

THE COMMERCIAL

HOSSEIN GHAEMI

WIDE BLUE YONDER AND THE ALMIGHTY HOOF (A painting show!)

at The Commercial Gallery, Sydney

25/07/14 – 23/08/14

For Hossein Ghaemi, the embrace of the unknown is both methodology and subject matter. In his working process, thinking comes through making, and objects materialise from an intuitive flow, a knowing without interference of reason. The ambiguous scenes and phantasmal characters he depicts appear as dream-like products of the unconscious mind: fragmented, spectral and hidden. Materially, his works are equally liminal, testing the boundaries between representation and object-hood as well as the porosity between mediums as he works fluidly between sculpture, installation, painting and performance.

His new exhibition, *WIDE BLUE YONDER AND THE ALMIGHTY HOOF (A painting show!)*, consists of constellations of materials hovering above our heads, mobilised in their descent from beyond. Connected to one another by a network of piercings and suspended chain-links, Ghaemi's double-sided supports act as the stage for the work's unwilling protagonist: paint. He antagonises the painted surface, purposefully moving between various abstract and figurative styles, teasing out painting's object-like qualities. He presents materials and forms as receptacles for secrets and truth, which - in an erotics of motion - are partially revealed before turning away again.

Among the painted surfaces we find elements akin to Sci-Fi. Strange scenarios unfold. A figure covered in a wrinkled, white cloak stretches its arm out in the middle of a basketball-shaped basketball court; and in another piece, a dark rectangle with menacing eyes stares from a cloud-like backdrop. The shape of a human foot and a ring are recurring motifs, the ring having a particular significance to the work in terms of its relationship to the circle and its conception as something with intrinsic divine or mystical qualities.

When asked about the collective nature of his vocal performances, Ghaemi explains that he never sings alone so that his voice can dissolve with the voices of the other performers, hence losing his sense of self and his ego. In a similar way, *WIDE BLUE YONDER AND THE ALMIGHTY HOOF (A painting show!)*, is a choir of materials, singing in a cacophony of densities and forms, dancing and slowly twirling to their own concrete essence.

Iván Muñiz Reed