

## Zohrab Salam-zadeh

b. 1992, Baku, Azerbaijan

*"All my ancestors are from this wonderful city, which I love deeply and care about. Everything you see in my paintings is intertwined with this cultural code. The costumes, images, and details are all carefully studied and specifically drawn. I always refer to our history, beliefs, mythology, religion, and mentality".*

Zohrab Salam-zadeh's work embodies a profound connection to his cultural heritage and the theater, expressed through a contemporary artistic lens. Each piece serves as a reflection of his personal experiences and pays homage to the cultural codes that have shaped him. The costumes, figures, and intricate details within his work are meticulously researched and constructed, showcasing his dedication to authenticity and narrative depth.

Salam-zadeh employs a distinctive approach characterized by a blending of techniques and materials. He often utilizes synthetic canvas to enhance the longevity of his brushes and facilitate the delicate application of intricate details. This choice underscores his commitment to precision, as the fine nuances in his work require a soft-feeling surface and a variety of fine brushes. His technique features a seamless integration of oil paint with other mediums, allowing him to create decorative elements that enrich his compositions. This layered approach fosters an exploration of complex themes, resulting in a visual language that resonates on both personal and universal levels.

Salam-zadeh prefers to stretch his canvases by hand, finding satisfaction in the physicality of the task and believing that it enhances the quality of his final work. His creative process involves extensive planning and sketching before beginning a painting, and he often works on multiple pieces simultaneously, allowing ideas to evolve naturally over time. Music plays a crucial role in his studio practice, providing an emotional backdrop to his focused and detailed work.

# FORA

Growing up in Baku, surrounded by its blend of history, architecture, and a thriving artistic community, Salam-zadeh's early fascination with drawing and visual storytelling began in childhood. His upbringing in a family where his mother was an architect and his father an engineer helped shape his aesthetic and understanding of structure, balance, and creative expression.

His work often explores themes of mythology, Sufi philosophy, and Azerbaijani folklore, with a particular emphasis on mythical creatures and the role of love within these stories. By incorporating these timeless narratives into his art, Salam-zadeh seeks to create a visual language that is both personal and universal, inviting viewers to engage with both the beauty of his work and the deeper meanings it holds.

Salam-zadeh additionally draws inspiration from various illustrations and art manuals that nurtured his creativity, particularly the works of Danish artist Herluf Bidstrup. The sense of movement and character that Bidstrup brought to life in his works continues to inspire Salam-zadeh's practice. The artist received his education at the Azerbaijan State Academy of Arts, where he pursued further studies in the Faculty of Painting. Later, Salam-zadeh expanded his creative repertoire by graduating from the Faculty of Theater Arts in 2017, which added a performative and narrative depth to his work. His time in these institutions allowed him to blend traditional artistic techniques with contemporary ideas, creating a dynamic and evolving body of work.

Zohrab Salam-zadeh's work has been widely exhibited in Azerbaijan and internationally. His distinct style, rooted in Azerbaijani tradition but expressed through contemporary methods, continues to garner attention and admiration from collectors and curators alike.

## EDUCATION

2013 - 2017      BA degree at Azerbaijan State Academy of Fine Arts

2009 - 2013      Azim Azimzade State Art School

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## EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Collaboration with Cartier, Gazelli Art House, Baku, Azerbaijan
- 2022 Yeditepe Biennale, Istanbul, Turkiye
- 2021 Group Exhibition, Gazelli Art House, Baku, Azerbaijan
- 2021 Solo Exhibition, Gazelli Art House, Baku, Azerbaijan
- 2017 "Time into the Time" / YARAT, Baku, Azerbaijan
- 2016 "The first was word" / YARAT, Baku, Azerbaijan
- 2014 "Eastern tale" / Riga, Latvia
- 2013 QGallery, Berlin, Germany

## Museums and Collections

Housed within private collections.