

## On a Painting by Haider

1

A first reading of a painting by Haider gives the impression that it expresses personal preoccupation and subjective anxiety. But when we look closer and read the painting carefully, it becomes apparent that the painting rather speaks to us about the objective outside, and particularly the universal 'other' across the outside. It is the self, with its consciousness and sensibility, penetrating the culture of a certain grouping with its history and symbols.

Hence a painting by Haider is a subjective anxiety, incandescent in universal structures that reflect in the mirrors of this anxiety. So much so that the painting takes the form of an intersection between the private history of an individual and general cultural history. In so doing, the artist in Haider revives the original symbols of this grouping, with their old and idealistic patterns, enhancing them and giving them a living dimension that undulates in the maps of the presence.

If we ever come across signs that would look like mere ornamentations or simply functional elements, we soon discover that the artist's way of constructing the painting pulls them completely out of the ornamental and functional. He puts them in a new artistic context which endows and recreates them afresh.

The Self in the painting plays the role of liberating it from the They, and equally from traditional stereotypes whether related to religion or ideology. By doing so the painting appears to be charged with temporality and its vicissitudes, not to mention a latent charge of exploration and the desire to change.

2

In Haider's work, memory is interlinked with and cannot be separated from imagination. The modernity in his artistic intuition leaves the bed of the antiquated and out-of-date, to plunge itself into the street and immerse this modernity in the street's dust and noise; a modernity that combines and conjugates the illuminations of memory and the culture of daily life.

And if we ever see banal discarded objects, this again can be said to indicate that the memory of nothingness is intrinsically allied to the presence of the object itself, any object. Consequently we can say that Haider manages to create an artistic structure and context out of this nothingness.

Equally true is the fact that when we look at the small elements used in some of the paintings (such as a fragment of metal, fabric, wood or cardboard, or a nail or a key) these tiny, small components of the larger painting transform themselves into movement. As if the matter itself takes the shape of a sign or one of its forms.

Hence, a painting by Haider habitually transforms itself into a kind of alphabet with which the world can be read.

3

There are no figures nor bodies in Haider's paintings, only the illusion of a body; not an abstract, but the semblance of abstraction.

Painting for him is all about construction and balance. An assemblage of mundane, discarded objects is transformed into beautiful richness bordering on aesthetic luxury, a construction and a balance inoculated by imagination along with personal obsession.

Some of the paintings almost become a small theatre, with a silent actor or two persons listening to each other; or one addresses the other, who is in turn absent-minded and taciturn. A verbal narrative in artistic technique.

4

Take a look at the painting, moving and alive with an abundant presence that liberates the matter of its isolation and its mundane commonplace existence to become part of a living different existence and context that creates another beauty, and you ask yourself whether the production of meaning is exclusive to living beings.

And you listen to the painting, and the answer is no. Inert beings do produce a living meaning.

5

And what does time become?

Is it a shadow that can be seen or moving pictures of a static place?

An exile reinvented again and again?

And what about the homeland?

You ask yourself.

The answer: a space of friendships, a horizon of dreams?

Tiredness, written by day and by night, and dictated by the wind.

As for the truth, it will always be outside conformity, outside of the identical and the lookalike, a truth that is outside of conformism in all its forms.

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10th October 2013, Paris

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4th April 2014, London

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4th May 2014, Oxford