

# AMAR DAWOD

AL-HALLAJ  
AND *THE*  
*TAWASIN*

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AND THE  
TAWASIN

This catalogue is published in conjunction with the *Amar Dawod: Al-Hallaj and The Tawasin* exhibition held at Meem Gallery, Dubai, 3 December 2013 – 20 January 2014.

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# FOREWORD

Writing forewords is never easy, particularly when it is for an exhibition that combines history, philosophy and religion as key sources for the art works presented. In relation to Mansur al-Hallaj and Amar Dawod's work, far better people have come on board to discuss these topics than myself. I will, therefore, leave these areas for them to elaborate on within the content of this catalogue.

This project was born over a glorious dinner I had with Amar back in 2011 during the *Art in Iraq Today* exhibition series, held at Meem Gallery from 2010 to 2011 and curated by Dia Azzawi and myself. Over dinner at my home in Dubai, Amar discussed with me the abstract symbolism contained within the *Kitāb al-Tawāsīn (The Tawāsin)* by al-Hallaj. He explained that the exploration of abstract symbols can be linked to early experiments with abstraction in art, and how the work of al-Hallaj has inspired him since he first came into contact with his writings and ideas, during the mid-1970s when he was a student at the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad. Amar then discussed the idea of basing an exhibition around the abstract symbols from *The Tawāsin*. We reviewed the original translated text and Louis Massignon's studies of al-Hallaj and soon realized that a show would work if Amar executed individual art works based on each chapter of *The Tawāsin* so that each piece in the exhibition relates to different parts of the entire text. Al-Hallaj and Sufi thought have been central to Amar's career as an

artist, and the mixed-media works displayed in *Amar Dawod: Al-Hallaj and The Tawāsin* demonstrate his commitment to this theme.

With the supporting catalogue, we felt that the content should be written by leading art critics, Louai Hamza Abbas and Suhail Sami Nader, who are very well acquainted with Amar Dawod's work, as well one of the most respected authorities on al-Hallaj, Stephen Hirtenstein, senior research fellow of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society. An international association with its headquarters in Oxford, UK, and Berkeley, California, the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society was founded in 1977 to promote a greater understanding of the work of Ibn 'Arabi and his followers. We also received permission to include Aisha Bewley's English translation of the *The Tawāsin*, first published by Diwan Press in 1974. Amar also organized a number of texts, making the supporting publication incredibly rich by way of content. However, the greatest and most important part of the project, in terms of content, is the work of Amar Dawod.

I would like to thank everyone involved in this project for their support, and for making this incredibly important exhibition come to life. Above all my huge thanks goes to Amar for creating such inspiring works and for making this exhibition happen.

Charles Pocock  
Managing Director, Meem Gallery  
Abu Dhabi, 18 November 2013



Sketch, 2010  
China ink and pencil

رسم تحضيري، 2010  
حبر صيني وقلم رصاص

Amar Dawod, Poland, 1983

عمار داود، بولندا، 1983



# AL-HALLAJ AND THE TAWASIN

AMAR DAWOD

## Why al-Hallaj and *The Tawasin* are the focus of this exhibition

Perhaps because he enriched my cultural experience when I lived in Baghdad, I have been markedly influenced by al-Hallaj's teachings since my early years in Iraq in the mid-1970s. It was during this time that my cultural vision crystallized, spanning the scopes of Western thinking, through to Iraqi thought, which we often derived from Baghdadi Sufis and writers' principles.

During that period, many factions waged intellectual debates which never considered Iraq's cultural and civilizational legacy, as their attention was solely focused on attaining authority or government privileges. That is why Iraqi intellectuals should have preserved this heritage originally inherited in their conscience in the midst of today's multicultural world.

Al-Hallaj says (on creating them): 'He has sheltered them under the veil of the name, and so they live; but if He would show them the sciences of His Power, they would faint away; and if He would reveal to them the reality, they would die.'<sup>1</sup>

This is the first excerpt that I heard by al-Hallaj when I was attending an art history lecture at the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad. It was delivered by the late Shakir Hassan Al Said who was introducing his theoretical vision for the contemporary arts of the country. This included:

- The stage of identification with nature; that is, realizing the inherent divine nature.
- Expressing the efficacy of thought (attaining the sciences of cognitive ability).
- And finally, the world's ultimate evanescence (the Truth).

I often wonder, what reunites me with al-Hallaj? It is a difficult dilemma. For me, it is perhaps because of the inherent desire of painters to traverse the self and overcome or deny it in order to completely ascend to where God declares His presence through the signs that have influenced many of the Sufis' minds, including al-Hallaj.

Al-Hallaj said:

Between You and me there is  
an I am that battles with me,  
So take away, by Your Grace, this I am from  
in between.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Hallaj deeply felt the Divine Lordship in everything, as if he was referring to the principle of pantheism, acknowledging that the sky is not merely a place. He said:

What earth is this  
so in want of you  
they rise up on high  
to seek you in heaven?

Look at them staring  
at you right before their eyes,  
unseeing, unseeing, blind.<sup>3</sup>

Like any artist, al-Hallaj's quest was totally focused on examining the reasons of life and creation. He wanted to explore the reasons why he existed. When the human psyche becomes mature through the experience of living in this world, then it marches a journey towards a big space of questions: Who am I? Where am I going? What am I doing here?

While I often disagree with al-Hallaj's ideas, I do understand the problematic position he held and the conflicts he faced. These are issues which artists experience today. The artist's natural inclination to communicate his ideas using an audible, written or visual language that may not always receive the desired positive reception from audiences remains in the present day.

The core foundation of al-Hallaj's Sufi discourse is to find God in the depths of himself first, and then to take the idea of dispensing to new horizons, identifying it with his reductionist and minimalist methodology. The symbolic pilgrimage is an example for which he paid dearly.

The Islamic clergy considered al-Hallaj a misleading heretic and magician, and an outsider to the religious community. In one of his lines, he claimed himself as 'the Truth' ('*Anā al-haq*'). He was accused of preaching against the pilgrimage to Mecca. In reality, his concern was more with the spiritual meaning of Hajj, and he thus 'spoke of the spiritual efficacy and legitimacy of symbolic pilgrimage in one's own home.'<sup>4</sup>

In the end, he was brutally decapitated, and his corpse was burned into ashes that were scattered on the Tigris River from the top of a minaret on the 26 March 309/922.

However, al-Hallaj's conciliatory style and montage-like approach were clearly embodied in his texts. For him, the text is like a harmonized structure in terms of style

and connotation. He perfectly reconciled bombastic simplicity with more enigmatic allusions, which are open for interpretation, along with obscure indications, while including terminology, which were a vital part of the text. He also injected poetry, quotations excerpted from the Holy Qur'an and enigmatic expressions, trying to reflect a charismatic and complicated style.

This unique style has inspired my artistic perspective and its approaches, thus enabling me to rebel against the method and conditions of what is called 'pure painting', in addition to enhancing my ability to focus on my individual style and artistic practice. Today's art should, therefore, open new horizons for interpreting its formal and connotative spheres which are expanding all the time.

Al-Hallaj's intellectual personality was markedly problematic, and many artists and thinkers needed to fully comprehend his ideas and obsessions. He often used enigmatic terminology and connotations, which caused many readers to misunderstand him, a fact that intensified his agony. However, al-Hallaj rejected using a more structured format for his prose – one loaded with bombastic meanings and clear connotations – because his discourse is based on recognizing the inefficacy of the mind to communicate the meaning of gratitude or to acknowledge the truth as an absolute fact, unless the mind adopts an intuitive cognition which freely broadens the scope for understanding and mental comprehension.

Al-Hallaj's problematic personality was more evident because he lived in a time where there were several ideological trends of thought. Thus, some Sunni figures described him as a turbulent Shiite, while some Shiite stood against him because they refused a seemingly pure Sunni School.

As described by the French Orientalist Louis Massignon, al-Hallaj embodied an emotional and rebellious soul that did



not care about taboos and authoritarian commands. Speaking about Sufi conventions and norms, al-Hallaj practically rebelled against his contemporaries by rejecting the *khirqā* (the rough woolen robe traditionally worn by the Sufi). Theoretically, he reiterated this rebellion in his book *The Tawasin*.

As stated in the prologue of his book, *Tae* is intended as *Taha*, *Siin* (*Yassin*) and *Nun* as God's Truth, which refers to a light which drives His creatures out of the darkness of nothingness into the light.

A well-structured and complicated book, *The Tawasin* was written during different periods of time. The ambiguity of the book is largely due to its obscure terminology, a result of bad copying or distortion and misinterpretation. The *Tawasin* contains ten chapters:

The Ta-Sin of the Prophetic Lamp  
 The Ta-Sin of Understanding  
 The Ta-Sin of Purity  
 The Ta-Sin of the Circle  
 The Ta-Sin of the Point  
 The Ta-Sin of Before Endless-Time and Equivocation  
 The Ta-Sin of the Divine Will  
 The Ta-Sin of the Declaration of Unity  
 The Ta-Sin of the Self-Awarenesses in Tawhid  
 The Ta-Sin of the Disconnection-from-Forms

In addition to this, the book contains eccentric and abstract sketches, very similar to a talisman's work. The text, however, is centred on four topics: a Sufi vision that includes reaching Allah through Stations (more than forty); the inability of the human mind to realize Allah's real Unity (*Tawhid*), and Transcendence (*Tanzih*); the dilemma of the Divine Command and the Divine Uncreated Will; and the problem of knowing or recognizing the Divine Reality.

The language of the *Tawasin* has multiple messages: one that is intelligible and needs no interpretation; another that

is indirect and obscure, but intelligible through interpretation; and a third that is unintelligible, mysterious and coded. The text's linguistic structure is complex. It forms a combination of obscure references as opposed to clear sentences and codes that are difficult to decipher. Here is where I tried to find the technical equivalent in the visual text that I created, which conveys its content through a space that contains all the levels of communication and the means of reception—a space that has to be compounded connotatively and structurally through the following:

1. A collage that depends on embedding scenic settings pertaining to variable ambiances in terms of clarity and obscurity. This stems from a structural form that is technically, purposefully or circumstantially extinct, and another one that is clear and easily read.
2. Clear meaningful communication on the one hand, and obscure and even mysterious communication on the other.
3. Rhythmic repetition of nominal items, which technically stand for the Sufi Remembrance rituals.
4. Adopting the style of opposition, or approaching two worlds or more without taking into consideration the degree of their compatibility, or even incompatibility, with the painting.

Just as the Sufi discourse does not tell the whole truth by placing it behind the text, or because it belongs to a code that finds itself obliged to be part of the language which the Sufi adopts for fear of misunderstanding, or as a means of running away from censorship – 'He who hasn't stopped at our signs, will not be guided by our sentences'<sup>15</sup> – so does my visual text which stops at intimately conversing

with the truth, as there is no way of knowing what truth is, or how to describe it. However, it acquires a shape the way my sensuous perception forms it as follows: nebulous (the opposite of the serried form which is logically firm), or coded (the code in this case is not collective, but is highly subjective and emanates from the inner self through its dialogue with the world and with others).

Consequently, Truth, which is descriptively absent, but present through codes floating on the surface of the world, will put on its unwilling, rebellious nature instead of declaring its omnipresence in the form of gestures, or in the form of a mystic, cosmic language in which all creatures – man, animals and plants – speak and express themselves, while it solidifies its gripping and captivating presence deep into the human inner self as a timeless language that has no beginning nor end. The beginning and the end undergo osmosis through nexuses, which no mind or sensuous perception can rule or decode.

'Everywhere we look and in everything we see, there is an *'athar'*, a *trace* of Allah in it.'<sup>16</sup>

If the Divine appears through a coded language spoken by the objects of this world, there must be traces left that bear witness to His presence, which makes us ponder the vastness of this world in awe, and flush with jubilation at the meaning of these traces and the uniqueness of the emotional values that we acquire from the pondering, which are aesthetic values in the wider sense of the word.

Al-Hallaj did not possess a 'self' in the typical way we identify ourselves. He did not see his 'self' because he surpassed it, made his way into the world and never returned. He found that there was no point in describing, or exposing the 'self' to others except as a veil or an impediment that has to be negated, or melted into the Divine Self.

The metaphysical world was his sublime and ever-present purpose, which would become the fruit of this continual negation of his eventually perishing 'self'. What draws me to al-Hallaj's discourse is his concept of death – his own, and that of others. Death is not an act of horror, or a riddle, the way most humans understand it. For al-Hallaj, death is the end of a journey and the beginning of a new one. Death is a happy ending!

To kill me is to make me live  
 My life is in my death, and my death is  
 in my life.<sup>7</sup>

Al-Hallaj received his life as a sacred divine gift, and a blessing which a living creature wins and is rejoiced over. He received his death in the same way: a gift and a blessing where worldly life ends, and the being ascends to a higher life where he can meet his Creator and dissolves in Him. He taught us to live our life the same way we will live our death. However, living our life also means to understand our death which gives life its meaning.

Therefore, al-Hallaj's discourse transcends its gnostic Sufi form and eventually becomes a local Arabic cultural project, which has an innovative, civilized dimension that makes it worth adopting, provided that it is understood according to this point of view which is free from intellectual and denominational intolerance and absolutism. He said:

You are the true manifestation of Truth;  
 and every truth speaks of You.  
 My parts supported each other; my all  
 fell in love with the entirety of me.<sup>8</sup>

I saw my Lord with the eye of my heart.  
 I said, "Who are You?"  
 He said, "I am You."  
 But for You, "where" cannot have a  
 place.  
 And there is no "where" when it

concerns You.  
The mind has no image of your  
existence in time,  
Which would permit the mind to know  
where you are.  
You are the one who encompasses  
every “where”,  
Up to the point of no-where.  
So where are you?<sup>9</sup>

This poetic embellishment, which is based on the principles of repetition and rhythm, is the one that I borrowed from al-Hallaj's poetic experience. I tried to work on these technical values, transforming them into visual terms, lining them up according to the poet's principles of similarity and opposition, repetition and rhythm.

I tried to weave my carpet *à la al-Hallaj*: the multiple levels of communication (the clear, the obscure which requires interpretation, and the mystical which is unintelligible), and the rhythm of repetitive units in terms of movement, visual tones and letterforms. However, I endeavoured not to make the images on my carpet similar to that of al-Hallaj. The images in this series are not an explanation or a visual rendering of al-Hallaj's vision established in his book of *The Tawasin*, rather, they reflect some of the communications and ambiances of his book that resonates with me and I thus created a space for them in my works. The Sufi taste, for example, is the product of spiritual remembrance, spiritual exercises, and spiritual seclusions. It does not follow the logic of science; it is the product of the Knowledge of the States and intuitive understanding. Therefore, any resulting Sufi text is unique in terms of form and content, and has definitely found its own spot within the space of these works as well.

<sup>1</sup> The first sentence of al-Hallaj in the collections of Sufi Tabaqat, from Sulami's on to Sha'rani's. Also see Louis Massignon's 'Notes on *Kitāb al-Tāwasin*', translation by R.A. Butler. <http://www.allamaiqbal.com/publications/journals/review/apr70/1.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> See Ibn al-Said in *Akhbār al-Hallāj* (Al-Hallaj News), edited by L. Massignon and B. Kraus (Damascus: Dar Al-Takween, 2006):15.

<sup>3</sup> Mansur al-Hallaj, *The Dīwān*. See 'Epilogue: "If they Only Knew" from the Dīwān Attributed to al-Hallaj', in *Early Islamic Mysticism: Sufi, Qur'an, Mi'raj, Poetic and Theological Writings*, edited by Michael Anthony Sells (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1996): 302.

<sup>4</sup> See Abdul-Rahman Badawi, *Shakhṣiyāt Qaliqah fī al-Islām* (Restless Characters in Islam): 76.

<sup>5</sup> See *Akhbār al-Hallāj*, edited by Louis Massignon and B. Kraus (2006):75 and 76.

<sup>6</sup> See Fadhlalla Haeri and Khaja Abdullah Ansari, *Heart of the Qur'an and Perfect Mizan* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1983): 49.

<sup>7</sup> Qasim Muḥammad Abbas, *Al-Hallāj: Al-a'māl al-kāmilah* (The Complete Works), (Beirut: Riad Al-Rayes Publishers, 2002): 294.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid: 333.

<sup>9</sup> See the reprint of al-Hallaj's 'The Ta-Sin of the Point,' in *The Tawasin* in this publication.



Dawod in his studio, Västervik, Sweden, 2013  
Photography by Svante Bäck

داود في مرسمه، فسترفيك، السويد، 2013،  
التصوير الفوتوغرافي من قبل سفانته بك

# AL-HALLAJ: A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

STEPHEN HIRTENSTEIN

Love, so long as it hides, feels itself in great danger; it is only reassured by exposing itself to risk.

— Mansur al-Hallaj, *Diwan*<sup>1</sup>

Abu al-Mughith al-Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj, known simply as al-Hallaj, is one of the most original and charismatic figures in Islamic spirituality, as well as perhaps the most controversial. He is notorious for his apparent profession of identity with the Divine (saying repeatedly *Anā al-haqq*, 'I am God/the Truth/the Real'), and for his public execution for heresy in 309/922 at the hands of the 'Abbasid rulers in Baghdad. From the time of his death until the fall of the 'Abbasids in 656/1258, there was an official ban on the copying or sale of his works. The fact that these writings and sayings were carefully preserved (albeit partially) by successive generations bears witness to the extremes of emotion his teachings inspired.

His influence on later Sufis cannot be overestimated: whether they revered him as the epitome of the true lover of God or censured him for overstepping the mark, all respected his extraordinary devotion to God as sole Truth (*haqq*) and his creative expression of deep truths.

His surviving writings are less well known and studied than they deserve to be. They include a *Diwan* of some eighty poems, a *Riwayat* containing twenty-seven *hadith qudsi* (Divine sayings transmitted via natural

phenomena such as the greenness of grass and the colour of flowers or a rainbow), and the eleven *Tawasin* which are translated here.

Born the son of a cotton carder (in Arabic *hallāj*) in the district of Bayda (Fars) in 244/857, al-Hallaj is said to have been the grandson of a Zoroastrian and descended from a Companion of the Prophet. From an early age he lived in Wasit, a town on the Tigris founded by the Arabs, which had a famous Qur'an recitation school. From the age of sixteen he studied at the school of the great Sufi master Sahl al-Tustari in Tustar. Abandoning Persian in favour of Arabic (he wrote only in Arabic), he was a sincere student, devoted to seeking out the deepest meanings in his practice of worship.

Al-Hallaj moved to Basra to formalize his Sufi training under 'Amr al-Makki, a disciple of the great Sufi master Junayd, and at the age of twenty married the daughter of a Sufi colleague, causing friction with his teacher who disapproved of the marriage. He was subsequently advised by Junayd to be patient during a visit to the latter in Baghdad, and returned to Basra to live with his father-in-law. Basra was caught up in the rebellion of black slaves, the Zanj, and his wife's family seem to have had some connection to the leader of the revolt.

When the revolt collapsed in 270/883, al-Hallaj set off for Mecca and made his first pilgrimage. He then spent a year in the sanctuary, in perpetual silence and fasting,

after which he started to proclaim what had been revealed to him, breaking the strict vow of secrecy that was binding upon Sufis. As a result of his making public what should have been kept secret, his teacher 'Amr al-Makki broke off relations with him.

On his return from Mecca, al-Hallaj encountered opposition amongst his Basran Sufi contemporaries, who felt threatened by his antinomian emphasis on direct personal inspiration (*ilhām*). He decided to settle in Tustar, where he preached for two years. He gave up the woollen cloak of the Sufis, and adopted a lay habit in order to mix freely with all social classes, encouraging everyone to find God in their own heart. He thus became known as *Hallāj al-asrār*, 'the carder of people's inner hearts'. He began to abandon the traditional ascetic language in favour of a vocabulary of abstract ideas in use among Mu'tazilis and Shiites.

In 274/887 al-Hallaj left on his first long journey to Khurasan, to continue his teaching among the Arab colonies of eastern Iran. He remained there for five years, travelling from *ribāt* (hospice) to *ribāt* as far as Transoxiana (an area beyond the Oxus including modern Uzbekistan and Tajikistan). His return to Ahwaz in 280/893 was met with great acclaim, and people began speaking of his public miracles. Soon after his wife had given birth to their third son, he proceeded to make his second pilgrimage, accompanied by some four hundred disciples.

He subsequently moved his family north to Baghdad. There he met two very well-known Sufis, both of whom would also encounter difficulties with the authorities: Abu al-Hasan al-Nuri (author of *Maqāmat al-qulūb*, d. 295/907), and Abu Bakr al-Shibli (a Turkish nobleman, d. 334/946) who became his lifelong friend.

His second great five-year journey began in 284/897, with his avowed aim to convert the infidel Turks (their Islamization said to be an apocalyptic sign of the end of time).

He travelled to western India, Khurasan and Turkestan, reaching Ma Sin (Qocho), the capital of the Uyghur Turks.

In 290/903 al-Hallaj returned to Mecca for his third pilgrimage, apparently clad in an Indian loin-cloth, spending nearly two years there. This year was highly significant to him and others (such as the Qarmatians, a Shiite revolutionary group dominant in southern Iraq at the time), since according to number symbolism (*jafr*) 290 signified the imminent coming of the Mahdi (the rightly guided redeemer who will rule before the Day of Judgment and rid the world of evil). In this highly charged atmosphere, al-Hallaj began to speak of himself as the 'present [immediate] witness' (*shāhid al-ānī*) of the Divine Eternal Witness, one who truly realizes the fact that only God *is*.

He also spoke of himself as embodying two natures. As he puts it in one highly celebrated poem:

I am he whom I love, and he whom I  
love is I  
we are two spirits fused together in a  
single body  
if you see me, you see him  
if you see him, you see us<sup>2</sup>

His final prayer at the station of 'Arafat was that God should reduce him to nothing, should make him despised and rejected, so that God alone might grant grace to Himself through the heart and upon the lips of His servant. To him this was the central rite of pilgrimage, commemorating the sacrifice of Abraham. Staying behind on Jabal al-Rahma, while other pilgrims prayed for the general pardon to descend, al-Hallaj is reported to have proclaimed this public prayer:

O my God, glorious King, I know You to be transcendent, I affirm You as transcendent beyond what those who worship You do in order to draw near

to You, beyond what those who profess Your Unity say in order to proclaim You One, beyond the glorification of those who say to You 'Glory be to You' (*ṣubhānaka*)... O my God, You know that I am powerless to offer You the thanksgiving that You should have. Come therefore into me that You may give thanks to Yourself, for that is the true thanksgiving, there is no other.<sup>3</sup>

This prayer conveys one of al-Hallaj's typically powerful affirmations of the absolute divine transcendence coupled with the immanent presence of God by grace in the purified and transfigured soul.

It was in the very public setting of the capital, Baghdad, that the final drama of al-Hallaj's life took place. According to his son Hamd, 'he returned [from Mecca] very changed... acquired property in Baghdad, built a home where guests could be received, and began to preach in public a doctrine only half of which I understood.'<sup>4</sup> He is said to have set up in his house a model of the Ka'ba, opening himself to the accusation that he wanted others to do the same rather than going to Mecca. Rather, the teaching that he sought to convey was that pilgrimage is an inner action, which can be symbolically re-enacted in one's own home and nature.

The hagiographical accounts portray him in this period as visiting notables, preaching in the *sūq* and in the mosques, receiving guests in his own home, and praying by night in the cemeteries. He proclaimed his desire 'to die accursed for this community', and was heard crying out in the streets provocative statements such as: 'O Muslims, save me from God, who has robbed me of myself' and 'God has made my blood lawful to you, so kill me.'<sup>5</sup>

However, it was not simply his outspokenness that sealed his fate with the authorities, for such unrestrained behaviour was not unique amongst Sufis. What really

shocked his contemporaries was the number of 'miracles' that were attributed to him and the very public nature in which these acts were performed. He was accused of being a sorcerer or a madman and of publicly claiming the supreme power of God. Mindful of the social unrest that such extremism could lead to and in the aftermath of two failed plots against him, the Caliph had al-Hallaj arrested in 301/913 and put in prison. Denounced by the religious officials, he was brought before a religious court, but the judge, Ibn Surayj, dismissed the charge of unbelief (*kufr*) against him on the grounds that al-Hallaj was a man 'whose inspiration I cannot grasp. So I shall not attempt a doctrinal evaluation of it.'<sup>6</sup> As a result of this, al-Hallaj's enemies politicized the charge, replacing *kufr* with the term *zandaqa* (free thinking or heresy, often applied to Manichaeans, and used as a pretext for political purges). Indeed it seems that for some the real underlying fear was that al-Hallaj was a Qarmatian agent in mystic guise, someone who might act as the figurehead of a social revolution. He was publicly exposed for three days under a placard reading 'Agent of the Qarmatians', but powerful friends at the palace prevented anything more serious.

He remained confined to the palace for nearly nine years, as the many ongoing arguments and political disputes that impinged on his status continued, and it was during this period that most of his writing was accomplished. One text, the *Ta' Sin al-Azal* ('The Ta-Sin of Before Endless-Time'), expounds a remarkable and daring version of the history of Creation in the form of a dialogue between Iblis (Satan) and God, in which he critiqued the Prophet Muhammad for not interceding for all sinners. Later mystics would find this doctrine reprehensible, suggesting that he had been deprived post mortem of the vision of the Prophet, due to his having insulted the latter's intercession.

Finally, his implacable enemy, the Sunni vizier Hamid b. 'Abbas, had the trial of al-

Hallaj re-opened, and the Caliph signed his death warrant. On 24 Dhu'l-Qa'da 309/26 March 922, before an enormous crowd at the Bab Khurasan in Baghdad, al-Hallaj was flogged, had his hands and feet cut off and was exhibited on a gibbet. The next morning he was decapitated, his body burned and its ashes cast on the Tigris. His close disciples and friends all testified to his extraordinary sincerity and spiritual devotion. Al-Shibli was present at the execution and asked him about the meaning of Sufism (*tasawwuf*), to which he replied: 'its lowest degree is what you are seeing now.'<sup>7</sup> While this gruesome end apparently satisfied his many enemies, his martyrdom only served to immortalize the man: for example, legend has it that his ashes formed the word *al-Haqq* (Truth, the Real) or Allah on the surface of the water. In imitation of al-Hallaj, Bektashi initiates bow down with a rope around the neck, showing that they are prepared to be hung for their love of God. Persian and Turkish miniatures depict al-Hallaj as hanging from the gibbet and able to speak.

The figure of al-Hallaj remains as challenging today as it was in his own time. His insistence on going beyond religious forms and rites and on following direct inspiration rather than mediated worship, his ecstasy before the Real God, his universal concern with the salvation of all humanity, and his teaching that the absolute transcendent nature of God is ultimately identical to His full manifestation in the true human being: all demand extraordinary dedication and realization.

What shines through in his writings, notably *The Tawasin* and his *Diwan*, is this uncompromising vision of the Divine as the sole Reality. God is the Beloved, the Friend, the 'You', while the human is nothing—at times, it is said, al-Hallaj could not even remember his own name, for the only I is God. The celebrated *Anā al-haqq* should be understood, according to Rumi, as 'an expression of great humility. The man who

says "I am the servant of God" affirms two existences, his own and God's, but one who says "I am God" has made himself non-existent and given himself up... this is the extreme of humility and self-abasement.'<sup>8</sup>

One of the characteristic features of his writing is the daring shifts he makes between personal pronouns. It is never entirely clear which 'I' is speaking (it is to preserve this ambiguity that I prefer to keep everything in lower case in my translations). As al-Hallaj himself puts it in one of his poems in the *Diwan*:

Make me one, o my one, with a true oneness  
 none of the ways can lead me there  
 I am the real, and the real is real  
 because of the real,  
 clothed in his own self, nothing of separation there  
 bright shining stars have revealed themselves  
 shatter-scattered rays within the lightning flash, there!<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Hallaj, *Dīwān*, ed. Louis Massignon (Paris, 1955).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Full text in 'Attār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (London, 1907), 2:139. See also *The Passion of al-Hallaj*, 1:222 for an alternative translation and discussion.

<sup>4</sup> Transmission of Ibn Bakuya in Louis Massignon, *The Passion of al-Hallaj: Mystic and Martyr of Islam*, trans. Herbert Mason (Princeton NJ, 1982): 1: 12.

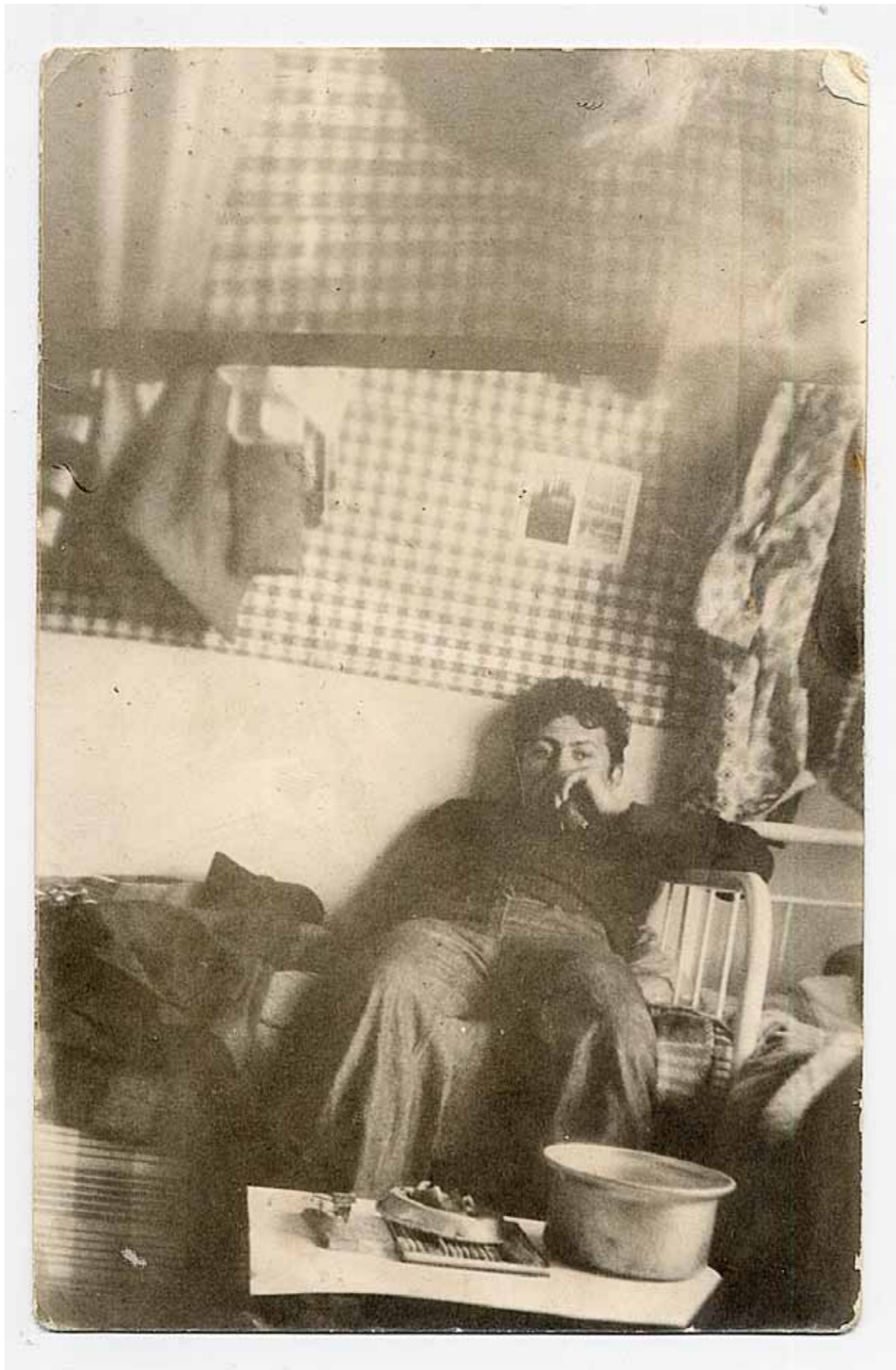
<sup>5</sup> See *Akhhār al-Hallāj*, ed. L. Massignon (Paris, 1957), and *The Passion of al-Hallaj*: 1:284 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, ed. W. M. de Slane (Paris, 1842–71):1: 443.

<sup>7</sup> See *Akhhār al-Hallāj*, ed. L. Massignon (Paris, 1957), and *The Passion of al-Hallaj*: 1:609.

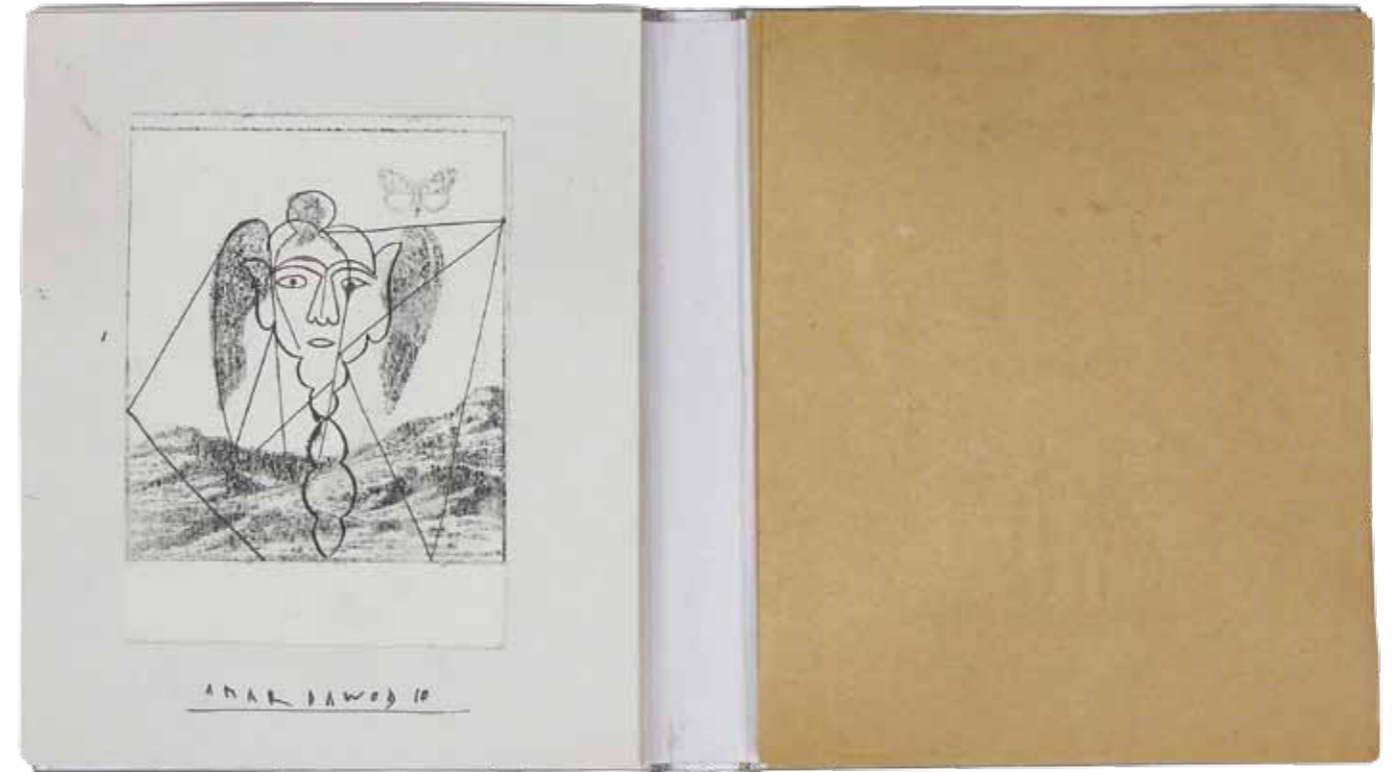
<sup>8</sup> *Discourses of Rumi*, trans. A. J. Arberry (Richmond, 1993): 55-56.

<sup>9</sup> Al-Hallaj, *Dīwān*.



Dawod in his dorm room,  
Institute of Fine Arts,  
Baghdad, 1977

داود في بيت الطلبة،  
معهد الفنون الجميلة،  
بغداد، 1977



Sketch  
Page from a completed  
book, 2010  
Mixed media

رسم تحضيرى  
صفحة من كتاب  
منجز، 2010  
مواد مختلفة

# THE TAWASIN OF AMAR DAWOD

LOUAI HAMZA ABBAS

I saw a certain bird from the selves of the Sufis which flew with the two wings of Sufism. He denied my glory as he persisted in his flight. He asked me about purity and I said to him: “Cut your wings with the shears of Annihilation. If do not, then you cannot follow me.”

— Mansur al-Hallaj, *The Tawasin*.<sup>1</sup>

Fine lines unite the universe, pull its elements together, open silent doors in the heart of darkness, and illuminate the naked soul in an act of contrast and discovery, giving the denuded body a chance to celebrate the rituals of transformation and transition. Every transformation is a testament; every line is a scar. The devotion of Amar Dawod’s painting to its testaments while producing its *Ta-Sins* invites it to commingle the worlds in their structural forms, ever aspiring for the formula of life: layer upon layer, wound after wound, and where the times are reclaimed and testaments endure.

With each new testament, the painting seeks to establish the theme of annihilation which occupied al-Hallaj’s aspirations as a process and a system. Here is where *The Tawasin*, the painter and the Sufi meet. They are both guided by annihilation and its representations, making the painting a

piece of al-Hallaj’s rag, his garment, and his skin after it had turned into the pages of the chronicle written about annihilation. The painting moves from the reality of annihilation to its symbolism, ever seeking to melt into the theme after dropping the burden of enunciation, and resigning into intimation, across a symbolic space which subsumes all the other paintings, unites them, and directs their themes. The elements of the space grow richer with the prevalent intimate discourse of the painting, gazing at the all-embracing concept as if looking at their own reflection in the mirror, or drifting along a vast circle that expands and extends in a representation of the quest’s triad: the first external who hasn’t arrived, the second who is already there but came to a closed door, and the third who went astray in the desert of the Truth-Nature of the truth.

The painting is preoccupied with the paths of the circles, broken or continuous, just as it is preoccupied with the one who went astray at the boundaries of the Point ‘from which externals and internals are not absent, and it does not tolerate forms.’<sup>2</sup> This is one of the qualities of the painter’s *Tawasin*, which works on opposing the dominance of form from one painting to another, and revoking and negating its solidity in favour of multiple surfaces that break away in aversion, yet in harmony, as

if relying on the power of what is intelligible from the shapes of things to produce further shapes. The transparency of the hollow shape greatly contributes to protecting the human being’s life while looking at his death in the painting. And while referring to his existence and naming himself; the human being reveals other creatures that lived beyond him in a remote time layer that inscribes one theme in existence and another in nihilism. It is a vision which does not interpret the idea, as much as it is guided by the techniques of al-Hallaj’s writings in primitively executing its forms—popular and coarse at times, smooth and compliant at others.

By re-looking, Dawod’s vision does not seek self-negation as much as it works on suppressing its desires. However, every attempt of suppression in the painting declares an outcry for liberation and transcendence while ridding itself of the burden of meaning by undermining the purity of art and by the practices of concealment, to live under the wings of a candid intimate discourse, with the power of truth and the clarity of its presence. The voice of al-Hallaj unfolds, addressing those whose names were obscured yet existed. Had the truth been revealed to them, they would have died.

From concealment to revelation, Dawod’s *Tawasin* continues to weave its worlds, alternating eclecticism, collages and intimate conversations. Hence, many of his paintings have become an iconoclastic representation of the rebellious aspect of a human experience that had always declared its estrangement under the weight of the human body, until it lived the procession of its crucifixion, as shockingly real as it is: from lynching, to dismembering, to hanging, to burning, to scattering.

Somehow, Amar Dawod’s *Tawasin* is the voice of this procession, still heard after 1,100 years. It is the panorama of transformation and transition, where, even though weary with its effects in a moment of suffering, annihilation

crystallizes and becomes a symbolic act of dissolving into the self of He who is being worshipped. At that particular moment, the idea becomes a continuous dialogue of different elements, separated at times and deeply interconnected at others: the human components in one painting find their echoes in what another painting calls into attention. A mosaic texture comes into being, benefiting from the value of adjacency that does not repeat a specific item per se, but enriches every item with the presence of a different one settling beside it, conversing with it, and seeking refuge next to it while celebrating the power and wealth of embellishment. A mosaic texture is not an evanescent artistic novelty. It is a precise and highly systematic language, suggested by the uniqueness of the civilized experience trying to represent the world while forming out of a Point that infinitely and incessantly repeats itself. It is the way by which a river continues to flow indefinitely (water’s embellishment is its ripples).

Amar Dawod’s *Tawasin* goes about its preoccupations intuitively, benefiting from the different social codes in building relationships and elevating its intimate conversations, crafts, miniatures, and primitive sketches, where every relationship constitutes a thread in the texture: the old acacia flower and the plum, the sleek grass leaf and the mellow fruit, the high, hollow head cap and the firm fully-ornamented angel wing, the gazelle, the bird, the net, and the horse are all awaiting the human’s rebirth into a ghostly form. The body is imperfect and amputated, representing the overwhelming signs of eternal suffering, sustained by an ear that listens to the universe breathing, and a blinking eye that gently and acquiescently prolongs its gaze at the vast human inner spaces where horses without legs soar, trying to incarnate their unwilling and rebellious nature while being ridden by fond knights without hands inside the artist’s vision where they ‘[declare their] omnipresence in the

form of gestures, or in the form of a mystic, cosmic language in which all creatures – man, animals and plants – speak and express themselves, while [solidifying] its gripping and captivating presence deep into the human inner self as a timeless language that has no beginning nor end. The beginning and the end undergo osmosis through nexuses, which no mind or sensuous perception can rule or decode.<sup>13</sup>

Recalling al-Hallaj artistically is an attempt to turn towards the journey of the Sufi realm through one of its most important pillars, and one of the most influential figures, on the track of modern Arab culture in thought and creativity. It is an attempt that necessarily fits into a certain context of knowledge, where the question of tradition is essential throughout the processes of reading, re-reading and production, regardless of how individualistic or seemingly motivated by personal taste and consciousness it is. In the case of Amar Dawod, it is not a difficult task to distinguish the role of the teacher, and the influence of the historical era in shaping his awareness and directing his approach—starting with Shakir Hassan Al Said and not ending with the calls to understand tradition and look at its cognitive aspects which dominated the Iraqi artistic landscape for more than half a century.

Taking Sufism to the second decade of the third millennium, Dawod's preoccupation with such discourse strongly refers to this potent kind of influence, which kept its strong presence in the Islamic memory throughout the ages, regardless of the many times it renewed its mechanisms to appear in the multiple fields of creativity. Amar Dawod's art does not only work on producing its own reading of al-Hallaj's *Tawasin*, and intimately conversing with the Sufi while working on setting his soul free after the dismemberment of his body in a procession of unification and annihilation, but perseveres in enriching its own vision while innovatively processing a dramatic element.

If the Iraqi artistic scene had long been preoccupied with the effectiveness of dramatic elements, the al-Hallaj drama expands the horizon of the Sufi presence, and while enriching it, is in turn enriched in 'suggesting a tragic perspective which prompts us to confront our real desire to treat the real bleeding wound inside each and every one of us.'<sup>14</sup> Therefore, Dawod's *Tawasin* clearly refers to one of the unique traits of Iraqi art: its ability to develop quietly, almost silently, and vividly, and to accumulate its textures and expand its visions inside the realm of the work of art, where the 'carpet' has an additional meaning that does not stop at one artist's atelier, but extends under the footsteps of the other artists who have contributed to the reflections of al-Hallaj, and created a narrative that is open to the matrix of his pains and secrets, which prolongs the desire of looking at a world where all dissipates except the bemused worshipper and the despot god in an all-encompassing condescending essence: 'the Living who brought the world to life with His sight. Those who he did not see alive are dead, even if they moved and talked.'<sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mansur al-Hallaj, 'Ta-Sin of the Point', in *Thus Spoke al-Hallaj* by Qassim Muhammad Abbas (Syria: Al Mada Publishing House, 2009): 109. Also see the translation of al-Hallaj's *The Tawasin* in this publication.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid: 108.

<sup>3</sup> See Amar Dawod, 'Al-Hallaj and *The Tawasin*,' in this publication.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Hallaj, 'Ta-Sin of the Point', in *Thus Spoke al-Hallaj* (2009): 30.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Hallaj, 'Al Tafsir', ibid: 89.





# TEXTS INTERTWINING

SUHAIL SAMI NADER

Nearby the site where Mansur al-Hallaj was crucified, his admirers built a tomb which has been frequently pilgrimaged for over a thousand years. It lies vacant because when al-Hallaj was crucified his corpse was burned into ashes and scattered in the Tigris River. However his symbolic tomb gained much acclaim and has often been recollected. While famous tombs of great caliphs, princes and army commanders in the 'Abbasid Empire, which lasted about five hundred years, often vanished, al-Hallaj's vacant tomb was frequently visited by grieved and anguished people with everlasting memories.

Parallel to the tale of this symbolic tomb, al-Hallaj's language – which was loaded with omissions, paronomasia, obscure expressions and erased meanings – created a unique lexicological scope for interpretation and injected new essences throughout history. Sometimes al-Hallaj was forgotten, yet his name was remembered through stories, grievous incidents and remarkable deeds. His frequently read poetry and writings provided interpretations which fitted his different characters and the era in which he lived. This phenomenon remained active afterwards.

Al-Hallaj's words inspired several Iraqi writers in the mid-1960s. They found they could recreate his practices and apply them within their narratives and poetry. While Iraqi abstract painting stemmed from Sufi concepts and al-Hallaj's interpretations, the abstract mid-1960s trend of artist Shakir

Hassan Al Said, along with other Iraqi artists, was entirely based on the Sufi experience and culture.

Amar Dawod's interest in al-Hallaj's approach is therefore not surprising at all. In his work, the crucified artist has resurrected every era, shining like a minaret for martyrs. The same scene is recollected again; there is always a need for an empty symbolic tomb which is always visited by the anguished, confused and conquered people. Within this scene, there are gaps for the mesmerized, lovely and innocent beholder to fill in. Indeed, the gravitation towards al-Hallaj is not solely determined by the temptations of reading, but also by the difficulties that existed in a spiritless world. Al-Hallaj's concept is depicted as an old historical hunt through which the spirit aspires for justice, happiness and purity. And this is quite a nostalgic phenomenon.

## **But, what are the aspects of this phenomenon witnessed in Dawod's paintings?**

Dawod has not resorted to al-Hallaj's famous gruesome story. Instead, he reverted to one of his very enigmatic texts—to a concept based on the subjective experience encompassed by mysteries.

Throughout time, al-Hallaj's writings have been re-examined. Explanations of his works' language have, however, resulted in the loss of its power. These short essays

ascend towards new horizons created by al-Hallaj's crucified body and his bloody fingers stemming from an inward experience which reflects the ongoing attempts to gain contact with God as well as a failure to do so. Such texts appeared as torn, consisting of complicated phrases extracted from the Holy Qur'an, principles of wisdom, childish desires, references and monologues. They inspire through enigmatic poetry resembling flashes of psychological and emotional deduction on blank surfaces as embodied through painting.

Dawod adopts a particular style to visually 'read' al-Hallaj's texts by piecing together several visual texts while eliminating any formal elements that seem redundant.

The decorative touches, inattentive lines, shapes and obscure motifs all acquire the same importance because they reflect texts extracted from others in a structure derived from another one, or texts inducing other ones. This embodies a reading loaded with implicit impressions, or uncertainty which the artist may fear to face. He therefore pushes it to a certain depth. This style is governed by passion and emotion, and that is why the artist tends to create multiple surfaces which result in using many non-centred structures.

The second style is characterized by forms borrowed from the art of miniatures and folk art which depend on the imagination to depict angels, along with allusions to mysterious lyrics, in addition to touching the core structure.

Within the third contemplative style, signs blend to make expressive forms more pronounced in terms of embodiment and a relationship with vacancy. This style is accompanied by the vertical forms examined in some of the artist's older works. These shapes seem like reductive and distorted representations of the human form yet appear as the plumb line used to righteously measure the rising construction. Furthermore, it is uncertain whether direct aspects have

any significant symbolic visual equivalent in the vertical shape adopted by the artist.

The fourth style unleashes the imagination in a systematic personified language close to embodiment. Here, the artist employs new expressionist methods to create artistic expressions injected with an auto-emotional language, allowing him to spontaneously read enigmatic texts marked with highly esoteric and expressive values.

The artist unleashes his imagination by combining specific references with autonomous planning experiences, along with choosing the vital independent organic shapes and the visual structure which he calls the 'carpet'. Such experiences are approximate to the poetic perspective which inclines more to the imagination, becomes closer to fantasy and symbols, and is drawn towards passion, depending on overlapping deduction techniques found in the rendering of line, colour, shape and collage.

It is not an easy task to visually read a text characterized by complicated pantheistic ideas. Within the text, there remains absent elements and the quest for new content continues. The visual text embodies this quest through fragile concepts flashing within the imagination and displays what the passion suggests to express itself through art.

Returning to Dawod's earlier works, it appears that the artist maintains a link with his previous formal vocabulary. His earlier paintings are recollected through the artistic embodiment needed by the new experience; mainly in the basic lines of forms and how the artist distorts them.

The angels depicted with wings, conical shapes, birds, butterflies and spiral shapes continue to appear as original forms, which leads to the conclusion that many of the artist's forms, which have significant psychological connotations, remain intact in his memory. There is also a mysterious and implied meaning which the artist tries to unveil by re-examining it within the context of

a new experience, which he considers as a genre of reading texts.

Nevertheless, the artist has subjected some of this vocabulary to a semiotic analytical reading, as the angel's wings almost become like the butterfly's wings. Here, the artist opens the door for utilizing independent motifs. Consequently, particular attention is given to the wings at times or to the decorative pieces. And these dynamic substitutions add vitality to the older forms.

Dawod's earlier style shows the changes made to his formal vocabulary, reflecting a stenographer-like style which depends on lines without creating conceptual links between shapes, thus leaving the task to the viewer. Even when the artist fills in the surface with visual forms, he realizes that his mission is not to connect these links using line or colour. His tendency towards simplification reduces his attention to composition, leading him, therefore, to adopt a stenographic style which seems closer to a signature or a motif created by a trifling hand.

Within the new experience, especially in the first and second styles, recurrent shapes reappear in a new structure which is loaded with various artistic practices which are linked through the use of overlapping shapes. As such, the artist can visually re-read al-Hallaj's texts and his formal shapes, a reading which can still rub the restless humanitarian wound, provoked by a restless spirit that seeks a safe haven near the angels.



Dawod teaching drawing,  
Sweden, 1994

اثناء العمل في تدريس الرسم،  
السويد، 1994

Sketch  
Pen, pencil and coloured  
pencil, 2011

رسم تحضيري  
قلم حبر، قلم رصاص واقلام  
ملونة، 2011



# THE TAWASIN

MANSUR AL-HALLAJ



## The Ta-Sin of the Prophetic Lamp

1. A lamp appeared from the Light of the Unseen. It appeared and returned, and it surpassed the other lamps. It was a ruling moon, manifesting itself radiantly among the other moons. It was a star whose astrological house is in the Empyrean. Allah named him 'unlettered' in view of the concentration of his aspiration, and also 'consecrated' because of the majesty of his blessing, and 'Makkan' because of his residence in His vicinity.

2. He expanded his breast, and raised his power, and lifted from him the burden 'that had weighed down thy back', and He imposed his authority. As Allah made his Badr appear so his full moon rose from the cloud of Yamāma and his sun arose on the side of Tihāma (Makka), and his lamp shone from the source of all divine munificence.

3. He did not report about anything except according to his inner vision, and he did not order the following of his example except according to the truth of his conduct. He was in the presence of Allah, then he brought others to His Presence. He saw, then he related what he was. He was sent forth as a guide, so he defined the limits of conduct.

4. No one is capable of discerning his true significance, except the Sincere, since he confirmed its validity, and then accompanied him so that there would not remain any disparity between them.

5. No gnostic ever knew him who was not ignorant of his true quality. His quality is made clear only to those to whom Allah undertakes to disclose it. 'Those to whom We have given the Book, and recognize their sons, even though a party of them conceal the truth, and that wittingly.' (2.46)

6. The lights of prophecy issued from his light, and his light appeared from the light of Mystery. Among the lights, there is none more luminous, more manifest or more uncreated-than-uncreatedness than the light of the Master of Generosity.

7. His aspiration preceded all other aspirations, his existence preceded non-existence, his name preceded the Pen because it existed before.

8. There was never on the horizons, beyond the horizons, nor below the horizons anyone more graceful, nobler, wiser, more just, kinder, more God-fearing or more sympathetic than the one who holds this role. His title is Master of Creation, and his name is Ahmad, and his attribute is Muhammad. His command is more certain, and his essence is more excellent, and his attributes are more glorious, and his aspiration is unique.

9. Oh marvel! What is more manifest, more visible, greater, more famous, more luminous, more powerful or more discerning than him? He is and was, and was known before created things and existences and beings. He was and still is remembered before 'before' and after 'after', and before substances and qualities. His substance is completely light, his speech is prophetic, his knowledge is celestial, his mode of expression is Arabic, his tribe is 'neither of the East nor the West' (24.35), his genealogy is patriarchal, his mission is conciliation, and he has the title of the 'unlettered'.

10. The eyes were opened by his signs, secrets and selves perceived by his being there. It was Allah who made him articulate His Word, and being the Proof, confirmed him. It was Allah Who sent him forth. He is the proof and the proven. It is he who quenches the thirst of the vehemently thirsty heart, it is he who brings the uncreated word that is not touched by what touches it, nor phrased by the tongue, nor made. It is united to Allah without separation, and it surpasses the conceivable. It is he who announces the end and the ends and the ends of the end.

11. He lifted the cloud, and pointed to the Sacred House. He is the limitation, and he is a heroic warrior. It is he who received the order to break the idols, and it is he who was sent to mankind for the extermination of them.

12. Above him a cloud flashed bolts of lightning, and below him a bolt of lightning flashed, shone, caused rain, and fructified. All knowledge is but a drop from his ocean, and all wisdom is but a handful from his stream, and all times are but an hour from his life.

13. Allah is with him, and with him is reality. He is the first in union and the last to be commissioned as a prophet, the inward by reality, and the outward by gnosis.

14. No scholar ever attained his knowledge nor did any philosopher become cognizant of his understanding.

15. Allah did not surrender (His Reality) to His creation, because he is he, and his being there is He, and He is He.

16. Nothing came out of the M of MHMD, and none entered into his H, and his H is the same as his second M, and his D is as his first M. His D is his perpetuity, his M is his rank, his H his spiritual state, as is his second M.

17. Allah made his speech manifest, and enlarged his mark, and made his proof known. He sent down the *Furqan* (The Criterion) to him, He made his tongue adequate, and He made his heart shine. He made his contemporaries incapable (of imitating the Qur'an). He established his clarification and exalted his glory.

18. If you flee from his domains, what route will you take without a guide, oh ailing one? The maxims of the philosophers are like a slipping heap of sand before his wisdom.

## The Ta-Sin of Understanding

1. The comprehensions of created natures are not attached to reality, and reality is not attached to created natures. Thoughts (which come) are adherences, and the adherences

of created natures do not attach themselves to realities. The perception of reality is difficult to acquire, so how much more difficult is the perception of the reality of the Reality? Furthermore, Allah is beyond reality, and reality does not in itself imply Allah.

2. The moth flies about the flame until morning, then he returns to his fellows and tells them of his spiritual state with the most eloquent expressions. Then he mixes with the coquetry of the flame in his desire to reach a perfect union.

3. The light of the flame is the knowledge of reality, its heat is the reality of reality, and Union with it is the Truth of the reality.

4. He was not satisfied with its light nor with its heat, so he leapt into it completely. Meanwhile, his fellows were awaiting his arrival so that he could tell them of his actual vision since he had not been satisfied with hearsay. But at that moment he was being utterly consumed, reduced and dispersed into fragments, and he remained without form or body or distinguishing mark. Then in what sense can he return to his fellows? And in what state now that he has obtained? He who had arrived at the vision became able to dispense with reports. He who arrives at the object of his vision is no longer concerned with the vision.

5. These meanings do not concern the negligent man, nor the transitory man, nor the man of wrong action, nor the man who follows his whims.

6. Oh you who are uncertain, do not identify 'I am' with the divine 'I'— not now, nor in the future, nor in the past. Even if the 'I am' was a consummated gnostic, and if this was my state, it was not perfection. Even though I am His, I am not He.

7. If you have understood this, then understand that these meanings were not true from anyone except Muhammad, and 'Muhammad is not the father of any one of your men', but the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets. He absented himself from men and jinn, and he closed his eyes to 'where' until there no longer remained any veil on the heart nor any falsehood.

8. There was a 'length of two bows' lengths or nearer' when he reached the desert of the 'knowledge of reality', he reported from the outward heart. When he arrived to the truth of the reality, he left his desire there and gave himself up to the Bountiful.

When he reached the Truth, he returned and said: 'the inward heart has prostrated to You, and the outward heart has believed in You.'

When he reached the Furthest Limit, he said: 'I cannot praise You as You should be praised.'

When he reached the reality of the reality he said: 'You are the only One who can praise Yourself.'

He renounced his desire and followed his vocation, 'the heart did not lie about what it saw' at this station near the Lote-Tree of the Boundary. He did not turn to the right to the reality of things, nor to the left to the reality of reality. 'His eyes swerved not, nor swept away.'

#### The Ta-Sin of Purity

1. Reality is something very subtle and minute in its description, the paths of access to it are narrow, and on them one encounters sighing fires beside deep deserts. The stranger follows these paths and reports what he has experienced in the forty Stations such as:

1. manners (*adab*)
2. awe (*rahab*)
3. fatigue (*nasab*)
4. search (*talab*)
5. wonder ('*ajab*)
6. perishing ('*atab*)
7. exaltation (*tarab*)
8. avidity (*sharah*)
9. probity (*nazah*)
10. sincerity (*sidq*)
11. comradeship (*rifq*)
12. emancipation (*litq*)
13. setting out (*taswih*)
14. rest (*tarwih*)
15. discernment (*tamyiz*)
16. witnessing (*shuhud*)
17. existence (*wujud*)
18. enumeration ('*add*)
19. labour (*kada*)
20. restitution (*rada*)
21. dilation (*imtidad*)
22. preparation (*l'dad*)
23. isolation (*infirad*)
24. captivity (*inqiyad*)
25. attraction (*murad*)
26. presence (*hudur*)
27. exercise (*riyada*)
28. circumspection (*hiyata*)
29. regret for things lost (*iftiqad*)
30. resistance (*istilad*)
31. consideration (*tadabbur*)
32. perplexity (*tahayyur*)
33. reflection (*tafakkur*)
34. patience (*tasabbur*)
35. interpretation (*ta'abbur*)
36. non-acceptance (*rafd*)
37. strong criticism (*naqd*)
38. observation (*ri'aya*)
39. taking a guide (*hidaya*)
40. beginning (*bidaya*)

The last Station is the Station of the people of Serenity of Heart and Purification.

2. Each Station has its own gift of which one part is conceivable and the other is not.

3. Then the stranger entered the desert and crossed it and embraced and comprehended the whole of it. He did not find anything familiar or useful, either on the mountain or on the plain.

4. 'When Musa accomplished the term' he left his people since reality was going to take him as 'his'. And yet he was satisfied with indirect information without direct vision, and that there should be a difference between him and the best of mankind (Muhammad). Therefore he said: 'Perhaps I will bring you some information.' (20.10)

5. If the Well-Guided was pleased with indirect information, how shall he who searches the route not suffice himself with an indirect trace?

6. From the Burning Bush, on the side of Sinai, what he heard uttered from the Bush was not the Bush nor its seed but Allah.

7. And my role is like this Bush.

8. So reality is reality and the created is the created. Reject your created nature, that you may become Him, and He, you—in respect to reality.

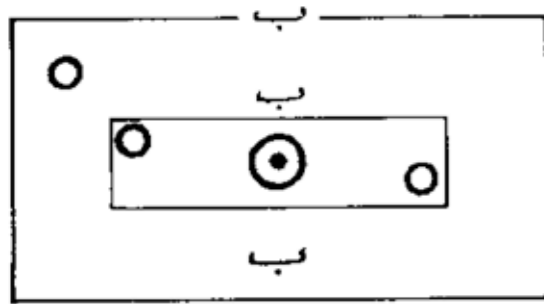
9. I-ness is a subject, and the object defined is also a subject in reality, so how is it defined?

10. Allah said to Musa: 'You guide to the Proof, not to the Object of the Proof. And as for Me I am the Proof of every proof.'

11. Allah made me pass by what is reality by grace of a contract, a pact, and an alliance. My secret is a witness without my created personality. This is my secret and this is reality.

12. Allah enunciated my knowledge for me from my heart. He drew me near to Him after I had been so far from Him. He made me His intimate and chose me.

### The Ta-Sin of the Circle



1. The first door represents the one who reaches the circle of Truth. The second door represents the person who reaches it, who after entering it comes to a closed door. The third door represents the one who goes astray in the desert of the Truth-Nature of the truth.

2. He that enters the circle is far from the Truth because the way is blocked and the seeker is sent back. The point on high represents his yearning. The lower point represents his return to his point of departure, and the middle point is his bewilderment.

3. The inner circle does not have a door, and the point which is in the centre is Truth.

4. The meaning of Truth is that from which externals and internals are not absent, and it does not tolerate forms.

5. If you wish to understand what I have pointed to here, then 'take four birds and twist them to thee' (2.260), because Allah does not fly.

6. It is His jealousy which makes it appear after He hid it. It was awe that kept us apart; it was bewilderment that deprived us of it.

7. These are the meanings of Truth. It is subtler than the circle of the origins, and the designation of the regions. And subtler still is the internal functioning of the understanding, because of the concealing of the imagination.

8. This is because the observer observes the circle from without not from within.

9. As for the Knowledge of the knowledge of Truth, he does not know it, because he is incapable. Knowledge denotes a place but the circle is a forbidden place (*haram*).

10. So they named the prophet 'Haram' because he alone came out of from the circle of Haram.

11. He was full of fear and awe, and wearing the garment of Truth, he went out and cried 'Ah!!' to all creation.

### The Ta-Sin of the Point

1. Finer still than that is the mention of the Primordial Point, which is the Source, and which does not grow or decrease, nor consume itself.

2. The one who denies my spiritual state denies it because he does not see me, and he calls me a heretic. He charges me with evil, and seeing my glory he calls for help, and it is to the sacred circle which is beyond the beyond that he cries.

3. He who reaches the second circle imagines me to be the Inspired Master.

4. He who reaches the third circle thinks that I am at the bottom of all desires.

5. And he who reaches the circle of Truth forgets me, and his attention is distracted from me.

6. 'No indeed, not a refuge! Upon that day the recourse shall be to thy Lord, upon that day man shall be told his former deeds and his latter.'

7. But man turns to indirect testimony, he flees to a refuge, he fears the sparks, and his intention is beguiled and led astray.

8. I am absorbed in the sea of the depths of eternity and he who reaches the circle of Truth is occupied on the shore of the sea of knowledge with his own knowledge. He is absent from my vision.

9. I saw a certain bird from the selves of the Sufis which flew with the two wings of Sufism. He denied my glory as he persisted in his flight.

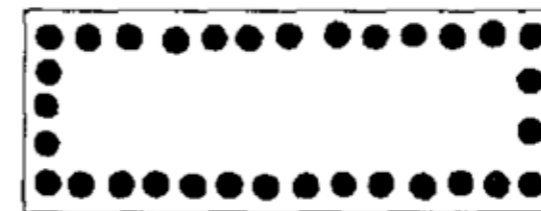
10. He asked me about purity and I said to him: 'Cut your wings with the shears of Annihilation. If you do not, then you cannot follow me.'

11. He said to me: 'I fly with my wings to my Beloved.'

I said to him: 'Alas for thee! Because there is naught like Him, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.'

So then he fell into the sea of understanding and was drowned.

12. One can represent the ocean of understanding thus:



I saw my Lord with the eye of my heart.  
I said: 'Who are You?'

He said: 'You!'

But for You, 'where' cannot have a place

And there is no 'where' when it concerns You.

The mind has no image of your existence in time

Which would permit the mind to know where you are.

You are the one who encompasses every 'where'

Up to the point of no-where.

So where are you?

12. A single unique point from the circle denotes the various thoughts of the understanding. A single point is itself the Truth and the rest is error.

13. 'He drew near' in rising, 'then he came again' in transcending. Seeking, he drew near; enraptured, he came again. He left his heart there and drew nigh to his Lord. He was absent when he saw Allah, yet he was not absent. How was he present and not present? How did he look and not look?

14. From amazement he passed to lucidity and from lucidity to amazement. Witnessed by Allah he witnessed Allah. He arrived and was separated. He reached his Desire and was cut off from his heart, and 'his heart lies not of what it saw'.

15. Allah concealed him then made him draw near. He commissioned him and purified him. He made him thirsty and then fed him. He purified him and then chose him. He called him and then summoned him. He afflicted him and then came to his aid. He armed him and then put him in the saddle.

16. There was a distance of 'one bow span', and when he returned, he reached

his mark. When called he answered. Having seen, he effaced himself. Having drunk, he was satisfied. Having come near, he was awestruck. And having separated himself from cities and helpers, he was separated from consciences and looks and created traces (*athar*).

17. 'Your comrade did not go astray', he did not weaken or grow weary. His eye did not falter nor was he tired by a 'when' of pure duration.

18. 'Your comrade did not go astray' in his contemplation of Us. He did not pass beyond in visiting Us, nor transgress in Our message. He did not compare Us to others in his treatment of Us. He did not deviate in the garden of *dhikr* in contemplation of Us, nor go astray in roaming in *fikr* (reflection).

19. Rather he remembered Allah in his breaths and blinks of the eye, and was resigned to Him in afflictions and thankful for his gifts.

20. 'This is naught but a revelation revealed', from the Light to the Light.

21. Change your speech! Absent yourself from illusions, raise your feet high from mankind and creatures! Speak of Him with measure and harmony! Be passionate and lost in rapture. Discover—that you might fly beyond the mountains and the fields, the mountains of cognizance and the hills of security, in order to see He whom you regard. And so the legal fast is ended on coming to the Sacred House.

22. Then he drew nigh to Allah like the one who is going to enter the Intention. Then he announced that it is forbidden. It is like a barrier rather than impotence. He passed from the Station of Cleansing to the Station of Reproach and from the Station of Reproach

to the Station of Proximity. He went nigh searching and he returned fleeing. He went nigh invoking and he returned a herald. He drew nigh answering and returned invested with Divine Nearness. He drew nigh as a witness and returned a contemplative.

23. The distance between them was 'two bow spans'. He hit the mark of 'where' with the arrow of 'between' (*ayn* and *bayn*). He stated that there were two bow spans to specify the exact place, and 'or' because of the un-delineated nature of Essence, 'a little closer' in the Essence of the Essence.

24. The Master of the Extraordinary Al-Husayn ibn Mansur Al-Hallaj said:

25. 'I do not believe that our expression here will be comprehensible except to the one who has arrived at the second bow span which is beyond the Tablet of Forms (*lawh mahfuz*).'

26. There are letters that are used that are no longer letters of Arabic or Farsi.

27. Except one letter only and that letter is the *mim*, which is the letter signifying 'what he revealed'.

28. The *mim* designated 'The Last'.

29. The *mim* is also the string of the First. The first bow span is the Kingdom of Might (*jabrut*) and the second is the Kingdom of Sovereignty (*malakut*), and the Kingdom of the Attributes is the string of the two kingdoms. And the Kingdom of the Essence of Intimate (specific) Illumination (*tajalli khass*) is the arrow of the Absolute and the arrow of the two spans.

30. It comes from the One who kindles the fire of Illumination.

31. He said that the adequate form of speech is the speech that evokes the sense of that which is drawing near. The Author of the meaning is the Truth of Allah, not the method of His creation. This nearing is only obtained in the circle of vigorous exactitude.

32. Truth and the Truth of Truths is found in the finest distinctions, from previous experiences, by means of an antidote made by one who loves, in consideration of calamities and the discernment of distinctions, and it is by a word of deliverance. This is the path of the elect in respect to individuals, and the nearing is seen as a vast area so that the knower who has followed the observed paths of prophetic tradition may understand.

33. The Master of Yathrib, peace be upon him, proclaimed the glory of the one who possesses the most excellent of graces, inviolable, preserved in a 'hidden Book', as He mentioned in a visible book, 'in a Book inscribed' on the meaning of the language of the birds, when He brought us there.

34. If you understand this, oh lover, understand that the Lord does not enter into conversation except with His own, or with the friends of His own.

35. To be one of His own is to have neither Master nor disciple, to be without preference or distinction or affectation or counsel, not having any 'his' or 'from him'. But rather what is in him is what is in him, but without there being an 'in him', as a desert without water in a desert without water, as a sign in a sign.

36. Public discourse translates its meanings, transplants his wishes, and his wish is seen from afar. His path is hard, his name is glorious, his form is unique, his knowledge is the denial of knowledge, his denial is his sole truth, his sin is his source of

confidence. His Name is his Path, and his outward characteristic is his burning, his attribute is Desire.

37. The Road (*shar'*) is his characteristic, the truths (*haqa'iq*) are his arena and his glory, selves are his portico, Shaytan is his teacher, every sociable being became his familiar animal, humanity is his conscience, obliteration is his glory, effacement is his subject of meditation, the bride is his garden, and the effacement of effacement is his palace.

38. His Masters are my refuge, their principles are my alarm, their volition is my request, their aid is my stopping place, their sorrows are my grief.

39. Their leaves are a drinking place, their sleeves are nothing but dust, their doctrine is the cornerstone of their state, and their state is impotence. But any other state would be an object of anger for Allah. So this is enough and success is up to Allah.

#### The Ta-Sin of Before Endless-Time and Equivocation

(For he who understands, in the understanding of the understanding relative to public discourse, what is legitimate with regard to intentions).

1. The Master Abu'l-Mughith, may Allah be merciful to him, said: 'There is no established mission except that of Iblis and Muhammad, peace be upon him, only Iblis fell from the Essence while Muhammad perceived the Essence of the Essence.'

2. It was said to Iblis, 'Prostrate yourself!' and to Muhammad, 'Look!' But Iblis did not prostrate himself, and Muhammad did not look, he did not turn to the right or the left, 'his eye swerved not, nor swept astray.'



3. As for Iblis, having announced his mission, he did not return to his first power.

4. And when Muhammad announced his mission, he returned to his power.

5. With this statement, 'It is in You that I am transported and on You that I fling myself,' and also, 'Oh You who turn the hearts,' and 'I do not know how to praise You as You should be praised.'

6. Among the inhabitants of heaven, there was no unitarian or worshipper like Iblis.

7. For Iblis there appeared the Divine Essence. He was prevented from even a blink of the eye of awareness, and he began to worship the Adored One in ascetic isolation.

8. He was cursed when he reached the double isolation, and he was questioned when he demanded the ultimate solitude.

9. Allah said to him: 'Prostrate yourself!!'  
He said: 'Not before another than You.'  
He said to him: 'Even if my curse falls on you?'  
He said: 'It will not punish me.'

10. 'My denial is to affirm your purity and my reason remains disordered in You. And what is Adam compared to You and who am I, Iblis, to differentiate from You!'

11. He fell into the Sea of Majesty, he became blind, and said: 'There is no path for me to other-than-You. I am a humble lover.'

He said to him: 'You have become proud.'  
He said: 'If there was one glance between us, it would have been enough to make me proud and imperious, but I am he who knew You in Before Endless-Time, "I am better than Him" because I have served You for a longer time. No one, in the two types of beings,

knows You better than I do! There was an intention of Yours in me, and an intention of mine in You, and both of them preceded Adam. If I prostrated before another than You, or if I did not prostrate, it would be necessary for me to return to my origin, since You created me of fire, and fire returns to fire, according to an equilibrium and choice which are Yours.

12. There is no distance from You for me, since I became certain that distance and nearness are one. For me, if I were left, your desertion would be my companion, so how much more are desertion and love truly one! Glory to You in Your Providence and in the Essence of your Inaccessibility for the pious worshipper who does not prostrate before any other than You.'

13. Musa met Iblis on the slope of Sinai and said to him: 'Oh Iblis, what prevented you from prostrating?'

He said: 'That which prevented me was my declaration of a Unique Beloved, and if I had prostrated I would have become like you, because you were only called upon once to "look at the mountain" and you looked. As for me, I was called upon a thousand times to prostrate myself to Adam and I did not prostrate myself because I stood by the Intention of my Declaration.'

14. Sayyidina Musa said: 'You abandoned a Command?'  
Iblis said: 'It was a test. Not a command.'  
Sayyidina Musa said: 'Without sin? But your face was deformed.'

Iblis replied: 'Oh Musa, that is but the ambiguity of appearances, while the spiritual state does not rely on it and does not change. Gnosis remains true even as it was at the beginning and does not change even if the individual changes.'

15. Sayyidina Musa said: 'Do you remember Him now?'

'Oh Musa, a pure mind does not have the need of memory—by it I am remembered and He is remembered. His remembrance is my remembrance, and my remembrance is His remembrance. How, when remembering ourselves, can we two be other than one? My service is now purer, my time more pleasant, my remembrance more glorious, because I served Him in the absolute for my good fortune, and now I serve Him for Himself.

16. I lifted greed from everything which prevents or defends for the sake of loss as well as gain. He isolated me, made me ecstatic, confused me, expelled me, so that I would no longer mix with the saints. He put me far from others because of my jealousy for Him alone. He deformed me, because He amazed me, and amazed me because He banished me. He banished me because I was a servant and put me in a forbidden state because of my companionship. He showed my lack of worth because I praised His Glory. He reduced me to a simple robe of *ihram* because of my *hijya*. He left me because of my union, He unified me because he cut me off. He cut me off because He had prevented my desire.

17. By His Truth I was not in error in respect to His decree, I did not refuse destiny. I did not care at all about the deformation of my face. I kept my equilibrium throughout these sentences.

18. If He punishes me with His fire for all of eternity I would not prostrate myself before anyone, and I would not abase myself before any person or body because I do not recognize any opposite with Him! My Declaration is that of the Sincere and I am one of those sincere in love.'

19. Al-Hallaj said: 'There are various theories regarding the spiritual states of Azazy/ (Iblis before his fall). One said that he was charged with a mission in heaven, and with a mission on earth. In heaven he preached to the Angels showing them good works, and on earth preaching to men and jinn showing them evil deeds.

20. Because one does not recognize things except by their opposites, as with fine white silk which can only be woven using black fabric behind it—so the Angel could show good actions and say symbolically: "If you do these you will be rewarded." But he who did not know evil before cannot recognize good.'

21. The Master Abu 'Umar Al-Hallaj said: 'I deliberated with Iblis and Pharaoh, the honour of the generous.

Iblis said: "If I had prostrated myself, I would have lost my name of honour."

Pharaoh said: "If I had believed in this Messenger I would have fallen from my rank of honour."

22. I said: "If I had disavowed my teaching and my speech, I would have fallen from the hall of honour."

23. When Iblis said, "I am better than him," then he could not see anyone other than himself. When Pharaoh said, "I know not that you have other Divinity than me," he did not recognize that any of his people could distinguish between the true and the false.

24. And I said: "If you do not know Him, then know His signs, I am His manifestation (*tajalli*) and I am the Truth! And this is because I have not ceased to realize the Truth!"

25. My companion is Iblis and my teacher is Pharaoh, Iblis was threatened with the fire and did not retract his allegation. Pharaoh was drowned in the Red Sea without

retracting his allegation or recognizing any mediator. But he said, "I believe that there is no Divinity but He in whom the tribe of Israel believe," and do you not see that Allah opposed Jibril in His glory? He said, "Why did you fill your mouth with sand?"

26. And I was killed, crucified, my hands and feet cut off without retracting my assertion.

27. The name of Iblis was derived from his first name, Azazyl, in which were changed: the 'ayn representing the amplitude of his endeavour, the zay, representing the growing frequency of his visits, the alif – his way in His rank, the second zay – his asceticism in His rank, and the ya – his wandering walk to his agony, and lam – his obstinacy in his pain.

28. He said to him: "You do not prostrate, oh contemptible one!"

He said: "Say rather lover, for a lover is despised, so you call me despicable. I have read in a Manifest Book, oh All-Powerful and Steadfast, that this would happen to me. So how could I lower myself before Adam when you created him of earth and me from fire? These two opposites cannot agree. And I have served you longer, and have a greater virtue and a vaster knowledge and a more perfect activity."

29. Allah, may He be praised, said to him: "The choice is mine, not yours."

He said: "All choices and my choice itself are yours, because You had already chosen for me, oh Creator, if you prevented me from prostrating before him You were the cause of the prevention. If I err in speech, You do not leave me because You are the All-Hearing. If You had willed that I prostrate before him, I would have been obedient. I do not know anyone among the Wise who knows you better than I do."

30. Do not blame me, the idea of censure is distant from me, reward me then, my master, for I am alone. If, in being a promise, Your promise is truly the Truth in principle, the principle of my vocation is strong indeed. He who wishes to write this declaration of mine, read it, and know that I am a martyr!

31. Oh my brother! He was called Azazyl because he was dismissed, dismissed from his primitive purity. He did not return from his origin to his end, because he did not go out from his end, he left, cursed from his origin.

32. His attempt to go out miscarried because of the fixity of his kindling. He found himself between the fire of his resting place and the light of his high position.

33. The source on the plain is a low-lying lake. He was tormented by thirst in the place where there was abundance. He cried his pain because the fire burned him, and his fear was nothing but simulation and his blindness is vanity and—here he is!

34. Oh my brother! If you have understood, you have considered the narrow pass in its very narrowness and you have represented the imagination to your self in its very unreality, and you have returned distressed and full of anxiety.

35. The most alert of the Knowers remained silent on Iblis and the gnostics did not have the strength to explain that which they had learned. Iblis was stronger than them in adoration and nearer than them to the Presence of the Essence. He exerted himself more and was more loyal to the covenant and was closer to them than the Adored.

36. The other Angels prostrated before Adam for support, and Iblis refused, because he had been in contemplation for a long time already.

37. But his case became confused and his thoughts went astray, so he said: "I am better than him." He remained in the veil and did not value the dust, and brought damnation on himself for the After-Endless-Time of After-Endless-Time.'

#### The Ta-Sin of the Divine Will



1. Here is the representation of the volition of Allah. The first circle is the Decree of Allah (*mashi'a*) and the second is His Wisdom, and the third is His Power, and the fourth is His Before-Endless-Time Knowledge.

2. Iblis said: 'If I entered the first circle I would have to undergo the test of the second, and if I passed into the second I would have to undergo the test of the third. And if I passed into the third I would have to undergo the test of the fourth.'

3. So—no, no, no, no, and no! Even if I rested on my first, no I would have been cursed until I uttered the second, and rejected until I uttered the third, so what does the fourth matter to me?

4. If I had known that prostrating would have saved me I would have prostrated. But I knew that after that circle were other circles. I said to myself in conjecture, "if I come out safe from this circle, how will I come out of the second, the third, and the fourth?"

5. So the *Alif* of the fifth *La* is 'He, the Living God.'

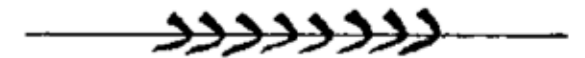
#### The Ta-Sin of the Declaration of Unity

1. He is Allah the Living.

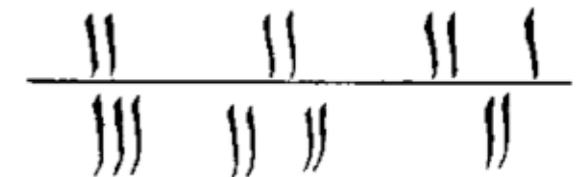
2. Allah is One, Unique, Alone and testified as One.

3. Both are One and the profession of Unity of the One are in Him and from Him.

4. From Him comes the distance that separates others from His unity. It can be represented thus:



5. The knowledge of Tawhid is an autonomous abstract cognizance, and is represented thus:



6. The Tawhid is an attribute of the created subject who pronounces it, and it is not an attribute of the Object professed as one.

7. If I being created say 'I', did I make Him also say 'I'? My Tawhid comes from me then, not from Him. He is free (*munazzah*) of me and my Tawhid.

8. If I say, 'The Tawhid returns to the one who professes it,' then I make it a created thing.

9. If I say, 'No, the Tawhid comes from the Object it testifies to,' then what relation attaches the unifier to his profession of Unity?

10. If I say, 'Then the Tawhid is a relation which attaches the Object to the subject,' then I have turned this into a logical definition.

**Diagrams:** The Tawhid is separate from Allah, and this symbol of *wahdahiya* is represented by *alif* with several *dals* in it. The *alif* being the Essence and the *dals* the Attributes.

**The uniqueness:** The primordial *alif* of the Essence with the other *alifs*, which are the created forms, subsists on the primal *alif*.

### The Ta-Sin of the Self-Awarenesses in Tawhid

1. The attribute of the Ta-Sin of the self-awareness in Tawhid is such:



(*Alif* – the Unity, Tawhid, *Hamza* – the self-awarenesses, some on one side, some on the other. 'Ayn at beginning and end—The Essence).

The self-awarenesses proceed from Him and return to Him, operate in Him, but they are not logically necessary.

2. The real subject of the Tawhid moves across the multiplicity of subjects because He is not included in the subject, nor in the object, nor in the pronouns of the proposition. Its pronominal suffix does not belong to its Object, its possessive 'h' is His 'Ah' and not the other 'h', which does not make us unitarians.

3. If I say of this 'h', 'wah!' the others say to me, 'Alas.'

4. These are epithets and specifications and a demonstrative allusion pierces this so we could see Allah through the substantive conditional.

5. All human individualities are 'like a building well compacted'. It is a definition and the Unity of Allah does not make exception to the definition. But every definition is a limitation, and the attributes of a limitation apply to a limited object. However, the object of Tawhid does not admit of limitation.

6. The Truth (*Al-Haqq*) itself is none other than the abode of Allah, not necessarily Allah.

7. Saying the Tawhid does not realize it because the syntactical role of a term and its proper sense do not mix with each other when it concerns an appended term. So how can they be mixed when it concerns Allah?

8. If I saw that 'the Tawhid emanates from Him', then I double the Divine Essence, and I make an emanation of itself, co-existent with it, being and not being this Essence at the same time.

9. If I say that it was hidden in Allah, and He manifests it, how was it hidden where there is no 'how' or 'what' or 'this', and there is no place ('where') contained in Him.

10. Because 'in this' is a creation of Allah, as is 'where'.

11. That which supports an accident is not without a substance. That which is not separated from a body is not without some part of a body. That which is not separated from a spirit is not without some part of a spirit. The Tawhid is therefore an assimilator.

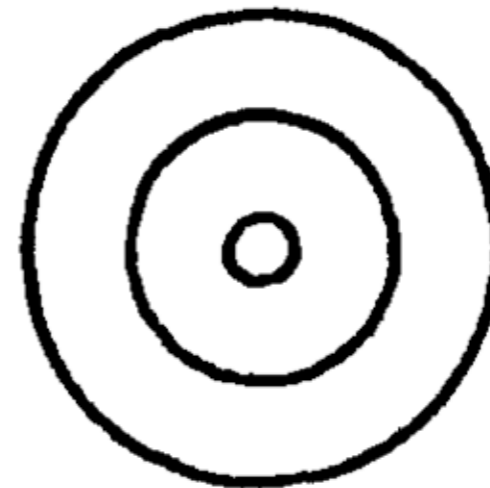
12. We return then, beyond this to the centre (of our Object) and isolate it from adjunctions, assimilations, qualifications, pulverizations and attributions.

13. The first circle (in the next diagram) comprises the actions of Allah, the second comprises their traces and these are two circles of the created.

14. The central point symbolizes the Tawhid, but it is not the Tawhid. If not, how would it be separable from the circle?

### The Ta-Sin of the Disconnection-from-Forms

1. This is the circle of the allegory and this is the figure which represents it.



2. This is the whole which can give us phrases and sentences, and to the adepts, cults and sects, doctrines and methods.

3. The first circle is the literal sense, and the second is the inner sense, and the third is the allusion.

4. This is the totality of things, created and composed, answered, trodden upon, seized on, contradicted, deceived and stupefied.

5. He circulates in the pronoun 'we' of subjects of persons. Like an arrow he penetrates them, provides for them, surprises them, and overturns them, and He amazes them in crossing them.

6. Here is the totality of created substances and qualities. Allah has nothing to do with these fables.

7. If I say, 'He is He', that statement is not the Tawhid.

8. If I say that the Tawhid of Allah is valid, they will tell me, 'no doubt!'

9. If I say, 'without time', they will say, 'Then is the meaning of Tawhid a simile?' But there is no comparison when describing Allah. Your Tawhid is without relation to Allah or to creation because the fact of expressing the number of times introduces a limiting condition. In so doing you have added a sense to Tawhid, as if it were contingent. However, the contingent is not an attribute of Allah. His Essence is unique. And both Truth and what is unreal cannot emanate from the Essence of the Essence.

10. If I say, 'The Tawhid is the word itself', the word is an attribute of the Essence not the Essence itself.

11. If I say, 'Tawhid means that Allah wishes to be One', the diving volition is an attribute of the Essence and volitions are created.

12. If I say, 'Allah is the Tawhid of Essence proclaimed to itself,' then I make the Essence Tawhid which can be spoken by us.

13. If I say, 'No, it is not the Essence,' then do I say that Tawhid is created?

14. If I say, 'The name and the object named are One,' then what sense does Tawhid have?

15. If I say, 'Allah is Allah,' then do I say that Allah is the Essence of the Essence and that He is He?





Dawod in his studio, Västervik, Sweden, 2013  
Photography by Svante Bäck

داود في مرسمه، فسترفيك، السويد، 2013،  
التصوير الفوتوغرافي من قبل سفانته بك



Born in 1957, Baghdad

#### Education

**1979**  
Diploma in Graphic Art, Institute of Fine Arts, Baghdad

**1987**  
Masters in Graphic Art, Art Academy, Łódź

**1991**  
Animation, Animations House, Eksjö

#### Solo Exhibitions

**1982**  
Art Academy, Łódź

**1983**  
Gallery BWA, Łódź

**1988**  
Gallery Linjen, Västervik  
Gallery Kretsen, Södertälje

**1989**  
Kulturhuset, Västervik

**1991**  
Gallery Linjen, Västervik  
Gallery Ängeln, Lund

**1992**  
Gallery T, Łódź

**1996**  
Kulturhuset, Västervik  
Galleri Majoren, Sollefteå

**1997**  
Arch Gallery, Kalmar  
Galleri C Hjärne, Helsingborg

**2000**  
Arch Gallery, Kalmar  
Galleri Storgatan 31, Västervik

**2002**  
Oskarshamns Konsthall, Oskarshamn  
Falun City Library, Falun  
Konsthall, Vetlanda

**2003**  
*Artist of the Month*, Kalmar Art Museum, Kalmar

**2004**  
Högsby Konsthall, Högsby

**2007**  
Gallery Storgatan 31, Västervik

**2008**  
Gallery 55, Västervik

**2009**  
*Artist of the Month*, Torsås Art Association, Torsås

**2010**  
Karim Gallery, Amman

**2012**  
*Amar Dawod: Painting and Svante Bäck: Photography* (joint exhibition), Lilla Galleriet, Västervik

**2013**  
Teater Galleriat, Kalmar  
*Amar Dawod: Al-Hallaj and The Tawasin*, Meem Gallery, Dubai

#### Group Exhibitions

**1983**  
*Small Graphic Form*, Gallery BWA, Łódź  
*Xylon 9*, Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur  
International Biennial, *Petit Format de Papier*, Musée du Petit Format, Nismes

**1984**  
Graphics Triennial 10, Kraków

**1985**  
UMC Fine Art Center, Boulder, Colorado

**1986**  
Graphics Triennial 11, Kraków

**1987**  
*Xylon 10*, Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur  
International Biennial, *Petit Format de Papier*, Musée du Petit Format, Nismes

**1989**  
Graphics Triennial, Fredrikstad  
International Biennial, *Petit Format de Papier*, Musée du Petit Format, Nismes

**1990**  
*Xylon 11*, Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur

International Graphics Triennial, Intergrafik 90, Berlin

**1991**  
Premio Internazionale di Biella per l'Incisione, Biella, Italy  
Biennial of Graphic Art, Ljubljana  
International Biennial, *Petit Format de Papier*, Musée du Petit Format, Nismes

**1992**  
Graphics Triennial, Fredrikstad  
The Fifth International Drawing Triennial, Wrocław

**1994**  
*Relief, Plan, Images*, Centre de la Gravure et de l'Image Imprimée, La Louvière

**1997**  
*Bilder vom Menschen*, Xylon Museum + Werkstätten, Schwetzingen

**1998**  
International Biennial, *Petit format de Papier*, Musée du Petit Format, Nismes

**2000**  
Fifth Chamalières Triennial, Chamalières

**2002**  
International Biennial, *Petit Format de Papier*, Musée du Petit Format, Nismes

**2003**  
*A propos de "La Résurrection" de Piero della Francesca*, Musée du Petit Format, Tuscany and Viroinval  
*Arab Illustrators of Children's Books*, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris

**2004**  
International Biennial, *Petit Format de Papier*, Musée du Petit Format, Nismes

2005

*Dafatir. Contemporary Iraqi Book Art* (travelling exhibition), University of North Texas Art Gallery, Denton, Texas  
*Five Artists from Västervik*, Eskjö Museum, Eskjö

2006

*Dafatir. Contemporary Iraqi Book Art* (travelling exhibition), Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota; Minnesota Center for Book Arts, Minneapolis, Minnesota; University of Texas, El Paso, Texas; Daura Gallery, Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, Virginia  
*Summer of Love*, Virserums Konsthall, Virserum  
Light Installation, Light Project, Kalmar Gränsöskonst, Ronneby  
Kulturcentrum, Ronneby  
International Biennial, *Petit Format de Papier*, Musée du Petit Format, Nismes

2007

*Paintings by Lillemor Bokström, Amar Dawod and Jan Wiberg*, Gallery Järnet, Västervik  
*Contemporary Iraqi Art*, Pomegranate Gallery, New York  
*Dafatir. Contemporary Iraqi Book Art* (travelling exhibition), The Center for Book Arts, New York; Minneapolis Athenaeum, Minneapolis, Minnesota; NIU Art Museum, DeKalb, Illinois; The Jaffe Centre for Book Arts, Boca Raton, Florida

2008

*(H)ÄR – Art from the Kalmar Region*, Kalmar Art Museum, Kalmar  
*Dafatir. Contemporary Iraqi Book Art*, Denison University, Granville, Ohio

2009

*Three Scholarship Recipients*, Konstrum Gallery, Västervik  
*Autumn Salon*, Gamleby Gallery, Västervik

2010

*Beyond the War*, Leila Heller Gallery, New York

2011

*Art in Iraq Today: Part III* (with Himat M. Ali and Delair Shaker), Meem Gallery, Dubai  
*Art in Iraq Today: Conclusion*, Meem Gallery, Dubai

2012

*Art in Iraq Today*, Beirut Exhibition Center, Beirut

Awards

1984

Honourable Mention, Kraków

1986

Honourable Mention, Kraków

1989

Graphics Triennial Award, Fredrikstad

2007

Grant, Artist Town, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris

2010, 2011, 2012

Grant, Swedish Art Grants Committee, Sweden

## FURTHER READING

Samar Faruqi. 'Art as a "Psychological Outlet": Expatriation and the Work of Contemporary Iraqi Artists.' *Art in Iraq Today*. Dia Azzawi, Charles Pocock, and Samar Faruqi, eds. Milan and Dubai, 2011.

Mansur al-Hallaj. *Diwān*. Louis Massignon, ed. Paris, 1955.

—. *Kitāb al-Tawāsīn*. Louis Massignon, ed. Paris, 1913.

—. *The Tawasin of Mansur al-Hallaj*. Aisha Abd ar-Rahman at-Tarjumana (Aisha Bewley), trans. Berkeley, CA, 1974.

Ryszard Hunger. *The Works of Amar Salman Dawod*. Exhibition catalogue. Gallery BWA, Łódź, 1984.

Karim Gallery. *Arabic Mood*. Exhibition catalogue. Amman, 2010.

Herbert W. Mason. *Al-Hallaj*. London & NY, 1995.

—. *The Death of al-Hallaj: A Dramatic Narrative*. Notre Dame, IN, 1979.

Louis Massignon, ed. *Akhbār al-Hallāj*. Paris, 1957.

—. *The Passion of al-Hallaj: Mystic and Martyr of Islam*. Herbert W. Mason, trans. Princeton, NJ, 1982.

Charles Pocock, Samar Faruqi, and Noura Haggag, eds. *Art in Iraq Today: Part III*. Exhibition catalogue. Meem Gallery, 7 February–3 March. Dubai, 2011.

'Abd al-Sabur Salah. *Murder in Baghdad (Ma'sat al-Hallāj)*. Khalil I. Semaan, trans. Prize-winning verse play in two acts. Leiden, 1972.

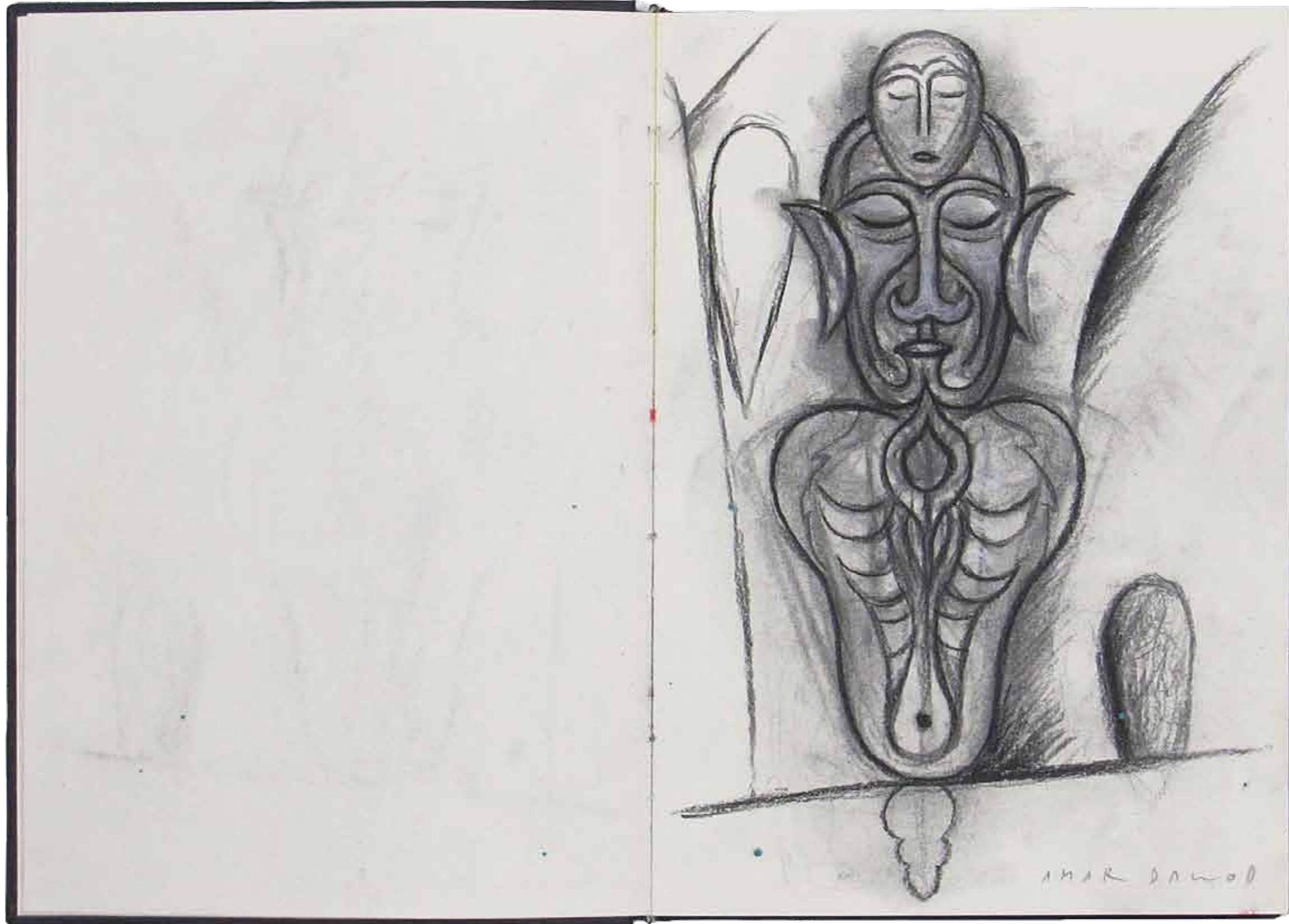
Nada M. Shabout. 'In Lieu of the Sublime: Himat M. Ali, Amar Dawod and Delair Shaker.' *Art in Iraq Today*. Dia Azzawi, Charles Pocock, and Samar Faruqi, eds. Milan and Dubai, 2011.

Farouk Yousif. 'Min Alameer Alsagheer ela Ghada' ala Alushb. *Risala min Rasam'* (From the Little Prince to a Lunch on the Grass: A Message from an Artist). *Thaqafat*, no. 13 (Bahrain, 2005): 149.

# PREPARATORY SKETCHES

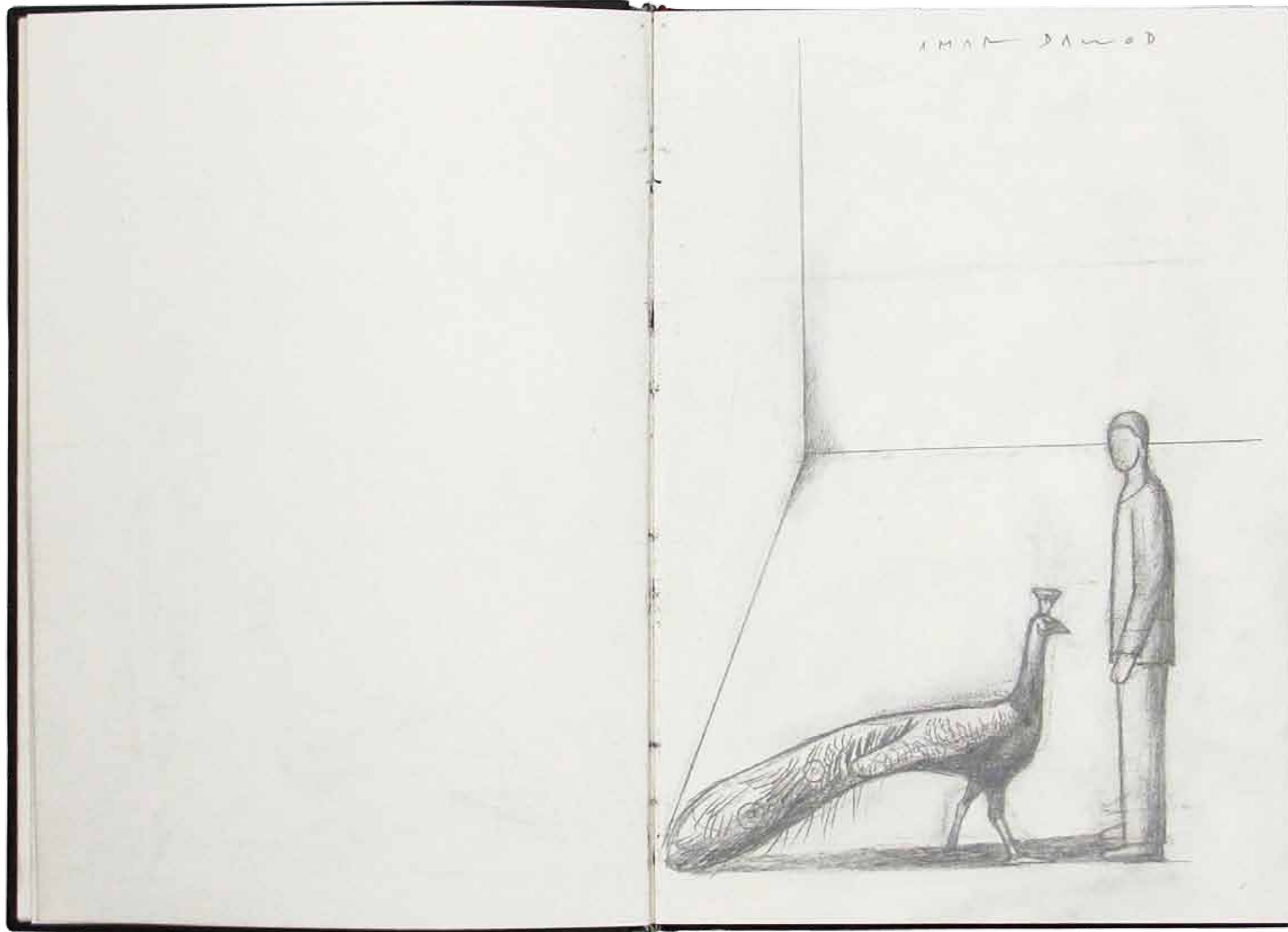


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Charcoal



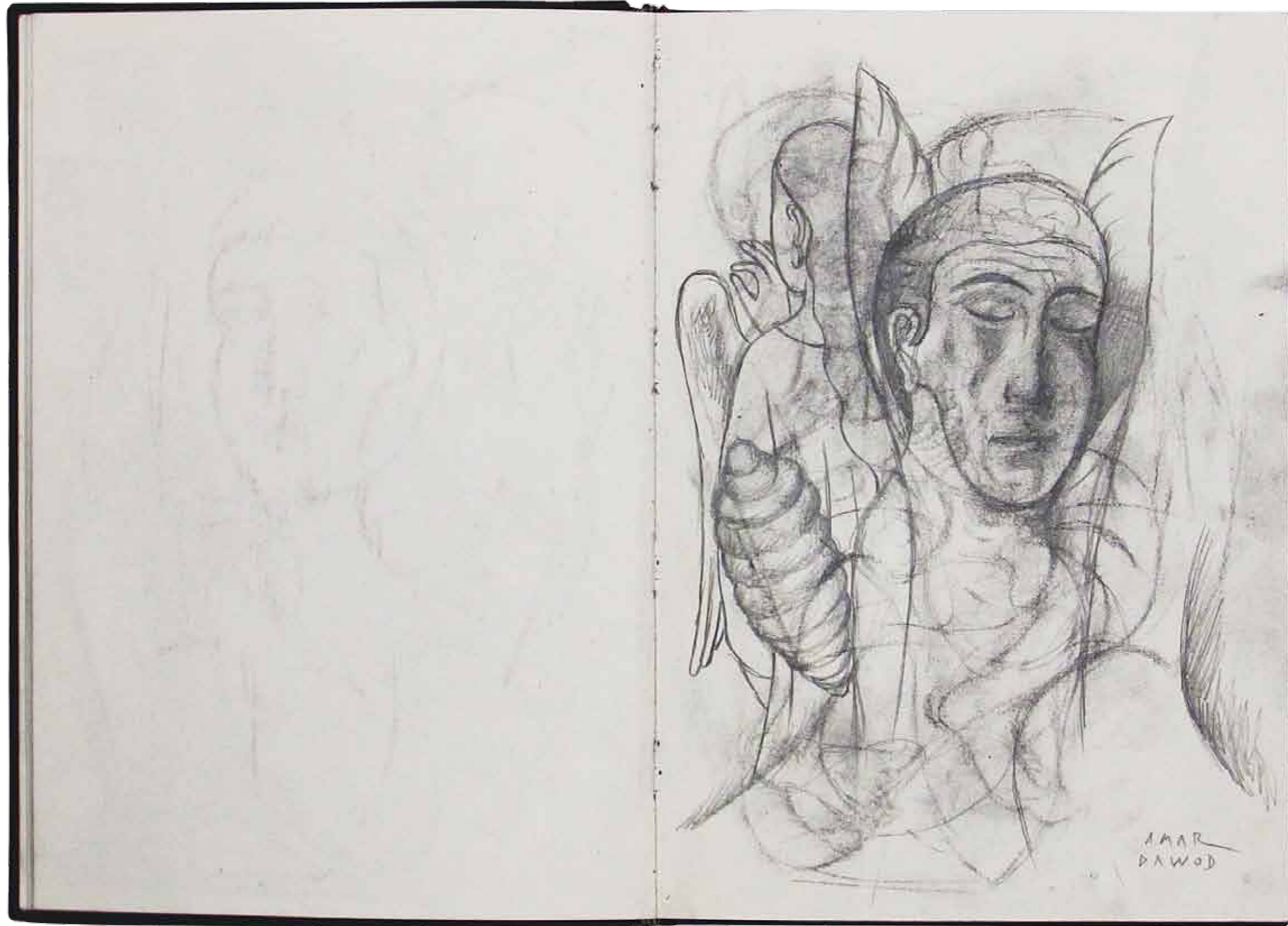
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قلم فحم

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Pencil



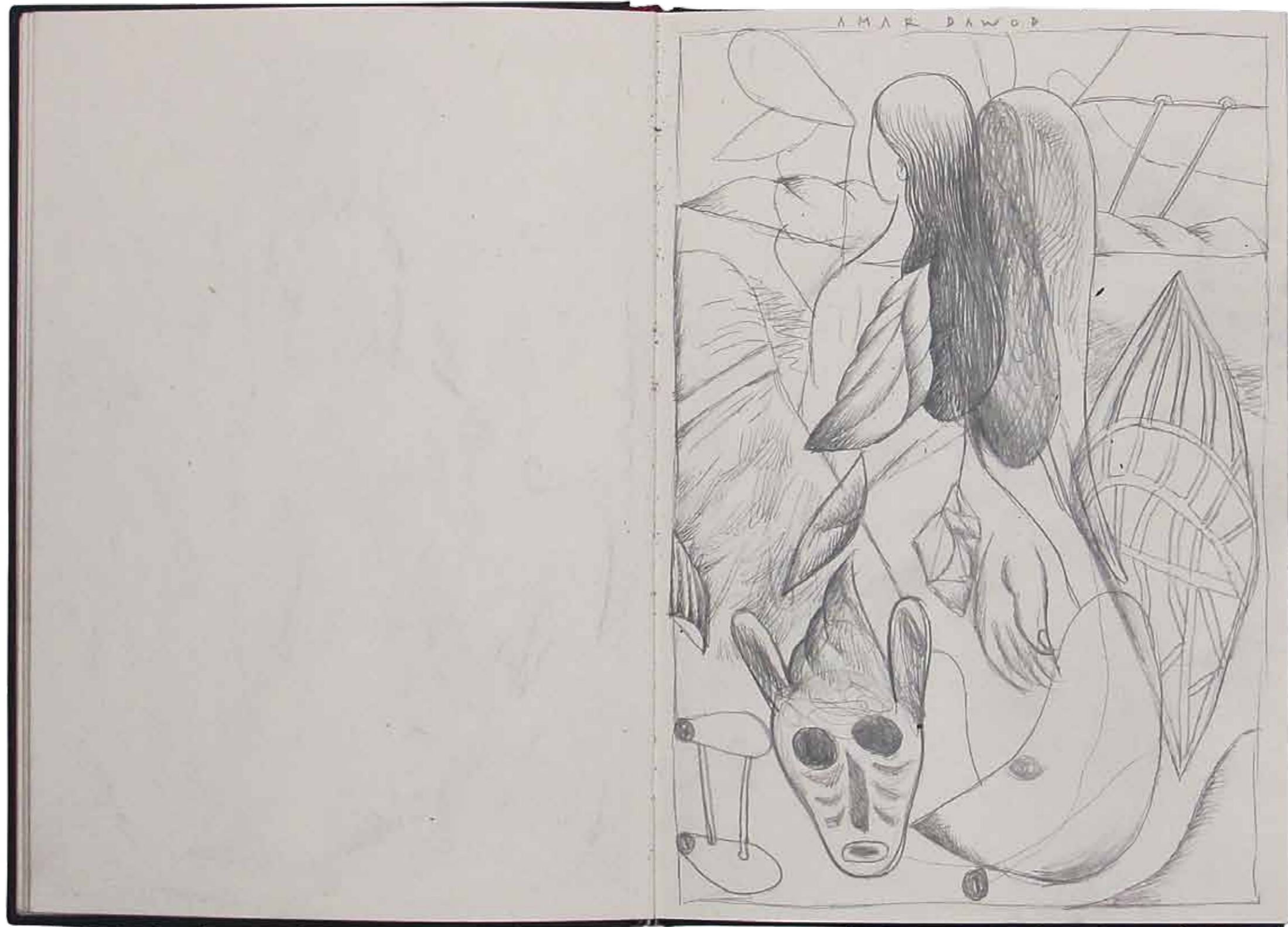
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قلم رصاص

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Charcoal and pencil



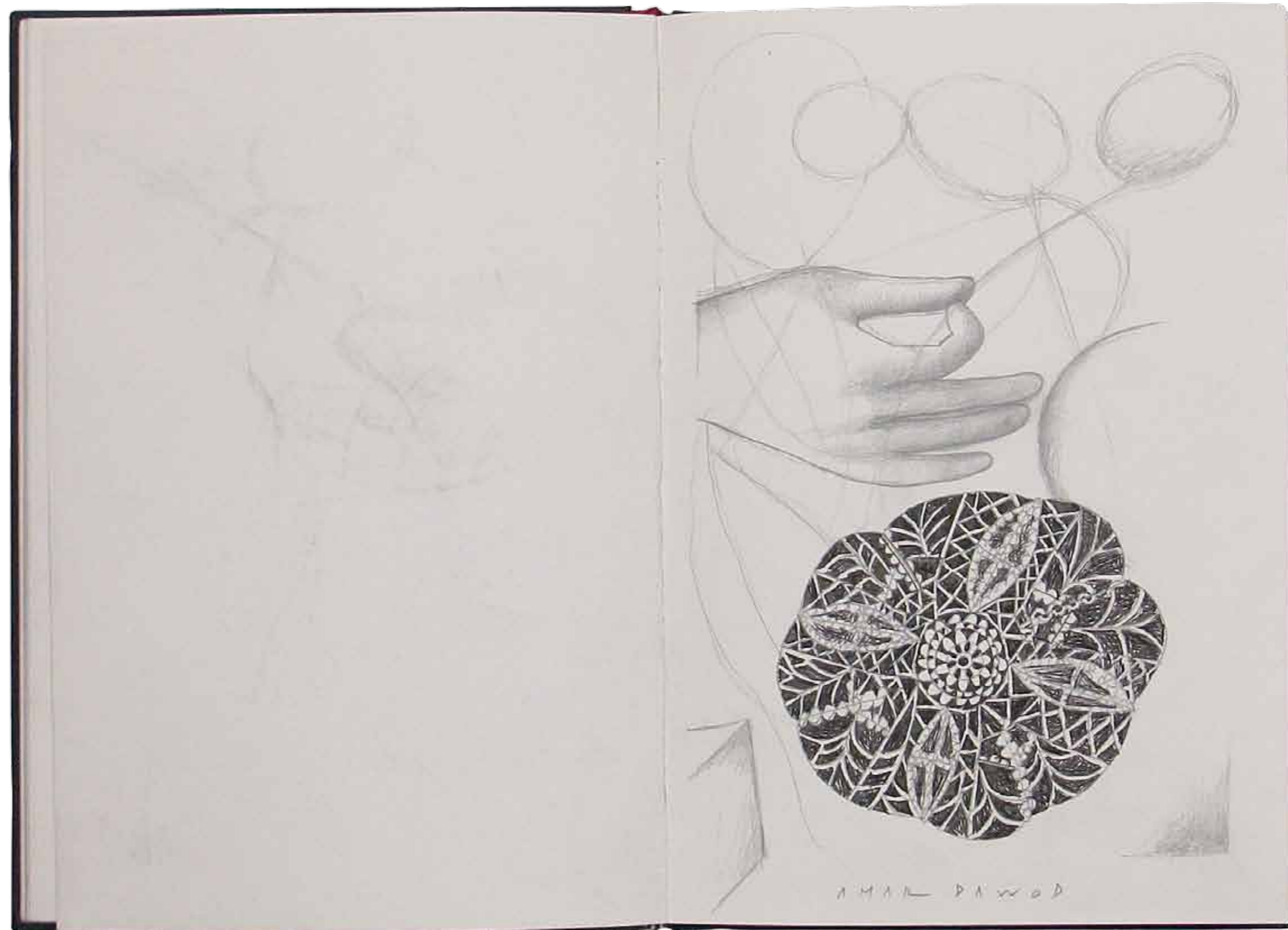
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قلم فحم وورصاص

Sketch  
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Pencil



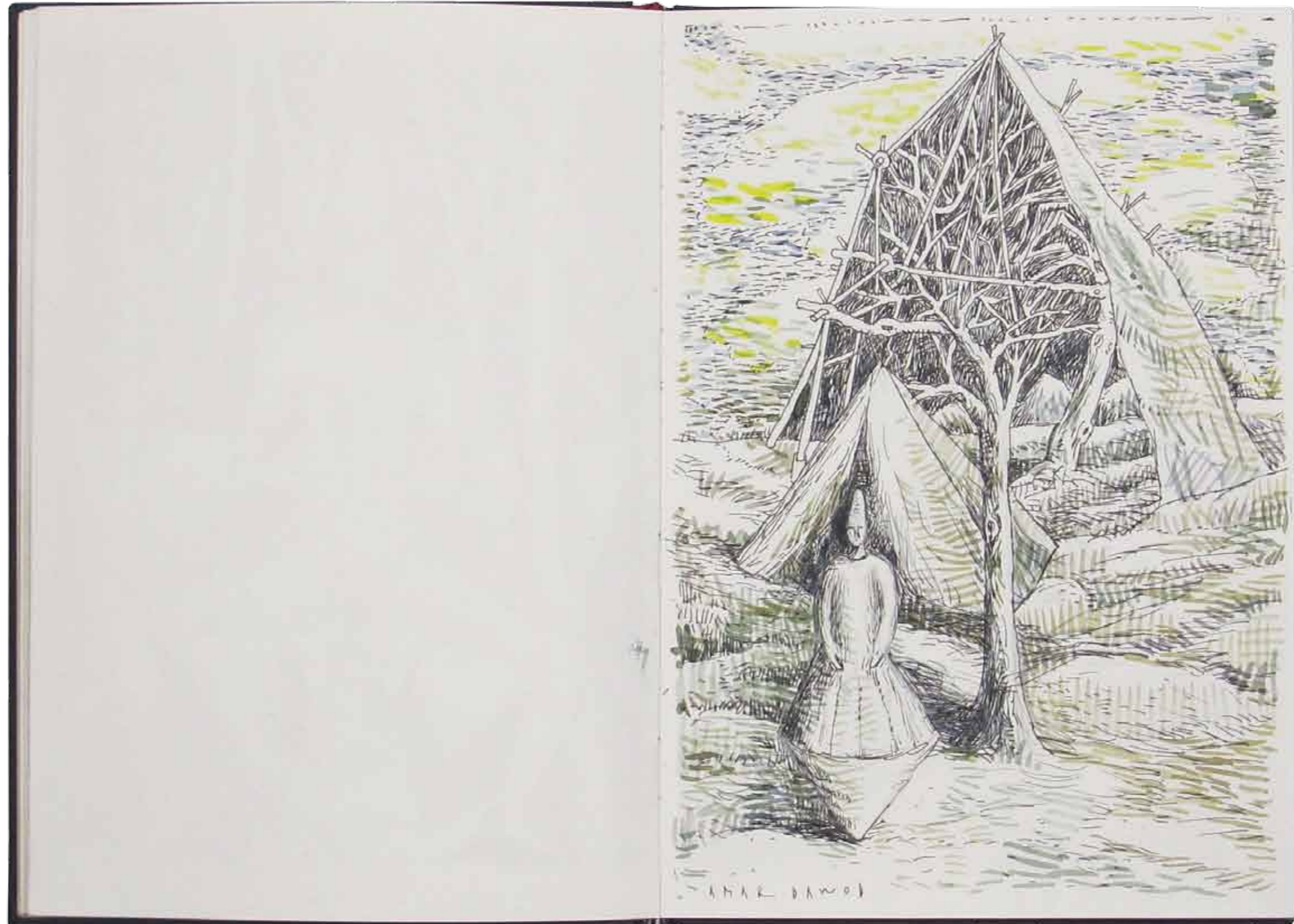
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قلم رصاص

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Pencil and ink



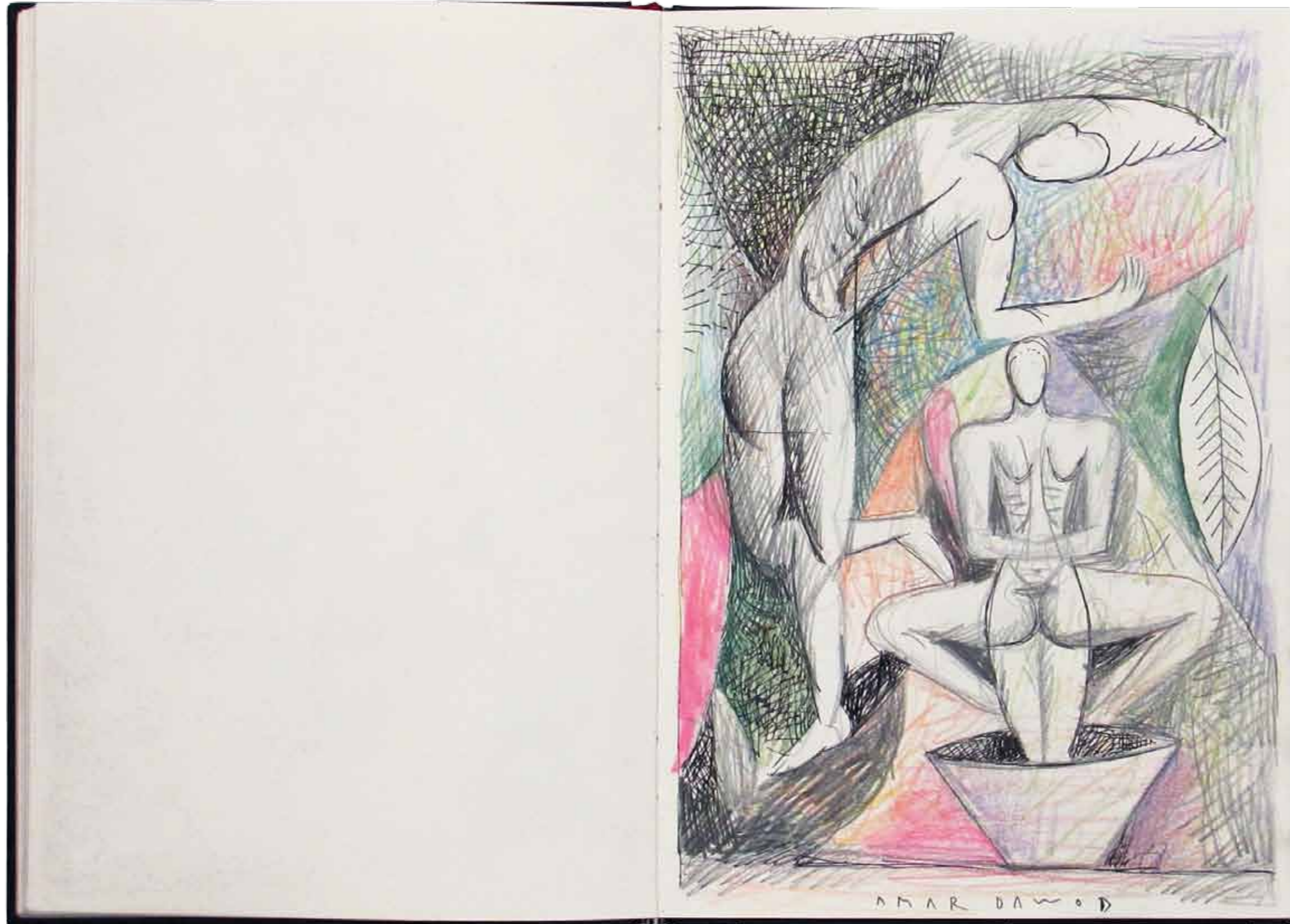
رسم تحضيري  
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قلم رصاص وحبير

Sketch  
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Pen and watercolour



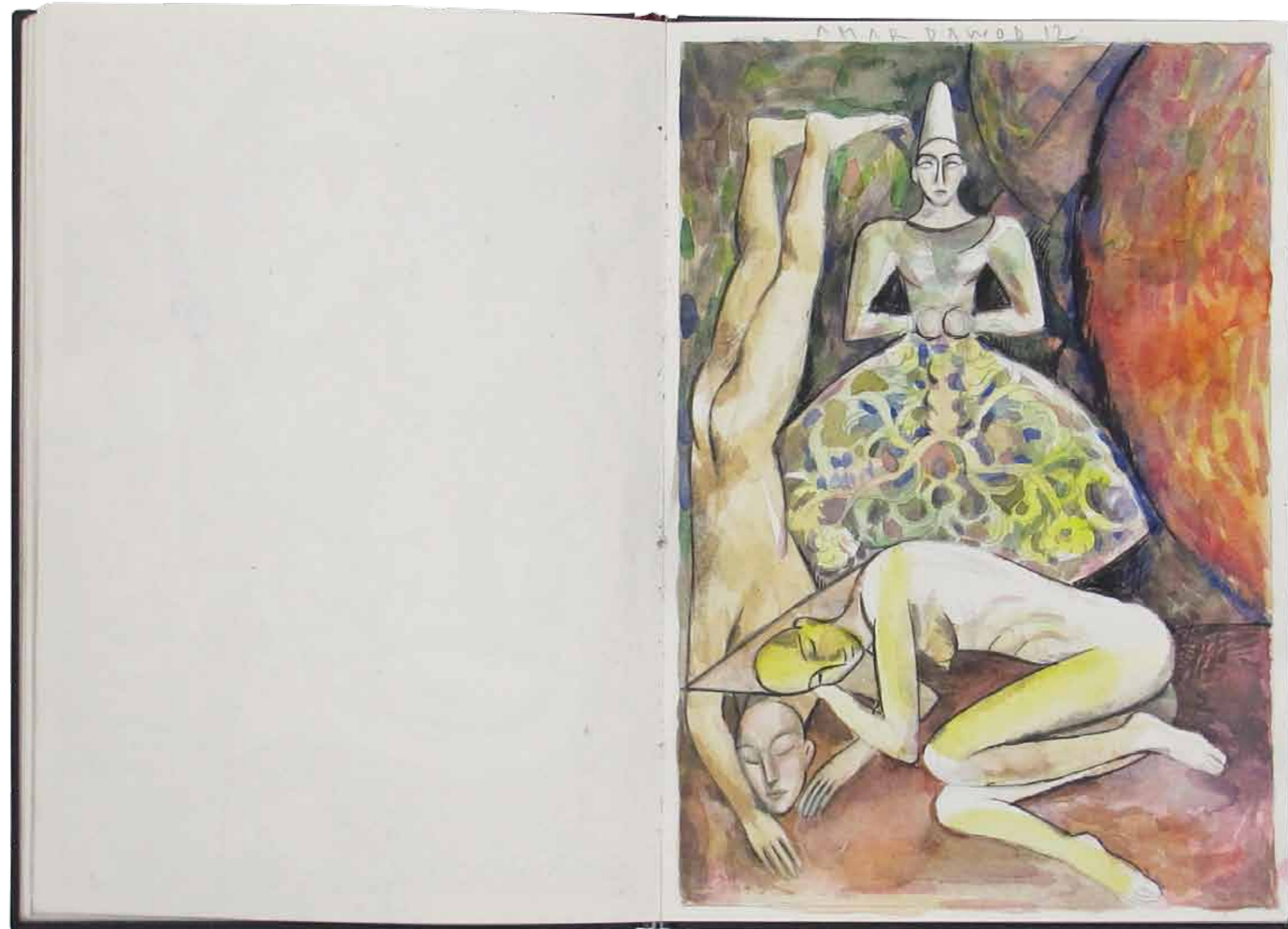
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قلم حبر والوان مائية

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Pencil and coloured pencil



رسم تحضيري  
صفحة من كتاب منجز، 2012  
قلم رصاص واقلام ملونة

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Watercolour



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الوان مائية

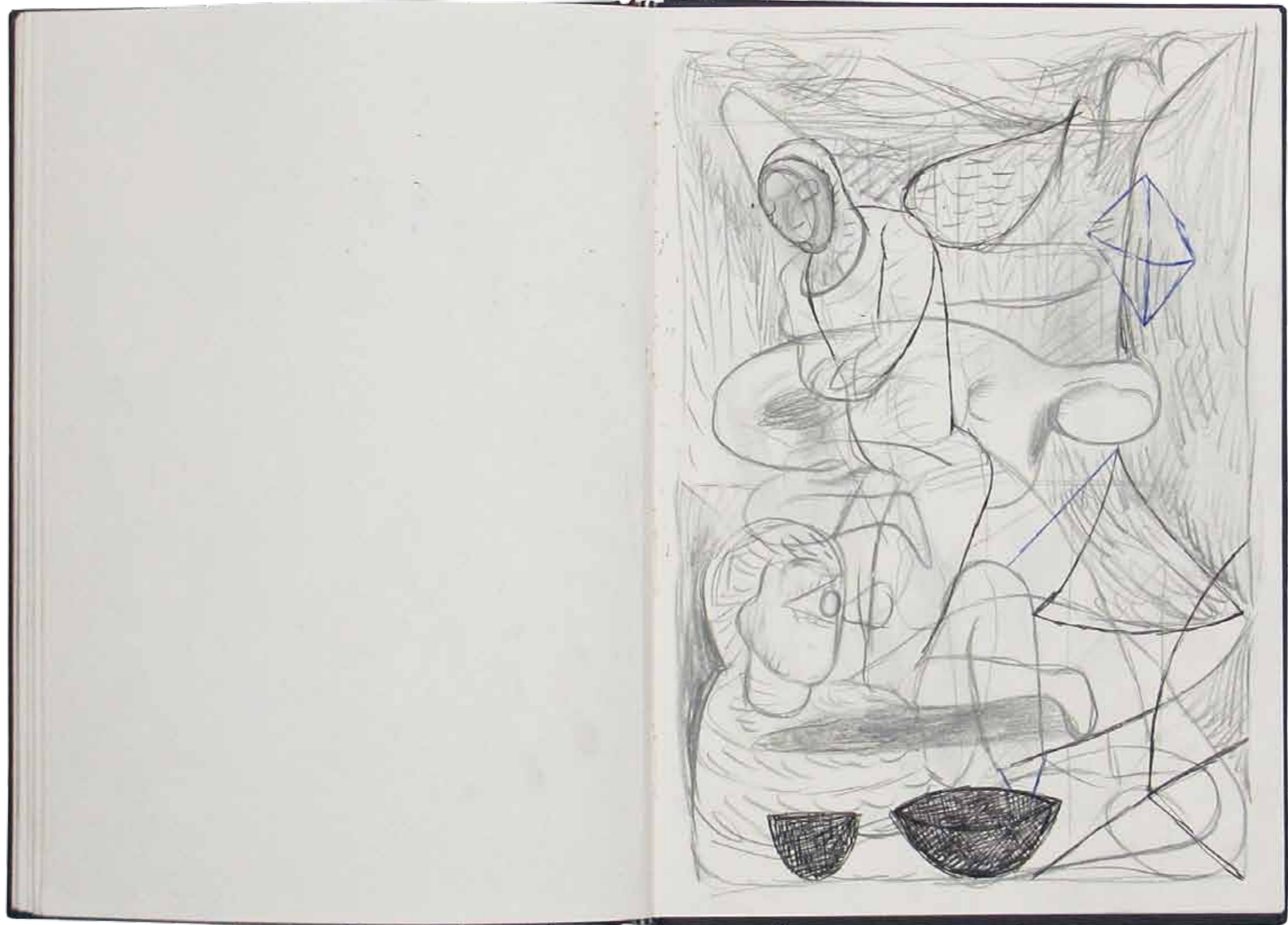


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Charcoal and pencil



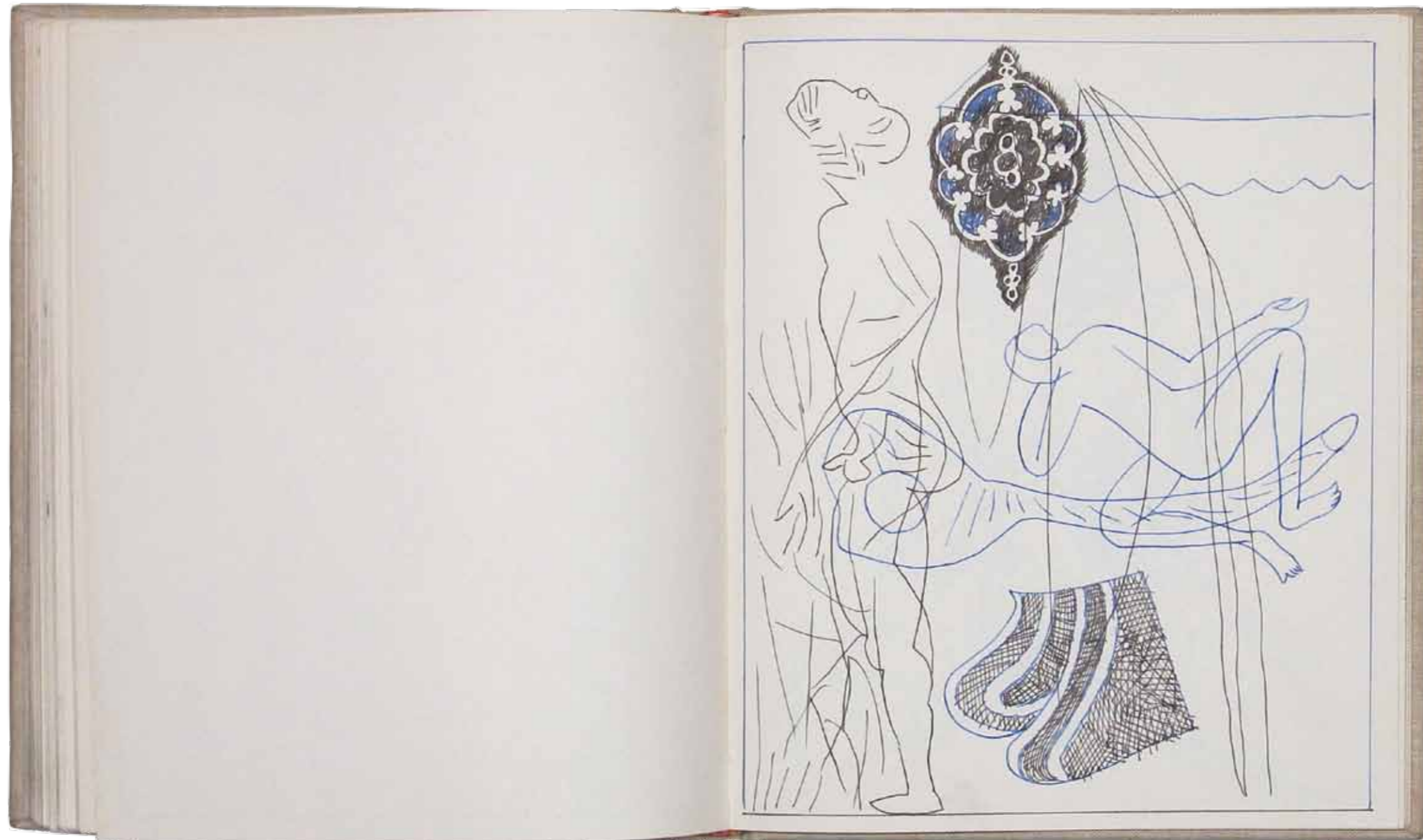
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قلم فحم

Sketch  
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Pencil



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صفحة من كتاب منجز، 2012  
قلم رصاص

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Black and blue ink



رسم تحضيري  
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قلم حبر اسود وازرق

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قلم حبر

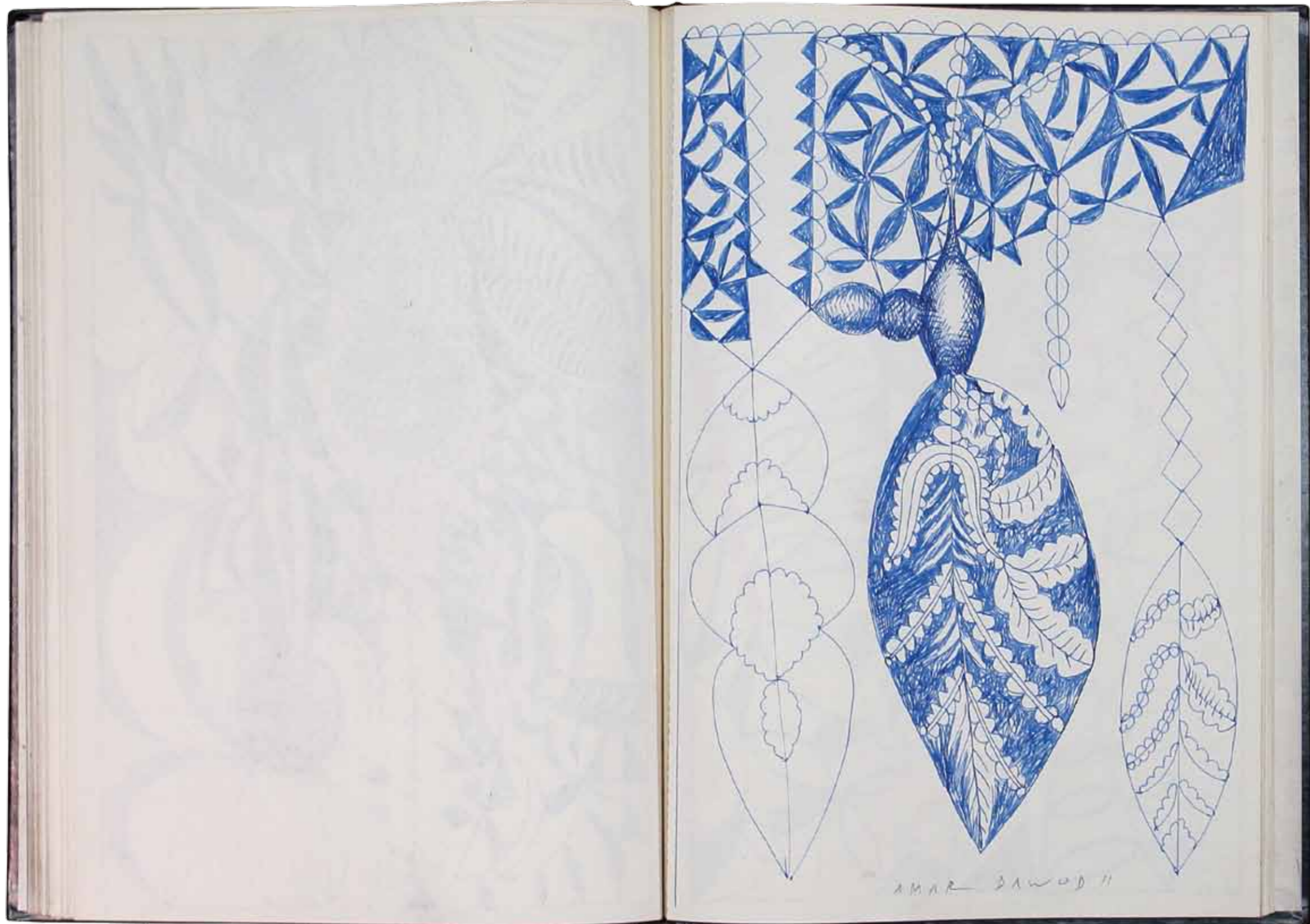
Sketch  
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completed book, 2011  
Ink pen



AMAR DAWOOD

رسم تحضيري  
صفحة من كتاب منجز، 2011  
بقلم حر

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2011  
Ink pen



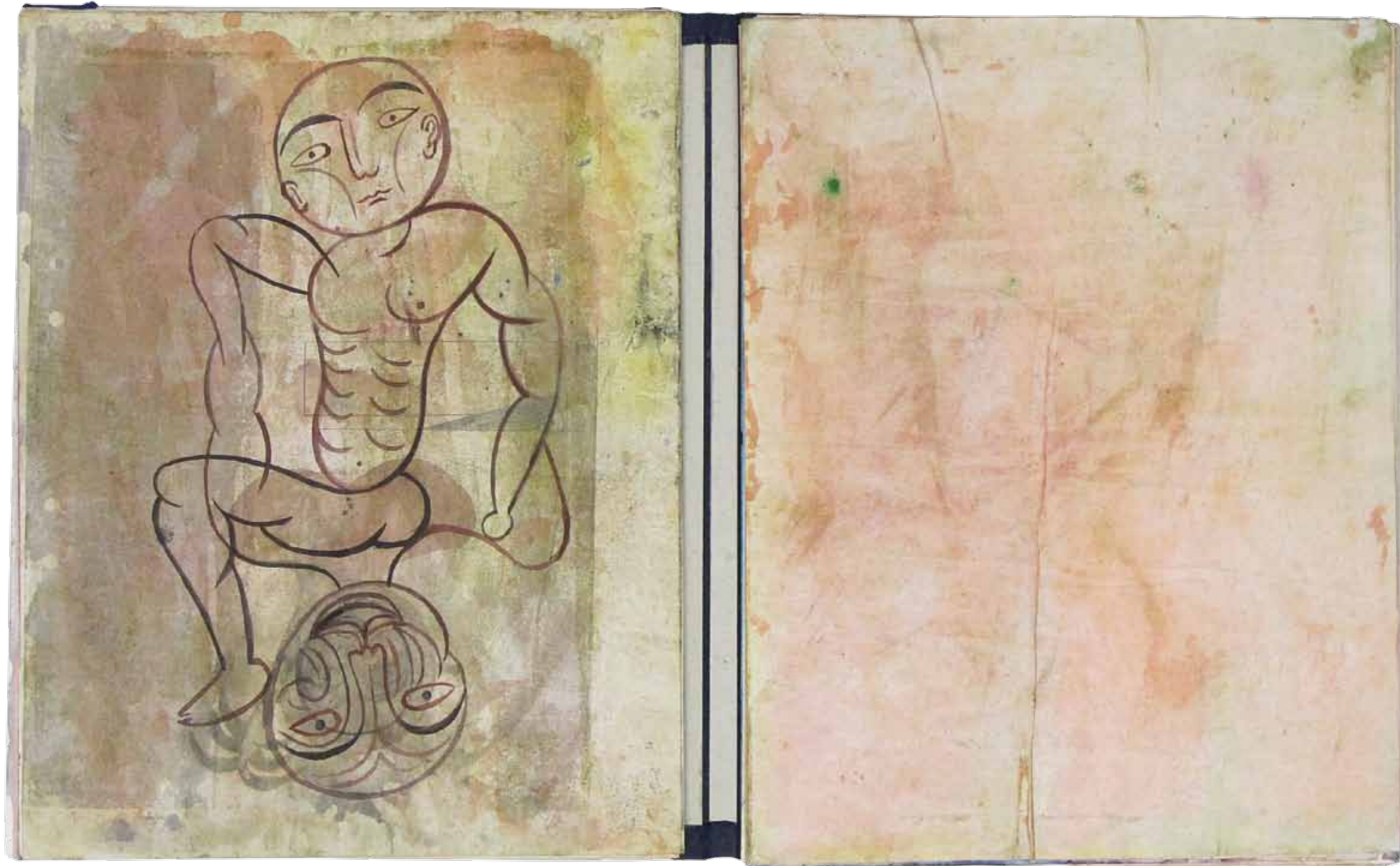
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قلم حبر

Sketch  
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completed book, 2011  
Ink pen



رسم تحضيري  
صفحة من كتاب منجز، 2011  
قلم حبر

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Watercolour



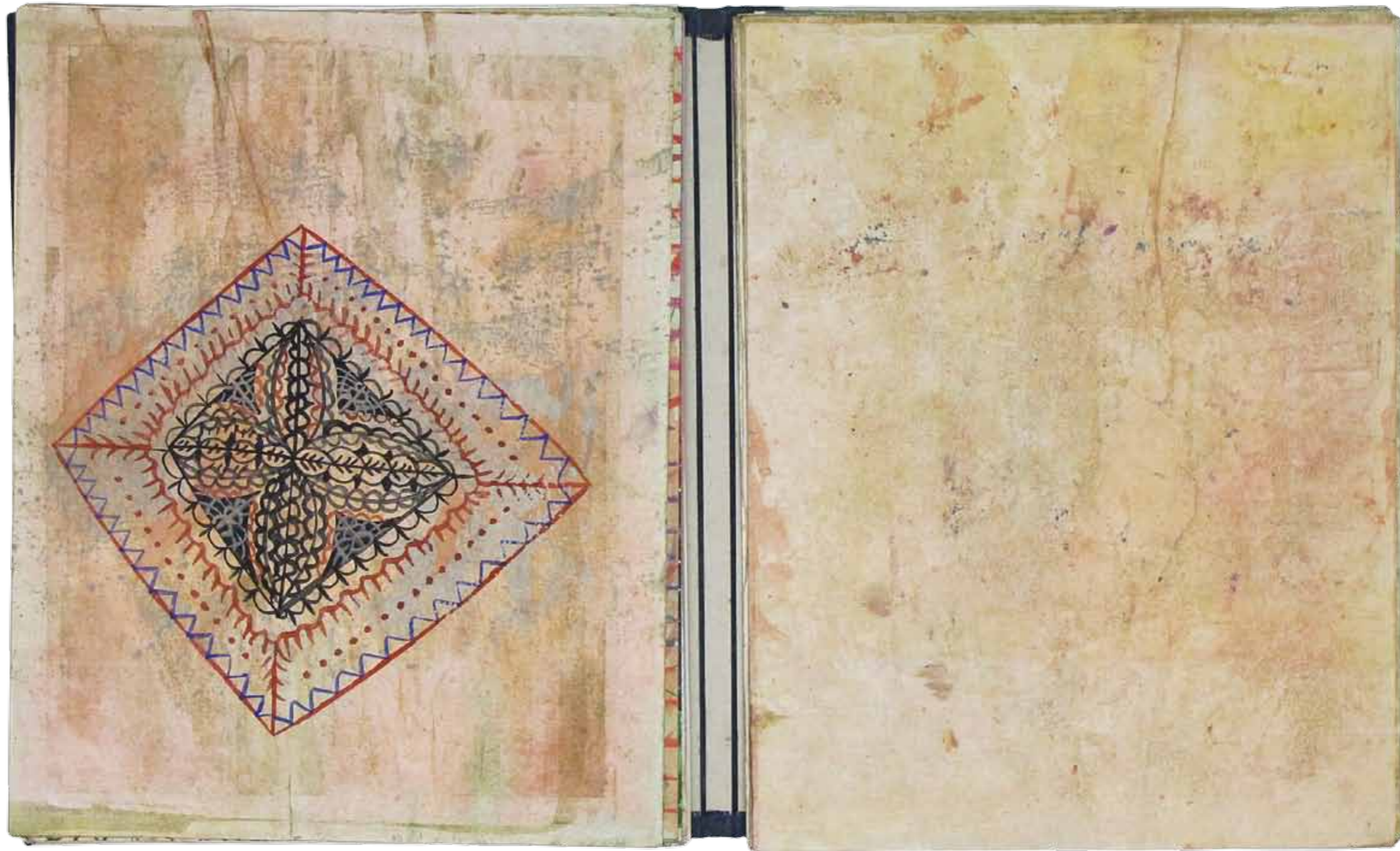
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الوان مائية



Sketch  
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completed book, 2012  
Watercolour



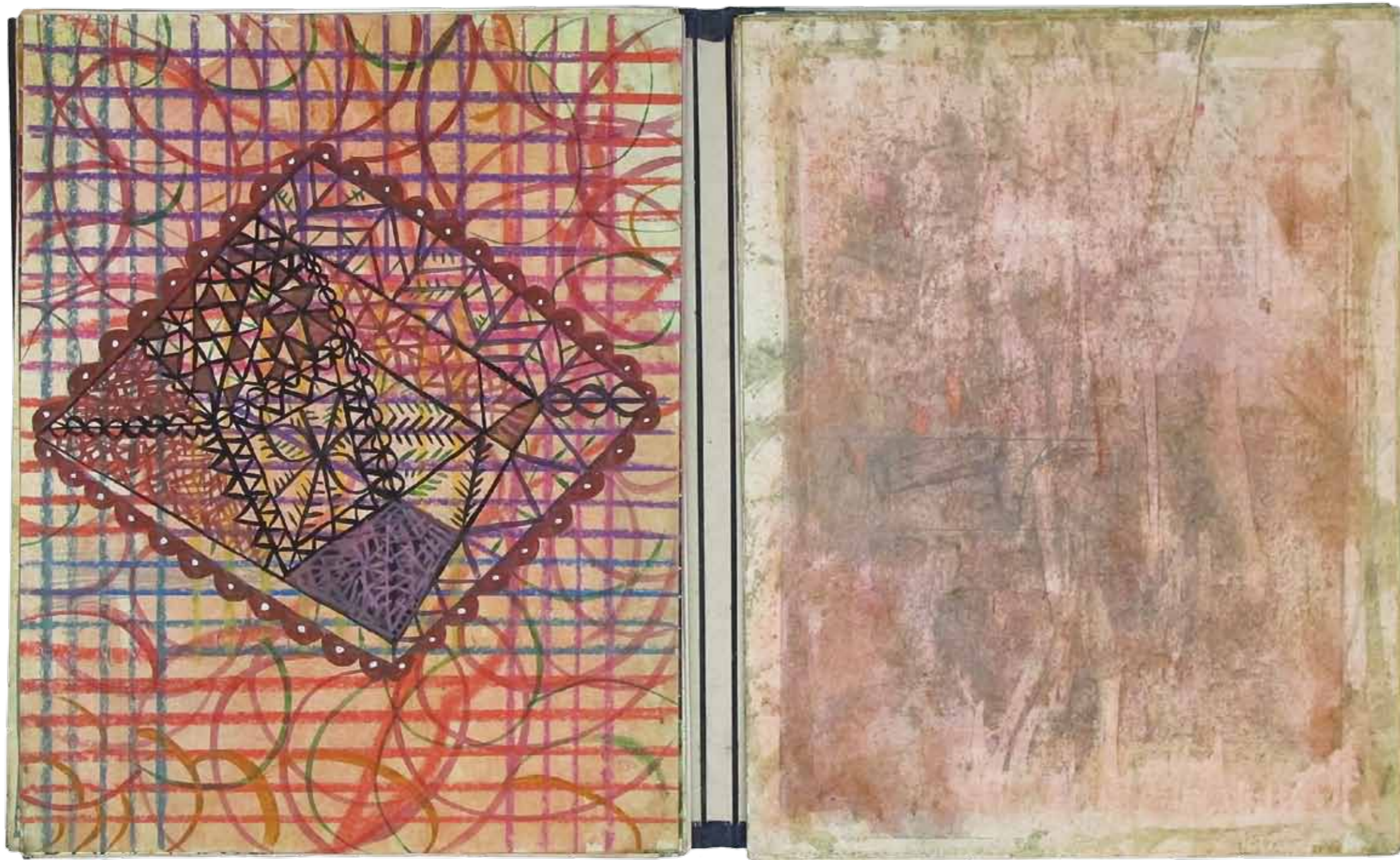
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الوان مائية



Sketch  
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completed book, 2012  
Watercolour

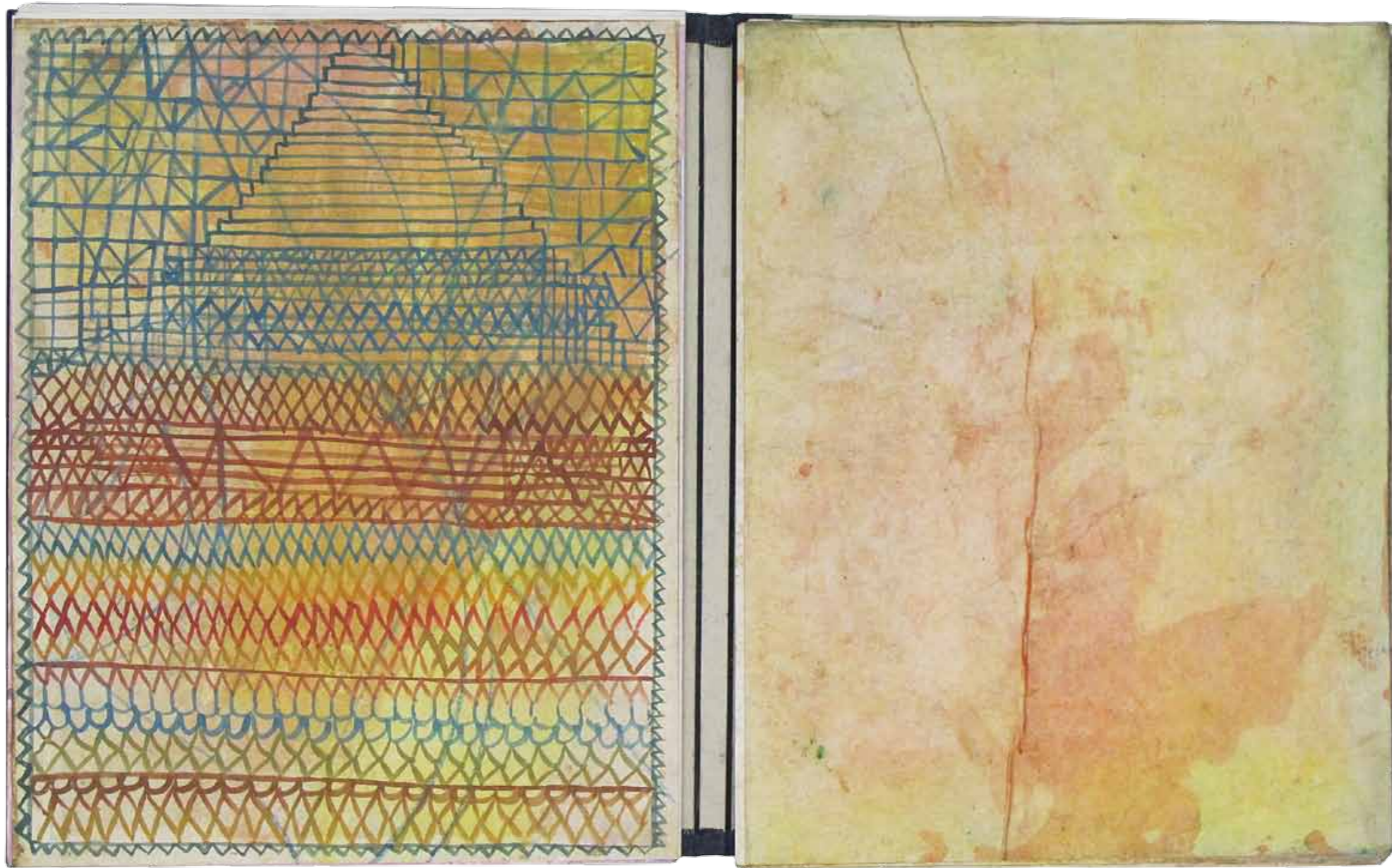
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صفحة من كتاب منجز، 2012  
الوان مائية

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Watercolour



رسم تحضيري  
صفحة من كتاب منجز، 2012  
الوان مائية

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Watercolour



رسم تحضيري  
صفحة من كتاب منجز، 2012  
الوان مائية

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2013  
China ink



رسم تحضيري  
صفحة من كتاب منجز، 2013  
حبر صيني

Sketch  
Page from a  
completed book, 2012  
Watercolour



رسم تحضيرى  
صفحة من كتاب منجز، 2012  
الوان مائية

# رسم تدقيق

# PLATES



The Ta-Sin of the Prophetic Lamp I (2013)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين السراج 1 (2013)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام  
باستيل، اكريلك، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Disconnection-from-Forms III (2013)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic, pen on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين التنزيه 3 (2013)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام  
باستيل، اكريلك، قلم جاف على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Point II (2013)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, acrylic,  
charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين النقطة 2 (2013)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اكريلك،  
فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Point III (2013)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين النقطة 3 (2013)  
كولاج، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل،  
اكريلك على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Self-Awarenesses in Tawhid I (2011)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الاسرار في التوحيد 1 (2011)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام  
باستيل، اكريلك، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Prophetic Lamp II (2011)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين السراج 2 (2011)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



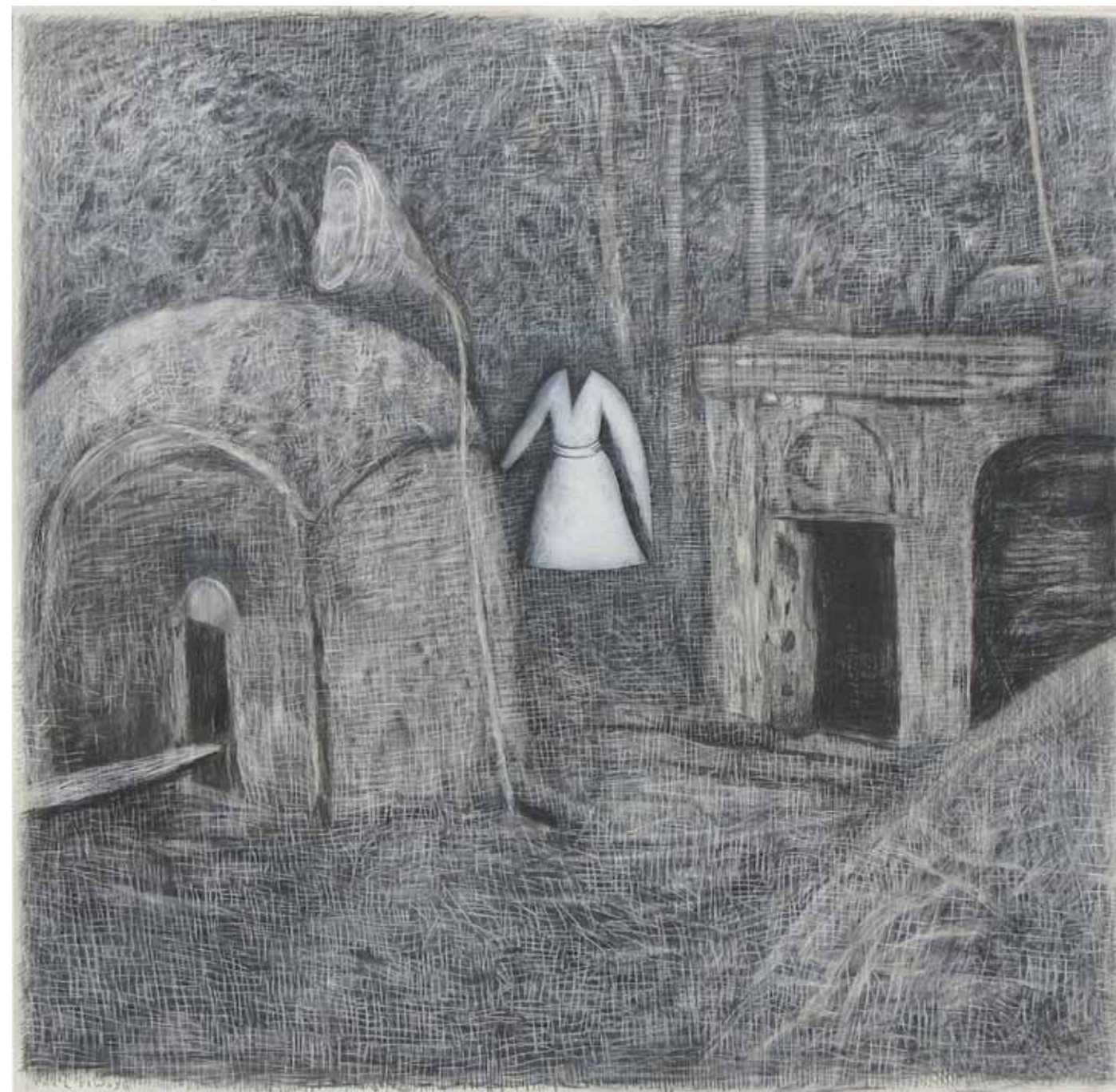
The Ta-Sin of Purity III (2013)  
Pencil, pastel, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الصفاء 3 (2013)  
قلم رصاص، اقلام باستيل، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Declaration of Unity II (2013)  
Pencil, pastel, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين التوحيد 2 (2013)  
قلم رصاص، اقلام باستيل، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر





The Ta-Sin of the Declaration of Unity I (2013)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين التوحيد 1 (2013)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام  
باستيل، اكريلك، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of Understanding I (2013)  
Pencil, black ink, watercolour, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الفهم 1 (2013)  
قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Prophetic Lamp III (2013)  
Pencil, black ink, watercolour, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين السراج 3 (2013)  
قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of Understanding II (2013)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الفهم 2 (2013)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام  
باستيل، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Circle III (2012)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الدائرة 3 (2012)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام  
باستيل، اكريلك، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of Purity II (2012)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الصفاء 2 (2012)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام  
باستيل، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of Before Endless-Time and Equivocation III (2012)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الازل والالتباس 3 (2012)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام  
باستيل، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of Purity III (2013)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الصفاء 3 (2013)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام  
باستيل، اكريلك، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر





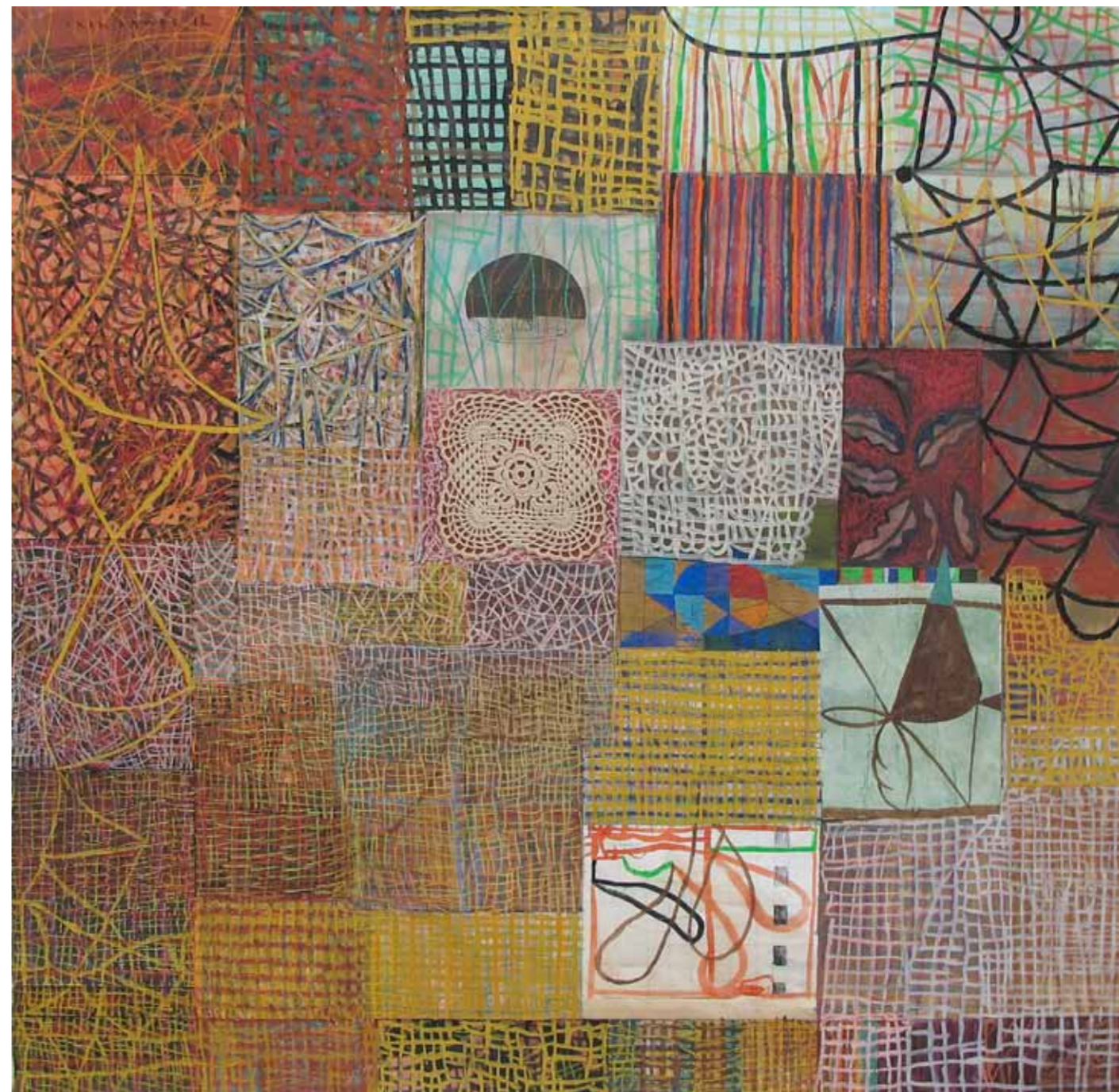
The Ta-Sin of the Point I (2013)  
Collage, black ink, watercolour, pastel, acrylic,  
charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين النقطة 1 (2013)  
كولاج، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل، اكريلك،  
فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Circle II (2013)  
Collage, black ink, watercolour, pastel, acrylic,  
charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الدائرة 2 (2013)  
كولاج، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل، اكريلك،  
فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Circle I (2013)  
Collage, black ink, watercolour, pastel, acrylic,  
charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الدائرة 1 (2013)  
كولاج، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل، اكريلك،  
فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Disconnection-from-Forms I (2013)  
Pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين التنزيه 1 (2011)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل،  
اكريلك، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of Before Endless-Time and Equivocation I (2012)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الازل والالتباس 1 (2012)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل،  
اكريلك، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



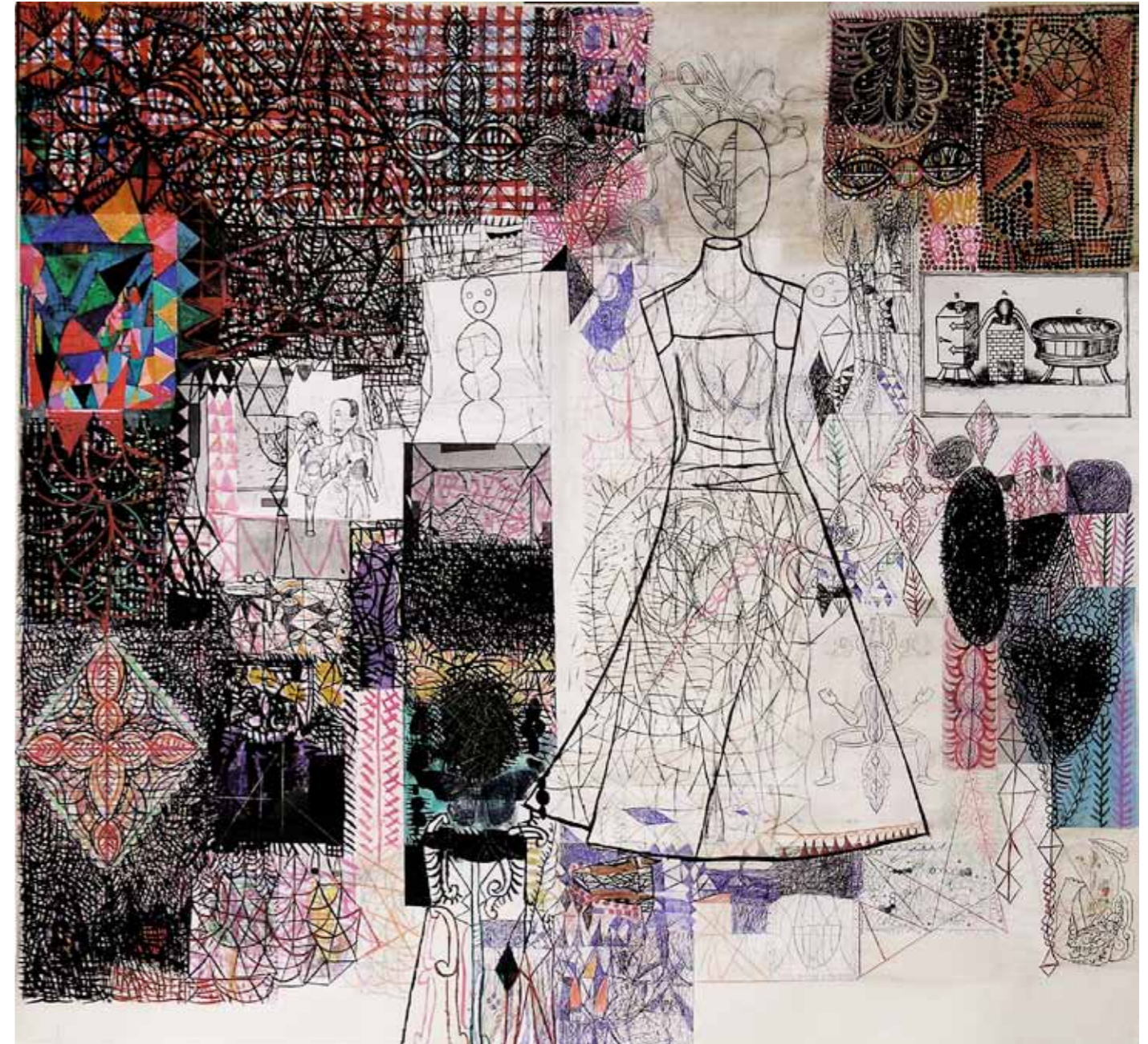
The Ta-Sin of the Disconnection-from-Forms II (2013)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
acrylic, charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين التنزيه 2 (2013)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل،  
اكريلك، فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of Before Endless-Time and Equivocation II (2011)  
Collage, pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel  
on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الازل والالتباس 2 (2011)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل،  
على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of Purity I (2011)  
Collage, black ink, watercolour, pastel on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الصفاء 1 (2011)  
كولاج، حبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر





The Ta-Sin of the Divine Will I (2013)  
Pencil, black ink, watercolour, pastel,  
charcoal on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين المشيئة 1 (2013)  
قلم رصاص، جبر اسود، الوان مائية، اقلام باستيل،  
فحم على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Self-Awarenesses in Tawhid II (2013)  
Collage, pencil, watercolour, pastel on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

طاسين الاسرار في التوحيد 2 (2013)  
كولاج، قلم رصاص، ألوان مائية، أقلام باستيل على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتيمتر



The Ta-Sin of the Divine Will II (2013)  
Pastel on paper  
152 \* 150 cm

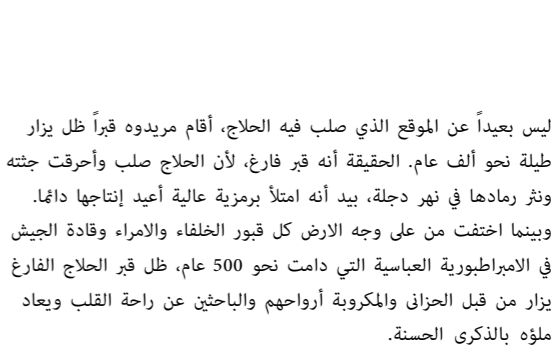
طاسين المشيئة 2 (2013)  
اقلام باستيل على ورق  
150 \* 152 سنتمتر



لو دھات

# لقاء نصّ

لسهيل سامي نادر



مجازاة حكاية هذا القبر الرمزي الفارغ، شكلت لغة الحلاج المليئة بالفراغات والتعابير الغامضة، والاحتياالات الرمزية، والمعاني المشطوبية، حقلاً لغوياً فريداً لتجارب التأويل وإعادة الشحن بالدلالات الجديدة على مر ذلك التاريخ. كان الحلاج يُبنى بين الحين والحين، إلا أنه كان يبعث على الدوام في حكاية أو حادث جلل أو مأثرة متصلة بالأحياء، وتعاد قراءة أشعاره وكلماته وتمنح تفسيرات ثلاثم شخصيات أصحابها والفترة التي عاشوها. لم تتوقف هذه الحركة أبداً. وما زلت أذكر أن الحلاج ألهم بكلماته وسيرته الكثير من الأدباء العراقيين في الستينيات من القرن الماضي فأعادوا غزلها في نسيج أعمالهم القصصية والشعرية، كما أن الرسم التجريدي بدأ في العراق من تأويلات صوفية حلاجية، بل إن اتجاه شاكر حسن آل سعيد اللاشكلي الذي ظهر في منتصف الستينيات، وشغل الرسم العراقي طويلا وما زال، قائم كلياً على الخبرة الصوفية في الرسم والثقافة المقترنة به.

من هنا لا أجد عودة الفنان عمار داود إلى الحلاج أمراً غريباً، لأن المصلوب يبعث من جديد في كل زمن، بمجازاة لوائح جديدة من الشهداء. ثمّة دائماً قبر فارغ يرعاه حشد من المعدبين والمتسائلين والمتضايقين والباحثين عن الخلاص. ثمّة دائماً فراغات لا تمأأ ابدا، تغري المفتونين والمحبين والإبرياء لدخولها. إن العودة الى الحلاج كما يبدو لي لا تقررها إغراءات القراءة فقط، بل ومصاعب الوجود في عالم سيء فاقد الروح أيضاً. إن الفكرة الحلاجية هي نوع من مطاردة تاريخية قديمة تقوم بها الروح سعياً للعدالة والسعادة والطهارة. إنها حركة شوق.

ما الذي نراه في رسوم عمار داود من حركة الشوق هذه؟ إن الفنان لا يعود إلى قصة الحلاج المأساوية المعروفة بل إلى نص من نصوصه الملغزة جداً، أي إلى حياة فكر تأسس على أساس الخبرة الذاتية المحاطة بالاسرار.

عبر الزمن، كانت نصوص الحلاج يعاد قراءتها، ويبدو لي أنها تضعف إذا ما اعتمدنا لغة شارحة. إنها نصوص تتحرك باتجاه طريق مرتفع شقه المصلوب بأصابعه الدامية، نصوص قصيرة تنطلق من تجارب ذاتية في الاتصال بالله والاخفاق في الاتصال، والمعاودة المستمرة، من هنا فهي، كما

أرى، ممزقة، تتكون من عبارات طلسمية، مجتزأة من القرآن، والحكمة، والصوبات، والاحالات، والدمدمة الذهنية، فلا يعود بالامكان استلهاهما إلا بشعرية ملغزة قريئة، تشبه الومضات، أو في إسقاط نفسي وعاطفي على سطوح فارغة كما في الرسم.

إن النمط البارز الذي اعتمده الفنان عمار في قراءته البصرية لنصوص الحلاج هو مراقبة عدد من النصوص البصرية الواحدة فوق الاخرى، وإفقاد أي عنصر شكلي بارز هيمنته على العمل. إن أعمال الزخرفة والخطوط الالهية والاشكال والموتيفات المغلقة تتخذ كلها الاهمية نفسها، فهي نصوص عن نصوص، نسيج عن نسيج، ونصوص تودع نصوصا أو تدفعها إلى موقع آخر. إنها قراءة مزدحمة بالإبهاءات أو مزدحمة بعدم اليقين الذي قد يخشى الفنان ظهوره فيقوم بدفعه إلى عمق ما ينتظرا لحظة أخرى. يسيطر على هذا النمط العاطفة والانفعال، ولهذا فهو يملأ السطح، محوِّلا السطح الواحد إلى عدد من السطوح، وفي النهاية هو يصنع انسجة عديدة بلا مراكز.

ثمّة نمط آخر يشبه النمط السابق لكن بوجود أشكال مستعارة من فن المنمنمات والفنون الشعبية التي تعتمد الخيال في تصوير الملائكة، فضلاً عن المعالجات الفنية من إضافات تأثيرات غامضة وحك السطح.

نمط ثالث تأملي تخفي فيه زحمة التأثيرات بما يجعل الأشكال التعبيرية أكثر وضوحا من حيث التجسيد والعلاقة بالفراغ. يرتبط هذا النمط بأشكال شاقولية نجدها في بعض أعمال الفنان القديمة. أرى أن هذه الاشكال مختزلة ومحرّفة عن الجسد الانساني، بيد أنها تشبه كذلك آلة الشاقول الذي يستخدمه الاسطوات لقياس صعود البناء باستقامة. ولست متأكداً من أن دلالة الاستقامة لها معادل رمزي بصري في الشكل الشاقولي الذي يعتمده الفنان.

نمط رابع يعتمد على إطلاق الخيال في لغة تخطيطية تشخيصية تميل إلى التجسيد.

اعتمد الفنان أساليب التعبيرية الجديدة التي تنشُد إطلاق التعبير الفني بلغة عاطفية ذاتية، وهو ما أتاح له قراءة نصوص ملغزة ذات قيمة فكرية تعبيرية بطريقة ذاتية. لقد أطلق خياله بالجمع ما بين التأثيرات الخاصة بتجارب التخطيط الحر، وتحديدات الاشكال العضوية الحيوية المستقلة، والنسيج التصوريي الرابط الممتلئ بالتأثيرات، أو ما يسميه الفنان بالسجادة. أعتقد أنه تجربته أقرب الى الحالة الشعرية التي كلما مالت إلى الخيال اعتمدت على الاشكال والرموز، وكلما مالت إلى العاطفة والانفعال جمعت بأسلوب التسقيط المتراكب ما بين الخطوط والالوان والاشكال والتلصقات.

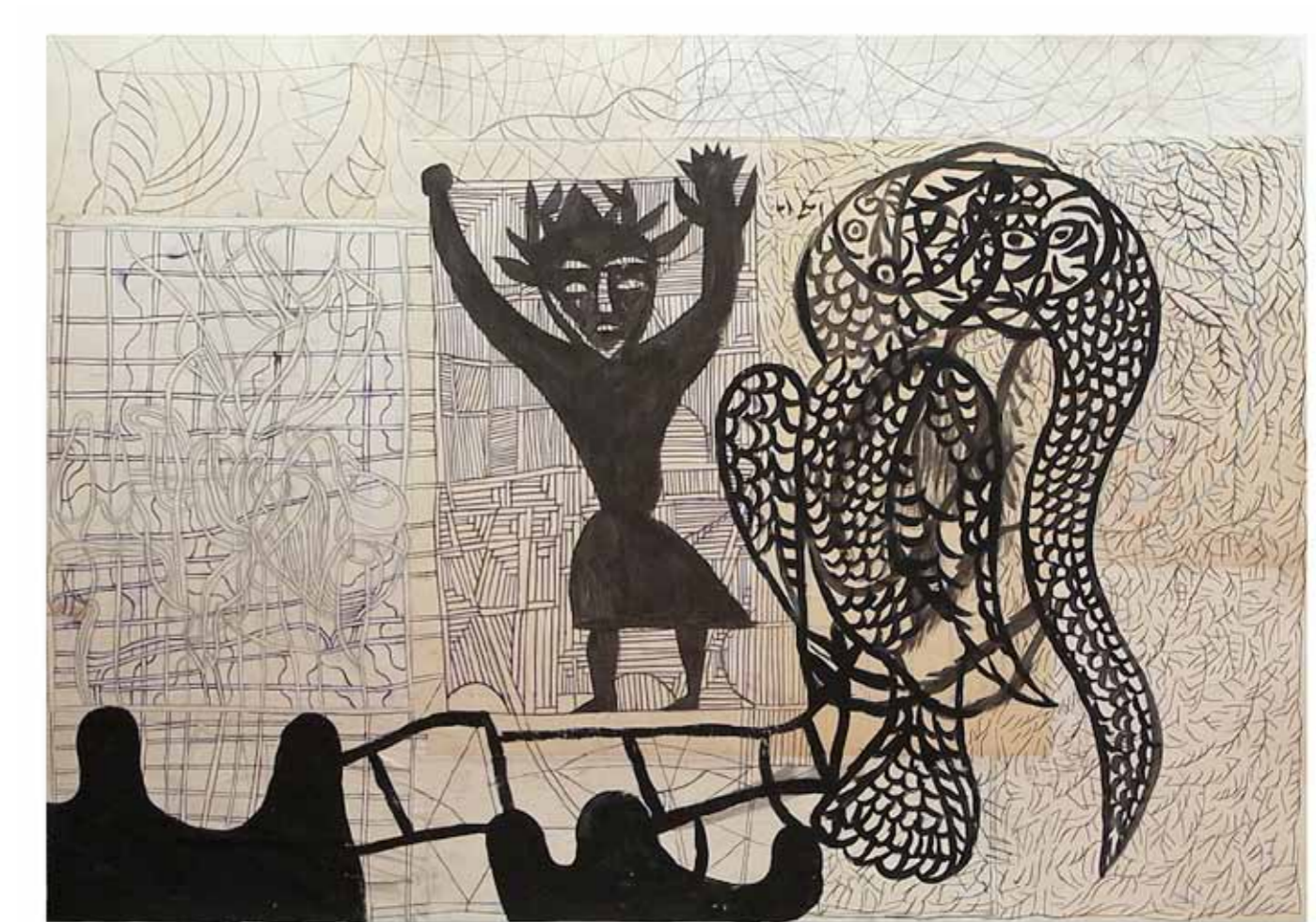
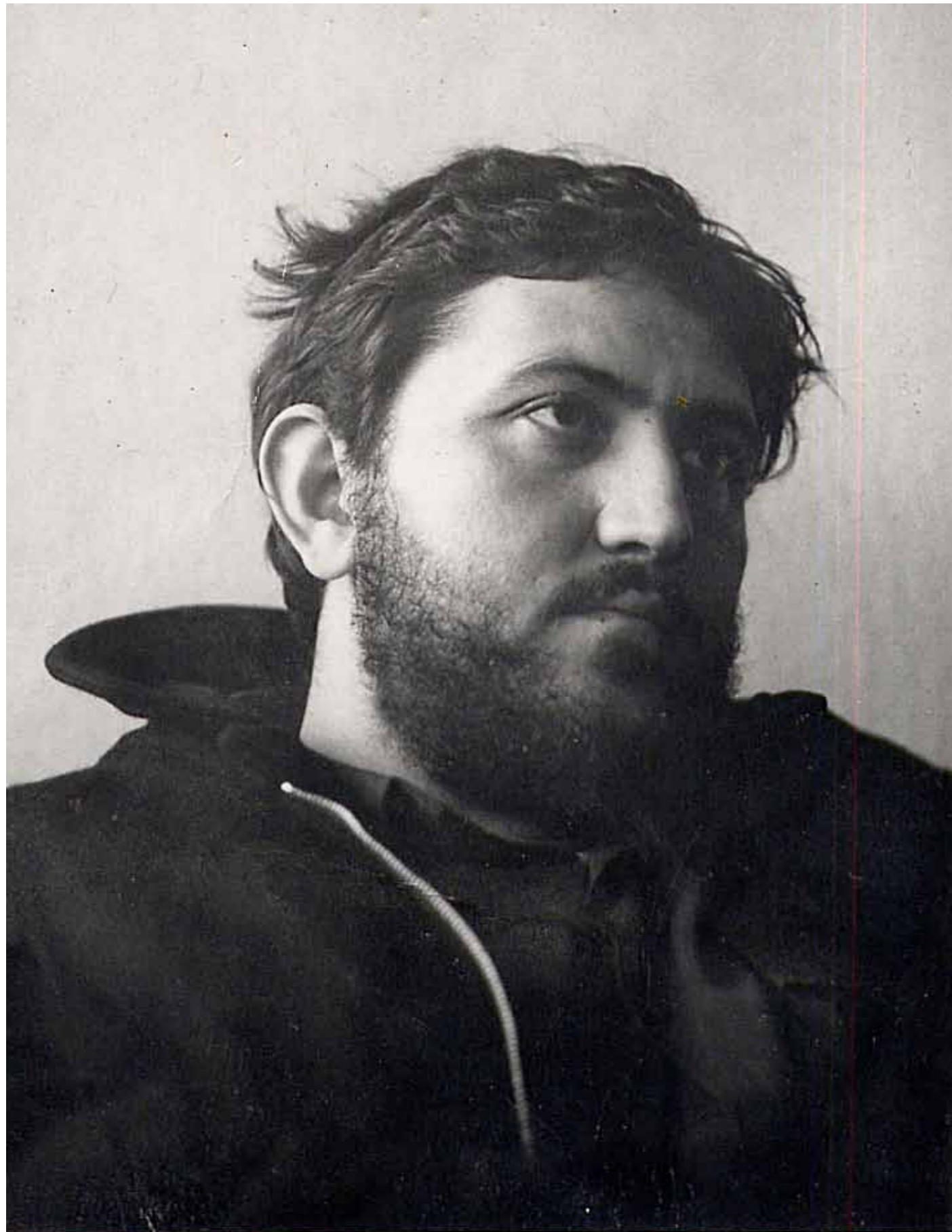
ليس من السهل قراءة نص لغوي يتصف بالافكار الحلولية المعقدة بطريقة بصرية. في النص اللغوي يبقى الغائب غائبا، ويبقى البحث عنه قائماً. النص البصري يعلّم هذا البحث بحضورات هشة هي ما يبرق في الخيال وما تقترحه عاطفة للتعبير عن نفسها بوسائل فنية.

بالرجوع إلى أعمال سابقة لهذه التجربة نجد أن الفنان لم يقطع الصلة مع مفرداته الشكلية السابقة. إن رسوماً سابقة تعود بصحة معالجات فنية احتاجتها التجربة الجديدة، لعل أهمها الخطوط المحيضية الاساسية للاشكال، وطريقة الفنان في تشويبها. إن الملائكة بأجنحتها، والاجساد المخروطية، وشكل الطائر، والفراشات، والاشكال الحلزونية، تواصل الظهور في إنشاء جديد، ما يجعلنا نستنتج أن أشكالاّ لها دلالة سيكولوجية ظلت في ذاكرة الفنان، وثمّة معنى غامض ومضمر يحاول الفنان كشفه في تكرارها في سياق تجربة جديدة يعترف الفنان نفسه أنها ضرب من قراءة لنصوص لغوية.

بالرغم من ذلك فإنه أخضع بعض هذه المفردات لقراءة سيميائية تحليلية، فأجنته الملائكة تقترب من أن تكون أجنحة فراشات، وهو يفتح لها نوافذ موتيفية مستقلة، عندها تبدو تفاصيل مقرّبة لأجنته مرة ومقاطع زخرفية مرة أخرى. إن هذه الاستبدالات أضفت الحيوية على أشكال قديمة.

إن أسلوب الفنان السابق يوضح التغييرات التي أجراها في مفرداته الشكلية، فهو مختزل جدا، يعتمد على الخطوط، ولا ينشئ روابط مفهومية بين الاشكال، بل يترك هذه المهمة للمشاهدين. حتى عندما كان يملأ السطح بالاشكال والمعالجات الفنية لا يرى أن مهمته هو أن يقيم صلات ما بينها لا بخطوط دالة ولا لون له ميزة خاصة. إن ميله إلى التبسيط قلل عنده الاهتمام بالانشاء مركزاً على حركة خط مختزلة تبدو أقرب إلى التوقيع او موتيفا منبثقا من يد عابئة.

في التجربة الجديدة، ولاسيما في النمطين الاول والثاني الذي وصفتهما، تحيا الاشكال المعاودة في إنشاء جديد زاخر بالمعالجات الفنية المتنوعة، وينسج رابط، وبتقنية تراكب الاشكال والمعالجات الفنية على بعضها البعض. يمثّل هذه المعالجات المتعددة يعيد الفنان قراءة نصوص الحلاج، كما يعيد قراءة أشكال سابقة. القراءتان تواصل حك الجرح الإنساني الذي لا يهدأ الذي تثيره روح الحلاج الباحثة عن ملاذ آمن قرب الملائكة.



Amar Dawod, Poland, 1983

عمار داود، بولندا، 1983

Sketch, 2012  
Ink, coloured pencil, and  
watercolour on paper

رسم تحضيري، 2012  
حبر، اقلام ملونة واللوان مائية  
على ورق

# طواسين عمار داود

لؤي حمزة عبّاس

”رأيتُ طيراً من طيور الصوفية عليه جناحان، وأنكر شاني في حين بقي على الطيران، فسألني عن الصفاء، فقلت له: إقطع جناحك بمقارض الفناء وإلا فلا تتبعني“<sup>١</sup> (الحلاج، الطواسين)

خيوط دقيقة توحد العالم، تشدّ عناصره إلى بعضها، تفتح أبواباً صامتةً في قلب العتمة، تضئُّ روحاً عارية في فعلٍ مغايرةٍ واكتشافٍ يمنح الجسدَ المجرّدَ مناسبةً للاحتفاء بمراسيم التحوّل والانتقال. كلُّ تحولٍ حجة، وكلُّ خيط علامة جرح، إن إخلاص لوحة عمار داود لحججها وهي تُنتج طواسينها يدعوها للمهااة بين العوالم في بعدها التركيبي الذي يرنو، أبداً، لتكبيبة الحياة: طبقةٌ فوق طبقة وجرحاً بعد جرح، حيث تُستعاد الأزمنة وتتواصل الحجج. تسعى اللوحة مع كل حجة جديدة لتكيز مقولة الفناء التي اتخذت من تطلّع الحلاج سيرورةً ونظاماً، وهو مكمّن العلاقة بين طواسين الفنان وطواسين الصوفي وهما يهتديان بفكرة النفي وتمثيلاتها، لتبدو اللوحة كما لو كانت قطعة من خرقة الحلاج نفسها، من ثوبه، من جلده الذي استحال طرساً لكتابة الفناء، وهي تتحرّك من واقعية النفي إلى رمزيته مواصلة سعيها للذوبان في الفكرة بعد أن تخلصت من أعباء الإفصاح مكنتفية بالتلميح في أفقٍ إشاري يجمع اللوحات، يوحدُها، ويوجّه مقولاتها، فتغتني عناصر هذا الأفق بما تسوده من مناجاة تعيشها اللوحات جميعها وهي تجيل النظر في الفكرة كما لو كانت تنظر إلى نفسها في مرآةٍ أوّهم في دائرةٍ فسيحة، تتسع وتمتد في تمثيل ثلاثي البحث والنشدان: البرآني الذي لم يصل، والثاني الذي وصل وانقطع، والثالث الذي ضلّ في مفازة حقيقة الحقيقة، واللوحة تديم انشغالا بسبل الدوائر المقطوعة منها والمتصلة، مثلما تشغل بمن ضلّ في حدود النقطة التي تؤدي معنى “ما لا تغيب عنه الظواهر والبواطن، ولا يقبل الأشكال“<sup>2</sup>، وهي واحدة من سمات طواسين الفنان التي تعمل على معارضة هيمنة الشكل من لوحة إلى أخرى، نقضه ونفي صلابته باتجاه سطوح تتجزأ في منافرة وائتلاف، مثلما تعوّل على قوّة ما يشفّ من الأشكال منتجةً أشكالاً سواها. إن شفافية الشكل المفرغ تُسهّم إلى حد بعيد في رعاية حياة الكائن والنظر إلى موته على سطح اللوحة، فهو في الوقت الذي يُشير إلى كيانه ويُسمّي نفسه، يشفّ عن كائناتٍ أخرى عاشت تحته في طبقةٍ زمنية بعيدة تحرّر قولاً في الوجود وآخر في العدم. إنها رؤيةٍ بصرية لا تترجم الفكرة بقدر ما تهتدي بتقنية كتابة الحلاج في تنفيذ أشكالها على نحو بدائي، شعبيةٍ خشنة أحياناً ورفيقة طيِّعة أحياناً أخرى. إنها لا تحقّق عبر معاودة النظر نفي الذات بقدر ما تعمل على طمس رغائبها، حيث يُعلن كلُّ طمسٍ على سطح اللوحة، بالمقابل، رغبةً بالتححر والسمو، وهو يتجرّد من أعباء المعنى

بما ينقض من نقاء الفن، وبما يمارس من أفعال الحجب ليعيش في كنف مناجاة صريحة لقوّة الحقيقة وجلاء حضورها، حيث يتجلّى صوتُ الحلاج مناجياً مَنٌ حُجّبوا بالإسم فعاشوا، ولو أن الحقيقة كُشفت لهم لماتوا.

بين مقولتي الحجب والكشف تواصل طواسينُ الفنان نسجَ عوالمها بين مطابقةٍ وتلصيقٍ ومناجاة، فتغدو كثيرٌ من لوحاته استبصاراً أيقونياً لجانبٍ عصيٍ من جوانبِ تجربةٍ إنسانيةٍ طالما أعلنت غريبتها تحت ثقل الجسد حتى عاشت مسيرة صلبه، بثقلها الواقعي، من جلدٍ إلى قطعٍ إلى تعليقٍ إلى حرقٍ إلى نثر. طواسين عمار داود هي، على نحو ما، صوتُ المُسيرة الذي ما يزال مسموعاً وقد مرّ عليه حوالي ألف ومائة عام، إنها بانوراما التحوّل والانتقال التي تكتفي من أثارها بلحظةٍ عذابٍ تَبْلورُ فعلَ الفناء فيها ليغدو ممارسةً رمزيةً للذوبان في ذات المعبود، ولتغدو الفكرةُ حواراً موصولاً بين عناصرٍ مختلفة، متفرّقةٍ مرّةً ومحكمةٍ الترابط مرّةً أخرى، فالأعضاء البشرية المحلّقة في فضاء لوحة تجد صداها في ما تستدعيه لوحةٍ أخرى من نسيجٍ زخرفي يُفيد بدوره من قيم المجاورة التي لا تكرر مفردةً بعينها بقدر ما تُغنيها بمفردةٍ مغايرةٍ تستقرُّ إلى جوارها، تحاورها وتآوي إلى ظلها وهي تحتفي بطاقة الزخرفة وثرائها، فلا تمثل الزخرفةُ كشفاً عابراً من كشوفات الفن بقدر ما تُعدّ لغةً دقيقةً، محكمةً النظم، اقترحها فرادة التجربة الحضارية لتمثيل العالم وهو يتشكّل من نقطةٍ تتكرر بغير توقّف أو انتهاء، إنها الطريقةُ التي يواصل بها النهرُ الجريانَ إلى ما لا ينتهي (زخارف الماء: طرائقه)، من هنا تأنّس طواسينُ عمار داود لانشغالاتها وهي تُفيد بما يشبه البدهة من المرموزات الشعبية المختلفة في بناء علاقاتها والارتقاء بمناجاتها، صناعاتٍ ومنمنماتٍ ورسوماتٍ فطريةً، تبدو معها كلُّ علاقةٍ خيطاً في نسيج: زهرةُ الأكاسيا القديمةُ والشاقول، ورقّةُ العشب الرقيقةُ والثمرّةُ البانعة، القلنسوةُ العاليةُ المفرّغةُ وجناحُ الملاك القوي كامل التزيين، الغزالُ والطائرُ والشبّكةُ والحصان، إنها تتطلّع جميعها لولادة الكائن من جديد في إهابٍ شجي، جسد ناقص ومبتور، علامة قاهرةٍ من علامات عذاب لا يزول، رعاها أذن منصتةً لأنفاس الكون، وعينٌ مفتوحةٌ/ مغمضة تديم النظر في رقّةٍ وتسليم للدواخل الانسانيةِ الفسيحة حيث تُحلّق أفراس بلا سيقان، يقودها فرسان مولعون بلا أكف، وهي تنقمص طبيعتها المتمنّعة العصية المنال بتصوّر الفنان ”مقابل أن تُعلن عن ذاتها في كلّ زمان ومكان، في شكلٍ إبحاءٍ أو لغةٍ غريبةٍ كونيّةٍ حيث الجمادات والكائنات الحية : إنسان، حيوان أو نبات تنطق بها أو خلالها وتعزز وجودها الساحر الأخاذ والنافذ في عمق النفس الإنسانية، فهي لغة لا زمان لها ... لا يحكمها أو يفك مغازيها عقلٌ أو إدراكٍ حسي“.

إن استعادة الحلاج تشكلياً تعني محاولةً في التصدّي لمسيرة الولاية الصوفيّة عبر أحد أهم أركانها وأكثرها تأثيراً في مسارات الثقافة العربيّة الحديثة في مجالي الفكر والابداع، وهي محاولةٌ تنتظم بالضرورة في سياقٍ معرفيٍ لن يكون سؤال التراث بعيداً عنه، فهماً وإعادة قراءةٍ وإنتاجٍ، وهي مهما بدت محاولة فرديّةٍ يحركها وعي وتذوّق شخصيان ـ في مثل حالة عمار داود لن يكون من الصعب تبيّن دور الاستاذ وأثر المرحلة في بناء الوعي وتوجيه الذائقة، من شاكر حسن آل سعيد حتى دعوات فهم التراث والتطلّع إلى معارفه التي سادت التشكيل العراقي أكثر من نصف قرن ـ إن انشغال عمار وهو ينتقل بالأثر الصوفي إلى العقد الثاني من الألفية الثالثة يُشير بقوّة لفاعلية هذا الأثر الذي حافظ على حضوره في الذاكرة الاسلامية، مثلما جدّد آليات هذا الحضور في نُظُم الابداع المتنوعة. إن لوحة عمار داود لا تعمل على إنتاج قراءتها لطواسين الحلاج وحدها، ولا تكتفي بمناجاة الصوفي وهي تعمل على استعادته روحاً طليقة وجسداً مقطّعاً في مسيرة توحد وفناء، بل تجتهد في سبيل إغناء رؤيتها في معالجةٍ معطى درامي معالجةً مبتكرة. وإذا كان التشكيل العراقي قد انشغل طويلاً بفاعلية الأثر الدرامي فإن دراما الحلاج توسّع مساحة الحضور الصوفي وهي تُغنيه وتغتني به في ” اقتراحٍ منظورٍ مأساوي يجعلنا في مواجهةٍ رغبةٍ حقيقيةٍ لمعالجة الجرح الحقيقي في داخل أيّ منا“<sup>3</sup>. لتشير طواسينُ الفنان إلى واحدةٍ من خصائص التشكيل العراقي وسماته المتفرّدة وهي قدرته على التطور الهادئ، شبه الصامت والحيوي الذي يراكم النُسجَ ويوسّع الرؤى في معالجةٍ عناصره التصويرية داخل (سجادة) اللوحة، حيث يكون للسجادة معنى مضاف لا يكتفي بالوقوف عند مشتغل الفنان وحده، بل يتسع ويمتد تحت خطى فنّانين أسهموا ويسهمون بتأمل الحلاج نصاً مفتوحاً على متوالية الآلام والأسرار وهي تديم رغبة النظر لعالمٍ لن يكون فيه غيرَ العابد المنتحِر والمعبود المتحكّم، جوهرأً محيطاً متعالياً، ” الحي الذي أحيا العالم بنظره، فمن لم يكن به وينظره حياً، فهو ميت وإن نطق وتحرك“<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>[1]</sup> طاسين النقطة، الحلاج، هكذا تكلم الحلاج، دراسة وتحقيق: قاسم محمد عبّاس، دار المدى، سورية 2009: 109

<sup>[2]</sup> م.ن: 108

<sup>[3]</sup> م. ن: 30

<sup>[4]</sup> التفسير، الحلاج، م.ن: 89



Dawod in his studio, Västervik, Sweden, 2013  
Photography by Svante Bäck

داود في مرسمه، فسترفيك، السويد، 2013،  
التصوير الفوتوغرافي من قبل سفانته بك



لقد استقبل العلاج حياته كهبة إلهية مقدسة ونعمة يحظى بها المخلوق ويسعد. واستقبل موته بنفس الصفة: هبة ونعمة تنتهي عندها الحياة الدنيا لترتقي إلى حياة عليا يلاقي بها المخلوق خالقه ويفنى فيه. لقد علمنا أن نعيش حياتنا كما سنعيش مماتنا، وأن نعيش حياتنا يعني أن نفهم أيضا مماتنا الذي سيضفي على هذه الحياة معناها. إذن هو خطاب يتجاوز صيغته الصوفية العرفانية ليصبح في نهاية المطاف مشروعاً ثقافياً عربياً محلياً يقدم لهذه البيئة المتميزة وجها حضارياً إبداعياً يستحق التبنّي، بشرط أن يتم تلقيه من هذا الجانب منزهاً من التعصب والاطلاعية الفكرية والمذهبية.

”بيان بيان الحق أنت بيانه وكل بيان أنت منه لسانه“  
”قد قام بعضي ببعض بعضي وهام كلي بكل كلي“.

”رأيت ربي بعين قلب فقلت من أنت قال أنت فليس للاين منك أين وليس للوهم منك وهم أنت الذي حزت كل أين (من ديوان الحلاج)

هذا الزخرف الكلامي القائم على مبدأ التكرار والإيقاع هو الذي استعرته من تجربة العلاج الشعرية في أعمالي الفنية، فقد حاولت أن أشتغل على هذه القيم التقنية محيلاً إياها إلى مفردات بصرية تتوافر على هذا النسق الزخرفي القائم على مبدأ التماثل والتقابل، التكرار والإيقاع. نعم، حاولت أن انسج سجادي على طريقة الحلاج! (محمول واضح، محمول غامض يحتاج إلى تأويل، محمول مبهم لا تأويل له، إيقاع وحدات متكررة من ناحية الحركة والنغمة المرئية وشكل الحروف) لكنني جهدت إلى أن لا تظهر صوري على سجادي مشابهة لصور الحلاج. فصور هذا المعرض ليست توضيحا أو ترجمة لرؤية الحلاج التي أتت مركزة في كتاب الطواسين، بل هي إيماءات ببعض أجواء ومحمولات كتابه كما شعرت بها شخصياً ووجدت في أعمالي فضاء لها يظهر هنا وهناك. فالذوق الصوفي على سبيل المثال الذي هو نتاج اذكارٍ وأوراد ورياضات روحية وخلوات لا يخضع لمنطق العلم بل لعلم الأحوال وهو وليد الفهم الحدسي بالدرجة الأولى وما ينتج عنه من نص صوفي فريد محتوى وشكلاً وجد لنفسه مساحة في هذه الأعمال أيضاً.

# الحلاج وطوائسيه

عمار داود

لماذا الحلاج وطواسينه محورا لهذا المعرض؟

لأنه رفيق فترة فتوتي الثقافية في بغداد؟

أم لتعاطم منزلته في نفسي بعد ما سمعته ووعيته في سنوات نشأتي الأولى في عراق السبعينات حيث تشكلت أولى ملامح رؤاي الثقافية التي امتدت ماين فضاءات الفكر الغربي وما يقابله من فكر محلي كنا نستقيه من صوفيي بغداد وأدبائها؟ ففي ذلك الزمان حيث تجاذبت جهات عديدة أطراف معركة فكرية لم يكن ليهما دائما مصير العراق الثقافي والحضاري بقدر اهتمامها باعتلاء كرسي الحكم ليس إلا، كنت أجد أن على المثقف العراقي أن يعتني بذلك النسخ الحضاري الكامن في وجدانه ويحافظ عليه في خضم عالم تعددت فيه أشكال الثقافات وتصارعت.

يقول الحلاج: ”حبيهم بالاسم فعاشوا، ولو أبرز لهم علوم القدرة لطاشوا، ولو كشف لهم عن الحقيقة لماتوا“.

وهو النص الأول الذي سمعته للحلاج، كان ذلك حين كنت طالبا في معهد الفنون الجميلة ببغداد أثناء درس تاريخ الفن الذي كان الفنان المرحوم شاكر حسن آل سعيد يلقيه علينا فقرأه معتمداً عليه لدعم رؤيته في موضوع تمرحل الوعي الفني المعاصر:

- مرحلة مطابقة الطبيعة (المحجوبية بالاسم).
- مرحلة التعبير عن فعالية الفكر في الواقع (الإسماك بناصية علوم القدرة).
- وأخيراً، مرحلة الفناء في العالم (كشف الحقيقة).

أتساءل، ما الذي يجمعني بالحلاج؟ وهو السؤال الأصعب - إن أردت أن أجيب عليه عقلياً - أليس هو الرغبة الملازمة لنا نحن معشر الرسامين في محاولة عبور الذات وتخطيها أو حتى نفيها من أجل التوجه بالكامل نحو العالم؟ هناك، إلى حيث يعلن الله عن وجوده بإشارات طيرت عقول الكثيرين من المتصوفة بمن فيهم الحلاج ذاته؟

”بيني وبينك إني ينازعتي فأرفع بانيك إني من البين“.

فالحلاج أحس بالذات الإلهية (عرفانيا) وراح يناجئها كأنها حاضرة أبداً وفي كل شي (مبدأ وحدة الوجود) فليست السماء فقط مكانا لها.

”وأَيُّ الأرض تخلو منك حتى تعالوا يطلبونك في السماء تراهم ينظرون إليك جهراً وهم لا يبصرون من العماء“

كان بحث الحلاج كبحث الفنان، منصباً على اجتراح أسبابه في الحياة والخلق، وهي أسباب وجوده بمعنى آخر، فما أن تنضج النفس الإنسانية من خلال خبرة العيش في هذا العالم، حتى تبدأ رحلتها باتجاه فضاء الأسئلة الكبرى: من أنا؟، إلى أين سأذهب؟ وماذا أفعل هنا؟

لكنني لست متفقاً مع الحلاج في كل ما جاء به من أفكار بقدر اتفاقي مع إشكالية طبيعته الفكرية وهي إشكالية يعاني منها الفنان أيضاً من جهة كونه وجداناً يعمل على توصيل أفكاره ضمن لغة مسموعة أو مكتوبة أو مرئية لا تحظى دائما برضا المجتمع الذي عاصره في زمنه وحتى زمننا الحالي.

كان منطلق الحلاج الرئيس في خطابه الصوفي، هو أن يجد المرء الله في أعماق نفسه أولا، وأن يذهب في فكرة (الاستغناء) إلى أبعد الحدود وهي التي ارتبطت بمهجه الاختزالي أو التقليلي (رمزية الحج مثلا والتي دفع ثمنها غاليا).

فقد اعتبرت السلطة الدينية الحلاج زنديقاً، ساحراً ومضللا وخارجاً عن الملة مما استلزم القصاص منه لادعائه في إحدى شطحاته بأنه الحق ولاستغناؤه عن فريضة الحج واستبداله بحج رمزي. فقد جلد وقطعت أطرافه وعلق على الخشبة والقي برماده من أعلى المئذنة في نهر دجلة 26 مارس عام 922 ميلادية.

لكنني أجد في أسلوبه التوفيقي (الالكليتيكي) وطريقته الكولاجية (الإلصاقية) في كتابة نصوصه (النص أشبه بمعمار توفiquي من حيث الأسلوب والدلالة حيث التوفيق ماين السهل الواضح والغامض القابل للتأويل وأخيراً المبهم العصي على الفهم) مع تضمينه لرسوم هي جزء من النص ومقاطع قرآنية وشعرية وكلمات غريبة لأسباب قد تكون مرتبطة بالسحر أو بالمناخ الطلسمي)، وهو ما يناجي عالمي الفني وطرائقه حيث أحاول التمرد على الأسلوب والشروط الموضوعة لما يسمى برسم نقي. فليس للرسم اليوم أن يعتني بالأسلوب وطريقة العمل ومقوماتهما بقدر اهتمامه بفتح أفق لتأويل عوالمه الشكلية والمضمونية يمتد ويتسع على الدوام.

كانت شخصية الحلاج الفكرية إشكالية إلى أبعد حد وربما كان السبب الرئيس هو طلب الآخرين لفهمه ولفهم ما يبته من أفكار وهواجس (كان الحلاج يستعمل كلمات تتصف بغموض المعنى مما تسبب في عدم فهم الناس له وكان شاعراً بذلك مما كان يزيد من ألمه) إلا أن هذا الأمر لم يكن

ليدفع الحلاج إلى قبول وتبني هندسة نصية للخطاب تلتزم بالمعنى والدلالة الواضحة، ذلك لأن خطابه مؤسس منذ البداية على منهجية الإقرار بعدم صلاحية العقل لتوصيل معنى العرفان أو معرفة الحق باعتباره الحقيقة المطلقة، إلا بالإدراك الحدسي الفالت من كل شرط نمطي لحالة الفهم والاستيعاب العقلي. وقد ازدادت إشكالية هذه الشخصية بسبب وجودها في محيط تتخاصم فيه عدة اتجاهات فكرية عقائدية: رأى السنة فيه مشاغبا شيعيا أما بعض الشيعة فوقفوا ضده بسبب عدم رغبتهم بأن تظهر مدرسة صوفية سنية خالصة.

وشخصيته كما وصفها ودرسها المستشرق الفرنسي المعروف لويس ماسنيون تظهر لنا انفعالية ومتمردة لا تأبه بالمحرمات والأوامر السلطوية، فمن جهة الأعراف الصوفية تمرد على معاصريه، عملياً، بتخليه عن الخرقه الصوفية. ونظرياً بتأسيسه لهذا التمرد من خلال ما جاء في كتابه (الطواسين) وهو النص المرفق لكراس هذا المعرض.

ومعنى الطواسين كما جاء في هامش هذا الكتاب هو: طواسين: الطاء يراد بها (طه)، والسين (ياسين) والنون نور حقه، أي جعله مصباحاً منه للخلق، كي يخرجهم من ظلمة العدم إلى النور.

يتميز نص كتاب الطواسين - مبني ومعنى - بالتعقيد، وكتب في فترات زمنية مختلفة وربما جاء شيء من غموضه بسبب ما اعتراه من تشويه وعدم وضوح في بعض عباراته بسبب النسخ السيئ أو أيدي الدلاء فالكتاب يحتوي على عشرة نصوص:

	طاسين السراج				
	طاسين الفهم				
	طاسين الصفاء				
	طاسين الدائرة				
	طاسين النقطة				
	طاسين الأزل والالتباس				
	طاسين المشيئة				
	طاسين التوحيد				
	طاسين الأسرار في التوحيد				
	طاسين التنزيه				

إضافة لذلك يحتوي الكتاب على رسومات تخطيطية غريبة وتجريدية جداً وهي أشبه بأسلوب الطلاسم. أما نص الكتاب فيصب في أربعة محاور هي: رؤية صوفية تتضمن الوصول إلى الله عن طريق مقامات (أكثر من أربعين مقاما)، عجز العقل البشري عن إدراك التوحيد والتنزيه الحقيقي، مشكلة الأمر والمشيئة، مشكلة معرفة الحقيقة أو التعرف عليها.

ولغة الطواسين ذات صيغ إرسال مختلفة وهي: صيغة مفهومة لا تحتاج إلى تفسير، صيغة غير مباشرة وغامضة لكن قابلة للفهم من خلال التأويل، صيغة مبهمة وملغزة غير قابلة للفهم، وبنية النص اللغوية جاءت بصيغة مركبة هي مزيج من إشارات غامضة مقابل عبارات واضحة وشفرات عصية على الفهم والدلالة وهو ما حاولت أن أجد له مرادفاً تقنياً في النص البصري الذي اشتغلت عليه، وبيث هذا النص محتواه ضمن أفق تفتشه جميع مستويات الإرسال وسبل التلقي حيث يعتمد أن يكون تركيبيا من الناحية الدلالية والبنوية:

- تصليق يعتمد تضمين عوالم مشهدية تنتمي إلى مناخات متباينة من ناحية الوضوح والغموض بسبب بنية شكلية مندرسة تقنياً أو قسدياً أو بالصدفة وأخرى واضحة ومقروءة بسهولة.
- إرسال مضموني واضح وآخر غامض أو حتى مبهم.
- تكرار إيقاعي لمفردات شكلية يقابله تقنيا طقس الذكر الصوفي.
- استخدام أسلوب المقابلة أو المقاربة ماين عالمين أو أكثر دون إعارة اهتمام إلى درجة توافقهما أو تعارضهما على سطح الصورة.

فكما أن الخطاب الصوفي لا يقول الحقيقة كلها، بسبب وضعه لها خلف النص أو لانتسابه إلى شفرة تنتمي للغة اضطرار، يتبناها الصوفي تحرزاً من الفهم السيئ أو هرباً من عين الرقيب. ”من لم يقف على إشارتنا لم ترشده عبارتنا“. فهكذا أيضاً سيتعمد نصي البصري إلى شيء أشبه بمناجاة الحقيقة (ليس إلا) وذلك بسبب عدم التمكن من معرفة كنهها أو وصفها وهي تستمد صيغة ظهورها كما يشكلها إدراكي الحدسي الكتالي: سديمية (عكس الصيغة المتراصة المتماسكة منطقياً)، أو ترميزية (الرمز هنا ليس جمعياً، بل هو وجداني ذاتي ينتج عن خلجات النفس في حوارها مع العالم والآخرين).

وبهذا ستتقمص هذه الحقيقة الغائبة وصفاً والحاضرة كإشارة والطافية على سطح العالم، ستتقمص طبيعتها المتمنعة العصية المنال مقابل أن تعلن عن ذاتها في كل زمان ومكان، في شكل إبحاء أو لغة غريبة كونية حيث الجمادات والكائنات الحية: إنسان، حيوان أو نبات تنطق بها أو خلالها وتعزز وجودها الساحر الأخاذ والنافذ في عمق النفس الإنسانية والى أعمق أعماقها، فهي لغة لا زمان لها من حيث البداية والنهاية ففيها يتنافذان ضمن وشائج لا يحكمها أو يفك مغازيها عقل أو إدراك حسي.

”ما رأيت شيئاً إلا ورأيت الله فيه“.

فإذا كانت الذات الإلهية تظهر من خلال لغة مشفرة؟ تنطقها أشياء هذا العالم فلابد لها من أن تترك لنا آثاراً تشهد لها، وهو ما يجعلنا نسوح في رحاب هذا العالم مندهشين ومنتشين بمعنى هذه الآثار وفرادة القيم الوجدانية التي نستمدها من هذه السياحة، وهي قيم جمالية بالمعنى الأرحب لكلمة جمال.

لم تكن للحلاج نفسٌ خاصة به بالمعنى النمطي الذي نعرفه عن أنفسنا، فهو لم ير نفسه بسبب تخطيه لها، وذهب نحو العالم ولم يعد إليها أبداً، فلم يجد أية أهمية لوصفها أو عرضها للآخرين إلا باعتبارها حجاباً أو عقبة لايد من نفيها أو تذويبها في الذات الإلهية، كان العالم الماورائي هو هدفه الأسمى والحاضر دائما مقابل نفيه المستمر لذاته المندرسة والآيلة إلى الفناء. فما يشدني في خطاب الحلاج هو مفهومه عن موته وموت الآخرين فالموت لم يكن بالنسبة له رعباً وأحجية كما يراه السواد الأعظم من البشر، كان بالنسبة له نهاية رحلة وبداية حياة جديدة (الموت محطة) الموت خاتمة سعيدة!

”إن في قتلي حياتي

ومماتي في حياتي

وحياتي في مماتي“

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عمار  
داود  
الحلاج  
وطواسينه

عمارة  
داود  
الحلاج  
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