



UNITED FOR  
**IRAN** اتحاد ایران  
برای ایران

# Borders and Boundaries

A Visual Collection of Censorship in Iran  
First Competition



**United for Iran**

## **Borders and Boundaries**

A Visual Collection of Censorship in Iran  
**Fall 2018**

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You can download this book at:  
[www.United4iran.org/en/BordersandBoundaries](http://www.United4iran.org/en/BordersandBoundaries)

United for Iran works to advance civil liberties in Iran by advocating for human rights, supporting civil society, and engaging citizens through technology.

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**[www.united4iran.org](http://www.united4iran.org)**

## Standing Up to Censorship

Censorship and exclusion are tools of suppression, and they often get reinforced by prevailing traditions and cultural norms. When advocates cross certain red lines, they are faced with hostile reactions by the government or society as a whole. It is through these barriers, justified through socio-cultural norms, that freedom of speech gets easily derailed.

The fact that an artist or writer can't openly critique social or cultural issues, or sometimes even directly mention the topic at hand, creates an environment which inhibits the expansion of that very culture. Censorship robs society of artists' creative expression and the possibility of such expression contributing and enriching the culture. Whatever the result of censorship and limiting freedom of speech may be, cultural enrichment is certainly not one of them. Nonetheless, censorship is a phenomenon with deep roots in some cultures and justifies systematic oppression.

In 1994, a group of Iranian writers published a text titled "We are Writers":

"We are writers, meaning that our feelings, imagination, thoughts, and research are expressed and disseminated in a multitude of ways. It is our natural, social, and civic right that our writings – including stories or poetry, movies, plays, research or critiques, as well as translations of other world writers – reach their audience freely and without any barriers. Creating obstacles against the dissemination of such works, for whatever reason, does not serve anyone. Naturally, once something is published, it is open to all to judge and freely critique as they see fit."

Furthermore, they noted "although critiquing writers' work is a necessary part of our cultural advancement, prying into the private lives of authors with the pretense of critiquing their work, amounts to an intrusion of their privacy. Condemning authors by abusing ideological values and moral codes is against democratic norms and the principles of authorship."

"We are Writers" is a brilliant example and expression of the state of art and creativity under the pressures of censorship. The red lines that confront Iranian artists and writers have undeniable implications that extend from intrusion into their personal lives, to exile, prison, and physical demise.

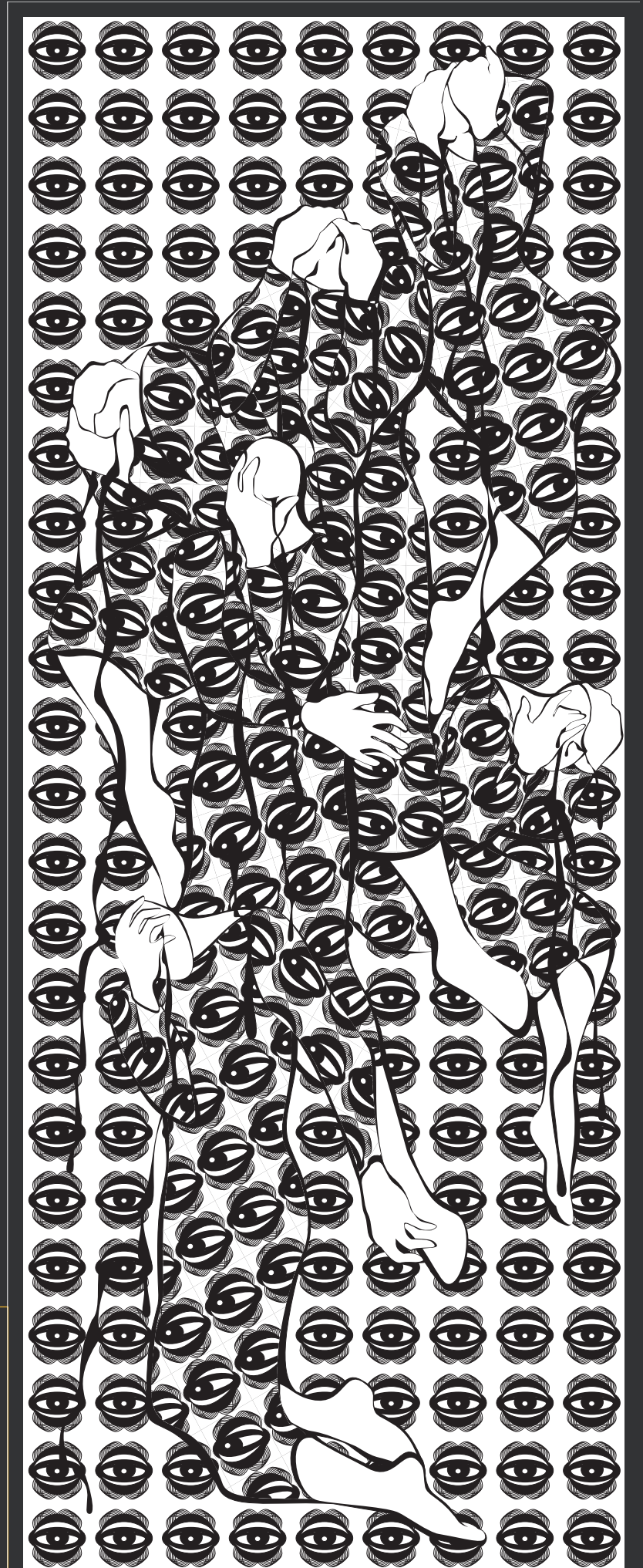
In the spring and summer of 2018, United for Iran set up a public contest titled "Borders and Boundaries" with the goal of strengthening freedom of speech and creating an avenue to improve public awareness about censorship. For years, United for Iran has been acting to further civil and human rights in Iran. The goal of the first round of the "Borders and Boundaries" competition was for the general public, as well as artists of all persuasions to depict the current state of censorship and exclusion, and the barriers against freedom of speech in Iran. It is worthwhile to note that most of the contestants chose to use a pseudonym, which in itself shows the current state of freedom of speech in Iran.

The contest, which ended in August 2018, was judged by Ms. Parastou Forouhar, Mr. Hassan Sarbakhshiaan, and Mr. Ethan Russell. We would like to thank the judges for their contribution. We'd also like to extend additional gratitude to Ms. Forouhar who allowed the exhibition of one of her own pieces at the competition's final showcase and in the published book of selected contestants.

What has been put together at this exhibition is a selection from all works received. It bears noting that all contest participants were amateur artists and members of the general public.

In order to continue supporting freedom of expression, United for Iran hopes to further expand this competition in upcoming years.

Donated from her own collection to  
Borders and Boundaries  
By: **Parastou Forouhar**  
Title: **Eyes**  
Dimensions: 40 x 100 CM



**Borders and Boundaries**  
*A Visual Collection of Censorship in Iran*

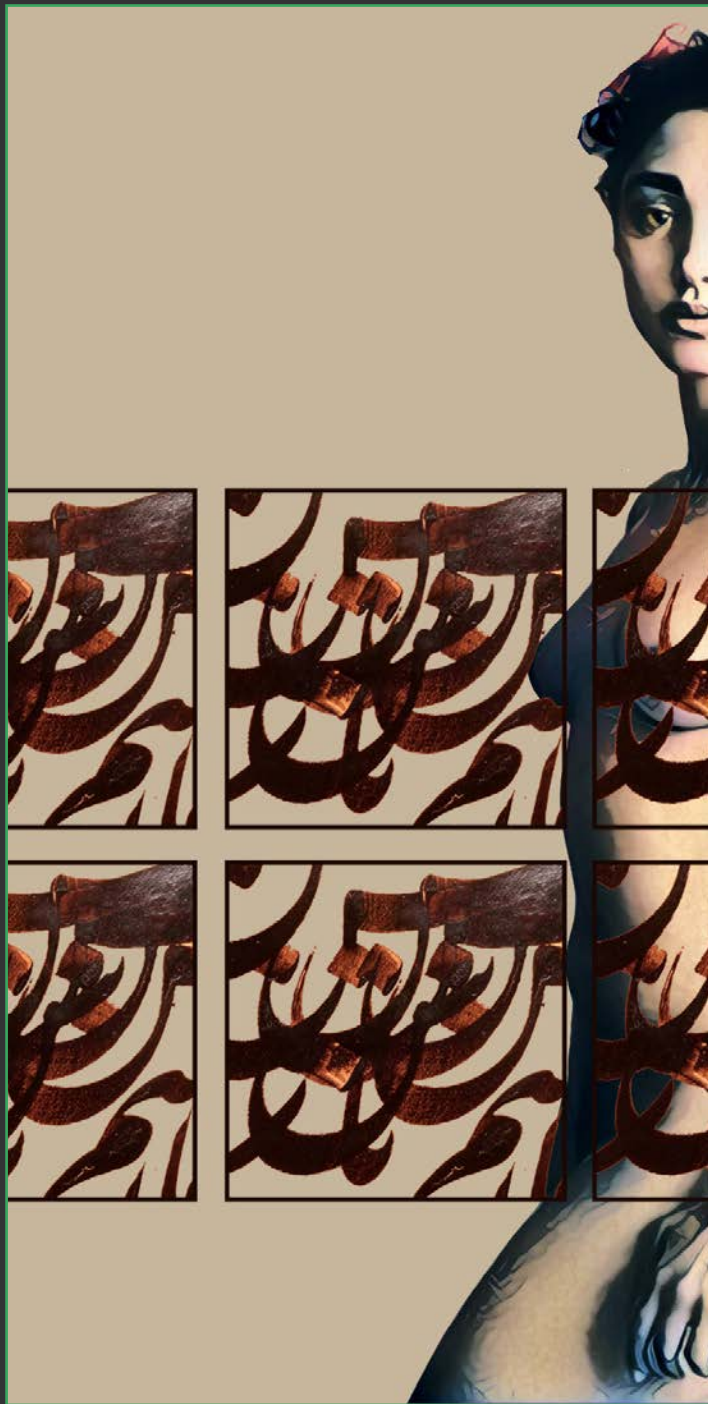
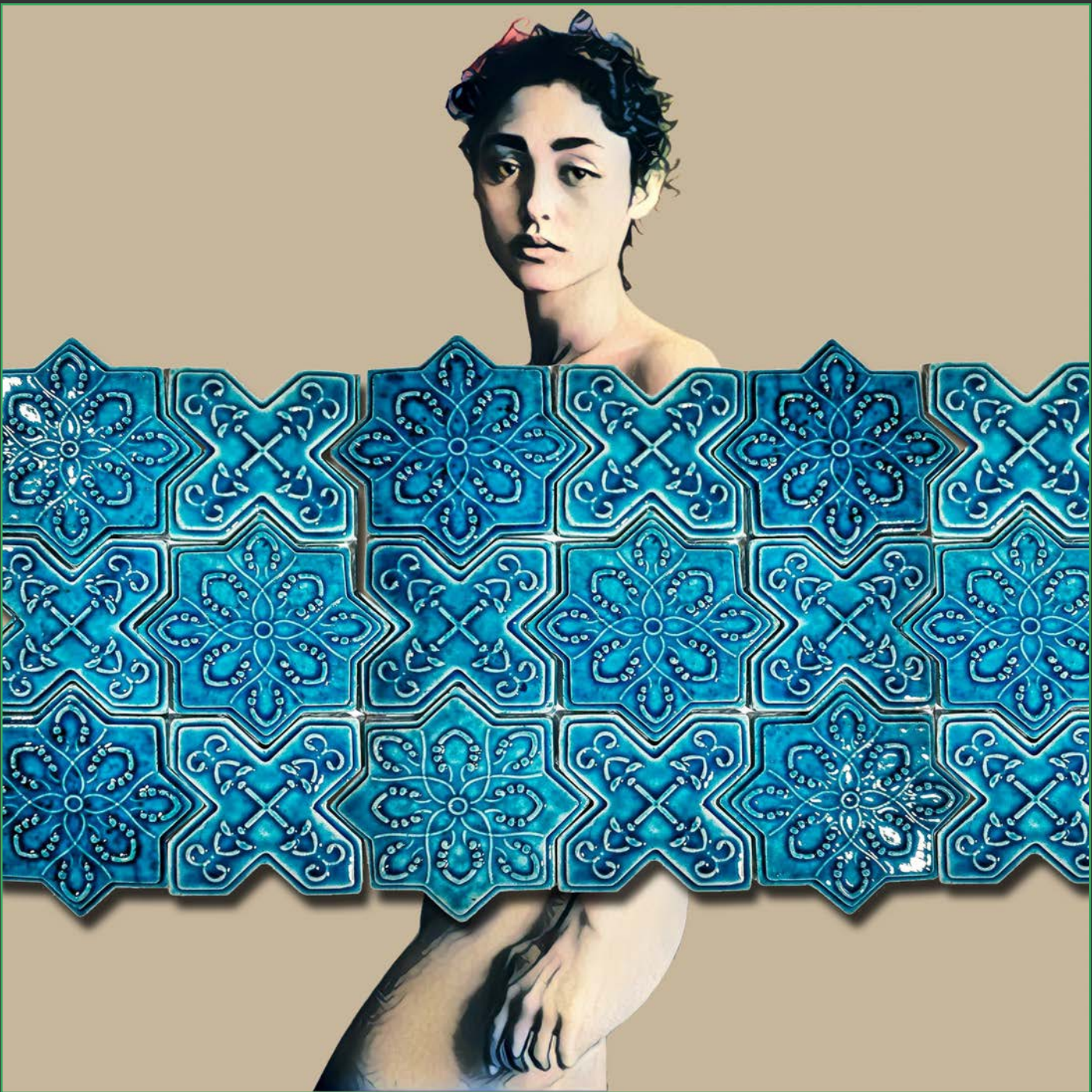


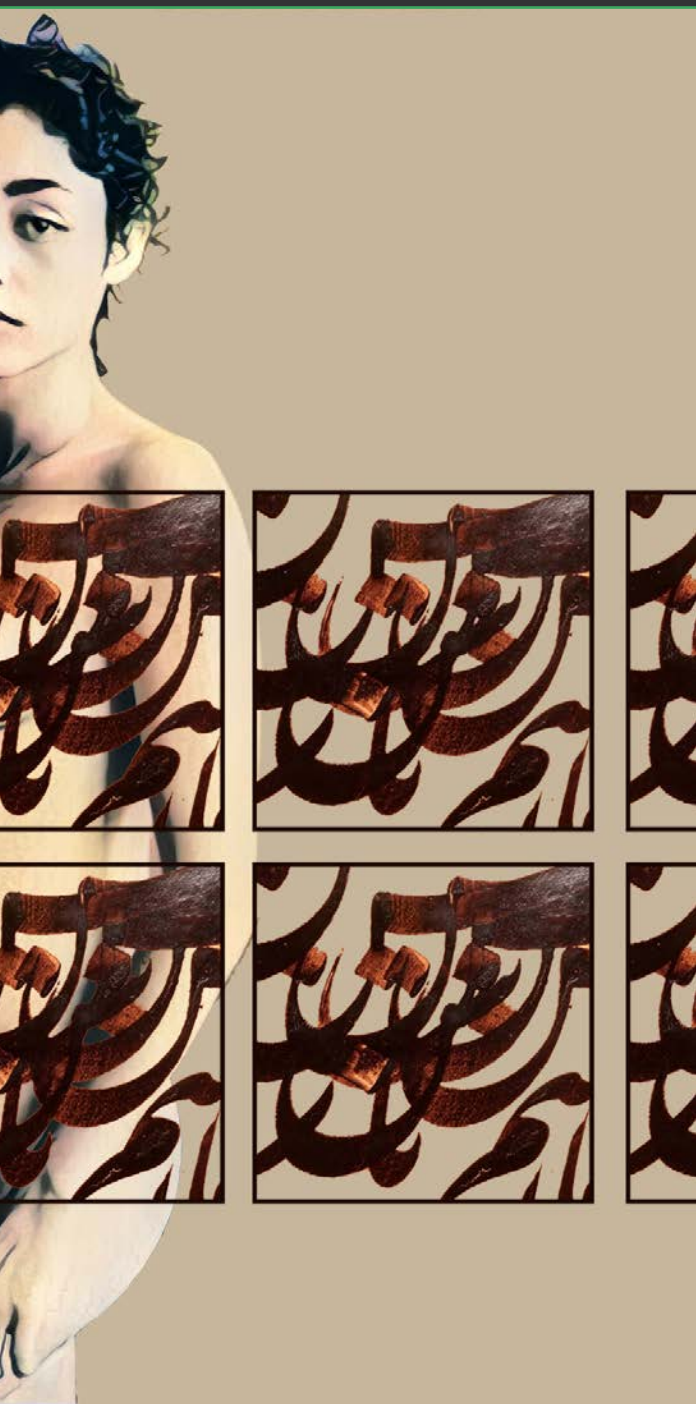


**Top Selected  
Work**

Artist's name:  
**Babak Sarbaz** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Clergies' Revolution**  
Dimensions: 100 x 75 CM

**Editor's Note:** This submission is a graphic manipulation of an image of Ayatollah Khomeini's return to Iran in 1979





Artist's name: **Bahar Azad** (pseudonym)

**Untitled**

Dimensions: 20 x 20 CM

**Editor's note:** The 3 submissions are graphic manipulation of an image of the Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani which was published in Egoiste Magazine. Because of her artistic and career choices, Ms. Farahani is unable to return to Iran.



Artist's name:  
**Mina Honarmand** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Among the Books**  
Dimensions: 25 x 35 CM







Artist's name:  
**Maryam Raha** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Unable to Write**  
Dimensions: 25 x 35 CM



Artist's name:  
**Peyman Panahandeh** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Family Portrait**  
Dimensions: 80 x 80 CM



Artist's name:

**Peyman Panahandeh** (pseudonym)

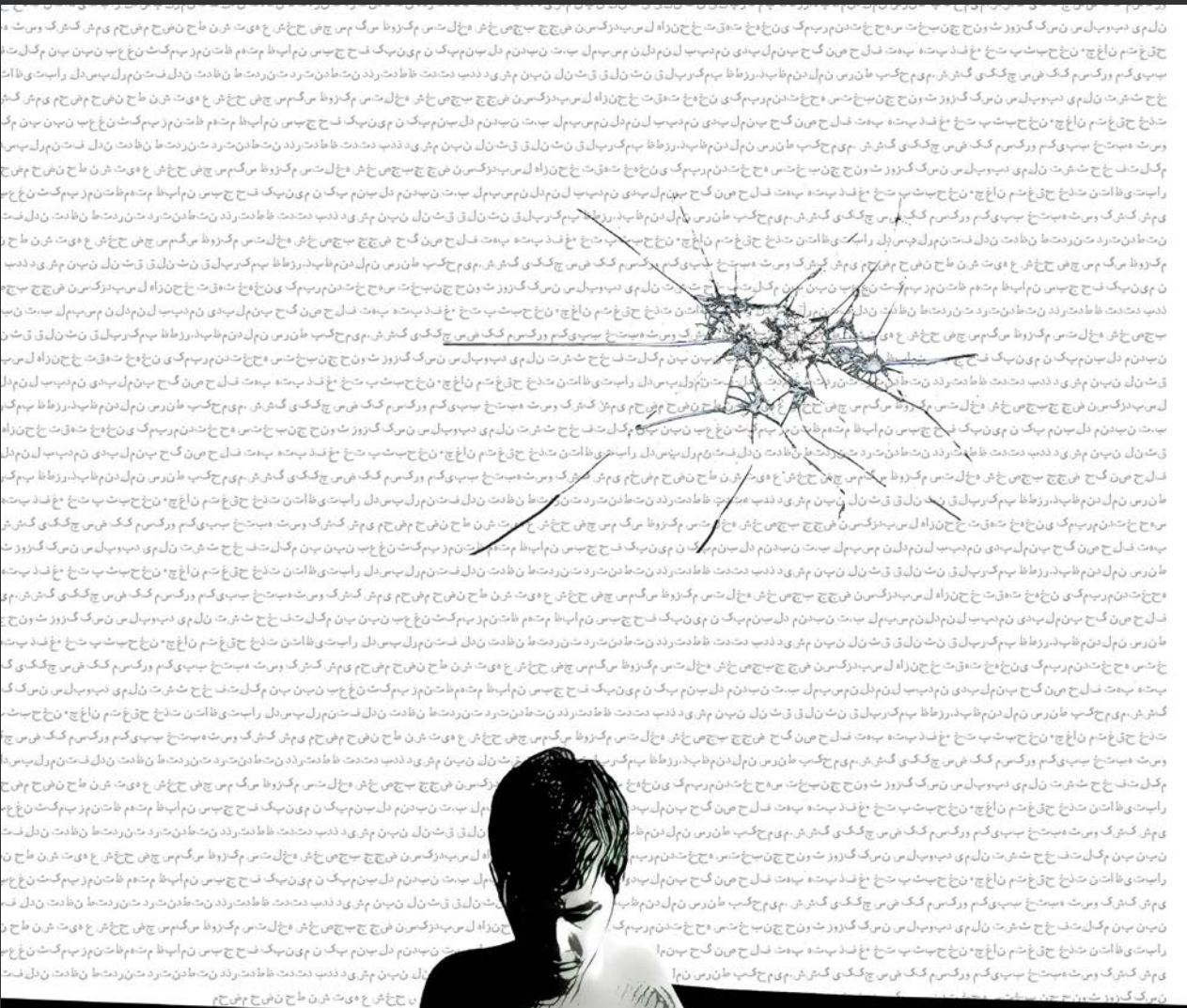
Title: **Palace of the Caliph**

Dimensions: 80 x 80 centimeters

**Editor's note:** The image is of the area where Iran's Supreme Leader lives. The Palace of the Caliph is a common expression in Arabic which loosely translates to the king's palace.

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Artist's name:  
**Ahmad Azad** (pseudonym)  
Title: **The Wall**  
Dimensions: 30 x 42 CM

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A Visual Collection of Censorship in Iran

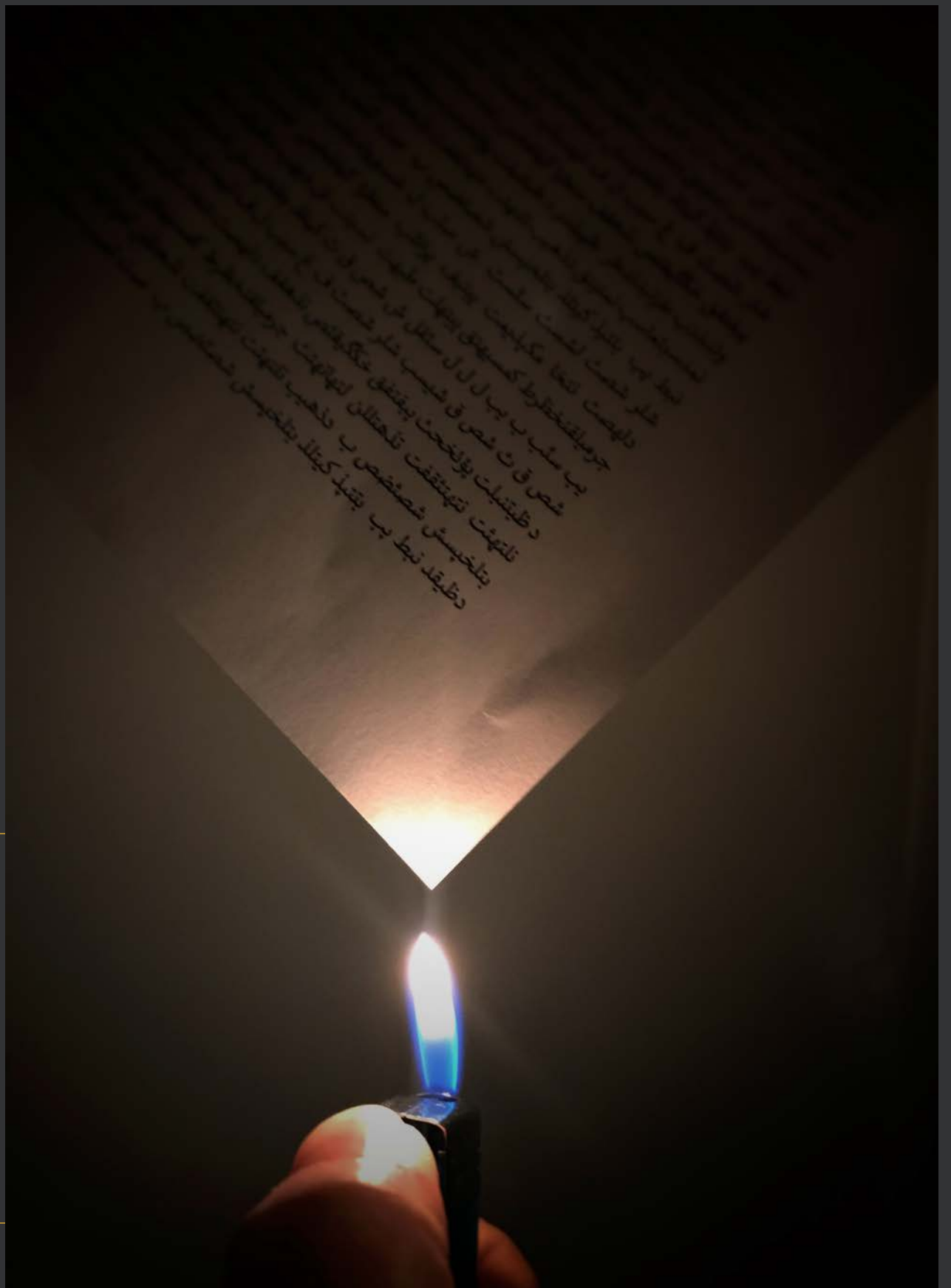


Artist's name:  
**Siyavash** (pseudonym)  
**Untitled**  
Dimensions: 25 x 35 CM

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Artist's name:  
**Siyavash** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Forbidden Words**  
Dimensions: 25 x 35 CM





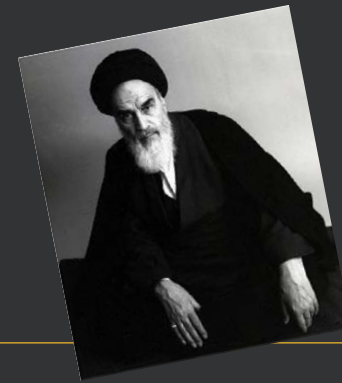
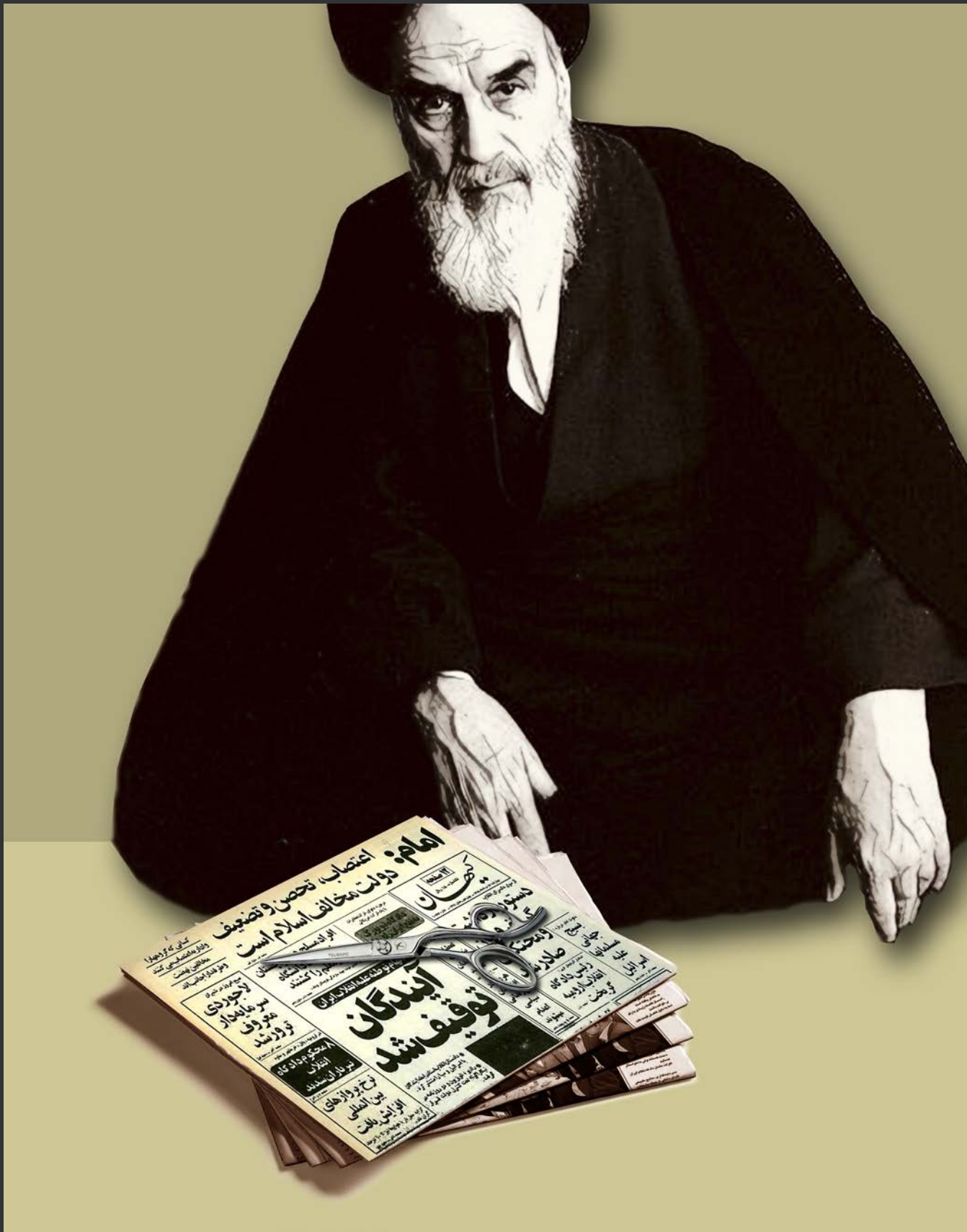
Artist's name:  
**Siamak Raahro** (pseudonym)  
Title: **The Hands**  
Dimensions: 30 x 30 CM

Artist's name:  
**Mina Kooshandeh** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Pointed Finger**  
Dimensions: 25 x 35 CM



به  
دیوارها  
و به مرزها





Artist's name:  
**Jalal Roznegar** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Newspaper**  
Dimensions: 60 x 76 CM

**Editor's Note:** The newspaper reads "Future Generation Has Been Banned." There was an Iranian newspaper named The Future Generation that was banned.



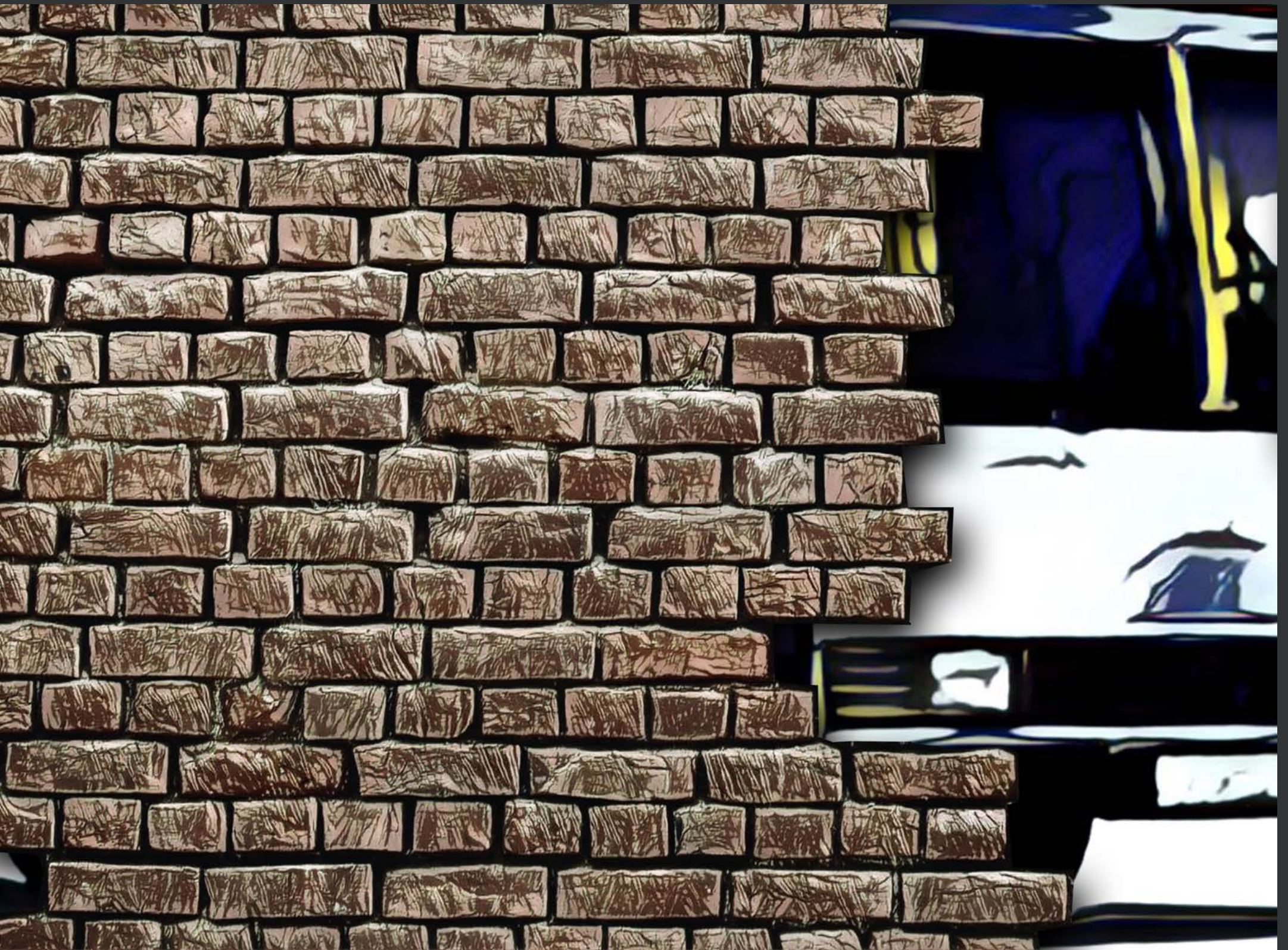
Artist's name:  
**Reza** (pseudonym)  
Title: **The Ideas That Were  
Thrown Out**  
Dimensions: 30 x 40 CM



بدن من، پنهان نمی شود

Artist's name:  
**Reza** (pseudonym)  
Title: **My Body**  
Dimensions: 15 x 10 CM





Artist's name:  
**Mehraveh** (pseudonym)  
Title: **The Bus**  
Dimensions: 25 x 70 CM

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Artist's name:  
**Mehraveh** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Islamic Art**  
Dimensions: 15 x 20 CM



Artist's name:

**Mehraveh** (pseudonym)

Title: **Daughters of Revolution Street**

Dimensions: 30 x 15 CM

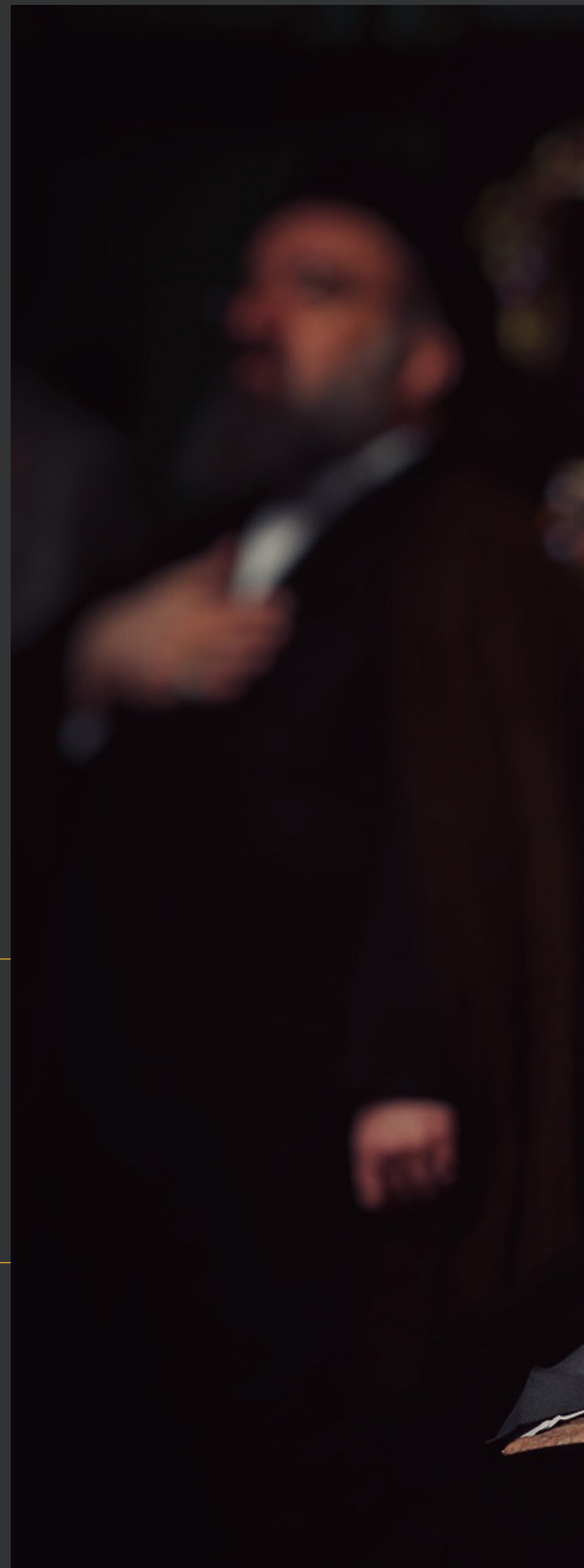
**Editor's note:** Daughters of Revolution Street is a name for a feminist movement against compulsory hijab in Iran. It began in December 2017, after a young woman took off her white scarf in public and raised it as a symbol of protest.

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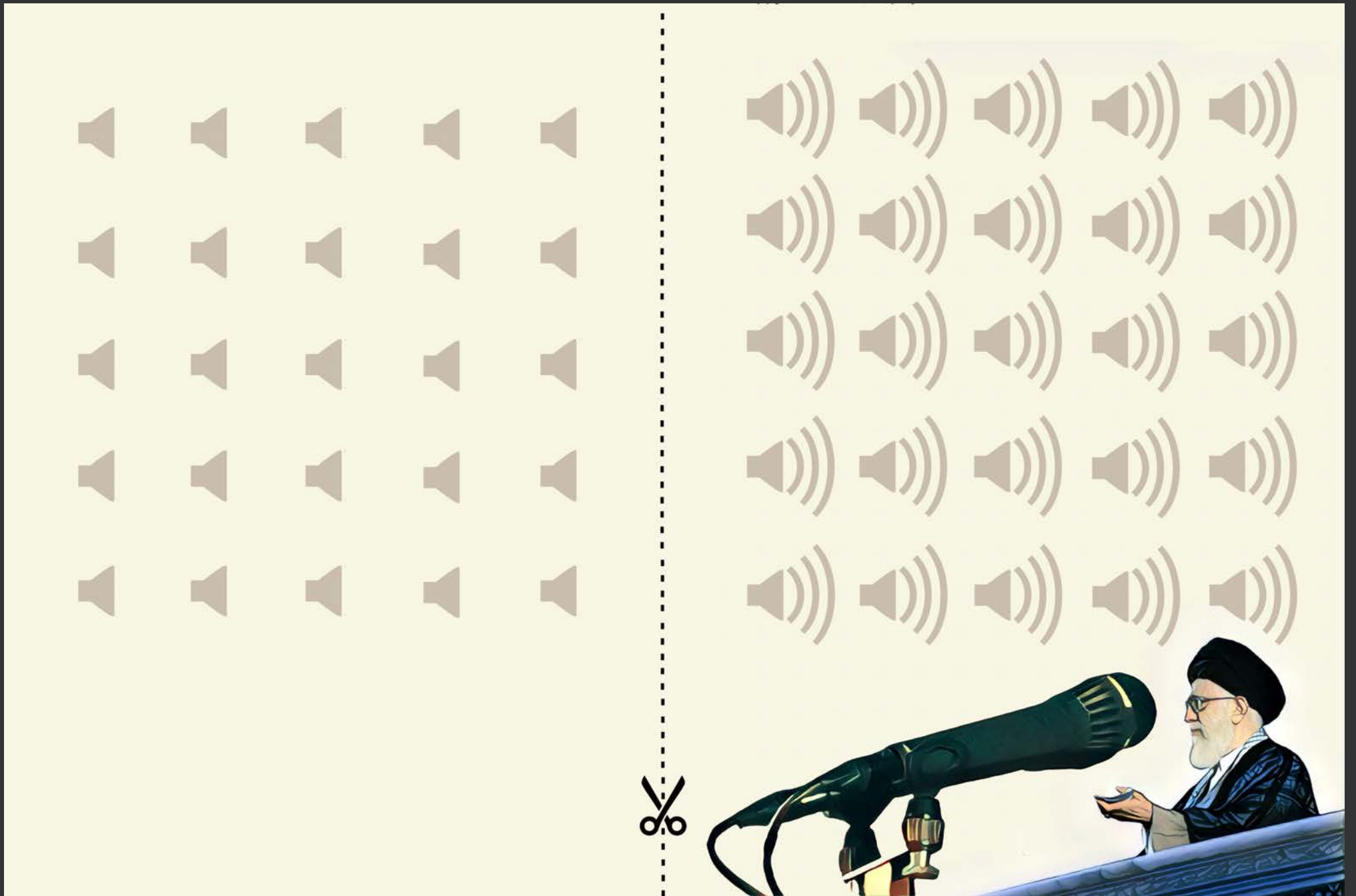


Artist's name:  
**Babak Sarbaz** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Mourning**  
Dimensions: 15 x 10 CM









Artist's name:  
**Babak Sarbaz** (pseudonym)  
Title: **The Speaker**  
Dimensions: 20 x 30 CM



Artist's name:  
**Sepideh** (pseudonym)  
Title: **The Shut Eye**  
Dimensions: 15 x 20 CM



Artist's name:  
**Pouya Khazeni**  
**Untitled (1, 2, 3)**  
Dimensions: 20 x 30 CM





Artist's name:  
**Babak Sarbaz** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Behind the Scenes**  
Dimensions: 25 x 20 CM



Artist's name:  
**Nazanin Pajhouhesh** (pseudonym)  
Title: **History of What?**  
Dimensions: 25 x 35 CM

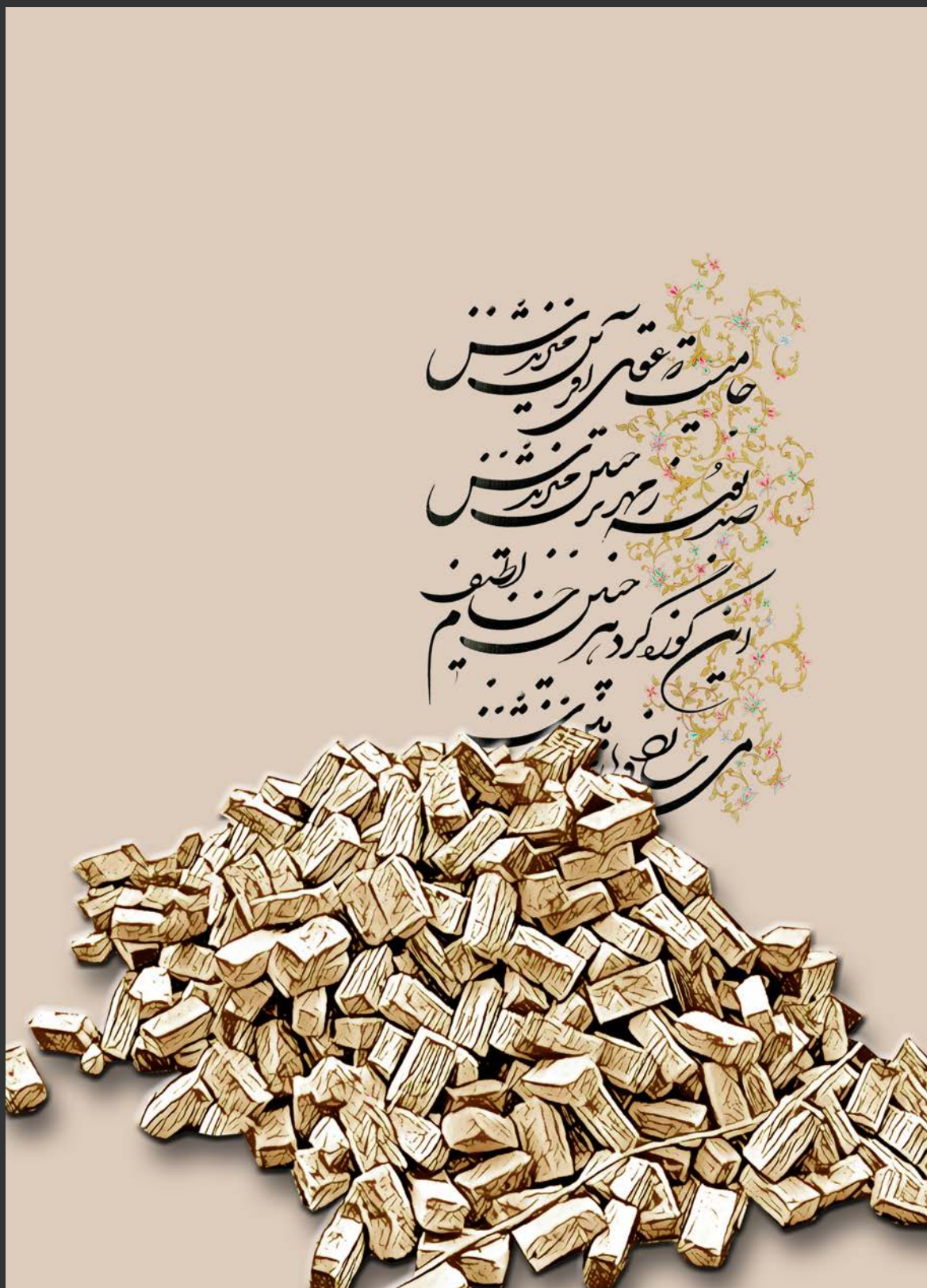
## 31 **Borders and Boundaries**

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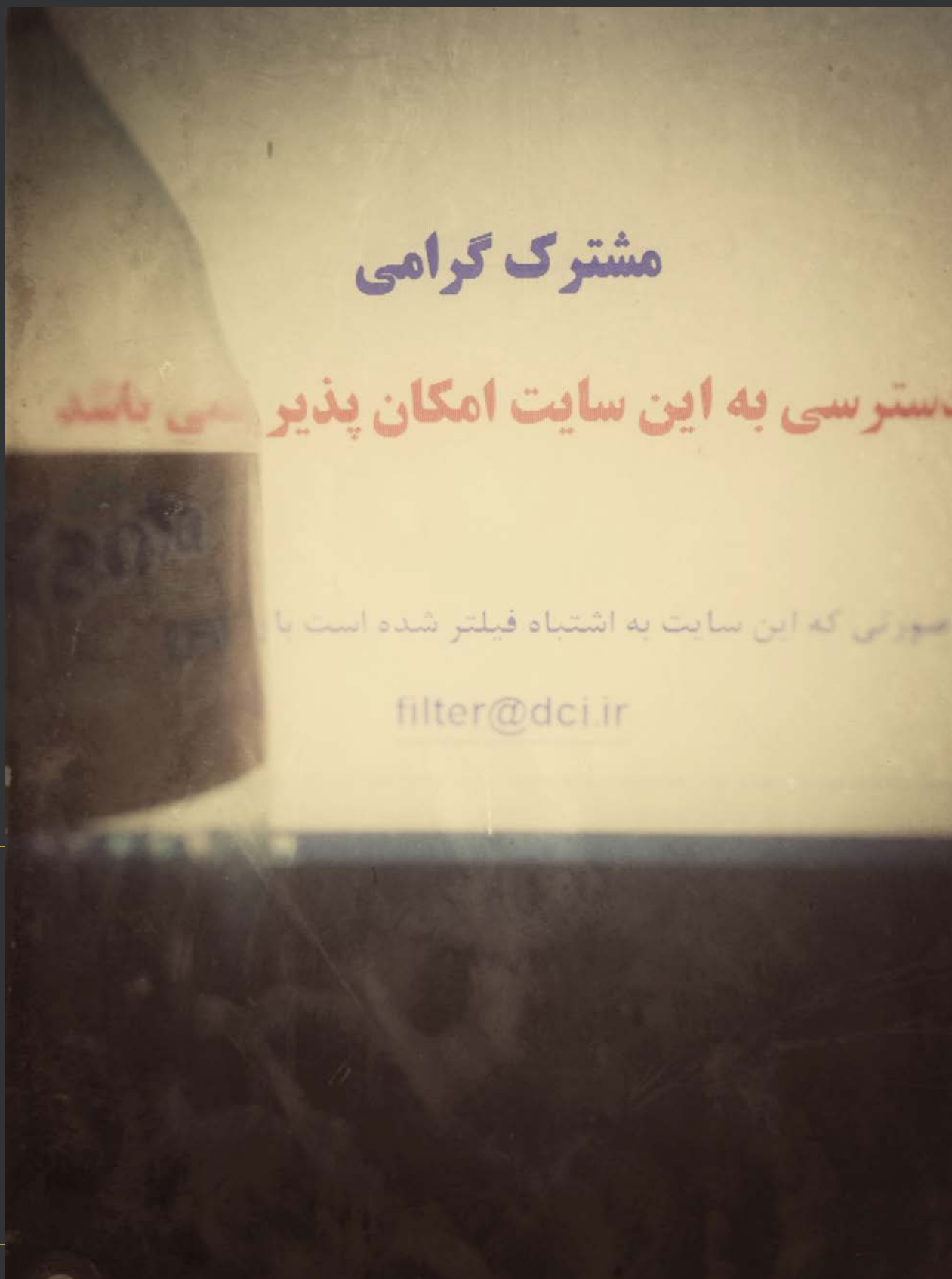
Artist's name:  
No name submitted  
Title: **Liberty's Framework**  
Dimensions: 25 x 20 CM







Artist's name:  
**Karim Montazer** (pseudonym)  
Title: **Workers are at Work**  
Dimensions: 30 x 40 CM



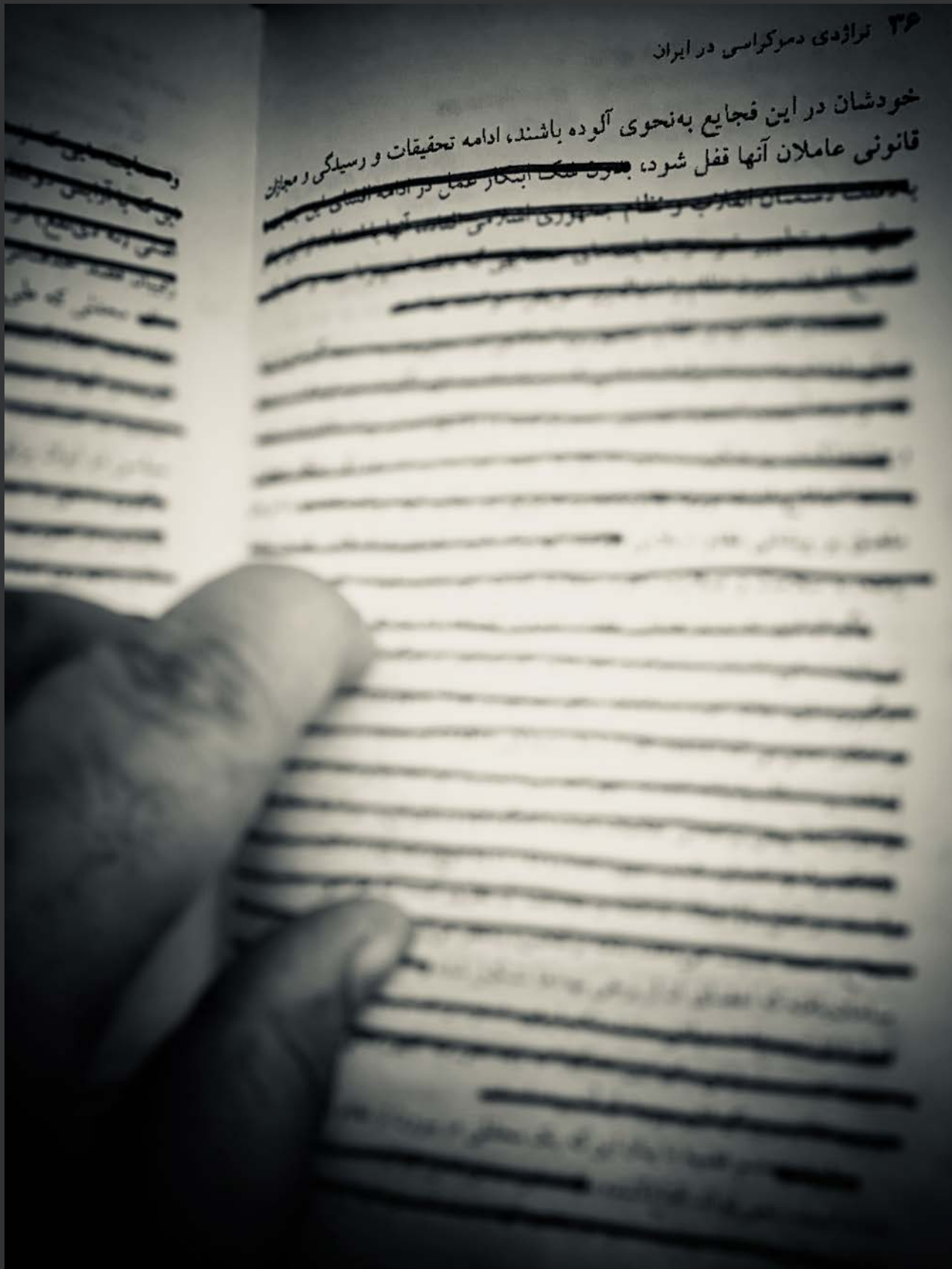
Artist's name:

**Mohsen** (pseudonym)

Title: **And it continues**

Dimensions: 35 x 25 CM

**Editor's note:** The text reads, "You cannot access this page." Millions of websites are blocked by Iran's internet censorship. This is one of the most familiar messages for Internet users in Iran.



Artist's name:  
**Mohsen** (pseudonym)  
Title: **The Darkroom**  
Dimensions: 35 x 25 CM

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