



PRESS RELEASE:
NADER AHRIMAN: Paintings, 1995 – 1997
May 2nd – May 20th 2006

Allsopp Contemporary is proud to announce its forthcoming solo exhibition, *Nader Ahriman: Paintings, 1995 – 1997*. The exhibition, the artist's first in London since 2002, will include fourteen works from this three year period.



Nader Ahriman, *Sarah Bernhardt as Hamlet*, 1997, acrylic on canvas

Nader Ahriman presents the viewer with painted manifestations of philosophical and literary modes of thought. Drawing on sources from Plato to Ezra Pound, Aristotle to Jung, Nader's paintings give literal figuration to abstract, academic concepts. Having started painting in the late 80s, the early part of Nader's career was spent working outside contemporary artistic trends. As multi-media installations filled galleries and museums Nader chose instead to address the fundamental relationships involved in the act of image making – that between aesthetics and content; an idea and its material translation. All this is done through what is essentially a speculative code – yet through Nader's suggestive and provocative titles the viewer is forced to engage with the works on an associative and intellectual basis. One's reading then shifts dramatically from surrealist anecdote to philosophical interpretation and comment.

Nader's relationship with philosophy, literature and art history is both fascinating and complex. There are clear artistic precedents to Nader's paintings. In the selection on display we can see references to Max Beckmann, de Chirico and Philip Guston to name but a few. Yet when looked alongside more recent major German figures such as Kippenberger or Oehlen, Ahriman's timeless, stage-like settings of anamorphic iconography and dream-like tales show a single-mindedness in tackling one of the most fundamental aspects of artistic practice: Can painted images effectively convey abstract modes of thought? As one might expect Ahriman's works cannot give conclusive answers and in so doing further fuel this intriguing, time honoured debate.

Nader Ahriman (b.1964) studied at the Kunstakademie, Stuttgart. A year after graduating (1994) he was chosen for the P.S.1 Artist-in-Residence Programme, New York before having his first solo show with Gallery Klosterfelde, Berlin in 1996 (further solo shows followed with Klosterfelde in 1998 and 2001). Nader was shown in London by aspreyjacques in 2002. In the US he has been shown in both New York and Los Angeles with The Project and has a forthcoming show with Friedrich Petzel, also in New York. In 2003 the Kunstverein Freiburg held the first institutional survey of Nader's work. 'Nader Ahriman: Paintings, 1994 – 2003' was accompanied by an impressive catalogue (ed. Dorothea Strauss) with essays by Strauss, Christia Haye and Paola Morsiani charting Nader's unique place within contemporary art. Nader lives and works in Berlin.