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Cover by nitty gritty, "actual air // time decanted" (2011)

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Editor's Note:

So, after all of this time, having embarked on a biannual course of issues for Fictive's second year, my editorial reflection has never been so murky, full of the ripples of time. I've come to drop a cent of a coin and make a wish, but I can barely see bottom, and once having thrown my pittance into the pond, it disappears.

Do I dip my hands into its polluted shallows, get dirty, if only for the sake of a memory? And now that the world is in a deep thaw, with a sheen of post-pandemic glamor for some, still sickening for too many, convulsed by bald-faced war in Europe, old 20th century fears returning to the end of civilization, if only it had begun.

But in the midst of this concept publishing project, *Fictive*, strapped, unworldly, we pursue the inward track to personal freedom by way of our thoughts, in search of what words and visions, images and feelings are really ours.

What do we want to capture and bring into the world? I ride on the cascading wave of such ambition as that which strikes the vocal chords of fellow creatives who've contributed parts of themselves, invaluable and immaculate, to enlighten this humble missive. These are vital shouts into the yawning chasm of the weary world.

It's a lonely road in search of our hearts. We have come to know just what makes us our pulses beat faster, to remember that our lives are ours. So, finally, we open our eyes, to read with outstretched palms, listen with active minds, to watch as the horizon blazes with our real names, unfading under distant skies, where the sun sets but does not fall.

Matt A.H. Apr. 24, 2022

Sonic Spectrums by Gözde Kaya



*Got To Keep On by The Chemical Brothers and Smith & Lyall / Sonar Istanbul / ZorluPSM /
02.10.2021 - photo courtesy of SonarIstanbul.com*

I - Traditional, Acoustic, Folkloric

There was a pale light that fell onto the waving Bosphorus strait, as the sun's last rays peaked over Istanbul's historic peninsula and onto the whitewashed marble floor of the shorefront terrace at the Four Seasons. In the uppish air of its elite ambiance, a pop-up stage had been lit, chairs fanned out in the style of an amphitheater, and onto its raised platform walked vocalist and composer Bora Uymaz, trailed by Ertuğrul Erhan on violin, Oray Yay on percussion, Murat Bağdatlı on oud, and finally Şirin Pancaroğlu on harp and ratchet harp, who, as fellow composer to Uymaz, organized the ensemble in their names.

They had come to play new compositions based on the 12th century Anatolian folk poet Yunus Emre for the 49th Istanbul Music Festival. It was a night of mysticism and reverie as Uymaz intoned the words, “I asked the yellow flower”, and the band performed, gently at first, as for a hymn, and then more vigorously. Yay followed the rhythmic lead of Uymaz who sang with a bendir frame drum in his hands, tapping out the careful, intricate measures with an apparent ease, as if the music had simply swirled up through him from the depths of the earth. They explored a variety of riddles, songs, Türkü folklore, humoresques and other forms.

Erhan’s violin grounded the music like the roots of the yellow flower, while elaborating outward from its stems, and buzzing up, even, transforming into the hum of a bee, the flapping of a bird, calling back and forth with the masterful oud work of Bağdatlı. Of all the solos that ensued about the evening’s performance, it was Bağdatlı who warmed up the crowd as they sat and listened during one of the first chilly nights of the season. A cool breeze drifted off the choppy water behind them as they witnessed Bağdatlı play at his deliberate pace, as a craftsman might hold onto the material of his work, balancing on the tightrope of creativity.

Bağdatlı improvised with an equally calculated, and spirited force. By the end of his detailed venture into the womb of the plucked instrument, he had achieved a subtle but no less powerful communication, of aural vision, beatific and harmonious. The adhan called and Uymaz, who was singing praises to Allah, asked that the ensemble hear its ululating cries, as is a traditional practice among musicians in Islamic spaces. But there was a tension about that moment, something inherent in the classist politicization of culture and religion, as it exists within Turkish society.

Pancaroglu began again, as the sole woman onstage, and a peerless classical artist in Turkey with an impressive range of musicological accomplishments, having, among many other untold achievements, managed to revitalize the medieval Ottoman ceng zither from obsolescent obscurity. Her playing was sweet to the ear, and although her recordings might have been more exquisitely crisper than her sound as engineered for the outdoor concert during Istanbul’s flagship music festival, she did not disappoint, and held a posture and strength of creative poise that rivaled the masculine voice of her chief collaborator, even surpassing the humble prowess of Uymaz with the soft, graceful touch of her virtuosic harp.



Yellow Flower, concert by Bora Uymaz and Şirin Pancaroğlu Ensemble - photograph Emre Durmuş

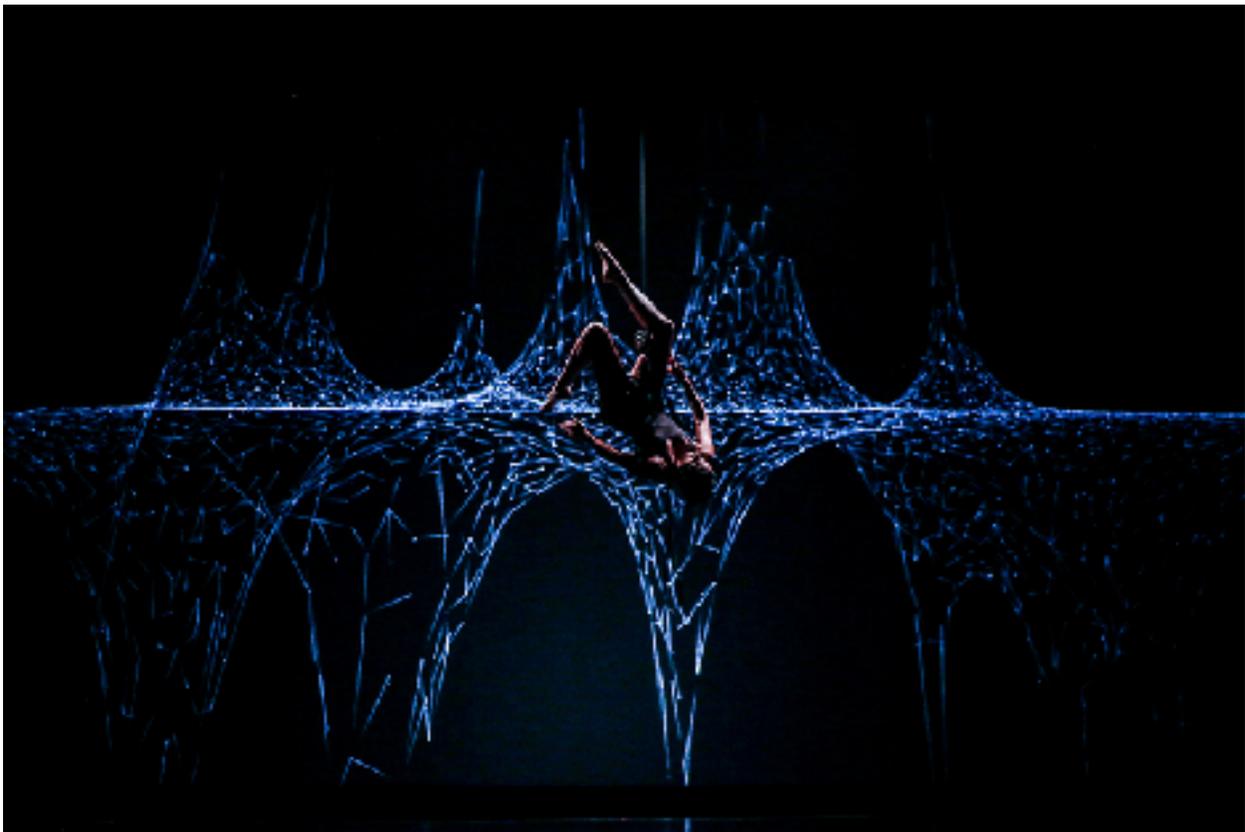
II - Modern, Electronic, International

Within the sleek, metallic rush of the Zorlu Performing Arts Center building, housed in an architecturally cutting-edge shopping mall, the electronic music festival Sónar pulsed and boomed, billowing with fog machines and crowds who held up their beer and cigarettes while entertaining the grooves of the multi-room venue. A long, shallow escalator brought guests down slowly into the heady mix of dance music and virtual art, machine-mad and raging, everyone there felt they were modern, contemporary, synonymous with cool, hip, in. The theme of the festival, “Music, Creativity & Technology” could not have been more basic.

But it seemed that most of those who danced and played, drank and reveled in the audiences of Istanbul’s Sónar 2021 only came to move their bodies in front of each other

while beating the soles of their feet to the monotonous din of EDM. The artists, however, did come with attempts to provoke thoughtfulness in the midst of the generally superficial social tone and its demands for all-out mindless fun. Opening the largest venue, SonarClub, on the first of the two evenings was Kerala Dust, who struck not a few high chords with their ensemble of two d.j. tables and an electronic guitarist, whose licks and notes accompanied well.

Out in the common hall, where cold drafts of local beer were served with gourmet Italian fare, a simple electronic music setup had a spot under SonarScreen, where the glissandi of Kerem Altaylar sounded off as part of the Algorave Istanbul collective. Their cathartic blends of crescendoing harmonies spilled upward to the eye-opening visual evocation of a waterfall, glistening with rainbow hues, and reverberating with a meditative ambience. It was all a daze of introspective blurs that fed out into the mundane thrust of capitalist commerciality under the distracting, streaming colors of its exuberant and delicious fakery.



Lijos / SonarIstanbul / ZorluPSM / 03.10.2021 - photo courtesy of SonarIstanbul.com

The following day, Acid Arab underwhelmed with a much-hyped but humdrum occasion of live drawing by one Raphaëlle Macron. Their project, “Climats”, wound through the streets of what appeared to be Beirut, or some such Middle Eastern city, as their forgettable music droned on carefree. It made everyone sit and wonder just how they had come to be so bored in a room with friends of friends they don’t know, watching someone paint away in the corner of the party like a disaffected loner. Although genuine, and even sweet, the effect did not communicate, artistically or musically.

Yet, when the veritable headliner came on next, Christian Löffler, the festival itself was redeemed of its insipid backwash of electronica and tech. Löffler slowed everyone’s heartbeat to that of a waving leaf, as a string quartet played his song, “Pastoral”, and changed the vision of a night out that so many had come to from the shores of the Bosphorus to that sterile mall. And rounding out his set with bold and vicious dance rhythms, Löffler proved to be not only the most dynamic artist of the festival, but also one of the greatest causes to make merry.

But in terms of pure jollification, the Spanish electronic musician Cora Novoa blew off the tops of everyone’s heads who wandered into SonarHall to see her following a relatively mediocre performance with her band, The Artifacts. She projected nerdy historical tracts up on a screen above her while jamming hard on a chorus of tempos that burned and bled across the devastated minds of her eager listeners. I, among them, sat alone, in the dark, smiling.

Gözde Kaya is an ethnomusicologist and journalist based in Edirne, Turkey



On Ficto-Criticism by Aslı Seven



Anoxic Event, 2021 (fragment)

Mould 21, cast 7-1, fuel tank epoxy, photograph with 3 dogs, polyol isocyanide, bone, flippers, pump, broken hand, helmet, new crater solid frit 1195 °C. Photo - Hadiye Cangökçe

It's difficult to summarize my encounter with ficto-criticism, because it mainly happened to me, in my own writing, before I knew the term existed.

For me it was a way to distance myself from 'explanation' when writing about art. Instead of positioning myself as a curator or an art writer, at a position of authority or exteriority, I was trying to find a way to write "with" the process of artistic research and production, to write something that flows alongside the art work and conveys something of artistic process instead of offering closed explanations on finished objects.

I did an artistic research PhD in France at ENSA Bourges and EESI Poitiers-Angouleme in 2019 and during that research it became clear to me that sometimes writing subjectively is the only way to reach any kind of truth about making exhibitions or any kind of truth about art and its context of emergence and visibility. At the same time, I always have the hope that writing subjectively one might reach a wider audience. Of course that is the constant desire, never fully achieved, but I still think subjectivity and fiction resonate more than self-righteous explanatory texts or "highfalutin" curating.

The key statement would be that fiction, if it is to have any critical value, always comes in a relationship to fact, and in ficto-criticism the issue is to intervene in what constitutes the matter of the world where facts and fictions coexist and make up each other constantly; to provide a shift in perspective where we can gain new insight on fictions that we take for granted (as facts) and reverse the situation.

Mackenzie Wark recently used the terms "ficting" and "facting" to underline this relationship. JG Ballard's non fiction writing is another reference, along with more anthropological ones - I also looked into field reports and theoretical writing in anthropology where fiction is clearly a method to convey something other than academic knowledge, closer to the process of research (I think of Nastassja Martin's novelized experience of getting bitten by a bear in Siberia in her book, "In the Eye of the Wild" translated by Sophie R. Lewis).

Another theoretical thread would be new materialism's insistence on the withdrawal of objects, the idea that no subject or object can ever fully grasp an object in all its potential. This insistence on un-knowability and the humility it brings to the table is where fiction and ficto-criticism as method become relevant.

"Electrical Afterlife Scriptoprothesis in the Shadow of a Hyperobject", the text I wrote in the catalogue for the exhibition, [Elektroizolasyon] at Arter uses fiction as a shell for critical / theoretical writing. If I must look closer into Emre's process, a written script was at the heart of process leading up to the exhibition. Meliha Erem's short stories carry fragments from this script that we chose not to share in the exhibition. Instead, we chose to display Erem's short stories and to give them the same status as other works of art. This was mainly done to convey a sense that besides the film and the sculptures, writing was also a

medium through which Elektroizolasyon expresses itself, and that ficto-criticism was not only in the text, but it is also the *modus operandi* through which sculptures and film were made.

To finalize, especially around Elektroizolasyon (but also the exhibition Saint Joseph: Beats of a Fabulous Machine); ficto-criticism does not only operate as a method of writing. It is also an architectural / scenographic expression where the fictions of the museum are activated, reified and interrupted with other fictions, like the industrial entrance door installed at the exhibition's entrance, or the bunker-like structure covering one of the windows on the second floor; or again, the appearance of Arter's architectural model in the film and the view over the exhibition from the 2nd floor which makes everything look like an architectural model - the question of scale opens up to some kind of critical fiction as operating across the space's architecture.

A similar approach to objects operates inside the vitrines in Saint Joseph where objects from artistic processes are displayed alongside objects from early 20th century physics and chemistry labs: their design carries similar methods of “ficting” and “facting” and putting them side by side creates a speculative space where it is possible to gain distance from what we take for granted in both scientific and artistic processes.

Aslı Seven is an independent curator and writer based between Istanbul and Paris. Her research and curatorial projects focus on infrastructure, landscape and built environment, with an emphasis on fieldwork, ficto-criticism and collaborative artistic processes. She is a member of AICA and OF C-E-A (French Association of Curators), and a collaborator with ICI (Independent Curators International).



Peace Dialogue By Augustino Lucano



photo by Augustino Lucano

Journey to South Sudan on December 7, 2020

My journey to South Sudan in December 2020 was to mobilize the community to complete a feeder road from Maji to Napotpot (in Eastern Equatoria, South Sudan). However, the cattle keepers presented a huge, imminent threat to the volunteer community

members keen to start the feeder road. Therefore, the community preferred to have a peace dialogue with the neighbours first before starting the feeder road. Unfortunately, I ran out of time, but the message for peace dialogue spread around. The religious communities and the local communities were getting together to discuss peace dialogues.

Long trip to Ngatuba Village July 23, 2021

While I was in Ngatuba Village, Pastor Lotuluba Paul had agreed to meet with me in Maji, but was unable to make it before I left. However, when I returned to Canada, I received a phone call from him. He was inspired by the community work and peace initiative for Maji. I had a long discussion about peace initiative dialogue on the phone with him. He promised me that he will go to Maji to meet with the Chief of Ngatuba, Akileo and his colleagues to discuss about peace initiative dialogue. Indeed, Pastor Lotuluba Paul surprised me one morning with the video he took in Ngatuba of the meeting he had with community in the same place that I also had community meeting. He decided to go to Maji, but he was advised by the community members not to go due to the cattle raiding activities which makes the area unsafe. Paul took the initiative to convince his church to build a church in Maji by the end of this year. And Paul is scheduling to attend the upcoming peace dialogue between the Didinga and the Toposa in Maji.



photo courtesy of Augustino Lucano

Peace Initiative Meeting in Charit Village, August 25, 2021

In fact, for a second time, Paul was determined to travel to Charit which is the next community to Ngatuba. He held another dialogue initiative meeting with the people of Charit. He was amazed to learn that all the little children asked him where is Augustino. The families and their children through Paul, urged him to tell Augustino to bring peace meeting with the Toposa. Again, the children expressed a great desire for peace so that they can go to school. They begged Paul to convey their message. Both children and their families cried for peace and development. They are tired of war. They need everlasting peace and development. The women expressed that they are tired of sleeping in the forests due to the fear that cattle raiders often burn villages down. They are fearful to collect firewood in the jungle, to fetch water in the rivers or to get green vegetables in the wilderness. They could not cultivate their gardens because the cattle raiders have created enmity between the neighbouring tribes.



photo courtesy of Augustino Lucano

Peace Dialogue in Ngauro, September 20-23, 2021

In black coat on the left [in the picture above] is Honourable Akileo Mboya, the Commissioner of Budi County. Next to him in blue is Abdallah Lokeno, the Commissioner

of Narus, Kapoeta East. Further to the right next to Abdallah in black suit is former Speaker of defunct Kapoeta State parliament, Bosco Lotyang. To his right in a black shirt is MP, Jervasio Amotun.

Akileo Mboya wrote that “This is just happening now in Ngauro, the golden city of Eastern Equatoria. Stay tuned for more details, give peace a chance for a prosperous society. Honourable Abdallah Angelo Lokeno, Commissioner of Kapoeta East addressing the delegates of the peace conference in Ngauro, the golden city of Easter Equatoria”.

Prior to the meeting, Abdallah and Akileo informed me that there was going to be a peace dialogue in Ngauro between the Toposa community and the Didinga community. The local CBOs, Nyekiriket had organized the peace dialogue. The peace dialogue was fruitful. At the end of the peace dialogue both the Didinga and the Toposa had buried the war hatchet. The two communities came together and celebrated their reconciliation. They promised each other never to fight again. They look forward for more reconciliation and forgiveness.



photo courtesy of Augustino Lucano

During the peace dialogue, Chief Akileo Achulo read a note. He finally met with the Kraal leaders. In green is Lokalio, and in brown coat is Marino. They met and revisited the previous letters that we exchanged through the bush. Akileo and I had written the first letter, and Akileo risked his life when he went to pin the letter on the tree in the river of Lokayot where Lokalio and Marino brought their cows to drink, but they cannot meet each other there because of hostility. Lokayot River was no man's land.

Lokalio and Marino, through William Karisio, promised to come to Maji for peace talks and they urged the government representative to provide police in Maji. They also promised that they will open the road from Napotpot to Maji.

“God will answer everything through our most able peace-loving Honourable Akileo Mboya, the Commissioner of Budi County”, William Karisio stated. William is the local journalist in the area; he was inspired by the peace initiative, and participated in the Maji peace initiative. William covered the story of Maji peace initiative for Sangaita Community Radio.

After the peace dialogue in Ngauro, the two communities had decided to plan the next peace dialogue which will be held in Maji. The two communities are waiting for the dry season. There is so much rain in South Sudan. The Toposa community paved the feeder road from Napotpot to somewhere close to Maji, but it was not completed. The Toposa agreed to complete the feeder road.

The Commissioner of Narus, Abdallah Lokeno promised to the Didinga Community that he will write a letter through Chief Akileo Achulo to inform him to bring the Didinga Community to Maji to have the peace dialogue with the Toposa Community. Abdallah is waiting for the dry season and then he will send the letter to invite the Didinga Community to meet in Maji this year.

I phoned Honourable Abdallah this week to follow up about the peace dialogue. He informed me that the peace dialogue will take place after the rain stopped. He expected me to join them in the peace dialogue. He jokingly urged me to bring the Didinga Community, and he will bring the Toposa Community for the meaningful peace dialogue.

Indeed, my community begged me to go home to bring the Toposa Community together for the peace dialogue. The good news is that I just received the report on Oct 16, 2021, that the Toposa Community are paving the feeder road towards Maji and the Didinga community members went to Maji to start the feeder road towards Napotpot, and they will meet in the middle with the Toposa Community. The Commissioner of Budi County, Akileo Mboya stated that, “The preparation for the feeder road is for the coming peace dialogue in Maji.”



photo courtesy of Augustino Lucano

Peace Delegates

With great excitement, the Southern Sudanese Children's Literacy Foundation (SSCLF) will send two delegates to attend the upcoming peace dialogue in Maji this year. The members of SSCLF have been engaged with community work in South Sudan. They have built a Primary School in Ngatuba Village.

The civil war that broke out on December 13, 2013, in South Sudan stopped all the developments in the country. The communities have been broken into pieces with civil wars and stricken with poverty which has perpetuated the cattle raiding. Now, the civil war has stopped so the people are trying to regain their strength for the communities. Therefore, SSCLF members are hoping to provide some support to cultivate the seeds for peace through peace dialogues. We hope to bring sustainable peace and development in the area so that the families and their children can live peacefully with their neighboring communities.

Augustino Lucano is South Sudanese. He was a refugee, student, social worker, and president of his own not-for-profit NGO. In 2015, Lucano received his a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Dalhousie University in New Brunswick, Canada. He also holds a Social Work Diploma from Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta. He worked as a Multicultural Support Worker, and a family Support Counsellor in Calgary, connecting students and families of new immigrants with community resources.



Notes on Kitsch by Ulya Soley



A Question fo Taste (2021), installation, courtesy of Pera Museum and Ulya Soley

The following notes are excerpts from Ulya Soley's essay, "A Question of Taste", published by Pera Museum as part of the exhibition, "A Question of Taste" (2021)

A snow globe filled with glitter instead of snow. Transparent and plastic. The glitter falls on a single rose. A well-bloomed rose, with beautiful leaves. It stands on a transparent plastic plate situated right at the center of the globe, and is thus visible in exactly the same way from all sides of the globe. When the globe is shaken, the glitter begins to float around the rose, glowing in tones of vivid pink and green.

If the internet was an object, it could have been this globe. Produced in China, transported to San Francisco to be sold, and sent to Turkey as a gift, this object reflects contemporary visual culture in every sense: its material, aesthetic, falsehood, and its reconciliation with its falsehood; the manner in which it transports the GIFs we are accustomed to encountering on the computer screen to our physical world; how it reminds us of the symbolic burden long-carried by the red rose while feeding off of the fact that it has been considered cool enough to be recently printed on sports socks; its transportability to geographies far away from its place of production and its capacity to appeal to a global "taste" that allows it to be received with the same enthusiasm wherever it goes.

This globe is a great starting point for addressing the concepts we will be using to examine contemporary visual culture such as taste, aesthetics, class dispositions, mass culture and art, kitsch and camp, real and fake, physical and digital, "good" and "bad" taste.

[...]

In his 1962 essay titled, *The Structure of Bad Taste*, writer Umberto Eco evaluates Greenberg's essay [*Avant-Garde and Kitsch*, 1939]. Eco states, "[...] not only does the avant-garde emerge as a reaction to the diffusion of Kitsch, but Kitsch keeps renewing itself and thriving on the very discoveries of the avant-garde."* Eco finds the dialectic of kitsch and the avant-garde useful.

Kitsch is not the only party that borrows in this relationship; avant-garde also frequently borrows from kitsch. Eco does not refrain from differentiating bad taste from good taste, but confirms that taste is not definable.

On the other hand, Susan Sontag seeks to define the concept of camp -- a concept that has become an ally of kitsch and that has also settled itself in Turkish with the same name -- in her essay titled, "*Notes on Camp*" published in 1964. She defines camp as the urban, apolitical, playful taste for the unnatural, that is, artificial and exaggerated.



A Question fo Taste (2021), installation, courtesy of Pera Museum and Ulya Soley

[...]

By the 1970s, Jean Baudrillard identifies kitsch as a cultural category with the unreal, simulation and imitation. He positions it as an element of consumer society, in opposition to the beautiful and aesthetic.**

Around the same time, Matei Calinescu links the recent emergence of kitsch in the context of high art to the close relationship it establishes with irony.***

Similar to Eco, Calinescu asserts that avant-garde and kitsch feed off each other, which he argues is proof of the complexity of kitsch as a concept. For him, kitsch is the result of romanticism's desire to escape reality, and is "one of the most bewildering and elusive categories of modern aesthetics."****

Calinescu also delineates the concepts of upper class and working-class kitsch. he describes kitsch as an internationally accepted "aesthetic lie"***** that provides comfort to the viewer, as he continuously underscores how indescribable it is.

*Umberto Eco, "The Structure of Bad Taste," translated by Anna Cancogni and David Robey. *The Open Work*. (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989), p. 187

**Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'" *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* (London: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 17

***Ibid, p. 25-30

****Ibid, p. 33

*****Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures* (London: Sage, 1998). pp. 110-111

Ulya Soley is a curator, writer, and translator based in Istanbul.



Among the Thugs by Alex Butler



Football match on Shrove Tuesday 1846 in Kingston on Thames | Public Domain

When news of the Astroworld disaster came, I had just finished Bill Buford's "Among the Thugs", an enthralling book detailing the mobs of British football fans. Although set in the 90s, the book's timelessness is evident throughout.

The selected passage depicts Buford's description of a mob mentality, the push and pull of a pulsing crowd. Brilliantly written, I knew I wanted to work with this passage in some way.

In my sonnet, I tried to convey a nightmarish sense of claustrophobia... A man slowly coming to grips with the massive, panicking crowd. As I wrote, I kept finding similarities with what I was hearing from the news... The tragedies of the Astroworld concert in Houston were too powerful to ignore...

Among the Thugs (Bill Buford)

Immured Sonnet

By Alex Butler

There was a narrow human alley, and I joined the mob pushing its way through for a place from which to watch the match. Except there was no place. There was a movable crush. It was impossible, once inside, to change my mind – to decide that I didn't want to see the game after all, that I wanted to go home – because I couldn't move left or right, let alone turn around and walk back the way I came. There was only one direction: forward. For some reason, there was an advantage, and an advantage worth defending. In being one step ahead of wherever it was that you happened to be. And that was where everyone was trying to go. There was a range of tactics for achieving this. The most common was the **One I never saw coming, blindsided simple squeeze**: by lifting your crushed arm from between the two in a way that forced the **unnatural** bodies that had wedged you in place and slipping it in front and by feeling in the **sprawling chaos**, ebbing then twisting yourself in such a way that your body, obeying rather **strictly against the promise** of natural principles, actually followed your arm, you could inch **another direction**. I **vied to move** towards that mysterious spot just ahead of you. The simple squeeze against the pulse, while **fighting to maintain** was popular – I had assumed that most people learned the **strange boundaries with strangers, the huddled** technique trying to buy a drink in London pubs – and **crowds becoming fearful, wild-eyed** since everybody did it, until interrupted by the *shove*. The momentum was somehow speeding up, my principle of the shove was this: somebody, somewhere breathing, labored and heavy, tight-fisted behind you, frustrated at not getting to this mysterious spot and panicked from **exhaustion would give out** just one step ahead, would give up and throw his weight at any moment. My fears collided into the person in front of him: then, amid cries of "fuckin' bastard," in **the midst of a nightmare I cried out**, everybody tumbled forward. Nobody fell if only because each **dying here, my vision flushed to whiteout** person, pressed so tightly against the one in front who was in turn pressed so tightly against the one in front of him that no one, apparently, was in any real danger. But I wondered about the person at the very front and was convinced that somebody must be feeling very frightened at the increasingly likely prospect of being crushed against a wall – for eventually there must be a wall. And it must have been this fear, felt by the panicked, slowly suffocating one at the front whose ribs were buckling painfully, which contributed to the *counter shove*, an effort of animal strength that seemed to occur shortly after you had abandoned the simple squeeze and, being unable to stop yourself from tumbling uncontrollably forwards, had resigned yourself to the authority of the shove, when suddenly, inexplicably, there was the counter shove and you were traveling uncontrollably backwards.

The movement never ceased.



Ukraine, Photos by Sila Yalazan



Sila Yalazan, "Ukraine" (2021)

I first went to Ukraine in the summer of 2019. I spent quite a while in Odessa then, a seaside port city. I was immediately amazed by everything that I saw, all of the characters I met. Even for a frequent world traveler like me, it was like nothing I had seen before.

I went four times after that, in the summer, winter, and "post-pandemic". In these challenging times, one thing I observed was the joy and strength of the people. I found freedom. By the end of my stay I realized I was running away from the oppression in my country.

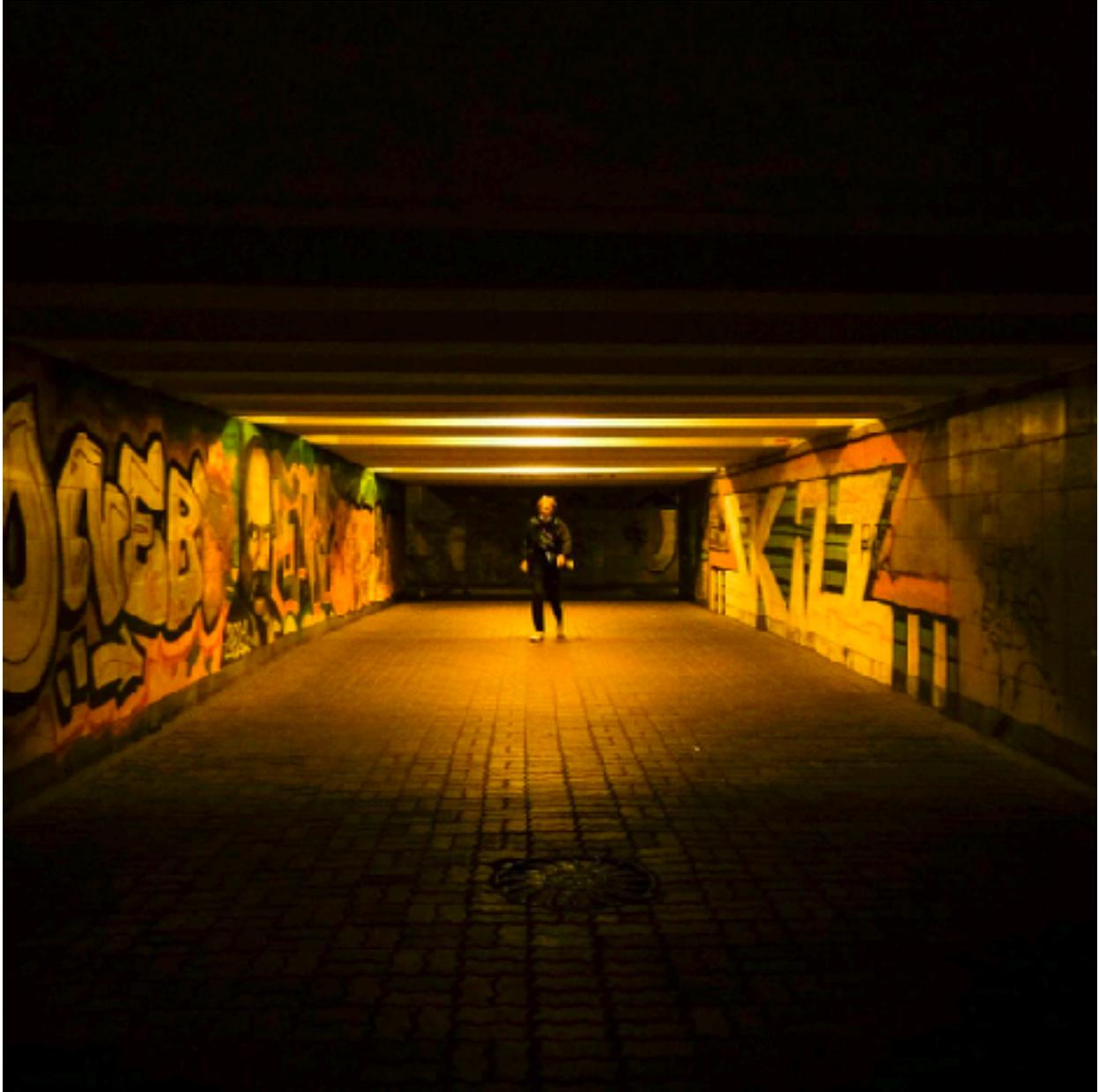
During my last trips, I visited more than 10 cities throughout Ukraine. From swamps to mountains, my eyes were were tired by all the beautiful and inspiring things I'd seen.

It's very hard for me see the country now. I am envisioning the places and faces I saw. Are they still there? Is their city damaged? Are they alive?

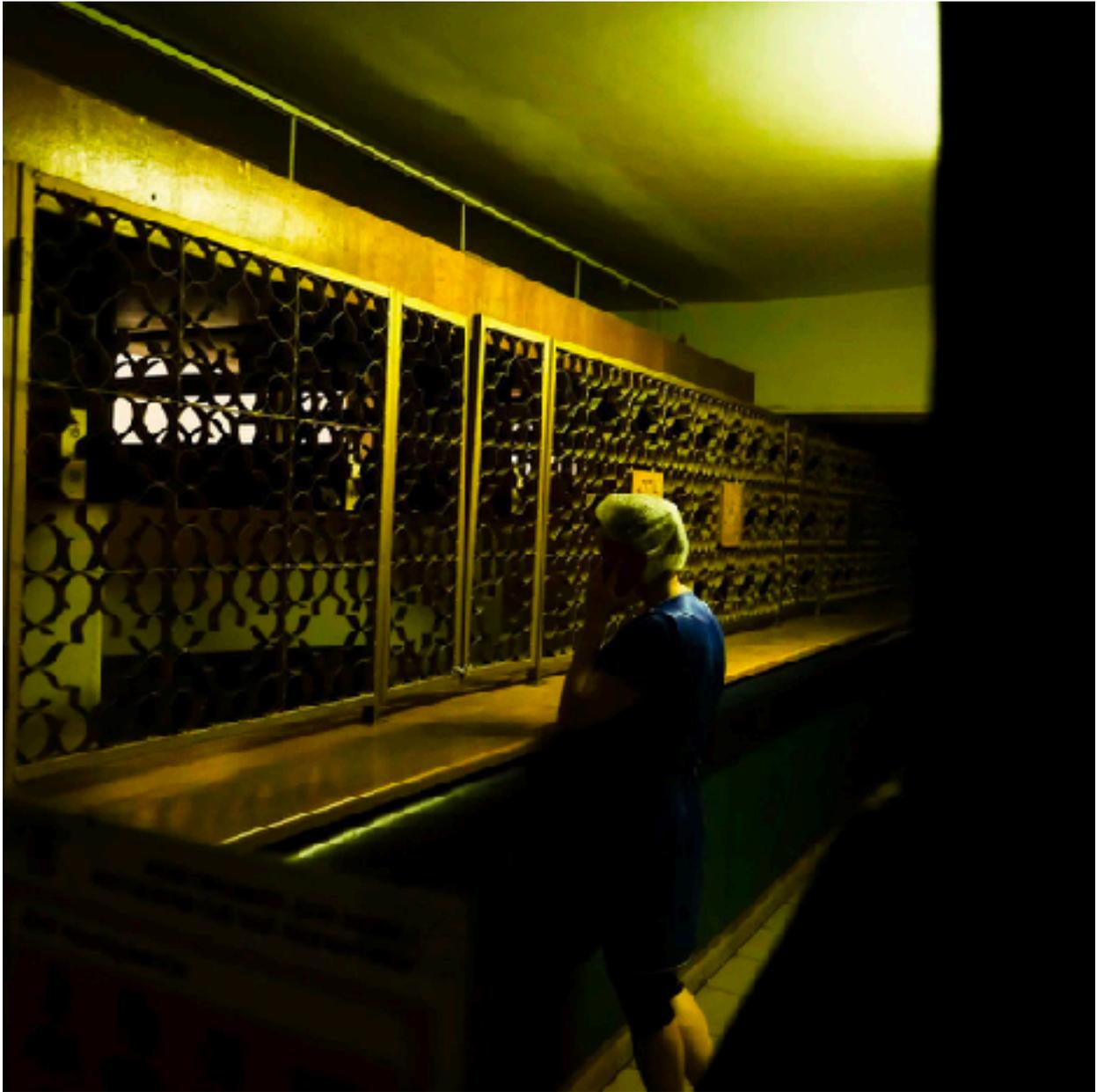
I have only memories and images to hold to now, before the invasion of beautiful, free Ukraine.



Sıla Yalazan, "Ukraine" (2021)



Sıla Yalazan, "Ukraine" (2021)



Sila Yalazan, "Ukraine" (2021)



Sila Yalazan, "Ukraine" (2021)

Sila Yalazan is a photographer based in Istanbul

Night Hunger by Cem Özuduru



excerpt from "Solo: Night Hunger and Other Stories" by Cem Özuduru

Night Hunger is a collection of short stories full of dread, anger, horror, macabre, torture and endless toxic nightmare fuel. It deals with mortality and immortality but at the same time the ethics of writing a social commentary novel, cannibalism, ghostly apparitions, the perils of going out with friends, sexting in haunted houses and Ottoman Ninjas...

So get ready to dive into the world of dark tales and scary fables, shut the drapes and listen to the rain outside while the pages silently sneak into your soul and grab you by the soul with their cold hands ... this is, The Night Hunger.

The following is "Night Hunger", a graphic story excerpted from the book, "Solo: Night Hunger and Other Stories" by Cem Özuduru, published by Marmara Çizgi











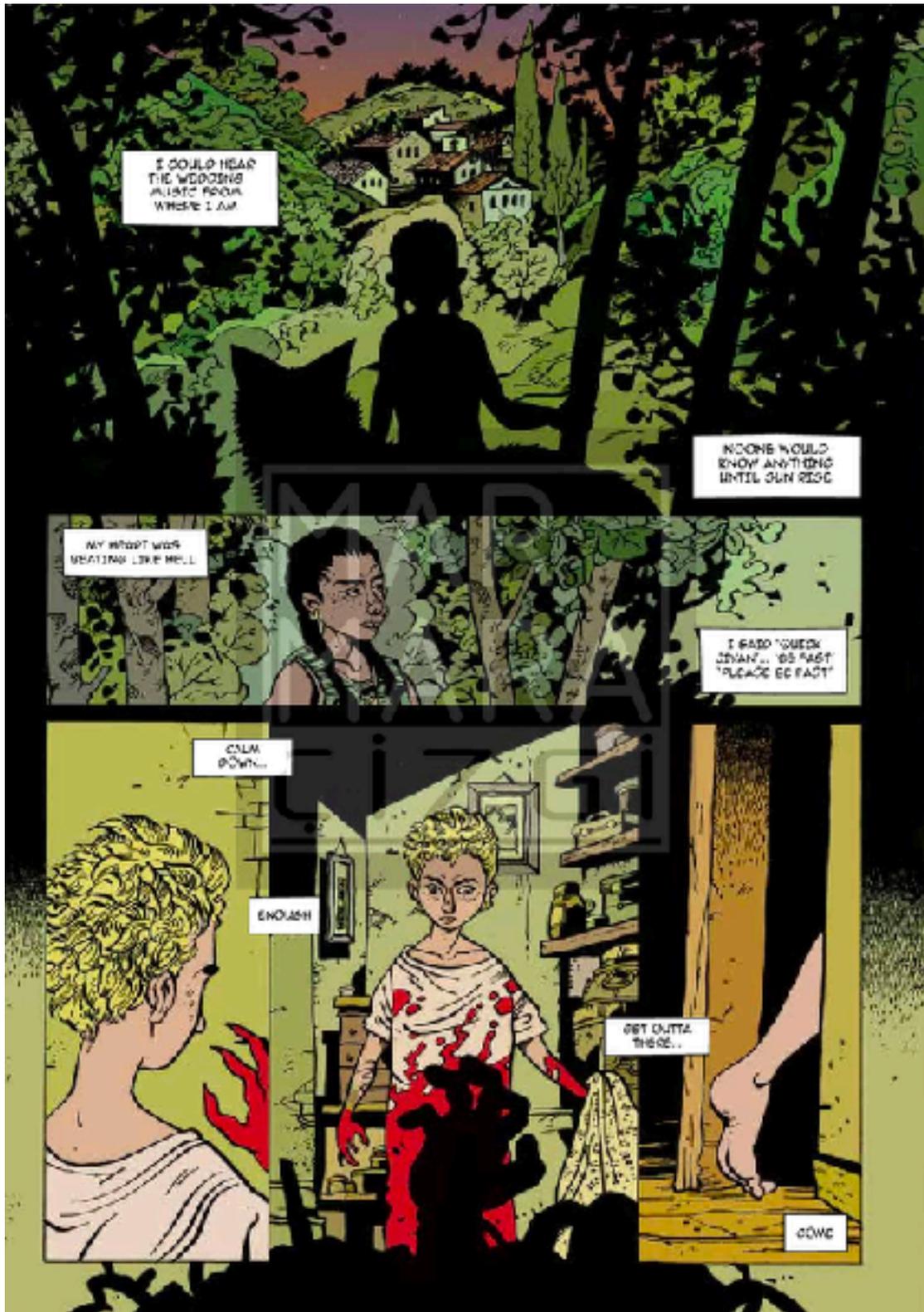
























Daughters of the Sea

by Itzik Rennert and Jennifer İpekeli



artwork by Itzik Rennert

The following texts and their accompanying artworks are excerpted from the illustrated book, "Tell Me Your Story", featuring a prologue by Etgar Keret, published by Paper Street Co. in Istanbul, in collaboration with Gnat Micro Press in Tel Aviv.

Itzik Rennert — Where Daughters of the Sea Are

When I was a small boy living in Haifa, I had a hiding place where I could be with myself and nobody else. We had a cluster of thick bushes under our house that the gardener always ignored, so it was untrimmed and wild. You could squeeze yourself, if you were little enough, through a tiny hole in the lavish canopy, and get inside what looked like a green cave made of leaves. It always smelled wet and mysterious.

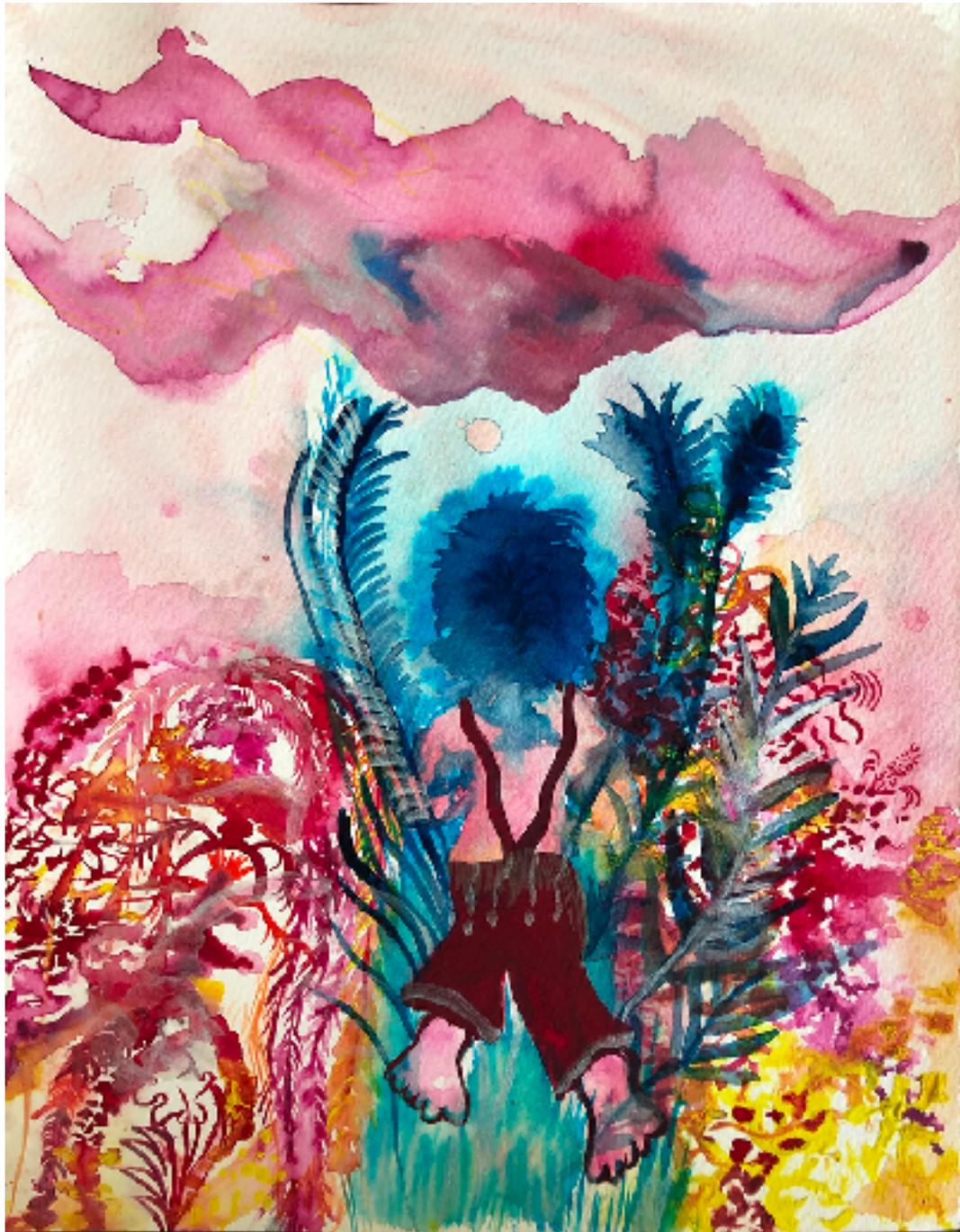
Through the gaps between the leaves and branches, you could see bright blue glimpses of the sky. On my back, arms behind my head, I would stare at those blue pieces of the sky and wait. After a while, the daughters of the sea, as I called them, would come flying. They were white, transparent creatures, hovering far away up there. Some of them rode horses and carriages from one side of the blue to the other, some just drifted with the wind.

They were beautiful and perfect, and silent. They always made me calm. Around the time I turned six years old, they stopped visiting. Soon after, the entrance hole to the cave became too small for my body, so there you go.

Jennifer İpekci

As a childhood memory, I want to go back to deep history, where I find my childhood memories in a place where no borders exist. I am a tree; my roots go up to the sky and deep into the soil. When it rains, my roots go deeper into the sky. Painting in the air, we worship the sun with naked eyes.

I vibrate and talk through the soil with my fellow brothers and sisters. Our language is universal. All welcome who respect our life. We are the only ones left on our planet that have and can give serotonin.



Hiding Under the Canopy by Jennifer İpek



Daughter of the Sea by Jennifer Ipek

***Itzik Rennert** was born in Haifa, between mountains and sea, in a middle class yet strange enough family. Not wanting to be a lawyer or a prime minister, he studied design and illustration at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem, and Illustration became his path in life. Rennert has been living in Tel Aviv for the last few decades -- yes, he is not a young man anymore -- and was Head of the Visual Communication Department and the Master's in Design Program at Shenkar College, where he is currently a senior lecturer. He eats too much and he doesn't like the color purple.*

*Searching through her roots and memories of past lives, **Jennifer İpekeli**'s work speaks about animism and collective resistance. Traveling through the body and the core of the soul, her work investigates the endless inner landscapes, the ever-changing seasons and the dimensions of the soul that belong to a place of neutrality. Society without a state, which lies at the zero-point of polar differentiation, represents the inner resonance of being, plant life, micro organisms, creatures, a myth for liberation.*



Ludicrous Letters by Serkan Özkaya

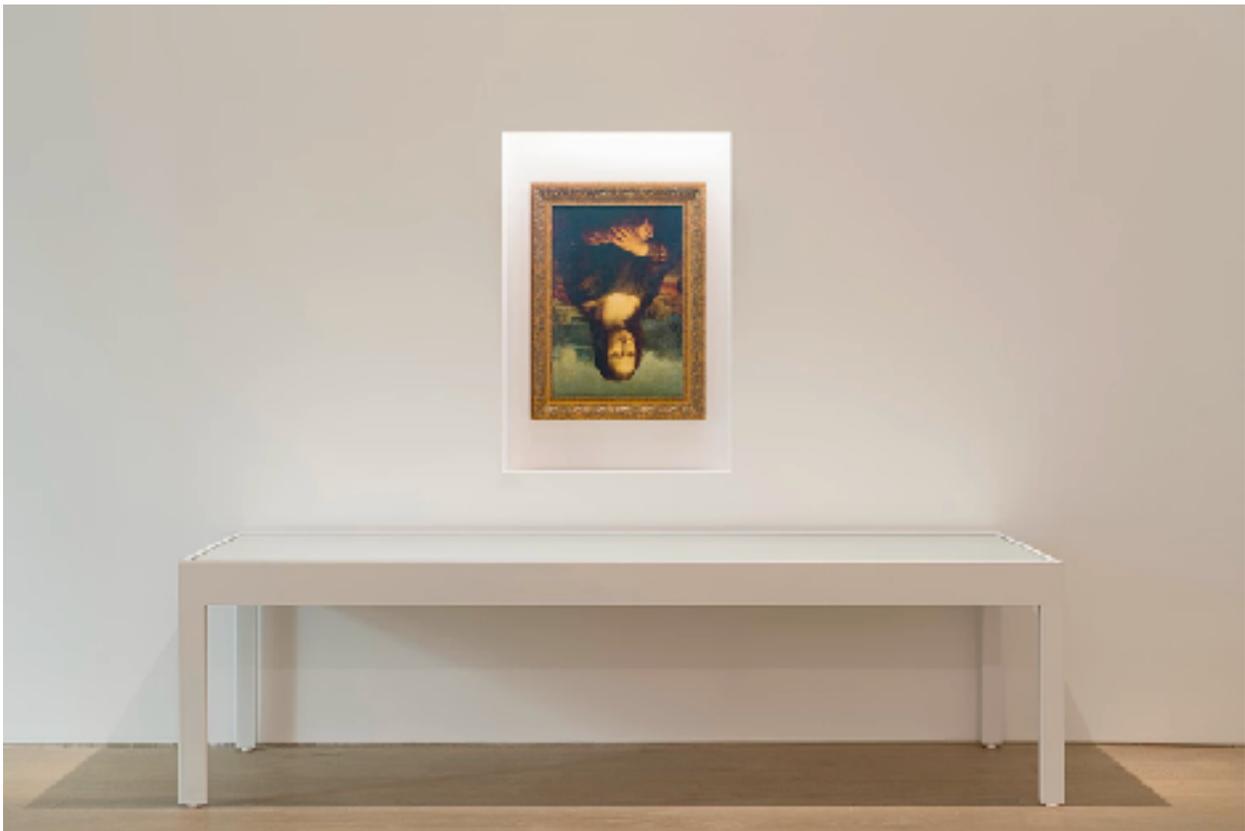


image courtesy of Serkan Özkaya

The following is a curatorial note displayed for Serkan Özkaya's installation, "Dear Sir or Madam" (1996 - ongoing), at Arter's exhibition, "Precaution" (2021-2022), curated by Emre Baykal:

Dear Sir or Madam is comprised of letters that Serkan Özkaya has sent to museums and cultural institutions proposing projects that are impossible to realise and the responses he has received. No matter how absurd, illogical, or inconsequential his proposals are, they never go without reply. These institutions, which fastidiously follow bureaucratic rules, respond to Özkaya's applications, in which it is unclear how much is real and how much is a joke, with the formality, politeness and distance warranted by institutional communication.

Hanging Leonardo's Mona Lisa, which gathers long lines of visitors, upside down; wrapping the Reichstag with fabric again even though only two years had passed since Christo and Jeanne-Claude's project had done the same; drawing a dollar sign over Mondrian's painting Broadway Boogie Woogie at MoMA -- even if it's covered in acetate -- immediately after Alexander Brener had been arrested for painting on a dollar sign on a Malevich painting at the Stedelijk Museum, Özkaya leaves such proposals which couldn't possibly receive positive responses to the cycle of institutional communication, collecting and archiving copies of his letters and the originals of the responses he receives alongside other visual materials concerning the projects he proposes. From this ongoing and expanding project and archive the artist's correspondence with three institutions dated 1996 and 1997 are presented.



Serkan Özkaya, "Dear Sir or Madam" (1996-ongoing), photo by flufoto

Mr. Glenn D. Lowry
Director of the MoMA
11 W 53rd Street
NYC 10019

Serkan Özkaya
Oyak Sines B Bink
Ornek apt. 16/18
81090 Kuzcoke
Istanbul Turkey
phone/fax: +90216.3893538

Dear Mr. Glenn D. Lowry,

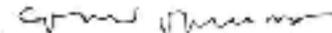
November 26th, 1997

I am writing you to propose a project concerning a painting at your institution. I would like to hang a sheet of acetate with a large dollar sign on it in front of Piet Mondrian's "Broadway Boogie Woogie". In this project I have been inspired by Alexander Broom and his action of 1997.

To date I have replicated several notable contemporary art works, including Christo's "Wrapped Automobile", Joseph Kosuth's "titled (art as idea as idea)", and Braco Dimitrijevic's "This could be a Place of Historical Importance", in New York; and Keith Arnatt's "Keith Arnatt is an Artist" at the BM Contemporary Art Center in Istanbul, Turkey. Recently I applied to the German Parliament to wrap the Reichstag in Berlin.

Enclosed please find a model for the project.

I look forward to hearing from you.



Serkan Özkaya



Serkan Özkaya, "Dear Sir or Madam" (1996-ongoing), photo by flufoto

Serkan Özkaya's works are usually predicated upon concepts and strategies such as originality, copying, multiplication, and appropriation, problematising what art is and how it functions. In Dear Sir or Madam, Özkaya uses similar strategies on the projects he proposes, taking them to a level so ambitious and exaggerated that they almost cannot be taken seriously; with the applications he "courageously" sends to the biggest institutions in the world, he playfully trips up the bureaucracy of culture and art and puts these stumbles on display, presenting them to the audience as the documents of "dismissed projects".

FICTIVE

Mind-Wandering by Zynph



Zynph by Nazlı Erdemirel

Since my childhood, I've had an intense desire to express myself. Throughout the years I tried hard to tell others about myself, in a constant need to be understood; which resulted in consecutive failures and oppressing what is inside me; feeding the darker parts of my psyche.

It was years later that I realized that I cannot express what I don't know; and that was the time I decided to get to know myself; a complete stranger at that time. I had never had an experience like wandering through the unenlightened areas of my soul and mind.

First, I had an intention to get rid of the dark side inside me; however as time passed, I saw that my soul is a combination of what I call "light" and "dark"; and what makes me feel

alive is the harmonic dance of the opposites. In the end, I came to the conclusion that darkness was not a trait for me to get rid of, but to embrace.

And again, since my childhood, I've had an intense desire to express myself. Then, one day, I found some tools to help me express; express in the form of music. This is how Zynph was born.



QR — Zynph on Spotify

*An Istanbul based DJ / Producer, **Zynph** describes her music as a final product of a self-confrontation process. Using music as a medium to express, she mainly focuses on the feelings the music evokes, rather than defining it by its genre. One of the distinctive characteristics of her sound is the sense of uncanniness it arouses. Her music is inspired by a wide range of genres from breakcore to industrial, IDM to experimental and ambient to extreme metal music.*

The Ritual of Faunus by William Benker



Terror, a still from "The Ritual of Faunus" by William Benker

Staff Sergeant Victor Veil has just come home from overseas. Wanting to return to his former life as a dancer, he signs up for a therapy session at the FAUNUS Institute to help him achieve his goal. Barriers are broken in the process.



QR to William Benker's film, "The Ritual of Faunus" at FictiveMag.com



Faunus, a still from "The Ritual of Faunus" by William Benker

William Benker is a filmmaker in Boston



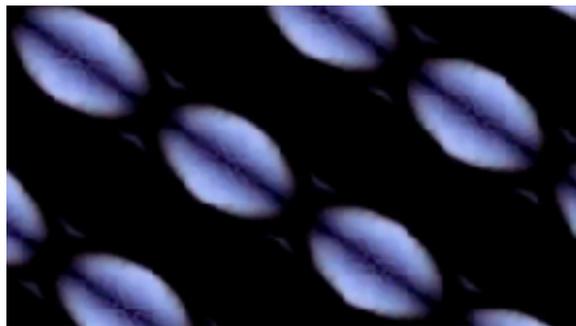
Old Videos by nitty gritty



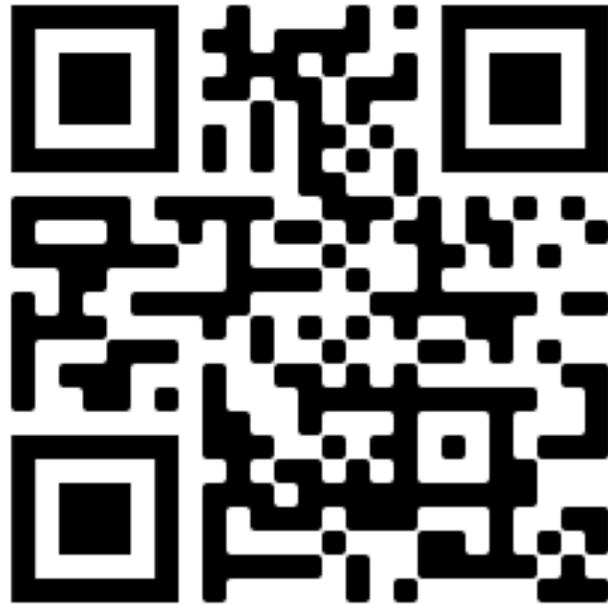
still from "actual air // time decanted" (2011) by nitty gritty

i was a video artist. these 3 videos are from my past. actual air / time decanted sets the music of Oneohtrix Point Never to a kaleidoscopic series of images. they are metallic and lit with reflective glares.

i photographed my hand and superimposed a glowing orb in the center of my palm. my body is in the digital space. the figure under a black shawl is a silhouette of my mind.



still from "actual air // time decanted" (2011) by nitty gritty



actual air // time decanted by nitty gritty

QR to Vimeo



still from "actual air // time decanted" (2011) by nitty gritty

ALLAH was shot from my window one hot sunny day. a shepherd was tending to the birth of a stillborn and healthy pair of sheep. his cold calculated actions were in contrast to the heat and mess of nature. that brings me to eternal summer, a portrait of the feeling of endlessness in the middle of the earth's orbit around the sun. i dedicate these videos to the memory of mermaids.



still from "ALLAH" (2011) by nitty gritty



ALLAH by nitty gritty

QR to Vimeo



still from "eternal summer" by nitty gritty



“eternal summer” by nitty gritty

QR to Vimeo



Contributors



Alex Butler is a nurse in the operating rooms at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, specializing in the trauma and oncology unit. He is an avid reader and writer, living in Somerville, where he enjoys cooking with his wife, Allison.



*Cem Ozuduru was born in 1987 in Istanbul. After entering the Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts, he published two graphic novels, *Zombistan* (2008) and *Dawn Frost* (2010). His latest book is *Solo, Night Hunger and Other Stories*.*



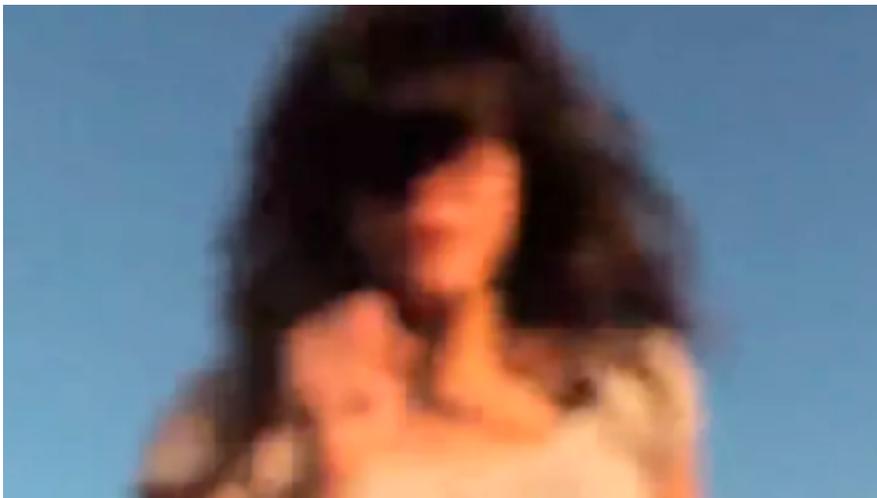
Aslı Seven is an independent curator and writer based between Istanbul and Paris. Her research and curatorial projects focus on infrastructure, landscape and built environment, with an emphasis on fieldwork, ficto-criticism and collaborative artistic processes. She is a member of AICA and OF C-E-A (French Association of Curators), and a collaborator with ICI (Independent Curators International).



Augustino Lucano is South Sudanese. He was a refugee, student, social worker, and president of his own not-for-profit NGO. In 2015, Lucano received his a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Dalhousie University in New Brunswick, Canada. He also holds a Social Work Diploma from Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta. He worked as a Multicultural Support Worker, and a family Support Counsellor in Calgary, connecting students and families of new immigrants with community resources.



Ulya Soley is a curator, writer, and translator based in Istanbul



nitty gritty (she/her) is an art-maker from smyrna who made videos and now works with earth



Jennifer Ipek, lives and works between Istanbul and London. She studied MA Fine Arts at Chelsea School of Art London between 2014-2015.

"I am drawn into creating riotous narratives to build an individual mythology for the age that we live in where fact and fiction are uncertain. Notions of power, gender and color are reimagined. Traveling to unknown territories and looking at inner landscapes, I depict paintings of heroes that remain incomprehensible and purposes unclear. In my narratives, I blend women heroes with cultural beliefs, my aim is to show the ever-changing womanhood, purifying her from materialism and hereby revealing the intellectual power."



Itzik Rennert, Israeli, was born in Haifa in 1959. After he finished his studies he opened a studio with Ziva Shalev. He worked as a designer for newspapers such as Yediot Aharonot and Maariv, and worked as art director in advertising firms. From 1995-2011 he was a member of the comics group "Actus Tragicus." He was the illustrator for books such as "Agada Hadasha" (1986) by Gil Hareven and "Allergia: Sipor Yaldut" (2003).



An Istanbul based Dj / Producer, Zynph describes her music as a final product of a self-confrontation process. Using music as a medium to express, she mainly focuses on the feelings the music evokes, rather than defining it by its genre. One of the distinctive characteristics of her sound is the sense of uncanniness it arouses. Her music is inspired by a wide range of genres from breakcore to industrial, IDM to experimental and ambient to extreme metal music.



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culture and art and puts these stumbles on display, presenting them to the audience as the documents of "dismissed projects".



Sıla Yalazan is a photographer based in Istanbul



William Benker is a filmmaker in Boston