

An Obscure Compass, An Overpowering Window, A Peculiar Dial On Meghdad Lorpour's "Dislocate and Displace"

Ashkan Zahraei
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When something is left behind, it is merely remembered. It becomes an immaterial sense so alien to the somatosensory presence it used to provide when it was there and real. It becomes a broken branch of information, with boughs and offshoots each taking different paths. It is not sensory, but only a perceived visual notion, like a preliminary image one builds up before expressing it. It is perfect, yet mostly inaccessible; an overpowering schema, itself limiting the outcome of the thought process. Each component expressed will merely be an incomplete synecdoche, half-noticed in the world of tropes one builds up to convey a meaning, or a sense—an image, established in the foreground, encircling the eyes, inviting into, and leaving behind in the background.

Even when one leaves most of their story behind and moves away from a familiar territory, the large pile of those remnants, or their casted shadow, will not fade into the perspective quickly enough so that one could temporarily break free. Even on a secluded road, it is impossible to escape the power of one's trust in their established patterns, the twists and turns, the shortcuts, and the wisdom of simultaneity: the subject, the thought, the image, and the process.

In Meghdad Lorpour's work, following an intentional rift, material is reintroduced to thought, and the familiarity of home is transformed into the ambiguity of the image. There are small but mighty forces at play that stream from the painter's wanderings, in place and in emotion, in thought and practice, and in taking the experience of life and putting it before him—for the reincarnation and the reanimation of matter, and the summoning of the immaterial and the memory.

Work starts at a suspense: the traveler is lost, trying to navigate within an unfamiliar environment, altered by humankind and the hands of time. Initially, the traveler seeks to level their position and view, and to find the proper perspective into the expanse. Soon though, the focus shifts towards finding a temporary balance so as to find familiar forms, recognizable shapes, and determinable patterns. The traveler is intent on removing themselves from the wonder, but the shadow of the entirety of previous experience casts itself on the power of interpretation, blurring out the effort to draw a map of the surroundings. What am I standing on? Where am I looking at? What purpose do the artificial devices provided in the puzzle serve? Am I confined within a region or a room? Will I ever cease to label myself as a traveler and become a true navigator of both the vessel and the world?

It is no surprise that since some of his earliest series of work, Meghdad has been fascinated by the Behbahan School of Persian Painting, a rather obscure fourteenth-century school from which only a handful of works remain today. The painters of Behbahan School, named after the city of Behbahan in southwestern Iran, derived their general style from Shiraz School, but developed their practice following a unique philosophy and worldview which was drastically different from their contemporaries. Unlike most of the schools of Persian Painting which focused on depicting figures and the relationships between the characters, usually painted landscapes as a background to human activity, the painters of Behbahan School removed human figures from the image and focused on that very background for the depiction of the habitat, the qualities of the secrets within reality, and the interconnectivity of nature.

These mysterious characteristics have become the core of Meghdad's will, reveries, practice, and compositions —the natural beings of the past, the dried lakes, the mythological animals, the ghosts of ancient civilizations, memories, lores and tales, the sounds of the waters and the dry crunch of the land, manifest themselves as visitations to the artist, and each, framed within a myriad of frames, rely ever more heavily on the power of memory and remembrance.