



Naeemeh Kazemi



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LaLaLand

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

Predominately a sculptor, Naeemeh Kazemi began painting in 2020 when the lockdown started since she could not get to her studio. She worked on these magical canvases in her one bedroom apartment in Iran, which helped her escape the confinement of quarantine and transported her to fantastical places.

Living in Iran, Kazemi has had to take creative approaches to her meanings through symbols, so as to not get in trouble with the Iranian government. Her themes of environmental and virus anxiety, feminism, and humanity are disguised in her enchanting paintings through tokens and motifs of the natural world, classical paintings, and quotidian objects.

In her most recent “La La Land” series, she depicts a world that is intertwined yet fragmented. It is as if familiar pieces float strangely in space. In her complex yet highly composed paintings, Kazemi ponders the questions “Could the whole history of the world be a mere misunderstanding?” and “Is it possible that man, with all his discoveries, developments, culture, religion, and global wisdom is just lingering on only to the outward of life?”

This series reflects Kazemi’s feelings and anxieties towards the world, exacerbated by the Covid pandemic quarantine instated since March 2020. She says, “I’m incredibly scared because I know we will soon annihilate this enlivening life-giving planet. A planet that soon gets a shell from skulls, bones, and dead machines. No one can do anything for her. We lost the game!” Kazemi creates an oasis sheltered from these fears in this series. A “La La Land,” clearly fictitious, but serving as a safe haven from the uncertain world.

Her work aims to reflect her constant state of questioning, anxiety, and interrogation with herself. She says “tense dreamy moments occur, which rushes blood to my cheeks.” The viewer can see these feelings depicted in the flourishing flora and fauna and bright, enchanting colors. But then, “a moment later, silent, unsure, tired, and depressed.” These juxtaposed feelings are sensed in the canvas through the lingering portraits- eyes hidden, hands floating, and plants tangled in a web.

Kazemi's most recent work is "The Birth of Christ." The scene depicts a carnival birthday scene, complete with confetti, banners, and birthday hats. People and animals pray to Christ, His body shown in three different places on the canvas, in an attempt to gain a piece of His humanity and to benefit from His kindness and generosity. Motifs of skulls and gas-masks allude to what Kazemi foresees as the fate of humanity- an eventual shell of a world. Juxtaposed with the theme of birth, new life, and heads of animals, the artist gives life to her chaotic thoughts and opposing feelings.

Ultimately, through these symbols, themes, and meanings, Kazemi is questioning life itself. For Kazemi, her works are not set in a final reality. She explores the system of meanings and understands that it is constantly changing and new realities are born every day. While first brought upon by the uncertainties of social and personal health by the pandemic, her investigation of finding meaning in life remains true for past, present, and future generations.





" Fear swirls like dreaded particles in the air, inhaled with every ragged breath, it begins to leak from every pore, hardening all that it touches. Screams of displeasure fill the air as the world hurtles on through space, cyclical in the unrelenting chaos. This civilization is being torn to pieces now more than ever, the throwaway culture thriving as the only living tissue found in its remains. I constantly think to myself, could the whole history of the world possibly hinge on a simple misunderstanding?

Is it possible that the existence of man, rife with discoveries, developments, culture, religion and wisdom, still lingers on the periphery of meaning? Yes, it is possible! To be alone with such awareness of the superficiality of life leaves little room for amusement. I'm incredibly scared, because I know we'll soon annihilate this singular life-giving planet. Soon our home will be nothing but a shell of skulls, bones, and dead machines. We can't do anything for her. We lost the game!

Thus, I am anxious and I believe one must act upon this feeling before it mutates into fear. Frustratingly, in life, sometimes a situation has no remedy. However, the human soul seeks contentment and because of this I must get to work and engage with my surroundings. I look for things that my situation lacks, hopeful to find relief from the many torments of this life. It is in the space between where I am and where I could be, that I find shreds of optimism. In my mind's eye, I find a land where the laws of nature begin to wiggle and weave under the pressure of my imagination. I see everything existing in a state of perpetual flux; formed from unique

combination of unpredictable and unrepeatable circumstances. There is no room for the authoritarian acts of man. This flux is what provides hope and purpose, as our old world is continually reborn through inevitable change. The ontological fabric of meaning is relentlessly called into question providing an antidote to the chaos.

The paradoxical truth that truth does not exist provides space for unity amongst those who can bare to speak in the language of the uncertain. The result will be a consolidated identity where the "la-la land" appears. In this space, I can come back to myself, there is a tranquility and I feel refreshed. Everything I know comes into question and is torn up before my eyes. Little by little I am learning to see. I am obsessive in my desire to blend the internal and external parts of myself; the visceral unforgiving organic aspects of existence with the expansive fluid mysticism of consciousness.

I am calmer now. Imagining a new world brings me a sense of unbridled joy, but the awareness of perpetual change brings new challenges. One moment I am restless, eager, hopeful, and enthusiastic, a moment later, silent, unsure, tired, and depressed, as if the pieces of my life have caught a new light and mutated in a strange unfamiliar way.

I breathe better now, busy watching my la-la land; I tread lightly, and somehow untroubled... "





Untitled
2021
Oil on canvas
160 x 300 cm



Untitled
2021
Oil on canvas
180 x 280 cm







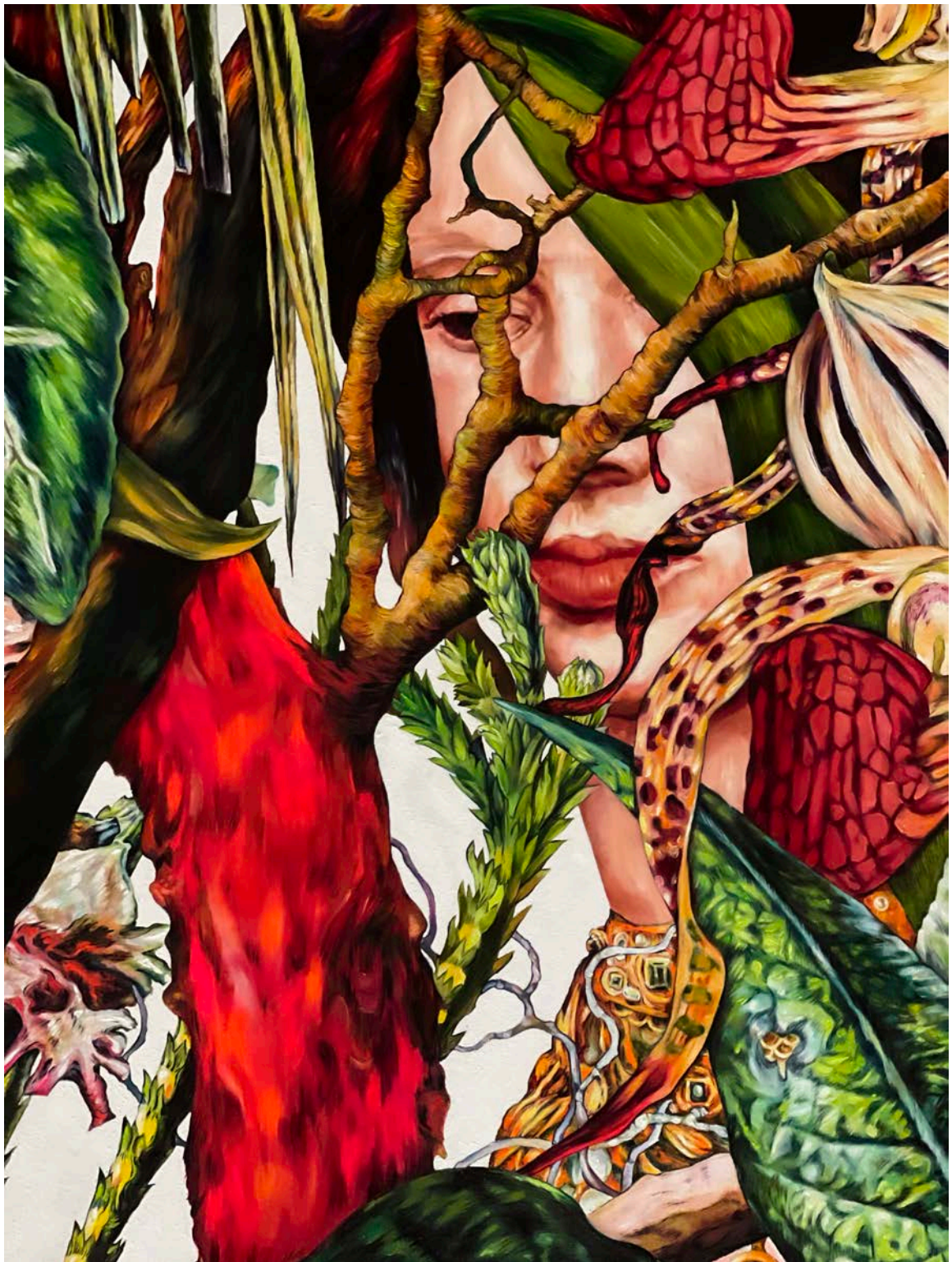
Untitled
2021
Oil on canvas
180 x 230 cm





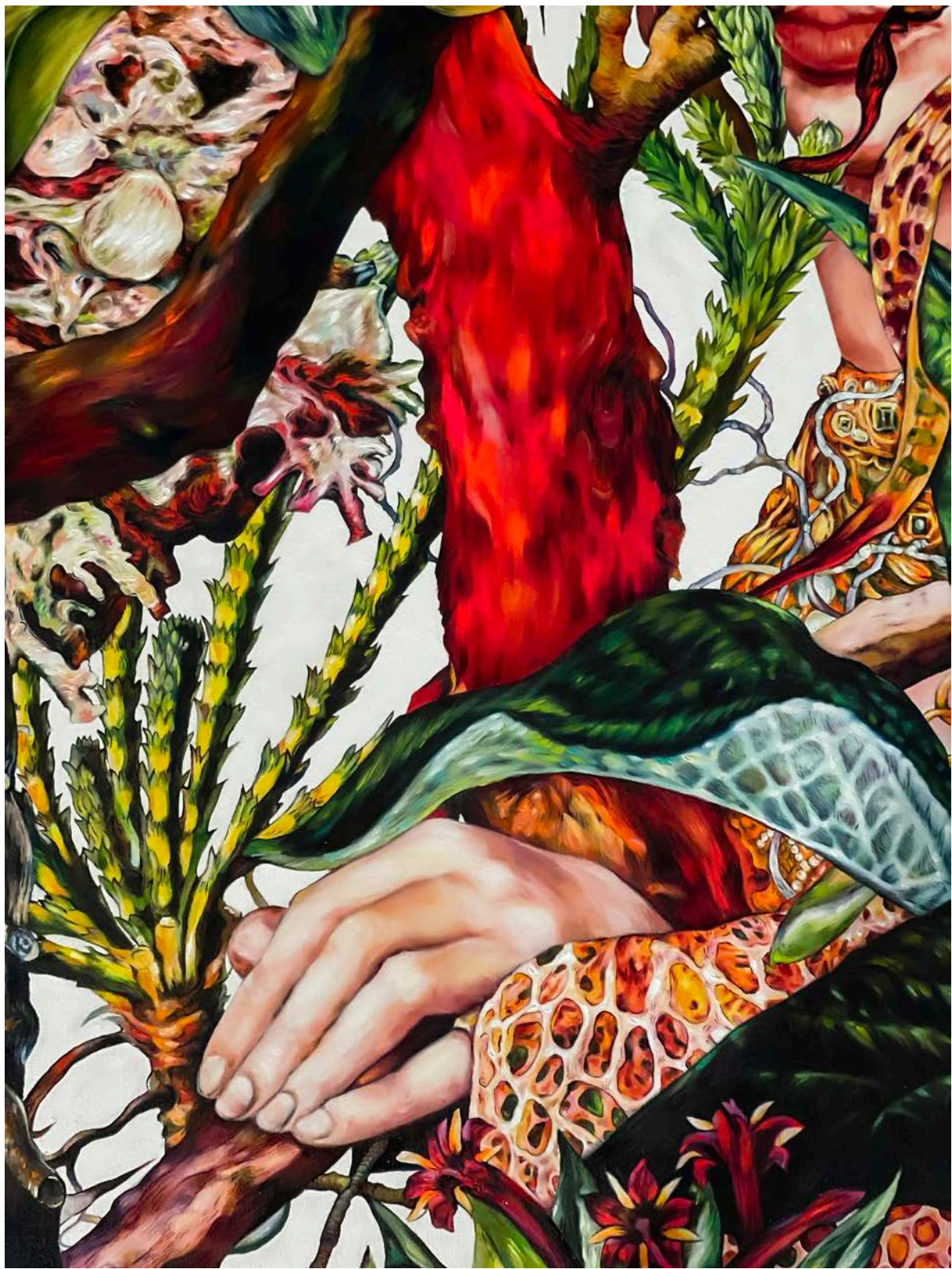


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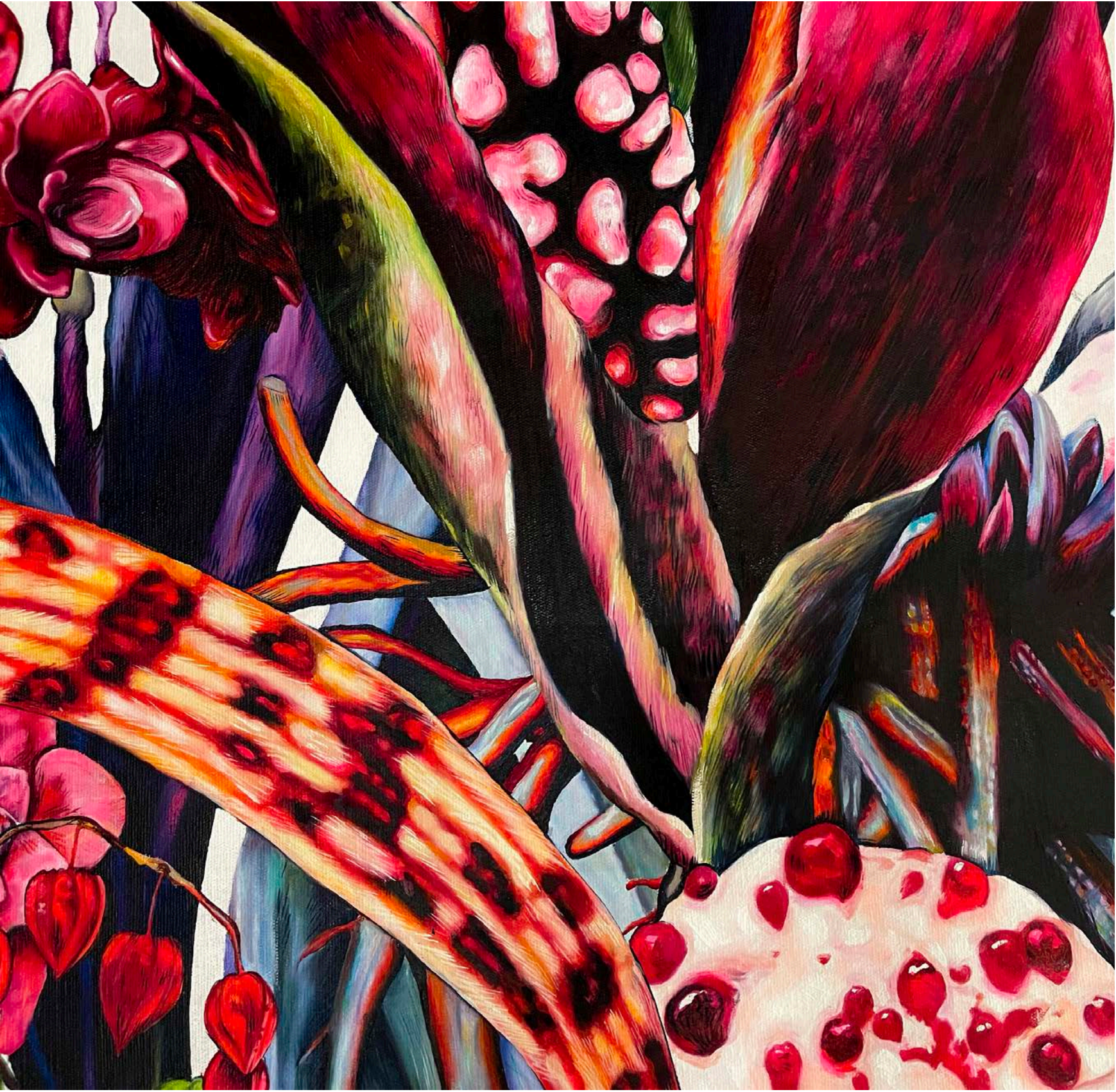


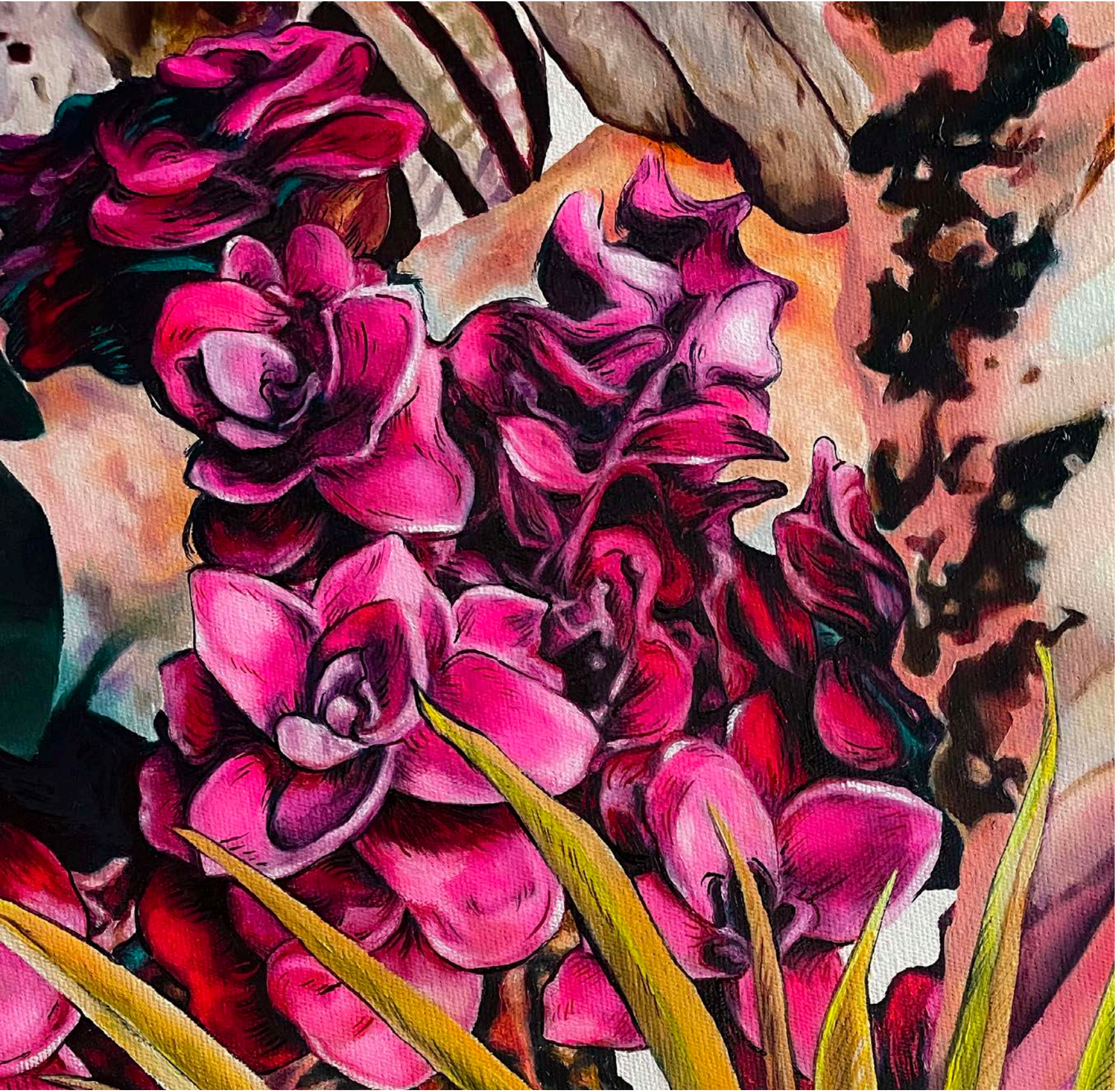


Untitled
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Oil on canvas
180 x 210 cm



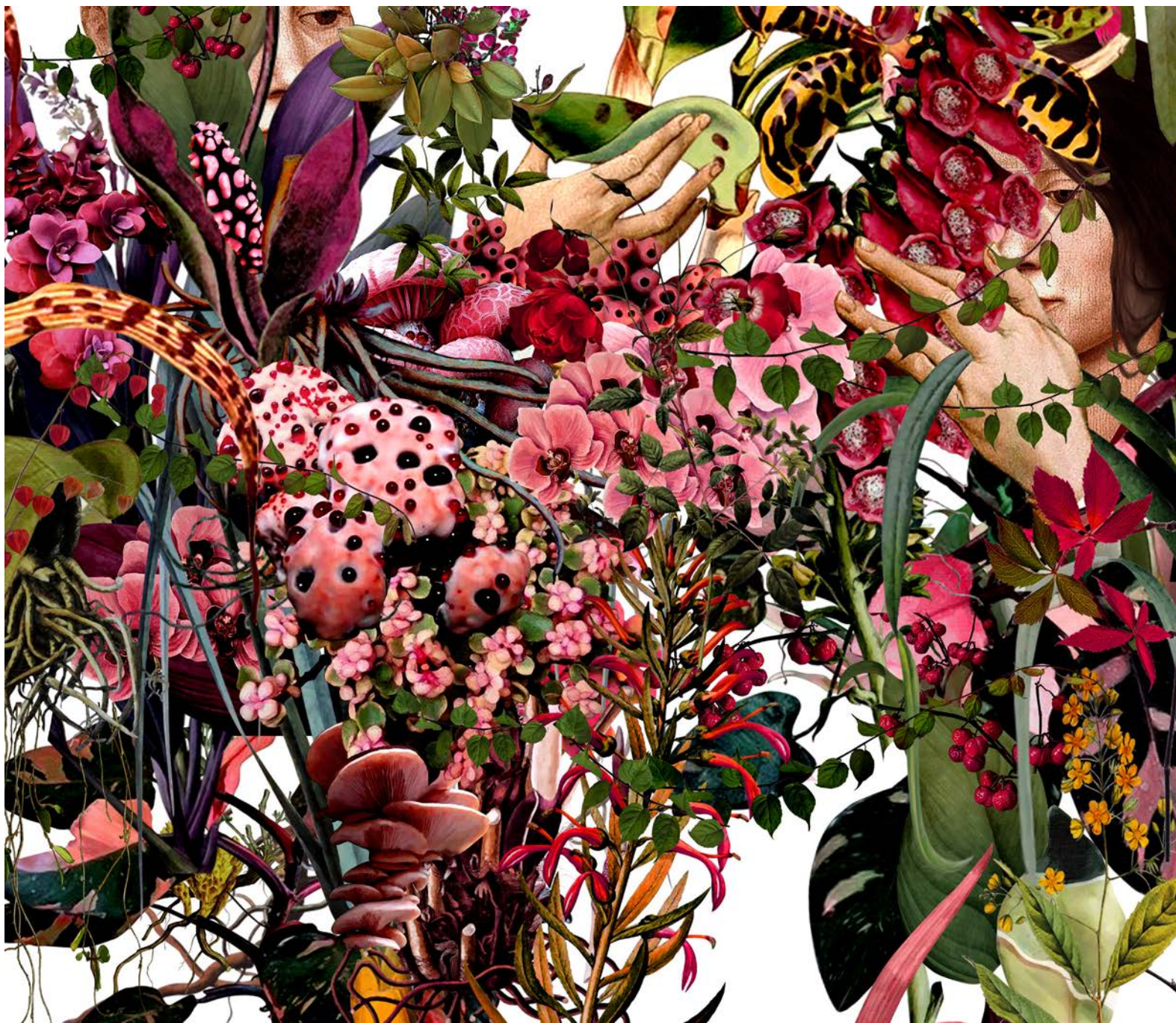












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Oil on canvas
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Untitled
2022
Oil on canvas
160 x 300 cm



Naeemeh Kazemi (b.1981, Tehran, Iran) is a visual artist who has an MA in painting. She has been working as a professional artist in Iran since 2002. For 5 years, she worked solely on children's art and participated as an expert in the Cultural Exchange Project of Iran.

Naeemeh is fascinated by the world of children's art, which influenced and inspired her early sculptures that were precise in their peculiarity and embodied the more monstrous facets of a child's imagination. Naeemeh is explorative in her medium choice and unafraid to venture into new artistic practices. For years, she was influenced by the craft of Persian Rugs and studied the patterns, designs, colors and textures in this field.

Whilst she wasn't drawn to toys and puppets in her childhood, her visual practice now includes making dolls, and she has found joy in these memorials of childhood's banality.

There is no final reality in Naeemeh's works. She believes that the system of meaning is constantly changing and new realities are born every day. To Naeemeh, it is as if the world is meaningless and in this abyss, she can write her own rules, where everyone is welcome to join and play. Naeemeh tries to connect the past with the present by using themes from the masters of the renaissance. She is constantly experimenting with different themes and inspirations to create the beautiful chaos present in her work.

The cheerful childish humor of her unique artistic language is evident across all mediums she works with and shines through the materiality of her pieces. After 12 years of continuous activity in the fields of sculpture and rug design, her first collection of paintings is available from 2021.

EDUCATION

BA (art - Painting) Elmo farhang University.

MA (art - Painting) Alzahra university.

Member of Association of Iranian Painters

Member of the Iran Visual Art Institute

Member of Institute for The Protection of Artists, Journalists and Writers

EXHIBITIONS

2021	Art Abu Dhabi, Leila Heller gallery, Abu Dhabi, UAE
2021	Art Dubai, Leila Heller gallery, Dubai, UAE
2018	Art for peace festival, Tehran, Iran
2018	Art & Fashion, Shirin art gallery, Tehran, Iran
2016	Istanbul Biennial, Shirin art gallery, Istanbul
2015	Group Sculpture Exhibition, Seyhoon art gallery, Tehran, Iran
2014	The Mine art gallery, Dubai, UAE
2014	Contemporary Arab, Iranian & Turkish Art Exhibition, Pro art gallery, Dubai, UAE
2014	Art 14, London, Shirin art gallery NY, London
2013	Scope Basel, Shirin art gallery, Basel, Switzerland
2013	Scope Miami beach, Shirin art gallery NY, Miami, USA
2013	Peace From The Bottom Of My Art, Opera gallery London, Dubai, UAE
2013	Art Dubai, Opera gallery London, Dubai, UAE
2012	Selected Artist, Magic Of Persia, Salsali Museum, Dubai, UAE
2010	Fine Art Group Exhibition, Art Center, Tehran, Iran
2010	Painting Group Exhibition, Kamaledin Behzad gallery, Tehran, Iran
2009	Colors for Green, Mellat gallery, Tehran, Iran
2009	Painting Exhibition, Laleh gallery, Tehran, Iran
2008	Dr. Sandouzi Design Biennial, Tehran, Iran
2008	Association of Iranian Painters Exhibition, Niavaran gallery, Tehran, Iran
2007	Painting Exhibition, Majd gallery, Tehran, Iran
2008-2004	Supervisor of the Cultural Exchange Project of Children of Iran and the Netherlands, Center for The Artistic Creation of Children & young adults, Kanoon, International Affairs, Tehran, Iran
2004	Painting Group Exhibition, Laleh gallery, Tehran, Iran
2003	Biennial of Iran Contemporary Design, Barg gallery, Tehran, Iran
2002	The Drawing Exhibition of Young Artist, Arasbaran gallery, Tehran, Iran

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LEILA HELLER GALLERY
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Images courtesy of the artist
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