



Dana Nehdaran
605 W. 42nd Street
Apartment #41U
New York, New York 10036
(917) 753-4533
www.nehdaran.com
dananehdaran@gmail.com

PORTFOLIO

I was born in Isfahan, Iran on the anniversary of my maternal grandfather's death in 1982. I began my art instruction at 9 years of age with private art classes under Hassanpour, a well-known artist who taught me the fundamentals that would eventually lead to further study at the Sooreh Art University in Shiraz. Shortly following Sooreh, I moved to Tehran where I continued by studies and worked as a professional artist for ten years. It was after learning my technique that I eventually moved to Vienna and after some months, New York, where I've now lived for almost three years. The most recent series of my work as inspired by my new urban surroundings, Fe26 has been shown in New York and Art Basel in Miami; however, I've shown other series in Tehran, Dubai, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Of the more than eight series that I've created, all focus on two primary themes: (1) tension, tension between past, present and future; and (2) concealment and revelation. As a Jewish Iranian now living in New York during a political climate polarized over immigration, I find a lot fodder for my work but always seek the experience of others. These themes touch all of our lives there is much to discover in everyone's truth.

I have been a member of the Iranian Painter Association from 2007.

HIDDEN

In 2005, for the Hidden series, I used just 2 colors, black and white, and made a texture by painting with a knife. After that I separated human-like creatures within the texture using the color brown. Next step again 3 colors black, white and brown helped me to save and reveal the mysterious creature.



Untitled, in Hidden series, 35x45cm, Acrylic on paper. Niloufar Azarba collection, Tehran.

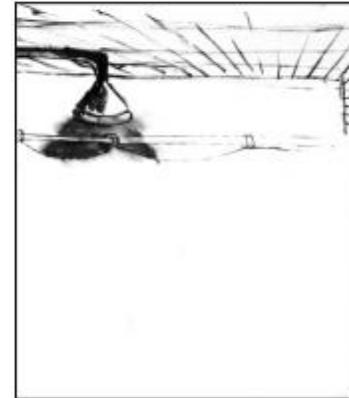
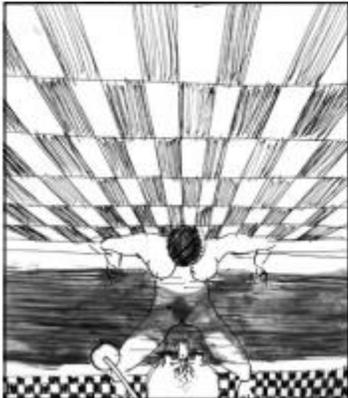
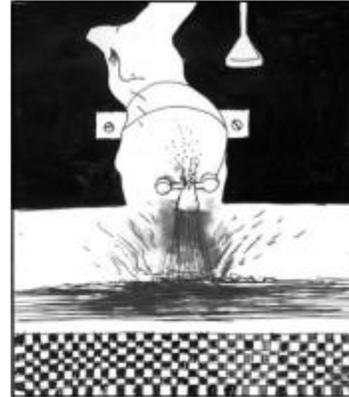
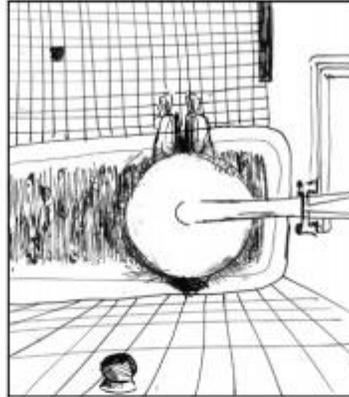
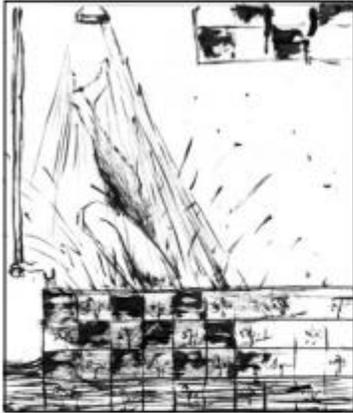


Untitled, In Hidden series, 80x100cm, Acrylic on board, Reza Nader Sepahi collection, Dubai.



Untitled, In Hidden series, 70x100cm, Acrylic on Board, My collection, Tehran.

THE BATH



In 2006, I started to draw the bath series in a quad notebook my friend. I used it during my free time on the bus. I drew a human figure surrounded by chess pattern; actually I embedded the unorganized figure into an organized pattern. Step by step the chess pattern turned into bathroom tile and the figure into a person taking a shower and masturbating (or doing other things a person might do in the bathroom). After a while he became the shower with all its details. Now a lady comes to the bathroom to take a shower and makes love with the shower. I was secretly witnessing all that happened from the bath window. I tried to paint some of the drawings but found that the drawings are more expressive than the paintings. At that time I chose to stop the project.

Bath series, each 13x12cm, ink on paper.

THE INSIDE LAYERS

In 2007 I decided to come back to the texture I used in the Hidden series but this time thicker and more touchable. Also, I used more colors, adding each layer by layer. Finding a portrait of that creature is like Rorschach tests...

I had a solo exhibition, The Inside Layers, in 2007 in Morteza Momayez Art Center in Iran. The exhibition included the Hidden series, the Bath series, and the Inside Layers.



Untitled, Inside Layers series, 100x150cm, Acrylic and Oil on canvas, Private collection, Tehran.

Unfortunately I had to remove some of the bath series because of the prohibition of nudity from an Islamic government. I wrote in my catalogue (about Inside Layers): *As I pushback the layers, you travel among them. Each layer has something to say but I don't care and continue on until something stops me and forces me to stay on that moment and stay in this layer. Time stops sometimes for years, sometimes for seconds, and what I want at that moment and I do not want any more. It must imprint what you imagine in your mind here (images come to my mind naturally on their own, I want to bring them to the physical world). In this point of time patterns appear. They want to catch me, they want me to realize them, and colors help me to do so. They look at me and I at them. Time starts to move and I am no longer interested in moving through the layers. This is the end of my painting.*



Untitled, Inside Layers series, 100x80cm, Acrylic on canvas, Private collection, Tehran (left)

Untitled, Inside Layers series, 70x100cm, Acrylic and Oil on board, Reza Nader Sepahi collection, Dubai. (below)





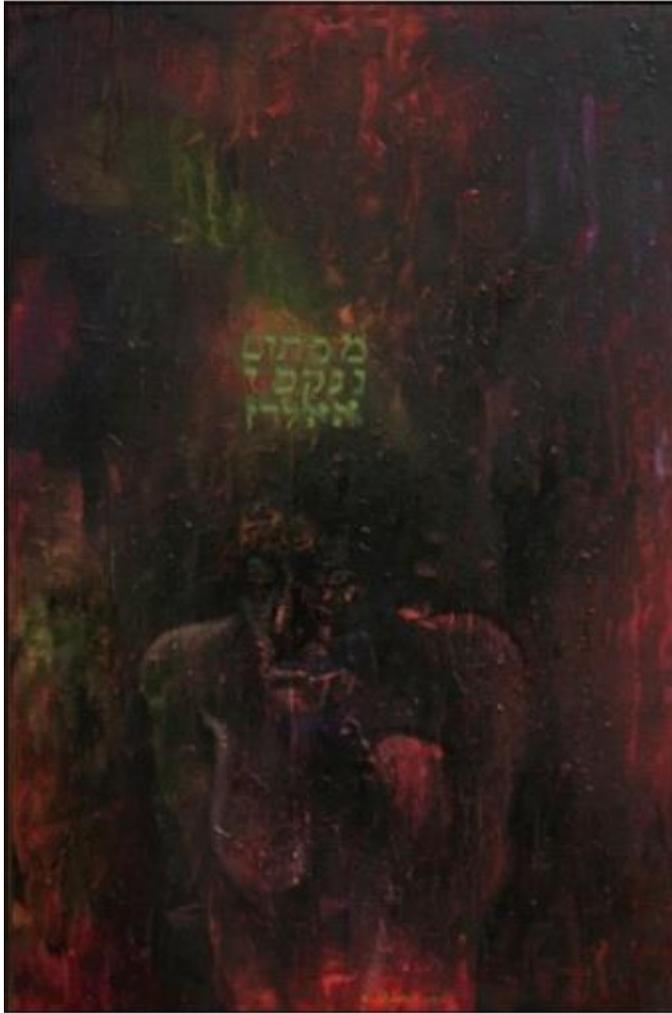
THE FEELINGS & THE WOMAN

The Feelings. In 2008 I was busy with this series when I fell in love with a pretty girl named Sheida. She was a poet with a beautiful voice. When I was with her I discovered feelings I had not known before. After we broke up, the series of my paintings also finished.

*Untitled, Feelings series, 120x100cm, Acrylic and Oil on canvas,
Reza Fateh collection, Tehran*



Untitled, Feelings series, 100x150cm, Acrylic on canvas, My collection, Tehran.



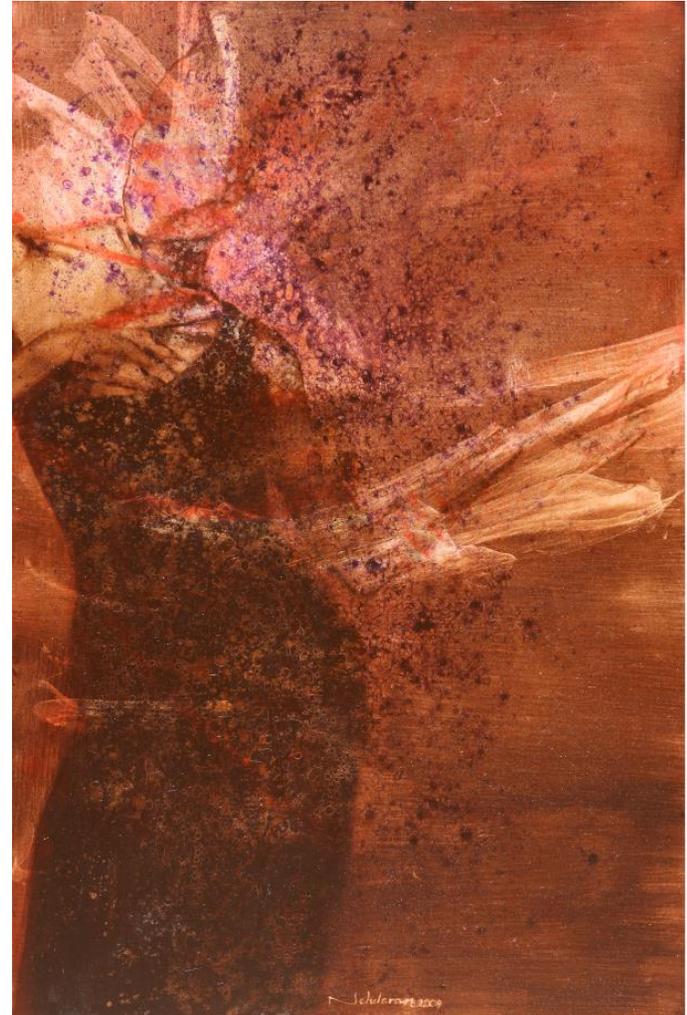
The Woman.

After our break up and the Feelings series finished, I experience a long depression. I started to heal my wounds by painting a lot of women in different positions.

The Feelings series and The Woman series never were shown.

Untitled, The Woman series, 120x80cm, Acrylic and Oil on canvas, Private collection, Canada (left)

Untitled, The Woman series, 150x100cm, Oil on canvas, Reza Fateh collection, Tehran (right)





*Untitled, The Woman series, 150x100cm,
Oil on canvas, Yahya Oheb collection,
Tehran (below)*

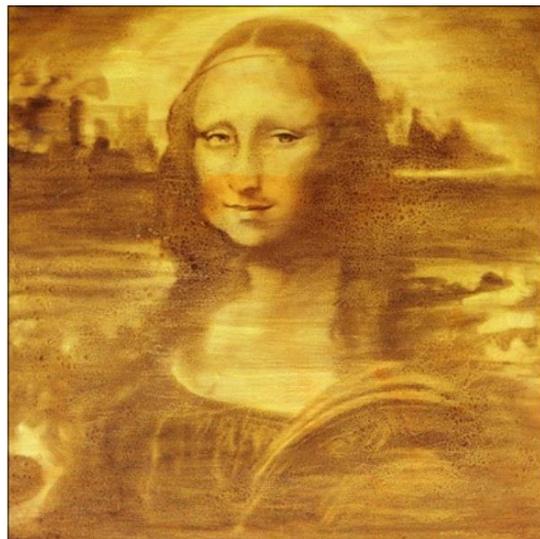
*Untitled, The Woman series, 150x125cm,
Oil on canvas, private collection, Tehran
(left)*



MY MONA LISA

I am passionate about Leonardo da Vinci's works, especially the Mona Lisa and have always follow the stories of her mysteries. One day in 2010, when I was waiting for the hidden creature in the texture that I had made, I saw her. She was winking and flirting with me. I started to save her on the canvas when this painting beckoned me to paint more and more with different details, different textures, different sizes, different colors, and different materials. I had a solo exhibition with only My Mona Lisa in Nar gallery in 2010. I wrote in my catalogue, "*As I look at Mona Lisa, something falls within me. I take my brush and possess her on canvas. I have no other tools*"

Untitled, My Mona Lisa series, 195x195cm, Acrylic and Oil on canvas, Private collection, Tehran.



Untitled, My Mona Lisa series, 160x160cm, Acrylic and Oil on canvas, Fati Samee collection, Tehran.

Untitled, My Mona Lisa series, 100x120cm, Acrylic and Oil on canvas, Yahya Oheb collection, Tehran.



ESTHER'S CHILDREN

Esther's Children is based on historic portraits of Jews in Iran from the collection, Esther's Children, ed. by Houman Sarshar.



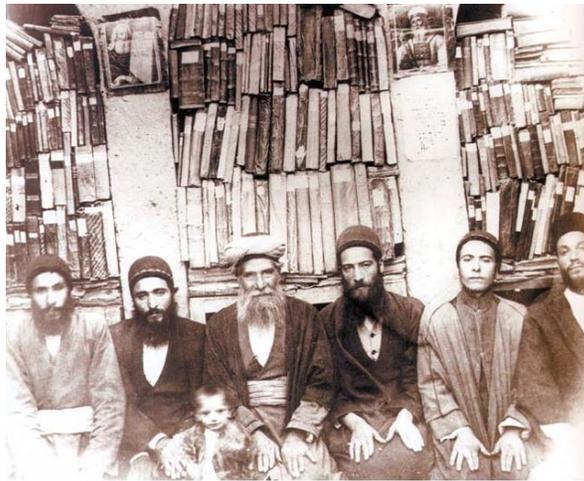
In 2011, when I first started this series, I was only thinking about the origins of Iranian Jews. I subconsciously added some faces to the photos, and took out some others; the reason for this is still not clear to me. I then found I was searching for myself in the paintings. When the painting process was over, a feeling awakened inside me, which is more important to me than any other experience in this work: it was the connection to these people inhabiting those old images were intrinsically bound to me. I realized they could very well be my own ancestors and I started to visualize signs of their presence in my home. Perhaps those signs had always existed, and I only now noticed them.



The Kahan family from Golpaygan, Original Photograph #1037, Esther's Children book (lower left)

Oil on canvas, 200x300cm, 2010 Salsali Private Museum, Dubai, UAE (below and detail at bottom)

Ramin Salsali, founder and owner of the Salsali Private Museum with me at the opening of Esther's Children series, 2013, Dubai, UAE (above)

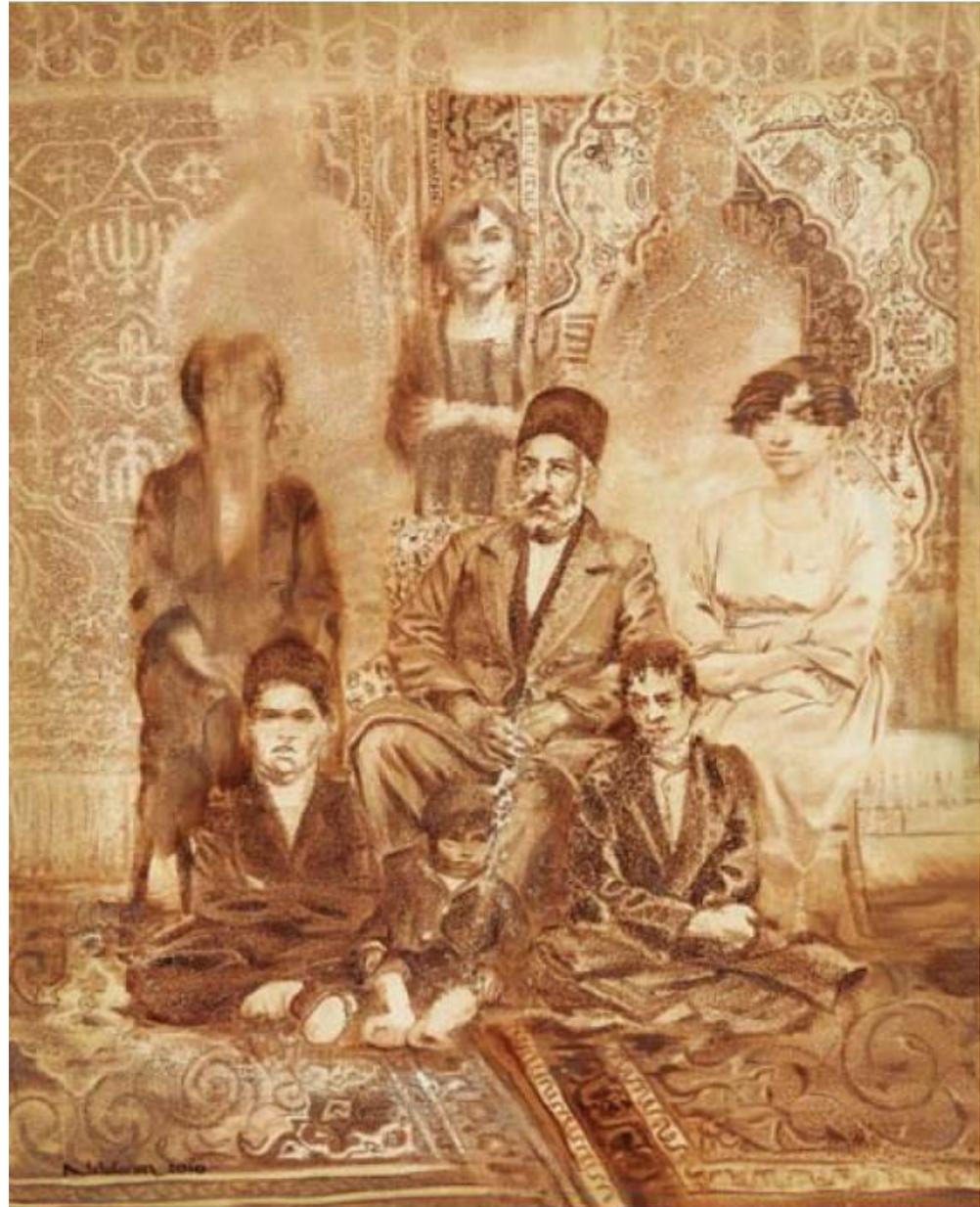




The figures, or better to say, the humans in these frames whether enjoying a tablatore or suffering in being faded - the ones who mere memories remained - all are ordinary people. As it has been in the Old Testament; the place in which “the whole world had one language and a common speech” [Genesis 11:1-9]

A family from Tehran, Oil on canvas, 190x160 cm, 2011 (left with detail below)



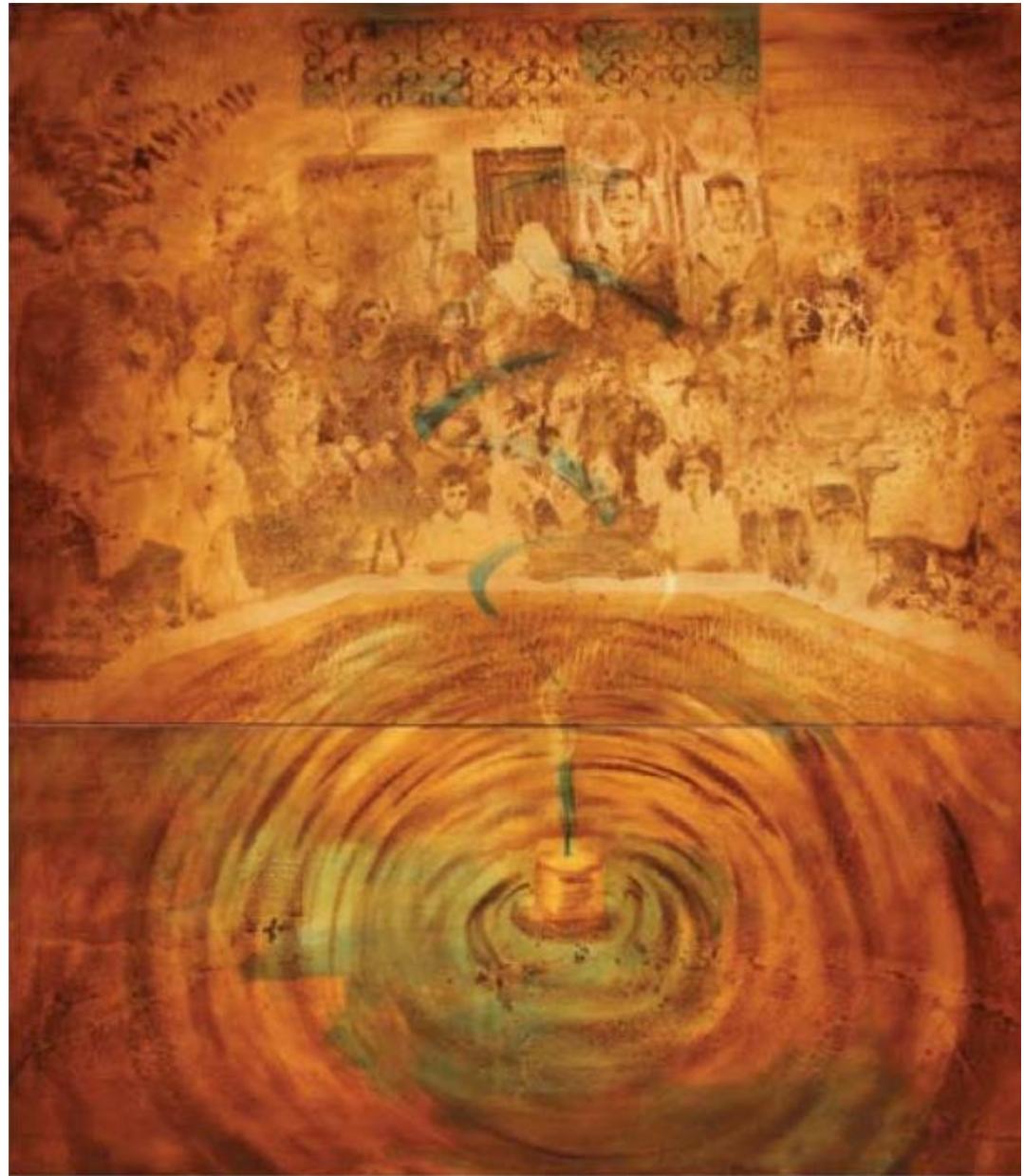


A family from Hamedan, Esther's Children series, 194x157cm, Oil on canvas, Ramin Salsali Museum, Dubai, UAE (Right with detail above)

Because this painting had a pool it provided a chance to use another color. My plan was to make the pool entirely blue but then I realized the less I used color the richer the painting looked. This fountain that is going up reminds me of incense burning but this really depends on what the viewer sees but my purpose was to paint a water fountain with a blue sky above it and people who are fading out in a nostalgic way. *(Original photograph below)*



A family from Tehran, Oil on canvas, Diptych, Overall: 260x260 cm, 2011. (Right and detail below)





A family from Isfahan, Oil on canvas, 150x195 cm, 2011.

AGITATIONS OF PLEASURE

The cracks in the painting are caused by an agitation of continuous pleasure, the pleasure of eternity.



The Painting has lived through centuries. It has felt every bit of everything through the ages. It has grown beyond its creator and lives on to tell of Time and the agitations of Time.

The Painting feels the growth of Time. The Painting trades its textures with Time, and lives on to express the Self of Time.

I paint the textures – the agitations of pleasure – the erotic trade of the Painting and Time.

When a day came that they marched into houses and palaces and tore the paintings down, we saw their dark shadows; their march was far threatening than the hurricane of detests. We could only imagine gigantic creatures that had stepped far beyond the fear of detest.

We will see the dark shadows left behind. Censorship is no less destructive than hurricanes of hate. We must resist these gigantic creatures who detest the creative life with such zeal.

“Coin” of Forough Farrokhzad, Acrylic and oil on canvas, 190cm diameter, 2013.

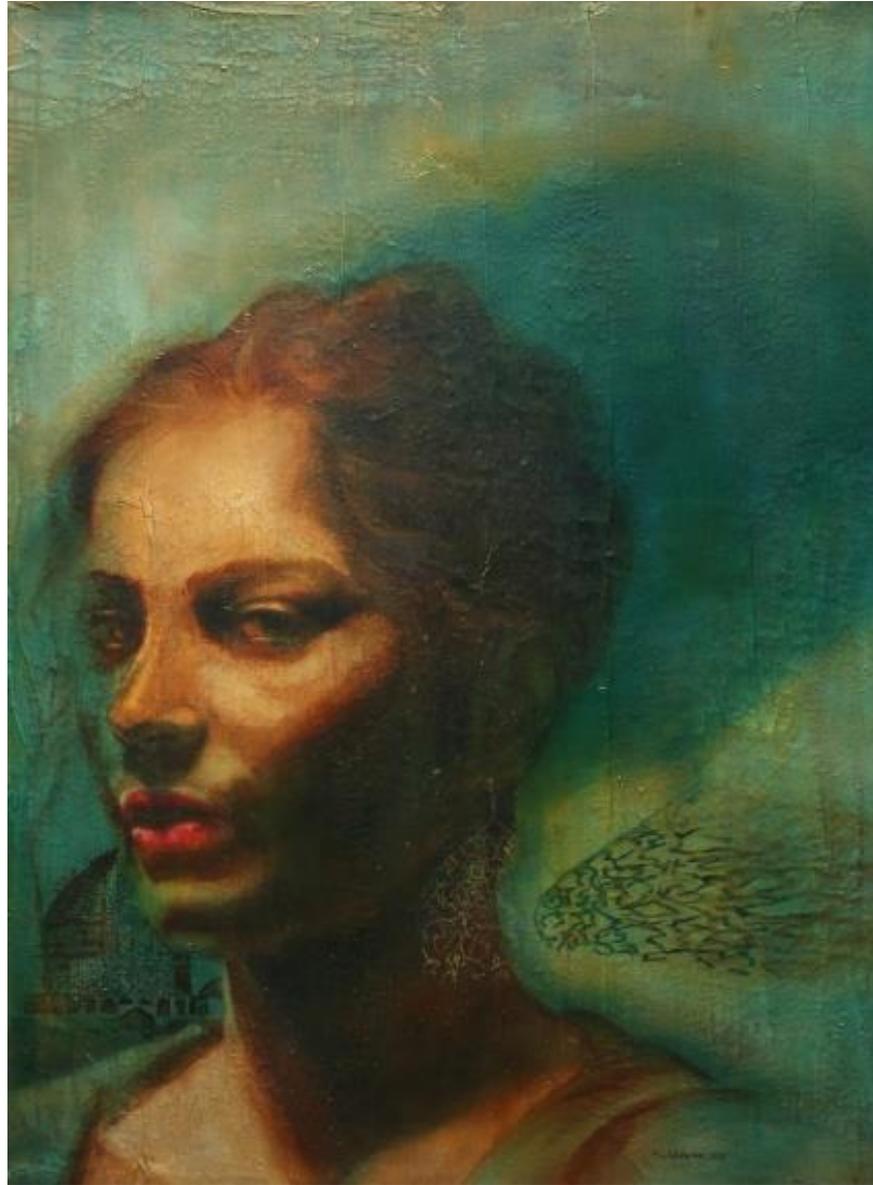


I visited Chehelsotoon Palace in Isfahan, where I saw the damage that both humans and age had done to many paintings. The destruction made it nearly impossible to see the actual paintings. I took great pleasure in imagining what secrets the painting once told, so I began to copy some of the Chehelsotoon pieces and other wall paintings like Da Vinci's Last Super and Creation by Michelangelo, using the same materials from that time. Using old materials was a new experience for me. I used plaster on the canvas and a glaze technic. I put myself in these painters' shoes and think about the loveliness these pieces have conveyed across the years that have caused them to crack. *Paparazzi, acrylic and oil on canvas, 120x160cm, 2014*



Even before Shiraz, I knew I loved art. How it can communicate with all people and command emotional reaction and discussion. I've been very fortunate in my career. Art is my passion. It is both a necessity and a luxury that I am able to focus nearly the entirety of my day on my work. Although I don't imagine it as a job, I follow much of the same routine that anyone in a different profession would do. I wake up in the morning, I make coffee and then head into my studio to examine my canvases, taking into account new blank ones as well as those in progress. I allow time for them to speak to me as to what they need and communicate what I can supply. Often, as with any artist, it's a struggle. I generally work until late evenings, six days a week, only breaking for meals and a daily ritual of capturing progressive camera shots of sunset lighting which transcends on people and architecture each day.

2017 - Agitations of Pleasure, Shirin Gallery, Tehran, Iran



All from Agitations of Pleasure series, acrylic and oil on canvas, 160x120 cm, 2014.





Acrylic and Oil on canvas, 140x220 cm, 2013.

Fe26



What is the most valuable matter within the earth? Fe26, the periodic table symbol for iron, is the most common element on earth. Aside from hydrogen, oxygen and carbon, it is arguably the most valuable. When combined with carbon and other elements, it creates steel, which continues to serve as the backbone for construction of higher and bigger commercial buildings, residential homes and national infrastructure.

Aside from construction, iron within the human body is required for the production of red blood cells, which creates our blood's color, and also part of the hemoglobin which binds to oxygen, thus facilitating life-required oxygen from the lungs to all cells throughout the body.

Untitled, Fe26 series, Iron powder, acrylic and oil on canvas, Diameter 36 inches, 2017

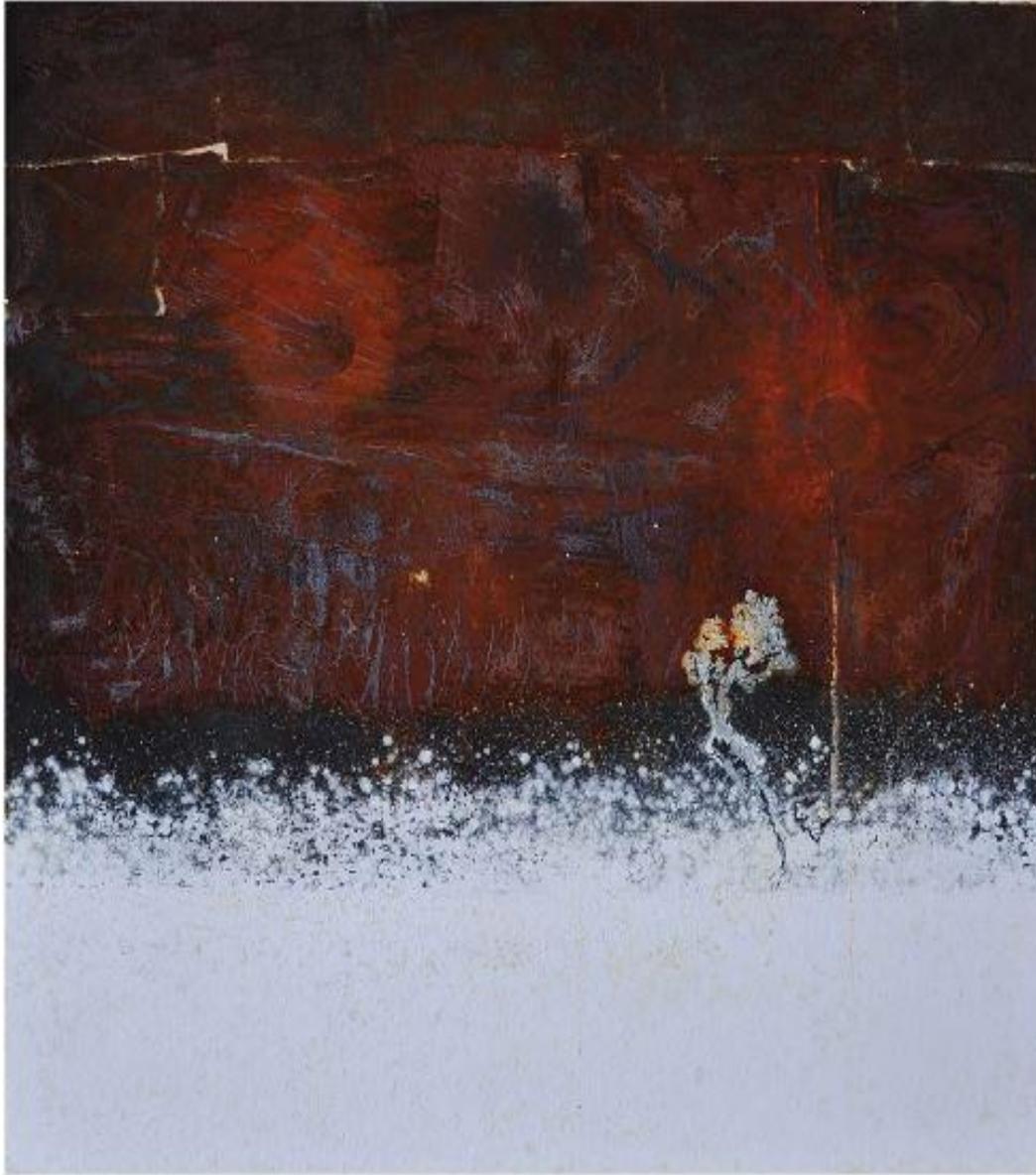
When breaking down my vision of both my muse and my art, it always comes back to my struggle with the materials and deciding which materials to use, which materials to show and highlight and which other materials to conceal. Although I was trained in traditional practice and worked with oils, acrylics and other usual media, I have recently undertaken a number of projects that deal with materiality of my pigments in order to expand the themes that I can address in my work.



There is always a way, Fe26 series, Acrylic, Iron powder and Oil primer on Canvas, 60X48 inches, 152.4X121.92 cm, 2016.

There is always a way even in squares, Fe26 series, Acrylic, Iron powder and Oil on Canvas, 60X48 inches, 152.4X121.92 cm, 2016.





After moving out of Iran and gaining some perspective, I now realize that the complexities and certainly the dichotomies of Iran are often lost on any non-Iranians. Perhaps much of this is due to our own culture of concealing what lies beneath. While nationally, we make our country's voice appear as one unified voice, it conceals many different races, religions, genders, sexual orientations . . . which is not to say that perhaps most of the Middle East may fall victim to this paradigm. Although not a new or young artist by any standard, I feel my work is beginning to shift given my new surroundings. Although I still continue to enjoy working on figurative work, most of my time is now spent on developing the Fe26 series. While it is still in progress, it is substantially developed so to enable me to start the communication between myself and others and continue its development in my new home of New York.

The material within any piece is also very much changing so the works themselves transform over time and strain against the aesthetic parameters that are set. Beauty and strength won't remain hidden for long and as time continues for example, rust from the iron and verdigris from the copper permeate though the exterior surfaces that builders and artist will apply to reveal themselves to the world.

Fe26 Series (Untitled), Acrylic, Iron powder and Oil on Canvas 48x48" 2016



For the above, I painted the map of Iran with iron powder and copper leaf instead of paint: iron powder to show the land; and, copper leaf to paint the bodies of water. I then manipulated the iron on a daily basis to expose colorful surfaces on the round canvas, symbolizing the earth with Iran at its center. The silvery iron powder crystallized and formed a reddish-brown surface. I call this chemical process "coagulation." Copper, on the other hand, changes color by exposure to humidity: from rose to a rich vibrant verdigris, representing the seas and the oceans. Once the desired effect of patina is achieved, I will then cover the Iran map with multiple layers of white titanium paint, in the gallery as an installation. These added layers of paint help suppress all the negative thoughts about Iran today, such as sanctions, terrorism, religious fanaticism, superstitions... *Iran on earth, Fe26 series, Iron powder, copper leaf, acrylic and oil on Linen, Diameter 60 inches, 152.4 cm, 2017*



Fe26 series (Untitled), Iron powder, acrylic and oil on canvas, 36x72", 2017



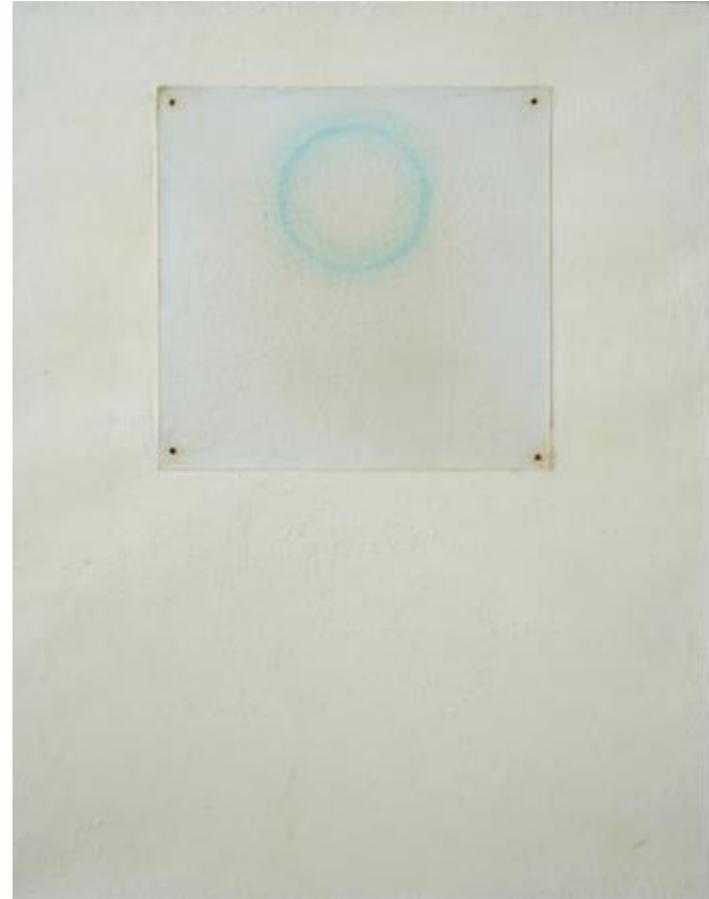
Fe26 series (Untitled), Epoxy, Iron powder, acrylic and oil on canvas 20x16", 2017



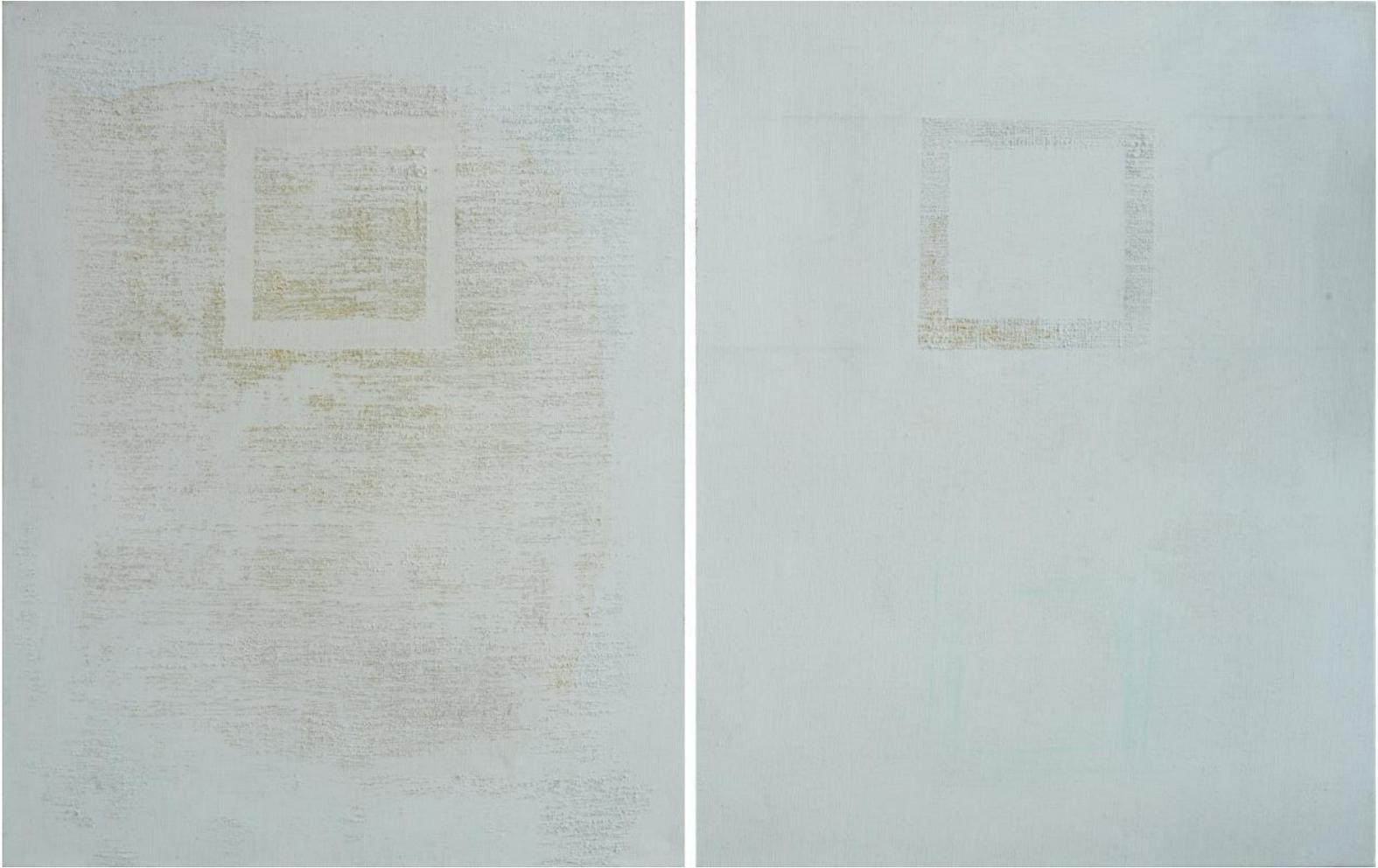
Fe26 series (Untitled), Iron powder, acrylic and oil on canvas 60x48", 2015



Fe26 series
A square
27x24 inches
Iron powder, acrylic, and oil on linen
2018



Fe26 series
27x20"
bronze powder, iron powder, acrylic, oil and epoxy on linen
2017



Fe26 series
36x48"
Iron powder and gesso on linen
2017

Three squares

Fe26 series

27x72 inches, Triptych, each 27x24 inches

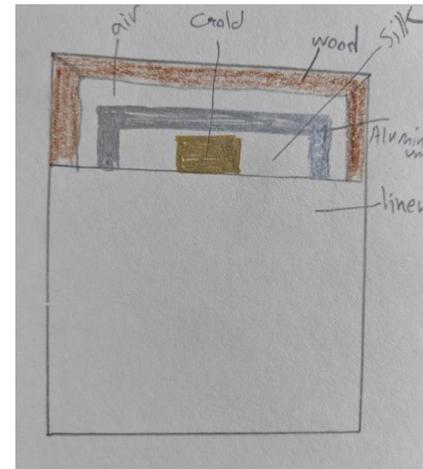
Gold leaf, silver leaf, copper leaf and oil on Linen

2017





While still working within the Fe26 Series, I've recently focused on all materials to paint without paint, utilizing wood, linen, silk, gold, aluminum and silver.



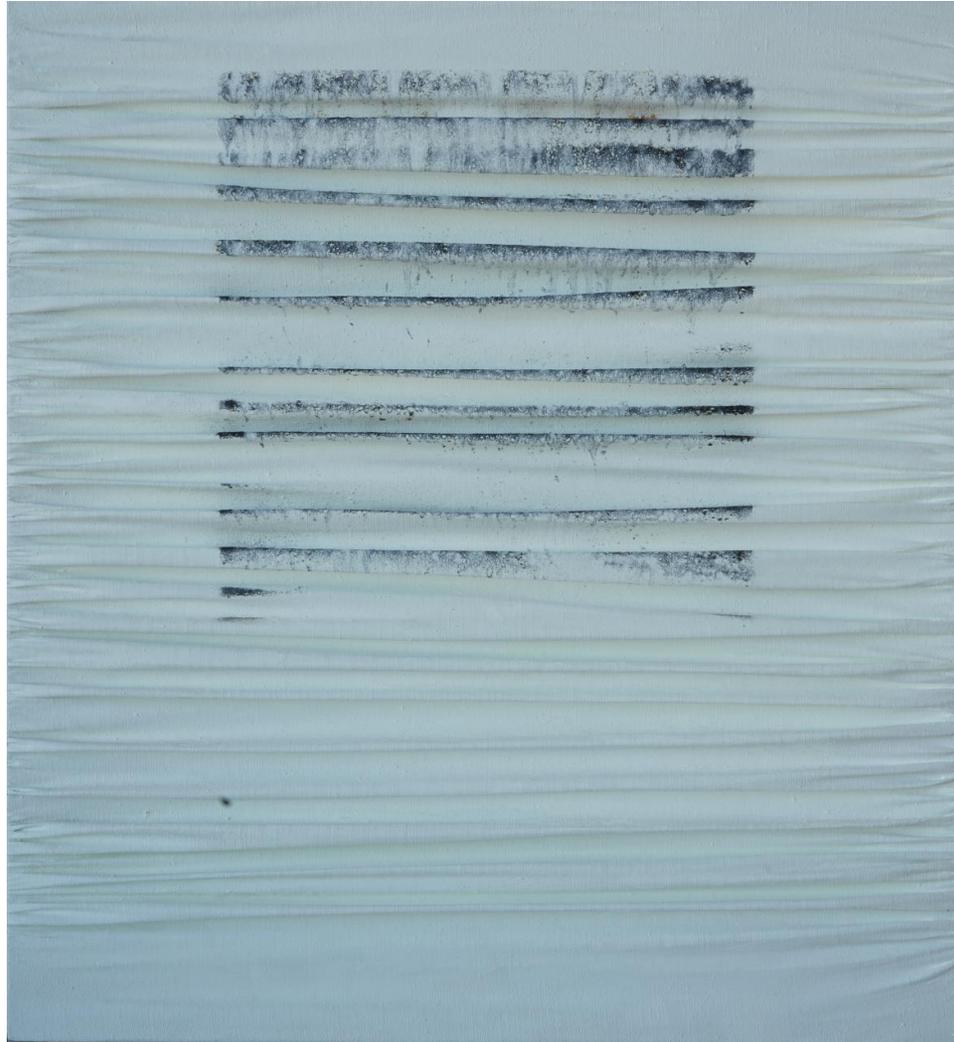
Fe26 series
Aluminum, silk, gold leaf,
wood, linen
27x30x2 inches
2018



Fe26 series
Stainless steel, wood, linen
27x30x2 inches
2018

Fe26 series
Iron sheet, wood, linen
27x30x2 inches
2018





Fe26 series
30x27 inches
iron powder and oil on canvas
2018



Fe26 series
Stainless steel, wood, linen
27x30x2 inches
2018



Fe26 series
Iron sheet, iron wire, wood, gesso and linen
27x30x2 inches
2018



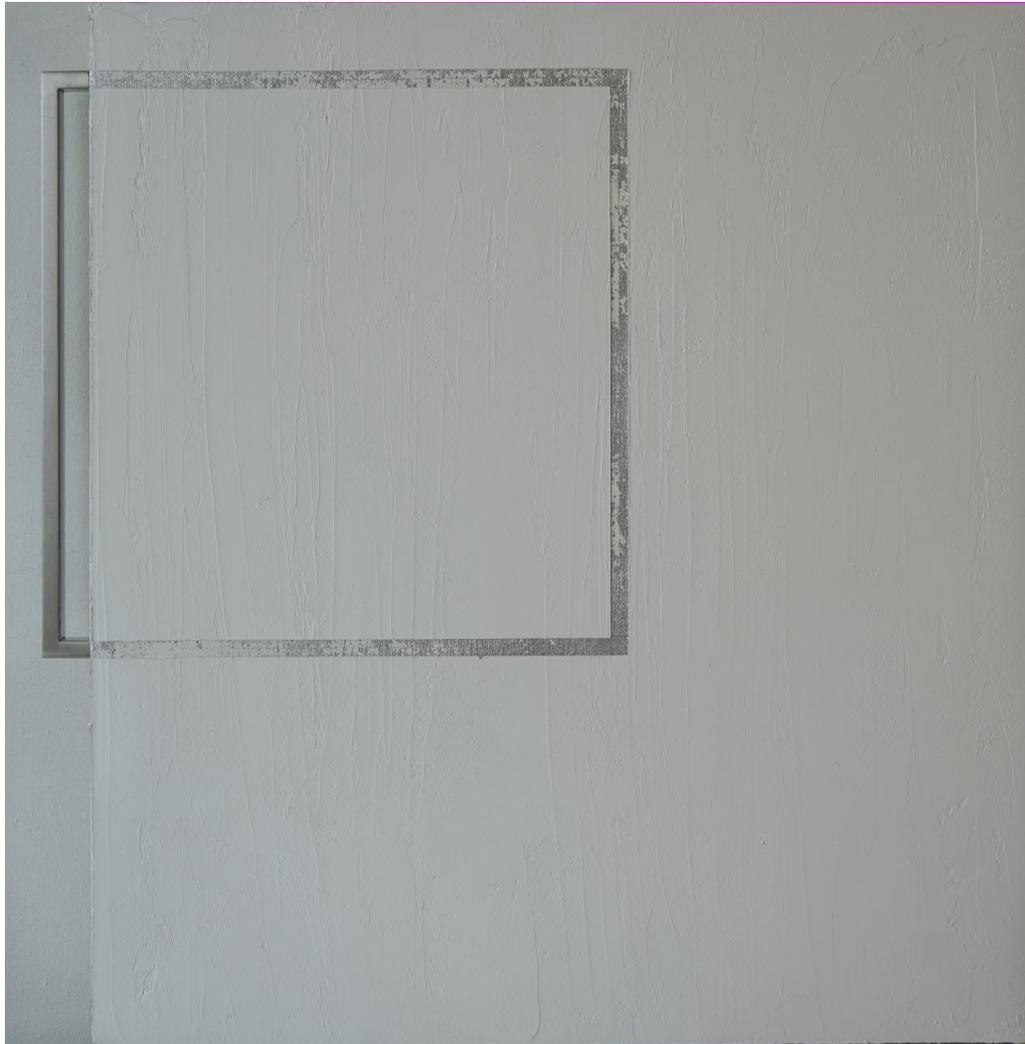
Fe26 series
Iron sheet, wood, linen
27x30x2 inches
2018



Fe26 series,
iron powder and oil on Aluminum sheet, wood and linen
27x30x2 inches
2018



Fe26 series
wood bar, iron bar, oil based paint
27x30x2 inches
2018



Fe26 series
Aluminum leaf, stainless steel handle and oil on linen
28x30x2 inches
2018



Fe26 series,
Gold leaf, Brushed brass handle stainless still and oil on linen
28x30x2 inches
2018