

Kezban Arca Batibeki

Pulp Fiction: The Sequel





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LEILA TAGHINIA-MILANI HELLER (LTMH) GALLERY
39 EAST 78TH STREET AT MADISON AVE
NEW YORK, NY 10075
WWW.LTMHGALLERY.COM

Cover: **Duel I** 2010 (detail), Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with sequins and beads on canvas, 39.4 x 47.2 in / 100 x 120 cm

Inside cover: **Duel II** 2010 (detail), Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with sequins and beads on canvas, 39.4 x 47.2 in / 100 x 120 cm



Kezban Arca Batibeki

Pulp Fiction: The Sequel

This is Kezban Arca Batibeki's first solo show in the United States, in which she will be presenting works that continue her *Pulp Fiction* series. This title is easily recognizable thanks to Quentin Tarantino's hit movie in 1994, but the term "Pulp Fiction" first originated from the magazines of the first half of the twentieth century. These magazines were printed on cheap "pulp" paper and published fantastic, escapist fiction for the general entertainment of the mass audiences. The Pulp Fiction era provided a breeding ground for creative talent, which would influence all forms of entertainment for decades to come. Batibeki's work is mostly concerned with this popular culture. Her childhood was spent pouring through the pages of these pulps, and as a young girl living in Istanbul at the time she became fascinated by them, in particular the personal journeys that the women would take in the stories. These magazines made a big impression on Batibeki and proved to be the inspiration behind her work in the years to come.

Although the paper was of cheap quality, pulp covers were beautifully decorated, many times with lurid portraits of pretty women in various stages of trouble. Pretty girls, and strange and mysterious villains all stalked the pages of pulps and allowed its readers to experience action they normally would not have access to. Batibeki's work develops this experience by emphasizing the dramatic side of the stories. Her work therefore requires a curious and engaged viewer.

Batibeki descends from a family of artists. Her father, Atif Yilmaz, was one of the most famous movie directors in Turkey and her mother, Nurhan Nur, was a movie star and stage actress. Atif Yilmaz was active in almost every period of the Turkish film industry. For Kezban Arca Batibeki, Contemporary art is both political and aesthetical. Her work focuses on profound female problems and theatrical stories, but in a humorous way. Batibeki consciously makes the pieces happy by utilizing vibrant colors and kitsch materials to draw the viewer in, and obstruct the direct effect of pain and tragedy. For example, women in burkas or with barcodes (likening them to cattle) are embellished with embroidered sequins. As Batibeki states, "A multicolored personality lies behind the monocolored veil."

Batibeki's paintings and photographs are in essence crime and detective stories, but just a fragment of a film. The viewer enters the story right after something has happened. We know that a dramatic event has taken place, but we don't know the details, we don't know what unfolded and we become curious to learn more. Batibeki allows the viewer to come inside, but in a somewhat secretive fashion. The viewer remains on the sidelines, peering in yet essentially hidden, but still very much engulfed in the fantasy world that becomes increasingly real. In fact, the viewer starts to identify with the work and by so doing projects his or her own feelings onto the work, feelings that are similar to those Batibeki is initially commenting on. The dialogue then comes full circle. Batibeki is using her own curiosity as a driving force behind the works, while relying on the viewer's curiosity to engage with the work.



by Isabella Icoz

She chooses to focus her work on suspense, drama and mystery. In her work it is the women who capture our attention: they are the heroes or villains of the stories; and the men, if they are included in a work, tend to have a blurred identity. The male presence is felt, but it is more like a shadow than an actual being.

Over the past three decades, Batibeki has worked in various disciplines of art, be it painting, installation, short film, or photography. Whatever the medium, her basis is the female world in all its complexity, particularly as she observes it in her own immediate environment. Batibeki's home serves as her main starting point in all of her works, and her life experiences provide the visual material for these works. Thousands of objects collected from around the world are incorporated in Batibeki's works to reflect her inner world. Batibeki's work has been labeled as "feminist", but it is not the label she prefers. While she admits that her work has feminist undertones, it is not something she consciously identifies with when producing the work; rather it is just something around her. In her approach to the love and hate relationships within the female sex, she refuses to follow the path of any absolute truth. The women in Batibeki's works sometimes become the objects of violence from the opposite sex, but for the most part, they end up as their own enemies or as the enemies of other women, very much mirroring life itself. Women are either the oppressors or the oppressed, but as in life, this role is ever-changing, and Batibeki's work captures this ephemeral moment in time. Through her paintings and photographs, Batibeki is directing her own dramatic movie of what it is to be a woman, or what it is like being a woman in Turkey. In this exhibition, like in all of Batibeki's shows, the works on display tell a story, both individually and collectively, with Batibeki as our guide. Scene by scene, women's innate desires, personal flaws, insecurities, and perceptions (of one self and of others) are played out.

This series does not reference a real time or place, but is obsessive in its detail. What attracts Batibeki and her viewer to this topic is a love of mystery, drama and suspense, and it is these characteristics that are most apparent throughout her work. On the surface, Batibeki's work looks fun and entertaining and immediately captures one's attention, but like the women depicted in the paintings and photographs, there are many complex layers that need to be peeled away to reveal the underlying theme. Consequently, Batibeki's work goes much deeper than what initially captures the eye, taking our sub-conscious and making it a reality through her art.

Isabella Icoz is an independent art advisor based in Istanbul



Dark Red 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
59 x 59 in / 150 x 150 cm



Girl Fight 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
59.1 x 78.7 in / 150 x 200 cm



Gossip Girl 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with sequins
and beads on canvas
39.4 x 59.1 in / 100 x 150 cm



Pearl Necklace 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
59 x 39.4 in / 150 x 100 cm





Reading Day 2010

Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
47.2 x 59.1 in / 120 x 150 cm



Duel I 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
39.4 x 47.2 in / 100 x 120 cm



Duel II 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
39.4 x 47.2 in / 100 x 120 cm



Hair 2009
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
39.4 x 47.2 in / 100 x 120 cm



Woman in Red 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
39.4 x 59 in / 100 x 150 cm



Dark Blue 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
63 x 55.1 in / 160 x 140 cm



Light Blue I 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
63 x 55.1 in / 160 x 140 cm





Orange 2010
Mixed media, acrylic and embroidery with
sequins and beads on canvas
59 x 78.7 in / 150 x 200 cm



Stairs 2010 (detail)
Digital photography
70.9 x 39.4 in / 180 x 100 cm



Kezban Arca Batibeki

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 *Pulp Fiction: The Sequel*, Leila Taghinia-Milani Heller Gallery, New York, NY
Pulp Fiction, Passage Petits Champs 1, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2008 *A Doll's House*, Siyah-Beyaz Art Gallery, Ankara, Turkey
A Doll's House, Istanbul Contemporary, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2005 *I Shot Andy Warhol in Istanbul*, Istanbul Project4L
Elgiz Contemporary Art Museum, Artvarium, Turkey
- 2004 *On the Road*, Bunka Quint Gallery, Costume Design Museum, Tokyo, Japan
Cage, Maçka Art Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2003 *On the Road*, Siyah-Beyaz Art Gallery, Ankara, Turkey
- 2002 *On the Road*, PG Art Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2000 *Game*, PG Art Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 1998 *Deep Blue-Angel Heart*, Siyah-Beyaz Art Gallery, Ankara, Turkey
Angel Heart, C.A.M. Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 1997 *Deep Blue*, PG Art Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 1995 *Flying Game*, Vakko Art Gallery, Ankara, Turkey
- 1993 *Flying Game*, PG Art Gallery, Is
Flying Game, AKM Ataturk Cultural Center, Istanbul, Turkey
- 1991 Urart Art Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 1990 Urart Art Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 1989 Urart Art Gallery, Ankara, Turkey
- 1988 Urart Art Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 *Istanbul Cool!*, Leila Taghinia-Milani Heller Gallery, New York, NY
PopArtIstanbul, ALANIstanbul
Openly, International Women Artists Video Exhibition, Sanat Limani, Istanbul, Turkey
7, CAM Gallery, Istanbul
- 2009 *I Received Your Invitation, Thank you!*, Mardin Contemporary, Turkey
Kitsch Room Project Short Movie: Where to?...
- 2008 Istanbul Kartal, Ümraniye, Küçükçekmece/2010 Portable Art Project İsimŞEHİR"
I Shot Andy Warhol, Azerbaijan Baku Biennial, Baku, Turkey
Truths and Mirages, Sofya, Bulgaria Union of Bulgarian Artists, Video Art Exhibition
- 2007 *Istanbul Now*, Austria Lukas Feichtner Art Gallery, Vienna, Austria
- 2006 *Natur-Mort*, Galerist, Istanbul
So far from here: A Public Space Project, Haydarpasa Train Station, Istanbul
Burnt Palaces - Cage Installation Project 3, Art in Akmerkez, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2005 *Kitsch Room Project - Cage Installation and Performance Project 2*,
Art in Akmerkez III, Istanbul, Turkey
Cinema Odysee, 17 Turkish Film Days, Strasbourg, France
- 2004 *The Cage - Cage Installation Project 1*, Art in Akmerkez II, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2003 *Image on the Water*, Dolmabahçe Cultural Center, Istanbul, Turkey
Eczacıbaşı 60 Years 60 Artists, Tüyap Art Fair, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2002 *Topsy-Turvy*, C.A.M Art Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2000 *Face to Face III*, Yapı Kredi Kazım Taşkent Art Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 1999 *Face to Face II*, Greece Melina Mercouri Cultural Center, Athens, Greece

PRIZES

- 1993 Esbank Competition Grand Prize
- 1992 Esbank Competition Grand Prize
- 1985 Tiglat Painting Competiton 2nd Grand Prize

MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

State Museum of Painting and Sculpture Ankara
Project4L Elgiz Contemporary Art Museum
Istanbul Modern Virtual Museum

CANVAS IN NUMBERS

LAUNCH DATE 2004 PRINT RUN 15,000
STAFF MEMBERS 24 STAFF NATIONALITIES
13 WORKING HOURS 24 INTERNATIONAL
ART FAIRS 17 COUNTRY DISTRIBUTION 26
FREQUENCY PER YEAR 6 CONTRIBUTORS
132 ARTISTS PROFILED 146 FEMALE READ-
ERS 54% MALE READERS 46% MONTHLY
WEBSITE HITS 400,000 1 CANVAS MAGAZINE



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All images courtesy of the artist

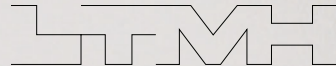
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canvas



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