

EXHIBITION

Inherent Colour

A solo exhibit of oil paintings on canvas and paper by Homeira Sunderland.

Born in Iran, Homeira Sunderland grew up in a culture highly appreciative of and sensitive to colour. As a child she admired the satin Iranian bedspreads embroidered with a special, thick, vibrantly dyed yarn. She also loved to look at the collection of multihued beads that she kept in her childhood room. In her Lausanne home there are colourful pieces of art on the wall and richly tinted carpets on the floor. She always keeps a beautiful stack of colourful fabrics in a special chest, including pieces newly flown in from Iran: ‘just looking at colour and touching the materials gives me energy’ she says. Colour has been an inherent part of Homeira’s life from the very beginning.

In high school she began to paint and clearly remembers how the art teacher left his students free to depict what they wanted and to choose their own subjects. That freedom was important to her. As a young girl she witnessed her mother creating fabric objects and jewellery. But even though her family appreciated artistry, “at home we were taught that it was important to learn something that could make us financially independent”, she remembers. She took that advice to heart and because she had always had the longing to go to Europe, at the age of eighteen Homeira came to Switzerland, to study Materials Science at EPFL.

That is where she met her future husband Paul, with whom she has had two children. Being a working mother, she had little time to paint, but she did buy brushes and oil paints at times, as if to be ready for her own creative time once the opportunity presented itself. And indeed, when her children grew up she began to take art classes and to paint again. Having been a curator for art shows at EPFL since 2015, organizing shows for a multitude of artists, the time for her own solo exhibit has now arrived.

Homeira’s Lausanne home studio overlooks the waters of Lac Léman and her lovely



« De Mashhad à Moscou ». © Homeira Sunderland

garden where the Japanese anemones are in full bloom. Paper and paint everywhere, sketches in preparation for a final work, paintings on the wall and stacked on the floor. There are some beautiful floral pieces, but the majority of her works portray human beings. “When I paint it’s usually about people. Perhaps that’s because I like to be around them. By capturing them with my brush, they’re with me all the time”, she reflects.

From a fragment of their life on canvas, groups and individuals are looking into Homeira’s ‘artistic camera’ as it were. In general her inspiration comes from scenes caught by the media: people from around the world observing life with their very personal expressions. Whether happy, proud, receptive or pensive, friendly and curious, they are often portrayed in colourful garments. And they always connect with each other; arbitrarily through a shoulder, an arm, a hand. But also between just two people on the canvas there is a bond, a tender intimacy, surrounded by light. Portraits of her family are always lovingly detailed in their expressions. In a larger crowd sometimes faces are indistinct, as if to challenge us a little and to tell us: this could be anybody on the canvas, including you, the spectator.

Homeira leads a busy and full working life. To keep in shape, she stays physically active: gymnastics, walking and Qigong are a few of her favourite pastimes.

But most of all she loves water and swimming. It makes so much sense: with her lively energy she immerses herself both in life and in nature. She even goes for a regular dip in the lake’s deep green-blue waters in winter.

Perhaps that is why, in the end, her favourite colours are dark blue and green. Enjoy the show!

Gusta van Dobbenburgh,
Artist, writer, art curator



HOMEIRA SUNDERLAND - HUILES

- > VERNISSAGE : FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 28, 2018, FROM 18:00
- > EXHIBITION : SEPTEMBER 28 - NOVEMBER 23, 2018
- > GALERIE ELA, CAFÉTÉRIA DES BÂTIMENTS EL, ELA 010
- > CURATOR : GUSTA VAN DOBBENBURGH
- > INFORMATION : ASTIE.EPFL.CH OU 021 693 28 23