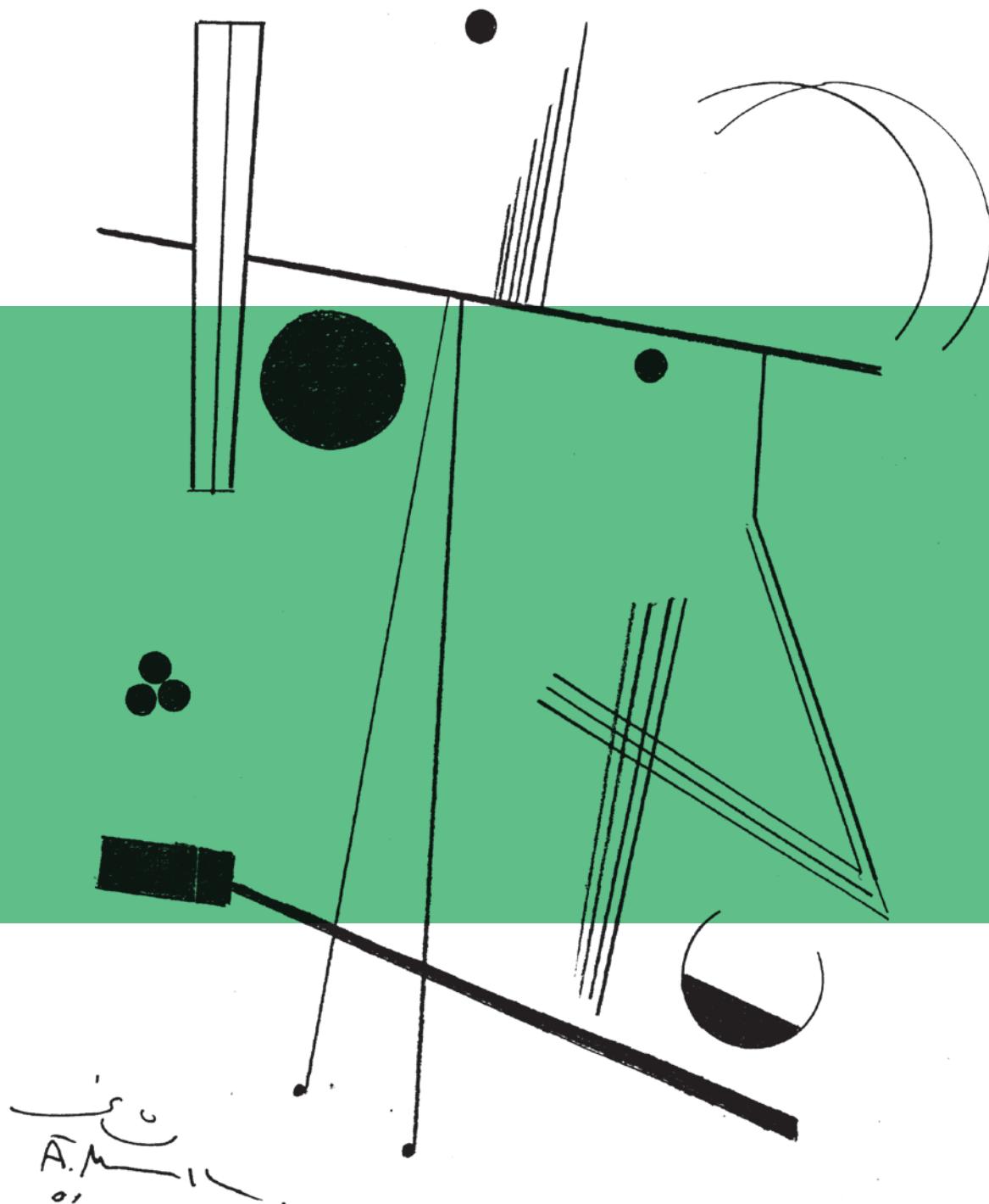


CONTEMPORARY IDENTITIES

International Art Magazine

Asma Belhamar | Martyna Benedyka | Jalal Bin Thaneya | Boris Duhm | Muzna Mahmood | Farhad Nikfam
Marie Pourchot | Laura Quevedo | Amin Roshan | Sonalika Vakili | Alireza Mashayekhi



Creativity is the power to reject
the past, to change the status quo, and to seek
new potential... Creativity is the power to act.

Ai Weiwei



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For further information please email us at:
info@contemporaryidentities.com

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*Questions, 2001, Acrylic on canvas,
35x50 cm*

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EDITORS' NOTE

We're delighted to celebrate the third anniversary of ContemporaryIdentities. As always, the essence of our pitch in CI is the link between contemporary artists and art writers to feature their creative practice. The energy and enthusiasm of our team, artists and writers move us forward to begin a new year. So, we would like to thank everyone involved in this edition.

Issue 9 features an interview with Alireza Mashayekhi, an Iranian musician, composer, conductor and painter. He is one of the first composers representing avant-garde, modern and contemporary music in Iran. He is also a pioneer of electroacoustic music in Iran. Besides music, Mashayekhi express his musical ideas through painting. We had a chance to listen to this part of his practice.

We would like to appreciate the participation of our artists and art writers. In addition to our board members, we also had the pleasure of working with international guest writers such as Ivan Bissoli (Italy), Sophie Kazan (UK) and Francesca Merz (Italy).

We are also thankful to our joined design team sponsored by Studio Tehran for their hard work and effort.

Finally, we are announcing the first group exhibition of CI's makers on CI's virtual art space curated by CI's teams to showcase the artistic roots of CI's makers. Take your time and visit this online exhibition on the gallery's website.

Take care everyone
Sara Berti & Elham Shafaei

Asma Belhamar

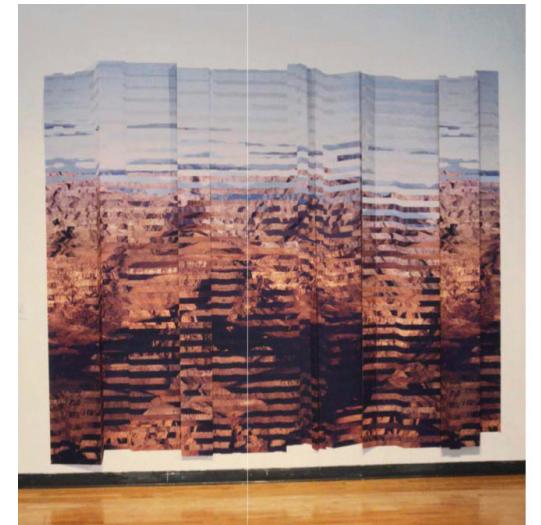
UAE | Sophie Kazan



Façade observation # 4, 2019, Mixed media on canvas, 61x53 cm



The edifice of Sba, 2019, Projection mapping on wood installation structure 800x400 cm



Irreversible view #3, 2017, Digital print on paper (folded), 200x230 cm

Asma Belhamar hails from the beautiful mountain region of Ras Al Khaimah, UAE and her art practice reflects the "chronological history of the [country's] landscape." "Irreversible view 2 ,1 and 3" are massive digital prints on folded paper that layer mountains landscapes and cityscapes, creating a sense of space, energy and timelessness. "Mountains were always an inspiration in my work [and] I'm intrigued by [their]... almost all-encompassing visual weight. "Grids, architectural drawings and facades have also found their way into Belhamar's work. "The Edifice of SBA," is a projection mapping on a large, square wood cube, where window mouldings appear in the mountain landscape. Similarly, Belhamar's "Façade Observations" drawings employ an architectural grid technique: "The grid is a physical response to the moment we are in... Grids hold a moment visually... I am fascinated by pauses and moments in time that say so much about the time we are living."

Martyna Benedyka

Poland | Ivan
Bissoli



Knife on the table, 2016, Oil color on wood, 10.5x14.8 cm

I was impressed about Benedyka's concept of memory: the impossibility of identically replicating two photos, after all, what forces us to do, if not starting with a redefinition of the perceived, revising the signifier associated with a memory, to a single fragment to the extent that the deceptive and misleading memory arbitrarily returns us in relation to what we have seen? In the painting "Knife on the Table" (Oil on Wood 2016), reinforcing the concept of contact emphasized by the icastic encounter of surfaces, the dimensional connections are grasped, just like the knife that cuts the eye in the short film "Un chien Andalou" (Luis Bunuel 1929), the surrealistic translation of a visual expression that becomes reality capable of projecting us to a higher level of perception. Similarly, bringing out the boundary between conscious and unconscious, the artist gives shape to a dividing line to stare the memory as an absolute sign.



Table with cheese, 2015, Oil color on wood, 15x11 cm



Roof, 2015, Oil color on wood, 14.8x21 cm

Jalal Bin Thaneya

UAE | Zoltán Somhegyi



Tire landfill, 2019, Digital photography, 120x160 cm

In Jalal Bin Thaneya's photographs we find ourselves in front of – or, sometimes we can even say: in the middle of – an overwhelming amount of industrial material. Metal machine parts, tires and other elements fill the darkly lit warehouses and large scrap yards, confronting the viewer with the otherwise hidden areas of industrial production. The images trigger ambiguous and contradictory feelings: one may, for example, on the one hand be surprised or even shocked by the sheer amount of these tools, while, on the other hand be amazed of the curious arrangement of them, that results in particular and random artistic qualities documented on the photos.



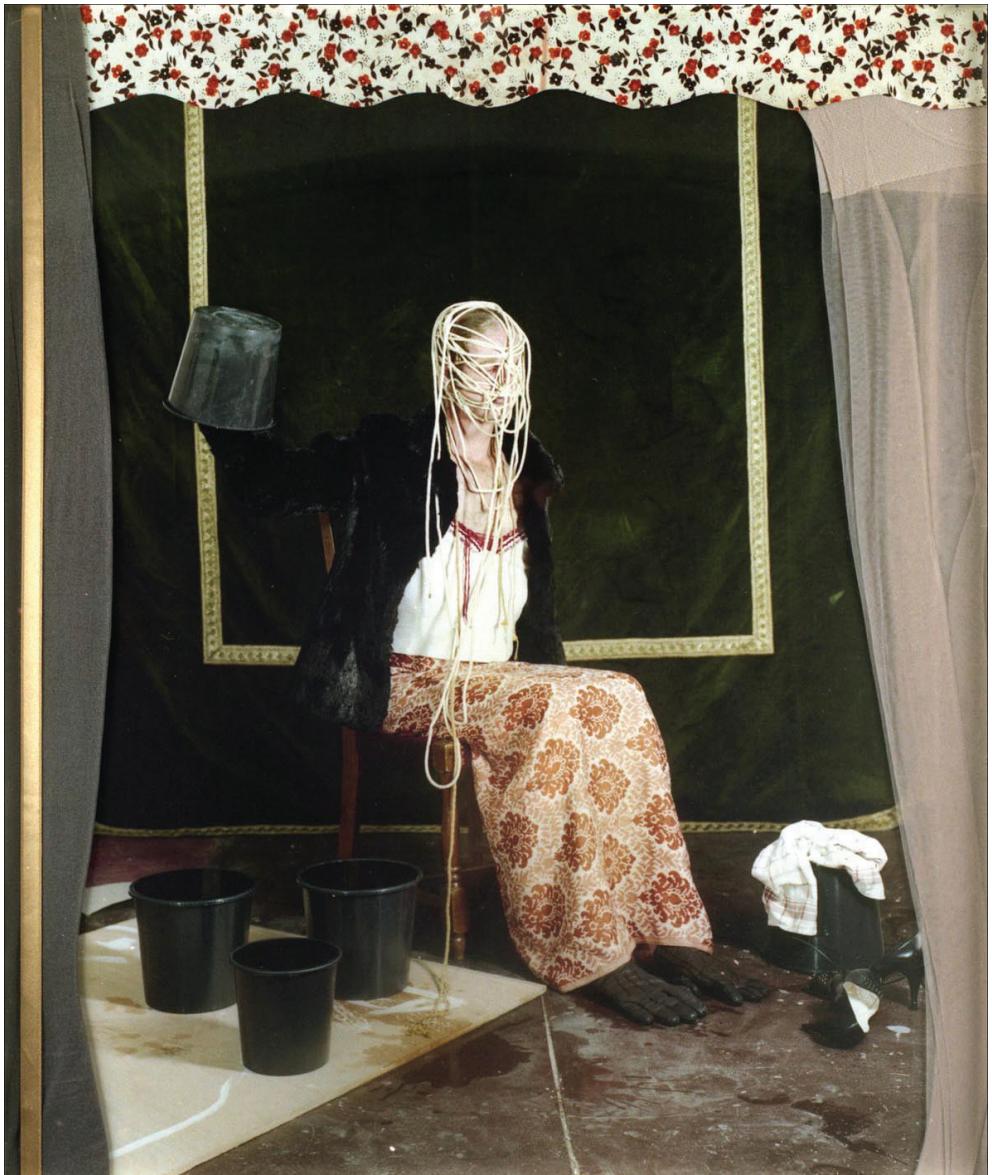
Axle wall 03, 2018, Digital photography, 148x187 cm



Scrap Yard 03, 2019, Digital photography, 148x187 cm

Boris Duhm

Germany Zoltán Somhegyi

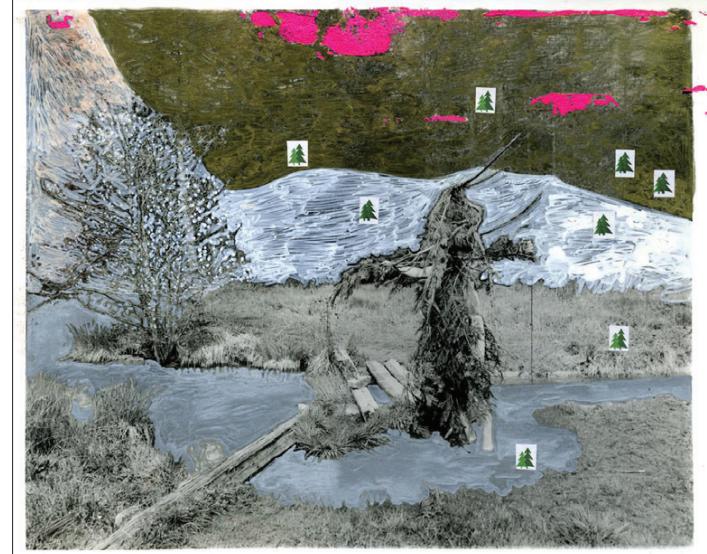


Selfportrait as Fetish Gibbon, 2010, Analogue Baryth photography from 7x6 cm negative, 120x90 cm, Edition: 3+1 AP

Raindance I, Rakita, Slovenia 2010 / Stuer Vorwerk, Germany 2020, Spray paint, enamel and labels on analogue Baryth photography from 6 x 7 cm negative, 26x32 cm, Edition: unique

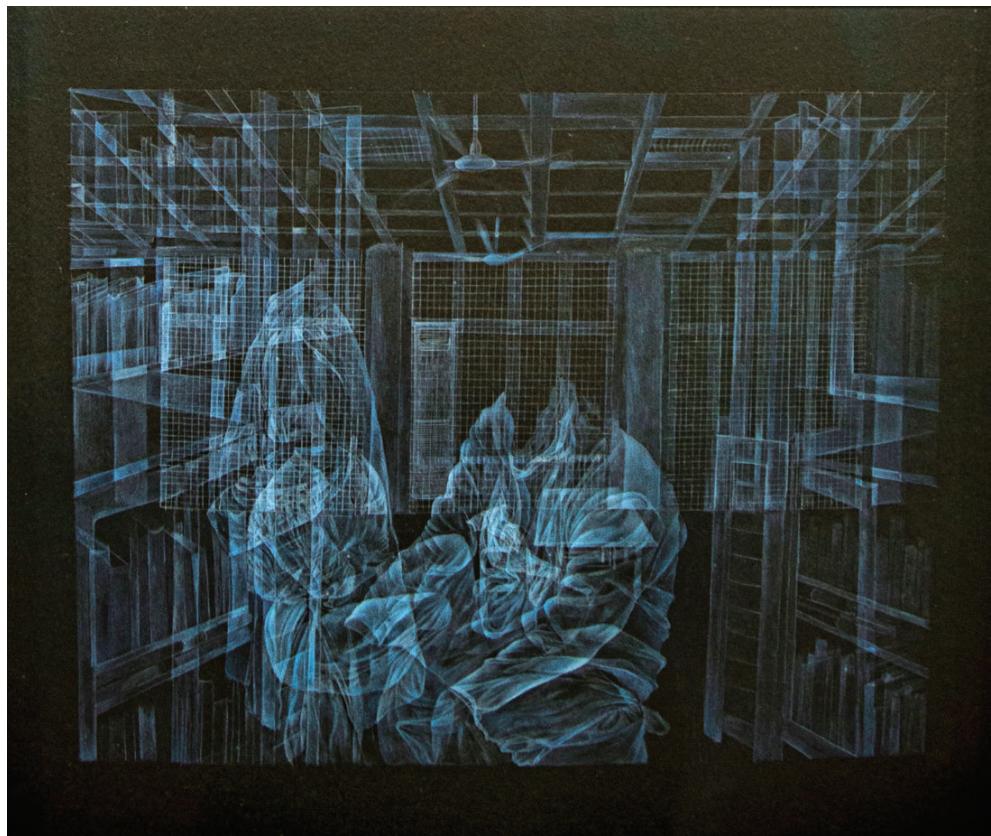


Boris Duhm is interested how to maximalise the possibilities of meaning: instead of narrowing down to or making the observer focus on one interpretation, the artist wants to add more and more levels in the reading of the artworks. In his landscapes for example he overpaints, adds cut-outs from books and creates further figures from pieces of collage, while in his staged photograph self-portrait he includes several objects – seemingly regular, everyday objects – that further open the ways how we can explore his pieces of art. The resulting web of intellectual, emotional and visual references will make us think of the aesthetic nature of these complexities.



Muzna Mahmood

Pakistan | Francesca
Merz



One more glance!, 2018, Gouache on wasli, 25.65x28.70 cm

Muzna Mahmood's work is a research that explores the idea of "Peace" in relation to acceptance and ignorance. How much does our awareness affect the perception of danger, and how much does ignorance affect the ability to harm? The work is so stratified, it starts from the perception of what surrounds us, and it is structured in layers. Layers that are not only spaces for meditation on the theme but also a technical hyperbole capable to get inspired from Pardakht, a traditional dry brush technique of Mughal and Persian miniature painting, updating it in a whirlwind of new volumes.



Pewasta reh shajar se, 2019,
Gouache on wasli, 45.72x 10.16 cm



Shadow of the wind, 2018,
Gouache on wasli, 52.07x39.37 cm

Farhad Nikfam

Azerbaijan

Izmer
Bin Ahmad



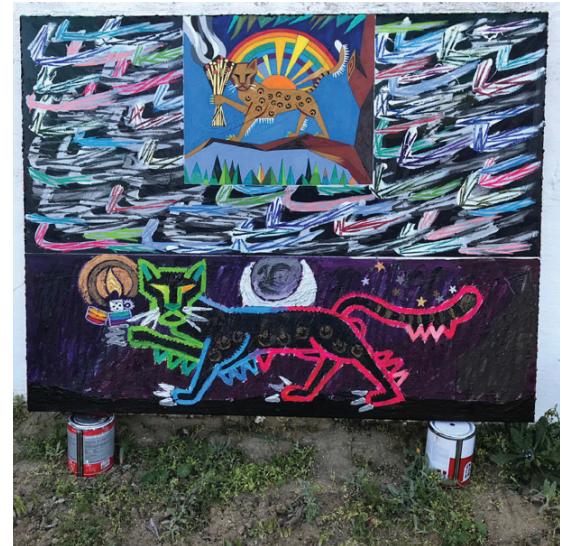
Untitled, 2019, Oil color on canvas, 112x112 cm

All life emerges from maternal enclosure into the exterior of the world. Perhaps it is worth considering that architectural imagination is deeply embedded within and without all life forms. Yet, by virtue of habits and practical reason, we passively define architecture as utilitarian structure without really living its organic essence. The works of Farhad Nikfam activates our architectural unconscious, disemboweling its interiors for our consumption, whether they be

dwelling spaces, staircases, or carpet design. Through geometric composition and angular brushstrokes, these paintings suggest that physical structures are visual messages, even a "story-board" for us to engage with. By re-contextualizing them as such, the artist re-awakens our imagination and sensory experience of structure and space.



Untitled, 2020, Oil color and acrylic on canvas, 85x100 cm



Untitled, 2019, Oil color and acrylic on canvas, 85x100cm

Marie Pourchot

France Izmer
Bin Ahmad



"Lockdown on a kimono" 2020, Paste-up of printing of painting, First on left: "the dark corner of the soul"; second: "war and poetry, the permanent movement" and the last on right: "the imagination is not partitionable", A4, Paris

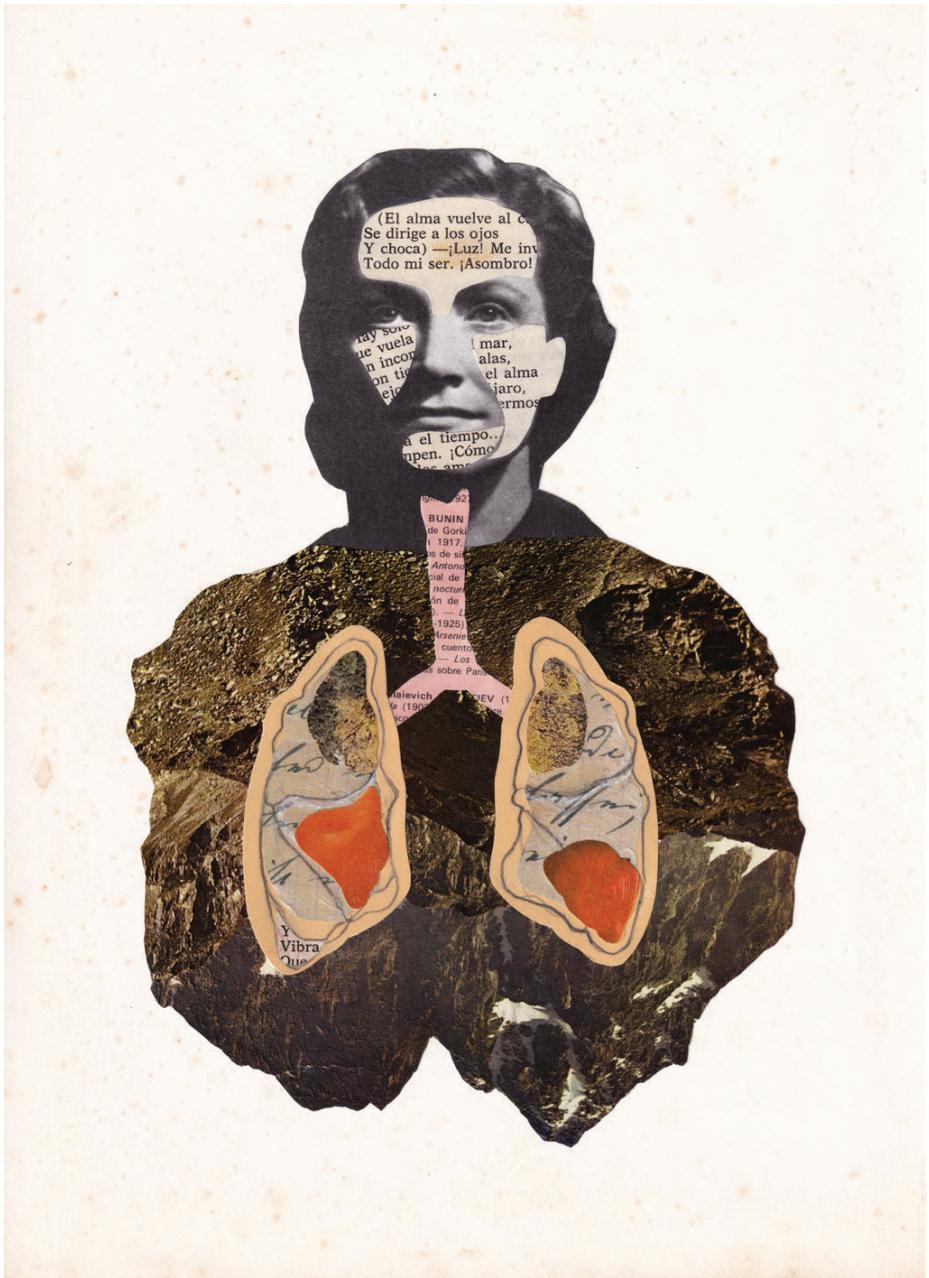
Originally trained as a painter, Marie Pourchot shifted her practice into textile-based art after her encounter with ethnology. Pourchot's stiches displaces her painterly conduct to supplement it with the delayed and thoughtful marks of threads. In doing so, her practice continues the critical legacies of craft that interrupted Euro-American canon of fine arts, a fact that seems to be more so in her choice of pasting her embroidered textile onto public buildings. Her act of 'street embroidery' not only emphasizes the centrality of textile in the bustling of life, but also reminds us of the deviant root of textile at the margin of patriarchal western art history. Anthropological materials introduce Pourchot to the vocabularies of art and life that had been placed outside this history. It is an 'exterior' that is always in relation to that center within, and vice-versa. All artists must thread that historical (un) consciousness, in one way or another.



"Lockdown on a kimono" 2020, Paste-up of printing of painting, First on left: "the dark corner of the soul"; second: "war and poetry, the permanent movement" and the last on right: "the imagination is not partitionable", A4, Paris



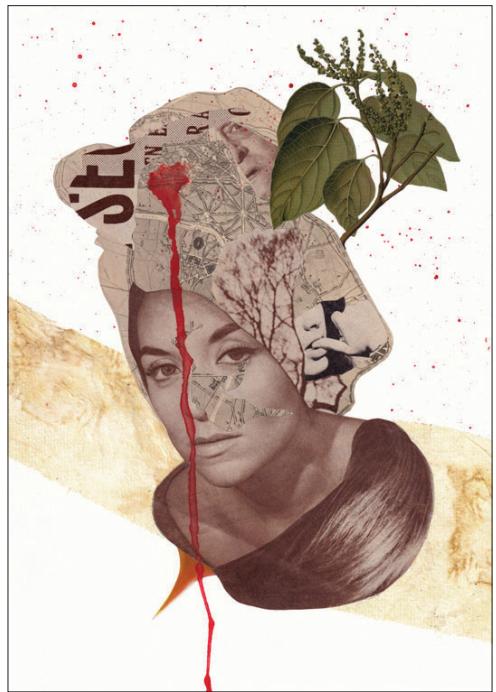
Lockdown on a kimono, 2020, War and poetry, the permanent movement; Engraving of a viking motif on an old piece of kimono, embroidery of the plan of the artist's apartment, painting, A4, 30x37.5 cm (with frame)



Poetic soul, 2020, Mix media collage, 29.7x21 cm



Tuétanos 3, 2020, Mixed media collage, 29.7x21 cm



Tuétanos 1, 2020, Mixed media collage, 29.7x21 cm

A multiple unraveling of narratives is the heart of the review of Laura Quevedo's works, we become part of this unique flow of images often distant from each other and yet so inextricably intertwined, in a chase between different temporal lines maintained in a perfect harmonic balance. An artistic journey that deserves for its wealth of details, its ability to transport the observer into a universe of memories, of indissoluble links between the past and the present, going on a journey that is often also melancholy. With the succession of multiple stories told my mind transports me to a multidimensional universe, from a dreamy perspective view over time, an ocean composed of many small drops whose actions have consequences on all others, and the sense of interdependence is felt vivid; as in the masterpiece Cloud Atlas by (Lana e Lilly Wachowski 2012) , where a journey to the greatest story ever told is staged: that of mankind.

Amin Roshan

Iran Sophie Kazan



Aircraft and ancient, 2019, Watercolor, crude oil, silk screen on map paper, 59.5x83.5 cm, Edition of 5

Amin Roshan is a Tehran-based Iranian artist who explores the history of oil exploration in Iran, principally using crude oil as a material. "[Oil has had] an extensive impact and influence, not only on my life and my family, but also on the geography of Iran," he says. "I was born where the first oil well in the Middle East was discovered, Naftoon district of Masjed Soleiman, a southwestern city near the border of Iran and Iraq... all the memories are still vivid to me. The smell of oil streams, childhood



Still life no. III, 2020, Chrome sphere, gravity and light, C-Type Print, 138x138 cm, Editions: 3 + 1 A/P



Hive, 2019, Watercolor, crude oil, silk screen on map paper, 59.5 x 83.5 cm, Edition of 5

games with tar, walking over oil pipelines on the way of school ..." Roshan uses oil collected from a valley near his birthplace and creates silkscreen images from his childhood and imagined scenes, using memorabilia, old photographs and maps collected from Iran's recent and colonial history.

"Jikak's Crown" is a British-made oil-worker's helmet engraved in an Iranian miniaturist style.

Sonalika Vakili

Iran | Francesca
Merz



Home pandemic series: Untimely nap, 2020, Digital photography, photomontage, 70x100 cm

Sonalika Vakili's work brings us back to an intimate and necessary dimension for these times. Her work explores our deepest feelings experienced in the period of lockdown. The artist analyzes the concept of finding oneself not only with oneself, but in relation to everyday objects. To be resized is our concept of home: the objects around us are not limited to being strangers, but we immerse ourselves in them, and they in us. Sonalika Vakili's art helps us to explore this new dimension.

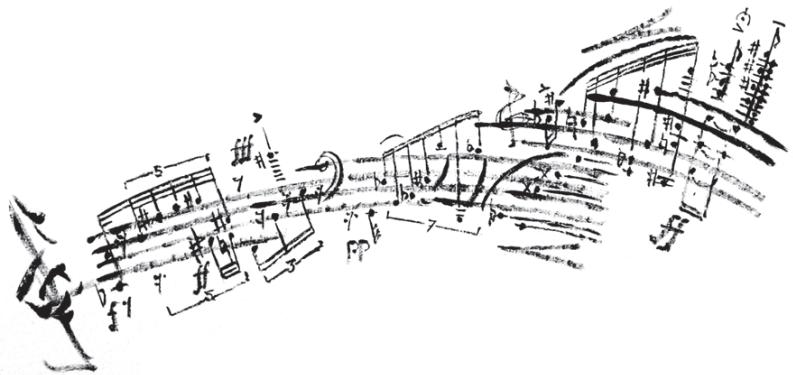


Home pandemic series: My window, 2020, Digital photography, photomontage, 70x100 cm



Home pandemic series: Every morning, 2020, Digital photography, photomontage, 70x100 cm

Alireza Mashayekhi



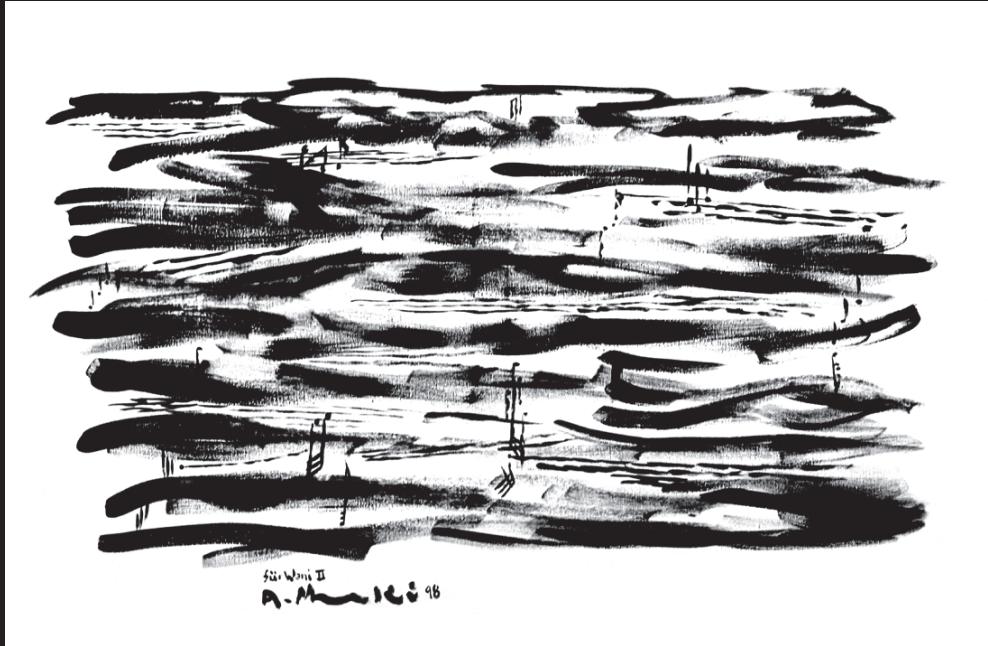
für Wanj
Mar. 93

Avec Chopin, 1993, Acrylic on canvas, 49x59 cm

CI: Tell us about your early influences.

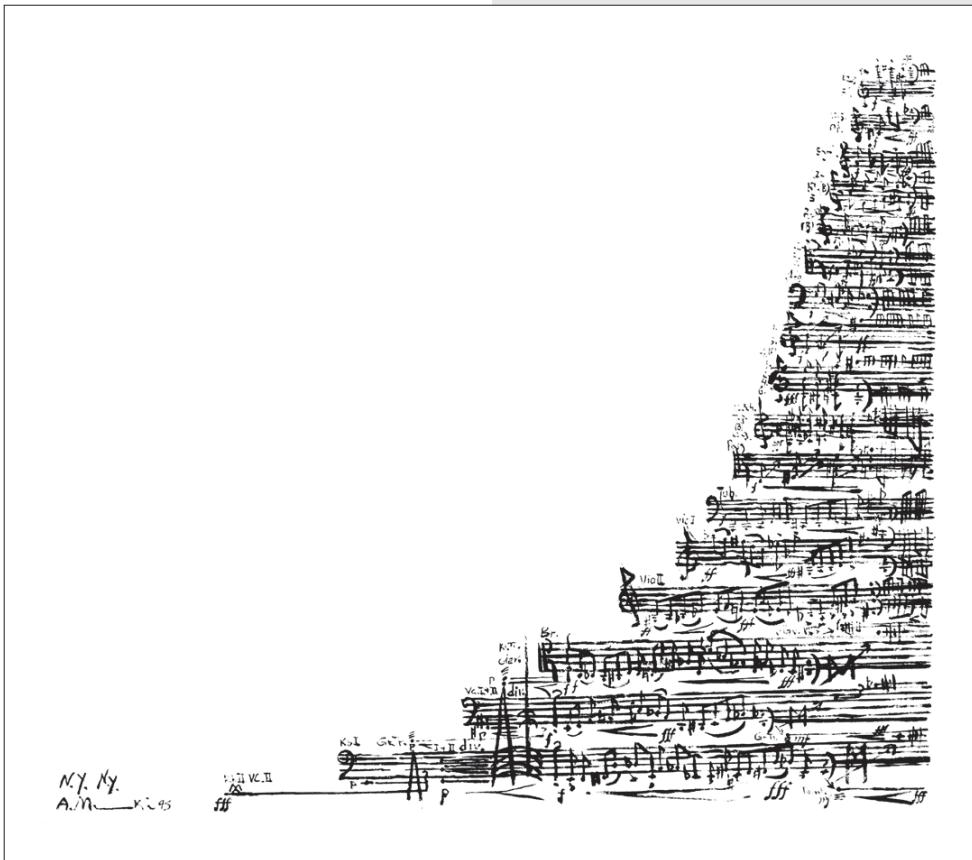
AM: When I was about 12 or 13 years old, I liked to repeat melodies of classical music. Classic romantic music was frequently played on the radio at that time. I gradually realized that I didn't like the ending of many of those pieces. When I was singing the melodies, I began to modify the endings and finally realized that it was better to change the coda. That was my first inspiration for composing. But at the same time, I liked to write prose.

A.M. K.
93



My horizon, 1998., Acrylic on canvas, 50x80 cm

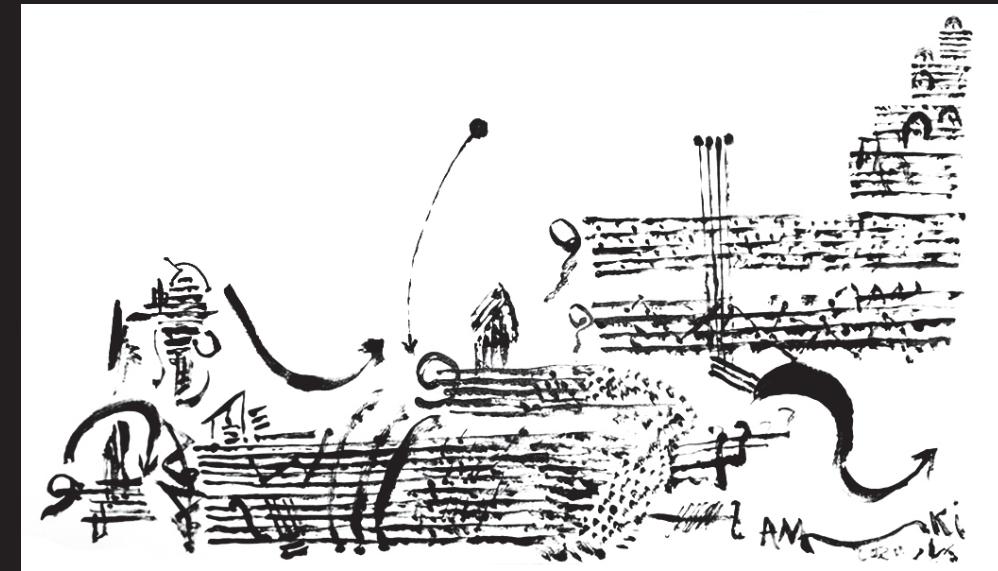
I wrote music and short stories but almost never painted. Eventually I decided to devote myself entirely to music and so I enrolled in the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna in order to study composition. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to study with Hanns Jelinek who is in my opinion the most important theorist of the Second Viennese School. He was Arnold Schoenberg's student and one of the most famous pioneers of twelve-tone music. Reading the Persian poet Omar Khayam and French writer Andre Gide and discovering Anton Webern's music had made me very curious about all musical fields.



New York, N.Y., 1995, Acrylic on canvas, 80x100 cm

CI: How has your practice change over time?

AM: My curiosity, through Jelinek's guidance, introduced me to huge areas of the musical world heretofore unknown to me. When I started to think about the depth of music, I came to the conclusion that a philosophical background could enrich musical content even further. This thought led me to my thesis about the philosophy of music and it was also at this time that I developed a serious interest in painting. When I started to express my new ideas in musical form, I was forced to design new notational shapes in order to express some of my musical ideas. These new shapes gradually developed a double function. I was able to express my music the way I wanted through my own notation, and at the same time my new notation inspired me to paint in a new style.



Modulation I, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, 50x80 cm

CI: Can you briefly explain about your paintings?

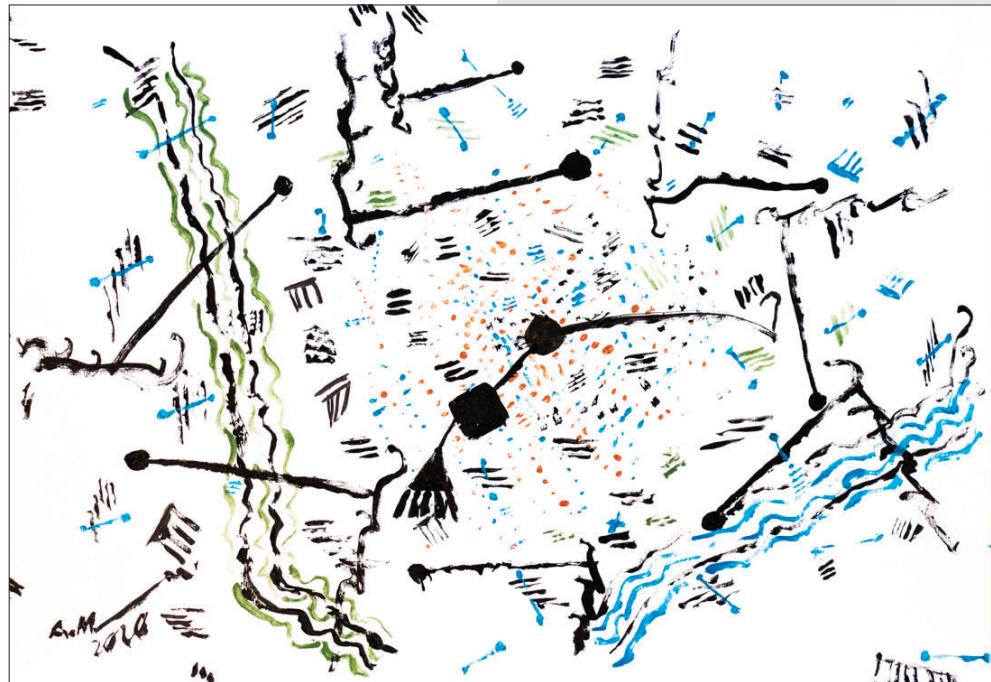
AM: Most of my paintings are either abstract or reminiscent of places I've lived in or inspired by foreign subjects. For example, my painting Manderly was inspired by "Rebecca", the famous novel by Daphne du Maurier and my painting New York, N.Y. was inspired by New York's landscape.

CI: What does your work aim to say?

AM: Reflecting back on the very beginning of my career, the most useful advice I came across was from Andre Gide who said "I should build my own road to my own style". We can actually neither create tomorrow's nor yesterday's art. We are at most qualified to talk about our own era's culture and by doing this I believe we automatically contribute to contemporary culture.



Modulation II, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, 50x100 cm



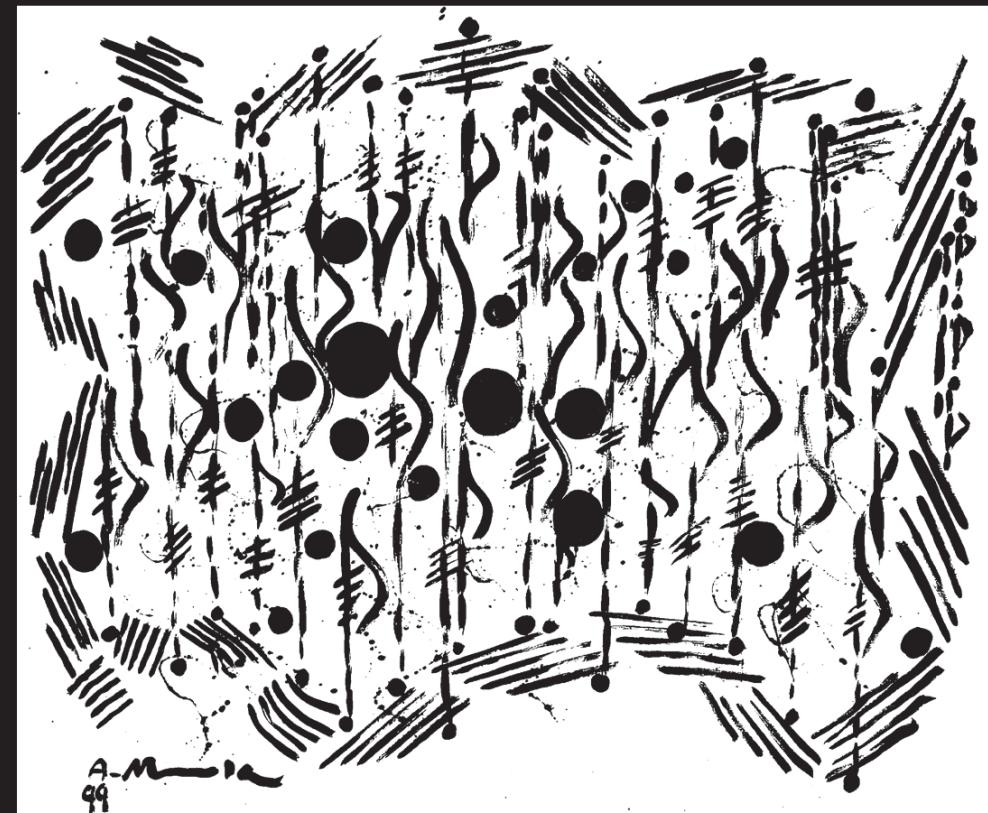
Memories, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, 90x120 cm

CI: What memorable responses have you had to your work?

AM: When I was about to finish my first painting on canvas, my mother came to me and saw my painting, stood several seconds in front of it and then said "this is unbelievably beautiful and possibly the first step of a very long journey". It was an encouragement that has lasted throughout my life.

CI: What do you think about the contemporary art world?

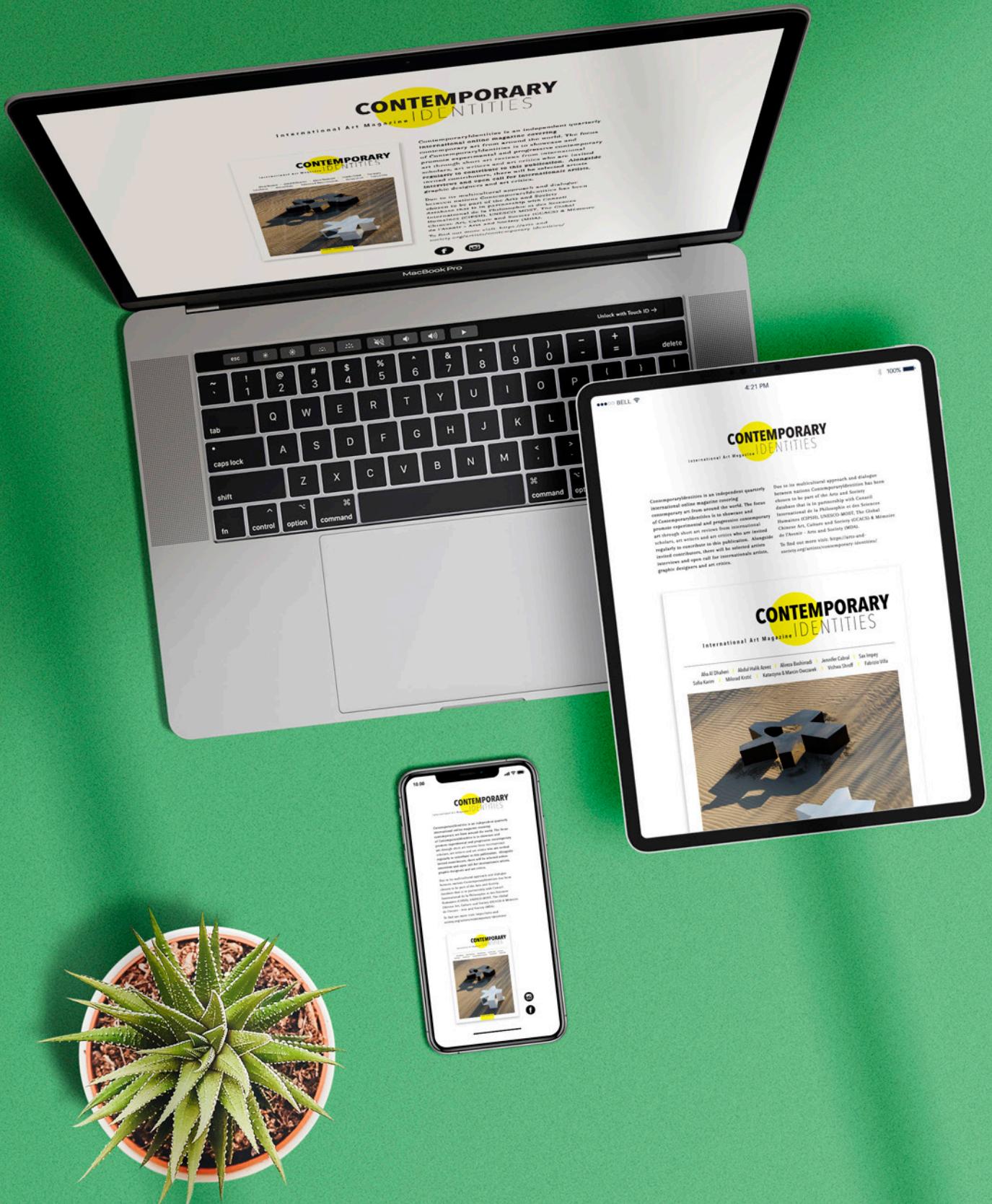
AM: I must say that unfortunately, in some countries as in mine, there is little attention and affection for contemporary art and new music. Nevertheless, I am very impressed by the activities of contemporary Iranian artists. They are definitely more active than Iranian musicians.



Fight, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, 80x100 cm



Polyphony, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, 30x100 cm



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