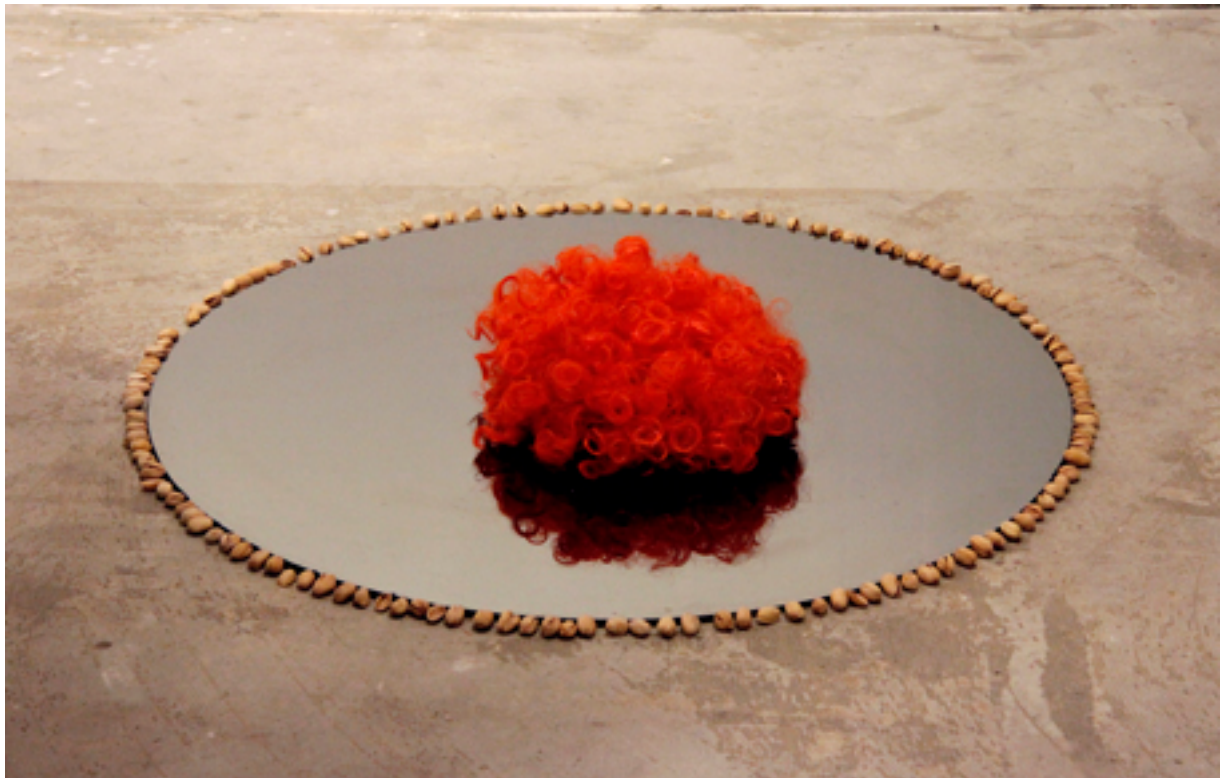


## Artist Insights: Curator Sandra Di Palma interviews artist Hossein Ghaemi

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**INTERVIEW: Sandra Di Palma interviews Hossein Ghaemi**

***Lets start off by talking about your practice. It is still relatively unknown to many people.*** I think my work relies on secrecy that comes from the unaware parts of my mind, unconscious thoughts surfacing to my consciousness. In this way my work is not specific to one thematic entity but is reflective of my own contemplation. There is never a finished remedy in my work. And that's what I prefer – I don't want to know anymore about the work. This is usually the only approach I can take, because if I know what I'm making then there is no point to continue -it's just mind numbing.

***You have moved away from creating polished, refined, and resolved works. This change was evident in your exhibition 'Oogga Booga' at The Paper Mill in 2010. The work in this show was messy, it had an uneasy feeling with humorous undertones.*** Yes, I guess now more than ever my work has unfastened, muddled and jam-packed itself in a way. Through certain characters I have created in my work, I have been able to concentrate on certain aspects of my own personality, allowing my work to become more

unstable and excessive. Although a lot of my practice deals with humour I am also earnest. I'm not making fun of particular things it is just my approach that is playful. The thing about humour is, when you think about a joke, beyond the wobbly surface there is always a hidden truth, but there is the task of letting loose, and then 'getting it'. I like to think my work is something like this.

***Certain symbols continue to surface in your work. You continue to feature objects such as the pistachio nut, popcorn kernel or pomegranate seed. Why do you draw attention to such arbitrary objects?*** This is a language I started developing in my work. The uses of such elements are idiosyncratic images that trigger a certain feeling that makes me give importance to these objects. I find that when I elevate objects that I become interested in, I give them a sort of spiritual hierarchy over other objects. Sometimes I am not sure why I take gain in certain objects, they come without needing to ask. The unspoken visual element of the object comes first then the idea behind it follows. It isn't until the installation period within a space that the topic of conversation between these objects is revealed.

***What objects and elements will you be elevating in WUNDER POND?*** It's strange, because a lot of objects that are reflective or elongated have suddenly come into my work. There are a dozen or so toothbrushes, a dancing pole, an emu, pistachio nuts and a dancing hair piece. The pole will be a central element to my work. Objects in the space will be attempting to please the dancing pole others will be guarding it. In many ways the pole is a tool that is representative of trying to reach a certain level of satisfaction and pleasure. The emu will be in the background, watching over like a silent observer. Beyond this, the meaning behind these elements won't be realised until they co-exist in the gallery.

***I'm excited to see how this idea reveals itself once the exhibition opens. I must say, your idea sounds absurd...*** Yeah, I guess that's the way I view the world. I understand it's creepy, but as an artist I think it is my mission to explore how absurd it can really get. For me there is a lot of sense and intelligence in absurdness. There is a lot of intelligence in non-intelligence. When you are intuitive like a troglodyte you can channel basic thoughts and ideas, allowing for something gifted to come forward, but this is best suited for someone who is deliberately ignorant to what's outside of the cave and only for that special someone with a fine taste for mostly staying at home. Well, not really.

Hossein Ghaemi is currently exhibiting in WUNDER POND at Tin Sheds Gallery.