

ISTANBUL APPRAISAL Wing, MediaPoint 10.06. - 11.09.2011

Cevdet Erek, Erdem Ergaz, Gözde İlkin, Koray Kantarcıoğlu,
Gamze Özer, Ekrem Yalçındağ

Guest Curator: Lars Breuer (Germany)

- **Preview for the media Thursday, 09 June, from 11 am to 12 pm**
- **Artist & Curator talk and tour Friday, 10 June, at 12.**
- **The opening of the exhibition will be on Friday, 10 June, at 6 pm**
- **Istanbul Appraisal presents Turkish Psychedelic Party at Kulttuuri- kulma club (Gallen-Kallelankatu 8) 10 June from 8 pm. Dj Grup Ses & Cevedit (Istanbul)**



Welcome!

Istanbul is among the biggest urban agglomerations in the world. Yet in terms of art it appeared on the international map only a few years ago. Developing at a rapid pace, more and more art galleries and off spaces have opened in the city centre. The recently inaugurated privately founded museums and art institutions have transformed the legendary Istiklal Avenue into a cultural mile exploring new and visionary approaches to contemporary art. The Istanbul biennial was founded in the 1980s and has grown to become one of the most important and prestigious events of its kind attracting artists and curators from all over the world – from this an internationally important art scene has developed in the Bosphorus.

Under the title *Istanbul Appraisal* the Pori Art Museum provides an insight into one area of this lively development. The show 'Istanbul Appraisal' includes works by Cevdet Erek, Erdem Ergaz, Ekrem Yalçındağ, Gamze Özer, Gözde İlkin and Koray Kantarcıoğlu. For many of the artists contemporary Turkish social and political issues are the catalyst and references for many of their works. **Gözde İlkin** (*1981 Kütahya) who is not only known for her embroidered fabrics but also for being part of the political art group Atilkunst questions the core ideas of education in the convergent themes of home, school and society. İlkin's installation piece *Homework* (2010) reacts to the early-age confrontation of socio-political threats by applying symbols of governmental power and military violence on learning materials and stationary.

The colourful drawings of **Gamze Özer** (*1984 Bursa) explore universal icons and strategies of global pop culture transposed into a local perspective. Özer takes images from the Turkish media and transfers them into her seemingly naive universe of cartoonlike characters – creating a cosmos of absurdity and paradox reflecting on a schizophrenic society. In her new drawings, Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse mingle among a group of praying men and religious slogans that warn against electric piracy. The exploration of the aesthetics of ornament and colour is prominent in the work of **Ekrem Yalçındağ** (*1964 Gölbaşı). Painted in an impasto manner his wall panel paintings - that cover the entire wall - consist of a stylized ornamental structure of flat silver outlines that contrast with a spectrum of colour and shades.

A realistic threat to Istanbul is the expected and inevitable major earthquake, however even this does not prevent the city from its rapid growth and expansion. In a series of paintings entitled *Natural Disasters* (2004), **Erdem Ergaz** (*1977 Istanbul) visualizes the hypothesis of different worst-case scenarios such as earthquakes, tsunami and cyclones on the city. Painted in cold flat colours with precise technical outlines this series depicts illustrative models that give a more objective and analytical approach to disaster as opposed to apocalyptic prediction. In contrast to the exemplary and solid landscapes in the models of Ergaz, the *Bitmap Landscapes* of **Koray Kantarcıoğlu** (*1982) become a fragmented, dissolved and elusive aesthetic. Kantarcıoğlu's series of digital drawings are composed of single pixels that trace the geological territory and formation of a mountain over time.

The structure of time and its visual and audible materialisation in rhythm and pattern is a recurrent theme in the works of **Cevdet Erek** (*1974 Istanbul). In his works *Dark Light Dark* (2007) and *Day* (2011) the sequence of absence and presence visualises the process of time in one of its most basic and essentially natural structures – the rhythm of night and day.

Istanbul Appraisal also includes a selection of Turkish fanzines and books from the continuing project *Even my mum can make a book*. This project is dedicated to independent publishing and small artist editions of printed matter. **Gamze Özer, Timothee Hugué** and **Kristina Kramer** initiated it in 2010 in order to create a constantly growing and travelling archive of artist books and publications from Turkey and all over the world.

In co-operation with: ArtSümer Gallery (Istanbul), Arter, Space for art (Istanbul), Dirimart (Istanbul), Galeri NON (Istanbul), Vehbi Koç Foundation (Istanbul), Turkin Suurlähetystö, Turkish Embassy (Helsinki)

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