

Passion and mass

As a theme, the kiss dominates Serwan Baran's exhibition, whether it is during a passionate move, the position of a body, displays of desire or touching.

Many have tried to use the kiss as an expression of their love. They either ended up wanting more, or were disappointed. Some want to be touched and never have enough, others dream at the merest of suggestions. Erratic persons vary in mood and desire. The erotic among us let their imagination run wild.

Literature is full of descriptions of the kiss. Words lead to more words and real life examples are non-ending, with varying descriptions and ideas and emotional needs.

Let us, however, see what Serwan's works say about the kiss and his own vision about it. He displays lips touching and exciting embraces that unite two bodies into one. The kiss is not just two lips together but a state of unity and longing that mold two bodies into a packed mass. The artist draws only a few lines to indicate the presence of two bodies, especially the arms and sometimes faces without personal details.

The legs are almost animalistic, which may appear strange, given that they normally give the body a natural balance, dynamic forces and a passionate expression.

But I see that these expressionist and abstract forms lend Serwan's work an extra weight and focus, and prevent a distraction that may be caused, for example, by the fine lines of the feet. Serwan has his own expressionist ideas about excesses and deformity, and symbolism about the body.



He uses big spaces as background to express the sense of mass and the unity of his work. Passion comes out, although traditional ways of constructing paintings are cancelled. There are few signs of the place. He prefers general expressionist space.

Serwan reveals -- and sometimes hides -- his ideas about how intimate positions should be. He cannot remain serious about his idea of passion. He is a bit pessimistic, even grumpy, so he transfers love stories into riot and sarcasm. We end up smiling at some of the positions he depicts, which are deformed and excessive. In other instances he separates man and woman, making them appear self-conscious of their bodies. He uses lines and colour strips to show semi-circular motions that point outward then retreat inward.

Serwan started his career as a realist and then delved into imagination and expressionism. He liked painting horses and other animals with an expressionist vitality and a desire to abstract. He released the animals from their environment and showed the horses as free, a bit vicious, sometimes irregular in their movement, naughty and sad, doing wild circular motions.

At the end he stopped this physical show and started mediating. He made works composed of sections of horses in a sad mass of fine lines.



At one point Serwan chose to do abstract work, but his abstraction came close to depicting some form a body. Perhaps his work on horses led him to his habit of dropping a strong mass of figures on surfaces. You find some of that in this exhibition.

Design and abstract ideas in art could be related to the motives and roots of the artist. What is exciting about Serwan is that he loves to drop mass on a big space. He has guts, and a troubled relationship with strong figures and space.

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