



Hearts Can Fly, 2015, Acrylic on canvas, 150 x 150 cm

MOHAMMAD BOZORGI AGAINST THE DARKNESS

30 May – 25 August 2016

Opening reception: Monday, 30 May from 7.00 to 9.00 pm

Ayyam Gallery Dubai (DIFC) is pleased to announce *Against the Darkness*, the solo exhibition of leading Iranian calligrapher and painter Mohammad Bozorgi. Selected from the artist's recent series, *Coloured Tears*, *Grey World*, the featured works were produced in response to regional conflicts, and describe the impact that such widespread destruction has on the global community. Bozorgi's latest body of work also serves as an exploration of colour and the high level of abstraction that can be realised when calligraphic forms are freed in complex compositions.

About the Show

In an accompanying statement, Bozorgi describes the artist's role of depicting the world as he or she observes it. According to the painter, references to everyday life in art are a form of translation that materialises even in certain uses of colour. In *Coloured Tears*, *Grey World*, the concept of darkness, or the decline of living conditions into a constant state of despair, is countered with colour in protest of 'lost dreams' and 'lost lives.' At the same time, Bozorgi seeks to inspire a sense of hope in viewers by alluding to a world shaped by beauty, peace, and tranquility.

The large-scale painting *Martyred Child (Damascus)* (2015), for example, uses contrasting hues to pay tribute to the young victims of war, as a sienna background is overcome by the radiance of cream-coloured text. The circular design of the script suggests the movement of a procession as letters are stretched to fluid lines that seem to travel beyond the edge of the picture plane. Words are contained in a circle at the centre of the painting, creating an optical illusion that suggests infinite spatial depth. From afar, this focal point and the surrounding text resemble the magnificence of a brilliant sun that shines over a dimmed setting.

In the diptych *War and Freedom* (2015) symmetry is used to describe battling ideologies as repeated words meet but do not cross a central axis. Bozorgi's calligraphic forms take on anthropomorphic attributes, as text appears to move like a mass of people that swarms a target object or site. The identical nature of the composition's two sides creates a mirrored image, an environment where chaos has arisen and a clear understanding of its causes is indistinguishable.

About the Artist

In keeping with the aesthetic principles of Islamic art, Mohammad Bozorgi maps his compositions according to precise mathematical structures and symmetry, and never deviates from the meaning of words despite the innovation of his script.

Born in Tehran in 1978, Bozorgi was originally educated as a biomedical engineer before entering the visual arts with a decade of training at the Society of Iranian Calligraphers, where he mastered a number of calligraphic forms, and earned 'Momtaz' degrees. This robust background has inspired Bozorgi to use the directives of geometry to create abstract illusions of depth and space while developing stylised characters based on Arabic and Persian examples.

Recognised as a leading figure among a 'New Generation' of contemporary calligraphers, Bozorgi builds on the breakthroughs of modern predecessors, as he seeks to advance the art of calligraphy through experimental formalism. Within his meticulously designed compositions, text multiplies as it is infused with energy and appears to move across the canvas or paper in unison, originating from and returning to the center like the cyclical rhythms of nature.

Bozorgi has participated in recent solo and group exhibitions at Ayyam Gallery Al Quoz, Dubai (2015); Ayyam Gallery, Jeddah (2014); Homa Gallery, Tehran (2014); Galerie Nicolas Flamel, Paris (2013); Kashya Hildebrand Gallery, Zurich (2012); Shirin Art Gallery, Tehran (2012); and Endjavi-Barbé Art Projects, Geneva (2012). His works are housed in private and public collections, including the Islamic Arts Museum, Malaysia.

About Ayyam Gallery

Founded in 2006, Ayyam Gallery is a leading arts organisation that manages the careers of diverse established and emerging artists. Blue-chip art spaces in Beirut and Dubai, a series of collaborative projects in the United States, Europe, and Asia, and a multinational non-profit arts programme have furthered the gallery's mandate of expanding the parameters of international art. With its widely respected multilingual publishing division and a custodianship programme that manages the estates of pioneering artists, Ayyam Gallery has also contributed to recent efforts that document underrepresented facets of global art history.

Exhibition Facts

Exhibition Dates: 30 May – 25 August 2016

Opening Reception: Monday, 30 May from 7.00 to 9.00 pm

Location: Ayyam Gallery, Gate Village 3, DIFC, Dubai

T: +971 4 4392395

Email: difc@ayyamgallery.com

Website: www.ayyamgallery.com

For press information, artwork images and interview requests, please contact press@ayyamgallery.com or +971 4 4392395