

Kour Pour: Polypainting

April 26th - Juni 24th, 2018

The logo for GNYP Gallery, consisting of the letters 'GNYP' in a bold, black, sans-serif font, centered within a light gray square background.

GNYP Gallery is delighted to present the second solo exhibition of the Los Angeles based artist Kour Pour. The nexus of the artist's various bodies of work lies in his reference to specific art making practices located between different global geographies and points in time. Existing series have referenced the visual languages of Persian carpets, Japanese prints and American abstract painting. The works in the new exhibition Polypainting take their formal structures from the tradition of Persian miniature paintings, which are in themselves an amalgamation of influences and styles from multiple cultures.

In each of the six paintings displayed, different themes are addressed from migration to spirituality, identity and colonialism. This is achieved through the artist's selection of images and symbols from different locations, time periods and cultures, which are collected from books, old catalogues and websites. Using a framework typical of a Persian miniature painting, these images are organized or collaged in Photoshop to create playful and dynamic compositions of disparate motifs. The paintings are carefully prepared then silkscreened and hand painted in multiple layers. The silkscreen printed sections have a digital or pixelated quality, while the meticulous hand painting is reminiscent of traditional miniature painting. The artist then finishes each work by sanding the surface to look and feel worn or antiqued.

In another body of work exhibited, Geometric Paintings, the artist silk-screened images appropriated from pages of Persian miniature paintings from the well known Shahnameh, the Persian Book of Kings, written by the 11th century poet Firdausi about Iran's mythical and pre-islamic history. Pour painted sections of the text out with blocks of colour, which disrupts the reading of the story and at the same time redacts the written farsi, for those who can read it. For those who cannot, the different blocks of colour play off of each other in a way that is reminiscent of minimal geometric abstraction, a style that is highly celebrated in Western art. For Pour, appropriation and the application of multiple visual languages highlights the influences of one culture on another, as well as the tendency to observe the world through inherited concepts of taste based on each viewer's personal history and identity.

Polypainting represents a shift from looking at histories as linear and stagnate, to a globally inclusive perspective of culture that branches out in every direction. Through the combination of art historical and cultural styles, to the different speeds of paint application by hand or printmaking, the use of technology to gather and organize images, and the way the paintings visually keep the eye moving around the surface, these works carry with them the feeling of a cosmopolitan existence.