

ACROBATS

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radicalgallery

ACROSS BORDERS

DR. PETER LODERMEYER, BONN

From Elvis to Eminem, Warhol's art;
I know your stories, know your songs by heart.
But do you know mine?
[...] do you know a word
Of my language, even one? Have you heard
That Al-gebra was an Arabic man?
I've read the Bible, have you read the Koran?

This verse quoted from Sally Potter's extraordinary film "Yes", is said by an immigrant arguing with his Irish-American girlfriend and sheds an incredibly strong light on the asymmetric elements of the relationship between the West and the Islamic cultures. Let's be honest: shouldn't we Europeans – including art lovers and all those professionals dealing with art – feel that this reproach is directed at us all? Our knowledge about cultures in the Near and Middle East, Iran and Iraq is so often restricted to the things snapped up by tourists and the tendentially prepared news reports. The reason for this deficient insight is many-sided: language barriers are definitely a part of it, but it is also due to the unhealed wounds which current and partly centuries old political and religious conflicts have caused.

In spite of all the diffuse fears and prejudices, there is great insight developing into the necessity of addressing non European cultures and mentalities. Our times are so shaped by global products and information streams as well as world wide ecological challenges that there are no more white patches on our world map. We are all neighbours now, and we cannot and may not ignore each other any longer. Since time immemorial, art has been especially suited for immersing ourselves in cultural knowledge to cross political, ideological and linguistic borders, to arouse curiosity about the unknown or vaguely known and to encourage a better understanding of each other.

ACROSS BORDERS is the title of a series of exhibitions at the RADICAL GALLERY in Zug, a significant start with works by artists from the Islamic regions. The West is rapidly becoming aware not only of the speed in which this cultural region is winning much sought after places in the art business (cf only art fairs in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharja), but also about how it is generating extraordinary contemporary art. Whoever automatically associates ornaments, calligraphy and Islamic aniconism with art from the "Orient" will be amazed by the diversity of genres and media (including video, installation and concept art) and the high standards of work by young Arabic, Turkish, Iranian and Iraqi artists. They are all very familiar with art from the West and many of them are permanently or temporarily living in western countries or have studied there. "Modern Art" and "Contemporary Art" are western concepts anyway, which are spreading inexorably across the globe and are therefore inevitably changing, too. This means that contemporary art from Islamic countries per se is marked by the encounter of Western and traditional thought. The corresponding art works reflect more or less the contrasts, points of contact and conflict lines between the cultures: critical impulses can be targeted in both directions through this. This makes contemporary art from the Islamic regions (on top of film, theatre and literature, which have been received much longer in the West) an important instrument for lively and critical intercultural dialogue.

For the first time ever, ACROSS BORDERS provides a forum in Switzerland to a selection of contemporary artists from various countries in this cultural region – a great opportunity for an art interested public to explore, without any prejudices and far beyond any old fashioned "oriental" clichés, curiously into a branch of contemporary art, which will doubtlessly confront us with much more remarkable work in the near future.

Azadeh Razaghdoost

IRAN

THIS PAGE:

FROM «THE SICK ROSE» SERIES (DETAIL) | 2008

OIL AND PENCIL ON CANVAS

120 X 100 CM

OPPOSITE PAGE:

FROM «THE SICK ROSE» SERIES | 2008

OIL AND PENCIL ON CANVAS

180 X 130 CM





Blut, Liebe, Leidenschaft

AZADEH RAZAGHDOOST, JUNI 2008

Die Ausdruckskraft der Farbe Rot hat mich schon immer fasziniert. Blut, Liebe und Leidenschaft – sie alle vermitteln meine emotionalen Reaktionen während des Arbeitens und in dem Augenblick, an dem ich dem vollendeten Werk gegenüberstehe. Meine Hände sind Werkzeuge, gezielt gesteuerte Waffen, mit denen ich geschickt den fleischigen Hintergrund meiner Leinwände verwunde und blutfarben mache, mit einer Trauerrose, mit pochendem Herzen oder einer Gebärmutterform.

Alles begann mit meiner ersten Serie – seziierte Torsi in schwarzer Tinte über medizinischen Instrumenten auf Seiten aus medizinischen Magazinen. Vielleicht war das die Umkehrung meines Verlangens, Medizin zu studieren; ich weiss es nicht. Diese Körper auf den Magazinseiten wurden durch abgeschnittene Fischköpfe ersetzt, Überreste einer einfachen menschlichen Reaktion auf Hunger, deren Zeuge ich auf Reisen an die kaspische Küste wurde. Sie bildeten später «Das verborgene Figurative», mein letztes Projekt.

Ihre wahllose Verteilung auf der Leinwand bedurfte einer Anordnung, die ich in meiner nächsten Serie durch ein Gitternetz hinein brachte. Das einzig konstante Element war die Farbe Rot mit all ihrer Erotik, Liebe und dem Nachsinnen. Rot zog mich unweigerlich zur Rose und zum Herzen hin; und zu einer Serie, die ich nach dem Gedichtband von Charles Baudelaire «Les Fleurs du Mal» (Die Blumen des Bösen) benannte. Nicht, weil irgendwelche Vorstellungen, Kontroversen zu erzeugen, in mir schlummerten, sondern weil diese Serie den Betrachtern die Schönheit im Augenblick ihres Todes und ihres Verfalls zeigte. Die Fläche der Leinwand wurde zu einer Szenerie, die voll von Zufällen, Impulsen und körperlichen Reaktionen war und mehr als nur ein Ergebnis hervorbrachte; nicht erkennbare Gewalt oder ansprechende Ornamentierung, letzte Testamente an das Leiden der Liebe und des Lebens und an das unvermeidliche Ende. Mit diesen Gedanken zog ich meine Leinwände weiter auf und ritzte William Blakes Worte in sie: «Oh Rose, thou art sick!».

Artist Statement

AZADEH RAZAGHDOOST, JUNE 2008

I have always been captivated by the expressivity of the color red. Blood, love, and passion all convey the visceral reactions I experience while working and at the moment I am confronted with the finished work. My hands are my tools, the controlled weapons with which I swiftly wound the fleshy backgrounds of my canvases, bloodying them with a weeping rose, a beating heart or a uterine form.

It all began with my first series – dissected torsos in black ink over medical instruments on the pages of medical journals. Perhaps it was a reversion to my desire to study medicine, I don't know. These bodies and their placement on the pages were replaced by cutoff heads of fish, remnants of a base human reaction to hunger witnessed on trips to the Caspian coast. They later made up "The Hidden Figurative," my final project.

Their random dispersal on the canvas required order which I provided in my next series by overlaying them with grids. The one constant element was and is the color red with all its eroticism, love and remembrance. Red infallibly drew me to the rose and the heart and a series called "Les Fleurs du mal" after the collection of poetry by Charles Baudelaire not because it harbored any ideas of controversy but because it demonstrated to viewers, beauty at the moment of its death and deterioration. The surface of the canvas became a scene filled with accidents, impulses and physical reactions creating one of two outcomes; unrecognizable violence or pleasant ornamentation, final testaments to love's and life's suffering and inevitable end. With these thoughts I wound my canvases further, scratching the words of William Blake "Oh Rose, thou art sick!"

OPPOSITE PAGE:

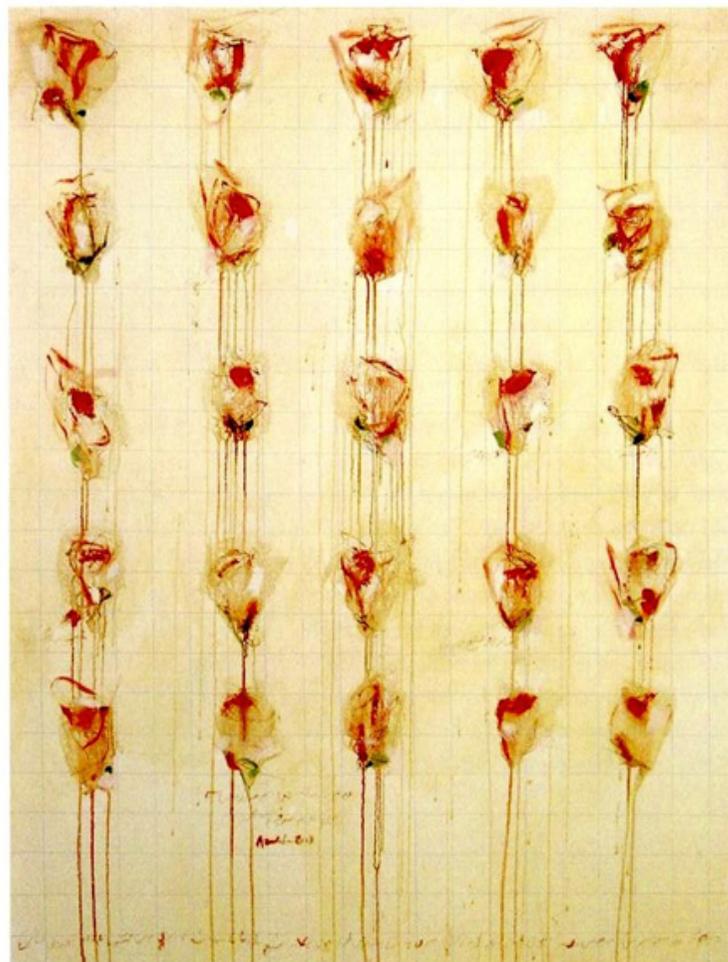
FROM «EPITAPH» SERIES | 2008

OIL AND PENCIL ON CANVAS | 180 X 130 CM



THIS PAGE:
FROM «FLEURS DU MAL» SERIES
2008
OIL AND PENCIL ON CANVAS
120 X 100 CM

OPPOSITE PAGE:
FROM «FLEURS DU MAL» SERIES
2008
OIL AND PENCIL ON CANVAS
180 X 130 CM





Azadeh Razaghdoost

Born 1979, Tehran, Iran
Member of Iranian Society of Painters of Iran
Member of Visual Arts Society of Iran
Member of «Badaneh» group

Education

Diploma in Painting, Academy of Fine Art, Tehran, 1997
BA Painting, University of Art, Tehran, 2002

Select Solo Exhibitions

2007 Assar Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2006 Golestan Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2002 Atbin Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran

Select Group Exhibitions

2008 Radical Gallery, Switzerland
2008 Hope, Focus gallery, Dubai, UAE
2008 Etemad Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2008 Mall Galleries, London, UK
2008 Art Dubai, Dubai, UAE
2008 Haft negah, Niavaran Cultural Center, Tehran, Iran
2008 Abdollah House, Dar-al-fonoon art gallery, Kuwait
2007 Assar art gallery, Tehran, Iran
2007 Art Expo, Society of Iranian Painters, Saad abad Cultural Centre, Tehran, Iran
2007 Radical Drawing, Tehran Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2007 Song of Bulbuls of Oil-rich Lands, Esfahan Museum of Contemporary Art, Esfahan, Iran
2006 Fourth Painting Biennale of World of Islam, Saba Cultural Centre, Tehran, Iran
2006 Society of Iranian Painters, Niavaran Cultural Center, Tehran, Iran
2006 «50 Contemporary Artists», Mah Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2006 The Iranian Society Of Painters «Group show, Artists», Forum, Tehran, Iran
2006 «Selected Artists of the New Generation», Homa Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2006 Self Portraits, Iranian Artists' Forum, Tehran, Iran
2005 The First Karaj Drawing Annual, Karaj Iran
2005 The Members of Badaneh Group's Painting exhibition, Day Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2004 The Members of Badaneh Group's Painting exhibition, Barg Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2004 Third Painting Biennale of World of Islam, Saba Cultural Centre, Tehran, Iran
2004 Society of Iranian Painters, Iranian Artists' Forum, Tehran, Iran
2003 Masters and students of Art University Iran, Barg Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2002 The Iranian Contemporary Drawing Annual, Barg Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2000 Fereshteh Art Gallery, with Fereydoon Mambeigi, Tehran, Iran

OPPOSITE PAGE:

FROM «FLEURS DU MAL» SERIES | 2008

OIL AND PENCIL ON CANVAS | 180 X 130 CM



radicalgallery



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Do und Fr 11.00 – 18.30 · Sa 11.00 – 16.00 · und nach Vereinbarung

20.08.08 - 27.09.08