



Tarasher Portfolio

Amin Afzalpour Poet, Author, and
Theorist of Visual_Graphic poetry

Translated by: Niknaz Razavi

با امضای قاضی

۳ شد

و

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping horizontal and vertical strokes that form a complex, cursive shape.





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Translator's Statement	1
Literary Biography	4
Interview with Amin Afzalpour	9
Tarasher Manifesto	46
Samples of Tarasher	75

Translator's Statement

by *Niknaz Razavi*

Translating Tarasher was not a linguistic task — it was a dialogue between two visual and intellectual worlds. This project, encompassing the manifesto, critical reflections, interviews, and poetic samples in both Persian and English, demanded more than translation; it required interpretation, reconstruction, and re-imagination.

Tarasher challenges the very structure of language. It turns poetry into a spatial experience — one that exists not only to be read, but to be seen, felt, and inhabited. To carry this essence across languages

meant preserving its philosophical depth while letting its visual pulse remain alive. Every word, line, and rhythm was chosen to maintain that delicate balance between clarity and intuition — between sound and sight.

As a translator, my role was to act as a mediator between traditions: the calligraphic elegance of Persian literature and the visual dynamism of global contemporary poetics. Through this translation, I sought not to simplify Tarasher, but to let it resonate — as a living movement that redefines how we perceive poetry and meaning itself.

Tarasher stands at the intersection of art, literature, and vision. In presenting this

portfolio, my intention is to open a window for the global audience — to witness how

Persian poetry, rooted in centuries of lyrical tradition, evolves into a visual and conceptual revolution.

This work is not merely a translation of words, but a translation of perception. It is an invitation — to see language differently, to read with the eyes, and to experience poetry as a shared act of creation.

Niknaz Razavi

Poet, Translator, and Literary Analyst

Literary Biography:



Amin Afzalpour, known by his artistic name “Taraz,” was born on November 28, 1985, in Dezful, Iran. He is a writer, poet, literary theorist, and the founder of the literary style, “Tarasher” (Visual Poetry), it is base on “Imagistic parallelism,” “Visual metaphors,” “Strength of brevity,” and “Change in Literary Calligraphy”. He holds a degree in electronics. Afzalpour entered the literary world professionally in 2015 with the publication of his poetry

collection "Panir Ma Gorbe Be Dam Andakht." Since then, he has published twelve poetry collections.

Works:

1. Panire Ma Gorbe Be Dam Andakht — Ahura Ghalam Publishing, 2015 (Iran)

2. Dar Sakhti Chon Mahie Sabor Bash — Ahura Ghalam Publishing, September 2015 (Iran)

3. Seghte Jobain — Ahura Ghalam Publishing, October 2015 (Iran)

4. Khaharz — Arzan Publishing, Pen Club. First edition: 2016; Second edition: Winter 2018–2019 (Sweden)

5. Pey Gham Bar — Pen Club. First edition: 2016; Second edition: Spring 2017 (Sweden)

6. Namaz-e Jama'at — Pen Club. First edition: 2016; Second edition: 2017 (Sweden)

7. Ghoveh Maghna'eh — Pen Club. First edition: Winter 2018–2019 (Sweden)

8. J3 — Pen Club. First edition: Winter 2018–2019 (Sweden)

English Translations:

9. A Captive Named Freedom — Amazonia Publishing Co., 2022

10. The Cold Colonialism — Amazonia Publishing Co., 2022

11. Rise of the Night — Amazonia Publishing Co., 2023

New addition:

12. Tarasher — Hormozbook Publishing, First Edition: 2025; Second Edition: 2025

Afzalpour currently resides in Sweden and is a member of the Swedish Writers' Association and the Swedish PEN Association. In February 2019, he introduced the literary style of Tarasher for the first time in modern literature. This style emphasizes the use of visual poetry and imagery, giving importance to the shapes and appearance of letters in addition to their meaning. It utilizes linguistic techniques from the outer layers of poetic language, contrasting with the fundamental concepts of poetic language that are considered the core of poetic expression.

**An Interview with Amin Afzalpour by
the Editorial Office of *Hozour Magazine*
Interviewer: Soria Davoudi Hamouleh**

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: Mr. *Afzalpour*, you have described *Tarasher* as a branch of *visual poetry*, emphasizing the poet's deliberate design of words. Before this, in the 1950s (1330s in the Iranian calendar), **Jazeh Tabatabai**, a painter and sculptor, published his collection *Ajagh Vojagh*, introducing a modern and non-verbal (visual) innovation into the history of Iranian literature. In the 1960s, **Tahereh Saffarzadeh** compiled *Echo in the Delta*, a form of *concrete poetry* that blends sound and sight. Later, **Mehrdad Fallah**, in his collection *Khandidani*, incorporated graphic design into poetry. Following.

these, other poets also experimented with *audio-visual poetry*, creating visual representations of words or even individual letters in similar styles. Given all this, do you believe your approach takes a different path?

Amin Afzalpour: If someone thinks *Tarasher* is merely a variation of concrete poetry or a visual play with words, then perhaps they haven't yet faced its true essence — because the real difference lies in the way we perceive language itself.

Concrete or visual poetry, as we know, mostly focuses on the arrangement of words — on how they are laid out on the page. The visual form becomes just as important as the meaning; for instance, the

poet might arrange words into the shape of a tree or a wave to evoke a certain feeling or message. In Iran, there have been beautiful experiments in this field — from *Jazeh Tabatabai's Ajagh-o-Vajagh* to *Tahereh Saffarzadeh* and *Mehrdad Fallah*. These efforts were valuable, yet they mostly remained on the surface of form and visual design.

But honestly, I didn't play with form — I wrestled with language itself. *Tarasher* is not a matter of simple design; it's an act of redesigning. It's as if you take language in your hands like a piece of stone — not to decorate it, but to carve it, to uncover something hidden inside it. For me, *Tarasher* is an encounter with the body of language, not merely with its meaning —

a direct engagement with the shape and substance of words.

People ask why I named it *Tarasher*. Well, precisely for this reason. Like a sculptor who first sketches and then chisels, I do the same — only with words. Here, the goal is no longer just communication; language itself becomes the subject of creation. Words are no longer mere vehicles for meaning — they *become* something in their own right.

The name *Tarasher* comes from this act of carving the language — not just to make an artwork, but to reach a new understanding of language itself. It goes beyond design, beyond imitation of what came before.

This is a new path, not a continuation of the previous ones.

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: You firmly believe that Tarasher is a movement. However, there seem to be some ambiguities in this perspective. If that's the case, how do you define a poetic movement? And would you describe Tarasher as a literary movement or an artistic one?

Amin Afzalpour: My commitment to Tarasher does not stem from a fleeting enthusiasm; it comes from a fundamental need — a need for a different experience of language, an experience capable of carving something new from the core of

words — not merely meaning, but the substance of sensation, structure, image, and thought.

When I say Tarasher is a movement, I do not mean imitation of the past, nor competition with it. Rather, it is the beginning of a new inquiry, one embedded within language itself. Some may see Tarasher as a form of visual or concrete poetry, but I must emphasize that what we are dealing with goes beyond simple visual play or formalism. In Tarasher, we take language in our hands like a block of stone — not for decoration, but to carve it, to reveal something hidden within it.

For me, a poetic movement represents a fresh worldview, a new way of narrating

the experience of life and perception. If a poem can shift the audience's perspective, if it can make language not a mere vehicle but the subject itself, it becomes a movement. Tarasher is precisely that: a linguistic-artistic initiative that generates structure and meaning simultaneously from the very letters and sounds.

In Tarasher, I treat language as a sculptor treats raw material. Letters and words are no longer just instruments of communication; they themselves are form, texture, and sound, and, more importantly, they create meaning, not merely convey it. From this perspective, Tarasher is neither a branch of poetry nor a mere continuation of established traditions; it is an effort to establish a new theory at the boundaries

of language, design, and even the philosophy of language.

We have not come to claim territory. Tarasher is neither a confrontation with Iranian literary history nor a repetition of it. We have not come to argue whether this is poetry or not; we have come to ask: is poetry only what it has been until now, or can it be something else as well?

In a world where language is constantly eroding and repeating itself, Tarasher seeks to carve away that erosion and reveal another layer of language. Here, art and literature join hands to let a new vitality emerge from the core of words. Many of you, devoted lovers of literature, may still see Tarasher as a movement born

of individual experience. But has not every movement once begun from a place of solitude?

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: Art is born of genius. What line of thought gave rise to the concept of Tarasher? What background led you to articulate this issue? It seems that the theoretical roots of this approach have not yet been fully explained. How would you evaluate your concerns in this regard?

Amin Afzalpour: If we look at Tarasher from the perspective of genius and artistic

conception, I must say that this movement was not the spark of a single moment. It is the result of a long journey — a kind of persistent exploration of language and form. Traces of this process can be seen in my earlier poems, although back then it had not yet fully blossomed.

Tarasher truly began at the point when I could no longer consider language merely as a tool for conveying thought. Language itself became a living entity for me — full of energy, full of complexity. At that moment, poetry was no longer the familiar classical or even postmodern form. It had become more of a testing ground, a space where language stepped out of its obedient role and became the shaper of

space and energy within the poem.

Honestly, my concern arose when I realized that the old, pre-defined frameworks of poetry were no longer adequate. Why should language always play the same old role? Why shouldn't it have its own creativity, its own capacity to produce experience, rather than merely transmit it? Gradually, these questions transformed into a new form — something I named Tarasher.

Tarasher is more of an experimental process than a rigid theoretical framework. In my work, theory emerges from experience, not the other way around. More than attempting to create a school or doctrine, I am wrestling with language

itself — with the words themselves, not just their meanings. I wanted to see what remains, what is created, if the traditional boundaries no longer exist. At its core, Tarasher is an effort to create new words or letters, not only altering the surface of poetry but also transforming its inner substance.

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: As you have described, Tarasher is a form of embodiment that creates a non-verbal (visual) relationship, and it does not follow any extralinguistic or metalinguistic patterns in contemporary literature. Do you consider this genre to be a completely independent artistic conception?

Amin Afzalpour: Thank you for posing such a precise question; it deserves a careful response.

To begin with, the answer is no. Tarasher is not merely a form of embodiment or a visually oriented practice, and its relationship with language goes far beyond the “non-verbal” or purely “visual arrangement.” In fact, what lies at the center of Tarasher is a mindset that regards language not as a tool for transmission, but as a subject of reflection, transformation, and creation. As I mentioned in previous answers, in Tarasher, language is treated as a living, fluid, and dynamic material — simultaneously form, sound, image, and

the substance of thought.
In Tarasher, we seek to reconstruct our relationship with language itself. As André Pasion said, “Poetry is a language behind language,” but Tarasher moves beyond this horizon. Here, the hidden language is no longer hidden; it transforms into a new language — a language that not only carries meaning but creates it. In other words, Tarasher does not attempt to enter poetry from outside of language; rather, it opens a fresh gateway for thinking, feeling, and creating from within language itself.

In this process, language is no longer merely a means of expression; it acts as an artistic object. Designing words in Tarasher does not mean emptying them of content; it is an effort to uncover hidden

layers and activate the forgotten potential of language. The poet is not alone — language participates as a co-creator. Here, words break, reconstruct, take form, and generate meaning not from narrative, but through their free, autonomous function.

Several questions naturally follow from this discussion. Given the one-sided nature of this interview, I will answer them myself. First: is Tarasher an independent genre? Yes — but not in the sense of being isolated or detached from literary currents. As a linguistic experiment, Tarasher enters into dialogue with the history of literature, sometimes critiquing it, sometimes moving beyond it. This movement is neither rejection nor imitation;

it represents a fundamental reconsideration of our relationship with language.

And if you ask whether other languages — such as theater, cinema, politics, or graphic design — have entered poetry, the answer is again yes. Yet, within this blending, the language of poetry itself is transformed. Contemporary Persian poetry, far from being weakened by these influences, expands its expressive horizons. What occurs in *Tarasher* is precisely this: a passage beyond stabilized language into a space where the word is not a sign of something else, but a thing in itself.

In one sentence: *Tarasher* is an attempt to

recover language, not to eliminate it; to create a new world emerging from language itself.

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: Tarasher emphasizes the deliberate design of words. In this framework, traditional poetry ceases to exist. You move beyond language itself, and poetry without words assumes an artistic essence. What remains is your own mind that perceives it as poetry. Here, the poet is no longer simply a poet but an artist, and the poem itself becomes a work of art. How do you assess this perspective?

Amin Afzalpour: First of all, I must clarify: when I talk about the “design of words” in *Tarasher*, I do not mean the elimination of language or the emptying of poetry. On the contrary, we are engaging with the words themselves, not to strip them of meaning, but to uncover new layers within them. In this practice, a word is no longer a worn-out tool; it is a living entity, constantly changing. It takes shape, breaks, and is reconstructed.

In fact, in *Tarasher*, the poet is never alone—language accompanies them; it is, in a sense, a co-creator. Yet if we examine the history of visual poetry, we see that even in avant-garde works, this living, creative aspect of language has often been overlooked. Frequently, there is the image,

but the language remains the same old language. This is precisely the intervention Tarasher aims to perform—a kind of surgery on language itself.

When I say, “poetry no longer exists,” I do not mean that poetry is dead. Rather, I mean that the traditional forms and structures are no longer sufficient to express what emerges in the poet’s mind in the present moment. This statement is, in a way, a declaration: it is time for the form to change, not just the content.

Some may argue that in Tarasher, the poet is no longer a poet but an artist. I agree—with a caveat: if by “artist” we mean someone who does not merely write, but designs, constructs, breaks, and

reconstructs. Tarasher is a serious play with words—a linguistic experimentation in which the poet works with language like a sculptor, not merely as a storyteller or emotional narrator.

Does this mean poetry without words—purely image—is the goal? Absolutely not. That would make no sense to me. Even when design dominates, the words are still there; we simply interact with them in a way that defies habit.

Tarasher transforms language into an artwork itself, where form, structure, and meaning are rewritten. Ultimately, the view that poetry without words can still be art is touching upon the same transformation that Tarasher articulates. In this process,

not only the poet's mind but language itself—and our very definition of poetry—is undergoing a metamorphosis. Perhaps this is exactly the moment when poetry will rediscover itself.

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: In *Tarasher*, the word transforms into graphic form. Has *Tarasher* managed to align itself with new theories and paradigms? And what, precisely, is your theoretical framework in this domain?

Amin Afzalpour: If, as a specialized reader, you think that *Tarasher* merely turns words into graphics, I must say that this perspective overlooks a very fundamental

linguistic experience. At the same time, it also reveals that you may still be resisting the new dimensions of this experience. Such resistance is entirely natural, because what we are dealing with here transforms not only meaning but also the form and physicality of the word itself!

This is not simply a matter of “playing with images.” In *Tarasher*, we are pursuing a kind of displacement. The goal is not to introduce visual forms as mere decoration in poetry; the crucial point is to generate, from within the word, new structures and relationships among letters, sounds, shapes, and meanings.

You asked whether *Tarasher* has managed to align itself with new theoretical

paradigms. My answer is that not only has

it aligned, but it is actively establishing a new theory. This theory, unlike classical linguistics—which typically seeks meaning through linguistic order—moves toward the pure dynamism of language. Language is approached as an artistic-conceptual phenomenon. I have distanced myself from fixed, conventional perspectives on language. Instead of treating it merely as a “tool for expression,” I work with it as if it were artistic clay: words no longer simply carry meaning or sound—they have structure. They have form. And these forms themselves can generate meaning.

While most poets are still playing within traditional or modern rules—adjusting rhyme, rearranging syntax—I begin at the

root: at the alphabet itself. I am seeking a new way of speaking, where letters and words are no longer mere “vehicles of meaning” but instruments for creating meaning and form.

My theory is a “linguistic-artistic theory,” something at the intersection of linguistics, design, and even philosophy of language. Tarasher demonstrates that language can simultaneously generate thought, image, and sensation. This is precisely the moment where poetry and graphic art, language and design, meaning and form, converge into a single creative experience.

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: From a morphological perspective, and considering both visual and textual imagery, to what extent have you been able to embed new concepts within the linguistic structures of this form?

Amin Afzalpour: From a morphological perspective, what this experience pursues is far more than mere wordplay or superficial arrangement. It is a fundamental reinvention: a transformation of the relationship between language, meaning, image, and form. Language is no longer just a tool for transmission; it becomes a living body, generating

meaning and breathing life.

In this form, images do not reside at the margins—they flow within the text, interwoven in a multilayered dialogue with the writing itself. They carry the audience beyond mere reading into a multisensory, spatial experience, at times almost cinematic. Language acts like soft, malleable clay, blending sound, silence, meaning, and form. This is precisely what Tarasher seeks to create: a linguistic experience that transcends letters and form, evolving into the language of form itself.

As I mentioned before, the entry of other languages—graphic design, theater, politics, or cinema—into poetry is neither

accidental nor imitation; it is the inner drive of poetic language to expand and transform. Contemporary poetry, particularly in the form of Tarasher, is neither weakened nor emptied by embracing these languages; rather, it has been revitalized into a dynamic, flowing, and generative force.

This path is more of a continuous experiment than a fixed theory. Structural shifts, intentional ruptures, conscious omissions, and visual and auditory defamiliarizations are all part of this practice. Here, language grows from form itself, and form is no longer a container—it is the message.

Ultimately, new concepts are neither

imposed from outside nor forced; they emerge from the heart of language, from the structure of form, from the arrangement of letters and the interplay of sight and sound. These concepts are not just intellectual—they encompass sensation, space, movement, and tension. Language here is no longer merely a carrier of meaning; it is itself the creator of experience.

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: Language cannot be separated from poetry, yet in *Tarasher* you seem to believe otherwise. Does this mean that you regard poetry as something distinct from language?

Amin Afzalpour: Who has ever said that in Tarasher, language is separate from poetry? On the contrary, everything I have tried to do is to show that language is not only inseparable from poetry—it is poetry itself. What I seek in Tarasher is not a separation, but a redefinition of the relationship between language and poetry. I have no intention of setting language aside; rather, I want to liberate it from being merely a tool of transmission and bring it to the very center of artistic creation.

In traditional poetry, language acts as a mediator between the poet's mind and the reader's. But in Tarasher, that mediation collapses. Language no longer wishes merely to convey; it wishes to create. It

wants to be the poem, not simply carry it. We have moved beyond the stage of transmitting meaning; we are entering a space where language becomes meaning—a meaning born not from external reference, but from the internal structures of letters, the play of sounds, the arrangement of words, and even the visual form of writing itself.

Let me be clear once more: I am not saying that language stands apart from poetry. Quite the opposite—I believe that language alone can give birth to poetry. In *Tarasher*, meaning arises not from narrative but from the free and radical functioning of language itself.

In essence, Tarasher is a linguistic experiment—an effort to open the constricted borders of language within poetry, to create a new form in which the word is no longer a sign of something, but the thing itself. We see words and letters the way a sculptor sees stone—not as a means of saying, but as a medium of shaping.

In this experience, language and poetry are no longer two entities—they become two sides of the same coin, where letters and words are not merely instruments, but the artwork itself. Tarasher is a path toward a liberated, self-generating language—a language that creates its own form.

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: According to the evolution of contemporary Iranian poetry, the languages of theatre, cinema, politics, and graphic art have all entered poetry. The question, then, is this: where is the language of poetry itself?

Amin Afzalpour: In response to the question of whether languages such as theatre, cinema, politics, and graphic art have entered poetry, I would say yes — absolutely. But what is often overlooked by specialists is that through this very process of entry and intermingling, the language of poetry itself is being redefined.

The language of poetry, contrary to what is

sometimes assumed, has never been a static or fixed phenomenon.

Contemporary Persian poetry—especially over the past few decades—has continually absorbed new forms, structures, and languages. And this is not a sign of weakness, but of maturity, of flexibility, of evolution. The languages of theatre, cinema, politics, graphic art, and even new media have all entered the realm of poetry—yet not to consume it, but to open up new possibilities for expression, for imagination, for sound, and for form.

What is often missed in this process is the heart of poetry: the place where language is not merely a tool of expression, but the very substance and raw material of creation itself. What appears on the

surface may be formal play or technical experimentation, but what truly pulses beneath it is the language of poetry itself—language as a living, fluid, generative being.

For me, and for others who look at the realm of poetic language with precision and care, it is clear that the language of poetry does not emerge from imitation or from external influence; it grows from within, constantly giving birth to itself. When poetry absorbs other languages, it does not lose its essence—it expands its capacity. This language no longer functions merely to convey meaning; it becomes a medium for experience: for creating space, image, silence, time, and even the sensation of seeing.

So what we pursue in Tarasher—or in any truly new poetic experiment—is not simply the inclusion of new elements, but a fundamental redefinition of poetic language itself: a language that is not fixed but in motion; not static, but perpetually in the act of creating itself.

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: Does Tarasher draw upon the cultural legacy and depth of the Persian language? To what extent does it engage the emotions and sensibilities of the intellectual class, and how deeply does it stir the perception and awareness of an attentive audience?

Amin Afzalpour: Tarasher undoubtedly draws upon the rich cultural heritage of the Persian language, for no transformation or innovation in language can endure or attain depth without its historical and cultural roots. Tarasher preserves the subtle nuances and semantic layers that Persian has cultivated over centuries, while simultaneously seeking to redefine the language itself—a redefinition that moves beyond mere structure or form, reaching into the very core of meaning and lived experience.

For further insight, one may refer to the writings of **Alireza Nasiri Khanegah**, who has explored the origins of Tarasher and its foundations within Persian linguistic

and aesthetic traditions.

In the end, I must emphasize once again that Tarasher is, above all, an experience—one that bridges the emotional depth of society with the spirit of the individual, transcending conventional boundaries of perception and understanding.

Soria Dvoudi Hamouleh: My deepest gratitude to you, **Mr. Afzalpour**, for generously sharing your time and insight with me.

Tarasher Manifesto: A Visual Awakening

*¹ Tarasher, as one of the modern movements of contemporary Iranian poetry, presents a multilayer and multisensory experience to the reader. In this mode, the words are not only the carrier of voices and meanings; but they combine with signs and visual elements to create visual_auditory experience. This approach not only forsakes traditional limitations that they mainly were based on rhythm and rhyme but also possibiles active interaction of the reader with text. The reader of Tarasher simultaneously reads, sees, and gets a multilayer experience meaning and form.

¹ Tarasher /'tɑ:ɾɑ:ʃɛr/ (طراشعر)(Tara+Sher): The meaning of Tara in Farsi comes from the Greek word "Grapho" it means graphic or picture, and Sher in Farsi drives poet in English): as a poetry movement

The purpose of codification of this manifesto is a completely introducing of principles, techniques, and prospects of Tarasher. This manifesto tries to explain theoretical and scientific foundations fluently, concisely, and clearly; and to be a light in the dark path of visual poem or in the other words; graphical _ visual poem for researchers, poets, and artists who like graphical _ visual poems. Also, this work tries to specify the position of TaraSher in contemporary Iranian poetry and to emphasise in developing of visual language of poem.

One of the obvious features of Tarasher, is using of strength of brevity and visual metaphors. These tools are possible poets to express complex concepts in the visual and pressed form and decrease the distance between poet and reader. Furthermore, visual symmetry, which emphasises on the visual and semantic harmony, is one of the main pillars of this movement. The result of this mode is the poem that is readable and experienceable for both the eyes and minds of the

readers; the poem isn't heard just by ears and isn't limited to traditional form.

Poetry always has been an experience between human and language; the experience that can transfer to reader by hearing and vision. A person who hears poem for the first time, receives the other person's inner feelings and deepest thoughts by his sound and language. This experience takes reader to poet's inner world and activates his hearing simultaneously. On the other hand, one who reads poem, experiences those inner feelings and deepest thoughts by the tools of literacy and sense of sight and achieves a visual_ mental interaction.

Accordingly, listening to a poem is considered a second_ hand art, and reading a poem is considered a third_ hand art; because the mediums between poet and readers are never eliminated and no concept is realized without any mediums. Even human consciousness has always realized by mediums of knowing and not knowing and understanding art isn't far from this rule. This fact presents art and literature not only aren't directly

transfer of meaning, but also are the complex and multilayer process that contributes addresser in its experience actively.

In such a context, the necessity of evolution and innovation in contemporary poetry is revealed. Traditional experiences that are mainly based on sounds and rhythm, they no longer meet the needs of today's audience. Contemporary audiences who live in the digital world and have naturally interacted with visual media need poetry, which can be both heard and seen at the same time. This necessity, creates the opportunity to form of modern movements like Tarasher; the style in which it takes words out of limitation of being only hearable and creates a combination of visual elements, multilayer and active experience for reader

Tarasher enables readers to search for significance not only in sound but also in image, color, combination, and the sequence of words. This movement, with the strength of brevity, visual metaphors, and pictorial symmetry, reduces the

distance between poet and reader and elevates the experience of poetry to a new and visual plane. Indeed, Tarasher is created in such a way that it is not merely to be read but to be seen, felt, and to engage with the reader's mind.

In light of these features, the codification of Tarasher manifesto as a fourth-hand art is not merely necessary but serves as a visual revolution in Farsi poetry. Tarasher seeks to take Iranian poetry beyond the limitation of tradition and authority and brings new, creative, and multisensory experience for today's audiences.

Tarasher, as a new style in contemporary poetry, has redefined the boundaries of literary experience and transforms the usual mediums between poet and reader. This mode, beyond the emphasis only on the meaning and concept, involves form and image of the words as the activated artistic tools, and by using of pictorial and graphical signs, enables visual and multilayer experience of poetry. In this argument, Tarasher is beyond the usual perception

of the poem and enables readers to read, see, and analyze meaning in the conceptual and visual layers at the same time.

Therefore, Tarasher, through the combination of words and images, creates a multidimensional and visual-conceptual experience that can be described as a “new horizon.” This experience actively engages the reader in the process of meaning-making and reduces the distance between the poet and the recipient, both visually and conceptually.

One of the fundamental elements of Tarasher is strength of brevity and the intelligent use of visual signs. In this style, every letter, every space, and every form of the letters becomes part of the text and a carrier of visual meaning. Visual metaphors and pictorial harmony allow for the creation of additional layers of meaning, so that even in the absence of a complete image, the reader can perceive meaning from the visual structure of the words. In this way, Tarasher is not only a poetic style but also a visual-auditory art that places the reader on a path of active and creative experience.

Tarasher can also be regarded as a visual revolution in poetry. In the digital age and the era of social networks, the reader tends to see more than to listen; therefore, poetry needs to move beyond the traditional frameworks of rhythm and rhyme and employ visual and graphic tools to create a simultaneous multisensory experience. This style remains faithful to Iran’s rich visual traditions—such as ^{*1}Nasta‘līq calligraphy and the miniatures of the ^{*2}Shahnameh—while at the same time engaging with modern technology and digital tools, bringing poetry into a new, creative, and accessible form for the contemporary generation.

¹ Nasta‘līq (نستعلیق):

Nasta‘līq is a traditional Persian calligraphic style, often regarded as the most elegant script of Persian literature and poetry.

² Shahnameh (شاهنامه):

The Shahnameh (“Book of Kings”) is a monumental Persian epic poem by Ferdowsi (10th–11th century), celebrated for its stories and richly illustrated manuscripts.

Thus, Tarasher should be seen not only as a poetic style but also as a revolutionary movement in the landscape of Iranian literature. With this approach, the boundaries between seeing, hearing, and understanding are dissolved, and poetry transforms into an active, multilayered, and visual experience that simultaneously involves both the reader's mind and eye, paving the way for future innovations in literature and the visual arts.

Here again, it must be emphasized that visual poetry has a long history in Iranian literature. From the Nasta'liq calligraphies to the miniatures of the Shahnameh, and even classical examples of visual poetry, there have always been attempts to combine meaning with image. However, TaraSher redefines this tradition in a coherent and modern way.

The "book Tarasher" by "Amin Afzalpour", recently published, presents a comprehensive collection of Tarasher samples, critiques, and related essays. This work not only reflects the growth and maturity of this style in Iran, but also provides a platform

where readers, researchers, and artists can experience poetry simultaneously as a visual and conceptual form. Its publication establishes Tarasher as a modern intellectual and visual movement, demonstrating that Persian poetry can be both traditional and innovative—preserving cultural roots while at the same time engaging with the contemporary visual language.

Through strength of brevity, the fusion of word and image, and the use of visual metaphors, Tarasher expands the boundaries of traditional poetry and creates a multilayered experience for the reader. This style reduces the distance between poet and reader in both meaning and form, opening the possibility of a creative and imaginative world. As a visual-auditory art, Tarasher enables active interaction between the reader and the text; the reader is no longer a passive receiver of meaning but instead constructs, understands, and gives meaning to the poem through their gaze.

In the digital age and the era of social networks, when audiences tend to see more than they listen, Tarasher can be regarded as a visual revolution in contemporary Iranian poetry. This style demonstrates that poetry can move beyond the traditional frameworks of rhythm and rhyme, and by employing graphic, digital, and visual tools, create an active multisensory experience. In doing so, Tarasher remains faithful to Iran's rich visual traditions while also engaging with modern technologies, bringing poetry into a new, creative, and accessible form for the contemporary generation.

From a systematic perspective on the conditions of the digital era, Tarasher is more than a poetic style; it represents a revolutionary movement in world literature, one that dissolves the boundaries between seeing, hearing, and understanding, and finds its place within the literatures of other nations. The publication of Tarasher underscores the importance and position of this style in contemporary literature, and further shows that the

path of innovation and creativity in world poetry remains open and full of promise. This work paves the way for future visual and multilayered poetic experiments and invites a new generation of poets and artists to create and engage actively.

We all know that both traditional and modern Persian poetry have often been confined to auditory rhythm and rhyme—the same "authoritarian old father" whose frame excluded anyone who did not fit within it, branding them as uneducated and in need of growth. This father completely ignored the visual elements of poetry. Such limitations have prevented a part of the audience—especially younger generations and those who prefer visual and multimedia experiences—from fully connecting with poetry.

Meanwhile, on a global scale, movements such as Concrete Poetry and Visual Poetry were flourishing widely across Europe, Latin America, and the United States, combining word and image to create multilayered and active experiences for readers.

In Iran, however, similar grounds remained barren and largely overlooked—until suddenly, Tarasher emerged.

Tarasher is not only a response to the limitations of traditional poetry but also a visual revolution in the field of Iranian literature. This style demonstrates that Persian poetry can be both traditional and innovative at the same time—remaining connected to its cultural roots while also attracting a new generation of readers through a modern visual language. The publication of diverse Tarasher samples, along with critiques and related essays in Amin Afzalpour's book *Tarasher*, stands as evidence of the importance and position of this new style and paves the way for creative and multilayered poetic experiences in the future of Iranian poetry. This movement is a call for poets, artists, and visually-oriented audiences to participate in a collaborative and creative experience, liberating poetry from the constraints of tradition.

For this liberation, certain key principles and theoretical-scientific frameworks have been defined. These foundational principles of Tarasher, as a theoretical and practical framework for the creation of visual and graphic poetry, determine the foundations of this new style and provide guidelines for poets and artists to create multilayered, active, and participatory experiences for their audiences. These principles are both a response to the limitations of traditional poetry and an opportunity to utilize the potential of visual and digital capacities.

The Core Principles of Tarasher

Words as Images:

Words are not only sound but also image. Their visual form and composition carry meaning. Without this visual dimension, the transmission of meaning remains incomplete. This principle breaks the boundary between auditory and visual meaning,

making poetry a multidimensional experience.

Dialogue Between Word and Image:

In Tarasher, text and image must remain in constant interaction. This interplay creates a multilayered experience, making poetry not only readable but also visible, and opening the way for new and unexpected meanings.

Visual Metaphors:

By using visual shapes and forms, meaning is deepened and intensified. For example, shaping the word “sun” into a glowing circle conveys both its semantic content and its visual presence.

Freedom from Traditional Rules:

Rhyme and meter are no longer binding. The visual form and spatial harmony of text itself can generate rhythm and poetic flow, allowing poetry to transcend conventional boundaries.

Active Audience Engagement:

Visual poetry transforms the reader from a passive recipient into an active interpreter. By compelling the audience to “see” the text, poetry becomes a participatory process of meaning-making.

Digital Expansion:

Technology and digital tools enable the fusion of visual and semantic layers, the creation of innovative forms, and the wide circulation of poetry. Software, apps, and online platforms extend Tarasher into a modern and global poetic style.

In sum, these core principles not only establish the theoretical foundation of Tarasher but also provide a clear operational path for poets and artists to create a new, active, and multilayered poetic experience. By relying on this framework, Tarasher goes beyond the limitations of traditional poetry, allowing the audience to discover meaning with both eye and mind, and to become part of the

creative process itself. This movement signals the beginning of a visual revolution in poetry—one capable of transforming the future of Iranian literature and introducing new generations of readers to an innovative, participatory experience of poetry.

Methods and Techniques of Tarasher

The methods and techniques of Tarasher serve as the practical foundation for realizing its core principles, creating a multilayered and active poetic experience. These techniques demonstrate how word and image can remain in constant dialogue, shaping a poetic form that is at once visual and semantic.

*1 **Calligram:**

One of the most recognized techniques in TaraSher is the calligram. In this method, the poem is shaped into the form of its subject, so that the visual image corresponds with its meaning. For example, a poem about a bird or a flower may be arranged so that the letters and lines take the form of a bird or flower. This technique not only strengthens the transmission of meaning but also elevates poetry to a visual level that engages the reader in interpretation and discovery.

Graphic Layers:

Another central technique of Tarasher is the use of graphic layers. Visual elements such as color, texture, shape, and spatial arrangement of letters enhance the interaction between text and image,

¹ Calligram: A type of poem in which the words are arranged to form a visual image of the poem's subject. This form became especially popular in French poetry of the early 20th century (e.g., Guillaume Apollinaire).

creating a multilayered experience. Each layer contributes independently to the meaning and emotion of the poem. In this way, poetry is freed from the limitations of one-dimensional auditory experience, inviting the audience into an active and participatory engagement where meaning emerges through its visual and spatial form.

Cultural Inspiration:

Tarasher also draws inspiration from Iranian cultural heritage. The use of Persian motifs, *¹ miniature art, and traditional calligraphy creates a bridge between historical tradition and modern innovation.

This approach gives Thrasher a uniquely national and historical identity, while also opening the way to new forms and modern styles.

¹ Miniature art: A traditional form of Persian painting, often used in manuscripts such as the Shahnameh, characterized by detailed, colorful, and symbolic illustrations.

The reader, therefore, encounters both the richness of Iranian cultural heritage and the innovative visual language of contemporary poetry.

Digital tools:

Digital tools also play a central role in the development of Tarasher. Software such as Photoshop, Canva, and mobile applications enable the creation, editing, and dissemination of visual-graphic poetry. These tools not only remove the traditional limitations of printing and publishing but also allow for the combination of semantic and visual layers, the creation of creative effects, and broad access to audiences. By leveraging technology, Tarasher becomes a modern and global style, paving the way for direct and active engagement between the audience and the poem.

These methods and techniques demonstrate that Tarasher is not merely a new poetic style, but a visual revolution in Iranian poetry. Through graphic layers, inspiration from Iranian culture, and the use of technology, this style can create a novel, active,

and multidimensional poetic experience for the audience. As previously noted, Tarasher moves the audience out of a passive role, placing them in the process of meaning-making and visual engagement, so that poetry is not only heard but also seen and felt. This marks the beginning of a redefinition of the relationship between poet, text, and audience in contemporary Iranian literature.

If we ask how Tarasher invites audiences and content creators to actively participate in the creation and experience of poetry, the answer lies in the philosophy and vision of this style. By providing a creative and multilayered space, Tarasher moves the audience beyond passive reading, guiding them into an interactive and visual experience where text, image, and visual form together produce meaning. In this space, the audience simultaneously sees and reads, becoming an active participant in the process of poetic creation.

Based on this approach, Tarasher's objectives are defined on two levels: short-term and long-term, both of which ensure the continuity and expansion of this new poetic style in Iran and beyond. The short-term objectives focus primarily on raising awareness and educating young poets and artists about this style. Specialized exhibitions, educational workshops, and academic sessions not only provide scientific familiarity with the techniques and principles of Tarasher but also create a network of creators and enthusiasts of visual-graphic poetry. This short-term approach lays the foundation for a sustainable literary movement and actively engages audiences and content creators in the creation and experience of poetry.

The long-term objectives of Tarasher extend beyond education and promotion, aiming to establish this style as a movement and an integral part of contemporary world literature. In this vision, the structure and form of poetry are no longer confined to auditory or traditional written formats, enabling the creation of a comprehensive and

multisensory experience for the audience. Tarasher has the potential not only to redefine the structure and form of poetry but also to influence other arts, including cinema, graphic design, digital arts, and visual media. By combining poetry and image, this style provides a multisensory experience that is simultaneously read, seen, and felt, thus transforming the traditional boundaries of poetic experience.

In addition, the international vision of Tarasher is to introduce and showcase the unparalleled potential of visual-graphic poetry to the world. By combining Iranian culture and art with modern global tools and techniques, this style can become part of the international visual poetry movement, positioning Concrete Poetry as one branch while establishing Iran's contribution to this new literary movement. Together, the short-term and long-term goals of Tarasher outline a clear and revolutionary vision for redefining the poetic experience, fostering creativity in literary-visual arts, and creating a strong

connection between the past, present, and future of literature.

To understand this vision, it is essential to recognize that Tarasher is not only an innovative style in contemporary Iranian poetry but also an artistic movement that actively invites both audiences and content creators to participate in the creation and experience of poetry. Poets, graphic designers, and all lovers of words are called upon to join this movement, challenge the traditional boundaries of poetry, and create a multisensory, interactive experience of language and image. This participation can take the form of collaborative groups, online publication of works, and creative challenges or competitions.

The central slogan of this call is: “Let us free words from the chains of sound and place them within the frame of the image!” This phrase serves simultaneously as an invitation and a revolutionary statement, reflecting the essence of Tarasher: poetry is no longer created merely to be heard—it is

meant to be seen, experienced, and interpreted. Establishing literary and artistic groups to practice and develop this style facilitates interaction among artists, audiences, and digital technologies, generating new capacities for literary experience.

Moreover, the online publication of Tarasher works can transcend geographical boundaries, elevating the movement to a national and international level. Creative challenges and activities—including Tarasher and visual-graphic poetry competitions, multilayered combinations of text and image, or the reinvention of global visual traditions with modern tools—act as the driving force of this visual revolution, inviting the audience to engage actively in artistic and intellectual creation. In this way, Tarasher not only offers a new method for experiencing poetry but also democratizes the literary process, enabling full participation of the audience in the artistic experience.

It must be emphasized once again that Tarasher goes beyond being merely a literary style; this

movement marks the beginning of a visual revolution in global poetry, redefining both the structure and traditional experience of poetry. The combination of word and image, the use of brevity and visual metaphors, pictorial harmony, and multilayered meanings allow the audience to experience poetry simultaneously through reading and seeing. In this way, Tarasher not only expands the language of poetry but also invites the audience to become active participants in meaning-making, engaging with the visual form and composition of words to perceive poetic concepts in a fresh, multisensory way.

With the publication of Tarasher and the release of its manifesto, Amin Afzalpour's role as a pioneer and founder of visual-graphic poetry in Iran has been firmly established. This work, in addition to presenting numerous examples of Tarasher, critiques, essays, and theoretical perspectives, provides a coherent and clear path for the future development of this style. In other words, Tarasher is not merely a new literary trend—it offers a

theoretical and practical framework for poets, graphic artists, and visual-language enthusiasts to actively participate and create a fresh experience of literary creativity.

The vision of Tarasher extends beyond Iran and traditional literature to include the global elevation of visual-graphic poetry. By fostering interaction among the visual culture of each country where Tarasher is practiced, contemporary audience experience, and digital technologies, this style has the potential to place literature within a multidimensional and innovative space. This transformation, in addition to influencing poetry, can also impact other arts such as graphic design, cinema, and digital media, turning literary experience from a purely textual activity into a fully immersive and multisensory process.

The concluding slogan of this visual revolution, created by Afzalpour, serves both as an invitation and a commitment to creativity and innovation. It can be expressed as:

“Visual-Graphic Poetry (Tarasher): Where the Eye Reads and the Heart Sees.”



The unveiling of the book "Tarasher"
Iran, Tehran_ September 18, 2025

One of the most significant differences between Tarasher and concrete poetry lies in the role of the image.

In concrete poetry, the reader must see the image in order to understand what is happening within the poem.

However, in Tarasher, the image does not explain meaning—it deepens it.

That is to say, the reader or listener of a Tarasher piece already grasps the meaning through language; the image then serves to unfold the subtleties, to reveal finer details, or to guide the audience into a deeper layer of that meaning.

دال است
نیمرخ لب‌هایت
برای
فریاد

The "C"

**is the curve of your
lips
for**

"ry"

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

In this example of Tarasher, the reader, after reading the piece, understands that it is about a cry for freedom and grasps its essential meaning. However, upon looking at the visual composition of the Tarasher, they notice the visual parallel—the letter “C” shaped like a woman’s mouth—and realize that this cry, this voice for freedom, belongs to a woman.

**The sea of my heart
ebbs and flows ;
when I hear :
the moon of "c"
in your name**

"  "

ynthia

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

In this Tarasher, the visual and linguistic structures operate in a deliberate interdependence. The letter “C”, whose crescent-like form visually evokes the moon, functions as both a graphic and semantic nucleus for the work. This correspondence between sound, shape, and meaning transforms the word Cynthia from a mere proper noun into a semiotic event — a convergence of phonetic, visual, and mythological dimensions.

The phrase “the sea of my heart ebbs and flows” introduces a rhythmic, almost tidal movement that parallels the gravitational influence of the moon itself. Yet, the key gesture of the Tarasher lies in embedding this lunar symbolism within language: the “C” not only resembles a crescent but also initiates a name that etymologically signifies “the moon goddess.”

Through this interplay, the work foregrounds how a single grapheme can extend meaning beyond the verbal, positioning visual morphology as an active agent of poetic creation. What emerges is a layered

experience — part linguistic analysis, part visual perception — that redefines the boundaries between reading and seeing.

**Even your name
wears a "Y" tie –**

Employee!



Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

In this Tarasher, the reader first encounters the ironic simplicity of the line — “Even your name wears a ‘Y’ tie — Employee.”

At first glance, it seems to play with the image of formality and work culture. But when we look closer, the visual metaphor of the “Y” inside the word “employee” unfolds: the letter Y visually resembles a tie, hanging from the neck of the word itself.

This visual parallel deepens the meaning — the name, the identity, and even language itself are dressed in conformity.

The word “employee” ceases to be neutral; it becomes a body restricted by formality and submission. Here, design and meaning intertwine: typography turns into critique.

The "A" of your finger

Got manicured

in

 Aristocracy!

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

**You are a king ;
The "W" in your name
is a crown –**

orker!

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

The "E" of your name
Is the key of

Glory,

 Elohim

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

Elohim: A Hebrew term in the Hebrew Bible referring to the God of Israel: the supreme creator and ruler of the universe

The "B" of your name


Is the heart of this Tarasher

 **ragi!**

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

Bragi: In Norse mythology, the god of poetry, eloquence, music, and the inspiration of artistic speech.

You improvise
With the "J" of saxophone of your name,
inside my mind,

Joshua!

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

Joshua: A Hebrew name means a savior God

The "T" of your name,
Illuminates

The god within my mind



Timothy!

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

Timothy: A Greek name means 'honoring God' or 'one who honors God.'

**"F" has a pipe wrench
To repair
Her**

 **feelings !**

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

**The "F" of weapon
Speaks the first letter
In
Freedom!**

Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

The migrating storks

Showed, twice,

The sign of



Translated & Adapted: Niknaz Razavi

پر کشیدی و

جای «ی» نشستند

گیسوآنت

برای

آزاد



In this example of Tarasher, the reader understands upon reading the text that the piece speaks about freedom. Yet, when they look at the visual composition, the meaning deepens; they realize that it is about women's freedom. The word "آزادی" (freedom) visually transforms into flowing strands of hair, resembling the long, colorful tresses of Iranian women. This visual metamorphosis reveals that these are not just lines of calligraphy, they are locks of resistance, the hair of women who, in their pursuit of liberty, let their very being soar. The transition from text to image mirrors the passage from the idea of freedom to the embodiment of it — freedom as lived, felt, and fought for by women.

مانیکور شد

«ز» انگشتت

درون

آرادی

In this Tarasher, the reader first understands through the text that the poem speaks about freedom. But once they look at the image, the meaning unfolds further; through the visual metaphor of the manicured red nail forming the letter “o,” it becomes clear that this freedom belongs to women.

The polished nail, delicate yet bold, becomes a symbol of self-expression and reclaimed femininity. It shows how, within freedom, women are no longer forced to hide their beauty or restrain their identity; instead, they embrace it unapologetically. The act of manicure, often dismissed as cosmetic, turns here into a gesture of defiance, an aesthetic rebellion.

Through this interplay of word and image, Tarasher transforms a simple line into a layered statement: freedom is not just political — it’s personal, bodily, and beautifully visible.

بارقص الف



گردباد ندا

برمی‌چینند

ستم را

نون

نادیده گرفته شود

تا واو

روشن نگردد

در

قانون

نون پایان شد

انگشتت

ر

قانون

کلمات مرسلینند

«ی» نامست

شلاق راست

آزاد

خاموش
روشن می‌کنی
جهان را
با دکمه
در حرف آخرِ
آسما



عصای موسی است
لام نامت

می شکافد

دریای دلم را

سادل

فریاد زد

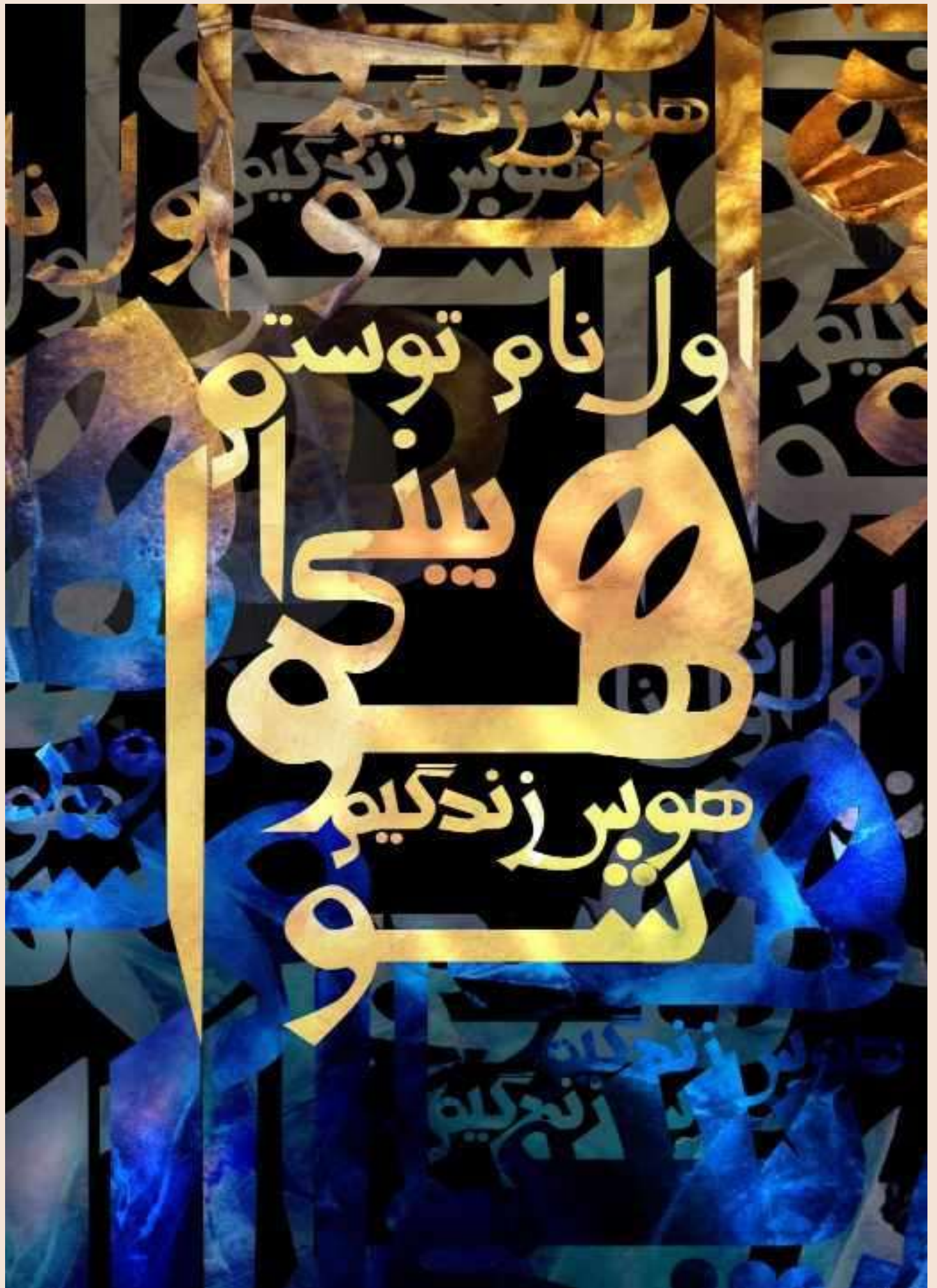
زن

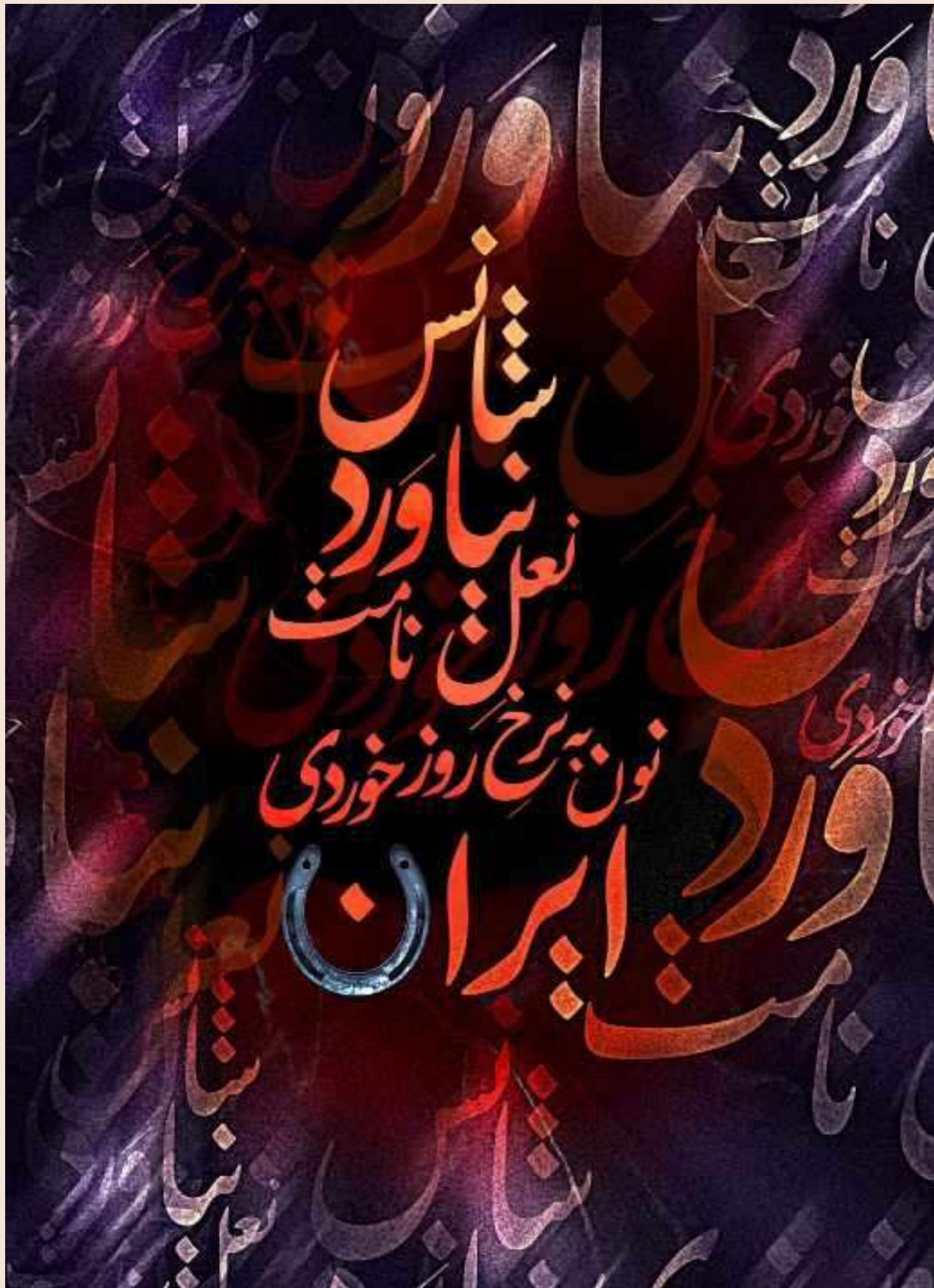
از هم گسست

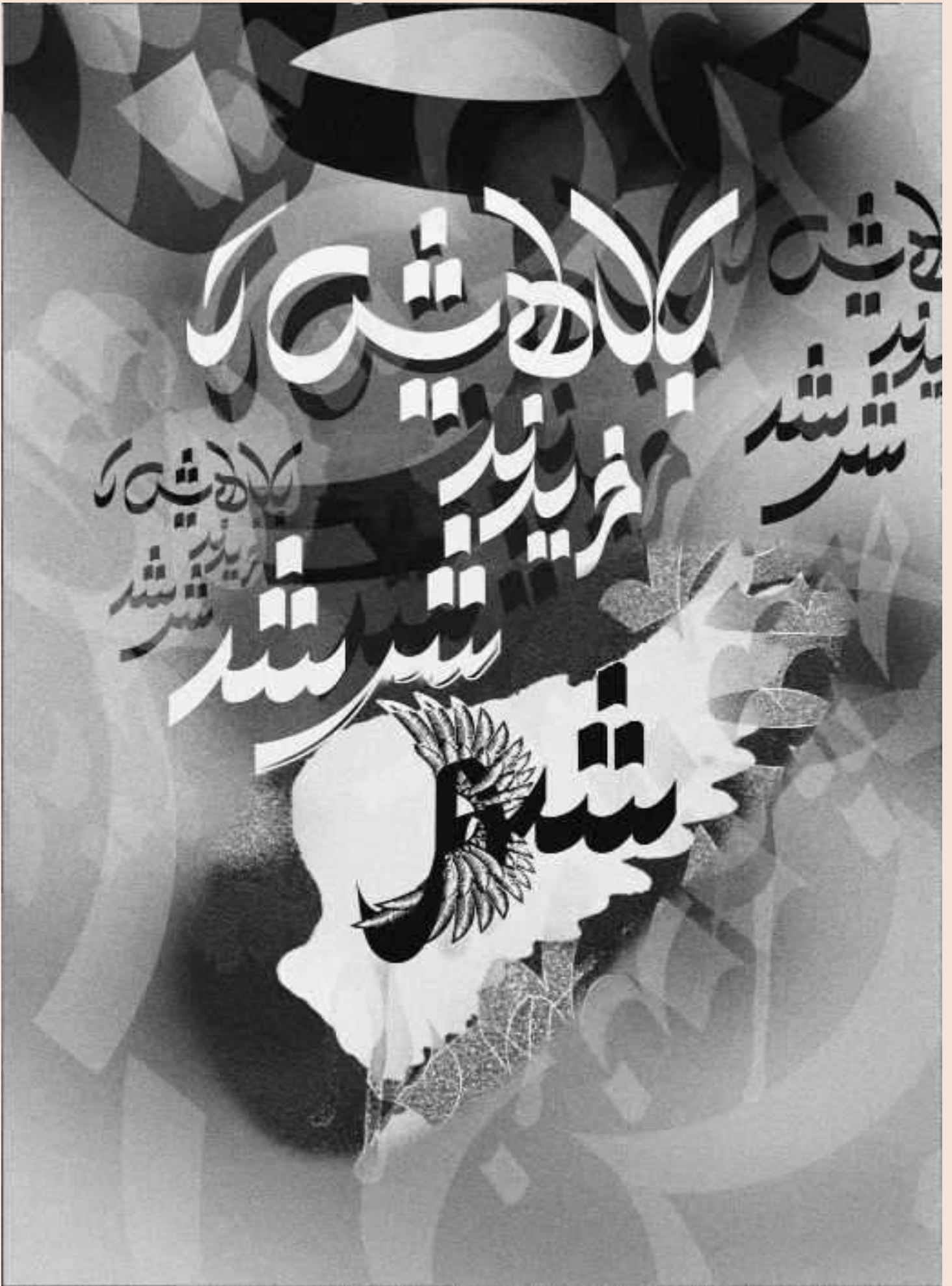
زخم
جیر

آبیار نسا دادند
علامت پیروزی
لک لک های

مهاجر



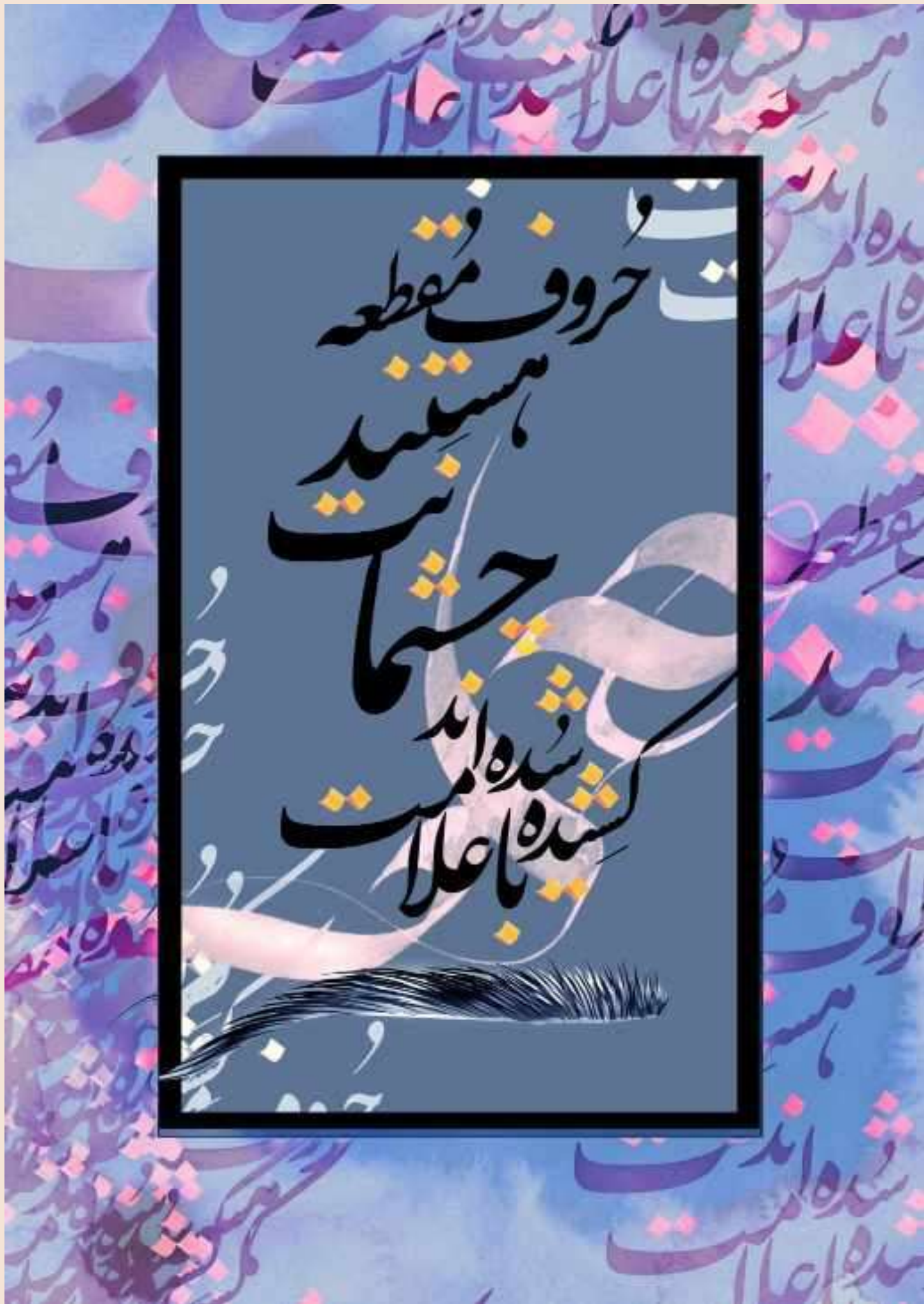




سنگاثری وا

بہی سبیل زندگی
تیر گمان ہی دست
لانگ باں مہی زندگی
پرنہ

ساجن



لامتنا کام زبان بسته اند
کرمی اقتصصاد
برقلا بنامت

دلا

سین کین کان
سین کین کان
ملا بیک
گند مرار را

بہ سین آختر
ملا بیک
سین کین کان
ملا بیک
گوش
گند مرار را







فصل اول
در حدیث
و حدیث

نادانان اوچ بگيرد

بومرنگ فرسا
بازمی گرداند

آزادان را

Credits & References

Afzalpour, Amin. *Tarasher* [□□□□□□]. Ahvaz:
Nashr_e
Hormoz, 2025

"Interview with Amin Afzalpour" *Hozour
Magazine*, 2025,

<https://www.hoozoor.com/%d8%b7%d8%b1%d8%a7%d8%b4%d8%b9%d8%b1-%d8%aa%d9%84%d8%a7%d8%b4%db%8c-%d8%a8%d8%a7%d8%b2%db%8c%d8%a7%d8%a8%db%8c-%d8%b2%d8%a8%d8%a7%d9%86/>

Original Works & Translations

Manifesto, interview, and all English poem translated and adapted by **Niknaz Razavi**
English layout and portfolio design by **Niknaz Razavi**

© 2025 — All rights reserved.

From
where
the
light
comes
from
the
dark

From
where
the
light
comes
from
the
dark

From
where
the
light
comes
from
the
dark

Freedom