



Smithsonian
*Freer Gallery of Art and
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery*

Ardeshir Mohasses Drawings

Ryan Murray

2021

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives
Title:	Ardeshir Mohasses Drawings
Date:	1981-1985, undated
Identifier:	FSA.A2019.01
Creator:	Muḥaṣṣiṣ, Ardashīr, 1938-2008
Extent:	1.8 Cubic feet (Two tall legal size flip top boxes, one 30 in. x 21 in. oversize folder)
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Gift of Farzad and Neda Rastegar, 2019.

Provenance

All drawings and lithographs were either received as gifts or purchase from the artist by the donors.

Processing Information

Processed by Ryan Murray, 2021.

Preferred Citation

Ardeshir Mohasses Drawings, FSA A2019.01. National Museum of Asian Art Archives. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Gift of Farzad and Neda Rastegar.

Restrictions

The collection is open for research use.

Biographical / Historical

Ardeshir Mohasses (also romanized Ardešīr Moḥaṣṣeṣṣ, Ardashir Mohases, Persian: اردشیر محمص) was born September 9, 1938 in Rasht, Iran. One of four children, and cousin to the noted artist Bahman Mohasses, he was raised in Lahijan. Ardeshir Mohasses began his career as an illustrator as a student in the 1950s, contributing work to *Towfiq*, a satirical publication. Although he applied to and was accepted by the University of Tehran's Faculty of Fine Arts, he opted to study political science and never trained formally as an artist. After graduating university in 1962, he briefly worked as a civil servant before deciding to pursue art full time. His work appeared in Iranian publications including *Ketāb-e haftā* and *Kayhān*, cementing his reputation as a leading illustrator and pioneer of satirical cartoons in Iran by the late 1960s. He published several volumes of work through the 1970s.

By the 1970s, Mohasses gained increasing recognition internationally, leading to publication of his work in major outlets in the United States, Europe, and Asia. He also exhibited works and toured in the United States.

Facing hostility from the government of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, Mohasses relocated to New York City in 1976 and decided to remain following the 1979 Iranian Revolution. He continued working, satirizing and criticizing the new Iranian government as he had the old.

Mohasses' health declined following a Parkinson's disease diagnosis in 1986 and other challenges. He continued publishing, including *Ardeshir Mohasses: Closed Circuit History* (1989) and *Life in Iran: The Library of Congress Drawings* (1994). He remained active until his death in New York on October 9, 2008. His life and legacy were celebrated at the conference "Ardeshir Mohasses, Art, Politics, and Beyond" at New York University, October 9-10, 2010, as well as *Ardeshir: The Rebellious Artist* by Bahman Maghsoudlou, a revised version of a documentary originally released in 1972 as *Ardeshir Mohasses and His Caricatures*.

Scope and Contents

Drawings and lithographs by Ardeshir Mohasses. All dated materials are from the early 1980s, after he decided to permanently reside and work in New York City. Subjects include commentary on and satire of the Iranian political situation, but also animal figures and street scenes.

Arrangement

Organized into two series: Series 1: Drawings Series 2: Lithographs

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Iran

Container Listing

Series 1: Drawings, 1981-1985, undated

Language: English.

Arrangement: Organized into eight subseries, based on the names of each collection of drawings:
Subseries 1: Animals Subseries 2: One Party System Subseries 3: Post-Revolution
Subseries 4: Pre-Revolution Cabaret Subseries 5: Road Subseries 6: Shahr-e-Ghesseh
Subseries 7: Street Subseries 8: Various

Scope and Contents: This series consists of drawings, primarily black ink on paper, but some feature colored pencil work as well. Subjects include the political commentary and satire for which Mohasses is best known, animals and street scenes, and drawings inspired by Bijan Mofid's play *Shahr-e-Ghesseh*. Drawings also range from more complete, complex works to sparser and perhaps incomplete pieces.

1.1: Animals, 1981-1985

Arrangement: Single album.

Box 1, Folder 1	"Animals" Series, No. 47, 1981-1985
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1.2: One Party System, 1983-1984

Language: English.

Arrangement: Arranged numerically by album number.

Box 1, Folder 2	"One Party System," Album 1 of 3, No. 47, 1983-1984
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Box 1, Folder 3	"One Party System," Album 2 of 3, No. 46, 1983-1984
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Box 1, Folder 4	"One Party System," Album 3 of 3, No. 20, 1983-1984
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1.3: Post-Revolution, 1982-1985, undated

Language: English.

Arrangement: Arranged numerically by album number.

Box 1, Folder 5	Post-Revolution Series, Album 1 of 3, No. 35, 1982-1985, undated
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Box 1, Folder 6	Post-Revolution Series, Album 2 of 3, No. 51, 1982-1985, undated
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Box 1, Folder 7	Post-Revolution Series, Album 3 of 3, No. 14, 1982-1985
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1.4: Pre-Revolution Cabaret, undated

Language: English.

Arrangement: Arranged numerically by album number.

Box 1, Folder 8 Pre-Revolution "Cabaret" Series, Album 1 of 2, No. 47, undated

Box 1, Folder 9 Pre-Revolution "Cabaret" Series, Album 2 of 2, No. 47, undated

1.5: Road, 1983-1985

Language: English.
Arrangement: Single album.

Box 2, Folder 1 "Road" Series, No. 17, 1983-1985

1.6: Shahr-e-Ghesseh, 1983

Language: English, Persian.
Arrangement: Single album.

Box 2, Folder 2 "Shahr-e-Ghesseh" Series, No. 3, 1983

1.7: Street, 1981

Language: English.
Arrangement: Single album.

Box 2, Folder 3 "Street" Series, No. 14, 1982-1985

Various, 1982-1985

Language: English.
Arrangement: Arranged numerically by album number.

Box 2, Folder 4 Various - 1, No. 5, 1982-1985

Box 2, Folder 5 Various - 2, No. 4, 1982-1985

Box 2, Folder 6 Various - 3, No. 36, 1982-1985

Box 2, Folder 7 Various - 4, No. 8, 1982-1985

Box 2, Folder 8 Various - 5, No. 35, 1982-1985

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Series 2: Lithographs, undated

Language: English.

Arrangement: Arranged alphabetically by title.

Scope and Contents: This series consists of lithographs of works by Ardeshir Mohasses, primarily concerning political subjects.

Oversize 1, Item 1	Coming Youth with Angrey Islamic, undated
Oversize 1, Item 2	A Determined Militant, undated
Oversize 1, Item 3	Family Economy, undated
Oversize 1, Item 4	The Flee of the Intellects, undated
Oversize 1, Item 5	Free Nutrition, undated
Oversize 1, Item 6	Incomplete Law and Justice, undated
Oversize 1, Item 7	Inflation, undated
Oversize 1, Item 8	Love and Super Attack, undated
Oversize 1, Item 9	The Lovers, undated
Oversize 1, Item 10	People-Government Cooperation Week I, undated
Oversize 1, Item 11	People-Government Cooperation Week II, undated
Oversize 1, Item 12	Standing Power, undated
Oversize 1, Item 13	Statistics, undated
Oversize 1, Item 14	[untitled], undated

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