juxtaposition illustrates a naive composition that integrated in 20th century's Iranian mannerism. The consequences are nothing but a deep silence embedded loudly in these paintings. One censored and the others asleep.



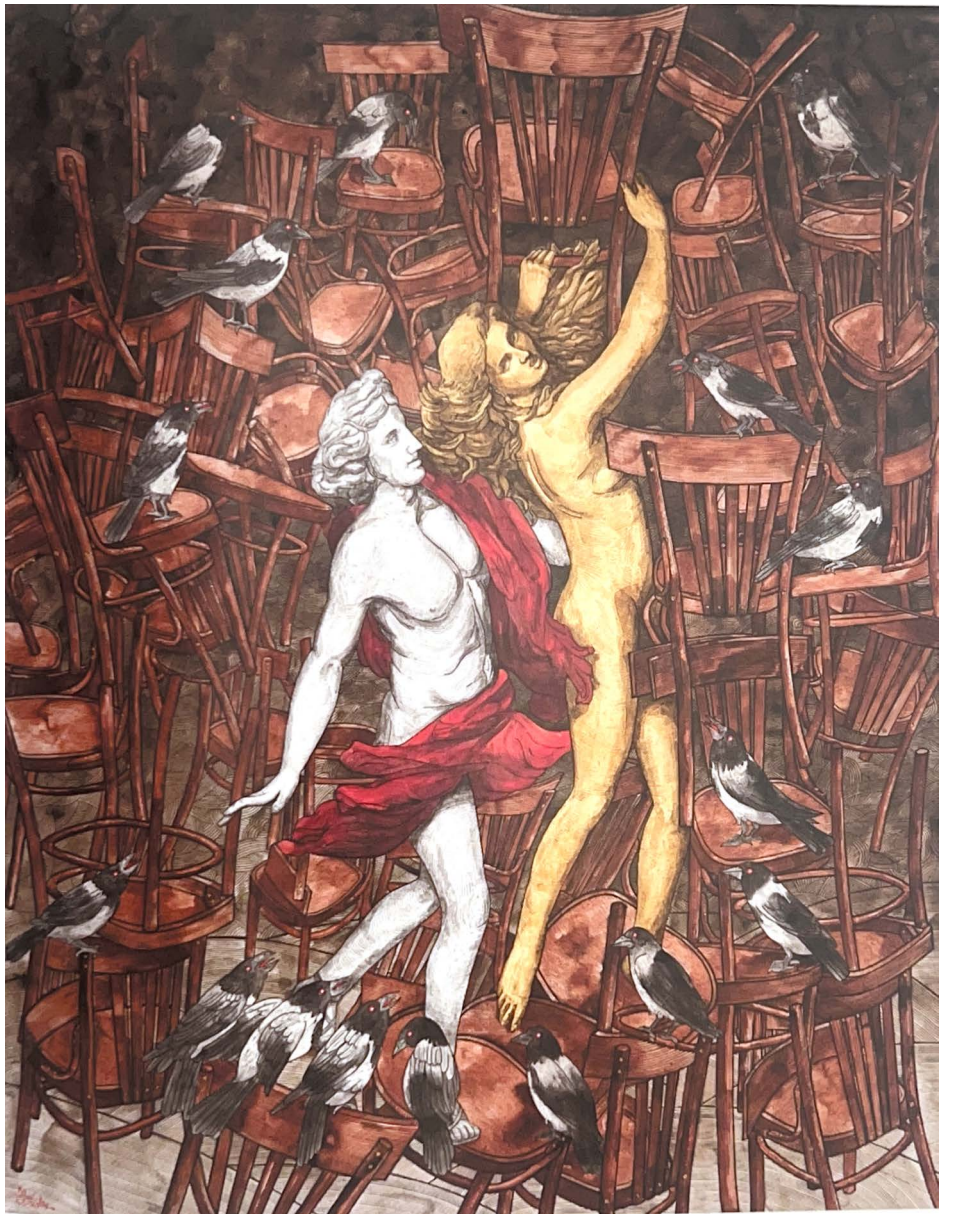
"Lost In Fame Moore"
2015
Ink & Acrylic On Canvas
150 x 120 cm



"Lost In Fame Degas"
2015
Ink & Acrylic On Canvas
150 x 120 cm



"Lost In Fame Rodin"
2014
Ink & Acrylic On Canvas
150 x 120 cm



"Lost In Fame Bernini"
2015
Ink & Acrylic On Canvas
150 x 120 cm



"Lost In Fame Munch"
2015
Ink & Acrylic On Canvas
150 x 120 cm



"Lost In Fame Picasso"
2015
Ink & Acrylic On Canvas
150 x 120 cm



This collection shifted dramatically from the ways Sadeghi creates art. In these works he began to retell his stories but this time by reviewing the animations he made in the 1970s. Each piece is a reproduction of related animation from his collection of original film cels that assembled to form a collage painting. Each painting portrays its narration in a static square frame filled with animated movement studies and colours. The entire rearrangement is composed of all the animation's characters gathered together to retell the story once again, but in a static layout. In fact, the genre that Sadeghi started with "Nails" and later "Game" and "Camouflage", evolves into a kitsch presentation with Sadeghi's cinematic assets. His stylized miniatures are a direct reference to the school whose exquisite characteristics he has exploited for many decades.



"Flower Storm Retell"
2015
Animation Celluloid, Ink and Silver Leaf on Canvas
150 x 150 cm



"Boasting Retell"
2015
Animation Celluloid, Ink and Silver Leaf on Canvas
150 x 150 cm



"Rook Retell"
2015
Animation Celluloid, Ink and Silver Leaf on Canvas
150 x 150 cm



CV

Ali Akbar Sadeghi

Born 1971, Tehran, Iran

Education

1969. BA from Faculty of Fine Arts, Tehran University, Tehran, Iran

Solo Exhibitions

2026. "By Ali Akbar Khan’s Hand", Inja Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2026. "By Ali Akbar Khan's Hand", Bazdid Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2025. "Holy Demons", Sarv-E Naz Gallery, Shiraz, Iran
2025. "Holy Demons", Iranshahr Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2025. "From Paper to Canvas", Hoor Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2025. "Akbar", Dastan's Basement, Tehran. Iran
2022. "Mad", Parallel Circuit, Tehran, Iran, Iran
2018. "A Retrospective", Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, Iran
1992. "Iran: The Land of the...", Sabz Gallery, Tehran, Iran
1988. Lashudofond Gallery, Switzerland

Group Exhibitions

2026. "Collection No. 4", EV Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2026. "724 Days", Dastan: Outside, Beverly Hills, LA, USA
2026. "Resonance", Dastan: Outside, Sam Center, Tehran Iran
2026. "Parallel Circuit[s]", Dastan: Outside X Francois Ghebaly, Beverly Hills, LA, USA
2025. “Akbar [Recent Ten Years]”, Ali Akbar Sadeghi X Ali Bakhtiari
2024. "Point of View", El Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2023. "Event: Iranian Contemporary Art and Shifting Realities", Bavan Gallery, London, England
2023. "Soft Edge of the Blade Vol. 2", Zaal Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada
2023. "Prospect", Parallel Circuit, Tehran, Iran
2023. "Root", Tooba Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2023. "Lotfi X Mashahir Cross 3", Guye Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2023. "A Selection of 70 Years of Iranian Sculpture", Art Center, Tehran, Iran
2023. "Root", Tooba Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2023. "Realism", Dastan Outside Projects, London, England
2023. "Prospect", Parallel Circuit, Tehran, Iran
2023. "Lotfi X Mashahir Cross 3", Guye Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2022. "Soft Edge of the Blade", Dastan Outside Projects, London, England
2022. "Season of Flower", Taalaar Space, Tehran, Iran
2022. "Resize", Artibition Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2022. "Mirrored Reflections", TMoCA, Tehran, Iran
2022. "Face to Face", Javid Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2022. "A Nostalgic Glimpse", X Homa, Tehran, Iran
2022. "1 Ith Collector", Artibition Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2021. "The Collection of Liam Gallery", Liam Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2021. "Legendary Artist", Negah Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2021. "Basket Goes Persian", Galerie Nicolas Flamel, Paris, France

2021. "A Rare Collection of Iranian Modern Art", Leila Heller, Dubai, UAE
2020. "Perspective", Javid Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2020. "One by One", Azad Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2020. "Masters of Iranian Art", Negah Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2020. "Editions", Aknoon Gallery, Isfahan, Iran
2018. "Painting Exhibition", Iranian Artist Forum, Tehran, Iran
2018. "l Sohrab Sepehri", DD Museum Gallery, Mazandaran, Iran
2018. "Free Sale", Azad Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2018. "Drawing as Living", Iranian Artist Forum, Tehran, Iran
2017. "Amordad", Afrand Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2017. "Amordad", Afrand Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2014. "Zoo", Shirin Gallery, Tehran, Iran
1993. Export Development Center, Tehran, Iran
1992. "Show for the People of Bosnia and Herzegovina", Niavaran Cultural House, Tehran, Iran
1991. Export Development Center, Tehran, Iran
1990. "A Tribute to Firooz Shirvanloo", Seyhoun Gallery, Tehran, Iran
1989. "Iranian Water-colorists Show", Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, Iran
1987. "A Tribute to Asghar Mohammadi", Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, Iran

Art Fairs

2026. Frieze London, Represented by Dastan Gallery, London, UK
2026. Frieze LA, Santa Monica Airport, Los Angeles, USA
2025. Art Basel Miami Beach, Represented by Zaal Art Gallery, Miami, USA
2023. Frieze Seoul, Represented by Dastan Gallery, Seoul, South Korea
2023. Art Dubai, Represented by Dastan Gallery, Dubai, UAE
2018. Art Dubai, Represented by Dastan Gallery, Dubai UAE
2016. Abu Dhabi Art, Shirin Gallery, Abu Dhabi, UAE
2015. Contemporary Istanbul, Represented by Shirin Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey

Biennials

2019. Participated in the Singapore Biennale

Major Collections

The British Museum

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art The

Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art

Awards

2004. Won the Iranian and foreign special jury prizes at the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults' Festival

1989. Awarded by the "Center of Intellectual Development for Children and Young Adults", for the book "Victory"

1985. 1st prize winner of the 1st Iranian Graphic Designers' show

1980. Received an honorary diploma from Odense's 4th International Film Festival, Denmark

1980. 1st prize winner of the Leipzig Festival, for the Book "No Worship Is like Thinking"

1978. The first Prize of the Illustrators Book of Asia (Noma) for "Contemplation is the Best Worship"

1978. "The Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor" won first prize of Asian Illustrators 1977. "Malek Khorshid" won the honorary diploma, Festival International de Court Metrage pour la Jeunesse, Paris

1975. Won a silver plaque at the 1 Ith edition of Chicago Film Festival

1975. A bronze plaque from Columbus Film Festival in Ohio, USA

1975. Won a bronze plaque and as well as a certificate of appreciation from the International Festival of Cartoon Films in New York

1974. A directed film by him named "Boasting" won Gandhi Peace Prize in the 24th World Film Festival in Berlin

1974. Received Artist's Award from Union of Soviet Artists

1974. Gold plaque from Virgin Islands Film Festival in USA
1974. Bronze plaque from Paris
1974. First prize at International Educational Film's Festival of Lebanon
1974. Won the bronze plaque from 1 2th International Festival in Cracow, Poland
1973. Won an award from Tampere Film Festival in Finland
1973. Won a special award from Los Angeles Festival and San Francisco Festival
1972. Won a gold plaque at the 7th international festival of films for young
1970. The book "Hero of Champions" won the 1st prize in the category of Asia's best illustrations



