

Azadeh Razaghdoost: Recipe for a Poem

24 November 2016 – 10 February 2017



Left: *My Winey Paper* from the *Letters* series, 2010, oil and pencil on canvas, 180x130 cm;
Middle: *Untitled* from the *Letters* series, 2011, oil and pencil on canvas, 180x130 cm;
Right: *Untitled* from the *Sick Rose* series, 2009, oil and pencil on canvas, 120x80cm.
Courtesy of the artist and Sophia Contemporary Gallery

Sophia Contemporary Gallery is pleased to present 15 recent paintings by Iranian artist Azadeh Razaghdoost for her first solo exhibition in the UK. Azadeh Razaghdoost's practice refers to 19th century European poems of the Romantic Age. The poem 'The Sick Rose' (1794) by British poet William Blake and the volume of poetry 'Les Fleurs du Mal' (1857) by French poet Charles Baudelaire have infused the artist's work over the years. The contradictions inherent to human nature are at the core of the artist's work, which she conveys in a sensual, lyrical and allegorical language. By focusing on the emotional properties of the colour red, a leitmotif in the artist's oeuvre, Razaghdoost evokes poetic associations with love, passion and blood in order to explore contrasting existential states and impulses: health and sickness, life and death, love and lust...

Coloured pigments are masterfully poured and arranged onto the white canvass in an artistic gesture reminiscent of Action Painting and Abstract Expressionism. Life is spattered in a whirlwind of emotions, and colour radiates an unrestrained eroticism culminating in glowing

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hearts and feminine attributes set on a pure white background. Contrasts collide and grapple with each other in a visually enthralling yet tender language. At times, existential dualities seem to be so closely knit together that contrasting desires and the looming danger of decay become a single whole.

Razaghdoost repeated use of flowers and letters, epitomized in the title of her major series, explores the vanishing concepts of blossom and transience. The existential tensions at the centre of her art materialise in painterly dualities, a cool and laconic accentuation of forms masterfully fusing with an expressive and sensual contamination of colours. By interrogating the essential tensions underpinning existence and exploring the emotive properties of colour, Azadeh Razaghdoost creates a truly poetic and idiosyncratic visual language at the confluence of life's most fundamental impulses.

The exhibition at Sophia Contemporary Gallery will comprise works from the Sick Rose and Letters series as well as stand-alone paintings such as Recipe for a Poem (2009).

About Azadeh Razaghdoost

Azadeh Razaghdoost (b. 1979, Tehran, Iran) is an Iranian painter based in Karaj, Iran.

Razaghdoost received her BA in Painting from Tehran's University of Art in 2002. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Vallpalou Foundation, Lleida, Spain and has been widely exhibited internationally, including at the Kunstzeughaus Museum in Zurich and Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art in Isfahan, Iran.

About Sophia Contemporary Gallery

Sophia Contemporary Gallery is a contemporary art gallery located in a 3,000 square foot space in the heart of Mayfair, London.

The gallery exhibits, represents and champions a diverse roster of emerging and established artists from the USA, Europe, the Middle East and Asia working in a variety of media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, installation, video and photography. The gallery is committed to nurturing the careers of artists from both East and West with a view to promote a creative global dialogue in contemporary art beyond cultural boundaries.

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In addition to its dynamic exhibition schedule, Sophia Contemporary publishes catalogues and books with essays by world-renowned scholars, hosts regular educational panels and is working with museums and institutions worldwide in order to place the gallery's artists in major public and private collections.

Exhibition Details

Title:	Azadeh Razaghdoost: Recipe for a Poem
Address:	Sophia Contemporary Gallery, 11 Grosvenor Street, London, W1K 4QB, UK
Website:	www.sophiacontemporary.com
Dates:	24 November 2016 – 10 February 2017
Private View:	6 – 9 pm, 23 November 2016
Opening Hours:	Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm, Saturday 11am to 5pm
Admission:	Free
Travel:	Green Park, Bond Street or Oxford Circus Tube Station
Twitter:	@SophiaCGallery
Facebook:	SophiaContemporaryGallery
Instagram:	sophiacontemporary