

Pi ARTWORKS ISTANBUL

Gulay Semercioglu

Desire to Survive

29 May – 29 June 2019

Private View: Tuesday 28 May,

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm



Zilli, ink on paper, 30 x 21 cm, 2018

Pi Artworks Istanbul reveals for the first time Gulay Semercioglu's drawings in an exclusive solo exhibition *Desire to Survive*, from 28 May to 29 June 2019.

Pi Artworks Istanbul is delighted to host Gulay Semercioglu and her solo exhibition *Desire to Survive*, featuring the artist's inedited drawings from the 28th of May to the 29th June, 2019. Gulay Semercioglu's works have been acquired by major national and international institutions and collections, including İstanbul Museum of Modern Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York. Semercioglu is known for her colorful metal wire works. It takes her weeks, sometimes months, to create these abstract and minimalist works. They require intricately weaving many kilometers of metal wire around thousands of minuscule screws, carefully placed on wooden surfaces, turning them into magically shimmering pictures.

Semercioglu's characteristic works stand out by virtue of concentration, control and stability. Her approach, combined with countless repetitions inherent to her technique, transpose into a form of meditation, leading the artist on a journey in the past or to the future, sometimes even into self-dedication, owing to the fact that her personality strongly determines the art works.

When admiring her handcraftsmanship, it becomes apparent that Semercioglu has embraced the strong creative inheritance of her family's handicraft. Her works clearly exist and reveal her capacity to combine the tensions between opposites; enveloping the traditional and the modern, the art and the craft, the masculine and feminine, intertwining these dualities by way of weaving.

Desire to Survive showcases Gulay Semercioglu's drawings created in this context, and Pi Artworks is proud to be sharing her latest works with the public for the first time. Drawings from "her kitchen", as Gulay refers to the private quarters of her creative process, will be on show in the gallery. Says Semercioglu: "They constitute my own way of thought." As such, the exhibition urges viewers to discover a different side of the artist's work.

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Encompassing different periods of her career, the autonomous drawings in the exhibition maintain their connection to the woven metal wire works, without preceding them however; they draw on the ideas she developed about the line. Semercioglu suggested an abstract approach in her drawings, choosing to conform to her wire works. Although the artist pushes the boundaries of abstraction - through detaching the line and the light of her wire works by using the light reflecting element of the metal wire - traditional symbols typifying womanhood, such as her “elibelinde”-motif (hands on hips), remain integral.

Nonetheless, the artist makes no distinction between technique and medium when perceiving the line. Semercioglu sees the line merely as a connection between two points, and the wire as “a tangible line” between two screws. Consequently, she refers to both her sketches and metal wire works as “drawings” and “paintings”. Every line has a starting and a finishing point, connecting a beginning and an end, embodying existence as the period between birth and death, and as such the exhibition juxtaposes life as the *Desire to Survive*.

Gulay Semercioglu, b.1968, İstanbul. Major exhibitions include *Artist In Their Time*, İstanbul Modern, Turkey (2017); *The Power of Form*, Plato Sanat, İstanbul, Turkey (2016); *The Woman on the Wire* (solo), Pi Artworks London, UK (2015); *Walking on the Wire* (solo), Pi Artworks İstanbul, Turkey (2014); *Sublime Porte: An Exhibition of Contemporary Turkish Art*, Dr. M. T. Geoffrey Yeh Art Gallery in New York, USA (2013); *Variations on Line* (solo), Leila Heller Gallery, New York, USA (2012); *Dream and Reality*, İstanbul Modern, Turkey, (2011); *Abbara Kadabra*, Mardin Biennial, Turkey (2010) and *İstanbul Next Wave*, Akademie der Kunste, Berlin, Germany (2009). Major collections holding her work include; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA; Centene Centre for Arts and Education, Missouri, USA; Quinn Collection, Los Angeles, USA; Cocca Art and Design Institute, Coimbatore, India; The Farjam Foundation, Dubai, UAE; Sheika Fatima Suroor, Abu Dhabi, UAE; Wheelock Collection, Hong Kong; Him Collection, Singapore; İstanbul Modern, Turkey and the Papko Art Collection, İstanbul, Turkey.