

If only for today, I am unafraid!

Ayad Alkadhi

Sunken Republic

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BIOGRAPHY

Based in New York, Alkadhi is a political painter, war survivor, and immigrant whose life experiences have shaped his creative practice. Holding academic degrees in art, engineering, and design, he brings a multidisciplinary approach to his work. His practice engages with the cultural and political realities of global and Middle Eastern events, critically examining his perceived position at the intersection of East–West polarities.

Sunken Republic exhibit presents raw, chaotic scenes that reject linear narratives, reflecting the turbulence of political conflict, social unrest, and survival. Figures twist and merge—flesh, bone, plant matter, and pigment—balancing physical solidity with dissolution. Bodies, landscapes, and archives collide in unresolved tension, where anatomical precision is disrupted by drips, neon bursts, and dissolving edges, evoking battle scenes, fever dreams, and vanishing acts.

Drawing from Renaissance painting, Japanese woodblock prints, and street art, Alkadhi crafts a hybrid visual language to confront violence and erasure. His work resists fixed meaning, asking: Who holds power? Who disappears? What does liberation look like when every surface—body, land, and history—is under siege?

The paintings navigate control and surrender, layering sculptural clarity with translucent washes and gestural marks. Earth tones and inky blacks erupt with acid green, visceral pink, and toxic teal—pigments that burn and infect, transforming calm into rupture. Echoes of historical grandeur meet ghostly overlays and street art grit that defies categorization.



Le Déluge
2018- 2025

Oil, acrylic, charcoal, oil stick and marker pen on canvas
183 cm x 244 cm





Eye Of The Storm
2018- 2025
Oil, Acrylic, charcoal and marker pen on canvas
122 cm x 153 cm



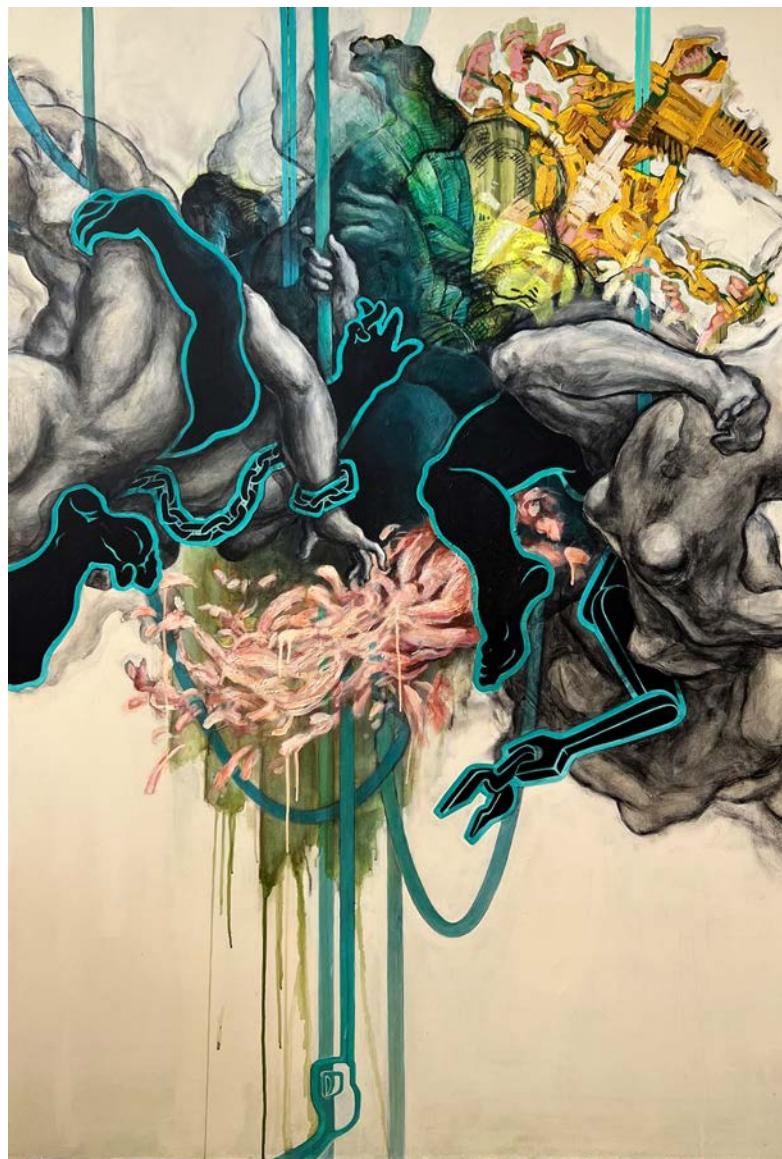
The Four Horsemen
2025

Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
183 cm x 183 cm





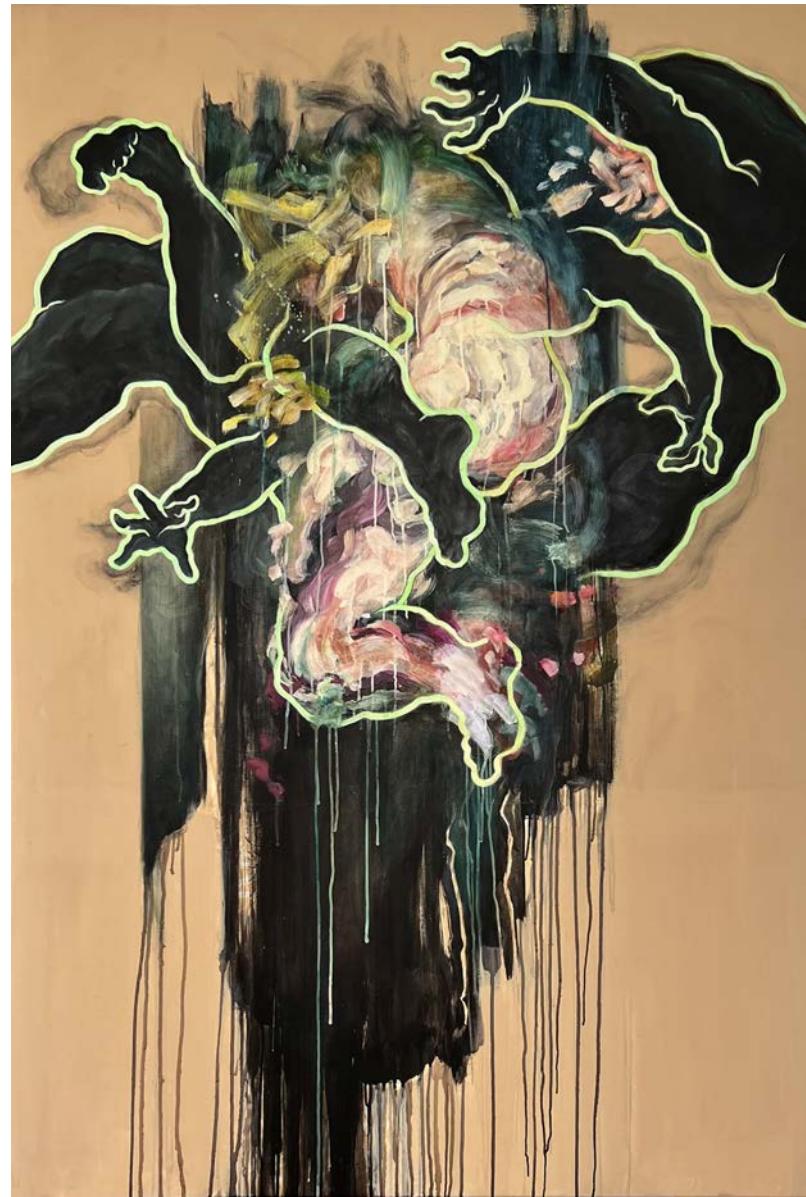




Freedom Fighters II
2014 - 2025
Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
183 cm x 123 cm







The Chosen I
2025

Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
183 cm x 123 cm



Forsake Me Not

2014 – 2025

Oil, acrylics and charcoal on Arabic Newspaper on canvas

183 cm x 183 cm







بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ
مَبْرُوْرٌ بِكَرْبَلَاءَ وَمَدْبُرٌ
بِالْجَنَّةِ وَالْجَنَّةِ وَالْجَنَّةِ



Revelations II
2025

Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
183 cm x 123 cm



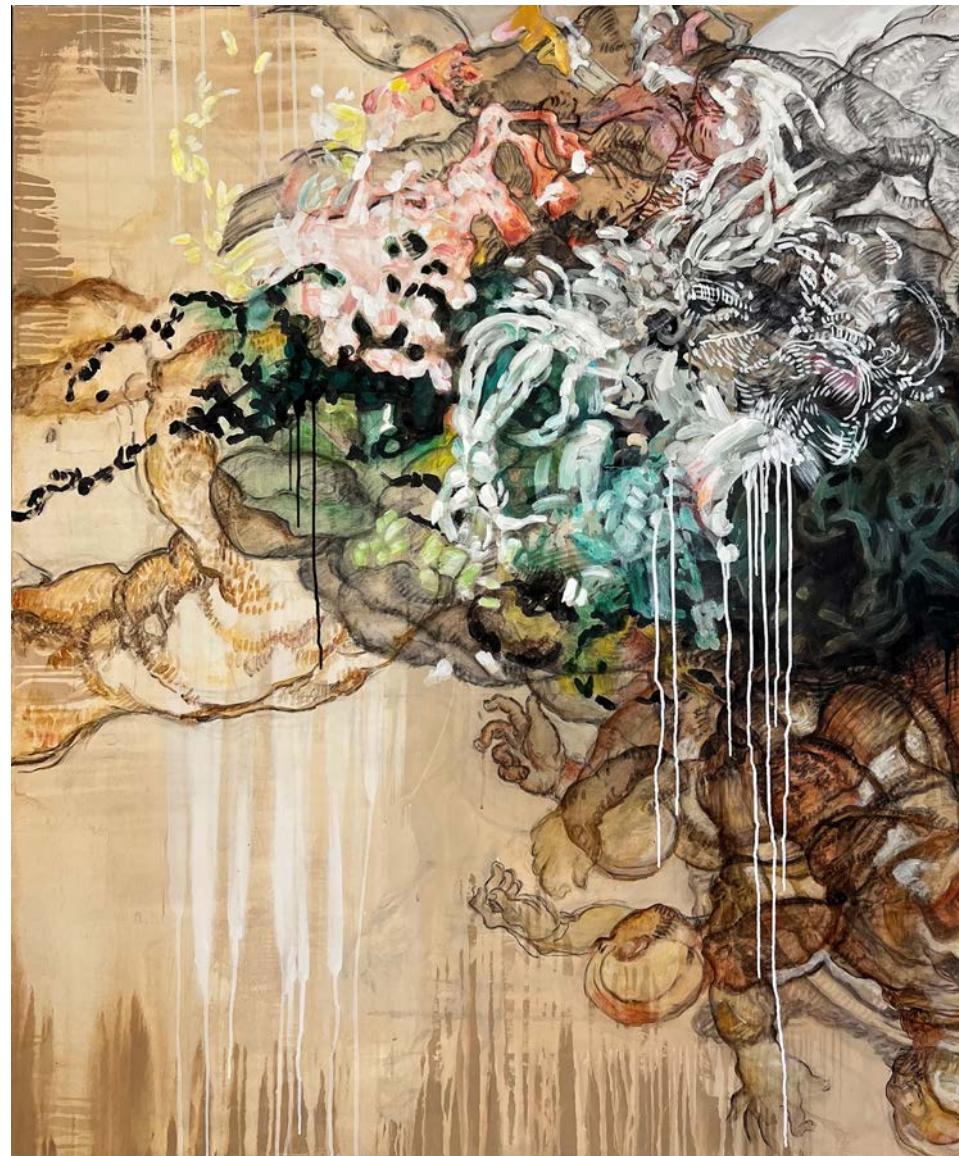
از پری اشکانی بودی که در هزار خیار گزینی اشتی

بر سر عازم کار کنیت کیم بزر مردمش از ایشان بود

که چنانچه چون بود

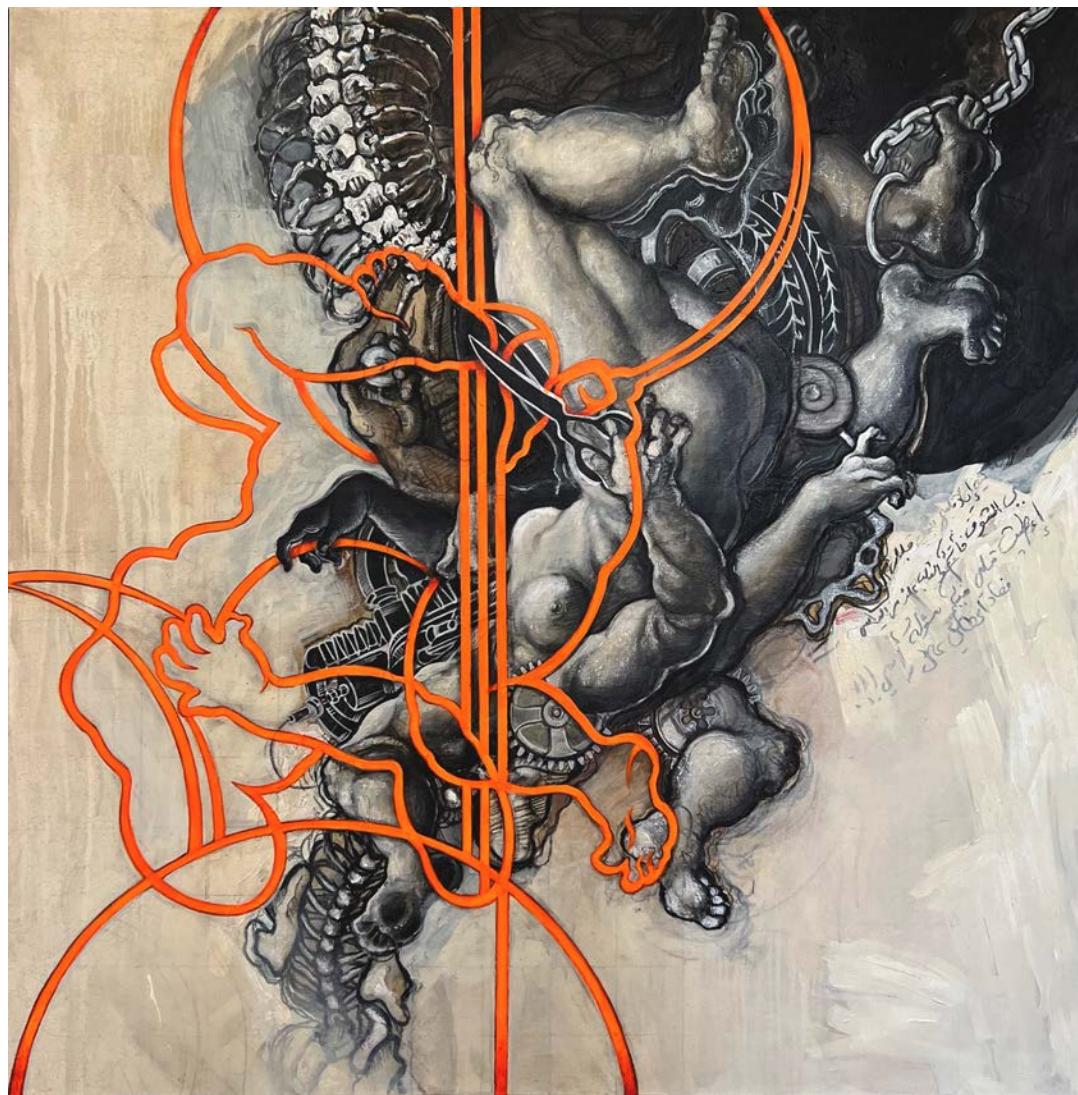
که بودی که



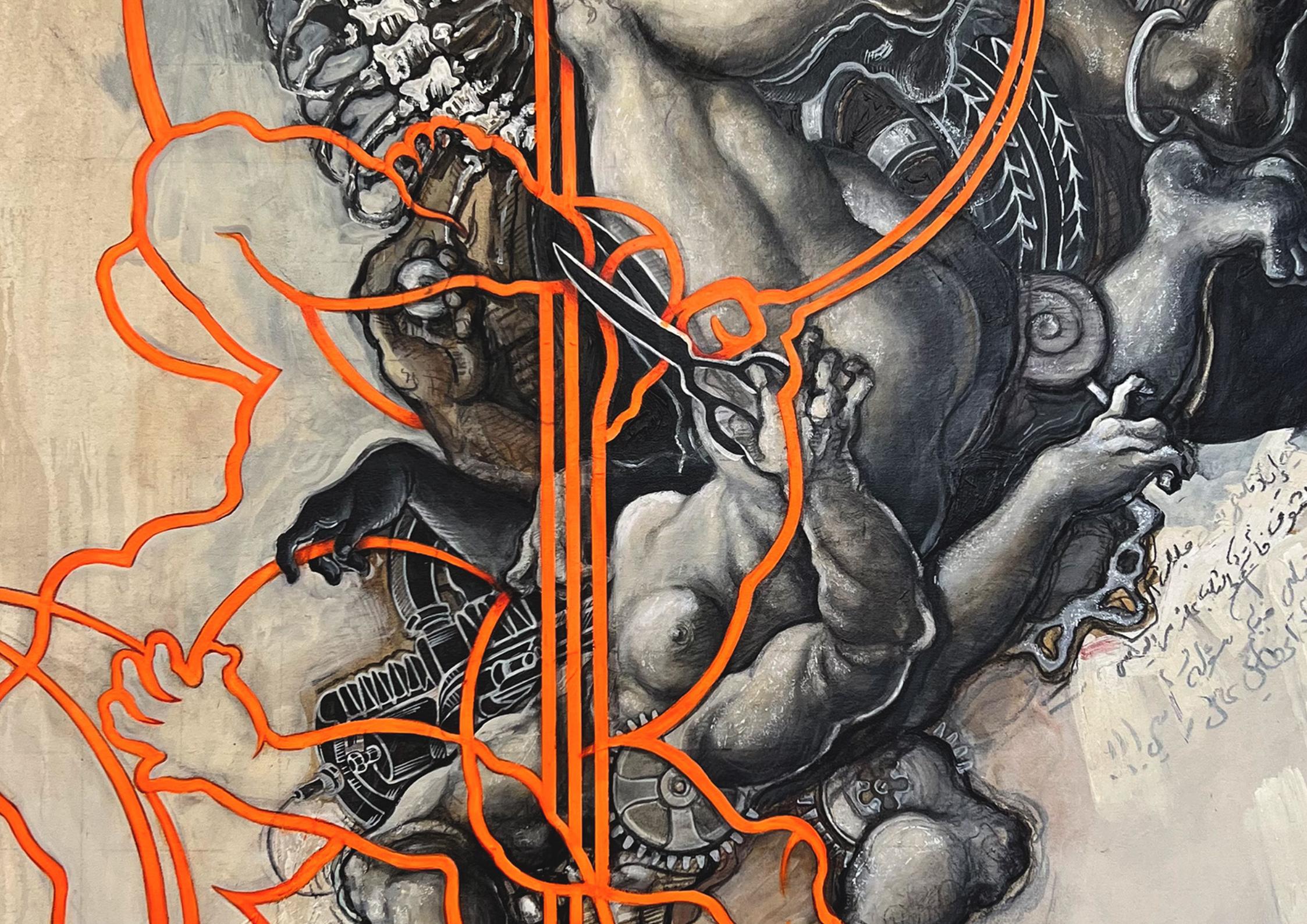


Revelations I
2025

Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
122 cm x 153 cm



Cords and Spines
2025
Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
122 cm x 122 cm







In Vitro II
2012 - 2013
Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
336 cm x 244 cm



Geneses II
2016 - 2025
Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
183 cm x 183 cm











Sunken Republic
2012- 2025

Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
183 cm x 244 cm



Geneses III
2019 - 2025
Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
183 cm x 183 cm







In Vitro I
2012 - 2013
Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
244 cm x 183 cm

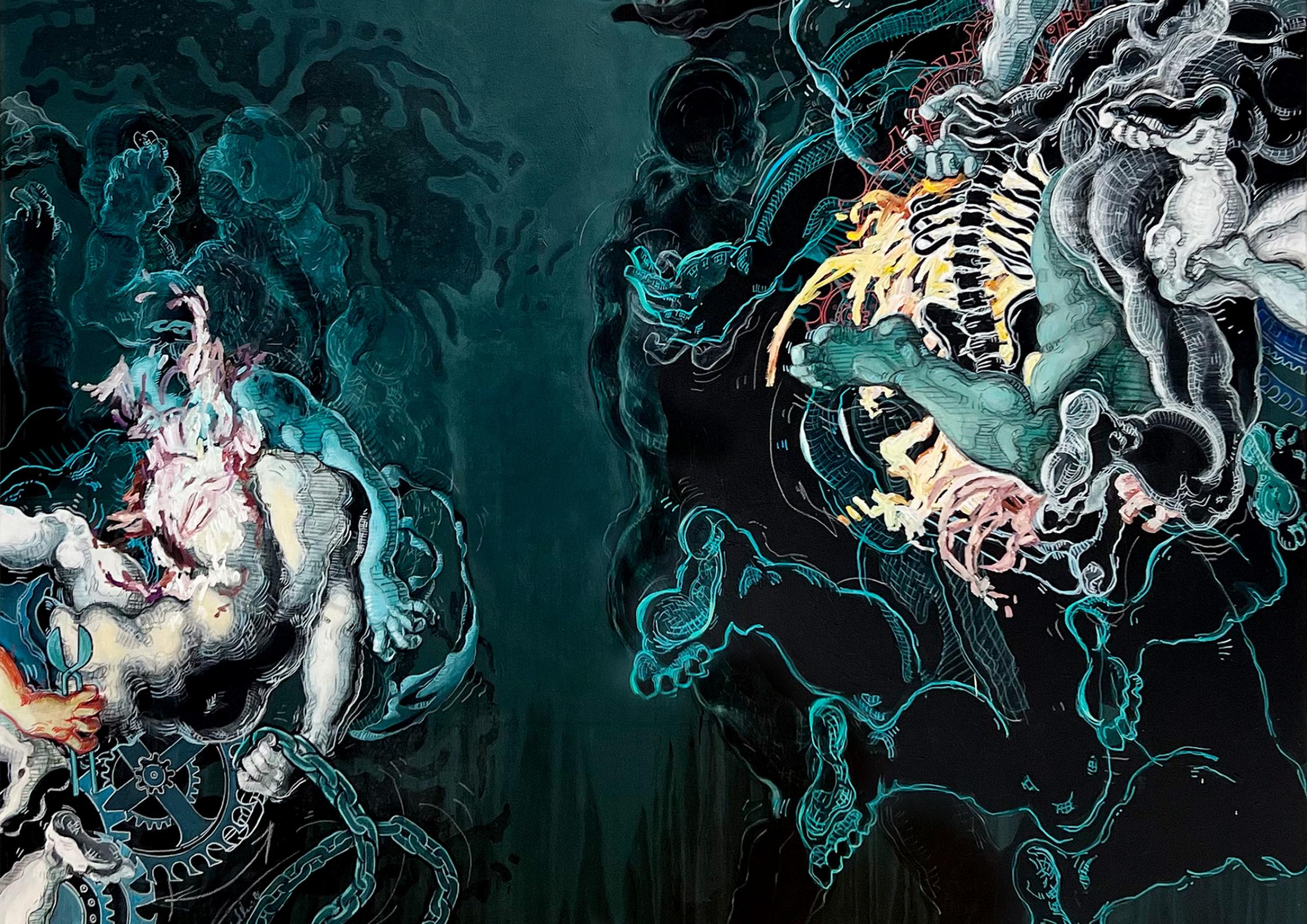


Burning The Republic

2012 - 2025

Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas

183 cm x 183 cm







Sacrificial
2012
Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas
183 cm x 123 cm

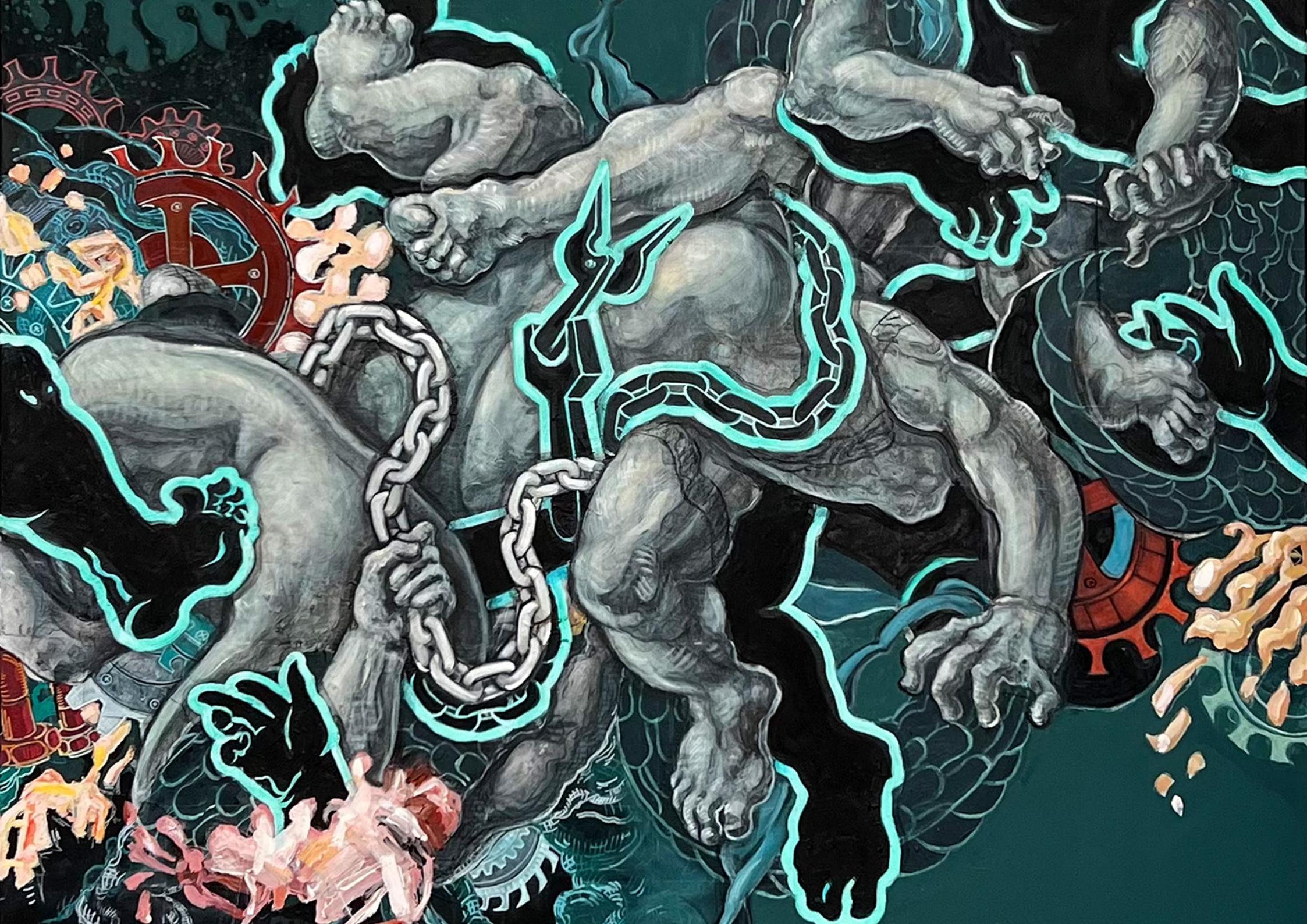


Ascending The Abyss

2025

Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas

183 cm x 123 cm



Snake In The Garden Of Eden

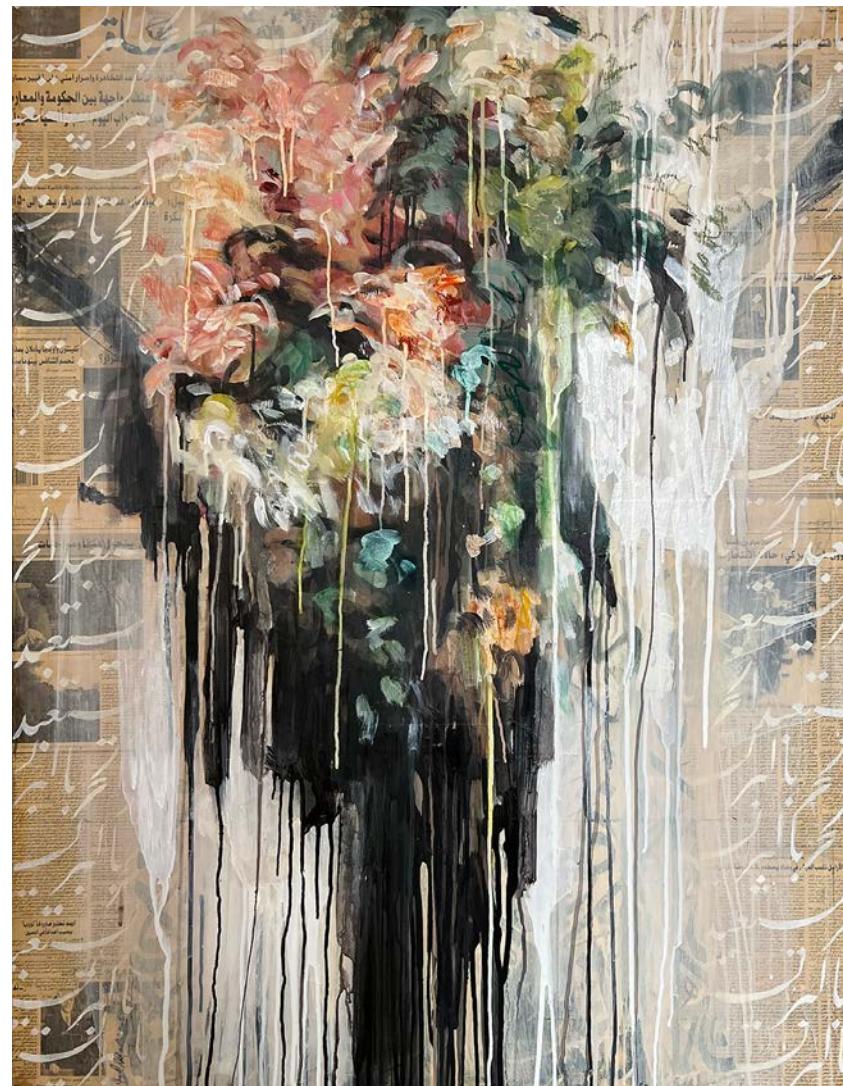
2025

Oil, acrylics and charcoal on canvas

183 cm x 123 cm







Freedom Influx
2025
Oil, charcoal, acrylic, oil stick on Arabic newspaper on canvas
94 x 122 cm

Ayad Alkadhi

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2015 Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY
- 2012 Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY
- 2010 AB Gallery, Lucerne, Switzerland
- 2009 ArtSpace Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2006 ArtSpace Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2003 Exposure Gallery, Palm Springs, California, USA
- 2000 Aotea Centre Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand

PERMANENT COLLECTION

- The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA
- National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan
- The Shangri La: Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Hawaii, USA
- The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles, USA
- The Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Ithaca, New York, USA
- The Honolulu Museum of Art, Hawaii, USA
- The Maraya Centre for Arts, Sharjah, UAE
- Black Gold Museum, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- The Farjam Foundation for Islamic Arts, Dubai, UA

EDUCATION

- 2004 Master of Fine Arts, ITP Tisch School of The Arts, New York University, New York, NY
- 2002 Associate Degree in Design and Graphics, City College of New York, NY
- 1993 Bachelor of Science, University of Technology, Baghdad, Iraq

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2023 Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2022 Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2018 AB Gallery, Lucerne, Switzerland (February 12 - April 5)

2017 Islamic Galleries – Recent Acquisitions, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA (July - August)

2016 Reopening of Islamic Galleries, Honolulu Museum of Art, Honolulu, USA (October 6 - Present)

2015 Asian Art Biennial: Artist Making Movement, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan (September 9 - December 6)

2015 Color Polemics, The Gateway Project's Gallery, New Jersey (April 30 - June 15)

2015 Prickly?, Causey Contemporary, New York, NY (March 4 - April 4)

2015 Doris Duke's Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape and Islamic Art, Honolulu Museum of Art, Hawaii, USA (March 4 - July 5)

2014 Doris Duke's Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape and Islamic Art, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (October 23 - December 28)

2014 Doris Duke's Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape and Islamic Art, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, NV (May 31 - September 7)

2014 Unforgetting Iraq: In Search of Recovery, Kimballton, Iowa, USA (May 24 - September 1)

2014 Doris Duke's Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape, and Islamic Art, University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, MI (January 25 - May 4)

2013 The Space Between, Middle East Center for Arts (MECA), Jersey City, NJ

2013 The Dance of Words, Quarter Gallery, Regis Center for Art at University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

2012 Art Dubai, Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2012 The Rule and Its Exception, Leila Heller Gallery, Deborah Colton Gallery, Houston, TX

2011 Navigating the Aftermath, Quarter Gallery, Regis Centre of the Arts at University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

2011 Abu Dhabi Art Fair, Leila Heller Gallery, Abu Dhabi, UAE

2011 Art Dubai, Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2010 Islam International, AB Gallery, Lucerne, Switzerland

2010 Peripheral Vision, The Maraya Art Center, Barjeel Art Foundation, Al Qasba, Sharjah, UAE

2010 Tarjama/Translation, Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Ithaca, NY (curated by Leeza Ahmady and Eikhar Dadi with assistant curator Reem Fadda)

2010 Art Dubai, ArtSpace Gallery, Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2009 Tarjama/Translation, Queens Museum of Art, Queens, NY (curated by Leeza Ahmady and Eikhar Dadi, with assistant curator Reem Fadda)

2009 The Seen and The Hidden: (Dis)Covering the Veil, Austrian Cultural Forum, New York, NY

2009 Einstein on Witherspoon Street, New York University Bronfman Centre at NYU, New York, NY

2009 Iraqi Artists in Exile, Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston, TX

2008 Reorientations, European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium (curated by Rose Issa)

2008 Council Juried Exhibit, Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs, CA

2008 East-West Dialogues, LTMH Gallery, New York, NY (curated by Dr. Layla S. Diba)

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Le Déluge
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Back cover image
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LEILA HELLER GALLERY.