



"THE STORYTELLER"

A collection of contemporary narratives

"The Storyteller"

A collection of contemporary narratives

Curated by Behrang Samadzadegan



The Storyteller
*A collection of
contemporary narratives*

Contemporary art is often seen as challenging and even perplexing, with artworks that may seem abstract or devoid of traditional forms of representation. However, at the heart of much contemporary art lies a powerful narrative or story, one that the artist is seeking to communicate. Artists who work with narratives may use a variety of mediums, from painting and sculpture to video and installation art. In each case, the artist is using their chosen medium to create a narrative that engages the viewer and invites them to consider complex issues and ideas.

One way in which artists use narrative is to tell stories about themselves or their personal experiences. Other artists use narrative to explore social and political issues, such as race, gender, identity, and political crisis, and some use narrative to create fictional worlds or alternate realities. In all of these cases, the artist is acting as a storyteller, using their chosen medium to create a narrative that engages and challenges the viewer. By working with narrative, contemporary artists are able to create works that are not only visually striking but also intellectually and emotionally stimulating.

The artists selected for this exhibition aim to convey the power of storytelling through a focus on contextual and situational realities. By observing and reflecting on these realities, they seek to intensify the empathic perception of intimacy, fragility, and micro-history. The singularity and authenticity of each situation and contextual meaning are crucial elements in their approach to storytelling. By emphasizing the concreteness of singular, situational, and contextual realities, the artists hope to create a poetic and powerful narrative that enhances sensitivity to the diverse and complex anthropological realities of our world.

Overall, it seems that the artists are exploring the ways in which contemporary narratives can be shaped by the relevance of specific contextual or situational meanings. By highlighting the lived realities of individuals and communities, they hope to create a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of the world around us. Walter Benjamin's essay "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov" reflects on the loss of the art of storytelling and the impact of industrialization and modernity on traditional forms of communication. Benjamin argues that the act of storytelling is more than just a means of transmitting information, but a way of connecting individuals to their cultural and historical roots.

The exhibition title, inspired by Benjamin's essay, suggests that the art of storytelling is still present today but is in danger of being lost. It emphasizes the importance of retaining and preserving stories as a means of keeping alive our cultural heritage. The title also alludes to the idea that the act of storytelling is a communal activity, one that requires both a storyteller and a listener. Through the act of listening, the listener becomes a part of the story and is able to retain it in their memory, passing it on to others in the future. Overall, the exhibition title suggests that the art of storytelling is a valuable cultural tradition that needs to be preserved and nurtured in the face of modernity and technological progress.

"For storytelling is always the art of repeating stories, and this art is lost when the stories are no longer retained. It is lost because there is no more weaving and spinning to go on while they are being listened to. The more selfforgetful the listener is, the more deeply is what he listens to impressed upon his memory. When the rhythm of work has seized him, he listens to the tales in such a way that the gift of retelling them comes to him all by itself. This, then, is the nature of the web in which the gift of storytelling is cradled. This is how today it is becoming unravelled at all its ends after being woven thousands of years ago in the ambience of the oldest forms of craftsmanship". Walter Benjamin, 'The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov, 1936.

Written by Behrang Samadzadegan



Arash Nazari
Bizhan Slays Nasiban and
Stems the Turanin Night Raid
2022
Oil on canvas
150 X 450 cm



Melis Buyruk
Colour of Night
2022
Black Poercelain, copper decorated
147 x 117 cm



Melis Buyruk
Falcon's Habitat
2022
Porcelain, 18 k gold detailed
175 x 155 cm



Azza AlQubaisi
Al Manhal
2009
Wood
70 x 80 x 150 cm



Parinaz Eleish Gharagozlou

All For Sale

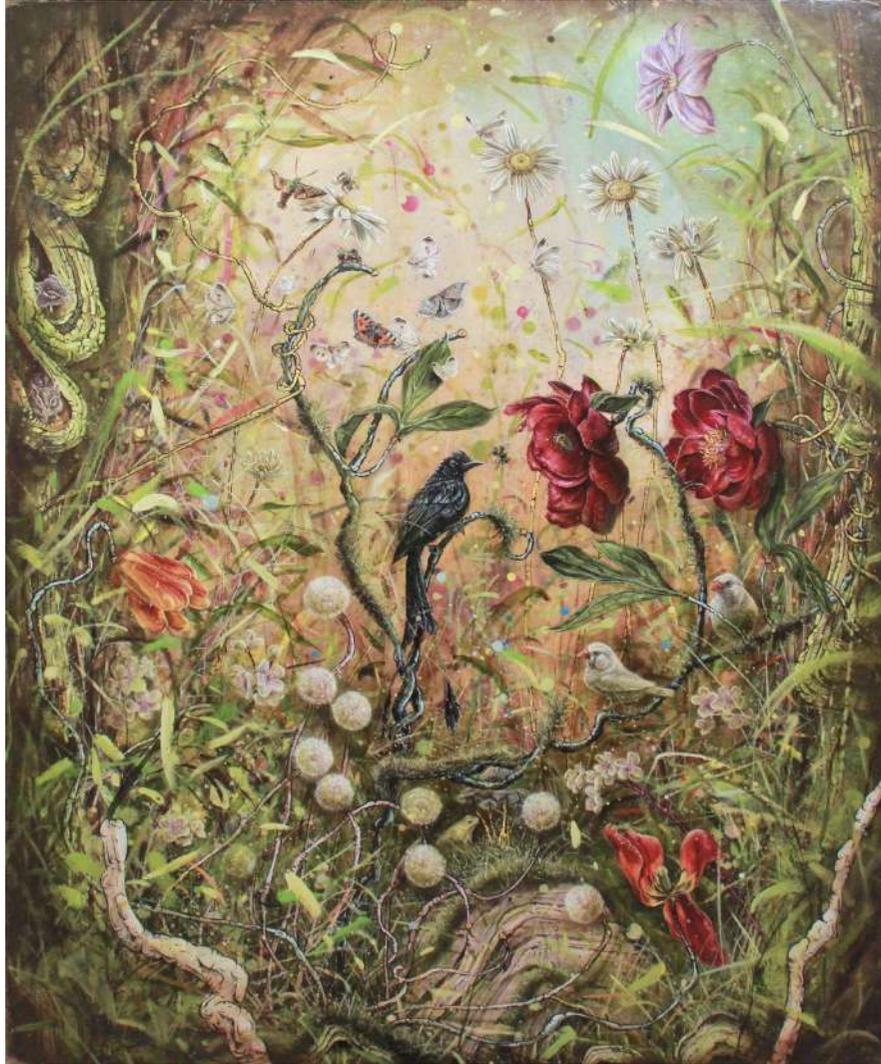
2022

Mixed Media and Collage on Canvas

121.92 x 91.44 cm



Parinaz Eleish Gharagozlou
What Of The Broken Roof
Of My House
2022
Mixed Media and Collage on Canvas
184.15 x 304.8 cm



Nathaniel Aric Galka

"there is more to the story..."

2021

Oil on Marble Plaster Jute on Panel

101.6 x 81.28 x 4.4 cm



Nathaniel Aric Galka

Untitled 3

2022

Oil on marble plastered jute on panel

30.5 x 30.5 x 4.4 cm



Nathaniel Aric Galka

Untitled 1

2022

Oil on marble plastered jute on panel

25.4 x 20.32 x 3.81 cm



Ran Hwang

The Secret Sublime P1

2022

Crystals, beads, pins on plexiglass

150 x 120 cm



Robert Wilson
Lady Gaga: Mlle. Caroline Rivière
HD video seamless loop
2013
Music by Michael Galasso
85" Screen
Edition 1 of 3



Robert Wilson

Elk

UHD video seamless loop

2018

Score composed by Bear Kirkpatrick

75" screen

Edition 2 of 3



Marwan Sahmarani
Neighborhood 1
2022
Oil on Canvas
70 x 90 cm



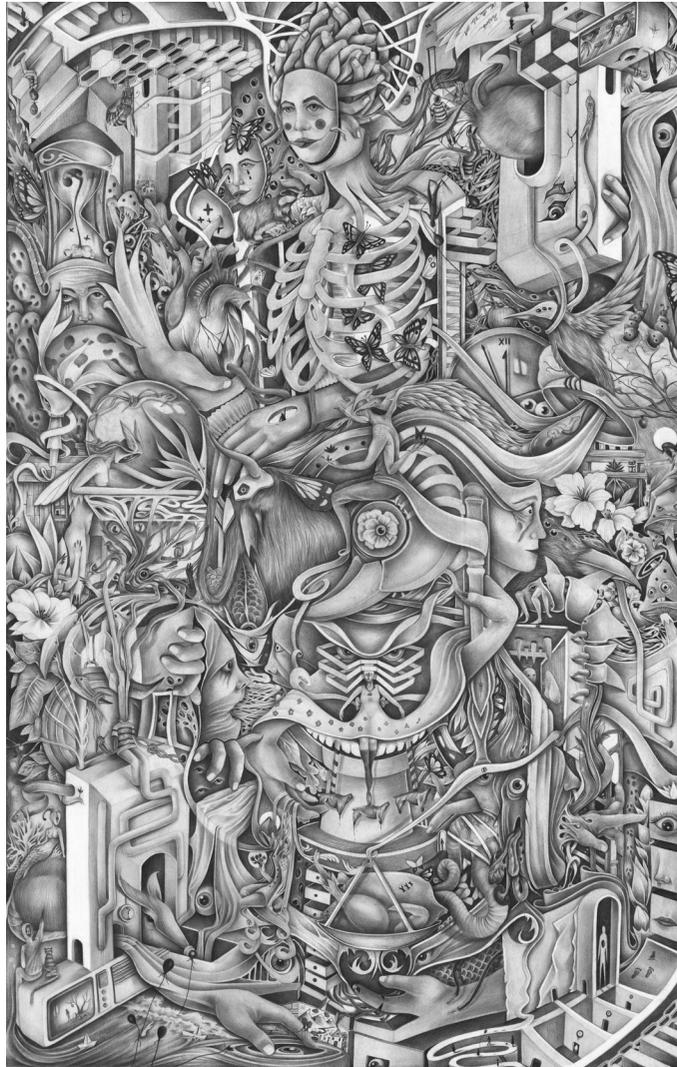
Marwan Sahmarani
Neighborhood 2
2022
Oil on Canvas
70 x 90 cm



Marwan Sahmarani
Under the Sun
2022
Oil on Canvas
200 x 185 cm



Alaattin Efe
Soul
2018
Charcoal on paper
120 x 80 cm



Alaattin Efe
Thinking Disorder
2019
Charcoal on paper
120 x 80 cm



Ghada Amer
The Sleeping Girl
2014
Ceramic
33 x 30 x 7.5 in



Farideh Lashai

El Amel

2011

Projected animated images on paintings
acrylics on canvas and sound painting

200 x 200 cm



Naeemeh Kazemi
LaLa Land
Oil on Canvas
2023
165 x 200 cm



Naeemeh Kazemi
LaLa Land
Oil on Canvas
2023
165 x 200 cm



Lorenzo Quinn
Together
Matte white carrara marble
Polished white carrara marble
68 x 117 x 67 cm



Behrang Samadzadegan
Fall of the castle
watercolor on paper
2022
160 x 260 cm overall
Diptych



Behrang Samadzadegan
Vice
Watercolor on paper
2022
138 x 210 cm



Sudarshan Shetty
Untitled
2017
Recycled teak wood
27.56h x 13.39w x 31.10d in



Sudarshan Shetty
Untitled
2017
Recycled teak wood
72 x 72 x 90 in, 80 x 40 x 12 in



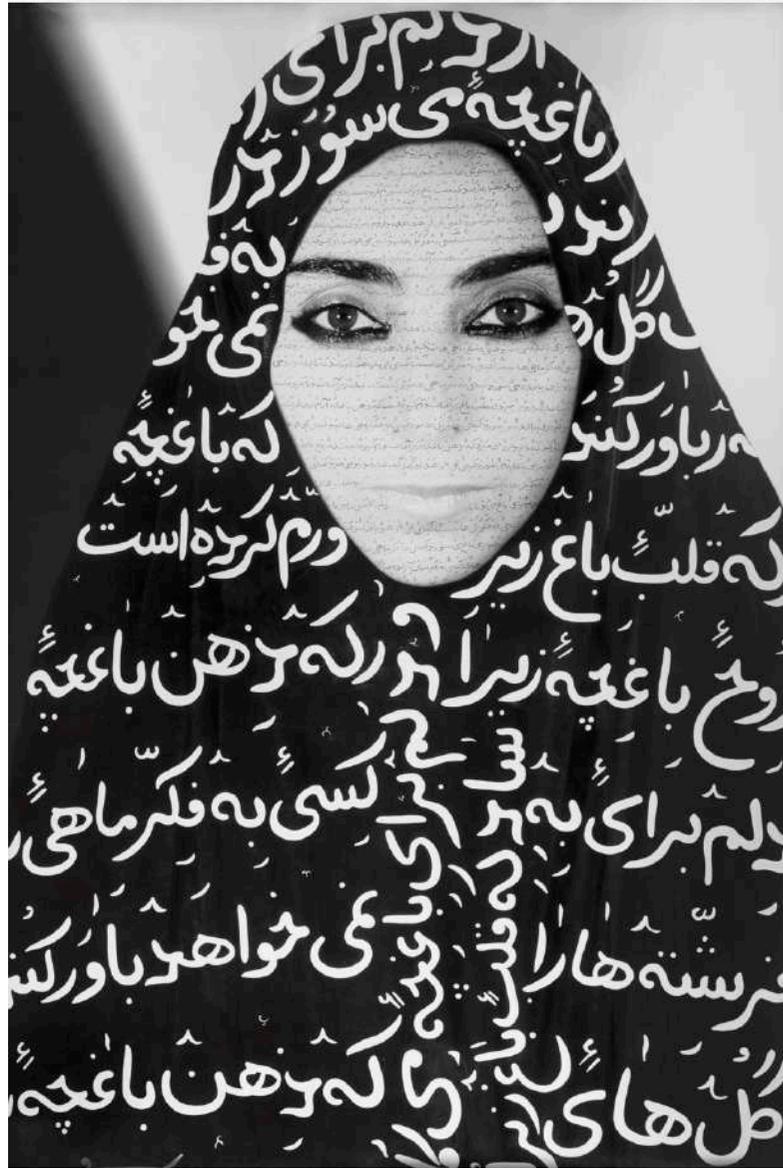
Wim Delvoye
Le Denicheur des Aigles
2018
Patinated Bronze
236 x 152 x 120 cm



Marcos Grigorian
Earth work
1963
Mixed media
and soil on canvas
85.09h x 41.91w x 6.35d cm



Shirin Neshat
Untitled (from the Tooba series)
2002
Photograph
50.2 x 61.5 cm



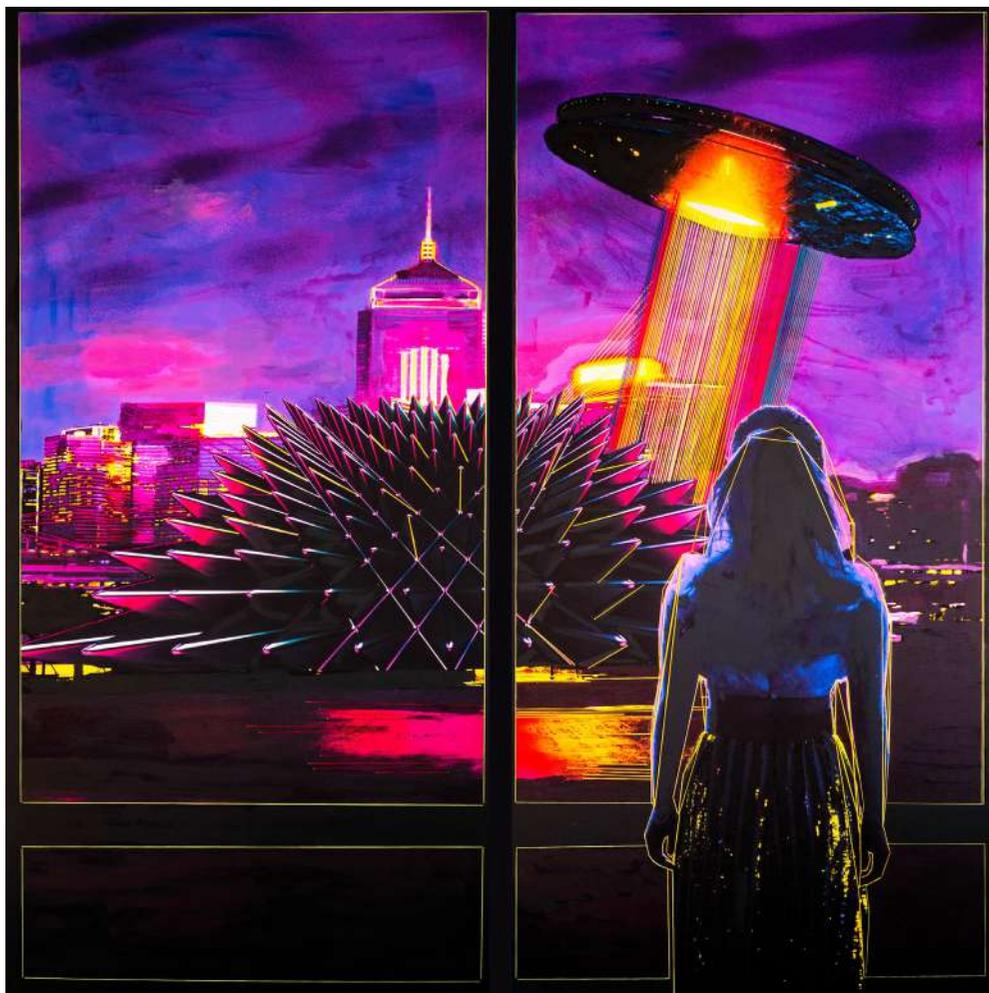
Shirin Neshat

Unveiling (from the Women of Allah series)

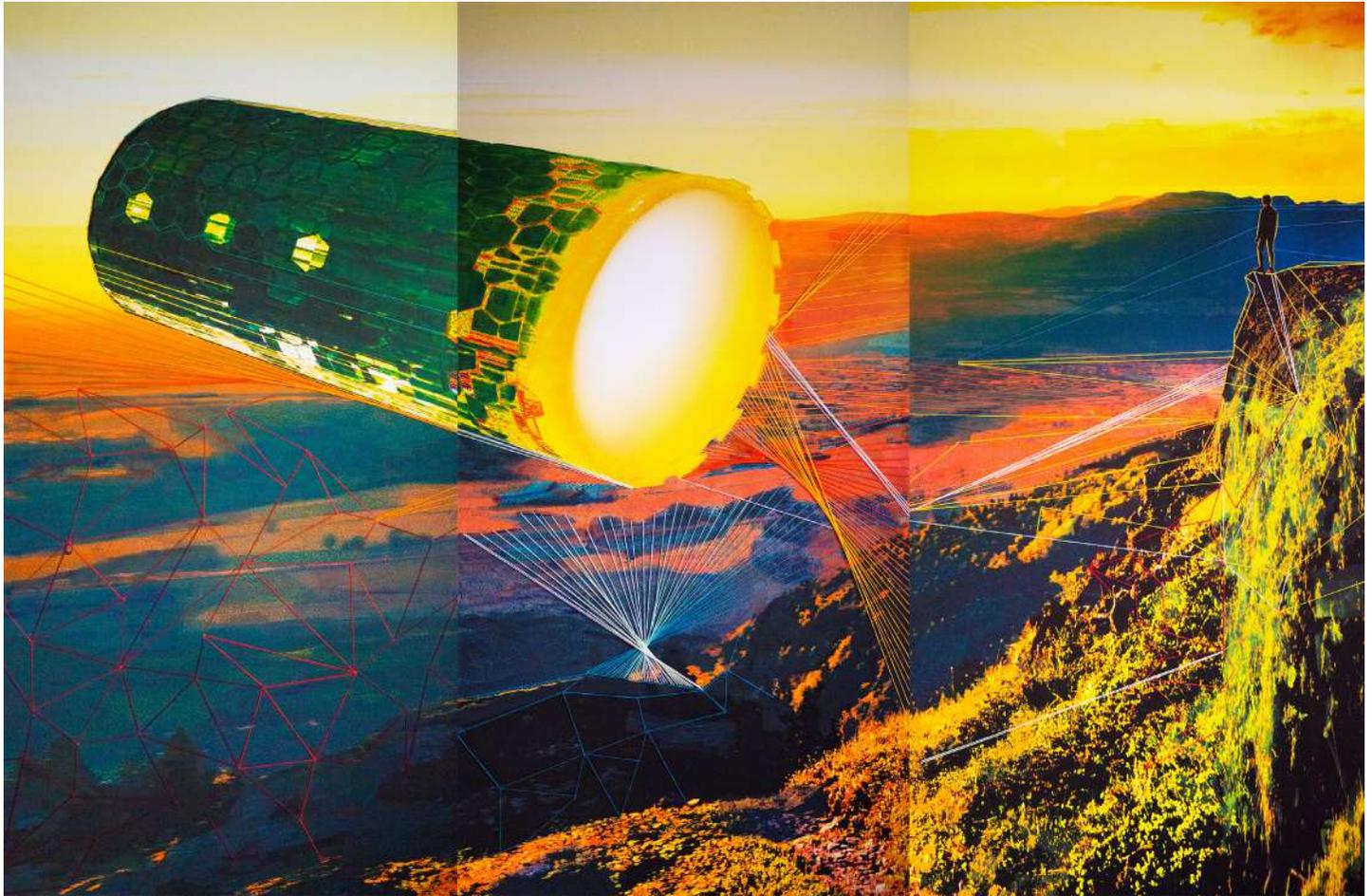
1993

Photograph

150.5 x 101.5 cm



Lin Jingjing
Every Word You Spoke
2023
Acrylic, silk thread, archival
pigment print on canvas
200 x 200 cm
Diptych



Lin Jingjing
Let It Shine
2023
Acrylic, silk thread, archival
pigment print on canvas
200 x 300 cm
Triptych



Zeineb Al Hashemi
Camouflage 1.618: The Unfinished Obelisk
Camel hides, steel rods
2022
Image courtesy of Hesham Al Saifi

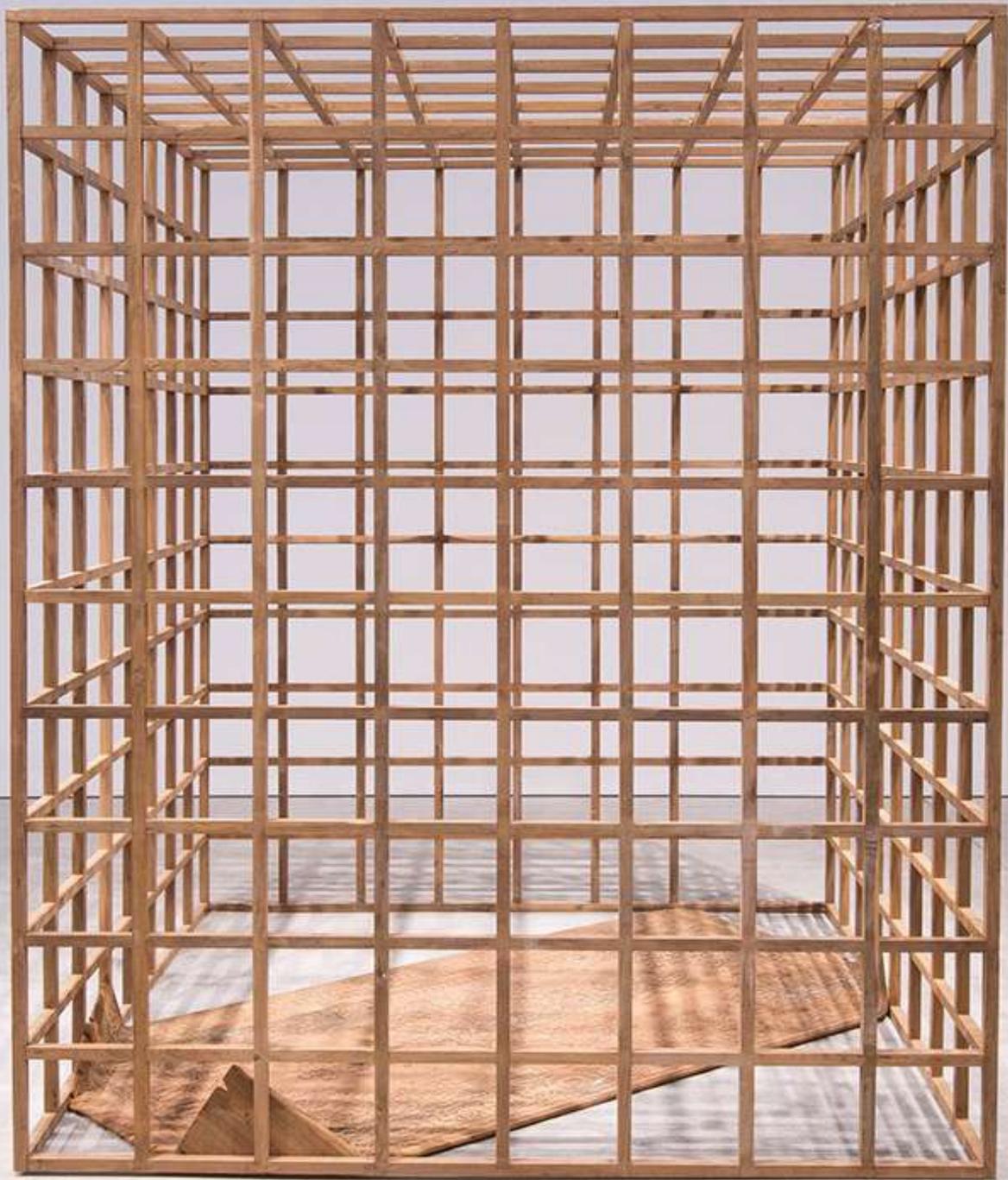


Ana D' Castro
"I didn't say goodbye..."
"...Não disse Adeus..."
Oil on canvas
200 x 200 cm

Published on the occasion of the exhibition "The Storyteller" - A collection of contemporary narratives.
Curated by Behrang Samadzadegan
April 26, 2023

Catalogue design by Abdelkarim El-Ghribi
Front Cover Image: Zeineb Al Hashemi, Camouflage 1.618:
The Unfinished Obelisk, 2022, Image courtesy of Hesham Al Saifi
Back Cover Image: Sudarshan Shetty, Untitled, 2017

LEILA HELLER GALLERY
I-87, Alserkal Avenue, PO Box 413991, Al Quoz 1
Dubai, UAE
www.Leilahellergallery.com
Publication © 2023 LEILA HELLER GALLERY, Dubai



LEILA HELLER GALLERY.