

# HOME COMING

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by

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## Abstract

*Home Coming* highlights my journey of *healing* as an ongoing and lifelong practice. Moreover, it stresses the relevance and urgency of such acts of individual self-determination in aiding the healing of the collective.

As I tell my story, I merge two important and overlapping discourses that actively inform each other: the *Western Contemporary Art* discourse which fuels my art making practice, and the *New Earth/New Paradigm* discourse which informs my healing practice. Given that the audience reading this MFA thesis is most likely an art audience, I write at length about some of the key concepts, research, language and players of the *New Earth/New Paradigm*. By doing so, I hope to create curiosity and inspiration for readers to dig deeper into the concepts and ideas presented, and relate to their own healing as a most urgent matter.

In the first section of the paper, I frame my colonized worldview as the current *dis-ease* I'm healing, and the emotion of unworthiness as the primary symptom of this dis-ease. By offering some historical context, I make the case that all people considered *other* to White European male identity are most likely inflicted by a similar inferiority complex. Moreover, the colonizer as well as the colonized are two faces of the same coin within our current paradigm of survival.

The next section looks at reality from a multi-dimensional perspective and introduces some of the key differences between what the New Earth discourse considers 3<sup>rd</sup> dimensional consciousness and 5<sup>th</sup> dimensional consciousness.

The final section dives into the science and wisdom of sacred geometry and its potential for our healing.

## I. Introduction:

*Home Coming* shines a light on my ongoing journey to wholeness and how this journey impacts and plays into the healing of the human collective. More importantly, it urges readers to consider *healing* as the most relevant and pressing act of self-determination in our present-day experience of reality.

I find no better way to highlight the responsibility of the part (personal) to the whole (collective) than by quoting the well-known poem of Saadi <sup>1</sup> from his book the *Golestan*, completed in 1258 AD:

*Human beings are members of a whole,  
In creation of one essence and soul.  
If one member is afflicted with pain,  
Other members uneasy will remain.  
If you have no sympathy for human pain,  
The name of Human you cannot retain.*

The sharing of my journey of healing is also a way to open a conversational door between two discourses that overlap in my life: the *Western Contemporary Art* discourse and the *New Paradigm/New Earth* discourse.

As the moderator of this dialogue, my intention is to inspire the former to consider the legitimacy of the latter as a serious discourse worthy of immediate attention. For this, I urge readers to stay open to new and foreign concepts they may be inclined to dispose of, or

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<sup>1</sup> Abū-Muhammad Muslih al-Dīn bin Abdallāh Shīrāzī, better known by his pen name Saadi, is one of the most important poets of Classical Persian literature of the medieval period of Iran.

consider “woo-woo.” Here, Doctor Rosales Meza<sup>2</sup> reminds us: “Energy healing is an ancient and indigenous medicine. It is not a new age philosophy.”

Given that every person enters this world with their own set of conditions and challenges, each one of us has a very unique evolutionary journey towards re-establishing our sense of wholeness. Mine is particular to me and embodies several conditions that I’ve alchemized into the building blocks of my healing. These conditions include a blurred sense of identity, the experience of displacement, and the emotional and perceptual impact of having been subjected to Othering as a Middle Eastern Muslim woman raised in the Western world. Before going further, I think it appropriate to lay down some distinctions in the language used throughout my thesis and to clarify the meaning of the words *condition*, *dis-ease*, *shadow*, and *healing* which will come up several times in the following pages.

When using the word *condition*, I’m referring to the *borrowed colonized worldview* that has filtered the way I’ve experienced myself, the world around me and my place within it. In my practice of writing and art making, I treat this condition as a *dis-ease* I’m actively engaged in *healing* so as to recover my dignity and arrive at the experience of wholeness, otherwise referred to as *Home* in my thesis title. In this process, I play the part of the healer as well as the one being healed.

*Unworthiness* is the primary emotional symptom I attribute to my borrowed colonized worldview: an inferiority complex uncovered layer by layer on my journey of healing. Prior to

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<sup>2</sup> Rosales Meza Ph.D is an intuitive life coach who facilitates healing and liberation for Black, Indigenous, Women of color from a decolonial, spiritual perspective.

my awareness of its existence, unworthiness lived within my psyche as *a shadow* which, according to Carl G. Jung, is an unconscious aspect of the personality that the ego resists identifying with. “The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge.”<sup>3</sup>

Over the years I’ve spent nursing my unworthiness out of the dark and bringing it into the light, I’ve been able to work with it and transform it into my greatest ally towards becoming whole.

Last but most importantly, I want to define *healing*. Healing to me is *a journey of conscious awakening* from one’s perceptual filters and limiting beliefs, and the remembering and practice of one’s highest purpose.

## II. Auto-biography:

As Eckhart Tolle<sup>4</sup> says in one of his many lectures: “Life will give you whatever experience is most helpful for the evolution of your consciousness. How do you know this is the experience you need? Because this is the experience you are having at the moment.”

Keeping Tolle’s words in mind while reflecting back on my life, I see that I was handed a good dose of the experience of displacement and Otherness which I synthesized into the belief that I was fundamentally unworthy. This belief is a burden I carried unconsciously, not realizing

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<sup>3</sup> Jung, Carl G. *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self* (1951)

<sup>4</sup> Eckhart Tolle is a world renowned, German-born spiritual teacher best known for his books “The Power of Now” and “A New Earth”

that it affected my perception of the world and my possible roles within it. I saw the world as a place that was unsafe and I saw myself as unworthy of being seen and heard, let alone being an active agent in shaping it.

I was born in Iran, raised in France and Canada, and split the rest of my adult life living between the United States and Iran. I did not *choose* to leave Iran as a child. My leaving was initiated by my mother whom, after several months when Tehran was under airstrike by Iraqi forces, no longer wanted her children to experience war. She insisted on taking us to France despite my father's reluctance, so off we were with some savings and two months of French classes, while my father stayed behind to work and supply us with the financial means for a humble new life overseas.

I remember my first days of school. Everything had suddenly changed, and not having language to communicate slowly turned me into an observer, a silent outsider. I began to long for belonging, for being part of something in order to find an anchor. At home, I often witnessed my mother cry. Perhaps she regretted her decision to leave the comfort of her home and her husband behind, but being proud and stubborn, backpedaling was not an option.

This was the mid-1980s, and the Arab minority in France was heavily discriminated against. Iranian identity at the time was confused with and fused to Algerian and Moroccan identities, neither of which were highly respected. Most French kids never bothered to invite my sister and I to play, and the friendships we forged were with Arab children. Our association with them solidified our identity and position as *the lesser Others*.

Being an empath, I felt the racism and distaste in my teachers' eyes all the way into my bones. Encounter after encounter, my body registered the feeling of shame in its cellular

memory. Every time someone looked at me as if I was dirty, I *felt* dirty. By the time I had finally built enough vocabulary to defend myself against unspoken insult, I had already come to a place where their gaze had become mine. I saw myself as the dirty, assumed poor, lesser than, uncivilized little burden that occupied too much space and should have never been allowed to infiltrate their sophisticated society. Children I supposed, don't have the analytical capacity to understand what might cause people to behave in the ways that they do. They innocently absorb the experiences they encounter in their little malleable bodies: experiences that become subconscious beliefs about who they are and what their worth is. It was not until my early twenties that I began to look at and unravel these demeaning beliefs about myself.

I began to heal my perception of myself in a very visceral way through yoga, reprogramming my spine to stand up straight, rooting my feet into the ground with firm confidence, lifting my gaze from the floor to that which was ahead of me. Little by little the aches and pains began to quiet down. I set aside my thyroid medication and began to take baby steps towards self-determination. I discovered the rebellious spirit that had been buried underneath my shame and fear and made room for her to take my hand and guide me. She took me all the way to India with a backpack and a sense of curiosity. There, I met a teacher who gave me the name "Priya" which I still use today. This name represents the individual I continue to *shape myself* into being, peeling off layer by layer those borrowed feelings and beliefs about who I am.

Even with this naming, the struggle had just begun. It was not until my early thirties, when I decided to devote myself to higher education, that I began to reflect intellectually on what had happened to me. History classes in elementary and high school had never grabbed my attention, not because I was lazy but because I never felt that any country's history pertained to me. I had not spent enough time in any given society to feel that its past was mine. My sense of un-belonging had made me numb and disconnected to any particular set of events, groups of people, or geography. College education in the United States, however, gave me the reflexive awareness I needed. I learned about the impact of ongoing Western intervention in the politics and social conditions of my country of birth. At last, I had language for the experiences that shaped my reality in the Western world. I learned that much of my unease resulted from my sense of *displacement*. I learned that as a *Third World Woman* I was *Othered*. I learned that there are different levels and degrees of Otherness. I learned that people are Othered because of the color of their skin, their gender, their economic and class status, their sexual orientation, their physical and mental disabilities— that the further one is removed from *healthy-heterosexual-white-middle-class-male* identity, the more complex the struggle for self-determination becomes. I learned about *Colonialism*, *Orientalism*, *Capitalism* and every other soul-hungry *ism*. I learned that the Western art world did not see me as I saw myself: An artist. As a naturalized American artist, I realized that I was perceived in a very different way from white American-born artists, and that there were certain expectations that I *had* to fulfill if I wanted to be seen as *relevant*. I realized that my Third World, Iranian, Middle-Eastern, Muslim, female identities spoke *before* my work ever did.



I saw these gaps, and my seeing them meant having to make choices as to how I would navigate them. I began by acknowledging my disadvantage and rejecting the stories made up about me by people who had themselves drunk the Kool-Aid of the dominant gaze.

*.... And when the sun rises we are afraid  
it might not remain  
when the sun sets we are afraid  
it might not rise in the morning  
when our stomachs are full we are afraid of indigestion*

*when our stomachs are empty we are afraid we may never eat again  
when we are loved we are afraid  
love will vanish*

*when we are alone we are afraid love will never return  
and when we speak we are afraid our words will not be heard*

*nor welcomed  
but when we are silent we are still afraid.*

— Audre Lorde

While my experience of life as *the Other* is particular to me, it also embodies similarities with the struggle of Black, Brown, and Indigenous women living in the United States. The same ideologies and systems that massacred, enslaved, and continue to disenfranchise their people, have their tentacles wrapped around mine, making sure— through propaganda, sanctions and ceaseless interventions— that we Iranians, maintain our position as a Third World Nation. It is through these similarities that I've come to discover a sense of solidarity and sisterhood with these women.

Security is such a fundamental need for every human being. When the building blocks of security feel wobbly or missing, little can be created. Without the sense that the earth is solid beneath one's feet, how can one stand and look up to the sky, eyes twinkling with hope, or look ahead to a horizon dreaming of prospects yet attained? In the last paragraphs of Lorde's poem, I feel this the most: Insecurity embedded in the body of Women of Color as well as in my body as a Third World Woman.

When I reached the age of 40, I made the most important decision of my life: I chose to wrap up my world in San Francisco and make *my grand return home* to Iran. This marked the systematic part of my "decolonization." Before going further, I want to clarify my use of this term, honoring the classical interpretation and acknowledging my appropriation of it to speak about my journey of healing. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang help clarify: "Decolonization specifically requires the repatriation of Indigenous land and life. Decolonization is not a metonym for social justice."<sup>5</sup> Given that my country of birth was never colonized, it may seem irresponsible of me to speak of my process as *decolonizing*. However, as stated earlier, I believe that all of us considered *Other* to White Europeans walk the world with an inferiority complex and see and judge ourselves not through our own gaze but through the dominant gaze of the White European male. To *decolonize* my worldview is to reframe my gaze and to reclaim my dignity. To this end, I've chosen to live in demonized Iran over the glorified United-States; to speak Farsi rather than English any time the option presents itself; and to re-orient my art

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<sup>5</sup> Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* Vol.1, No.1, 2012, pp.1-40  
Decolonization is not a metaphor

practice, which has always been a recording of my journey of healing. “Decolonization” is the current chapter of this journey.

With my entry into this new chapter of my journey, I want to propose that we switch from words like *struggle* and *fight* and *resistance* to *healing* because ultimately this struggle for equality is a journey of healing, and it isn't about one side winning and one side losing, or one side gaining dominance over another. It is about healing and it is about wholeness. Healing is a lifelong commitment to the gradual and humbling remembrance of the Divine Feminine and Divine Masculine that we each embody, one being dysfunctional without the other. Wholeness can only come as we hold equal space and reverence for everything that we are: feminine, masculine, dark, light, good and evil and everything in between. Only then can we experience full coherence within ourselves and with each other. In our healing, each of us will face unique challenges and learn unique lessons. But in our healing, we must also acknowledge when and where we've betrayed one another. We must ask for forgiveness when we do and choose anew to include and elevate those whose dignity, wisdom, beauty, and power we've ignored because of the color of their skin, their economic status, their sexual orientation, their religious beliefs, or their mental or physical disabilities. To feel that anyone is less worthy of our attention and respect is a *dis-ease* to heal from.

Raising our consciousness to see and feel that we are all in the same boat isn't a quick fix. It happens little by little through trial and error and experience. Millions before us have walked this path to get us to where we are today. Those who've struggled the most are often the ones

who *know* the most and *can help* the most, for it is through hardship that wisdom, strength, and compassion are often built. The resilience and strength of women like the late Safiya Bukhari<sup>6</sup>, member of the Black Panther Party, teach me to keep going when I feel most tired and hopeless at the state of the world. The commitment Bukhari demonstrated to protect her community, even from her prison cell, reminds me to stay committed to mine and to write and record my journey, for another woman somewhere in the world, engaged in her own healing, may carry this torch I'm carrying today and that Bukhari carried yesterday. She might read my words and wake up a little more from her slumber and better remember who she is and what her worth is. As she wins I win, as I win you win. There is no real winning unless it is for all of us. The endeavor of Feminist healing—to bring equality between men and women, balance between Masculine and Feminine forces—will never hit home unless it makes room for everyone despite our differences. The mountain top demands that we arrive all together, hand in hand. It is *only* then that we'll be able to claim our arrival as one human collective.

### **III. The psychology of Colonialism:**

A colonized worldview isn't the only dis-ease I've strived to heal from. It is, however, the one I'm currently working on, and the one I think has been the most detrimental to my self-expression. My *colonized* worldview caused me see myself as lacking, lesser than, and generally unworthy of attention and respect, especially by white people of European decent.

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<sup>6</sup> Bukhari, Safiya, and Laura Whitehorn. *The War before: The True Life Story of Becoming a Black Panther, Keeping the Faith in Prison & Fighting for Those Left Behind*. New York City: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2010.

In this section, I want to lay out some of the historical contexts that may have contributed to my colonized worldview even *prior* to my migration from Iran to Europe and North America. To avoid any confusion for readers unfamiliar with the important political events of modern-era Iran, allow me to restate that Iran was never colonized during the 19<sup>th</sup> century European colonial expansion. However, as Farah Ghaderi describes: “A more recent history shows that although Iran was never officially colonized, it was reduced to a semi-colony as an effect of Western power’s political and economic exploitation during the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>7</sup>

From personal experience, I can claim that Iranian psychology is *deeply* infected by an inferiority complex, in that the tendency of Iranians is to position themselves *in relation* to White Europeans and harbor the desire to be like them. In his 1952 book *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon states: “Inferiorization is the native correlative to the European’s feeling of superiority. Let us have the courage to say: *It is the racist who creates the inferiorized.*”<sup>8</sup>

If we follow Fanon’s logic, the superiority complex embodied by Europeans was met by Iranians with the only other seat left available: the inferior one. While I see Fanon’s point, I wish to clarify that I’m not laying down the foundations to paint Europeans as the bad guys and the rest of the world (especially the colonized world) as their victims, even if history clearly shows the harm that the former has inflicted on the latter. Rather, I am interested in providing some historical context for my condition as an *Iranian*.

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<sup>7</sup> Ghaderi, Farah. “Iran and Postcolonial Studies: Its Development and Current Status.”

<sup>8</sup> Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Penguin Classics, 2020.

In his 2008 book *A History of Modern Iran*, Ervand Abrahamian describes the changes brought by Europeans in 20<sup>th</sup> century Iran: “At the beginning of the period, the perennial dangers haunting the average person were highway robbers and tribal bandits; wild animal, *jinns*, the evil eye, and black cats crossing one’s path; famine, pestilence, and disease, especially malaria, diphtheria, dysentery, tuberculosis, smallpox, cholera, syphilis, and influenza. By the end of the century, these fears had been replaced by such modern concerns as unemployment, pension, housing, old-age infirmities, pollution, car accidents and air crashes, crowded schools, and competition to get into colleges.”<sup>9</sup> When Modernity came knocking on Iran’s doors, it did not bring technological advancements and scientific progress alone, but also people whose way of thinking and seeing the world differed greatly from that of Iranians.

Daryush Shayeghan describes in his 1992 book *Cultural Schizophrenia: Islamic Societies Confronting the West* how technological advancement in Europe sprang from philosophical awakenings and did not just burst out of nothingness. This gradual arrival at Modernity he claims is missing in other cultures, creating an undeniable gap between Europeans and the rest of the world. Shayeghan’s perspective is that Asia and Africa fell into a sort of slumber while Europe petalled ahead: “For more than three centuries we, the heirs of the civilization of Asia and Africa, have been ‘on holiday’ from history. Having cemented the last stones into place on our Gothic cathedrals of doctrine, we sat back to contemplate our handiwork. We succeeded so

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<sup>9</sup> Abrahamian, E. (2008). *A History of Modern Iran*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

well in crystallizing time in space that we were able to live outside time, arms folded, safe from interrogation.”<sup>10</sup>

Given this gap that set Europe apart from the rest of the world, one cannot be surprised that European settlers viewed themselves as *ahead* and therefore *superior* to the people whose cultures they came into contact with. With this statement, I’m not in any way applauding the European mission to conquer, dominate, and colonize. What I’m implying, however, is the high probability that any nation in their position would have behaved similarly given that humanity lives in a *paradigm of materiality and survival*. In the New Earth discourse, this paradigm is referred to as 3<sup>rd</sup> Dimensional consciousness or 3D reality. It’s a paradigm in which human beings experience themselves as separate from each other. It’s an experience of fragmentation in which competition, fear and survival are the filters through which human beings experience reality.

#### **IV. Paradigm Shift:**

Thankfully, the prospect of a *collective arrival* does seem in the realm of possibilities, especially for those of us who subscribe to the idea and experience of a paradigm shift currently occurring in human consciousness. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, a shift in paradigm is “a time when the usual and accepted way of doing or thinking about something changes completely.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Shayegan, Darius, and John Howe. *Cultural Schizophrenia: Islamic Societies Confronting the West*. (p.12)

<sup>11</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/paradigm-shift>

Of course, we've already lived through other paradigm shifts. Going back to Shayeghan:

"It should be noted that since the revolutionary scientific developments of the twentieth century — the theory of relativity, quantum mechanics — there are signs of the emergence of another paradigm which, compared to its predecessor, has the advantage of being organic, holistic and ecological." (p.49) Keeping in mind that Shayeghan wrote these thoughts in the late 1990s, the *emerging* paradigm he refers to has grown, in the last 30 years, into a robust discourse called the *New Earth*.

The *New Earth* discourse describes a shift in human consciousness from 3<sup>rd</sup> dimensional reality (3D) to 5<sup>th</sup> dimensional reality (5D) as a result of a mass spiritual awakening tied to the procession of the equinoxes<sup>12</sup> and our entry into the astrological age of Aquarius. I said earlier that in 3D, human beings experience reality through the lens of separation, fear and survival, identifying primarily with their physical body, the material world, within linear time and space. In 5D, the human perception and laws of physics change radically. This is because, per Anais Nin<sup>13</sup>:

"We do not see the world as it is. We see the world as we are." Given this, when our consciousness shifts, our experience of reality shifts. We begin to identify with energy and as energy bodies, and we understand that we are part of *one unified field of consciousness*. One of my favorite quotes of all time is by Pierre Teilhard De Chardin<sup>14</sup>: "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience." In the past,

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbbkHwDOxZM>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mh9TRqnvHIY>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mushMMq0ZOg>

<sup>13</sup> Anais Nin is a French-born author of novels and short stories whose literary reputation rests on the eight published volumes of her personal diaries. Her writing shows the influence of the Surrealist Movement and her study of psychoanalysis under Otto Rank.

<sup>14</sup> Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) was a French Idealist philosopher and Jesuit paleontologist who worked to understand evolution and faith.



this worldview was held by the few yogis, Sufis, buddhas, shamans, saints, prophets and others considered enlightened masters. Today— and as a result of the paradigm shift in consciousness— these *enlightened* states are available to *anyone* ready to transcend the limitations of the material plane. The Law of Vibration states that everything in the universe moves and vibrates at one frequency or another. In other words, *everything is frequency*. We are energy inside a universe of energy—drops of water that make up an ocean. Therefore, we are all connected at the lowest level, a level professor John Hagelin<sup>15</sup> calls the *Unified Field*.

The *New Paradigm/New Earth* community consists of theorists, scientists, researchers, teachers, healers, channelers, activists and a growing general public grounded in the perspective that human consciousness as well as the consciousness of the Earth itself is in the process of a pivotal shift in frequency. As a result of that, our relationship to ourselves, to each other, to the earth, animals and plant life is transforming; the socio-political and financial systems that are founded upon the values and structures of 3D are collapsing; and human beings are being radically forced to shift gear in every way. Many even believe that Covid-19 is a collective manifestation to facilitate this shift upon the human population at large. By causing a halt in the ways we've always done things, we're being forced to step back and reassess our priorities and values, as well as the quality of our relationships. This time of challenge is also highlighting the deficiencies within the traditional capitalist economic system and showing us how a *universal basic income* foundational to the security and the well-being of modern

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<sup>15</sup> Professor John Samuel Hagelin is the leader of the Transcendental Meditation (TM) movement in the United States.

societies.<sup>16</sup> While it may not seem obvious to everyone, I also feel that our central nervous system has been given a chance to recover from overdrive, and therefore heal. I am not saying that healing is a *given* at this time. It is, however, more available than ever if we direct at least *some* of our attention and energy in its direction. On one hand, we can continue to dwell in anxiety and fear by consuming mainstream news all day; experience anger and frustration by resisting, or blame everything that is wrong in the world outside of us. On the other hand, we can turn the lens of our attention inward a little; allow our heart to feel those suppressed emotions we'd buried under the busy-ness and distractions; get honest with ourselves about our needs, desires, un-lived passions; and engage in practices that allow us to surrender, ground, connect, integrate, and step into our creator selves. The primary quality of the 5<sup>th</sup> dimensional consciousness is the realization that we are *conscious creators* of our lives and not the victims. We are creators at a personal level and co-creators at a collective level. So, what will we choose? What will we create in our personal life experiences, and what will we co-create for the future of humanity? *These* are the pivotal choices at hand.

#### **V. Arriving at the Flower of Life:**

My art practice, much like the rest of my life, feels as though it has been guided by some divine intelligence with a *perfectly designed plan* for its evolution. In 2017, while I was focused on several collaborative performances,<sup>17</sup> I had also returned to painting— specifically, to an

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<sup>16</sup> I really appreciate the views of 2020 American Presidential Candidate Andrew Yang on this matter. Yang believes universal basic income to be central to people's restoration of trust and speaks of "Human-centered Capitalism". <https://www.yang2020.com/policies/>

<sup>17</sup> "Lost & Found" (2012), "If You Come to My House" (2016), and "Bodies of Water" (2017) These installations/performances can be viewed on my website at <http://www.assalgheysari.com/>

exploration of abstract landscapes<sup>18</sup>. To my surprise, every time the work felt complete, I'd feel an urge to superimpose a layer of intricate pattern over the entirety of the surface I was working on. I couldn't visualize the pattern clearly but it felt like a delicate and complex screen, grid, or web. In the pursuit of quenching my thirst for this mysterious and stubborn vision, I began looking at Islamic geometry. I purchased several stencils to use on the surfaces of my performance spaces and for creating new paintings. Unfortunately, none of these satisfied me, and I knew I had to keep searching.

In 2018, I began the first summer residency of my MFA program at SAIC. With a brand-new stencil at hand, I started painting the entire floor of my Chicago studio. During this time, I was also experiencing homesickness and decided to build a teepee inside my studio: a cozy place to crawl into when I felt the need. The night I built my teepee, I had a dream. A robot-like creature stood in front of me and began feeding me psychic information on how to build a tetrahedron structure. The next day, I walked over to the hardware store and purchased six tall wood posts. Effortlessly, I joined them together and had my first tetrahedron structure. When I tried to adjust the base to fit it over the geometric pattern on my studio floor, it did not work. I intuitively knew in that moment that there was a particular geometry that was a perfect match to my tetrahedron structure. After some online research, I discovered that the Tetrahedron was the 3D expression of the 2D geometrical shape called *The Flower of Life*. The Flower of Life and its derivatives *The Seed of Life*, *The Egg of Life*, *The Tree of Life*, and *The Fruit of Life* are those intricate patterns my intuition had been pulling me towards for the past year and they are

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<sup>18</sup> These paintings as can be viewed on my website at <http://www.assalgheysari.com/painting>

referred to as *sacred geometry*. A mysterious and profound world had opened itself up to me, and I was beyond ready to dive into it (Fig.1).

## VI. The Flower of Life and Sacred Geometry:

Let's first take a look at what might turn *regular* geometry into one considered *sacred*.

*Sacred* or *canonical* geometry is not some obscure invention of the human mind", writes Paul Devreux, one the world's leading writers on Earth mysteries, "but an extrapolation by it of the implied patterns in nature that frame the entry of energy into our space-time dimension. The formation of matter and the natural motions of the Universe, from molecular vibration through the growth of organic forms to the spin and motion of the planets, stars and galaxies, are all governed by geometrical configurations of force."<sup>19</sup> The mainstream belief that certain geometrical patterns are considered *sacred* because they're deployed in the design and architecture of sacred sites and buildings (ones in which the divine is worshipped) seems incorrect. Many, if not most Islamic mosques and sites of worship are covered and embedded with geometrical patterns, but those patterns are not referred to as *sacred* geometry. They are referred to as *Islamic* ornamentation or geometry<sup>20</sup> (Fig.2). This takes us back to Devreux' statement that *sacred* geometry is *canonical* geometry and that canonical geometry is the ABC of geometry— the A part being none other than *the circle*.

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<sup>19</sup> *Sacred Geography: Deciphering Hidden Codes in the Landscape* (2010)

<sup>20</sup> After the Muslim conquest of Persia in 7<sup>th</sup> Century B.C, Persian architecture took this primary or canonical shape of the circle and manipulated it over time to come up with ever so complex and intricate new geometries it could call its own. I see this process best illustrated in the illustrated book: *Knot Making and Knot Design in Iranian Architecture* by Morteza Fereshteh Nejad (see Fig.2)

“Imagine consciousness (spirit) floating in a void (nothingness). Spirit decides to do something and expand its consciousness to creates a sphere (circle) around itself. The center point of the initial circle moves to its own edge and repeats another circle, creating the *Vesica Piscis* (Fig.3). All of the motifs mentioned above start with a single circle that becomes overlapped by another one, just as in the process of creation and cell division. At seven overlapping circles, we arrive at the *Seed of Life* (also called *the Genesis Pattern*); at thirteen clusters of circles we arrive at the *Egg of Life*; and at nineteen overlapping circles we arrive at the *Flower of Life*. If we continue further and expand the overlapping circles, we arrive at the *Fruit of Life*, a pattern made up of thirteen complete circles. This pattern is considered female as it is made entirely of circles (Fig.4). If connective (male) lines are added to it by drawing a straight line from the center of every circle to the center of every other circle in the pattern, what we arrive at is an image called *Metatron’s cube* (Fig.5).”<sup>21</sup>

Metatron’s Cube is considered one of the most important informational systems in the universe. Modern science made fun of this until the 1980s, until Professor Robert Moon at the University of Chicago, demonstrated that the entire Periodic table of Elements, literally everything in the physical world, is based on these five forms (Fig.6&7). In fact, throughout modern physics, chemistry and biology, these sacred geometric patterns of creation are being rediscovered. Everything that modern science knows about the elements and reality are tied together by the Platonic Solids, which come out of Metatron’s Cube, which is formed out of the

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oA6cVzAl4jk>

Fruit of Life, which comes from the Flower of Life, which is made by consciousness (spirit) expanding into the first circle.<sup>22</sup>

Ever since my discovery of sacred geometry, I've continued to study it and experiment with it through painting. In my research, I discovered that the Flower of Life and the Seed of Life motifs are embedded in many ancient structures around the world. They are found in ochre stain on The Osirian temple in Abydos, Egypt (1294-1279 BC); under the paw of the male Fu-Dog that sits at the entrance of the Forbidden City in Beijing, China (206 BD – 220 AD); on the Knights Templar tombstone of St. Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall, a small town on a Scottish Island. They are also found in Israel in ancient synagogues in the Galilee and Masada; in Sanai at Saint Catherine's Monastery; in various sites in Spain such as La Alcudia in Elche; in Fez, Morocco; in Turkey; and in many other places around the world. Many of these sites date from times when communication between human beings living far apart was rare if not impossible. So why was this motif drawn, engraved, and built into structures that were scattered across the world?

These questions matter to me, because my art practice explores higher consciousness and connection to divinity. To this end, I want to know if sacred geometry is *the* visual language that has been used throughout history to help humans achieve these goals.

In his 2002 book *Secrets in the Fields: The Science and Mysticism of Crop Circles*, Freddy Silva writes that the general assumption that the nature of matter is fundamentally composed of solid particles has given way to quantum physics, which shows that at a subatomic level,

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHuvW7YaGjQ>

matter is empty, and at its heart lie patterns of energy. This acknowledges geometry as the fundamental basis of matter.”<sup>23</sup> If this is in fact true, then geometry might very well be *that* invisible but unifying web that holds it all together and as such is our universal visual language—A language that we inherently recognize, understand, and can recalibrate/realign our energy with. Sylva later quotes Gregg Braden (1993): “The Flower of Life may contain the mathematical sequences of the code of creation.”<sup>24</sup>

## VII. Conclusion:

The analytical mind and its limited perspective cannot always make sense of our internal GPS (aka the wisdom of the subconscious) and therefore cautions us against stepping into the irrational unknown. But I’ve learned by following my internal voice, that it’s precisely there in the dark, that we stumble upon unexpected doors that lead to new opportunities for growth and healing.

As we continue to ground ourselves in the empowering language, narrative, values and experiences of 5<sup>th</sup> dimensional consciousness, which is essentially the next level of our evolution, my speculation about the future of *Contemporary Art* is that there will be an emergence of artists whose interests and practices represent some aspect of their spiritual awakening. Moreover, this new paradigm is heart-centered. It wants to *feel* rather than *think*. It wants to *be* rather than *do*. It wants to *share* rather than *take*. To this end, artists will be less

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<sup>23</sup> Silva, Freddy. *Secrets in the Fields: The Science and Mysticism of Crop Circles* (p.176)

<sup>24</sup> *Secrets in the Field* (p.185) — Gregg Braden is a New York Times best-selling author, scientist, international educator and renowned as a pioneer in the emerging paradigm based in science, spirituality, social policy and human potential. <https://www.greggbraden.com/>

inclined towards individuation and personal recognition, and more drawn to co-creation. *Burning Man*<sup>25</sup> is a great case in point. This art festival in the Nevada desert has gained immense popularity since the 1980s, when it first came into being. Each year, thousands of artists from all over the world come together to collaborate on large immersive art. Their concern is less about authorship and more about their contribution to the community they form when they join efforts to co-create. The result is incredible innovation and creativity. While art institutions initially ignored these art forms and practices as worthy of serious consideration, they've had no choice but to acknowledge their legitimacy and make room for them in their establishments and literature. In 2017, the Hermitage Museum and Gardens in Norfolk, Va. hosted an exhibition of Burning Man art; and the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington DC launched the 2019 tour *No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man*, which made its way to the Cincinnati Art Museum and the Oakland Museum of California later that year.<sup>26</sup> The first two institutions, Brian Schaefer writes in the *New York Times*, "claim that this large scale, largely crowd-funded, collaborative and ideologically driven work deserves consideration as an important modern art movement."<sup>27</sup> Schaefer also states that this genre of art: "...can be seen as a descendant of Dada and Allan Kaprow's Happenings..." placing *Burning Man* (whether we like it or not) in the canon of art history.

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<sup>25</sup> Burning Man (1986 to present) is an annual arts event in the Nevada desert with musical performances, dancing, art, communal living and gift economy. <https://burningman.org/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/burning-man>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/23/arts/design/burning-man-art-renwick-gallery.html>



When I link my journey of healing to the wave of transformation washing across our planet, and to the magical language of geometry that unifies us all into one beautiful weave of creation, a symbol crystalizes in my mind's eye: the *Ouroboros* (a snake biting its own tail) which represents the cycle of life, death, and rebirth (Fig.8).

We made our first artistic marks in Paleolithic times with the recording of our sacred rituals and community gatherings on the walls of caves—and sculpted statuettes in worship of the Divine Feminine. But somehow along the way, we entered a long cycle of separation, violence, and division. We fell into a sort of slumber, forgetting the value of our connection to each other and to Mother Earth. And now, after thousands of years of fragmentation, we are reawakening to the possibility of harmonious coexistence.

May I dare to say that we are at the precipice of making a full circle? One circle amongst many made before and many more to come? I invite us to hold a little consideration here for the astonishing journey we've lived, and recognize all that we've overcome. And with that, I raise my glass to what's ahead of us: a new earth and narrative, and art that shapes and represents it.

Fig.1: Priya Assal Gheysari, 2020 MFA Thesis Project: Flower of Life painting



Fig.2: Example of the process of creating Islamic Geometry

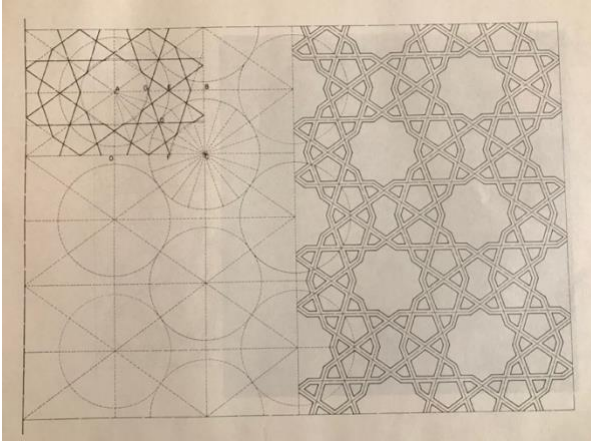


Fig.3: Vesica Piscis

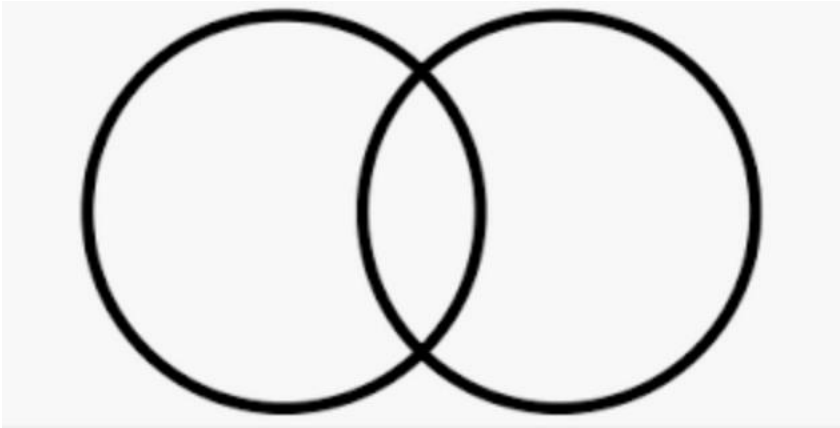


Fig.4: c) Seed of Life, d) Tree of Life, e) Egg of Life, h) Flower of Life, l) Fruit of Life

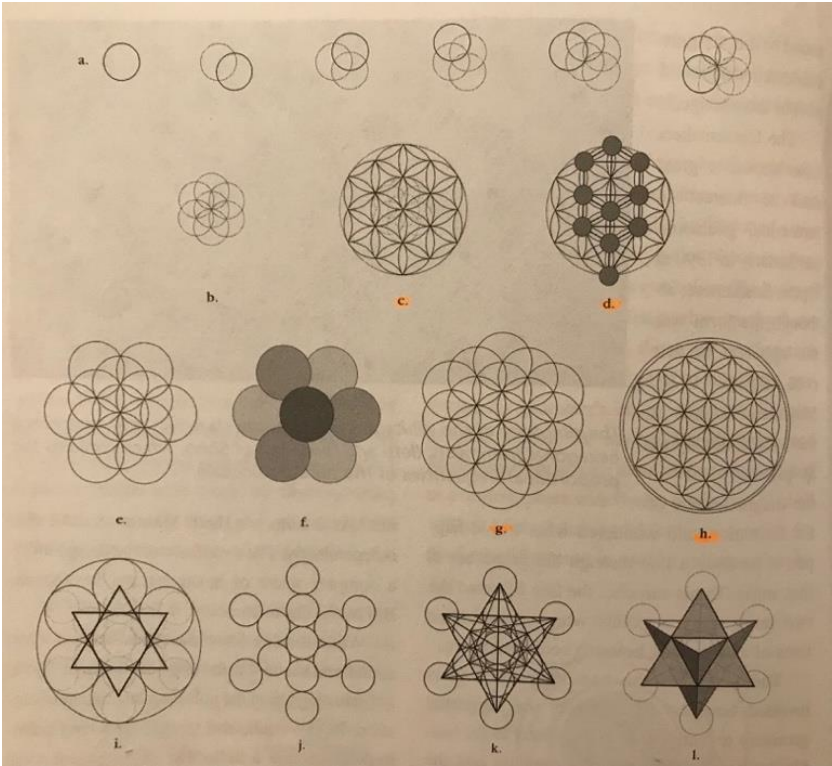


Fig.5 — Metatron's Cube

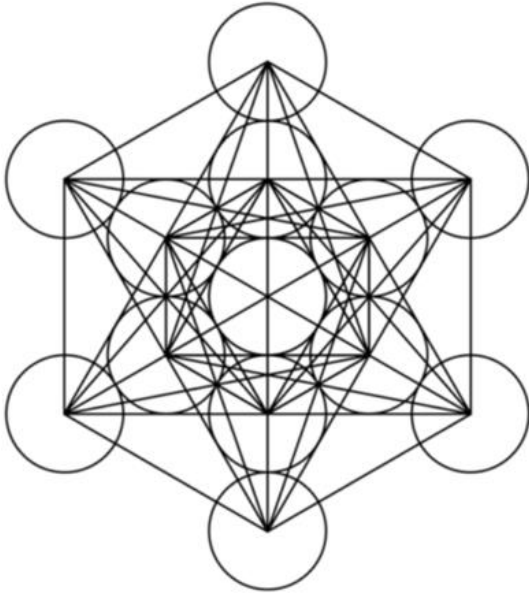


Fig.6 — The Platonic Solids

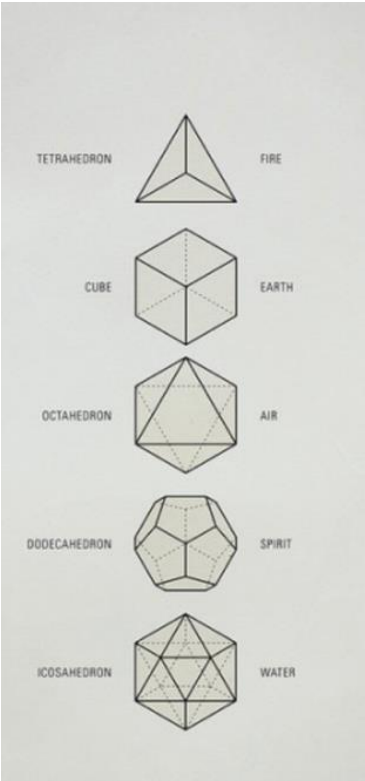


Fig.7 —Metatron's Cube and the Platonic Solids

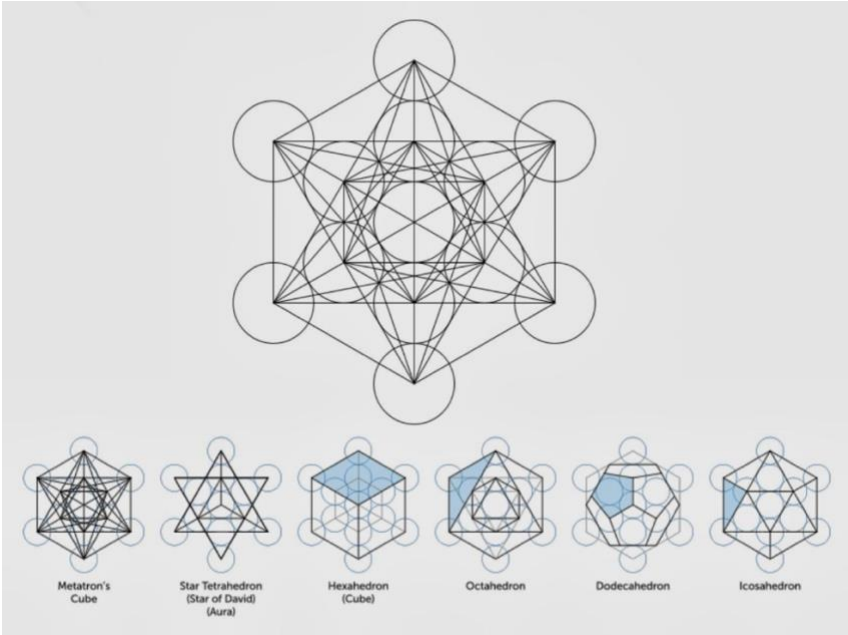
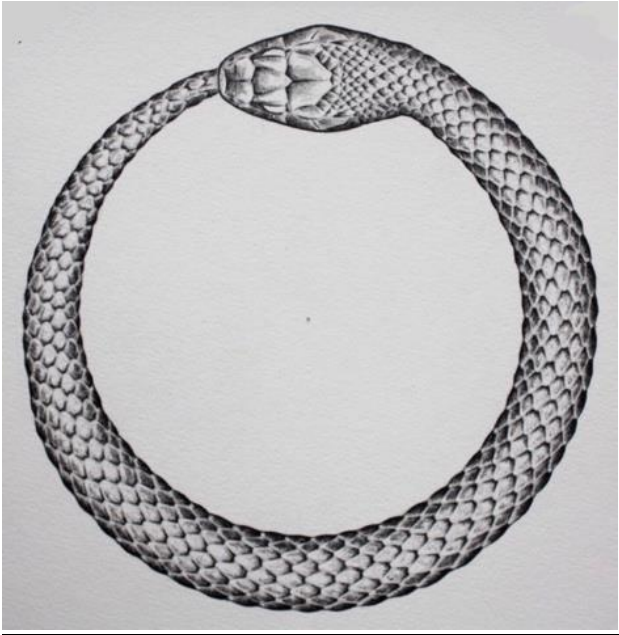


Fig.8 — The Ouroboros symbol



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