

# Parviz Tanavoli and fifty years of Pop Art

## Universal Icons

&  
Exercise Writing

Curated by  
Tarlan Rafiee  
Yashar Samimi Mofakham

 Tehran - IRAN 2016

Tanavoli and fifty years of Pop Art

# Parviz Tanavoli

## Universal Icons



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 SHOHRIVOR GALLERY

May 20 to June 17 2016

Parviz Tanavoli has played a key role in the art and culture of Iran as well as the Middle East over the past six decades. This role is not limited to his creations as an artist, but to the range and variety of his activities in different areas of the arts, particularly the cultural inheritance of Iranians. He is a sculptor, painter, print-maker, author, researcher and art historian, as well as a collector and patron of Iranian modern and contemporary art.

His research and collections focus on local, tribal, and folk arts of Iran. He has written more than twenty books on subjects such as, talismans, locks, scales and weights, kohl containers, tombstones, as well as many books on hand-woven fabrics, tribal and village kilims and rugs, focusing on the historic-cultural importance of these items for the first time. The range of these collections clearly shows the depth of Tanavoli's knowledge, and his interest in the creations and beliefs of common people. He lives surrounded by folk art and the effect of this is clearly visible in his art.

With an exhibition in 1965 in Tehran, Parviz Tanavoli defined Iranian Pop Art for the first time. He showed that Iranian Pop Art is popular, narrative, poetic, critical, bold, exciting, and confusing, but it is rooted in idioms, tales, beliefs, and folk creations. It is limitlessly Iranian without resorting to usual techniques for announcing its Iranian identity.

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Extract from the exhibition catalogue, written by Yashar Samimi Mofakham

The exhibition "Universal Icons" alongside the exhibition "Exercise Writing" celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of Pop Art in Iran as well as Iranian Pop Art in the world. It also happens to mark the fiftieth anniversary of Parviz Tanavoli's "Heech".

Shahrivar Gallery is proud to present this historic exhibition by Parviz Tanavoli, curated by Tarlan Rafiee and Yashar Samimi Mofakham, from May 20 to June 17, 2016 .



Marilyn Monroe, 2016, Acrylic on Canvas, 150 x 120 cm

"My entire childhood and adolescence was about manners. In addition to home, I was required to be polite and clean at school too. The assistant principal spoke in praise of manners every morning and the calligraphy teacher asked us to repeat lines commending manners. But outside home and school it was very different. No one else was as clean as we were. On the streets we sometimes ran into men who used dirty words to call each other's mothers and sisters, suggesting intimate relations with them. I have never forgotten some of those scenes from life back then."

Parviz Tanavoli

## Tanavoli and "Adab (Manners)"

Tarlan Rafiee

In the early 1960s Parviz Tanavoli created a collection of which only a few images have been published before. In this collection, different from his other works, he created a writing board like those used in grade school to teach penmanship, and on top in elegant Nasta'liq calligraphy wrote a line, which he then repeated in dashed lines below. What made this work avant-garde at the time and set it apart from the art of its time was Tanavoli's conceptual approach to the canvas. There is no sign of calligraphy-paintings in this series, and no sign of figures and imagery. It doesn't even have any colors. What the viewer sees is a line of writing and the dashed lines running the length of the canvas below.

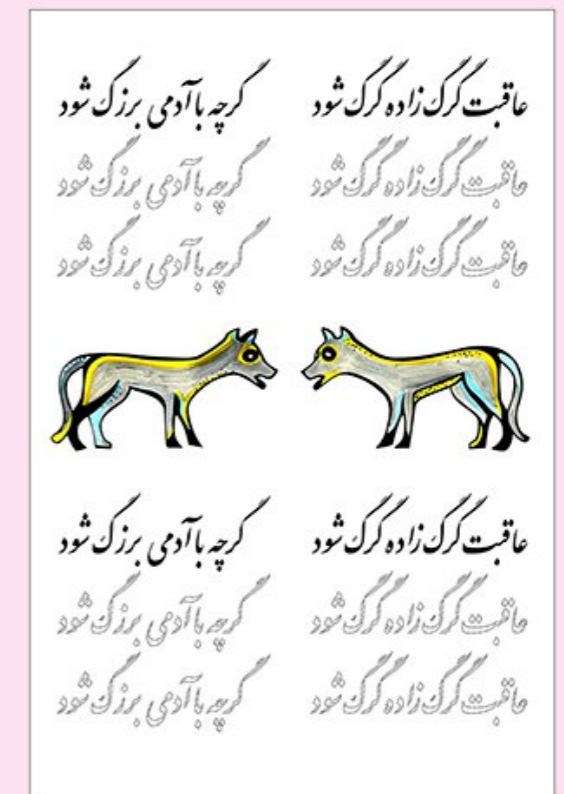
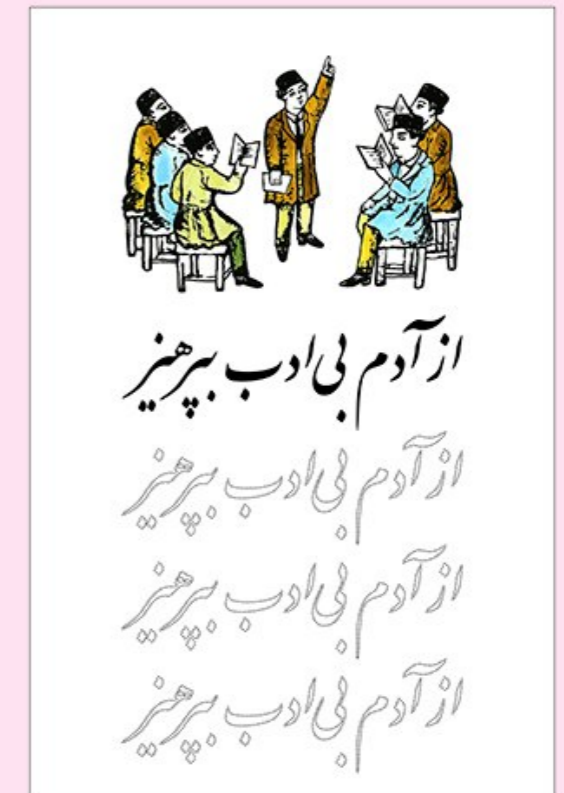
In his selection of the written line Tanavoli cleverly placed the viewer in the same position he has had in society throughout childhood and adulthood. In Iranian society and social-political history people have permanently been in the position of being advised: *the king is always a shepherd and the masses the flock*.

Based on the series mentioned above and using images from it Parviz Tanavoli has created two collections of hand-colored Screen-prints, which are reminiscent of the schoolbooks from his youth. The collections "Manners" and "Exercise Writing" are based on what he created fifty years ago, like the writing boards given to children to teach them writing and manners through the repetition of phrases and poems.

Extract from the exhibition catalogue, written by Tarlan Rafiee



From "Adab (Manner)" series, 2016, Hand-coloured screen print on Paper, 58 x 38.5 cm



From "Exercise Writing" series, 2016, Hand-coloured screen print on Paper, 58 x 38.5 cm

نمایندگاه آثار

# پرویز تناولی



فرهاد هر که بود مرد بود



گالری برگز. تهران

۱۳-۲۷ آبان ماه ۱۳۴۴

Exhibition Catalogue, Borghese Gallery, 1965  
Design: Parviz Tanavoli