

Kaybolan

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Sweet Garden of Vanishing Desires

Sweet Garden of Vanishing Desires, bringing together works of Ülgen Semerci, Deborah Tchoudjinoff and Olivia Strange, curated by Deniz Kirkali, looks at how pleasure and desire are explored, expected, pursued and expressed in times of multiple crises we are going through. How do we act on our conflicting desires, especially when we consider the impact of the ecological crisis on the entire living world, albeit under different contexts, scales and conditions, and in times when loss, grief, and anxiety define our collective emotional map? How do we grieve in the absence of what no longer exists or something on the brink of happening? How do these desires contradict each other and require constructing alternative ways of being?

In times dictated by anxiety and the unknown, facing a certain future puts people on a liminal/libidinal threshold and requires surrendering and letting go of control (as well as accepting that we were never in control to begin with). At the same time, while continuing to exist in this dilemma, it renders our desires even more visible. Sweet Garden of Vanishing Desires, which deals with feelings of love, loss, mourning, longing and pleasure, assumes that desire is not only human, singular and consistent. It approaches pursuing these desires as a queer form of resistance, a posthuman proposal to live together, a method of remembering what no longer exists, and as a form of speculating the future we face collectively. Ülgen Semerci's three-channel video and installation works deal with attachment styles, love, nature, and power balances, Olivia Strange's painting and sculptures transform queer desire and the notion of jouissance, and finally, Deborah Tchoudjinoff's installation which constructs speculative worlds based on various minerals, invites to remember what is no longer and to contemplate future narratives.

Desire is not always a positive emotion; on the contrary, it is an intense tension shaped by our relations with different others, which may evoke violence and destruction. In the increasingly digitized world and in the aftermath of the pandemic, with the absence of bodies, we are witnessing the disappearance of desire that is not reduced to only the erotic and the sexual. However, for this very reason, pursuing desire and pleasure means revolting against human and labor exploitation and the value parameters brought by the capitalist system. As such, desire creates new possibilities for engagement and collective action. Remembering and mourning the lost pleasures and continuing to anticipate pleasure has great potential as a worldmaking practice.

Exhibition leaflet designed by Serra Şensoy



BIOGRAPHIES



Olivia Strange's multi-disciplinary practice spanning sculpture, painting, installation, moving image and poetry, is characterised by a layered narrative and highly visceral aesthetic. The work is concerned with disarming patriarchal descriptors via exploration of her Italian roots and draws on themes of Greco-Roman mythology, the female body & jouissance to portray an empowering image of queer female subjectivity. Since graduating with Distinction from Chelsea College of Art- MA Fine Art (2017) having received the Vice Chancellor Scholarship, Strange has exhibited at Annka Kulty's Gallery presenting an ambitious large scale immersive installation as part of the inaugural Cacotopia show, Southwark Park Galleries, Unit 1 Gallery, Liminal Gallery (Solo Show), Every Woman Biennial and Basis Projektraum. Strange was selected for the 2021 cohort of the SPACE Studios X London Creative Network Artist Development Programme and the Ellipsis Prints 2021 Commissioning Project and Shortlisted for the prestigious Ingram Collection Purchase Prize 2021. More recently Strange was selected for the Radical Residency 2022 at Unit 1 Gallery in London, longlisted for the Robert Walters UK New Artist Award 2022 and shortlisted for the GIRLPOWER Residency 2023.

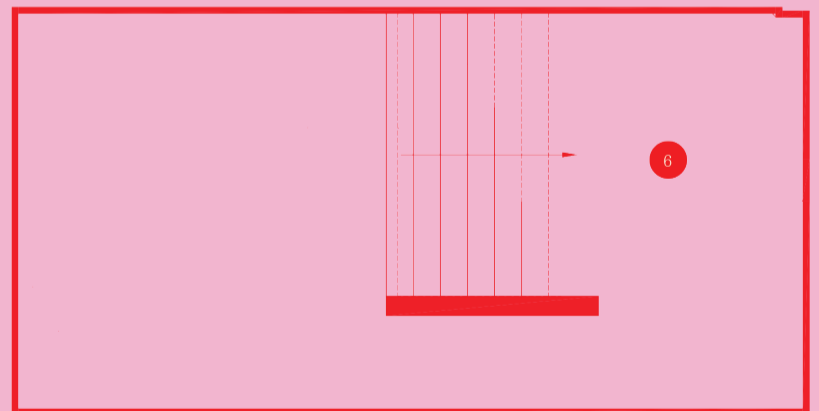
Istanbul born, London based artist Ülgen Semerci received her BFA in painting & drawing from Concordia University in Montréal, Canada and her MFA in painting at New York Studio School, USA. Ülgen's practice is rooted in ecology and psychoanalysis. She works across drawing, painting and installation. She believes artworks, much like selves, are constructed in and through relationships. Her landscapes are an ecology of the inner world, open-ended narratives that take shape in relation to others. Her selected exhibitions include; Bag, Pedestal, Rabbit, Potato, Staffordshire St Gallery, London 2022, Do I Contradict Myself? ArtOn Istanbul 2022, In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country: Neology of Newcomers, London Lighthouse Gallery, London 2021, Fugue, Evliyagil Museum, Ankara 2019.

Deborah Tchoudjinoff is a multidisciplinary artist based in London. Her practice is the result of research into the temporal and spatial aspects of ecologies, often making work about something that no longer exists. She takes notice of how technology constructs, remembers, and forgets the stories of past and future ecologies alongside climate change. Deborah works primarily with screen based image making and material sculpture to create mixed media installations. Often beginning with a locality or research concept, she considers what the form is through the process of material and visual experimentations. She is influenced by fiction and future story worlds as a method and her work is inspired by otherworldly aesthetics, utopian hope, and the tension between what is natural and technological. Through the personal lens of her own heritage she feels it is important to imagine futures in uncertain times. Deborah studied at the Royal College of Art (2016) and have exhibited work in the UK and Portugal.

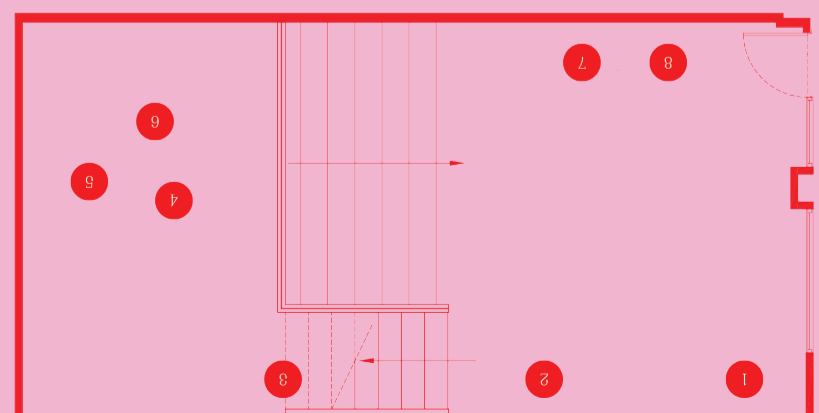
Deniz Kirkali is a curator and writer based between Istanbul and London. She holds an MA in Contemporary Art Theory at Goldsmiths, University of London and a BS in Media, Culture and Communication at New York University. She has co-founded topsoil, a transnational curatorial and research collective, and Garp Sessions, a summer programme in Babakale, Turkey. Her writings have been published in international magazines and platforms such as AQNB, Flash Art, this is tomorrow, Cogito, Sanat Dünyamız and Art Unlimited. She is the co-author of Otomy, published in 2022 by OnaGöre. She is currently doing her PhD in Advanced Practices at Goldsmiths, University of London.



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| 1 | Ülgen Semerci, Attachment, 2023
Fine Art Print | 4 | Deborah Tchoudjinoff, Ovos, 2022
Found Materials (newspaper, rope, fabric),
Plaster, Gold foil, steel, ink, framed fabric |
| 2 | Ülgen Semerci, Love is a Hierarchy, 2023
Stoneware and porcelain | 5 | Deborah Tchoudjinoff, The City of Gold,
2023
Video 2' |
| 3 | Olivia Strange, God is a Woman, 2022
Oil on Paper | 6 | Deborah Tchoudjinoff, The City of Copper,
2023
Video 4:45 |
| 7 | Ülgen Semerci, Attachment, 2023
Fine Art Print | 8 | Olivia Strange, Treasure Palace, 2022
Plaster, Clay, Epoxy Resin, Stainless Steel
Ring and a Mirror Plate
Video 2:17 |
| 9 | Ülgen Semerci, Love is a Hierarchy, 2023
Video 2:17 | | |



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