

Parvaneh Etemadi

15 May—13 June 2013

JAMM Art is pleased to present an exhibition, curated by Ali Bakhtiari, of collages on paper by renowned Iranian artist Parvaneh Etemadi.

Etemadi studied painting at the College of Fine Arts of Tehran University, where she became associated with a group of progressive, innovative painters of Talar Ghandriz. Throughout her career spanning over 4 decades, she has constantly reinvented herself and her artistic practice.

In the early years of her artistic activity, Etemadi appeared as an abstract painter. Her abstract works were free compositions of forms in pleasing proportions with extensive touches of cold opaque colours, nevertheless designed and worked out candidly and resolutely.

The second period of Etemadi's artistic practice, which took shape in the 1970s was a synthesis of constructivism of her first period with a return to figurative art. The works of this period are predominantly still lifes and figures with rough, sketchy textures of oil colour on a cement base and a modern, minimal structure. They depict objects and forms from everyday life: flowers, fruit, flower pots, chairs and household utensils, executed with the least amount of lines and colours.

In the 1980s, Etemadi turned to colour pencils. During this period, by virtue of her masterful technique and a colourful palette of warm, harmonious and balanced colours, she reproduced silk textiles, laces and brocades, returning to "her grandmother's imaginary basement with trunks filled with ancient garments and knitwear."

In her collages, which mark the fourth period of her work, Etemadi created compositions made of cut photocopied pieces of her previous colour pencil drawings pasted on the surface of wide canvases with an ever more colourful and varied palette—a kind of artistic improvisation of fantastic free dancing outfits often breaking through the surface and the frame of the canvas, moving and suspended in the air. Unique in their intensity, vitality and dynamism, Etemadi's collages pulse with beauty, humour, joy and mischief.

In her recent series of collages, Etemadi brings alive the familiar inanimate objects (pomegranates, knives and delicate hand-woven textiles, termeh) and combines them with ancient Iranian myths, fables and literature, thus revealing her attention to and criticism of the social air of contemporary Iran. These repetitive patterns are a product of intense concentration, allowing the painter to become lost in a universe of her own. "I painted fifty years before realizing how Iranian my work was. It was unintentional. On the contrary, I resisted against letting my work take an indigenous taste. I did not leaf through miniature books to find my compositions."

Born in 1948 in Tehran, Etemadi has had solo exhibitions at Ghandriz Gallery and Seyhouh Gallery in Tehran, Wade Gallery in Los Angeles and Vancouver and Majless Gallery in Dubai. She has participated in group exhibitions in Beijing, Shanghai, Paris, Washington, DC, and New Delhi.

Opening times: Saturday–Thursday, 11am–7pm

JAMM