

SERRA TANSEL PORTFOLIO

2012 - 2025

Serra Tansel Biography

www.serratansel.com

2 March 1989. Born in Istanbul, Turkey. Lives in London.

Collectives

Hayırlı Evlat

Makkam

Bonnington Cafe

Selected Exhibitions and Projects

2022

bag, pedestal,rabbit,potato at Staffordshire St, London

Sinopale 8, online

Suyun Bildikleri, Pilot Galeri, İstanbul

2021

SH/FT, a temporary assemblage initiated by Serra Tansel at No Show Space, London

Hayırlı Evlat @ Zevk Meselesi, Pera Müzesi, İstanbul

Tasawar Transcultural Talks: On Queering with Derya Bayraktaroğlu and Dijan Özkurt

2020

Mor Çatı için Sanat Dayanışması / Artists for Purple Roof Turkey

"Passion can create drama out of inert stone"?!, Peak, Elephant & Castle Shopping Mall, London

HIGHER, Serra Tansel, Pilot, İstanbul

2019

Hayırlı Evlat at Sinopale 7, Sinop

Heavens!, Bilsart, İstanbul and Battersea Arts Centre, London

2018

Love and the Ocean , LUX Scotland's guest-curated programme for Eden Court, selected by artist Frances Davis, Glasgow

Billboard 8171, Annin Arts, London

2017

Hiçbir Şey Görememek karma sergi / Not Seeing Anything group show, Alt Bomonti, İstanbul

2016

Freundschaftsspiel Istanbul : Freiburg, Museum für Neue Kunst, Freiburg
Artists' Film Biennial: Selected by artist Ahmet Ögüt, ICA, London
Chance Symphony at BP: Tate Together Families Event, Tate Britain, London

2015

Sera Tansel Unlimited by Serra Tansel, noshowspace, London
Dünya Döner, Museum aan de Stroom, Antwerp
ΓΑΥΚΙΑ ΜΟΥ - Joanna Peace & Serra Tansel, Snehta Residency, Athens
We Out Here: ParaSite School with Felipe Castelblanco, Melanie Coles and Shepherd Manyika, Royal Academy, London

2014

Su İkramımızdır with Duval Timothy at Polistar, Istanbul

2012

Chance Symphony at BP: Tate Together Families Event, Tate Britain, London

Residencies**2022**

Fondazione Morra, Napels

2017-2018

GROUNDLED at Growing Underground, Battersea Arts Centre Agents of Creative Change program set up by Amy Pennington, London

2016

Air Antwerpen, Antwerp

2015

ParaSite at Royal Academy, London
SNEHTA Residency, Athens

2012

AIR Mini Residency, on public art, London
The Drift Project, on performance art, Rio de Janeiro

Education

2007-2011 BA, Central Saint Martins, Fine Art 3D Department, London

SKYSCAPES

The exhibition brings together the artist's new works, which focus on her multi-layered relationship with the sky, as well as her site-specific installation. The installation takes its name from poet Mahmoud Darwish's lines "Where Do the Birds Fly After the Last Sky?" and features birds that are near-endemic to Palestine. The installation, titled *Where Do the Birds Fly After the Last Sky?* is inspired by the imagery of a cardboard bird Serra Tansel encountered at the Palestine Solidarity March in London. The bird, a symbol of movement, freedom, and peace, combined with cardboard boxes, the everyday material of global logistics networks, reveals the contradiction between the fluidity of trade objects and bodies condemned to forced migration or immobility.

The artist's gaze, turned towards the sky during the first months of motherhood, focuses on how this space, laden with transcendence, hope, and mythological promise, has been redefined by death, loss, and absence in the era of wars we are living through. The place of the sky in cross cultural memory stars as refuge, the horizon as a projection of the future, intertwines with experiences of personal grief, birth, and collective trauma to form a new narrative. Tansel's plaster sculpture, cast from her baby's footprints and painted to resemble the sky, offers a poetic intervention into spatial perception. These small feet, which invert the idea that the sky begins where the earth ends, bring the distant heavens shaped by imagination, belief, and mythology closer through the materiality of the body, prompting us to rethink the sky as an accessible space.

The exhibition's sky-centered conceptual framework further expands with other works that bear traces of invisible violence. The photographic series *Under the Same Sky* preserves only the sky portions of images taken by Gazan journalists whose lives were cut short, making visible the silence of the destroyed lives and images, as well as the dual burden created by censorship. When placed side by side, these skies create a topography that holds both the void of a lost world and the resilience of imagination.

A metal assemblage, pressed and transformed from police barriers, emerges as a gesture of resistance that explores the possibilities of dismantling and reconstructing existing structures. Positioned in front of a wall painted in barrier blue (ultramarine and sky blue) tones, the sculpture invites reflection on the horizon line, the threshold between earth and sky. The barricade irons, broken apart and crushed into a new form, evolve from an obstructive structure into an opening, a newly imagined horizon.

Tansel's works that engage with scent, surface, and memory translate the relationship between body and environment into a sensory register. An oil burner cast from orange peel, produced in reference to Palestine's orange groves - which created the biggest orange supplies to the world between mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries - carries the intimate fragrance of displacement and the idea of home; while the limestone plinth invites the memory of geography into the space. This sensory intensity leads the viewer on a simultaneous journey toward contemplating a distant geography and their own inner world.

The trace left in the sky by political violence turns into searing satire in another work: *The Donkey Flight Project*. With Gaza's roads destroyed, donkeys that became rescue vehicles are seized by the IDF and transported to Europe under the name of an "animal rescue operation," addressing the contradictions of destruction and the absurdity of its representations. Donkey portraits hung on galvanized metal sheets folded into origami planes reveal the tension between flight and captivity, compassion and exploitation, prompting viewers to question how the political meanings of the sky are reproduced.

FREE-range transforms the political connotations of language into a spatial play through remotely controlled, chicken-sized letter mechanisms. While the sky is imagined as a zone of escape, Puerto Rico offers another kind of false refuge: an oil-painted reproduction of a Puerto Rican beach poster hung in the open visitation areas of a prison reinterprets images of controlled freedom. The brightness of the exotic landscape holds both the promise of freedom and its unattainability.

Tansel's new exhibition, *Skyscapes*, moves beyond traditional romanticized interpretations of the sky, instead treating it as a space where both personal and collective fractures are recorded today. She removes the sky from its position as a fixed vantage point and positions it as a being that touches, trembles, smells, sounds, and bears witness. Throughout the exhibition, the idea that everything living under the sky is bound together by invisible ties is recalled through different materials and sensory experiences.



Exhibition photos by Sahir Uğur Eren

“Where Should the Birds Fly After the Last Sky?”

2025

This installation borrows elements from the Palestine Solidarity movement. Its title quotes Mahmoud Darwish’s poem *The Earth Is Closing on Us*, and the work is inspired by a cardboard bird placard seen at a Palestine Solidarity March in London.

Cardboard boxes—everyday objects readily available to many through global circulation and trade—form the core material of the installation. These boxes evoke movement and mobility, standing in stark contrast to the enforced immobility of people in Gaza. Replacing the symbolic peace dove of the original placard, the birds depicted here represent near-endemic species of Palestine.

The notion of endemism raises questions about borders: where Palestine begins and ends, and how ecological boundaries come into tension with political ones. The natural habitats of Palestine’s birds have been occupied by drones, debris, and dust; they, like all living beings and objects in Gaza, have become subjects of genocide.

In the installation, the birds pierce the cardboard boxes, disrupting the flow of global trade before entering the exhibition space—an act that gestures toward both rupture and flight.



"Where Should the Birds Fly After the Last Sky?", 2025
Oil paint on cardboard, cardboard boxes, wooden beams



Sky Starts Under Your Feet

2025

Gypsum sculptures cast from the soles of our baby's feet are painted as the sky. If the sky begins exactly where the ground ends, then—technically—we are already walking on it. These small feet remind us that the skies containing our dreams, beliefs, and mythologies are not distant; they rest at the limits of our reach.



***Sky Starts Under Your Feet* 2025**

Oil paint on gypsum

37.3 x 37.3 cm

Returning Home

2025

From the mid-19th to the mid-20th century, Jaffa was the world's leading exporter of oranges, cultivated by Palestinian workers of all faiths before the founding of Israel and the displacement that followed. After the establishment of Israel, a new narrative emerged—one that claimed the orchards were planted by them on barren land, erasing this agricultural history.

Smell triggers memory, acting as a portal to other times and places.

Returning Home is an oil burner cast from an orange peel, resting on a piece of limestone. As the orange oil warms, the corridor leading into the exhibition space becomes a sensory passage to a remembered home.



Returning Home, 2025

Oil burner: Brass limestone, tea light candle, orange oil
10 x 13 x 13 cm

Seeds

2024

One of the meanings of the word “human” in Turkish is “pupil.” Tansel creates this double self-portrait by tracing the outline of her pregnant belly, depicting it in the shape of a watermelon, a symbol of Palestinian resistance.

In 1967, the Palestinian people, whose flags were banned by Israel, later became a symbol of Palestinian resistance by raising slices of watermelon, the fruit of their land, which shares the color of their flag. Palestinian artist Sliman Mansour recounts how, during his exhibition in Ramallah in the 1980s, the gallery was closed by Israeli occupation forces and he and two other artists were detained. The Israeli occupying soldier told them they were not allowed to do any political work and that using the colours of Palestine was forbidden. The soldier said, “If you even paint a picture of a watermelon in the colours of your flag, we will destroy your painting.” According to Mansour's account, the idea of the watermelon symbol in the anti-genocide protests that have spread across the world today was actually first mentioned by an Israeli soldier.

Giving a baby the watermelon that has been lifted from the ground when it is ripe is a tradition among Kurds living within Turkey's borders. When the watermelon is lifted from its bed, its insides are first scooped out. Its size shows the fertility of the soil. To celebrate this, a baby is placed inside the scooped-out watermelon. The baby and the soil meet, and the watermelon becomes the baby's skin.

Tansel envisions humanity, the land, and its fruit in her work, *Seeds*.



***Seeds*, 2024**
Watercolour on paper
Framed: 46 x 47 cm

Scale

2021

“Scale” is an x-ray of a big fish with small fish inside it. According to the news on TV, some fishmongers are stuffing expensive large fish with small scrap fish to make them weigh more on the scale. The work was produced for What Water Knows group exhibition at Pilot Galeri.

Conversation about the work in Turkish available at [this link](#).

Pilot Podcast: Beyza Dilem Topdal & Serra Tansel & Sedat Gündoğdu

Pilot Podcast'in üçüncü bölümünde, Birbuçuk Kolektifi üyesi Yasemin Ülgen; sanatçılar Beyza Dilem Topdal ve Serra Tansel ile akademisyen, deniz biyoloğu ve aktivist Sedat Gündoğdu, Topdal'ın "Kirlenmiş Evler" ve Tansel'in "Ağırlığınca" işleri hakkında konuşuyor.



Scale (Ağırlığınca) 2020
x-ray, lightbox, frame
41.5 x 37.2 cm



“Passion can create drama out of inert stone”?!

2020

An eternal display
like
white marble gravestones
with right angles
ordered
like
something we've all seen before.

Looping on itself
like
Shirley Eaton in gold.

“Passion can create drama out of inert stone”?! was on display on 23 - 24 September at Peak Gallery inside Elephant and Castle Shopping Mall. The mall has closed permanently on the 24th of September 2020 for demolition, to give way to a new shopping centre, residences and University of the Arts campus. Elephant and Castle Shopping Mall was built in 1965. It had a very comfortable lighting and acoustics and opened up space for soft socialising. The mall has been home to the Latin American community and many of the shop owners have been there for more than 20 years. Some of the shops will be relocated by the property developers with 2 years of rent reduction but there are no plans for after that period. With the shops being dispersed, the new aesthetics of the neighbourhood and the new clientele, it is highly unlikely that these shops will be around for long.

The rental contracts of the new shops in the mall in the last few years included a clause that banned the tenants of speaking out about the demolishing of the mall. Peak Gallery was one of these spaces. Ayşe Köklü referred to this as “the elephant in the room”.

In the last few days of the mall, I refurbished, repainted and cleaned Peak Gallery. I made a perfect white cube that would not allow any context to seep in, like the campus of University of the Arts. I tried to camouflage the space into the slick aesthetics this neighbourhood now demanded. It needed to be White. Removing all the personal marks from the space was a ritual that would hopefully make it easier to part with it. If it became generic enough, it would become a meta space and not having the physical space anymore would be irrelevant.

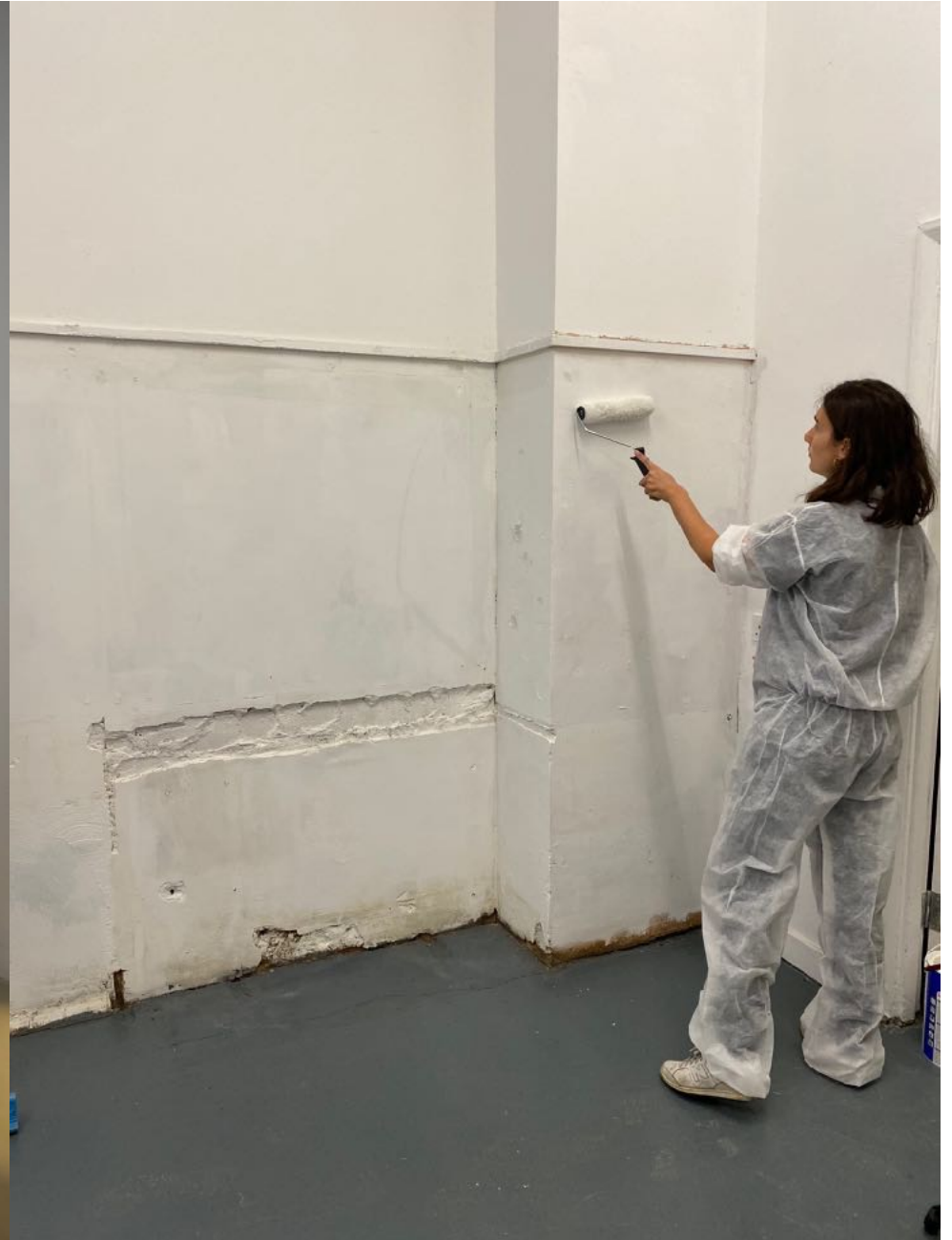
I found a tea mug, a vintage souvenir of Elephant and Castle Restaurant on eBay. In the James Bond's Goldfinger movie, Shirley Eaton is killed by Goldfinger by being painted in gold. They believed this would block her pores and raise her body temperature and could be used as a weapon. This reminded me of London's gentrification and Grenfell Tower which burnt down due to the flammable cladding it was covered with to make it look more tolerable from outside for the rich neighbourhood it was located at.

“Passion can create drama out of inert stone” is a quote taken from Le Corbusier's Towards a New Architecture.





Photography by Katarzyna Perlak





Photography by Katarzyna Perlak



Photography by Katarzyna Perlak



Photography by Katarzyna Perlak



Photography by Katarzyna Perlak



"Passion can create drama out of inert stone"?!, 2020

porcelain mug painted in gold leaf paint

14 x 14 x 7.5 cm

Accessible but unbearable: Serra Tansel addresses the invisible conditions for dispossession at Elephant and Castle, & beyond

Deniz Kirkali, 15 March 2021
Interviews

Born and raised in Istanbul, [Serra Tansel](#) has a certain relationship to shopping malls. In the past years, public space has been increasingly disappearing and many green areas, especially in larger Turkish cities, have been replaced with luxury buildings and shopping centres. For maximum profit and encouraging consumption, the whole country has been turning into one huge commercial centre with Western names and aesthetics. Unlike the contemporary malls that tend to rise overnight in Turkey, London's Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre was built in 1965, and has been home to Southwark's Latinx community since the early 2000s. Tansel first visited the retail space in 2007 after relocating for her fine art degree, and found its surprisingly soft lighting and the soothing acoustics made it a place she has enjoyed spending time, reading a book, having coffee, meeting friends—until now.

'Being in the mall in its last week felt like being at a funeral,' say Tansel via Zoom from her London home, about the final days of Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre before it was closed for demolition on September 24, 2020, after 56 years. "People were coming by to pay tribute, to take photos and say their farewells to their favourite shops." Set to be replaced with a new retail and residential building—as well as an University of the Arts London (UAL) campus extension—existing businesses were forced out by developers with the promise of being temporarily relocated with reduced rents during construction. They would then be returned to the new premises, but, of course, to a transformed neighbourhood serving a totally different clientele who can now afford to live there. The consumption needs and demands might not be met by the current stores, the fabric of the previous community having been wiped out for the slick aesthetics and higher rents of an increasingly gentrified South London area. The seemingly empty promises of protecting the interests of its current tenants neglects the social bonds and support networks built through the mall, as well as the emotional connection they have to the space. There are powerful invisible dynamics which will disappear, and they will either have to cater to the new demographics or go bankrupt.



Serra Tansel, *'Passion can create drama out of inert stone'?* (2020). Exhibition view. Photo by Kat Perlak. Courtesy Peak Gallery, London.

AQNB **

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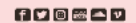
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Accessible but unbearable: Serra Tansel addresses the invisible conditions for dispossession at Elephant and Castle, & beyond. Interview with Deniz Kirkali, published at AQNB on 15/03/2021

www.aqnb.com/2021/03/15/accessible-but-unbearable-serra-tansel-addresses-the-invisible-conditions-for-dispossession-at-elephant-and-castle-beyond/

HIGHER

Pilot hosts HIGHER, Serra Tansel's first solo exhibition in Istanbul between December 27, 2019 and February 1, 2020.

HIGHER is a manifestation of Istanbul's neoliberal poetry. Occupied with the ways we settle into the world and the borders of our homes in her art practice, Tansel focuses on the gated communities of Istanbul with HIGHER. These settlements have been shaping Istanbul's silhouette and gaining ground in the global real estate market since the 1980s.

The compounds that are guarded by private security guards, CCTV cameras, walls and fences, bring to mind prisons or military bases and create more segregation in the society. Taking advantage of the earthquake legislation, they lay their foundations on shaky grounds of financial inequalities and ethnic cleansings. The walls encircling them become materialised lines between social classes, externalizing the "other" as foreign and eerie. Concurrently, the gated communities, estate agents and home decoration shops that are named in Western languages to make them sound more modern -> luxurious -> valuable estranges us to our own culture and language. As a token of our westernization adventure, their advertisements promise to straight couples, pearl smiles and blue eyed blonde kids running on the green grass of their cosy homes.

Whilst our neighbourhoods are being dug up, Tansel is hollowing out the images and language of the dreams and desires produced by the real estate market. The gated communities that replace nature with high rises most commonly include references to rural life and nature in their names. These names that strive to recover what has been wiped out, reveal further the delusion we are living in. Tansel's works in HIGHER disguise themselves in the aesthetics of advertisements and the bright colours of fantasy lands, to visualise the absurdity of the established order.

*HIGHER is pronounced the same as the Turkish word for NO – HAYIR.
Photo credits: Kayhan Kaygusuz

K24


Kritik Zapt edilen zamanın peşinde: EN **T24** Bizimiz İnternet Gazetesi


EDITÖRDEN DOSYA KRİTİK SÖYLEŞİ PORTRE EVVEL ZAMAN KİTAPLAR HER ŞEY

HABERLER DİĞER

'HIGHER': Gündüzcondulardan güvenli site hayatına ayrıcalıklı hayat yanılması





Serra Tansel'in Pilot Galeri'deki sergisi Higher, yüksek güvenli siteleri konu ediniyor





DERYA BAYRAKTAROĞLU
@e-posta
Her Şey

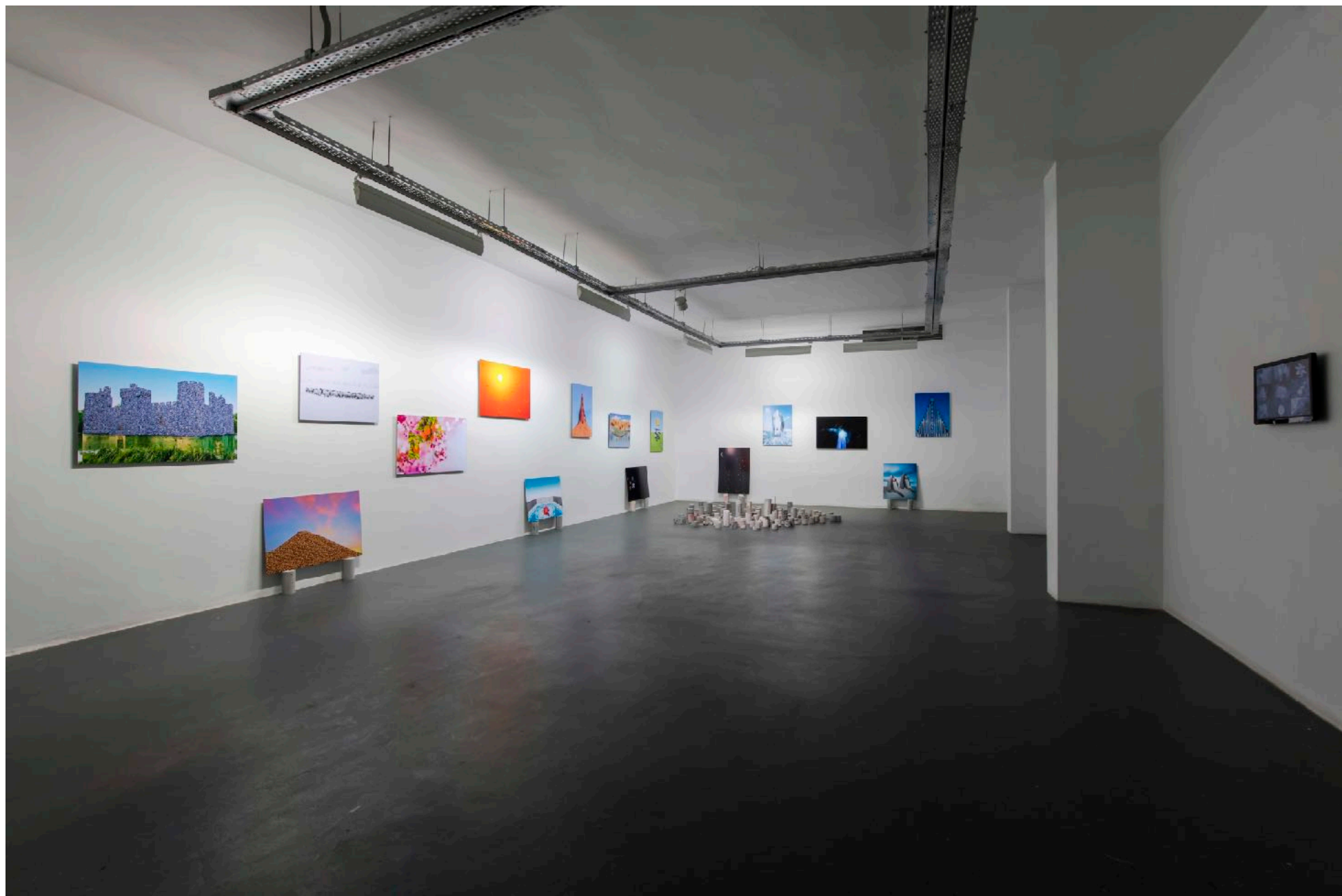
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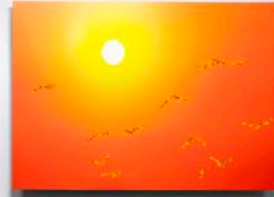


Serra Tansel'in Pilot Galeri'de 1 Şubat'a dek izlenebilecek solo sergisi *Higher*, sermaye grupları ve kentli elitlerin ayrıcalıklı yaşamlarına mahal olan yüksek güvenli siteleri konu ediyor; merkezlere yakın ormanlık alanlarda veya şehir içindeki AVM'lerin çatılarında yükselen farklı görünümde fakat kullanım düzenleri bakımından benzeşen güvenli yaşam mekânlarını derliyor. İnşaat ve finans sektörlerine, çevre ve iskân politikalarına yön veren, toplumsal dinamiklere etki eden söz konusu yapılaşma ve yaşama biçimine ilişkin imgelerle mekân kuruyor.

'HIGHER': Gündüzcondulardan güvenli site hayatına ayrıcalıklı hayat yanılması by Derya Bayraktaroğlu, published at K24 on 21/01/20

<https://t24.com.tr/k24/yazi/higher-gunduzcondulardan-guvenlikli-site-hayatina-ayricalikli-hayat-yanilmasi.2518>





Gündüzkondular (Placed in daylight)

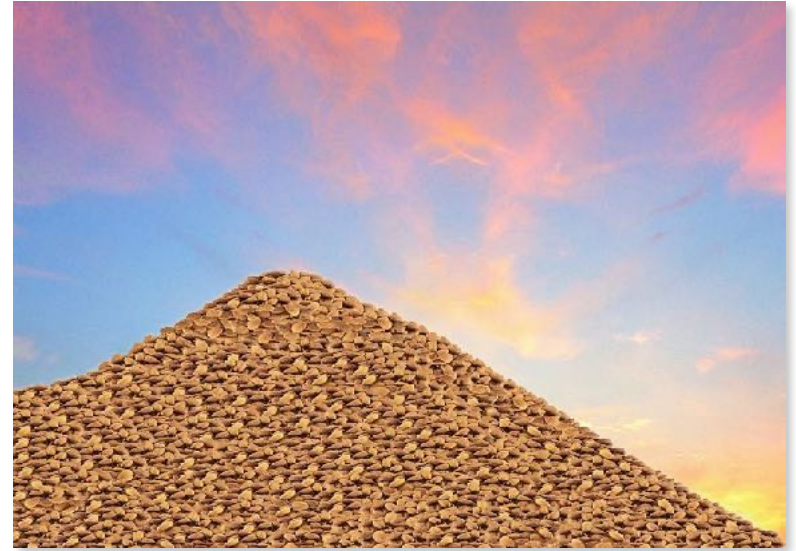
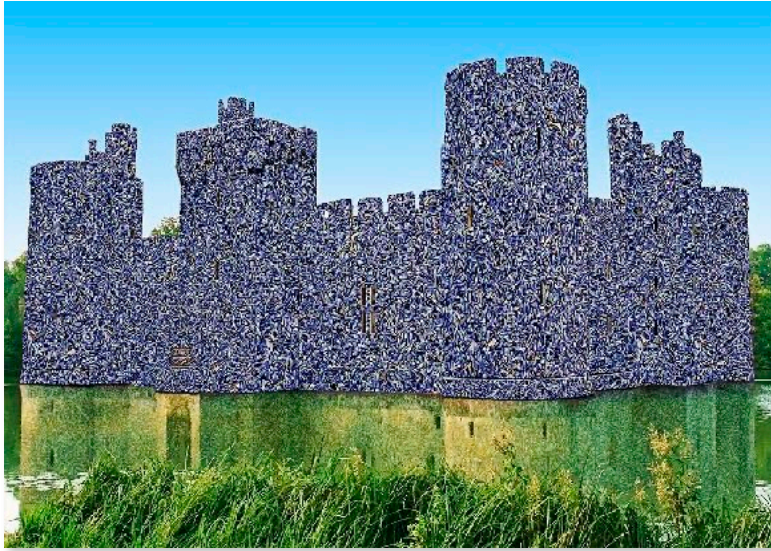
2017 - ongoing

Gündüzkondular (Placed in daylight) is a reference to “gecekondu” which translates as “placed at night”. Gecekondu are houses in Turkey built overnight without a land permit, as the law allows the built structure to be retained if it settled overnight without interference. They are built by people immigrating to big cities from villages and date back to 1950s. With industrialisation, Istanbul’s population grew drastically after the 50s and the state didn’t have the funds to provide affordable housing to the migrant blue-collar workers. Therefore, the state usually turned a blind eye to these settlements and most politicians promised permits to gecekondu residents in their election campaigns which never got fulfilled.

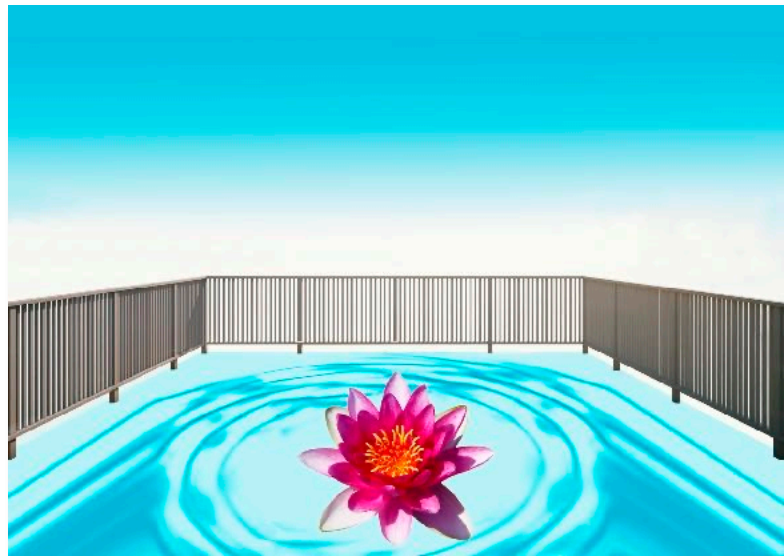
By 1980s Istanbul was the engine of the whole country and the gecekondu were the most dominant way of dwelling. Yet, a decade later, with the liberalisation of the economy and the price increases in Istanbul’s property market, they became the tumours of the city. My earliest memories of Istanbul as a child is watching the violent eviction of gecekondu residents on TV and seeing demolitions everywhere as we drove through the city.

With the destruction of their homes, low income residents of Istanbul were pushed to the outskirts and the city centre was left to the construction of skyscrapers, shopping malls and gated communities. Gated communities became the dominant way of dwelling since the early 2000s. They are built in daylight unlike gecekondu yet with a lot of corruption in most cases. They are highly secured with walls, fences, cameras and guards, bringing to mind army camps or prisons.

Some of these new gated communities even have themes such as ViaPort Venezia, which promises “Not just 2 nights and 3 days of Venice but a whole life time”. These Disneyland type of fantasy settlements are not just selling shelters, they are selling lifestyles. A certain social status is included in their prices. The gated neighbourhoods are most commonly named in English, or semi-Turkish semi-English, to make them sound more modern, luxurious and expensive. Their names often include references to rural life and nature whilst they replace nature with high rises. The digital drawings *Gündüzkondular (Placed in daylight)*, take these gated communities’ names literally and visualise what kind of a world our property moguls are envisioning and constructing for us.

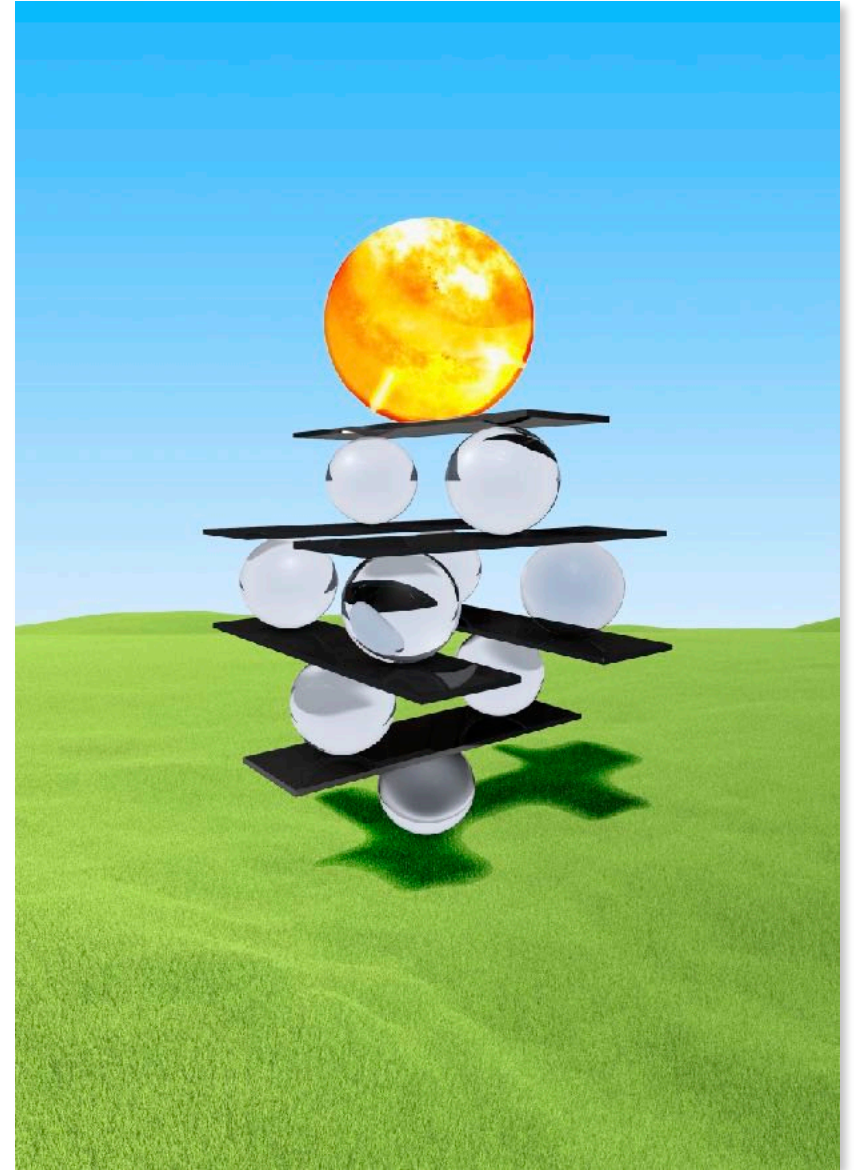


Suryapi Lavender (Castle Walls Lavender) / Almond Hill / The Mandarins Acıbadem (The Mandarins Almond) / Kuzu Effect (Lamb Effect)
Hahnemühle Digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle Glossy paper, mounted on aluminum composite



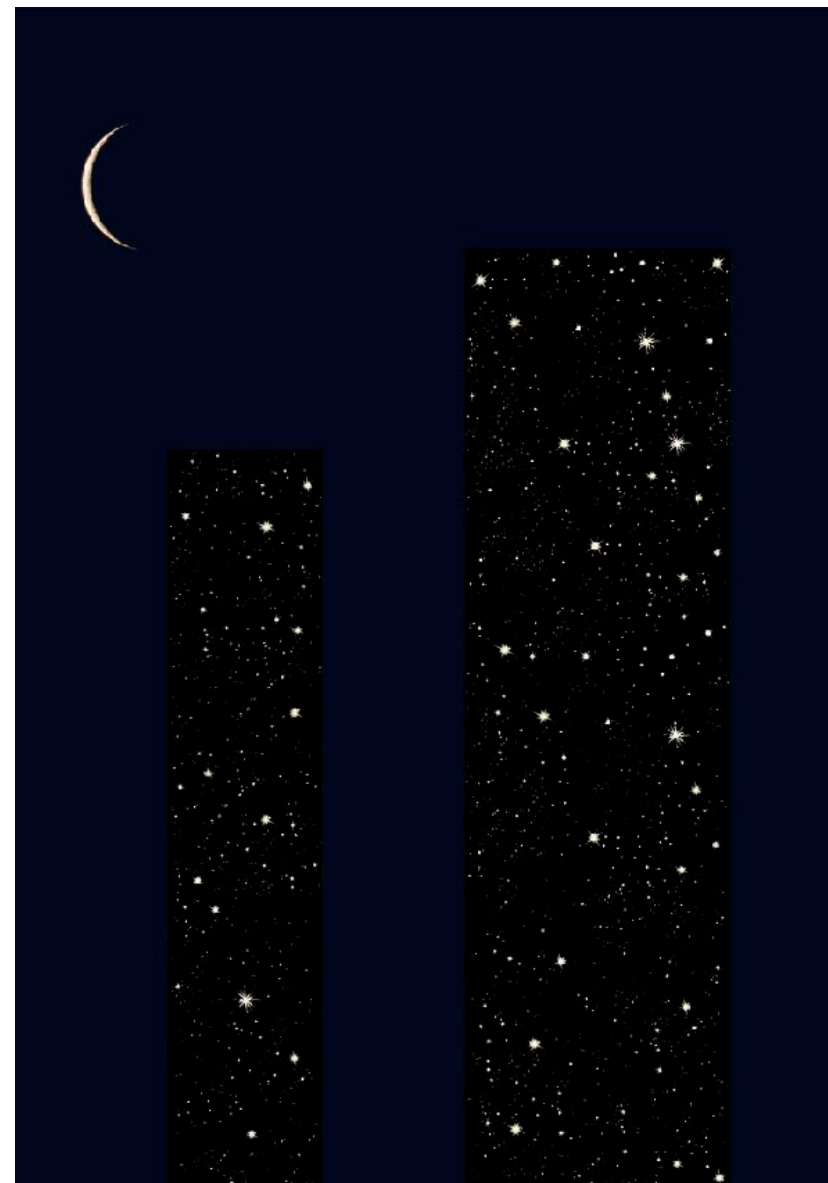
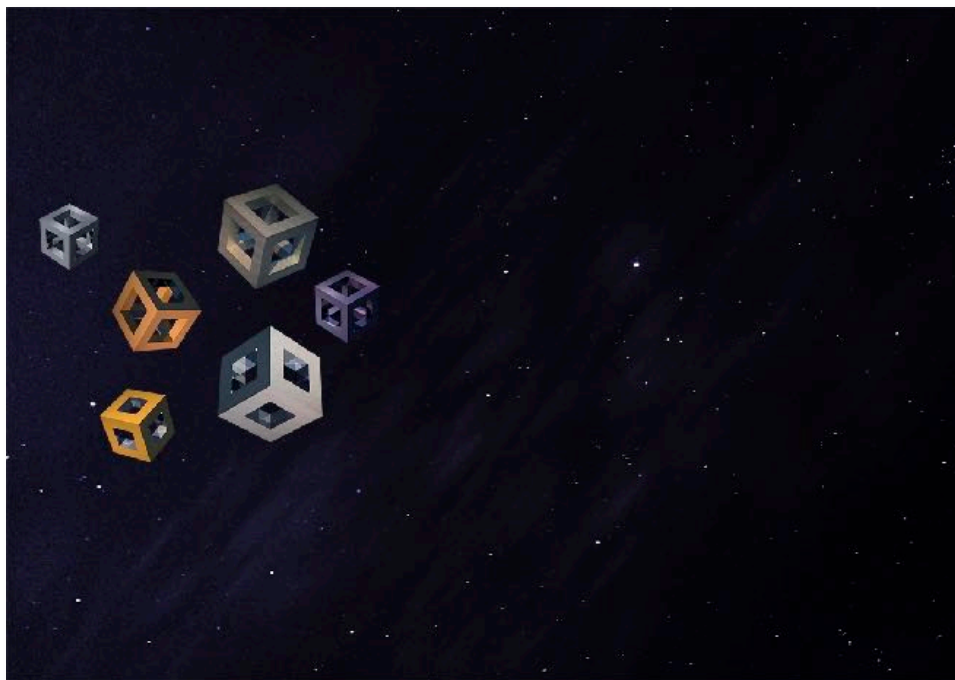
Helenium Wings / Anthill / Almond Hill / Lotus Terrace

Hahnemühle Digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle Glossy paper, mounted on aluminum composite



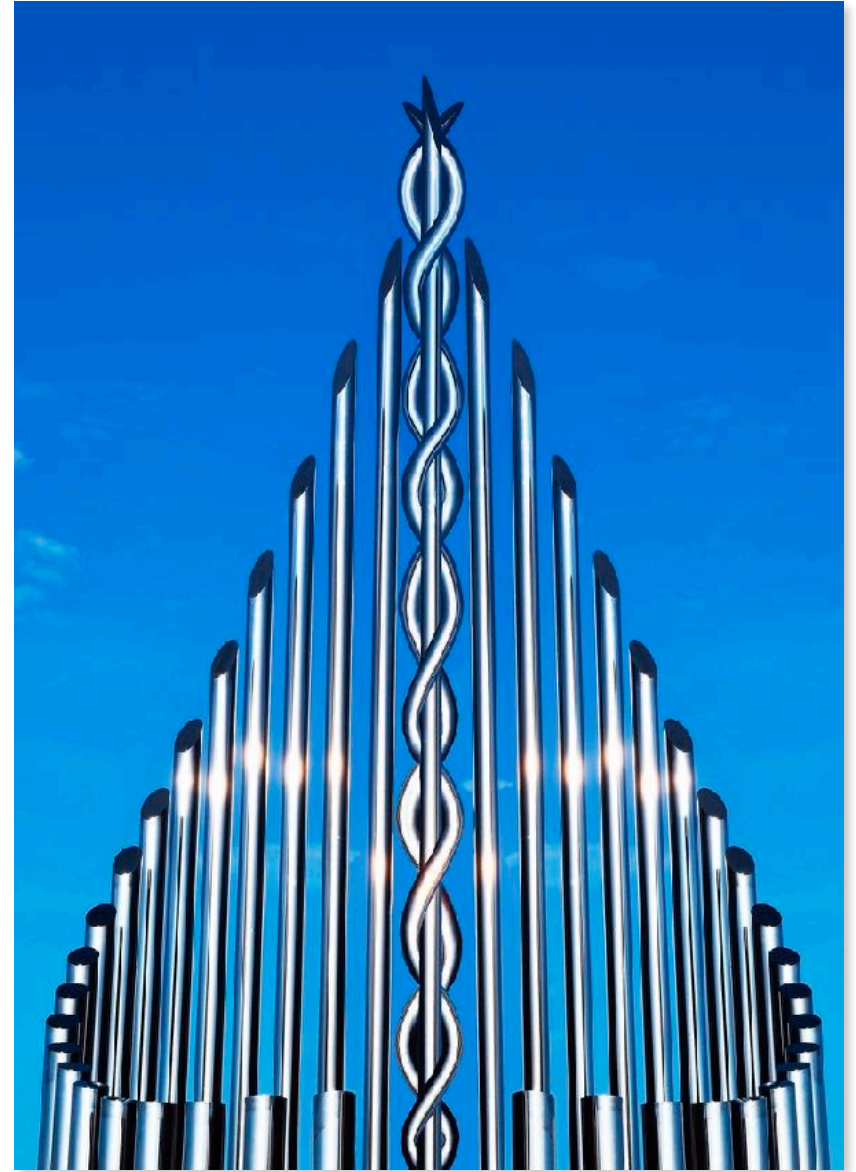
Sunflower Altınorak (Golden Sickle) / Balance Güneşli (Sunny)

Lenticular print, aluminum frame on the back / Hahnemühle Digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle Glossy paper, mounted on aluminum composite



West Blocks / Star Towers

Hahnemühle Digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle Glossy paper, mounted on aluminum composite



Crystal Tower / Demir (Iron) Romance

Hahnemühle Digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle Glossy paper, mounted on aluminum composite



Şelale (Waterfall) Space Center / Selenium Twins

Hahnemühle Digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle Glossy paper, mounted on aluminum composite

Not a new home, a new life.

2019

The drilling cores that are collected from a couple of different test centres are samples taken from buildings all around Istanbul. They are tested under pressure to see if they are strong enough to survive an earthquake. Some of the cores are so weak that they were crumbling even whilst installing. Some of them have seashells in them which means that sea sand was used without washing and the salt has been eroding these buildings. The cheaply made buildings cost many people's lives in the earthquakes.

Currently, the drilling cores are most commonly taken out of buildings in the neighbourhoods that the property investors decide to demolish and build luxurious high rises or gated communities.





Alkent Sitesi closed circuit television footage

2019

One of the first gated communities built in Istanbul, Alkent Sitesi, has named all its buildings with flower names. This video is made of footage of these flowers and they are edited as if this was the CCTV footage the security guard would be watching.



Alkent Sitesi closed circuit television footage, 2019
Video, 2'19"

cam göz

2019

cam göz - kem göz means “evil eye” in Turkish. cam and kem are homonyms and refer to the cctv camera in the centre of the evil eye protection.

This sculpture is a modified flower wreath people send out to funerals and openings. This type of metal version that is typically in a plain colour is more commonly used by state departments.

cam göz was installed at the entrance of HIGHER exhibition at Pilot Galeri which was about the gated communities of Istanbul. cam göz is an amulet of the property owners who want to secure themselves with the gaze of the state mechanisms against all the dubious outsiders.



cam göz, 2019
Metal wreath, spray paint, fake CCTV camera
176 x 125 x 93 (r) cm

ÖZEL GÜVENLİK (PRIVATE SECURITY)

2017

Photo of a recycling worker working in the streets of Istanbul. He is wearing a PRIVATE SECURITY jacket that he might have found in the bin, like a glitch in the system.



ÖZEL GÜVENLİK (PRIVATE SECURITY), 2017

C-Print

50 x 70 cm

K24

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EDITÖRDEN DOSYA KRİTİK SÖYLEŞİ PORTRE EVVEL ZAMAN KİTAPLAR HER ŞEY

HABERLER DİĞER

'HIGHER': Gündüz kondulardan güvenli site hayatına ayrıcalıklı hayat yanılması

Serra Tansel'in Pilot Galeri'deki sergisi Higher, yüksek güvenli siteleri konu ediniyor

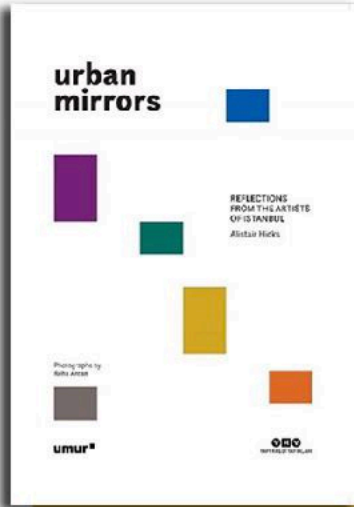
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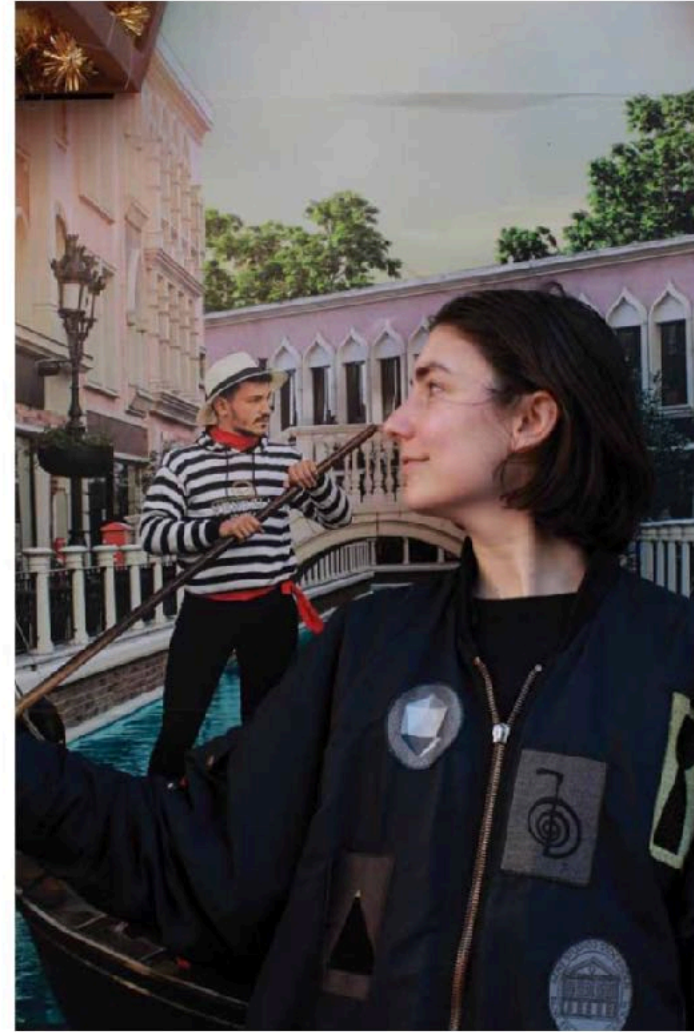
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Her Şey

Serra Tansel'in Pilot Galeri'de 1 Şubat'a dek izlenebilecek solo sergisi *Higher*, sermaye grupları ve kentli elitlerin ayrıcalıklı yaşamlarına mahal olan yüksek güvenli siteleri konu ediyor; merkezlere yakın ormanlık alanlarda veya şehir içindeki AVM'lerin çatılarında yükselen farklı görünümde fakat kullanım düzenleri bakımından benzer güvenli yaşam mekânlarını derliyor. İnşaat ve finans sektörlerine, çevre ve iskân politikalarına yön veren, toplumsal dinamiklere etki eden söz konusu yapılaşma ve yaşama biçimine ilişkin imgelerle mekân kuruyor.

'HIGHER': Gündüz kondulardan güvenli site hayatına ayrıcalıklı hayat yanılması by Derya Bayraktaroğlu, published at K24 on 21/01/20
<https://t24.com.tr/k24/yazi/higher-gunduzkondulardan-guvenlikli-site-hayatina-ayricalikli-hayat-yanilsamasi.2518>



serra tansel



Urban Mirrors – Reflections From the Artists of Istanbul / Kentin Aynaları - İstanbul'un Sanatçılarından Yansımalar by Alistair Hicks, published by Yapı Kredi Yayınları and conceived by Ayşe Umur, 2022

Photography by Reha Arcan



CAM GÖZ EVIL EYE

Cam göz, kem göz - a camera eye, an evil eye
Send them a flower wreath, for the ones who die
and the places that came to life.

Make it official, make it out of metal to use it over and over again.

Cam göz, kem göz - an amulet meant to protect a dream entrusted
to the state, against all dubious outsiders.

BY SERRA TANSEL

Sometimes Roads Lead Back to Themselves

2024

Using airport belt barriers commonly associated with crowd control, *Sometimes Roads Lead Back to Themselves* reflects on journeys shaped by external systems and expectations. While following paths determined by others can distance us from ourselves, these same paths may also lead us back. The work considers the relationship between physical movement and inner navigation.



Sometimes Roads Lead Back to Themselves, 2024

Transfer print on belt barrier. Installed with chrome feet or wall bracket
130 x 95 x 32 cm

Glitter Bomb / Runway Collection: Long Lines, Sex Bomb, Fly High, Hot Shot, Big Arms

2023

Glitter clothing, due to its metallic fibres sets off metal detectors, blinding the scanners. Tansel experienced this glitch as she was passing through the security in an airport wearing a shimmery jumper. Glitter is carried with pride in the feminist and LGBT+ movements. It is a playful, joyful material as it tricks the eye with its multifaceted shimmer. Blurring the vision therefore the borders, binaries disappear and the bodies are liberated. It connects bodies, leaving a residue of contact which lingers on for a few days. It is a contrasting material to the highly sanitised airports where the security personelle is trained to catch expressions of emotions as a potential threat.

Chosen for all these reasons, glitter bombing has been an act of protest against homophobia and anti-feminism in which activists throw glitter on politicians at public events.

The garments from the *Glitter Bomb / Runway Collection* are all stitched with glitter threads, carrying slogans with double meaning, as a reference to the feminist and queer movements' threat on our patriarchal societies. The beeping garments are fractures in the constructed ideas of public security which involves gender.



Glitter Bomb / Runway Collection: Big Arms, Fly High, Long Lines, Sex Bomb, Hot Shot 2023

Glitter clothing with embroidery, stainless steel display hanger

89 x 93.5 cm

Split Square

2021

Split Square observes a day in Şişhane Square in front of Beyoğlu Municipality Sixth Chamber and Beyoğlu Tax Office. This space, where grass and bollards direct passer bys, portrays the relationship of the dominant powers with squares rather than the public. Divided by naturalistic elements, the square raises negotiations, collisions and slaloms between both the space and its occupiers and between the occupiers. This slippery ground, where nothing can catch on and mature, does not allow gatherings or collecting memories. Though it might be believed that it is protecting the majestic structures on top of it by pouring everything downwards, the skyline of Istanbul always opens to the sea.



Split Square, 2021

video, 00:03:08

<https://vimeo.com/530041816>



Split Square installation view at SENKRON, Pilot Galeri , 2021

The Gate

2011

The Gate is a video performance shot in Istanbul, responding to the Ottoman era style public sculpture that appeared in front of the municipality building one day. The sculpture seemed to be placed at a random angle, guiding one off the staircase that goes up to the municipality. The direction it leads people is either the wall of the building or the highway. It obstructs the pedestrian route on the already disheveled pavement. The video captures the visitor going through this gate to smash to the wall and going back into the traffic, failing to enter the municipality building.



The Gate, 2011
Video, 00:01:46
vimeo.com/376876289

Heavens!

2019

Heavens! was produced during an artist residency inside former air raid shelter tunnels built for WWII in Clapham. The subterranean tunnels are currently rented by Growing Underground, the first urban underground farm in the world, growing micro herbs under LED lights 33 metres below street level. The tunnels' historical background is charged with 8,000 people being pushed down there for survival during the war as well as temporarily hosting Windrush immigrants. They now shelter micro herbs in the midst of an environmental collapse. As the artist got more involved with Growing Underground, she started working for them casually, introducing their salads in organic supermarkets. *Heavens!* is constructed around a real event, a homeless person teasing her and asking "Will I go to heaven if I eat these herbs?" whilst sampling the micro herbs in Planet Organic.

Produced with the support of Arts Council England and SAHA.

Grounded residency inside Growing Underground was set up by Amy Pennington as a part of Battersea Arts Centre Agents of Creative Change programme.



Heavens!, 2019

HD video, 00:13:22

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/333707203?share=copy>

Bilsart - Sanat Konuşmaları: Serra Tansel & Birhan Keskin



Bilsart - Sanat Konuşmaları: Serra Tansel & Birhan Keskin, 2019

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DruqWbwqsos&t=6s>

SH/FT at No Show Space

2021

www.noshowspace.com/exhibition/shft-serra-tansel

SH/FT is a temporary assemblage of artists at No Show Space's shop/front in Bethnal Green, London. Put together during the pandemic and the lockdowns, this project is experienced from the street.

Initiated by Serra Tansel, taking on from Gizem Karakaş' method of an artist chain for Transfer in Istanbul, SH/FT's assemblage grows as each artist invites the next participant and the works accumulate in the same space. The names of artists are revealed as the handovers take place with an online conversation. Works on display create space for each other and their context shifts with every addition. In these times of distance, disconnection and disruption, the process of coming together and finding new ways of self-organising is the framework of SH/FT.

This spatial and temporal meeting breaks away from the old normals. / Can we really talk about a time stop? Or zooming in on other rhythms; like that of bees and dust, smoke even./ Plunged into soil, connections to dispersed histories and corporeal intimacies uncovered. / Unearthing connections to the textural materiality of being in my environment, Observing and playing with the slippery meshy-ness of being part of a physical and felt world. / We can't help but embody the fundamental chasm between inner and outer space; between the finitude of external matter and the infinity within./ Sowing connections in a season of restrictions, how materials in space could be activated as seeds for shared meanings. / Interactions with objects. Maybe they've gone now, or completely changed but "Memories are motionless", Bachelard in *The Poetics of Space*. Public space coordinated via objects /

The first work in the space, *persistent strange dreams* is inspired by Tansel's dreams of driving away and it warps time and space in this period that is referred to as the "new normal".

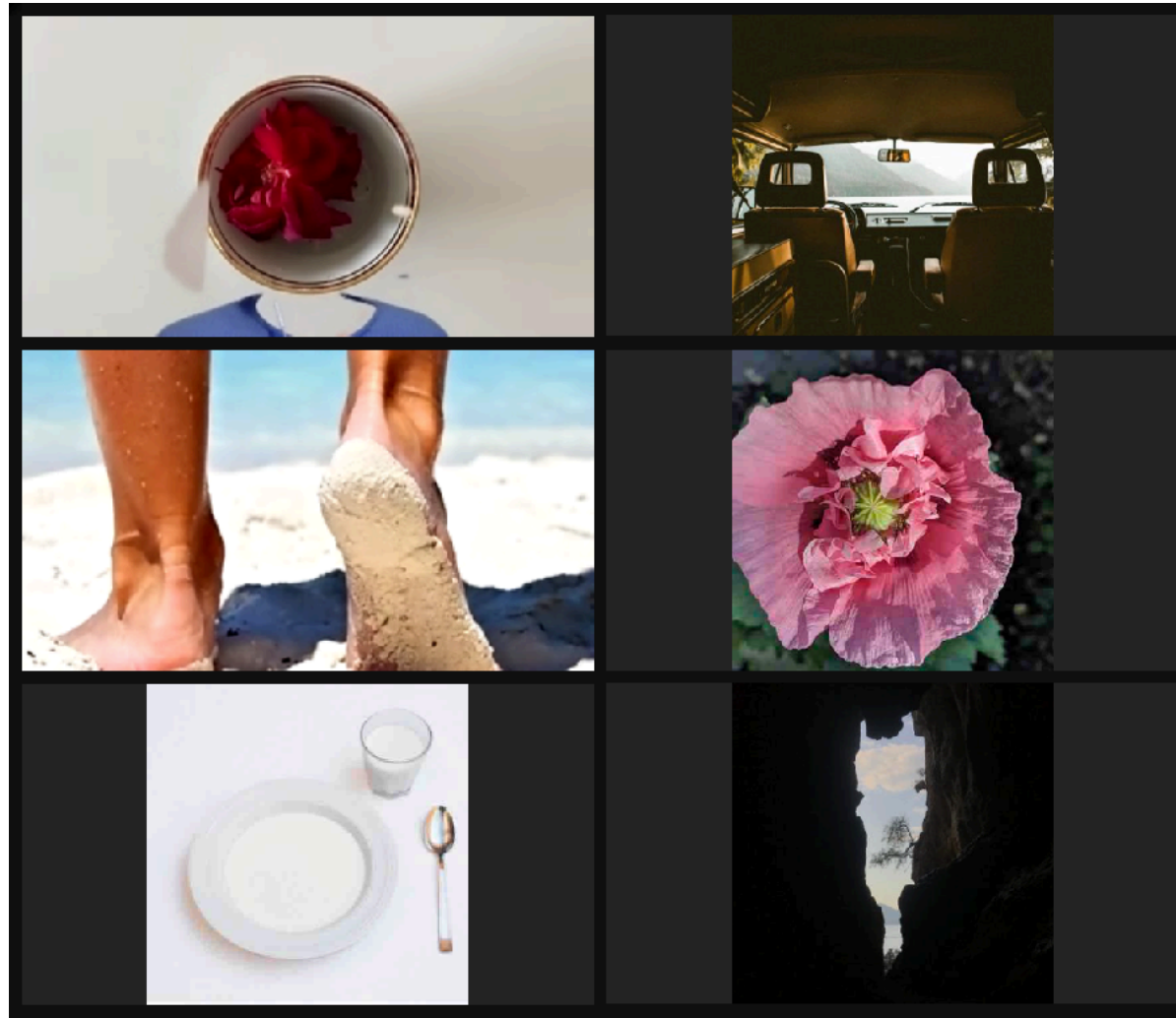


SH/FT poster, No Show Space, 2021
Works by Sam Hutchinson/ Sam Blackwood/ Haffendi Anuar/
Veronika Neukirch/ Rhiannon Hunter/ Davinia-Ann Robinson/
Elisabeth Molin/ Serra Tansel



persistent strange dreams, 2021

Rear view mirror with concave mirror, car freshener
mirror size 29 x 7 x 8 cm



Portals and Passages, 2021

Zoom session hosted by Elisabeth Molin and Serra Tansel to think of smells, memories and senses of belonging as portals and passages that connect us to each other. SH/FT was initiated with the idea of forming temporary assemblages with fluid dynamics and finding ways of self-organising to create intimacy and new associations. The group session was an open invitation for anyone to participate in, or to listen in on. Participants were asked to bring a story of a smell that triggered a memory for them and an image / images that is associated with this moment. The session was audio only and used the images as profile photos on Zoom.

A Porous Container

2022

Writing sessions facilitated by Serra Tansel

A Porous Container was a series of collective writing sessions that took place at the group exhibition Bag, Pedestal, Rabbit, Potato curated by Carrier Bag Collective at Staffordshire St Gallery London. The inspiration behind the exhibition was Ursula K. Le Guin's text *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*. The first writing session was hosted exclusively for the artists and curators of the exhibition and took place on a live Google Doc. All the artists were invited to pick a container and do automatic writing about their containers to then think about the exhibition through this lens, to perceive the exhibition space and their artworks as containers. The screen recording of this exercise was then displayed at the exhibition together with an invitation to the visitors to contribute to a growing exhibition text. The final exercise was a writing workshop inside the exhibition space, where the participants were asked to focus on a container; be it the room itself, the artwork or a detail from an artwork and did automatic writing about their containers.

This video is a recorded documentation of A Porous Container writing session. The exhibiting artists were invited to participate in this virtual collective dreaming workshop via Google Doc to explore the notion of 'container' as a way of collectively imagining the possibilities of Ursula K. Le Guin's Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction – facilitated by Serra Tansel.

All visitors are invited to contribute to the text using the pens and paper provided. The initiation question for visitors is:

"If this day/ this space / these artworks / this exhibition are different forms of containers, what would you like to take from these containers to keep with you and what would you like to add to them from yourself?"

The trick is to write continuously, without thinking about it too much, letting the words flow out of you even if they are repetitive. It is an automatic writing method, a stream of consciousness. Please time yourself to 10 minutes and if you are happy to share your writing with the visitors, post your paper on this wall so it can be part of a growing exhibition text.

I WOULD STAND. STAND
OUTSIDE BESIDE THE
CONTAINER I'VE ASSEMBLED
UNKNOWINGLY AROUND ME
SINCE BIRTH. AND LISTEN.
LISTEN TO THE CONTAINERS
AROUND. WHISPERING, GUIDING,
SUGGESTING, NAGGING. REMEMBERING
WHEN THERE WASN'T. PREPARING
FOR WHAT WHEN THERE ISN'T.

A Porous Container, 2022

A Live Google Doc file created with the participating artists and contributions from the visitors for a growing exhibition text

Screen recording of the Google Doc session available [here](#).

Google Doc available [here](#)

Headed Women

2017 - ongoing archive

Headed Women started with a black and white family photograph found in a flea market in Hamburg. The whole family, including the black sheep was in the frame but the head of the mother was missing as she somehow wasn't part of the main focus. After buying the photo, Serra started spotting many similar crops. The heads that were missing were mainly of female caregivers such as mothers, nannies or teachers. She started collecting these photographs and completing them as drawings.

5Harfliler

Ara

MEYDAN

KÜLTÜR

ECİNNİLİK

TARİH

SANAT

Mor Çatı

İçin Sanat

Dayanışması





SANAT

Eril Şiddete Karşı Mor Çatı İçin Sanat Dayanışması

ETİKETLER:

BAGIŞ DESTEK KAMPANYASI

FEMİNİST AVUKATLAR

FEMİNİST DAYANIŞMA

FEMİNİST HAREKET KADIN SANATÇILAR

MANŞET MOR ÇATI TECAVUZ KÜLTÜRÜ

10 ARALIK 2020

0

Facebook

Twitter 1

Gmail

...

1

Fatoş Hacıvelioğlu gönüllü olarak bir sürü kadının hakkını mahkeme odalarında savunan çok değerli feminist bir avukat. Tek bir manşet okumak, bir fotoğraf görmek bile çoğumuzu altüst ederken, o bu şiddet hikayelerinin her ayrıntısını biliyor, aylarca, yıllarca bu hikayelerle yaşıyor. Birçok kadın, avukat olarak, sosyal hizmetlerde, telefon hatında, sığınakta, çoğu zaman maddi bir karşılık dahi almadan kadına karşı şiddeti bitirmek için mücadele veriyor. Biz de sanatçılar olarak



Serra Tansel

Mor Çatı'nın 30. senesinde sanatçılar olarak senelerdir bizim yanımızda duran Mor Çatı'nın yanında ve kadınların her gün maruz kaldığı sistematik şiddetin, ayrımcılığın karşısında durduğumuzu göstermek için işlerimizi bağışladık.

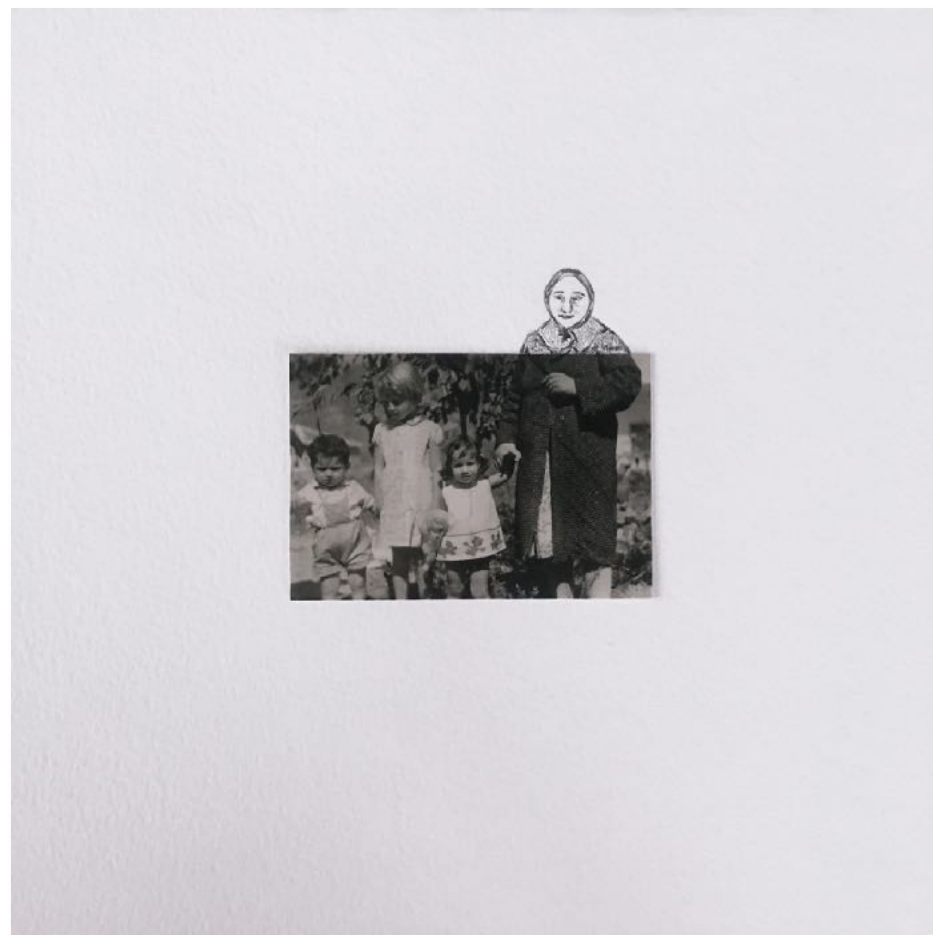
YAZARIN DİĞER YAZILARI

Eril Şiddete Karşı Mor Çatı İçin Sanat Dayanışması by Serra Tansel, published at 5 Harfliler on 10/12/20

www.5harfliler.com/eril-siddete-karsi-mor-cati-icin-sanat-dayanismasi/



Headed Women 1, 2019
Pencil on watercolour paper, found photo
21 x 21 cm



Headed Women 5, 2019
Pencil on watercolour paper, found photo
21 x 21 cm



Headed Women 6, 2019
Pencil on watercolour paper, found photo
21 x 21 cm



Headed Women 7, 2019
Pencil on watercolour paper, found photo
21 x 21 cm



Headed Women 8, 2019
Pencil on watercolour paper, found photo
21 x 21 cm



Headed Women 9, 2019
Pencil on watercolour paper, found photo
21 x 21 cm



Headed Women 10, 2019
Pencil on watercolour paper, found photo
21 x 21 cm



Headed Women 11, 2019
Pencil on watercolour paper, found photo
21 x 21 cm

5Harfliler

Ara

MEYDAN

KÜLTÜR

ECİNNİLİK

TARİH

SANAT

Mor Çatı
için Sanat
Dayanışması





SANAT

Eril Şiddete Karşı Mor Çatı İçin Sanat Dayanışması

ETİKETLER: BAĞIŞ DESTEK KAMPANYASI FEMİNİST AVUKATLAR FEMİNİST DAYANIŞMA FEMİNİST HAREKET KADIN SANATÇILAR MANŞET MOR ÇATI TECAVUZ KÜLTÜRÜ

10 ARALIK 2020

0

Facebook

Twitter 1

Gmail

...

1

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Tasawar Transcultural Talks: On Queering with Derya Bayraktaroğlu and Dijan Özkurt

2021

Online panel discussion

TASAWAR Curatorial Studios was a postgraduate study program hosted by the GOETHE-INSTITUT in Tunis. I got involved in an online seminar they hosted online where each participant focused on a movement in a country they were familiar with. I invited Derya Bayraktaroğlu and Dijan Özkurt to speak about the act of queering in their practices. The talk was not recorded but my introduction was written as below:

“I think of Queer as a movement of love. James Baldwin says “The world is held together by the love and the passion of a very few people.” and I agree with that.

And some people pay huge costs to defend their love as they are not following the legitimate patterns of loving as Audre Lorde would say. When they take this defence, they do it for themselves, for each other but mainly for the sake of our world because their love is holding our world together. And so we all need to defend this love.

Stemming from this foundation, and with all my respect and admiration for those who defend love, I want to speak of queer not as a gender identity but as a form of disidentification. I want to speak about queering as an action, an attitude. Queering as a verb, that takes us towards disidentification. And about queering as a challenge to capitalism and to the borders of nation states.

Queering is a threat to capitalism because it challenges the “norm”. Dijan will be expanding on the notion of normal so I will have to make a bold statement to keep it brief about why the norm is constructed. The norm doesn’t represent the majority, the norm is there to divide people and to protect and justify the privileges of certain groups of people. The concept is there to normalise the violence towards disadvantaged groups. And so queering and not accepting this normal can be a blow to the current financial system that is built on deep injustices.

I see identity as a becoming, rather than a static notion. For me identity is in a becoming with context, with time, and it is in the becoming in the journey of life. It is also an accumulation of pieces we collect from others and make our own. The more stretched the identity, the more adaptable it is to all kinds of situations and so it is vital for survival.

The poet Birhan Keskin has a book titled Y’OL which is a wonderful word-play. Yol, means path, journey and ol meaning “become” sits inside the word. Perceiving life as Y’OL, believing in transitions, accepting changes is an ephemeral state.

I came across a paragraph in a lifestyle magazine called Modern Turkey Magazine from 1938, early years of the foundation of the country. It states "The Turkish nation has now decided it will permanently reside on this land and believe will be its rulers forever. This is why wooden bridges are being replaced by iron and concrete bridges, and wooden houses are replaced by stone and concrete buildings. For the European, home is under personal ownership. In our country, the house is now starting to become an institution and organization that has risen to this civilized level ... The Turkish citizen is getting to know dwelling in the period of the republic, as well as many good things. "

I find this to be a very revealing article in terms of the foundation of nation states and ruling power's materialisation. So much fear is embedded in this paragraph and I believe fixing things, making them static stems from a similar reflex fuelled by fear. Making peace with decay, our death, our decomposing bodies is part of understanding and loving the self in its transitions. Leaving the fear behind, leaves the concrete and iron behind. And the rigid borders.

Nation states defend and justify their borders through the threat of the Other. And this Other is the non-normative. But when the normative is not accepted, the non-normative also disappears so does the border. Queering is not about inviting the outcast to the center, it is about decentralising power and getting rid of the centre.

Just a brief introduction to Derya and Dijan now, as we pass the word to Derya and then to Dijan and then to the audience.

Derya's approach to her curatorial praxis has been extremely influential for me since I met her at the exhibition, colony, she co-curated in 2017. Her activism and curation move together as one single practice and I think this is because of her extreme sensitivity towards her context. When she is creating an exhibition her context starts from the universe, including the stars, the speed of our planet's rotation, the satellite pollution and gets more and more narrowed down and specific. When she is thinking about a body inside a museum, she is concurrently considering another body fleeing a war and so her practice I believe is about creating spaces for peace.

Sometimes we need to cross borders in order to find out about them. Sharing this experience requires courage but more simply, words. Borders are most often produced and also destroyed mentally. These borders can be the borders of gender, borders of our bodies, our sexuality. Dijan works on producing this language, these words so we can formulate our thoughts and distribute them. I am borrowing her words today consciously or unconsciously as I have already made them mine. So thank you for your empowering words, Dijan."

[3] On Queering

On December
27 FEBRUARY 2021
4.00 pm to 6.00 pm CET
8.00 pm to 9.00 pm Turkey Time
FREE TICKETS VIA EVENTBRITE

Featuring Derya Bayraktaroglu and Dijen Ghosh

Hosted by Serra Talbot

Denying the complexity of life and fitting oneself into binary, even polarised structures are grave forms of violence. When one performs the part of and belongs to a defined group, in order to relate to others, this study reveals a binary choice and can be very repressing. The day, as in "fitting into a box" is the chosen and homogeneous left as we tick boxes on forms. The sexuality box has been particularly puzzling for me, readers, we feel as if I don't know myself enough to answer such a simple question. Not being recognised can make a person doubt their sense of self. The masculinity there and looks about our skin colour, nationality, gender, mental status and why these modes of identification are still relevant reveal many structures of violence.

Queering these boxes means deconstructing their lines in order to draw spirals, flowers, insects, rivers, spirals, hearts, decomposing bodies. Queer is about multiplicity and singularity. It is about subverting the middle-man that is the nation state, the football

Queering these boxes means deconstructing their lines in order to draw spirals, flowers, insects, rivers, spirals, hearts, decomposing bodies. Queer is about multiplicity and singularity. It is about subverting the middle-man that is the nation state, the football team, the social class etc. To have the sense of belonging to the world itself as we are, as we are in our becoming. Queer is about knowing our bodies don't need any of these social constructs to feel as and our journey.

Expanding and opening up my lines happen through relationships, conversations, conflicts, negotiations and sharing stories. Ever though all the participants have a different experience with their bodies, it is a collective journey and engages the collective. Queer can be identity as an accumulation of places we walked from others and make our own. The more stretched the identity, the more adaptable it is to all kinds of situations and so it is vital for survival. Creating inclusive spaces where we can stretch our minds and horizons together is an integral part of Derya Bayraktaroglu and Dijen Ghosh's practices and this panel aims to serve as one.

Independent curator and writer Derya Bayraktaroglu (Istanbul, Turkey) will share her curatorial works: *Unpredictable House: Encouraging Contemporary (Radical) Curatorship* (2016) progressing a political critique of certain knowledge, normative citizenship, and the regulatory power politics by reflecting on the interplay between art and activism in terms of feminist and proto-queer inquiries in Turkey; and collaborative works (*Kasa GL Association* (Istanbul, Elendi Pavilion, Istanbul, 2017; *Schwein Museum*, 2018) that deal with human-centred narratives, normativity and gender by queering posthuman. She will discuss in what ways curatorial action may contribute to building a community of exchange experimenting solidarity, art as a social practice. How it may convey transnational perspectives on resistance and resistance to connectivity practices that abstract borderlines by the turbulent institutional or political?

PhD candidate Dijen Ghosh (Istanbul, Turkey) will talk about the following questions: What is "human" and what is "nonhuman" person who is excluded in and excluded from this categorical frame? How can "we", those who are excluded from that normative frame [1] resist or transcend but not for identity category? How may this movement lead to a companionship with other-than-human? Given these questions, may we ask about how the words excluded in colony may provoke us to think about forms of companionship with other-than-human who companionship [2] instead of those we make with idealised

[1] Butler, J. *Prekariat Life, The Power of Mourning and Violence*, 21, 53, London, New York: Verso Books, 2016.

[2] Haraway, S. "Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late 20th Century" 111, in *The International Handbook of Virtual Learning Environments*, edited by Joel Weiskopf, Susan Hoban, Jeremy Hunsinger and Peter Trifunovic, 97-111, Dordrecht, Springer, 2016.

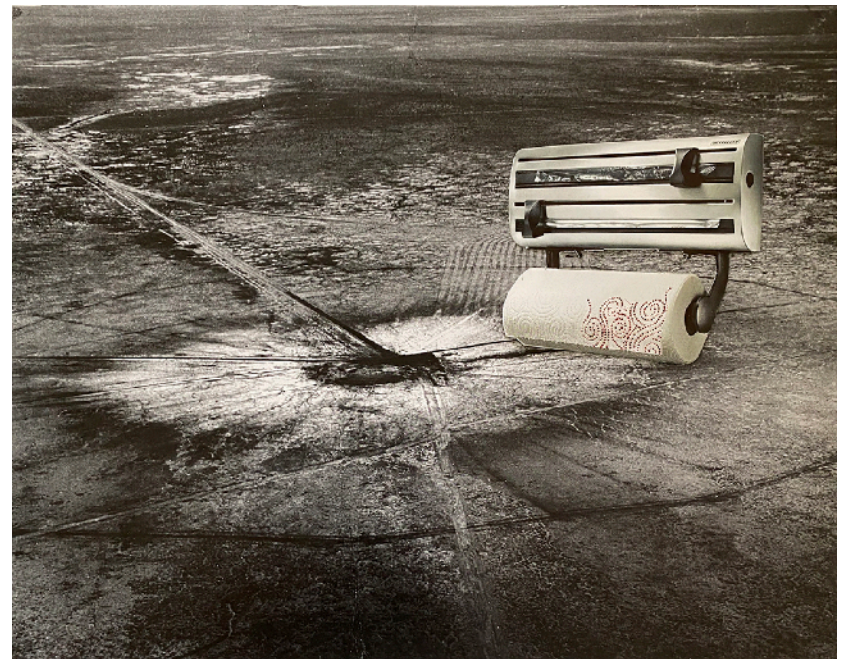
Collages

2019 - ongoing

Collages out of images that are distributed for free in public spaces or catalogues / promotions sent to our homes made as a way of processing these images. Visualising the discreet connections between them to reveal the accepted forms of violences we are inured to. They act almost like tarot cards to make readings of our the times.



Never before has it been this easy to serve a melon, 2020
Paper collage



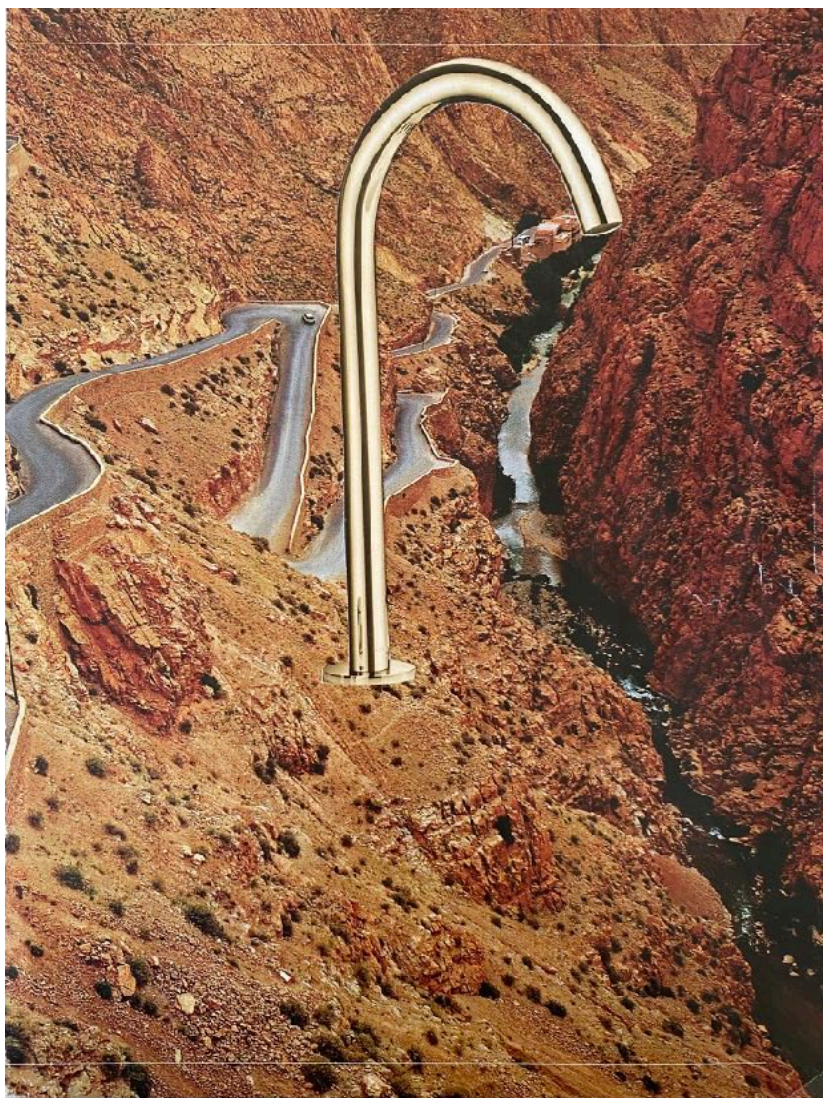
Say goodbye to time consuming hunting, 2020
Paper collage
19 x 24.2 cm



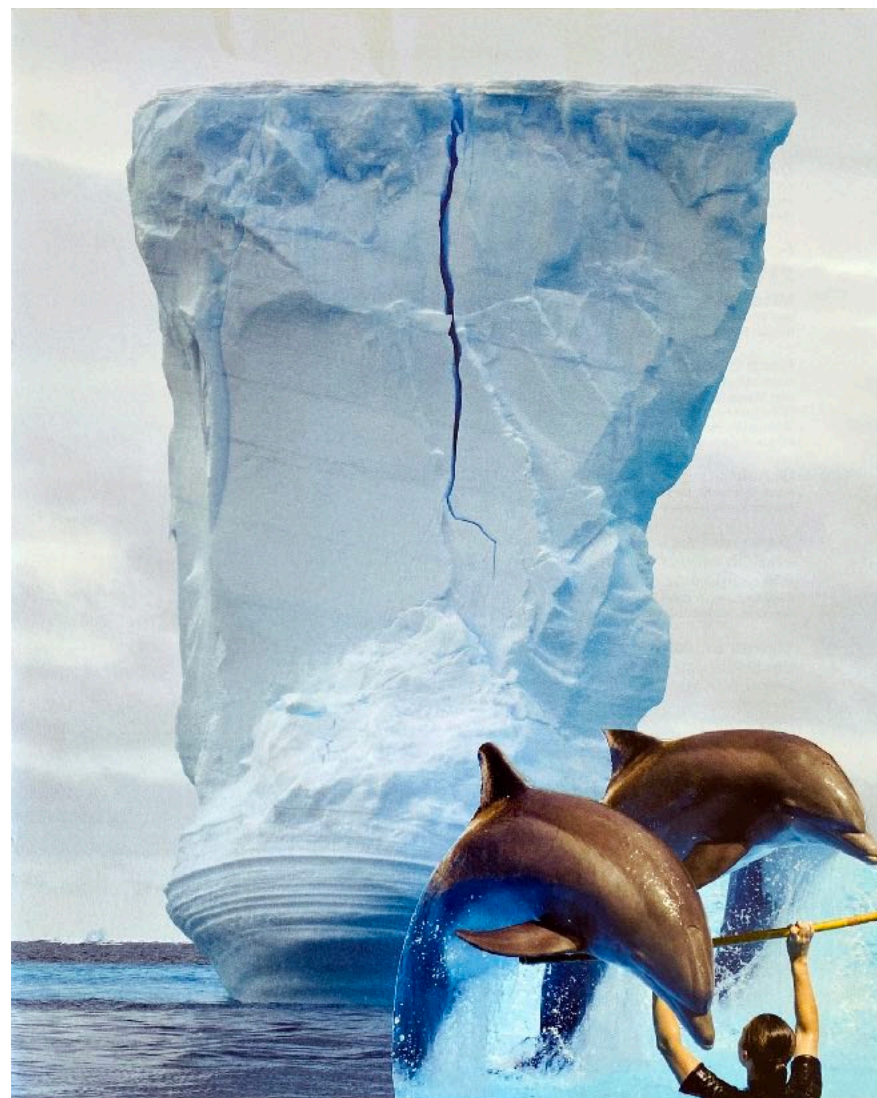
Kutu Kutu Pense (écoutez écoutez pensez), 2024
 Paper collage
 28.5 x 25.5 cm



Resort, 2024
 Paper collage
 24.7 x 36.8 cm



Current, 2024
Paper collage
26 x 19.4 cm



Breaches, 2024
Paper collage
19 x 25 cm



***Cleaning and Waste Management*, 2019**

Paper collage
13 x 18 cm



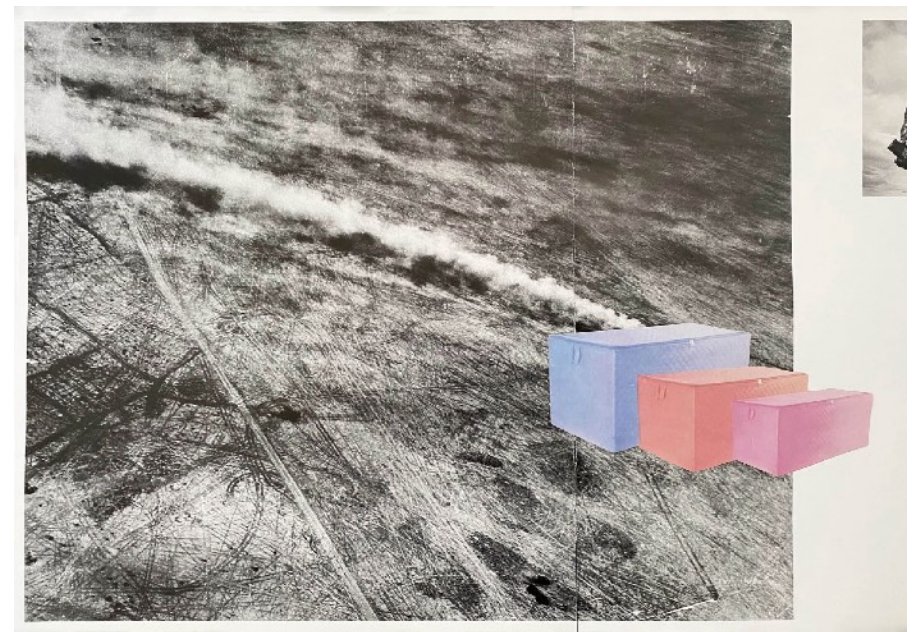
***Migration*, 2024**

Paper collage
17.3 x 11.6 cm



No longer suitable for upper-class gardens, 2024

Paper collage
18 x 24.2 cm



***Order*, 2020**
Paper collage
41.6 x 28.8 cm



Belly, 2020
 Collaboration with Alper Oruç
 Paper collage. The image with the fish is taken from Ali Arkady's work.
 25 x 38 cm



Land - schaft, 2020
 Paper collage
 21.5 x 14.6 cm



Visitors' easy chair, 2021



Stück Land, 2020
10.5 x 14.3 cm



Revolving Doors, 2021
Paper collage
32 x 26 cm



Alien Encounter, 2021
Paper collage



Soft seating, 2021
25 x 38 cm



Bright Lights, 2020
21 x 21.5 cm



Dreams without Memories, 2024
12.9 x 12.8 cm



Tranquil Break, 2024
17.3 x 17.3 cm



Crossing , 2021



Creation, 2020
29.3 x 21 cm



External Forces, 2024
 Paper collage
 17.2 x 21.6 cm



Like A Fish Out of Water, 2024
 Paper collage
 25 x 19 cm



In Season and Out of Season, 2024
Paper collage
25 x 18.8 cm



Family Home, 2024
Paper collage
20.2 x 13.4 cm

Super Mercato Canaletto

2017 - 2019

Food waste dinner to fundraise for food banks

Super Mercato Canaletto was an occasional open buffet at Serra Tansel and Alper Oruç's old flat in Vauxhall fundraising for food banks and cutting on food waste. Only the surplus ingredients from New Covent Garden Market were used which would otherwise go to waste. Guests were asked to donate whatever they wished for their meal to be passed on to food banks.

Mutfaktaki güncel sanat


Gastronominin zihin açıcı yanına odaklanan sanatçılar, gıda ve yemekle ilişkimizi toplumsal cinsiyet, hafıza, tedarik zinciri ve temsiller üzerinden irdelerken bize yeni bakış açıları sunuyor.

Yazar MELİDA TUZUNOĞLU

Sanatın kullandığı malzeme çeşitliliği ve sanatsal ifadenin olası olduğu alanlar dahilinde; yiyecek, gıda ya da yemek mefhumları sosyal, kültürel ve politik boyutlarıyla inceleniyor ve kavramsal olarak yeniden üretiliyor. Sanatçılar, öncelikle gündelik hayatın sürmesine araç olan ve zamanla türlü anlamlar ve boyutlar kazanan bu olguyu derinleştiriyor, kendi dilleriyle izleyiciye anlatıyor. Böylece, mutfağın bileşenleri çağdaş sanat tarihinin bir parçasına dönüştürüyor.

Serra Tansel

Baglama ve mekana özel iş ürettiği için pratiğinde genellikle şehir hayatına odaklanan sanatçı Serra Tansel, son 14 yıldır Londra'da yaşıyor, ancak İstanbul'a sıklıkla seyahat ediyor. Sanatçı, İstanbul üzerine bir işi İstanbul'da üretmeye ve sergilemeye, Londra üzerine ürettiği bir işi ise Londra'da sunmaya özellikle dikkat ediyor. Böylece iki büyük kentte yaşama ve üretme; gündemini, sokak hayatını, politikasını takip edebilme; sistemsel benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları gözlemleyebilme fırsatlarını ve dünya düzeniyle ilgili daha geniş bir bakış açısını yakalayabiliyor. Gıda ve yemek kültürüyle alakalı olarak çalışmaya başlamasıyla, Londra'nın Vauxhall semtinde bir dönem yaşadığı evin büyük bir meyve-sebze haline yakın olmasıyla ilintili. "Sabah 7'de, hal kapandıktan sonra insanların kalan artık ürünleri topladığını duymuştum. Bunun üzerine bir arkadaşımın gittiği yerde kasalarca taze meyve-sebzelerin ortalıkta bırakıldığını gördük. Toptancıların miktar algısı farklı oluyor ve Londra kadar pahalı bir şehirde yer kısıtlı olduğu için depolama masraflarından dolayı satamadıklarını sokakta bırakmak

bazen daha kârlı oluyor." Londra'da da yoksulluğun her geçen gün derinleştiğinden bahseden sanatçı ekliyor: "Yemek bankaları, ihtiyacı olan insanlara haftalık gıda sağlamaya çalışıyor. Devlet ve finansal düzenin yarattığı sistematik vahşetin insanları nasıl mağdur ettiğini bireysel hikâyeler üzerinden anlatan, eski bir yemek bankası çalışanı Tara Osman tarafından yazılıp yönetilen *Foodbank As Is Is* adlı tiyatro oyununu izledikten sonra, halde bulduğum artık ürünler ile bu gıda ihtiyacı arasında köprü kurmayı düşündüm." Super Mercato Canaletto başlığıyla bir yemek projesi kurgulayan Tansel, artık meyve-sebzelerle yemekler yaparak insanları açık büfeye davet ediyor. Katılımcılar yedikleri ve eve götürmek için aldıkları taze meyve-sebzelerin karşılığında istedikleri kadar bağış bırakıyor. Sanatçı bu bağışları yemek bankalarına aktarıyor. Gıdanın "pazar değerini" toplumun ziyanına dayalı olduğunu halde artıkları toplayan öğrendiğini anlatan sanatçı, diğer yandan yemeklerin sembolik değeri üzerine düşünüyor. Tansel, şimdilerde Pilot Galerisi'deki *Sayın Bildikleri* başlıklı karma sergide yer alıyor. 



Bonnington Cafe

Occassional cooking as Bonnington Cafe member
2017 - ongoing

Bonnington Cafe is a co-operatively run vegetarian and vegan restaurant in the Bonnington Square Community Centre in Vauxhall, London. The cafe has been open since the early 80s when it was started as a squat cafe to provide a good cheap meal for the community. There is a different cook each day and the person in charge of the day brings their own staff, creates their menu, buys their ingredients, pays rent and takes the daily profit. The prices are fixed and everyone is expected to adhere to a certain standard. The cafe creates working opportunities both as an employee and an employer.



Makkam

2018 - ongoing

www.mixcloud.com/Makkam_Collective and bi-weekly on [Root Radio](#).

Makkam is a non-profit music collective founded by Serra Tansel, Alper Oruç, Daniela Nofal and Yamen Makdad. Makkam has been organising club nights quarterly to bring people together around a wide range of music. Through these nights, we learn how to move our bodies together. Makkam collaborates with people who want to channel their music to its dancefloors. The Makkam community is growing through word of mouth and is slowly creating its own rituals and codes.

Makkam is a word for melodic modes in music as well as meaning a state of higher elevation in Turkish and Arabic languages.





Geçer, 2021

Music set 1:13:00

Makams were played to patients to heal them during the Ottoman era. Different makams resonated with different organs so the patients were played a set of makams specially catered to their symptoms. Geçer (This Too Shall Pass) is a set I recorded of makams that could respond to coronavirus symptoms, hoping that this music can clean people's lungs, empty their minds and warm their hearts.

https://soundcloud.com/dj_devam/gecer



Toprak, 2023

Music set 1:58:49

image credit: twitter.com/AntakyaKapilari

My set of folk music from the earthquake region in Turkey to fundraise for Turkey and Syria as part of Makkam's day-long music fundraiser at the online radio loose.fm for the earthquake.

https://soundcloud.com/dj_devam/makkam-earthquake-fundraiser-by-serra-tansel



Makkam Collective takeover on Root Radio in Solidarity with Palestine, 2021

Music set, 00:56:08

Root radio is an independent radio based in Istanbul where Makkam has regular slots. This set was my contribution to our Makkam takeover at Root Radio to fundraise for Palestine during Israel's war in 2021.

<https://soundcloud.com/rootradiolive/serra-tansel-makkam-x-root>

Su İkramımızdır (Water is on the house)

Collaboration with Duval Timothy

2014

Su İkramımızdır (Water is on the house) was Serra Tansel and Duval Timothy's project that took place in Polistar, Istanbul in September 2014. Polistar was a non-profit gallery located in a humble flat in a neighbourhood full of conflict between the more conservative locals and the newcomers raising the rents. The new contemporary art galleries that were opening in the neighbourhood had been attacked a couple of times by the locals with sticks and stones as people were drinking alcohol at the private views or holding hands on the street. By using water as a common ground, *Su İkramımızdır* wanted to provide a platform that could bring people together. The filter installed to Polistar's tap served potable water in the gallery in the handmade clay cups and another tap was put on street level to serve as a public fountain during the project. *Su İkramımızdır* was used as an event space for 10 days and the events involved performances, movie screenings and gigs that were around the themes of water rights and public spaces. Local traders and residents were involved and chance encounters became a part of the project. Sercan, the 9 year old percussion busker's gig at the opening night, Medyartiz's *Virüel Potansiyel* performance of fortune telling, Mario Rizzi's movie on the local shoe makers *Murat and İsmail* and Metin Akdemir's short film *Küpeli* about a now demolished swimming pool are a few examples from the events calendar.

Produced with the support of STEP Beyond Travel Grants.



Dünya Döner (World Döner / Revolves)

Dünya Döner was produced during a residency at AIR Antwerpen and alongside *Istanbul-Antwerp. Port City Talks* exhibition that took place at the city museum of Antwerp, Museum aan de Stroom. The work was paying tribute to the Turkish immigrant community living in Antwerp since the 1960s. Similar to many other European cities, Antwerp had many Turkish kebab shops. This sign was placed at the top of the museum. Dünya means world in Turkish and döner has several meanings including revolves/rotates and a meat dish that is skewered on a stick and cooked rotating on fire. This pun on world's revolution and döner kebab correlated people's immigration around the world with world's rotation around itself and the Sun.

The lightbox sign is in the Museum aan de Stroom collection.



Dünya Döner (World Döner / Revolves), 2015
Lightbox sign. Digital print on Duratrans.
270 x 60 x 17 cm



Dünya Döner (World Döner / Revolves), 2017

Rotating wind shift sign. Digital print on 2mm PVC, bottom can be filled with water or sand

134 x 50 x 50 cm

Ülkem

2017

Digital print poster

The image of this ghost kebab is a photograph of the surface of a mini van of a kebab shop in Antwerp. The name of the business, *ÜLKEM (My Country)*, was written on the van next to this bleached döner kebab image. The address and phone number of *ÜLKEM* were Belgian but the title referred to Turkey. The image gave me a sense as if this ÜLKEM, the longing and nostalgia of “my country” were haunting this person and it was a feeling that I was very familiar with myself. I wanted to turn this image into an art poster to be able to infiltrate this symbol of the immigrant culture that is left out, consumed as a late night junk food into more intimate territories, private indoor spaces.



Ülkem, 2015
Digital print on Hahenmühle paper
A1

with freedom to roam outdoors during the day

2018

Billboard 8171, London Bridge

The phrase “with freedom to roam outdoors during the day” is a quote from a free range egg packaging. How we sing ourselves praises for the tiny freedoms we allow inside the prisons we create... The visitors were welcomed to feed the pigeons in front of the billboard during the exhibition period to encourage the birds to cover the text with their droppings and take over the billboard.

Commissioned by Annin Arts.



with freedom to roam outdoors during the day

Sera Tansel Unlimited

2015

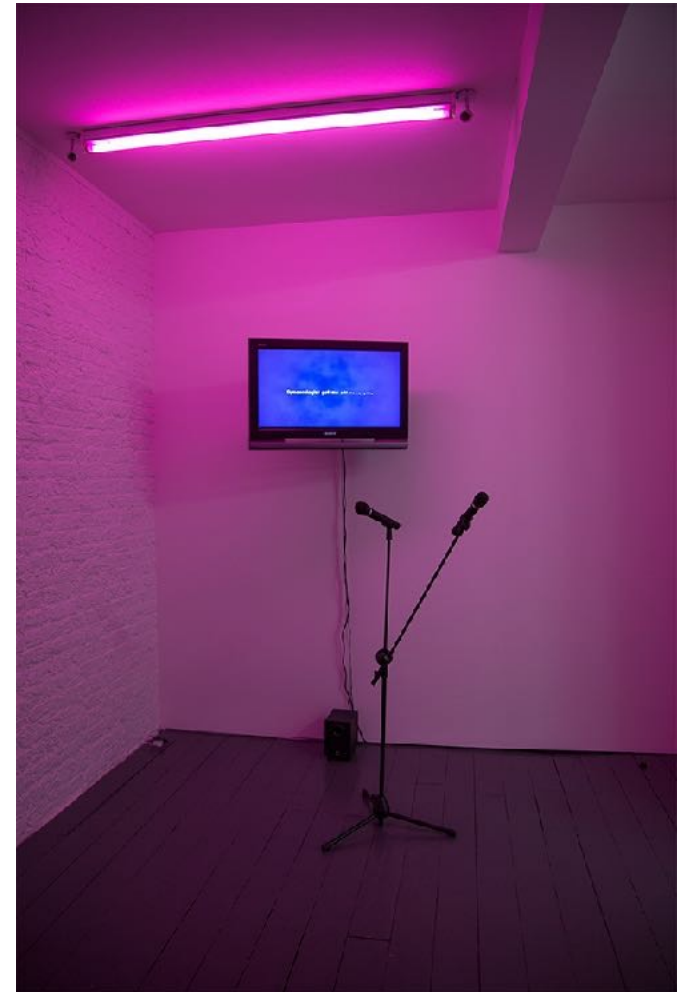
Sera Tansel Unlimited is Serra Tansel's first solo show and it imitates a museum shop of a famous artist's retrospective. It is a display of unlimited reproductions of non-existing works at noshowspace, London. The installation consists of reproductions of unsung songs, unsent request songs scribbled on napkins and untaken photos; in the forms of karaoke DVDs, colouring books, silk handkerchiefs and tote bags. As their originals do not exist, these reproductions simultaneously exist as their own originals. The reproductions and originals become equally authentic or fake and equally accessible. They share the same aura. The products on display can be purchased at prices on a par with that of reproduced artworks sold in museum shops. Serra Tansel is misspelled on all the products as Sera Tansel like a bad imitation that validates the original brand.

Sera Tansel Unlimited, as well as referring to the unlimited editions, refers to the artist's company Serra Tansel Limited which she had to set up in order to get a visa from the UK. The immigration process limited her in many ways, especially in terms of work opportunities and this exhibition was an attempt to give herself access to the British art world.

Exhibition text written by Joanna Peace.

Exhibition link: noshowspace.com/projects/sera-tansel-unlimited

Produced with the support of Arts Council England and Umur.



10/26/2015 Gmail - UNLIMITED

Joanna Peace <joanna.peace@gmail.com>

UNLIMITED

1 message

Joanna Peace <joanna.peace@gmail.com> To: Serra Tansel <serratan-sel@gmail.com>

Tue, Oct 20, 2015 at 6:34 PM

Hi again,

Sooo... before you read what I've written, I thought I should tell you a bit about where it's coming from.

I wrote the bare bones of it the other night, and maybe it was because it was late it came out strangely, and I found myself writing like a rejected lover or a cast-off fan. Not sure why. And inspired by the teabag as you know. I was thinking about how you were mass-producing things, and how I refused that somehow, I wanted to write about preciousness, about experiences that can't be repeated or reproduced. I felt I was writing like a stubborn child refusing to learn the lesson from the world that we're not special, not unique.

Then today I was looking in the google doc at the things you're making for the show. And they are each so precious, so full of love and heart even when they're funny and cutting and critical, so generous and open. And this changed what I wrote.

So I was imagining myself as a performer on a glitzy stage, maybe a cabaret performer, and introducing you as the main act. Or maybe as an embarrassing Uncle giving a wedding speech. Or maybe on Skype at your private view.

And I was thinking about how you had to become 'Limited' in order to stay in the UK. And remembering Athens. I think it's best read out loud. It feels a bit weird to show you. But see what you think and we can chat tomorrow.

Big love,

Joanna

--

Joanna Peace

+44 (0)777 979 0753 joanna-peace.squarespace.com

YOU ARE UNLIMITED-4.docx

UNLIMITED by Joanna Peace

Written on the occasion of the exhibition
Sera Tansel Unlimited by Serra Tansel
noshowspace, 2015

Sleeve of the exhibition text by Joanne Peace for Sera Tansel Unlimited. Page below sits inside this text.

Hi everyone, and greetings from Glasgow!

You're all here tonight to celebrate the work of one person – Serra Tansel. Now, I first met Serra in a subway station in Athens on 2nd June this year. If I remember right she was wearing a white t-shirt, green shiny shorts and her favourite white sneakers. I do remember she was smiling, and that she offered to carry my heavy suitcase.

Since that day we've become good friends and collaborators. As you know this here tonight is Serra's first solo show, and so I wanted to mark the occasion by performing something a bit special for her, and for you. Sadly, for reasons best not gone into, I can't be with you in person this evening. So I've sent something ahead of me instead. I hope you enjoy it.

Serra, glykia mou, this one's for you.

YOU ARE UNLIMITED, my teabag says to me.

YOU ARE UNLIMITED, my Women's Energy teabag now dunked in boiling water says to me. Just to me. Just to us.

YOU ARE UNLIMITED, you are open to the sky, to the stars, to us. To all of us. My hands are your hands, you said. Do with them what you will.

YOU ARE UNLIMITED, your words shooting into the hot green air around our heads. Dark red wine and cool white tsatziki, your song words sharp and funny.

WE ARE UNLIMITED, as we send yellow and purple balloons falling into the dark well of a blacked-out city. Hold nothing sacred, you told me. Hold nothing dear, dearest girl. I'll be gone soon and so will you. Hold nothing dear, girl. Hold nothing dear.

YOU ARE UNLIMITED, you tell me, as Venus winks down through the pink-tinged pollution through the hot night-ening city. I can feel my skin peeling back. Or maybe splitting at the seams. Or maybe melting away. S.O.S says the blue sign next to the blue ALPHA BANK.

S.O.S I AM UNLIMITED AND I'M SCARED I MIGHT FLOAT AWAY.

I AM UNLIMITED. OMNISCIENT. NO-ONE CAN HOLD ME DOWN. HOLD ME BACK. HOLD ME HERE. Please let me stay, for a bit. Please let me go home.

LIMITLESS

INFINITE

UNRESTRICTED

UNRESTRAINED

BOUNDLESS

BOTTOMLESS

UNCONSTRAINED

WE ARE UNLIMITED, we are open to the stars. A sky full of daydreamers a BOUNDLESS stretch of blue. I will cry you a river if you'll let me.

Bırak Kendini - Hayırlı Evlat ft Musdef

2019

Music video, 00:06:08

Hayırlı Evlat is a persona that merges Serra Tansel, İpek Hamzaoğlu and Gizem Karakaş.
www.benhayirlielvat.com

“Hayırlı Evlat’s work titled *Let Yourself Go* is a pop song and video inspired by Sinop, the happiest city in Turkey according to survey results. Judging by the responses given to most of the questions posed by Hayırlı Evlat to the residents of Sinop, this statistic, despite being useful for tourism companies, does not reflect reality. Still, some residents think they are more peaceful when compared to residents of other cities across Turkey. Hayırlı Evlat, who describe happiness as “a soft resistance” within the political climate of Turkey, makes references to the fake happiness featured in advertising images in this video, which starts on a beach, and moves to the forest to a game table to a dinner with rakı, where the acting is exaggerated. The empty promises of repetitive political discourses blend in with the wind along with chorus sung together by the performers, the accompanying choreography and the blues and greens of the background. Hayırlı Evlat transforms this form of popular culture, namely, the music video to create more inclusive representations, drawing attention to the dysfunctional or problematic areas of the system.”

Text written by Ulya Soley as part of “A Question of Taste” exhibition at Pera Museum, 2021.

Lyrics ~ Hayırlı Evlat feat. Mustafa Korkmaz aka. Musdef

Music ~ İbrahim Hekim

Camera ~ Malu Blume, Yusuf Emre Yalçın, Hayırlı Evlat

Script ~ Hayırlı Evlat

Set Assistant ~ Malu Blume

Voice recording, Production and Sound Mix ~ İbrahim Hekim

Sound Mastering ~ Cemil Hamzaoğlu

Choir ~ Cansu Kırcan, Çağatay Şimşek, Erkan Aklıman, Yiğit Bahadır Kaya, Yusuf Emre Yalçın

Actors ~ Cansu Kırcan, Çağatay Şimşek, Elif Kuli, Erkan Aklıman, Gülbahar Karaduman, Güngör Erdem, İbrahim Hekim, Malu Blume, Mustafa Korkmaz aka. Musdef, Nil İlkbaşaran, Sinem Hekim, Şenol Şener, Tuğçe Yılmaz, Yiğit Bahadır Kaya, Yusuf Emre Yalçın

Thanks ~ Ayşe Turkay Yiğit, Cansu Kırcan, Cemal Keskin, Çağatay Şimşek, Doğa Burak Hayırcı, Elif Kuli, Erkan Aklıman, Gülbahar Karaduman, Hakan Yüksek, İbrahim Hekim, Kumkapı Beach, Malu Blume, Melih Görgün, Mert Karaçıkay, Mustafa Korkmaz aka. Musdef, Lizart Ajans, Selin Saraçoğlu, Tuğçe Yılmaz, Yiğit Bahadır Kaya, Yusuf Emre Yalçın, Yasemin Zamanpur

Produced at Sinopale 7. Funded by Sinopale, SAHA, Avusturya Kültür Ofisi İstanbul and Sinop Belediyesi.

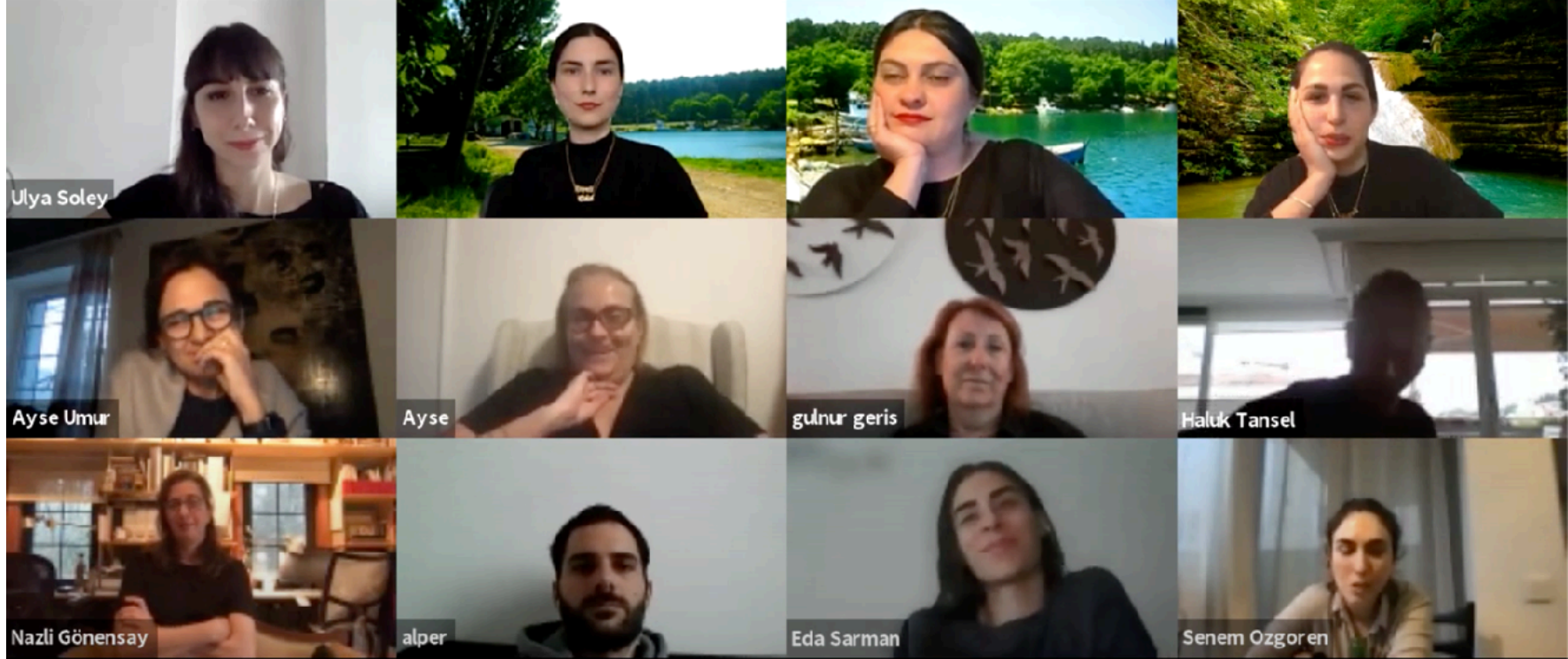


Bırak Kendini (Let Yourself Go), 2021

HD music video, 00:06:08

Video link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HZFEe1IgAk&ab_channel=HayırlıEvlat

Ulya Soley'in Hayırlı Evlat ile Söyleşisi - 21 Nisan 2021

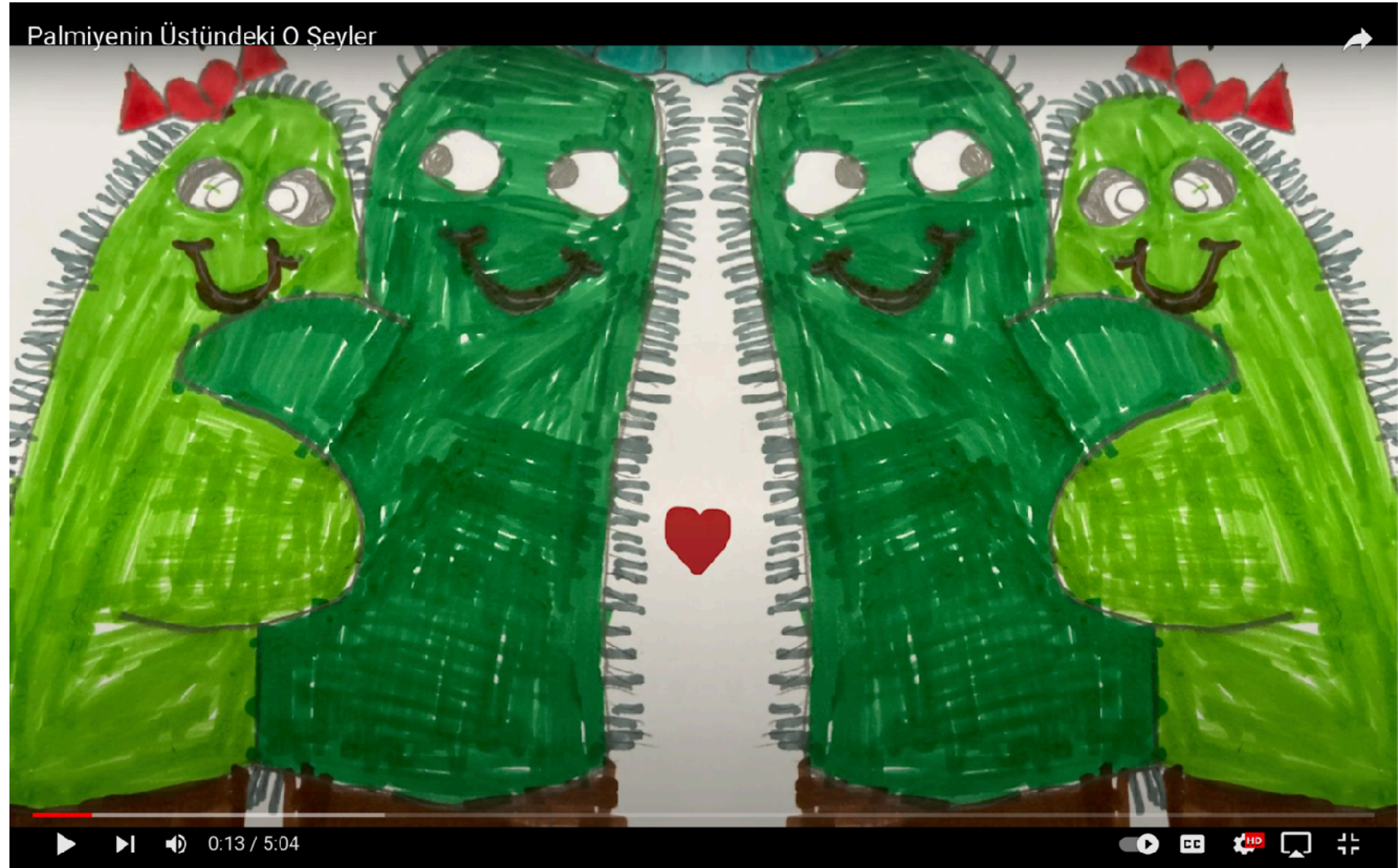


12:47 / 50:05



Ulya Soley'in Hayırlı Evlat ile Söyleşisi - 21 Nisan 2021

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMv4eL5yYto

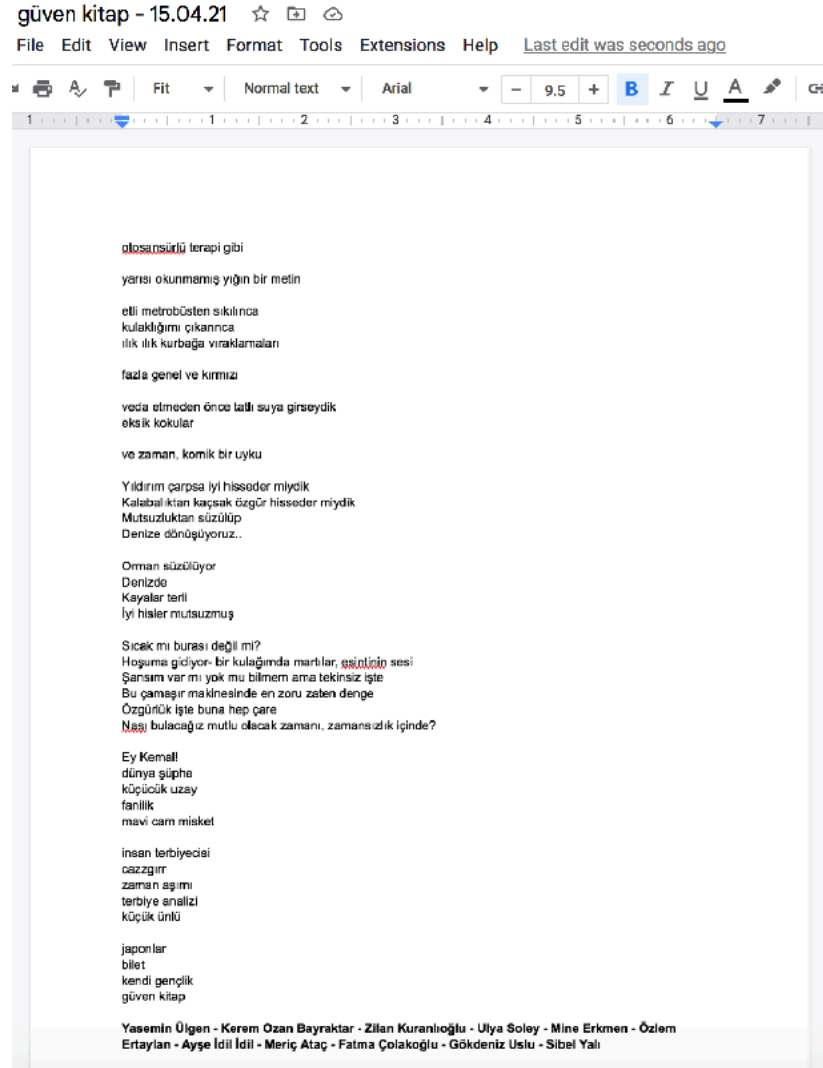


Palmiyenin Üstündeki O Şeyler - The Things on the Palm Trees

Song by primary school kids as the outcome of Hayırlı Evlat's workshop

Palmiyenin Üstündeki O Şeyler is the outcome of a Hayırlı Evlat's online workshop with 8 year old kids. Hayırlı Evlat was invited to run a workshop by the art teacher of a primary school. The kids were asked to do drawings of happiness before the workshop which were used as conversation starters during the session. Picking words and phrases from these conversations, Hayırlı Evlat wrote the lyrics for the kids to sing over the tune of Bırak Kendini.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkTe83ieQmA



güven kitap & bütün

Collective poem as the outcome of Hayırlı Evlat's workshop at Pera Museum

güven kitap & bütün are collectively written poems from Hayırlı Evlat's online workshop at Pera Museum. The participants were asked to bring an image that makes them unhappy which was put into a pool of images before the session. They were then asked to pick an image from the pool, have a look at it for a minute and then think of a place that makes them feel happy to transport themselves to this happy place. They then did automatic writing of their process and shared it in their groups. As they read their text, the other group members picked 3 keywords which then lead to the collective poems. Voice recordings of the poems by Hayırlı Evlat were shared at Sinopale 8 [here](#).

haki (khaki)

2017

haki was a sound piece produced for a group exhibition *Not Seeing Anything* at Alt Bomonti, Istanbul curated by Mari Spirito. Responding to the title, the work suggests that if we cannot see it, we can still hear it. The exhibition happened at a period where Turkish state declared a war in the Kurdish region of Turkey.

On the stage painted with flowers, there was a speaker that played a poem about air, flowers and soil, inspired by the artist's friend D's journey from Iran to Greece. D ran away from his home in Iran at the age of 16 when his father forced him to go to the military service of the Iranian state. He escaped to Iraq to join the Kurdish peshmerga but then didn't want to be part of an armed organisation, sought asylum in Turkey to then flee to Greece. He now sells flowers in Athens. Serra met D as she went into the plant shop he works at to buy a plant.

khaki is a Kurdish word meaning soil.



Sound installation on a painted stage

Stage : (w) 530 x (h) 90 x (radius) 200 cm.

Sound: 00:05:23

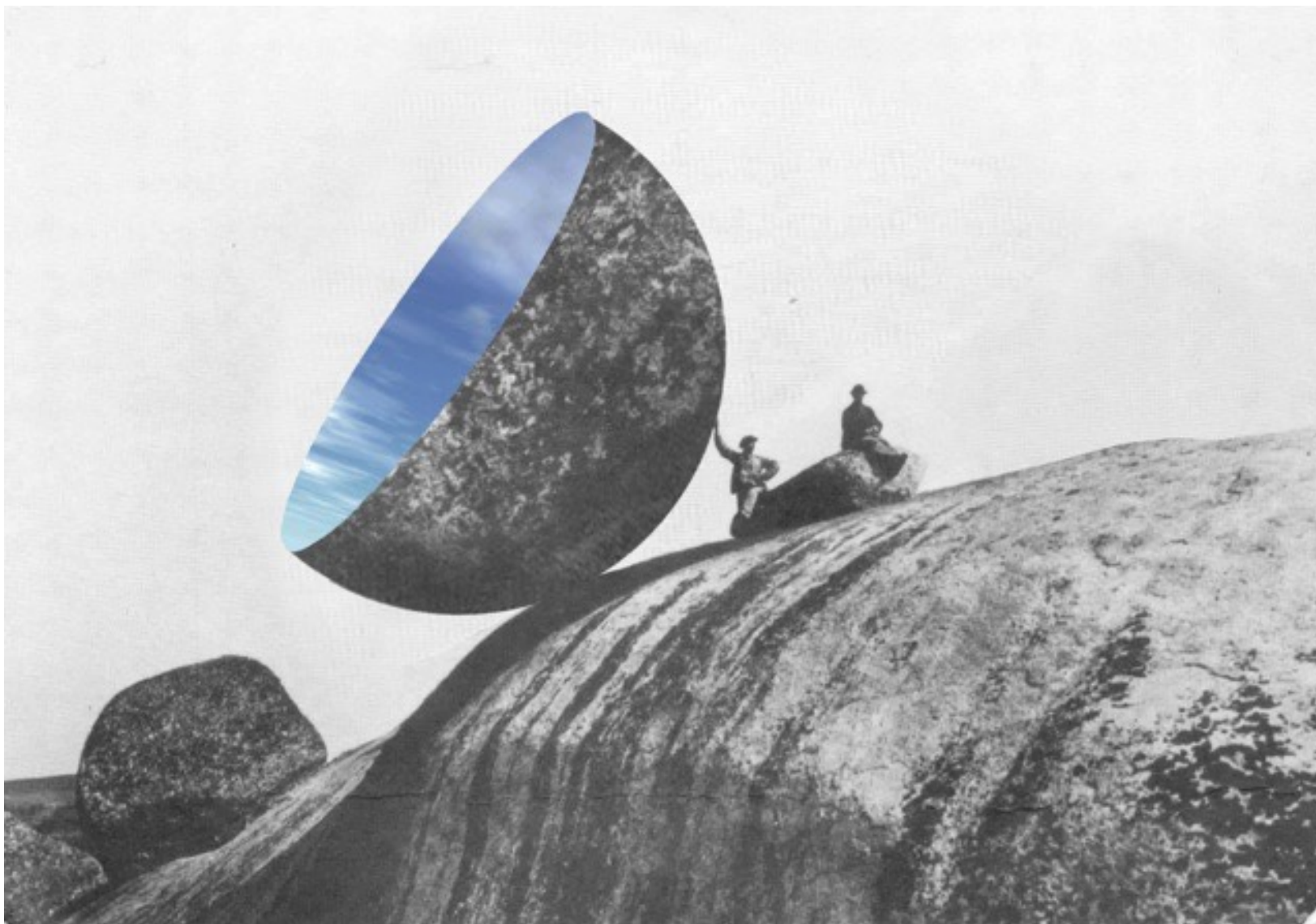
https://soundcloud.com/dj_devam/haki?si=01158315877a40e4a8a8134fc8572ba8

Two Seated People

Collaboration with Duval Timothy

2013

Two Seated People is the first collaborative work of Serra Tansel and Duval Timothy. Not able to rent a studio together, they started collaborating by sharing images online and produced this collage digitally, dreaming of a shared sky.



***Two Seated People*, 2013**

Digital print on Hahnemühle paper, lacquered centre

10 x 14.2 cm

Edition of 30 + 2AP

kids blowing the sea

2011

A video of kids blowing the sea to push it back and playing with the coastal border the waves are creating.



kids blowing the sea, 2011

Video, 00:00:27

vimeo.com/164439880

What about a film that doesn't begin, that just fills the cinema with a kind-of-presence or with a darkness, that is there but also not there.

What about a film that is interrupted by the dust from the projector, that first keeps circulating in the air, like a endless whirl, that gets more intense and dense as the film progresses and that eventually falls vertically downwards, like snowdrops or little shiny pixels that drips on to your skin.

What about a film that is constantly interrupted by waves, that fills up your eyelids with a continuous greenish blue afterimage, that shakes your notion of balance and leaves you zig zagging along the beach.

What about a film that pulls you closer to the screen, that at first automatically lifts you from your seat and that makes you move closer and closer to the light, in an zombie like state.

What about a film that you can walk through or walk into. Electric cables hanging down tickling you with a soft static electricity, and where you could swim in the image, float in the middle of it, in this sea of electricity.

What about a film that doesn't end, that just keeps changing and morphing. That moves like a crystal moves, and mutates, depending on who is looking at it and from where. How about a film that changes in time, that sometimes lasts just a split second, at other times is an evening long and that sometimes haunts you, like a bad memory or like a pop song, that sticks to your brain, so repetitive and circular, so constant that it almost erases itself.

Chance Symphony

2012

Chance Symphony was an installation commissioned by Tate Britain for a 1 day event organised for kids, inside the William Turner room with paintings of ships in stormy seas.

Chance Symphony, attempted to claim space through sound and challenge the stiff etiquette of the museum that can intimidate its visitors. There were 50 handmade wearable musical instruments that were displayed on rotation. Visitors helped themselves to wear these instruments and created music with their movements inside the gallery. There were complaints about the noise from some guests but the invigilators told them they were allowed to be loud for the day as it was part of a work that the museum had commissioned.



Tate Britain's BP Saturdays: Tate Together, 9 June 2012, (c) Tate 2012

Dots

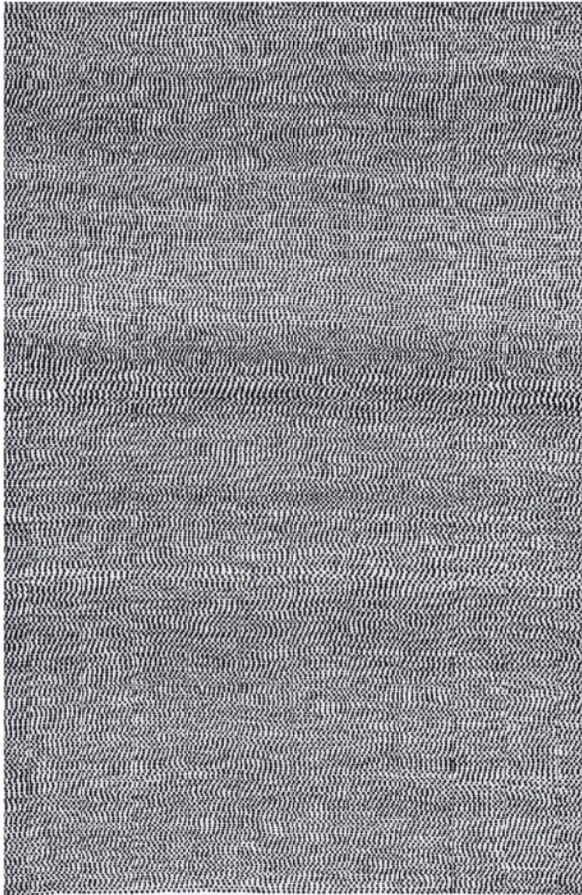
2013 - 2016

This is a series made out of dots using a pack of everyday children's pens bought from the corner shop, trying to create a drawing that is as close as possible to the material itself. The dots are in the order of the 30 assorted colour fibre pens that are in the package. Each dot is the size of the pen nib, in rows from left to right until a sheet of A4 is full.

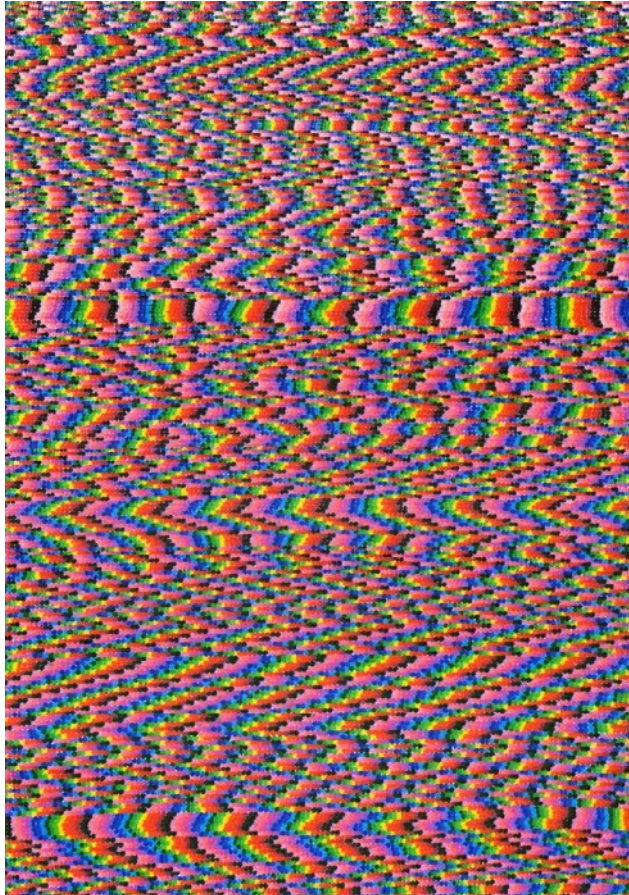
The title *Great, Creative Fun, Bright, Assorted Colours, Safe & Non-Toxic* is taken from the packaging of the pens.



Great, Creative Fun, Bright, Assorted Colours, Safe & Non-Toxic, 2016
30 Fibre Pens on Everyday Paper
21 x 29.7 cm. Frame size 40.6 x 32.3 cm.



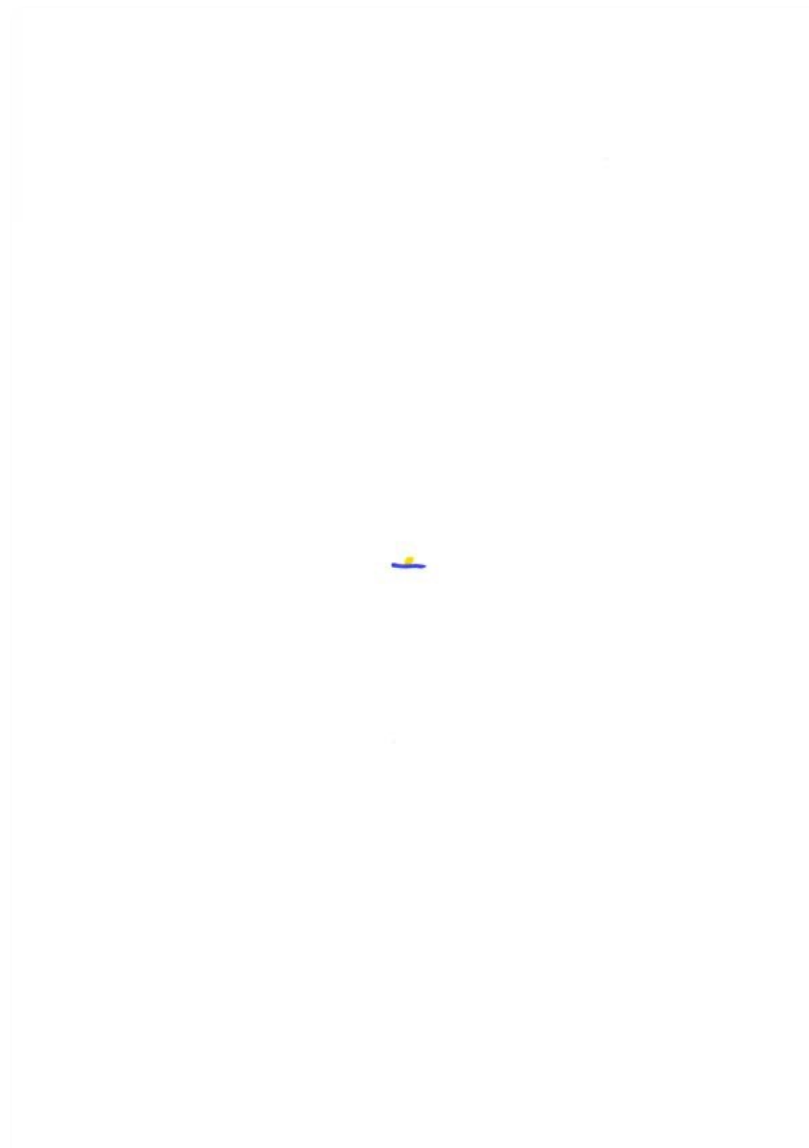
Dots (Light and Dark), 2013
Permanent marker on paper
21 x 29.7 cm



Fantasia, 2014
Fibre Pens on Everyday Paper
21 x 29.7 cm



Dots (Dark), 2013
Permanent marker on paper
21 x 29.7 cm



Sunrise / sunset, 2013

Marker pen on paper

21 x 29.7 cm

A minimal representation

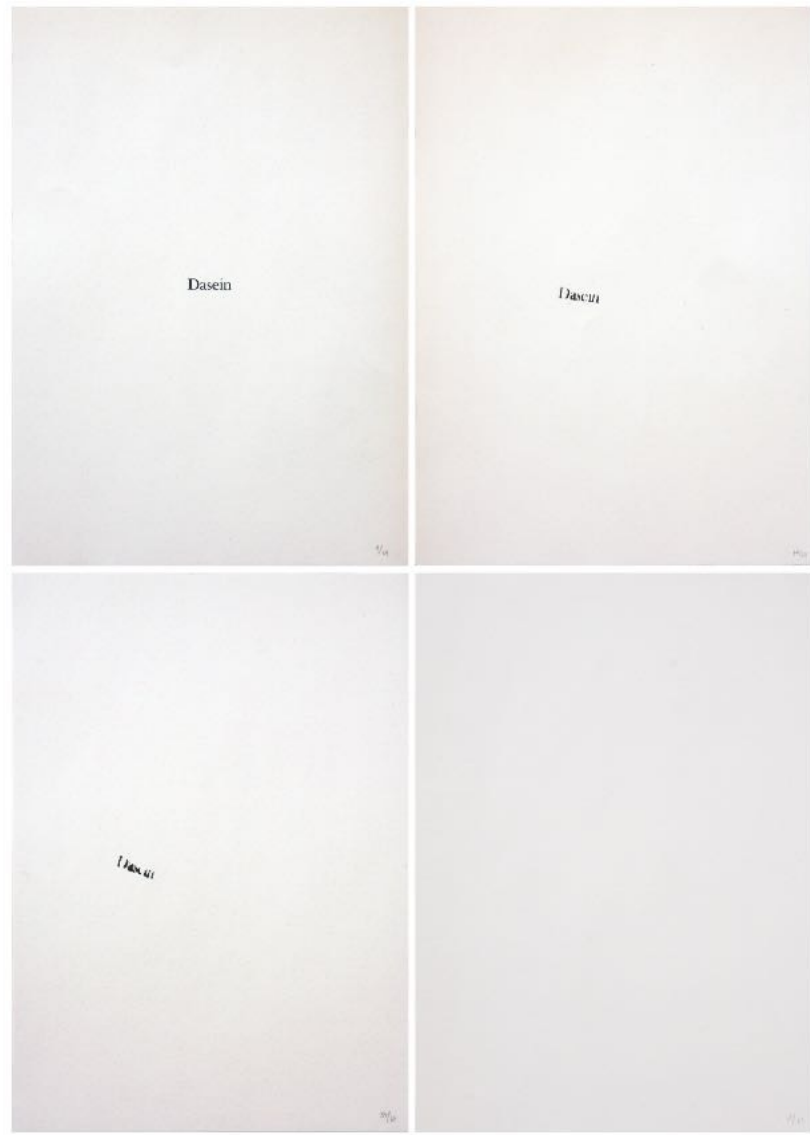


a-z, 2013-2017

Digital print on paper

21 x 29.7 cm

All letters from a to z printed on top of each other



***Dasein*, 2014**

Photocopy on paper

21 x 29.7 cm

The word 'Dasein' in German is printed in the middle of an A4 paper. The photocopy of this page is taken, followed by the copy of the second page and this goes on until the word on the page vanishes, as the ink fades with each copy.

