

DR. MARAL DARBANDI

PROFESSIONAL & ACADEMIC ARTIST PORTFOLIO

Visual Artist | Oil Painter | Independent Studio Practitioner

Primary Fields: Painting, Figurative Art, Expressionism, Contemporary Visual Arts

Primary Medium: Oil on Canvas

Additional Practices: Acrylic underpainting, charcoal, mixed media, texture and impasto techniques

Academic and professional portfolio prepared for international artistic and prior-learning assessment.

ARTIST PROFILE

Dr. Maral Darbandi is an Iranian visual artist and independent studio practitioner whose primary medium is oil painting. Her artistic practice is centred on the human figure, psychological experience, memory, silence, loss, identity and the emotional dimensions of contemporary life.

Her work moves between figurative expressionism, postmodern expressionist approaches, abstraction and contemporary interpretations of the figure. Rather than treating painting solely as a representational medium, Darbandi approaches the painted surface as a psychological and conceptual field in which gesture, colour, texture, fragmentation and negative space operate as carriers of meaning.

Her professional development combines sustained studio practice with an interdisciplinary academic background encompassing Visual Arts, Political Science, Private Law and Computer Engineering. This combination contributes to an artistic methodology informed by visual research as well as questions of society, power, identity, human relationships and the structures through which individual experience is shaped.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Dr. Darbandi's academic trajectory is interdisciplinary and reflects sustained engagement with both analytical and creative fields.

PhD in Visual Arts (Painting) - Completed 2026

PhD in Private Law

PhD in Political Science - Islamic Thought

Master's Degree in Political Science - Iranian Studies / Issues of Iran

Bachelor's Degree in Computer Engineering

This multidisciplinary academic background has significantly informed her artistic development. Political and social inquiry has strengthened the conceptual dimension of her practice, while legal studies have contributed to her interest in structures of authority, individual agency and social relations. Her academic training in Visual Arts has developed alongside an independent professional painting practice, allowing theoretical research and studio experimentation to operate as interconnected aspects of her work.

ARTISTIC PRACTICE

Darbandi's principal artistic language is painting. Oil on canvas remains at the centre of her practice, frequently incorporating impasto, layered surfaces, acrylic underpainting, charcoal interventions and textural construction.

Her figurative works are characterised by elongated bodies, partially obscured or absent facial identities, gestural lines, fractured spatial structures and psychologically charged negative spaces. The absence or reduction of facial features is particularly significant within her visual vocabulary. Rather than defining the subject through portrait likeness, Darbandi allows posture, movement, spatial relationships and painterly gesture to communicate emotional and psychological states.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A central concern throughout Darbandi's practice is the tension between what is experienced internally and what remains invisible externally. Silence appears repeatedly in her work - not simply as absence, but as an active psychological and social condition.

Figures often exist in ambiguous spaces. Faces disappear. Bodies stretch, bend, dance or withdraw. Lines interrupt apparently stable forms. Empty spaces become as significant as painted ones.

INTERCONNECTED VISUAL DIRECTIONS

Postmodern Expressionist Figuration

Elongated and frequently faceless figures, gestural marks, fragmented spatial structures and psychologically charged compositions.

Expressive Abstraction

A spontaneous practice based on movement, materiality, colour and emotional intensity.

Contemporary Figurative and Neo-Cubist Investigation

Geometric fragmentation of the figure and structured planes examining relationships between individuals and their environments.

Impasto Landscape and Contemporary Nature Painting

Natural environments explored through physical paint surfaces, colour, movement and material presence.

SELECTED SERIES & BODIES OF WORK

Silent Geometry

Investigates silence, human relationships and psychological distance through fragmented figurative structures, negative space and geometric intervention. The series developed into Darbandi's solo exhibition "Silent Geometry / ■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■." The works explore the possibility that silence itself may possess structure - an invisible architecture created between individuals, memories and emotional states.

After You

Explores mourning through movement. The series depicts grieving women who dance, turn, shake their heads and move through emotional states that resist conventional representations of grief. Movement becomes simultaneously an expression of pain and an act of survival.

Women Who Run with Wolves

Investigates feminine instinct, autonomy and the relationship between vulnerability and strength. The wolf functions as a symbolic presence associated with instinct, freedom, protection and untamed dimensions of identity.

Madness

An evolving body of work moving toward unrestricted expressive abstraction. Gesture, accident, physical movement and emotional intensity increasingly determine the structure of the painting.

SELECTED WORKS

- Silent Dialogue - Oil on Canvas - 100 x 100 cm
- After Him - Oil on Canvas - 100 x 80 cm
- Silent City
- Collective Silence
- Passage
- Root and Sky
- Women Who Run with Wolves
- After You Series
- Silent Geometry Series

The complete professional portfolio includes additional works ranging from intimate formats to large-scale canvases approaching approximately 180 cm and beyond.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

SOLO EXHIBITION

Silent Geometry / ■■■■■■■■ ■■■■

Solo Exhibition - Iran

A body of approximately fifteen works investigating silence, human presence, fragmented identity and psychological space.

SELECTED INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

Chiaroscuro of Silence - Iran-Oman International Group Online Exhibition - Oman - September 2026 - Curated by Masih Azari - Selected Artist

International Visual Arts Exhibition - Oman - 2024

International Online Exhibition - Türkiye - 2024

International Online Exhibition - United States

Clay & Words - Singapore - 2026

International Group Exhibition / Online Presentation - Istanbul, Türkiye

NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

Darbandi has participated in approximately **ten national group exhibitions in Iran**, in addition to her solo exhibition. Selected presentations include exhibitions with Artiman and Golhaye Davoudi, alongside other national group exhibitions and independent artistic events. Her exhibition history is supported by certificates, catalogues, invitations and other documentary evidence available for academic or professional assessment.

INTERNATIONAL ARTISTIC ACTIVITY

Darbandi's professional practice has increasingly developed an international dimension through exhibitions, online presentations, gallery correspondence, curatorial contacts and opportunities for international representation. Her works have been presented to audiences beyond Iran, including exhibitions or artistic activities associated with Oman, Türkiye, the United States and Singapore. These activities form part of an ongoing effort to position her practice within a broader contemporary international context while maintaining the individual conceptual identity of her work.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

- Development and production of original bodies of work
- Large-scale and medium-scale oil painting
- Conceptual development of artistic series
- Preparation of works for exhibitions
- Professional portfolio development
- Exhibition participation
- Independent presentation and sale of artworks
- Collaboration and correspondence with galleries and curators
- Documentation and archiving of artistic production
- Development of commissioned and site-responsive artwork
- Research into contemporary painting and visual culture

RESEARCH & INTERDISCIPLINARY CONTEXT

Darbandi's artistic practice is informed by an interdisciplinary intellectual background. Her studies in political science have contributed to an ongoing awareness of collective identity, social structures, power and the relationship between individuals and society. Her legal background has further developed her engagement with questions surrounding individual agency, institutional structures, rights and social relationships. Within painting, these concerns are not generally presented through direct illustration. Instead, they appear through the psychological positioning of figures, fragmented bodies, spatial tensions, silence, gesture and symbolic relationships.

CURRENT ARTISTIC DIRECTION

Darbandi's current work represents a transition toward increasingly free and physically expressive painting. While figurative structures remain important, recent works allow gesture, materiality, movement and abstraction greater autonomy. This development is particularly visible in the *After You* and *Madness* bodies of work, where movement itself becomes an artistic language. The studio is increasingly understood as a site of experimentation rather than execution: a space where intellectual research, personal memory, material behaviour and spontaneous gesture interact.

ARTIST STATEMENT

My paintings begin where language becomes insufficient.

I am interested in the psychological territory between presence and absence, silence and expression, vulnerability and resistance.

The human figure frequently appears in my work, but I often remove or obscure the face. By doing so, I attempt to move the figure beyond individual portraiture and toward a more open psychological identity. Bodies, gestures, lines, colour and empty spaces become carriers of emotion.

My practice has increasingly moved toward physical and expressive forms of painting. I am interested in allowing paint to retain evidence of movement - the pressure of the hand, the interruption of a line, the accumulation of material and the instability of gesture.

Grief, memory, femininity, silence and human resilience recur throughout my work, but I do not approach painting as an illustration of predetermined ideas. For me, painting is itself a process of discovery.

The image often emerges through the act of painting rather than existing completely before it.

Ultimately, I seek to create works in which personal experience can move beyond autobiography and become a space in which another person may recognise something of their own experience.

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