

# LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

## GULAY SEMERCIOGLU

### *Variations on Line*



*Separate Pieces*, 2012, Wire, screws, wood, 71 x 59 in / 180 x 150 cm

October 11 – November 10, 2012

Opening reception: October 18, 6 to 8 pm

*“There is in the work a suggestion simultaneously of Oriental sumptuousness and of futurist design.”—Melik Kaylan*

New York (October 3, 2012) – Leila Heller is pleased to present *Variations on Line*, the first solo exhibition in the United States by Turkish artist Gulay Semercioglu, on view at Leila Heller Gallery, located at 568 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street, from October 11 through November 10, 2012.

Semercioglu forms geometric, 3-dimensional compositions by weaving thin vibrantly colored metal wires on to a wooden plank. More than twenty layers are created from one long piece of metal wire wound around numerous nails. The results are abstract, perhaps even meditative, works inspired by the shapes of microorganisms, simple leaf forms, mountains, and even water. Light and perception play a significant role in Semercioglu’s oeuvre. The aluminum knit works transform visually as light reflects off the work at different points according to the time of the day and the viewing position.

“At first glance the eye is unsure whether it is looking at a textile or industrial object, at handicraft or machine product,” observes journalist Melik Kaylan in his essay from the catalog

accompanying *Variations on Line*. “There is in the work a suggestion simultaneously of Oriental sumptuousness and of futurist design. Indeed, the eye is unsure all around, but it feels ravished by a profound and striking visual utterance that keeps echoing.”

Semercioglu is aware that her work evokes dualities. “I like that [my art] makes contradictions exist and reconcile.” The interplays between East and West, ancient and hi-tech, art and craft, sculptural and painterly, silken and textured are all encouraged and provoked in Semercioglu’s ultra-fine steely tapestries. Works such as *Separate Pieces*, 2012, *Green Apple*, 2011, and *Golden Circles*, 2012, seem at once representational, suggestive of other things—peacocks tails, glossy fans—and yet only of themselves and the integrity of their material. “People like to touch them, as if they were piano or harp strings.” Semercioglu says. “That is as it should be—they are tactile, made by touch. They communicate also on that level.”

It takes Gulay weeks, even months of painstaking handiwork, often using miles of wire, as ancient textile makers once did, to create her pieces. The Semercioglu family originally hailed from Turkey’s eastern city of Gaziantep where such crafts once flourished. “My grandfather, when he was bored or unhappy, used to resort to weaving. My grandmother used to win prizes for her embroidery and jewelry. It’s in my genes and in the process.” To that organic and traditional process she has added the rigors of structure and form. “What I have discovered in myself is a calling, an appetite for architectural design. In my thoughts I am designing buildings.”

#### **About Gulay Semercioglu**

Gulay Semercioglu was born in Istanbul in 1968. She studied painting and Social Sciences at Mimar Sinan University and has had 6 solo exhibitions in Istanbul. Additionally, she has participated in numerous group exhibitions worldwide, including in Abu Dhabi, Berlin, Dubai, Hong Kong, New York, and Zurich. She is the recipient of numerous prestigious awards including the Dr. Nejat Eczacıbaşı Art Museum Award at the Contemporary Artists 15th Istanbul Exhibition, the Turkey Jockey Club Painting Competition Achievement Award, and the first prize at Siemens Art Awards. Semercioglu lives and works in Istanbul.

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