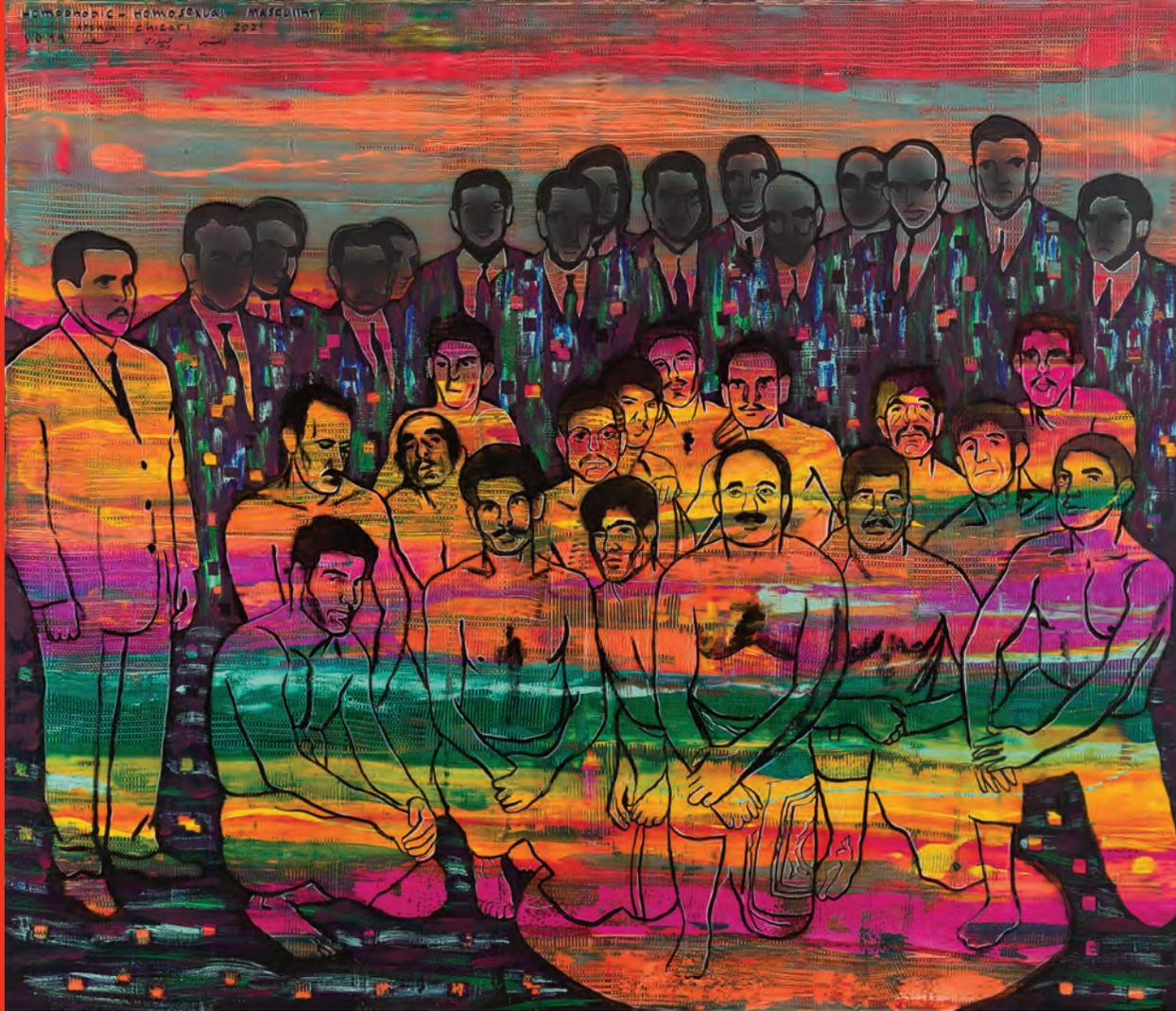


Portfolio

# Afshin Chizari

Visual Artist/Set Designer

# “Unlearning” Series



Mixed Media on Canvas, 200\*170 cm, Iran, 2021

This series is based on family photo archives collected through an open call on social media. I asked people to send me group photos featuring only men, and I received numerous examples that reflected a patriarchal society. These paintings highlight the absence of women and explore how this exclusion shapes the way we narrate history. The series, consisting of 25 large paintings (each 2 meters on one side), examines the impact of removing women from our masculine culture and its stories.





Mixed Media on Canvas, 200\*130 cm, Iran, 2021

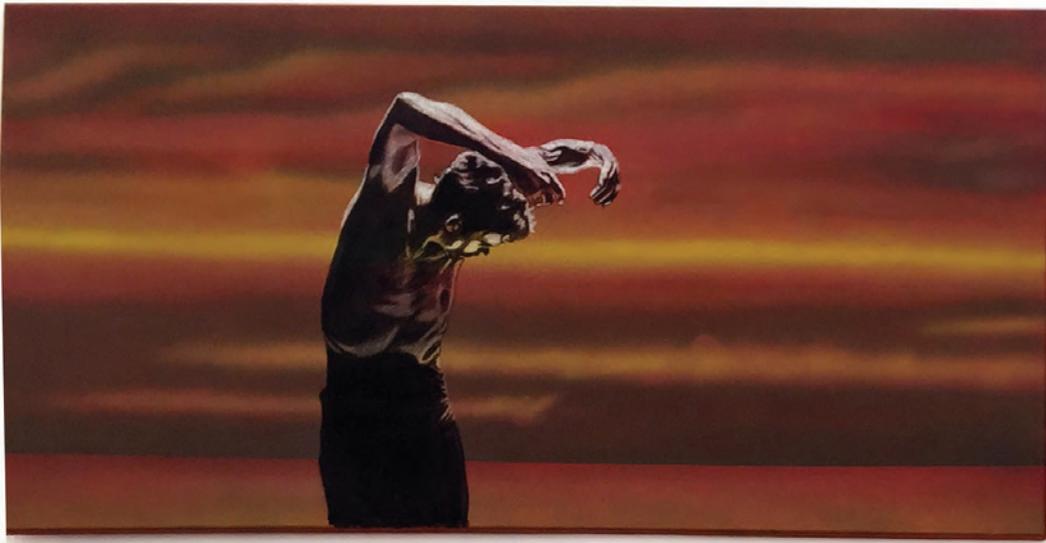
Mixed Media on Canvas, 200\*130 cm, Iran, 2021



# "A Day As If..." Series



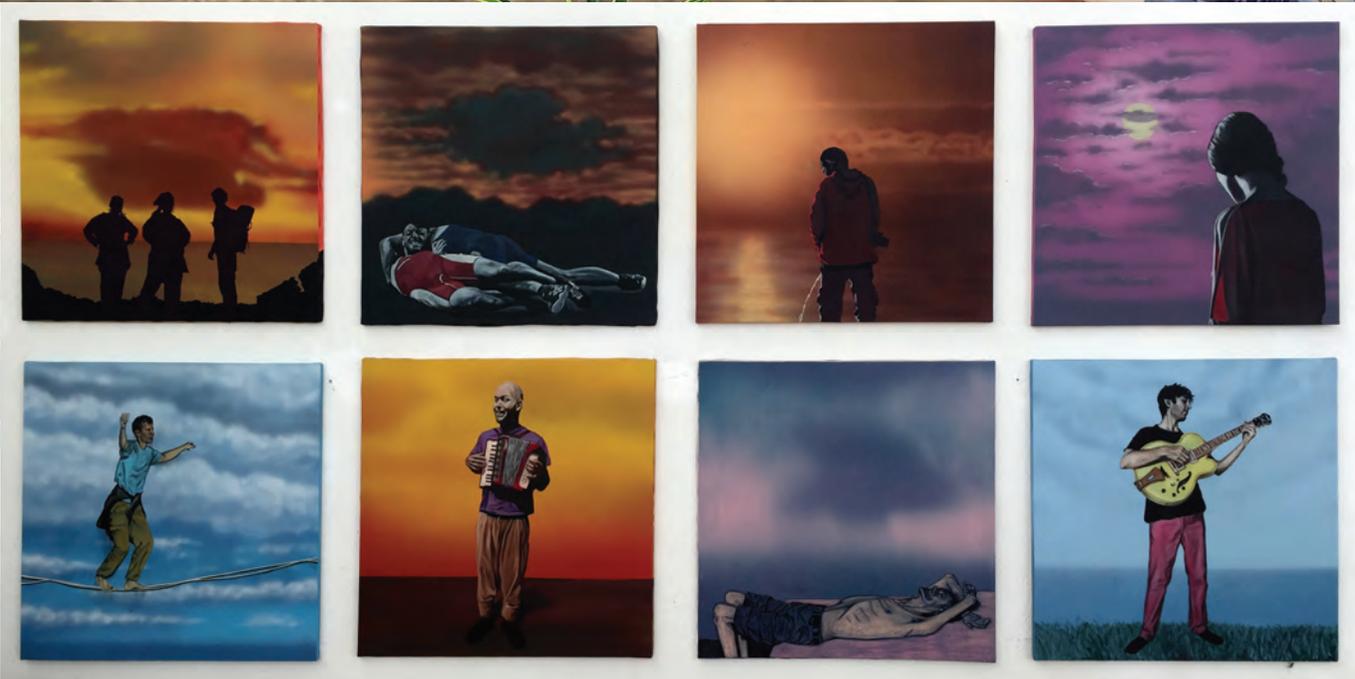
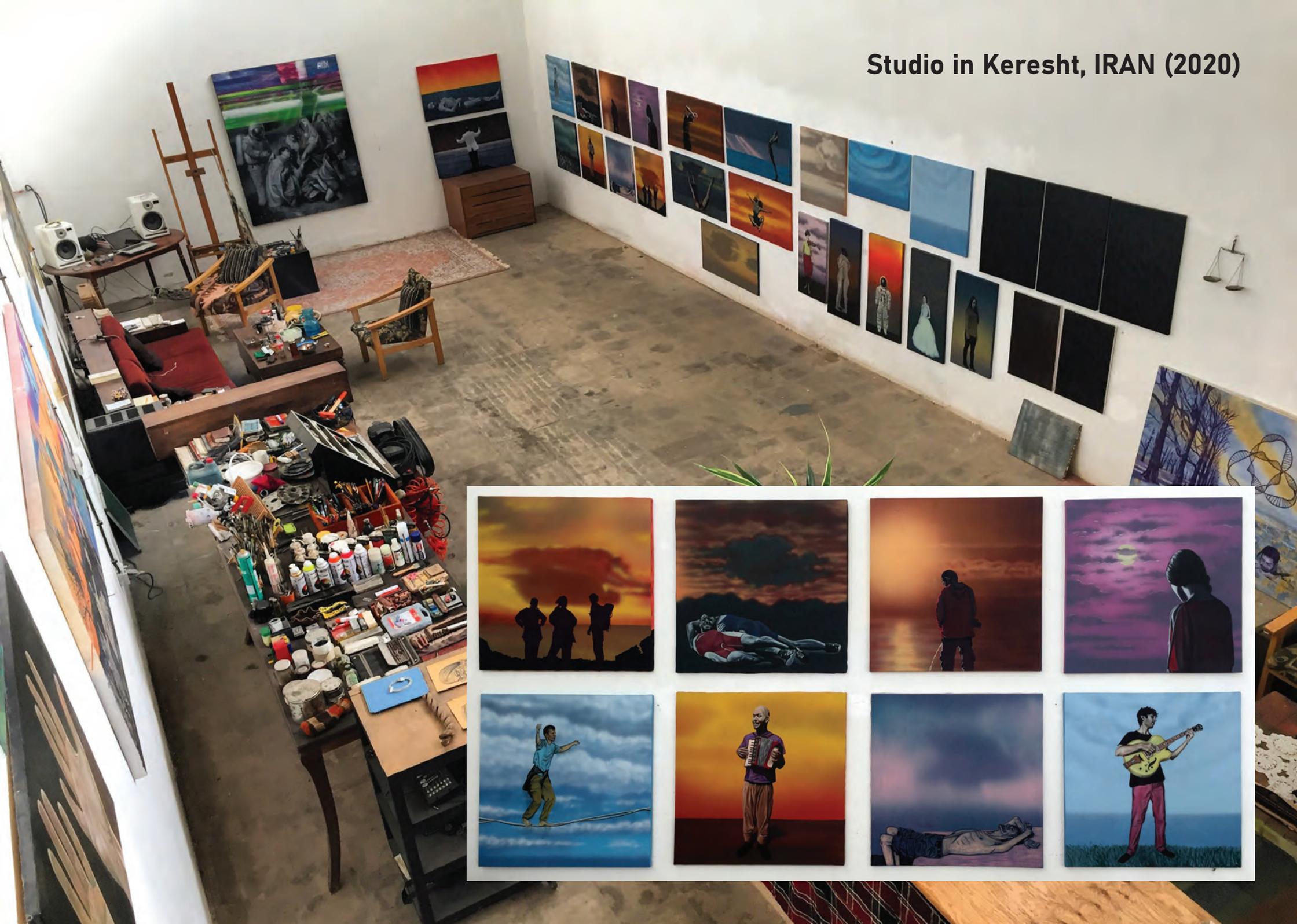
Mixed Media on Canvas, 250\*140 cm (each) Iran, 2020



**Mixed Media**  
**on Canvas,**  
**100\*50 cm (each)**  
**Iran, 2020**

This series was created during the COVID-19 pandemic. Each piece is painted on canvas, combining airbrushed backgrounds with figures rendered in oil paints. The series blends elements of painting, sculpture, dance, and photography. It explores different color palettes and focuses on human gestures, capturing distinct states of being or inner emotions. The solitary figures reflect the isolation experienced during the pandemic.

# Studio in Keresht, IRAN (2020)



**“Afshin +  
Keywan”**  
**Duo Painting  
Project**



Mixed Media  
on Canvas,  
200\*140 cm,  
Iran, 2020

# Installation view, Exhibition at O Gallery, Tehran, IRAN (2019)



بی آن کله بدانی حرف زده ای  
بی آن کله بدانی زنده بوده ای  
بی آن کله بدانی کرده ای.

ساعت را به بریس شکست می کشند  
از هوا حرف بزن شکست می کشند  
نام مادرت را به باد بیاور  
شکل و تصویر کنش را

سریع! از چیز کوچکی آغاز کن  
مثلاً رنگها مثلاً رنگ زرد  
سبز اسم چند نوع درخت

به دزدی کله نیست فشار بیاور  
فصلها را مثلاً برف  
سریع باش. سریع

چیزی برای بودنش پیدا کن. فور بردار  
ممکن است بقیه چیزها پادت بیاید

سریع! وگرنه  
واقعاً  
به بریکت  
عادت، کرده ای.

شهرام شبداپی

*“Nashr — Independent & Collaborative  
Publishing Platform”*

**NĀSHR**  
p u b l i c a t i o n



Four-meter uncut drawing folded into a Book Edition of 100, Printed at Bethanien Creative Quarter, Berlin, 2023



## **Nashr – Independent & Collaborative Publishing Platform**

### **Founded 2023, ongoing**

In 2023, I founded Nashr, an independent and collaborative publishing platform focused on limited-edition printed matter. Situated at the intersection of drawing, printmaking, text, poetry, and conversation, Nashr approaches publishing as both an artistic and political practice. Rather than treating books as finished objects, the platform prioritizes interaction, use, and collective authorship.

Nashr was publicly presented in collaboration with Tehran Contemporary Sounds (TCS) and Somos Gallery and Residency during the one-day event Self-Publishing as Resistance. The event combined a temporary exhibition, a live artist talk, and the first public presentation of five Nashr projects, opening the platform to a broader audience and framing self-publishing as a form of artistic autonomy.

Since its founding, Nashr has produced four self-published books in limited editions of 100 copies. The first three publications form the series Mirroring, collaborative notebook/artbooks composed of approximately four meters of uncut folded paper. One side contains my drawings; the other remains blank, inviting readers to intervene and complete the work. Through Nashr, publishing becomes a living, relational process rather than a fixed output.

#### **Links:**

<https://somos-arts.org/self-publishing-as-resistance/>

<https://tehrancontemporarysounds.com/tcs-events/>

<https://afshinchizari.com/mirroring/>

*“Laughing in a Burning House”*



Multimedia installation from the final exhibition of the residency, presented at SCHIESSLHAUS AiR, Kollnburg, Germany, 2023



This series began with copper printmaking and evolved into a sculpture installation. The installation features two figures: one made of plaster, which remains intact, and the other crafted from 200 kg of wax, resembling a large candle. During a six-hour burning process, the wax figure melts away, leaving behind an empty embrace. This piece is dedicated to those who lose loved ones to the fires of oppression and war.

Screenshots from video of life-size sculpture, 200 KG, Wax & Plaster, Presented at SCHIESSLHAUS AiR, Kollnburg, Germany, 2023

## **Laughing in a Burning House**

### **Multimedia installation, Schießhaus AiR, Munich, 2023**

This project was developed during a two-month residency at Schießhaus AiR in Munich, marking my relocation from Tehran to Germany. Laughing in a Burning House took the form of a room-scale multimedia installation unfolding as a durational event.

The work combined copper printmaking, a hanging drawing installation, and a video documenting a six-hour sculpture made from approximately 600 kilograms of paraffin candles. As the sculpture slowly burned, no physical trace remained; the video became the only surviving form. The space was illuminated exclusively by candlelight, creating an atmosphere shaped by fragility, disappearance, and temporal transformation.

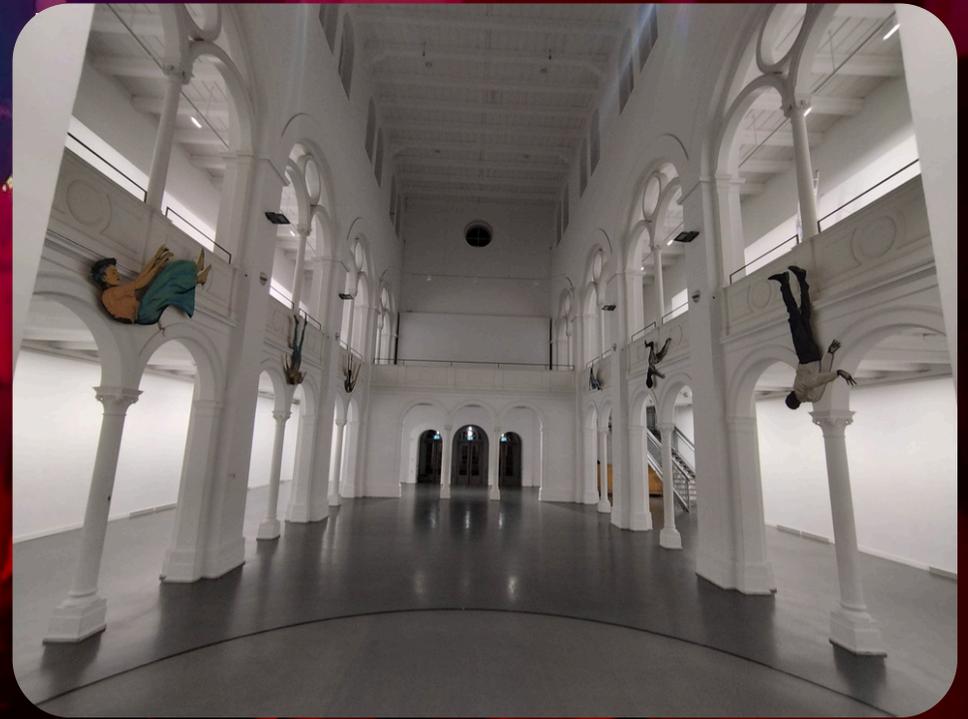
Through the interaction of materials and media, the installation investigated absence, loss, and the quiet persistence of grief carried by ordinary people whose stories are erased from dominant historical narratives. Rather than offering a linear story, the work operated through duration and material erosion. The installation was presented in the residency's final exhibition and accompanied by a poem by an Iranian poet who died young. The work was dedicated to those living with the irreversible absence of their beloved ones.

#### **Links:**

<https://www.schiesslhaus-air.eu/news/currentartistsinresidence2023> <https://afshinchizari.com/burning-sculpture/>  
<https://afshinchizari.com/laughing-in-a-burning-house/>

Installation view at Kunstquartier Bethanien Berlin

*“Figures of Displacement”*





**Painted Wood Panels, Stage Design for Tehran Contemporary Sound festival at Bethanien Creative Quarter, Berlin, Nov. 2024**

## **Tehran Contemporary Sounds (TCS) Festival 2024**

### **Stage Design , Bethanien Creative Quarter, Berlin**

I was invited to develop the stage design for the 5th edition of Tehran Contemporary Sounds (TCS) Festival, held from November 1–3, 2024 at Bethanien Creative Quarter in Berlin. TCS presents Iranian musicians and artists living in exile, and the stage was approached as a spatial extension of the festival’s historical and emotional context rather than a neutral backdrop.

Working closely with the festival’s organizer, Behrooz Moosavi, we sought a visual language that reflected our shared position in Berlin while remaining attentive to the present moment. The work emerged through a painting-based process in my studio, where human figures appeared through experiments with scale and layering. These figures were informed by experiences of displacement—bodies suspended between places, histories, and states of belonging.

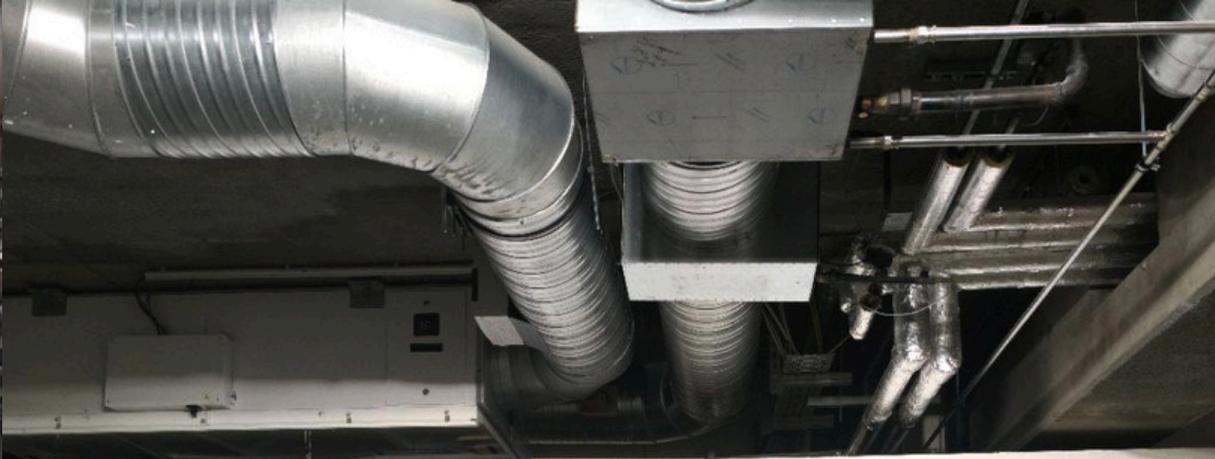
Life-size figures were painted on wooden panels without background or narrative context, then physically cut out using a saw. Detached from their visual ground, the figures were installed using ropes and suspended in the air throughout the three-day festival. Presented alongside live performances, the static bodies formed a quiet spatial counterpoint to sound, movement, and audience circulation.

#### **Links:**

<https://tehrancontemporarysounds.com/past-events-2/tcs-festival-2024/tcs-festival-2024-2/>

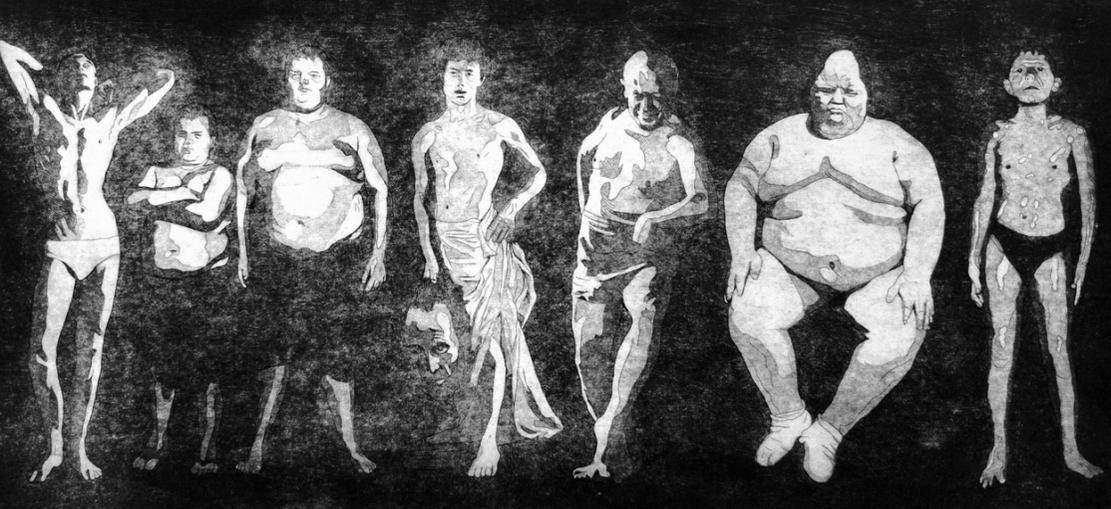
<https://www.instagram.com/p/DBjLZo2Iw7s/>

[https://www.instagram.com/reel/DCP5k\\_itS4G/](https://www.instagram.com/reel/DCP5k_itS4G/)



*“Timeless entanglement”*





## **Timeless Entanglement**

### **Printmaking residency and exhibition project, 2025**

I was selected as Printmaker of the Year 2025 for an artist residency at Quellenhof, which provided a fully funded one-month stay, access to an extensive printmaking studio, and production support. The residency allowed me to deepen a practice I have pursued since the age of eighteen, beginning with my training in copper printmaking at the School of Fine Arts in Tehran and continuing through years of artistic and pedagogical engagement.

During the residency, I produced a series of eight large-scale etching and aquatint works titled Timeless Entanglement. The project combines an investigation into the technical history of printmaking—from Renaissance traditions to contemporary processes—with a conceptual inquiry into post-internet image culture.

The works draw from an extensive archive of images collected online, reflecting fragmented visual memories shaped by war, planetary crises, and shared global experiences such as the COVID-19 pandemic. These images circulate as collective subconscious material rather than fixed narratives. The series asks how historical printmaking techniques can slow down, materialize, and critically process contemporary images that otherwise move endlessly through digital space.

#### **Links:**

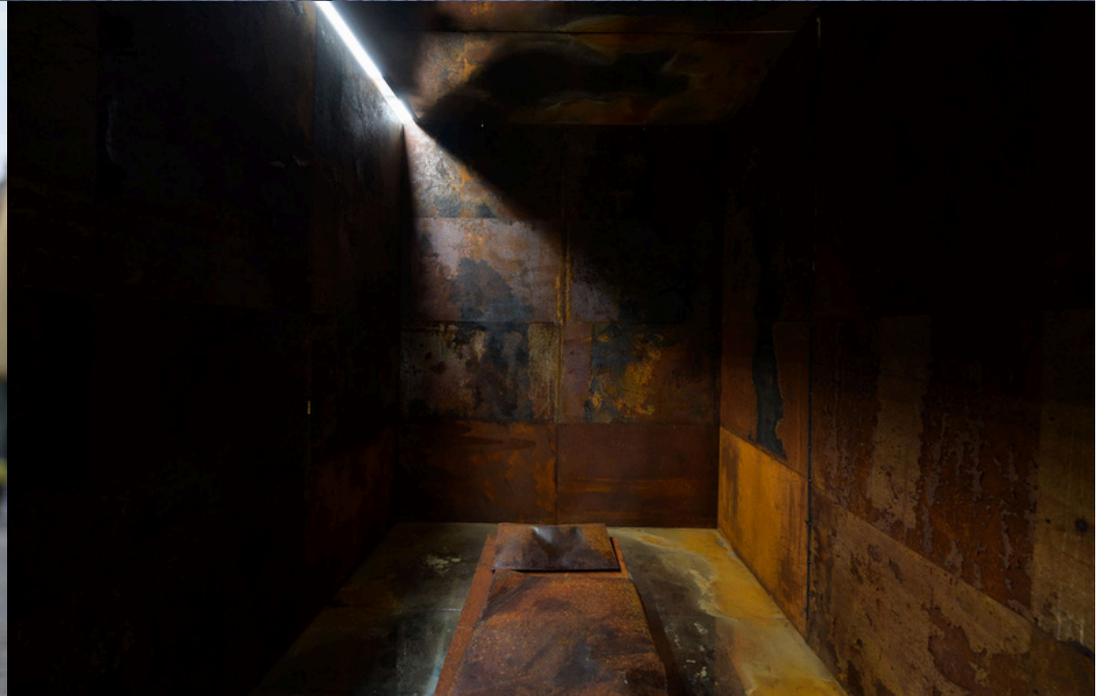
<https://www.quellen-hof.de/kulturgut-quellenhof/artists-in-residence/>

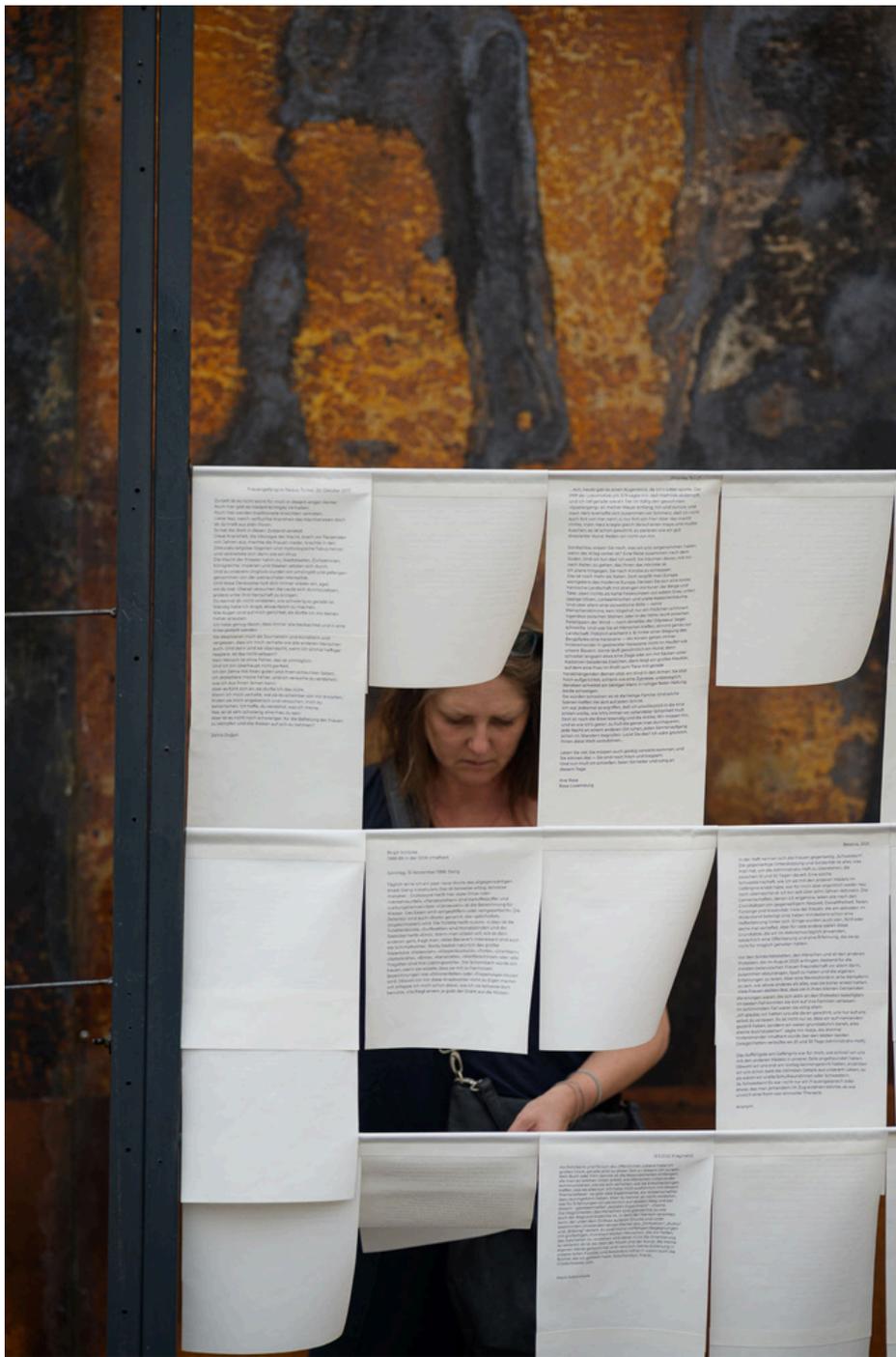
<https://www.lichtenstein-stiftung.de/galerie/index.php?d=12838>

<https://www.spektakel.wien/events/ausstellung-afshin-chizari/> <https://youtu.be/nL1F4a9-OpA>



*“Commissions and Collaboration”  
Tanzpol festival & Hab keine angst*





## Hab Keine Angst / Don't Be Afraid Public installation collaboration, Leipzig, 2024

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Hab Keine Angst is a public space installation by Shahrzad Rahmani, presented in the city center of Leipzig. The work takes the form of a single-person prison cell constructed from metal panels and addresses freedom of speech and political imprisonment worldwide.

I collaborated on this project as an illustrator and artistic contributor, bringing lived experience into the work. During the Woman Life Freedom movement, I was detained in a prison cell in Iran. Rahmani invited me to share insight into the material and psychological reality of political incarceration, which informed the conceptual development of the piece.

On the day of presentation, I entered the cell for an extended period and used sharp tools to scratch sentences, poems, and keywords into the metal walls—echoing a long tradition of inscriptions in political prisons. The title originates from a memory I shared with Rahmani: a sentence scratched in Farsi —“don't be scared”—that I encountered during my own detention.

My contribution also included ongoing artistic support and video documentation of the installation.

Link:

<https://www.shahrzadrahmani.com/hab-keine-angst/>

<https://youtu.be/OV-ix2ltfnf?si=cD7jX9fAlFxzE5ot>



## Tanzpol Festival 2024 – Visual Identity

### Commissioned artistic visual identity, Berlin

I was commissioned to develop the complete visual identity for Tanzpol Festival 2024, a Berlin-based contemporary dance festival. The project included posters, flyers, website visuals, logo design, printed publications, and a central video teaser announcing the festival.

Rather than approaching the commission as a graphic branding exercise, I treated it as an artistic investigation into how digital images detach from bodies and return to material space. For the video teaser, I collected portrait photographs of the festival's artists and crew and projected their faces onto various urban surfaces across Berlin using a mobile projector. These projections were filmed on site and transformed back into digital moving images. The city functioned as both screen and collaborator.

This process of extracting images from the digital realm, embedding them temporarily into physical space, and recording them again informed the visual language of the entire festival. Each design element followed its own internal logic while remaining part of a coherent system. At the conclusion of the festival, I designed a publication illustrating four critical texts, extending the project into the field of artistic research in contemporary dance.

Links:

<https://tanzpol-berlin.de/en/about/>

<https://tanzpol-berlin.de/en/media/>

<https://afshinchizari.com/collaboration/>