

big museum-style catalogue for one of its shows. The London gallery, a relative newcomer that had already expanded to Berlin and Zurich and enlisted artists ranging from Bill Viola to Jorge Pardo, arrived in New York like the proverbial hunk of meat. It means to be a "heavyweight." This blue-chip inaugural loan show carried, as it were, coals to Newcastle, giving the Big Apple a dose of its own Abstract Expressionism. But the gallery is currying favor with the locals half a century too late. With a phalanx of beefy guards dressed in black, the curatorial chops of noted British art historian David Anfam, and a polite young female staff baring not a fang of gallerista disdain, its debut heralded a strange cross between a major gallery with deep pockets, an elite auction house (Haunch of Venison is owned by Christie's and occupies the latter's penthouse space in Rockefeller Center), and a slightly pathetic provincial museum. It's neither fish nor fowl.

Most of the works were on loan from artists' estates, museums, and private collectors who—with the exception of John McEnroe—wished to remain "private." Whatever. Anfam may not have had the classic works that thrilled us recently at the Jewish Museum, and he didn't use those he had to explore critical disputes between Clement Greenberg and Harold Rosenberg. But he made the best of an awkward situation and an awkward space: the show boasted a red Ad Reinhardt, two Clyfford Stills, a big, bloodred and white Lee Krasner titled *Another Storm* (1963), and a number of works by forgotten artists. Anfam went for old-style formal comparisons. The 1970 gray and white Jack Tworlov was a dead ringer for a Cy Twombly; the three-panel Richard Pousette-Dart, with a diamond, circle, and triangle, unexpectedly anticipated Sol LeWitt; and the pairing of Mark Rothko's bottomless squares and Adolph Gottlieb's levitating orbs suggested that round pegs and square holes sometimes fit, just as the three steel shapes in David Smith's *Voltri* perfectly echoed the three black blobs in Robert Motherwell's *Elegy to the Spanish Republic* (1970). In fact, in a show bursting with gratuitous comparisons, it was hard not



Willem de Kooning, *Hostess*, 1973, bronze, 49" x 37" x 29".
Haunch of Venison.

to see Willem de Kooning's four-armed bronze *Hostess* (1973) as a monumental Jules Feiffer cartoon. —Kim Levin

Avish Khebrehzadeh

Albion

In her first solo show in New York, Avish Khebrehzadeh married video animation with painting and drawing in an inventive and mesmerizing way. The Iranian-born artist projected simple hand-drawn animations onto large-scale black paintings. Ghostly figures and animals glowed in the light of the projection and assumed the mercurial quality of daguerotypes. Against this backdrop the videos, which played in continuous loops accompa-

nied by melancholic sound tracks, provided open-ended vignettes reflecting upon human frailties.

Falling Horse in Battle (2008) is a pair of paintings: a white silhouette of a grown man against a dark ground, and a silhouette of a mother and her two children against a black ground. Projected onto the man, as if it were inside him, is an animation of a boy playing with a bow and arrow, seemingly dreaming of being a warrior; the adjacent animation shows a downcast soldier shooting his gun. In William Kentridge fashion, the animations dissolve into images of processions with soldiers and horses, train tracks moving through tunnels, and deer nursing their young, evocative of separation and loss.

Another large projection work, *Monkey, Goat and Trainer* (2008), is based on a story by Iranian writer Sâdeq Chubak and accompanied by layers of drawings that Khebrehzadeh used in the animation. Illuminating the complexity of dependence, the animation revolves around a master who forces his enslaved monkey to do tricks. When the master doesn't wake up one day, the monkey is so unmoved by his freedom that he chains himself to the master's goat.

Especially affecting was *Within and Without* (2008), a painting of a kneeling man pulling open his shirt to reveal his chest, onto which is projected a sequence of swimming fish that shifts to spiderwebs, buzzing flies, and drops of water, giving form to the irrationality and unfathomability of dreams.

—Hilarie M. Sheets



Avish Khebrehzadeh, *Falling Horse in Battle*, 2008, oil on gesso and wood with video-animation projection, 72" x 106½". Albion.