

Reverberation

Intro

"Only the voice remains", Iranian poet, Forough Farrokhzad, eloquently says; a poetic truth. Yet, in our world, sounds are inevitably transient, immaterial, and mortal. *Reverberation* refers to the short but permeating life span of every sound from its moment of birth out of an instrument's womb to the moment of eventual stillness in a solid matter. But what if there were a parallel universe in which every pulse of a sound's life would be embodied as a color, line or shape, thus becoming immortalized. What would this universe be like? "Reverberation", the new exhibition by painter, art educator and visual arts journalist, Alireza Jahromi (b. 1984, Iran), at Saradipour Gallery offers an answer to this question and takes us to a journey into the twilight realm of forms and sounds, where the impossible becomes possible.

Over the years, Alireza Jahromi has covered a variety of themes in his series, from social and political concerns ("Gap in Nature", "Motorcycles" and "Take Photos without Coordination") to cultural issues and taboos ("Unfinished Fantasies"). The converging point throughout Jahromi's career, however, lies in his *draughtsmanly* explorations. *Drawing*, not merely in the sense of drawing lines using common tools on paper or any other surface, but rather in its extended definition as the ability to combine a variety of visual components to achieve a singular image and create a robust, unified world has always been essential in Jahromi's artistic endeavors – just as a composer or a musical conductor ingeniously combines notes from different instruments into a single, novel whole. His figurative drawings and paintings, from the very beginning, have been fields of constant attempts to create new and unusual images by establishing fresh connections between seemingly disparate forms, using various technical approaches: in the "Gap in Nature" series, human figures, warplanes, and missiles of unusual dimensions come together in geometric spaces, while in "Unfinished Fantasies", nude figures intertwined with each other and with letters of Persian alphabet appear in public places and interiors. As Jahromi's art evolves, the representational aspect is still preserved, yet he gradually moves away from the visual expression of the external themes towards more intrinsic questions in painting.

The "Reverberation" series is a step in this new direction. Portraits of vocal artists and various opera scenes are not the main subjects but are rather subjected to the core of the artist's quest in this series that is the sound-like transformation of objective forms, for it is only through a transition from the familiar to the unfamiliar that the nature of change can manifest itself to the viewers. Therefore, these drawings, prints, and paintings, in particular, obtain a dual figurative-abstract quality. In these works, we see how each character's features, with their mouths or eyes shut and open at the same time, appearing both older and younger in profiles and full faces, merge into one another, eventually emerging as a new form that once again fragments itself back into the multifaceted space around it, thus becoming inseparable from space.

The present series consists of portraits of legendary figures of classical singing over the past hundred years whose voices, each having a unique color, texture and artistic identity, have left different marks on the wide canvas this is the universe of singing.