



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

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Hossein Ghaemi (b. 1985, Tehran) has been selected for [Primavera 2014: Young Australian Artists](#) at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, his first major exhibition in a public institution. Curated by artist Mikala Dwyer, Ghaemi is developing a major new work for *Primavera* that builds upon his choral performances, taking them in a new direction. (*Primavera* exhibition dates: 23/09/14 – 30/11/14.)

In 2010, Ghaemi completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours) at Sydney College of the Arts, The University of Sydney. Since then he has actively exhibited principally in artist-

run-initiatives in Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart and developed performances for festivals and arts programs in Sydney and Melbourne. Solo exhibitions (excluding performances) include a temporary outdoor sculpture, [\*Bush Node and the Second Fiddle\*](#), for the artist-run public art program, Plinth Projects, in Melbourne's Edinburgh Gardens (2014); [\*Spirit Awl Hickey, Vox Talent / Crest of the Pious Hex-dump!\*](#) at The Commercial Gallery, Sydney (2013); [\*Earmark on the Hoi Polloi\*](#), Honours Graduation Show, Sydney College of the Arts, The University of Sydney, Sydney (2010).

Since 2009, Ghaemi has developed an impressive series of surreal performance works that employ choirs for which he creates a score, abstract libretto as well as full costuming, styling and choreographing of singers. In a 2013 work presented as part of the Tiny Stadiums festival in Sydney's inner city suburb of Erskineville, Ghaemi had his performers - three warriors - singing from the rooftop of a defunct cake shop, engaged in combat, armed with an artillery of sonic 'questions'.

Performances include [\*Frank: Hole up - Hold up\*](#), in the YOU'RE HISTORY festival at Performance Space, Sydney (2013); [\*THE DEFICIENT OF SOLUTION DEVELOPMENT: QUIZZING MAKES REMEDY\*](#) for Tiny Stadiums festival, Sydney (2013); [\*10<sup>th</sup> Edition MCA ARTBAR\*](#), curated by Michaela Gleave, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney (2013); [\*SKIN IN ON\*](#), as part of Performance Space, Sydney's program, *NightTime: Twilight*, at St Stephen's Church, Newtown, curated by Bec Dean (2012); [\*The Ooo in Who\*](#) as part of Firstdraft Gallery's *We Are Here* program at Church on Chalmers in Surry Hills, Sydney (2011); [\*Ussef/Issiac I Can't Tell Which One is Wearing the Hat?\*](#) at Sydney College of the Arts, the University of Sydney and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney (2009 and 2010 respectively).

Major collaborative works include a week-long performance project with Claire Finneran for Next Wave Festival, Melbourne, Artistic Director Emily Sexton and Artistic Program Manager Serena Bentley (2012); a two-person exhibition with Claire Finneran at Firstdraft Gallery, Sydney (2011); and an ambitious installation with Sydney Guild for an exhibition at The Paper Mill, Sydney (2011).

Group exhibitions include [\*TWO/THREE\*](#) at The Commercial Gallery, Sydney (2012); [\*Wunder Pond\*](#) at Tin Sheds Gallery, Sydney, curated by Sandra Di Palma (2012); [\*OOGGA BOOGA\*](#) - Hossein Ghaemi, Benjamin Ryan and Ben Terakes at The Paper Mill, Sydney; and [\*Everything's Alright\*](#) at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, curated by Amanda Rowell (2010).

In 2013 Ghaemi was shortlisted for the Fisher's Ghost Art Award - Contemporary Art Award section at Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney and in 2010 he was nominated for the Redlands Art Prize, Sydney by artist Lindy Lee.

Ghaemi is part of the Sydney-based collective, Sydney Guild (with Christopher Hodge and Amelia Wallin). In 2012, Sydney Guild established a regular exhibition program in their

Darlinghurst studio space, supported by the City of Sydney as part of the Oxford Street Creative Spaces program.

*WIDE BLUE YONDER AND THE ALMIGHTY HOOF (A painting show!)* is Ghaemi's second solo exhibition with The Commercial Gallery.



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