

IRVINE

CONTEMPORARY

HEDIEH JAVANSHIR ILCHI

Artist Statement

My art revolves around my cultural identity. As an Iranian immigrant, my initial understanding of the notion of identity as a fixed phenomenon has become more and more hybridized with the passing of time and has indeed transformed into an enticing amalgamation of East and West. This never ending transition has proven to be a challenge from the immediate culture-shock to my recent dealings with the not so recent social/political issues of Iran and the United States. I find a strong parallelism between the social/political issues and the most personal issues as this reflects in an individual's understanding of his or her identity. This interconnection has dragged itself into my art and it specially drives my recent body of work.

The dichotomy of my Eastern and Western experiences enables me to explore and push artistic and gender related boundaries of the two cultures. My work morphs into a cultural hybrid that defines itself in a dual sense, as a visual entity and a conceptual paradigm. I utilize personal/cultural memories of experienced moments and allegorical symbols. These elements are merged with the appropriation of the Western macho Abstract Expressionism techniques and concepts and the feminine styles of miniature paintings and Islamic art of the Middle-East to find a collective language that is neither personal nor cultural, but somewhere in-between. Spontaneous and energy driven pours and splashes of paint are followed by hours of quiet and contemplative act of painting.

My paintings echo a sense of narration; though, this narration is fluctuating and non-linear throughout the body of work. This is an invitation for the culturally diverse viewers to participate in the making of art. I embrace the layering of meanings and the ambiguity that they entice. I draw from cultural and artistic traditions and conventions as a means of reframing those traditions.

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