

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NADER AHRIMAN
"Stromboli"

January 12 – February 10, 2007

Opening reception: Friday, January 12, 6-8 pm



Friedrich Petzel Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition by Iranian painter Nader Ahriman. Ahriman's representational paintings give shape to abstract philosophical concepts drawn from some of the most remarkable Western European philosophers, particularly Hegelian idealism and the schools of thought that reacted to it during the 19th century. This exhibition – titled *Stromboli* – will feature seventeen new paintings and thirty-seven drawings based on a passage from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* by Friedrich Nietzsche¹:

There is an isle in the sea – not far from the Happy Isles of Zarathustra – on which a volcano ever smoketh; of which isle the people, and especially the old women amongst them, say that it is placed as a rock before the gate of the nether-world; but that through the volcano itself the narrow way leadeth downwards which conducteth to this gate.

In this chapter a discourse on revolution is allied to an uncommon amount of action and a fantastical story told by a crew that went ashore on the island of Stromboli; there Zarathustra's alter ego was seen flying through the air crying "it is time, it is high time!" "For what is it high time?" The answer, suppressed for a moment but following soon afterwards, was: "Time to declare the eternal recurrence".

Ahriman's works exhibit a skillful use of painting by generating a fascinating balance between aesthetics and content, spirit and matter, figuration and abstract thought. His practice first draws inspiration from a philosophical idea, then develops its concept with the use of figural representation and through the choice of specific colors and hues. The characters of his works, shapes with strange anatomy, act in a-temporal and undefined spaces. These floating atmospheres of his works strongly evoke the Surrealist imagery of artists such as De Chirico or Max Ernst. The result is a puzzle of meanings, a stratification of metaphors that does not reveal the sense of the artworks in their entirety, but encourages the process of individual interpretation.

Ahriman's past exhibitions include *Painting at the Edge of the World* at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2001), and solo exhibitions at the Kunstverein Freiburg in April 2003 and Galerie Klosterfelde in Berlin in 2004.

The exhibition will open on January 12, with an opening reception from 6-8 pm, and will be on view through February 10, 2007. For more information, please contact the gallery at 212.680.9467 or info@petzel.com. Friedrich Petzel Gallery is located at 537 West 22nd Street, New York, NY 10011.

¹ Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Also Sprach Zarathustra* - Chapter XL – On great Events.