

Selections Magazine

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'Living in a Burning House' By Amir Khojasteh at CARBON 12

By Selections Magazine

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Amidst the backdrop of an uprising in Iran, artist Amir Khojasteh found refuge within his studio, grappling with the uncertainties, sorrows, and contradictions of the time. His artistic journey unfolds against a backdrop of veiled and unveiled canvases, symbolising a transition from tragedy to comedy, from the solemnity of a tragic hero to the whim of a village fool. 'Living in a Burning House' is a solo show by Amir Khojasteh displayed at Carbon 12 from April 4th until May 28th.

Khojasteh reflects on this tumultuous period, describing a revelation of sorts as if a veil had been lifted to reveal a hidden truth. Within the confines of his studio, he encountered a dying creature, weathered by time and sequestered in isolation – a figure reminiscent of the mythical divs that would later populate his work. Yet, rather than confronting terrifying trauma, Khojasteh encountered the absurdity and emptiness of the unveiled reality.

Undeterred by the chaos, Khojasteh embarked on a creative odyssey, crafting head sculptures of divs as a symbolic triumph over adversity. These sculptures embody a desire for failure and success, tangible manifestations of Khojasteh's conquest over his inner demons. The use of bronze lends a luminous quality to these sculptures, their surfaces interacting dynamically with light, symbolising victory and resilience.

In his paintings, Khojasteh channels the spontaneity of monotype prints, infusing them with visual energy through the addition of white lines, slots, and scars. Deeply influenced by art history, his canvases teem with life-sized mythical creatures, their curved forms echoing motifs from Qajar-era paintings. The deliberate smudging effect, achieved through meticulous technique, adds depth and texture to his compositions.

Through his art, Khojasteh invites viewers to contemplate the perpetual state of "living in a burning house," where every painting serves as a reflection of self or a commentary on the absurdity of existence. With laughter as his guide, Khojasteh exposes the contingency, ephemerality, and unreality of the world around him, inviting others to find solace and understanding amidst the chaos.

ABOUT AMIR KHOJASTEH

Born in 1988 in Iran, Khojasteh, now based in Brussels, Belgium, intricately weaves political turmoil, especially in the Middle East, into his art. Through fantastical portraits, he challenges the notion of fear and its creators. His work delves into the intersections of violence, power, and dictatorship, juxtaposed with elements of dark humor and expressive painting. Drawing from art history, popular culture, and personal experiences, Khojasteh's pieces serve as a reflection of global happenings with dramatic impacts on society. Embracing a simultaneous blend of fantasy and reality, his art becomes a poignant commentary on the sacredness of fear and its consequences.

Location: Carbon 12, Dubai

Date: April 4th – May 28th, 2024.