

RENATA AZEVEDO MOREIRA
(MONTREAL)

**CREDO QUIA ABSURDUM :
I BELIEVE BECAUSE IT'S
ABSURD**

Text commissioned by Skol for *It's
absurd so you have to believe it.*

What does Aïda Vosoughi believe in?

If her convictions are based on the imaginary world that inhabits her, they are clear as the colours of the first brushstrokes on her paintings. Vosoughi believes in dark-leafed forests, flooded with deep lakes and lit with blazing skies. She lives among hybrid beings that are a mix of ancient Middle Eastern literature and current news stories verging on science fiction. Vosoughi takes her inspiration from the suspicious borders between the figurative and the abstract, the animal and the human, storytelling and drawing.

This other world is revealed in snapshot-paintings, portraits of a planet that only the artist knows intimately. But Vosoughi lets us take a look. She carefully gives us access to her renditions of this world and refuge that she was lucky to find, create, and develop. Once inside, you have to wait a little while before feeling the effects of the change of rhythm and the shifting of space-time. With one deep breath, you are immersed and ready to experience this parallel world—a world that is nevertheless exactly the same world as before, what we usually call reality. It is simply another “mode of existence,” to borrow the words of the philosopher Étienne Souriau: an alternative way, perhaps dreamier and more pictorial, of being where we already are.

Everything is metaphor in Aïda Vosoughi's work. It opts for the unsaid, the hidden. In a subtle manifesto against overstating, both the exploration of themes and the characters are implicit. Often seen from behind, fleeing or in tears, calm or despairing, her characters are sometimes watched by several pairs of tireless, ubiquitous eyes.

Piled up and open wide, they are there in spite of it all, whether or not the gaze is invited, whether it's welcome or welcoming. The white rabbit—perhaps Alice's—hops from canvas to canvas as fleeting as a camera flash: as soon as you're aware of it, it's already gone, already left for the next painting. Her recurring animal figures are ways of interpreting our non-linear existence. Like Vosoughi's life and like ours, each work is meticulously destroyed as soon as it reaches the slightest stability.

Building, destroying, rebuilding: these paintings have a circular trajectory. It's apparent in the gallery as they take a form that's far from definitive and there the supposed end never comes. The paintings are moments, points along a lifepath. The layers of ink bear the virtual journeys of the artist, who lives in a constant, transitory interval between here and elsewhere, other places where she has left a piece of herself.

You have to believe it because it's absurd tells of fables, personal journeys, dreams, immigration, and the ephemeral, without addressing any of these things directly. It's by experiencing these works that they are completed, and perhaps the happenstance of meeting them will forever affect their trajectories.

- Renata Azevedo Moreira is a PhD student in communications as well as a journalist and curator. She likes to write about art, exhibit art, and create in collaboration with artists.

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ÄIDA VOSOUGHI
(MONTREAL)

**IT'S ABSURD SO YOU HAVE
TO BELIEVE IT**

January 9th - February 22nd 2020
Painting



Aïda Vosoughi's artistic practice maintains a close relationship with the literature and storytelling of the Middle East's ancient cultures. In recent years, she has drawn considerable inspiration from the tales of Kalila and Dimna and sees many parallels between them and current socio-political situations.

At Skol, Vosoughi presents an exhibition of narrative paintings that explore power relationships transposed into a world of metaphor. At times almost abstract, her artworks revisit ancient tales in a wholly modern way and are tinged with a biting sense of humour.

Aïda Vosoughi is an Iranian artist who lives and works in Montreal since 2014. Her work has been shown in many solo and group exhibitions in Iran, including at Raf Projects, Homa Art Gallery, Gallery East and Contemporary art festival. She did a residency and presented a solo exhibition at Tankstation Enschede, Netherlands. As a columnist and art critic, she has contributed to Shabake-Aftab and Tajrobeh magazines. As an illustrator she collaborated with author Media Kashigar.

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