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NADER AHRIMAN
„DIE HEGELMASCHINE TRIFFT DIE WELTSEELE“

OPENING ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH 2011, 7 PM
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“I saw the emperor – this world soul riding through town, setting out to reconnoitre,” Hegel wrote in 1806 following the battle of Jena-Auerstadt and continued, “it is indeed a wonderful feeling to see such an individual focused on one thing, sitting on his horse, transcending and dominating the world.”

The philosopher, a professor in Jena at the time, was mingling with the people on the street when, on October 13, Napoleon Bonaparte left the town that had been occupied shortly before to inspect the ground and the troops before the battle began. In those days Hegel was very worried since he had just sent his manuscript of *Phenomenology of the Spirit* to his editor on October 11 and feared that it would be lost in the chaos of war.

The situation before a battle is, in Hegel’s words, “a state whose definitive nature brings forth difference and tension in this substantial unity, which becomes the incentive for action - the situation and its conflicts.” On the basis of this notion, the philosopher developed in his aesthetic an ideal of art whose tasks consists in creating an ideal state of the world – and that means a situation.

In this sense we can also view Nader Ahriman’s paintings as situations. In thinking and painting he can be seen as relating to the metaphysicians among the artists, as for instance De Chirico and Oskar Schlemmer. Objects and figures are clearly delineated, in an almost comical fashion. Seldom does something blurred in the form of cloud columns and wafts of mist or pictorially framed abstract plays of color appear. In the paintings we encounter actors and objects that stand next to each other, pursue each other and are sometimes even engaged in a battle with each other.

To take a painting as an example: in the painting of the battle of Achilles with the river god Skamander the artist tosses us a bar of Swiss army chocolate, in place of the trampled battler of Troja. We could see the painting historically as a recalling the scene of Illias or Runge’s painting which he submitted to the Weimar painting competition in the year 1801. But apart from the merely historical understanding Nader Ahriman gives us the task of discovering our own world state in the painted situation.

Text: Stefan Heidenreich, art theorist (Berlin)