

Transformation in the Concept of Safe Haven from Place to Human condition: An Approach to Developing Contemporary Artistic Formulations in Art Crafts

Samah Abdallah Mohammed Alrefai

Associate Professor of Art and popular works, Department of Art Education, Faculty of Specific Education, Kafrelsheikh University, Egypt

Abstract

In this research, the artist presents a creative endeavor that transcends the boundaries of technical material handling, establishing a visual project grounded in the interplay between thought and matter, symbol and reality, and the self and memory. She successfully transforms the material from a mere medium of artistic formation into a language in its own right—one that bears the traces of time, encapsulates human experience, and serves as an essential partner in constructing meaning. The works reveal a clear artistic awareness of how contemporary art can engage with existential and human themes. This is achieved through a visual language that combines relief forms, assemblage, multi-layered structures, and rich textures; these elements lend each piece its unique character while simultaneously preserving the unity of the project as a whole. The true value of this research lies not merely in the diversity of materials or the technical skill of execution, but in its ability to reframe the concept of a "safe haven" as a human experience open to interpretation. Safety is portrayed not as a fixed location or a protective wall, but as a state of reconciliation with the self, a connection to memory, a sense of belonging to one's roots, the capacity for love, and the belief that true strength stems not from the absence of pain, but from the ability to transform it into meaning. Ultimately, the works in this research linger in the viewer's memory long after the viewing experience ends. They offer more than just visual imagery; they leave an emotional imprint that invites contemplation and a re-examination of the very concept of safety. Herein lies the power of the experience: it does not drive the viewer to seek a safe haven outside the artwork, but rather leads them to discover that such a haven may have existed within them all along—waiting only for a moment of awareness to bring it to light. We may roam the world in search of a safe haven, only to discover in the end that the safest places are not those that surround us, but those we build within our souls—out of memories that do not betray, love that does not break, and roots that the wind cannot uproot.

Keywords: Safe Haven; Space to the Human Condition; Creating Contemporary Plastic; Art Crafts.

Introduction

In contemporary thought, a work of art is no longer merely an imitation of reality or a record of its external appearances; rather, it has become a means to reveal the human inner world and to translate emotions, questions, and visions regarding the self, the other, and place. From this perspective, contemporary artworks have emerged as a creative realm possessing great flexibility in incorporating diverse materials and repurposing them within a visual structure that bridges thought and technique, as well as the aesthetic and the conceptual. The concept of a "safe haven" is deeply relevant to contemporary reality, given the rapid social, psychological, and cultural transformations that drive individuals to constantly seek a space offering a sense of safety, tranquility, and stability. This haven is no longer confined to a physical location; it has become linked to the self, memory, belonging, human relationships, and everything that empowers individuals to persevere and face life's challenges. This artistic endeavor is grounded in the view that material is not merely a medium for shaping forms, but an expressive entity that carries its own memory and contributes to constructing visual meaning. Consequently, the project relies on combining various materials with distinct textural and structural properties to create contemporary artworks. These pieces utilize

assemblage and relief techniques to generate multiple layers within the work—layers that interact to reinforce the idea's expressive and philosophical dimensions.

The significance of this artistic project lies in its approach to the "safe haven": it treats the concept not as a mere spatial notion or a fleeting state, but as a complex human experience where memory intertwines with identity, reality with dreams, and fear with hope. From this perspective, the artist embarks on a visual journey exploring innate human needs for serenity, belonging, and a sense of being held—employing a contemporary visual language that leverages the potential of the artwork as a realm where concept and material converge. The work is grounded in an artistic vision that views material not merely as a technical medium, but as an expressive element possessing its own memory and actively contributing to the creation of meaning. Consequently, diverse materials of varying natures coexist and intertwine within a multi-layered, multi-level assemblage; textures, cracks, fibers, fabrics, wood, and structural elements become integral to the visual discourse, articulating the accumulation of human experiences and the traces of time—marks that leave their imprint on the human being just as they do on the material itself.

The artist eschews direct narrative or realistic description, instead weaving her visual discourse

through a system of symbols and formal relationships—such as human faces, windows, doors, roots, birds, vintage photographs, and natural elements—that recur in various forms throughout the works. These elements transform into signifiers reflecting the human quest for safety, whether within the self, in memory, in human relationships, or in one's primal sense of belonging. The works reveal a keen awareness of compositional principles, balancing mass and void and fostering a dialogue between geometric and organic lines. Meanwhile, the layering of surface planes enriches the visual rhythm and imparts a sculptural dimension that distinguishes the artwork, granting it a simultaneous physical and emotional presence. Color plays a pivotal role in shaping the emotional atmosphere; the artist favors earth tones, shades of blue and green, and muted grays to craft visual spaces defined by serenity and contemplation. Interspersed touches of gold and light serve as symbolic markers of hope and the possibility of healing, despite the marks left by time and experience. Rather than offering ready-made answers regarding the meaning of a "safe haven," these works pose the question in various forms, leaving the viewer free to complete the meaning based on their own personal experience. Each piece stands as an independent milestone within the project, yet remains linked to the others by a unifying intellectual thread, rendering the entire body of work a visual narrative that explores the human condition in relation to the self, the other, memory, place, and life itself. In this context, the artworks transcend mere practice based on material diversity to become a contemporary visual language capable of embracing both intellect and emotion. Here, material becomes a medium for contemplation, and the surface serves as a visual record of human experience. Meanwhile, the concept of a "safe haven" remains an open idea—manifesting differently across works yet united in the assertion that true safety is not bestowed from without but built from within through memory, belonging, love, and the enduring capacity for self-restoration.

The creative work within this research presents a contemporary visual perspective on the concept of a "safe haven" through a range of human, structural, and natural symbols—such as faces, doors, windows, roots, birds, the sea, vintage photographs, and botanical elements. These symbols transcend their literal meanings to become visual signifiers reflecting the human journey in search of self, memory, belonging, and that place where one feels embraced and at peace. Through this endeavor, the researcher seeks to highlight the role contemporary art can play in articulating human and philosophical themes. By employing diverse materials, technical experimentation, and a conceptual framework, the work enriches the expressive dimension of the art piece and opens new horizons for artists and scholars in the field. This research delineates a cohesive artistic project; the artist does not present the "safe haven" as a singular concept but rather reveals its multifaceted nature. We find it in the realm of the self, in contemplation, in memory, and in the journey of life;

here, we find it in human relationships. This diversity does not scatter the inquiry but rather lends it depth, turning each aspect into a distinct chapter in a single story about the human being—and their ceaseless search for a place, a state of being, or a person in whose presence they can say: "Here, I feel safe."

• The Concept of a "Safe Haven"

The concept of a "safe haven" refers to a state in which an individual experiences a sense of safety, containment, and psychological stability. This state may be linked to a physical location, a human relationship, a memory, or a life experience that instills a sense of reassurance. Within psychological and social studies, this concept has evolved to become integral to notions of quality of life, identity, and belonging; researchers posit that the individual's sense of having a safe haven fosters psychological balance, resilience in the face of stress, and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances (Bowlby, 1988; Krause et al., 2021). In psychology, the idea of a safe haven is closely linked to John Bowlby's Attachment Theory. This theory emphasizes the human need for a "secure base"—a source of confidence and reassurance from which one can venture out to explore the world and to which one can return when facing stress or threats. The concept later expanded beyond interpersonal relationships to include places with which individuals form emotional bonds—a phenomenon known as "place attachment," which is a key concept in environmental psychology (Bowlby, 1988; Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

From a philosophical perspective, Gaston Bachelard argues that a place is not merely a physical space; rather, it embodies psychological and emotional dimensions that shape human memory and identity. In his book *The Poetics of Space*, he asserts that the home symbolizes protection, serenity, and containment. He notes that individuals retain the image of this safe place in their memories long after leaving it, allowing that image to become an integral part of their emotional and creative makeup (Bachelard, 2014). Donald Winnicott asserts that a sense of security develops within what he termed the "holding environment"—an environment that provides the individual with the confidence and psychological support necessary for growth and free self-expression. Consequently, in many contemporary studies, the artwork is viewed as a safe space where the artist can express their experiences and emotions and visually reorganize them (Winnicott, 1971).

In the realm of contemporary art, the concept of a "safe haven" is no longer tied to the direct representation of a physical location; instead, it is expressed through symbols, materials, and structural relationships within the artwork. Here, material transforms into a medium bearing memory and human experience, while the artwork becomes a space for contemplation and the evocation of feelings of security and belonging. Thus, many contemporary artists employ diverse materials, symbolic elements, and assemblage techniques to articulate the relationship between the individual, their memory, and their surroundings, thereby enabling the viewer to reconstruct their own experience regarding

the concept of a safe haven (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2020). Building on this, the researcher adopts the concept of the safe haven as a conceptual framework for creating contemporary artworks. Expression here extends beyond physical space to encompass memory, belonging, human relationships, and the self. This is achieved through the use of varied materials and visual symbols within artistic compositions that reflect the human experience, lending the artwork a philosophical and expressive dimension aligned with the nature of the artistic craft.

Research Problem

The research problem is summarized by the following questions:

- To what extent can the concept of a "safe haven" be employed as a philosophical approach to constructing a contemporary art piece?
- How can the use of diverse materials and assemblage techniques enrich the expressive dimension of the artwork?
- What is the nature of the relationship between visual symbolism and human memory in the construction of contemporary art?
- To what extent do assemblage construction and relief modeling contribute to reinforcing the conceptual dimension of the artwork?
- How can environmental and human elements be utilized as visual symbols expressing safety, belonging, and a sense of sanctuary?
- What role does material experimentation play in developing creative vision within the field of art crafting?

Research importance

The significance of the research lies in the following:

- Presenting a contemporary visual perspective on the concept of a "safe haven" as both a human and philosophical issue.
- Enriching the field of art crafting by employing diverse materials within a contemporary assemblage structure.
- Revealing the expressive potential of natural and synthetic materials and their role in constructing the artwork.
- Highlighting the relationship between philosophical thought and visual structure in the artwork.
- Utilizing symbolism, memory, and a sense of belonging as a means to enrich the expressive aspect of the artwork.
- Opening new horizons for experimentation in art crafting by integrating materials and relief modeling techniques.
- Leveraging the artistic experience to foster creative thinking among art education students.
- Presenting a contemporary model that combines intellectual authenticity with a modern visual perspective.

Tools and Materials Used

The researcher employed a wide variety of materials suited to the nature of the concept being presented, most notably:

- Recycled natural materials.
- Various modeling pastes.
- Fabrics, burlap, and medical gauze.
- Cotton and linen threads, as well as decorative yarns.
- Natural fishing nets.
- Ropes and plant fibers.
- Metal and copper wires.
- Metal rings and chains.
- Treated paper and handmade paper.
- Printed photographs.
- Dried botanical elements.
- Various organic materials.
- Acrylic paints.
- Watercolors and inks.
- Protective varnish.
- White glue and animal glue.
- Various sponges and brushes.
- Carving, sculpting, and sanding tools.
- Metal fastening and shaping tools.

Research aims

The research aims to:

- Utilize the concept of the "safe haven" as a source to enrich contemporary artistic thought.
- Create artworks based on the synthesis of diverse materials.
- Enhance the expressive quality of the artwork through symbolism and materiality.
- Explore the aesthetic potential of assemblage and relief-style forms.
- Highlight the role of memory, identity, and belonging in shaping the artwork.
- Foster experimental thinking within the field of artistic craft.
- Develop contemporary artistic formulations that integrate aesthetic and conceptual dimensions.
- Present an artistic experience that enriches applied studies in the field of artistic craft.

Philosophical Basis of the Research

This research is grounded in a philosophical perspective positing that art is no longer limited to producing beautiful images or crafting refined forms; rather, it has become a means to understand the human condition and re-examine existence in light of the rapid transformations characterizing the contemporary world. Thus, the concept of the "safe haven" emerges as an intellectual entry point that transcends physical location, evolving into a human and philosophical concept linked to memory, belonging, identity, and a sense of containment. The concept of safety is a fundamental human need that has accompanied humanity since its inception. However, in contemporary thought, its significance extends beyond mere physical shelter to encompass psychological, spiritual, and cultural dimensions. Humans constantly seek a space that fosters internal balance and empowers them to confront life's pressures and changes. From this perspective, the researcher approaches the "safe haven"

as a human experience shaped by relationships, memories, belonging, place, nature, and the self, rather than merely as a geographical location. The artistic experiment is grounded in a philosophy that views material as possessing memory; matter is not a neutral element in the artwork but rather carries its own history, traces of use, and transformations—attributes that endow it with an expressive capacity transcending its physical function. Consequently, the use of reclaimed wood, fabrics, netting, roots, ropes, vintage photographs, and natural materials aims not merely to achieve visual richness but to evoke layers of human experience, allowing each material to become an integral part of the work's visual narrative.

The experiment also relies on the concept of accumulation as a guiding principle in the construction of the artwork. Just as experiences accumulate within the human being, materials accumulate on the work's surface, rendering these structural layers a visual counterpart to the layers of memory. Through this accumulation, relationships emerge between disparate elements, generating meanings that transform the artwork into a medium for contemplation rather than merely an object of visual perception. The researcher posits that individuals harbor multiple sanctuaries within themselves—whether a person, a home, a memory, an idea, or even a moment of silent introspection. Thus, while the artworks vary in their visual vocabulary, they are united by a shared intellectual vision; each piece offers a distinct perspective on this human concept without imposing a singular interpretation upon the viewer.

The experience further confirms that contemporary art is inseparable from experimentation. Experimentation is not limited to introducing new materials; rather, it extends to reformulating the relationships between material and idea, form and meaning, and the viewer and the artwork. Hence, the study employs artistic approaches that synthesize drawing, assemblage, and relief work, creating a contemporary visual language capable of encompassing the research's philosophical vision.

In this context, the "safe haven" within this experience is not the journey's end but a starting point for self-reflection and an attempt to rediscover the human essence through art. The artwork thus transforms into a space for dialogue—between material and memory, reality and dream, and the individual and the world.

Educational Philosophy of the Research

The educational philosophy underpinning this research stems from the conviction that the field of artistic crafts is uniquely capable of fostering creativity within art education. It offers opportunities for experimentation, the discovery of formal relationships between materials, the cultivation of aesthetic sensibility, and the enrichment of students' visual and emotional experiences.

The researcher maintains that the educational process in artistic crafts should not be confined to acquiring technical skills; instead, it must extend to shaping an artist capable of critical thinking, analysis, and inquiry, and of producing innovative artistic solutions grounded

in a clear philosophical vision. Thus, this research was conceived as an experience that bridges artistic practice and intellectual reflection, allowing the artwork to serve as a tool for expression, a means of self-discovery, and a springboard for developing an independent creative vision. The experience also underscores the importance of material experimentation as a pedagogical approach, rather than merely a technical method. Working with diverse materials and repurposing them within new artistic contexts fosters flexible thinking, problem-solving abilities, and the capacity to discover unconventional relationships between visual elements—all of which directly contribute to the development of creative thinking.

Through this research, the author aims to present a practical model applicable to the teaching of art crafts. This model bridges theory and practice, demonstrating how a philosophical idea can be translated into a contemporary artistic form grounded in research and experimentation, while employing materials in a deliberate manner that serves the artistic concept. Furthermore, the research emphasizes the importance of encouraging students to draw upon their human and personal experiences as sources of creativity, ensuring that the artwork reflects a genuine lived experience rather than serving merely as an exercise in technical skill. True creativity is not achieved by imitating pre-existing models, but rather by constructing a personal vision capable of transforming human experience into a contemporary visual language.

From this perspective, the research opens new educational horizons for art education students by encouraging them to engage in research and experimentation, rethink the potential of materials, and create artworks that embody intellectual and humanistic content. This contributes to cultivating artists who possess aesthetic awareness and the capacity for innovation, while keeping pace with contemporary trends in the field of art practice.

Research Themes

- The "Safe Haven" as a Philosophical Approach to Constructing the Artwork:

This theme treats the "safe haven" as a human concept that transcends physical boundaries, evolving into a state of psychological balance, belonging, and a sense of being held or embraced. The researcher sought to embody this concept through artistic elements and visual symbols that articulate the relationship between the individual and their memory, as well as between the self and the surrounding world. Each artwork thus becomes an attempt to answer the question: Where does the individual find their true safe haven?

- Utilizing Diverse Materials to Construct a Contemporary Artistic Language:

The creative process relies on combining natural and synthetic materials—both traditional and modern—to produce artworks that integrate aesthetic, tactile, and expressive qualities. This diversity of materials serves not merely to enrich the form, but to achieve harmony between material and concept; the material itself transforms into a semantic element that bears the traces

of time and contributes to constructing the work's visual narrative.

- **Symbol, Memory, and Identity:**

Symbols play a central role in the construction of these works. Elements such as faces, doors, windows, roots, the sea, birds, vintage photographs, and plants serve as a vocabulary carrying meanings that transcend their literal definitions, expressing themes of memory, identity, and belonging. This approach contributed to enriching the expressive dimension of the artworks and opened the way for multiple readings and interpretations.

- **Assemblage and Relief Modeling as Artistic Media:**

The researcher employed assemblage and relief modeling—key approaches in contemporary art—whereby varying surface levels and rhythmic textural contrasts enabled the creation of works combining characteristics of painting, sculpture, and craft. This achieved visual and tactile richness while reinforcing the artwork's presence as both a physical and intellectual entity.

- **Developing the Expressive Dimension of the Artwork:**

This experiment demonstrates that artistic expression is not achieved through subject matter alone, but rather through the organic relationship between idea, material, and formal structure. Consequently, the resulting works emerged as experiments grounded in exploration, research, and the reconfiguration of elemental relationships. The aim was to arrive at innovative formal solutions that enrich the field of artistic craft and foster the creative capabilities of both the artist and the student.

Methodology of the Artistic Experiment

To conduct this research, the researcher employed the "Self-Experimental Approach"—an applied methodology within the field of art practice. This approach entails a continuous search for new formal solutions rooted in a specific philosophical concept, followed by a series of artistic experiments involving the synthesis of materials and the reconstruction of formal relationships between elements, ultimately leading to visual compositions that achieve a unity of thought and form. The experiment unfolded through several sequential stages. It began by defining the intellectual framework of the "safe haven" concept through an exploration of its psychological and human dimensions. This was followed by a phase of gathering visual motifs associated with the concept—such as human faces, doors, windows, boats, roots, birds, vintage photographs, and botanical elements—viewing them as symbols capable of conveying diverse philosophical meanings.

The researcher then proceeded to the material experimentation phase, testing a wide range of natural and synthetic materials. She examined their physical and tactile properties and their capacity to express the underlying idea, while ensuring structural compatibility between the various materials within a single work; the goal was for each material to serve as an active agent in constructing meaning rather than

merely acting as a decorative addition. Furthermore, the experiment utilized techniques such as assemblage, relief modeling, and multi-layered composition. These methods enabled the creation of surfaces rich in movement and texture, fostering an organic relationship between mass and void, color and material, and form and significance. Each artwork underwent a series of experimental trials before reaching its final form; this process involved refining visual relationships, redistributing masses, and selecting symbolic elements best suited to convey the underlying concept—all while ensuring the work's unity and its alignment with the research's overarching philosophy. The researcher emphasizes that experimentation in this study was not an end in itself, but rather a means to discover new formal solutions. These solutions contribute to enriching the field of artistic practice and open up new avenues for engaging with the material as a medium for intellectual and emotional expression.

General formal characteristics of the research project's artworks

The artworks in this study are characterized by a set of formal qualities that lend them visual unity, despite the diversity of their subject matter. Key among these qualities are:

- Reliance on a multi-level, additive construction, imparting visual and tactile depth to the artistic surface.
- Combining natural and synthetic materials within a single structure that serves the overall concept.
- Utilizing relief forms as both structural and expressive elements.
- Prioritizing symbolism over direct description, thereby allowing for multiple interpretations.
- Achieving balance between primary masses and secondary elements.
- Blending geometric and organic lines to enrich the visual rhythm.
- Employing color as a psychological element that enhances the artwork's emotional mood.
- Leveraging tactile relationships to highlight the temporal and emotional dimensions of the materials.
- Maintaining stylistic unity alongside a diversity of formal elements.
- Structural foundations of the artworks

The artworks are based on a set of design principles that shaped the general structure of the pieces, most notably:

- **Unity:** Achieved through the interconnection of elements and materials within an integrated structure that serves the central concept.
- **Balance:** The researcher distributed masses and elements to achieve visual balance across the artwork's components, whether through symmetrical or asymmetrical arrangements.
- **Rhythm:** Manifested through the repetition of elements, textures, lines, and spaces, creating a gentle visual movement that guides the viewer's eye through the artwork.
- **Dominance:** Human and symbolic elements occupy the dominant position in most of the

artworks, reinforcing the expressive dimension of the piece. □ Variety: Achieved through the interplay of materials, textures, and surface levels, without compromising the unity of the compositional structure.

- Harmony: Resulting from the balanced relationship between color, material, space, and mass, thereby lending the work a cohesive emotional unity.

Aesthetic values in the works of the research experiment.

The aesthetic value of this experience lies in its ability to synthesize thought and matter, symbol and material, and formal composition with philosophical significance. Diverse materials have contributed to creating surfaces that are rich both visually and tactilely, while the chosen symbols deepen the human dimension of the experience, enabling the artworks to engage the viewer on both visual and emotional levels. Furthermore, the use of a subdued color palette, varied surface levels, and linear rhythms creates a visual presence that evokes a sense of contemplation and serenity. This aligns with the research's central theme, ensuring that the aesthetic values stem from the unity of concept and form, rather than from mere ornamentation or visual spectacle.

Analysis of Artworks

The artworks presented in this research are the outcome of an inquiry that integrates philosophical thought with

material experimentation. Each piece stands not merely as an independent experiment but as part of a cohesive visual system that explores the concept of a "safe haven" from multiple perspectives.

In constructing each piece, care was taken to balance technical execution with expressive intent; structural elements, materials, and symbols all serve the work's central idea without compromising its formal unity or aesthetic integrity. Accordingly, the artworks will be analyzed according to two primary axes:

- Technical Analysis: Addresses materials, execution techniques, formal composition, and design relationships.
- Artistic and Critical Analysis: Addresses the conceptual vision, symbolic significance, expressive and aesthetic values, and the relationship of each work to the research philosophy.

Thus, the analysis of the artworks becomes a natural extension of the research's conceptual and practical framework. It reveals how the abstract idea was transformed into contemporary artistic forms, successfully turning the concept of a "safe haven" into a visual and human experience open to interpretation and capable of fostering an ongoing dialogue with the viewer.

First Research Experiment

Artwork Title: *Self* (Dhat)

Dimensions: 50 x 70 cm

Materials: Mixed media on canvas



Figure (1). Title of the Work: Dhat



Figure (4)



Figure (3)



Figure (2)

In this work, the artist does not present the concept of a "safe haven" as a physical place of refuge; instead, she frames it as an internal journey—a space shaped by the memories, experiences, and moments of brokenness that define the human being. At first glance, the viewer senses that this work eschews direct narrative, constructing its visual discourse instead through the layering of materials and varied surface levels, where the material itself becomes integral to the meaning rather than merely a medium for expression. The piece belongs to the realm of contemporary art, utilizing diverse materials within an assemblage structure characterized by multiple layers and relief forms, thereby lending the composition both visual and tactile dimensions. The surface is not a flat plane but a space rich in movement, where masses coexist with voids and raised elements interact with weathered backgrounds—as if time itself has become one of the work's materials.

The composition relies on a vertical arrangement that provides a sense of stability, yet this stability does not negate the feeling of movement. The eye constantly shifts between geometric frames, cascading strips, faces, and script, tracing a visual path that invites multiple interpretations and underscores that the journey to a safe haven is not a straight line, but an experience filled with transformations. The two faces at the heart of the composition appear less like distinct individuals and more like two states of being within the same person. The profile, with its closed eyes, evokes contemplation and serenity, while the other face confronts the viewer with a direct gaze conveying a sense of anxiety and anticipation. Between these two states lies the work's core concept: the human search for a safe space amidst the tension between external reality and internal emotion. Among the most impactful elements are the multiple windows and frames that intersect with the faces. They serve not merely a formal function but transform into symbols of vision—representing how we perceive the world through our personal experiences. Perhaps the artist intends to convey that we do not see things as they truly are, but rather as shaped by our memories and experiences; each window represents a new possibility to step out of the circle of fear and seek a sense of serenity.

The materials themselves are the true protagonists of this work. The artist approaches them with a distinct experimental sensibility, allowing each material to

retain its unique character rather than concealing its nature. Cracks and rough textures appear alongside smoother surfaces, collectively forming a visual record of the passage of time. Here, the material becomes a witness to the human experience; every mark on the surface seems to trace a memory, a situation, or a wound—not one that has been fully erased, but one that has become an integral part of the human makeup. The use of color reinforces this theme; varying shades of blue dominate the scene—not merely for aesthetic appeal, but as symbols of tranquility, containment, and spiritual expansiveness. In contrast, hues of beige, brown, and gold weave through the composition, lending the surface a human warmth and creating a balance between the coldness of reality and the warmth of hope, between pain and the possibility of healing. Arabic calligraphy also features prominently, serving as a formal element no less significant than the other visual components. The letters are not meant to be read as a discrete text; instead, they merge with the forms and materials, becoming an intrinsic part of the work's overall rhythm. It is writing that is seen before it is read, transforming into a visual voice that adds an emotional and spiritual dimension to the work, affirming that the word, too, can be a sanctuary in which one finds refuge. The interplay between straight and curved lines reveals a clear compositional sensibility; vertical lines lend the structure solidity and balance, while free-flowing, curved lines impart a sense of movement and fluidity. This creates a dialogue between order and spontaneity, between intellect and emotion—mirroring the very journey a person undergoes toward psychological stability. A distinctive feature of this work is that the artist does not treat the material merely as a formal element, but as an active partner in generating meaning. The superimposed layers do more than add visual depth; they evoke the accumulation of human experience, suggesting that attaining a sense of safety is not an instantaneous event but a process built upon layers of pain, experience, and awareness.

Ultimately, the work succeeds in presenting a contemporary vision of the concept of a "safe haven," steering clear of literalism or purely descriptive narrative. It invites the viewer to reflect rather than seek a ready-made answer, granting them the freedom to discover their own sanctuary within its details. This capacity to open up multiple avenues for interpretation is a key strength of the piece, underscoring the artist's understanding of the potential of contemporary art—

not merely as a medium defined by material diversity, but as a visual language capable of articulating the deepest of human concerns. In this work, the artist does not rely solely on the aesthetics of the material or the skill of formal composition; rather, she stakes her vision on art's capacity to reshape the human experience. Every layer, texture, frame, and surface mark appears as part of an unwritten autobiography—a narrative seeking a moment of peace within a world

where sources of anxiety are ever-increasing. Thus, a "safe haven" ceases to be a destination we reach, becoming instead a state we rediscover within ourselves each time we contemplate the work.

Second Research Experiment

Title: Sakina

Dimensions: 50 x 70 cm

Materials: Mixed media on canvas



Figure (5). Title: Sakina

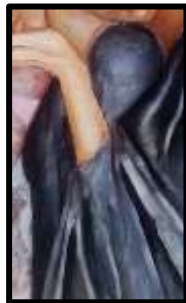


Figure (8)



Figure (7)



Figure (6)

In this work, the artist moves away from the concept of a sanctuary as an external location, approaching instead its deeper meaning: that inner space one creates within oneself when the outside world fails to provide solace. Thus, the work's theme transcends being a mere framework for the pieces; it becomes an intellectual thread connecting diverse human experiences, with each work charting its own visual path toward the same core idea.

Belonging to the realm of contemporary art, the piece employs a variety of materials within a structure that blends painterly treatment with assemblage techniques. Layers and textures intertwine with painted elements in a balanced relationship, underscoring that the material is not merely a medium of execution but a fundamental

component in shaping the work's meaning. The composition centers on a primary mass occupying the right side of the picture plane, featuring a human figure cradling another head—eyes closed—in a scene radiating serenity and a sense of holding. The two faces do not appear as separate individuals so much as representations of two states within the same person: one seeking safety and the other providing it. It is as if the artist suggests that true sanctuary lies in that quiet part deep within the human spirit, rather than in the external world. The inclination of the heads and the intertwining of bodies reinforce this sense of containment; the movement is devoid of tension or conflict, replaced instead by a visual language of gentle curves and a tranquil rhythm, rendering the

composition more akin to a moment of silent contemplation than a narrative scene. The text incorporated into the work holds special significance; it does not serve to explain or interpret but rather acts as an extension of the visual vision, conveying the following sentiment:

"A sanctuary is not a place, but a moment of serenity in which I embrace my inner self, far removed from the clamor of the world."

This phrase encapsulates the concept visually constructed by the artwork without foreclosing the possibility of interpretation; instead, it offers the viewer a key to the emotional experience proposed by the artist. Thus, Arabic calligraphy transforms into a visual element that—alongside color and texture—participates in the creation of meaning.

The background plays a pivotal role in establishing this evocative atmosphere; far from being a neutral space, it consists of serene color layers interspersed with textile, burlap, and lace elements, lending the surface a tactile richness that evokes the passage of time and the traces of memory. These materials appear as fragments of past human experiences, reimagined by the artist to affirm that serenity does not emerge from a void, but rather from the accumulation of experiences and the marks left by the passage of days. The color palette belongs to a tranquil scheme dominated by pink, gray, and beige—hues that resonate more with the realm of emotion and inner feeling than with objective reality. These tonal gradations helped create a delicate visual atmosphere that harmonizes with the underlying concept, while the dark garment lends the human figure a commanding presence within the composition, balancing the lightness of the background against the weight of the human form.

The treatment of light reveals a keen photographic sensibility; the artist focuses illumination on the faces and hands—the body's most expressive features—while allowing other elements to gradually dissolve into the background. This clever approach directs the viewer's eye straight to the work's emotional focal point. From a formal perspective, the artist successfully strikes a balance between realism and abstraction; the

faces bear distinct human features yet do not belong to any specific individual, transforming instead into a universal human symbol. This allows the work to resonate with the viewer's inner self without tethering it to a particular time or place. The role of the material itself cannot be overlooked; it serves not merely to visually enrich the surface but becomes an integral part of the expressive language. The background texture carries symbolic connotations of restoration and containment—as if the artist is weaving a new space of serenity from the remnants of human experiences—thereby turning the material into a metaphor for healing and self-reconstruction.

In this piece, the artist does not provide an answer to the question, "Where is the safe haven?" but rather invites the viewer to pose the question to themselves. Every element within the composition—from the body's posture, the open gaze, and the reposeful head to the layered materials and the inscribed phrase—converges on a single idea: true peace is found only through reconciliation with the self, and a moment of inner clarity constitutes the most authentic and enduring sanctuary. Perhaps the work's most distinctive quality is that it relies not on immediate visual impact, but on quiet expression and genuine emotion. It is a piece that does not impose its meaning upon the viewer but whispers it, allowing each individual to evoke their own sanctuary through personal memory and experience; this imbues the work with a human value that transcends mere form, reaching the depths of the emotional experience. Furthermore, the work is characterized by a poetic tranquility, relying less on dense formal construction than on minimalism and a visual whisper. Furthermore, the text incorporated into the composition is integral to the concept rather than merely a decorative element; thus, the piece can be interpreted as an exploration of the "safe haven" as a state of inner serenity.

Third Research Experiment

Title: Nostalgia for the Past

Dimensions: 50 x 70 cm

Materials: Mixed media on canvas



Figure 9. Title: Nostalgia for the Past



Figure (12)



Figure (11)



Figure (10)

The artwork relies on visual storytelling by assembling elements that appear disparate on the surface yet harmonize within a unified vision; it is also rich in symbolic depth. Here, the artist presents the "safe haven" not merely as a state of tranquility, but as an arduous journey—one where the individual navigates constraints, chance encounters, and memories to ultimately discover their true self. In this piece, the concept of a "safe haven" expands, becoming more complex and multifaceted. The artist does not simply place the human figure at the heart of the experience; she surrounds it with visual symbols evoking memory, choice, childhood, and freedom, weaving a visual narrative that operates on multiple layers of meaning.

The work belongs to the realm of contemporary art, where diverse materials coexist within an assemblage structure defined by multiple layers and planes. Relief elements and painted areas intermingle organically, dissolving the boundaries between drawing and three-dimensional construction. Far from being mere formal embellishments, the materials transform into expressive elements that enrich the visual surface while deepening the work's meaning. A woman's face occupies the center of the composition—not as the scene's protagonist, but as an anchor around which the other elements revolve. Her features are serene, devoid of overt emotion, while her gaze drifts beyond the artwork's boundaries, as if searching for a horizon invisible to the viewer. This look imbues the figure with a sense of contemplative anxiety, suggesting that the quest for a safe haven remains ongoing. Surrounding this figure is a collection of symbols that, while appearing disconnected at first glance, actually belong to a unified system. The playing cards do not point to a specific game; rather, they evoke the concepts of probability and chance—forces that sometimes govern the course of life. It is as if one does not always choose one's own path, but instead finds oneself propelled among options over which one lacks full control. Their scattered arrangement within the composition disrupts traditional order, underscoring the fragility of certainty in the face of life's unpredictable shifts.

Elsewhere, a small doll commands attention; it appears not merely as a toy, but as a symbol of early childhood—embodying innocence, vulnerability, and a need for nurturing. The artist seems to summon the child dwelling within every human being—that part of the self that ceaselessly seeks security, regardless of age. Thus, the doll becomes a visual metaphor for a memory that never ceases to accompany us. The white

bird represents the most poetic element of the work. It appears not as a mere decorative detail, but as a symbol of freedom, peace, and the possibility of liberation from constraints. Its placement at the base of the composition, close to the human figure, affirms that hope endures, even when the path toward it seems fraught with obstacles. The intersecting black lines command a strong visual presence, appearing as barriers, fences, or nets that obstruct the movement of elements within the composition. Yet, the artist does not render them as impenetrable walls; instead, she leaves spaces for passage, suggesting that constraints are not the end of the road but rather part of the journey toward a sanctuary. Remarkably, despite their rigidity, these lines create a visual rhythm that connects the composition's various parts, lending it unity amidst its great diversity. The viewer's attention is also drawn to the depicted image at the top of the work, which resembles a fragment of a deconstructed painting or a memory preserved within a frame. This element invites interpretation regarding the nature of memory—specifically, how individuals carry within themselves multiple versions of the self across time; some remain intact, while others are fragmented by life experiences. Thus, the past becomes present in the work—not merely as a recollection, but as a fundamental component of identity.

The background is rich in textures, fissures, and traces of materials, lending the surface visual depth and a sense of the passage of time. Fabric, burlap, and superimposed layers of color serve no merely decorative purpose; rather, they appear as strata of human memory, bearing the marks of lived experiences and affirming that experience leaves its imprint on the human being just as it does on matter. In terms of color, the artist has chosen a palette dominated by beige, brown, and gray, accented with touches of blue, orange, and gold—a selection that strikes a balance between warmth and coolness, and between the real and the dreamlike. The color contrast between the face and its surrounding elements helped anchor the visual focal point, without causing the other elements to lose their presence within the scene. The work reveals a clear awareness of rhythm and balance; despite the abundance of visual elements, the composition avoids visual chaos. Instead, the artist successfully organizes the relationships between elements through the distribution of masses, the repetition of lines, and the interplay of negative space, allowing the eye to move freely among details without losing the sense of the work's unity. The value of this work lies not merely in

its multiplicity of symbols, but in the way the artist enables them to converse with one another without imposing a single, fixed meaning. The woman, the doll, the bird, the playing cards, the old photograph, and the layered materials all transform into elements of a visual narrative. This narrative speaks of the human being on an ongoing journey toward safety—toward a sanctuary that is not granted ready-made, but is built through experience and born of confronting fear rather than fleeing from it.

The strength of this work lies in its ability to transform everyday objects into human symbols; nothing within it appears arbitrary. Rather, every element carries memory, significance, and a formal function. In doing so, the artist advances her exploratory project, affirming that a safe haven is not a fixed location but a state formed from the scattered fragments of our lives—our childhoods, dreams, choices, and our capacity to mend ourselves whenever we fracture under

the weight of life. Here, the artist's visual identity becomes clear: she does not rely on material merely to enrich the surface, but employs it as a symbolic language. The presence of the human face is a near-constant—not as a mere portrait, but as a vessel for memory, emotion, and the quest for serenity. As for the diverse materials—with the traces of time they bear and their varied textures—they serve not as a backdrop for the unfolding narrative, but as an integral partner in shaping the concept; it is as if the artist is affirming that the human being, much like a work of art, is formed by accumulated layers of experience, and that these very layers ultimately create one's safe haven.

Fourth Research Experiment

Title: Journey of Survival

Dimensions: 50 x 70 cm

Materials: Mixed media on canvas



Figure (13). Title of the work: Journey of Survival.



Figure (16)



Figure (15)



Figure (14)

The visual symbol stands as the most powerful element of this work; rather than explicitly stating its concept, it constructs it through interwoven visual metaphors. It also diverges from earlier works by shifting from a psychological sanctuary to an existential one; here, the human figure seeks not merely peace, but survival amidst a turbulent world—a quality that imbues the

piece with immense expressive power. In this work, the artist moves beyond the interior space that dominated some of her previous creations, opening a window onto the outside world with all its attendant turmoil and peril. Yet, she presents neither the sea as a mere landscape nor the boat as a simple fishing vessel; instead, she employs them as symbols of the human

journey through life—a voyage fraught with storms, yet tethered by a thread of hope.

The piece belongs to the realm of contemporary art, where natural and synthetic materials converge within an assemblage structure defined by relief and multi-layered forms, transforming the material itself into a distinct visual language. The artist successfully harnesses the tactile qualities of each material, allowing nets, ropes, chains, and fabrics to carry their own specific significance rather than serving as mere decorative additions. The boat sits at the center of the composition as the work's true protagonist, yet it does not appear detached from the human figure; rather, it merges with a body clad in jeans, as if the artist intentionally sought to dissolve the boundaries between the human and their means of survival. The boat is not an external object here, but an extension of the self—bearing the individual just as it is borne by them—so that the sanctuary itself becomes an integral part of the human being.

This fusion of boat and body invites a rich symbolic interpretation; The human figure appears transformed into a vessel navigating the waves of life—bearing the marks of wear and tear, yet pressing on with the journey. The torn trousers serve no mere aesthetic purpose; rather, they clearly signify the impact of experience and the scars life leaves behind—scars that do not diminish a person's worth but instead bear witness to their journey. The tattered nets draping the boat add yet another layer of meaning. Far from being fishing nets laden with a bountiful catch, they appear worn, torn, and ravaged by time. Through them, the artist may be suggesting that we always carry the remnants of our experiences with us, and that what appears tattered may be precisely what grants us the strength to endure. The chains hanging upon the body invite a wide range of interpretations. They may symbolize the constraints imposed by life or the burdens of responsibility weighing one down; yet, they do not halt movement—the boat remains upright, and the journey continues. Herein lies the power of the symbol: constraints do not extinguish hope but become part of the equation of survival.

At the top of the composition, a white dove appears as a strikingly pure visual element, offering a moment of respite amidst a structure rich in symbolism. It is not merely a bird soaring over the sea, but a symbol of peace, freedom, and perhaps the serenity that hovers before us, beckoning us to continue the journey no matter how turbulent the waves become. The sun also plays a significant symbolic role; it appears luminous amidst a vast blue expanse, serving as a visual focal point and a beacon of hope. It does not assert its presence aggressively but radiates a quiet glow, as if the artist is affirming that true light requires no clamor to be impactful. Among the most poetic details is the human face peering through the tears in the denim, alongside smaller faces that seem to hide within the folds of the composition. These do not appear as

independent figures, but rather as memories or shadows of lived human experiences—bearing traces of pain and fear, yet remaining integral to one's identity. Through these intricate details, the artwork transforms into a space that evokes memory rather than merely describing reality. The color palette harmonizes with the overarching concept; shades of blue—in varying tones—dominate the work, establishing an atmosphere linked to the sea, the sky, and vastness, while simultaneously conveying serenity and contemplation. In contrast, hues of green, brown, and gold infuse the composition with warmth and vitality, creating a visual balance that prevents the blue from veering into emotional coldness.

The surface treatment reveals a clear mastery of materials; fabric, ropes, netting, pastes, and rough textures all intertwine within a unified structure, seamless to the viewer. The artist achieves this harmony through a deliberate command of the relationships between mass and void, texture and color, turning the surface into a living space that invites the eye to wander across its details. Despite the density of elements, the work retains its visual unity; The movement of diagonal lines, the direction of ropes, and the sweep of waves guide the viewer's eye toward the boat—the focal point of meaning—before circulating calmly among the other symbols, lending the composition a cohesive visual rhythm. The artist's choice of the sea is far from incidental; in human culture, the sea has long symbolized the unknown, fear, hope, and new beginnings. Through this symbol, she reimagines the concept of a "safe haven": it is no longer a port we reach, but rather the capacity to keep sailing despite the burdens we carry.

The value of this work lies not merely in the skillful use of materials, but in its ability to transform everyday objects into profound human metaphors. The boat becomes a body, the body transforms into a homeland, and the sea becomes time itself; meanwhile, the dove and the sun stand as witnesses that, no matter how heavily life weighs upon us, the possibility of reaching a safer shore always remains. Here, the artist does not use material to dazzle the viewer, but rather employs it to serve the underlying idea. Each element is interconnected within a web of semantic relationships, such that no single component could be removed without disrupting the overall structure. This imbues the work with genuine artistic value and underscores the maturity of an approach that uses art as a medium capable of uniting the visual and the philosophical. Ultimately, the "safe haven" becomes not a place of refuge, but an ongoing journey toward the self—a voyage undertaken with the memories, wounds, and hopes we carry.

Fifth Research Experiment

Title: Containment

Dimensions: 50 x 70 cm

Materials: Mixed media on canvas



Figure (17). Title of the work: Containment.



Figure (20)



Figure (19)



Figure (18)

In this work, the concept of a "safe haven" reaches a profound human zenith; the artist shifts from seeking safety within the self to discovering it in the other—through embraces, presence, and the shared memories forged by human relationships. Here, the sanctuary is neither a physical location nor an abstract psychological state; rather, it becomes a relationship that mends the fractures within the human spirit and restores a sense of belonging. The piece belongs to the realm of contemporary art, employing diverse materials within an assemblage structure characterized by layering and relief. This creates a vibrant surface where matter and image intertwine, and texture becomes an integral part of the expressive language rather than merely a technical treatment.

The composition is dominated by an embrace that unites two figures into a single mass, almost dissolving the boundaries between their bodies. The viewer perceives not so much one person holding another, but rather a unified entity—an embodiment of the work's core theme of profound connection. The figures' eyes are closed in deep stillness, as if the artist is asserting that true serenity requires no visual perception of the world, but rather the felt presence of someone who offers safety. The formal structure reveals a sophisticated sense of composition; the human form

anchors the work with its visual weight, while surrounding elements move in a gentle rhythm that complements rather than competes with the central figure, thereby reinforcing its presence. Curved lines flow fluidly, guiding the viewer's gaze toward the heart of the embrace, making this human encounter both the emotional and visual focal point of the piece.

The artist does not treat the faces as realistic portraits, but rather presents them as universal human symbols. The features are pared down, devoid of individual detail, allowing the viewer to see themselves within the work and to summon from memory images akin to love, loss, nostalgia, or a sense of being held and comforted.

Materials play a pivotal role in constructing this visual world; the cracks covering parts of the background, the varied textures, and the layers of paste lend the surface a sense of the passage of time—as if the walls themselves bear the traces of life. Yet, the artist does not frame these cracks as signs of collapse; instead, she transforms them into evidence that beauty can emerge from fissures, and that one becomes more capable of love after experiencing pain. Among the work's most beautiful elements is the presence of old photographs suspended in the upper-left section of the composition. They serve no documentary function; rather, they

evoke the continuity of family and memory, linking the present to the past in an unbroken bond. It is as if the artist is suggesting that a safe haven is not created by the present alone, but is also built by the faces that once inhabited our memories—faces that have departed the physical space yet remain ever-present in the heart and mind. Furthermore, the botanical elements scattered along the edges of the work are not merely decorative motifs; they carry clear connotations of growth, continuity, and the renewal of life. In this context, the green leaf symbolizes a hope that persists and grows even in the harshest environments. Meanwhile, the cactus at the base of the composition offers another layer of symbolism: a plant that thrives in arid conditions while retaining its resilience, it becomes a metaphor for patience and the capacity to endure—qualities inseparable from the concept of true security. The small sculpted head in the lower corner carries a mysterious presence that enriches the work's semantic depth. It appears as a relic of the past—or a silent witness to the human experience—bridging personal and collective memory. It affirms that within every human being lie many faces; some remain dormant in the depths, shaping identity without ever revealing themselves. Regarding color, the artist chose a palette dominated by beige, green, and gray, accented with soft touches of blue. These hues harmonize with the concept, blending the warmth of the earth with the coolness of shadows to create a sense of visual and psychological balance. Soft color gradations around the faces enhance the feeling of serenity, while the richer, more varied background highlights the human form, granting it prominence within the composition. The work demonstrates a keen awareness of the relationship between mass and void; the spaces

surrounding the elements are not merely silent gaps but active participants in orchestrating the visual rhythm, allowing the scene to breathe. Furthermore, the varying surface levels—contrasting the raised elements against the background—lend the piece a sculptural quality, offering the viewer a simultaneous visual and tactile experience. Despite the density of symbols, the artist maintains the work's unity through a delicate network of visual relationships. Branches, leaves, images, the cracked background, and the human figure all engage in a dialogue within a cohesive system, with no single element overpowering the others. This balance between diversity and unity is a key factor in the composition's success. This work does not merely ask where we seek safety; it poses a deeper question: who is the person that grants us this safety? Through this inquiry, the artist redefines the concept of a "safe haven," transforming it from a protective wall into a genuine human connection, an enduring memory, and a presence capable of healing what words cannot mend. In my view, the power of this work lies not solely in the skill of its execution or the richness of its materials, but in its profound human sincerity. It eschews exaggerated expression, relying instead on a silent moment of embrace—a moment that encapsulates the very essence of safety. It affirms that, no matter how deep one's solitude, the ultimate quest is for a heart that offers peace, a hand that holds us close, and a memory that assures us we were never truly alone.

Sixth Research Experiment

Title: Roots

Dimensions: 50 x 70 cm

Materials: Mixed media on canvas



Figure (21). Title of the work: Roots.



Figure (24)



Figure (23)



Figure (22)

This work represents the philosophical heart of the research. While previous works explored refuge found in the self, memory, or the Other, this piece speaks of roots—of belonging to a place as the primary sanctuary, and of an identity that remains anchored to the individual, no matter how far they roam. It is a work grounded in the concept of return: not a return to a physical location, but a return to one's origins. Here, the artist revisits a question that runs deeper than that of safety: the question of belonging. A "safe haven" is not presented merely as a place of refuge in times of fear, but as the foundational root of human identity—a memory that endures within the individual, transcending shifts in place and time. Through this perspective, the painting transforms into a visual meditation on the relationship between human and place, memory and roots.

The piece belongs to the realm of contemporary art, where natural and synthetic materials intertwine within an assemblage structure characterized by relief forms and multi-layered surfaces; the material itself acquires an expressive presence as significant as the pictorial elements. Far from merely enriching the texture, the materials serve as vessels for time—visual traces revealing layers of stories embedded within the wall. At the center of the composition lies a human face with closed eyes, cradled by coils of fabric in a circular motion reminiscent of a womb or a cocoon. These wrappings do not appear to conceal the face but rather to embrace and protect it—a visual metaphor suggesting that true security begins from within, and that returning to the self is not an escape from the world, but an attempt to regain balance amidst a turbulent reality. The artist has chosen to render the face in a state of absolute stillness, devoid of overt emotion; this lends it a contemplative quality that invites the viewer to project their own experiences onto the work. The face does not represent a specific individual but rather serves as a symbolic image of the human being—caught in a moment of self-reconciliation or the recollection of a distant memory. The brick wall surrounding the face stands out as a key semantic element of the piece. Far from being a mere architectural backdrop, it bears the marks of time—cracks and erosion—resembling the wall of an old home that has preserved the echoes of its inhabitants' voices more vividly than their physical likenesses. Through this wall, the artist evokes the concept of the "first home"—that place which never leaves one's memory, no matter the distance traveled. Thus, the

structure transforms into a symbol of stability and sanctuary, and a metaphor for the homeland in its deepest, emotional sense. The intertwined roots piercing the wall command a powerful visual presence. Instead of growing underground as is typical, they spread across the surface of the artwork, wrapping around both the structure and the face in an organic movement. This suggests that roots are not merely something left behind, but a hidden force that accompanies us wherever we go. It is as if the artist is affirming that while a person may change their place of residence, they cannot uproot their memory, for its roots remain deeply embedded within them.

The small doors and windows distributed along the edges of the composition also draw the eye. Positioned far from the work's center, they appear less like architectural elements and more like memories. These are doors that evoke nostalgia rather than inviting entry, and windows that open onto the past rather than the outside world. Thus, vernacular architecture transforms into a symbol of collective memory—a testament to the fact that places inhabit the human spirit far more than they inhabit maps. From a formal perspective, the artist has successfully struck a delicate balance between the rigid geometric lines of the wall and the free-flowing organic lines of the roots. While the structure conveys a sense of solidity and stability, the roots introduce a continuous movement suggestive of growth and life; this creates a visual interplay between rigidity and flexibility, between permanence and transformation—a duality that aligns with the work's overarching theme.

The color palette is subdued and harmonious, dominated by shades of beige, gray, and earthy green, accented by touches of pale blue and gold. These colors evoke the passage of time rather than immediate reality, lending the piece a visual serenity that complements its contemplative nature. The sparing use of gold accents adds symbolic weight, hinting that the remnants of memory are humanity's most precious possession. The work also highlights the artist's exquisitely sensitive use of natural materials; roots, rough textures, pastes, and layered pigments combine to create a rich surface that does more than merely meet the eye—it almost invites the touch. This interplay between the visual and the tactile lends the piece a distinctive character within the realm of art; the material becomes a medium for expressing time just as much as it is a medium for shaping form. Although the composition centers on a single human element, it is

imbued with a profound sense of presence. The artist has successfully woven a network of visual relationships that interlink every element: the face rests within the fabric, the fabric is cradled by the wall, the wall is permeated by roots, and the roots extend toward doors and windows. This creates a closed visual loop that constantly draws the viewer's eye back to the face—the focal point of the human experience.

The work does not impose a single interpretation on the viewer; instead, it leaves the door open to multiple readings. Some may see it as a reflection on the homeland, others as an evocation of childhood, and still others as a journey into the self. This capacity to embrace multiple meanings is a hallmark of a mature artwork, as it grants the viewer the freedom to participate in the creation of significance. In this piece, the artist presents neither the wall as a barrier nor the roots as a shackle; rather, she redefines them as a space of protection and belonging. What appears aged or weathered transforms into a source of strength, and what seems static harbors a latent vitality. Here, a "safe

haven" is not a place we flee to, but a place that never left us—remaining planted in our memories, woven into our roots, and dwelling deep within us, no matter how far our paths may take us. If I were to choose the most poetic and philosophical piece from the exhibited collection, it would be this one. It does not rely on direct symbolism; instead, it constructs its meaning through a subtle interplay between the face, the wall, and the root. This is a remarkably rich triad: the face represents the human being, the wall represents memory, and the root represents belonging. From this quiet dialogue, the artist develops a profound concept of a safe haven—for a sanctuary is not merely a doorway we enter; it can be a root we carry within us, or a home that dwells in memory even when it is no longer visible to the eye.

Seventh Research Experiment

Title: At the Threshold of Nearness

Dimensions: 50 x 70 cm

Materials: Mixed media on canvas



Figure (25). Title of the work: At the Door of Nearness.



Figure (28)



Figure (27)



Figure (26)

This work embodies the concept of a "safe haven" through a profound spiritual vision, shifting the quest for security from the material realm to the dimension of faith; here, nearness to God becomes the true refuge to which one turns in moments of weakness and

brokenness. Drawing upon the Quranic verse, "And when My servants ask you concerning Me—indeed I am near" (Al-Baqarah: 186), the researcher asserts that tranquility is not tethered to a specific place or circumstance, but rather to the presence of faith within

the human heart. The composition centers on a human figure raising their hands in supplication, with a cloth covering their eyes—a symbolic gesture indicating that inner insight transcends physical sight, and that faith empowers one to perceive safety even in the absence of material certainty. This approach stands out as a key expressive feature of the work, transforming the absence of vision into a symbol of trust and spiritual surrender. Surface treatments and varied textures play a pivotal role in the work's construction; the background resembles a wall bearing the marks of time—featuring cracks and material accumulations that evoke successive human experiences—while the body and hands emerge from the surface, creating an interplay of visual depth and tactile quality that imbues the piece with a sense of presence and expressive realism. Earthy tones and warm hues play a significant role in enhancing the work's emotional resonance; associated with serenity, stability, and authenticity, they harmonize with the essence of the noble verse to create a visual atmosphere that invites contemplation and reverence. This composition underscores that a "safe haven" may be a state of inner peace rather than a tangible physical location. The Arabic script

highlights the value of calligraphy as a formal element serving both aesthetic and semantic functions; the verse does not merely serve an explanatory purpose but becomes an integral part of the visual structure, interacting with the human figure and the materials to form a unified whole that enriches the visual experience and reinforces the work's intellectual message. The piece affirms that a safe haven is not necessarily a house, a homeland, or a person; rather, it can be the steadfast conviction that one is never truly alone, and that closeness to the Divine grants the strength and serenity needed to overcome fear and anxiety. Through this approach, the work adds a spiritual dimension to the inquiry, complementing a philosophical vision that views the safe haven as a multidimensional human experience—one rooted in memory, belonging, human relationships, and faith, yet united in the shared pursuit of tranquility and inner peace.

Eighth Research Experiment

Title: Haven

Dimensions: 50 x 70 cm

Materials: Mixed media on canvas



Figure (29). Title of the work: Sanctuary.



Figure (32)



Figure (31)



Figure (30)

This work offers a poetic vision of the concept of a "safe haven." The artist transcends the notion of place as a mere physical shelter, presenting it instead as a state of inner serenity to which one returns when burdened by life's struggles. Through this approach, elements such as an open door, the vast sea, a human face, and botanical forms transform into visual motifs; together, they weave an artistic narrative that invites contemplation rather than offering a literal description. Belonging to the realm of contemporary art, the piece combines drawing with multi-layered construction. It employs diverse materials and textures to enrich the artistic surface, adding visual and tactile dimensions that heighten the work's expressive quality.

The composition is anchored by a human face—in which only the eyes are visible—in a symbolic treatment that suggests the presence of an observing self rather than a physical body. The eyes appear contemplative and expectant, as if searching for a sanctuary that cannot be seen with the physical eye but is perceived through feeling. This reduction of facial features underscores that the human being is the focal point of the experience, and that the journey toward safety begins within before extending to the outside world. A visual staircase guides the viewer's eye toward an open door overlooking the sea and a luminous horizon, creating a composition that evokes a sense of movement and transition. This door is not merely an architectural element; it becomes a metaphor for the shift from anxiety to tranquility, and from the confines of reality to the expansiveness of hope, while the sea symbolizes vastness, freedom, and the potential for new beginnings. Botanical elements distributed across the composition reinforce themes of growth, renewal, and continuity; the green leaves engage in a visual dialogue with the light streaming through the doorway, affirming that life continues to flourish whenever one finds a safe environment.

The Arabic text lends a philosophical dimension to the work, integrated seamlessly into the visual composition—not merely as an explanation of the image, but as an extension of it. The phrase—"A sanctuary is not a place, but a return to peace where light dwells and silence becomes home"—does not limit interpretation but deepens it, offering the viewer a key to the work's inner world. Here, Arabic calligraphy transforms into a visual element embodying rhythm, mass, and negative space, joining color and texture in constructing meaning. The artist employs a serene color palette dominated by beige, gray, and pale blue, accented with touches of gold that evoke warmth and tranquility. The contrast between the light emanating from the entrance and the surrounding muted tones establishes the doorway as the visual focal point—the center of hope within the composition. The work reflects a vision asserting that a safe haven is not a fixed location, but a journey of returning to the self—to the peace born when one reconciles with their memories, dreams, and faith in life. Through simple yet deeply symbolic elements, the artist creates a visual expression that encapsulates a core concept of the research: that one may travel great distances in search of safety, only to discover that the path begins within,

and that true light lies not at the journey's end, but in the very act of walking toward it.

Commentary

Each work in this artistic inquiry represents a chapter in a unified visual narrative; the underlying concept evolves gradually from one piece to the next, ultimately coalescing into a comprehensive artistic project centered on the notion of a "safe haven."

The artist successfully constructs this narrative without resorting to mere repetition. She grants each work its own distinct artistic and conceptual autonomy while maintaining the project's cohesion through the recurring use of specific visual motifs—such as human faces, architectural elements, roots, windows, birds, vintage photographs, and natural materials. These elements transform into a visual vocabulary that redefines its meaning with every new work.

The human figure occupies the heart of the artistic inquiry across all the works; yet, the figure does not appear merely as a representational subject, but rather as a vessel for memory, emotion, and existential questioning. Closed eyes, distant gazes, and embracing bodies transcend the boundaries of realistic depiction to become symbols of psychological and human states, affirming that the quest for safety begins within before extending to the outside world.

Conversely, the artist does not treat "place" merely as a backdrop for events; instead, she imbues it with symbolic value that transcends its physical presence. Walls, windows, doors, boats—and even trees and roots—cease to serve their conventional functions, transforming instead into visual metaphors for home, memory, belonging, transition, and survival. Thus, place itself becomes an emotional state rather than a mere geographical space.

The works also reveal a palpable presence of memory as one of the project's central themes. Old photographs, the traces of time on walls, cracks, and weathered materials do not evoke the past as a bygone era, but rather as part of the present—an essential element in shaping human identity. Here, memory is not merely an act of recollection but a sanctuary where one seeks refuge when the present feels constricting.

From a formal perspective, the artist employs a language rooted in assemblage, mixed media, and relief work, lending the artistic surface both visual and tactile depth. She successfully utilizes materials as carriers of meaning; fabrics, burlap, ropes, netting, wood, and pastes are no longer just artistic media but vessels for concepts of time, experience, erosion, and reconstruction. The composition maintains a distinct sense of balance despite the density of elements. Dominant masses command visual priority, while secondary elements are arranged in a calm rhythm that guides the viewer's eye across the work's various planes without clutter or distraction. This equilibrium is reinforced by an ongoing dialogue between geometric and organic lines, and between solid masses and free-form elements, imbuing the works with a visual vitality that mirrors the dynamism of the underlying concept.

Color plays a psychological role no less significant than its structural function; shades of blue, gray, earth tones, and natural greens recur within a relatively restrained palette—shunning clamor in favor of contemplation. Touches of gold and light serve as subtle visual cues of hope, as if the artist is affirming that light need not occupy vast space to make its presence felt. It is also evident that the artist avoids relying on closed or literal symbols; instead, she imbues her elements with the capacity to generate multiple meanings. A dove may symbolize peace, freedom, or deliverance; a boat might serve as a vessel for crossing or a metaphor for the human self; roots transform into symbols of identity and belonging; and old photographs become mirrors reflecting both personal and collective memory. This semantic openness lends the works an interpretive richness, allowing them to be reinterpreted anew with each viewing.

While the works vary in their visual vocabulary, they share a fundamental question: Where does the safe haven lie? The artist offers no single answer; rather, she allows the response to take shape through a diversity of experiences—sometimes found within the self, in contemplation, in childhood, in love, in one's roots, in memory, or in the resilience to continue the journey despite the arduousness of the path. Consequently, the pieces do not appear isolated but rather engage in a dialogue, with each work complementing what another began. Ultimately, they coalesce into a cohesive visual experience—one that is contemporary in its vision, artistic in its language, and deeply human in its subject matter.

Conclusion

In this research, the artist presents a creative endeavor that transcends the boundaries of technical material handling, establishing a visual project grounded in the interplay between thought and matter, symbol and reality, and the self and memory. She successfully transforms the material from a mere medium of artistic formation into a language in its own right—one that bears the traces of time, encapsulates human experience, and serves as an essential partner in constructing meaning. The works reveal a clear artistic awareness of how contemporary art can engage with existential and human themes. This is achieved through a visual language that combines relief forms,

assemblage, multi-layered structures, and rich textures; these elements lend each piece its unique character while simultaneously preserving the unity of the project as a whole.

The true value of this research lies not merely in the diversity of materials or the technical skill of execution, but in its ability to reframe the concept of a "safe haven" as a human experience open to interpretation. Safety is portrayed not as a fixed location or a protective wall, but as a state of reconciliation with the self, a connection to memory, a sense of belonging to one's roots, the capacity for love, and the belief that true strength stems not from the absence of pain, but from the ability to transform it into meaning. Ultimately, the works in this research linger in the viewer's memory long after the viewing experience ends. They offer more than just visual imagery; they leave an emotional imprint that invites contemplation and a re-examination of the very concept of safety. Herein lies the power of the experience: it does not drive the viewer to seek a safe haven outside the artwork, but rather leads them to discover that such a haven may have existed within them all along—waiting only for a moment of awareness to bring it to light. We may roam the world in search of a safe haven, only to discover in the end that the safest places are not those that surround us, but those we build within our souls—out of memories that do not betray, love that does not break, and roots that the wind cannot uproot.

References

1. Bowlby, J. (1988). *A Secure Base: Parent-Child Attachment and Healthy Human Development*. Basic Books.
2. Krause, A. N., et al. (2021). Sites of meaning-making: Places of attachment afford psychological meaning. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 110, 102958.
3. Manzo, L. C., & Devine-Wright, P. (Eds.). (2020). *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
4. Scannell, L., & Gifford, R. (2010). Defining place attachment: A tripartite organizing framework. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30(1), 1–10.
5. Winnicott, D. W. (1971). *Playing and Reality*. Tavistock Publications.