

Joumana Medley

AVAILABLE ARTWORKS



All pieces are one-offs or limited editions, shipped with a certificate of authenticity. They are shown in order of completion, from newest to oldest.

www.majnouna.com
joumana@majnouna.com

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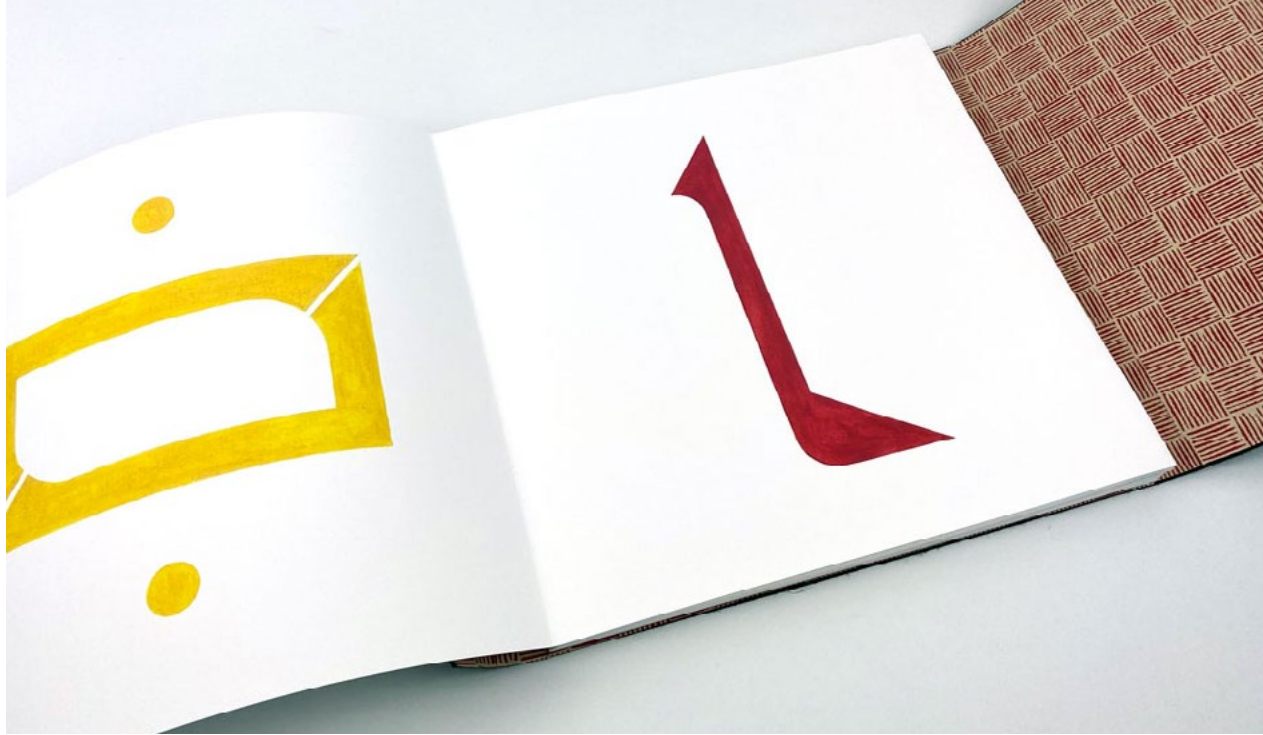
Unforeseen

Lapis lazuli and red earth in gum tempera on paper, hand-cut. 56x56 cm. 2023. £2,250.

Uncertainty is now our constant companion; making plans no longer means anything. Anxiety is the usual response, but we can also see this moment where we have no knowledge or control as pregnant with possibility - because what uncertainty really means is "anything can happen", including blessings un hoped for and opportunities we never imagined.

In this piece, the background square is made up of a word for "making plans", *khitat*. Through this solid and safe-looking ground, the unforeseen bursts with a chaotic but vital design of its own, opening doors for something new.



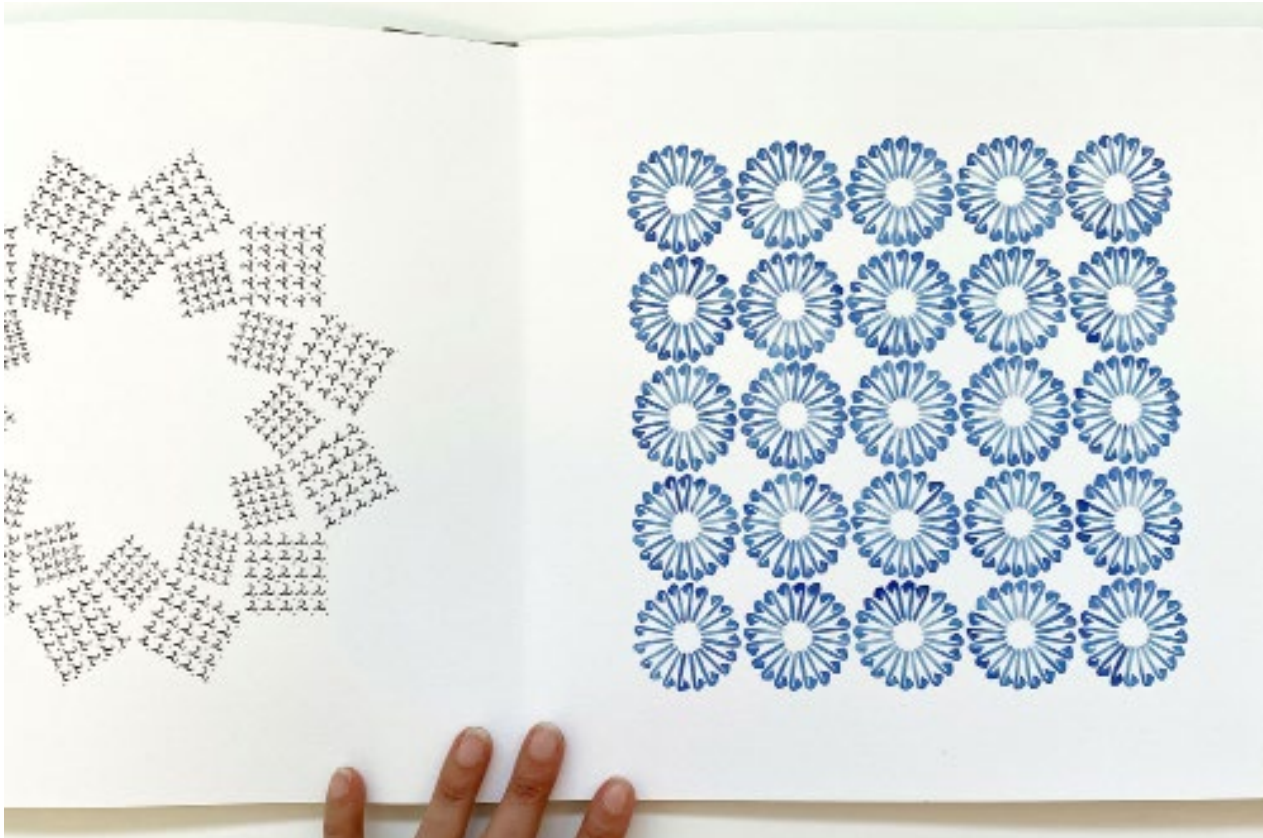


The Book of Abjad

Artist book in Limited Edition of 28. Giclée printing, hand-finished with mineral pigments, hand-bound with linen thread and waxed lokta paper. 28x29x2.5cm. 2023. £800.

In this majestic handmade codex, the forgotten relationship between Arabic letters and numbers is expressed through geometry, which is number unfolding in space.

The Book of Abjad refers to the Arabic alphabet, but is short for *abjad hawaz*: a mnemonic sentence to remember the original order of the letters, and thereby their numerical value according to the Semitic origin of this system. The book features a numerical composition for each of the 28 letters, unfolding one group at a time. Lamalif is not forgotten, and each edition features a different design for the 29th letter.

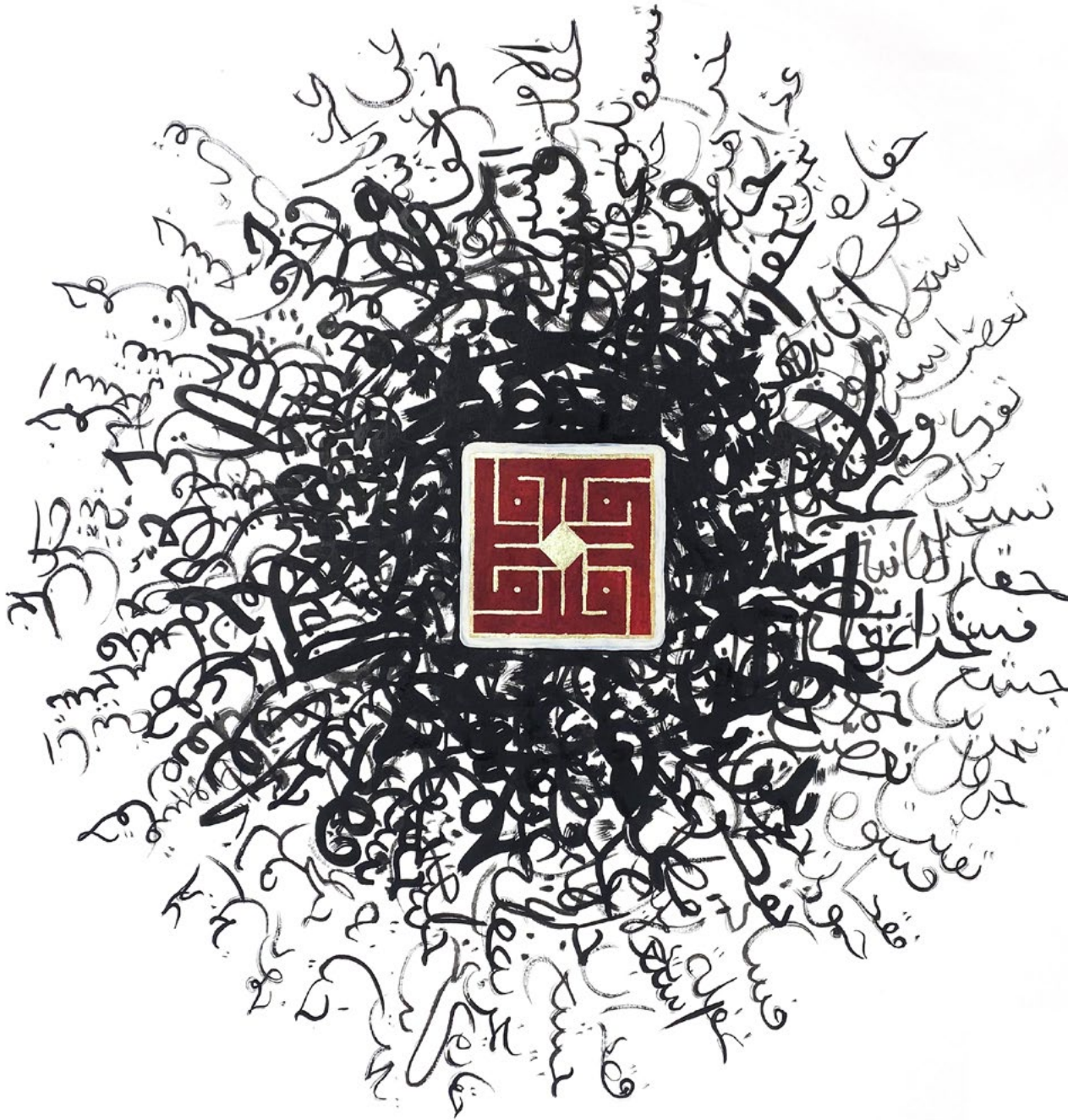


Fortress of the Heart

Historical pigments in gum tempera, lamp black ink and gold leaf on watercolour paper. 56x56 cm. 2023. £2,000.

An unusually spontaneous piece, born of a day of feeling overwhelmed by the bad news coming from around the world. On the way to the studio, a question formed in her mind: Where to go when everything became too much? This title and image came in answer.

The central design is made up of the word "heart" *qalb*. The darkness attacking it is made up of words that it isn't necessary to describe - think of everything out there that make you anxious, angry or sorrowful, and you'll be able to guess them.





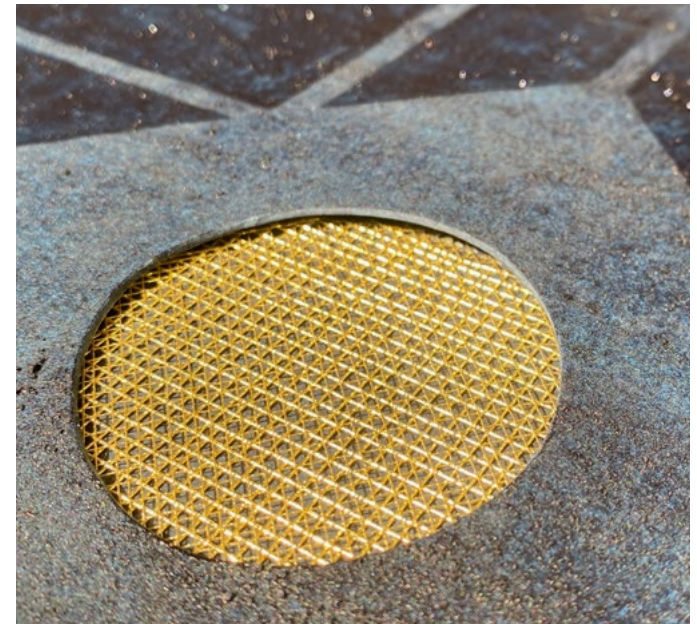
Offering قربان

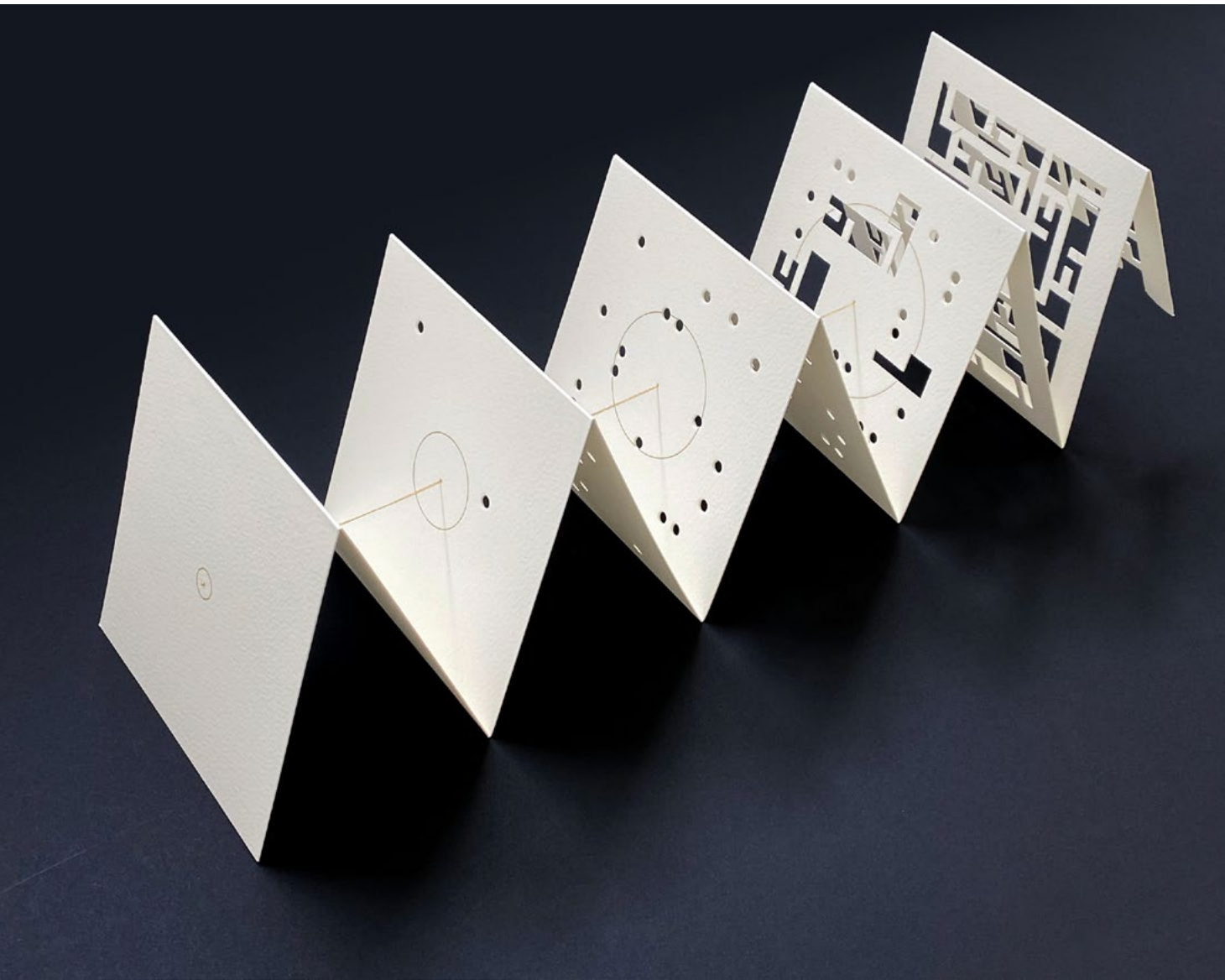
Gold embroidery thread, genuine indigo pigment in gum tempera and egg glair on watercolour paper. 55x55 cm. 2023. £2,200.

Although a number of Arabic words carry the meaning of "offering", I was specially drawn by the etymology of *qirbān*: from the root QRB, "nearness", for a literal meaning of "something to bring one closer [to the Divine]". It's also an ecumenical word, prominent both in the Qur'an and in Christian rites.

The rough granulation of the indigo pigment and variegation of the natural materials balance out the strict geometric precision of the composition, but also offer an extra layer of contrast with the painstakingly woven, golden centre.

This piece can look very different under various lighting conditions and angles.





Ruination ۵۱۵

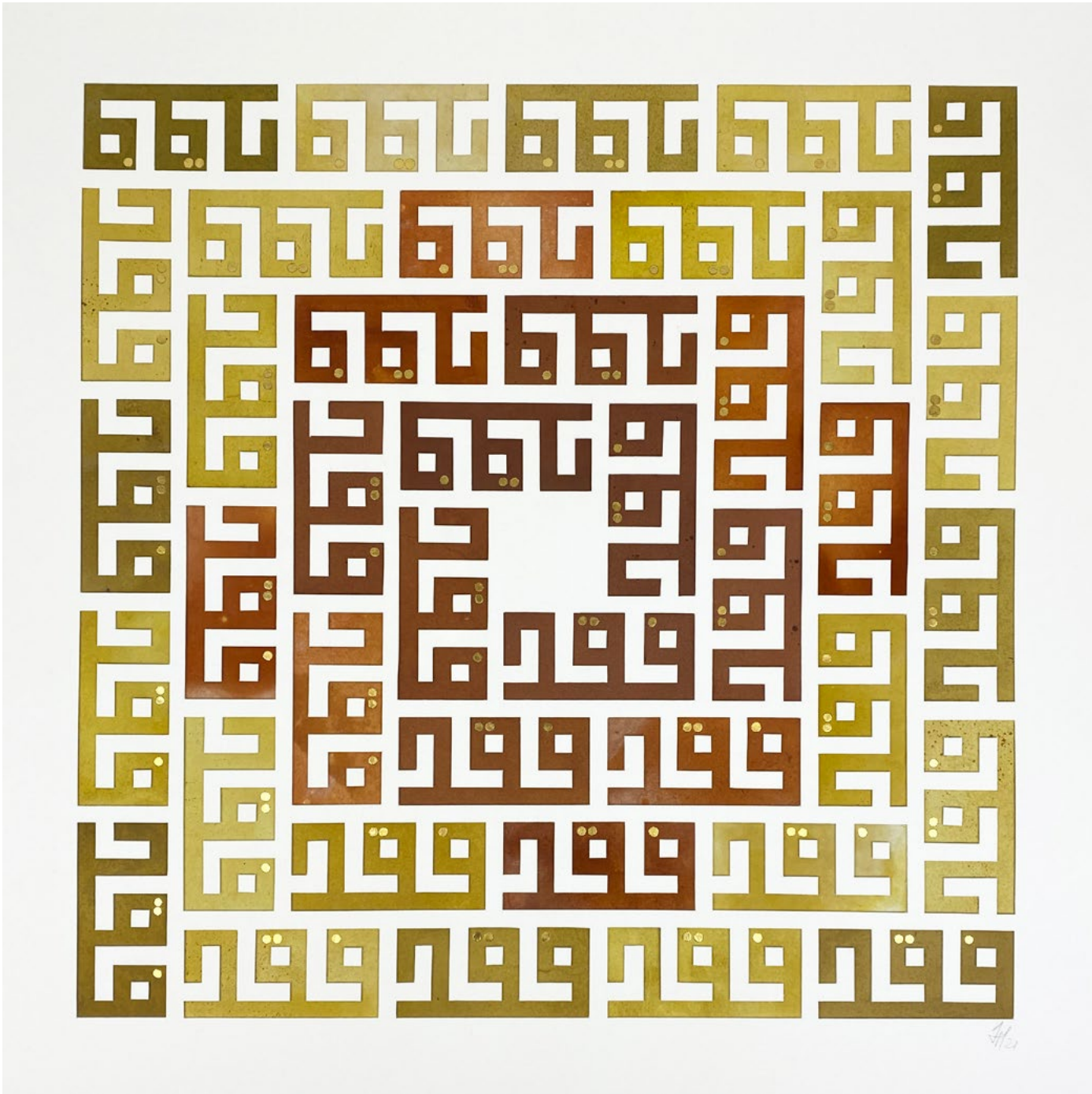
Artist book × paper sculpture. Gold on hand-cut paper, gold-plated chain. 15x15x2 cm in handmade slipcase. Limited Edition of 12. 2023. £550.

Ruination: "the action or fact of ruining someone or something or of being ruined"

I wanted to make a beautiful but stark sculptural object telling a story gone wrong. The piece is a functional book that can live in its slipcase, but is designed to be displayed as a paper sculpture; both formats tell the story equally.

The story: Here we have a small point of light piercing the darkness and beginning to expand, but this growth is undermined - chunks of the ground removed - before it can become an encompassing circle of wholeness. As structural integrity decreases, the word *hadm* ("ruination") becomes visible in absentia as the circle quietly disappears. A golden chain, functioning on a different plane, continues to keep the whole standing - up until there is no longer a centre that can hold.





Loss فُقْد

Plant-dyed paper, gold leaf and handcut card, 50x50 cm.
2021-22. £2,000 framed.

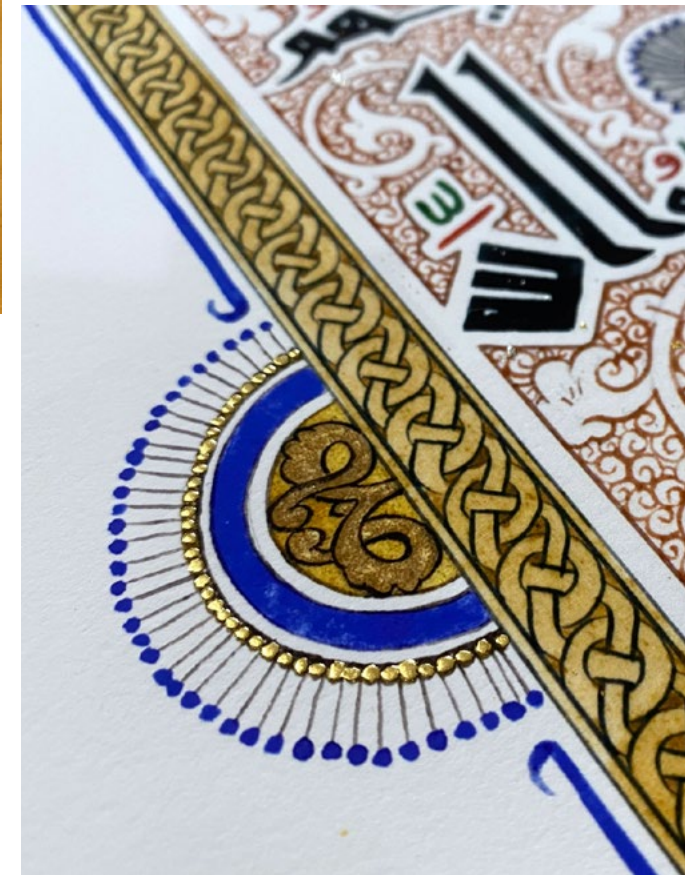
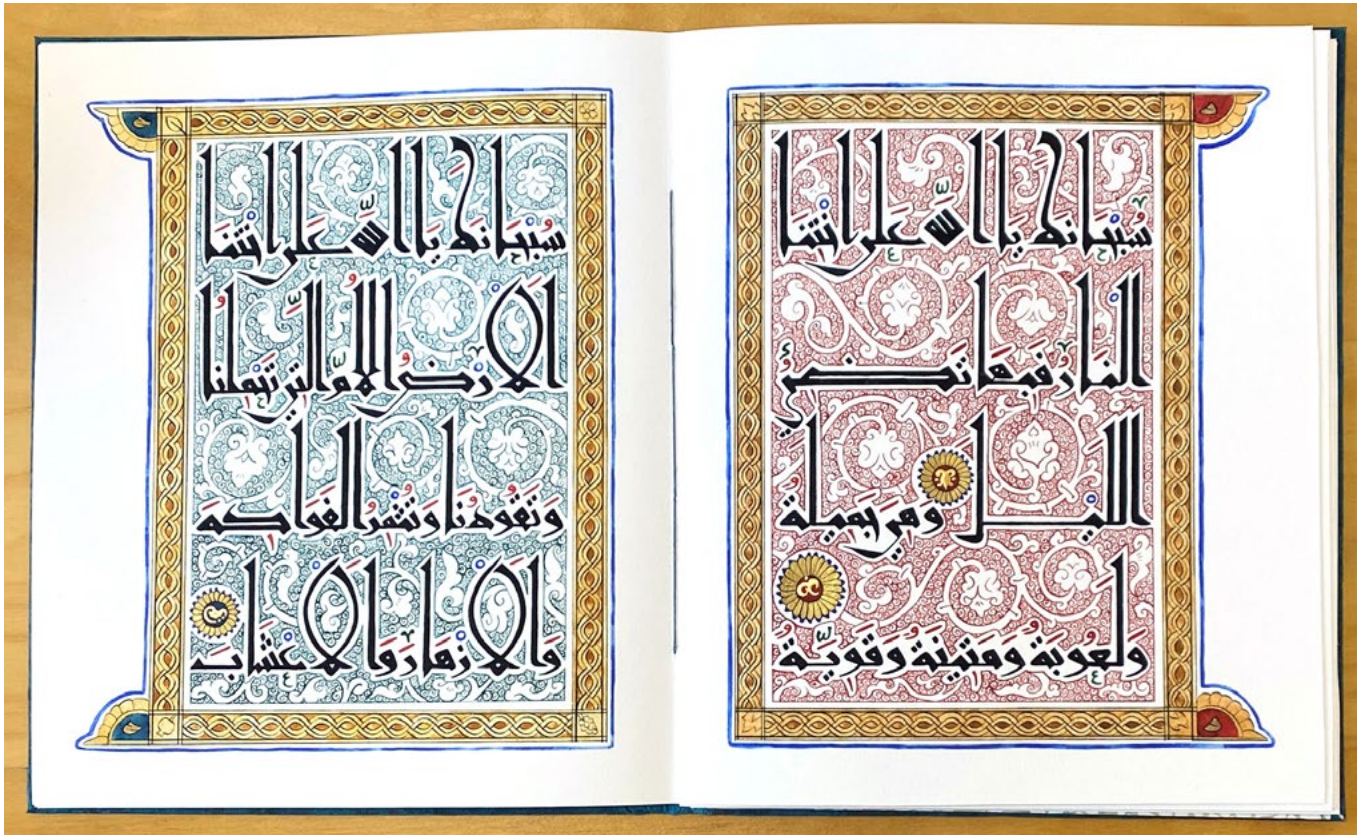
Loss is illustrated here by a composition that will fade over time. The paper is dyed with plants gathered as summer was starting to wane. The piece was then left exposed to natural light for a year. The organic colours fade, each in its own way — but the genuine gold of the seed-like dots will neither fade nor tarnish.



The Canticle of Creatures

Limited edition Artist Book: gold leaf on giclée print, waxed paper cover embroidered with gold, codex-bound by hand. Signed and numbered out of 15. 25x30 cm, 6 spreads plus endpapers. £315.

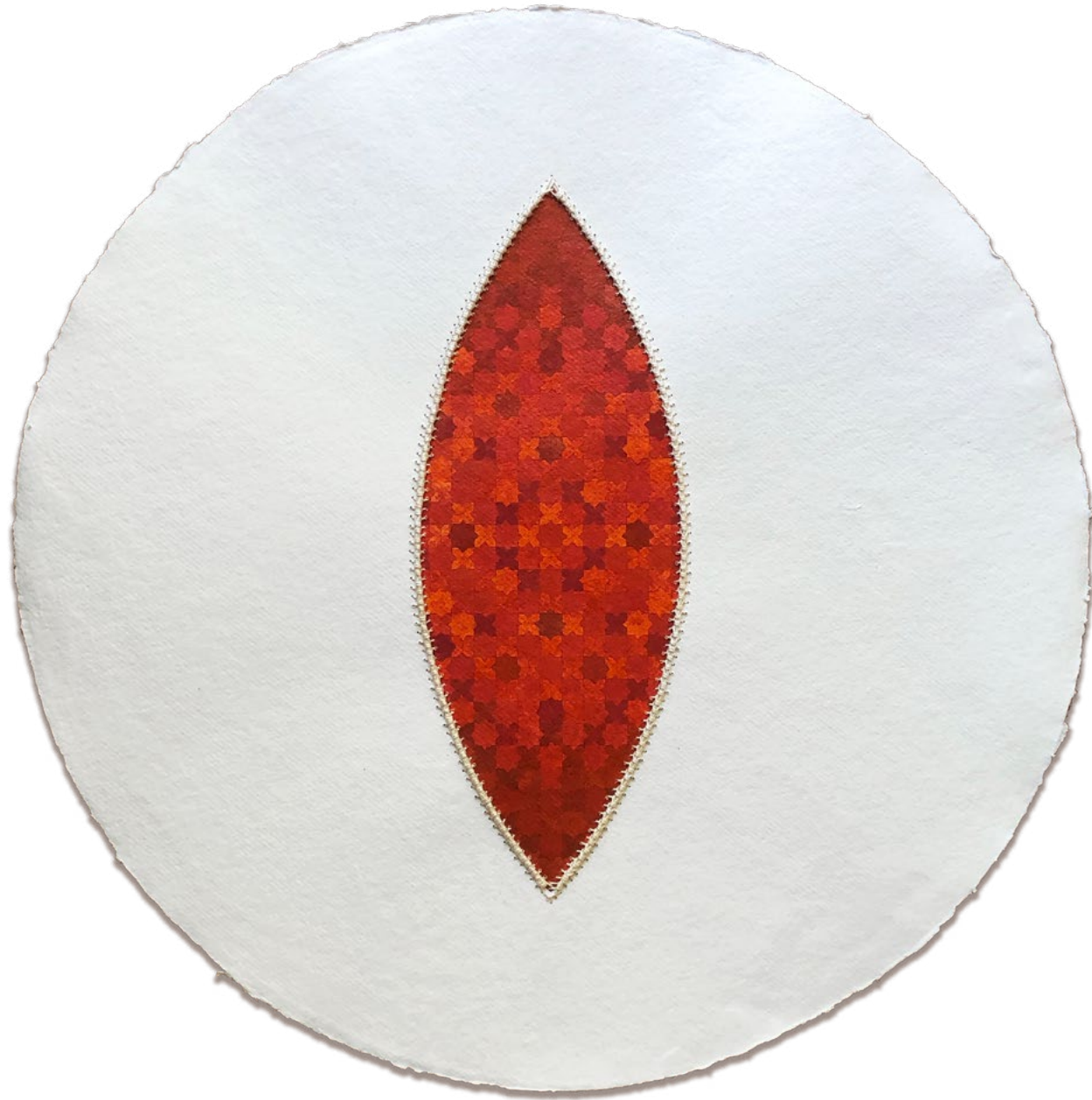
A rendering of St Francis of Assisi's Canticle of Creatures in Arabic, in the style of the Qarmatian Qur'an.



Birthing

Historical pigments in egg tempera, silk thread on Khadi paper. Ø 56 cm. 2020. £2,200.

Something between an image and a feeling, but less tangible than either, pushes through its way into my consciousness. I then endeavour to translate it materially, without losing that original signature of which the only record is a sensation. There is something self-referential about this image, describing the very process by which it came into being. Where previously there was Nothing, Something is suddenly there, striving to come into existence, pulsating with irresistible life force that will destroy what doesn't make way. The vesica shape is the intersection of two circles, two worlds, through which something can be born. The caterpillar binding stitch is a solid boundary that does much to convey the impression of a passage opening in the paper. Though beautiful, it is uncomfortable, evoking stitches on a wound.

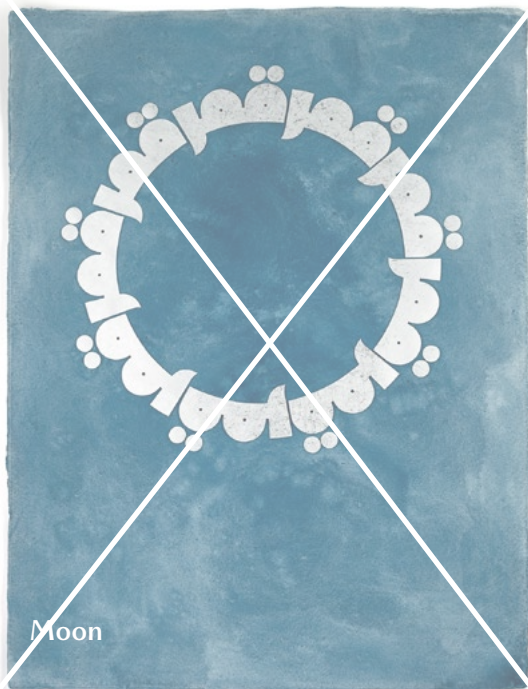
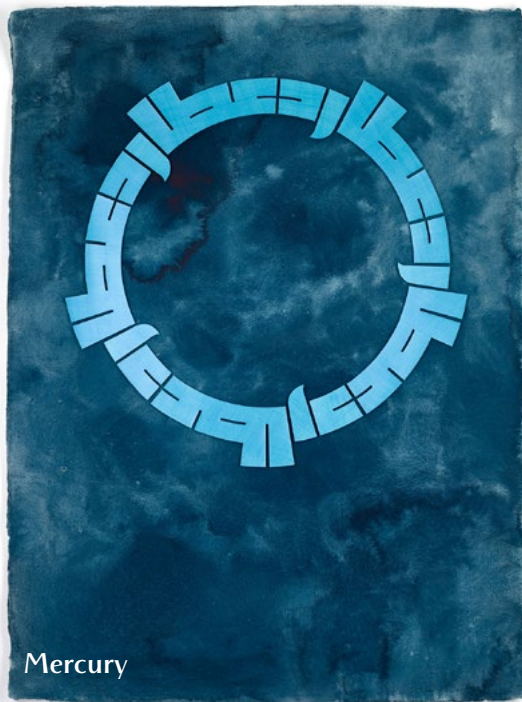


Emptiness ii

Pencil, mineral pigments, linen thread and gold on circular Khadi paper. ø 56 cm. 2019. £1,600 each.

How can you paint emptiness? These pieces attempt to depict what is not there, each with a different energy to the emptiness. The tiny five-pointed star, symbolising a human being, transforms the piece completely by creating a sensation of scale that grabs the viewer with almost physical impact.





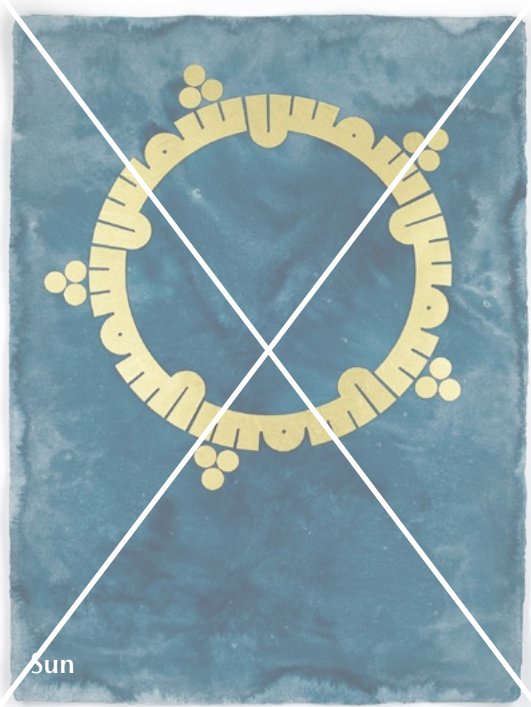
Planetary Spheres كواكب

Acrylic or watercolour on cut paper, assembled on Khadi paper 650gsm, 56x76 cm each. 2016. £2,000 each.

In the context of my work on cosmological themes, I decided to create a series for the planets individually, so they could be seen as individual bodies in their own right. Because the last three planets (Uranus, Neptune, Pluto) did not have proper Arabic names, I had to assign ones that carry on the pattern of the much older Arabic astronomical names, which correspond to pre-Islamic deities.

The number 10 also brings the solar system to a perfect completion, being, in Pythagorean thought, the all-embracing, all-limiting "mother". A full discussion of the research and symbolism behind this series can be found on majnouna.com/portfolio/planets.





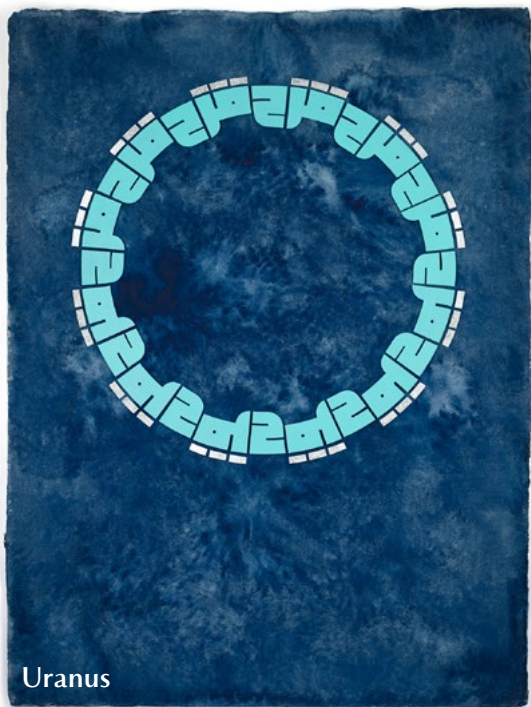
Sun



Jupiter



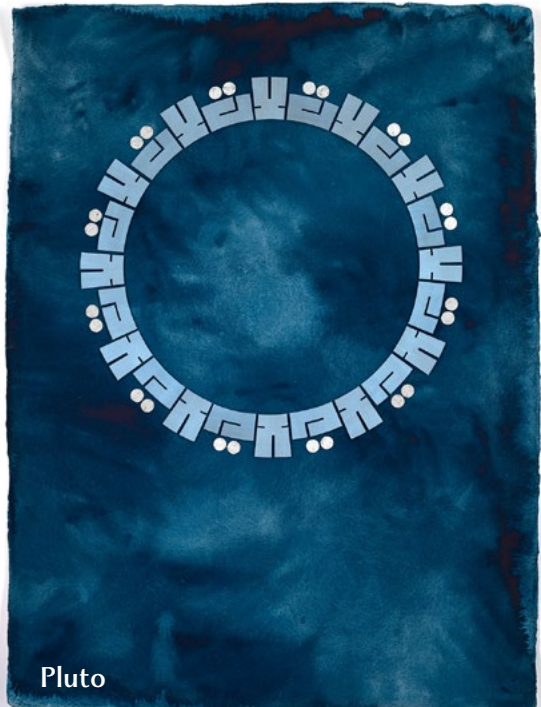
Saturn



Uranus



Neptune



Pluto



Lovesickness دڭ

Watercolour and metal leaf on paper. 50x50 cm. 2017.
£1,500.

"Sweeter than this poison I did not see any drink,
Lovelier than this illness I did not see any health."

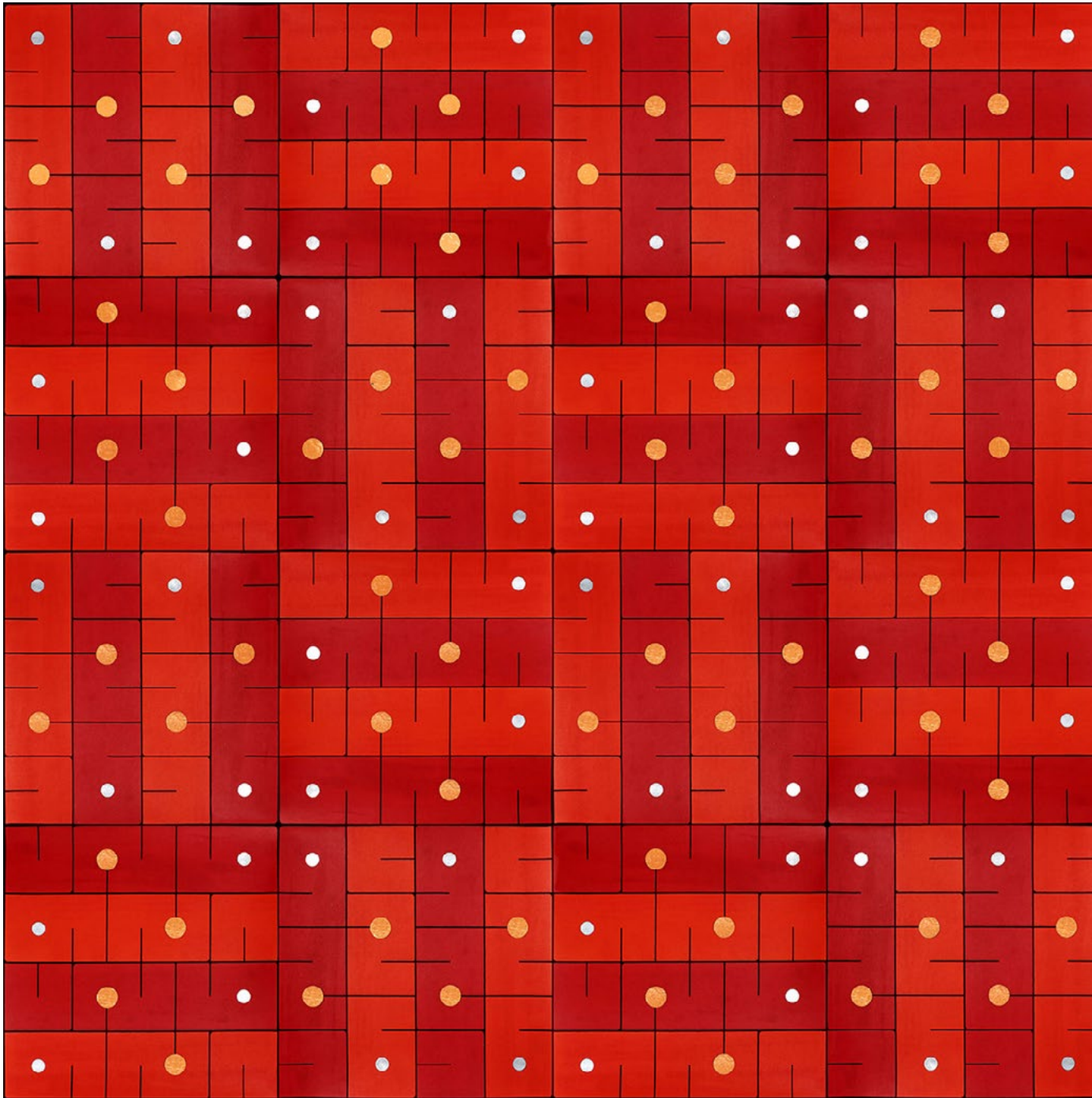
— Rûmi



Fancy هوى

Watercolour and metal leaf on paper. 50x50 cm. 2017.
£1,500.

The Arabic word *Hawâ* shares with the English "fancy" the double meaning of "infatuation, sudden passion" and "whim, caprice".

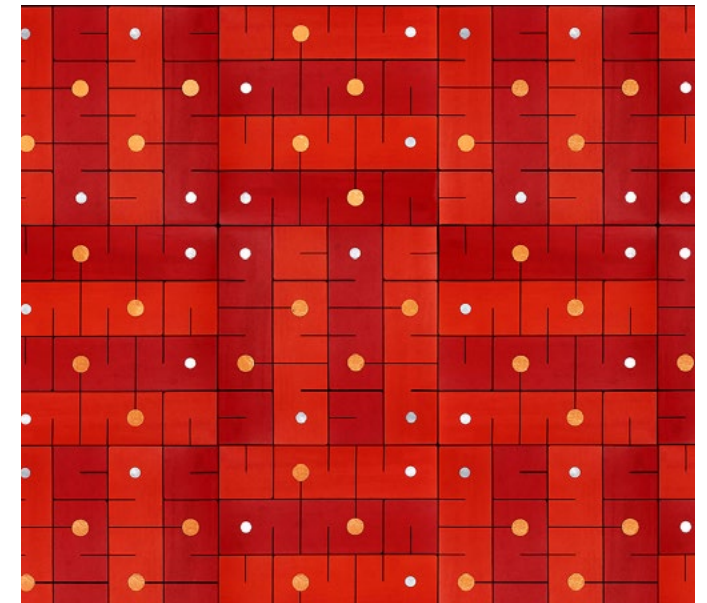


Ecstasy عَجْز

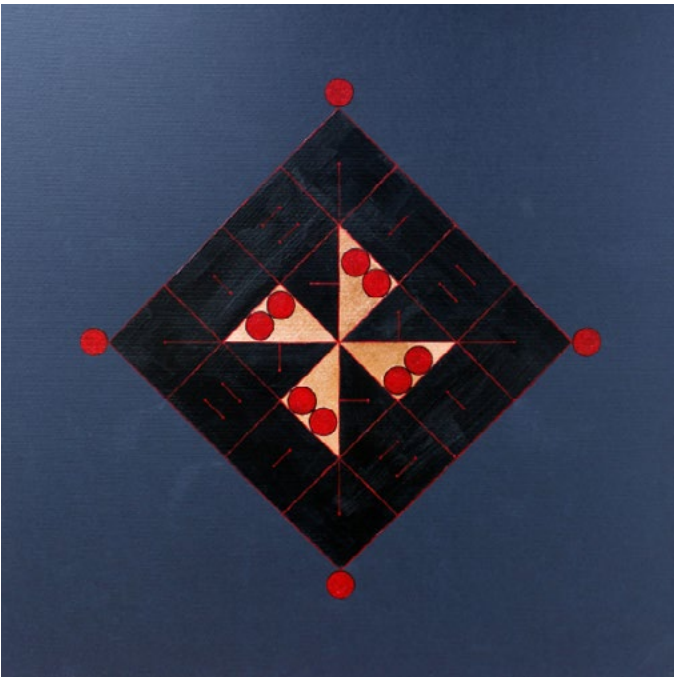
Acrylic and metal leaf on paper. 192 x 192 cm (made up of 16 pieces of 48 x 48 cm each). 2015. £5,800.

The word stylised here in Kufic, a geometric style of arabic calligraphy, is Ecstasy (*wajd*). While the design appears static at first, movement comes from contemplation: then swirling patterns appear and begin their dance, with the dots seeming to float over the paper from which they are lifted by their metallic sheen.

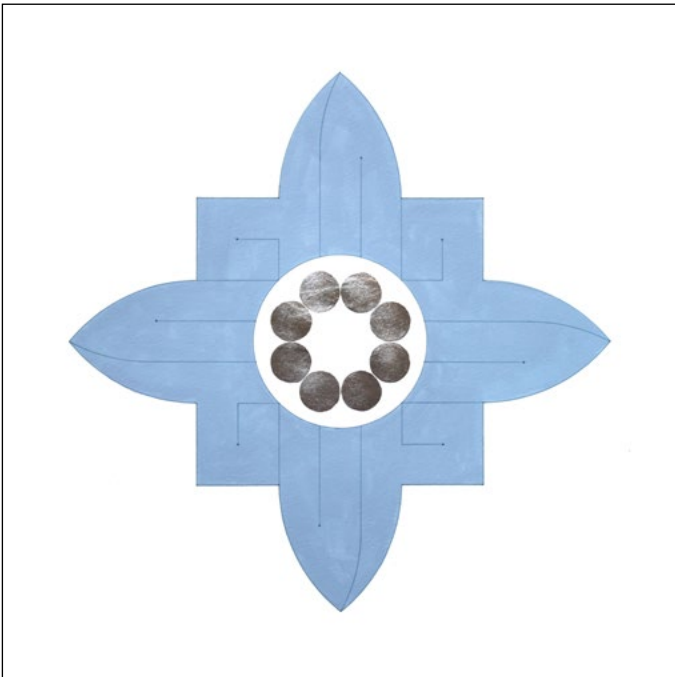
Please note this piece is made up of 16 pieces measuring 48x48cm each. This makes it simple to ship but they need to be mounted or framed before the piece can be hung.



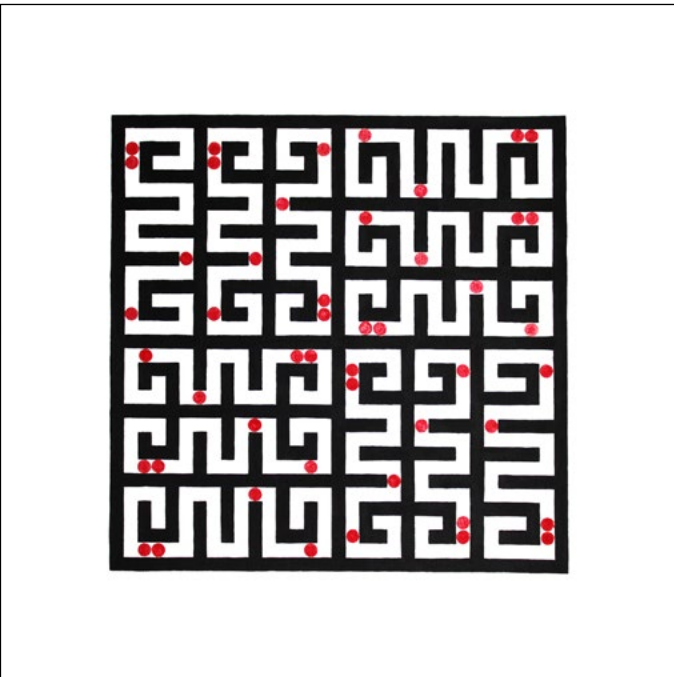
Early works (2011-2013) in acrylic or watercolour with metal leaf on paper, 50x50.



Dread £500 رهبة



Sorrow £400 حزن



Jinn £500 جنّ



Poverty of the Heart £400 فقر