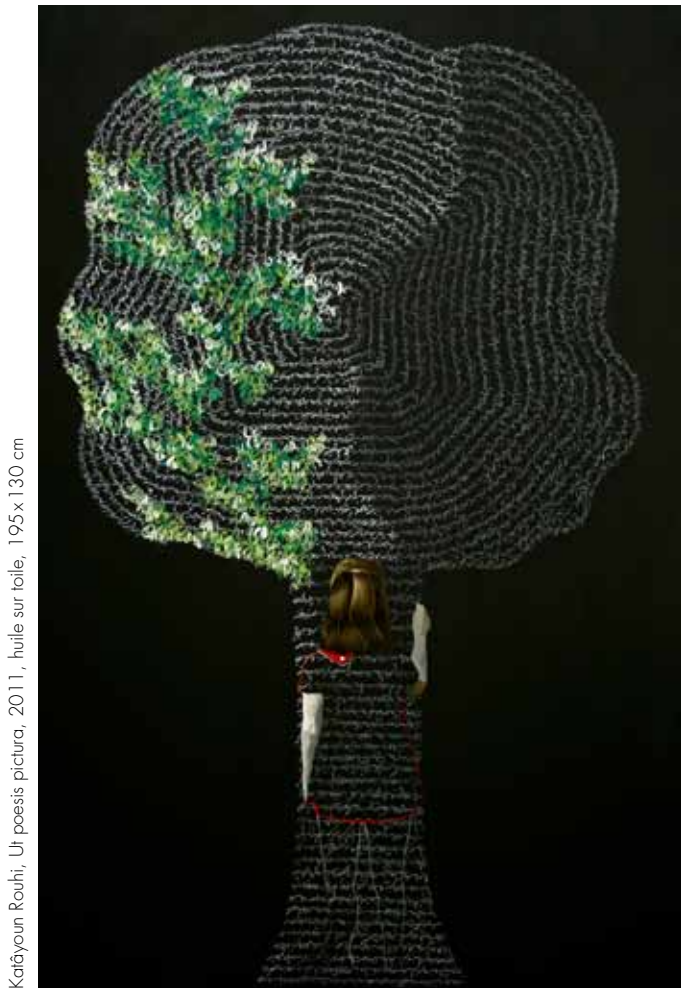


Ut poesis pictura

Katâyoun ROUHI - Kambiz SABRI

Curator Mrs Farnaz BAHMANYAR

from the 11th of March to the 7th of May 2011



Katâyoun Rouhi, Ut poesis pictura, 2011, huile sur toile, 195x130 cm



Kambiz Sabri, sans titre, 2010, détail

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A woman and a man, both born in Iran in the sixties, exhibit their paintings and sculptures at the Taïss Gallery. Their childhoods were marked by the fall of the Shah's monarchy in 1979 and the Ayatollah Khomeini's establishment of the Islamic republic— a troubled time when a conservative régime replaced that of a dictator. Katâyoun Rouhi left her native land at 17 to study at the Ecole des Beaux Arts of Paris, following in the footsteps of the grand masters. Her series of Trees shown at the gallery was a great success at the last auction at Sotheby's in Doha last December. Her book, "L'ontologie du lieu (The Ontology of the Place)", an interrogation on the act of creation, has just been published by Editions L'Harmattan. Kambiz Sabri chose to remain in Tehran where he acts as a sculptor, designer and professor. He participates in numerous biennial exhibitions and coordinated the Iranian pavillion at the 51st Venice Biennial.

The Taïss Gallery welcomes these two artists for a confrontation between their works. At first glance, they would seem to have little in common. However, a more penetrating look reveals symbols that reveal a similar quest: that of knowledge. Kambiz Sabri regards the world with detachment, the better to know and understand it. The movements of the sculpted mattresses that welcome groups or solitary individuals symbolize the valleys that man, according to the philosopher Sufi, must cross to gain truth and thus discover his deepest self.

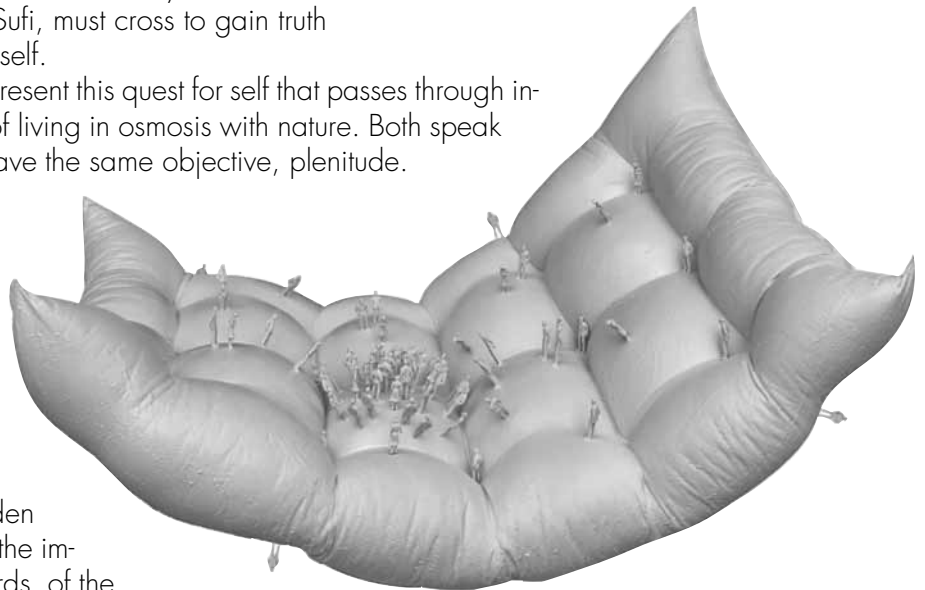
Katâyoun Rouhi's paintings represent this quest for self that passes through introspection and the necessity of living in osmosis with nature. Both speak in a symbolic manner. Both have the same objective, plenitude.

Katâyoun Rouhi's paintings show a young girl before a tree or advancing down an alley in the direction of a faraway light. A Persian poem composed by the artist covers the figures. Written backwards, it cannot be read. The meaning is hidden behind the sign as if to signify the importance of the underlying words, of the allegory. "During the repression, poetry allowed

one to say a lot of things", says the artist. The figure of the child, a melange of the artist's daughter and herself as a child, is shown from the back, allowing one to identify oneself with her. In this way she becomes a generic, timeless figure. The tree itself also symbolizes the quest for identity. Is it the Tree of Life, the Tree of Knowledge, a Family Tree, the Cosmic Tree? "Everyone can see what they wish. But in Persian poetry, it is a point of reference. During my childhood we oriented ourselves in the wild by the trees that punctuated the landscape." The classical style of her paintings confronts a surrealistic representation. The artist paints her



Katâyoun Rouhi, Où est la demeure de l'ami, 2010, 81 x 130 cm



Kambiz Sabri, Sans titre, 2010, 70x90x170 cm



Kambiz Sabri, Sans titre, 2010



unconscious. And in the image of Persian calligraphy, perspective has disappeared. The nature, the writing, the human, the monochromatic background, the white line and the young girl are treated on the same scale, as if to represent the sought-after unity.

By repeating the same poem for four years, by drawing these same figures for four years, the artist accentuates the spiritual dimension of this series by the spell-binding aspect in the form and in the idea.

Before the paintings of Katâyoun Rouhi which invite introspection, Kambiz Sabri's sculptures open themselves to the world. Dozens of individuals stand upon a disproportionately large mattress. Some in groups, some alone, they all seem similar. But the closer one looks, the more differences reveal themselves. In this uniform group, attitudes are distinguished. The majority of them are immobilized in anticipation of an action that never comes. Others advance to act. These works are understood as metaphors for today's world. They play on contradictions. They invite a back-and-forth from near to far, between a mass view and a close-up, between the hope for a harmonious world thwarted by the desire for domination of a Small group hidden somewhere outside of this representation. These same oppositions are found in the execution. Stylized forms confront precise representations, the symbolic faces realism.

A second, more violent, more critical reading then takes form. The fragility of the soft matter turns to stone. The apparent lightness becomes judge. The tension is obvious. "I dream of the day when the wars and conflicts will be replaced by luminous and joyous parties, where collective expression will become sacred." Kambiz Sabri imagines this beatitude, foiled by conflicts engaged in for domination, by this desire to slouch like a Roman emperor partaking of every luxury as he sends his army to their deaths.

"Iranian philosophy is based on the apparent and the hidden. What you see has to relate to something invisible that must be revealed", explains Katâyoun Rouhi. The creations of these two artists borrow from this culture. Their remarks are hidden behind the form. It is up to each of us to lift the veil.

Aude de Bourbon Parme

Katâyoun ROUHI

Biographie

Born in 1965.
She lives and works in Paris since 1986.

Exhibitions

- 2010: Sotheby's, Doha, Qatar.
- 2010: Christie's, Paris, France.
- 2009: Artcurial, Paris, France.
- 2008: Galerie Hour, Tehran, Iran.
- 2004: *Thirty-eight parallel*, Skironio Museum Polychronopoulos, Athens, Greece.
- 1998: *Thirty three years of memories*, Dominique Vivens Gallery, Paris, France.
- 1994: *Another human face*, Maison Mansart Gallery, Paris, France.
- 1992: *The years of the red fountain and Life goes on at Europe*, Paris, France.
- 1988: Salon des artistes français, Grand Palais, Paris, France.

Collections

Polychronopoulos Foundation, Athens, Greece.
Mëshkinfam Foundation and Museum, Shiraz, Iran.

Kambiz SABRI

Biographie

Born in 1967.
He lives and works in Tehran.

Exhibitions

- 2011: Sculpture Exhibition, Art Dubai 2011, United Arab Emirates.
- 2010: Sculpture Exhibition, Far Va Har gallery, Tehran, Iran.
- 2009: Sculpture Exhibition, Cite des Arts, Paris, France.
- 2009: Sculpture Exhibition, "Five Artists X 3 Dimensions", XVA Gallery, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- 2008: Sculpture Exhibition, Iranian Garden Museum, Iran.
- 2008: 5th Tehran's Contemporary Sculpture Biennial, Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran.
- 2007: International Sculpture Biennial 2007, Toyamura, Japan.
- 2006: Sculpture Exhibition, Conculta INBA, Center Mexico, Mexico.
- 2005: The coordinator of Iran Pavilion in 51st biennial of Venice, Venice, Italy.

Collections

Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art
Abadan Museum of Contemporary Art
SARI Museum of Art "Resistance" Museum, Tehran

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