

Art

unlimited

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY, FREE OF CHARGE, JULY-AUGUST 2023, NO. 76, ALFREDO JAAR, PHOTO: ROBERT GRÜNDLER

W H A T N E E D
I S T H E R E
T O W E E P
O V E R P A R T S
O F L I F E ?
T H E H O L E
O F I T A L L S
F O R E A R S



ALFREDO JAAR

On the occasion of his exhibition in Berlin, A. S. Bruckstein Çoruh wrote an essay about the artist's practice

A LABORATORY IN A UFO

Selin Çiftci reviewed Yağız Özgen's first exhibition *Astronomy Picture Of the Day* in New York

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Zeynep Gülçur reflects on Nan Goldin in light of the documentary *All the Beauty and the Bloodshed*

NEW HORIZONS ON THE BIENNIAL QUESTION

Misal Adnan Yıldız interviewed the curators of the current editions of the Freiburg, Göteborg and Helsinki biennials

BASAK BAYKAL

TIMELESS GEMS FROM THE GRAND BAZAAR



basakbaykal.co.uk

TAMAMEN ELEKTRİKLİ JAGUAR I-PACE

JAGUAR



Borusan Otomotiv



Alfredo Jaar, Photo: Robert Gründler

Hello,

This summer we can say hello to you with excitement because we are back to publishing Unlimited in two languages and two editions again. This issue is a milestone for us in many ways... After a difficult election process, we are more eager than ever to trust in democracy and do what we know how to do best. Our decision to resume bilingual publishing and international distribution is also related to this enthusiasm.

On the cover of this issue, we invited Alfredo Jaar on the occasion of his exhibition *The Temptation to Exist* at Galerie Thomas Schulte, one of our favorite Berlin based art galleries. A. S. Bruckstein Çoruh has written an essay about Jaar's practice in the light of his Berlin exhibition which includes his works with 51 other artists, including Ayşe Erkmen.

We prepared this issue during the month of honor. <3 We worked with Huo Rf to create the content in the spirit of both the month of honor and the summer season. İlker Cihan Biner's interviews with drag queens, 32nd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, the ongoing *Peotics of Perception* exhibition at Akbank Sanat, :mentalKLINIK's Istanbul exhibition in which not a single work touches the floor are some of the titles that you will encounter within this issue. We also wanted to take you to a wonderful vacation spot in Antalya and to Yağız Özgen's first exhibition in New York, introduce you to young and successful art gallerists from Istanbul, make you feel the old summer vacations in Greece, witness the protest processes that Nan Goldin has recently devoted herself to and sit at the same table with the current curators of three important European biennials.

In addition to our usual distribution points, you can also find our summer issues at Çeşme, Bodrum and in marinas of Göcek in Turkey. We have also selected New York, Berlin and Amsterdam as the three distribution cities where you can get your first copies of Unlimited's English edition.

We wish you a pleasant summer and enjoyable reading,

Merve Akar Akgün & Huo Rf

Arkasında yarın var.

Yarının
dünyası
bu.

PARİBU

Mehmet Efendi

Bugün 60 ülkeye ihracat yapan
Kurukahveci Mehmet Efendi,
tüm dünyada
Türk kahve kültürüne
hizmet etmeye devam ediyor.

CAFÉ LANDTMANN
VIYANA



KURUKAHVECİ
MEHMET EFENDİ

—1871—

Her Yerde

ART UNLIMITED
Year: 16 Issue: 76

Editor in chief
Merve Akar Akgün

Executive editor
Selin Çiftci

Advertising
Hülya Kızılırmak

Accounting
Berfu Adalı

Design Unlimited
Liana Kuyumcuyan

Photography
Berk Kır

Performative arts
Ayşe Draz Orhon

Contributors
Sinan Refik Akgün, A. S. Bruckstein Çoruh, Sinan Eren Erk,
Çınar Eslek, Zeynep Gülçur, Oğuz Karayemiş, Ceylan Önalp,
Nazlı Pektaş, Yekhan Pınarlıgil, Huo Rf, Selim Süme, Eva
Vaslamatzi, Misal Adnan Yıldız, Erman Yılmaz

Design
Vahit Tuna

Design and application
Ulaş Uğur

Thanks
Alfredo Jaar Studio, Asya Çetin, Galerie Thomas Schulte Team,
Merve Arat, Robert Gründler

Print
SANER MATBAACILIK
Litrosyolu 2. Matbaacılar Sitesi
2BC3/4 Topkapı-İstanbul
0212 674 10 51
info@sanermatbaacilik.com

Unlimited Publications
Address
Meşrutiyet Cad. 67/1 34420
Tepebaşı, Beyoğlu, İstanbul
info@unlimitedrag.com
@unlimited_rag

Owner
Galerist Sanat Galerisi A.Ş.
Meşrutiyet Cad. 67/1 34420
Tepebaşı, Beyoğlu, İstanbul

Published 2 times a year.
Distributed free of charge.
Authors are solely responsible for
the content of submitted articles.
All rights reserved by Unlimited.
Quotations are not allowed without
permission.

unlimited



Yeni Maserati Grecale GT Her Günü Olağanüstü Kılar

YENİ MASERATI GRECALE GT'Yİ KEŞFEDİN.
ZARAFET VE GÜÇLE OLAĞANÜSTÜ BİR ŞEKİLDE ÖNE ÇIKIN.

Fer Mas Oto Tic. A.Ş.
Kuruçeşme Cad. No: 27 Kuruçeşme/İstanbul
Tel: (0212) 263 30 01

Otokoç Antalya
Altınova Sinan Mah. Serik Cad.
No: 301 07170 Kepez/Antalya
Tel: (0242) 225 18 18

Otokoç Ankara
Söğütözü Mah. Söğütözü Cad. No: 2
Koç Kuleleri C Blok No: 8-9 Çankaya/Ankara
Tel: (0312) 220 55 02

Mengerler Bursa
Ovaakça Santral Mah. İstanbul Cad.
No: 644 Osmangazi/Bursa
Tel: (0224) 261 11 14

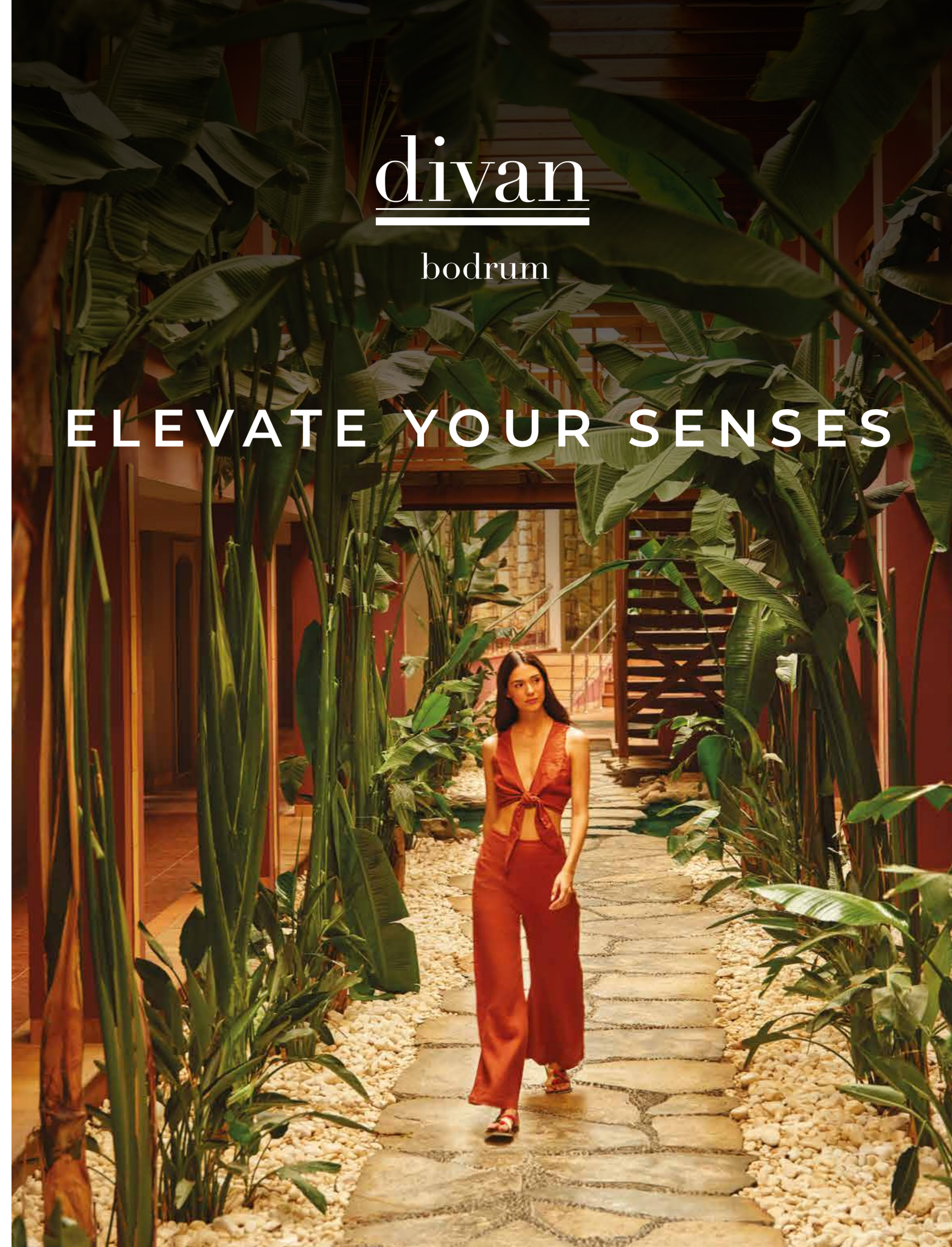


Motor: L4 MHEV, Azami Güç: 300 CV/450 Nm, Azami Hız: 240 km/s, 0-100 km Hızlanma: 5,6 sn, Yakıt Tüketimi (karma) min.-maks.: 8,7-9,2 L/100 km, CO₂ Emisyon Oranları (karma) min.-maks.: 198-208 g/km. İlanda belirtilen veriler versiyona göre değişiklik göstermektedir.



TABLE OF CONTENT

- 14** **New York:** A laboratory in a UFO
Selin Çiftci
- 18** **Abu Dhabi:** Anyone who wants to see their future should pick up a few novels
Huo Rf
- 22** **Review:** Poetics of perception: endless labirynth
Ceylan Önalp
- 26** **Portrait:** Both local and international
Merve Akar Akgün
- 28** **Interview:** Keeping curiosity and motivation fresh
Merve Akar Akgün & Huo Rf
- 36** **Greece:** ... like a test case within a broader experiment
Eva Vaslamatzki
- 38** **Artwork:** TREMOR / RUMOUR
Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin
- 42** **Interview:** Nature, people, time, life
Merve Akar Akgün
- 43** **Poster**
Selim Süme & Erman Yılmaz
- 50** **Paris:** Say it loud, say it clear
Zeynep Gülçur
- 56** **Dossier:** Dreaming of another life, the dazzling light of performance
İlker Cihan Biner
- 59** **Berlin:** The Temptation to Exist: What Need is There to Weep?
A. S. Bruckstein Çoruh
- 72** **Round table:** New horizons on the biennial question
Misal Adnan Yıldız
- 76** **Interview:** If paradise is on sale
Nazlı Pektaş
- 82** **XXY:** Alla Beni Pulla Beni Sabah Ateşi
Çınar Eslek & Yekhan Pınarlıgil
- 86** **States of Matter:** The ancient grammar of matter II
Oğuz Karayemiş



Yağız Özgen's first solo exhibition in the USA, *Astronomy Picture Of The Day*, opened at DIANA Gallery in New York. We visited the laboratory of Özgen, who draws the search for meaning into the representational plane of art

A laboratory in a UFO

Text: Selin Çiftci

Maximiles Black ile başka bir dünya sizi bekliyor



Yüksek mil kazandıran Maximiles Black'e İşCep'ten başvurun, size özel ayrıcalıklardan yararlanın!



Restoran ödemelerinizde
%20 indirim



Otel ödemelerinizde
%5 indirim



Otopark ödemelerinizde
%50 indirim

maximiles
BLACK

Hemen
başvurun:



Detaylı bilgi:
www.maximiles.com.tr



If red flows into white, it turns pink, it puts aside its resentments and turns his face to the sky.

The sky is the one and only unpredictable landlord of sky gods, flirtatious Zeus, purple clouds and sunny Sundays. It hides the deep, silent, cold and ever-expanding darkness behind it, leaving the earth to deal with a shy moon, cropped stars and a dazzling sun. For those who feel the ground beneath their feet, "turning their face to the sky" first gives them a good, deep breath. Then, it lowers their blood pressure and introduces them to new questions and other curiosities with certain latitudes and indefinite longitudes. For those whose physical boundaries are determined by the possibilities of their bodies, it is a curious look at the "limitless and uncertain". The nature of this gaze, which yearns to place its existence on a cause-and-effect scale, directs its "why" question to the sky and continues its search for meaning in the clues it receives. Just like a tooth that aches or an eye that misses an eyelash, the human being, as the only living species that is aware of its own existence, strives to get a satisfactory answer to its "being". Yağız Özgen is one of the soldiers of this feverish questioning. He exposes an image taken from a digital celestial diary, where astronomers publish a photograph taken from space every day, to his own inquisitive gaze, partially deconstructs it and hosts it in his laboratory. Özgen's laboratory is caught in the middle of a heated debate in which the Earth and the sky confront each other, so that it bears the tension of unanswered questions.

The artist first pixelates the photograph, in which cheerful oranges from deep space meet healthy and strong blues, such that the eye becomes alienated from this image and seeks new belongings. The color pattern of the photograph, which has been intervened in its entirety, dissolves and disintegrates and each frame declares its individuality. This distortion continues not only in the photograph itself but also in its representation. The representation surrenders to a flow that transforms it: The photograph, born with light, finds re-representation in the painting; while the painting disintegrates into its colors, the colors exist on their own without mingling, without kissing, and they decompose by becoming physically tangible. The cold white walls of the laboratory not only give the colors their independence but also expose them to sunlight in front of the glass, adding a performative dimension to the dialogue with the sky.

At DIANA art gallery, which shuttles between the earth and the sky, resembling a UFO with white walls, the search for meaning is drawn to the representational plane of art. Since the plane of representation melts into air, like all that is solid* in the Earth's atmosphere, where the only thing constant is change, the sacred becomes mundane, and concepts become lighter and float in the void, someone has to pull the strings. For this reason, the painting hanging on the wall inside this unidentifiable celestial body, the paints on the windowsill and the installation in the center of the space each have their place and boundaries. The painting representing the photograph turns the corner as far as allowed. The colors that find themselves are equally positioned at arm's length from each other on the table in the center. This distance is the same length as the pieces of wood cut to define the borders of the table. The UFO's course is not yet clear, but those inside know the distance to each other.

Together with the exhibition, a single photo frame from the dark side of the sky opens a new door to the representation of art and the nature of painting: The existence of another space. In this controlled deconstruction, I don't know if the color that is transformed by the sun, the fragmented image of color that is separated, and the pixelated image will miss themselves, because Yağız's laboratory irrevocably transforms everything it puts on its agenda into another.

I am coming out of Yağız's laboratory, stepping out of the UFO positioned in the streets of New York and descending to the surface of the Earth. In the Chinatown district, a familiar song is murmured in a sharp, fast, and unfamiliar language. I turn the corner from the Buddha statue, which smiles serenely at the ramen shop in front of it, and I am captivated by the rhythm. 🎵

* *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*, Marshall Berman



“Together with the exhibition, a single photo frame from the dark side of the sky opens a new door to the representation of art and the nature of painting: The existence of another space. In this controlled deconstruction, I don't know if the color that is transformed by the sun, the fragmented image of color that is separated, and the pixelated image will miss themselves, because Yağız's laboratory irrevocably transforms everything it puts on its agenda into another.”

KUNDURA
SİNEMA

BEYKOZ
KUNDURA

BİR
YAZ
GECE
Sİ
FESTİ
VALİ

04 ≈ 20.08
2023



BİLETLER BEYKOZKUNDURA.COM

Anyone who wants to see their future should pick up a few novels*

Text and interview: Huo Rf

One of our writers, artist Huo Rf, visited the 32nd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, which took place between May 22nd and 28th. We assembled an interview with Ayesha Eid AlMazrouei, the events director of the fair, and a review about the event where Türkiye was the guest of honor



Courtesy of Abu Dhabi International Book Fair

Between May 21-25, I was in Abu Dhabi to see a fair that I am almost the same age with. The reason I was so interested in the 32nd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair this year was the excitement of meeting Nermin Yıldırım, whose name I saw in the program. We traveled with Etihad Airways and it was quite striking that the airline filmed the in-flight emergencies and precautions information video at the Louvre Abu Dhabi. In the corridors of what we can call the branch of one of the most important museums hosting the history of world art, the stewardesses were describing the emergency exit directions with animations, also inside the museum. I was focused on visiting the fair with the awareness of the serious investments made by the emirates in culture and arts activities; I have been following how they use these investments in every detail for a long time.

The fair, which took place at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center (ADNEC) from May 22-28, hosted more than 1,300 exhibitors from more than 85 countries. This year's guest of honor was Türkiye, with more than 2,000 cultural, literary, educational and artistic events, including the 32nd edition of the fair, the largest in the history of the fair. The fair hosted the Türkiye Pavilion with an intensive program highlighting the cultural exchange between Turkish and Arab cultures, while also focusing on promoting Turkish literature, children's books and Turkish cuisine. When I first visited the Turkish pavilion, I was informed that Nermin Yıldırım would not be able to participate in the program. I think it was obvious that I was upset; they referred me to Nermin Mollaoglu, with whom Yıldırım had worked. I attended another event to listen to Mollaoglu's experiences, and the questions I directed to Ms. Mollaoglu about book fairs remained unanswered. I did not get the necessary interaction from our pavilion, where I had the opportunity to meet only a few publishers. I think that the venue and the methods of exhibiting works at the exhibition of painter Zahit Büyükişiyen, organized as part of the guest of honour Turkey, were ineffective. From the Turkish publishers I met, I learned that the scope of the professional program was productive in terms of mutual agreements and collaborations. Due to what I could not find for myself at the Turkey Pavilion, I had to shift my focus to the fair in general. Among the exhibitors that caught my attention at the fair, Peter Harrington Rare Books' selection, which I became aware of thanks to Melodi Şihnaztepe from the Flint PR team, gave me the opportunity to examine an edition of Othello written in Ottoman Turkish. The first Ottoman Turkish edition of Shakespeare's Othello was produced by Hasan Bedreddin and Mehmet Rifat. This version was translated into French by Jean-Francois Ducis and staged at the Gedikpaşa theater in Istanbul in 1867. It was also the first theater production in Turkey to be performed by Turkish actors instead of traveling company actors. The Peter Harrington Rare Books team brought this copy to the fair as Turkey was the guest of honor... I found the German and Chinese pavilions impressive both for their variety of publications and

Love at first sight...



Qajar Steel Rooster
19th century



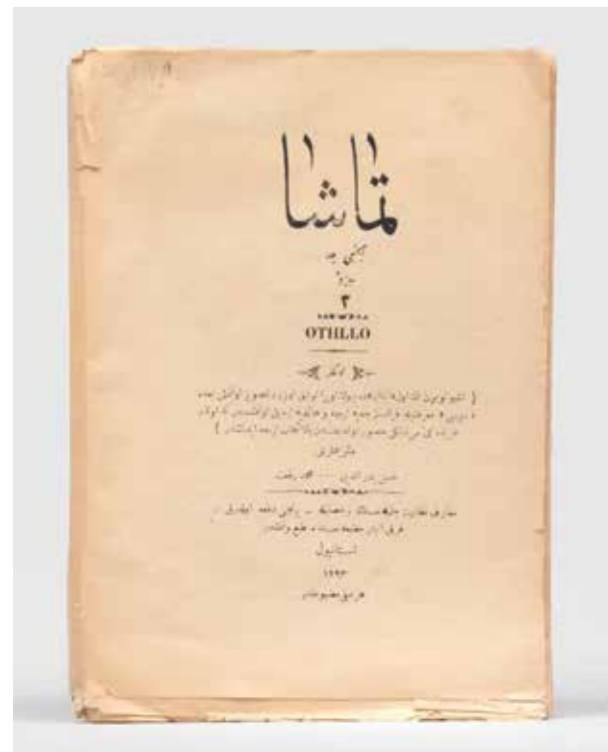
Coral Painted Tear Drop Iznik Vase
17th century

KHAFTAN

ART & ANTIQUE



Photo: Huo Rf



Oshello, Photo: www.peterharrington.co.uk

the way they interacted with the audience; similarly, the Louvre Abu Dhabi's stand was remarkable with its books containing the museum's publications and collections, and its space designs. Arts and culture institutions operating in the emirates (such as the Sharjah Art Foundation or the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Center) were in their own spaces to present their activities.

I met with Ayesha Eid AlMazrouei, the events director of the fair, for my technical questions about the fair, which is a major organization:

Can I get some information about how you chose and organize the participants?

The selection process of publishers and exhibitors for the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair is based on clear criteria and fundamentals. We assess the quality of each publishing house that applies by reviewing both their backlist and frontlist to ensure the Fair continues to be the credible industry leader that it is. Another crucial consideration is copyright, as every exhibitor must respect copyright laws and have no previous violations or infringements that contradict the laws and directions of the UAE.

To promote diversity and maximize the participation of different countries, we give particular attention to ensuring a geographically diverse representation of exhibitors. Additionally, we consider the ability of exhibitors to effectively communicate and promote their participation in the exhibition through various channels.

Do you have an open call for participants or an invite list? Do you provide facilities or support programs for geographically distant publishers?

For the third consecutive year, the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre, which organizes the annual fair, waived the rental fee for publishers and exhibitors to participate in the fair in an effort to support the growth and advancement in the publishing and creative industries locally, regionally, and internationally. This has helped publishers from all over the world participate in the Fair, from the Middle East to Europe, East Asia, and North America.

How do you organize the content of the public program? The fair seems to be more Middle East oriented.

The Abu Dhabi International Book Fair is a gateway to the publishing and creative industries in the Middle East. With participation from over 1,300 exhibitors, representing 85 countries, the Fair is a truly international event that brings together publishers, authors, artists, editors, booksellers, and many other publishing professionals from around the world.

The fair team always carefully curates the events program according to key themes and areas of interest for our broad range of audiences, from children and families right through to professionals in the publishing and creative industries. Broadly, the events program covers cultural, professional, educational, and creative sessions, including everything from debates on key issues facing the industry to cooking workshops and live concert music.

Sessions are delivered in the Arabic language with live interpretation provided in English and often other languages such as Turkish and Chinese this year due to the prevalence of exhibitors from these countries.

Is this your priority or do you have an effort to make it more international?

Our priority is always to attract publishers from around the world, and in doing so the fair reflects the rich cultural diversity and openness of Abu Dhabi. Abu Dhabi is ultimately a modern, open city with a culturally diverse population and rich cultural scene, supported by international universities such as New York University Abu Dhabi, Sorbonne Abu Dhabi, and world-class museums like the Louvre Abu Dhabi and the new Guggenheim Abu Dhabi in development. In this spirit of openness, the fair is a prominent cross-border, cross-cultural platform for the publishing industry and the general public.

Our program also included a free visit to several institutions. One of these institutions was the Louvre Abu Dhabi. Designed by Jean Nouvel, it was a highly effective and well-constructed space that was comfortable for the viewer to walk around and experience the works on display. Our tour guide explained the construction of the museum, how the collection was assembled and displayed, and how the materials used in the building relate to the culture of the region. I think that the display of works from the museum's collection is an effective installation, with multiple works from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, all produced in the same period, juxtaposed together. At the same time, the museum building was not filled with artworks, somehow, I think they somehow achieved the balance of less is more. The daylight filtering through the roof of the museum and the contact of the building with the sea made the visit enjoyable with the possibilities of the space. The Louvre will be the place I will want to return to during my time in Abu Dhabi. Another place we could visit in our program was Qasr Al Hosn, where you can get to know the culture of the region, the desert, and the Emirates closely. This place, which focuses on desert life, has been restored and modernized at the same time, and this building standing among the plazas and skyscrapers has taken its place at the top of my Abu Dhabi notes. The friend I visited this place with, and I went to the seaside as it was getting close to dark. Since no one was swimming, we asked a security guard on the beach, "Would it be a problem for us to go into the sea?" We learn that it is forbidden to swim at sunset, the guard adds that it is not forbidden in Dubai... I open the ban on swimming to you, the reader...

I return to the very beginning of my article, to the author Nermin Yıldırım, who has been exciting me lately. Her book *Forgotten Lessons** has been a reference to many of my conversations and works for a while now, and it is also a reference to the title of this article-interview. My trip of a few days ends with the same book on the way back with these thoughts.

*Unutma Dersleri, Nermin Yıldırım



Rain'i incelemek için QR kodu okutunuz.

TEPTA
AYDINLATMA



Poetics of perception: endless labyrinth

Text: Ceylan Önalp

Zeynep Dadak + Çiçek Kahraman, Vortex 1, 2023, Mixed media, Installation

***Prizma Expanded: Poetics of Perception* brings together three directors and three film professionals who transform their cinematic worlds into an experience in space. The thirteenth project of Prizma, the independent art initiative recently co-founded by curator Lara Kamhi, the exhibition explores the concept of expanded cinema, which is also the initiative's founding objective**

"Positioned on a plane where the imaginary intersects with reality, *The Poetics of Perception* makes use of color, light, movement and sound - the basic elements at the core of cinema - as materials, but mostly uses the fluid nature of cinematic reality, its twisting and transforming state. Thus, the exhibition, which centers on the fictional structure of perception, invites the audience to a dimension where cinematic universes intersect with space, while asking: As the cinematic experience expands, does perception also expand?"

This paragraph, which I have quoted from the curatorial text of the exhibition, tells the viewer about the journey of the concept of extended cinema from the 1970s to present day, focusing on the nature of time, the object of flow and the interaction of sensory perceptions. A much more academic text could be written about the exhibition, but I would rather focus on the exhibition's details on memory and perceptual stimuli. Just as when reading John Berger's books, the author's powerful and voluminous visual expressions make the reader feel as if they are watching a Magritte or Caravaggio painting, this exhibition envelops the viewer in a poetic loop and takes them on a journey through a sea of synesthesia. And it allows the viewer to experience a flow of associations one after the other. A good example is Deniz Tortum and sound designer Alican Çamcı's work *Kesit* (Section). This work is based on Tortum's feature-length documentary film *Maddenin Halleri* (States of Matter), which was shot at Cerrahpaşa Medical Faculty in 2020. In this installation, the sense of the uncanny in the hospital corridors is projected on one surface, while the external presence of autopsy processes and various fetuses is projected on another. These projections take place in a small space like darkrooms where analogue image prints are processed. The vertical projections in this dark space, where the perception of vision is questioned with a sense of depth, refer to the concept of home in the book *And Our Faces, My Heart, As Short-Lived as Photographs*, which is mentioned in the exhibition text; "home was the center of the earth because where it was located, a vertical and a horizontal line intersected. The vertical one went up, up to the sky; the horizontal one went down, underground. The horizontal one represented the traffic of the earth, showing all possible routes to other places. Thus, at home, man was closest to the gods in the sky and the dead in the underworld. This closeness promised access to both states."

Here, it underlines the perception of time and space, which has become one of our most important problems since we started thinking about the dialectic of life and death, rather than the contrast between the concepts of hospital and home. While experiencing this work, I was reminded of John Berger and Selçuk Demirel's book *Saat Kaç?* (What time is it?) in which they try to understand time instead of chasing after it; where old texts and fresh drawings meet, where the writing affects the line, and the line affects the writing. As I left the dark room and experienced Vortex, a co-production by Zeynep Dadak and Çiçek Kahraman, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu's poem *Kusura Bakma* (Sorry about that) kept coming to my mind in the spiral of time.

I'm sorry.

The moment I'm in

Half of you in the past

The other half in the future

Time is a three-legged little rock

The life of one is hidden in the other

The life of the present in the future

The soul of the future is hidden in the past

At this point, we can talk a little bit about synesthesia. What is synesthesia? What is synesthesia? The word synesthesia, derived from the Greek, *syn* (together) and *aisthesis* (perception), means combined sensation. In other words, synesthesia is the perception of one sense by another sense. It can be interpreted as the translation of something seen into sound, and of a sound heard into a visual. People with synesthesia can smell sounds, taste shapes and hear colors. For example, the visual perception of an object can trigger an auditory sensation, while the auditory perception of a sound can trigger the sense of touch. So, for those with synaesthetic sensitivity, a triangle is not only perceived as a shape, but can also be experienced as a color (e.g. red) or a sound (e.g. a bell).

Deniz Tortum + Alican Çamcı, *Kesit*, 2023, Two channel video installation, LED

Zeynep Dadak + Çiçek Kahraman, *Vortex 2*, 2023, Mixed media, Installation





What is synesthesia?
The word synesthesia, derived from the Greek, syn (together) and aisthesis (perception), means combined sensation. In other words, synesthesia is the perception of one sense by another sense. It can be interpreted as the translation of something seen into sound, and of a sound heard into a visual.

Reha Erdem + Florent Herry,
 Mimirap, 2023, 7 minutes, Mixed
 projection technics, Music/Sound
 design and mix: Reha Erdem, Music:
 Nils Frahm/Tristana, Kaplan* beat

(ALT) Zeynep Dadak + Çiçek
 Kahraman, Vortex 1, 2023, Mixed
 media, Installation

So, as spatial perception expands, our brains begin to act in concert with our sense of time, space and volume. The fact that I associated almost every work with a book or a spatial memory while visiting the exhibition is not a coincidence, but rather a result of the expanded cinematic experience creating the space to expand the boundaries of perception and memory.

While we are immersed in the sea of synaesthesia, I would like to mention the book that Mimirap, a co-production of Reha Erdem and cinematographer Florent Herry, based on Erdem's film the Big Big World, reminded me of. While watching this work, which is exhibited in the form of a circular show box, it made me go back in time and think of a book of short stories titled Labyrinth by Jorge Luis Borges that I read years ago. The book opens a visual passage between the ordinary magic of everyday life and the literary magic of a fantastic universe. Just like the main character of the sequence, Zuhul, also known as Mimi, sings a rap song in her own unique style, perhaps embellished with words she mimes so as not to forget them.

With the momentum that Mimi's rebellious rap gives us, we can step out of the sea of free associations. The Poetics of Perception exhibition shows the viewer that poetics, or the body of flow, has a rhythm that derives, and progresses from language, as much as the experience of architectural space triggers the senses to perceive together, that is, it reveals synesthetic perception more than we realize. In simpler terms, with this exhibition, we can say that spatial perception is not a one-way display, and that video installations bring together the fluidity of perception and time in an infinite labyrinth. 🌀



Both *local* and *international*

We talked to Leyla Ünsal and Mert Ünsal founders of Versus Art Project; the most dynamic art gallery of Istanbul

Interview: Merve Akar Akgün

Photo: Elif Kahveci



Versus Art Project is an Istanbul-based gallery that has been actively exhibiting since 2015, representing a wide range of artists working in a variety of mediums and leading the way in lens-based art. What were your goals when you founded this gallery and what are you currently doing? What have been the factors that have shaped you the most?

When starting the gallery, our main goals were to support innovative and experimental art practices that create space for original forms of expression, to bring the local artists we represent to international platforms, to develop their relations with museums and other cultural spaces around the world, to introduce their works to this international arena, and to contribute to collaborations and the development of the art network by organizing solid and reliable relationships with the art community and art professionals through both institutional and individual communications. Our goals were to support and encourage young artists and to create opportunities for new forms of expression to meet the art audience by giving space to alternative perspectives. For almost 10 years, we have been organizing exhibitions in our space in Hanif Han in Beyoğlu, one of Istanbul's most valuable historical districts, and we regularly participate in international fairs to bring the works of the artists we represent to as wide an audience as possible. Unlike many galleries, we have been organizing a panel/conversation in parallel with almost every exhibition since the day we were founded, bringing together our artists and art professionals. We care about structuring the gallery as a cultural platform rather than just a sales venue.

Can you share any examples where patience and perseverance worked to achieve a milestone or breakthrough for your gallery? I believe the answer to this question can be important and inspiring for everyone living in this society.

Since the first day of the gallery's establishment, patience and perseverance have become the leading principles of our working life. Founded in 2013 and actively managed since 2015, the establishment and growth of our gallery coincided with the most challenging socio-economic conditions we could ever face. In a time of crisis, when many well-established galleries closed their doors to visitors, we had to focus on our work with greater effort and motivation than our colleagues in other countries doing the same work in order to prove our existence and continue as a new organization. Trying to survive in spite of all these challenging conditions we faced required us to adopt different strategies that required patience and resistance, and to develop strong management policies. In a period when participation in international fairs and even the production of works is becoming increasingly difficult due to the rapidly changing exchange rates, we are trying to move towards the goals we have set without losing our motivation. For the past 7 years, Enter Art Fair in Copenhagen, which we have attended uninterruptedly despite the various economic difficulties of the time, has been an exemplary milestone in laying the foundations of the gallery we will establish abroad today.

What factors do you believe contribute to your stable position in the art world? How do you define and measure success in the context of your gallery?

What is important for us is to be a visionary gallery that can create new and developing opportunities for all its stakeholders and to represent our artists both locally and internationally in the most professional way by constantly renewing ourselves by protecting our moral values that constitute our principle. Our passion for art and our belief in the artists we work with are the main sources that motivate us in the face of all the challenges we face. I think this is the most important factor that contributes to our stability. The commitment and belief we have in the artists we work with and their representation, beyond making us a family, ensures that we do not doubt where this work will be in years to come and the success it will achieve despite all the difficulties. In your journey as a gallery, you have the opportunity to work with many artists, art professionals and collectors. I can also say that our intention to build our relationships in the sector based on trust is another value that contributes to us and our success.

As a young gallerist living in a country like Turkey, which has been in an artistic decline in recent years, what does it mean for you to participate in international art fairs? Do you encounter certain cultural barriers or misunderstandings when interacting with international audiences?

The fact that living in Turkey without compromising your freedom of expression and, as I mentioned, the economic difficulties making production processes more and more difficult has reached a level that prevents all stakeholders of the field from breathing. Artists and intellectual producers, who developed themselves both theoretically and practically through their travels and research abroad, now have to struggle with the problem of sustaining their living standards in Turkey, let alone traveling. In a country where procuring materials, security and even shelter have become a struggle, it is not possible for an artist to continue producing in the same way. For institutions and gallerists, the harshest conditions begin the moment we step out of the border in terms of both content and representation. It is very important for us to represent the works of our artists in fairs attended by the world's leading galleries despite all the financial and operational difficulties, from customs to transportation. We are happy and proud to communicate with art professionals around the world whom you never have the opportunity to meet while you are in the gallery, to strengthen the artists' relations with institutions, and to bring their works to private collectors and institutional collections abroad. In addition to the subjectivity of our artists, the fact that their works are international in both conceptual and technical terms arouses a serious curiosity and intense appreciation in the viewer who encounters the works, as opposed to a negative cultural barrier.

What are your future goals and expectations for your gallery in terms of promoting art in our country on a global scale?

We will continue to actively participate in international art fairs to make Turkish art more visible in the international arena. By increasing international collaborations, we aim to give our artists more access to international exhibitions and events. At this point, the participation of artists in different institutions and museums, especially in theoretical exhibitions, is very important and constitutes one of the cornerstones of our communication strategy. We believe that the development of state policies and the creation of support funds are essential for the sustainability of these efforts. With the founding of our gallery abroad, we are focused on maintaining a steady path. This requires engaging with a wider and more diverse audience of art lovers, supporting the careers of artists, and a reliable branding process in the art world in every sense. 🌍



Nooch sofa system, design Piero Lissoni. bebitalia.com

mozaik

B&B Italia Stores: Ortaköy Dereboyu Cad. No: 78 34347 İstanbul
T +90 212 327 0595 - F +90 212 327 0597
Cinnah Cad. No: 66/1 Çankaya/Ankara
T +90 312 440 0610 - F +90 312 440 0594
www.mozaikdesign.com - info@mozaikdesign.com

B&B
ITALIA OUTDOOR

We had a conversation with Nazlı Yayla and Gizem Demircelik from the Zilberman team, who are currently preparing to celebrate the gallery's 15th anniversary. With its 6 venues in 3 different countries and an international fair agenda, we tried to look at the gallery's busy schedule, responsibilities, program and motivation

Keeping curiosity and motivation fresh

Interview: Merve Akar Akgün & Huo Rf
Photos: Berk Kir

Zilberman, which will soon celebrate its 15th anniversary, has been engaged in many new formations in recent years. Lately, the gallery's presence abroad has been increasing and we observe that you have determined new strategies. Could you share with us how you set up this system from within and what you look out for? What kind of vision does Zilberman foresee for itself in the national and global art market? What are you doing currently?

Since its beginning, Zilberman has endeavored to develop and transform its spaces and program in accordance with the ever changing dynamics and needs of the Turkish contemporary art scene. Starting with Art Hong Kong in 2011, we have actively participated in a wide-range of international fairs across various countries every year. Through these engagements, we have established strong connections, especially in Asian and European countries. Zilberman Berlin, which opened in Charlottenburg in 2016, has enabled us to reach an international art audience and initiated a close dialogue with institutions, particularly in Berlin, whose programs we closely follow.

In addition to fairs such as Art Basel Hong Kong, Untitled Miami and Zona Maco, which we have been participating in for years, we are also interested in exploring fairs held in countries where our artists live and work. Last season, we participated in K1af Seoul and Art Singapore, along with many other galleries that were seeking a new center in Asia, especially with Hong Kong's closure until this year. In the coming period, we will be exploring West Bund in Shanghai and Taipei Dangdai in Taiwan. Sharing experiences with the artists we represent is the most reliable guide for us.

We can say that Zilberman is based in Turkey, how would you position it? In your policy of opening up to the world, do you follow a local or international path wherever you go?

Nazlı Yayla: Istanbul is our main office and headquarters, but we strive to ensure that the programs we run in each of our venues are international in nature. With the addition of Miami, we are shaping our work around three different countries, taking into account different art audiences, collectors and local institutions. For example, as a result of our discussions with local art professionals during our preparations for the Miami gallery, we are planning to organize the Young Fresh Different (YFD) selection, which has been held in Istanbul for the past 12 years, in Miami next year with a format tailored for young artists from Miami and its surrounding areas.

How many exhibition spaces do you have in total? For what purposes do you use your spaces? Do you have a policy in this regard? How do you choose your programs?

With the inclusion of the spaces planned to open in the upcoming season, Miami gallery and Platform Berlin, we have a total of 6 venues. Every time we say it, we still find ourselves needing to pause and list all of them again. (Laughs) Each space has developed step by step as a response to the projects and needs that we want to form within Zilberman, that attract our curiosity and excite us. The first of these is our main exhibition space on the 3rd floor of Misir Apartmani, which we can call our home. Here we follow our annual program, which includes solo exhibitions of the artists we represent, group exhibitions that we create together with various curators we invite, and the YFD exhibitions that close each season. In our project space on the 2nd floor, also in the Misir Apartment, are *Highlights* exhibitions organized simultaneously with the solo exhibitions in Berlin to create a dialogue between the two cities. This is a space where the exhibitions at the Berlin gallery extend to Istanbul. With the new season, we will announce the name of this space as *Zilberman Dialogues*.

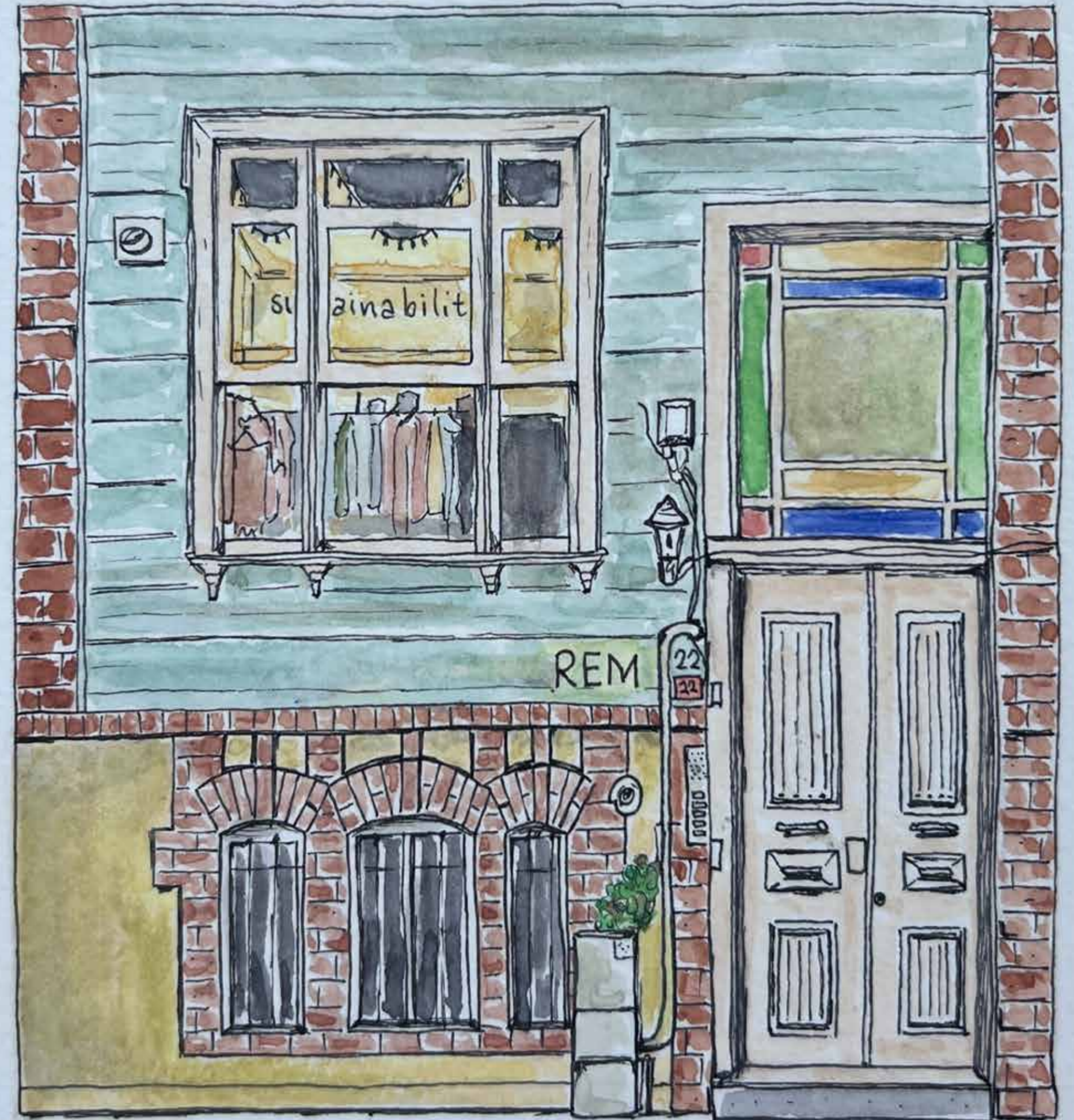
The program of our exhibition space in Piyalepaşa primarily consists of group exhibitions in order to create a space where we can include artists we do not represent. Depending on the content of the exhibition and the artist's preference, solo exhibitions can also take place in this space. For example, Isaac Chong Wai's exhibition titled *If we keep crying, we will go blind* took place here, with an installation that spilled out of the exhibition



REM

istanbul

Locally manufactured sustainable brands



remistanbul.com | @rem.istanbul

space. In Berlin, solo and group exhibitions are accompanied by public events as part of the program. Platform Berlin, the non-profit project space where we transformed the already existing space in Berlin, will follow a program shaped by our collaborations with institutions. For the upcoming Miami gallery, we have prepared a calendar of two solo exhibitions, one group exhibition and a special project per year.

In all of these venues, we organize one solo exhibition for each artist every two years.

Maybe it is a technical question, but we would like to ask a question that we think is important: Zilberman is an important organization for the Turkish art scene. We get this idea by following your exhibition productions and the fairs you participate in. How do your responsibilities and commercial planning align?

Gizem Deirçelik: As a team, our priority in the production process is to provide all kinds of support that the artist needs to compose the imagined project, from material research to bringing together with the right people until the exhibition. We prioritize providing production, transportation and publication support not only for the exhibitions organized within Zilberman and the fairs we participate in; but also, for the projects of our artists who are invited to non-profit projects in Turkey or abroad. One of the projects that excited us the most was Pedro Gómez-Egaña's installation *Virgo*, which was shown at the Lyon Biennale in 2022. After discussions with the artist, we had our craftsmen in Istanbul produce Pedro's house-sized kinetic installation and send it to Lyon. And it worked on the first try.

You have a policy of publishing a publication accompanying each exhibition. You offer these publications to the audience free of charge. This means both a serious production and labor force. Is there a new system you would like to develop for your publications?

NY: Since its foundation, Zilberman has published a publication for each of its exhibitions, a tradition we are happy to preserve. The writings of the authors we invited from Turkey and abroad for these publications both accompany the exhibition and form a valuable archive for our exhibitions. Despite having to make adjustments to the printing and page numbers due to the rising costs, the fact that all publications are both free of charge and accessible on the website and the continuity of this is a priority for us. Apart from the exhibition publications, we are starting a monograph series in the fall. Together with a Berlin-based publishing house, we are currently preparing a book by Pedro Gómez-Egaña.

You have an artist residency program in Berlin. This program only works through the artists you represent. Is this program productive for you, do you have the potential to open the program to be more inclusive or create a space for project-based artists?

GD: We have a residency program both in Istanbul and Berlin. We primarily work with the artists we represent, but we also invite curators and artists we interact with to Istanbul or Berlin and support their research and projects. At the end of this program, we do not expect an output, our priority is for the artist or researcher to get to know and interact with the city they are in.

NY: Together with Platform Berlin, we plan to structure and expand the residency program. We aim to create a model that we can run together with other programs, not only between Istanbul and Berlin, but also in cooperation with institutions in Hong Kong and London.

How do you evaluate the state of art in the world? How does Zilberman fit into this picture? What kind of gaps does Zilberman fill in the framework of Turkey and the world?

First of all, we think that Zilberman is at an important position to carry the practices and productions of artists working in Turkey, dealing with contemporary socio-political and conceptual issues, within different geographies. Nowadays, we observe that galleries and museums, biennials and public collections are working much more closely, and that the distinction between commercial and non-profit is becoming a bit more apocryphal. For example, Zilberman has recently become one of Delfina Foundation's 'gallery circle' supporters, and we welcome the support that curators and institutions can receive from galleries to enhance the programs of biennials.

With projects such as Zilberman Residency, GYF, Berlin Platform and new models we are working on, we aim to expand our reach and opportunities to a wider circle. In order to revitalize the art market in Turkey in particular and to offer a more accessible and beneficial program to the audience, we are dynamically researching 'how to do it better' and taking steps to put it into practice.

What would you like to share with us about your future projects?

As we mentioned, the big projects that excite us and keep us up at night are Platform Berlin in Goethestrasse with our new 350 m2 exhibition space in Schlüterstrasse in Berlin, located in the former Hotel Bogota building; and Zilberman Miami, which will start its activities in the new season. We plan to announce our GYF in Turkey with a new format in the following season and to start local GYFs in Berlin and Miami. And finally, to keep our curiosity and motivation fresh, we find ourselves researching the artists, curators and institutions we dream of working with, without falling into the comfort of "usual suspects." 🐷

Simon Wachsmuth, Installation view from the exhibition *Seven Deadly Sins*, 2022, Photo: Chroma

Zeynep Kayan, Installation view from the exhibition, *One One Two One Two Three*, 2022, Photo: Chroma

Itamar Gov & Sim Chi Yin, Installation view from the exhibition *Transit*, 2023, Photo: Chroma

Pedro Gomez Egana, Installation view from the 16th Biennale de Lyon, *A Manifesto of Fragility*, 2022, Photo: La Biennale de Lyon



“When Pigs Fly”

CANSU CÜRGEN & AVŞAR GÜRPINAR
AMBIGUOUS STANDARDS INSTITUTE

This ninth project, hosted by *Kahve Dünyası's contemporary art project Yanköşe*, is an installation consisting of the Ambiguous Standards of Time on LED signs that we are familiar with from daily life. On a crossroad where the transportation lines intersect, people and vehicles race against time, ambiguous expressions of time, whose mathematical correspondences are impossible to find, appear and disappear.

April-October 2023
Meclis-i Mebusan Caddesi No: 85 Kabataş
The installation could be visited 24 hours as it is located at a public space.

(scan to watch the project video)



YANKÖŞE
GÜZEL SANAT PROJESİ

yankose.org

[instagram.com/yankoseprojesi](https://www.instagram.com/yankoseprojesi)

#yankoseproject

#whenpigsfly

#ambiguousstandardsinstitute

TIME IS A CHILD

A group exhibition in Leros, Greece
GALERIST | PERASMA

9-23 JULY

Everyday between 11:00 - 20:00

Navy Base Leros
Koulouki Bay, Lakki

ALICE GUITTARD, AYÇA TELGEREN
BURCU YAĞCIOĞLU, ELİF URAS
EVGENIA VERELI, KOSTIS VELONIS
LARA ÖGEL, MALVINA PANAGIOTIDI
MARIA JOANNOU, MARTIN CREED
MERVE İŞERİ, NAZIM ÜNAL YILMAZ
NİL YALTER, NURİ KUZUCAN
ÖMER PEKİN, RASHID AL KHALIFA
SAVVAS LAZ, SERKAN ÖZKAYA
SİLVA BİNGAZ, STEFANIA STROUZA
WILLIAM KENTRIDGE, YEŞİM AKDENİZ
YUSUF SEVİNÇLİ

With the kind support of

V
I
E
N
A
CONTEMPORARY



Miller
HOLDING

ATELIER REBUL
DEPUIS 1895

MINVAL
LIVING



ethnicloom

TEPTA
LIGHTING

hello@timeisachild.com

... like a test case within a broader experiment

Interview: Eva Vaslamatzi
Photos: Courtesy of Erica Scourti



Erica Scourti, Dad's Diary (2009, 2017) video still

In your poem *Lost to the Phosphorus* you write “I’ve always felt alienated from my own voice, like only to allo miso milaçi”. The shifting of languages when referring to your “other half” using Greeklish, does not seem accidental. This transition from one language to another, often without translation, is characteristic of your work, as for example in the video *Exit Scripts*. How do these two mother tongues, English and Greek, impact your work? Are they complementary in conflict?

The negotiation between languages and cultures and how to articulate this sometimes uneasy location through foregrounding mistranslation, bad transcription and using this third “language” of Greeklish is an important aspect of my work. Perhaps they are neither complementary or in conflict but that the impossibility of ever achieving perfect translation emerges as a site of generativity. Caroline Bergvall talks of working against the “unifying, mythicized, and frequently exclusionary principles of national language and of monolingual culture”, and allowing languages to contaminate each other. Or as poet Uljana Wolf says, even beyond the confines of national languages, something within us always remains “in another language, unreadable, untranslatable; unmissably hidden in the middle”, which conveys another angle of the self-alienation these two works allude to: the impossibility, perhaps, of ever finding an authentic, true voice or self-expression, despite this being held out as promise in consumer capitalism, and the association of creativity with a unique authorial voice. Of course, in practice, most of this contamination is unidirectional; while colloquial (and artspeak) Greek is littered with Englishisms (from “performance” to “no worries”), this isn’t the case in reverse, reflecting Anglophone hegemony inscribed through histories of imperialism. Leaving some parts untranslated is a way of highlighting that imbalance, and resisting Anglophone assumptions of access. Meanwhile, the software’s inability to transcribe spoken Greek also alludes to my own lack of grasp of aspects of Greek culture, having lived until recently in the UK since the age of 18- a lack sometimes pervaded with a sense of melancholy.

In your work you often expose yourself to the camera, which makes it feel immediately intimate and personal, like a confession. However, even if the content is intimate this gesture works like a research process that reveals social mechanisms. I am thinking about your work *Screen Tears*, where you placed videos of yourself crying in stores and public spaces. What does it mean as an artist to turn the camera to you to make an artwork today? I think, for example, of the weight of heritage from artists such as Bas Jan Ader and his work *I am too sad to tell you*.

The video you mention was directly inspired by Bas Jan Ader’s video and was almost a new “version” conveying the pervasive mediation of self across digital networks through selfies and online profiles. It also explores how public displays of emotion play into what Eva Illouz has called emotional capitalism, with the crying shot especially valorized as the guarantee of realness and authenticity. Emotion is apparently personal, yet is also highly commodifiable, echoing the way that—as feminist thinkers have long argued—love, supposedly a personal matter, is similarly put to work in naturalizing the caring, domestic, and emotional labor expected of women. So perhaps, reflecting the feminist notion that the personal is political, that a sense of personhood, including our feelings, are inseparable from the societal structures that shape our self-understanding as gendered, classed and racialized subjects. For example, while feelings of shame, loss, and depletion after a breakup are felt “personally”, they are entangled with the (failure of) dreams of what Lauren Berlant calls the “good life” promised by coupledness within a hetero-patriarchal system. As for your question, I had worked for some time with collaging found text and did not risk very much as a result. Putting myself in the frame (literally), and often staging actions in public spaces, including the internet, was a way of acknowledging my own positionality, utilizing myself as a test case within a broader experiment.

¹ Which translates to “like only the other half of myself is talking”.

Eva Vaslamatzi, curator and writer living and working in Athens, had an extended conversation with artist Erica Scourti about her art practice. This conversation focuses on Scourti’s works, her relationship with language, how she assimilates social life, the medium she uses and her exhibition at EMST through Eva Vaslamatzini’s reflections

Zilberman Berlin
Schlüterstraße 45 ↓

zilbermangallery



Fotoğraf: Chroma

Transit

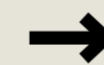
Yane Calovski & Hristina Ivanoska, Antje Engelmann, Memed Erdener, Hanna Frenzel, Itamar Gov, Fatoş İrwen, İz Öztat & Zişan & BAÇOY KOOP, Judith Raum, Sim Chi Yin, Annette Weisser

Küratör Lotte Laub & Susanne Weiß

29 Nisan—29 Temmuz 2023

Chemistry and Physics in the Household

Itamar Gov



Zilberman Berlin
Goethestraße 82



Fotoğraf: Chroma

27 Nisan—29 Temmuz 2023



Fotoğraf: Kayhan Kaygusuz

Çatisız
Neriman Polat



Zilberman İstanbul
Mısır Apartmanı

24 Mayıs — 15 Temmuz 2023



Yes, we also saw the coexistence of these two aspects of your work, collage, and video, in your recent exhibition at EMST *Profiles of you*. In the show, your work *Dad's Diary* (2009, 2017), where your father reads parts of the diary he kept when you were a teenager, really stuck with me. It is as if this works in the starting point of the exhibition which generates various genealogies: of your own search for identity, of the "rituals" of the Greek summer holidays of that time, etc. What is it like to let go of control and accept another "profile of you" from someone close to you?

Yes, this video seemed to have resonated with many viewers, perhaps because it speaks so directly to Greek experience- not just the "Greek summer" ritual but also the children leaving home to go abroad for studies, in many cases permanently. Though I should point out that the videos are not my own- they are all found on Youtube, of other people's holidays, suggesting the ways what feel like unique, life-defining experiences are in reality widely shared. But this question of giving up control by inviting another to create a "profile" is one I've thought about a lot, for example in *The Outage*, where I commissioned a ghostwriter to produce a fictional autobiography based only on my digital footprint. There is an inherent risk, both in releasing agency over the telling of one's "story" and in the ethical, interpersonal considerations- how and to what extent others are also exposed through the telling. I am interested in complicating the assumption that autobiography is a guarantee of the author's true narrative voice, also drawing from Adriana Caverero's notion that life stories, and our sense of self, are externally narrated- that we understand ourselves through the recognition and pen of the other.

And you also let, beyond people, technology give its own interpretation with the tools it has through algorithms, search engines, etc. One last question: How is your relationship with technology developing through the years? To what extent do you want to incorporate new technologies that are constantly emerging and how interested are you in keeping a distance from them?

I have found my work gaining distance from digital technology per se- partly because it is challenging to use software, algorithms, social media, etc in even an explicitly critical way without in some way reinscribing their ubiquity. Instead, I moved more towards questions that arise when envisioning the body and soul at work as technologies themselves- where ideals of efficiency, performance, and productivity are internalized as protocols. I want to push against this, while also using traditional media in ways that problematize this relation; for example, my hand-written sheets, which are a form of journaling and meditation- practices that are often held out as ways of handling the stress that arises from work, challenging life situations and so on -could also be seen as reinforcing the idea that tending to mental health is one's individual self-responsibility, a prevalent attitude of neoliberal capital. Also, there is a pleasure in embodied practices and media like fabric, collage, and drawing that allow absorption in materiality and somatic connection. 🌿

Erica Scourti, *Clean Sheets* (2020- 21)
installed at *Profiles of You*, EMST, 2023.
Photo © Studio Vaharidis

Erica Scourti, *Screen Tears* (2008) video still

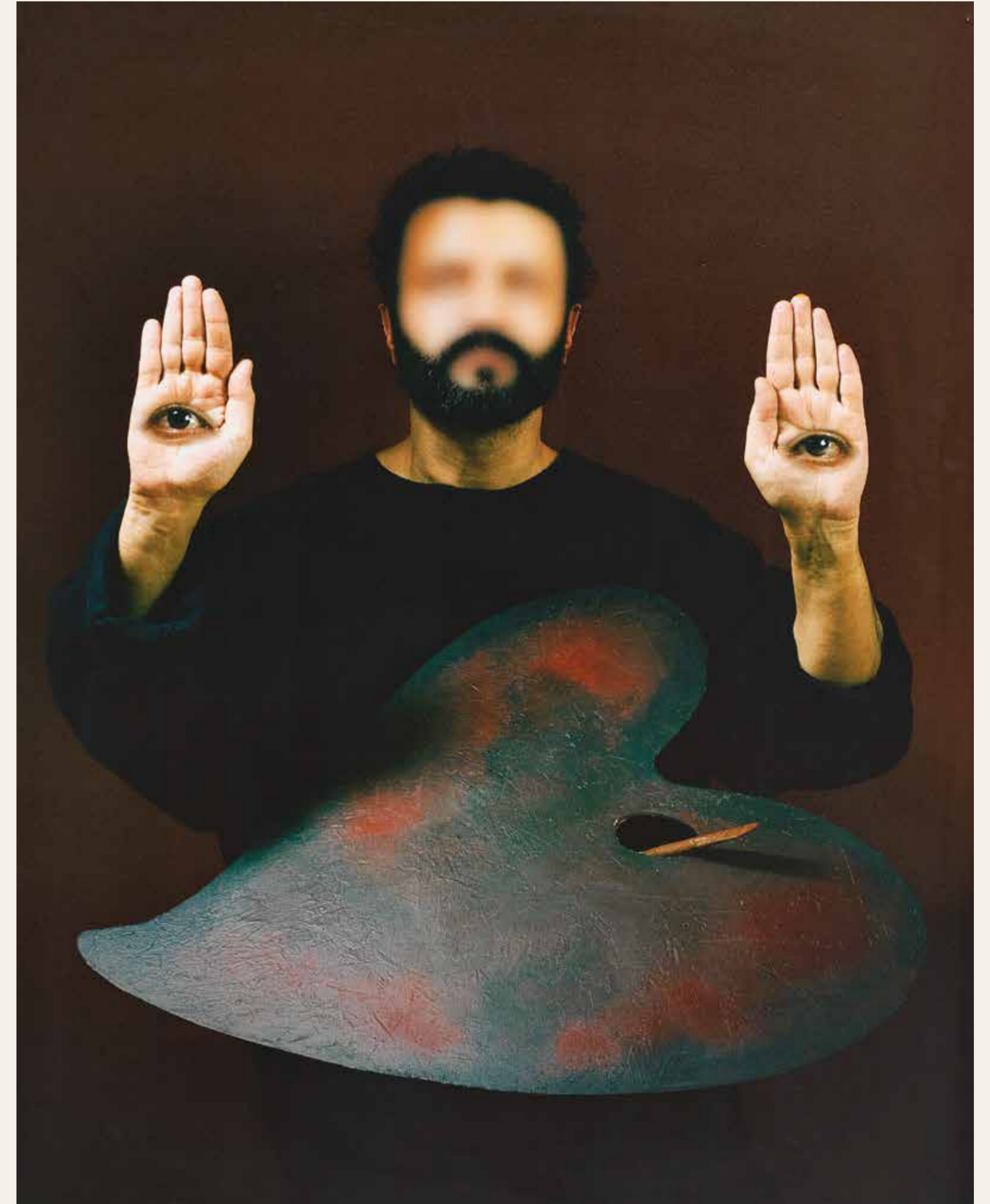
Erica Scourti, *No To Self* (2020-23) digital
collage installed at *Profiles of You*, EMST,
2023. Photo © Studio Vaharidis

Erica Scourti, *Too Deep* (2019) collage

SURETİMİN RESMİDİR

A Painting of My Face

Dr. Şükrü Bozluolcay Koleksiyonu'ndan Sanatçı Atölyeleri ve Otoportreler
Artist Ateliers and Self-Portraits from the Dr. Şükrü Bozluolcay Collection



Balkan Naci İslimyeli
Sanatçının Elleri ile Gördüğünün Resmidir / The Painting of What The Artist Sees with His Own Hands, 1998
Prestoval üzerine dijital baskı / Digital print on canvas panel
101 x 78 cm

Küratör | Curator:
Oğuz Erten
Dr. Özlem İnay Erten

19 Haziran | June
26 Ağustos | August 2023

BOZLU ART PROJECT
www.bozluartproject.com contact@bozluartproject.com

TREMOR / RUMOUR*

TREMOR / RUMOUR*

Hoovering life
 Hoover, I know all about your rumours...
 Hot summer
 Once again
 Odessa Mama calling
 Two fugal tanks entering into the Bosphorus
 From the Black Sea
 Athena after Rasputin
 Interview with Yuko
 Squatting the secret garden
 The damned Esma Sultan Palace
 On the sea
 Spirit escapes from the isolation
 Shell is fragile then
 To look himself/herself
 The eternal fugue
 Shell to shell
 Skin to skin
 Receptor aches
 Thousand pieces
 Mankind plateau¹
 Fractal spirits
 More spin more tremor
 Why
 Why not
 What
 Tremor makes rumour
 Rumour makes humour
 Relational
 Ho ho ho
 Hoover²
 Hotel City welcomes
 Heterotopic³ orgy
 Mobility Yes
 Identity No
 Sincerity Maybe
 Pure Fraternité
 Huge Picnic
 In the city
 Hoover
 All in the boat
 Attendance
 Sea to sea
 Port to port
 Shell to shell
 Hoover Hoover
 Linen spirits
 Off-season oysters
 Big sale
 Permanent devaluation
 Everybody promises
 I promise on
 Somebody else's sweat
 Punching bag
 Hoover
 Dignity in the Calypso
 Melancholia in Arkadia⁴
 Next vodka
 Another shell

My body your body
 Everybody except me
 Where are you
 Hoo
 Ver
 Jules Verne
 Along the Black Sea
 İstanbul to İstanbul
 Black Hole⁵
 Everything goes in
 Nothing remains
 In the dream
 Of fugitive sturgeon
 Cheap champagne please
 Warm champagne please
 To everybody
 To me too
 No love
 No hangover anymore
 Hoover
 Over
 From shell to shell
 Sea to sea
 Black Sea Baltic Sea Barents Sea
 B-Fact
 Neglected elegance
 Lunatic souls
 White nights
 Sunflower divan
 Blue cavalier patrolling
 Repetition
 Skin to skin
 Spin to spin
 Rehearsal life
 Rehearsal city
 Hoover up
 Picnic City
 Public Perversion
 Private Paranoia
 Summer depression⁶
 Neuromancer ballad
 Spontaneous escape
 İstanbul-Odessa-Yalta
 Lovelace
 Loveface⁷
 Back in September
 Don't come on Monday
 Tremor Sea
 Black Tremor
 Hoover the water
 Sevastopol calling
 Writing a mockery letter
 Kosacks in the rebellion
 Sultan indifferent⁸
 İstanbul Hotels packed
 With nomads
 No way no promise
 Year 2001
 Crisis
 Black Hall
 Everything suspended
 Rumour here rumour there

Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin

1 * Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin. This poem by Alptekin was written on the occasion of the Becoming a Place exhibition at Proje4L, İstanbul in 2001 where Tremour/Rumour/Hoover (2001, sequins mounted on plastic plate) was shown.

Plateau: The title of the Italian pavillion at the 49th Venice Biennial, curated by Harald Szeemann in 2001 was Plateau of Mankind.

2 Hoover, an electrical home equipment brand, held an extensive advertisement campaign in Turkey in the 1980s for their vacuum cleaners. The jingle of this commercial started like this: "Ho ho ho Hoover..."

3 Informed by Michel Foucault's 1967 lecture "Des Espaces Autres (Of Other Spaces)," Alptekin employed Foucault's concept of the "heterotopia" in a multiplicity of his works, including collages and installations throughout his artistic career.

4 Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin, Melancholia in Arkadia, 2000

5 "Black Hole" is a phrase embroidered on a white linen, from Alptekin's Incident(s) series (2007)

6 Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin, Artist in Summer Depression, 1996 (mixed media installation). Site-specific installation for the exhibition Azınlık (Minority) curated by Ali Akay

7 English poet and mathematician, also acknowledged as the first computer programmer, Ada Lovelace (1815-1852); also 1970's porn star Linda Lovelace. Alptekin has two works with the same title; Lovelace (1999), shown at his solo show at Dulcinea Gallery, İstanbul and another version was first shown at the exhibition Ekoloji/Periferi curated by Ali Akay in 1998 in Florence, Italy. Its counterpart Loveface (2000), was first shown at the exhibition "Total Global" organized by Samuel Herzog in Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel, Switzerland, 2000.

8 Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin, Guardians of the Threshold, 1999



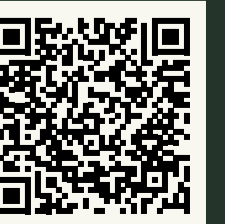
SELECTIONS II

Vahram Davtian | Bayram Demir | Gago | Sedat Girgin
 Edgar Grigoryan | Hakan Gürbüzler | Armen Hakobjanyan
 Vav Hakobyan | Mehmet Resul Kaçar | Roman Kakoyan
 Mesut Karakış | David Martirosyan | Daron Mouradian
 Ani Qananyan | Armén Rotch | Tigran Sahakyan

15.06.2023 - 27.08.2023

Ziyaret Saatleri: Pazartesi - Cumartesi, 10.00-18.00

Online kataloğa ulaşmak için lütfen "Karekodu" cihazınıza okutunuz.



Hacimimi Mah. Necatibey Cad. Sakızcılar Sok. No: 1/E Karaköy 34425
 Beyoğlu, İstanbul, Turkey | Tel: +90 212 251 27 54 | Faks: +90 212 251 90 41
 info@galeri77.com | www.galeri77.com

GALERİ 77

ARTSY /galeri77

Violence Victim and Visa

Stay darling

Stay forever

Hoover the fucking City

Till eternity

Just Hoover

Ho ho ho

Hover

A shitty summer. Full of crisis smitten wretched people, İstanbul, a worn-out picnic ground waiting for an earthquake. Public paranoia seems like a cure-all. The eventful land - which tremors with rumour and where tremor becomes rumour,

With all work initiated only to be left half-done. Poverty, infused with glamor that stretches across the sea. By the way, hadn't the Byzantine loot been exhausted? Projects one after the other, who is going to pick our ass, European museums or art? The wretched empathize with each other, the rich tolerate the poor.

With your castrated self, you still deal with lovelace and your loveface. It's full of thieves and the neutered all around.

Whereas the sea is everywhere. The whole country is covered with co-ops. Incomplete, half-done, out of order, liquefied petroleum gas, watermelon bark, beer, flour dough, oil, tourist, chair, sardine.

Tired artists, stationery, file, sale, athlete's foot, foul breath and projects that keep my butt on the road. Health insurance, certificate of residence, computer clatter, technological fuck-ups, bank, foreign currency, bank, ever wandering like an idle pulley.

Year 2001, exotic market blown up with the crisis, contemporary Turkish art, my balls dried up because of alcohol, curators checking my teeth, young horse, young artist. Why do artists happen to be ugly, why do feet end up with athlete's foot, why does the craw have a foul smell. Is the tea garden only public space, is only the mattress private. Spotless CDs, meticulous portfolios, smooth e-mailings, eminent sales.

Clothing from Terkos bazaar, ten pieces of rags instead of one, sweat, deodorant, taxi, beer, odour, everyone keeping the change. Andy Warhol in the middle of summer, this was all we needed, Even schools are closed.

Odessa calling, Blacksea up there, at the footsteps of Këraban, No sanatorium this summer, no rubdown, no opium, no acupuncture. No Black Sea except for the vodka shrimp of Karaköy. We're after serious work, preparing for bialn harlotry, penniless, in debt. Our friends will come: "Good to see you" friendships, a brief tremor, wish we could at least arrange for a tiny earthquake. Meetings on the Bosphorous, auction sales of conscience, make shift exhibitions of Europe Europe Here We Come, We Can't Come.

A sundown at Sevastopol, indifferent to the world, thousand and one ships, Thousand and one books. My ego on the run doesn't want to return. Missing a summer melancholy, a sanatorium melancholy is what my share is. Whereas it is possible to spread out rump to rump like a calf on "İstanbul rafts" at Bodrum Türkbükü, with a teeny telephone in hand and accompanied by bodyguards. How irresponsible, İstanbul is vacated,

Left to the Laila clientele, people we know not, who are about to dump those who remained into the sea on the very shore Neuromancer passed by.

Whereas one should be seen Bodrum-İstanbul-Bodrum at airports, high-society takes roll-calls along with the spindoctors of the media. At last, sponsored festive festivals are over, football is on vacation and here is the South, the real thing, life is the Aegean, what rules is bronzed skin underneath linen. But wasn't fun and play a sign of the postmodern? There is something wrong here. While people on the street loiter with discount sale traps, payment installments thru credit cards and popular assessments of the intellectual "two" supplements these people hardly spare each other and artists puke violence in sludgy humidity. With drivers, houseboys and bodyguards, while gathering strength to rest, you don't even have an assistant they said.

Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin, 2001

9 Weekend supplements of newspapers



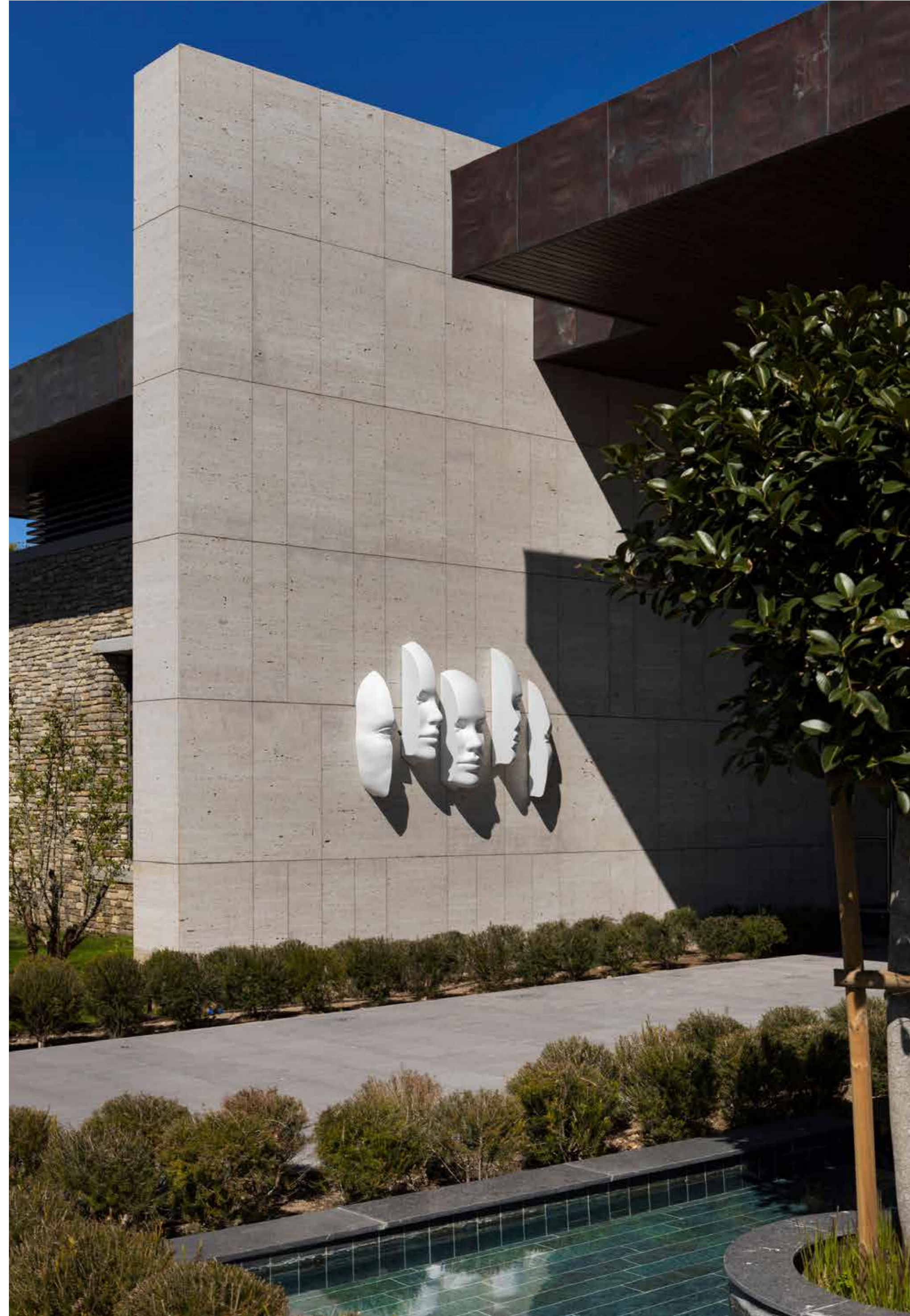
Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin, Love Lace, 1995, Sequined billboard, 250 x 350 cm, Ed. 3 + 2 AP. Courtesy of the artist's estate and Galerist.

Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin, Love Face, 2000, Sequined billboard, 250 x 350 cm, Ed. 3 + 2 AP. Courtesy of the artist's estate and Galerist.

"The art is

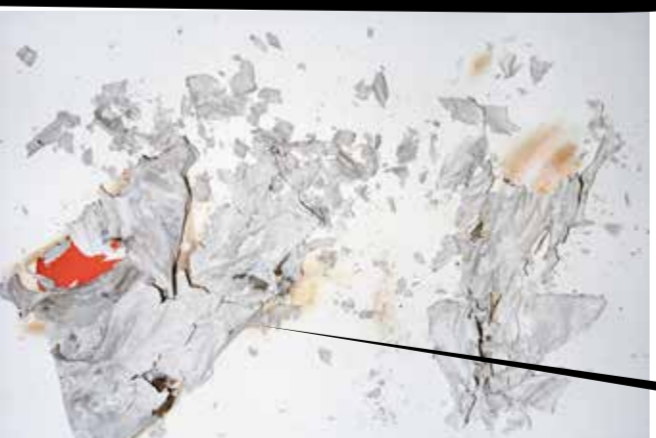


MARTCH



Bayou Villas, Lara Barut Collection, Antalya, Türkiye, Artwork on the wall: Ali Şentürk

SELİM SÜME FOR ART UNLIMITED MAGAZINE IN 2023



Interview: Merve Akar Akgün
Photo: Berk Kır

BAYOU Villas by Lara Barut Collection, where Barut Hotels Group offers an attentive and innovative accommodation experience, is located in Antalya, in a natural setting embracing the beauty of the Mediterranean Sea. Comprising 24 private villas, BAYOU Villas is home to a wide selection of artworks put together by Gözde Ulusoy. We spoke with Ulusoy about art consultancy and what an art-infused travel experience can be

Nature, people, time, life

THIS POSTER WAS CREATED BY ERMAN YILMAZ AND

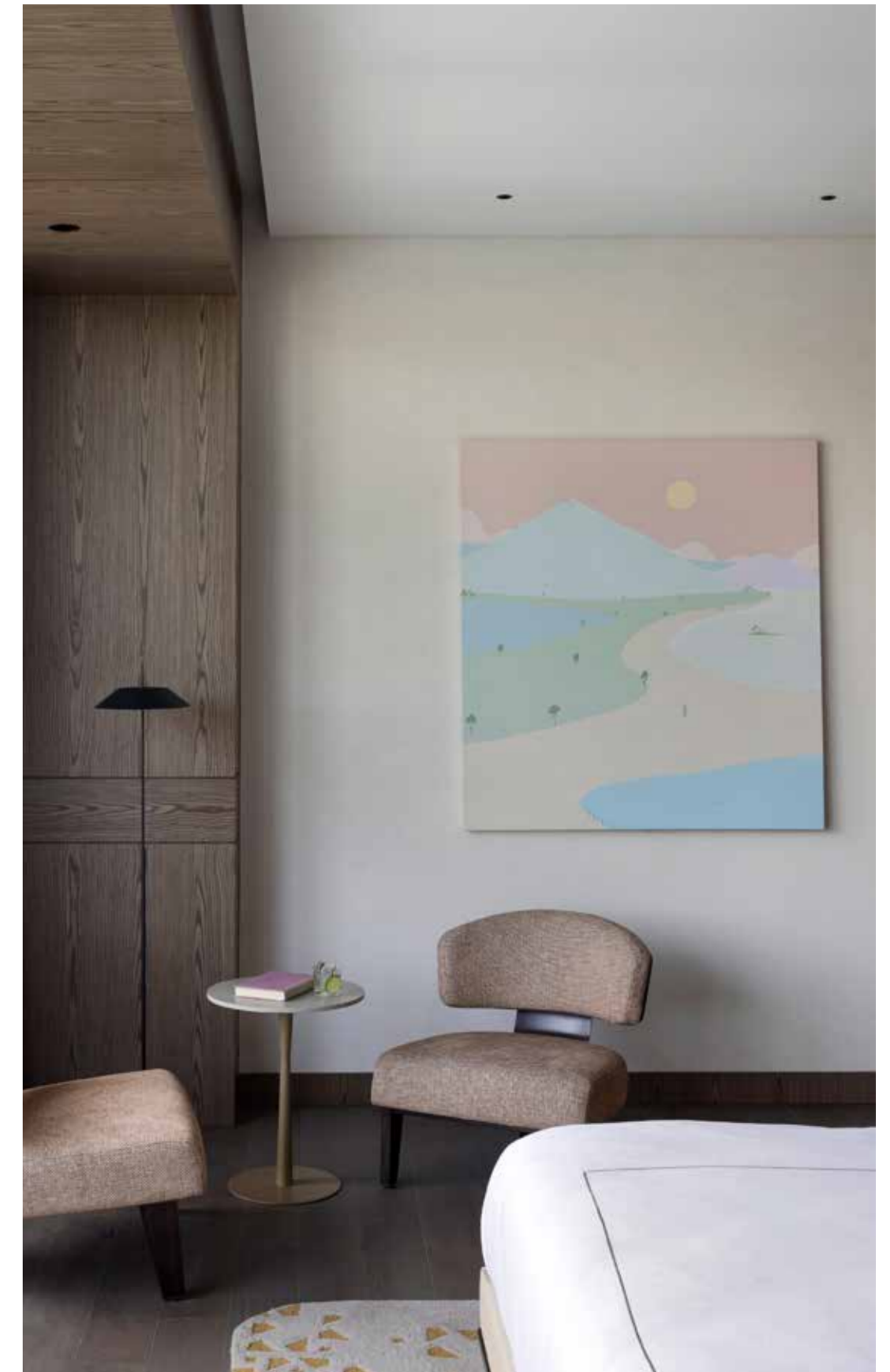


Installing artworks in luxury projects is a very delicate experience. It is not only a matter of creativity to be able to bring different artworks together without wearing out the artists and the artworks, making room for concepts and aesthetics, but it is also a matter of keeping many different balances together in an orderly way. How do you personally handle art consultancies in this context? How did you cross paths with BAYOU Villas in Antalya, which offers a very comfortable vacation experience?

It is definitely a multiple equation and requires a delicate balance. But working with people who already have a strong and current relationship with art has a very valuable advantage in creating the balance we are looking for. When we created our selection for BAYOU Villas, we created a ground for the content and evolved in a direction where we did not focus on a single artist, but when we had the opportunity to make space for more than one artist, we took it, making our job harder along the way. We needed to create a coherent network in both the production and careers of the artists who would be featured. In this process, we worked and thought about each work and each artist in detail, and with each new decision, we revisited and updated the entire selection.

My field of consultancy has developed as a way of working in collaboration with architectural and interior design projects with PavéXart, a new extension of Pavé Studio founded by Merve Sarıkaya, which we laid the foundations of in 2021. Together with Hüray Erk, the interior architect of the project and co-founder of Metex Studio Erk, we proceeded with a system that we referenced this way of working in this project.

What factors did you consider when selecting artwork for these high-end vacation destinations? What were the must-haves for you?



Bayou Villas, Lara Barut Collection, Antalya, Türkiye, Artwork on the wall: Serdar Acar

We worked on a selection where the simple but impressive language created in interior design and architecture would be understood by an audience open to reading and discovering the same simple language and the subtext of the work.

Diversity of voice was a must for me, and what made me happiest was working with people who supported this idea. Since the works will meet with international audiences with different perspectives over time, we have created a large collection that supports young artists at the beginning of their contemporary art careers, as well as internationally recognized artists or young and mid-career artists who have advanced their careers in contemporary art in Turkey. 25 different artists' works in different disciplines such as painting, ceramics, installation, collage, digital art, video art and NFT. The texts of the works of each of these artists will soon be included in the villas as a catalog, so that guests will be able to get to know the artists as well as gain information.

How did you make sure that the artworks you chose complemented the interior design and architecture of the villas?

I would say that I have a bit of an advantage in this respect. This was not a field that I carried out alone and proceeded without criticism. With Hüray Erk, one of the founding partners of Metex Studio Erk, who undertook the interior architecture of the project and with whom we collaborated while realizing the art selection, we have always made very detailed evaluations at every stage, thinking together and evaluating why it would be the right combination or why the works we did not include but evaluated would not be the right complement. In addition to his professionalism in design and architecture, he is also a good art viewer and collector. Ahmet Barut, who is also the owner of the hotel and a collector, who always cares about the relationship with art in his hotels, was constantly involved in the process. While trying to reach a consensus, it was inevitable to deepen the evaluations. The selection was shaped in a process in which we all followed both local and international examples very well, and evaluated examples that we found meaningful, where the work added value to the space and the space added value to the work. In addition to my professionalism in the field of art, I have the advantage of combining multiple perspectives as an editor in the field of design and architecture for many years and as someone who has worked and spoken with international architectural offices on their projects. The coming together of architecture, design and art reveals the integrity of an effortless harmony when the right background is created. This unity supports the feeling of completion.

How did you choose the artists in the collection and how did you bring them together? What were your most important considerations in these practices? Did you pursue a curatorial philosophy?

I think it would be beyond my scope to say a curatorial philosophy, but of course we first created a subtext for the selection. Before discussing the artists and their works, we determined the space, what we wanted to create, what kind of interaction network we wanted to establish and what the ground for this would be with the interior architect of the project and the owner of the hotel.

BAYOU Villas is a special project that integrates with nature and is designed with the idea of offering a personalized experience. In the art selection, we focused on creating a wide selection of contemporary art that maintains a simple language in harmony with the architecture, interior architecture, and landscape architecture, and is mainly inspired by people, nature, nature observations and behavioral characteristics of nature, including examinations of the relationship between nature-human-time-life, and includes different layers of thought and production. The selection, which includes works whose disciplines are different from each other and therefore differ in their approaches to color and form and the issues they examine, has emerged as a result of a long and painstaking process that reflects a holistic perspective, with an approach that respects the artist and the way of production, without intervention, and in harmony with each other in terms of conceptual infrastructure and aesthetic language.

How do you balance the client's aesthetic preferences with your own curatorial vision?

In my consultancy projects, I am not involved in a person-based art consultancy model, but in a project-based project that is already coordinated with the architect and interior architect. This puts us in a valuable area where we can focus on what the artist and the work tell us, rather than personal tastes, where we can evaluate how the space, we are in interacts with the design concept, and where we can also talk about the future of the work and the artist. We can even transform the space according to the work and this allows the work to be presented in the best way. It is a very advantageous situation for me. I have already worked with people who respect professionalism, who do not look for added value only in aesthetics when bringing design and art together. Therefore, we do not have a conflicting or disconnected point of view. At this point, what I paid attention to was not to ignore the fact that these works are in shared spaces, in a hotel project that hosts guests from different cultures.

Finally, how do you follow the latest updates in the art world while carrying out these projects?

Although I am not a constant part of the dynamic compared to the period I was working at the gallery, with UP Art Project, which I founded with Zeynep Pakel in 2021, and PavéArt, which was born in the same year as a new area of Pavé Studio, we have a cycle in which we constantly stay up to date, research, talk and think, albeit within its own calm dynamics. I have more opportunities to visit galleries and workshops in Turkey, I try to organize my travels with biennial/gallery/museum/artist visits in mind, if possible, to follow the international dynamics. I try to use social media a little more for my own benefit, and by following international art critics and writers, I practically incorporate a wider network into my own flow than my physical visit and discovery dynamics. Also, since I continue to work as an editor, my urge to be informed is always awake, and being in the flow of information has the advantage of keeping up to date. 📖



Bayou Villas, Lara Barut Collection, Antalya, Türkiye, Artwork on the wall: Sevim Kaya

Artists whose works are featured:

Ahmet Çerkez, Ali Şentürk, Anne Kari Odegaard, Bora Başkan, Burçin Başar, Camila Rocha, Çağla Köseoğulları, Defne Tesal, Eda Soyulu, Emin Mete Erdoğan, Erinc Seymen, Erman Özbaşaran, Hamza Kırbaş, Hasan Pehlevan, Ilgın Seymen, Merve Şendil, Mithat Şen, Ömer Faruk Yaman, Serdar Acar, Sevim Kaya, Sinan Logie, Uğur Daştan, Süleyman Yılmaz, Umut Toros, Yonca Karakaş

GİZEM AKKOYUNOĞLU
KEREM OZAN BAYRAKTAR
LUDOVIC BERNHARDT
LUZ BLANCO
MEHMET DERE
YUNUS EMRE ERDOĞAN
EROL ESKİCİ
ÇAĞLA KÖSEOĞULLARI
YAĞIZ ÖZGEN
ZEYNO PEKÜNLÜ
CHRISTIANE PESCHEK
FARID RASULOV
SERGEN ŞEHİTOĞLU
MERVE ŞENDİL
BERKAY TUNCAY
CLEMENS WOLF

SANATORIUM

KEMANKES MAH. MUMHANE CAD. NO:67/A—34425—KARAKÖY/İSTANBUL | SANATORIUM.COM.TR | INFO@SANATORIUM.COM.TR | T: +90 212 293 67 17

Say it *loud*, say it clear

Nan Goldin refuses to look away from the beginning of her career, her work intertwines with her veracity, each frame a testament to her unwavering truth. We focus on her practice through Laura Poitras' documentary *All the Beauty and the Bloodshed*

Text: Zeynep Gülçur



Tamara Rodriguez, Harvard Art Museums



Tamara Rodriguez, Harvard Art Museums

American photographer Nan Goldin made a name for herself in the art world through her evocative and intimate photographs during the 70's and 80's. Using photography as an extension of her life, Nan captured lovers lying in bed with her, friends playing out in clubs, hostels, bordellos, beaches, drag queens kissing in bars. When the AIDS epidemic hit, it ravaged the photographer's community. Being one of the prominent figures to fight against the stigma surrounding AIDS, Nan was fearlessly using her voice to advocate for change. Four decades later, the photographer finds herself battling against another epidemic. An epidemic caused by the Sackler family, manufacturers of a highly addictive opioid painkiller, who washed that blood money by donating to museums and art institutions.

The narrative unfolds in *All the Beauty and the Bloodshed*, the documentary by acclaimed filmmaker Laura Poitras tangling Nan Goldin's personal and artistic journey together with her ongoing crusade against the pharma billionaires and art world philanthropists, Sackler family.

Written and directed by Poitras, with Nan as producer, director of photography and on-screen subject, *All the Beauty and the Bloodshed* skillfully interweaves two parallel storylines, a narrative choice by Poitras to thread the photographer's past and present.

Poitras is best known for her *9/11 Trilogy* comprising *My Country, My Country* (2006), *The Oath* (2010) and *Citizenfour* (2014). The *9/11 Trilogy* delves into a historical period marked by intense conflicts over access to information and the power dynamics surrounding that information. Governments, citizens, security agencies, and the media all engage in a complex struggle to control and shape the narrative surrounding the events of 9/11. The films collectively raise vital questions around the role of critical visual culture at a historical juncture at which the construction of a social imaginary of "freedom" is positioned at odds with transparency and accountability.

While Poitras insists that *All the Beauty and the Bloodshed* is no less political than her earlier work, she acknowledges that it is indeed her most collaborative work to date with a "certain intimacy and emotional depth". The director goes beyond capturing Nan the activist. We see Nan the artist, Nan the sister, Nan the daughter, Nan the sex worker, we see a creative force on the margins in New York City, through her slideshows, intimate interviews, ground-breaking photography, and rare footage of her personal fight to hold the Sackler family accountable for the overdose crisis.

In the 1970s, Nan Goldin was already a striking figure, documenting New York's downtown scene with snapshot photographs of drag queens and strippers, writers, artists, performers and addicts. Her photos, autobiographical in nature, provide a window into her idiosyncratic lifestyle and intimate relationships with a raw and unfiltered perspective. The combination of visuals and narration in the film offers a compelling insight into Nan's personal experiences and artistic vision. Through hundreds of original photographs presented in Nan's signature slideshow technique overlaid with her narration, we see selected pictures from *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (1983-2022), *The Other Side* (1972-1992), *Sisters, Saints and Sibyls* (2004-2022) to *Memory Lost* (2019-2021).

Her best-known work is *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (1983-2022), a project she describes as a visual diary chronicling the struggles for intimacy and understanding among the friends and lovers whom Nan describes as her tribe, as her family, not the one she was born into but the one she chose for herself. She began

working on it in the 80's when she was living in a windowless loft in Bowery in New York. "There is a popular notion that the photographer is by nature a voyeur, the last one invited to the party," Nan writes in the foreword to the book version of *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, first published in 1986. "But I'm not crashing; this is my party. This is my family, my history." Nan's intention is for her subjects to establish a genuine connection by looking directly at the viewer. She strives to depict the world as it truly is, free from embellishment or exaggeration. While acknowledging the presence of pain, her portrayal of the world is not bleak; rather, it embraces introspection as a valued quality.

The Ballad (1986) also includes pictures of her back then boyfriend Brian and harrowing documentation of Nan's healing process after she got beaten up by him in Berlin. We see her blackened eyes, an intense red blood in the white of her swollen left eye mirrors the shade of her lipstick. Nan's work has consistently carried a political dimension. "Women who've been battered have come to me and told me that they were able to talk about it because of those pictures," she explains. "It was about the power that men have over women, and how that power translated up in society."

In the film, Nan reveals that it wasn't solely Brian who attempted to impede the publication of *The Ballad*. There was also her father who was afraid of the foreword of the book, in which Nan dedicated it to her sister Barbara, thinking Nan is trying to prove that it was her family who killed her sister. Barbara whose sexual orientation and nonconformism in the early 1960s caused her parents to have her institutionalized, leading to her suicide as a teenager.

Nan's decision to open up about her personal experiences, including her time as a sex worker, is commendable and courageous. It is a testament to the significance

Nan Goldin, New York City, 1978. © Nan Goldin. Courtesy of NEON





Nan Goldin, Picnic on the Esplanade, Boston, 1973. © Nan Goldin. Courtesy of Stedelijk Museum

of addressing these often-taboo topics. By sharing these intense and deeply personal subjects, she highlights the importance of bringing them into the public discourse. Her choice to speak out reflects a deliberate decision to confront these issues that have remained unaddressed for far too long.

The documentary places significant emphasis on unraveling the origins of Nan's artistic work and her lifelong commitment to challenge authority and power structures. It delves into the exploration of her background and the factors that shaped her perspective and determination.

At the end of 1989, Nan was invited to curate a show at Artists Space in Tribeca, she wanted the subject of it to be AIDS and there hadn't been any shows about AIDS before. *Witnesses: Against Our Vanishing*, a groundbreaking group exhibition about dismantling the stigma and discrimination around AIDS, about a loss of a community.

Nan chose the work of artists she knew who were affected by AIDS or who were living with AIDS from Peter Hujar, David Armstrong, Mark Morrisroe to Philip-Lorca di Corcia, and Greer Lankton. Their poignant and impactful works shed light on the human experiences surrounding AIDS, offering a deeply personal and evocative perspective on the epidemic. It was David Wojnarowicz who wrote an essay for the catalog. In it, he denounced Senator Jesse Helms for his homophobia and described Cardinal John O'Connor of New York as a "fat cannibal". The National Endowment for the Arts has canceled its grant because of the show's political context since it was dealing with homosexuality and AIDS, and on the verge of these events, Nan's exhibition became national news.

In Poitras's documentary, we see a footage of Wojnarowicz in his apartment talking about the reaction exhibition receives. "How can they ignore the political aspect of AIDS? Is the fact that I'm dying of Aids in 1989, is that not political? Is the fact that I don't have health insurance and I don't have access to adequate health care, is that not political?" he asks.

Poitras canvases Nan's fight for two epidemics: opioid and AIDS. "Most of my community was lost to AIDS. I can't stand by and watch another generation disappear." Nan explains. It was the ACT UP activism campaign of that time that largely inspired P.A.I.N., an organization Nan founded in 2017 to hold the Sacklers and Purdue Pharma accountable for their role in America's opioid epidemic. "I knew of no political movements on the ground like ACT UP." P.A.I.N. (Prescription Addiction Intervention Now) by using direct action puts pressure on museums, art spaces and educational institutions to refuse future donations from the Sacklers, to remove their name from the halls of their galleries and insists they put their resources into funding treatment and education and correcting the widespread misinformation regarding opioids.

This fight is deeply personal for Nan due to her own experience with OxyContin addiction. Following a surgical procedure, she was prescribed Oxy, and despite taking it as directed, she became addicted. "Though I took it as directed, I got addicted overnight. I went from three pills a day, as prescribed, to 18," she explains. As her dependence intensified and she faced financial constraints, she turned to alternative substances, eventually falling into heroin use. This path led her to the brink of death when she experienced a near-fatal overdose from fentanyl.

After battling addiction for several years, Nan underwent rehabilitation and achieved recovery. During this period, she became aware that the name Sackler who had made billions selling this "fraudulently marketed prescription" was primarily known for their philanthropy in the arts with high-profile donations to various art and educational institutions, in exchange for tax write-offs and their name adorned the halls of major museums including those that housed Nan's work.

Motivated to halt what she refers to as the act of "washing blood money," Nan initiated a campaign aimed to get museums to take down the Sackler name. Through P.A.I.N., she organized demonstrations at prominent institutions such as the Met, Guggenheim, and Louvre.

Nan leveraged her position as an artist as well, by threatening to withdraw from a possible retrospective at National Portrait Gallery in London if the museum continued to take money from the Sacklers. Less than a month later, the National Portrait Gallery became the first major institution to decline a donation from the Sackler family. And gradually, other museums, recognizing the potential impact on their reputation, started to succumb to the increasing pressure and follow suit.

"Congress didn't do anything," Nan says to the Poitras's camera at the Met after the museum removed the name Sackler. "The Justice Department didn't do anything. Bankruptcy court completely left them better than ever, they're completely vindicated by bankruptcy court. So, this is the only place they are being held accountable, the only place. And we did it."

Here are some of the museums and art institutions that have severed ties with the Sackler family and removed their name from their galleries thanks to the efforts and dedication of Nan Goldin and her organization P.A.I.N.: The Met, Guggenheim, Louvre, Tate, National Portrait Gallery, V&A, The Royal Academy of Arts, The British Museum, MOMA, Whitney Museum, MCA Chicago, Smithsonian Institution and the list goes on...

As the voices of Nan Goldin and P.A.I.N volunteers echo through the museum halls, their collective message rings out powerfully: "Say it loud, say it clear, the Sacklers are not welcome here." 🙏



Most of my community was lost to AIDS. I can't stand by and watch another generation disappear.



Nan Goldin, Self portrait with scratched back after sex, London 1978.
© Nan Goldin. Courtesy of NEON

Nan Goldin, French Chris on the convertible, New York City 1979.
© Nan Goldin. Courtesy of Stedelijk Museum



Nan Goldin, Amanda at the sauna, Hotel Savoy, Berlin, 1993. © Nan Goldin. Courtesy of Stedelijk Museum

There is a popular notion that the photographer is by nature a voyeur, the last one invited to the party. But I'm not crashing; this is my party. This is my family, my history.



Nan Goldin, Brian and Nan in Kimono, 1983. © Nan Goldin. Courtesy of Stedelijk Museum

Dreaming of another life, the *dazzling* light of performance

İlker Cihan Biner tries to look at the possibilities in the contemporary/ political and aesthetic struggle of drag culture in Turkey. The author writes his text by taking the experiences and criticisms of babykilla, Tusidi, KiKi ggNash in these fields



babykilla, Photo: babykilla

We have left another election behind us. The suffocating results are obvious. There are two issues related to the political environment of the country. One is that the People's Alliance continued its politics through anti-LGBTIQ+. Bodies that do not conform to or rebel against binary gender domination were targeted; LGBTIQ+ struggle was surrounded by the discourse of "terror". The second issue, which is deeply connected to the first situation, is the understanding of "reis". We live in an autocratic and authoritarian order that has turned into an apparatus of manipulation and propaganda at the same time.

With the insufficiency of the opposition, there is no other way but to continue to struggle against the mechanisms of masculine power. We are going through a period in which it is not enough to have a say in who controls our lives, to know where or how the control comes from, and it has become impossible to mark our borders. We have to build aesthetic forms and open up ways to change and transform.

"Whose life can be lived?", "Whose life cannot be lived?" In the midst of the questions of inequality and injustice that arise in Turkey, there is a value in looking at and learning about the field of drag queenship. Indeed, drag performance is at the intersection of the politics of aesthetics and the design of politics. These positions can also be called actions in which gender appearances are turned upside down, where the internal and external dynamics of the body are the threshold of each other and have the power to change the field in which they move. The power of the drag queen babykilla world linked to performances as the invention of new orbits that can be seen, heard and done, and the power relations, she says the following about the power relations:

"As much as I like to bring overtly political elements into my performances, it is becoming increasingly difficult to do so in this climate. The striking power of drag seems to bring a certain amount of courage, but since I'm doing political drag in addition to entertainment, I've become afraid of the recent agenda. It's been hard to admit this fear and admit it to myself, but that's the way it is. It's been a long time since I've made performances that put my well-being at risk on top of the feeling that I'm going to be threatened no matter what I do, and that's too much."

"My visual inspirations often come from Kurdish women and Kurdish mythology. In terms of content, experiences from the LGBTIQ+ freedom struggle and our ghetto lives in metropolitan cities shape the programs I put on stage."

Text: İlker Cihan Biner

Görüşler: babykilla, Tusidi ve KiKi ggNash

"The animals arrived at the field in a herd and set about removing the harvest. When they returned in the evening, they would find that the milk had disappeared."

- *Animal Farm*, George Orwell.

In George Orwell's stories, we see that he frames truth as a liberated, earned space. He depicts that the search for equality is not possible in the hierarchy of powers and can only be achieved when this balance of powers is equalized on a utopian ground. Can we say that "truth or liberated spaces" are related to temporality?

What can we put at the core to reconstruct the truth?

Tusidi reflects on the change she has experienced in terms of shaping herself:

"I can say that I use my performances as a tool to get out of the molds we are trying to squeeze into. At first, I thought I just wanted to be painted, to look pretty, to do my performance and get paid, but over time it turned into something that I made more complex, deeper, and therefore discovered layers of myself. At some point in this search process, I entered into the concept of moving away from the human form, and now I'm trying to discover it and have fun with it. It's like I'm wandering on an endless road without knowing what I'm looking for, adding something to myself wherever I stop and continuing on my way."

On the other hand, KiKi ggNash offers a perspective on both her inner journey and her relationship with the audience:

"When I create, I am inspired by myself and my stories. I use what I am forced to live, especially on stage. Sometimes I live on stage to use my transness, my femininity, sometimes it evolves to become the things I am afraid of and to reduce my fear, sometimes I exist on stage to open my overweight body that I am constantly told to cover more and more, and many more. My problem is actually to heal myself a little bit. On the one hand, I want to show other young queers like me that something else is possible because of the issues I went through at the time and isolated myself because of them. I also love to expose them to my ugly and horrible aesthetics. I like to present a form that they are afraid to look at but can't take their eyes off."



Tusidi, Photo: İlkin Zeybek

Common senses, singularity in collective struggle

There is a multidimensionality in performance. First of all, the democratic narratives that are formed turn into an intervention into patriarchal social perceptions. The fictions created are linked to the displacement of borders and the formation of new body images. However, some difficulties may arise in encountering authoritarian mechanisms. Joy and the joy that arises within you has an absolute place that is not questioned. There are little things that make up love. You don't care where they come from or how they appear. Vasconcelos' cult story *O Meu Pé de Laranja Lima* (My Sweet Orange Tree), in which Vasconcelos tells the story of little Zeze, takes us on a journey about these desires and absolute feelings. From this point of view, the story is not really a children's story. It is written for adults, to remind adults of something forgotten.

babykilla especially emphasizes this issue while sharing his experiences:

"Although I would like to see performance spaces, which are already very limited, as liberated zones, I can say that this is not quite true. Here, too, a lot of effort is needed to build spaces of freedom, to provide and protect a safe space. When I am going to do a performance, the police can call the venue and intimidate me; undercover police officers can come. In these moments, I face harassment that makes me feel that I am not free. I can also be detained when I walk out that door. Considering that I momentarily liberate my body or the audience with performances, at the end of that short experience, reality can hit you hard in the face. Being liberated for a while, even if it is limited, is a breath of fresh air, it is worth it. But it's very frustrating that it's not sustainable and that it's always open to an external threat."

In addition to babykilla, Tusidi is in a remarkable position in relation to performance and the making of space:

"It requires attention, dedication and respect from three sides. We can open it as performers, audience and business. We try to make the necessary warnings at the beginning of our performances. In order to make the flow of the night enjoyable for everyone, it is of course up to the audience to apply this or not. At the point where it is not implemented, the management gets involved. It is also their responsibility to solve the problem in the most conciliatory way. The right decisions may not always be made at this point. Being open to warnings and ideas from the people we work with is also based on the bond of trust established between them. Come and act knowing that you will be kicked out if you show disrespect, discrimination, sexism or racism."

Reality, performance and multidimensional aesthetic forms

KiKi ggNash talks about the challenges of building spaces of freedom and the relationship with reality as follows:

"Sometimes I feel like we're in a simulation, especially at our own events, but then I realize that no, we're actually very real. For me, there is no difference between KiKi in everyday life and ggNash on stage. Of course, I add something extra on stage, but I'm also there as myself. In both places, so that transformation is happening not only in the spaces where we perform but everywhere we are. Right now we are making history in a country where there is so much oppression, death, crisis, sometimes it seems funny what we are doing. On the other hand, I don't exist only as a performance artist, I am an audience member, active nightlife participant, organizer, observer etc. so I am involved in what is being done from different perspectives. Many people in the sector, new and old, are in a great struggle. To protect our spaces, to recreate them, to help someone... What is being done is very valuable. We are talking about something difficult when we say creating a space of freedom. Because we are in control up to a certain point. Even in places where we think we do, sometimes it may not be so. The dynamics of the spaces also affect this a lot."

On the other hand, when we talk about the multidimensionality of the performances, the question of form comes up. There are details such as the songs chosen, posture, gaze.

babykilla is in a place that points to the musical diversity in her performances:

"As a musician drag queen, the place of songs in my performances is very important. The songs I choose and sing in my one-woman show "wheel corner with babykilla" all have their own stories and personal stories for me. So far, I have mostly sung arabesque, neo-arabesque songs and Kurdish songs, and these have been and are a breath of fresh air for queer nightlife in a place like Istanbul, which is strangely identified with raves, for lubunyas, including myself, who love and listen to arabesque, who

want to belly dance and “halay”. I believe that queer spaces can also be created and quality time can be spent with this kind of music and I want to break down these prejudices. For example, in the *Derdo Feminist Nights* I organize, I find it very valuable to get toxic, excessive, passionate, depressive emotions - emotions that are treated as if they need to be hidden or destroyed instead of being confronted and healed - out of our systems by living and experiencing them for a few hours. Here, I can say that the story is passed on to the audience through the way I perform the songs, through the laughs I make, or through the slices I share from my life.”

Tusidi talks about the mystery of his performances:

“I can say that the focal point changes in every performance. In one performance, the piece already gives everything with its lyrics, while in another performance, the movements, postures, moods planned to better convey the subtext of the piece draw the audience in the direction you want to go. But I guess the first step is to determine what my mood is for that particular performance. Am I spoiled, am I strong, am I like this or that? Once this is determined, the part of how I can guide the audience with me begins. After this point, I call it a professional secret and add a little mystery to it.”

While KiKi ggNash reveals her aesthetic attitude on stage, she underlines her performative position shaped in the world of the senses:

“The image I present on stage is very important for my production. Not necessarily to present it to the other person, but also to present it to myself. I like to be comfortable on stage. At the beginning, I was just going out and living my head, but I didn’t

Whose life can be lived? Whose life cannot be lived?

know exactly what I was living. In the last year, it struck me, “Oh, I am a professional performance artist.” It feels ironic on the one hand. I do things as a job that my parents told me to do as a hobby. I’m a painter, I do drag, etc... It’s surprising. I think the fact that I do my job with such bewilderment and yet so passionately must be the other way around. Because when I think about what I do, I smile, when I watch it I go crazy, when I’m on stage I’m already on a cloud. For example, I did a performance called *Scandal Birth* at the end of March in collaboration with XSM. I was chained by my arms and legs for three hours. I lay there with a pregnant belly made of plastic makeup, a seven-meter intestine inside me and a four-kilogram silicone baby. And then I gave birth. How can I explain passing this on to the audience? I’m not talking about making a cover, I’m talking about getting the story across. I don’t think there’s a formula, so I think there’s no formula for getting it across.”

The possibility of another world

The views of three different drag queens should not be perceived as representational positions on the struggle. On the contrary, it can be said that the performances create democracy at the level of alterity. The difficulty of making a democratic production on an undemocratic ground is well known. In the geography we live in, it is valuable to dissolve fixed places and powers such as gender, class and race, and to be able to listen, see and learn about different existences and practices.

In this respect, while it is valuable to say “I exist, we exist, we will exist”, it is also important to be able to ask the question “how will we exist” to the slogan-like expression.

I would like my writing to remain “open”. My only wish is for each drag queen artist to expand the text by adding their own performances and struggles. The plurality that will emerge has the power to deepen each of our contact with the other. Here is the time to salute the struggle with a poem* by Arkadaş Z. Özger:

“It’s like we are leaving now, friends
We’ll be back one day
Without pain, without a name...”

Thanks to Zekican Sarısoy for his contribution to the article.

*Günler Perişan



KiKi ggNash, Photo: Dirty Projector

Alfredo Jaar

The Temptation to Exist: *What Need is There to Weep?*

Essay: A.S. Bruckstein Çoruh / House of Taswir

Berlin, June 12, 2023

Dear Alfredo Jaar,

My name is Almut Sh. Bruckstein, also known as House of Taswir.

It is a joy and honor for me to imagine an interview and/or essay for Istanbul’s magazine *Art Unlimited* on the occasion of your upcoming exhibition *The Temptation to Exist* at Galerie Thomas Schulte in Berlin.

Art Unlimited’s context is courageous and unbroken in spirit. The magazine is a platform for critical thought, contemporary art, and theory. We will have a lot of freedom to present, frame, and feature *The Temptation to Exist*.

As I understood you will be arriving in Berlin this coming weekend; I would be grateful and excited to meet you at any time during the week you may suggest.

One option would be the classical interview format. But since there are so many interesting overlaps—some of them possibly yet unexplored—between your work, the works of the artists you have gathered, and the epistemic architectures I have developed mainly in conversation with critical theorists and artists from the so-called Middle East over the last twenty years, we could also consider doing it a bit differently.

We could meet in the gallery next week for about an hour and a half and speak freely, starting with indefinite beginnings and without a set of predefined questions. I would then create a literary form(at) combining visuals, snippets of our conversation, and theoretical reflection in ways inspired by the architecture of the exhibition itself.

Of course there are various gravities in the orbit of which we could begin the conversation. One of them could be “architecture” itself: architecture(s) related to a critique of representation, to diasporic ways of thinking, and to ancient texts, which in their overflowing margins (all life is in the margin) explore the cracks, fissures, holes in “what’s written.”

When I think of it now, it is possible that this kind of epistemic architecture is even at work in *The Temptation to Exist*, with all those works punctuating, interweaving (intervening) the text: **WHAT NEED IS THERE TO WEEP OVER PARTS OF LIFE? THE WHOLE OF IT CALLS FOR TEARS.**

This would be one way to enter. Naturally there are a million others. What do you think—would you like to suggest a time next week? Looking forward to hearing your thoughts.

Warmly,

Almüt

New York, June 12, 2023

Dear Almüt,

Thank you very much for your beautiful invitation. I will be honored.

I think that Thursday midday might be best, hopefully we should be almost ready by then. Please let me know if it works for you.

Best regards,

a

Berlin, June 13, 2023

Dear Alfredo,

Thank you for your kind and swift reply.

Thursday midday—12 pm—in the gallery sounds great. I can’t wait to see you there.

Warmly, Almüt

Diary toward an exhibition opening

Berlin, June 13, 2023

The Temptation to Exist

Yesterday I plunged into E. M. Cioran's *The Temptation to Exist*, a collection of essays published in an English translation in 1968. It is the thirty-five year-old Susan Sontag who introduces this Romanian thinker (1911–1995) to English-speaking readers: "Cioran... with his oddly lyrical chains of ideas, his merciless irony, his gracefully delivered allusions... his universe of discourse is preoccupied with the themes of ... impasse, suffering, mortality... His fierce, tensely argued speculations sum up brilliantly the decaying urgencies of 'Western' thought, but offer no relief from them beyond the considerable satisfaction of trying to understand. Relief, of course, is scarcely Cioran's intention. His aim is diagnosis."

E. M. Cioran. Susan Sontag. Alfredo Jaar. Summoning the "decaying urgencies of 'Western' thought offering no relief beyond trying to understand." What is the temptation so intimately tied to human existence that the artist Alfredo Jaar, together with E. M. Cioran, calls this exhibition "the temptation to exist"?

"We last only as long as our fictions," Cioran suggests in the last paragraph of *The Temptation to Exist*, an essay on death and dying, and the last of the essays collected in the book. Human existence is inextricably tied to fictions, and fictions have a Janus face: just as any fantasy of progress, they may be fabricated to avert the gaze from desolation, death, and disaster. Seen in this light, even hope becomes a matter of betrayal. Or just the other way around: fiction may prove the only way to touch, transform, create reality. *The Temptation to Exist*:

an essay on the immanence of death (Cioran). *The Temptation to Exist*: an introduction on how to stand in the ruins of thought, history, and man (Susan Sontag). *The Temptation to Exist*: a Berlin exhibition opening at Thomas Schulte on June 23, 2023, featuring seven works by Alfredo Jaar accompanied by more than forty works by nearly fifty artist friends.¹ Susan Sontag wrote in 1968:

"More and more, the shrewdest thinkers and artists are precocious archaeologists of these ruins-in-the-making, indignant or stoical diagnosticians of defeat in an era of permanent apocalypse. The time of collective visions may well be over: by now both the brightest and the gloomiest, the most foolish and the wisest, have been set down. But the need for individual spiritual counsel has never seemed more acute. *Sauve qui peut.*"



At the Abyss

In the evening I go to a poetry reading at St. Matthäus, a reading and performance of Georges Didi-Huberman's letters to Gerhard Richter, *Images in Spite of All*. The context is the exhibition *At the Abyss of Images*, showing sixteen large-scale paintings by Michael Müller that comment on and undo Gerhard Richter's 2014 Birkenau Cycle. In his letters to Richter, Didi-Huberman, the rigorous French thinker and art theorist, interrogates the (impossible) conditions under which images of horror, violence, occupation, genocide, and bloodshed must (not) be shown. He wrote the letters between 2014 and 2016 after visiting Richter's Cologne studio. There, pinned to the artist's studio walls, Didi-Huberman saw the four black-and-white photographs from Auschwitz-Birkenau that were the subject of Didi-Huberman's own monograph *Images In Spite of All* (2012): photographs witnessing what happened inside the extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944. Shot by forced Jewish laborers at Auschwitz-Birkenau, taken in haste and under the threat of death, these photos were smuggled out of the extermination camps, most probably by a man named Alberto Errera. Errera was a member of the *Sonderkommando* perversely set up by the Nazis to torture Jewish laborers with the various tasks connected to the machinery of death. After the war, these four photographs found their way into a museum in Dresden and were publicly shown: the only existing visual testimonies of the Nazi death acts at Auschwitz-Birkenau's gas chambers and crematorium. When Didi-Huberman came to visit, Richter had placed four large, untouched white canvases *vis-à-vis* on the opposite wall, lying in wait for an act of representation that never got quite concrete. Provoked by Didi-Huberman's book, Richter first painted photorealist copies of those photographs, then decided to paint them over, those testimonies fading into opaque abstraction under thick layers of paint.²

How do we do it then? I felt I had stepped into a scene of unending substitutions. Not only Auschwitz but also Rwanda. Not only Alberto Errera but also Gutete Emerita.³ Those outrageous acts of violence, hatred, torture, and death are perpetrated in an abysmal swirl of repetitions. The whole of it... The whole of it, Seneca is right, calls for tears. Not only Ukraine, but also Yemen, South Sudan, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, which has been occupied for more than seventy years, where killing of Palestinians becomes a daily routine, and Europe whose borders become a mass grave for people in need drowning to the tens of thousands before the eyes of the world.

² One work by Gerhard Richter is included in Alfredo Jaar's selection of artists for *The Temptation to Exist*. It is a photograph from 2000, measuring 87.6 by 49.5 centimeters, based on a large 1965 almost photorealist oil painting by Richter, *Onkel Rudi* (Uncle Rudi), depicting an anonymized, archetypal soldier of the German *Wehrmacht*. Both works are based on a photo from a personal family album, showing Richter's uncle, Rudolf Schönfelder, who served in Hitler's *Wehrmacht*. Only Richter's deliberate choice of title makes the story concrete.
³ See below for more information.

(Left) Alfredo Jaar, 1 + 1 + 1, 1987 (detail), Lightboxes with sepia transparencies, gilded frames, mirrors, 101,6 x 101,6 x 12,7 cm, Copyright Alfredo Jaar. Courtesy The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, The Lannan Foundation, Los Angeles, and the artist, New York.

(Right) Alfredo Jaar, What Need Is There to Weep over Parts of Life? The Whole of It Calls for Tears, 2018, Neon, 324 x 410 cm, Copyright Alfredo Jaar. Courtesy Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin, and the artist, New York, Photo: GRAYSC 2023

Berlin, June 14, 2023

Say Their Names!

I keep listening to the conversation between Alfredo Jaar and Carlos Basualdo at the opening of *The Temptation to Exist* at Galerie Lelong & Co. in New York, Saturday, May 14, 2022.⁴ Jaar's work *06.01.2020 18.39* (2022)—an artistic testimony to the Black Lives Matter protests in Washington, DC, on June 1, 2020, in solidarity with George Floyd, the unarmed Black man in Minneapolis murdered by a local police officer in an abhorrent public scene—was concurrently on view at the Whitney Biennial. Not only Alberto Errera, but also Gutete Emerita, and also George Floyd. Not only Alberto Errera, but also Gutete Emerita, and also George Floyd, and also Razan Al-Najjar, the Palestinian nurse killed by IDF forces June 1, 2018, at the Gaza border. Not only Alberto Errera, but also Gutete Emerita, and also George Floyd, and also Razan Al-Najjar, and also Mahsa Amini, the twenty-two-year old Iranian woman killed by the "morality police" of the Islamic Republic Iran for not covering her hair correctly. This is the terrifying logic of "the whole of it": a list of names so long, too long to remember, let alone to mourn, extend one's sorrows to family and friends, speak and write about, all those lives cut short. "Say their names!" we hear. An impossible imperative arises. We must say their names. But the artist is right: empathy and mourning become a matter of power relations and national alliances. Morality a matter of narcissism and self-righteousness. Refrain from the unbearable self-righteousness of morality, Simone Weil suggests in *Gravity and Grace*.⁵ There seems no way to translate the gravity of moral action into the beauty and generosity grace. Refrain, refrain. Humility demands an ego emptied out. How do we do it then? How does the artist do it?

What Need Is There to Weep?

"WHAT NEED IS THERE TO WEEP" Seneca says, and the red neon letters in Alfredo Jaar's installation may offer a twist in the matter. The words are arranged two by two: WHAT NEED—yes, there is a need—IS THERE—alas a specific need—TO WEEP—OVER PARTS—yes! over parts—OF LIFE?—implies a reading in reverse, from the end to the beginning: EVEN IF the whole of it calls for tears, there is a need to weep over parts of life. An impossible imperative cracks an otherwise mere nihilistic reading of this passage. Weeping is not futile, but it is necessary. "What need is there": there is a need to weep over parts of life, again and again. For more than four decades

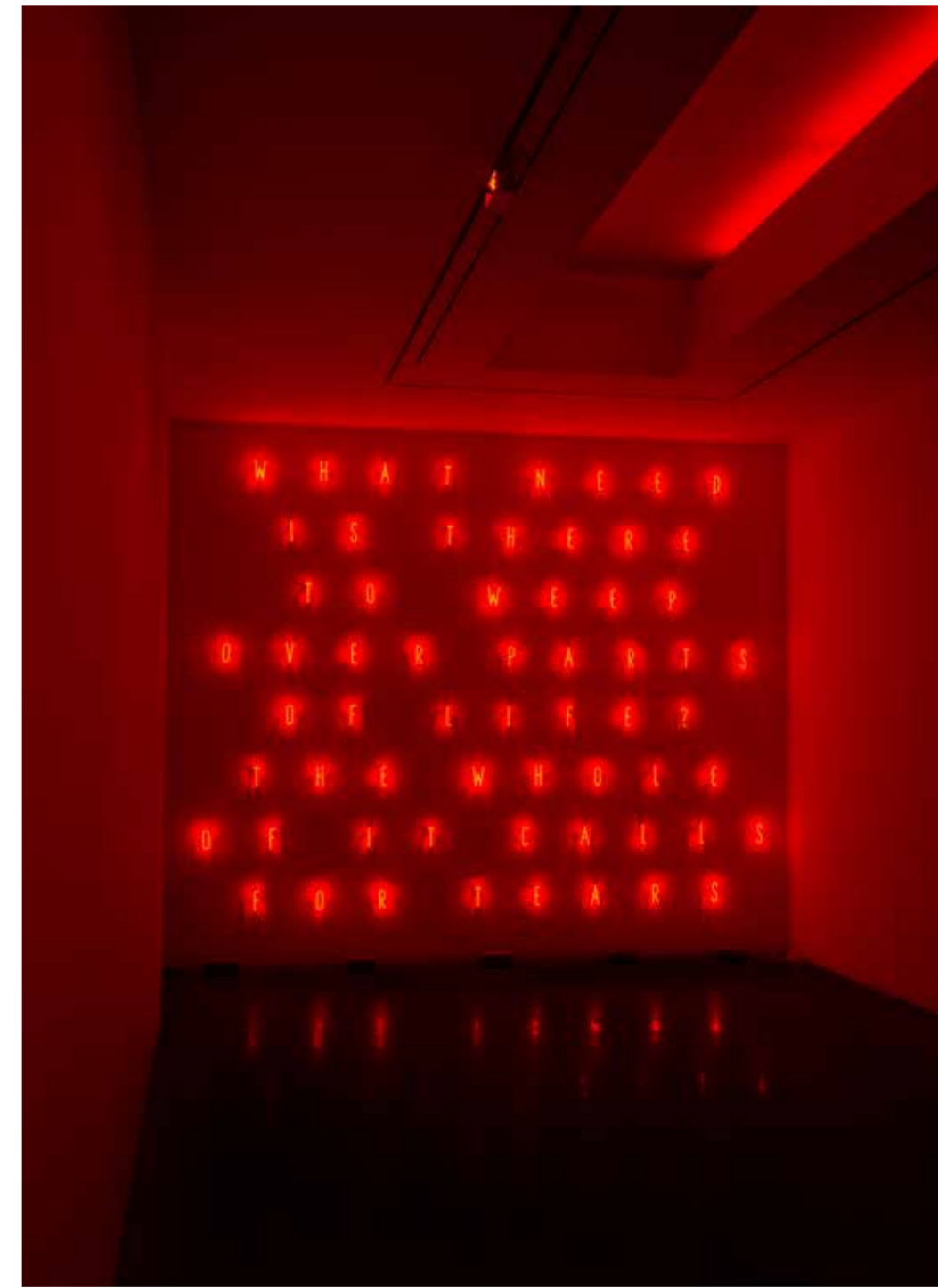
Jaar has repeatedly created riveting installations that address the specific deadlocks of this imperative. By use of unforgettable images and carefully crafted texts, with minimalist means, and in fierce opposition to authoritarian repression, the artist explores the impact (media) images have on the general public, rigorously engaging the moral complexities and responsibilities that come with their use, including his own.⁶ The questions that arise are perennial and touch upon the deadlocks of representation. How (not) to expose human suffering to the public gaze? How not to remain silent? How (not) to speak? How then to show *Images in Spite of All*?

even scratched to death
a simple rectangle
of thirty-five
millimeters
saves the honor
of all of the real.
- J.-L. Godard⁷

When in the presence of the face of another, there is an abysmal threshold to cross. Artists, filmmakers, poets, writers, critics know: the biblical imperative "You shall not make for yourself any graven image" literally pertains to nothing as much as to the human face. Why? Because we read: "In the image of God, [He] created man." The medieval rabbis explain: just as we do not know the face of God, so we ought not to contain/delimit/arrest/define/expose the face of the other. The Hebrew *be'tselem elohim*⁸ is an allusion to "in the shadow of..." Speak shadows, says Paul Celan, give it the shadow... give it shadow enough...

see how things all come alive—
by death! Alive!
Speak true who speaks shadow.⁹

- Paul Celan



⁶ See Lilly Wei, Alfredo Jaar, *studio international* (New York), June 6, 2022.
⁷ Jean-Luc Godard, *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1998), seen in Georges Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of All* (Munich: W. Fink, 2007), [2].
⁸ "In the image of God" [Gen. 1:27].
⁹ Paul Celan's poem *Speak You Too*, in *Selected Poems and Prose of Paul Celan*, trans. John Felstiner (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 76–77.

¹ The exhibition *The Temptation to Exist* was first shown in a different constellation at Galerie Lelong & Co. in New York, May 13 to June 25, 2022.

⁴ Carlos Basualdo is the curator of contemporary art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.
⁵ Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, New York: Routledge, 2002.

Berlin, June 15, 2023

Give it the Shadow

How, then, does the artist Alfredo Jaar “give shadow enough”?¹⁰ How does he answer the indifference of the general public? How does he confront the compassion fatigue created by the infinite stream of media and social media images? How does he steer clear of voyeurism?¹¹

I realized that I couldn't use [those images].
It didn't make sense to use them;
people did not react to these kinds of images.
Why would they react now?
I was starting to think that there must be another way
to talk about violence without recurring to violence . . .
- Alfredo Jaar¹²

Allow me to summon before my mind's eye works by Alfredo Jaar I have seen that “give shadow” to memory, traces, and faces in pain. How do they give shadow? They radicalize the threshold, withhold and blur the image, produce blindness, evoke the imagination by narration, substitute letters for images, mirror or invert the gaze. The installation *Real Pictures* (1995–2007), for example, shown at the Berlinische Galerie in 2012, confronted visitors with several black plinths, a kind of archive, a graveyard reminiscent of Berlin's memorial for the Shoah.¹³ Each plinth bears a paragraph describing a particular scene witnessed by the artist during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. All images are withdrawn from view, locked up in the plinth's drawers, thousands of them, images that the artist took during his trip to Kigali three weeks after the Rwandan genocide, during which nearly a million people were killed in less than one hundred days.¹⁴ One of the inscriptions reads:

Ntarama Church, Nyamata, Rwanda
40 kilometers south of Kigali
Monday, August 29, 1994

This photograph shows Benjamin Musisi, 50, crouched low in the doorway of the church amongst scattered bodies spilling out into the daylight. Four hundred Tutsi men, women and children, who had come here seeking refuge, were slaughtered during Sunday mass. Benjamin looks directly into the camera, as if recording what the camera saw. He asked to be photographed amongst the dead. He wanted to prove to his friends in Kampala, Uganda, that the atrocities were real and that he had seen the aftermath.¹⁵

“Benjamin looks directly into the camera, as if recording what the camera saw.” *Real Pictures* not only withholds the image, substitutes letters for images, but also inverts the gaze, barring our vision, expose us to the gaze of the other. The subject switches fronts. *J'accuse* is now voiced by the other. An interrogation takes place, and the visitor is summoned to give testimony, work by work. *The Eyes of Gutete Emerita* (1996): to give testimony of what happened to Gutete Emerita, thirty years old, surviving her husband, Tito Kahinamura, forty, and her two sons, Muhoza, ten, and Matirigari, seven, slaughtered by a Hutu death squad at Sunday mass in Ntarama Church in Rwanda. Jaar tells their story in imageless lightboxes, paragraph by paragraph. Her gaze, in the last one, is the only image.¹⁶ *The Silence of Nduwayezu* (1997): to give testimony what happened to Nduwayezu in Rwanda, the young boy who had witnessed the killings of his parents and remained silent.¹⁷ One million slides of Nduwayezu's eyes pile up on a massive lightbox, with magnifying loupes strategically positioned. The artist pulls the visitor into an ethnographic act; visitors use loupes to take a close look. Precisely this act splits the subject. A double shooting takes place: the minute we look, Nduwayezu's gaze hits back, summons, calls us to stand up. That's the moment we put the device down. To forget or not to forget, to ignore or not to ignore. That is the question.

10 All of Alfredo Jaar's work touches upon this question. Among them is *Shadows* (2014), a mixed-media installation that retells the story of two Nicaraguan women who had lost their parents using photographs by Koen Wessing.

11 See Kathy Berman, *The Rwanda Project: Chilean-born, New York-Based Conceptual Artist*

Alfredo Jaar's Latest work at the Zeitz MOCAA, Daily Maverick, April 6, 2021

12 Quote related to *The Eyes of Gutete Emerita* at Sammlung Zimmermann

13 *Alfredo Jaar—The Way It Is: An Aesthetics of Resistance*, Berlinische Galerie, June 15–September 17,

2012. This piece is part of the huge work *The Rwanda Project* (1994–2010)

14 See also the museum website of MCBA in Lausanne announcing its acquisition of Alfredo Jaar's

Real Pictures, 1995–2007.

15 See Jaar's website, <https://alfredojaar.net/projects/1995/the-rwanda-project/real-pictures/>.

16 See Jaar's website, <https://alfredojaar.net/projects/1996/the-rwanda-project/the-eyes-of-gutete-emerita/>.

17 Alfredo Jaar, *The Silence of Nduwayezu* (1997), part of *The Rwanda Project* (1994–2010),

Alfredo Jaar, *The Eyes of Gutete Emerita*, 1996, Two Quad
Vision lightboxes with 4 color transparencies, 67 × 128 × 16 cm,
Copyright Alfredo Jaar. Courtesy Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin,
and the artist, New York

Berlin, June 16, 2023

Ilya Kabakov R.I.P.

I start the day by reading an obituary for the Soviet conceptual artist Ilya Kabakov, who passed away on May 27, published by the artist Anton Vidokle on e-flux. Vidokle describes the “artistic shock” that Kabakov's work created. “Each narrative contained a conceptual snap that would go off like a small explosion in your mind.” Yes. Each work contains a conceptual snap that goes off like an explosion. That's it: Jaar's work withholds and radicalizes the threshold of the image, probes the nervous system, produces shock and surprise when the image is released. Alfredo Jaar's *Sound of Silence* (2006) is such a work.¹⁸ The shock of its last image, released in an explosion of sound, still reverberates in my body. It's the sound of the camera's click.



Lament of the Images and memoirs of the blind

On September 18, 2019, Alfredo Jaar showed his work *Lament of the Images* in the old synagogue in Stommeln.¹⁹ This small synagogue, located not far from Cologne, had escaped destruction in the November 1938 pogroms because the Jewish community of Cologne had sold the synagogue to a German farmer in 1937, who used it as an animal shed, which protected it from the Nazi pogroms. Stommeln Synagogue has been turned into a space for contemporary art since 1991 for in-situ commissioned works by many international artists.²⁰ For his *Lament of the Images* Jaar invents a mobile apparatus, in which two light tables, one standing, one hanging face down, move closer and closer to one another until they almost touch. Cyclical moments of touch rhythmically darken the room. A shadow falls, and when the two lights are about to touch, there is a moment of blindness.²¹ *Chiaroscuro* in the synagogue: darkness for monsters to arise, blindness for the memoirs of the dead.²²

In 1990 Jacques Derrida curated an exhibition at the Louvre called *Memoirs of the Blind: Self-Portrait and Other Ruins*, accompanied by a monograph with the same title.²³ Derrida views the artist as a blind man; blindness, dimmed light, tears, veils, body shrouds are the aporetic conditions for creating, drawing, and making an image. The blind become “archivists of visibility.”²⁴ In Derrida's dreams, he sees his forefathers as blind Jewish old men. Jews? Derrida turns the blindfolded synagogue into an insignia of seeing. Foolish and blind, she (the synagogue) insists to see the world through the letter, the body of the letter, the flesh of the letter, the wound of the letter, the letter of wounds. Letter people. In the world of contemporary art, that blindfolded dame is no longer the synagogue. It is artists, thinkers, filmmakers, activists who develop an aesthetic of resistance, who expose the violence of images unveiled, and return justice to the blind.

An abysmal heterogeneity
separates the drawn object [face]
from the [photographic] trace.

- Jacques Derrida²⁵

19 *After Stommeln Synagogue* (2019), this work (2002) was shown at Thomas Schulte Corner Space from November 14 to December 23, 2020.

20 Participating artists included Jannis Kounellis (1991), Richard Serra (1992), Georg Baselitz (1993), Mischa Kuball (1994), Eduardo Chillida (1995), Gregor Schneider (2014), Anthony Cragg (2015), Walid Raad/SITU Studio (2016), Franz Erhard Walther (2018), and Alfredo Jaar (2019). Rebecca Horn (1998), Lawrence Weiner (2002), Rosemarie Trockel (2003), Sol LeWitt (2005), Maurizio Cattelan (2008) were all solo artists at Synagogue Stommeln. Cf. *One Site—One Space—One Work: 30 Years of Art Projects in the Stommeln Synagogue*, ed. Angelika Schallenberg (Munich: Hirmer, 2023).

21 *Ibid.*, 326. See also Alfredo Jaar's greeting for the New York opening, in which he describes an eye injury; *ibid.*, 327.

22 Reference to Alfredo Jaar's several versions of *Chiaroscuro/O vello mundo/Il vecchio mondo* (2021/2021/2016) displaying Portuguese or Spanish translations of a line from Prison Note books by Italian theorist, political thinker, and freedom fighter Antonio Gramsci: *O vello mundo está morrendo—o novo demora a nascer. Nesse claro-escuro, surgem os monstros.* “The old world is dying, the new world is slow to appear. And in this chiaroscuro the monsters arise.” For the politico-poetic translation history of this Gramsci quote, see Melo Minotaure and CapCat Ragú's literary/poetic Delicatessen online.

23 *Mémoires d'aveugle: L'autoportrait et autres ruines*, exhibition at the Musée du Louvre curated by Jacques Derrida, October 26, 1990–January 21, 1991. Published in English as Jacques Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins*, trans. Michael B. Naas and Pascale-Anne Brault (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993).

24 *Ibid.*

25 *Ibid.*, slightly modified by the author.

18 See <https://alfredojaar.net/projects/2006/the-sound-of-silence-2/>.

June 19, 2023

The color red and the *Withdrawal of Tradition Past a Surpassing Disaster*

There is a command *noli me tangere!* when it comes to the face of other. The wound of the other radicalizes this demand. In 2009 Lebanese artist, filmmaker, and writer Jalal Toufic published a large essay entitled *The Withdrawal of Tradition Past a Surpassing Disaster*.²⁶ Toufic coins this phrase *The Withdrawal of Tradition Past a Surpassing Disaster* in reference to an “immaterial” withdrawal of tradition. He claims that such a withdrawal is caused by a specific type of persecution, war, genocide, colonial occupation, or other acts of violence that not only destroy people, buildings, and the infrastructure of a community during the times of the disaster, but also have an irreparable impact on the tradition itself. These are, for Toufic, effects of an immaterial withdrawal, a lack or absence witnessed especially by those who are sensitive to the withdrawal, even in the midst of the material abundance of repair, usually because they themselves have been affected by the disaster. It is the writers, artists, filmmakers who, after a surpassing disaster, can no longer find their way into the newly sculpted terrain, even if books, libraries, institutions, and other remnants of it have been restored and remain materially available. One of the traditions that have immaterially withdrawn after a surpassing disaster, according to Walid Raad, an artist who has worked closely with Jalal Toufic ever since the publication of the essay in 2009, is the color red.²⁷

And Yet.

When entering Alfredo Jaar’s *The Temptation to Exist*, we are immersed in a dim-deep red emanating from WHAT NEED IS THERE TO WEEP, reminiscent of a darkroom’s safe light. How does the artist do it? How does he resurrect the color red which—thus we think—due to extensive bloodshed must have withdrawn past a surpassing disaster? Jaar uses this color in an early work, *September 11, 1973* (1974), in which the artist arrests all weekend dates after September 11, 1973 as “11” in red²⁸, as if to say: after 9/11 of that year, time forever changed.²⁹ “The color red is the color of rage, the color of warning, of danger.”³⁰ But there exists a connection to a work of Alfredo Jaar we must not overlook. A material connection. We look at the poem by Russian poet Anna Akhmatova published in 1930 in St. Petersburg which reads:

So much to do today:
kill memory,
kill pain,
turn heart into a stone,
and yet
prepare to live again
-Anna Akhmatova

Alfredo Jaar dedicates an entire work to Akhmatova’s poem. In his version of the poem, a lettered neon installation called *And Yet* (2019), the color red resists its withdrawal. The color red resists the withdrawal of tradition past a surpassing disaster because it finds itself glued to the words AND YET.

²⁶ Jalal Toufic, *The Withdrawal of Tradition Past a Surpassing Disaster* (Forthcoming Books, 2009); free download on <https://jalaltoufic.com>

²⁷ A.S. Bruckstein Çoruh, *Red Ink: Utopia/Dystopia, in House of Taswir: Doing and Un-Doing Things; Notes on Epistemic Architecture(s)* (Munich: W. Fink, 2014), 180. See also the entire chapter “Red Ink,” 153–91.

²⁸ September 11, 1973, was the day of the military coup (supported by the CIA and Western powers) that brought down the Allende government and put Agostino Pinochet into power. For the work *September 11, 1973* and its variants see the website of the Hosfelt Gallery in San Francisco, <https://hosfeltgallery.com/exhibitions/105/works/artworks-9046-alfredo-jaar-september-11-1973-1974-2011/>.

²⁹ September 11, 1973, was the day of the military coup (supported by the CIA and Western powers) that brought down the Allende government and put Agostino Pinochet into power. For the work *September 11, 1973* and its variants see the website of the Hosfelt Gallery in San Francisco, <https://hosfeltgallery.com/exhibitions/105/works/artworks-9046-alfredo-jaar-september-11-1973-1974-2011/>.

³⁰ Alfredo Jaar in conversation with Carlos Basualdo at Galerie Lelong & Co. in New York (see note 1).

Alfredo Jaar, *And Yet*, 2019, Neon,
177,8 x 108,5 cm, Copyright Alfredo Jaar.
Courtesy Goodman Gallery, London, and
the artist, New York

Berlin, June 20, 2023

Power, Joy, Humor, Resistance

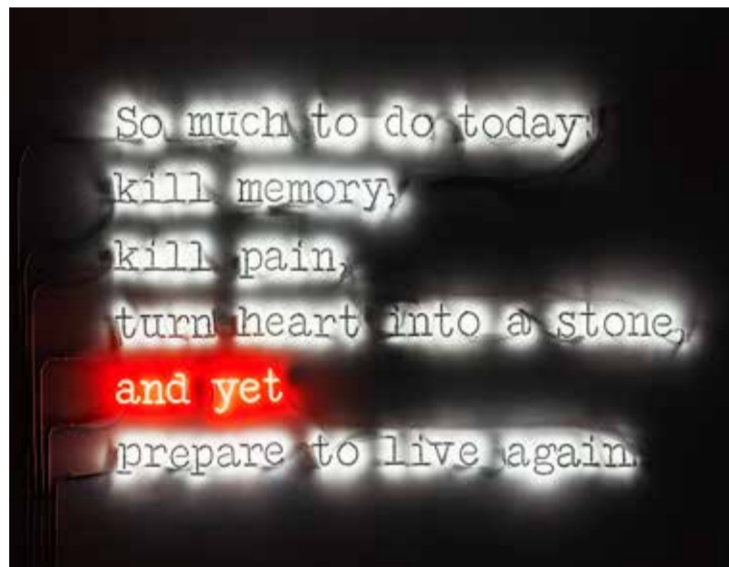
I get lost in following the work and life of Anna Akhmatova. And I collect my thoughts for the meeting with Alfredo Jaar on Thursday at Thomas Schulte that I am really looking forward to. How does the artist convene his loosely associated faculty of forty-eight artists, living and no longer living? And how does he turn rage and mourning into *Power, Joy, Humor, Resistance*?³¹

An afterthought from the Kalam School

The medieval thinkers of the Kalam schools take a detour through theology to give us their take on the matter. They all ask the same question: since we must not ascribe any essential attributes to God (nor anyone else), how do we know the ways of creation and how to act in the world? The key to this question, they say, are attributes of action, attributes of relation. To the Kalam masters, critical thinkers before their time, sentences like “God is good” or “God is just” are blasphemous, “and yet”!, goodness and justice, love and graciousness indicate (divine) ways of human interaction. The Istanbul art scene is full of deeply creative ways of doing things, of creating solidarity and loyalty, exuberance and joy “Despite It All.” “Love and Action is the Answer” is a hashtag among members of one of the most inspiring communities in Istanbul. I am convinced there is massive energy and power when communities in the vicinity of *The Temptation to Exist* unite. Alfredo Jaar has created such a community, a community where the living and the dead unite, a community imaginary and real, inspiring and exuberant, a community for a future that is now. Forty-nine artists and sixty-three works unite and relate to one another in a space measuring twenty square meters, a tiny imploding universe. If there is a black hole in which things worked in reverse,

tears turned into dance, swords into plowshares, patriarchy into female power, then it must look like this one. Alfredo Jaar has built his own *Kleine Mnemosyne*,³² where artists, thinkers, critics, activists unite and are dancing on “down to the government.”³³ Rebecca Horn’s mobile installation *Love and Hate: Knuggle Dome for James Joyce* (2004) teaches us the secret, both contemporary and ancient, widely visible to all.

How do sharp knives kiss? she asks. And how do we?



even scratched to death
a simple rectangle of thirty-five
millimeters
saves the honor
of all of the real
-J.L. Godard

³¹ Work by Monica Bonvicini (2021), shown by Alfredo Jaar in *The Temptation to Exist*, Thomas Schulte Berlin.

³² Reference to the small art and think space *Meine Kleine Mnemosyne* (My Little Mnemosyne) at the House of Taswir. In a space measuring twenty square meters, it shows a subjective and exuberant configuration of more than fifty artists, mainly from the Middle East, who all dedicate their life and work to resisting disappearances, violence, and loss. See www.taswir.org. It was inspired by Aby Warburg’s *Mnemosyne Project* in Hamburg in the 1920s. Warburg’s Atlas had sixty-three image plates. Cf. Aby Warburg, *Der Bildatlas Mnemosyne*, ed. Martin Warnke and Claudia Brink (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003).

³³ Jenny Holzer, *Survival: Dance on Down to the Government...* (1984), text on cast aluminum plaque. This work was included in Jaar’s *The Temptation to Exist*.





(Previous page) Rebecca Horn, Love and Hate, Knuggle Dome for James Joyce, 2004, Knives, metal construction, motor, 60 × 110 × 40 cm, Copyright Rebecca Horn. Courtesy of Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin, and the artist, Bad König, Odenwald, Photo: GRAYSC 2023

(Up) Grada Kilomba, Untitled Poem (One Sorrow, One Revolution), 2022, Charcoaled piece, engraved poem, hand-painted with gold leaf, 24 × 24 × 86 cm, Copyright Grada Kilomba. Courtesy of Galerie Thomas Schulte and the artist, Berlin, Photo: GRAYSC 2023

ALFREDO JAAR

THE TEMPTATION TO EXIST

24 JUNE TO 12 AUGUST

OPENING TONIGHT
7 TO 9 PM

BASJAN ADER
ROSA BARBA
LETIZIA BATTAGLIA
DAWOUD BEY
MONICA BONVICINI
FRÉDÉRIC BRULY BOUABRÉ
STANLEY BROUWN
GIOVANNA CALVENZI
ANGELA DE LA CRUZ
HANNE DARBOVEN
GINO DE DOMINICIS
JUAN DOWNEY
AYŞE ERKMEN
THEO ESHETU
VALIE EXPORT
HAMISH FULTON
HANS HAACKE
MONA HATOUM
JENNY HOLZER
REBECCA HORN
ALFREDO JAAR
ANN VERONICA JANSSENS
JOAN JONAS
BIRGIT JÜRGENSSEN
ON KAWARA
SEYDOU KEÏTA

GRADA KILOMBA
COSIMA ZUKNYPHAUSEN
JOSEPH KOSUTH
JANNIS KOUNELLIS
MISCHA KUBALL
PIERO MANZONI
GORDON MATTA-CLARK
ZANELE MUHOLI
SHIRIN NESHAT
YOKO ONO
ANNA OPPERMAN
GIUSEPPE PENONE
SUSAN PHILIPPSZ
CHARLOTTE POSENENSKE
GERHARD RICHTER
FRED SANDBACK
KARIN SANDER
CAROLEE SCHNEEMANN
MALICK SIDIBÉ
KATHARINA SIEVERDING
DAYANITA SINGH
NANCY SPERO
ROSEMARIE TROCKEL
REIJIRO WADA
LAWRENCE WEINER
FRANCESCA WOODMAN

Invitation to the Opening of Alfredo Jaar,
The Temptation to Exist at Gallery Thomas Schulte, June 2023

With many thanks to Alfredo Jaar, Merve Akar Akgün / Art Unlimited,
and to the Thomas Schulte team for this inspiring collaboration.

WHEN I BOUGHT
THIS ARTWORK
I CLEARLY HAD
TOO MUCH RAKI

DANIELE SIGALOT

AROUND THE WORD

25 HAZİRAN - 23 TEMMUZ 2023

KARMAÇOMA

KÜRATÖR *AYÇA OKAY*
29 TEMMUZ - 3 EYLÜL 2023



EKİN SU KOÇ

THE REBIRTH OF VENUS
9 EYLÜL - 29 EKİM 2023

ANNA LAUDEL

ZAI YAŞAM, ÇIRKAN MAH., HALİDE EDİP ADIVAR CAD. NO:7, BODRUM
WWW.ANNALAUDEL.GALLERY



Misal Adnan Yıldız



Paula Kommons



João Laia



Joasia Krysa

New horizons on the biennial question

Participants: Paula Kommons, João Laia, and Joasia Krysa ile Misal Adnan Yıldız

This interview happened through meeting on an online document in one week in between the openings of the second editions of the Helsinki Biennial curated by Joasia Krysa with other curatorial intelligences, and the Freiburg Biennial by Paula Kommons with a promise of listening to the street, during the last preparations of the next Göteborg Biennial, curated by João Laia, coming soon for mid-September. The never-ending question of -to biennial or not, has been adjusted to audiences' engagement, artistic research, public space, and mediation layers. There are plenty of brilliant ideas, critical points, and also, innovative resolutions in their approaches, aiming to bring fresh perspectives on the ways that the biennials happen today. Even a biennial, triennial, or quadrennial; we still want to see a good exhibition, we still want to have a good story.

Misal Adnan Yıldız: Thank you for accepting our invitation for this round table discussion on an alternative biennial map; and also, for coming together for rethinking the formats, exhibition models and programs you propose and manifest this year in different cities. I would like to start with a question considering the evolution of the biennialisation of contemporary art. Where do you see your exhibition today in terms of its relationship with the city context, target audience, publics, and communities you want to engage with? Who is your audience? Who have you prepared these exhibitions for?

Joasia Krysa: Thanks for the question and I am very happy to be part of this conversation. You ask about the biennialisation of contemporary art, and this is an issue that all biennials should be aware of and respond to; biennialisation is a rather pejorative term that suggests that biennials have a negative and homogenising effect, setting out a repeatable format for contemporary art. This may well be the case in general terms, and the sheer number of biennials might suggest as much, so it's important to listen and speak to diverse audiences, both local and global, both general public and *artworlders*. The audience for the Helsinki Biennial - only in its second edition this year - is typically diverse in this way, and I hope the issues that are addressed speak to a broad audience, especially as the biennial seeks to establish itself in Helsinki and internationally. The most successful exhibitions work on different levels to different people - for instance, one of the concerns of Helsinki Biennial 2023 edition is environmental issues, and we wanted to converse with those concerned with environmental issues on a local level (i.e. contamination at the Baltic Sea) as well as to explore how these issues resonate and are universal as in the case with climate damage more broadly. I also wanted to invite a diversity of voices to be heard, which include those from minorities, non-western contexts as well as animals, plants, and the environment (guided by the reference to Anna Tsing that operates as part of the conceptual curatorial frame), and technology too (in the form of an AI Entity). In this sense, the audience perhaps extends beyond the category of human, or at least is sensitive to other entities and worlds, in dialogue with the ecologies it seeks to engage with. At the same time, we have also made a deliberate decision to de-center this edition from its original location on the island of Vallisaari, one of over two hundred islands in Helsinki Archipelago and only recently opened to

A round table discussion with
the curators of the current editions
of the Freiburg, Göteborg,
and Helsinki Biennials

the public, to extend to the mainland, to venues including art institutions, public realm, as well as outside of the city center to the east and north, to reach out and embrace the cultural diversity of the city. Also for the first time, Helsinki Biennial takes place online, with a number of works specifically made to be experienced online and those unfolding in a blended way across multiple venues both physical and online, extending the biennial to wider audiences both geographically and demographically. I have tried to set out some of this thinking in my curatorial statement.

Paula Kommos: Thank you so much for inviting me - I am thrilled to join in. The Biennale for Freiburg is a relatively young biennial. It was founded in 2019 by the association *Perspektiven für Kunst in Freiburg e.V.* in response to the closure of the Freiburg branch of the Academy of Fine Arts Karlsruhe and the resulting question about the role of contemporary art (education) in Freiburg. The Biennale expands the cultural and artistic life in Freiburg and sets impulses for an ongoing exchange between national and international artists, artistic contexts, and urban society. Therefore, the main audience group is local artists, who are also part of the preprogram and the exhibition. In this year's edition entitled *The Song of the Street* many local initiatives are involved, such as the archive for social movements, the feminist history workshop, here & Black, Freiburg-postcolonial, the student film club, and many others. In this way, the Freiburg Biennial tries to engage the local community. Also, the invited international artists used the opportunity to research individually about Freiburg, its history, and its contexts.

João Laia: Thank you for the invitation, I am happy to be part of this conversation. While many of my projects are site reactive and sensitive, for Göteborg I departed from a different framework, which did not stem from its immediate context. The exhibition reacts against the generalized notion of the crisis currently defining Western culture. In 2022 Collins Dictionary named "permacrisis" the word of the year. The biennial highlights how queer agencies imagine and enact other ways of being together which offer multiple choreographies for worlds to come. In this sense, the key proposal of the project aims at being generic in an inclusive and embracing way. At the same time, in the current moment of generalized social closure because of populist, nationalist, and nativist discourses, I also felt the need of proposing a perspective opposing this status quo by highlighting transnational affinities between non-normative agencies both local and global. I believe this positioning and the stories radiating from the exhibition are relevant to societies at large and I aim its audience to include diversified segments of Göteborg, Swedish, and their surrounding territories' social fabrics, as well as added international audiences which can contact the project onsite or online.

MAY: I would like to ask about the ways which determine your artists list. How have you been considering your invites, commissions, and also priorities? What are your parameters in order to decide what is urgent to or present today?

JK: The artist's list was not so much determined in my case as it evolved through ongoing dialogues with others and resisted the centralizing perspective of the single curator. The curatorial conceit was to collaborate with other institutional entities as curatorial intelligences - that opened up the process of shaping curatorial framework alongside a selection of practices; artists and artworks - working with Museum of Impossible Forms, a cultural center, and queer-feminist project located in East Helsinki; TBA21-Academy, a research center and cultural ecosystem fostering a deeper relationship to the ocean

through the lens of art; Critical Environmental Data, a transdisciplinary research group at Aarhus University in Denmark; ViCCA @ Aalto ARTS (Visual Cultures, Curating and Contemporary Art) at Aalto University; and an A.I. Entity developed with Digital Visual Studies at University of Zurich. All these bring particular perspectives and urges to bear on the selection of works and the issues that were considered to be important and to help explore the core conceptual threads of contamination, regeneration, and agency. Amongst this we looked for an intersectional diversity of genders and geographies and cultures, Finnish and international artists, focus on the diversity of artists living and working in Finland, individuals and collectives, different mediums and art forms, existing works and new commissions, a balance of established and emerging artists, to develop the exhibition as a kind of ecology in itself.

JL: I find it difficult to organize in a linear way the processes with the artists participating in the show. While departing from precise interests and questions, there was also an intuitive approach, which makes clear-cut formulations somewhat inadequate to describe how we arrived at this formulation of the project. Maybe I can underline an interest in a form understood as the way practices materialize as something quite important in my work and definitely essential for GIBCA. We wanted to disseminate other stories and other ways of being which also materialize in different manners, for example by enacting bodily and sensual strategies rather than merely cognitive.

PK: I am filled with great joy as we just opened the biennial last week with over 34 artists as well as collectives from 23 countries and have a program with other 20 events ahead of us - I am especially looking forward to the symposium on July 8th NERVOUS INFRASTRUCTURES, ACTS OF RESISTANCE. Together with Jessica Aimufua, Alejandra Coz Rosenfeld, Polina Stohnushko, and Prof. Dr. Stefan Trüby we will look into the street as an infrastructure and the written and unwritten rules shaping our perception, regulating our behavior, and guiding our movements on them. As the central nervous system of a society, infrastructures unite the flows of traffic and information, the circulation of goods, people, and data. Spontaneous or planned, a counter-public is formed that gives rise to a new space: A space for acts of resistance and solidarity. These moments that I just described were also functioning as a lens during my search for artists to participate. It all started with a historic position. Eva Eisenlohr, who was a sculptor in Freiburg, returned from her studies in Karlsruhe in the 1920s. After participating in first exhibitions and receiving commissions her work was labeled as "degenerated" by the Nazis. She was the only woman amongst the artists here in Freiburg. After the war, her art career did not evolve. Nonetheless, she worked as an artist and art educator. She donated many of her works to schools and local communities and also placed them in the public space. She did this without being commissioned, just by herself with the wheelbarrow. It is these acts of resistance and activating of the street that has influenced my artist list. I met with the local art scene, did many studio visits, and researched all over. From Egypt, artist Dara Birnbaum's CANON: TAKING TO THE STREET, Amyo Akingbade's STREET 66, and Halil Altındere's WONDERLAND and the street becomes a platform for raising your voice against specific power configuration.

MAY: How has the public space, public time or publics engaged in the biennials; I am sure, it is different in each case, so I might ask, could you explain with a few examples, how have you been dealing with the public realm?

PK: One aim of this year's biennale was to engage with the public space and carry these resonances into the exhibition space. We were able to expand the exhibition to five new locations for this year's biennale. For example, the Seepark - a park that was founded in 1986 for a garden show. Here, five new productions were realized, which are on view for the next six weeks. On the opening night, there was a 90 min performance by the collective lo.me which engaged with the sight as a place where the body and its surroundings form a unity. In a subtle way, the choreography channeled our attention - of viewers and passersby alike Further works at Seepark include Yong Xiang Li & Francois Pisapia, Phung Tien Phan, and Rebecca Grundmann.

At Kunstverein, the work of Amal Kenawy carries the public space into the exhibition hall. Amal Kenawy's SILENCE OF THE SHEEP is the documentation of a performance, where friends and workers followed the artist through the crowded city center of Cairo. What happens after is a heated debate around art, its limits, Egyptian pride, and shame. This form of lived publicness is key to understanding this biennale theme. **JL:** This edition of GIBCA engages with the public realm more in a symbolic rather than literal site-specific way, meaning the key narrative of the project engages with art as a public platform for urgent issues marking the now, questioning dominant narratives, and enacting alternative positions. Having said this, we are collaborating with Hammarkullen Konsthall, a very special art space operating in the only underground tram stop in Göteborg. The Konsthall is primarily geared towards its vicinity and engages with local and international agents. We have commissioned Prem Sahib who will intervene in the public space of the Konsthall using the advertising light boxes and the vitrine located in the lobby space between the platforms and the automatic staircases.

JK: This edition of Helsinki Biennial took place mainly in public sites - the island of Vallisaari but also other public spaces in the city and online. This helps, of course, to broaden the notion of the public to a more general audience, including those encountering work accidentally such as the billboard of Zheng Mahler in an underpass, or at the harbor side as is the case of the Dineo Seshee Bopape and sonic work by collective Red Forest, or guided through an experience of the works signposted in public space using the Audio tours that were developed by Jussi Parikka and the Critical Environmental Data group at Aarhus University, or the "social-choreography" of Sonya Lindfors that aims to open up the idea of the commons. The discursive program developed by Giovanna Esposito Yussif and Ali Akbar Mehta of the Museum of Impossible Forms is a good example too, in which the Biennial moves to areas of the city to a site where culture is perceived differently, and the notion of the public is more politicized, and not-so-White. But perhaps the best examples of works that engaged different publics are ones that operate across different spaces and constituencies: Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley's work for instance, part online as well as in physical space, involving live-action-role-play and life-size figures scattered across the island of Vallisaari as well as their stories accessible online, thereby activated by public engagement. In these works, publics become multiple, distributed, and an emergent force.

MAY: The last question is about the reception of the works, and the shows, so your strategies on learning, education, and mediation. What have you learned from this experience, and also will keep it for your practice later?

JL: The curatorial remit of GIBCA does not really include the conceptualization of a public program or other activities related to learning or mediation and rather focuses on exhibition making. This is an

outcome of an enlarged network of local agents and events named GIBCA Extended which materializes a wide public program that showcases the range of Västra Götaland's contemporary art scene and is deeply embedded with the local context. The approach of GIBCA Extended is similar to previous experiences such as the way we involved the Vilnius art scene in the Baltic Triennial by inviting five project spaces to be part of the project (Autarkia, Atletika, Editorial, Lithuanian Artists' Association, Swallow, Tech Arts in partnership with Rupert). For GIBCA my contribution to the public program focuses on a performance program presented at the opening, which is organized in two successive moments. The day program, *A Calling*, serves as a welcome device, introducing key narratives of the biennial project and concentrating attention on a ceremonial and liminal moment of the opening-as-event. The nocturnal program, *A Celebration*, is, at the same time, a presentation and a social gathering. It echoes the night as a haven of various others and articulates in a different context the narratives of the exhibition. Because of its bodily, celebratory, and intensified features, performance programs design places of communal experimentation, places of possibility where social formations can emerge and be rehearsed in shared manners. In this sense, the performance program expands the exhibition displays, queering the stability of the biennial format by playing with ephemeral and durational rhythms of presentation while enlarging its potential audiences.

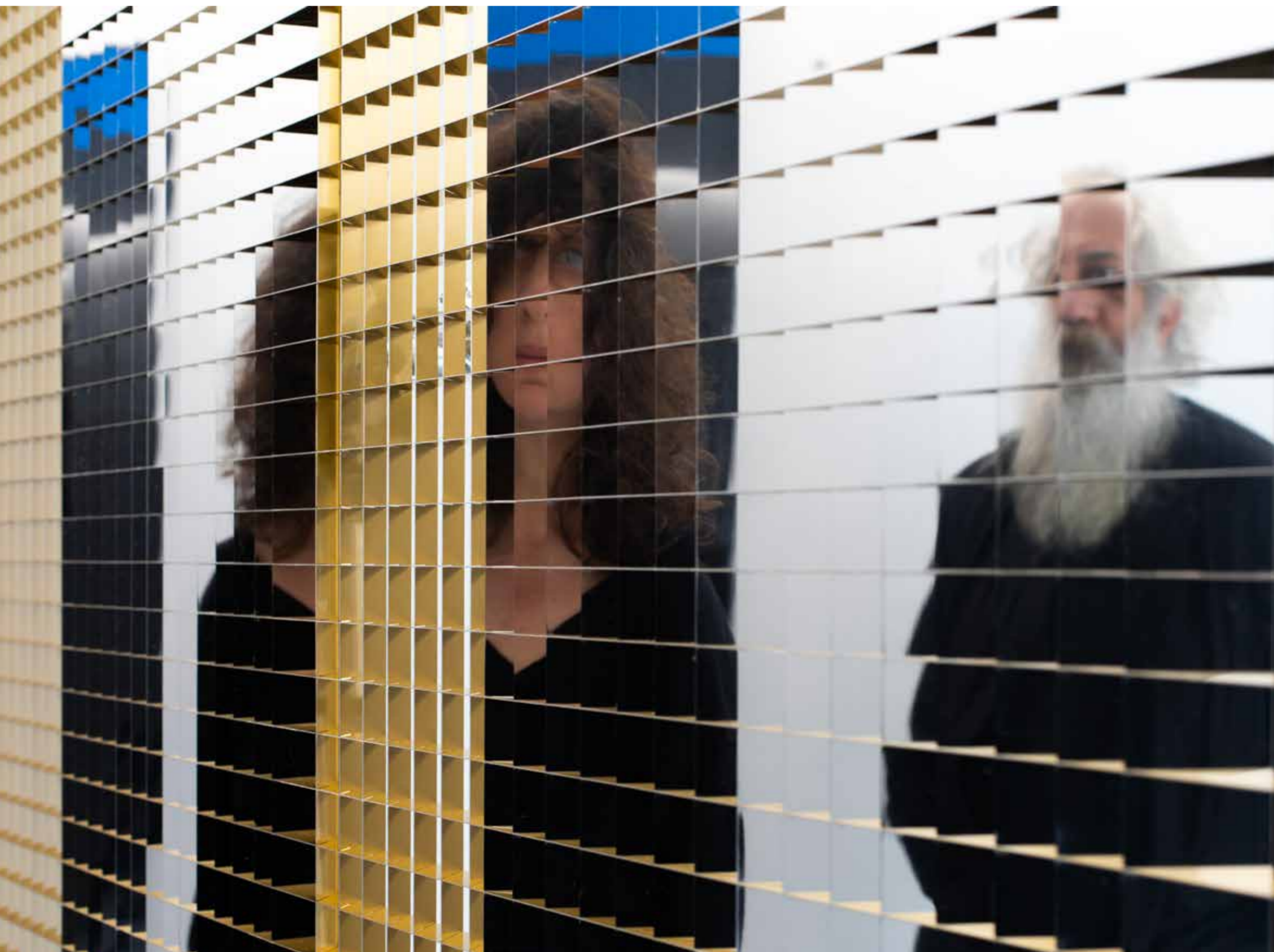
JK: I have learned so much, as always, which is part of the motivation for doing projects like this. You have an idea of what things will be like and the doing of it inevitably changes it. More formally, in terms of a learning program, and aside from the implicit learning involved in encountering the artworks more broadly, there is a publication and mediation program Art Mediation Forum - a conference that happened in the run-up to the Biennial, a published anthology of essays and a series of mediation events entitled the Curatorial School of May - developed by Bassam El Baroni and Patrizia Constantin with a group of students at the ViCCA (Visual Cultures, Curating and Contemporary Art) at Aalto University; an audio tour, as mentioned, developed by Critical Environmental Data researchers at Aarhus University, and a discursive program with the Museum of Impossible Forms, also mentioned. The public program, so-called, is an important part of this Biennial edition and allows for the ideas that the Biennial has tried to explore into dialogue with others. The Biennial is also engaged with AI and machine learning (a collaboration with Digital Visual Studies researchers at the University of Zurich and Helsinki Art Museum Collections). Altogether, it is in the encounters and conversations with other humans and non-humans that learning takes place and there's always more to learn from other people as well as from the environment around us where learning is situated and grounded in lived experience.

PK: Working together with artists who also have a practice in education was a great enrichment to this year's biennial. The artist Maximianle Baumgartner developed an action space, which also entails a leaflet workshop for children and youngsters. Furthermore, I am absolutely stunned by the positive feedback and active engagement of the Freiburger community and visitors from all over. Inviting figures from different fields of knowledge and contexts was especially enriching and makes discussions more vibrant. Yet new bounds were formed - we might initiate the first Freiburg Architecture biennial with a walk through a new town that is yet to be built. I can't wait to see what traces the song of this biennale will leave and how it will resonate in the future. 🌱

If paradise is on sale...

Interview: Nazlı Pektaş

Images: Nazlı Erdemirel, :mentalKLINIK, Paradise On Sale, 2023, Yerleştirme görüntüleri, Dirimart Dolapdere



:mentalKLINIK was founded in Istanbul in 1998 by the artist duo Yasemin Baydar and Birol Demir. The duo based in Brussels and Istanbul, in their last exhibition at Dirimart, as they always do, placed the viewer in an immersive event. What just happened? What will happen next? What were they actually saying in a shimmering, glittering and cluttered gallery? Has the viewer been caught between an unforgettable event and an artwork displayed in an installation recalling a hyper contemporary atmosphere? Where did what they imply and show collide and explode, creating an uncanny invitation for a playful exhibition? Were we in the past passing through the present and in the future that had already exploded while visiting the exhibition? If heaven is on sale, will we all fit in hell?

I wrote about your studio for the Unlimited Visits series in our magazine where I made the following definition: “Forms of production are the ways in which the intellectual ethos is transformed into being.” Shall we start here, dear :mentalKLINIK, what kind of intellectual ethos did we wander this time in your exhibition *PARADISE ON SALE*?

In our exhibitions, we wander in the “aorist present”, in the traces of the knowledge of the past and the future accumulated in the “moment” we are living in, and we invite the viewer to wander through (mental) this thought and the (KLINIK) dimension of it. This is an uncanny invitation, first, the viewer has to decide, should I enter the world of :mentalKLINIK or not?

In this adventure, one can trace our transition from a disciplinary society to an era of bio/psycho-politics in which our desires and inclinations are controlled and manipulated before we are conscious of them, to our data-driven precarious lives under the power of the invisible, to the uncertainty created by our technology and service-oriented subjectivity. There are also scenes of our joyless zeitgeist, the digitization of our bodies opens to constant calls, our hyper-connected lives devoid of satisfaction and surprises, and our cruel search for happiness.

Not only this exhibition in particular, but also the exhibition Bitter Medicine, which we realized at Borusan Contemporary Museum during Covid 19 pandemic in a hybrid form of exhibition, open to view 24/7 live and constantly in motion, led our thoughts to the hyperstimulation created by hyper-connectivity, the new field of experience procured by augmented reality applications, and the relationship between the body and this new hybrid reality with its sensory and emotional effects. The definition of “reality”, in its most generic meaning, has been again and irreversibly defeated by the post truth. When we were experiencing this great crisis of faith through our *Tru-ish* (2017) exhibition, we were asking “How can art lie when the reality is not true enough?” So today, the question is how we can exist in this slippery, ambiguous ground, in such an intellectual world where contexts have been crashed. As :mentalKLINIK, we take an archaeological look at this deep “time-space” for small possibilities, intervals, opportunities, as if we are searching mines.

On the other hand, under the rule of FAANG (Facebook, Amazon, Apple, Netflix, Google) that are the real, horny miners who have turned our lives, bodies, behaviors into deep excavation sites, the new world realities to be experienced between us, the last biologically precarious humans, and the semi-heroic humans with augmented abilities and artificial intelligence, are at our doorstep. This un-surprising reality is building a thick, deep, and opaque wall of the “new reality”. As :mentalKLINIK, we reflex to both the changes in perception that this deep mechanism creates in our gaze and the anxieties created by invisible politics. Hyperreality is hidden in this moment, in this new hyper capitalism that has infiltrated the body and started to transform it, and in the “non-democratic” order that it carries us to with the non-functioning structure of many overlapping definitions of capitalism.

In *PARADISE ON SALE*, we imagine a new field of thought through the atomized particles of a sense-time that has lost its ground with the sculptures hanging from the ceiling, video artworks, and an installation that does not

touch the floor. We have been left alone with the post-human problems in a weird climate of an exploding system of values, blurred human-body-society-nature relations, and those who fail while trying to produce different meanings, who fail to see the nuances of the newly glorified polished values without realizing that priorities or re-attributed importance are caught in the trap of wild capitalism. We are in a system where the enemy to be blamed is lost in the baroque system and the blame spreads to everyone, where the individual constantly glorifies and constantly punishes itself. We are wandering in this period of shifting meanings, where the concept of anxiety has been pushed from a productive meaning into the realm of fear and avoidance. Instead of producing an answer (which is not possible, and it is not our place), as we navigate this ethos in a clinical field of experience, as we let our mind and senses roam freely in this micro-climate, we open space for nuances in thought. *PARADISE ON SALE* invites us to a dance floor of the sweaty world of entertainment, as we oscillate between over-abused concepts, the lightness of the everyday and the decency of the art field, in thoughts that are contaminated with dirt and crime. The party may be over, but we can still reach our thoughts in different ways by exploding norms in a semi-conscious state in the hangover’s head. This wandering doesn’t necessarily have to be very careful and serious, it’s not a space of obligation, it can be a lazy hanging out in a strange mode where the joyful and the sad overlap.

“We heard there is a party, so here we are!” the viewer walks in and find itself in a world which is not glittering and glamorous, but a present where a glorious explosion has just taken place. What do you expect from the audience or what do you promise?

:mentalKLINIK exhibitions are neither an expectation nor a promise. Only an open invitation with a pre-written policy. In *PARADISE ON SALE*, an invitation to voluntary complicity was sent to the viewer. They were invited to a time-space full of life, vivacious, vibrating, but at the same time sarcastic, overbearing, attacking the whole body. Open to different readings and feelings, the exhibition may work differently for each viewer, and the viewer may feel a bit like lying on the couch of psychoanalysis. Not just an individual psychoanalysis, but a psychoanalysis of modernism, a questioning of neoliberalism. We believe that the artist has a position outside of his/her area of responsibility, so we desire a meeting and encounter rather than a promise-expectation dichotomy. The same thing applies to the relationship between the works and the form of exhibition. :mentalKLINIK exhibitions are a pluralistic union of different elements that do not promise each other responsibility, support, or relationship. It’s more of a relationship to hang out now and then than a promise of marriage.

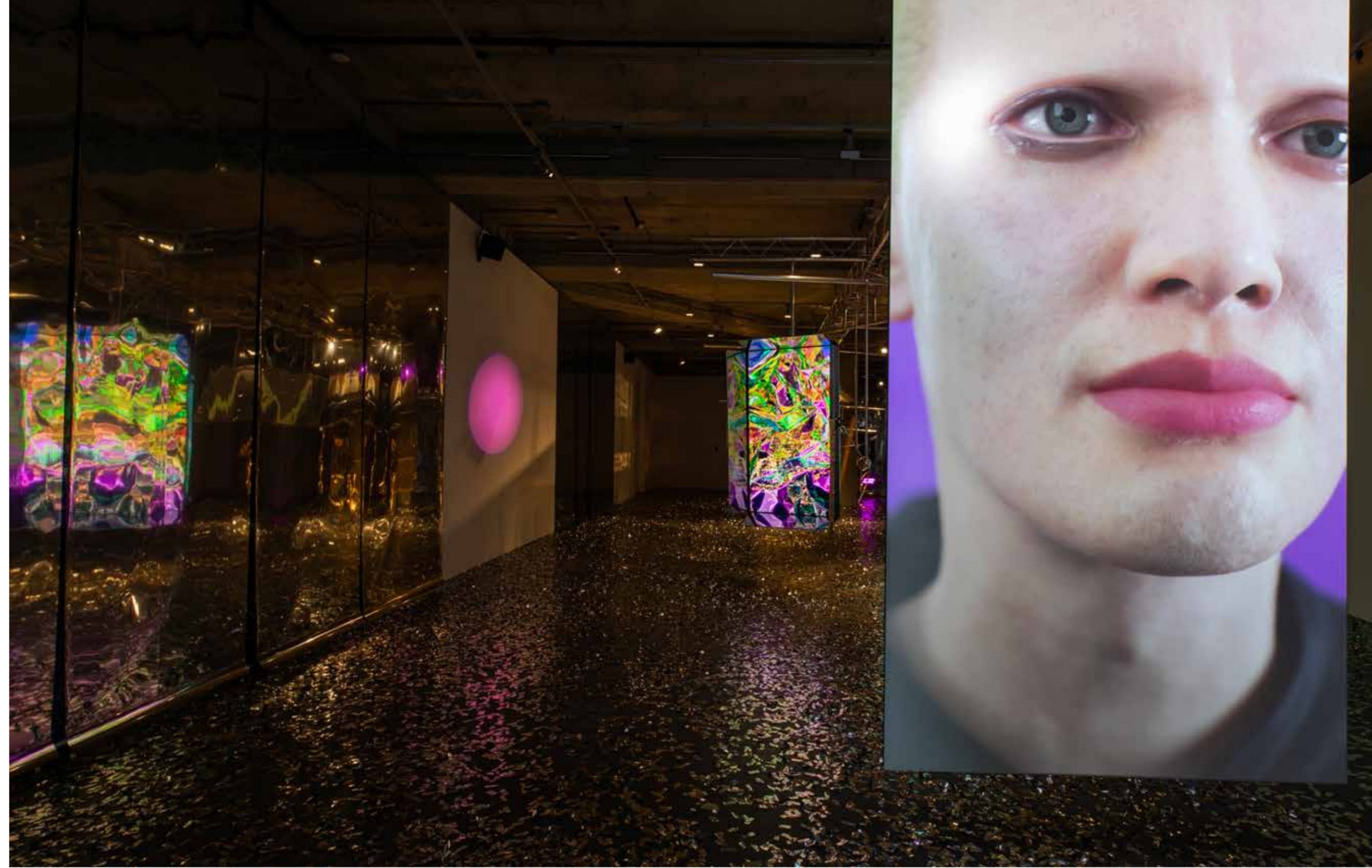
In an overly positive fantasy, we donate all our senses as data for the sake of continuity of the system, where the data field is attacking privacy and the body today. The exhibitions and works of :mentalKLINIK, which Jack Halberstam defines as counter-collaborative, seek to invite the viewer’s body and mind to activate and create a short-lived but memorable experience by creating a cold shower effect, drawing the already short attention to the field of art. In doing so, they drag the alluring aesthetics of contemporary life, technology, and new materials into the realm of contemporary art as a wake-up call for the constantly stimulated and distracted.

Perception is always in the center in many of your exhibitions. Here I would like to mention Merleau-Ponty, due to his ontological-phenomenological approach, where he refers to perceptual belief as: "We see things themselves, the world is what we see." Seeing things through perceptual belief is a plan to see the world through the body itself. In other words, according to Merleau-Ponty, perceptual belief is knowing and affirming the world as it is, without asking questions, without doubting the belief we have in existence and the world. The existence of the body is like a guarantee of the existence of things and the earth... In this exhibition, you are multiplying the existence of things, the existence of self and the existence of the world in embodied existence, and the belief here is that the body and the outside intertwine with the same wholeness and all the senses integrate each other. It's a meditation of the five senses, but it's a bit noisy!

In these times when we are shattered by visual and sensory overstimulation, when the five senses are under attack, we seek to break through this hegemonic armor, in order to reach the erotic body. In :mentalKLINIK exhibitions, the physical space invites the viewer into an almost dysfunctional heterotopia. As a time-space that is still open to experience, even if everything has already happened and the celebration has just ended. The transitions, displacements, threats, playful encounters, titillating and depressing situations between the body-spirit-physical world and the disembodied-unconscious-virtual, in the artificial intelligence revolution of the new age, constitute the fields of attraction, occupation and thought for :mentalKLINIK. We are attracted to the changes that emotions undergo as they transform from the lived to the linguistic transfer, and to the indicators that come back from the transferred meta-world and are mediated into the erotic body, to the lost emotions, and to the aspects of augmented senses that are open to surprises. We do not generate a melancholic utopia or a pessimistic dystopia from this change we are experiencing. Perhaps the state of opening to each other, as Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology suggests, is more exciting. Noisy is a good definition. We explode, we make noise. In this period when positivity is glorified, hasn't the state of conforming, taming, suppressing gone too far? It should not be a coincidence that meditation is also popular along with the 21st century.

You believe in utopia on the one hand and explode utopia on the other. Explosion/dispersion/scattering as a metaphor explodes utopia in all your works. Because all kinds of utopias written, drawn, and thought on earth have a fate that will not last forever. And you, fed by the idea of utopia's dissolution in the 21st century, put paradise up for sale and blow up the store! The window says *PARADISE ON SALE!* Is this explosion due to fatigue or boredom?

In the 20th century, we metaphorically defined paradise as sparkling seas under the sun, reflected in blue skies, touristic promises where trees generously offered their shade, we sought happiness in these places of renewal where capitalism insidiously perpetuated leisure time in a new sphere of consumption. Then the climate crisis reminded us that the sun is not so innocent, that we are destroying the biological balance of the seas, that we



are brutally destroying nature. Now when we look at the sun, we see an enemy that we need to protect against. We lost the image of the paradise we had fantasized about, we sold that paradise and tried to build Meta-heavens in its place. We turned the physical reality we stepped on into a threat and tried to rely on feelings of guilt and Gretas who could not see the bigger picture. When we kicked the gods out of their paradise, we put too much pressure on ourselves and our individuality and we blew the paradise up as well while trying to discover and recreate ourselves. Now we are turning into narcissistic creatures by burning their own paradises. Even if we scrape the mirrors, we cannot go deeper, we are trapped in reflective surfaces. From pre-sin to post-sin, we have abrogated all grand narratives and taken refuge in our micro-stories. Meanwhile, the giants (meta_musk_amzn_goog) are preparing their own stories of salvation, their Gilgameshs for their next party, leaving us in our exhaustion, in our tired lands.

But how many times are we going to create and destroy the paradise that doesn't even exist? Do we have to occupy every moment, every corner?

The explosion is more of an intellectual revolt. Taking into consideration the fact that the dialectical perspective cannot explain the present, all the explanations, policies and cultural products made by taking refuge in this binary opposition still confine us to a boring, outdated, conservative field. :mentalKLINIK, since its foundation, has preferred to push the forms imposed by the fields of binary opposition to the point where new meanings and perspectives can emerge by challenging and destroying them. We are trapped in a time-space that is highly contradictory with the new technology we are expected to consume and the new understanding of time. The utopia-dystopia dialectic applies in a same way for us; it is not possible for us to understand the time we live in and enjoy it to the fullest without changing the paradigm. We need to take our consciousness with us into this time that harbors potentials and stop looking for the paradises we know and swim in its cold waters. In the world of hyperreality, we can create a beautiful foreign form of swimming by building our own hypertexts and diving in and out. In third, pluralistic, polyphonic, different realities. It has been a long time since the existing definition of reality could explain today's reality.

As Gramsci said, we are once again in a period of interregnum (transitional age) where "the old is dying and the new is struggling to be born". To decide which side to stay on and contribute to what is being born, to take a stand or just to complain. Which one to choose?

Nowadays, we see an enemy when we look at the sun, an enemy from which we need to be protected. We have lost the image of our imagination of paradise. We sold that paradise and tried to build meta-heavens instead. Turning the physical reality on which we stand into a threat, we relied on the feelings of guilt and the Gretas who cannot see the bigger picture.



I would like to talk about your relationship with spaces. Can we say that :mentalKLINIK builds spaces in their exhibitions?

:mentalKLINIK exhibitions create microclimates. A micro-climate is a small climatic area that is separated from the larger climatic features of its surroundings and allows for the cultivation of different crops; we are a micro-climate within the realm of art. We usually think of the given space as a shell. We transform that shell physically and conceptually. In our introspective exhibitions, viewers enter the exhibition space accompanied by the neon of :mentalKLINIK. Thus, this generic name creates an ambiguity in the function of the exhibition space. :mentalKLINIK exhibitions design a pact with the viewer before they enter, once inside, they have to be determined and willing to disconnect from the real world and hang out in our micro-climate. In these exhibitions, filled with augmented senses and sometimes stripped of elements, we transform physical encounters into a space of augmented experience.

Instead of making space, we are interested in creating new forms. The conceptual transformation of the space, the sharp absurdity of the time interval, the change of the language of invitation and of who is invited (patient, accomplice, etc.) in each exhibition bring us and our viewers together in different exhibition forms. We think we need different strategies to reactivate the enchanted walls of art.

Does *PARADISE ON SALE* talk about the promises of the art market while critiquing capitalism in a gallery turned into a so-called nightclub, accompanied by sound, smell, light and glitter?

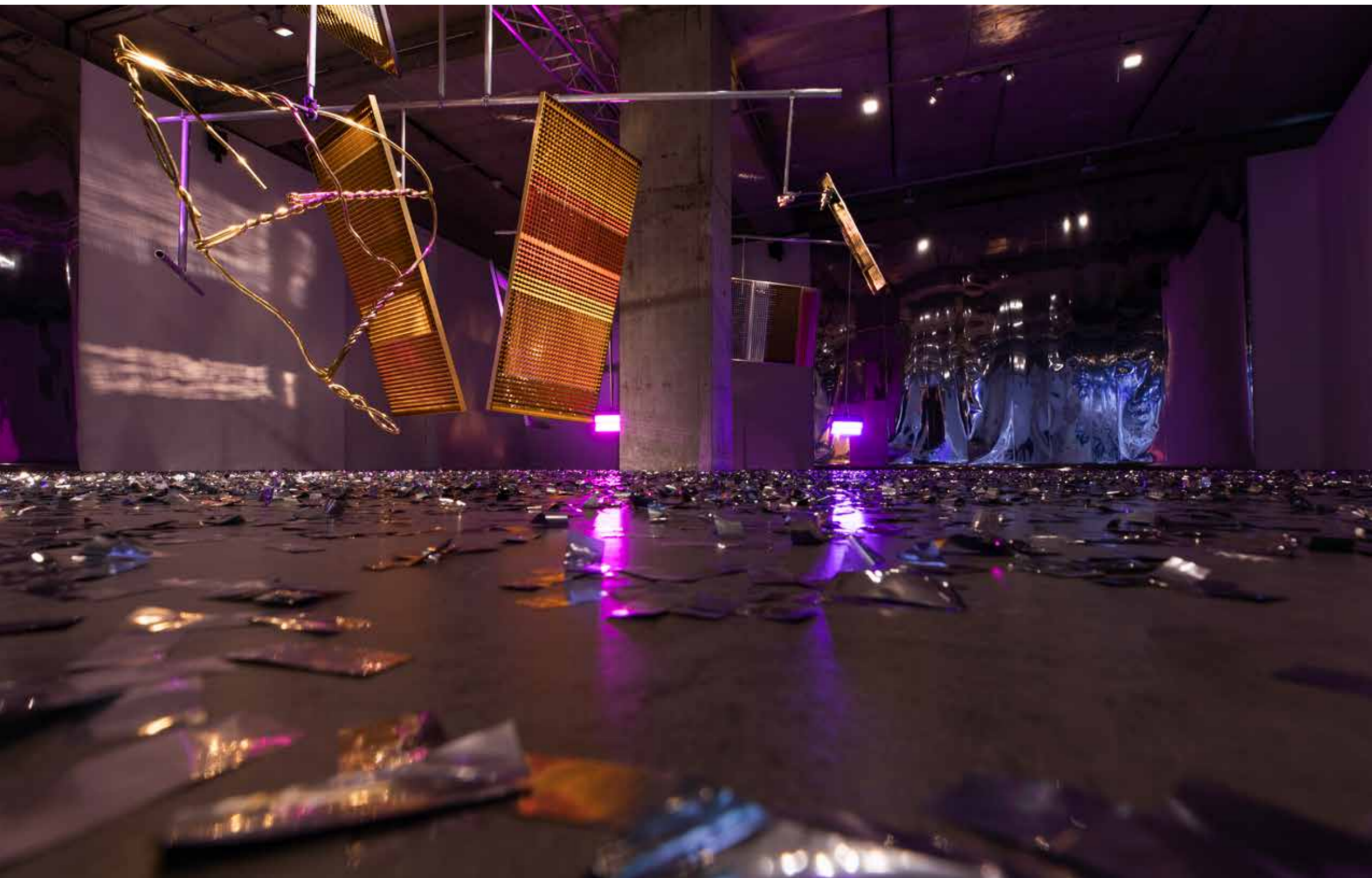
PARADISE ON SALE exhibition infiltrates the Dirimart gallery space as a micro-climate, stretching the institutional dynamics of the gallery context. Art has worked as an efficient tool and accomplice of the system for gentrification in many periods. Currently, Art Shows, which gentrify the ways in which technology is accepted in life, and in an art market shaped by who supports art institutions, these institutions, which will make room for different, extreme forms of thought in the sheltered space of art, assume comfort and the voice of the majority instead of risk. We are in an art market climate where censorship that is legalized by political correctness, cancel culture, social media and discussions on artificial intelligence, is normalized. As art retreats into the

everyday and the countable, it becomes a Netflix platform closed to surprises by diminishing itself. With exhibitions and artist invitations based on statistics and the number of viewers, invitations to exhibitions and artists based on interaction, and institutional programs created according to trends, it is as if everything is being pulled towards norms. In institutions that turn art into an educational mission, learning-by-entertaining programs pull art and artists into shallow waters. There is a rapid transition towards the era of the artist as entertainer. As long as the eye and mind accustomed to the surface/superficiality cannot go deeper, the art market is doomed to remain superficial. The “wow” effect guides art institutions as a tool that attracts the majority. :mentalKLINIK takes the “wow” effect into its visual language as a strategic call and invites those who are convinced to enter behind the curtain.

We find the field of art both abundant with possibilities and conservative. We continue our heretical and impulsive behavior to play spoilsport in this field, to twist the meaning enough to open up to new interpretations, as a surplus of art, while covering many art forms with the micro-climates we create in the dysfunctional world of art at the same time. Since the day we were founded, we have been presenting our multifaceted approaches like a disco ball towards our own universe rather than a linear evolution.

I would like to connect the last question to the workshop article I wrote: “Transferring the traditional language to the present, marking the egotistical attitude in today’s language, opening it to new readings by designing political-economic icons accompanied by new and own icons: a playground for mentalKLINIK.” How will this game continue?

As a party pooper. 🍷



In these times when we are shaken by visual and sensory overstimulation, when the five senses are under attack, :mentalKLINIK seeks to break through this hegemonic armor, to reach the erotic body. In their exhibitions, the physical space invites the viewer into an almost dysfunctional heterotopia: as a time-space that is still open to experience, even if everything has already happened and the celebration has just ended. The transitions, displacements, threats, playful encounters, titillating and depressing situations between the body-spirit-physical world and the disembodied-unconscious-virtual, in the artificial intelligence revolution of the new age, constitute the areas of attraction, occupation and the field of thought for :mentalKLINIK.

Alla Beni Pulla Beni Sabah Ateşi*

Prepared by: Çınar Eslek and Yekhan Pınarlıgil

A space for “the strong-as-steel attitudes of bodies that do not fit into representations, do not remain under control, use art as a possibility, do not stand still, love laughter, are not afraid of themselves, do not observe boundaries, dance, especially curl, make love with feather-lightness, do not look like anyone else, are a little monster, sometimes hybrid, not-one”, XXY focuses on the story of a human who has devoted his whole life to the porn industry in its new episode



Congratulations, you won the Best Veteran Actress award for Best Underground Film at the Venus Porn Film Festival. We see you in different kinds of movies. Can you tell us about your performance in the movie *Alla Beni Pulla Beni Sabah Ateşi* for which you received an award? Under what conditions and in which theater was this movie shown before? How did you become a porn actress?

Thank you very much for your kindness, but there is a mistake I would like to correct. It was not the Best Veteran Actress award. Every year the festival gives an Honorary Award to a person who has given years to the profession and has contributed to the social and political acceptance of the porn community. It's not given to a movie, a role or a performance, but to the person themselves, to their whole career. Thanks to them, this year I was honored. It was a very pompous ceremony. Of course, you can't help but feel proud. It's easy to say, a lifetime has passed. For years, I have worked in many different positions, with many, many different people. (Laughter.) In every sense of the word... Personally, I have not suffered any great harm, but of course, we are practicing a profession that is despised, especially in our country. We are on the margins, we are invisible. We have neither a union, nor social rights, nor a professional chamber, nor a proper representative. However, it is boiling over. It is a sector with a long history, dating back to the very beginning of image production, and it is a growing sector. We place our lives in this paradox. Generally speaking, our presence in the industry doesn't last very long anyway, the actors have to leave when they get a little older or fatter, the producers move on to more respectable fields as soon as they get a few cents, the technical staff are people who come from television or cinema, who shoot porn on the side, "secretly". When you can survive for a long time in these conditions, you attract attention. This is the main reason for my award, in other words, the underlying reason for being called an Honorary Award is just to have survived. Otherwise, honor is just a dick that patriarchal discourse elevates to the top, behind which is hidden a huge garbage dump.

Of course, the image production of this sector, which has a long history, changes every period. How have these changes affected your existence and acting?

Image production techniques have really developed at a very serious pace. Cinema cameras becoming portable was an event in itself. Then video came out and became lighter at an incredible speed. Nowadays they shoot porn with cell phones. I can say our world has changed. However, it must be said that each technique brings a different aesthetic, and each different aesthetic has a different fetishist. Those who liked to watch porn in the cinema probably found their happiness in the velvety quality of the image. In the early years of video, the contrasting gray scenes gave the feeling of being watched from a hidden camera, happy peepers. There was Super 8, for example, with limited but oversaturated colors. It gave the impression of being shot at home and mixed nostalgia with intimacy. They were the favorite movies of shy men and expats. And when the Hi8 came out, we were very excited. We could make copies easily and sell them easily, under the table and over the counter. They were more for fast consumers; for the golden children of wild liberalism who are not satisfied with one scene, who are always looking for a new one!

I guess that was a roundabout way to answer your question. But my acting was shaped not by the change of techniques, but by the different customers of the changing techniques and their expectations. "Who can buy and watch which technique? What does he/she expect while watching it?" and I dressed accordingly and acted accordingly.

Secrecy is inevitable in these degrading conditions. How were the films shot under the table released? Or if not, how could they be seen?

I think there's a little confusion, Betty dear. The movies that were released were not made in secret. They were shot with the usual production methods, but sometimes the script was changed to make them more erotic than they should have been. But of course, there were movies that were shot under the table. We were using Super 8 especially for these. We would shoot them quickly with a method we called in-camera editing. They would make a certain number of copies of the 3-minute cartridges and sell them to private individuals under the table. There was no such thing as these movies being released.

In-camera editing seems to be more suited to the performance. Today, there is no montage technique used in editing programs. As someone who has seen and participated in these two periods and in between, how do you evaluate this process?

Technology is advancing, language is evolving accordingly, this is normal. In-camera editing was an urgency for us, it was a convenience. Now there is no need, because editing techniques have become so easy, everyone can make a good or bad edit even on their phones. But you should ask this question to those who think about this more than me, Betty dear. There are historians and researchers who are interested in these conversations now.

You said you worked with very different people and in very different positions. What kind of positions were these?

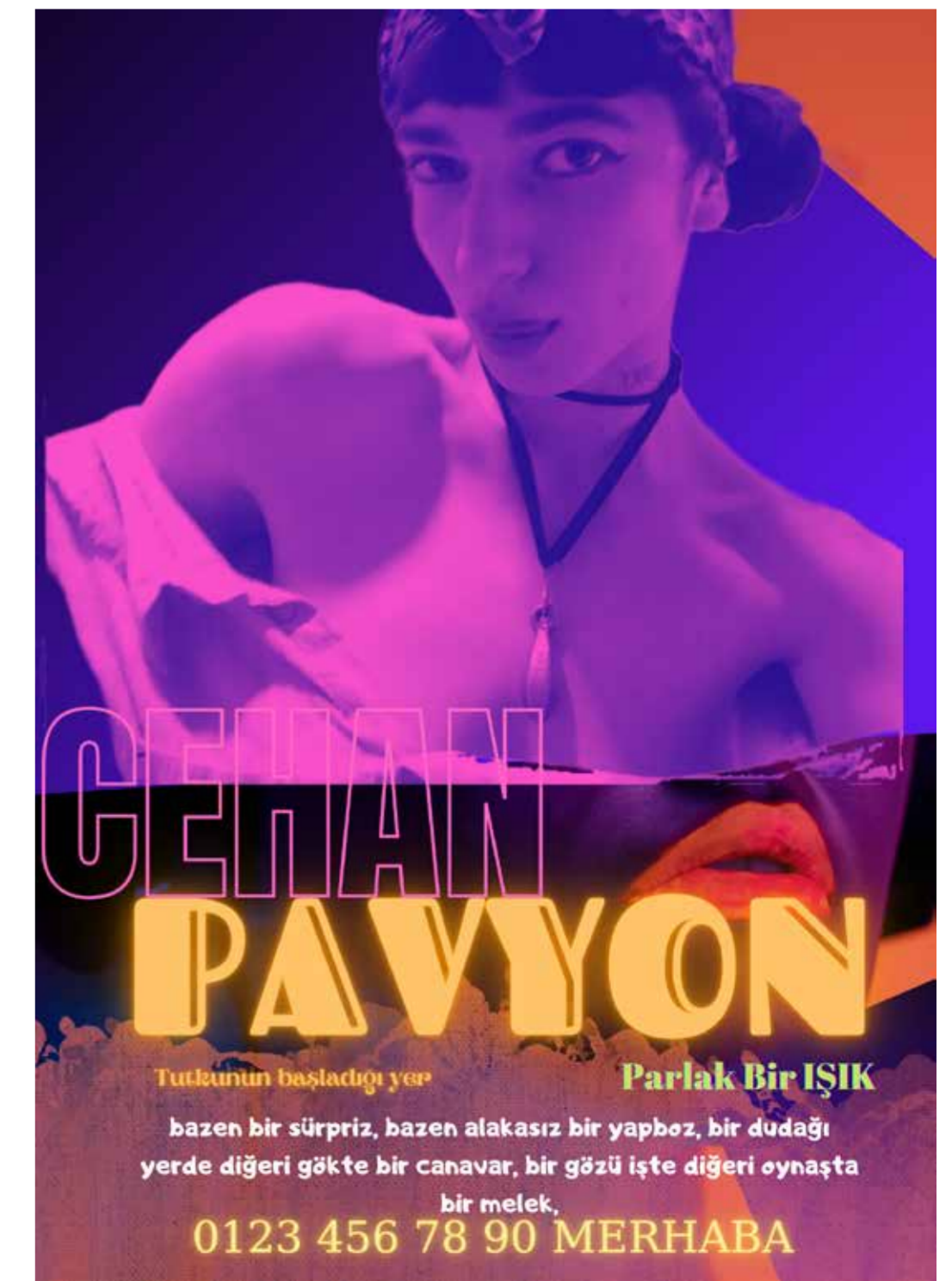
I was interested in movies from a young age. Not only the movie seen, but the whole movie ceremony. The transition from light to dark excited me. It's like going from consciousness to the subconscious, to the depths of human beings, to their dreams, to what they cannot confess. In that deep darkness

there were feelings I exchanged with people I didn't know: love, admiration, sometimes fear, but above all excitement. Then there was the strange embarrassment I felt when the intermission came, when the light came on, the furtive glances of people I had confided in but had never met while they were eating their Alaska Frigos or sipping their tea in a corner... And one of the elements that impressed me the most was the usher's dance with a flashlight. I entered the hall almost blind, and the only way out was for that little light to accompany me and my destiny. Then I would take my place next to my traveling companions for a few hours.

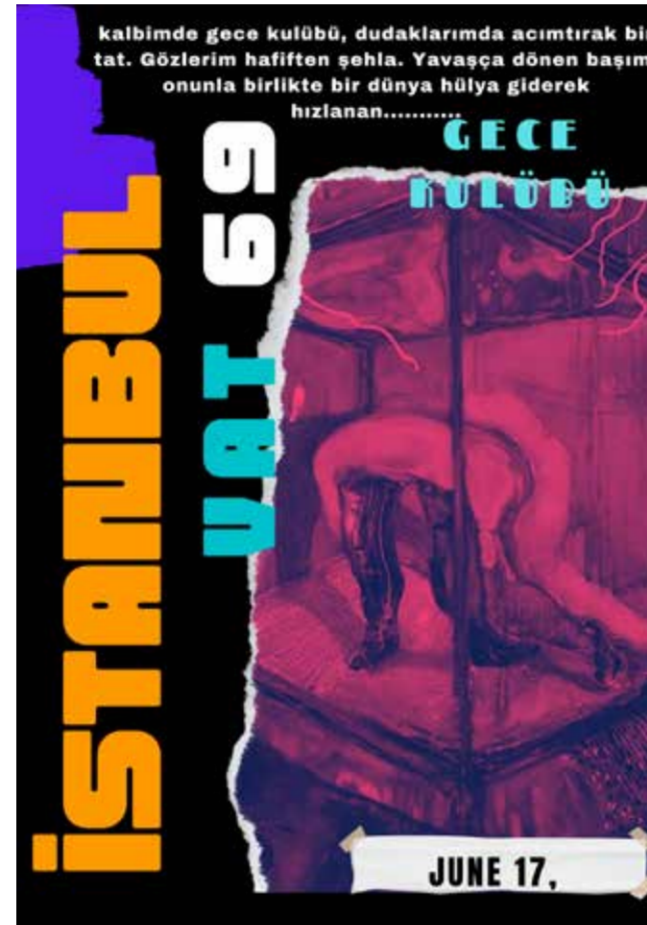
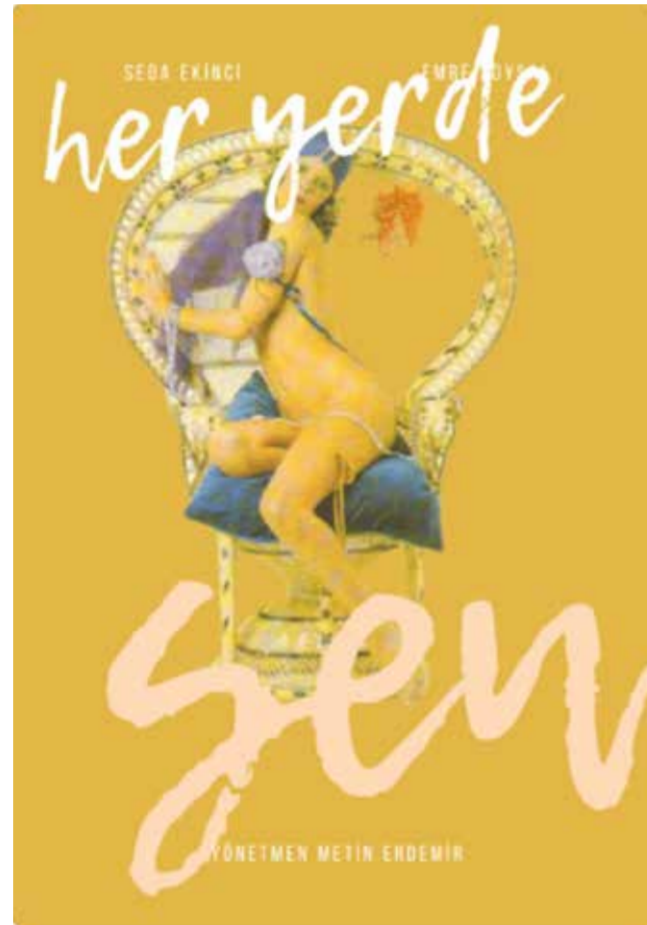
This is probably why, when I was very young, I begged the manager of a small movie theater in Anatolia to hire me. He told me repeatedly that they were looking for someone with more experience, but I persisted and finally succeeded. I worked as an usher in that movie theater for a long time. I had a flashlight that I used sparingly. I worked tirelessly, up and down, almost flying. After a long time, I received offers from different cities and drifted from place to place for a while. Until the boss of one of Istanbul's distinguished movie theaters discovered me. I performed my flashlight choreography in Aksaray for a long time. The movie theaters were small businesses, and when one of them got sick, another member of the team would take over. I worked in the tearoom, mopped the floors, and worked on the projector.

It was a winter morning, I remember it very well, the snow had covered Aksaray. Wet footprints at the entrance of the movie theater, a few spectators warming themselves with tea next to the burning stove in the foyer. I had opened the doors between the two movies, and I was calmly watching the people coming out: finding themselves on the cold streets of Istanbul before they had gotten rid of their dreams... The door of the foyer was left open, I was trying to close it. Suddenly there was a scream, a shouting and screaming, we were all surprised. The manager's wife had gone mad and stabbed him. They rushed him to the hospital. I first cleaned up the blood in his office and then started to organize his work.

Like a pavilion... Ten years ago I lived in the back streets of Beyoğlu. There was a pavilion opposite my house and a rock bar next to it. At night, the customers coming out of both places would mingle with each other. One day there was a shout, a scream. I looked; a customer had been stabbed. The front of the place is full of blood stains. By the time the police



When I say porn, I mean an industry, a profession to make money and survive. Not every striptease or every masturbation is porn. Everyone does it, not everyone makes porn at home. They don't dedicate their body images to the pleasure of others, people they've never even seen.



Each technique brings a different aesthetic, and each different aesthetic has a different fetishist. Those who loved watching porn in the cinema probably found their bliss in the velvety quality of the image. In the early years of video, the contrasting gray scenes gave the feeling of being watched from a hidden camera, happy peepers. There was Super 8, for example, with limited colors but oversaturated, as if shot at home. Nostalgia and intimacy were mixed.

arrived, the blood stains were wiped away and the customer disappeared. It was very strange. You also lived in the unlit, back streets of Taksim Park. They say some of the streets were dark. You could see the silhouettes of people, but their faces were hard to make out. Is that so?

Oh, my Betty, how many people passed through those streets, who disappeared there, who went from light to darkness, who turned into flesh and blood ghosts... The most well-known faces of the community disappeared there. Beyoğlu nights have such power. It anonymizes you, takes you in without you noticing. It's like a case of reverse birth. Dark streets pull you into their wombs. The next thing you know, you are gone. You have no face, no identity, no color in your eyes. Your body has turned into a spirit, your soul into smoke, you have become one of the darkness of the city.

That's how it is, sugar, Mr. Fahri came when I was working as a temporary manager. He opened the door without knocking, he didn't hear about the manager's incident, he paused when he saw me waiting for him. He quickly recovered and started chatting. He was one of the big shots of the time, a bit of a crazy, active, outgoing kind of guy. He said, "I'm a producer, we'll find a suitable position for you. That's how it happened. The curtain was pulled back on the porn industry, and I quickly got behind it like that.

Speaking of backstage, did you have any contact with the opera house? Was it a challenge for you to move quickly behind the curtain?

I think every new beginning is a challenge. When you go to a new city, it is difficult for you, a new house, a new lover, a new job... It was no more than that for me. The Opera House was a shelter that housed me for a while. It was a shelter. It was a family, a home, a house. For a period of my life, I was the opera, and that building was my stage. Everyone had left the city. There were ghosts, zombies, television stars, novel heroes, and then there was me... A period when they took down the cartel of the city.

Socially and politically, the power relationship wants to perpetuate its existence with a masculine dominance. Especially sexuality and issues related to sexuality have spread to our living spaces as normative rules. Morality has almost been reduced to issues related to sexuality.

This moralism manifests itself in different dimensions. Watching porn is not even brought up because it would be considered strange. Yet we are the country where the most porn is watched. The fact that porn has become a taboo makes the situation more acute. How do you evaluate not being able to talk about porn and sex at all, in your words, how do you evaluate this being despised?

First of all, I have to say that porn and sex mean very different things to an actress. When you look at it from the audience's point of view, porn is one of the forms of sexual consumption, a turn-on, or a spectacle in its purest form. Whereas for us, porn is a performance, like dance or theater. We are trying to arouse something in the audience by presenting your body to their gaze. Desire, orgasm, sometimes passion. For the lucky ones, porn is a profession. An industry in which you earn a living. However, it is important to remember that porn is not consumed because we show ourselves, we do not force anyone to watch us, we do these performances because the audience wants to see them. So, it's a matter of supply and demand. You talked about a society that cannot talk about sex. There is a great desire but a victim of so-called morality, a great interest but a clown of hypocrisy. A mob pretending to be mute. Silenced bodies, pretending not to live. A story of beer cans wrapped in newsprint, or of wine glasses blurred on the television screen. But we don't talk about sex, we stage ourselves as if we are having sex so that others can have a good sex.

Jeff Koons created a series of paintings, photographs, and sculptures from scenes in which he and Italy's porn queen Ciccilina (Ilona Staller) experimented with all forms of porn. For example, one work is called Ilona's Asshole. And this series was exhibited at the Venice Biennale International Art Exhibition in 1990. Another celebrity who pornologized art is Nobuyoshi Araki. Araki's photographs were published in pornographic magazines and then suddenly exhibited in galleries and art museums. In time, performances imitating pornography spread. Cosey Fanni Tutti, one of the most prominent of these performance artists, was once a porn star and Annie Sprinkle a prostitute. She appears in shop windows in Amsterdam's famous neighborhood, the Red Light District. Jemima Stehli and Hannah Wilke strip, others masturbate. You also talked about

porn as a performance. Based on these examples, how did your process take place and did your performance ever take place within the discipline of art?

First of all, I would like to say that I find it very strange that you put Jeff Koons' name in the same paragraph with other artists. I don't think it's possible to call what he does neither art nor porn. At best we can call him an advertiser, but it seems more like cunning to me. He knows the weaknesses of society, or rather the market, and he uses that to get attention. It's not porn, it's sex. People are free to do what they want with their bodies, but I think you always must be honest: with yourself and with the audience! Jeff Koons is commercially concerned, he's not honest or clear, he deliberately erases the traces, flushes them out. I think what is done is neither porn nor art. It seems insulting to others to lump artists like Hannah Wilke with him because they make art using their bodies as tools. We're talking about people who have changed society to make it more livable, or at least triggered change, not a marketer who plays with the boundaries of society to lull people to sleep for personal glory. I would also like to remind you that when I say porn, I mean an industry, a profession to make money and survive. Not every striptease or every masturbation is porn. Everyone does these things, not everyone makes porn at home. They don't dedicate their body images to the pleasure of others, people they've never even seen. In the same way, I think art has a certain line, it has its own morality, otherwise there are many people who make art at home...

You said, "Not every striptease or every masturbation is porn." What is porn? What is the difference between sex and porn?

When I think as a porn professional, I can answer like this: Sex is my private, my private life, the time I spend with my partner or partners with pleasure, sex is a sensual and spiritual pleasure. Porn is my profession, a profession that I do to exist, to make a living, for which I get paid. We all rent our bodies, our souls, our minds to someone. I don't think I'm very different from an office worker. Imagine a civil servant, working in a company or institution. At certain times of the day, he puts his body and mind at the service of his organization. And my organization is the porn industry. A few hours in which I rent my body for the pleasure of others.

We see you in many different roles in many different fields. It is difficult to define you. You may think you're just renting your body, but the audience doesn't think so. Or the art community. It is clear from the fact that they have awarded you this prize.

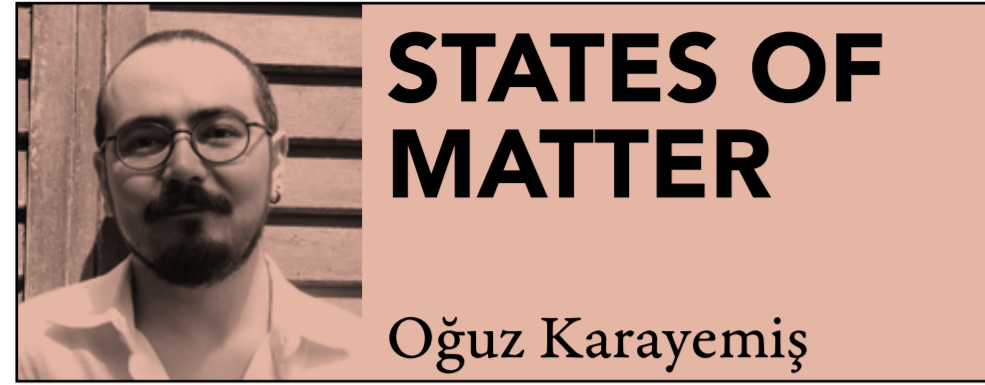
As for me, I never thought I was making art, but in recent years the boundaries of art have expanded and there has been an interest in what I do in the art community. I can't say it didn't work for me, because the films that we used to sell under the table are now being spent quite well by enthusiasts. So, I came to this field in spite of myself, through collectors and researchers. There was a very serious interest especially in Super 8 films. They had more or less three-minute cartridges. While we were playing the scene, let's not say acting, the cameraman would film us with the method we call in-camera montage. In other words, to summarize the whole scene in three minutes. Sometimes he couldn't get it right, for example, the cartridge ran out before the orgasm, (laughs) we would get angry at him, but what can the guy do, it's human, these things happen. Anyway... Then we would send these films to the developer and watch them when they came back. The producer would duplicate the ones that could be sold and sell them under the table for very good prices, and we would throw away the ones we thought were duds. Today even those are in demand. Recently, a researcher who works in a museum abroad, Yekhan Pınarlıgil, came to see my archives. I am sometimes surprised by this interest!

I've heard of Yekhan Pınarlıgil. I even recently visited an exhibition he curated. He was working with an artist named Çınar Eşlek, and together they were preparing an exhibition on my archives. From where to where... But of course, you like it, someone has found the posters of the movies you made years ago, they cherish your old movies and photographs. Moreover, people will come and see them. Who doesn't want to get attention, especially when you do a profession that has been left in the dark for years... Look, you are interviewing me. (They laugh together.)

When will the exhibition open? Where will it be?

It will be in Istanbul, at an art gallery called March Art Project. If I remember correctly, it will open at the beginning of January. 🌸

*Redden me, Flake me, Morning Fire



STATES OF MATTER

Oğuz Karayemiş

The *ancient grammar* of matter II

In the first of this series of columns, I tried to pursue the problem of the possibility of a grammar of images that is not anthropocentric, a problem that Uras Kizil addressed in his curated exhibition *A New Grammar of Images* (2022). In this respect, I discussed various artists and their works that think about the first and, in my opinion, the most important dimension, the matter-form continuum, either by directly practicing it in the process of art production or by establishing it at the level of the image. The main idea I formulated there was the following: The organizing principles of bodies and ideas as organized/formed matter arise not from a transcendent and spiritual dimension, but from the capacities of matter itself. This constituted what I called the “ancient grammar of matter”. For in this way the history of the cosmos and everything in it, whether a galaxy or a work of art, becomes the history of the self-organization of matter. Works that problematize these processes of self-organization and the transformation of matter through different materials (as well) constitute an important dimension of the new grammar of images.

In this article, I will consider another dimension of this grammar: works that focus on the agential capacities of various nonhuman beings as organized matter. In this complementary axis of the grammar, the main issue is to recognize and problematize the specific activities of non-human beings. These activities can manifest themselves in an agreement or disagreement with human goals and activities. It is this possibility of disagreement that grounds the autonomous existence of nonhumans from humans. Going even a step further, it would not be wrong to say, as Martin Heidegger did for the first time in the history of philosophy in *Being and Time*, that it is through their disagreement, i.e. their maverick behavior that we become aware of the agential capacities of non-humans, i.e. their maverick behavior that does not conform to our wishes and desires, to the functions we assign to them.

Let us proceed by discussing some works again. The first work I would like to discuss is Merve Ünsal's *A few words to drones (Second Version)* (2022), also from the exhibition *New Grammar of Images*.

In this three-photograph work, a different version of which was previously exhibited at the 5th Mardin Biennial, a kite with the inscription “both metal and plastic are tired” is seen soaring in the sky. Here, it can be said that Ünsal emphasizes at least two different nonhumans' extra-human agency. On the one hand, metal and plastic, which are referred to with the anthropomorphizing feature of fatigue, and on the other hand, the kite, which emerges as a political agent itself. “Fatigue” (e.g. “metal fatigue”) means the inability of different things to continue performing the functions they are defined to fulfill, at least with the expected efficiency. For example, these could be war machines that have been put to work for the purpose of waging an unspeakable war. Indeed, there are dozens of forms of human resistance to war, but it must be remembered that various devices, even weapons -by jamming- can resist war. To paraphrase Genghis Khan's famous quote, a loose nail can lead to the loss of a war.

Just as Merve Ünsal's work underscores disagreement - at least as a possibility - another work in the exhibition, Ali Kazma's video *Absence* (2011), shows an abandoned NATO base acquiring new transhuman functions. The buildings, tools and other abandoned objects that constitute this base cease to be part of most social relations in actual terms and become the propagation surfaces of other beings (mosses, insects and other creatures), that is, their new homes. At this point, I also realize that these capacities, which were already encapsulated in the building, have been suppressed to suit human purposes. A whole set of cleaning practices exists so that the buildings we inhabit cannot become homes

for other living beings. Putting another being to work for our purposes means actively suppressing capacities in it that may not suit our purposes at the time. One might even say that this repression is a defining dimension of social formations such as the institutional body that once occupied this NATO building.

The agency of nonhumans is, of course, not only the emergence of conflicts with human aims and effects that go beyond the human world. Art, correspondingly, does not only focus on the resistance of things and their activity indifferent to any human purpose. It can also render properly sensible agential performances that are in harmony but neglected and ignored. For this, let me return to a work from Eda Şarman's first solo exhibition, *Phenomenal Tendencies in Usual Phenomenon*, which was shown at Ferda Art Platform between May 12 and June 10, 2023. In this painting, titled *Kara* (2023), I am looking at a slender body enveloped by two dog paws. This work takes me to the problematization of the agency of care in its most basic and everyday form. Caring relations are complex and involve many forms of non-reciprocity, asymmetry and even structural inequality. However, it is a fact that the other living beings we live with also take care of us, and that they have highly organized care practices towards their fellow human beings. It can be said that Şarman's work unveils this capacity to act, that is, the capacity and practices of care of nonhumans.

To summarize, the new grammar of images is based on the discovery of various activities and actants offered by the ancient grammar of matter and the invention of artistic ways of making them noticeable. Instead of presenting non-humans as a set of human symbols, images seek to envision them as *themselves*. The ultimate power of art will be to carry this imagination into the imagination of other worlds traversed by new links between human and nonhuman. ✨

*Don't ever underestimate a nail. A nail saves a horseshoe, a horseshoe a commander, a commander an army, an army a country.

Ali Kazma, *Absence 3*, 2011, Two channel HD video, endless loop



exactly this place
27'e 37'n

Ruins | Bodrum
23 06 - 31 08

ART
ON
BODRUM



ENTEĞRE KURMA KOLU KORUMASI



MAVİ PARACHROM PANDÜL



KOLAY OKUNUR
DAKİKA ÖLÇEĞİ

HEP DAHA YÜKSEKLERE

O, havacılığın öncülerine bir övgü niteliğinde. 1958'de çıkan Air-King, 1930'ların pilotlarını ve Rolex Oyster'ın onların efsanevi hikayesindeki yerini onurlandırıyor. Saatin karakteristik siyah kadranında, optimum seyir süresini takip etmeyi sağlayan kolay okunur dakika ölçeği bulunuyor. Artık, kurma kolu korumasına sahip yeniden tasarlanan kasası ve daha iyi okunaklılık sunan dengeli kadranı ile, Rolex'in daima sınırları zorlamayı sürdürerek hep daha yükseklerle ulaşmayı başaran profesyonel modelleri arasındaki yerini sağlamlaştırıyor. **Air-King.**

#Perpetual



OYSTER PERPETUAL AIR-KING

RESMİ ROLEX SATIŞ NOKTASI



RHODIUM



ROLEX