



MASSOUD ARABSHAHI

*Early works from
the Azari Collection*

23 September – 2 November 2017

Untitled, 1960-64

(Detail)

Ink and gouache on heavy paper

26,4 x 31 cm

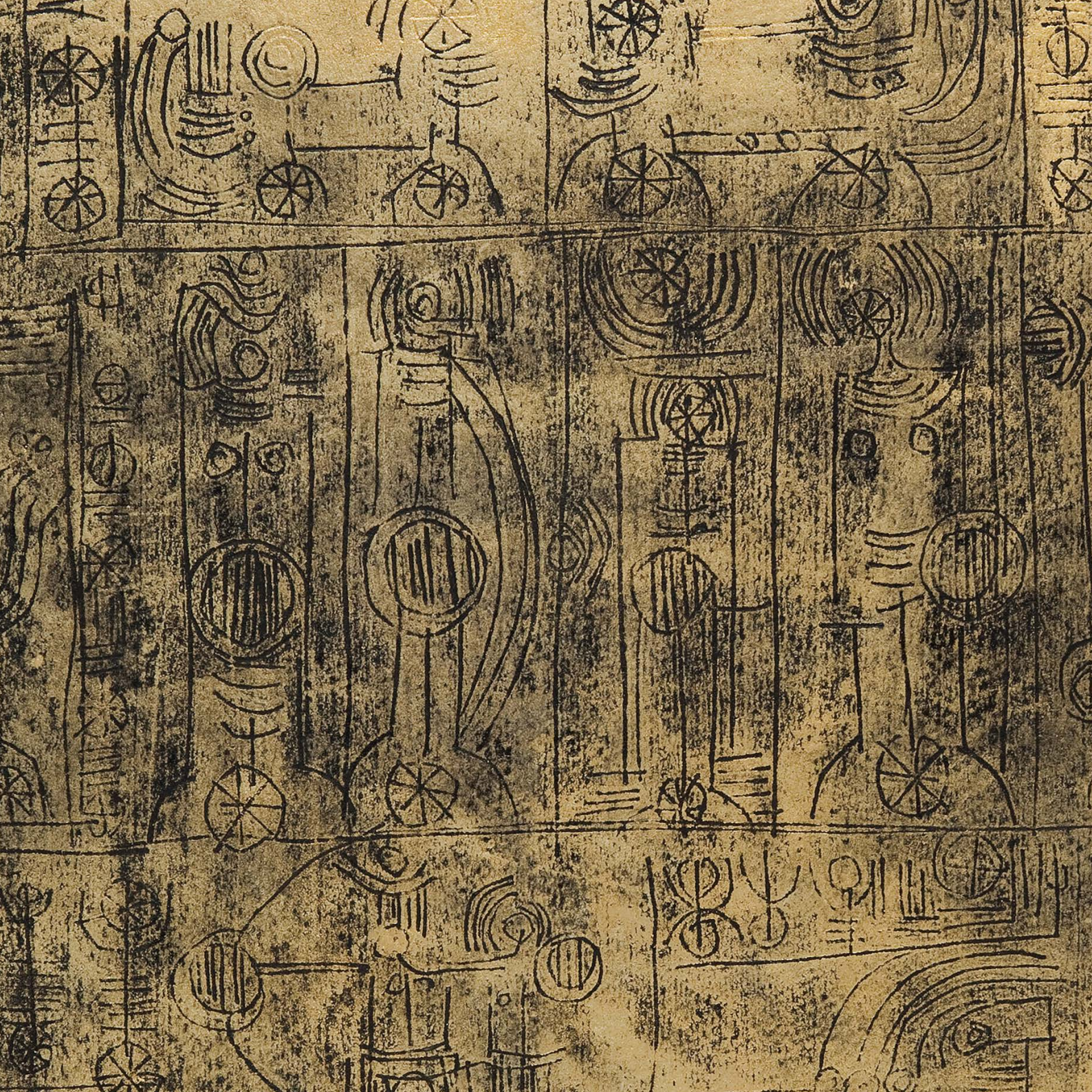
MASSOUD ARABSHAHI

*Early works from
the Azari Collection*

With an Introduction by
William Lawrie

& Essays by
Ari Akkermans & Mahnaz Fancy

LAWRIE SHABIBI



INTRODUCTION

By William Lawrie, 2017

The paintings in this exhibition are from perhaps the most significant holding of early modern Iranian art in private hands, the Azari Collection.

Eric and Sheila Azari were young collectors and dealers in modern Iranian art, antiquities and textiles, resident in Tehran between 1959 and 1964. Eric, a physicist and the son of an Iranian father and a Russian mother, met Sheila, an American from an established Southern family, while they were both studying at USC Berkley in the 1950s. Following his father's death in 1959, Eric had to return to Tehran to handle the family business, bringing with him Sheila and their young family. Sheila, an Art History major, was fascinated in the art and archaeology of Iran, exploring sites being excavated and networking with a group of young artists. Her interest was primarily in the "neo-traditionalist" artists, many of them among the best known today, such as Hossein Zenderoudi, Massoud Arabshahi, Parviz Tanavoli, Faramarz Pilaram, Sadegh Tabrizi, and Nasser Ovissi. Also significant was her engagement with Sohrab Sepehri and two other

artists – lesser-known today – Hassan Ghaemi and Fereydoun Rahimi Asa.

The Iranian modern artists of the 1960s, like their counterparts everywhere in the world, were rebelling against "old art" and the established perceptions of what made art itself. The unique quality of these Iranian artists that so attracted the Azaris, is that they delivered their message by drawing on the mythology and the ancient cultural and religious symbols of their country. The artists that Eric and Sheila were particularly drawn to combined the religious and folk idioms of their country with the modern, forward-looking art movements of the world, those that blended Persian motifs with cubist and impressionist inspirations.

Sheila, in particular, would visit artist studios, getting to know some of the artists intimately, and exhibit works of these artists in their home in Tehran, where they would hold a salon and throw lavish parties to entertain the business and diplomatic sets. They moved back to Los Angeles

in 1964 and Sheila had a plan to market these artists, opening Ishtar, a “home gallery” in their house in Bel Air, in an attempt to promote their work to an American audience. If in those days an Iranian audience was mostly unimpressed by their own avant-garde art, that in California was even less easily persuaded. The gallery flopped and finally fizzled out in 1966. Various disruptions – the lack of commercial success, the couple’s separation, the 1979 Iranian revolution and the subsequent death of Sheila in XXX all served to sever the links between the family and the artists, and their works were kept in storage.

With little clear distinction between the family’s personal collection and the works on consignment to the gallery, when this group was brought to market decades later, ownership was disputed. The process of resolution took almost seven years, and this exhibition is the first to take place with works from this group since the title dispute has been settled.

The choice of exhibiting these works by Massoud Arabshahi was not an obvious one. Arabshahi was the last of the artists the Azaris encountered, and quite different from others whose work was more clearly aligned to “Saqqakhaneh” – Persian spiritual pop art exemplified by Zenderoudi, Tanavoli and Pilaram. Unlike the others, who drew

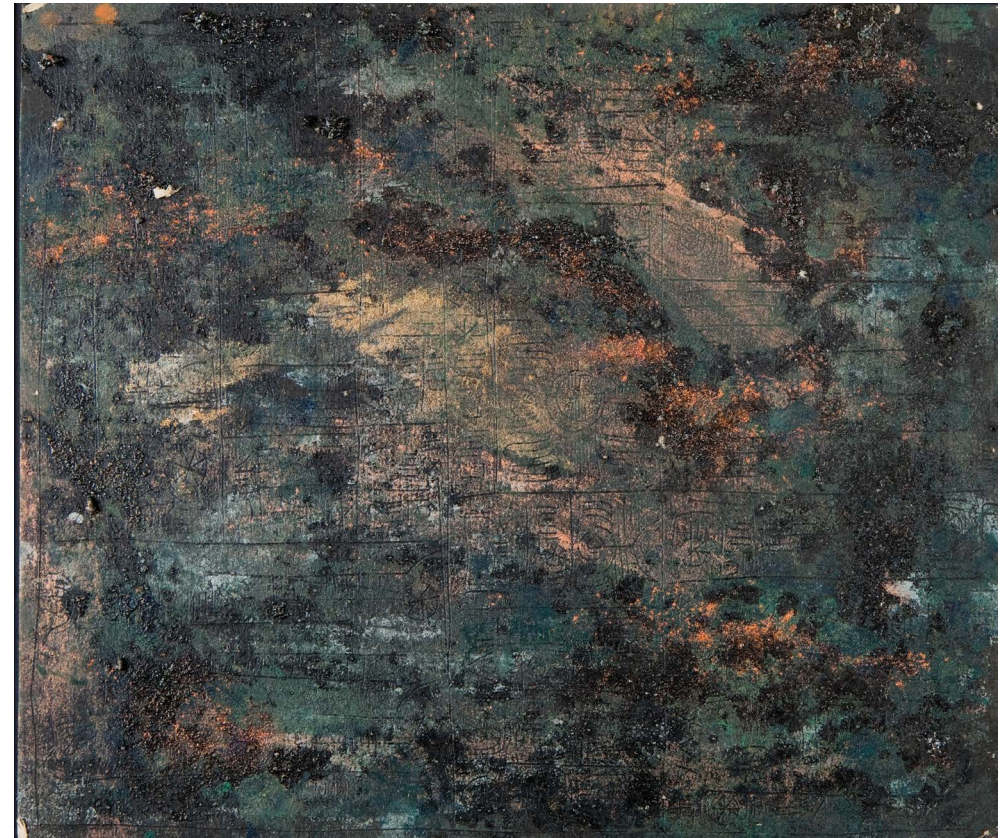
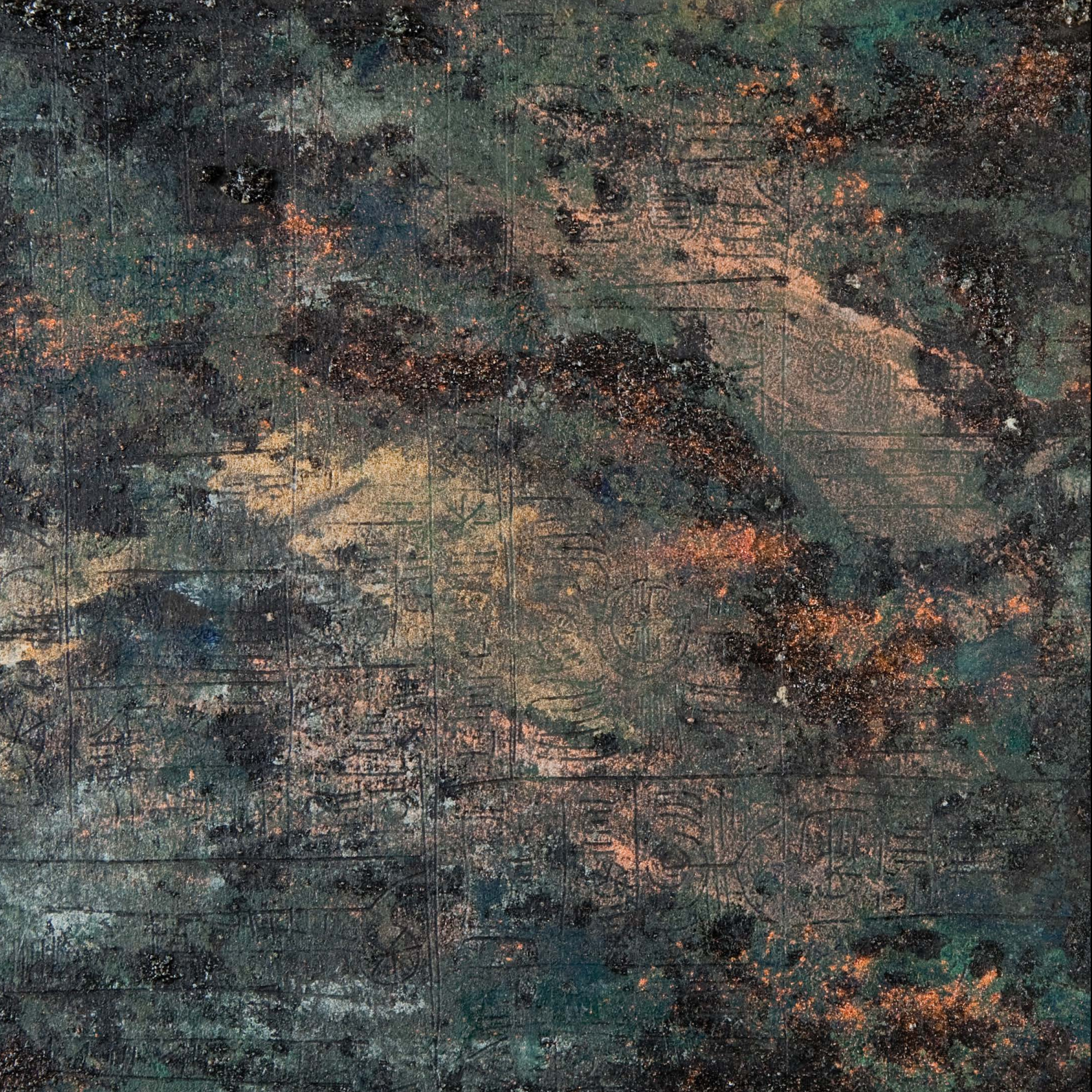
their inspiration from later Persian visual culture, Arabshahi looked to the distant past – Sumerian, Babylonian, Achaemenid, even pre-historic. Always an individualist, these early works by Arabshahi show quite how prepared he was to experiment – with materials, technique and motif. Some of these forms and techniques were carried on to his later work.

Arabshahi has yet to achieve his deserved recognition. This may be down to timing: only a year before the Iranian revolution, he was commissioned by Queen Farah to produce an illuminated version of Avesta, the main Zoroastrian religious text, a highly prestigious commission from which, given the political situation, he had little time to capitalize. In presenting these works unseen for over 50 years, we hope in some small way to correct this oversight.



***Untitled*, 1960-64**

Ink & gouache on heavy paper
26.4 x 31 cm



Untitled, 1960-64

Ink & gouache on heavy paper
26.4 x 30.5 cm



Untitled, 1960-64

Ink & gouache on heavy paper
21 x 29 cm

THE INEFFABLE VOID

By Ari Akkermans, 2017

In the beginning, there was no image but the void. In order to become equipped with the measurements of the finite versus the infinite, it was necessary to clear out completely the primeval emptiness rather than to fill it with the concrete matter of ‘existence’ (the etymology of this word suggests that something has come into being from something else, has become visible after being previously invisible or has been caused to stand); all the elements that would sustain this life-world would be not only contained in, but identical with the hollow container of creation. Beginning, then, is no longer a phase in the formation of a larger whole but a productive stand-still out of which being oozes out indefinitely, circulating throughout space at all times while defining the limit boundaries of this space at the same time – there are no negative spaces in fact, but only refractions.

What follows from the void is ‘the image of God’, this madness. The ineffable turned out then to be such a perverse metaphor for the history of representation. Where do the void and the

image and the divine merge or divide? From the mythologies of the Near East that chronologically coincide with our agricultural beginnings as a young species, we learn about the absolute and the otherworldly – this blind spot of the law beyond the law, out of which a type of cosmic contingency unfolds in front of us with endless, chaotic possibilities. The world is not even full, but replete – it could burst out any moment: So many forms, so many archetypes, so many human symbols that refer constantly to our ordinary experience in the Euclidean space of the earth but that point toward a transcendental horizon. Simultaneously earth-bound and strangled by the cosmos, our gaze is directed at the center of nowhere.

The history of painting, heretofore, has been also a history of how the void has constantly reappeared in every generation, reinventing each time the project of spirituality. The oeuvre of Massoud Arabshahi, an Iranian painter born in Tehran in 1935, is an unusual but illuminating example of the paradoxes that co-exist inside of painting at the level of the

transcendental horizon. An entire generation of postcolonial studies has made us aware of how irrelevant are such binary distinctions as modern and contemporary, Western and Eastern, or abstract and figurative; they are part of the cultural capital of European colonialism but do not reflect categories universally applicable. Arabshahi, alongside other Iranian painters of his generation such as Behjat Sadr or Sirak Melkonian, dwelt in a tradition without prescribed rules in which decorative arts and metaphysics co-existed without boundaries.

What we call abstraction today, referring to the formal period between the Russian avant-garde and American post-minimalism, although it covers a whole six decades, is only one chapter in the long history of abstract operations performed by our species and that begins in the Ice Age when our current brain cortex was finally formed. This process has known many parallel and cumulative beginnings: The Upper Paleolithic, the Sumerian and Cuneiform writing systems, Euclidean geometry, Arabic mathematics, medieval philosophy, Copernicus, the Impressionist movement, Malevich, and so on. Accordingly, the grand architectural reliefs that Arabshahi executed early in his career served as a *tabula rasa* for the works in the exhibition at Lawrie Shabibi: The physicality of his archetypal forms is deep-

rooted in Persian culture (e.g. Sasanian or Elamite inscriptions) and served as a palimpsest in reverse.

Time and again, the artist would return to these forms as hyper-objects: They were not a decorative motif meant to ‘enhance’ a composition but rather constituted a substratum of the life-world image (viewed historically) that we would need to preserve in the same manner that an alphabet is learnt – through conscious repetition. Returning to the world of the mythical, Arabshahi encountered on the surface of his own canvas symbols already emplaced and shaped into relief, almost sculpturally. Yet inside of the myth, the cyclical time of nature and the absolute here-and-now of the void, clash violently, and scatter the forms in such a way that only now they become visible to the naked eye. But one could sometimes even assume that those are not paintings or sketches; they are rather entire blocks of historical time, torn off from live remembrance.

And what is a palimpsest in reverse then? Instead of walking away from the void – the most basic gesture of all monotheism – Arabshahi has assumed the archetypal forms (the lotus, the wheel, the sun) as a shadow of the cosmic space that must be overcome in order to penetrate the reality of a human self-image; the uncannily real at the opposite of alienation. As these basic forms are

being cleared out, even more basic units of meaning appear in the work such as Euclidean circles and squares – structures that can be navigated by means of everyday perception – and almost at the very end, the palimpsest is nearly clean and flat. In this borderline, you are faced with the truly mysterious: The straight line, the point, the purely mathematical symbol. The kind of purity expressed here is not of a moral or theological kind; rather, it is the view from nowhere, or from the center of nowhere.

The metallic paint and the gold foil, in a number of works from the 1960s, are almost extravagant in their solidness versus the fleeting and weak symbols of the real escaping the grip of rigid formalisms. It is here where you can feel that painting has ended: How can you go on? What exactly can you do in painting once you have crossed the final boundary? Once you have returned to that primeval darkness? While this question was never answered by minimalism (perhaps with the exception of Eva Hess and her Turkish contemporary, Bilge Friedlaender), Arabshahi was not too worried about the question: A certain versatility of language enabled him to play hide and seek with the abyss, and though constantly tempted downwards, the artist never gave in completely. The deep-seated sense of remembrance is always gazing at the fullness, understood as far more transcendental than the nothingness.

It was the tyranny of the empty image, that blind spot of the Western tradition, what prevented abstract expressionism and its successors from realizing (and fulfilling) their place in the relationship between the cosmic space and the human image. The fatal mistake of Greenberg's formalism, for example, was to consider abstraction a unidirectional process of increment and subtraction with a definite end: The color field as a receptacle of consciousness. In this Cartesian system, with a world above and a world below, and a strict dualism of the mind, largely informed by the modern faith in progress, it was easy to overlook the rich sense of contingency and multi-directionality specific to images. Arabshahi's immediate access to the archetypal has allowed him to – in the same way it would allow Carl Jung or Agnes Martin – to reach for a fuller, more complex idea of consciousness.

But consciousness is not identical with the absolute: The former is a precondition of life and the latter is a borderline of the world. In the thick density of Arabshahi's canvases, where it becomes more and more difficult to distinguish the objects (although this phenomenon is not chronological – it has happened at different periods in his work), neither void nor archetype have preceded each other: They are both primeval source and dialectical result,

without cancelling each other out. Arabshahi's leap into total abstraction (the concept is a tautology) is not an abandonment of the real, or the discovery of a reality superior to the existing material world (both ideas are identical in Plato); instead, these solid sculptural forms are grounded in gravity, and a delicate balance is maintained between the objects and the conditions of painting. In fact, there is no abstraction to speak of here; there is only painting.

The artist occupies a simultaneity of positions inside and versus his own work, arguing against it at times and eliminating the possibility of personal redemption; the images are always subject to both the unpredictability of human action and the burden of interpretation. At the heart of Arabshahi's work there's an acute understanding about how the labor of logically arranging and cataloging the facts of reality cannot be performed by painting, or at least no more than it was once performed by metaphysics. Arabshahi's view from nowhere is implying the return to very fundamental questions that predate metaphysical systems: How are we to live with objects, where do these objects end and what does God see. Objects for us become identical with pictures, but what happens when these objects have become too large or too opaque to be known with the traditional categories of both theory and perception?

It is immeasurability, paradoxically, that keeps the universe whole, according to Arabshahi's transcendental imagery. The pictorial space here, it seems, is not the Aristotelian place that lies in between two points, but rather, an unimaginably deep space that contains all possible times, even the future times. The best metaphor for this time-sign continuum would not be the cube but the polyhedron: In algebraic topology, it is defined as a space that can be constructed from building blocks such as line segments, triangles, tetrahedra and other analogs. The difficulty with the polyhedron, which applies equally well to Arabshahi's painting, is that some of the building blocks are units either too basic to be split or too complex to be singled out. In theory, mathematical rules would be as good an analytical model for this work as any historiographic and visual considerations.

But it is impossible to do away with intersubjective relations when it comes to painting. The truly sublime aspect to Arabshahi's oscillation between the absolute and the archetypal is not its orientation toward the transcendental horizon but rather its human and earthly scale. The warm palette (competing against the strictures of minimalism), filled with earths and sands, retains much of his own cultural imaginary but without being culture-specific, while it also serves to mask the inevitable

cosmic finality that is embedded within lived time. It is not only the individual anxiety over one's death, but also a certain collective awareness of the unforgiving and brutal nature of deep space, permanently oozing into our history and the history of the things that we see and that we have seen. Beginning with the worship of the stars by our ancestors, our recent spatial voyages have shown us the deep dark out there.

Terrifying as this picture might be – and there is an entire century of cultural pessimism about this – Arabshahi's infinities and void surfaces have never indulged in the terror of pure space, precisely because of a natural skepticism in art about notions of purity in general. The void, coming out of the archetype remains always concrete, and the archetype, coming out of the void, remains always absolute. This holistic approach to paintings, which by no means can be called spiritual, precisely because it contains spiritual and non-spiritual (along with many other) forces, remains unbiasedly ahistorical in its rejection of teleology and progress. Its internal concept of time is perhaps not always a stand-still, but an endless beginning that can never be consummated, at least not in plain view: How can you re-start something for the first time? From dualities, we move here to duplicities.

The distant past that nurtures these works is not nostalgic or even a past tense in the traditional sense but a self-positioning toward internal contradiction: On the one hand, it retains the allegory of the historical ruin, while on the other hand, it uses temporariness as both subject and raw material. The presence of anthropomorphism in many of Arabshahi's works is apposite to the clarity of vision in his abysmal surfaces and half-diluted forms, carving into the most ephemeral memories, a highly cultivated optimism about human time in general, rather than specifically about our immediate future. Sometimes it's required to come closer, much closer, to inspect the smaller works in such a way that they become almost readable text. After a while you think you have mastered the alphabet at last and recognize some of the characters; but suddenly they disappear, crumbling under their own weight.

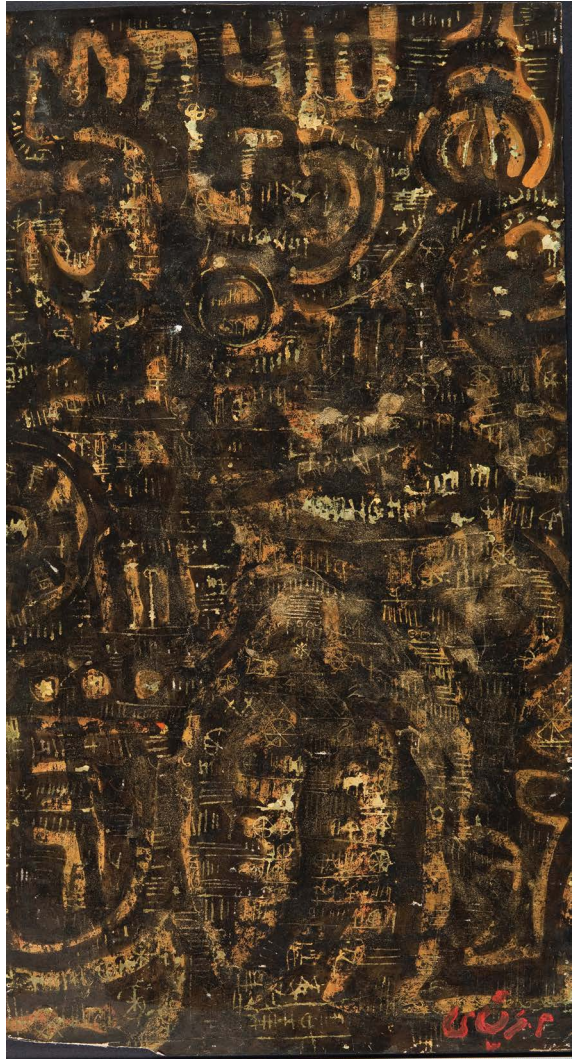
Forever at the beginning, all the time...



Untitled, 1960-64
Metallic and industrial paint on card
70 x 50 cm

Untitled, 1960-64

Ink and gouache on paper mounted on card
56 x 30.5 cm



Untitled, 1960-64
Metallic paint and gloss paint on card
102 x 76 cm



Untitled, 1960-64
Metallic paint and gloss paint on card
102 x 76 cm





Untitled, 1960-64
Poster paint on paper
102 x 76 cm

TRADITION AND FREEDOM IN IRANIAN MODERNISM

By Mahnaz Fancy, 2017

A pioneer of Iranian Modernism, Massoud Arabshahi (b.1935) arrives on the Tehran art scene in 1964, against the background of Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi's recently launched "White Revolution"—Iran's oil boom-funded political, cultural, and social transformation into a modern and secular state along western lines.

Over the next 15 years—until the Iranian Revolution brings the Pahlavi reign to an abrupt end in 1979—this nationalist mission is translated into a cultural agenda for nurturing the creative expression of those political and cultural ambitions by a new generation of artists. Led by Queen Farah Diba, a comprehensive program of state-funded educational and cultural initiatives takes shape to support these artists from the Tehran Biennial and a newly founded School of Decorative Arts (where Arabshahi is enrolled in 1964), to funding for international travel and study, and government-supported international exhibitions.¹

This exhibition at Lawrie Shabibi concentrates on paintings produced between 1960 and 65, as Arabshahi's distinctive style starts to take form amidst rapid development of Iran's art sector and the intellectual and artistic experimentation it made possible. During this early stage of his career, he is studying at the School of Decorative Arts to complement his existing training in painting and sculpture with a practice in architectural reliefs.

With the recognition of first prize at the fourth Tehran Biennial and his first solo exhibition at the Iran-India Center in 1964, Arabshahi joins the pioneers of Iranian Modernism. Nurtured by the state and championed by the queen, these young avant-garde artists (many of whom are also enrolled at the School of Decorative Arts) are shaping the aesthetic dimensions of Iran's new modern identity while maintaining its roots in tradition. Negotiating rising anti-western popular sentiment and nationalist demands, they invent new visual languages out of

1. Layla S. Diba, *The Formation of Modern Iranian Art: From Kamal-al-Molk to Zenderoudi*, in "Iran Modern" (New York, Asia Society Museum, 2013)

the juxtaposition of their formal training in European painting and sculpture with elements borrowed from local Iranian heritage, folk vernacular, and popular culture.

From Hossein Zenderoudi's exploration of abstraction's potential to merge with Islamic calligraphy and indigenous decorative motifs to Parviz Tanavoli's Pop Art-like sculptures composed of artisanal objects found at shrines and bazaars, and Monir Farmanfarmaian's experiments with the geometry of the mirror-mosaics of shrines, a new neo-traditionalist style becomes visible at the third Tehran Biennial in 1962—which Iranian art critic Karim Emami immediately proclaims the national school for modern Iranian art and names the *Saqqa-khane* School, borrowing the term for public water reservoirs commemorating 7th century Shi'ite martyrs in Karbala.

At first glance, Arabshahi's expressionistic and experimental modernist style in these early works seems to be aligned with those of his contemporaries. The bold compositions on card and paper are the explorations of young artist working in a range of sizes and with diverse media from ink and gouache to metallic or industrial paints. At the same time, they reveal an ability to shift between primitive figuration

in brash and heavy impasto brushstrokes and abstract symbols and motifs in very light scratch-like fine lines that speak to the confident hand of a skilled and versatile artist. However, Arabshahi's treatment of ancient Persian imagery and iconography animating these early compositions immediately signals his departure from the popular Shi'ite iconography associated with the *Saqqa-khane* School.

Informed by his research into the art and architecture of Iran's pre-Islamic history, Arabshahi finds his inspiration in the Zoroastrian Achaemenid Empire. Founded by Cyrus the Great in 550 BC and considered the height of the Persian Empire, it stretched from the Balkans to the Indus Valley until it fell to Alexander the Great in 330 BC. The remains of the ancient ceremonial city of Persepolis and its necropolis *Naqsh-e Rostam* serve as a visible legacy of Achaemenid achievements. Rich with symbolic resonance of Persia's glorious past, the Sassanians (224 to 651 AD) deliberately linked themselves to the ancient empire by building their own tombs, *Naqsh-e Rostam*, on the same site.

For Arabshahi, the ancient visual language of those relics of soaring columns and architectural reliefs represents a powerful corrective for the alienating effects of the westernization of the early Pahlavi



Untitled, 1960-64
Poster print on paper
102 x 76 cm

era of his youth and, just as importantly, one that is as recognizable as the *Saqqa-khane* School's folk imagery. As he explains in 1977, "From the very beginning of my career in painting I was always attracted by the mysterious, ambiguous, and glorious monuments of this country – the ancient needs, the mysterious and complicated designs, and even those ancient dishes and souvenirs which I saw in the museums..."² In fact, it was so powerfully resonant with the popular national imagination that Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi would stage his extravagant 2,500 Year Celebration of the Persian Empire at Persepolis in 1971.

While the national symbolism of Achaemenid architecture appears to play a part in Arabshahi's attraction to the visual language of this particular moment in Iranian history, his painted adaptations of the panel form in those ancient wall carvings in this exhibition draw the viewer's attention to the eclectic mix of Assyrian, Egyptian, Babylonian and Greek elements and motifs inscribed there—a reminder of the hybrid foundation of classical Persian culture. Through a manipulation of this rich diversity of signs, he invents his own visual language of pseudo-cuneiform, progressively adding more universal geometrical symbols like circles, squares, arrows,

curves, and spirals along his career. Meanwhile, the second series of paintings with fine lines scratched onto opaque and luminescent backgrounds foreshadow a series of drawings that Arabshahi will go on to make in the 1980s inspired by the *Avesta* Zoroastrian text. In those later works, Arabshahi's manipulation of those same symbols will subtly shift to create compositions resembling archaeological maps or architectural plans for ancient cities. In an almost alchemical encounter between his scholarly understanding of ancient arts and his imagination, the ancient cultural traces are transformed into creative inspiration for the future, demanding that viewers approach the abstract and impressionistic imagery intellectually in order to decipher their meaning.

It's important to recognize that, above all, Arabshahi's practice is a deeply intellectual one. This aspect is what allows him to move beyond Emami's identification of the *Saqqa-khane* painters and sculptors as "...descendants of Iran's famous craftsmen of early centuries—illuminators, goldsmiths, engravers and calligraphers—who beautified a thousand and one utilitarian objects with intricate floral scrolls and calligraphic lines,"³ Relying on his creativity and imagination, he transcends the lesser art of craft

2. Roudaki, July 30, 1972 - All quotations from the artist and their citations are taken from the Chronology section of Ruyin Pakbaz and Yaghoub Emdadian, eds *Pioneers of Iranian Modern Art*: Massoud Arabshahi (Tehran, Museum of Contemporary Art, 2001)

3. Encyclopedia Iranica (Art in Iran I)



***Untitled*, 1960-64**

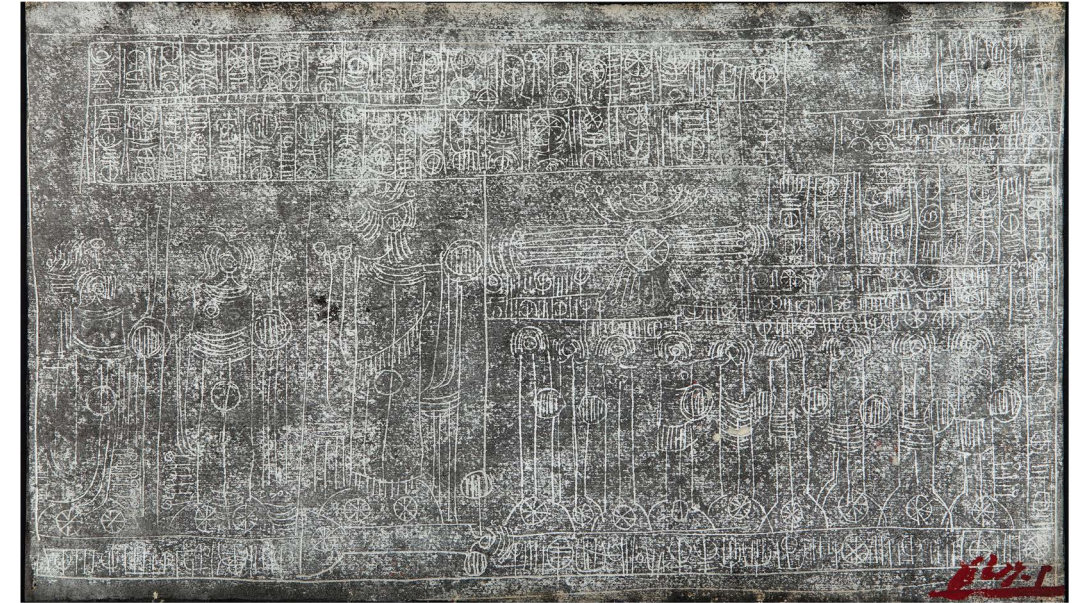
Ink and gouache on paper mounted on card
40 x cm

and distills a higher dimension of meaning from the Achaemenid architectural details. Through his thoughtful and sensitive exploration of Zoroastrian metaphysic, his works create an intuitive link to the cosmological meanings embedded in the relics and therefore the ancient cultural foundation upon which modern Iran is built. Arabshahi's practice evolves beyond a reproduction of material culture of Iranian tradition to a creative act that represents the intellectual and spiritual inspiration buried in the past—this is where he begins to differentiate his practice from that of his contemporaries.

Acknowledging his initial alignment with his colleagues of the *Saqqa-khane* School, Arabshahi expresses a keen awareness of the creative limitations of the state-mandated requirement that modern Iranian art must be rooted in tradition, “Artists of the *Saqqa-khane* movement, one of whom was myself, based their work on traditions but worked superficially... It is dangerous to overindulge in traditions but at the same time we shouldn't disregard them... One should be cautious in applying traditions because once you set foot on that course you will be enslaved by repetition and eventually come to a dead end.”⁴ This restrictive imposition denying artists the freedom to follow their own imagination is typified by Arabshahi's attitude towards

Islamic calligraphy, “When calligraphy enters a work it is followed by repetition and after a while if the calligraphy is expunged nothing will be left.”⁵ And, as a result, his works are marked by a resistance to using language as a means of direct signification.

Arabshahi continues to forge his own path and develops his own unique visual idiom by introducing more opaque archaic forms, ideograms, symbols, and geometric signs over the course of his career. Through their manipulation, he arrives upon an illegible language composed of abstract signifiers gesturing to a distant imaginative space that resists easy access. His compositions offer viewers an indirect means of communicating with the past—below their shimmering surfaces, his canvases are imbued with the same mysterious metaphysical and mythical resonance as those ancient carvings that inspired him. Resembling primitive cave drawings as much as contemporary graffiti, they refuse to be “read” as narratives or fixed in any specific time in history, and, instead, they appear to radiate a mysterious and mystical wisdom that transcends time. In seeing Arabshahi's early expressionistic adaptations of the panel form and quieter canvases composed of abstract signs and symbols together in this exhibition of works from 1960 to 64, his impressive ability to play with the visual language of ancient Persian



***Untitled*, 1960-64**

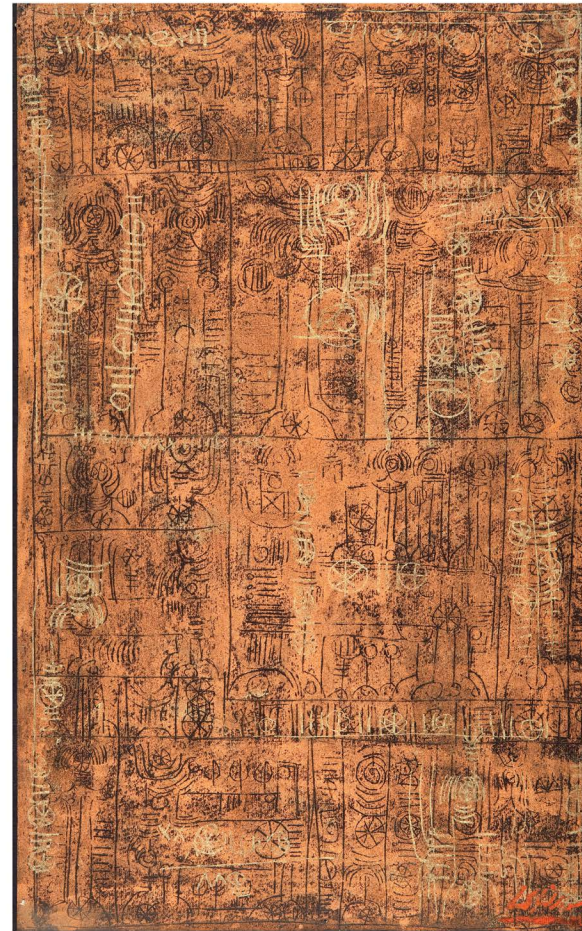
Ink and gouache on paper mounted on card
50 x 29.2 cm

4. Roudaki, July 30, 1972

5. *ibid*

architectural decoration comes to the fore. He merges an intensive study of the formal structure and logic of bas-reliefs with an equal mastery of spatial composition and perspective to translate the complex three-dimensional art of ancient Achaemenid wall carvings into two-dimensional paintings. Arabshahi's essentially hybrid practice allows him to avoid repetition and keep innovating his practice by continuously uncover new layers of creative potential from his source of inspiration—thereby opening the path to a career of continued experimentation at the intersection of sculpture and painting.

It makes sense that he accepts two major commissions to make bas-reliefs for public buildings in Tehran after graduating from the School of Decorative Arts in 1968. In an interview in 1976, Arabshahi re-articulates his fear of the restrictive influence of tradition as part of his need to maintain a balance between his painting and bas-relief practices, “Suddenly, epic lines and forms as well as tiny motifs appeared in my canvases between 1963 and 1966 and I thought I must maintain the 3-D aspect in my works.”⁶ He returns to painting again in 1971 and continues this pattern of shifting back and forth between his two-dimensional and three-dimensional practices, finding creative freedom from the restrictions of the historical moment that initially formed his practice and Iranian Modernism.



***Untitled*, 1960-64**

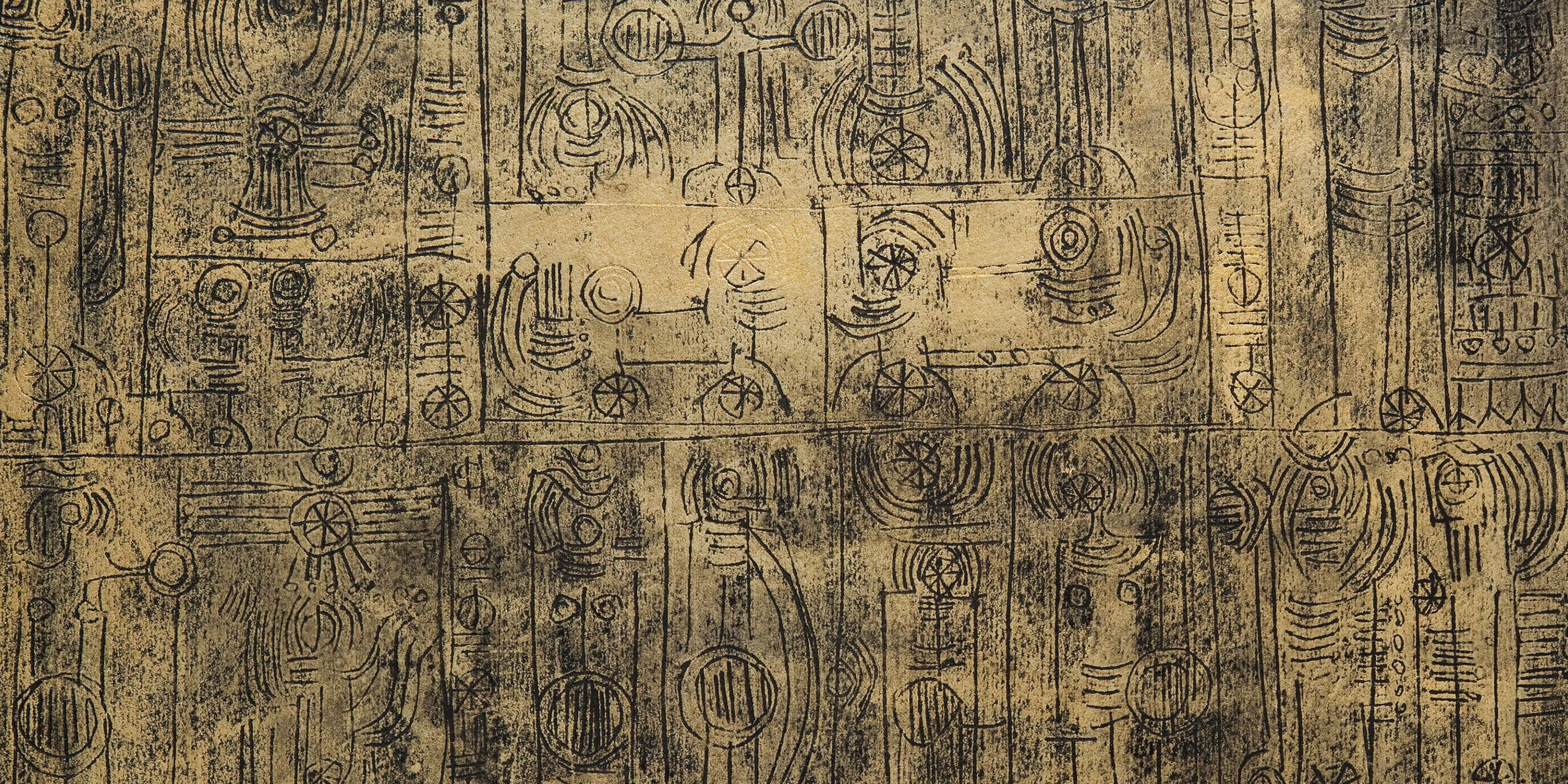
Ink and gouache on paper mounted on card
49 x 31 cm



***Untitled*, 1960-64**

Ink and gouache on paper mounted on card
50.5 x 40 cm

6. Rastakhiz Daily, Issue 551, 23 Feb, 1976.





Untitled, 1960-64

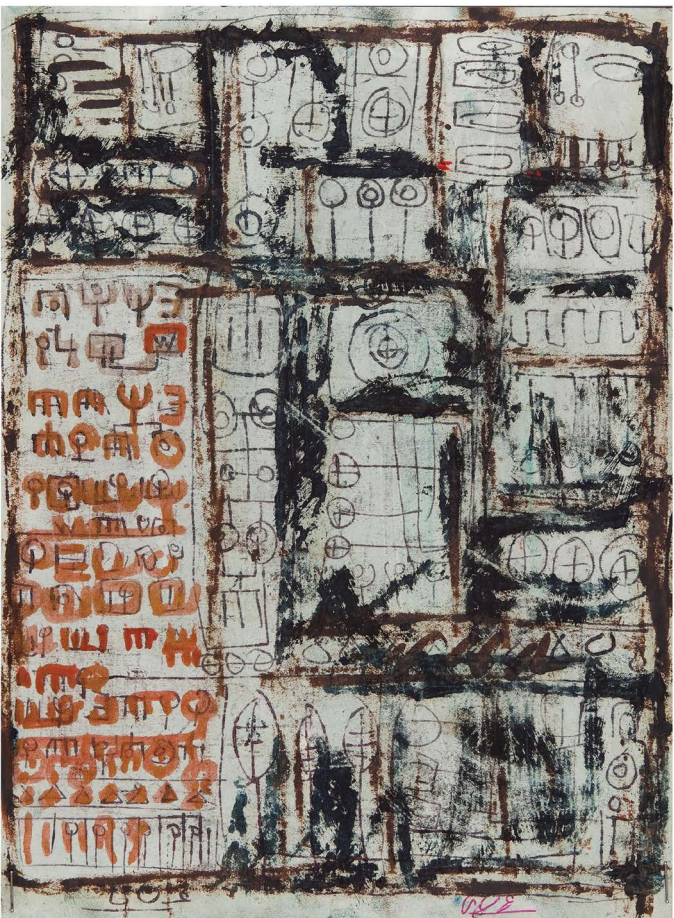
Poster paint on paper
101 x 102 cm



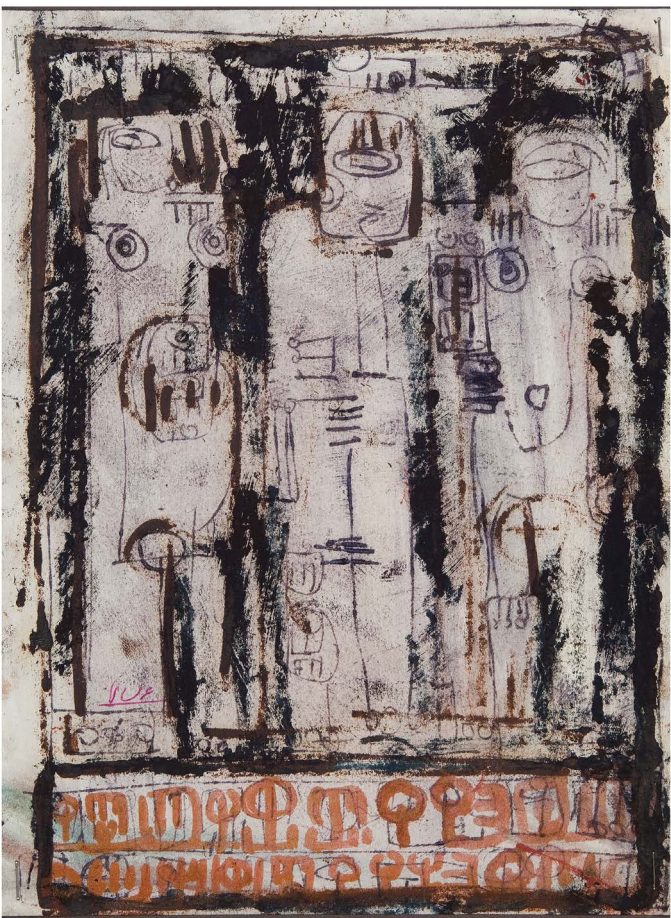
Untitled, 1960-64

Poster paint on paper
101 x 104 cm

Untitled, 1960-64
Ink and gouache on paper mounted on card
29.5 x 21 cm



Untitled, 1960-64
Ink and gouache on paper mounted on card
29.5 x 21 cm



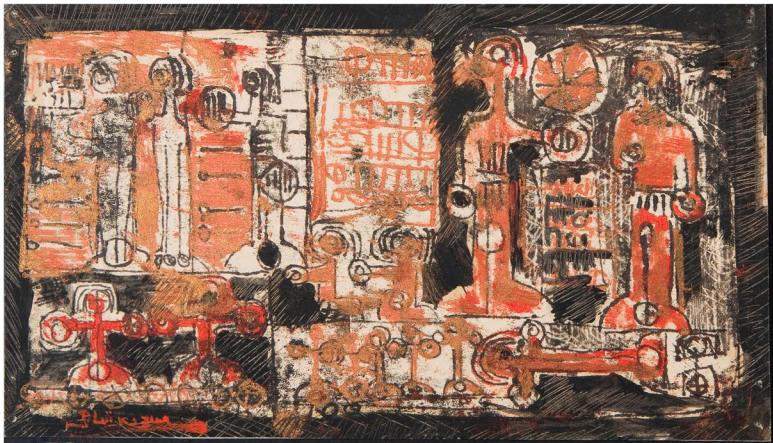


***Untitled*, 1960-64**

Ink and gouache on paper mounted on card
26 x 22 cm

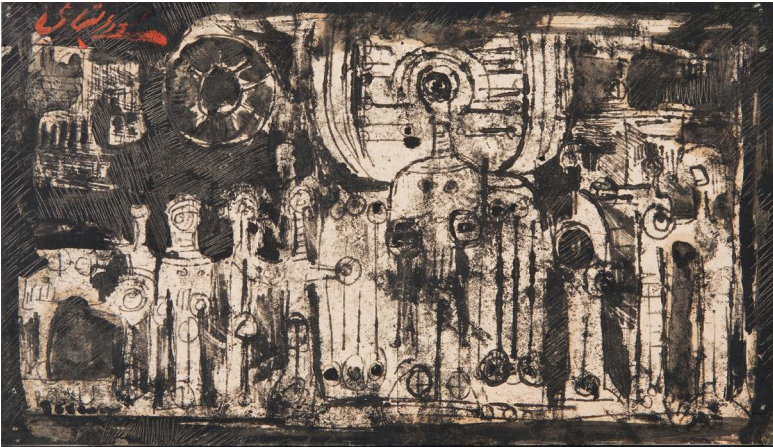
***Untitled*, 1960-64**

Ink and gouache on paper
mounted on card
13.2 x 23.4 cm



***Untitled*, 1960-64**

Ink and gouache on paper
mounted on card
10.8 x 17.8 cm



***Untitled*, 1960-64**
Ink and gouache on paper
mounted on card
14 x 28.6 cm



***Untitled*, 1960-64**
Ink and gouache on paper
mounted on card
17 x 28.5 cm



***Untitled*, 1960-64**
Ink and gouache on paper mounted on card
21.5 x 37.5 cm



Untitled, 1960-64
Ink and gouache on paper
21 x 36 cm



Untitled, 1960-64
Ink and gouache on paper
13 x 37 cm

ARTIST C.V.

Born 1935 in Tehran, Iran
Lives and works between Tehran and California

EDUCATION

- 1967 M.A. in Interior Design, College of Decorative Arts, Tehran, Iran
- 1965 B.A. in Sculpture and Painting, College of Decorative Arts, Tehran, Iran

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 *Great Works*, Shahrivar Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2007 Mah Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2006 Seyhoun Gallery, Los Angeles, California, USA
- 2006 Mah Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2002 Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran
- 2000 Golestan Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1999 Golestan Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1996 The Association of Architects in

- California, USA
- 1995 Keyhan Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1995 Seyhoun Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1994 Seyhoun Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1994 Massoud Arabshahi Retrospective, Barg Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1994 Golestan Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1993 Seyhoun Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1990 Los Angeles International Gallery, California, USA
- 1984 Leila Taghinia Gallery, New York, USA
- 1977 Saman Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1973 Seyhoun Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1972 Litho Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1971 Negar Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1970 *Modern Iranian Art: A Retrospective*, Iran America Society, Tehran, Iran
- 1969 Seyhoun Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 1967 Galerie Solstice, Paris, France
- 1964 Tehran University, Iran
- 1964 India Artistic Center, Tehran, Iran
- 1962 Iran-Indian Cultural Centre, Tehran, Iran

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

		California, USA	1999	<i>Tehran Contemporary Drawing Exhibition</i> , Barg Gallery, Iran	1975	<i>Fifty Years of Iranian Art</i> , Iran–America Society, Tehran, Iran
2017	Art Dubai Modern, with Shahrivar Gallery, UAE	2001–03 <i>New Art from Iran</i> , Meridian International Centre, Washington DC, USA	1999	<i>Reflection of Tradition in Modern Iranian Painting</i> , Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran	1975	<i>Volume and Environment</i> , Iran–America Society, Tehran, Iran
2016	Mah Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran	2001 Iranian Contemporary Art, Barbican Centre, London, UK			1975	<i>Blue</i> , Takhte Jamshid Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2015	<i>1960’s Iranian Modern Art</i> , Shahrivar Exhibition, Tehran, Iran	2001 <i>Two Modernist Iranian Pioneers</i> , Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran	1998	<i>Tehran Contemporary Drawing Exhibition</i> , Barg Gallery, Iran	1975	Mess Gallery, Tehran
2015	Mah Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran	2000 <i>Inheritance</i> , Leighton House Museum, London, UK	1991	Art Deca, Los Angeles, California, USA	1974	Washington Art, USA
2014	Mah Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran		1991	Los Angeles Art Expo, California, USA	1974	Basel Art Fair, Switzerland
2013–14	<i>Iran Modern</i> , Asia Society Museum, New York, USA	2000 <i>Bob Ravah</i> , with Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Morocco	1986–87	Los Angeles Art Expo, California, USA		First Tehran International Exhibition of Arts, Iran
2013	Mah Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran	2000 <i>Contemporary Iranian Artists</i> , Museum of National, Folk and Popular Art, Rome, Italy	1983	Paris International Art Festival, France	1973	Galerie Guillot, Paris, France
2012	Tehran Art Expo, Vahdat Hall, Iran		1976	Basel Art–78, Switzerland	1973	Grand Palais, Paris, France
2011–13	Permanent Collection, Pasargad Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, Iran	2000 <i>Art of 20: One Century of Iranian Contemporary Painting</i> , Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran	1977	Washington Art, D.C. Armory, USA	1973	Monaco International Exhibition, Monte Carlo, Monaco
2011	Art Expo, Los Angeles, California, USA		1977	Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran	1970	<i>Modern Iranian Art: A Retrospective</i> , Iran American Society, Tehran, Iran
2011	<i>The Collection, An Exhibition of Master Fine Persian Artists</i> , Abra Gallery, Westlake Village, California, USA	2000 Group exhibition, with Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Ravagh Yahya Gallery, Tunisia	1977	Contemporary Art Museum, Kerman, Iran	1968	<i>Iran’s Contemporary Artists</i> , Mobile exhibition, USA
2011	Mah Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran		1976	International Exhibition, Washington, USA	1967	Tehran Biennial, Iran
2002	<i>The Scent of Heaven in the Works of Iranian Painters</i> , Los Angeles,	1999 <i>First Drawing Exhibition</i> , Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran	1976	<i>Volume and Environment–2</i> , Saman Gallery, Tehran, Iran	1967	<i>Sacred Art</i> , Museum of Modern Art, Paris, France
			1975	Basel Art–76, Switzerland	1965	The Paris Biennial, France
				Exhibition Gallery Association		

ARTIST C.V.

- 1964 Fourth Tehran Biennial, Iran
- 1964 Talar-e Iran, Tehran, Iran
- 1962 Third Tehran Biennial, Iran

AWARDS

- 1974 First Prize, Sculpting Competition, Farah-
Abad Park, Tehran
- 1973 First Prize, Monaco International
Exhibition, Monaco
- 1973 Mother's Day Exhibition Prize, Tehran
- 1964 First Nation-wide Fine Arts Prize, Fourth
Tehran Biennial

PUBLIC & PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Arabshahi's works are in the public collections of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art; Fine Arts Museum, Sa'd-Abad Palace Museums, Kerman Museum of Contemporary Art as well as private collections in Iran, UAE, France and the USA



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