

Foreword

Alireza Jahromi is a painter who has spent most of his career experimenting with form and roaming through the pages of art history. Following in the footsteps of great Western painters, his concern in the studio and in front of his canvas revolves first and foremost around visual issues emerging after modernism such as multiplication of objects, diverse textures, fragmentation of space, interlocking places and the creation of imagery, qualities that have a significant presence in his work. Although in the contemporary world, endless philosophical debates about concepts such as history, perception and pluralism have left little space to talk about techniques, styles, emotions, or the visual language, these are the values that the painter considers as the components of *original art*. Jahromi's visual language has evolved from a subtype of subject-based representation to more painterly, more complex, darker, and vaguer acts, and from arranging a few figures in an urban setting to orchestrating a plurality of figures, combining several (mainly interior) spaces. However, in his art, Jahromi seeks more than a mere description of a subject. His works are becoming increasingly abstract to the point where they are turning into an obscure imaginary universe, highlighting a particular visual language.

The present book is a compilation of studies on Alireza Jahromi's "Vagrant in Time" series, a series of paintings and drawings which was formed from 2015 to 2018; a more immersive experience in the field of painting that emphasizes on one of the most popular subjects in art history. In this study, we first read the artist's statement, followed by Hadi Momeni's article, "An Evolving Evolver," which deals with the dual aspects of the "Vagrant in Time" series. According to Momeni, Jahromi's paintings, on the one hand, aim to achieve a personal interest that drives the painter to differences in manners of expression, and on the other hand, he attempts to bring the audience into the interpretive circle (plurality of meanings and references) via the titles of the works. In "Bestiality of Painting", Behrang Pourhosseini discusses the long-standing link between *art* and *animal*, describing the horses *vagrant in time* as a sort of subject of artistic contemplation; a subject that is largely absent from court paintings of horses including portraits of cavalry and aristocrats on horses, or even the pictures of free horses in the meadows and glamorous natural settings. Pourhosseini believes that this idea cannot be reduced to playing with forms or painting techniques. Horses present an image of the human-beast condition to the viewers.

The third article by Moslem Khezri is about Alireza Jahromi's efforts to expand his visual language. Discussing the notion of ambiguity throughout the works of the present series which acts as a strategy towards formal coherence and a step away from expression, he examines the course of Alireza Jahromi's experiences. Describing the painter's working process, Khezri considers the potentials born out of Jahromi's more recent artistic endeavors as independent from any objective rule, visual tradition, particular artistic style or extrapersonal ideal, but

rather as a function of his belief in ambiguity, departure from expression, and "inner affirmation". Lastly, we read Hadi Momeni, Alireza Rezaei Aghdam and Moslem Khezri's group conversation with Alireza Jahromi, talking about different stages of his career, the stylistic features, and his favorite artists who have influenced him. The titles and the creative process of his works and his idea of what constitutes original art will also be discussed.