



BAZMAKET...
Gegam Kacherian

AUG 28 - OCT 10, 2021

Tufenkian
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Also on view,
a collaborative series between
Gegam Kacherian and Chris Trueman

BAZMAKET...

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Los Angeles, 2021

Bazmaket is an Armenian word that means many dots: similar to ellipsis in English. A bazmaket, or ellipsis at the end of a sentence references an unfinished thought or a continuation. In Los Angeles based artist Gegam Kacherian's latest work, the 'dot, dot, dot' metaphorically signifies the space between...

the space between US and Armenia
the space between war and peace
the space between sun and moon
the space between myth and reality
the space between fact and fiction
the space between church and state
the space between abstraction and representation

Kacherian's paintings explore how narratives are created using diverse imagery culled from disparate sources. His dream-like, sci-fi environments are filled with gestural abstractions, fragments from nature and nods to his Armenian homeland. It is easy to get lost in these atmospheric paintings fluttering with swirling brushstrokes and swashes of bold colors.

While Kacherian began as an abstract painter, he now excels at realistic rendering. The paintings have a collage aesthetic with disproportionate elements working in concert with each other in relation to pulsating backgrounds. He draws from history and current events, as well as the natural landscape, especially the colors of the sky at sunrise and sunset and montages the fragments he observes and appropriates into whimsical paintings that coalesce intuitively.

In *Desire in Absence*, the base layer is a receding bright yellow and blue sky covered at the bottom with rolling green hills and a pink stream from which surreal flowers and animal forms frolic. At the top the composition is bisected by a thick diagonal pink band, under a heaving canopy of dark green and a thinner layer of red. Together these elements form a landscape that contains, at the far right edge, the facade of a modern glass house. Toward the bottom left, a pale yellow car from the 1950s sits above which is perched a giant yellow

bird (a goldfinch) on a branch between two thin tree trunks. How these elements relate is ambiguous as Kacherian allows viewers to weave their own narratives through his painted cues.

Out of My Hand is a surreal landscape where fantastical creatures inhabit a bright pink sky above and a blue-green ground beneath a detailed contemporary cityscape. Looking closely reveals loosely painted vintage automobiles, as well as a suited businessman, cows, birds and a flock of penguins. Like in Hieronymus Bosch's, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, this painting is filled with realistically rendered, yet incongruous elements.

Kacherian makes both large and small scale works. In intimate paintings, such as the 12 x 12 inch *Tegher*, the outlines of the Monastery of Tegher built in 1213 are the grounding element for swirling abstract lines atop a fiery background. The painting alludes to Armenian history and the strength of architecture to withstand time, as well as to the dancing flames of fire and war. Moving from the small to the large, the evocative 60 x 96 inch diptych *Cascade* at first glance depicts a cityscape based on New York, yet less dense than its actual skyline. As the eye traverses the work moving from ground to sky, it encounters birds, floating businessmen and other biomorphic-creatures in what becomes a fantastical universe. Upon successive glances more and more details are revealed.

The exhibition includes a new suite of square paintings, each begins with a linear depiction of a church or monastery fused with bright backgrounds. Kacherian melds these architectural icons with more fanciful imagery, taking the eye on a visual journey from the concrete to the abstract. Kacherian outlines the shapes of these buildings as if to say it all begins here... They are contrasted with gradients that are overlaid with non objective markings reminiscent of Arshile Gorky or even Lee Bontecou— concentric shapes and transparent swaths of color that criss-cross the compositions. The works are dynamic. Kacherian carefully leads the viewer's eye across the compositions from areas of pure color to figures balancing on painted lines as if suspended in air that ultimately dissolve into small zig zags, completing the circle.

Kacherian fuses observation and memory to transform fragmented imagery into twisting and twirling abstract shapes that interact with outlined architectural structures. While the paintings at first glance appear bucolic, in reality they are weighted with nostalgia for a past that can never be returned to and an uncertainty about the future.

Also included in the exhibition are paintings created in collaboration with Chris Trueman. In this collaboration, the rules were fluid. Kacherian and Trueman engaged in a playful back and forth that allowed Trueman's abstract backgrounds and oscillating patterns (visible in *Transmutation* and *Contour*) to become platforms for more representational imagery that then gets folded back into the abstracted ground. Through their exchange, Kacherian and Trueman created a conversation about the myriad ways background textures and foreground imagery could work in concert to create a densely layered receding space.



Out of My Hand
2021, Acrylic on canvas, 48x60"



Cascade
Diptych
2021
Acrylic on canvas
60x96"



Tegher
2021, Acrylic on canvas, 12x12"



Desire in Absence
2021, Acrylic on canvas, 24x24"



Transmutation
2020, Acrylic on mounted yupo, 27x21"
Gegam Kacherian and Chris Trueman collaboration



Contour
2019, Acrylic on canvas, 26.5x21"
Gegam Kacherian and Chris Trueman collaboration

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