

# Daniah Alsaleh

Portfolio 2025



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# Daniah Alsaleh

Saudi, b. 1970, Riyadh, KSA

## Bio

**Daniah Alsaleh's** work reflects on memory and cultural conditioning: how messages and beliefs are absorbed and delivered via media and other networks. She questions behavioural patterns and paradigms in the everyday, examining things that we take for face value, by destabilising the mainstream assumptions that form the basis of this conditioning. Her work deconstructs accepted meanings and suggest alternative positions. She looks at the ordinary, the mundane, the ubiquitous of things by looking into cultural tropes, memory, connectedness and division. Through different materials and computation, Alsaleh uses analogies to establish ways of reading and unearth unexpected perspectives. The work is duplicitous: behind its aesthetics lies a commentary on human fragility, insecurity, and vulnerability

## Statement

*My work reflects on cultural conditioning: how messages and beliefs are absorbed and delivered via media and other various networks. I scrutinize everyday behavioural patterns and paradigms, challenging those elements we often accept at face value. By destabilizing mainstream assumptions that underpin such conditioning, my work deconstructs accepted meanings to propose alternative positions. I explore the ordinary, the mundane, and the ubiquitous by delving into cultural tropes, memory, and the dynamics of connectedness and division. Utilizing a variety of materials and computational techniques, I employ analogies to reveal new ways of understanding and uncover unexpected perspectives. The work is duplicitous: behind its aesthetics lies a commentary on human fragility, insecurity, and vulnerability.*



# Hinat

Mixed Media / 2022

**Hinat** is the name of the female skeleton that was found in tomb 117 in Hegra, and what has inscribed on her tomb "This is the tomb which Hinat daughter of Wahbu made for herself and for her children and her descendants forever. And no-one has the right to sell it or give it in pledge or write for this tomb a lease. And whoever does other than this, his share will revert to his legitimate heir. In the twenty-first year of King Maliku, King of the Nabataeans."

In this work, Daniah is imagining Hinat alive, her ghostly presence is drifting in different locations in Alula. She represents the anonymous female in history, and the known presence of the everyday woman in Alula. The artwork is reflecting on the symbolism of the absence and presence of the female agency through history. The millennial history of Alula and its enduring archaeological and folk records convey to curious listeners and onlookers many chronicles of great kings and priests and several stories of the quotidian lives of its people. Few, however, impart any information about those of its women. Almost invisible in the narratives of the past, female presence is mentioned in only a few anecdotes that Daniah seeks to find, catalogue, interpret, and relay. Where historical evidence falls short, alternative realities begin to take hold: Augmented by machine-learning networks and the curated input of the artist, the landscapes of Alula become receptacles in which her research culminates, implanting amorphous displays of real women in painted panels of liminal terrains. Like ghosts finally making their return, the anonymous women's silhouettes, and the fabrics they wave are distorted as if in a blurred memory that nevertheless manages to embody their histories and discreet presence.



**Memories, though intangible and unseen** by the exterior world, play a pivotal role in shaping our identity and perception of reality. Our thoughts, feelings, and emotions all stem from the memories we accumulate over time. However, the nature of memories is inherently questionable; they can be crystal clear or completely elusive, and are subject to distortion and change as they age and are influenced by new experiences. While semantic memory can be fact-checked with dates and figures, episodic memory is malleable and prone to creating false accounts, multiple versions of the same experience, or emphasizing different aspects of a singular narrative. This installation explores the processes of recall and the distortions that occur under the influence of the self and one's subjective sense of time. It reflects on the encoding and decoding of memories, the missing details, and the compressed versions of experienced realities. The installation takes the form of a memory wall, featuring a collection of generic personal photographs that evoke a sense of family, love, and the passage of time. Yet, all the photographs and videos are deep fakes created by a machine learning program. The work invites the viewer to contemplate the glitches of memory, the momentary malfunctions that often go unnoticed and are unconsciously filled with fragments of different impressions and imagination. This speculative point lies between the process of forgetting and recollecting, offering viewers to engage in a more grounded reflection on the nature of memory and its inherent flaws.

# Rewind, Play, Glitch

13 Videos / 2022

# Love Stories

Video / 2022

**The use of love songs** as a means of conveying emotions between two individuals has long served as a mode of indirect communication, particularly within conservative societies where public declarations of love remain taboo. Despite the proliferation of love songs across various forms of media, overt expressions of love remain frowned upon under the scrutiny of cultural norms and societal expectations. This installation, with its focus on popular love songs, delves into the invisible stories they conceal and the nostalgia they evoke. The work centres on the lyrics of each song, where individuals sing to each other openly in a public space. Through the creation of deep fakes of both male and female images, this installation invites the viewer to explore the interplay between public and private expressions of love within society.



[>>> Video Link](#)



# That Which Remains

Watercolour Paper, Video Channels,  
Acrylic, Transfer / 2021



**Inspired by the French scholar** of history and memory Pierre Nora, *That Which Remains* examines the disappearance and preservation of cultural memory as symptoms of accelerated urbanization and globalization. The work consists of eight cylinders made of watercolour paper, onto which she projects imagery generated by machine learning. Daniah selected two datasets as inputs: one of old footage and images of Saudi Arabia since its founding, collected from television programs and news media, and the other of scenes from the artist's life, taken in 2021. The algorithm then blended these old and new memories together, giving them a hazy, nostalgic quality. Projected onto watercolour paper, they appear as if a metaphor for the fragility of human memory. To the artist, everyday memory, which is to say private memory, is gradually vanishing, while public or collective memory is preserved and celebrated in monuments. The implicit, urgent question raised by the work is what materials, methods, and forms we might use to preserve our private memories in a similar fashion.



# Evanescce

Video / 2021

[>>> Video Link](#)

The golden era of Egyptian cinema, which spanned from the 1940s to the 1960s, produced some of the most iconic films in the region's history. These movies captured the imaginations of audiences across the Middle East, with their dazzling musical numbers, epic love stories, and charismatic heroes and heroines.

Evanescce goes beyond mere nostalgia, to examine the cultural impact of these films on conservative societies in the region. In particular, the project explores the ways in which these movies challenged social norms and expectations, presenting a world of glamour, romance, and sensuality that was often at odds with traditional values. Through careful research and analysis, the work reveals the ways in which these films were perceived by audiences at the time, and the complex ways in which they contributed to changing social attitudes towards fashion, love, and sexuality.

This 10-minute video is a unique and innovative creation, utilizing machine learning to fabricate a sense of what it is like to watch these movies, while at the same time creating an uncanny feeling of familiarity that is difficult to measure. With machine learning, the project has focused on certain tropes and scenes that are present in every movie that challenge our assumptions about what we know and remember, fabricating a sense of what it is like to watch these movies, while at the same time creating an uncanny feeling of familiarity that is difficult to measure.

Ultimately, Evanescce offers viewers a sense of time that cannot be measured, evoking memories and emotions that are both familiar and strange. It is an invitation to explore the ways in which cinema can influence our perceptions of the world and to reflect on the complex ways in which our memories and experiences are shaped by the images and narratives that we encounter in popular culture.



All the characters here are Fakes, created by StyleGan 2 model. The installation explores the process and mechanism of memory making in the presence of media influences. How the constant flux of images in media impacts, interferes and intrudes with memory preservation in particular within the context of cultural identity. "How do I remember Thee" is influenced by the framework of cultural theorist Stuart's Hall philosophy of coding and decoding discourse, and by the French theorist Jean Baudrillard views of modernity and postmodernity with regards to his notion of hyperreality. The piece situates itself as a commentary on how the archival memories of the past is being slowly distorted by images in contemporary political culture informed by different modes of media by using fourteen generated deepfakes that recite poetry.

# How Do I Remember Thee

Videos & Paintings / 2020

>>> Video Link

>>> Video Link



60 x 42 cm  
Transfer, Oil, Charcoal on Canvas



42 x 39 cm  
Transfer, Charcoal on Canvas



# Delicate

Mixed Sculptures / 2020

[>>> Video Link](#)

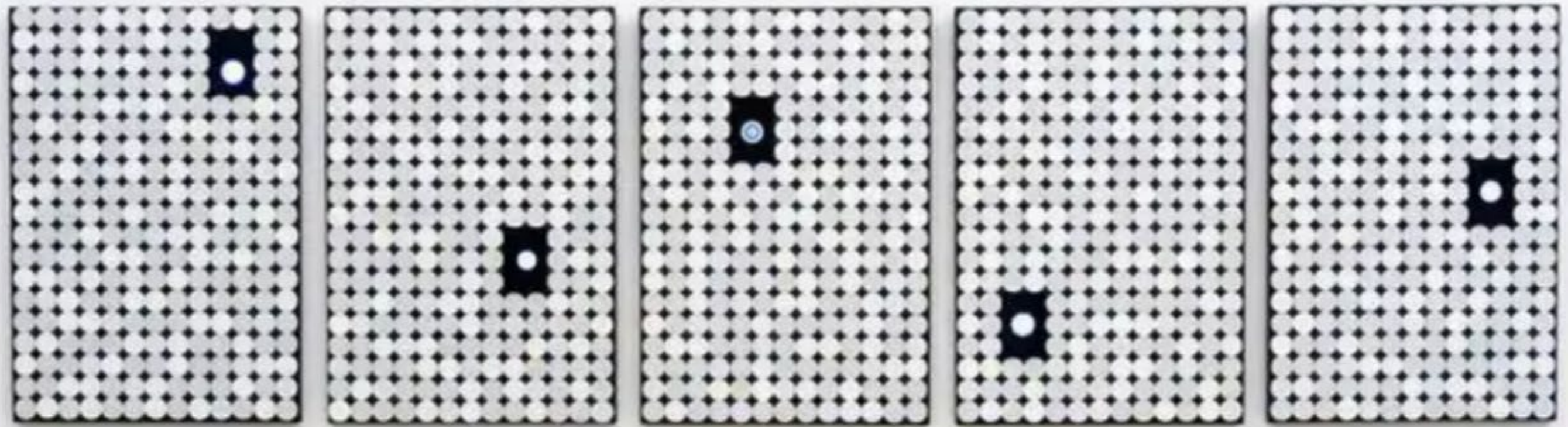


**Through a network of hanging mixed sculptures,** Delicate (2019) addresses the inequalities of class, religion, and race within our highly striated contemporary cultures. The installation uses the infinite perfection of fractal patterns found in nature to explore potential structures for harmony and positive change. Considering how these orders work, the artist offers a model that might counter what is otherwise fragmented, hierarchical and imbalanced.

Although inspirations from biology have direct and beneficial applications in architecture, design, science, and innovation, this work furthers the artist's interest in social systems and structures, looking to nature to find potential models for collective change. The work is an intricate visual exploration of emergent strategy, a philosophy based on observations of nature that considers how complex systems can be organized at the scale of the individual.

Looking to the processes and structures of ecosystems, such as forests and fungus, emergent strategy seeks actionable and empowered order from chaos. Pioneered by the American author and activist adrienne maree brown, the concept explored through Delicate focusses on simple connections and interactions to build sophisticated, complex networks for good. Giving priority to critical connections instead of critical mass, the theory creates strong bonds with the potential to action and massive change through simple straightforward and replicable gestures.

Manifesting the simultaneous simplicity and complexity of fractal phenomena, the work demonstrates the powerful potential in this organizational structure. From a single micro point, representative of the most accessible of actions that can be enacted by any individual, the work evolves into an intricate decentralized ecosystem of relations.



# Disobedient Affect

Acrylic on Canvas and Tablets / 2019

Conceptually, these artworks question social norms. The series, titled *Disobedient Affects*, consists of five panels filled with circles, painted in a repetitive, constraint method with a small rectangular monitor inserted into each. The monitor displays an animated circle, each speculatively representing a human behaviour.

The actual meaning is subjective; however, the viewer could interpret their movement as embodying emotion or else as a defiant gesture against the adjacent, static circles. Inspired by a psychological study of human behaviour - *An Experimental Study of Apparent Behaviour* by Fritz Heider & Marianne Simmel (1944) - this series asks viewers to consider the interpretation process when making judgments of others.

The animations were placed in a media file on the tablets. They consist of 5 circles moving in five different movements (Three are shown here). The animations were made by a programming language "Processing", a framework based on Java.



For this installation, I deconstructs the Arabic spoken language; by breaking a word into letters, and each letter to the corresponding sound we make through our vocal cords. it utilises 28 screens, each screen represents a letter and its phoneme; arranged in a 4x7 grid.

The visuals are constructed using a coding programme; which is called a sketch; to generate lines that move and change at random.

The recordings of the phonemes were of my voice inserted into the programme making the wavelengths of the corresponding phonemes to vibrate; visualised on the screen as the moving geometrical shapes.

[>>> Video Link](#)

[>>> Video Link](#)

# Sawtam

Video Installation / 2019

Ithra Art Prize / Art Dubai

Sawtam is a digital, audio-visual installation based on the phonemes of the Arabic alphabet.

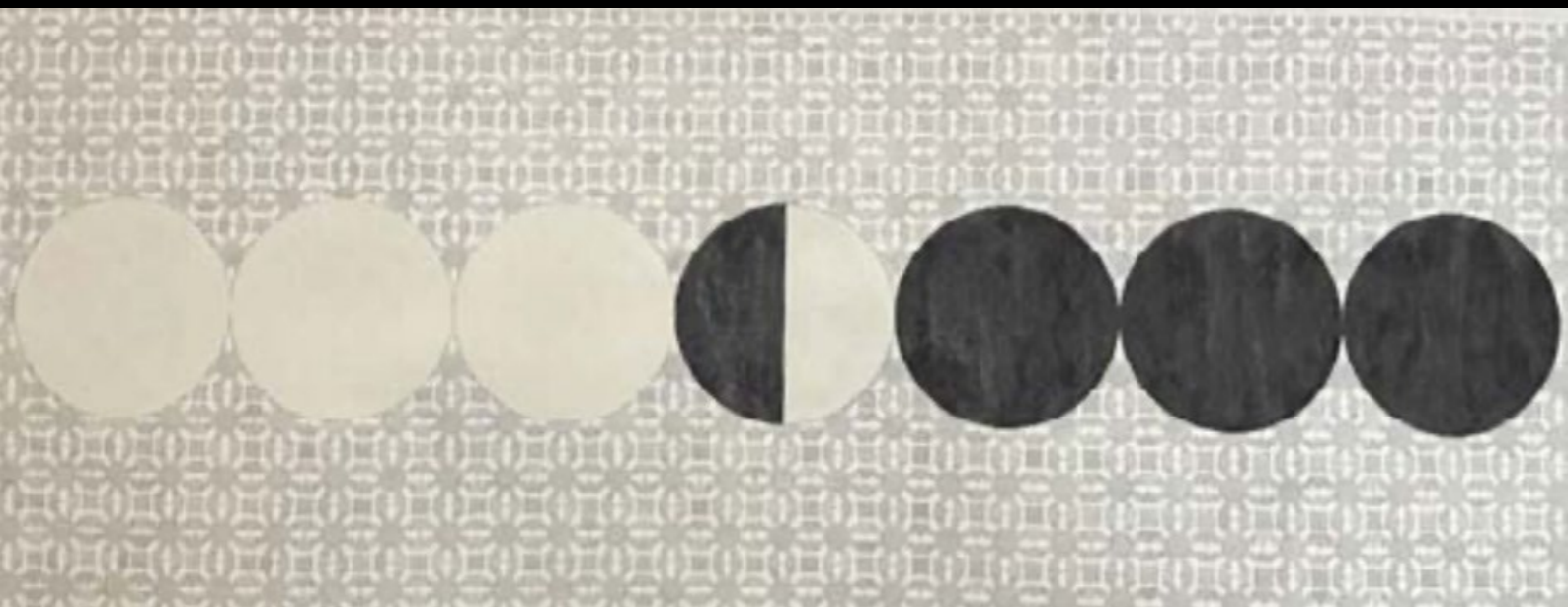
Sawtam meaning phoneme in English; indicates the smallest unit of sound in the spoken language. The installation intends for the viewer to be enveloped within a wall of visuals and sounds that are meaningless yet comprised of the parts of verbal language that are used in the every day.





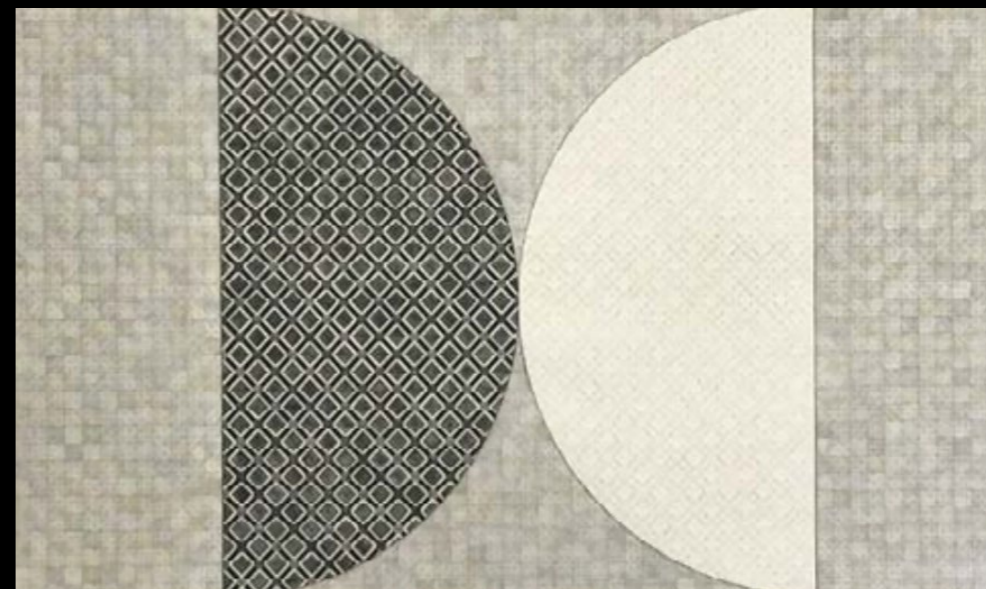
# From here to there

Emulsion, Watercolour, and Pencil  
on Watercolour Paper / 2018



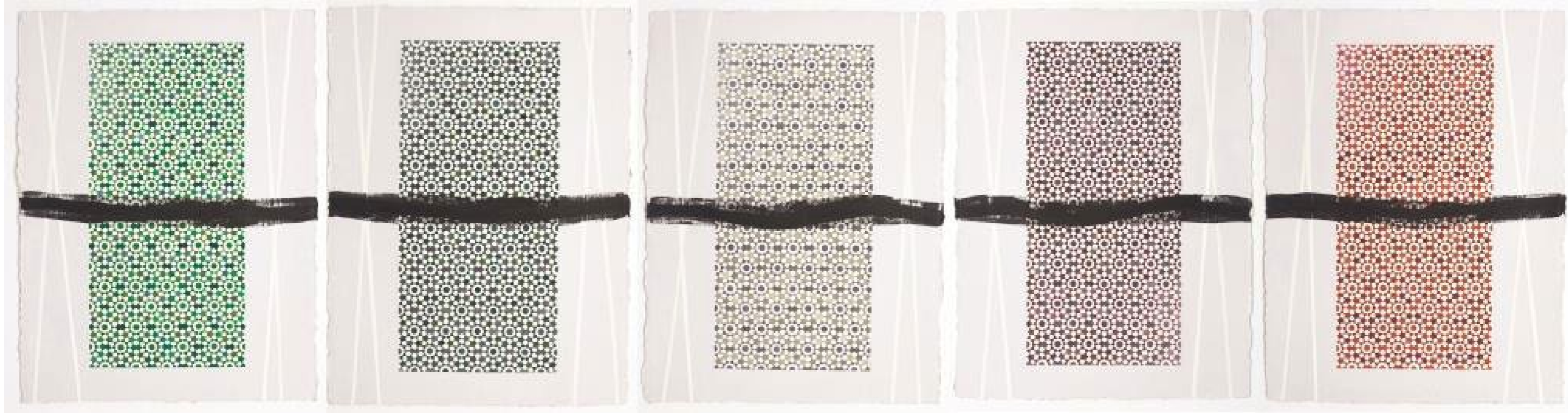
# Doubt

Emulsion, Watercolour, and Pencil  
on Watercolor Paper / 2017



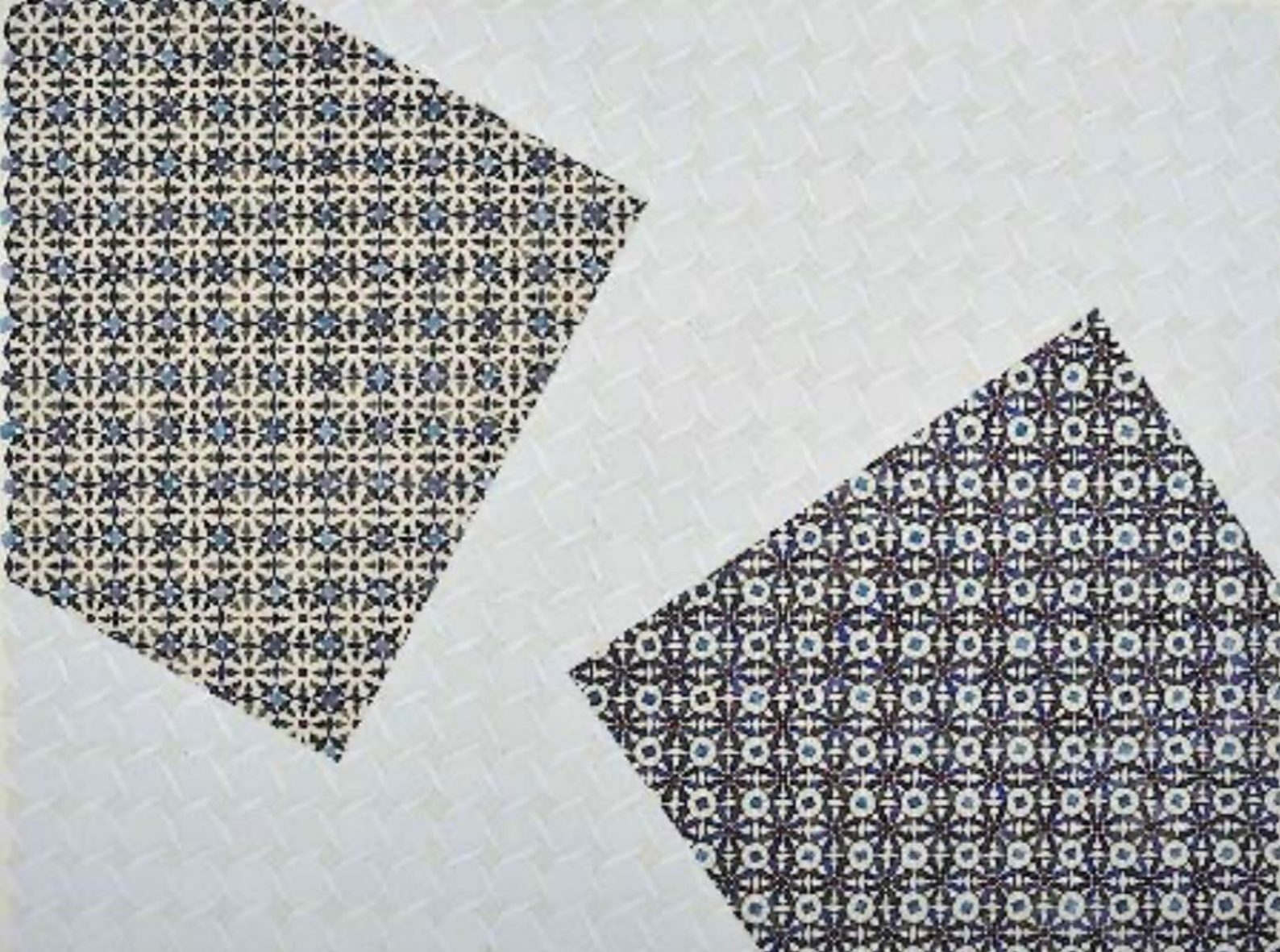
# Face Off

Emulsion, Watercolour, and Pencil  
on Watercolor Paper / 2017



# Restitution

Watercolor, Gouache,  
Acrylic on Paper / 2017



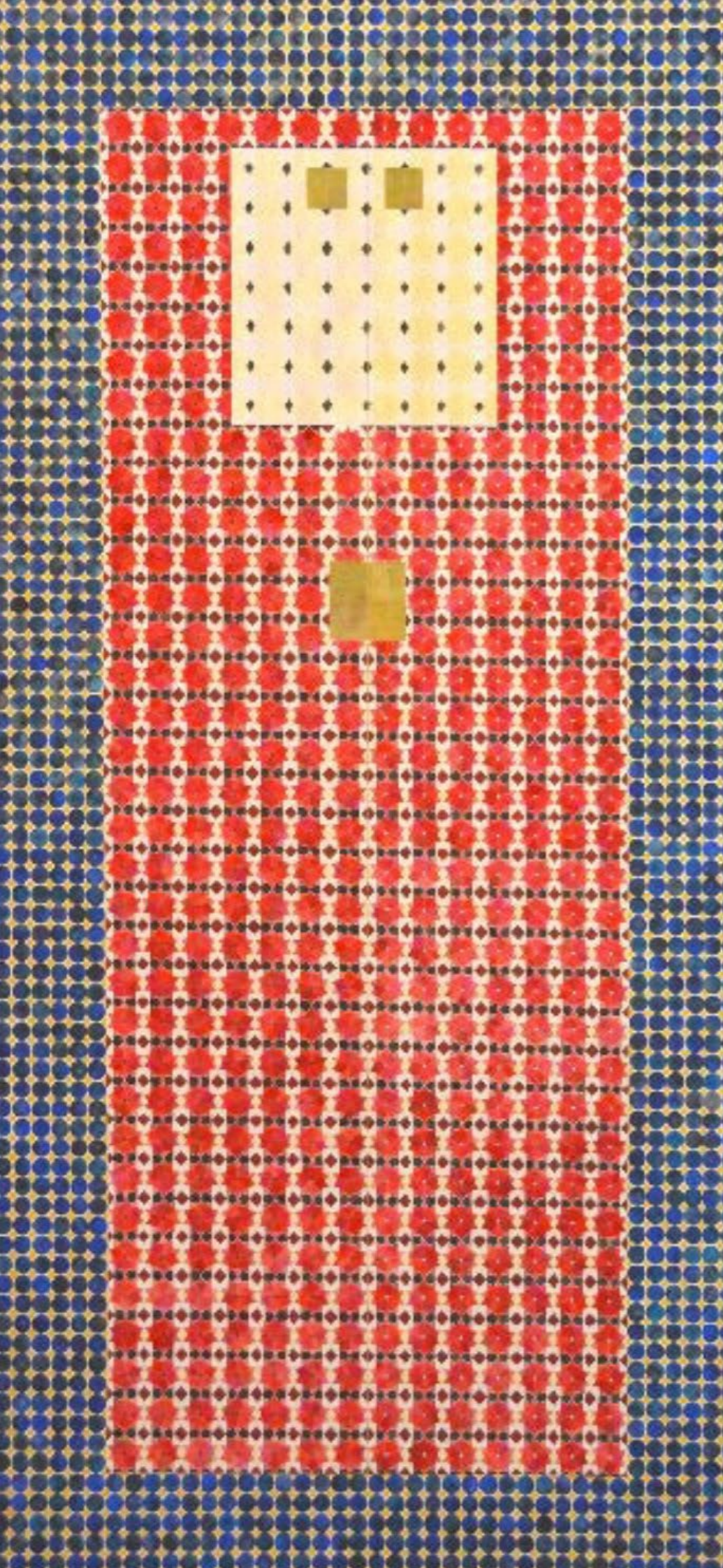
# Behind the Barrier

Watercolour paper, Watercolour,  
Pencil, Acrylic / 2014



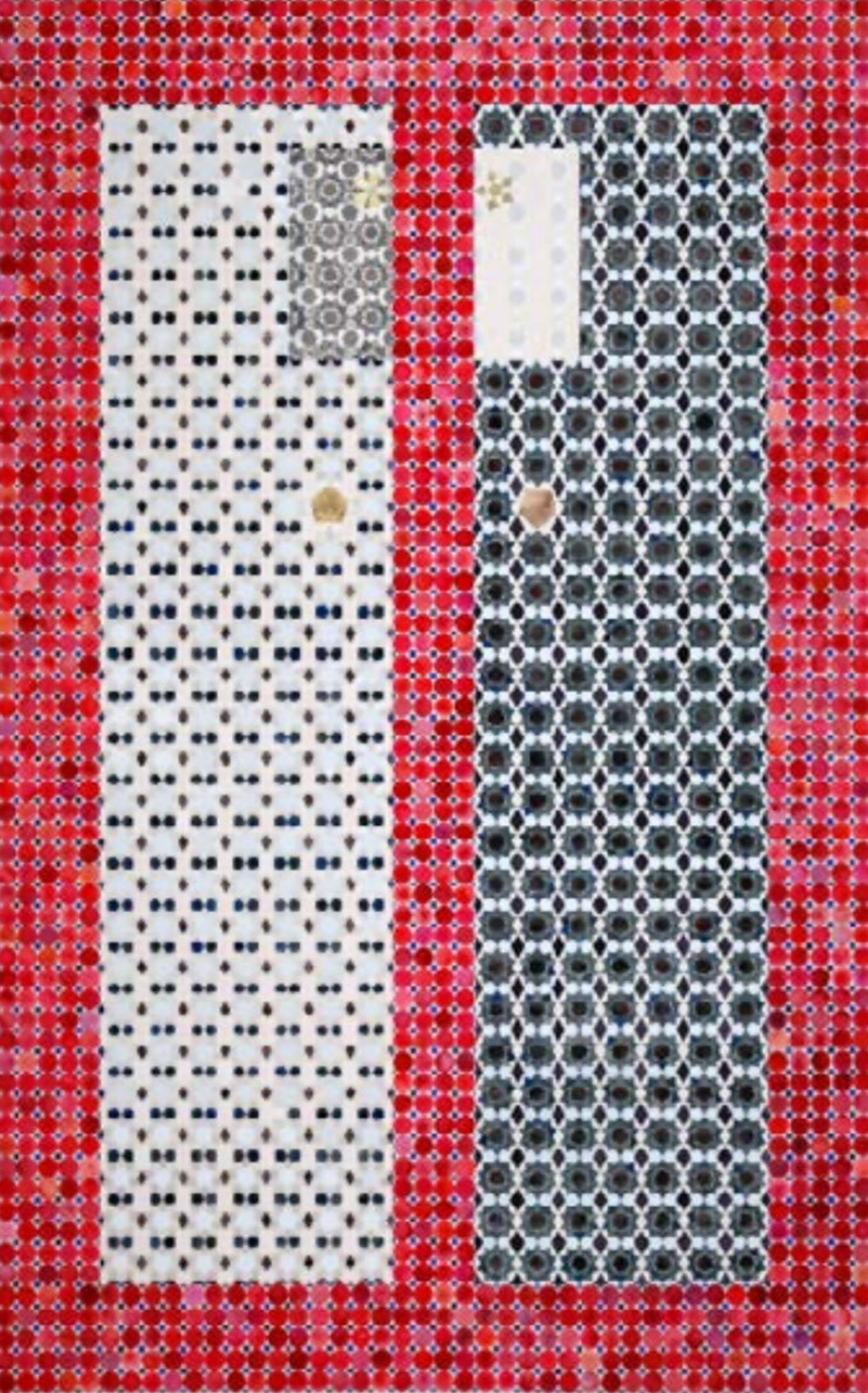
# Drifting Apart

Watercolour, Gouache  
on Watercolor Paper / 2015



# Ashwag

Watercolour, Gouache, Gold Leaf  
on Watercolor Paper / 2014



# Ahwak

Watercolour, Gouache, Gold leaf  
on Watercolor Paper / 2013

## Education /

- \* **2020** MFA (With Distinction) in Computational Art, Goldsmiths University, London, UK
- \* **1993** Undergraduate degree in Computer Applications, King Saud University, Riyadh, KSA

## Residencies /

- \* **2024** Delfina, London UK
- \* **2023** Goethe Institute Saudi Arabia & The German Archaeology Institute Residency, AlUla
- \* **2023** French Embassy of Saudi Arabia & French Alliance Residency, Riyadh
- \* **2022** RCU AlUla Residency, AlUla, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2022** Berlin Art Institute Residency, Berlin, Germany
- \* **2020** Online Residency at AreByte Gallery June/July, London, UK
- \* **2019** Hayy Learning, Navigating the Contemporary Art Scene, Art Jameel, Jeddah

## Professional development /

- \* **2014-2017** Short Courses (Textile Sculpture, Oil Painting), The Art Academy, London, UK
- \* **2010-2017** Selected Short courses The Princes School of Traditional Arts, London, UK
- \* **2012** Short Course Slade School of Art, London, UK
- \* **2007-2008** Selected Short Courses, Central Saint Martins, London, UK
- \* **2002-2012** Selected Courses, Atelier of Dar Safiya bn Zagr, Jeddah, KSA

## Solo Exhibitions /

- \* **2023** Keep Smiling, Athr Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2016** Delirium, Athr Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

## Due Exhibitions /

- \* **2025** Alamaat, Athr Gallery, Alula, Saudi
- \* **2024** Art And Archeology, Ahlam Gallery, Riyadh (September 2024)
- \* **2024** Woven Portraits, Dreamscapes Of A City, L'art Pure Foundation, Riyadh

## Group Exhibitions /

- \* **2024** After Rain, Ad Diriyah Biennale, Ad Diriyah, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2024** Art Must Be Artificial: Perspectives of AI in the Visual Arts, DAF, Diriyah Art Futures, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2024** Art of the Kingdom, Imperial Palace, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- \* **2024** Bamako Encounters, African Biennale of Photography
- \* **2024** Forever is Now, Art D'Egypt, Pyramids of Giza, Egypt
- \* **2024** Orbis Tertius, Galeries Joseph, Paris, France
- \* **2024** Unknownness is the way: Open Studio, Delfina Foundation, London, UK
- \* **2024** Khamseen: 50 Years of Saudi Visual Arts, Sotheby's, London, UK
- \* **2023** Palimpsest of Time, Arts AlUla, Mabit, AlUla, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2022** From Spark to Spirit, Noor Riyadh, Jax, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2022** We Dream of New Horizons, Noor Riyadh, Oud Square, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2022** Tales of Nostalgia, Misk Art Institute, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2021** Feeling The Stones, Ad Diriyah Biennale, Ad Diriyah, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2021** Echos. A World Between the Analogue and the Virtual, BIENALSUR, Qasr Khuzam, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2021** Echos. A World Between the Analogue and the Virtual, BIENALSUR, Emilio Caraffa Provincial Museum of Fine Arts, Cordoba, Argentina
- \* **2021** Echos. A World Between the Analogue and the Virtual, BIENALSUR, Jax Ad Diriyah, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2021** Elemental, Online Exhibition
- \* **2020** Chimara Garden, Goldsmiths College, London, UK
- \* **2020** I Love You urgently, Seventh edition of 21,39, Jeddah, KSA
- \* **2020** Wolf Tone, XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- \* **2019** So How is that Working for You, Goldsmiths College, London, UK
- \* **2019** AI and International Dialogue, Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg
- \* **2019** Together, Medina Art Centre, Medina, KSA
- \* **2018** Echo Systems, Goldsmiths College, London, UK
- \* **2018** Cultural Days, Moscow, Russia
- \* **2018** Cultural Days, New York, USA
- \* **2017** Letters, Athr Gallery, Jeddah, KSA
- \* **2015** Anonymous, Hafiz Gallery, Jeddah, KSA
- \* **2014** Mualaqat First Edition 21,39
- \* **2014** The language of Human Consciousness, Athr Gallery - Jeddah, KSA
- \* **2013** Jeddah Atelier, Jeddah, KSA
- \* **2013** Unstitched, Nayla Art Gallery, Riyadh, KSA
- \* **2013** Against the Grain Cap, Kuwait, Kuwait

## Biennale /

- \* **2024** Ad Diriyah Biennale 2nd Edition
- \* **2022** Ad Diriyah Biennale 1st Edition
- \* **2021** BienalSUR

## Art Fairs /

- \* **2019** Art Dubai
- \* **2018** Abu Dhabi Art
- \* **2017** Abu Dhabi Art
- \* **2016** Abu Dhabi Art
- \* **2015** Abu Dhabi art
- \* **2015** Art Dubai
- \* **2014** Art International Istanbul

## Awards /

- \* **2019** Ithra Art Prize, Ithra, Saudi Arabia

## Pannel Discussions & Talks /

- \* **2024** Panel Discussion / Moderator: Dena Zaidan. Panel: Dr Wafa Alkhayal, Dr.Awad Alyami, Catherine Gfeller. L'art Pure Foundation, Riyadh
- \* **2024** Panel Discussion / Moderator: Yasmin Sabri. Panel: Dr.Hatoon Fasi, Arwa Almunajjed, Catherine Gfeller. L'art Pure Foundation, Riyadh
- \* **2024** Panel Discussion / A Library of Earthen Architecture, Alderiya Foundation, Riyadh  
Moderator: Jorge Otero Pailos. Panel: Various Artists
- \* **2023** Artist Talk, Modern & Contemporary Art Course, Sotheby's Ins, London
- \* **2023** VAC panel Discussion Participation, Riyadh
- \* **2022** Panel Discussion/ Moderator: Marilou Thiebault. Panel: Mohammad Alfaraj AlUla, Saudi
- \* **2022** Panel Discussion / Moderator: Nourah Almaluh, Ali AlGazawi. Panel: Dr. Afra Atig, Mohammad Alfaraj, M'hammed Kilito, Augustine Paredes, Sabine Mirlesse AlUla, Saudi
- \* **2022** Talk and Workshop: AlUla Residency Mabiti, AlUla, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2022** Public Art Matters: Public Art Masterclass / Moderator : Samuel Mayze.  
Panel: Cori Stewart, Miguel Blanco, Nouf Almoneef, Daniah Al-Saleh  
Diriyah Biennale Foundation, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

- \* **2022** Artist Interview / Moderator: Viv Lawes with Sotheby's Institute of Art  
Diriyah Biennale Foundation, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2021** How Advances in Technology complementing artistic practice and experimentation?  
Moderator: Melissa Gronlund. Panel: Daniah Alsaleh, Edouard Cabay, Basma Al Sulaiman  
Misk Art Institute, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2020** Whose job is it to save the world? / Moderator: Carlo Rizzo. Panel: Maha Nasrallah,  
Daniah ALSaleh, Ghidaa Bajbaa 21,39 Seventh Edition, Gold More, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- \* **2019** Ithra Art Prize second Edition / Moderator: Laura Egerton. Panel: Daniah Alsaleh,  
Benedetta Ghione, Ashraf AlFageeh, Candida Pestana, Dubai Art Fair, Dubai, UAE
- \* **2018** Artists Talk / Moderator: Raneem Bukhari. Panel: Daniah Alsaleh, Ahmed Angawi  
Cultural Days, Palais De Tokyo, Paris, France

## Selected press /

### ENGLISH TITLES:

- \* ["Art of the Kingdom"](#) exhibition showcases works by Saudi artists in Brazil,  
ArtDayME, November, 2024.
- \* ['Art of the Kingdom'](#) takes contemporary Saudi creations to a global audience,  
Arab News, Afshan Aziz, November, 2024.
- \* [Saudi artist Daniah Alsaleh: 'We can celebrate tradition, but we really need to be open  
to change'](#), Arab News, Adam Grundey, October, 2024.
- \* [Saudi Artist Daniah Alsaleh Blends Tradition and Change](#), Magzoid, October, 2024.
- \* ["Echoes of Time"](#) exhibition by Daniah Alsaleh and Susanne Kriemann  
at Ahlam Gallery, ArtDayME, October, 2024.
- \* [Forever Is Now: Egypt's Celebrated Art Exhibition Returns](#), AD, Mona Basharat,  
October, 2024.
- \* [Art D'Égypte 2024: Forever Is Now](#), Canvas Online, October, 2024.
- \* [Open-air gallery at the Pyramids](#), Ahram Online, Nevine El-Aref , October, 2024.
- \* [AlUla's Artists-in-Residency Program Presents Exhibition "Orbius Tertius"](#)  
in Paris, Whitewall Erica Silverman, October, 2024.
- \* ["Orbis Tertius"](#) at 5 rue Saint-Merri, Paris, Mouse Magazine, October, 2024.
- \* [Orbis Tertius](#), e-flux Agenda, October, 2024.
- \* ['Echoes of Time' exhibition: An artistic exploration of Saudi Arabia's archaeology](#),  
Arab News, Rahaf Jambi, September, 2024.
- \* [Between Collective Memory and Contemporary Media: AI in Daniah Alsaleh's  
Creative Practice](#), The Arab Gulf State Institute in Washington, Nada Ammgui, June, 2024.
- \* [Saudi and French-Swiss artists create work inspired by Riyadh women's lives](#),  
Arab News, Sulafa AlKhunaizi, March, 2024.
- \* [Saudi artists create special commissions for Riyadh's Diriyah Biennale](#),  
Arab News Pakistan, Rebecca Anne Proctor, February, 2024.
- \* [Three women go solo with artwork at Jeddah's Athr Gallery](#),  
Arab News, Jasmine Bager, February, 2023.

- \* A liminal space: The soft power of Saudi's growing art scene, Arab News, Nada Alturki, November 2022.
- \* "Second Ithra Art Award Honours Artist Who Celebrates 'the Overlooked'." The National, Melissa Gronlund, March, 2019.
- \* Art Dubai will display the Ithra prize-winning 'Sawtam' for the first time, Arab News, March, 2019.
- \* Ithra Prize winner Daniah Alsaleh unveils her completed commission at Art Dubai, Saudi Gazette, Samar Yahya, March, 2019.
- \* Meet Daniah Alsaleh, winner of the Ithra Art Prize 2019, Arab News, Denise Marray, February, 2019.
- \* "The Ithra Art Prize represents hope. It is an important and transformative prize for an artist's career." | Daniah Al Saleh, 2019's winner, Art Dubai, February, 2019.

#### العناوين العربية

- \* الشرق الأوسط، أكتوبر ٢٠٢٤، أصداء الزمن... الفصص الكامنة في قلب الصحراء تمتد جسورها للوافتع
- \* اندبندنت عربية، نوفمبر ٢٠٢٤، الفن السعودي المعاصر في أروقة القصر الإمبراطوري البرازيلي
- \* مجلة بازار العربية، نورة الدعج، سبتمبر ٢٠٢٤، عين بازار: فنون دانية الصالح تغطف بين الأسود والأبيض
- \* الشرق الأوسط، عبير مشخص، يونيو ٢٠٢٤، في استديو الفنانة السعودية دانية الصالح... نساء وذكاء اصطناعي وأغنيات حب
- \* الشرق الأوسط، نوفمبر ٢٠٢٢، الفنانة السعودية دانية الصالح... تجمع 26 أغنية في فضاء شاعري
- \* مجلة سيدتي، يناير ٢٠٢٢، دانية الصالح تطأ التاريخ في عملها الفني "ماتيفي" داخل بينالي الدرعية
- \* مجلة سيدتي، ديسمبر ٢٠٢١، التشكيلية دانية الصالح: بينالي الدرعية حدث عالمي وتاريخي على أرض السعودية
- \* مجلة هي، أبريل ٢٠١٩، المبدعة السعودية دانية الصالح لـ"هي": الأبدية العربية قادرة على التعبير عن مؤلفات أدبية معقدة
- \* ماري كلبر العربية، مايو، ٢٠١٩، عندما ترتقي المرأة بالساحة الفنية في الخليج العربي

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