Azadeh Razaghdooost: *Recipe for a Poem*

24 November 2016 - 18 February 2017

Sophia Contemporary Gallery is pleased to present 15 recent paintings by Iranian artist Azadeh Razaghdooost for her first solo exhibition in the UK. The show will comprise works from the *Sick Rose* and *Letters* series as well as stand-alone paintings such as *Recipe for a Poem* (2009). Azadeh Razaghdooost’s practice refers to 19th century European poems of the Romantic Age. The poem *The Sick Rose* (1794) by British poet William Blake and the volume of poetry *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1857) by French poet Charles Baudelaire have infused the artist’s practice over the years. The contradictions inherent to human nature are at the core of the artist’s work, which she conveys in a sensual, lyrical and allegorical language. By focusing on the emotional properties of the colour red, a leitmotif in the artist’s oeuvre, Razaghdooost evokes poetic associations with love, passion and blood in order to explore contrasting existential states and impulses: health and sickness, life and death, love and lust.

Coloured pigments are masterfully poured and arranged onto the white canvas in an artistic gesture reminiscent of Action Painting and Abstract Expressionism. Life is spattered in a whirlwind of emotions, and colour radiates an unrestrained eroticism culminating in glowing hearts and feminine attributes set on a pure white background. Contrasts collide and grapple with each other in a visually enthralling yet tender language. At times, existential dualities seem to be so closely knit together that contrasting desires and the looming danger of decay become a single whole.

Razaghdooost’s repeated use of flowers and letters, epitomized in the title of her major series, explores the concepts of ephemerality and transience. The existential tensions at the centre of her art materialise in painterly dualities, a cool and laconic accentuation of forms masterfully fusing with an expressive and sensual contamination of colours. By interrogating the essential tensions underpinning existence and exploring the emotive properties of colour, Azadeh Razaghdooost creates a truly poetic and idiosyncratic visual language at the confluence of life’s most fundamental impulses.
Notes to Editors

About Azadeh Razaghdoost

Azadeh Razaghdoost (b. 1979, Tehran, Iran) is an Iranian painter based in Karaj, Iran.

Razaghdoost received her BA in Painting from Tehran’s University of Art in 2002. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Vallpalou Foundation, Lleida, Spain and has been widely exhibited internationally, including at the Kunstzeughaus Museum in Zürich and Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art in Isfahan, Iran.

About Sophia Contemporary Gallery

Sophia Contemporary Gallery is a contemporary art gallery located in a 3,000 square foot space in the heart of Mayfair, London. The gallery exhibits, represents and champions a diverse roster of emerging and established artists from around the world working in a variety of media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, video and photography. Sophia Contemporary is committed to conducting research and educating the public through events and talks, and is working with museums and institutions worldwide in order to place the gallery’s artists in major public and private collections.

Exhibition Details

Title: Azadeh Razaghdoost: Recipe for a Poem
Address: Sophia Contemporary Gallery, 11 Grosvenor Street, London, W1K 4QB, UK
Website: www.sophiacontemporary.com
Dates: 24 November 2016 - 18 February 2017
Private View: 6 – 9 pm, 23 November 2016
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm, Saturday 11am to 5pm
Admission: Free
Travel: Green Park, Bond Street or Oxford Circus Tube Station
Twitter: @SophiaCGallery
Facebook: SophiaContemporaryGallery
Instagram: SophiaContemporaryGallery

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