

GÜLSÜN KARAMUSTAFA

Insomniambule, 2011

video, 11 min 40 sec

Born in 1946 in Ankara, Turkey lives and works in Istanbul, Turkey.

'While we were students in the Fine Arts Academy in Istanbul our teachers from the previous generation, were introducing boundless humanistic thoughts that were widely favoured at that time. This exaggerated compassion for mankind hosted also a kind of veiled epic heroism. With every reference to humanism I inevitably remember this group of people who have a great impact on Turkish intellectual life. Though I respected much their knowledge and their intellectual value I had a certain distance to their ideas. Compared to them, our generation was looking at life from a sharper angle and our demands for the future were more clearly defined. Anyhow the two generations, them and us, could not escape the political suppression of that time, we shared the same fate and were imprisoned together during the dark atmosphere of the military coup d'état in 1971. My artistic productivity covers nearly a quarter of a century. After activist and agit-prop practices of the '70s, I experienced a long period of solitude, depending only on my creativity fed by observation. I tried to keep up a certain rhythm in production although there wasn't any demand for such works at that time. Sometimes I find myself thinking, if I had any chance to go back to the beginning, with my current experience, perhaps I could have overcome some artistic obstacles more easily. Sometimes the opposite question to that troubles my mind: if I had not lived through all these experiences would I be so efficient in finding solutions to the current problems. There's no easy answer, I suppose... Now with the recent changes in paradigms and geographical dynamics I do possess an efficient ground in the city I am based in, but in those years I have just mentioned, mainly the eighties, I was totally unreachable. Nowadays, I cannot speak of a determined positioning for myself in relation to my work for I learned that I can look at a certain problem through several view points. Probably this is why my works are so versatile. I still work with alternative art scenes, as well as showing in big curated exhibitions and people from these different structures get satisfied with the results as I do. This is because I always tried to situate myself on a position of genuineness and transparency. This position creates a space that allows me to be questioned, but also gives me the possibility of directing questions to myself...' [GÜLSÜN KARAMUSTAFA IN INTERVIEW WITH ERDEN KOSOVO]

INSOMNIAMBULE, 2011

Insomniambule follows the nightly journeys of two characters, Somnambule and Insomniac. While one gives clues that she is suffering from nightly sleepwalks, the other stands in contrast as a symbol of constant consciousness. Though they seem to depict the heterogeneity of being awake and asleep, at their core, the two states exhibit distinct similarities. Both are fighting against the state of sleep Insomniac deliberately rejecting sleep and trying to keep consciously awake while Somnambule struggles against deep slumber from within an already induced state of sleep. From either side, both characters must find a way to adapt themselves to normal life. The characters pass through the doors of memory and recollection, subconsciously playing several games that lead them through both personal and social past and present. The two characters, represented by the women who constantly follow one another, accentuate the uncanny sensation and weird relationship of being split into two. Therefore Insomniac and Somnambule can easily join together to form the word Insomniambule, which symbolizes them both. It also creates a platform for understanding the connection between artistic creativity and the twin conditions of insomnia and somnambulance. [DAVID ELLIOTT]

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2013** *A Promised Exhibition*, SALT Beyoğlu, Istanbul, Turkey
2011 *Etiquette*, ifa Gallery, Berlin, Germany
The Monument and the Child, x-hibit/Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna, Austria
2009 *Opening*, Rodeo Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
2008 *Bosphorus 1954*, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, Germany
Unawarded Performances, Konsthall C, Stockholm, Sweden

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2011** *Modern Essays, Modernity Unveiled/Interweaving Histories*, SALT Galata, Istanbul, Turkey
Seven New Works, Borusan Perili Köşk, Istanbul, Turkey
Double Crescent, C24 Gallery, New York, USA
2010 *Tarjama/ Translation*, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Ithaca, USA
A Dream... but not Yours: Contemporary Art from Turkey,