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# Paintings of Ahmad Morshedloo

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Tehran Avenue

December 2007

به فارسی بخوانیم



I want to write simply on the paintings of {Ahmad Morshedloo}. His works speak to their audience across many layers and writing about them presupposes an analytical mind. The multilayer structure of these paintings allows the viewer to interpret them variously. I am only offering one of these interpretations.

The first characteristic of Morshedloo's paintings that attracts my attention is their technical prowess and the organic structure of their parts (elements). But what makes them stand out is the use of technique for expressing inner concerns of the artist. The soft contrasts and deformations that pervade the paintings can be detected through carefully drawn hatchings. It is precisely these hatchings that carry the burden of storytelling. The realistic approach makes a show and directs the gaze of the viewer from surface to depth. It is here that the artist targets his audience by inviting him/her to go beyond the technique and the visual structure and to look for the "real" behind them. Although the head is most prominent in these paintings, it is no more than just another body part, and not the seat of consciousness. It is the society as a whole that is reflected in these works. By placing contradictory elements (covered bodies or naked ones, black and white, big and small, frontal and dorsal) next to each other, the artist is talking about his surroundings, directly and straightforwardly but with utmost patience. This delicate straightforwardness is achieved through the work's content, which will only reveal itself, like a secret, to those who are willing to discover it.

Next to works in which the surface is teeming with faces, we come across other paintings with fewer figures, like the figure of the young man sitting on the ground with his legs extended, arms across the chest, and his head stooping over his abdomen, as if he is contemplating himself. The suspended state of the young man give the figure an uncertainty, as he may tip over one way or another at any time. Morshedloo doesn't leave his audience with the weight of straightforwardness. He continues his narrative – his figures grow, reach self-consciousness, slowly move away from repetition, and ultimately go beyond their beliefs and dogma. This is the same objective that Morshedloo sees for himself. In a note on his latest exhibit [\*], he reminds us, "The artist has a huge responsibility.. [he] is an inevitable presence in society's evolution or its degeneration. His selective gaze puts him in a decisive position."

One can clearly see Freud's footprints in Morshedloo's compositions. The nightmarish, spectral spaces in the works, which are filled with childhood conflicts and obsessions have gone through the psychological filter of their creator, but they are nevertheless ordinary. The artist is looking at his surrounding with a critical eye. As such, his paintings have an independent identity and a signature that belongs to Morshedloo.

One of the paintings in this collection is structurally different from others. Anaked and colorful doll appears to us in various profiles, each of which have been painted on different canvases. There are no hatchings here, only a soft, plastic-like composition, a symbolic work that doesn't match the rest of the paintings. The viewer, as such, is caught off guard. Perhaps the artist likes this dissonance and uses it deliberately, something that we can also see in his previous exhibits.

[\*] Morshedloo's last exhibit was on view from 26 October through 13 November 2007 at ASSAR Art Gallery (No 13, Barforushan, Iranshahr St.Tel: +98 21 8832-6689)



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Ahmad Morshedloo

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