

RAMIN HAERIZADEH

*To Be or Not To Be, That is the Question.
And Though, it Troubles the Digestion**

13 September – 2 November



Still Life, 2017, Collage on paper, 70 x 100 cm

Spanning almost 20 years, Ramin Haerizadeh's work is a rare and ambitious feat of the human spirit, carried by the 40-year-old multidisciplinary artist in an endlessly renewable source of vitalist energy and creation, a constant force of mutation and subversion. His everyday activities guide the way to his work. According to the time and the situation, he picks up a multiplicity of identities to meet everyone and everything from a different angle. In 2015, Roberta Smith from The New York Times wrote:

"The action is dominated by Ramin Haerizadeh — bald, bearded and resplendent in changing gowns and roles. The earmarks of an underground classic are abundant."

His studio is a theatre of the absurd, a space in motion transformed by the tension between play and acting, which is later converted into collages, diaries and objects, or actions being recorded on films or photographs.

Haerizadeh's life has been punctuated by displacements and redirections but the artist constantly returns to his works, pulling pre-existing works, adding and withdrawing to the works after they return from exhibitions across the globe, and as such they keep being recycled. He refuses to lock up any work in the cellar, to maintain the idea that the old will give an aura to the new. He constantly revisits and reinterprets his earlier work, meditating on the overlapping and contingent nature of the world.

Alongside his own photographs that subversively play with all kinds of old and new photographic devices, he collects materials from a wide array of existing printed materials: used cardboard postal box protecting a desired work of art, plastic packaging, old boxes or old films posters from the internet, as well as daily objects such as airport souvenirs, small plastic figurines, anatomic models, miniature Tabasco bottles, etc... He uses his mother's photo albums where she records her existence through photography and maintained a diary of her times at a boarding school in the UK until the revolution, the war and post-war period in Iran. These materials are filtered: the artist photographs, scans, prints,

collages, re-photographs, re-prints and again re-prints and re-collages them, to eventually allows unrelated objects to appear in a work as an irruption. All put together, the works escape easy generalisation as they are no longer in the domain of photography or printing. Instead the artist's life becomes tangible in the works formed by the stratification of his materials.

Haerizadeh's canvases are uncanny; underlining familiar scenes from Dubai metro or Mall of the Emirates, a bombarded dentist clinic in Syria, or HSBC bank's CEO office... In doing so, his montages allow incompatibilities to co-exist.

Notably unfussy, Differently intentional act of putting stuff together.

You take something and seated next to something else in order to pose, but not necessarily to answer. The question about their relationship.

*You do this not because on its own it's a particularly interesting thing to do, but because as a context, art give things in relation a capacity to inform that no other framework can.***

In a series of works on paper paradoxically entitled *Still Life*, everything is set in constant flux and transformation, where a protest in Turkey eventually invites the viewer to contemplate the scene on a 'pause' mode.

Beyond the obvious notions, the works carry concealed messages about questions around gender roles and identity, religious intolerance, media manipulation, political propaganda and contemporary art, ultimately aspiring to challenge hegemonic ethics in general.

*Title extracted from the poem *Children of our Age* by Wislawa Szymborska

**Quote by Fred Moten