

Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh Love is a Difficult Blue

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Palimpsest

An interview by Brett Littman
with Ghada Amer and
Reza Farkhondeh

This collaborative interview between Brett Littman, Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh was conducted in their studio in Harlem, NY on November 16th, 2017. Each participant contributed questions that they wanted to ask to each other on index cards, all of the cards were shuffled together and then randomly chosen by each participant.





Question by BL, for GA and RF, Card read by RF:

There is a word called palimpsest. The definition is: a manuscript or piece of writing material on which the original writing has been effaced to make room for later writing but of which traces remain or something reused. A secondary definition is something that has been altered that still bears visible traces of its earlier form.

I think this new work could be defined by this term. What do you think about that word and do you feel it would be an accurate description of what you are doing?

Reza Farkhondeh: I think it's a great question and definitely related to the new drawings we are showing at Goodman Gallery. Part of these drawings are made on the used pellon on which we have been making paper a few months ago; some of them bear marks from earlier works done by printers and other artists. In a way, we have effaced or added new marks to these pellons during the process of papermaking and later by directly drawing on them. What I like about this new body of works is that we are highlighting the organic memory embedded in the pellon and adding other layers of drawing on them. This process went on to set off some new thoughts about drawing per say in my practice. It went on to initiate more reflection upon the idea of layering in painting that I have been working on for sometime now. This process brought me more of meditative approach to my whole artistic activities. It would have been very different if I were to work on a blank pellon or a blank paper. There is this omnipresence of almost every line and color that make me more conscious about my own process.

Brett Littman: Well to me the interesting thing about the word palimpsest is that it presupposes an already existing history. Graffiti on walls naturally has that kind of sensibility. Sometimes text has this sensibility when there is added commentary. Even architecture or archeology can have this affect when you see buildings on top of buildings on top of buildings. You can never forget the history of the original object and its meaning, but of course as layers are added meaning shifts, changes and re-contextualizes. I thought this word really beautifully defined your approach to use the recycled pellons that had marks from other people.

RF: One thing that just came to my mind is the Hagia Sophia, the mosque in Istanbul, Turkey, that has all of these scratches remaining on the walls ...

Ghada Amer: From when it was a church before it became a mosque.

BL: Exactly. The Temple on the Mount in Jerusalem would also be a kind of architectural palimpsest. You have a temple, a mosque and a church. Each of these religious structures are built or written over each other.

Question by BL for RF and GA, card read by GA:

You have both learned from and pushed the boundaries of printmaking since you started to collaborate and work with master printers. In your assessment, what have been the major takeaways from these interactions?

GA: Well, to be clear, our collaborations began before we stepped foot inside a print shop. In 2004 Reza was a little bit down for some time and was staying in bed making drawings. When he was done with his drawings he would throw them under the bed. I came to check up on him and found all of these beautiful drawings under the bed. To encourage him and cheer him up I told him, “Why don’t you continue to make these drawings?” Then he told me, “No, I don’t want to. Nobody’s interested.” I told him, “Ok if you don’t want them can I take them, they are very inspiring to me.” So, he gave some to me and then I took them to my studio and drew on top of them. This was payback time for me because in the year 2000, uninvited, he painted over my canvasses one day while I was travelling. At first,

I was annoyed at him but then I got excited about what he had done to my painting. Then we started this game where he would make a new mark on my paintings while I was out of the studio that I would continue. I remember talking to some people about our “collaboration” and eventually we were invited to work in a print shop to explore this idea more.

I think that the fact that we really developed our collaboration in a print shop was important. You know, because nobody really “cares” about prints, nobody “cares” about printmakers; it has this own life in this beautiful free zone where you can do whatever you want. You can think without commercial pressures because you don’t really make prints to make money, or at least we don’t.

For me all our early works in print were really a nice way to think about drawing. When I say drawing – I mean mark making – which is how I understand the medium. It’s the marks that you make on the paper either by hand or by a machine, or by whatever tool you have. In the printmaking process, you get the chance to look at your mark each time you are on the press. You have to stop because the ink has to dry and so it has this built-in time lapse that forces you to look at these marks and evaluate what you have done and what you are going to do next. I guess for me this close looking and reflection in the print making process has been the most important takeaway.

RF: When we entered the realm of printmaking, it felt like all of sudden I was swimming in an ocean – which was very different than swimming in the small pool I had created for myself to work on my watercolors. In the print shop so many things can be done, so many mistakes can happen, waves are constantly hitting you and moving you to other places and suddenly you can lose your balance. It is another planet! There are so many things involved. I think print shops opened my eyes to incorporating chance, experimentation and the unknown into my work.

BL: So, Reza you liked the fact that printmaking destabilized you and there were all of these new ways to work. It does seem that this is important because now you seem to be almost like a scientist or an astronaut in the studio going out into the unknown pretty much every day.

GA: Ha, yes Reza is like an astronaut in the studio these days!

RF: Well with the print shop, there are so many options or directions for the works to choose that can overwhelmingly surprise you. Like a bear waiting in the upstream river for Salmon to come. Printshops easily challenge your “knowledge”, your “savoir fair”. You can accept or reject the intervention of the press machine but you know in your heart that there are real reasons for everything that happens on paper. Today I feel much more fearless in taking risks – which is definitely not how I felt when we started.

Question by BL for Ghada, card read by Reza:

When was the first time you incorporated thread into your work? Why did you decide to do that?

GA: The first time I incorporated thread in my work was in 1991. When I came out of art school in the South of France I somehow had this idea drilled into me that women were not allowed to paint? I had been searching during my studies in art history books for female painters and couldn’t find any. In the art school I attended from 1984 to 1989, women were not allowed to take painting classes – only men could. If we wanted to take the class or we wanted to know about painting, we had to ask the male students who were in the class. Lastly, painting was in a real crisis in France in the 1980s – and the only people who were using that medium were a small sub-group of men who were working often very conceptually. So, the only thing that I could do was to draw but I wanted to paint. In 1986, on my third year of school I left for America for a summer and a fall semester in Boston at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. There I discovered a lot of female contemporary artists like Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger and Rosemarie Trokel. I was delighted but still was not allowed in painting class.

This is how I had decided that painting was a man’s world and in order for me to paint that I would need to come up with my own technique – which was using a traditional woman’s technique of sewing because by sewing instead of using the brushes I would relay the message each time that I would make a painting that women have been erased from art history. It has taken me 20 years to develop this idea as a form of painting/revolt – but this is how it started – really from this negative idea and frustration that women cannot paint.

RZ: Ghada has a really early work, maybe the first one she did with thread, called Five Women at Work from 1991.

GA: It’s a quadriptych where I sewed one woman cleaning, the second at the supermarket, the third one cooking, the fourth one taking care of a child and the fifth woman is I embroidering them, a woman artist. I guess this was kind of my big statement about all of this frustration and a self-portrait as well.

BL: Through this process though, do you feel that you’ve lost a little bit of the sense of immediacy that you used to have of just simply putting a watercolor on a paper?

RZ: Well when you are working outside of the studio with other people things are different. You have to be more responsive. I think the way that we keep the immediacy in our work is through monotypes. Of course, there is still a time gap between starting and finishing a monotype that is different than making a watercolor but with monotypes we just try and jump into the project without a sense of pre-determination so it has the feeling of being immediate.

GA: Reza, to follow up on this idea there is a question that I asked you a while back that you never answered about why you made stencils for our recent project?

RZ: Ok I will tell you now. You know if I wanted to make a proper stencil I would have made stamp. But I wanted to use watercolor in the stencil to create the form – which in many ways is not the right medium to use with this tool. I wanted the liquid watercolor to bleed and bloom on the paper under the stencil.

GA: I see - you wanted to undermine and destroy the idea of the stencil.

RZ: Exactly, right.

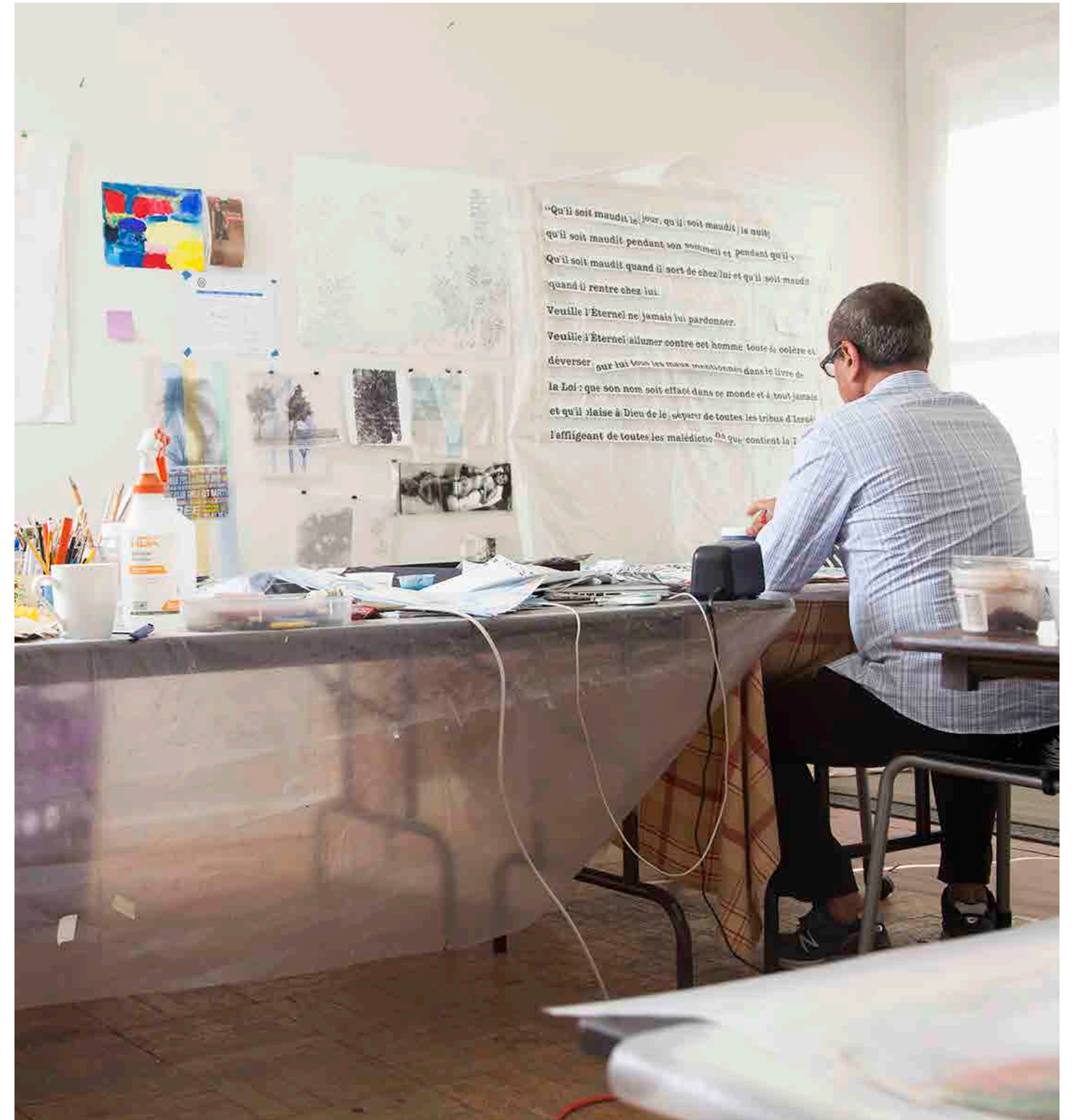


Question by GA for Brett, card read by GA:

What are the criteria to show at The Drawing Center?

BL: Well I think that's actually a good question and obviously something I've given a lot of thought about. I don't think that my goal as the director of The Drawing Center is to show what I would describe as "great" drawings. I think The Frick and Morgan and the MET are more invested in the idea of presenting great drawings. For us, when we put together a show, I think there are a couple of criteria. First and foremost is we are interested how drawing has changed the way that artists think about their work. Secondly, I am interested in how drawing operates for practitioners of drawing who may be known for something else like: graphic design, theater, music, architecture, and natural science etc. Recently we have really started to think of the practical applications of drawing as a way of effecting social change. We will launch some new programs next year that deal directly with this.

I view The Drawing Center more like a think tank rather an institution that participating in some kind of teleological understanding of drawing in art history. We ask a question, is this thing a drawing? There are three answers: yes, no and maybe. Even when the answer is maybe and no, I still may want to show it, because also it's about where does the boundary of drawing end.



Question by BL for RF, card read by Brett:

You draw a lot of flowers and plants. Why did you start to do that and what is the meaning of these images in your work?

RF: As for the meaning of these images in my work, they come in as a layer of imagery that is a part of my “Broken Landscapes”. “Broken” literally and conceptually as if they were heading to nothingness, to extinction. It seems that since my ‘Made in China’ series of oil paintings, I tend to like things that are thrown away, have little or no values, like green lands that are sold out for cheap to make room for bare lands to build something on it, deforestation and extinction of wildlife are examples of my “Broken Landscape”, broken promises of politicians are another example of socially “Broken Landscapes” the faith of precursors of Enlightenments, individuals such as Giordano Bruno, Galileo Galilei, Margaret Cavendish, Baruch Spinoza; the repression of women and injustice are some other aspects of my contemporary landscapes.

Before I started to make drawing of plants and flowers, I was making oil paintings of 99-cent objects, “Made-in-China”, in the 1990s, you know the kind of really cheap things that you find in stores that are such as Dollar Shop, and Dollar Tree. After doing this for a while, I started to struggle with what I wanted to do next and that caused me a kind of a depression. I remember while making the last 99-cent painting I was listening to Serge Gainsbourg songs and crying all the time. I couldn’t figure what was going on inside me and why I felt that way I did. So, I stopped painting and ended up making videos and event audited some classes at NYU in theater and performance to get away from painting. I was very self-critical during this period and was asking a lot of questions about where my work was going and didn’t really feel I could continue without having a definitive concept behind my work. I guess what broke me out of this self-doubting period was when I painted some on Ghada’s canvas in 2000. Later on I began to paint landscape and sometimes with masking tape and other motifs such as flowers and trees.

I think that the idea of painting nature freed me from the idea of the concept. It felt like something that was tied to the “old time” in history and as well an image that was universal. It relaxed me.

As I began to slowly develop these images. I was able to experiment with different techniques (such as water color and acrylic) that didn’t take a lot of energy during my depression and that horrible lack of energy. I could use masking tape to make trees and flowers on paper with watercolor or acrylic washes. The directness of collage elements was very refreshing for me and really helped me to get into a better place artistically and emotionally.

BL: It seems to me, from what you’ve just described is that drawing botanical images was a way out of a psychological maze. It also freed you from having to worry about whether or not your work had meaning in a more conceptual way.

RZ: Yes! I would call these works a collection of Broken Landscapes. They question both changes in the social world, in the environment and in one’s or my own mind.

As for how these images relate to our collaborations – I did think of nature in relationship to Ghada’s women. It is not that I related flowers to women directly but I thought about the fact that women perpetuate life and that nature in its pure form is perpetual evolution of life forms, in permanent creation and re-generation. Nature as well perpetuates life.

GA: For me Reza’s flowers and plants are a kind of self-portrait or internal landscape – they reflect his emotions, the world at large and other external factors on any given day.

RF: You both went to the same art school in France. What kind of influence did that have on you?

GA: We met in 1988, in Nice, France in Art school. At that time, there were no other people studying art that looked like me. Maybe there was one Chinese student and a Japanese teacher but everybody else was from France or other European countries and more specifically from that region in France. I was immersed in Western Art history and thought that this was the only form of art that existed. Things like calligraphy, tiles or textiles from the Arab world were considered decoration.

In my last year at this school – which was a five-year program – there were two new students accepted at the third-year level. It was very rare for this to happen as the school was very competitive and it had a difficult entry exam, and really nobody was coming there from outside. We all wondered who these new students were who could enter the school without having to queue like we did. One was Reza Farkhondeh the other was Yvan Mispelaere, who went on to be a great designer.

When I first saw Reza at school I was shocked. I was like, “Oh my God. He looks like me and he’s interested in art and he is from the Middle East.” So of course, I wanted to talk to him and get to know him. Over the next two years we ended up talking about a lot of very important things that only we could understand - since our position was one of being outsiders in the south of France in a Western culture.

RZ: I went to France in 1984 from Iran because of the Cultural Revolution that had already begun. The universities had been shut down and if you wanted to learn, you had to leave. In my first year in France I took classes at night to prepare a new portfolio. A year later while in the art school, I remember in one class we saw the famous image of man in the center of the Renaissance by Da Vinci – you know the one of the naked man with his arms outstretched. I was shocked to see that his genitals were exposed – there was no fig leaf to cover him. This image prompted a lot questions for me and really forced me to understand how I would deal with this new culture.

When I went to Nice and met Ghada we started to have very profound discussions about what is the place for artists like us that come from countries and traditions that are outside of Western art history. We would talk about why a great African mask would only be considered a folkloric object – not a work of art – but when Picasso uses the image it becomes art. This then led us to questions about whether or not we should go and make carpets or tiles.

I think our shared experience in Nice definitely had an impact on us. We have spent many years talking to each other and looking and critiquing each other’s work. Maybe our collaborations really began all the way back then.

BL: I can only imagine that finding each other in Nice in the 1980s was a very important formative moment for both of you.

I did want to ask if you studied surrealism and had seen exquisite corpse drawings when you were in school?

GA: Yes, absolutely. We studied this and we loved this, and since these things were originated in France it was very much part of our curriculum. Maybe studying these things made us open to the idea of blurring authorship and later even blurring genders. It is important to me that I don’t get pigeonholed as only a female artist. In our collaborative works we sign the pieces together – so it is not about being a man or women. It proves to me that art is not only about gender.



Question by Brett for RH and GA, read by GA:

Given the complicated, and in my opinion the terrible state of world politics, environmental conditions and the refugee crises – how does what is going on in the outside world effect your work?

GA: Well we both are news junkies and in particular Reza. I am emotionally moved by a lot of things but I can honestly say that it does not affect the way I make work or my images. But for example, during the Arab Spring uprising in Egypt, I stopped working for about a year.

BL: Really you totally stopped working?

RF: Yes, she even had trouble sleeping.

GA: I found my own work very irrelevant and I had no inspiration during this time.

BL: From my vantage point it seems that the new body of work on the pellons are reacting to current events. The fact that you are making work from recycled materials that are dirty or pre-marked may be reflecting something about the energy of the state of the world that we live in.

GA: Well, I wanted to only work on the pristine pellons at first. I could see more clearly what I was doing. But later when I started to work on the used pellons I started to find them very beautiful.

RF: Maybe the marks and dirt and mistakes that were on the used pellons are a way of expressing some kind of personal disenchantment with the world. But for me, it is always the titles of the work that more directly relate to my personal states. The title of this exhibition is “Love is a difficult blue”, a reference to a song by French singer and song writer Alain Souchon who in one of his woks entitled “L’amour à la machine” writes: “Matisse, l’amour c’est bleu difficile”.

It is about the fading of original colors of love and by pure coincidence we found that we can wash pellons but we cannot get back the vibrant colors of origin! C’est la vie”

Question by Brett for RH and GA, read by GA:

At what point in your collaborations did you start making each other’s imagery? Is it interesting to you that the viewer knows who drew the flowers or woman in any given work? Are there telltale signs that would help someone discern who drew what?

GA: I can say that half of the time I draw his flowers and half the time he draws my women. I love having the freedom to draw his flowers and not be responsible for the women.

We of course, have very different way of working and drawing and you can tell who made what if you know us. For me, it doesn’t matter if the viewer can figure this out. But it is very important for the viewer to know that we are producing each other’s imagery all of the time. This is one of the interesting aspects of our collaboration for me.

RF: I think Ghada is more into lines and contours and when I trace her drawing my hand shakes and my line is very different from Ghada's line.

GA: I love it when his hand trembles. He doesn't like it but I do. For some works I tell my assistant to exactly follow his trembling line when she stitches because it adds a very beautiful element to the work.

As well, I am envious of his freedom when he paints. He's not scared at all of paint. For me painting is very challenging. Our collaboration teaches me to be more fearless as I try to think like him when I paint.

Also, when Reza draws, he draws the values. I don't see values, I see lines.

BL: That is a nice way of describing the difference in your approaches to making drawings.





Question by BL for GA, card read by BL:

I wanted to ask Ghada is about the choice of types of women in your work? You use highly sexually charged images, often women pleasuring themselves. The women often seem white. How did you come to decide that these images would form the basis of your visual lexicon?

GA: If I painted a black woman or an Arab or Asian women, people would think that these groups of people are oppressed. In the west, the “other” has no real importance. So, I have deliberately chosen to represent “white women” as a universal stand in for “all women.” It is my experience when I do this I subvert expectations and force the viewer to realize these women are not “others” but rather images of themselves and thus they are not so inconsequential to their own existence.

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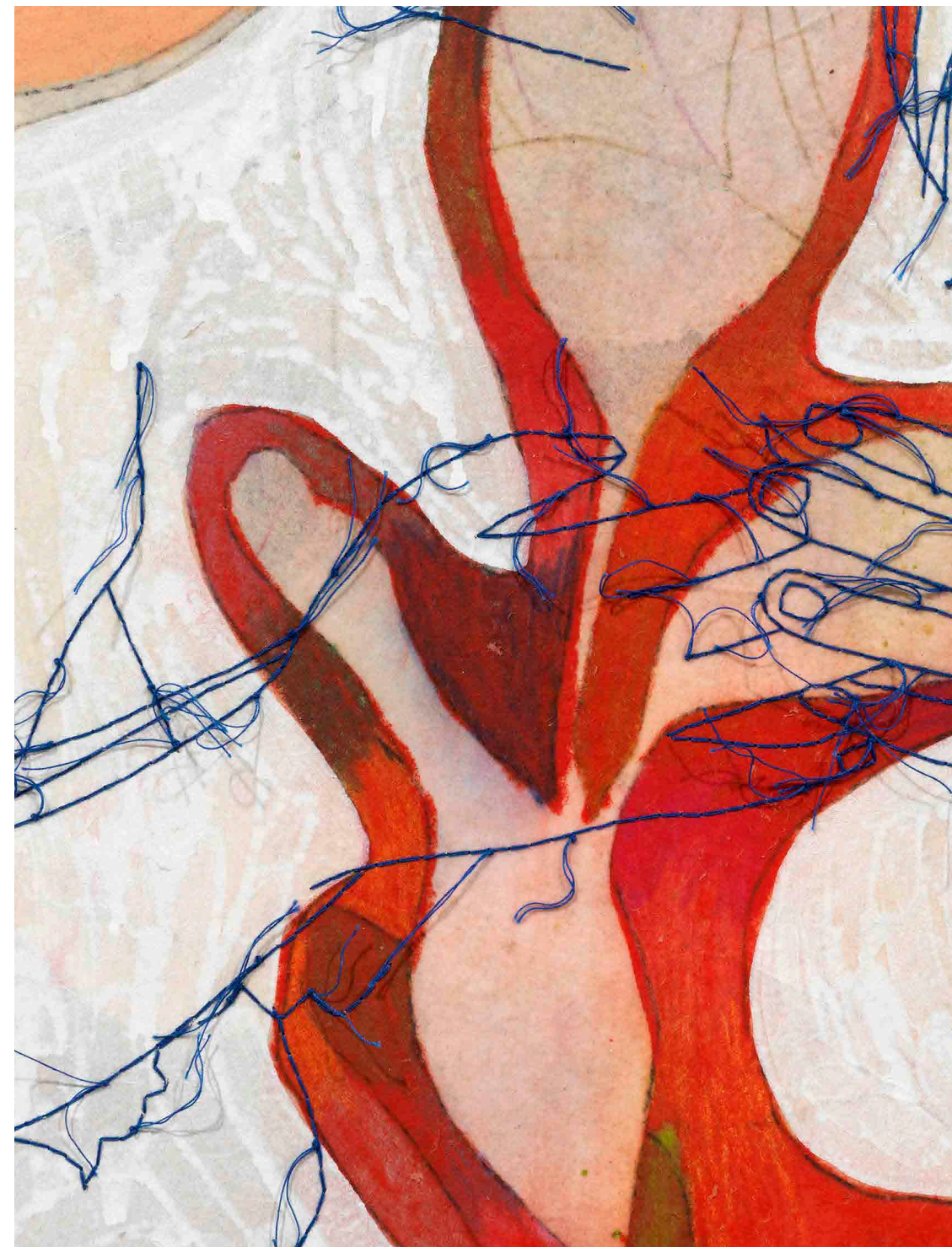
Question by GA for BL, card read by GA:

Why do you like drawings?

BL: Okay, well, that is a good last question.

The things I like about drawing tend towards some of the mediums deconstructive tendencies. The fact that drawings tend to be provisional and incomplete. The fact that doodles, sketches and notations can be considered drawings are interesting to me. I also believe drawings is a universal activity - maybe the only art form that everyone can do and most disciplines can use to visual information. Lastly, it is a platform in which one can really understand the human mark, and the human mark doesn't necessarily have to be on paper, it can be a line in space, it can be a sound, a glaze on ceramics or a print of a hand on a cave wall.

Love is a Difficult Blue



Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
MADAME DE POMPADOUR (WORKING TITLE),
 2017, Acrylic, gesso and embroidery on
 pellon, 65.7 x 52.7 cm



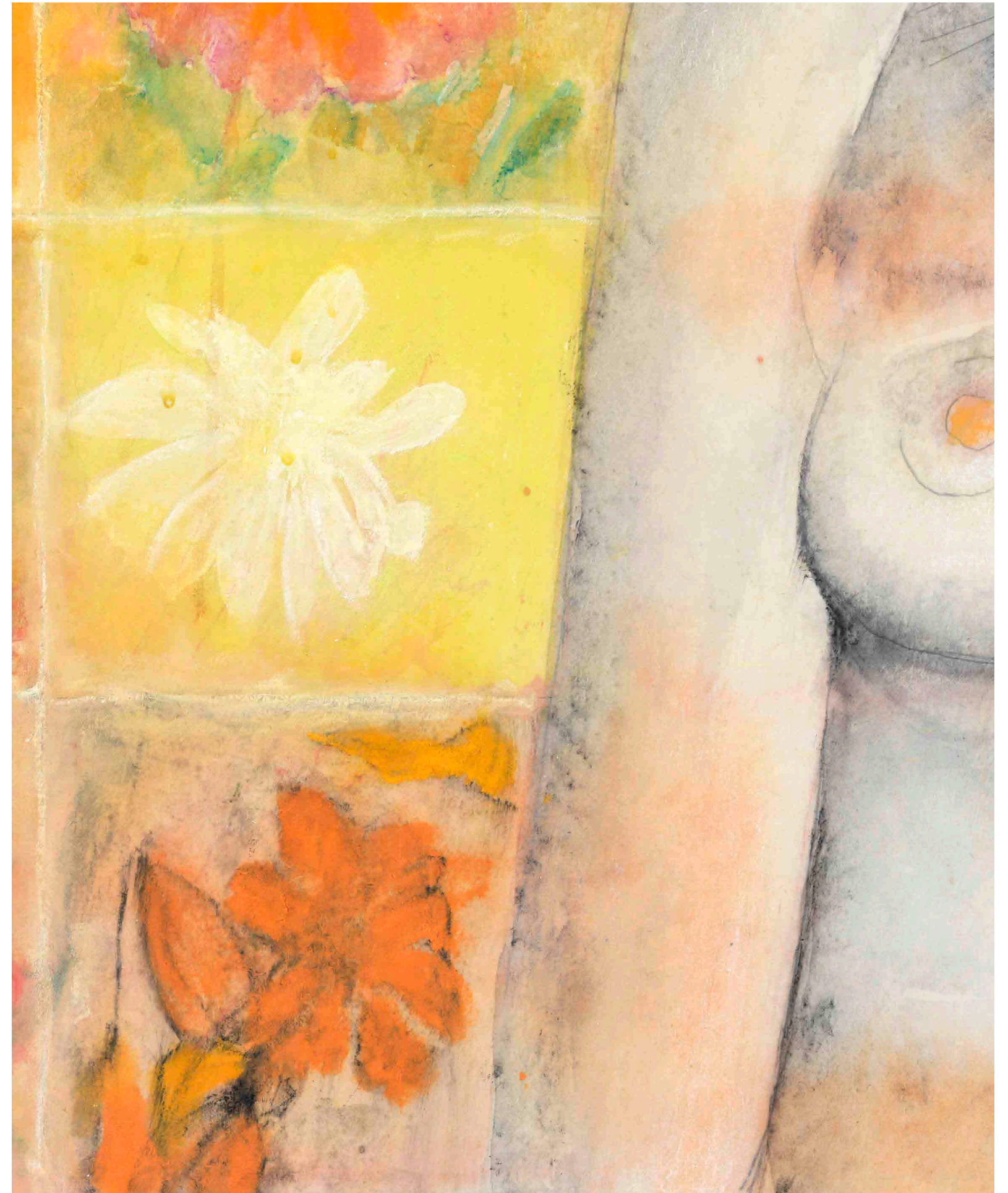
Left: Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
 PORTRAIT OF TALLULAH BLACK (PROSTITUTE
 OF LITTLE CITY) (Detail), 2017, Acrylic,
 colored pencil and watercolor on pella,
 83.2 x 63.5 cm
 Right: Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
 TO BE TITLED (Detail), 2017, Acrylic, ink,
 watercolor, embroidery and fabric on paper,
 57.2 x 75.9 cm

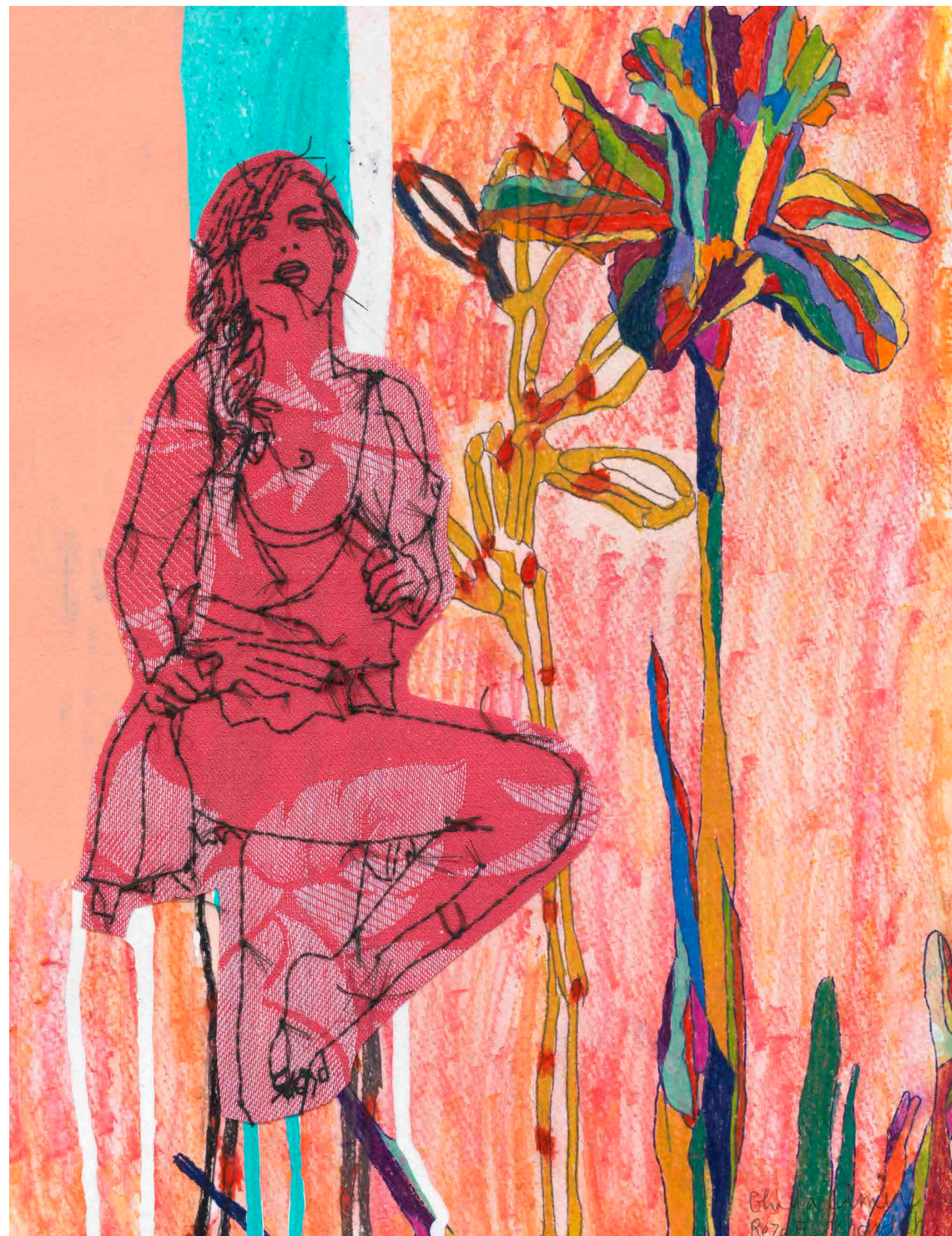




Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
*MEDITATION OF ESTHER (PRINCESS OF
 PERSIA)*, 2017, Watercolor and pencil on
 peltan, 101.6 x 121.9 cm

Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
*MADAM DE POMPADURE (CHIEF MISTRESS OF
 LOUIS XV AND PATRON OF ARTS)*, 2017,
 Pencil, chalk and watercolor on pellaon,
 95.3 x 116.8 cm





Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
TO BE TITLED, 2017, Pencil, watercolor
 and embroidery on paper, 38.1 x 27.9 cm

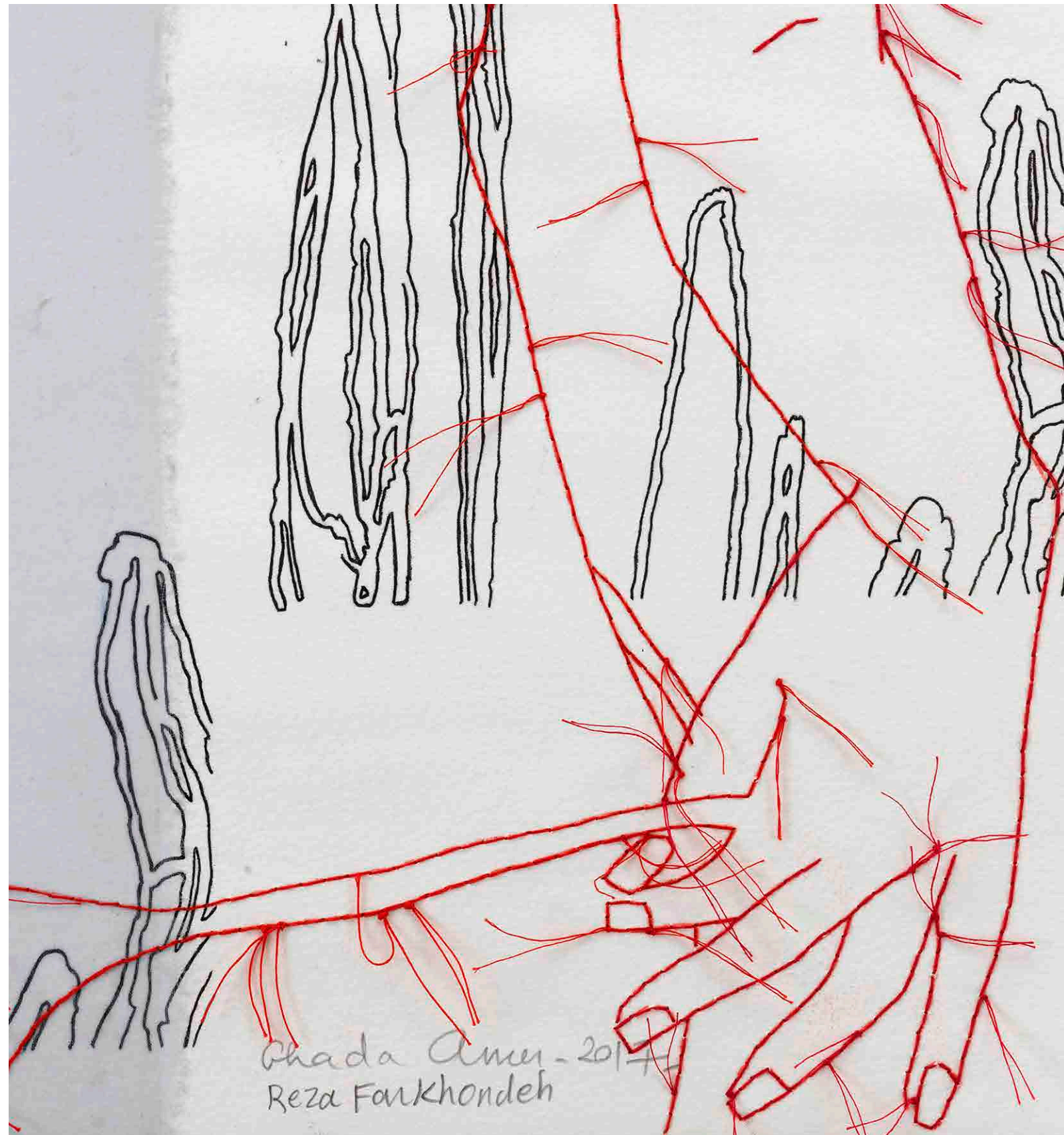


Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
TO BE TITLED, 2017, Pencil, watercolor
 and embroidery on paper, 38.1 x 27.9 cm

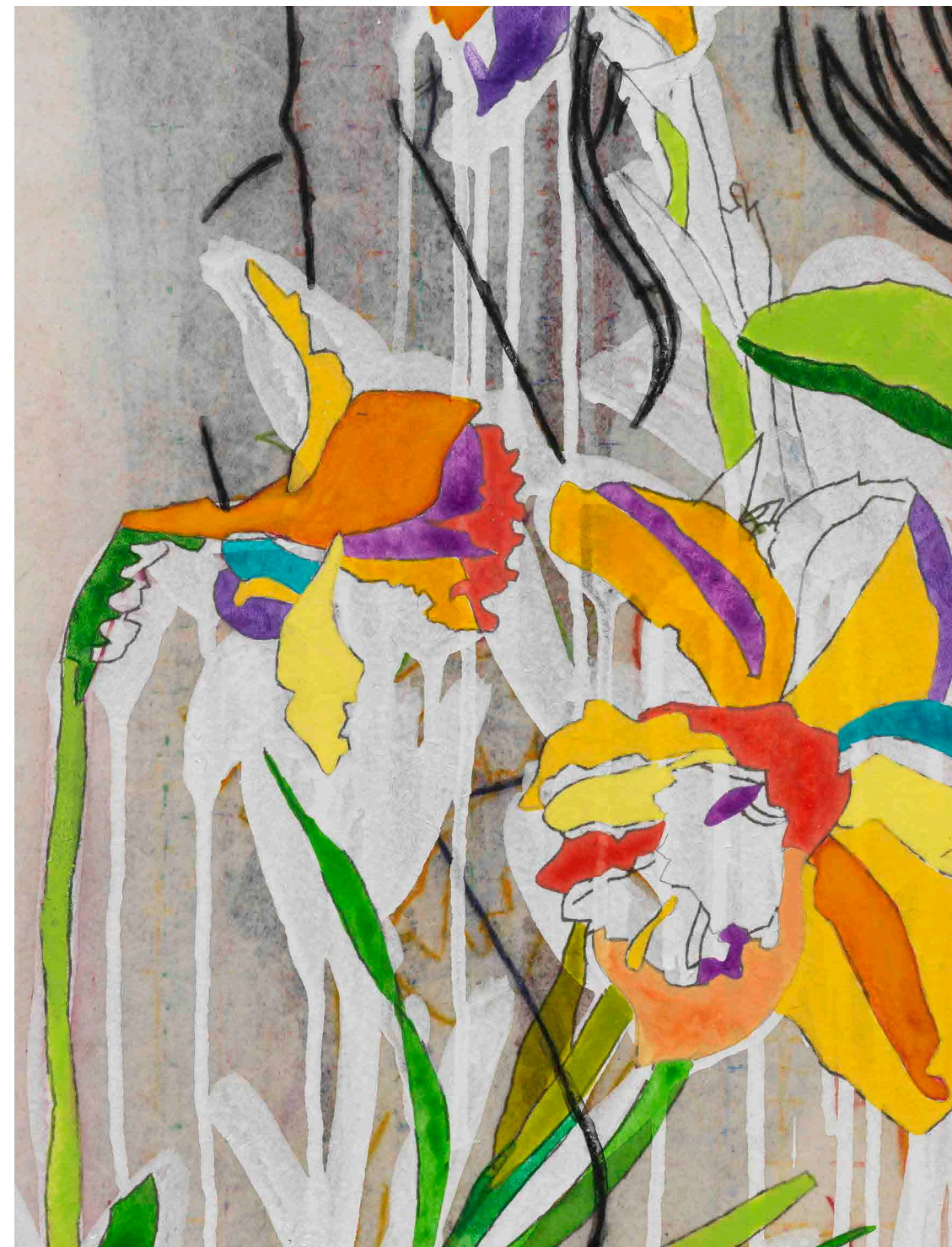


Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
BLUE WINDOW (WORKING TITLE), 2017,
 Ink, acrylic, fabric and embroidery
 on paper, 55.9 x 75.6 cm

Ghada Amer - 2017
 Reza Farkhondeh

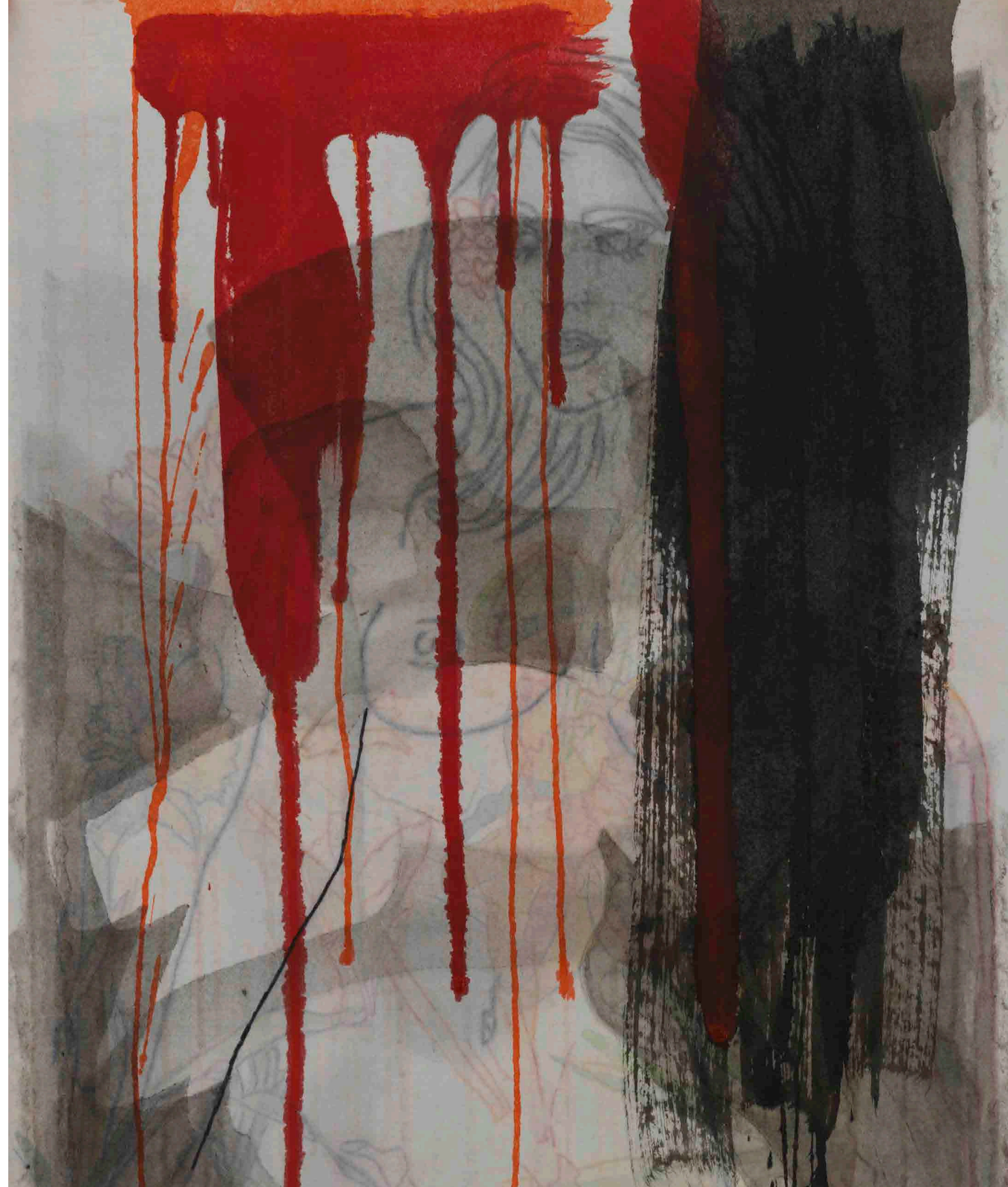


Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
BLUE WINDOW (WORKING TITLE) (Detail),
2017, Ink, acrylic, fabric and embroidery
on paper, 55.9 x 75.6 cm



Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
LUST IN DREAM (WORKING TITLE), 2017,
 Pencil and acrylic on vellum,
 65.7 x 52.4 cm

Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
LUST IN DREAM (WORKING TITLE)(Back),
2017,
Pencil and acrylic on pelton,
65.7 x 52.4 cm





Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
MY BLOOD, MY DECISION, 2017,
 Ink, watercolor and pencil on paper,
 86.4 x 65.4 cm



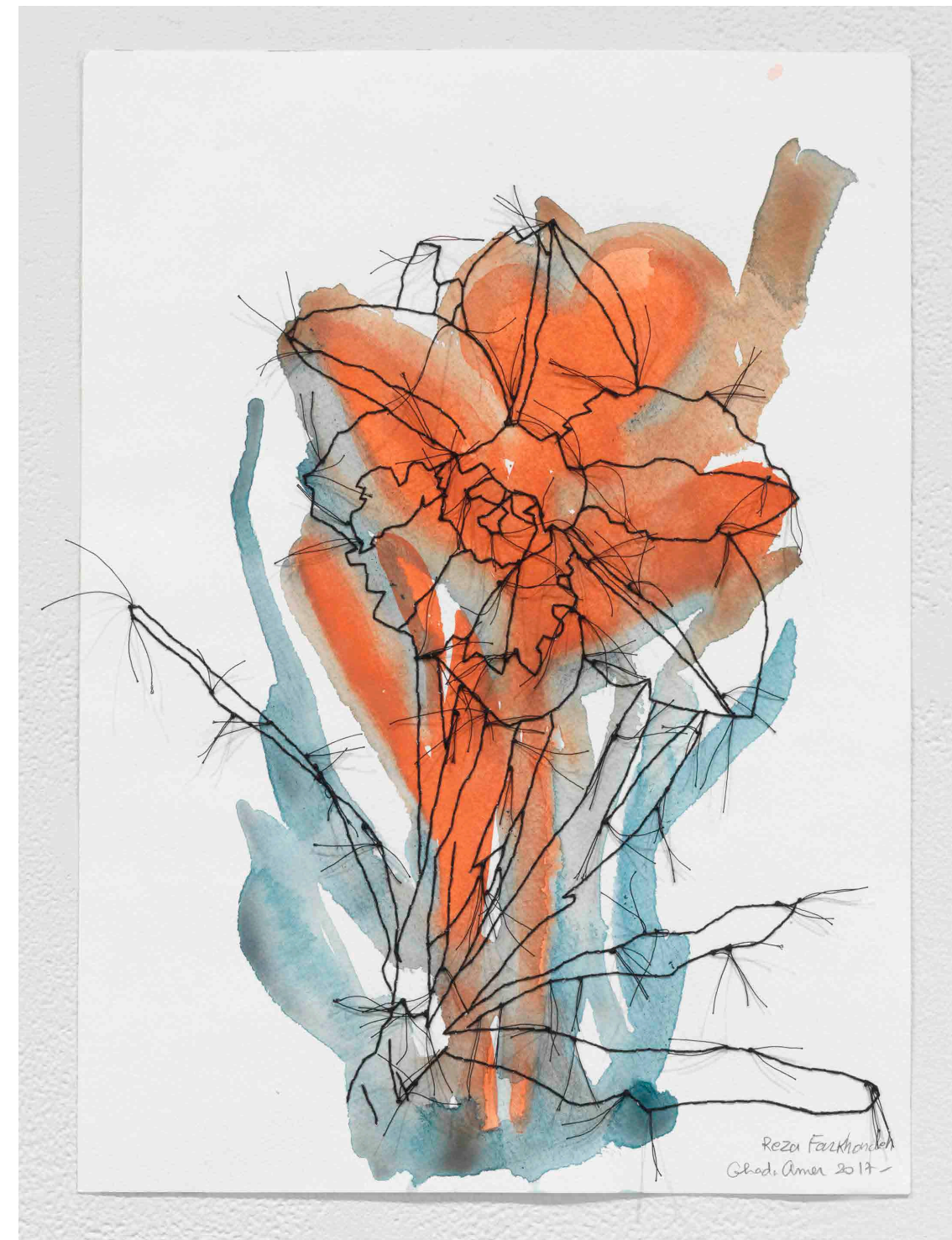
Previous: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer, *THIS MOMENT IS ALL THERE IS (WORKING TITLE)*, 2017, Watercolor, color pencil, oil pastel and embroidery on paper, 57.2 x 75.6 cm

Right: Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh, *COLOR MODEL (WORKING TITLE)*, 2017, Ink, color pencil and embroidery on paper, 75.6 x 57.2 cm





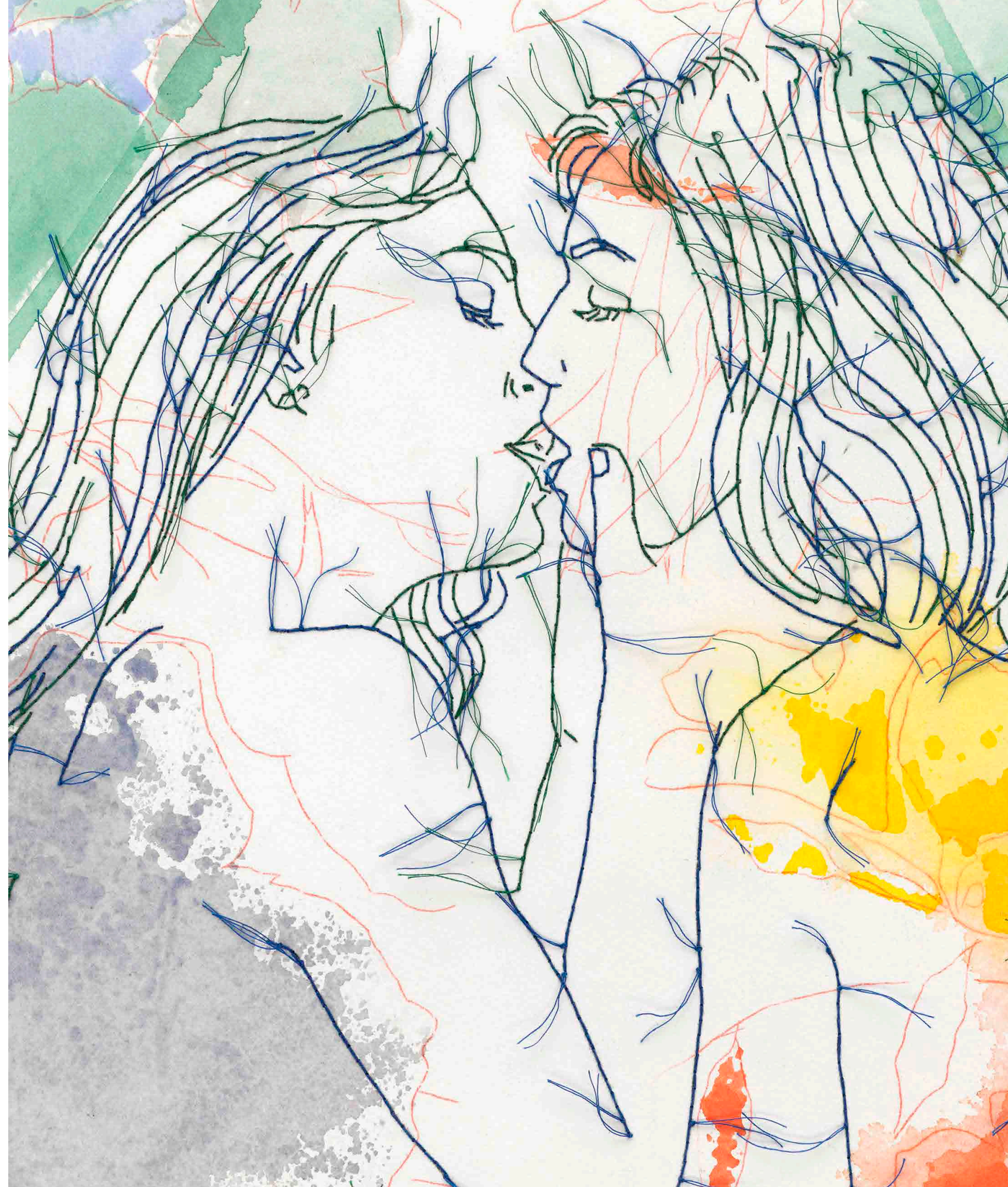
Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
COLOR MODEL (WORKING TITLE) (Detail),
 2017, Ink, color pencil and embroidery
 on paper, 75.6 x 57.2 cm



Left: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
TO BE TITLED, 2017, Pencil, watercolor
 and embroidery on paper, 38.1 x 27.9 cm
 Right: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
NUDE INSIDE YELLOW, 2017, Acrylic, pencil
 and tape on pellow, 75.9 x 56.5 cm



Left: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
LIGHTNESS, 2017, Watercolor and embroidery
 on paper, 75.9 x 57.5 cm
 Right: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
ANGEL'S HUT (Detail), 2017, Ink,
 watercolor, red carbon and embroidery on
 paper, 75.9 x 56.5 cm







Left: Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh, *THE GIRL WITH RED TATTOO (WORKING TITLE)* (Detail), 2017, India ink, ink and embroidery on paper, 101.6 x 66 cm
 Following: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer, *GREY, PINK, YELLOW AND RED (WORKING TITLE)*, 2017, Watercolor and embroidery on paper, 50.8 x 66 cm





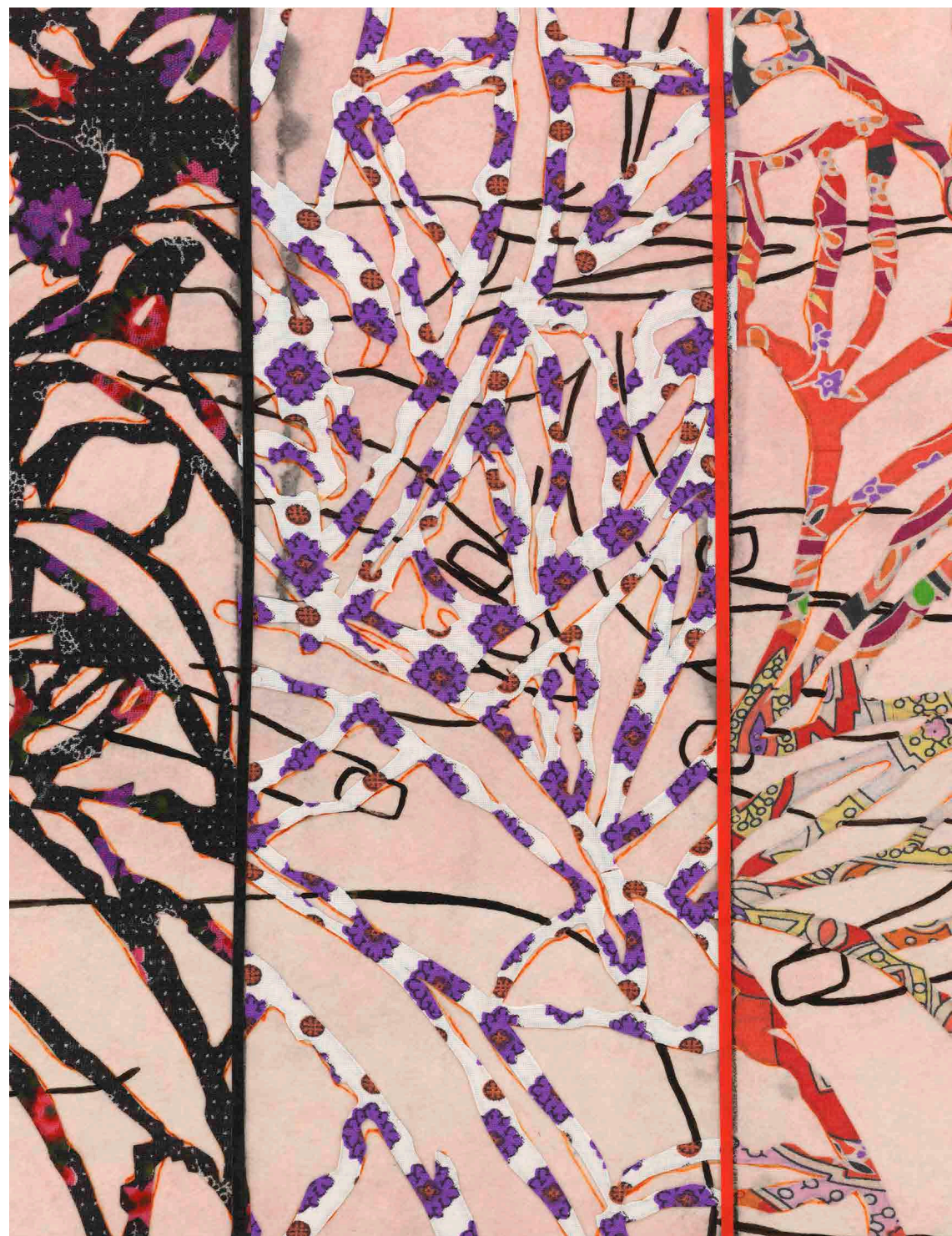


Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
SMALL OLYMPIA (WORKING TITLE), 2017,
 Watercolor, kozo paper, and embroidery on
 paper, 33 x 43.2 cm



Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
LARA'S DYPTIC (WORKING TITLE), 2017,
 Acrylic, tape, fabric on peltan, 98.4 x
 118.7 cm

Ghada Amer 2017
 Reza Farkhondeh



Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
LARA'S DYPTIC (WORKING TITLE) (Detail),
 2017, Acrylic, tape, fabric on pellaon,
 98.4 x 118.7 cm
 Following: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
TO BE TITLED (Detail), 2017, Acrylic, tape
 and colored pencil on pellaon, 90.2 x 109.2 cm





Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
FIGURE WITH 3 FLOWERS (WORKING TITLE),
 2017, Acrylic on pellow, 114.6 x 97.2 cm
 Following: Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
FIGURE WITH 3 FLOWERS (WORKING TITLE)
 (Detail), 2017, Acrylic on pellow,
 114.6 x 97.2 cm







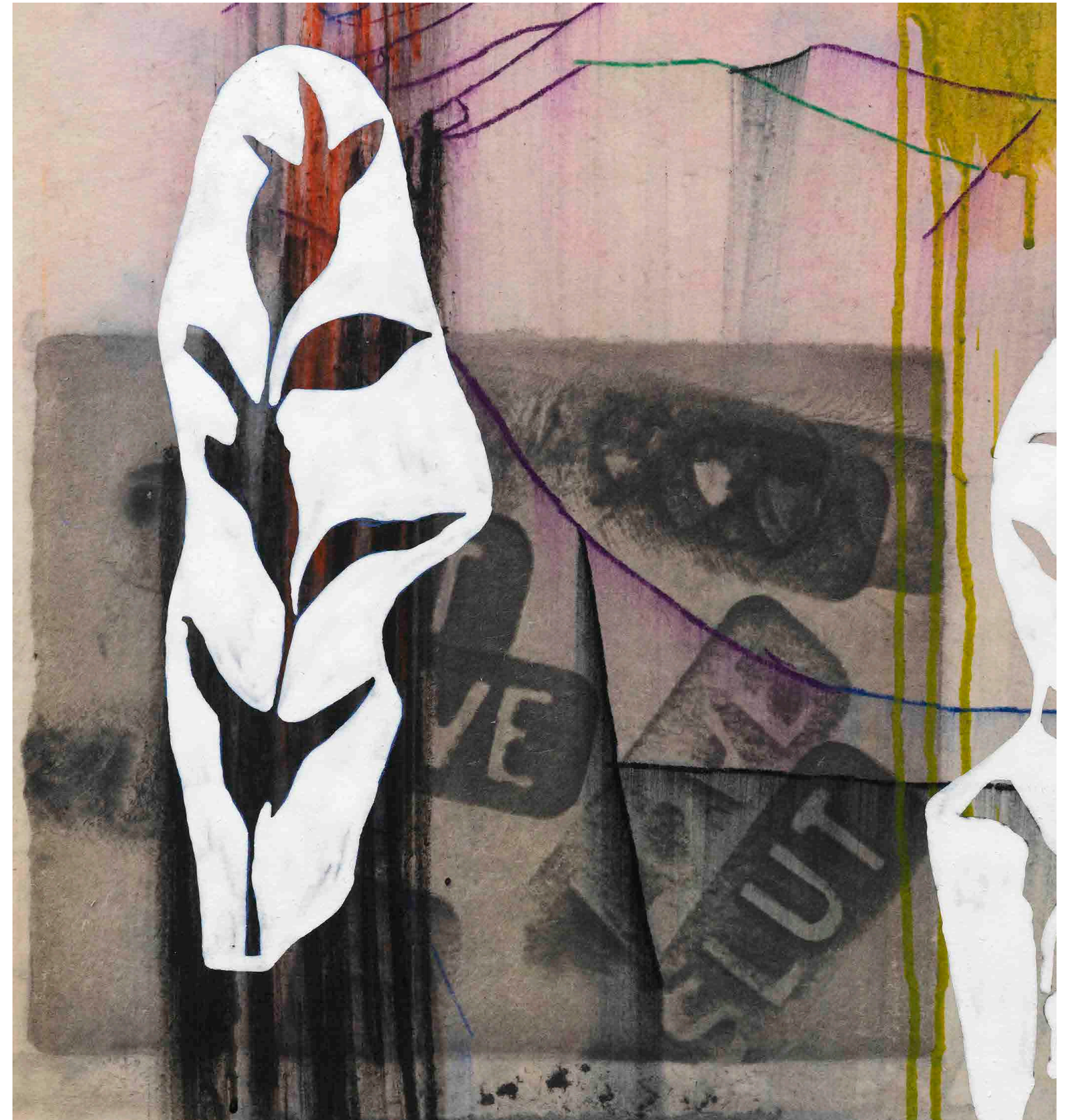
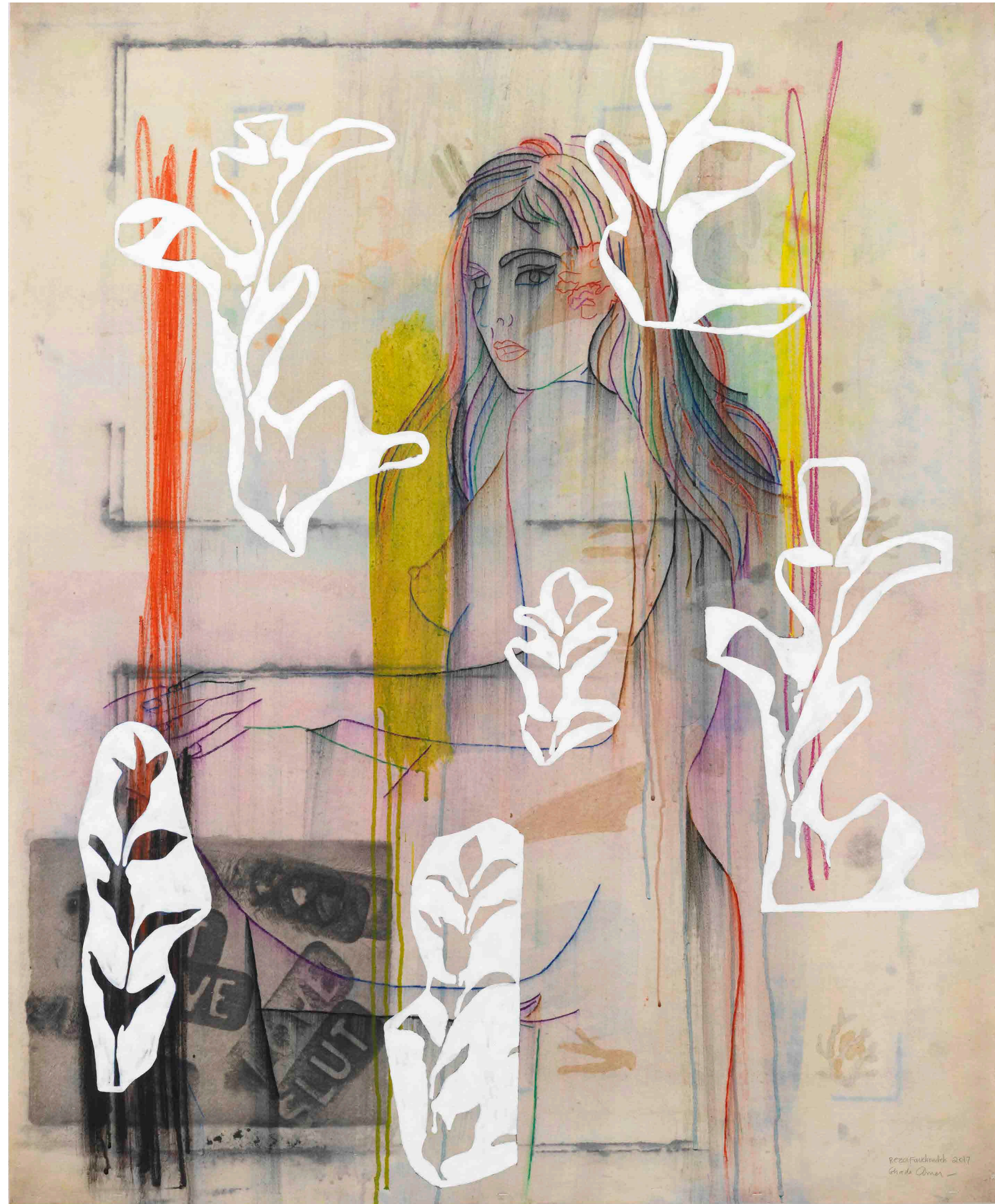
Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
DISARRAY OF EMMA BOVARY, 2017, Acrylic
 and pencil on pella, 97.8 x 117.5 cm



Left: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
TO BE TITLED, 2017, Watercolor, ink and
embroidery on paper, 75.9 x 57.2 cm

Right: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
TO BE TITLED, 2017, Pencil, watercolor and
embroidery on paper, 38.1 x 27.9 cm





Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
LOVE, WHITE, SLUT (WORKING TITLE), 2017,
Acrylic, water soluble crayon on pellon,
119.4 x 97.2 cm



Left: Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF MADAME BOVARY
 (WORKING TITLE), 2017, Ink, watercolor,
 silk and embroidery on paper, 75.9 x 57.2 cm
 Right: Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh,
TO BE TITLED, 2017, Watercolor and
 embroidery on paper, 75.9 x 57.2 cm





Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer,
 FLOWER POT AND THE MODEL
 (WORKING TITLE), 2017,
 India ink, color pencil, watercolor
 and embroidery on paper,
 66.7 x 101.6 cm

Collaborative Biography

Reza Farkhondeh,
American (born Iran)

Lives and works in New York
and Paris

Education:

- 1993 Institut des Hautes Etudes en
Arts Plastiques, Paris, France.
- 1991 MFA in Video and Short Films,
Villa Arson, Nice, France.
- 1988 BFA in Painting, Beaux-Arts
de Dijon, Dijon, France.
- 1980 B.A. in Economy.

Ghada Amer,
American (born Egypt)

Lives and works in New York
and Paris

Education:

- 1991 Institut des Hautes Etudes en
Arts Plastiques, Paris, France.
- 1989 MFA in Painting, Villa Arson,
Nice, France.
- 1987 School of the Museum of Fine
Arts, Boston, MA.
- 1986 BFA in Painting, Villa Arson,
Nice, France.

Solo Exhibitions:

2018 *Love is a difficult Blue*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa (Jan 20-March 3, 2018)

2012 *Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh at the M Building*, Miami, FL, USA (Dec 5 - 9, 2012)

2011 *No Romance*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa (Feb 17 - Mar 4, 2011)

2010 *The Gardens Next Door*, Galeria Filomena Soares, Lisbon, Portugal (Sep 16 - Nov 20, 2010)

2009 *Roses Off Limits*, Pace Prints, New York, NY, USA (Apr 16 - Jun 13, 2009)

2008 *A New Collaboration on Paper*, Singapore Tyler Institute, Singapore (Feb 23 – Mar 20, 2008)

2007 *Collaborative Drawings*, Kukje Gallery, Seoul, Korea (Dec 15, 2007 - Jan 13, 2008), travelled to Tina Kim Fine Arts, New York, NY (Mar 14 - Apr 12, 2008)

Indigestible Dessert, Galleria Francesca Minini, Milan, Italy (May 17 - July 28, 2007)

2006 *Paintings & RFGA Drawings* (curated by J. Poodt), The Stedelijk Museum, ‘S-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands (Jul 1 - Nov 12, 2006)

Group Exhibitions: (a selection)

2018 *Une Nouvelle Humanité* (curated by Simon Njami). 13th Biennale of Dakar, Dak’Art, Dakar, Sénégal

(May 3-Jun 2, 2018)

2017 *Uptown* (curated by Deborah Cullen-Morales), Lenfest Center for the Arts, Columbia University, New York, NY (Jun 2-Aug 20, 2017)

2016 *Contemporary Art From Africa and the African Diaspora*, Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, MA, USA (Sep - Dec, 2016)

2014 *Killer Heels* (curated by Lisa Small), Brooklyn Museum, New York, NY, USA (Sep 10 - Feb 15, 2015). Travelling exhibition to: Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque (May 30 - Sep 8, 2015); Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs (Sep 9, 20015 - Mar 1, 2016); Currier Museum of Art, Manchester (May 2, 2016 - Sep 4, 2016).

2013 *Morphology of the Print*, Lehman College Art Gallery, New York, NY, USA (Oct 8, 2013 - Jan 8, 2014)

Earth Matters (curated by Karen E. Milbourne), National Museum for African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, United States (Apr 22, 2013 – Feb 23, 2014)

2012 *The Fertile Crescent: Gender, Art and Society*, (curated by Judith K. Brodsky and Ferris Olin), Bernstein Gallery at Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University, NJ, USA (Aug 27 - Oct 19, 2012)

Prism-Drawings from 1990-2011, (Curated by Gavin Jantjes) Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo, Norway (Mar 2 - Aug 5, 2012)

Advance/Notice, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa (Feb 2 - 25, 2012)

Onde de Choc, Musée d’Art Contemporain de Montréal, Montréal, Canada (Feb 3 - Apr 20, 2012)

2010 *In Context*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa (May 2 - Jul 11, 2010)

All Editions - STPI Survey Show, Singapore Tyler Print Institute, Singapore, Singapore (Jan 16 - Feb 20, 2010)

2009 Print Triennial, The Silvermine Guild Arts Center, New Canaan, CT, USA (Nov 22 - Dec 23, 2009)

2006 *Hot Off The Press*, (curated by Janice Oresman), Grolier Club, New York, NY, USA (Dec 13, 2006 - Feb 3, 2007)

Public Collections:

Israel Museum. Jerusalem, Israel

SCAD Museum of Art

Smith College Museum of Art

The list Art center collection (Brown University)

Books and Catalogues:

2013 Karen E. Milbourne, *Earth Matters: Land as Material and Metaphor in the Arts of Africa*. Ed: The Monacelli Press.

2012 Brodsky, Judith K.; Olin, Ferris. *The Fertile Crescent: Gender, Art and Society*. Ed: Rutgers University Institute for Women and Art.

Prism. Oslo: Nasjonalmuseet for Kunst, Arkitektur og

DesignSchwartz, Jamie; Lewis, Jacob.

Jaime Schwartz, *The Other I: Notes on Collaboration*. New York: Tina Kim Gallery

2011 Rubin Nathan, Nadine. *No Romance*. South Africa: Goodman Gallery.

2010 Antle, Martine. *The Gardens Next Door*. Lisbon, Portugal: Galeria Filomena Soares.

2009 Katz, Vincent. *The Natural World, the Political Context: Collaborative Monoprints by Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh*. New York: Pace Prints

2008 Antle, Martine. *Ghada Amer / Reza Farkhondeh: A New Collaboration on Paper*. Singapore: Singapore Tyler Print Institute.

Farrell, Laurie Ann. *Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh: Collaborative Drawings*. Seoul, Korea: Kukje Gallery.

Sharp, Christopher; Kent, Sarah. *Demons, Yarns & Tales: Tapestry by Contemporary Artists*. Bologna, Italy: Damiani; and London: Banners of Persuasion.

2007 Farrell, Laurie Ann. *“Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh: An Indigestible Dessert.”* Milan: Galleria Francesca Minini.

Articles and Reviews: (a selection)

2011 Jordan, Emma. «No Romance for Theses Artists.» IFor1, Feb 23.

«No Romance at the Goodman Gallery.» www.10and5.com,

Feb 22.

Partridge, Matthew. «No Romance: Reza Farkhondeh and Ghada Amer at Goodman Gallery.» Gauteng Reviews, Artthrob, Feb.

2010 De Guzman, Amanda. «Off to a Retrospective Start.» Business Times, Jan 15.

«Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh’s Collaborative Exploration.» www.huffingtonpost.com, Dec10.

Heyman, Marshall. «Paltrow, Madonna, OHM-tinis and Yoga.» Wall Street Journal, Apr 30.

Morse, Rebecca. «Atoosa Rubenstein’s Flatiron Loft Gets Cover-Worthy Makeover.» The New York Observer, Dec 20.

Rubin Nathan, Nadine.«Creative Symbiosis.» Wanted, Jun.

2009 Alexander, Lily. «Ghada Amer/ Reza Farkhondeh: Roses Off Limits.» Whitewall, Apr 28.

«Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh, *Roses Off Limits*.» Time out New York, Apr 24.

«Ghada Amer, Reza Farkhondeh, *Roses Off Limits*.» Artslant, Apr 17.

«Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh, *Roses Off Limits*.» NY Art Beat, Apr 17.

2008 Bancroft, Shelly; Nesbett, Peter, Sears, Rebecca. “Fifth Annual New Print Review. Art on Paper, Nov-Dec.

Bennett, Olivier. “Hanging Cool.” The Sunday Times, Oct 12.

Chow, Clara. “Lust and Found.” South China Morning, Mar 11.

“Ghada Amer & Reza Frakhondeh.” Art Forum, Mar.

“Ghada Amer / Reza Farkhondeh: A New Collaboration on Paper.” Art Beat, Mar 7-16.

Nayar, Parvathi. “A Creative Partnership.” The Business Times, Feb 29.

Nayar, Parvathi. “Works on Paper.” The Business Times, Feb 22.

“Out of the Darkness and Into the Light.” Lexean Issue 08, pp. 102-103, Mar.

Park, Hyun-Ju. “Brief Art News: Nam-Shin Gwak’s Gaze and Other Briefs.” Financial News, Jan 1.

Shetty, Deepika. “1 Canvas, 2 Artists, Many Layers.” The Straits Times, Feb 27.

Withrow, Joel. “Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh: Collaborative Drawings.” Flavorpilled Events, Mar 14.

2007 “Amer e Frakhondeh: Bush e Blair come Dessert.” Tutto Milano (La Repubblica) May.

Kolesnikov-Jessop, Sonia. “Defusing the Power of Erotic Images.” Herald Tribune International, March 13.

Nayar, Parvathi. “Empowering women through works of art”. The Buisness Times (Singapore). March 16, 2007.

2006 Egan, Maura. “Art Gâteaux.” The New York Times, Dec 3.

