

EXPERIENCE THE OPULENT ARTISTRY OF

OVISSI

TEXT, DESIGN AND LAYOUT BY BETH ELLEN HUNZIKER | IMAGES BY NOSRAT TARIGHI





For Nasser Ovissi, the purpose of his art is to express himself, to share his thoughts and feelings, his passions and values, his beloved culture and those things he holds most dear. In a recent interview, Ovissi said he wants to share the happiness he feels when he paints. Even at 89-years-old, the artist still paints and sketches regularly. It is one of the great joys of his life.

Ovissi was born and raised in Iran (Persia). He shared that he began drawing at the age of six and credits his mother for always encouraging him in his pursuits. Ovissi studied the Law and Political Science at universities in Tehran and Rome, he later became a cultural diplomat in Spain, a country he found artistically inspiring. Living, studying and traveling the world Ovissi was exposed to diverse people and cultures. Although he painted subjects from these varied places, it is the culture of his homeland and its symbolism that he returns to again and again.

One of the most reoccurring subjects in Ovissi's work is the Arabian horse. The first time he witnessed the majesty of a horse was when he was six-years-old. His friend David Suratgar's father was riding an Arabian horse. He says he loved the horse because it was so beautiful, powerful, yet gentle. He loved watching it prance, to him, the horse looked as though it were dancing. He loved the horse's proudly arched neck, the plume of its tail and its large expressive eyes. There is a black Arabian horse in Persian folklore called "Raksh". It was beloved for being noble, regal and kind. Each of Ovissi's horses are painted with these same characteristics - always beautiful, proud and gentle. Ovissi's horses are often depicted with women to whom they are companions. Whether they are pictured reclining together or riding through colorful fields of flowers, it is clear that the relationship between them is one of trust and love.





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BECAUSE HE HAS NO VOICE TO SPEAK."



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EXPERIENCE MY WORK WILL WALK AWAY WITH AN EXPERIENCE OF BEAUTY."



In addition to his favorite subjects of horses and women, Ovissi includes other traditional Persian elements in his work that are meaningful to him and to his culture. The pomegranate, which originates in Persia, is the national fruit of Iran. The doves and other fanciful birds that grace his work are eternal symbols of peace and joy. One of the most striking elements Ovissi uses throughout his work is beautiful Arabic calligraphy, which is poetic in both its meaning and its graceful lines.

What you will find lacking in Ovissi's work is any semblance of pretense, politics or discord. It is all beauty, grace, love and harmony. Is it any wonder his work is loved and appreciated so much? To view his work, indeed to live with his art, the viewer enters into Ovissi's world where joy and peace reign supreme.

Although this article features only a small sampling of his paintings, Ovissi also works in watercolor, gouache, collage, lithography, gold leaf on canvas, ceramics and gold smithing. For decades, Ovissi has exhibited his work at some of the most prestigious galleries and museums around the world including Belgium,

Brazil, Canada, China, Dubai, England, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Monaco, Spain, Switzerland, the United States, Turkey and Yugoslavia. When displaying his work, he has shared exhibits with Picasso, Dali, Chagall, Dubuffet, Felix, and other note worthy artists. The list of awards from his many exhibits is lengthy.

His works can be found in museums in Athens, Barcelona, Belgrade, Boston, Brussels, Campione, Jordan, North Carolina, Ottawa, Paris, Pasadena, Rome, Tehran, Washington D.C. and other major cities.

In 2023, the Ovissi Foundation was established. The inspiration was the artist's memories of those who encouraged and helped him along his way to becoming an artist and the man he is today - his mother, his neighbors and his teachers. Now he wants to give back. The Ovissi Foundation is dedicated to supporting artists and programs created by individuals of Iranian descent as well as promoting Iranian art and culture. To learn more, you are invited to visit the website at: www.galleryovissi.com



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More exciting news includes a documentary about Nasser Ovissi which will debut in 2024-2025 and an exhibit of the select works by the artist will accompany the film including some of his most iconic works as well as never before seen works in black and white. Locations around the world are currently being considered such as Toronto, London, Dubai and others. Updates will be available on the official Instagram page as well as the website.



Current works, books, and more are available on the Gallery Ovissi website and at the Eran Gallery in Toronto, Canada, find the link on the Ovissi website. You are invited to learn more about this incredible artist and experience a joy and peace that is as unique as his art. ~ FINI