



THE THREAD OF LIFE

Friederike Ruff

The Thread of Life

„The Thread of Life“ is an artistic attempt aiming at investigating the concept of Bestiary, by creating a collection of 50 pieces stitched and painted compendium of animals and fantastic creatures. Bringing the exhibition to the wider public in an accessible, modern form shall serve as a basis for broader reflection touching upon topics such as physics, chemistry, psychology, philosophy, mythology and literature.

Bestiary as an idea has been explored throughout history and across different cultures. Presenting animals, birds, fantastic creatures and sometimes plants or stones has been used as a way to explain the world, but also to challenge people's understanding of universal notions and to provide symbolic interpretation of the reality. Examples of historical Bestiary include Physiologus, a didactic Christian book compiled in Greek by an unknown author or a 13th century Marvels of Things Created and Miraculous Aspects of Things Existing by Zakariya al-Qazwini.

Historical presence of Bestiary proves that animals are universal symbols that can be understood regardless of people's cultural, educational, and social background. Therefore, „The thread of Life“ is not only to explore how the concept can be presented in a more modern artistic form, but to use for understanding the current social challenges.

In its core, the exhibition is based on the idea of using universally understood symbols to explore reality and challenge public's view on very contemporary topics, such as interconnection of all beings, ecosystem and climate change, cooperation as a practice of survival and evolution.

As for the technique to be used for creating the pieces, it will combine embroidery and painting on canvas.

The idea behind it is to bring together two approaches to art creation traditionally have associated with different genders.

Stitching, seen as exclusively female activity being anonymous, paid poorly or not at all and considered as merely a craft as opposed to real art.

Painting, on the other hand, is traditionally seen as well respected form of cultural expression that in the past was done by male artists exclusively.

In Western art history male artists have been perceived as genius, whereas women were not regarded as capable of creating art.

The technique I created is an attempt to melt both traditionally seen male and female approaches into a universal mean of expression and therefore to reconcile their history, creating pieces that include both genders' perspectives, making it accessible to both men and women.

My personal artistic roots lie in the technique of collage. The technique to be used to create exhibition pieces in itself is not a collage as such, but it uses images from a variety of topics and times as well as different cultural backgrounds.

I cut the images out, freeing them from their original context and composing these elements in a new form, creating new meanings.

My approach is based on interdisciplinary thinking stemming from the realization that all things are interconnected. In order to get a full understanding of contemporary challenges and attempt to solve them, it is needed to combine different perspectives and approaches, from science through culture and arts to politics.

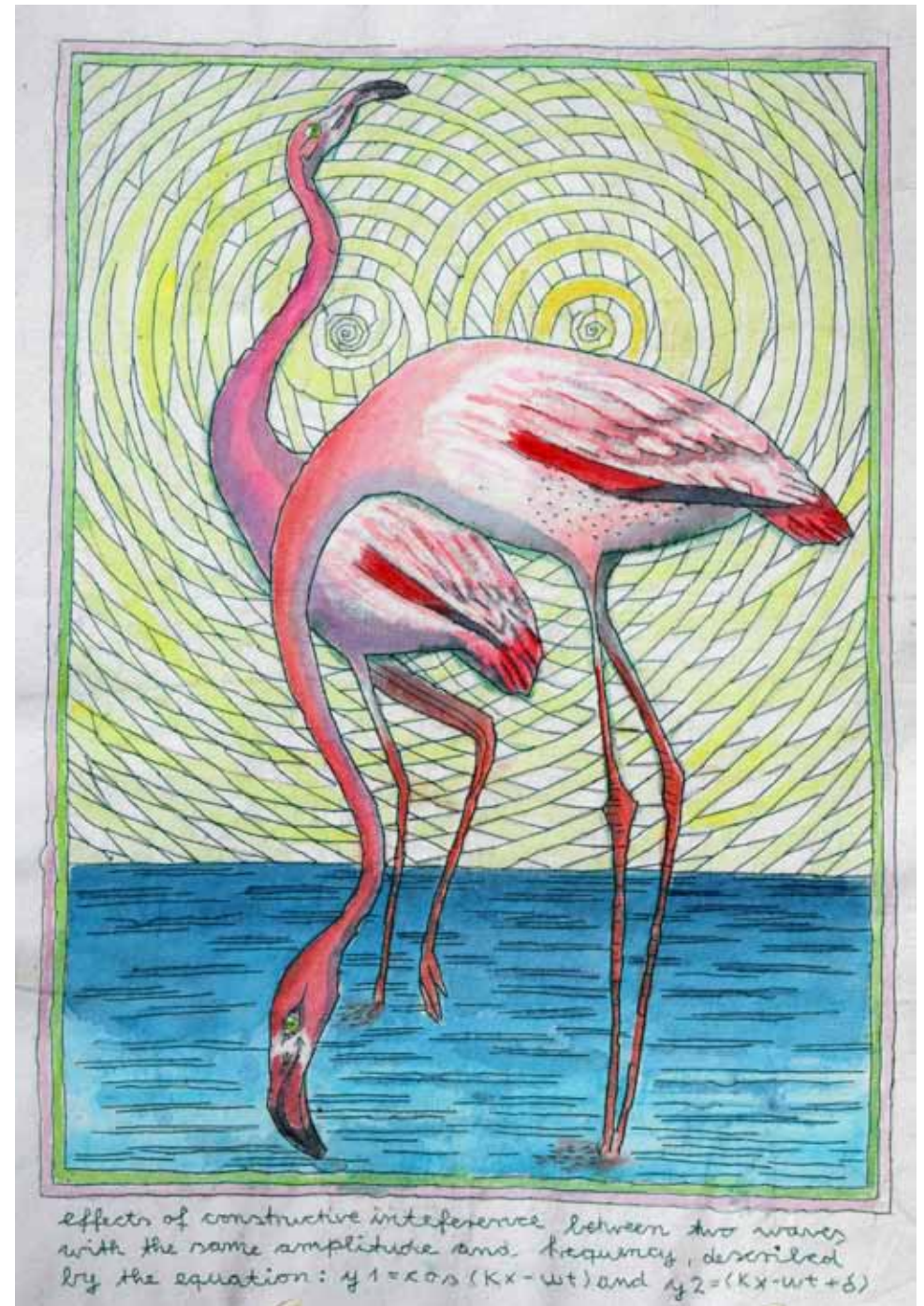
The exhibition I am to create is an artistic emanation of this approach, taking visual representations of animals as a basis to be combined with elements and symbols from a variety of disciplines to show the interconnectedness of the reality.

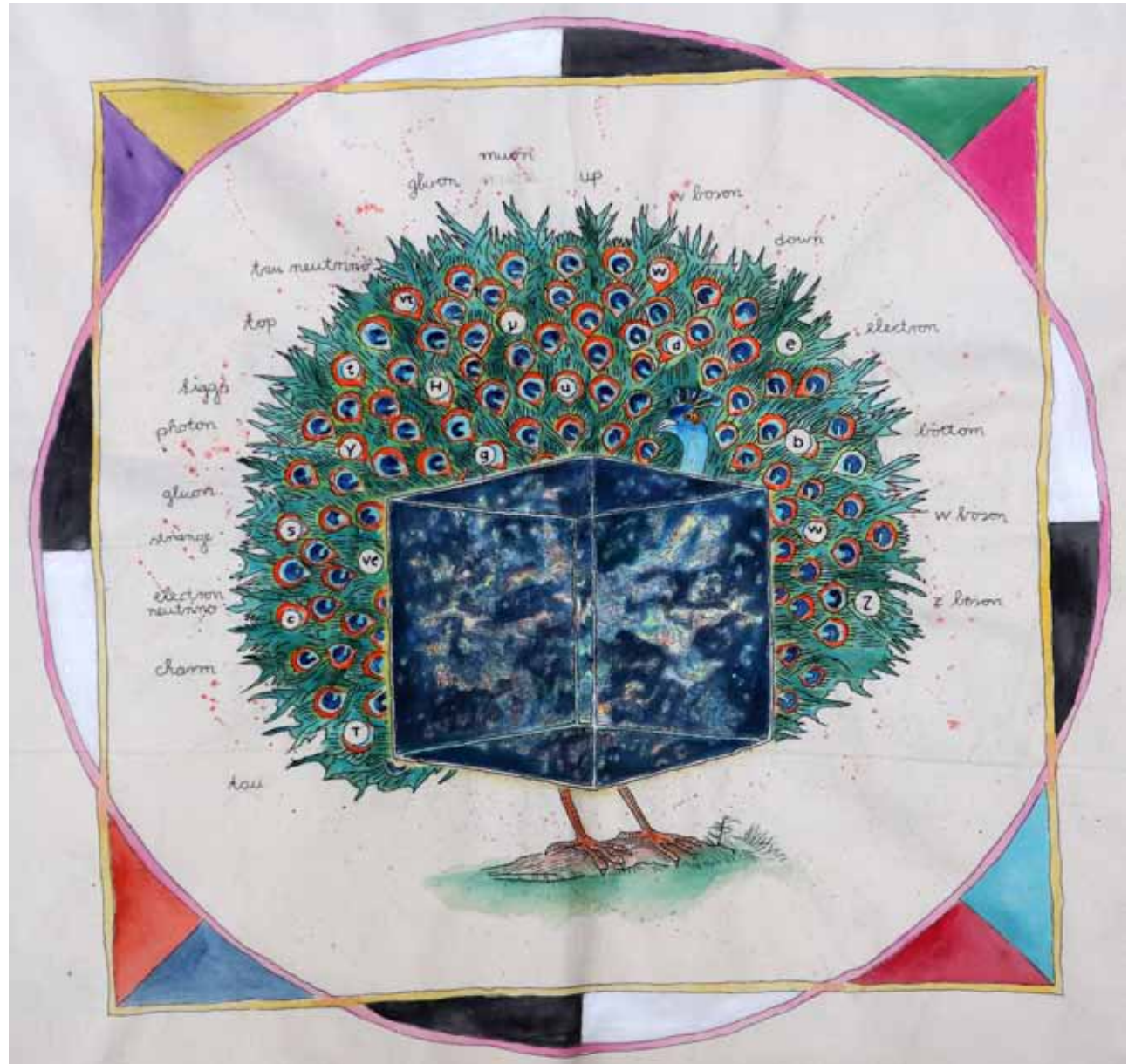
The final result of my art project will be a collection that is accessible but at the same time open to personal interpretation, providing the public with multilayered pieces that do not aim at teaching or explaining the reality, but rather inviting for a reflection on the contemporary world.



Constant change
Snake (Serpentes)
Colour wheel
65x81cm
Embroidery and painting on canvas
2019

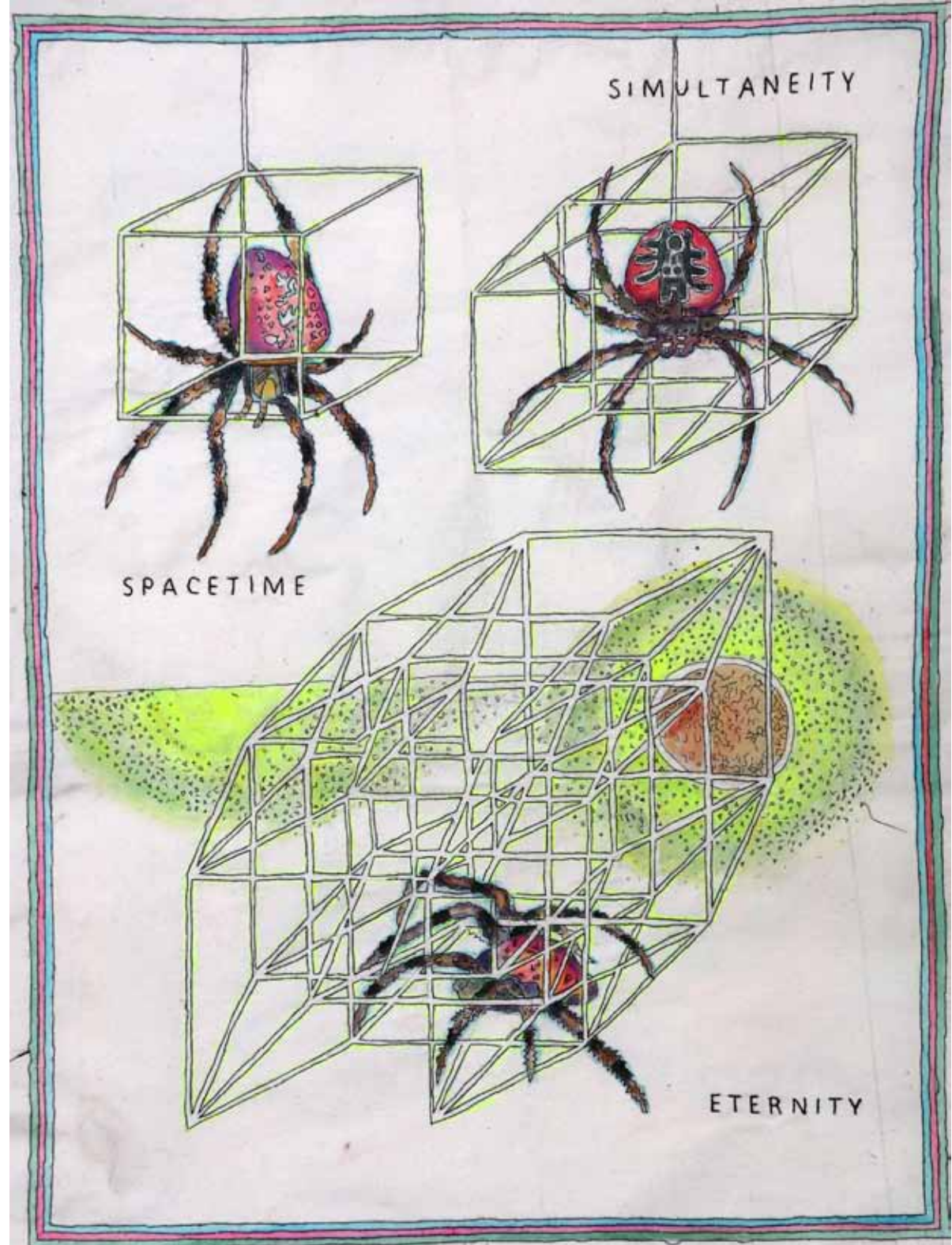
Meet me in the middle
Flamingo (Phoenicopterus)
Interference waves
55x36cm
Embroidery and painting on canvas
2020





Micro Macro and the wheel of life
 Peacock (Pavo Christatus)
 Quarks and space simulation cube
 80x80cm
 Embroidery and painting on canvas
 2019-2020

Time after time
Spider (Araneae)
3d, 4d, 5d cube models
92x67cm
Embroidery and painting on canvas
2020



I can see in the dark

Snowy owl (*Bubo Scandiacus*)

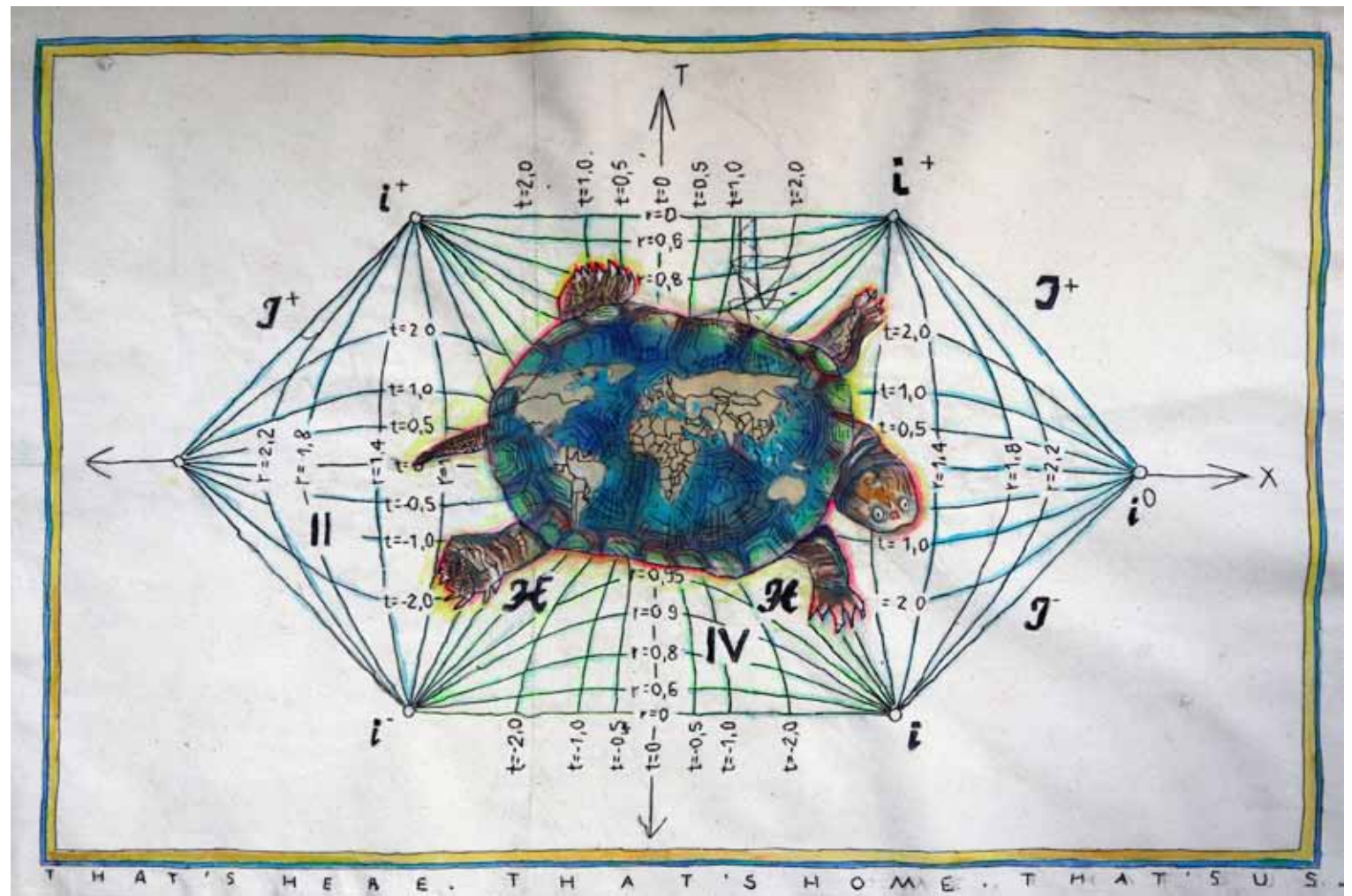
The Nebulae, a cross-section of the milky way
by Thomas Wright

76x51cm

Embroidery and painting on canvas

2020





That's here, that's home, that's us

Turtle (Testudo)

Penrose Diagram, capturing the causal relations between different points in spacetime through a conformal treatment of infinity

45x70cm

Embroidery and painting on canvas

2020

WHAT IS TO HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE IS THEN THE CAUSE OF WHAT IS OCCURRING NOW,
AND AT THE SAME TIME, WHAT OCCURRED IN THE PAST IS ALSO THE CAUSE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW.



IN ADDITION, A GREAT NUMBER OF THINGS ROUND ABOUT, ON EVERY SIDE,
ARE CAUSING WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW: EVERYTHING, ALL THE TIME, IS CAUSING EVERYTHING ELSE.

Everything all the time is causing everything else all the time

Bee (Anthophila)

Mathematical riddle „The magic hexagon“. Adding all lines in all directions always gives the same final sum.

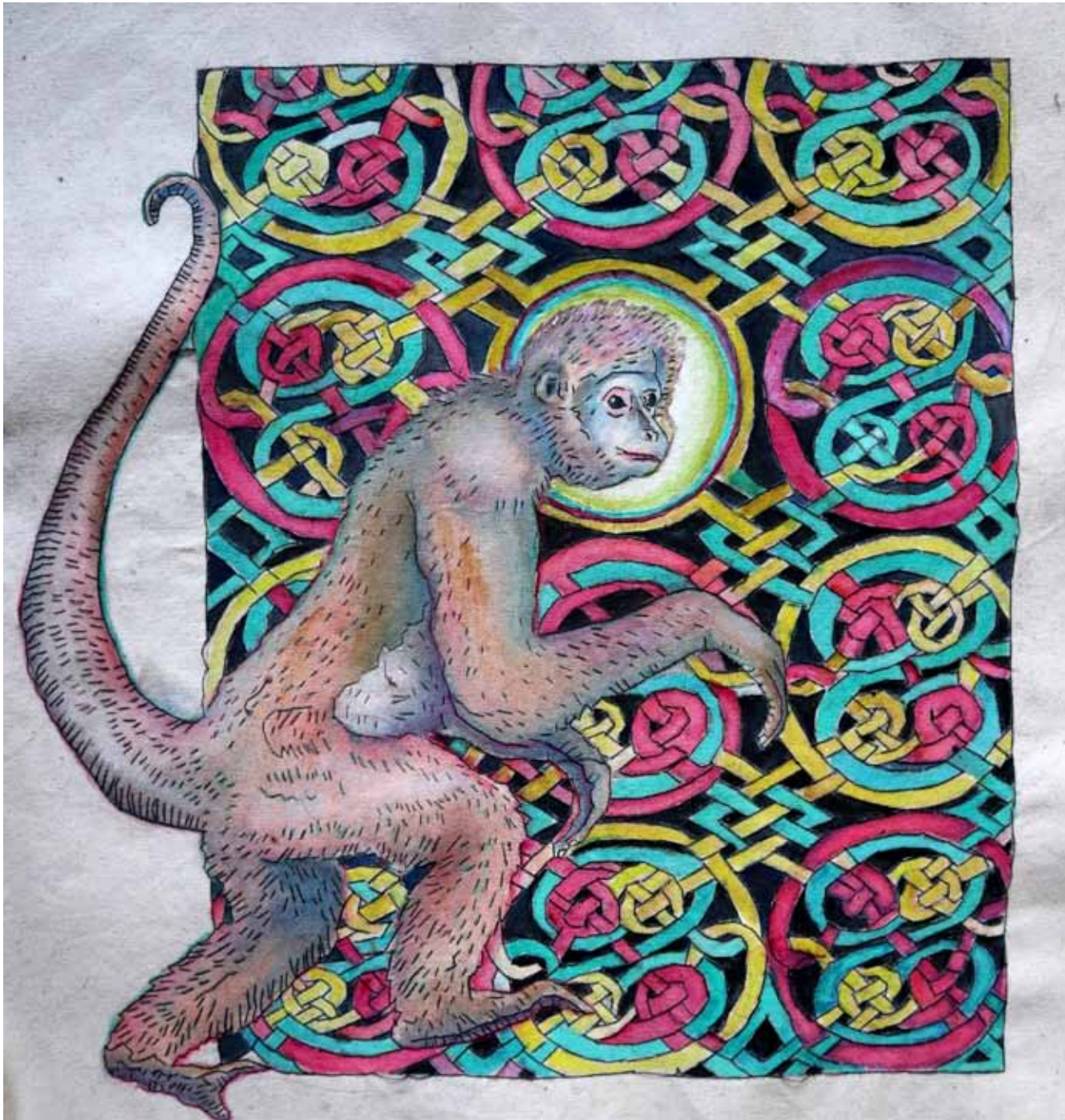
110 x 75cm

Embroidery and painting on canvas

2020



Time is a concept
Housefly (*Musta domestica*)
Time -Space Continuum
41x21cm
Embroidery and painting on canvas
2020



The field

Langur (*Semnopithecus*)

Medieval bookpainting from the book of Durrow

40 x 40cm

Embroidery and painting on canvas

2021

We create circumstances, circumstances create us
Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*)
Cross-section of an egg
80x58cm
Embroidery and painting on canvas
2020





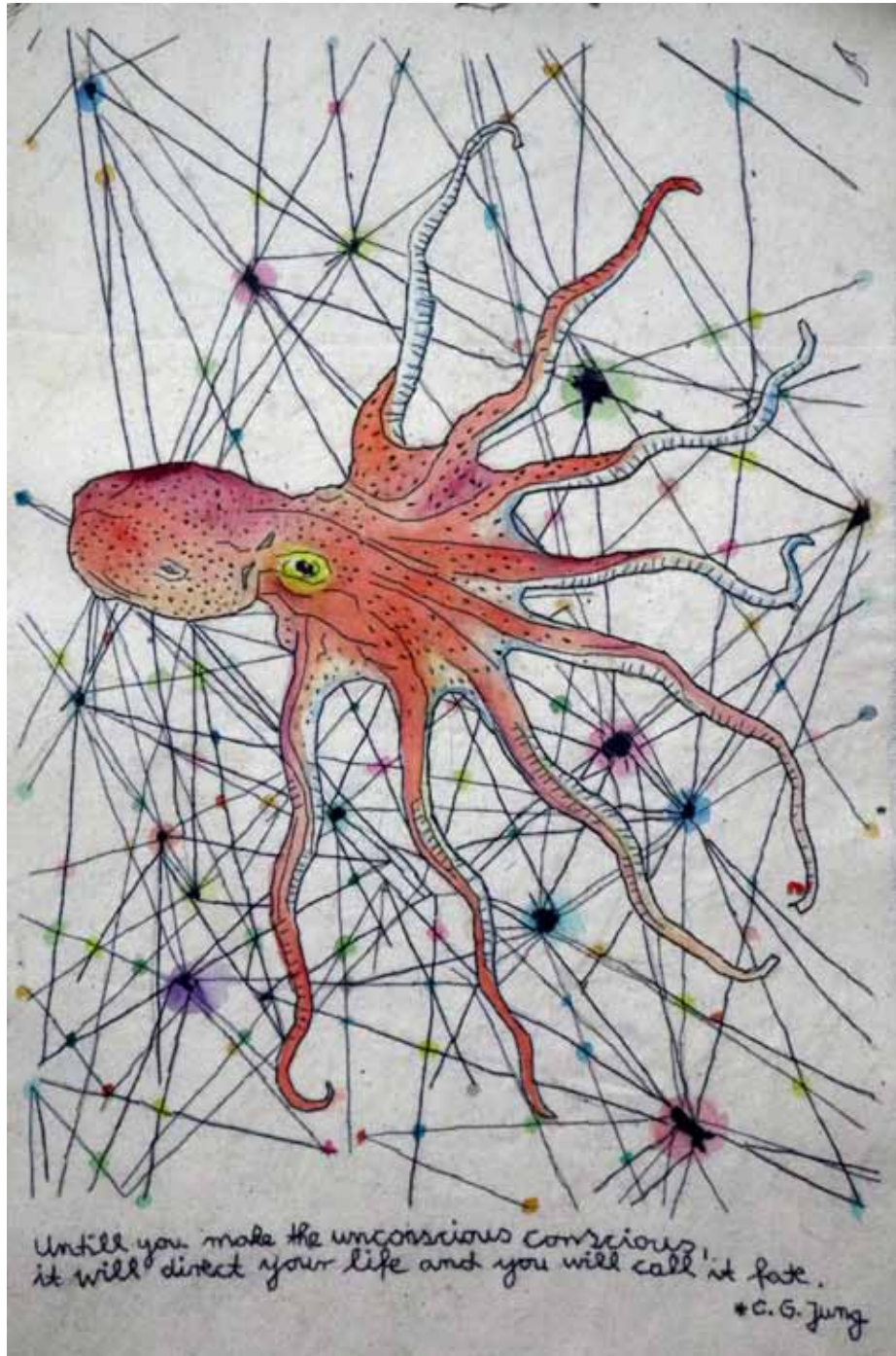
Zero

Nature scene from a persian book painting

27 x 20cm

Embroidery and painting on canvas

2020



The Deep

Octopus (Octopoda)

Multidimensional net

30 x 40cm

Embroidery and painting on canvas

2021



Passive Agressive

Tiger (*Pantetheria tigris*)

260x160cm

Embroidery and painting on canvas

2019-2020



Abraxas

Gnostic god

30 x 45cm

Embroidery and painting on canvas

2020