

IRANIAN ART BRUT

OUTSIDER ART FROM PERSIA

MORTEZA ZAHEDI



JEAN-MARC DECROP

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PREFACE

SOPHIE MAKARIOU *PRESIDENT OF FRENCH NATIONAL ASIAN ART MUSEUM GUIMET*
FORMER DIRECTOR OF ISLAMIC ARTS DEPARTMENT, LOUVRE MUSEUM

When Jean-Marc Decrop invited me to preface the book he was preparing on marginal figurative art in Iran - what we call Outsider Art, Art Brut or singular art - I was caught off guard. What sort of judgement could I express on a field I know nothing about? But wondering about authority issues with an art that does not care about them is probably a methodological error. So I opened the file that he sent me and started to look at the images. Looking at art is like riding a bike for the art historian: a reflex.

Very quickly all what I knew about Iran, from its art to its very long History, came back to overwhelm my mind through many signals. Among the artists, all self-taught, presented in this book, the two-dimensional representation dominates. Only one of them, Amir Kamand, opts for sculpture. The means of expression of these artists are either painting or drawing, whether with pencil, felt or at the tip of ballpoint pen. Their references abound and often come from textile art, or a world of words irrigated by the epic vein so perennial in Iran. Iran has for literary base the "Book of Kings" the great Persian epic written

on the threshold of the 11th century by Firdawsi. Its thousands of verses unfold before our eyes the glorious battles of these protagonists in a merciless struggle, inextinguishable, between good and evil. Zabibollah Mohammadi could be of these artists from the past that drew the decor of the Hussainiyah, the place of representation of the Taziyeh, Persian "mysteries" of the Shiites commemorating the Martyr of Imam Husayn. Also, let's not forget that Iran has a long tradition of shadow theatre. It is also the universe of large Persian cotton canvases, block printed which come in mind when looking at the decorative patterns of Zabibollah Mohammadi, Salim Karimi or Kazem Ezi. But soon so we are struck by the vitality of the creation of these artists who can defy all frontiers. For some, like Mostafa Sarabi or Mohammad Banissi; any allusion to their Iranity seem to have disappeared.

One can be struck also, as in other outsider art productions, of the strong sexual dimension of some of the artworks. This is particularly striking with Mohammad Hossein Ariyaei who produces a powerful painting haunted by Daymon, spirits

or demons. The role of his mother, an exorcist, evokes this shamanic world that still remains grounded in many societies.

Major artists have been able to go beyond the borders of the seriousness of representation, getting away from rules that would lock them up. This is the case of course of Dubuffet whose mischievous spirit, free and inventive resonates within this book. This is the case of Basquiat that would have found connivances here. Gradually these informal artists, from "the school of Essaouira" in Morocco to an Iran who remains too ignored, gain a place that they shouldn't lack to take us, by their freedom, to the territories of the unconscious. They invite us to go down in our own caves and come out, rejuvenated, regenerated, stronger to have dared to dive.



Salim Karami, Untitled, Colour ball point pen on paper, 70x50cm

ESSAY

MORTEZA ZAHEDI *Curator*

Over the years, numerous terms have been coined for a new category of aesthetics: naive art, outsider art, singular art, nonmainstream art, unstrained artists, self-taught art, nonacademic art, amateur art, untrained visionaries, art resulting from impulses and mental disorders, among many others.

In 1945, Jean Dubuffet called it art brut, advocating the artistic creativity of the mentally challenged, criminals, people who are isolated in their homes, people at the fringes of the society, those who do not expect to be acknowledged, appreciated, or recognized, and whose artworks are made out of necessity for an audience of one, to reveal a profound secret. He kept these pieces at the core of his collection, and, because art brut is more enthusiasm than definition, more attitude than genre or style, and more orientation than status, he made his position clear.

Since the term “art brut” was never common in the Anglo-Saxon world, and due to a lack of theoretical foundation and serious literature on the subject, in 1972, Roger Cardinal, reluctantly and at the suggestion of his editor, referred to this artistic tendency as “outsider art” in his book. In fact, Cardinal had to come up with a term like that, for Dubuffet used to say that he owned the copyright to “art brut” and no one was allowed to

use it!

The publisher also engraved the words Outside Art on the cover of the book to avoid legal consequences (although Cardinal used the word “art brut” all over the book to describe his views and ideas).

This was the beginning of controversies.

Many experts believe that “outsider art” is an imaginary concept that can be used to justify or describe almost everything. They say something like, “Such a term does not describe the world of art, but examines the artist. It promotes a form of discrimination in the sphere of art. It is a racist, bogus, and elitist label that adds fuel to the fire of superiority of the trained, recognized artist.” Such things are rarely in the minds of artists engaged in this form of artistic expression. These people reinforce the fact that art, in the true sense of the word, is dependent on essential human behavior rather than merely being a creative goal. (The most personal expression from the most personal perspective.)

Thus, in 1979, Nico van der Endt proposed an alternative term: singular art. He believed that, in addition to outsider art, art brut is a common French word and therefore cannot be ideal for such a tendency.

Yet, while this dilemma still persists (i.e., after decades), and none of these terms seem to be entirely accurate, “outsider art” became ubiquitous, and is now being used internationally.

We know that the arts of the non-European world include a variety of ideas and forms that are related to the histories of nations far away from Europe, and it is clear that the arts of non-European nations that rely on their inspiration and uniqueness, are great forces and stimuli, which, during the last two centuries, have been instrumental in transforming the arts of the Western world into something truly global. Consequently, the intersection of these influences caused ebbs and flows in the forms and expressions of art. Introducing these products to the Western man required a transformation that, over time, could gradually make the world of art recognize their importance and realize that not only these works were not simple, trivial, and crude, but indeed advanced, both aesthetically and conceptually.

Now in Iran, as in other parts of the world, we are witnessing the development, promotion, and acceptance of this artistic field. Although it is rather new, it is moving strongly in parallel with mainstream art.

Concerning the works published in this book, it should be noticed that the works of these individuals are addressed, in artistic trends, as “art brut” or “self-taught.” Much like their ancestors in the present age, these artists are engaged in artistic creation—on the fringes. Their works depend solely on pure human resources. Their outputs are strangely tied to their natural lives. The presentation of these works is underpinned by their originality, innovation, and romantic goals. The creators of this form of artistic expression

can be considered an epitome of disregard for the social and economic considerations “in the art world”: they are able to express their ideas in their own language.

The works of a number of these artists are situated on the boarder of contemporary art and art brut. The visual manifestations of the art have such frankness, latitude, and immediate expressiveness that many experts believe that it has more originality and power than the mainstream art. Perhaps the real reason is that the indentations of the artists are different and, similar to trained and professional artists, they are not concerned with mainstream issues.

The truth is that, when Dubuffet presented his rules about the field, no one really knew what its content was and how to make sense of it. No one imagined what would happen later in Europe, the United States, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Now, however, everything has changed and the idea of art brut is gradually developing and penetrating the global culture: a colossal, diverse, and pluralistic field, involving non-European and American countries—such as Iran.

Morteza Zahedi

PROLOGUE

JEAN-MARC DECROP *Expert contemporary art CNES & CEDEA*

Painters without having learned, Iranian art brut artists, self-taught or mentally different, are bursting with creativity. Their artworks take us in a journey to surreal, visionary, poetic universes ...

Unexplored territories ignoring conventions and taboos, these fresh and original compositions are revealed before our eyes with humor and poetry.

While art brut is generally constructed outside of any cultural and artistic referent, completely breaking away from previous creation, these ten art brut artists with more than 150 works here are for many deeply rooted in the thousands of years old tradition of Iranian culture : literary and poetic references for Araeyiei, Persian mythologies for Zabihollah and Ezi, everyday objects linked to the local culture for Karami, cultural emblems for Kamand.

It seems that the particular situation of Iran where arts education may not be as accessible as elsewhere but where the arts and culture are so strong there that they have permeated all strata of society, is such that it has allowed a brut art to flourish everywhere.

It may even be that these artists reflect the Iranian reality better than contemporary artists, many of whom were either trained abroad or were influenced by it.

The situation of this brut art in Iran is changing. Completely ignored before, he has been on the path to better recognition in recent years.

Iran, nourished by the breeding ground of a millennial civilization, reveals to us here this flowering of endearing individuals.



L'art ne vient pas coucher dans les lits qu'on
a faits pour lui ; il se sauve aussitôt qu'on
prononce son nom : ce qu'il aime c'est l'incognito.
Ses meilleurs moments sont quand il oublie comment
il s'appelle.

J. Dubuffet

*"Art doesn't go to sleep in the bed made for it. it runs away as soon as one says its name;
what it likes is to be incognito. Its best moments are when it forgets what its own name is."*

Jean Dubuffet

MOHAMMAD HOSSEIN ARIYAEI

1987, ISFAHAN

Born in 1987, Ariyaei was raised from an early age by his exorcist grandmother. It is undoubtedly under her influence that the artist in his paintings drag us towards mysterious parallel universes. A frenzied creator, Ariyaei covers his papers or his canvases over their entire surface, figures and texts intermingle, leaving not an inch uncovered with content.

An inhabited artist, he paints for himself, he doesn't care about his audience. Immersed in his very own universe, he tirelessly traces his enigmatic signs and figures. The characters in his paintings live in a dense and rich interior world, they call us to witness, turning towards us with their mysterious smiles.

The titles he gives to his paintings refer to political events ("Maryaam Mirzakhani going to the other world", "Student movement in France", "male domination"...) But above all to Persian literature and poetry, borrowing to the poets Saadi and Hafez quotes and fragments of poems. ("Standing on a poem by Baha'Al-Din Al-'Amili" "Strengthened by Ferdowsi (from the book of kings)" "Treasury of the Mysteries", "Hard Talk with 3 Iranian poets Shams Tabrizi, Hafez and Rumi").

However, it should be noted that Iranian society is itself extremely steeped in these poetic texts. The everyday environment has incorporated the poetry of this ancient civilization. We can find these scraps of texts and poems in everyday life on truck bodies, cigarette wrappers, present throughout the urban landscape ...

Exorcism, Acrylic on cardboard, 70x50cm, 2018





Male domination, Acrylic on paper, 30x40cm, 2018



Maryam Mirzakhani going to the other world, Acrylic on paper, 30x40cm, 2018



Amazon, Acrylic on paper, 30x40cm, 2018



Standing on a poem by Baha'Al-Din Al-'Amili, Acrylic on cardboard, 70x50cm, 2018



Student movement of France 2018 ("I said sad, you said sadness come "Hafiz)
Acrylic on cardboard, 70x50cm, 2018



*Iranian poets society,
Acrylic on cardboard, 50x70cm, 2018*



*Treasury of the Mysteries (most beautiful mystic poem in the Persian language with both perfection of
language and grandeur of thought), Acrylic on cardboard, 70x50cm, 2018*



Hard Talk with 3 Iranian poets
Shams Tabrizi, Hafez and Rumi,
Acrylic on canvas, 69x90cm, 2018



Strengthened by Ferdowsi (from the book of kings), Acrylic on cardboard, 70x50cm, 2018



Tribute to Fereydoun (poem by Saadi Shirazi), Acrylic on cardboard, 52x80cm, 2018



Ritual, Acrylic on paper, 30x40cm, 2018



Pepsi Generation, Acrylic on cardboard, 50x70cm, 2018

ZABIHOLLAH MOHAMMADI

1941-2021, LORESTAN

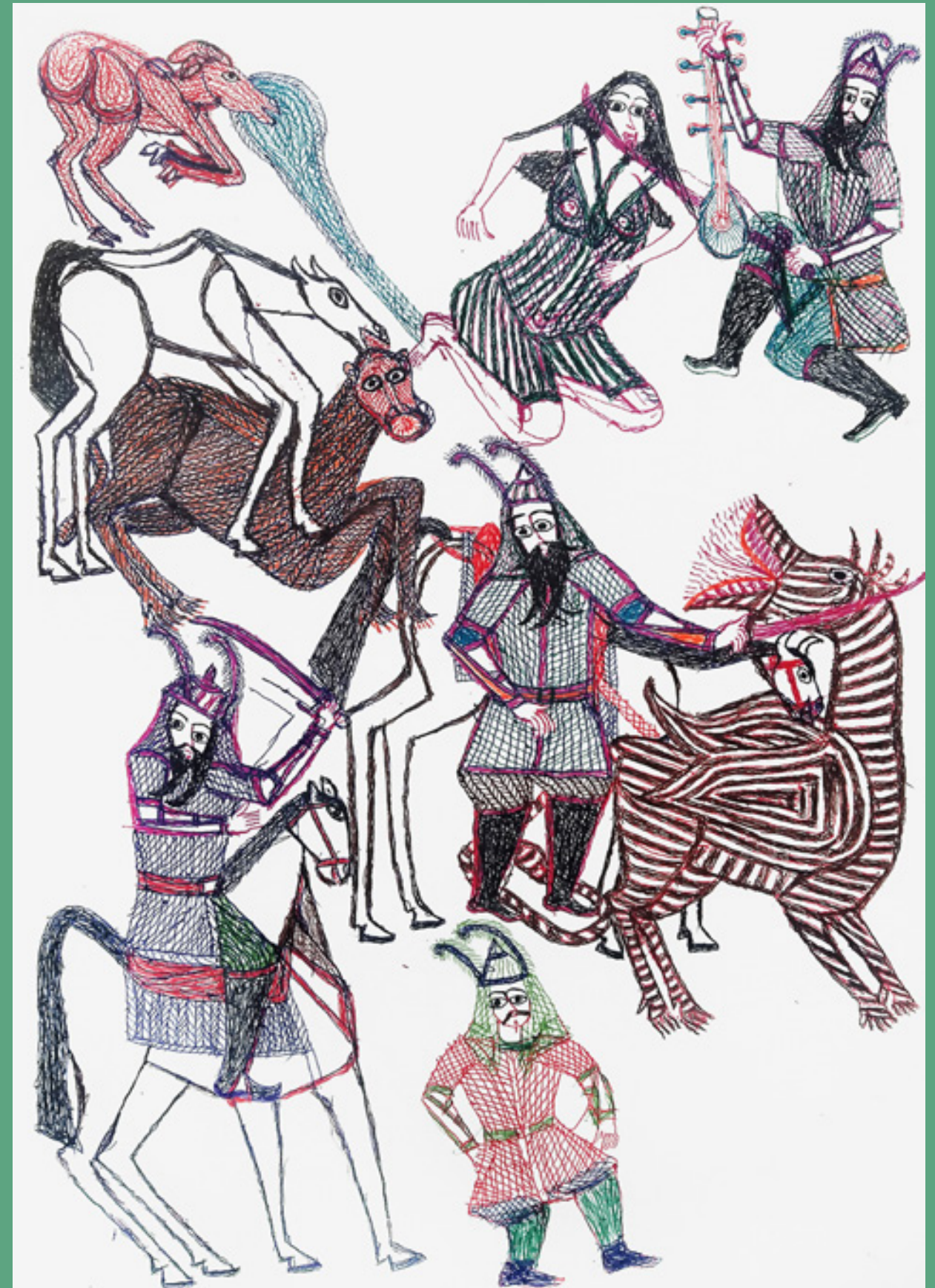
Zabihollah was born in the famous region of Lorestan in western Iran, known for its fabulous Iron Age bronzes, close to Scythian art.

His works on paper made using pencils and colored markers draw their inspiration from Persian mythology and are expressed through always poetic and harmonious compositions.

The infantrymen and horsemen in his compositions recall the bas-reliefs of Persepolis or the Frieze of the Archers kept at the Louvre Museum. Gallant or even erotic scenes are sometimes portrayed in a humorous narrative. Flowers and birds are also an omnipresent theme in this very sensitive artist.

Zabihollah's work is still relatively confidential. Discovered by Morteza Zahedi, it was shown mainly in Iran in solo exhibitions and in a group exhibition, curated by Morteza, at the Hammer Gallery in Amsterdam in 2014. His works were acquired by the Portuguese collection Treger / Saint Silvestre in 2015. He is represented in Teheran by the gallery Outsider Inn and Delgosha gallery.

Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 41.5x29 cm





Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 26x19cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 42x25cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 26x19cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 19x26cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 32x42cm



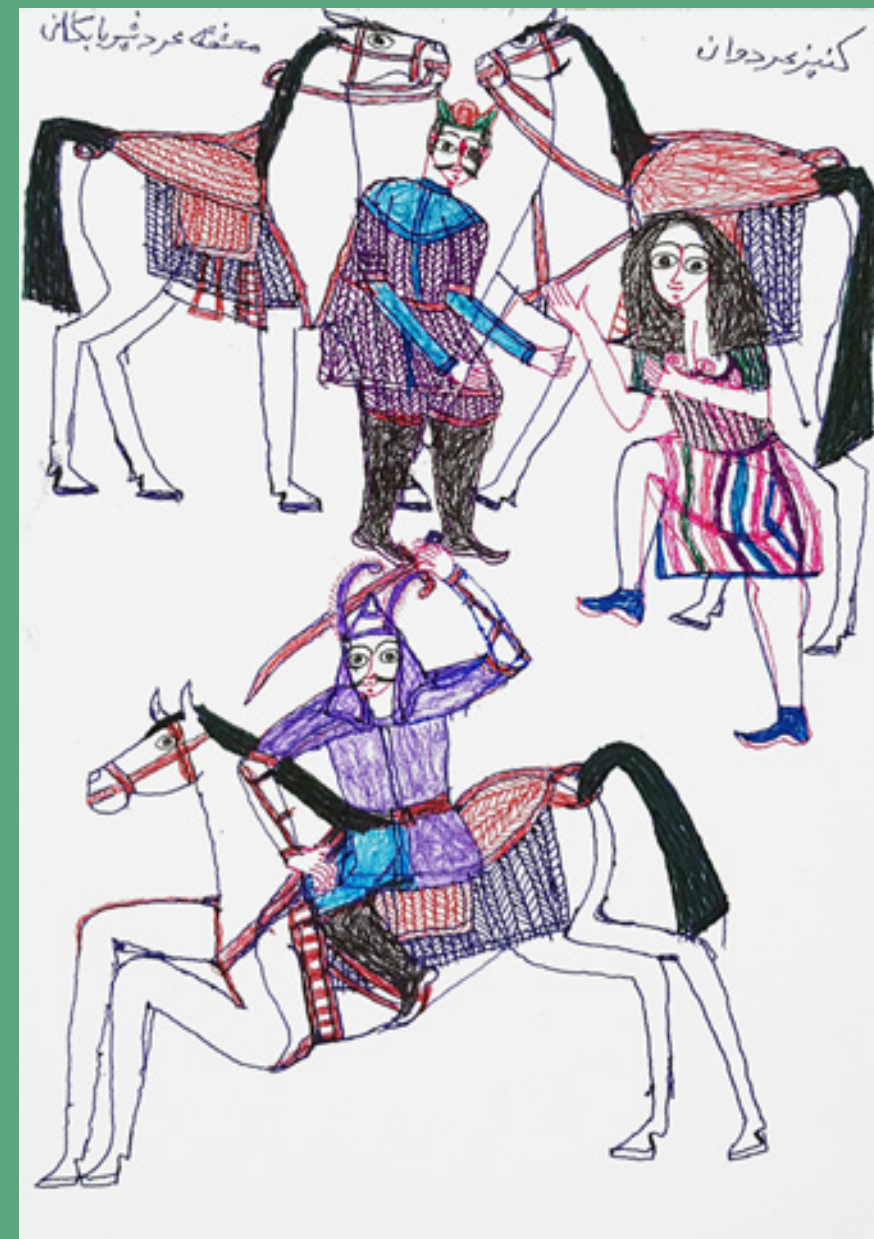
Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 42x32cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 42x32cm



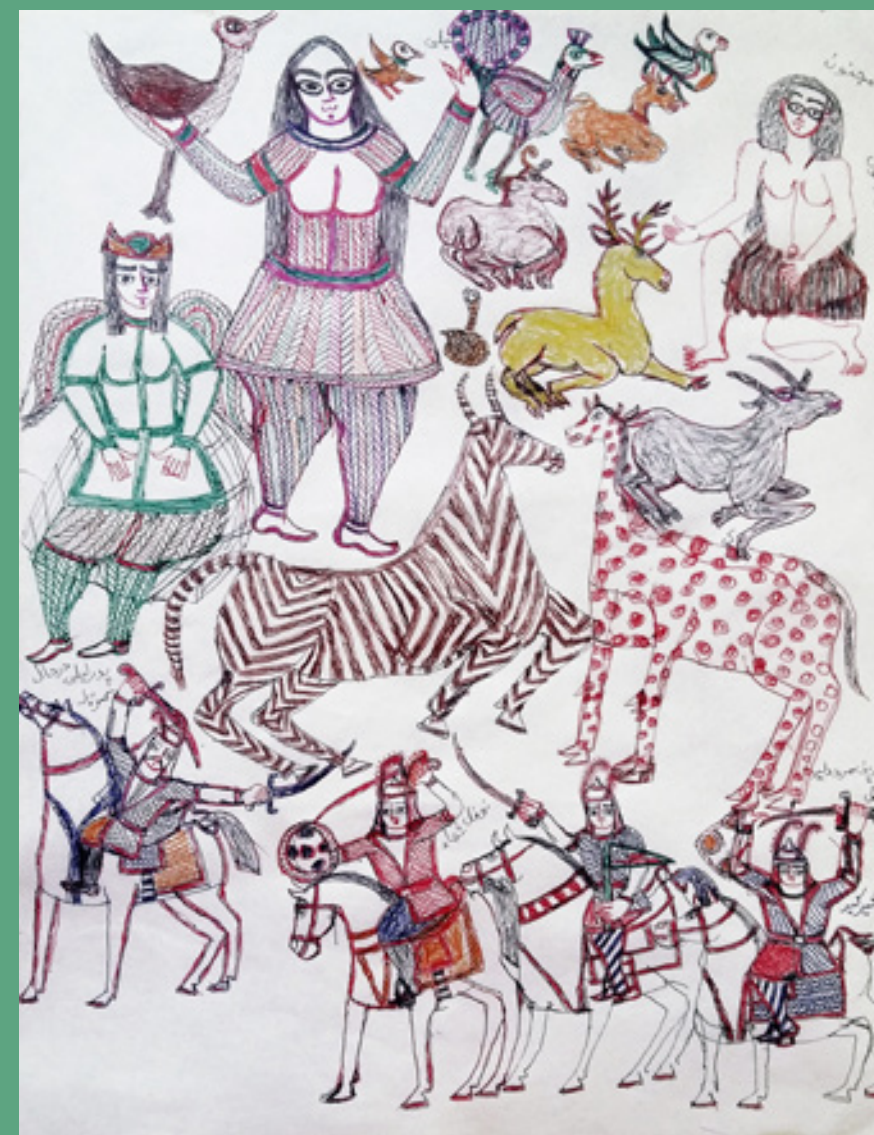
Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 42x32cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 42x32cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 42x32cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 42x32cm

JAMSHID AMINFAR

1956, TEHERAN lives in Teheran

Born into a wealthy family of lawyers, Jamshid suffers from cyanosis which results in mental and learning disabilities. Sent by his father to England for training, Jamshid failed to attend normal schooling and had to change schools several times.

However, he shows an interest in art, classical music and cinema. Back in Tehran, he married but quickly fell into depression and left his wife for a more bohemian life that was not well accepted by those around him.

He then devoted himself to his passion and became a street painter, covering pieces of wood and car parts with raw, naive and radical paint. His compositions, where hallucinatory characters and animals are brushed with primary colors, are often dramatic, violent or imbued with sadness. However, they are sometimes softened by the inscription of hearts, as a message of hope and love.

In 2007, he was the subject of a 32-minute documentary film by Iranian filmmaker Rokhsareh Ghaemmaghami retracing his career as a street artist. The film titled "Cyanosis" will be noticed during its participation in the London Iranian film festival in 2010.

Jamshid Amfar is represented by Mohsen Gallery in Teheran and XVA Gallery in Dubai.

Untitled, Oil on hard cardboard, 44x33.5cm





Untitled, Oil on hard cardboard, 50x50cm



Untitled, Oil on canvas, 60x80cm



Untitled, Oil on wood, 24.5x319.5x2cm (Upper left)
 Untitled, Oil on wood, 52x23x3cm (lower left)
 Untitled, Oil on wood, 60x 26.5x2.5cm (Right)



Untitled, Oil on wood, 30x20x2cm



Untitled, Marker on wood, 56x24x4cm



Untitled, Acrylic on wood, 34x25x2cm



Untitled, Oil and crayon on wood, 37.5x60x1cm



Untitled, Oil on cardboard, 42x57x15cm



Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 40x28cm



Untitled, Acrylic on wood, 40x53x3cm

DAVOOD KOOCHAKI

1939-2020, GILAN

Born into a modest family of farm workers in northern Iran, Davood Koochaki moved to Tehran at age 13 and became an apprentice and then a mechanic.

It was at the end of the 70s, when he was 40 years old that Davood felt the urge to draw, this creative impulse would only grow over the years. It's once retired, in the 90s, that Davood devoted himself exclusively to his creation.

Nicknamed "the Pencil Man" for his exclusive use of graphite and colored pencils, he draws mysterious and primitive creatures full of charm. Grit-toothed monsters sometimes appear as a reflection of his difficult past.

His work has been shown in galleries in France and Holland as well as at Outsider Art Fairs. The Lausanne Art Brut Museum has several of his drawings as well as the French National Modern Art Museum of the Center Pompidou thanks to the Bruno Decharme donation made in June 2021.

Untitled, Charcoal and colour pencil on paper, 70x50cm





Untitled, Colour pencil on paper, 45x30cm



Untitled, Colour pencil on paper, 35x22cm



Untitled, Colour pencil on paper, 30x20cm



Untitled, Charcoal and colour pencil on paper, 30x20cm



Untitled, Charcoal on paper, 100x70cm



Untitled, Charcoal and colour pencil on paper, 100x70cm



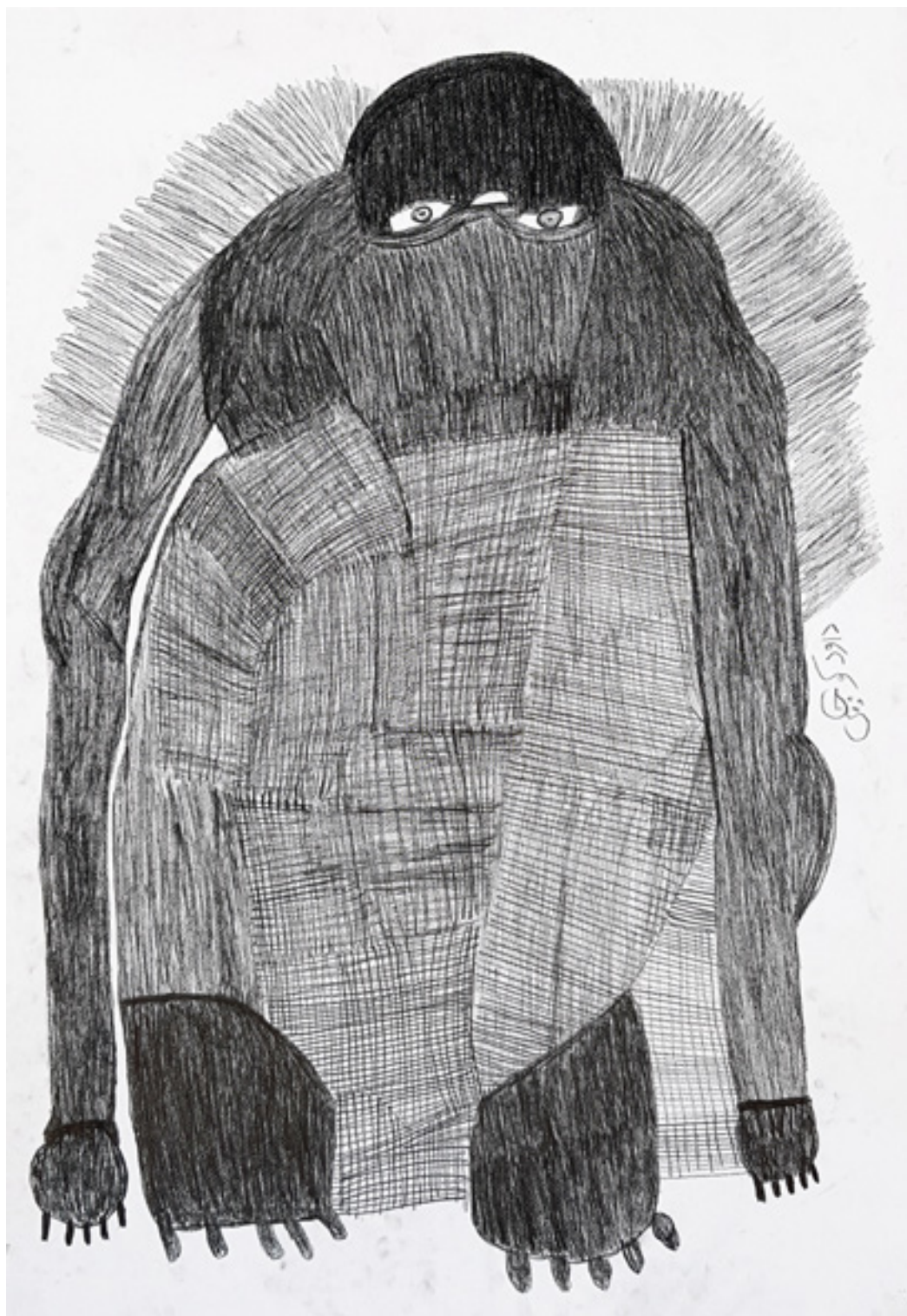
Untitled, Charcoal and colour pencil on black paper, 100x70cm



Untitled, Charcoal and colour pencil on black paper, 100x70cm



Untitled, Pencil on paper, 100x70cm



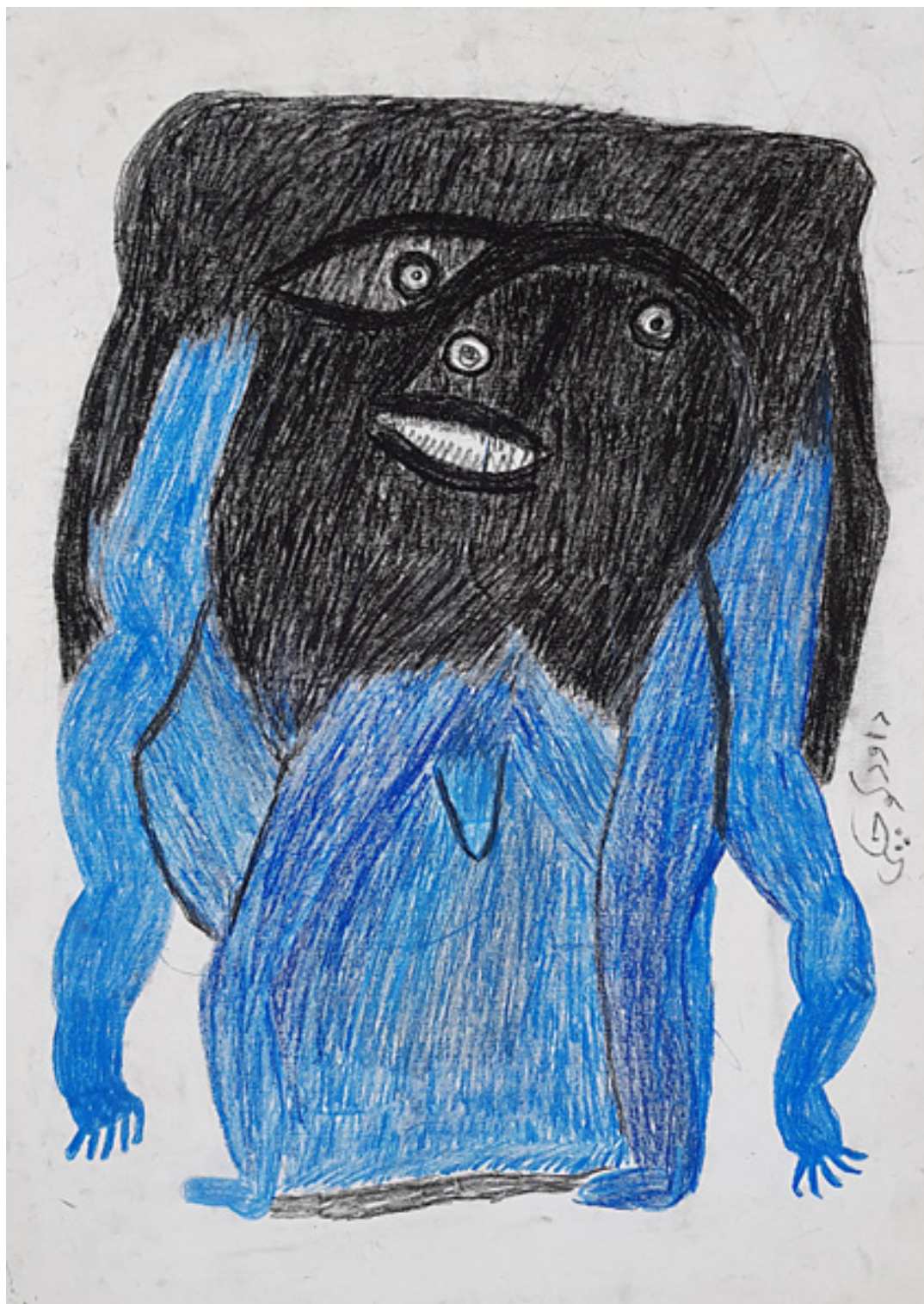
Untitled, Pencil on paper, 100x70cm



Untitled, Pencil on paper, 100x70cm



Untitled, Charcoal and colour pencil on yellow paper, 100x70cm



Untitled, Charcoal and colour pencil on paper, 100x70cm



Untitled, Pencil and colour pencil on brown paper, 100x70cm

AMIR KAMAND

1960, TEHERAN lives in Teheran

Kamand is a self-taught polychrome woodcarver. His wood carvings - mostly small in size - depict characters from autobiographical memories, mythologies, and science fiction in scenes full of creativity and overflowing with humor.

The characters are distorted with exaggerated features and often in puzzling associations: gorillas in a sidecar with bananas, military guards with monkeys, Iranian lions resting on the muscular arms of an athlete, palanquin of an Indian princess, iconic scene from the movie Titanic...

His latest exhibition at the Dastan Gallery in Tehran (in May 2021) titled "Aliens versus Gorillas" is an earthy mix of gorillas, aliens, little green men flying saucers and other inter-space rockets.

Discovered by Morteza Zahedi who curated his first exhibition in the Dastan gallery, Kamand's works were slow to be accepted and appreciated. But growing interest eventually gained recognition both in Iran and abroad.

His work was thus shown in Paris at the Palais de Tokyo in the "City Prince / sses" exhibition in June 2019.

Amir Kamand is represented by Outsider Inn and Dastan galleries in Tehran, Monica Reyes in Vancouver and Balice Hertling in Paris.



Gorilla with a bee, 2018, carved wood and paint



King Kong, 2018, carved wood and paint, 36x31x27cm



Saturn, 2018, carved wood and paint 30x25xcm



Titanic, 2018, carved wood and paint, 28x31x18cm



Air Force (2 people + their dog ontop a Latecoere), 2018, carved wood and paint, 26x30x24cm



Queen of Sabat and her cat on a palanquin, 2018, carved wood and paint, 34x56x18cm



Sidecar driven by a gorilla and a she-monkey holding a banana, 2018, carved wood and paint, 25x22x18cm



Strong, 2018, carved wood and paint, 28x45x10cm



Alterophile with a hero and a lion, 2018, carved wood and paint, 29x26x18cm



Skiing with his 2 pets, Carved wood and paint, 2018, 68x18x14cm



Helicopter rescue, Carved wood and paint, 2018, 78x14x12cm



Jazz (2 Musicians), Carved wood and paint, Saxo 39x19x10cm, Guitar 29x 21x6cm, Microphone 21x3x3cm, 2018

MAHMOOD KHAN

1956, TEHERAN lives in Teheran

Born in a small village in northern Iran near the Caspian Sea, Mahmood went on with his education despite his disability, a spinal cord trauma causing numbness and paralysis of certain organs. After his military service, he first worked as an employee for Melli Bank, then passed a civil service competition, after which he was sent as a primary school teacher to the village of Lashtenesha.

He worked there for several years, but didn't enjoyed a job which he found uncreative or innovative. He then resigned and fully devoted himself to painting and drawing. Without any formal artistic education, he draws colourful works inspired mainly by animal and plant motifs in a lively and surreal atmosphere.

His drawings have been shown in the "Nous les Arbres" exhibition at the Fondation Cartier in Paris. (July 2019-January 2020). The renamed "Trees" exhibition is repeated in Shanghai in Power station of Art (venue of the Shanghai Biennale) with an increased performance of the works of Mahmood Khan (July – October 2021).

Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 70x50cm





Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 50x70cm (each)



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 50x70cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 50x70cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 50x70cm



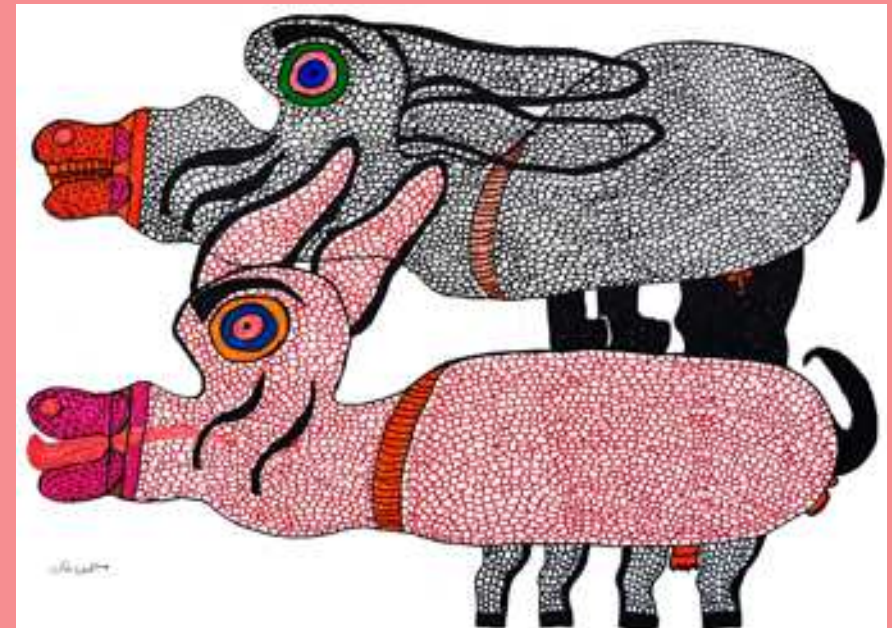
Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 70x50cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 70x50cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 50x70cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 50x70cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 70x50cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 70x50cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 50x70cm



Untitled, Coloured pen on paper, 50x70cm

MOHAMMAD BANISSI

1991, TEHERAN lives in Teheran

Born under the difficult circumstances in which his twin brother passed away, Banissi suffers from numerous disabilities that require rehabilitation and behavioural therapy. Long stays in hospital due to the treatment of a severe meningitis and operations on the heart, lungs and spinal cord led him to stop his schooling and devote himself to drawing from 2005.

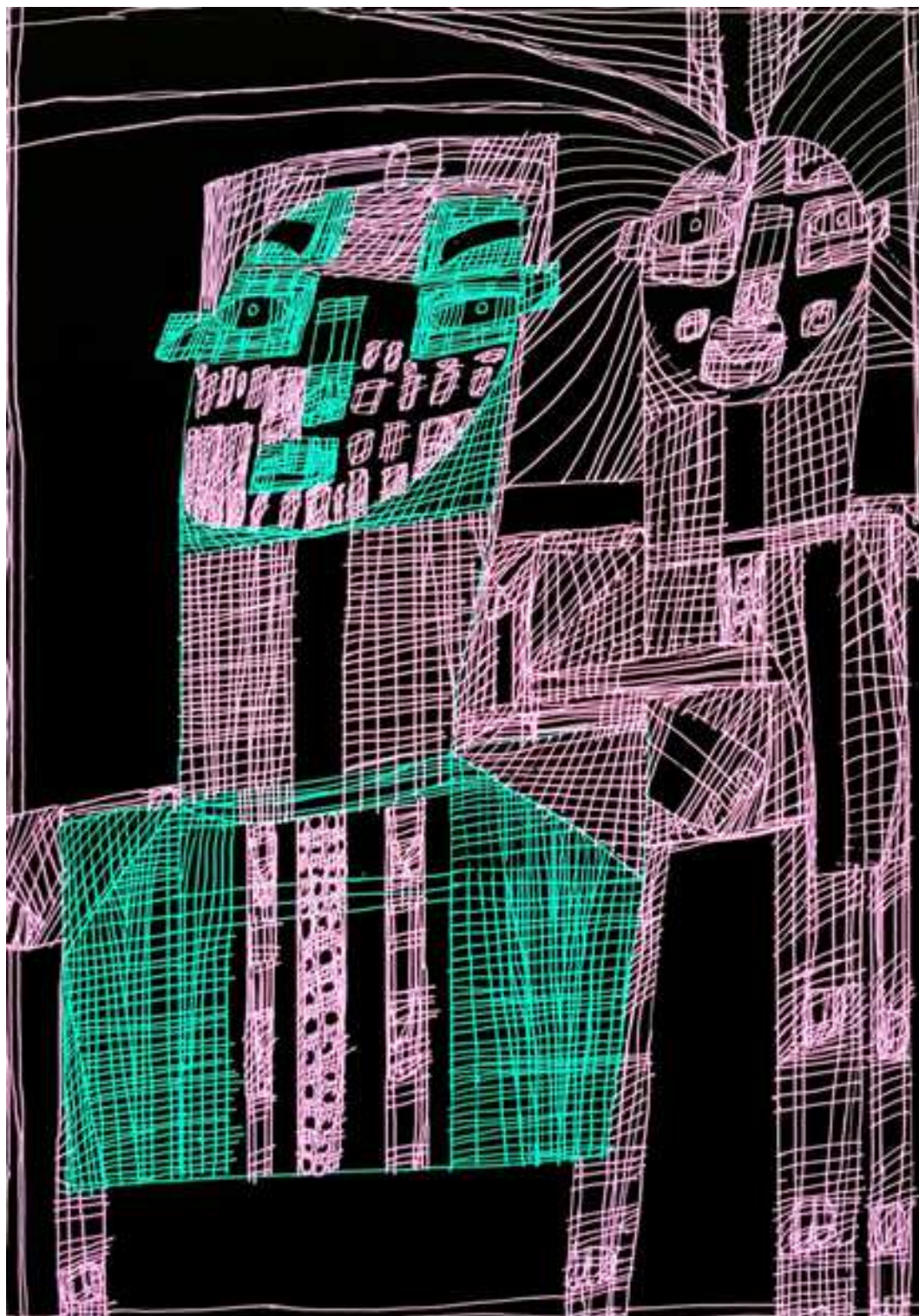
His work in pencil, ballpoint pen and colored felt pen is exuberant, reflecting a fantastic universe inhabited by dreamlike and poetic creatures. If his universe is easily recognizable, Banissi is not confined to one style, his drawings explore different paths, creating multiple series with boundless creativity.

Banissi is exhibited in galleries in France, UK and Holland and has participated in several Outsider Art Fairs.

He is represented by HdM gallery (London / Paris / Beijing)

Untitled, marker on hard paper, 100x70cm





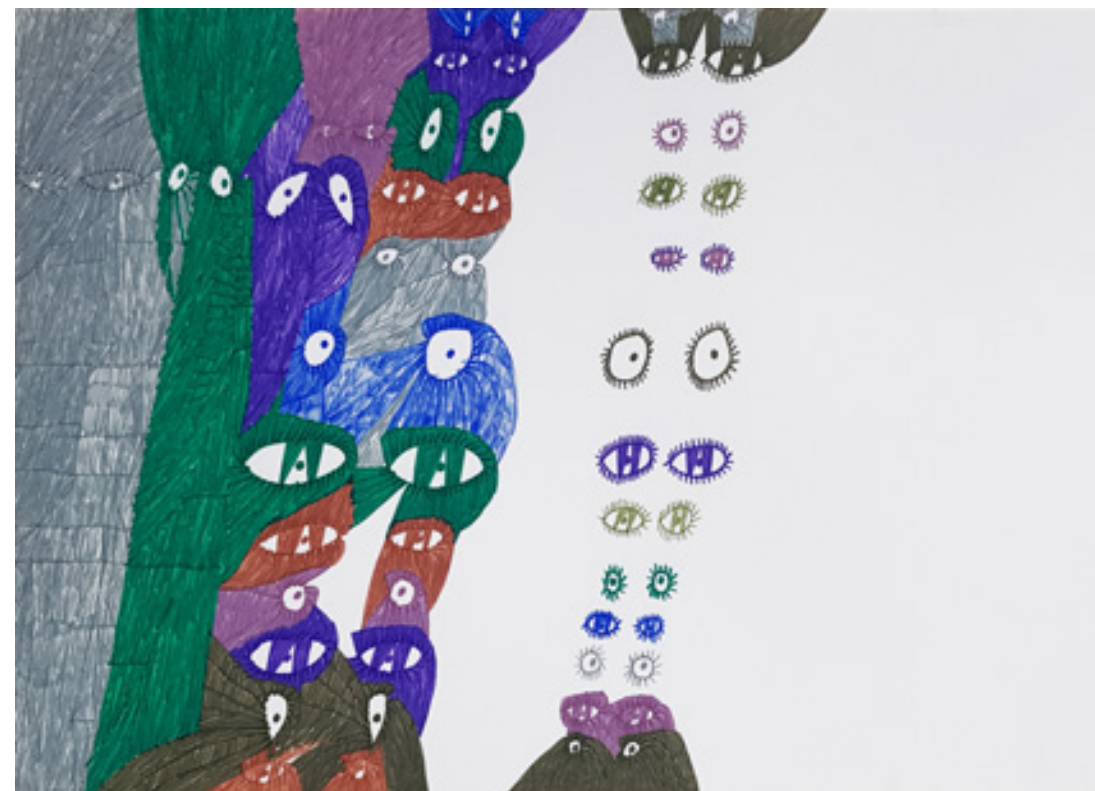
Untitled, marker on hard paper, 70x50cm



Untitled, marker on paper, 42x30cm



Untitled, marker on hard paper, 50x70cm



Untitled, marker on hard paper, 50x70cm



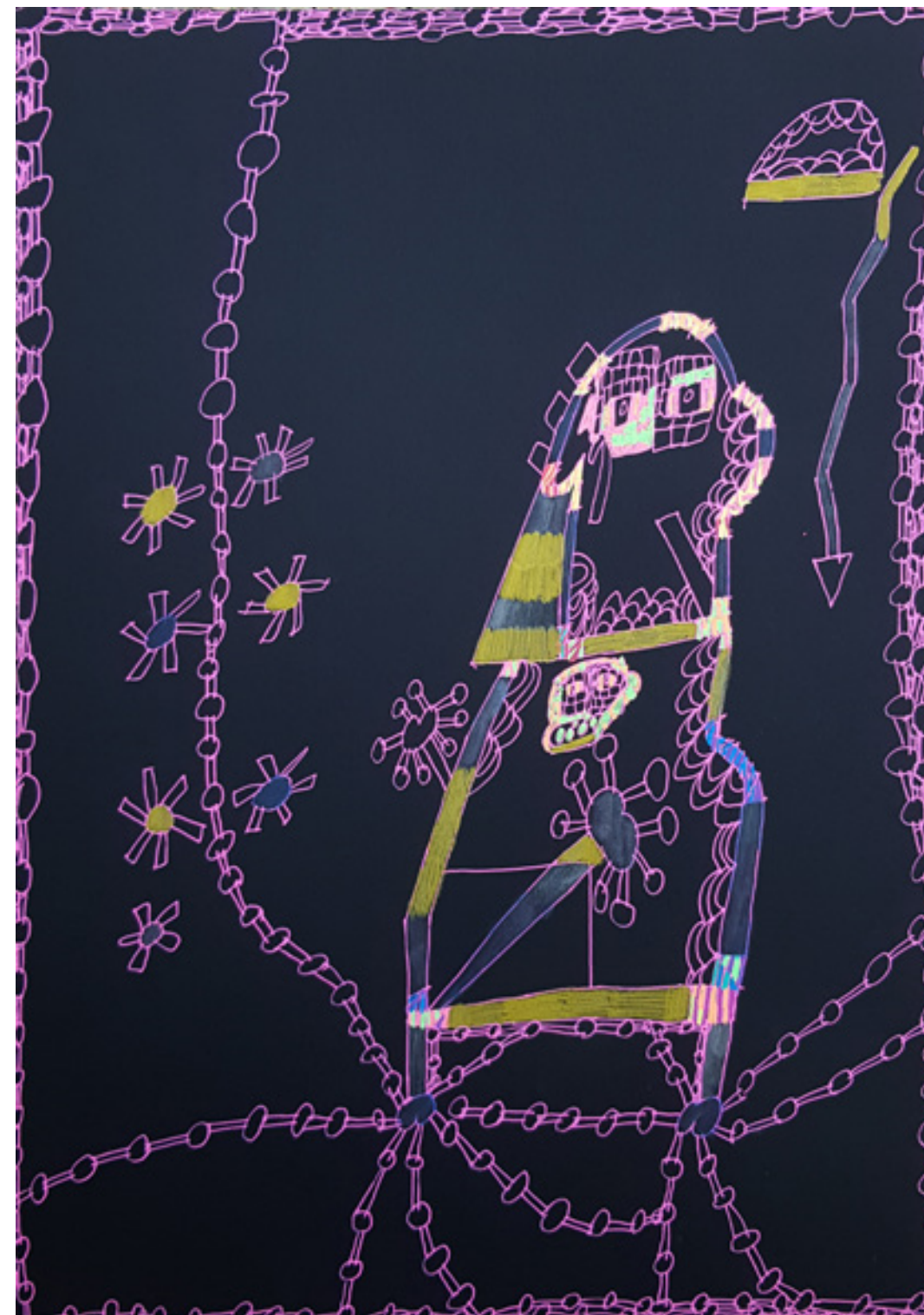
Untitled, marker on hard paper, 70x50cm



Untitled, marker on hard paper, 70x50cm



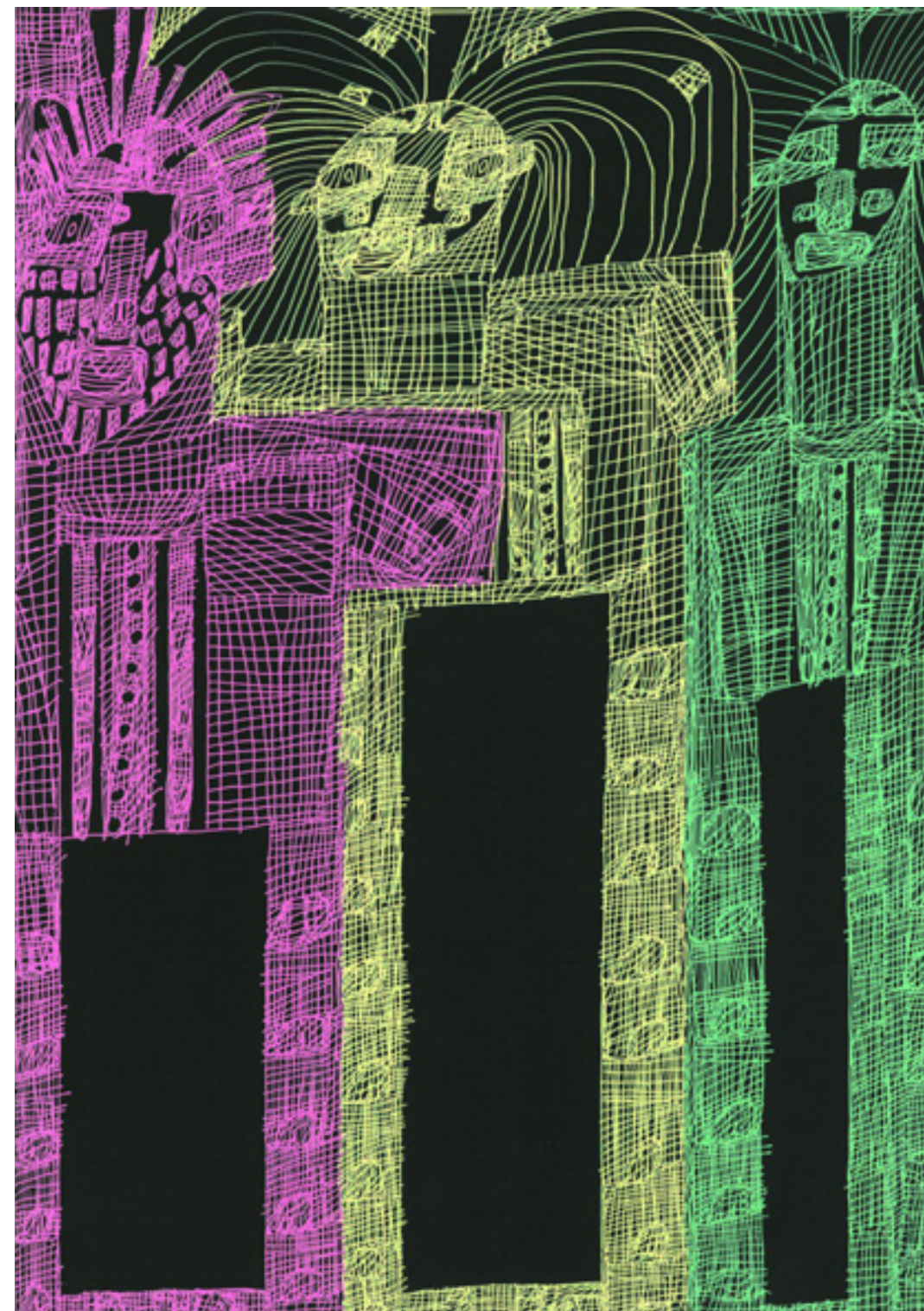
Untitled, marker on hard paper, 70x50cm



Untitled, marker on hard paper, 70x50cm



Untitled, marker on hard paper, 100x70cm



Untitled, marker on hard paper, 100x70cm



Untitled, coloured pencil on paper, 30x42cm



Untitled, marker on hard paper, 50x70cm



Untitled, marker on hard paper, 50x70cm



Untitled, marker on paper, 30x42cm



Untitled, marker on hard paper, 50x70cm

SALIM KARAMI

1925-2014

Self-taught artist, Karami only started drawing at the age of 60 in the late 1980s. Suffering from kidney failure and complications from a surgical transplant, he died of cancer at the age of 88.

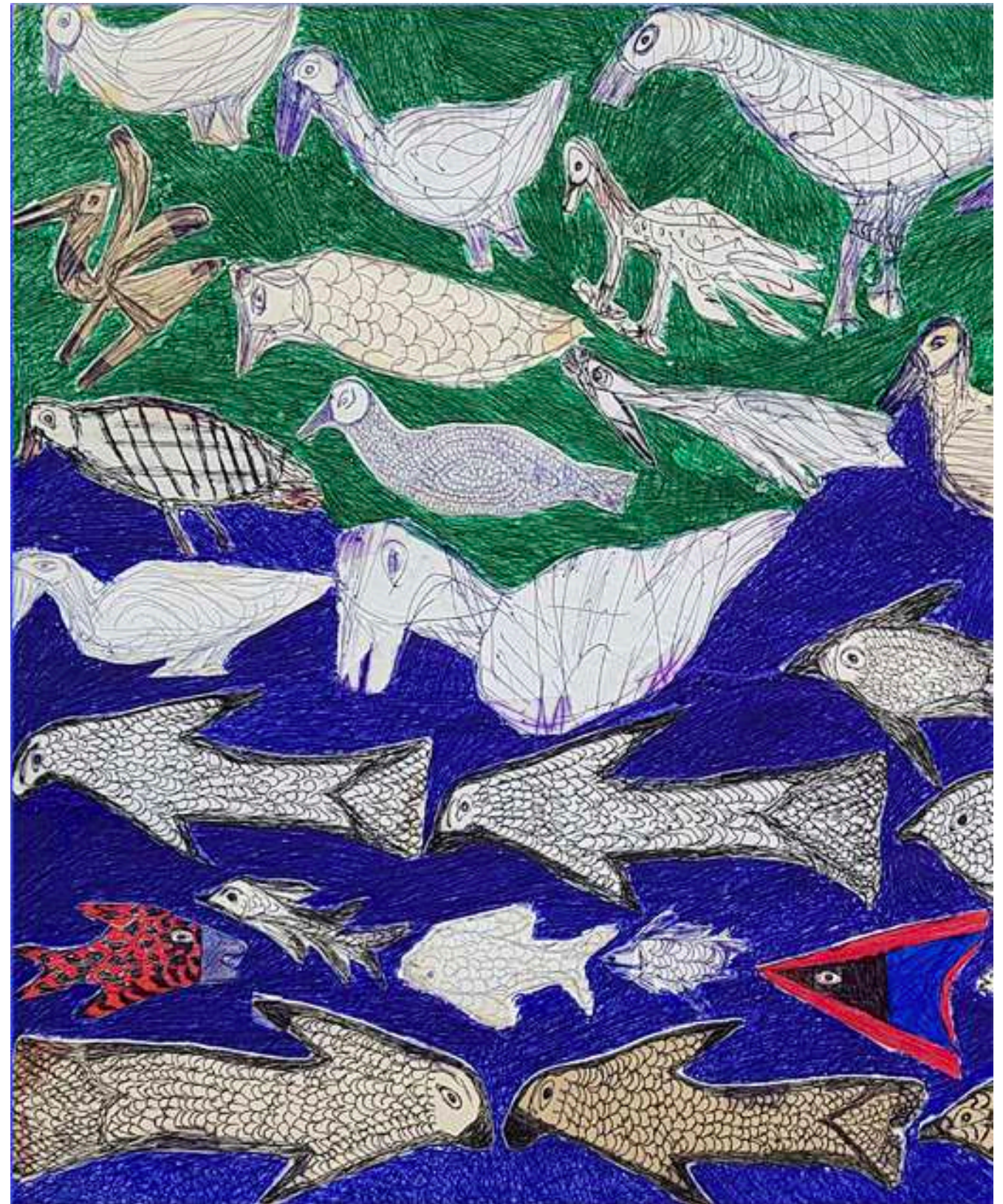
His first drawings are made on the back of Armaqan Behzisti lottery tickets. Later he would draw with a colored ballpoint pen on papers which he would then cut out and put together in collages with ambitious shapes. His universe stems directly from his perception of Nature: flowers, trees and animals are his favorite subjects.

His unparalleled talent as a colourist and his creative compositions make his work extremely attractive and very early on gives him public notoriety and international recognition.

His drawings have been shown in the "Trees" exhibition at the Fondation Cartier in Paris. One of his drawings illustrated the cover of the catalog and one of the exhibition posters. (Image Below)



Untitled, collage and colour ball point pen on paper (Detail), 70x100cm





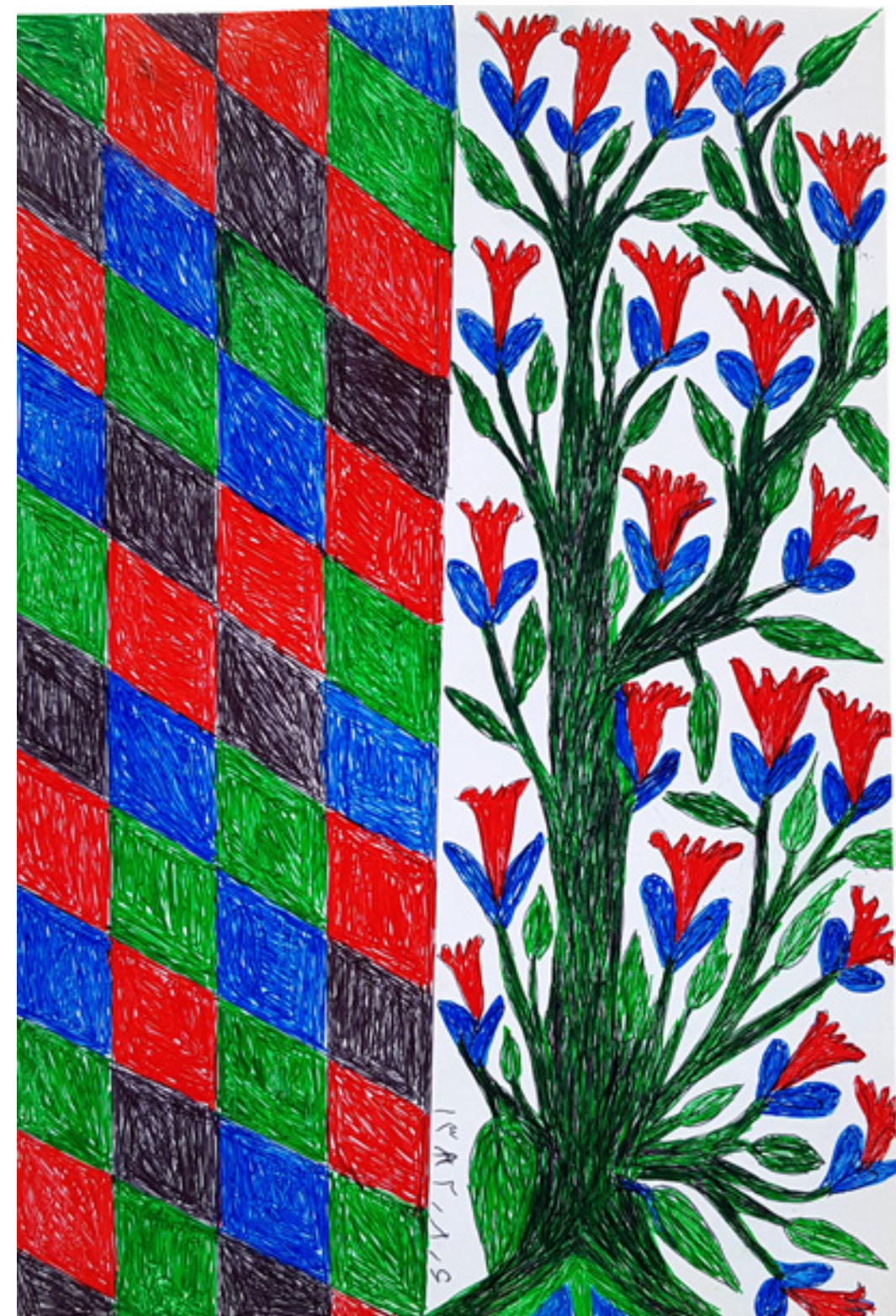
Untitled, Collage and colour ball point pen on paper, 70x100cm



Untitled, Collage and colour ball point pen on paper, 70x100cm



Untitled, Colour ball point pen on paper, 20x30cm



Untitled, colour ball point pen on paper, 70x50cm



Untitled, Collage and colour ball point pen on paper, 70x100cm (each)
 Untitled, Colour ball point pen on paper, 70x50cm (right page)





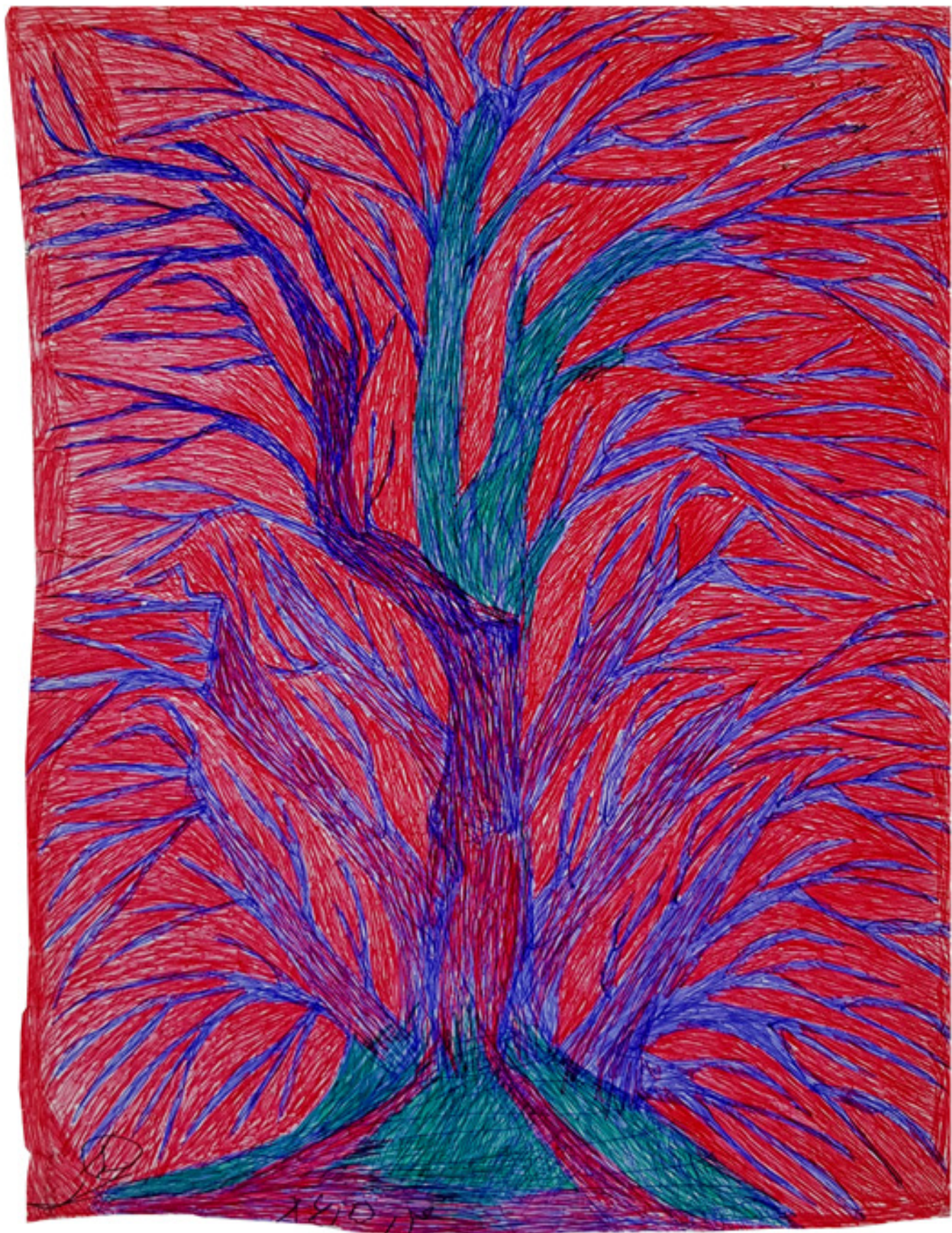
Untitled, Colour ball point pen on paper, 70x50cm (left page)
 Untitled, Collage and colour ball point pen on paper, 70x100cm (Top)
 Untitled, Collage and colour ball point pen on paper, 50x70cm (Bottom)



Untitled, Collage and colour ball point pen on paper, 70x100cm



Untitled, Collage and colour ball point pen on paper, 70x100cm



Untitled, Colour ball point pen on paper, 70x50cm (left page)
 Untitled, Colour ball point pen on paper, 50x70cm (right page)



Untitled, Colour ball point pen on paper, 70x50cm (left page)
Untitled, Colour ball point pen on paper, 70x50cm (right page)





Untitled, Collage and colour ball point pen on paper, 70x100cm

MOSTAFA SARABI

1983, TEHERAN lives in Teheran

The naive mannerism of the young artist Sarabi, a sort of Iranian Douanier Rousseau, has recently gained international recognition with exhibitions in Paris, Milan, Berlin and Cyprus.

His supernatural-looking paintings mix characters and mysterious animals in environments drawn from the artist's dreams. History, memory, and family, 3 omnipresent elements of Iranian culture interweave in his drawings.

His work could be an illustration of Paul Ricoeur's book "Memory, History, Oblivion", an unexpected eruption between imaginary and memory.

In several of his paintings the figures have their arms stretched out towards the sky, turned towards the beyond, awaiting a meeting of the 3rd kind. The tree and the often impenetrable forest are also a strong theme in his cardboards.

Sarabi's work has been shown in the Giardino Segreto group exhibition in Milan in 2019, in the Peres Projects gallery in Berlin, at the Island club in Cyprus, and in the contemporary art center in Brest. He is represented in Paris by the Balice Hertling gallery

Untitled, Gouache on cardboard, 40x25cm





Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 25x50cm



Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 25x20cm



Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 25x30cm

Untitled, Gouache on cardboard, 45x30cm





Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 25x35cm



Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 30x50cm
 Untitled, Watercolour on cardboard, 40x30cm (right)





Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 70x50cm (left)

Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 50x90cm

Untitled, Acrylic on canvas, 60x120cm

Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 40x28cm





Untitled, Acrylic on cardboard, 75x50cm

KAZEM EZI

1933, IZI lives in Teheran

Ezi was born in the village of Izi in eastern Iran in an area near Afghanistan. In the traditional school of his village (Maktab khaneh) where he studied religious texts, he is noticed by his teachers for the quality of his drawings.

However suffering from epilepsy and having to work to help his family in need, he has to end his studies after the 4th grade. He then worked with his father and uncle in the family business of making and distributing brewing stove, going from village to village like a hawker. During his travels, especially in the region of Karbala and Najaf considered sacred by the Muslim Shia, he observed the traditional buildings which he transposed in his drawings.

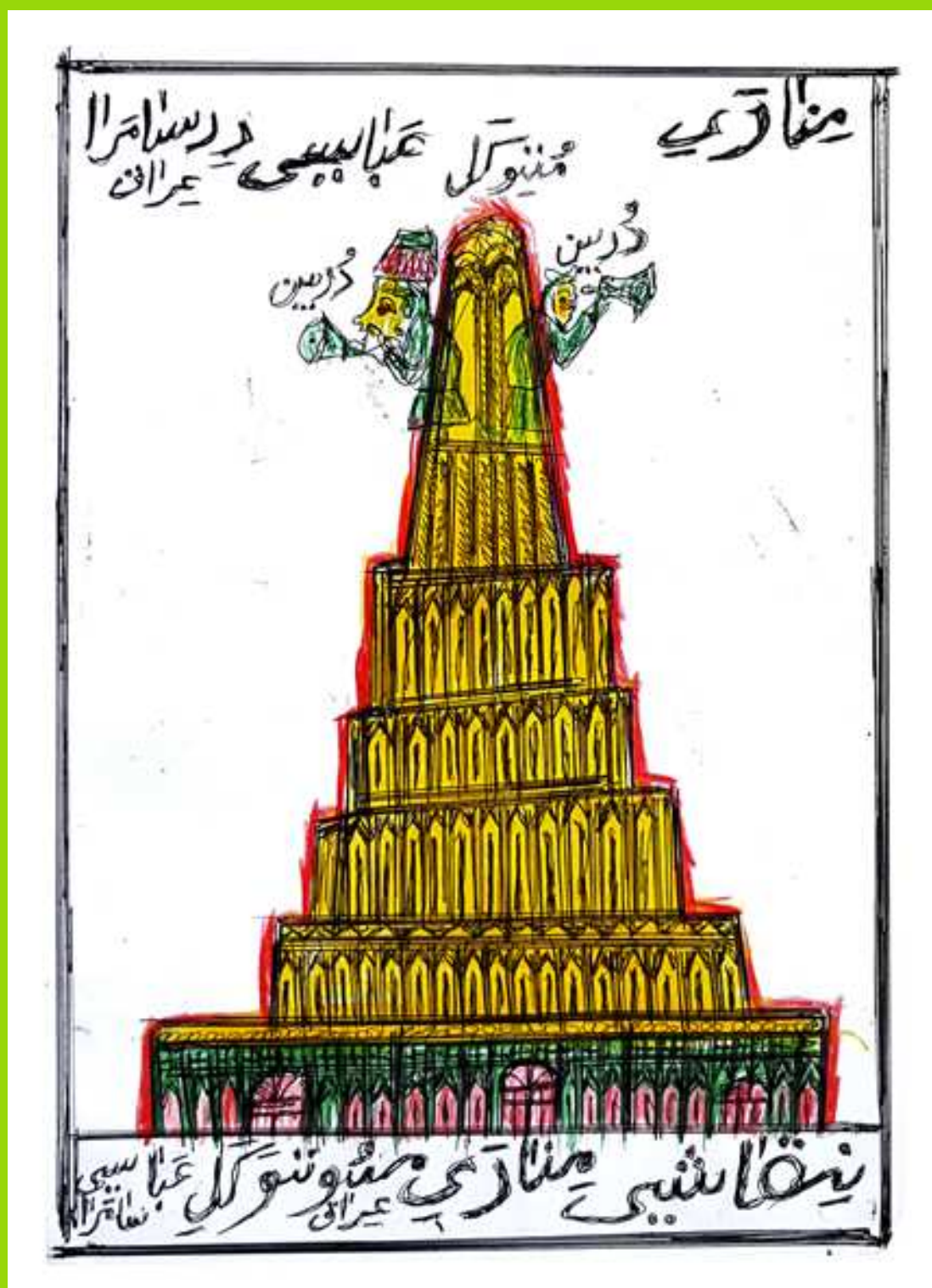
Kazem Ezi's aesthetic vocabulary is extremely consistent, with his drawings mostly focusing on depicting mosques, palaces, and armored warriors.

The loss of an eye in 1989 following a rockfall freed him from his epileptic seizures and stimulated his creativity. He then lead a quieter life, marrying at the age of 55 and giving birth to 2 daughters.

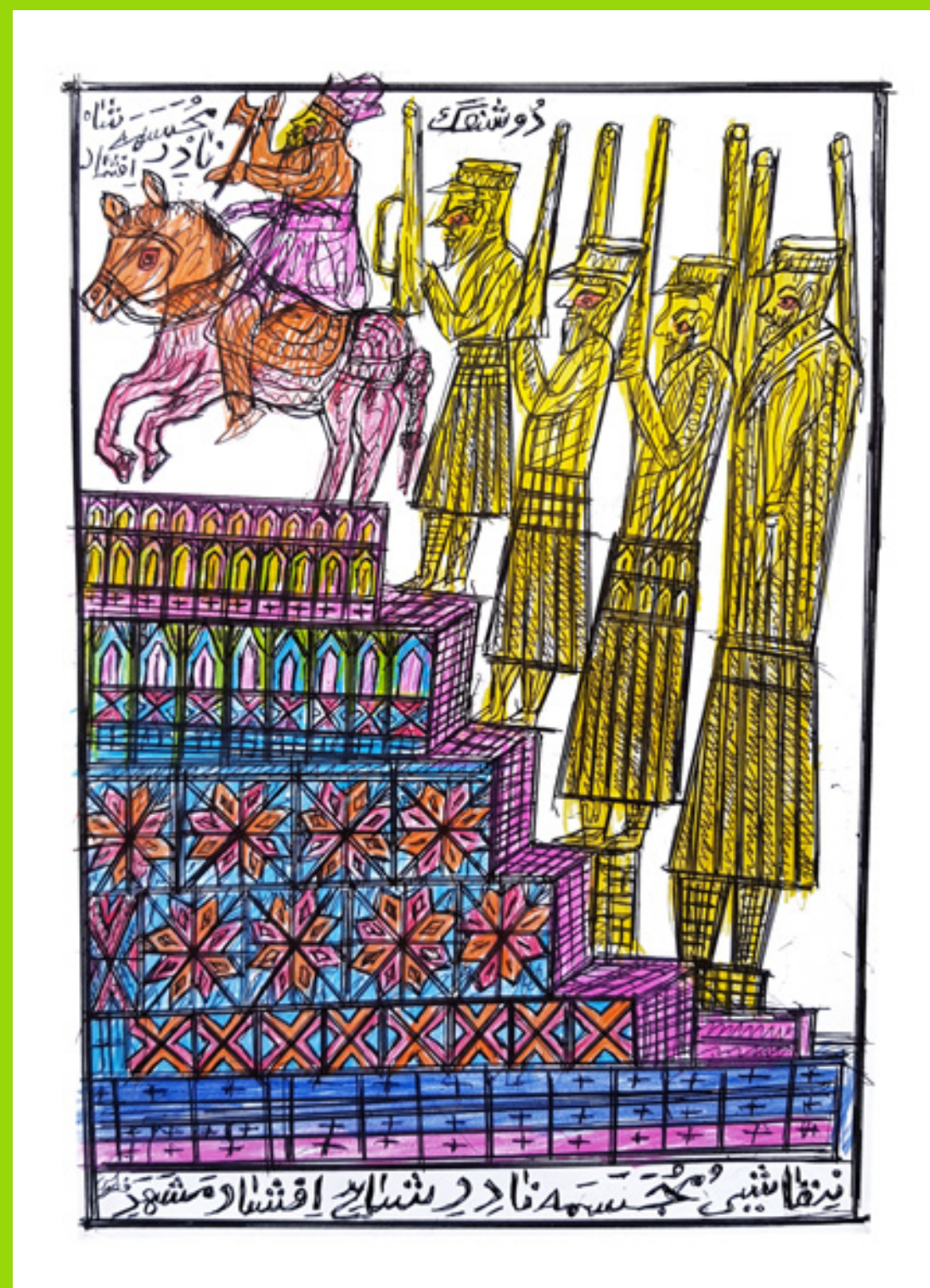
Ezi is represented by the Mohsen gallery in Tehran and the Claire Corsia gallery in Paris.



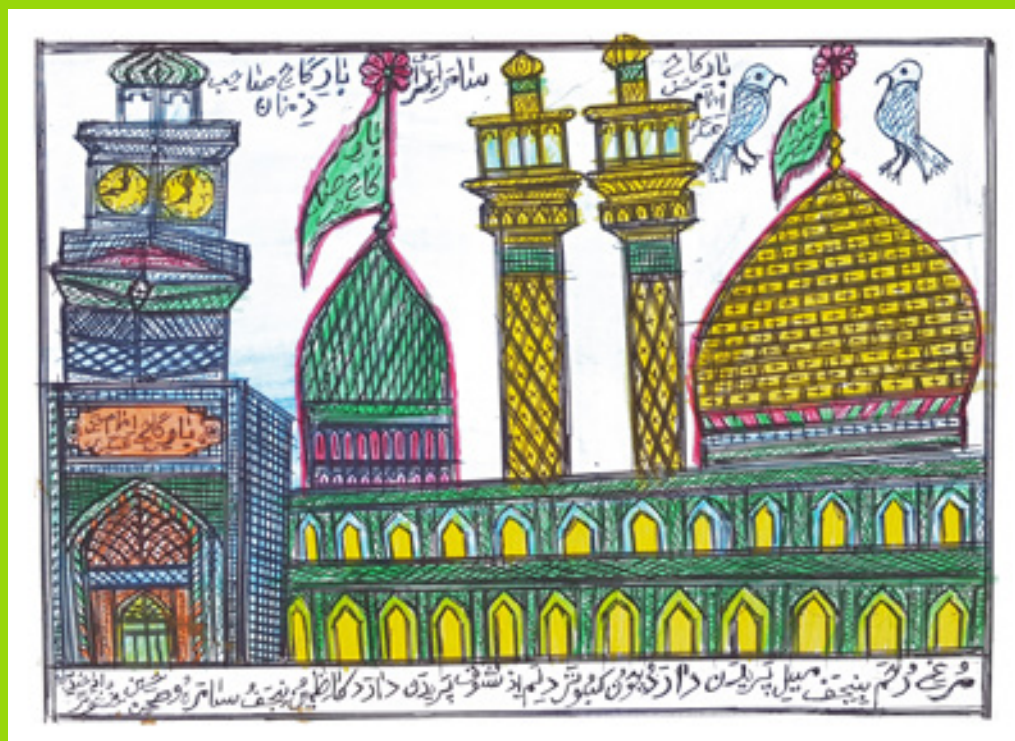
Untitled (Detail), Pastel and coloured pen on paper, 25x35cm

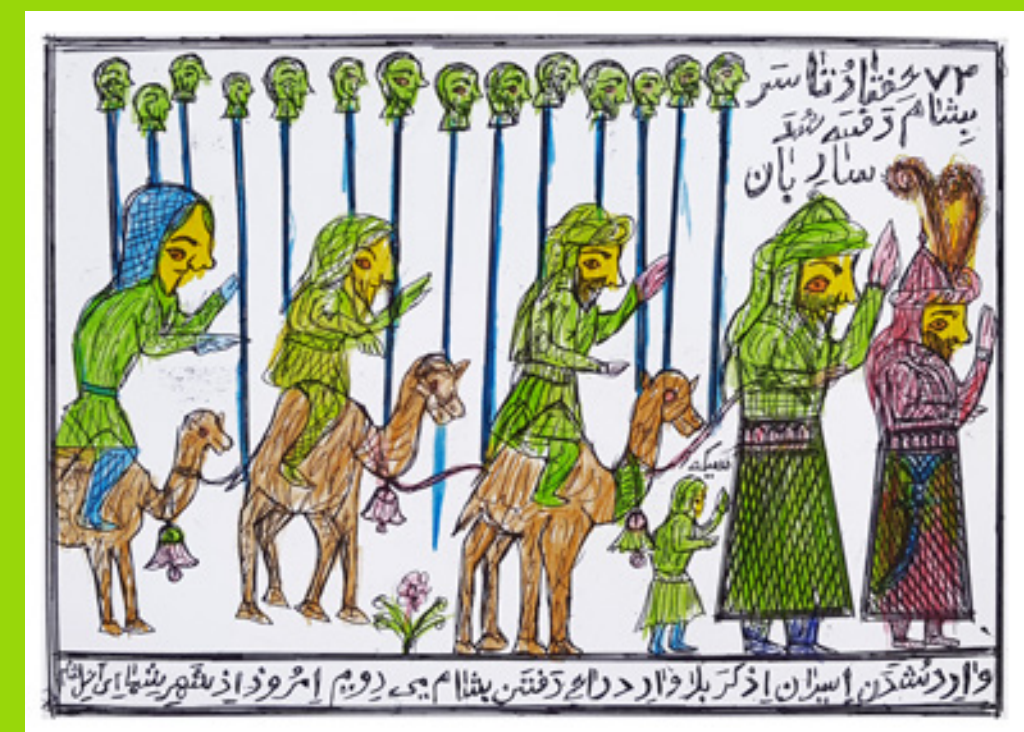


Untitled, pastel and coloured pen on paper, 35 x 25 cm



Untitled, pastel and coloured pen on paper, 35 x 25 cm





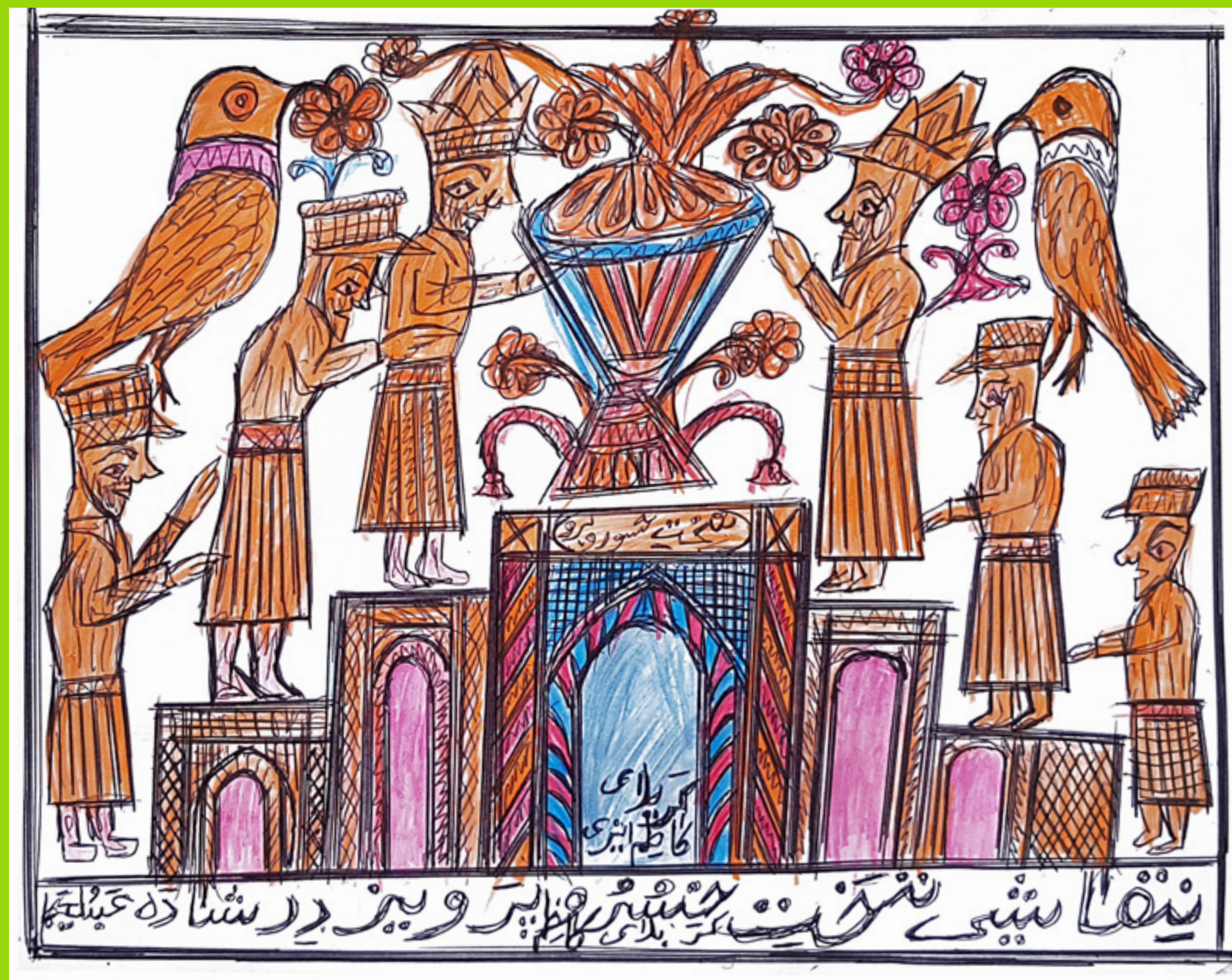
Untitled, Pastel and coloured pen on paper, 25x35cm (each)



Untitled, Pastel and coloured pen on paper, 25x70cm



Untitled, Pastel and coloured pen on paper, 25x70cm



Untitled, Pastel and coloured pen on paper, 34x50cm

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Morteza Zahedi was born in the north of Iran (Rasht) in 1978. He graduated in Graphic Design and painting from the University of Art and Architecture of Tehran.

Morteza first worked as children's books illustrator. He received numerous prestigious awards in this field in Iran and abroad and many of his books have been published in Latin America, Europe and Asia. As an artist, he has held more than 50 exhibitions in Iran and Asian, European and American countries. As a writer and researcher, he has published numerous articles in domestic and foreign journals in the field of illustration and Art Brut. As a curator, he has organized numerous exhibitions of the potential of untrained Iranian artists in international forums.

Morteza is definitely the most important Iranian Art Brut specialist. He's been curating, writing and collecting it for decades. He's been an avid promoter of the scene, founding the Iranian Art Brut annual exhibition and opening Outsider Inn// Iran, the only gallery in the Middle East specialized in Art Brut. It is through his dedication and participation in Outsider art fairs around the world, that many prestigious international museums and important collectors started to appraise and collect Art brut .

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Jean-Marc Decrop is an expert specializing in Chinese and Asian contemporary art, affiliated with the National Chamber of Experts CNES and the European Confederation of Experts CEDEA.

He was one of the pioneers in the discovery and promotion of Chinese art in Europe, advising and helping to build important European collections in this field, including those of Guy Ullens, AM. Gillion Crowet, JJ. de Flers, P. Donnersberg and DSL collection

He has organized several international exhibitions in Macao (Futuro, CACOM 2000), in Brazil (China, FAAP, Museum of the University of Sao Paulo 2002), in Paris (Paris-Beijing, Espace Cardin, 2002), in Lisbon (Subversion and Poetry, Culturgest Foundation, 2003) and other places.

He has published several books including Modernités Chinoises, Skira 2003 in collaboration with Christine Buci-Glucksmann; Red Flag Liu Xiaodong, Mapbook 2006, Red Flag Zheng Guogu Mapbook, 2008 and China, The New Generation, Skira 2015 in collaboration with Jérôme Sans...

Since 2008 he has broadened his field of action to other emerging artistic scenes, notably in Iran, Indonesia, Pakistan, Morocco and the Middle East

