

## ***KHOSRO BERAHMANDI : ART AS METAPHOR***

By Dorota Kozinska

The rich cultural tapestry that is Montreal's art scene is woven of myriad threads, silken strands and coarse hemp. It unravels endlessly while encapsulating entire pictorial, and personal, universes. To encounter the art of Khosro Berahmandi is to open a book of intoxicating wonder, and if attentive enough, step into a visual landscape like no other.

The reference to tapestry is inescapable when looking at Berahmandi's intricate works. It is both intentional and accidental, a reflection of an ancient culture that imbues each of his strikingly graphic composition, ultimately but a stepping stone to a visual realm of endless interpretations.

*"Everything that is made beautiful and fair and lovely is made for the eye of one who sees."*

- Rumi

Khosro's personal tale is one of transition and renunciation, of rebirth and redemption, of innocence and wisdom. Escaping the regime in Iran, he left behind a life of commitment to a cause, and his home, and like so many others, began a peripatetic existence before settling in Canada.

The winds of fate blew him towards foreign lands and cultures, from Paris to Montreal and back, and then back again to this city that, for one reason or another, echoed true to his spirit.

Archaic, or avant-garde, Khosro's worldview revolves around the notion of beauty and the eye of the beholder, and what he chooses to behold, pleases his senses... and by extension, ours. In Montreal, he has found a refuge and a community, and the indispensable freedom to be himself. His art is a reflection of a purely personal vision, albeit one redolent of the ancient Persian culture, its visual imprint a vital aspect of his oeuvre.

*“Don't be satisfied with stories, how things have gone with others. Unfold your own myth.”*

- Rumi

The key to Khosro's art is hidden in each and every one of his works. It is woven into the intricate tapestry that is the surface treatment, before the eye has the time to unravel the mystery of its many symbols and forms.

And like tapestry, each strand can be read on its own, drawing the viewer into a dense landscape of whorls and swoops, of cross hatching and minuscule pin points, to the verge of visual intoxication. The use of metallic crayons and paint adds to the mesmerizing quality of Khosro's paintings, the shimmer like a veil over the, almost without exception, unnervingly structured central image.

*Nebulous Rings* is one such piece, composed of contrasting shapes, both geometric and organic, and all, like in a cosmic constellation, suspended in perfect pictorial harmony. But pull at any thread, begin the reading of this impossibly detailed work from any point, and you embark on a journey beyond art. The work holds a rich narrative, with an overwhelming pantheon of characters, from the stylized male and female figures occupying centre stage, to the tiny blue square pulsating beside them. Symbolic of a drop of water, it adds its voice to the monumental staging that is this work. "An element of surprise," in the words of the artist, it keeps the entire composition in check.

Arched like a portal, *Nebulous Rings* is indeed an entryway to a truly magical realm.

Messengers of universal harmony, of inner and outer worlds, of colour as language and shapes as words, the players in Khosro's compositions speak of the sacred that is in nature and in everyone. There are no grandiose visions behind his visual proclamations. This is very personal pictorial lexicon, and without question, an acquired taste.

The calibre of Khosro's work is indisputable. Honed over years of study and with profound commitment to both the medium and the message, it makes of each of his works an objet d'art, a visual saga wrapped in a painting. Unbearably labour

intensive, his works take months to complete, requiring hours of meditative concentration on each exquisite and precise detail. There is a wonderful tale spun around the ancient art of Persian carpets, which says that a tiny flaw that can be found in each one of them, for only God is perfect. But try hard as I might, I could not find any in Khosro's painting.

To attempt to place Berahmandi's work against the backdrop of contemporary art does a huge disservice to both. These are two universes, co-existing yet separate, and in terms of timelessness, my odds are on Khosro.

*"You are not a drop in the ocean. You are the entire ocean in a drop"*

- Rumi

Khosro Berahmandi is represented by:

Mekic gallery

4438 Rue de la Roche

Montreal, QC

[www.mekic.ca](http://www.mekic.ca)

Photo credit:

*Nebulous Rings*, 2009

Mixed media on wood

107 x 152 cm