

PI ARTWORKS

Abu Dhabi Art 2023

Manarat Al Saadiyat

Stand #S20



Pi Artworks is thrilled to be exhibiting a solo presentation of works by artist Fatma Bucak at Abu Dhabi Art 2023.

Bucak is an Italian / Turkish visual artist who addresses the plurality of histories through a variety of artistic media, with themes of political identity, historical memory, and gender being critical to her research.

For Abu Dhabi Art, her sculptural series *Sum of the Misdeeds and Consents and Cowardly Acts (2022)* is paired with screen-print *I Do Smell War (2023)*, creating a conversation on destruction and violence. Contrasts in materiality demonstrate Bucak's multidisciplinary approach to artmaking and her fluidity in response to both ecological and human conflict.

Fatma Bucak

Fatma Bucak, b.1984, lives and works in Turin and London.

Bucak received her M.A. in Photography, from the Royal College of Art, London, in 2012 and In 2019, she was named one of the Royal Photographic Society's 'Hundred Heroines', recognizing the achievements of women in contemporary art and photography. Her recent works focused on the intersection between political power and gender and climate change.

Selected Solo Exhibitions include:

- 2022 While the Dust Quickly Falls, curated by Kari Conte, Dresden Kunsthaus, Germany
Fatma Bucak/Unknown Paradise, Peola Simondi Contemporary Art, Torino, Italy
- 2020 Acts of Erasure duo with Krista Belle Stewart, MOCA Toronto, Canada
- 2019 A Colossus on Clay Feet, ICI New York - Italian Cultural Institute, NY, USA
- 2018 So As to Find the Strength to See, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palermo, Italy
- 2017 Remains of what has not been said, (Universita degli Studi di Torino, Italy
Sticks and Stones, curated by Nat Muller, Pi Artworks London, UK
Detail of an aftermath—Damascus rose, Harpe 45, Lausanne, Switzerland
- 2016 And men turned their faces from there, David Winton Bell Gallery, Rhode Island, USA
- 2015 Nothing is in its own place, Galleria Alberto Peola, Turin, Italy
Over a line, darkly, curated by Ian Alden Russell, Artpace, San Antonio, Texas, USA
- 2014 I must say a word about fear, Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy
- 2011 Daughter of Man, Alberto Peola Arte Contemporanea, Turin, Italy
- 2009 Melancholia I, The Zandra Rhodes Gallery - UCA, Rochester, UK

Selected awards and art residencies include:

- 2018 ISCP New York, USA
- 2017 La Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, France
- 2015 Artpace San Antonio, Texas, USA
- 2014 Townhouse International Art Residency, Cairo, Egypt
- 2013 Illy Present Future Award, Italy
Damiani Award/Academy Now Award, London, UK
- 2012 The Worshipful Company of Painter – Stainers Prize award, London, UK

See a full [cv](#)

[Read Fatma's interview with Elephant](#)



The Sum of the misdeeds and consents and cowardly acts is an installation of ten bronze birds, all of which are native to Iraq and feature on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's 'red list' of threatened species. The differing sizes of the bronze sculptures, which take the form of measuring weights, correspond to the degree of vulnerability of the bird species represented: the greater the weight and size, the greater the fragility of the species in question. The work looks back to the tradition of the Sumerian and Assyrian dynasties, in which zoomorphic weights were manufactured in stone or bronze and bore the royal seal inscriptions in cuneiform, marking them out as emblems of state power and guarantees of the value of goods. The work draws particular inspiration from a duck-shaped weight that belonged to the National Museum of Baghdad and was lost after the sacking of the museum in April 2003. Some of the birds depicted in the bronzes come from Iraq's marshlands, and the drainage of these areas over decades for political reasons has severely compromised their habitats. Connecting endangered birds to these weights implies systems of control and value; humankind used weights for trade to determine the worth of commodities. Bronze, traditionally a material of power and durability, is transformed into an indicator of precariousness and imminent loss. In this sense, Sum of the misdeeds and consents and cowardly acts asks: what is the value of non-human life in already troubled territories?

(From largest to smallest, the bird species are the Slander billed Curlew, Sociable Lapwing, Basra Reed Warbler, Steppe Eagle, White-headed Duck, Saker Falcon, Macqueen's Bustard, GreaterSpotted Eagle, Marbled Duck, and the Common Pochard.)

Fatma Bucak
2022
*Sum of the misdeeds and
consents and cowardly acts*
10 bronze sculptures Variable
dimensions



Fatma Bucak
2023
I do smell war
Screen printing, typography
90 x 63.5 cm

Edition 2 of 23+2 AP



Other projects

A Study of Eight Landscapes

Confronting the contingency of border spaces and the tenuous interdependency that resides within them, Bucak's work emerges from collaborative research processes with people living in and moving through border landscapes. As a space between states, border landscapes are often treated politically as non-states – a situation that has profound social and political implications for the lives of people moving through, along, and living within them.

The photographic images in the series *A Study of Eight Landscapes* emerge from the artist's research addressing stories of such hardship. Through the objects Bucak collects from a range of borders, the artist gives shape to a developing, metaphorical language that is also an emancipatory act – both a documentation of conditions and a shifting of the terms imposed on life in border spaces. The images explore both mental and material realities where the conditions of life are highly dependent on the entities on either side. Each image in the series becomes an argument for an undefined land with its dialectic relationship between the land itself and its identity.



The objects become the subject of this series of still-life photographs, with each image presenting arrangements of objects from the border spaces in which the artist has worked – an Armenian rug, stone collected from a construction site, a fish with concrete and rebar, white bread, white fabric and a skull.

The series of images also presents a challenge: to the political identity of the land, to historical interpretation, and the erasure, by the violence of borders, of the geographical and aesthetic landscapes themselves. In each composition, there is a sense of transformation, transition, pause, and anticipation that leaves room for the viewer to discern the order of things.

Fatma Bucak
2014
Promised Land
From the series:
A Study of Eight Landscapes
Archival fine art print
82,5 x 90 cm

Edition 3 of 5+2 AP



Fatma Bucak

2013

*Suggested place for you to see it | And then
God blessed them*

Two-channel video, HD, colour, sound, 13 min.
32 sec. | 9 min. 28 sec.

Edition 5 of 5 + 2 AP



*Suggested Place for You To See It and And Then
God Blessed Them,* are a two-channel video
work set on Tuz Gölü, the Salt Lake, in central
Anatolia. The work is an exploration where the
fixed contemporary definitions of religion,
gender hierarchy, gender politics, and their
impact on society are held in question through
a, sometimes humorous, dialogue around
theatricality, audience, and medium.

The first video, *And then God blessed them*, is a performance executed by the artist herself with her brother. Bucak revisits the genesis myth of the monotheist religions, transforming the stage into a negotiation of gender politics.

<https://vimeo.com/218211920>





Exhibited as a sort of 'call and response,' the second video, *Suggested place for you to see it*, makes the audience of a performance into the subject of a work. Here, a camera is fixed on a group of invited thirteen women witnessing the artist's performance in the same place. The artist creates an almost palpable friction between a fictional scenario and the dialogue of the women's comments, revealing certain cultural entrenchments on women and gender politics in Bucak's audience.

<https://vimeo.com/154829317>

Fatma Bucak
2013

*And then God blessed them &
Suggested Place for you to See it*
Two-channel video, HD, colour, sound
13 min. 32 sec. | 9 min. 28 sec.

Edition 5 of (5+2AP)



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