



FAKE: Idyllic Life

New Works by Shoja Azari

Cover:
Queen of Houries(*The King of Black*)(detail), 2013
Lenticular 3D depth on acrylic sheet
30 X 41.5 in / 76.2 x 105.41 cm

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Negar Azimi

It's been said that William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* borrows liberally from the 12th-century Persian poem *Haft Paykar*, or *Seven Beauties*, by Nizami Ganjavi. The seven stories that structure the long Persian epic – each built around the exploits of a particular princess – roughly approximate the plot of the English play, written some four centuries later.

* * *

A conservative Florida pastor named Terry Jones threatens to publically burn the Koran on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Riots erupt throughout the Islamic world. The September 24, 2012 issue of *Newsweek* runs a cover image of sweaty, hirsute, and menacing-looking Afghans mid-protest. Its headline is *Muslim Rage*.

* * *

A python is coiled around the taut torso of a nude boy and extends along his arm as the boy gazes out at a group of men gathered in a blue-tiled space. A long-bearded wizened snake charmer plays the flute. The image is familiar, if not for its place in the vexed history of Orientalist painting, then for its twinning with Edward Said's both canon-wrecking and canonical *Orientalism* (it graced the cover of a 1980s Penguin version of the text and has more or less been on the cover of every reprint since). And yet, something is slightly altered in this version of Jean-Léone Gérôme's *The Snake Charmer* (1879). Seated among the assembled tribesmen is a woman whose face is all but obstructed by a niqab (there are no women in the original). Like telltale signs of the wars in our midst, two Kalashnikovs lean against the wall.

If the Kalashnikovs and the niqab, as altogether too-familiar visual memes of the post 9/11 world, represent a contemporary update of Gérôme's iconic canvas, then so too is an American flag engulfed in flames in an inspired reinterpretation of Eugène Delacroix's

The Fanatics of Tangier (1838). Based on the romantic artist's encounter with the Isawas, a Muslim sect whose members are perhaps best known for working themselves into charged trance-like emotional states, the men in the original are literally depicted in the throes of passion. In this altered version, a number of the men – equally animated – are clothed in the distinct camouflage gear of the modern militant.

Nearby, in another series, Playboy bunnies lifted from the magazine of the same name are painted into elaborate Orientalist settings. The antique odalisques of lore now come with prefab breasts and hourglass bodies, Victoria's Secret negligees and shiny Nike sneakers. Not terribly unlike the nubile and co-optable members of the Sultan's harem, these women manage to fulfill several fantasies at once; and while their insertion is seamless, their contemporaneity is incidental.

These works and others, presented under the rubric of *FAKE: Idyllic Life*, constitute a series by Shoja Azari devoted to the psychic convergences – oftentimes absurd – between ostensibly disparate regimes of images. What do Delacroix and the editors of *Playboy* and *Newsweek* magazines have in common anyway? Beyond mining in an economy rife with cardboard clichés – for that is too easy a point to make – could each harbor uncanny structural similarities across time and place? The strange, estranged, and sexualized are present throughout, for herein lies the pleasure dome that Coleridge once evoked in *Kubla Khan*: a projection of fantasy onto an exotic, distant other that, in painterly representation anyway, probably reached its apotheosis during the Victorian era. And in as much as these newer works proclaim *I am different*, in another probably quieter voice, they whisper, *but I am so much the same!* It is perhaps fitting then that Azari's reconfigured paintings hang on a vast wallpaper composed of thousands of screen shots drawn from the Internet, chronicling the broad sweep of 'the Islamic world' (this is where the *Muslim Rage* cover comes into play) – a sort of Warburgian trope atlas drawn from the bowels of the contemporary consciousness. Once orphaned, it is as if these JPEG inheritors of a long history of image-making about the East have finally been reunited with their painterly parents.

* * *

In the work *Idyllic Life*, Azari explores what happens when an Eastern art form, long known for holding intricate and diverse narratives, is implicated in the representation of the current day. It opens with a view onto a classic Persian miniature: Women pour tea, men lazily strum the sitar, a feast is prepared. Before long, we hear the distinctive patter of a bird's wings flutter. As the bird opens his wings to fly away, he slams against a ceiling, and hits

it again, and again. It is a tragic dirge and yet, utterly hypnotic.

Another corner of the miniature comes to life via animation: This time we see the streets of Tehran, where a woman stands above a man splayed across the pavement. He is bleeding, while she, gorgonish and animated by unknown demons (for she is wailing), continuously has a go at him with a knife. People walk by. A cameraman clearly doesn't feel compelled, or maybe able, to do anything.

In another scene, a young Shia man is chanting devotional songs to Imam Hussein while a forest of men below him clap and heave rhythmically. Elsewhere, boys take turn slapping each other (it is unclear why this has been filmed in the first place). And yet, in a different scene, an Imam – it may even be Ayatollah Khomeini – takes a drag from a long opium pipe. Taken from the vernacular of YouTube, each of these scenes represents the stuff of life: minor and major dramas, the quotidian and the epic, the banal and the absolutely horrific. Here, the Persian miniature, as the traditional repository for such forms, comes to life anew but, in this instance, with a tap of the keyboard and a simple Google search.

* * *

In all of these works, Azari manages to subtly point to the circularity of images and to the timelessness and stupidity (indeed the timeless stupidity) of clichés, but also our appetite for telling stories through images. Not only are we, as humans, architects of these images, but, as consumers, we all but guarantee their existence. By having out sourced his vivid recreations to a painter – for the artist does not paint – he emphasizes the ready-made nature of each composition. A precise contract detailing the conditions of the reproduction hangs next to each reinterpretation, a trace of the exchange and the image economy in which works like this exist. "The size of the painting is to be 20 percent larger than its original size." Does the altered scale matter? Who is the author? The painter-for-hire cum unfaithful reproducer? Azari? Delacroix? The air we breathe? In a contemporary world marked by the logic of outsourcing, the question might be impossible to answer. Here, the term "fake" loses all of its bluster and luster.

* * *

Let us return for one minute to Ganjavi, the Persian poet we opened with. In one final work entitled *The King of Black*, Azari deftly animates a single story from *Haft Paykar*, complete with miniatures as backdrops and live actors in the forefront. The visual effect is stirring

and idiosyncratic, like a storybook that has suddenly come to life. We meet a handsome king who seeks to understand why the world around him is black. Here, mourning is de rigueur as we witness images of weeping black-robed women unleashing big, percussive tears. Hoping to understand why this land is so grief stricken, the king embarks on a journey which only climaxes as he enters an other-worldly (colorful) paradise populated by beautiful women. He breaks the one rule he is not supposed to – the reference to the Garden of Eden is clear –and is expelled. Hence, a return to the temporal, earthly life, and the grim black we began with. Once again, Azari reminds us how male fantasy has shaped the imagery of the pleasure dome though, this time, the fantastic is relegated to the heavenly sphere.

In the end, *FAKE: Idyllic Life* creates a space in which radically different histories rub up against one other – the 5th century intermingles with the 12th, the 21st, and the 18th. Not unlike the story we began with of Ganjavi's purported influence on Shakespeare – indeed a tale the artist once recounted to me in his studio as we talked about the works at hand – you could equally say that Delacroix the romantic is not that far removed from the arbiters and architects of the contemporary mass media. Orientalist painting, miniatures, the Internet, YouTube, magazines. It's all the same. This is a story about the endurance of caricatures and the porousness of histories; about how we, as humans project our desires. This is a story about how we tell stories.

Negar Azimi is senior editor at *Bidoun*, an arts and culture magazine with a focus on the Middle East based in New York. She studied international relations and biology at Stanford, politics at Harvard, and anthropology at Columbia. She has written for *Artforum*, *frieze*, *Harper's*, the *Nation*, the *New York Times Magazine*, and *Parkett*, among other venues.

p. 5

The Snake Charmer or The Anatomy of the 21st century Savage, 2013

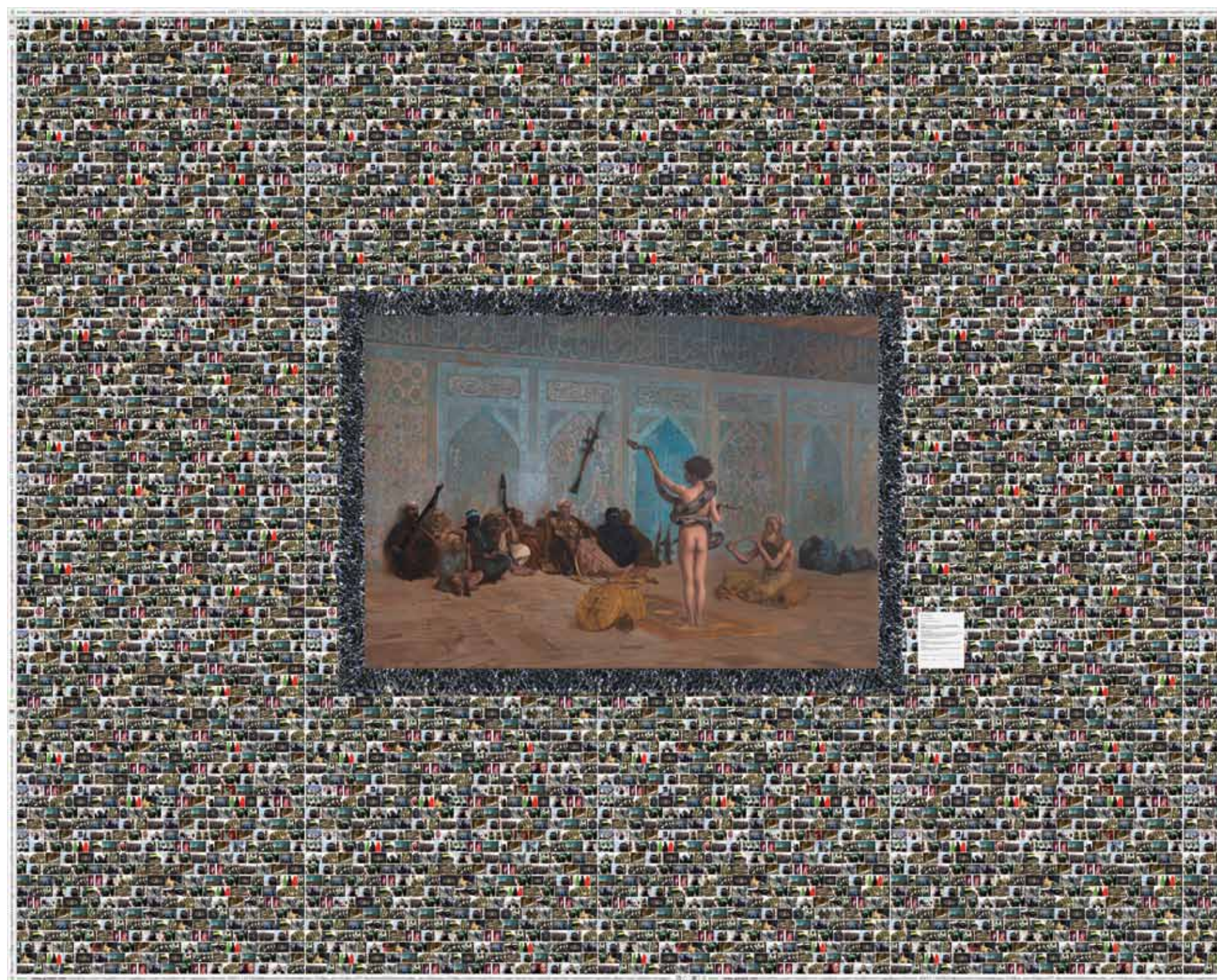
Oil on canvas

40 x 58 in / 101.6 x 147.3 cm

p.6

Wallpaper detail from *The Snake Charmer or The Anatomy of the 21st century Savage*, 2013

p.7

Painting detail from *The Snake Charmer or The Anatomy of the 21st century Savage*, 2013

p. 9

Fanatics of Tangier or The Muslim Rage, 2013

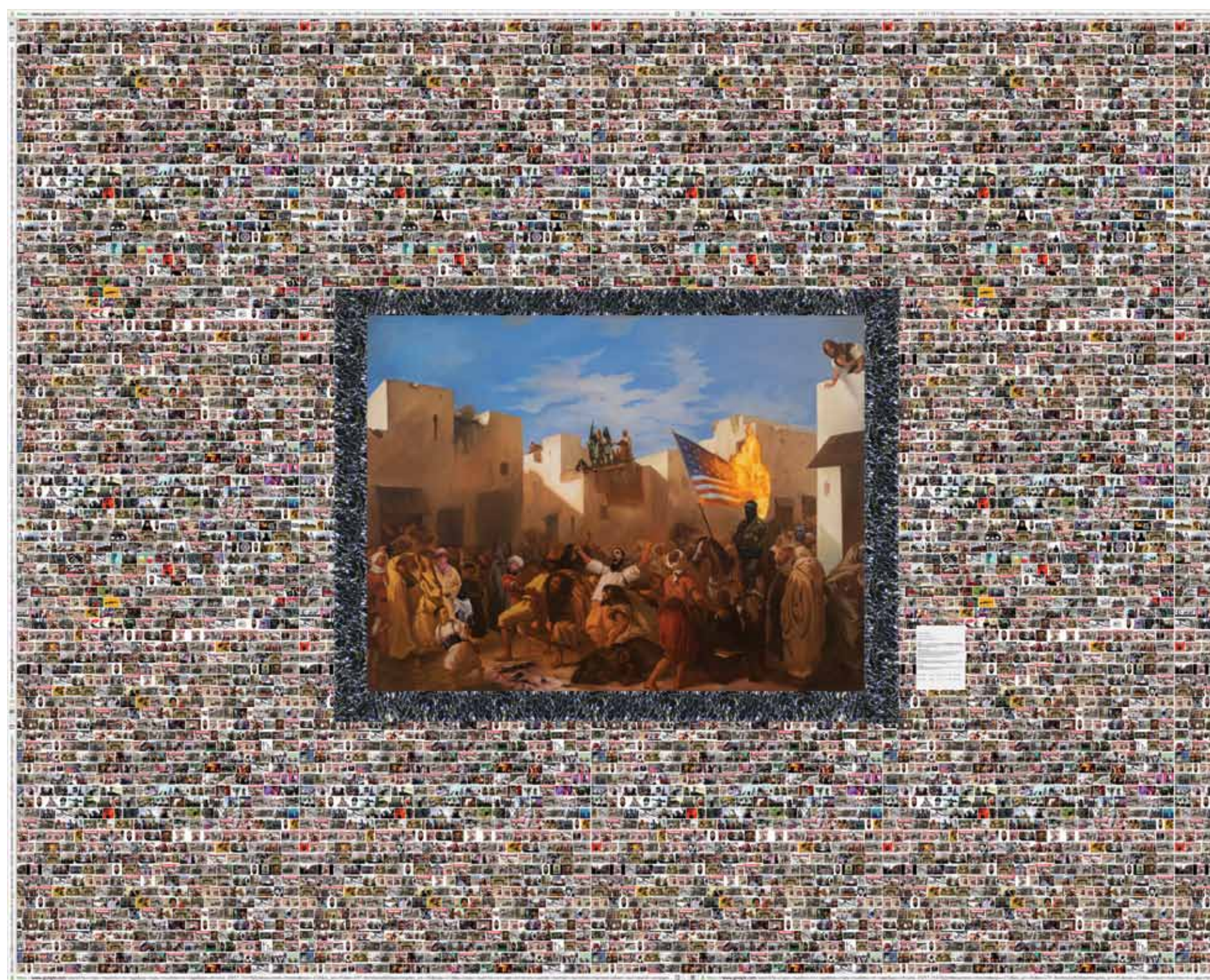
Oil on canvas

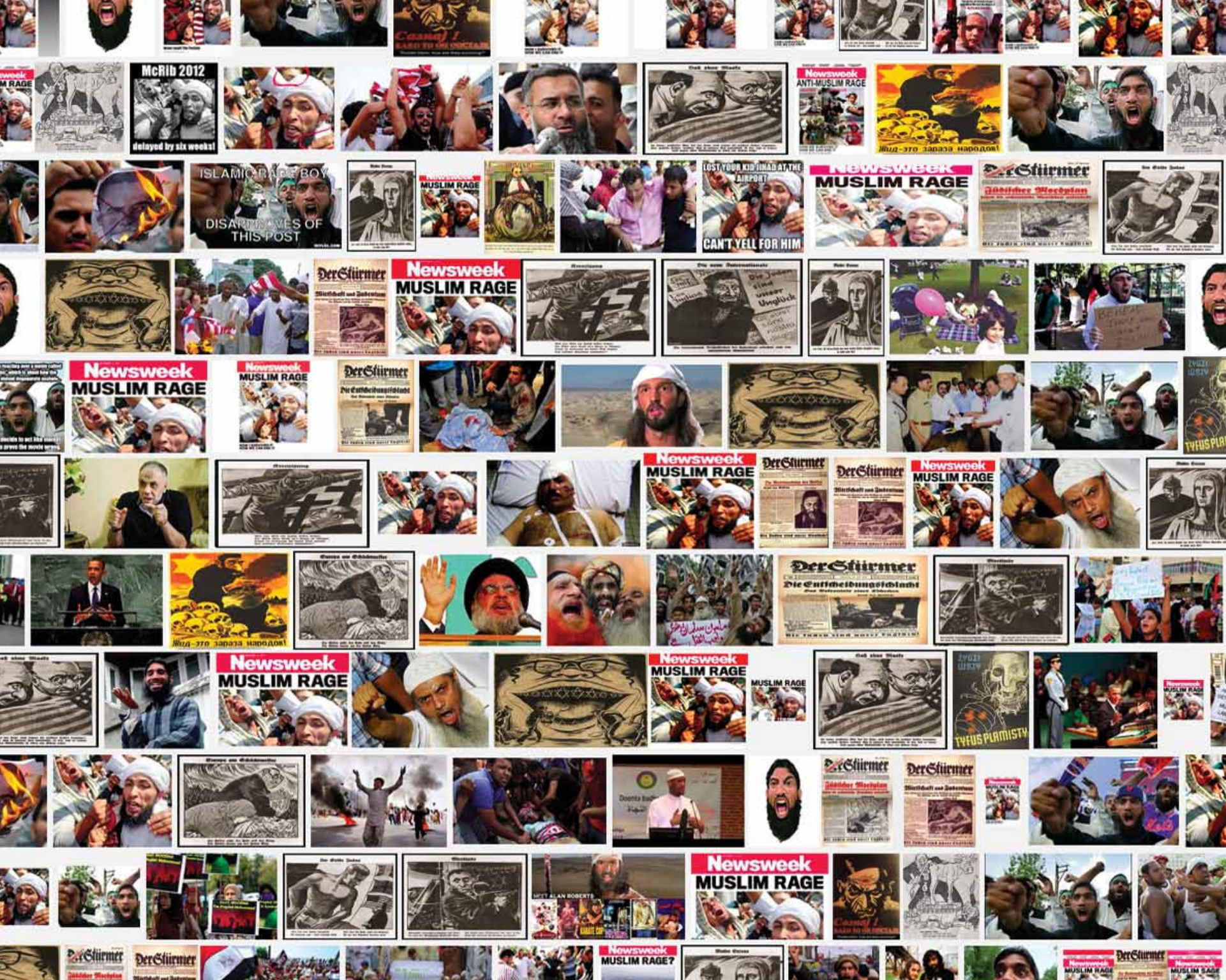
62 x 82 in / 157.5 x 208.2 cm

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Wallpaper detail from *Fanatics of Tangier or The Muslim Rage*, 2013

p. 11

Painting detail from *Fanatics of Tangier or The Muslim Rage*, 2013



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The Dance of Alemah or The Ugly Hamza, 2013

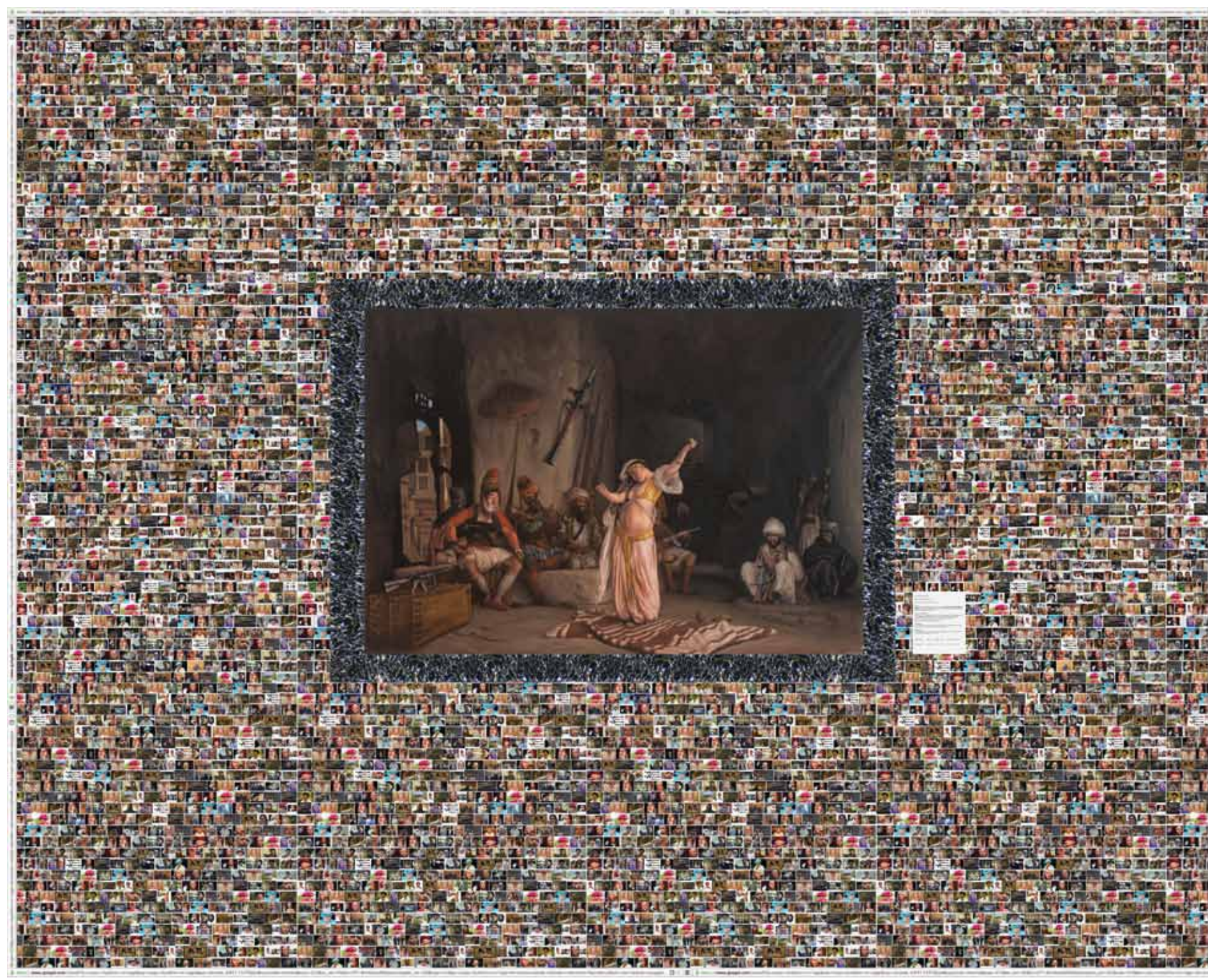
Oil on canvas

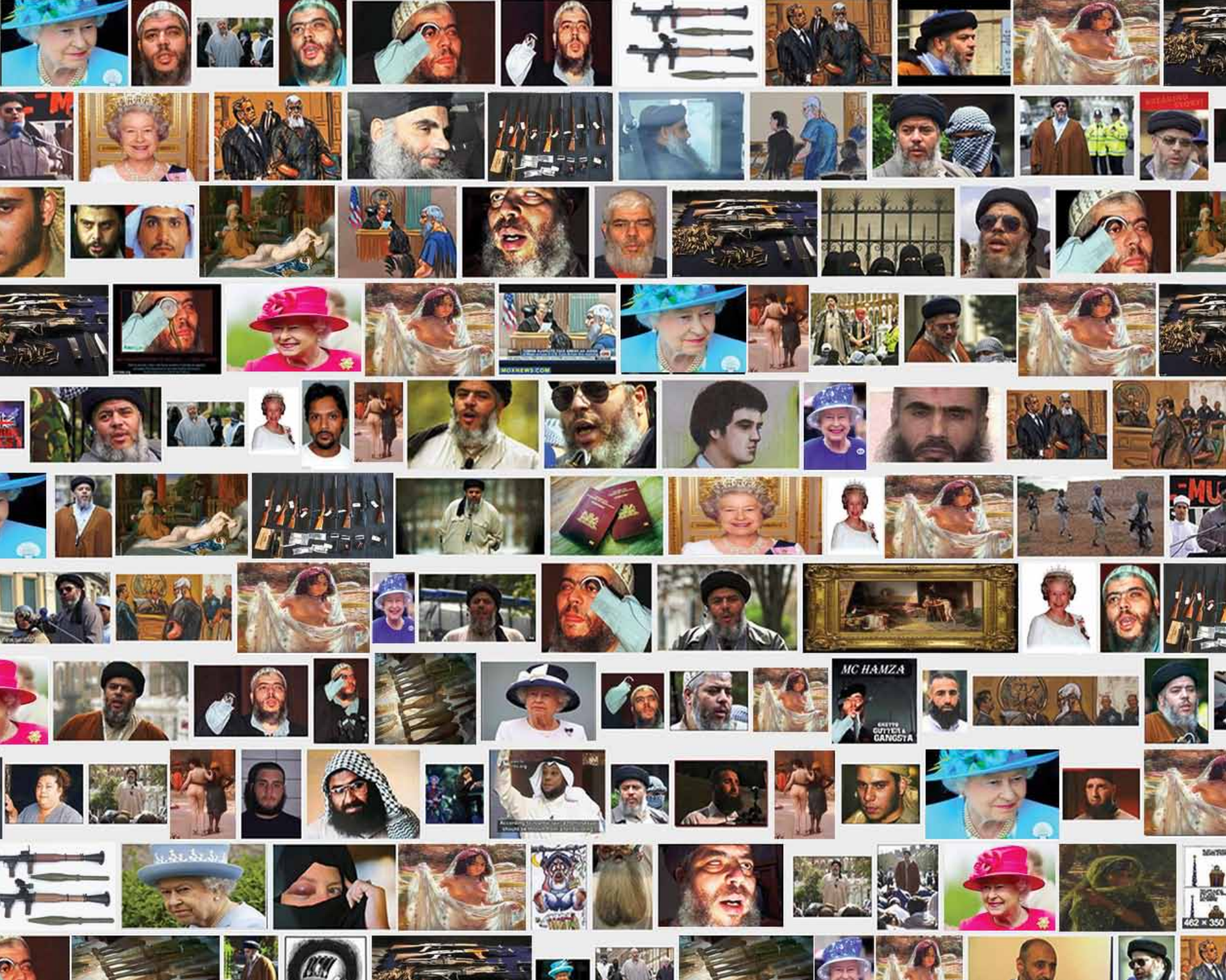
58 x 40 in / 147.3 x 101.6 cm

p. 14

Wallpaper detail from *The Dance of Alemah or The Ugly Hamza*, 2013

p. 15

Painting detail from *The Dance of Alemah or The Ugly Hamza*, 2013



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Oriental Interior or Bunnies ЯUs, 2013

Oil on canvas

28 x 22 in / 71.1 x 55.9 cm

Oriental Bath or Bunnies ЯUs, 2013

Oil on canvas

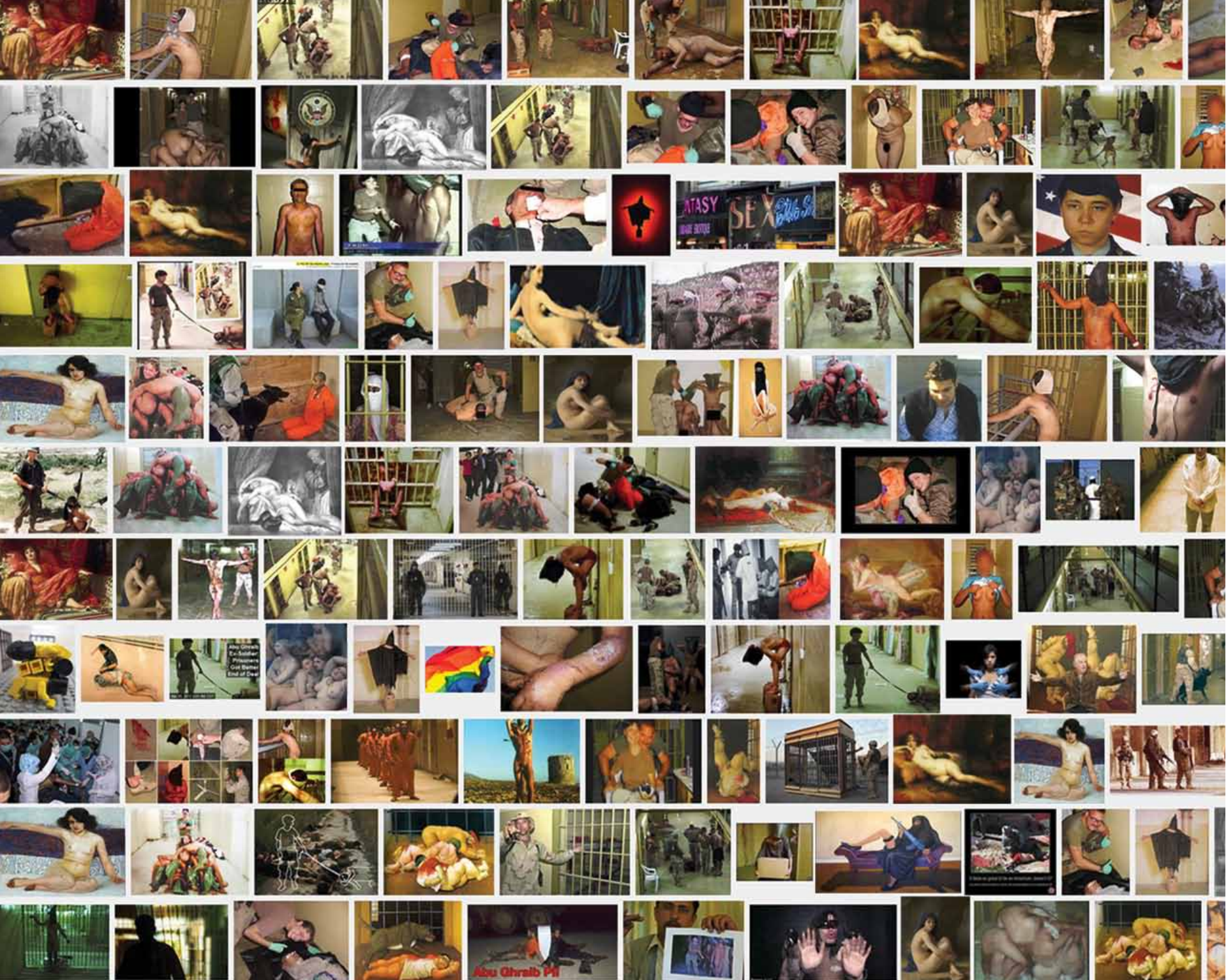
35 x 22 in / 88.9 x 55.9 cm

p. 18

Wallpaper detail from *Oriental Interior or Bunnies ЯUs* and *Oriental Bath or Bunnies ЯUs*, 2013

p. 19

Painting detail from *Oriental Interior or Bunnies ЯUs* and *Oriental Bath or Bunnies ЯUs*, 2013



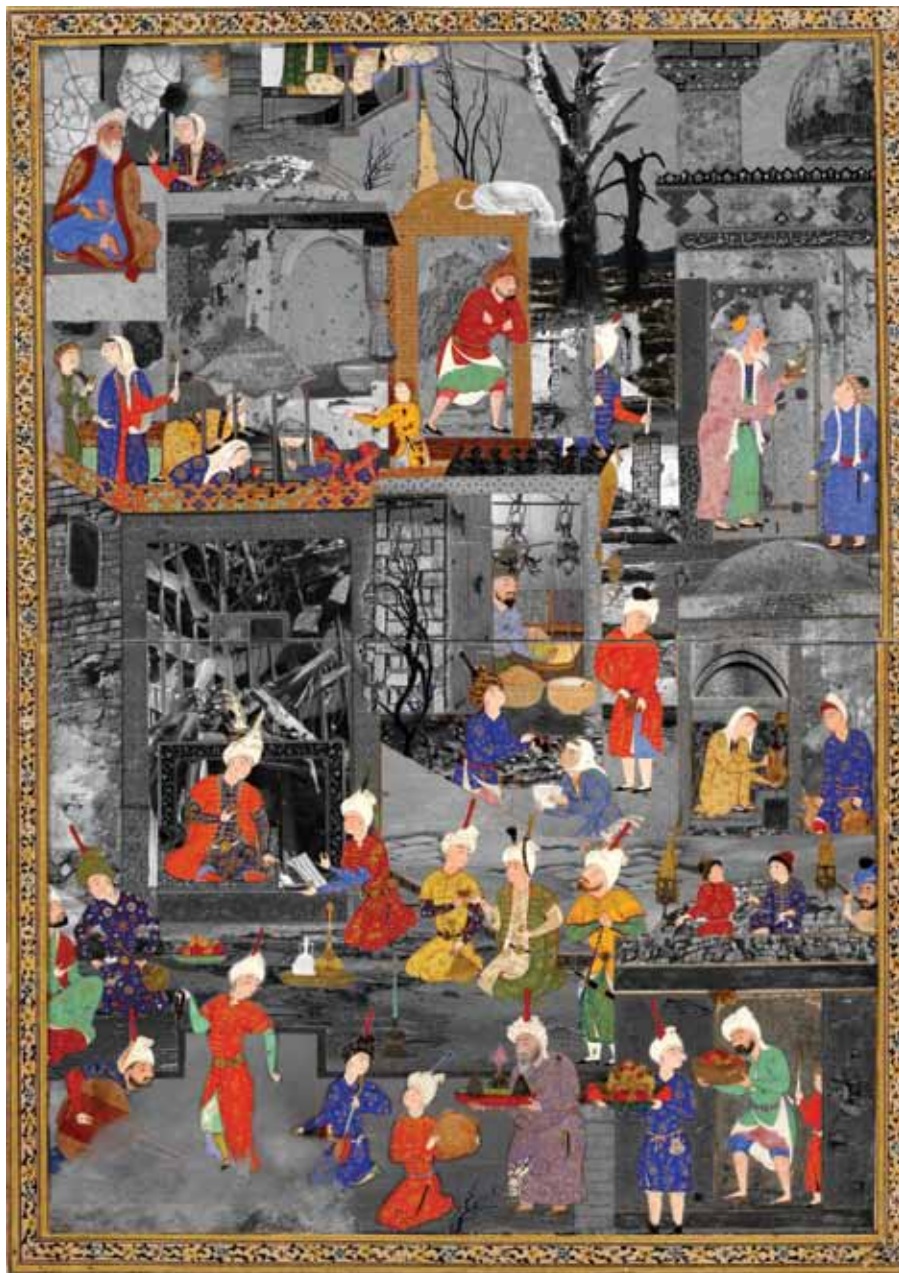
Commission Agreement between Shoja Azari (client) and Karl Koett (painter)
for *The Snake Charmer* or *The Anatomy of the 21st century Savage*, 2013



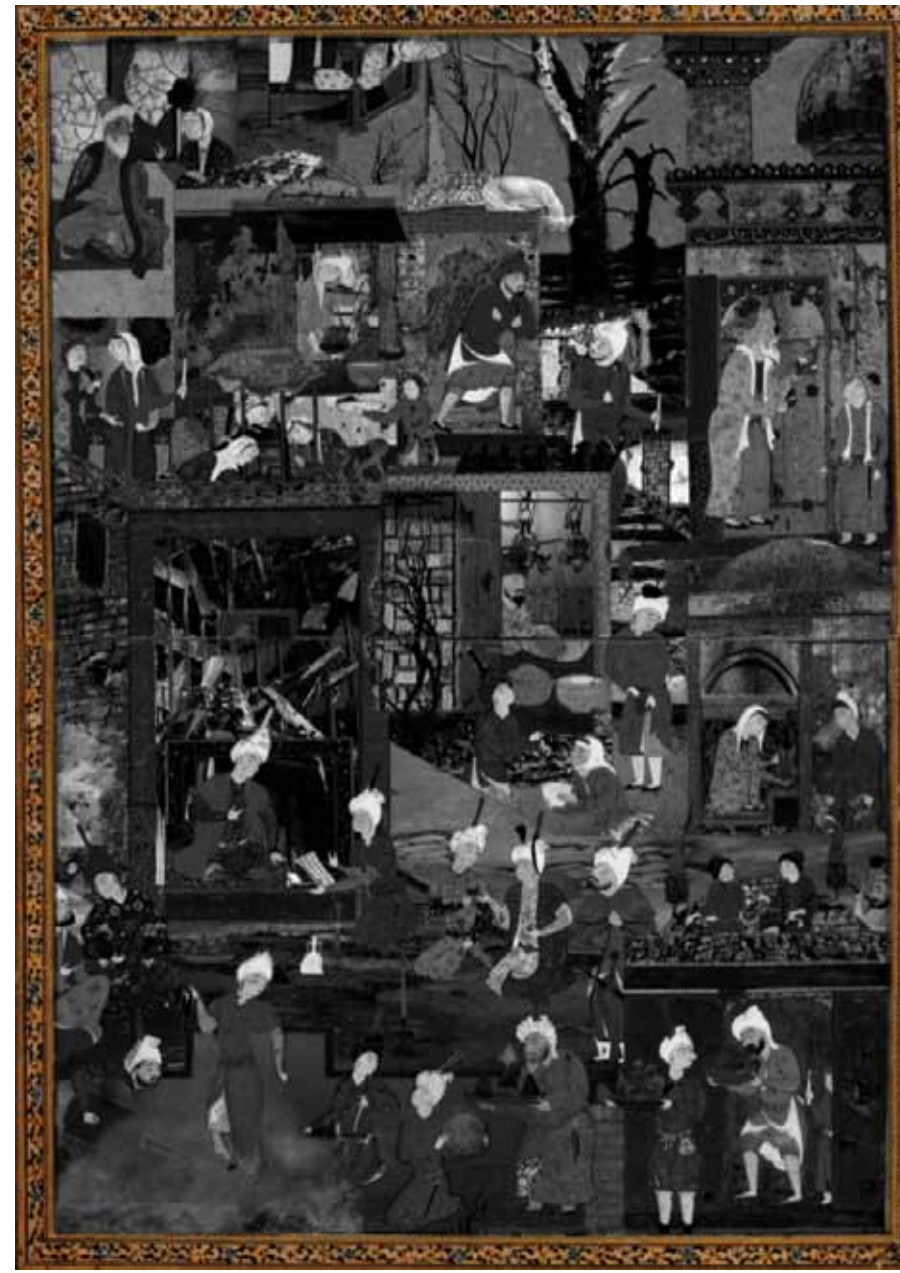
Idyllic Life (still 1), 2012
High definition video



Idyllic Life (still 2), 2012
High definition video



Idyllic Life (still 3), 2012
High definition video



Idyllic Life (still 4), 2012
High definition video

Once upon a time...

This is how *The King of Black* begins. It also begins as a silent film might: black background, old-fashioned frame with flowered detail, white lettering giving us the narrative premises of the story, the reason we are here, the reason we are watching. But there are giveaways, “tells” that it is nothing of the sort. The text scrolls up rather than sitting still on the page like a book. The music betrays its contemporary production. When the first image arrives, in saturated color we are confirmed that the conventions of silent cinema announce affinities not actualities, but that image brings us back to “Once upon a time....”

For the image we encounter is not cinema in any ordinary sense. “Once upon a time” seems to be a statement, but I think it is more of a question asked of the spectator of *The King of Black*. Which time? Which times?

Front and center in the first image frame, an old man in black sits in a chair and spins a wheel, the spokes casting shadows on his legs, accompanied by the diegetic sound of the wheel ticking and rattling. The King enters the frame from the back left, and crosses downstage, pausing at the old man. The shadows and other effects of light are seen only on the human figures. The rest of the mise-en-scène is a series of much flatter renderings of architecture and space, and because Azari uses green screen technology against its capacity to represent the impossible in a realistic mode (think *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001-2003), *Avatar* (2009), or *Gravity* (2013)), the cinematography operating on the figures does not operate on the space they seem to traverse. Once upon a time, in the early days of video effects, the flat background on which three-dimensional characters moved was the best one could do. This is not that, although the composition may refer to it elliptically. The actual reference is to the illuminated miniature that would have accompanied the 12th-century Persian poet Nezami Ganjavi’s romantic epic, *Haft Paykar*, or *Seven Beauties*, which is the source text for *The King of Black*. (Text, it must be said, is an incomplete description, because it erases the essential and integral aspect of the image.)

Azari emphasizes, even exacerbates, the difference between the aesthetic of the miniature and that of the live action film. “In a sense, as a filmmaker when you look at miniature paintings, they can be seen as storyboards for film,” he says. “It was this aspect of the medium that fascinated me and I wanted to go back to this tradition while utilizing the modern language of Cinema. I was also very curious to see what happened when you have a three-dimensional live action film unfold in a two-dimensional world of the miniature painting.”¹ The mise-en-scène of *The King of Black* offers an unresolvable tension between the desire and capacity of cinema to produce a moving, three-dimensional image and the resolute flatness of the miniature. There is a gesture towards perspective in the miniature, but in *The King of Black*, that gesture is complicated and undermined by the movement of cinematic figures through the landscape. The time of the miniature and that of digital video are at once completely different and, yet, entirely in conversation. As is the case with much of Azari’s work (especially his collaborations with the painter Shahram Karimi), *The King of Black* ponders the very idea of media shifts: what does it mean to make a painting in the Digital Age? What does it mean to anchor your digital video to painted objects?

Rather than seeing the digital merely as the cutting edge of image making practice, Azari seems very comfortable understanding its capacities as contiguous with painting and

other technologies of representation. He often thinks about what images meant to people before digitalization, before mass reproduction, before print. His work engages with the very idea of media even as it complicates ideas of history and culture (without history and culture, what media would there be?), and suggests that to focus on history and culture in the 21st-century is also to question what it means to choose any medium or a range of media to do so. If the medium is the message, what happens when one medium remedies another, as happens so deftly in Azari’s work?

Coffee House Painting, for instance, pushes the idea of what painting is, what history painting is, and what constitutes an epic narrative (and that’s just a start). *The King of Black* seems to want to use certain conventions of cinema almost against their own purposes: the three-dimensionality of the moving image folds back upon itself when grafted onto the illuminated miniature, and even the “moving” aspect of the moving image is put under duress, since not everything in the image is moving at the same rate at the same time (backgrounds, animated crows, the king himself, all operate on different principles of motion, and produce different effects of time). There are obvious connections between *The King of Black* and *Coffee House Painting*, principally surrounding how the aesthetic of the miniature is mobilized to produce something that engages with other modes of pictorial historicization. If a miniature might imply multiple temporal frameworks simultaneously appearing in a single spatial order, history painting (like David’s *Oath of the Horatii*, for instance), on the other hand, is about accounting for a linear chain of moments by freezing one – the frozen moment to stand for all moments, to stand for a history of something, but also for history itself. When the moment freezes and unfreezes at your will, and the chain of moments is no longer linear, we are in the realm of a critique of those conventions for understanding history. This is certainly the case in *Coffeehouse Painting*, as well as in *Idyllic Life*, but I think there are related practices in *The King of Black*, perhaps subtler and best grasped by dwelling with the work. “Time, in my work, moves in a non-linear fashion,” says Azari. “It can be historical time, personal time or invented time. In any of these cases they distort the sense of solidity and permanence that is often associated with space.”² There can be great political stakes to thinking through the relation between time and space and, in *The King of Black*, the unsteady relation between time and space – and between one temporal frame and another (between time and time) – assumes allegorical proportions: the fact that *The King of Black* is a story, a story as re-told to us by Azari, exceeds in importance what the story is. This is for political reasons – and we know (inverting the feminist kernel) that the political is personal.

The political valences of Azari’s work seem profoundly altered by the Green Revolution, a representational focus on Iran and the rest of the Middle East coming into view in the

work at that time. The work often functions very incisively in a powerfully intermediated way – when Azari layers various historically disparate media within a single piece – not just for the sake of form, but more as a way of tracing the history and culture of Iranian subjects, both exilic/diasporic and “in place.” The history of media implied in Azari’s most recent work is also a set of implied histories – histories made by memories, which are often displaced. Nezami’s epic poem may be a cultural product, but the book that houses it is a media technology – one that is more than a ghost in *The King of Black*. And in this context we may see that *The King of Black*, as well as *Idyllic Life* and *Coffeehouse Painting* before it, enact storytelling as a means of survival. Azari, in describing his diasporic status, as an existence of not being at home anywhere, said, “that’s the reality of exile. You don’t belong to any place, not even your own homeland. You’re an outsider.”³ These digital paintings are in vital ways about that condition of neither/nor, but also about beginning to make a space where the backlash is. Liminality begins to become, if not home, then somewhere you can live. I asked him whether he considers himself an artist working with the moving image or a filmmaker edging into painting, he didn’t see a need to make such a distinction. He replied, “I have to say that if I have to do some soul searching, I would say that I am a storyteller at heart. So, I do look for any form and modality to tell my stories, I really do not think I have without any particular strategy. I am caught between the Art world and the world of Cinema and I think I like and find both worlds ideal mediums to tell stories in different ways.”⁴ Storytelling is living—just ask Scheherazade.

Once upon a time...

Once upon all time...

All upon one time...

1 Shoja Azari, email interview with the author, 24 October 2013.

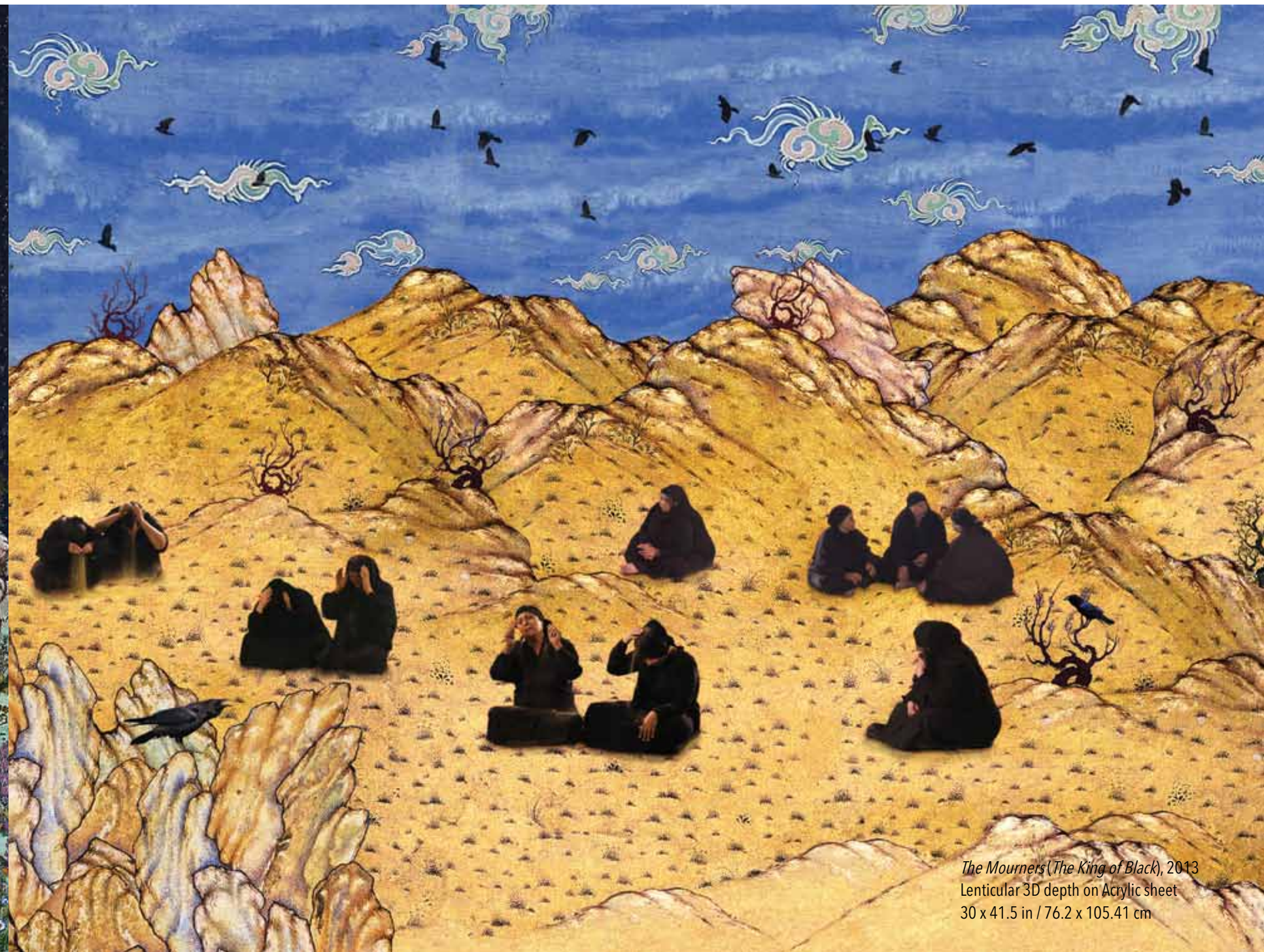
2 Shoja Azari, email interview with the author, 24 October 2013.

3 Quoted in Kate Taylor, “The Windmills of His Mind: Shoja Azari,” *Canvas* (May-June 2010), p. 105.

4 Shoja Azari, email interview with the author, 24 October 2013.

Alexandra Keller is associate professor of Film Studies and Director of the Film Studies program at Smith College. She received her B.A. in Art History from Harvard and her Ph.D. in Cinema Studies from NYU. She specializes in the American Western, cinema and the postmodern, avant-garde and experimental film, and the relationship between cinema and other forms of artistic and cultural production. She has published work on all of these topics.

Banquette of Houries (The King of Black), 2013
Lenticular 3D depth on Acrylic sheet
30 x 41.5 in / 76.2 x 105.41 cm



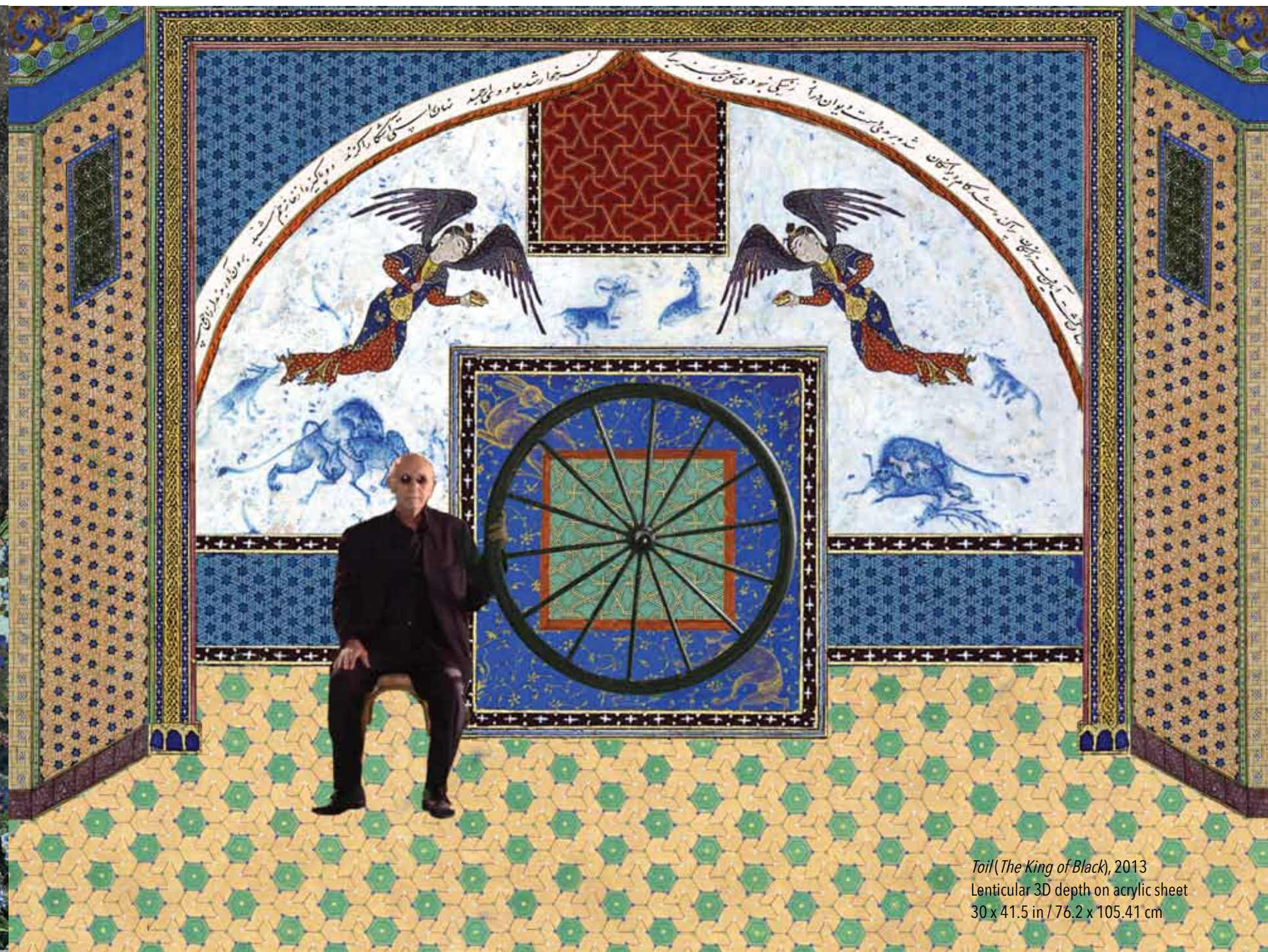
The Mourners (The King of Black), 2013
Lenticular 3D depth on Acrylic sheet
30 x 41.5 in / 76.2 x 105.41 cm

The Heavenly Bed of the Virgin (The King of Black), 2013
Lenticular 3D depth on Acrylic sheet
30 x 41.5 in / 76.2 x 105.41 cm



Hijlah or Unconsummated Love (The King of Black), 2013
Lenticular 3D depth on Acrylic sheet
30 x 41.5 in / 76.2 x 105.41 cm

Queen of Houries (The King of Black), 2013
Lenticular 3D depth on acrylic sheet
30 X 41.5 in / 76.2 x 105.41 cm



Toil (The King of Black), 2013
Lenticular 3D depth on acrylic sheet
30 x 41.5 in / 76.2 x 105.41 cm

SHOJA AZARI

B. Shiraz, Iran
Lives and works in New York

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

34	2013	<i>Fake: Idyllic Life</i> , Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY
	2011	<i>There are No Non- Believers in Hell</i> , Galerie Jérôme de Noirmont, Paris, France VIP Art Fair, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY
	2010	<i>There Are No Non- Believers in Hell</i> , Leila Heller Gallery, ZOOM Contemporary Art Fair, Miami Beach, FL <i>Icons</i> , Figge Von Rosen Gallerie, Cologne, Germany <i>Icons</i> , Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY <i>Blazing Grace</i> , East Central Gallery, London, UK
	2009	<i>Shoja Azari</i> , Marco Noire Contemporary Arts, Turin, Italy Shoja Azari, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, Art Dubai <i>Oil Paintings</i> , Art Dubai, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY
	2008	<i>Odyssey</i> , Figge Von Rosen Gallerie, Cologne, Germany
	2007	<i>Special Project</i> , Marco Noire Contemporary Arts, Basel Art Fair, Switzerland
	2006	<i>Convergencias</i> , Helga de Alvear Galerie, Madrid, Spain <i>Windows</i> , Figge Von Rosen Gallerie, Cologne, Germany <i>Windows</i> , Domus Artium Museum Salamanca, Spain <i>Project Rooms</i> , ARCO, Madrid, Spain <i>Special Project</i> , Marco Noire Contemporary Arts, Exitbart, Torino, Italy

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

	2013	<i>Magic of Light</i> (in collaboration with Shahram Karimi), Mana Contemporary, Jersey City, NJ
	2011	<i>OverRuled</i> , commissioned by Performa, Cedar Lake Theater, New York.
	2010	<i>Blazing Grace</i> , East Central Gallery, London, UK (in collaboration with Shahram Karimi)
	2008	<i>Silence</i> , Galleria Il Gabbiano, Rome, Italy (in collaboration with Shahram Karimi)
	2006	Galleria Il Gabbiano, Rome, Italy (in collaboration with Shahram Karimi)
	2003	<i>Logic of the Birds</i> , in collaboration with Shirin Neshat, Sussan Deyhim, and Ghasem Ebrahimian, <i>Change</i> , Palermo, Italy, Belgium
	2002	<i>Logic of the Birds</i> , in collaboration with Shirin Neshat, Sussan Deyhim, and Ghasem Ebrahimian, The Lincoln Summer Festival, in New York, NY <i>Logic of the Birds</i> , in collaboration with Shirin Neshat, Sussan Deyhim, and Ghasem Ebrahimian, <i>Art Angel</i> , London, UK,
	2001	<i>Logic of the Birds</i> , in collaboration with Shirin Neshat, Sussan Deyhim, and Ghasem Ebrahimian, in New York, Minneapolis, London, Siracusa, and Brugg

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

	2013	<i>Come Together: Surviving Sandy, Year 1</i> , Industry City, Brooklyn, NY (curated by the Dedalus Foundation in collaboration with Phong Bui) <i>Summer Selects</i> , Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY <i>The King of Black</i> , Sconfinamenti, Spoleto Festival of Two Worlds, 56th Edition, Spoleto, Italy (curated by Achille Bonito Olivia) <i>Love Me, Love Me Not: Contemporary Art from Azerbaijan and its Neighbors</i> , Arsenale Nord, Tessa 100, Venice, Italy (curated by Dina Nasser-Khadivi) <i>The Poetics of Anxiety and Malancholia</i> , MOCAtv, Los Angeles, California <i>Lunchtime shorts</i> , Casino, Forum d'Art Contemporain, Luxembourg <i>The Space Between: Contemporary Perspectives on Tradition and Society</i> , Middle East Center for the Arts (MECA), Jersey City, NJ
	2012	<i>Festival Iranian Arts Now–Les Arts Iraniens Maintenant</i> , Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, France
	2011	Art Beat Fair, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY [<i>Dis</i>] <i>Locating Culture: Contemporary Islamic Art in America</i> , Michael Berger Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA Art Dubai, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY (curated by Reem Alalusi)
	2010	Abu Dhabi, Leila Heller Gallery, Abu Dhabi, UAE <i>On Rage</i> , Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany <i>In Defense</i> , Progetto 107, Turin, Italy <i>Live Art/Expanded</i> , Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK Art Dubai, Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai, UAE <i>Tehran- New York</i> , Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY <i>C.O.N.T.R.A.V.I.O.L.E.N.C.I.A.S.</i> , Koldo Mitxelena Kulturunea – Donostia, Spain (Against Violence, Koldo Mitxelena Kulturunea, San Sebastian, Spain) <i>New Directors/New Films</i> , Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), New York, NY
	2009	<i>VIVA Show</i> , LOOP Alternative Space, Seoul, Korea <i>Iran Inside Out</i> , Chelsea Art Museum, New York, NY (curated by Sam Bardaouil and Fil Felrath) <i>A Room with A View</i> , Kunstfilmbiennale, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France <i>Punto de Encuentro</i> , Havana Biennial, Plaza de San Francisco, Havana, Cuba Urbanea, Fundacio Cultrural Es Convent, Inca, Mallorca <i>L'Iran sans Frontiere</i> , Galerie Almine Rech, Paris, France (curated by Negui and Kamran Diba) <i>Selseleh/Zelzeleh: Movers & Shakers in Contemporary Iranian Art</i> , Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY (curated by Layla S. Diba) Kunst Biennale, Cologne Germany
	2008	St. Moritz Art Masters, St Moritz, Switzerland <i>Proyecto Civico/Civil Project</i> , Centro Cultural Tijuana, Tijuana, Mexico <i>Splash</i> , Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY <i>Park and Castle of Acciaio-Scandicci</i> , Florence, Italy

	2007	<i>Summer Group Show</i> , Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, NY <i>Ma liberaci dal male</i> , Galleria San Fedele, Milan, Italy <i>Existencias</i> , MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Castilla y Leon, Spain <i>Camm</i> , Centro Atlantico de Arte Contemporaneo, Las Palmas, Spain. Video Dia Loghi Festival, Torino, Italy <i>The Space Between</i> , Petach Tivka Museum of Art, Petach Tivka, Israel (curated by Drorit Gur Arie) <i>Pre-opening exhibitions</i> , Contemporary Art Museum, Santra Istanbul, Turkey <i>2 Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art</i> , Moscow, Russia Kunstfilm Videonale, Cologne, Germany
	2006	<i>Emergencies: the inaugural show of MUSAC</i> , Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Castilla y León, Spain <i>Amerika</i> , Figge Von Rosen Gallerie, Cologne, Germany
	2005	<i>After the Revolution: Contemporary Artists from Iran</i> , Koldo Mitxelena, San Sebastián, Spain (curated by Octavio Zaya)

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE ESSAYS

"Icons," *Figge von Rosen Galeri Exhibition Catalogue*, Figge von Rosen Galeri, Cologne, Germany, 2010.
Hamid Dabashi, "Shoja Azari: Making the Homely Unhomely," *Leila Heller Gallery Exhibition Catalogue*, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY, May 2010, 1-5.
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2007	"Through the Window," <i>Exit Magazine # 26</i> . Gil Golfín, "Spaces in Between," <i>The Jerusalem Post</i> .

2006	Olga Gambardi, "Pablicato Marted," <i>Flash art</i> . Javier Hernando, "Shoja Azari, tras el crystal," <i>El Mundo</i> , April 20, 2006. Laura Revuelta, "La Ventana indiscreta," <i>ABC</i> . Javier Diaz- Guardiola, "Shoja Azari, Soy un hombre sin iddentidad, sin fronteras," <i>ABC</i> . Juan Albarran, "Before the pain of the others," Art.es, International Contemporary Art, no.12/13. "Opening the lid bordering Windows: A conversation with Octavio Zaya," <i>Atlantica</i> . Aaron Hills, "Windows," <i>Premiere Magazine</i> . John Anderson, "Windows," <i>Variety Magazine</i> .	2007 2006 2005 2004 2003 2002	<i>Odyssey</i> . Shoja Azari. 2008. Color short film high definition video. <i>Converted</i> . Shoja Azari. 2007. Feature length script. <i>Windows</i> . Shoja Azari. Mad Apple Films, 2006. Black and white and color. <i>Zarin</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. Essential Film production GmbH, 2005. 35 mm color. <i>Mahdokht</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. Coproduction Office, 2004. 35 mm black and white and color. <i>Maria de Los Angeles</i> . Shoja Azari. Mad Apple Films, 2003. DV color. <i>The Last Word</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. Mad Apple Films, 2003. 35 mm color. <i>K</i> , a feature length film based on 3 short stories by Franz Kafka. Shoja Azari. The 7th Floor and Parrot Production Inc., 2002. Black and white. <i>Tooba</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. 2002. 35 mm color 2-channel video projection. <i>Logic of the Birds</i> . Shoja Azari. Artangel Media, 2002. 16 mm Technicolor. <i>Pulse</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. 16mm black and white. <i>Possessed</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. 16mm and 35mm black and white and color. <i>Passage</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. 35 mm color single channel video/audio installation. <i>Fervoi</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat.1999.16mm black and white. <i>Rapture</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. 1999.16mm color 2 channel video installation. <i>Soliloquy</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. 1999. 16mm color. <i>The Story of the Merchant and the Indian Parrot</i> . Shoja Azari. 1998.35 mm color. <i>Turbulent</i> , Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat.1998.16mm black and white 2-channel video installation.
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2003	Morteza Neghai, "K," <i>Kayhan Newspaper</i> , Sept 26, 2003.	2000	
2002	Rose Aidin, "The Flock of the New," <i>The Observer</i> , November 10, 2002. Alex O'Connell, "Logic of the Birds," <i>The Times</i> , November 8, 2002, 27. Richard Williams, "The Exotic and the Everyday," <i>The Guardian</i> , October 31, 2002, A14-15. David Stratton, "K," <i>Variety Magazine</i> , Sept. 9, 2002. Charles McNulty, "Iran to You: Ritual and the Avant-Garde at the Lincoln Center Film Festival," <i>The Village Voice</i> , July 23, 2002. Anne Midgette, "Festival Review; An Epic Journey in Images and Sounds," <i>The New York Times</i> , July 15, 2002.	1999	
2001	Amei Wallach, "Theater; An Islamic Culture in all its Beauty," <i>The New York Times</i> , September 30, 2001.	1998	

FILMOGRAPHY

2013	<i>Adirondack Bars</i> , Feature length film script, 2013 <i>Egypt in My Heart</i> , Feature length film script, 2013
2009	<i>Paradise</i> . Feature length film script. <i>Women without Men</i> , feature film based on Shahmush Parsipur's novel <i>Women Without Men</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. Indiepix, 2009. 35 mm color.
2008	<i>Faezeh</i> , based on Shahmush Parsipur's novel <i>Women Without Men</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. 2008. Black and white video/audio installation. <i>Munis</i> , based on Shahmush Parsipur's novel <i>Women Without Men</i> . Shoja Azari in collaboration with Shirin Neshat. 2008. Black and white video/audio installation.

SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Castilla y León, Spain
CAMM, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain
MAMBO, Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá, Colombia
Helga De Alvear Collection, Madrid, Spain
Marco Noire Contemporary Art Collection, Turin, Italy
The Farjam Foundation, Dubai, UAE
MOCA, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California

Idyllic Life:
Special effects and sound design By: Johnny Azari

The King of Black
Adapted from Nizami Ganjavi's poem *The Black Dome*

A work by
Shoja Azari

Staring:
Ahmed Ibrahim
Martina Markota

Original score composed and performed by:
C. Ryan McVinney

Sound design and musical arrangement:
Johnny B. Azari

Cinematographers:
Ben Wolf
Eslam Abd El Samie

Background miniature scenery:
Hamid Rahmanian

Composite and animation:
John Komar

Composite and Green screen supervision
Nariman Hamed

Production designers:
Shahram Karimi
Abd El Rahman Magdi

Executive producers:
Farhad Farjam
Mohammed Afkhami
Leila Heller Gallery

Produced by:
Shoja Azari
Ahmed Ibrahim

Still Photography and photoshop
Richard Lapham

