



Untitled, Abstract Calligraphy series, 2017, smoke and acrylic on burnt canvas, 80 x 80 cm

## JEAN BOGHOSSIAN UNPREDICTABLE HORIZONS

19 March - 12 May 2018

Opening reception: Monday, 19 March from 7.00 to 9.00 pm

Artist Talk: Wednesday, 21 March at 4.30 pm (The Yard, Alserkal Avenue)

Ayyam Gallery (Alserkal Avenue) is pleased to announce *Unpredictable Horizons*, a solo exhibition by Jean Boghossian.

### About the Show

Upon representing the Armenian pavilion at the 57th Venice Biennale, Boghossian is now showcasing a continuation of paintings with several directives in mind. *Unpredictable*

*Horizons* highlights the artist's latest experiments in abstraction and script, which have unfolded over the course of a few years.

The initial works of the series reflects on Boghossian's interest in preserving historical, poetic, and mythical scripture, while also preserving memory and traditions - the very essence of the identity and the epos of a culture and people. In paintings such as the Filigrane Transparency series, the rectilinear and parallel compositions and perforations of the canvas caused by the fire on the backgrounds produce an imaginary script that, like the ever shifting tongues of fire, must primarily be understood by the senses.

A new feeling of spirituality emerges, whether it be secular or religious, when viewing the Abstract Calligraphy series: where the canvas is scorched by fire, leaving a faint trace that evokes abstract inscriptions. This work, along with others similar to it, invite individual consciousness and self-examination through the critical process that has resulted from the alchemy of art.

Throughout his work, Boghossian often experiments with the law of randomness and the unexpected behaviour of the hazard, while always questioning and researching new ways of expressing himself. The different materials and techniques produce various outcomes that then become pictorial, sometimes taking on plastic forms, making up the repertoire of the artist's opus, while continuing to reach new levels of aesthetic exploration.

#### About the Artist

Jean Boghossian is an abstract multidisciplinary artist whose artworks all bear, at different degrees, traces of burn degradation. Through the process of willful damage and the use of a blowtorch instead of a paintbrush, Boghossian raises the questions of what it means to create inextinguishable art with an invasive and violent, yet poetic method that intends to combine media by creating a construction through the deconstruction of flames.

Born in Aleppo in 1949, Boghossian stems from a family of jewelers for whom he worked while studying Economics and Sociology at University of Saint-Joseph in Beirut. In 1975, the Lebanese Civil War forced Boghossian to leave the country and settle in Belgium where he resides today. Over three decades ago, Boghossian decided to enroll in the Academy of Fine Arts in Boitsfort while continuing to oversee the family business. In 1992, he created the Boghossian Foundation with the support of his brother and father.

Globally, Boghossian is one of the few artists who experiments by applying fire and smoke to various works. Fire, being his artistic language of choice, is presented via a wide array of torches as his medium. Having transitioned a little more than a decade ago towards abstraction through alchemy, Boghossian's art evokes a contemporary view on the Zero-movement and Fluxus. This being said, he does not belong to any recognized movement or school.

Objects that Boghossian has attacked through the flame include canvas, paper, books, and even chairs, at times leaving behind patterns of perforation. In his paintings and drawings, Boghossian uses different multimedia including watercolor, charcoal, oil, and acrylic paint with techniques that include folding, collage, and arrachage. Boghossian's sculptures range from wood, polystyrene, clay, and bronze, some of which are flame-sensitive.

Boghossian has participated in recent solo and group exhibitions at Ayyam Gallery, Dubai (2018) Art Abu Dhabi (2017, 2013); 57th Venice Biennale (2017); Musée d'Ixelles, Brussels (2017); Beirut Exhibition Center (2015, 2011); Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collection Burri, Città di Castello (2015); Museo Archeologico di Atina e della Valle di Comino, Atina (2015); Villa Empain - Boghossian Foundation, Brussels (2014); Youngeun Museum of Contemporary Art, South Korea (2012); Galerie Guy Ledune, Brussels (2012, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007); and Amernian Center of Contemporary Experimental Art, Yerevan (2007).

### 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: 19 March - 12 May 2018

Opening Reception: Monday, 19 March from 7.00 to 9.00 pm

Artist Talk: Wednesday, 21 March at 4.30 pm (The Yard, Alserkal Avenue)

Regular Hours: Sun – Thu: 10.00 am to 6.00 pm, Sat 12.00 to 6.00 pm

Location: Ayyam Gallery Dubai (11 Alserkal Avenue), Al Quoz 1, Dubai

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