

PI ARTWORKS ISTANBUL

Iz Oztat

Watercolour on Paper

11 February – 23 March 2021

Private View: 11 February, Thursday

14:00 – 19:00



April Diary, 2020, watercolour on paper, 21 x 30 cm

Pi Artworks Istanbul is pleased to present Iz Oztat's solo exhibition: *Watercolour on Paper*.

Pi Artworks Istanbul is presenting Iz Oztat's second solo exhibition *Watercolour on Paper*. Oztat's previous solo exhibition at the gallery titled *Suspended*, which received critical acclaim internationally, took place in 2019, during the 16th Istanbul Biennial.

The exhibition brings together a selection from the watercolour series *In the Rivers North of the Future* (2014-2017), *Pleasure/Sizzle* (2018-2019) and *April Diary* (2020), along with the video titled *Recounting Nightmares to Running Water* (2015), which is based on a series of watercolours. Since 2014, Oztat's watercolour works accompany the artist's research processes like a diary; bearing abstract traces of their transient making, as well as the contexts with which they are associated.

Although her work is dependent on the context within which it is produced, Oztat regularly revisits certain subjects: convergence of water and freedom, return of the suppressed past in the present and potentials of fiction in constructing historical narratives and ideological implications of display.

Iz Oztat started working with watercolours during her research on the struggles against the construction of run-of-the-river hydroelectric power plants to let the rivers flow free. The watercolour series *In the Rivers North of the Future* was made during her articulation of the desire for rivers and expression to flow freely, in relation to the political and economic conditions that prevent such flows. During this process, Oztat worked with a colour palette of blue, red and black, which she associated with the subject matter at hand. Oztat's video *Recounting Nightmares to Running Water* was also produced in this period, departing from the Anatolian folk belief that nightmares flow away as they are described to running water. The watercolours flowing horizontally in the video are accompanied by a narrative that begins with a shamanic

ritual initiated by reciting the names of rivers and moves through various states of consciousness in an attempt to resist drought.

Pleasure/Sizzle watercolour series was made during the research process of Oztat's solo exhibition *Suspended* at Pi Artworks Istanbul in 2019, bearing traces of mourning, pain and pleasure. The sculptures in the exhibition, which appealed to the skin, were also utilised by the artist to caress, cut, scratch and fray the surface of the paper in the making of her watercolours.

Oztat's *April Diary* series, made during the quarantine experienced on a global scale in 2020, accompanied her research relating the current circumstances to crystallisation. This process culminated in the video *Confused Examination Under Given Circumstances* (2020), where some of the watercolours from the series appear.

Watercolour on Paper brings together watercolours from distinct periods of for the first time and reveals a different dimension of Iz Oztat's practice. Some of the watercolours previously appeared in various exhibitions and contexts: A selection from the series *In the Rivers North of the Future* was exhibited at the 14th Istanbul Biennial *Salt Water: A Theory on Thought Forms* in 2015. The video *Recounting Nightmares to Running Water*, produced as part of the exhibition organised by The Moving Museum in Istanbul in 2015, was shown in the lecture-performance, at the end of which the watercolours of nightmares were gifted to the audience, and was screened at the symposium titled *Testimony as Environment: Violence, Aesthetics, Agency* organised at the London School of Economics in 2019. The book titled *Haz/Cizz* [Pleasure/Sizzle], published by Yapi Kredi Publications in 2020, features the correspondence between curator Bige Ozer and Iz Oztat, along with their conversation following the exhibition *Suspended*, and includes a selection of watercolours shown in the *Watercolour on Paper* exhibition. The video *Confused Examination Under Given Circumstances* is on view as part of the group exhibition titled *Crystal Clear* at Pera Museum in Istanbul until the 7th of March, 2021. In the exhibition catalogue, Bruno Latour's text titled *What Protective Measures Can You Think of So We Don't Go Back to the Pre-crisis Production Model?* is accompanied by a selection of watercolours from Oztat's *April Diary*.

Iz Oztat, (b. 1981, Istanbul), lives and works in Istanbul. Selected exhibitions include *Crystal Clear*, Pera Museum, Istanbul, Turkey (2020-2021); *What Time Is It?*, Arter, Istanbul, Turkey (2019); *Suspended*, solo exhibition at Pi Artworks Istanbul, Turkey (2019); *Tamawuj*, Sharjah Biennial 13, UAE (2017); *The World Made New*, Pi Artworks London, UK (2017); *Land without Land*, Heidelberger Kunstverein, Germany (2016); *I prefer to answer questions*, solo exhibition at Macka Sanat Galerisi, Istanbul, Turkey (2016); *Salt Water: A Theory on Thought Forms*, 14th Istanbul Biennial, Turkey (2015); *Once there was a Country*, Heidelberger Kunstverein, Germany (2015); *Reunion*, Sakip Sabanci Museum, Istanbul, Turkey (2015); *Conducted in Depth and Projected at Length*, solo exhibition at Heidelberger Kunstverein, Germany (2014); *Rendez-vous 13*, Institut d'art Contemporain, Lyon, France (2013); *Here Together Now*, Matadero Madrid, Spain (2013); *I am not dealing with triangle, square and circle*, solo exhibition at Macka Sanat Galerisi, Istanbul, Turkey (2012) and *Second Exhibition*, Arter, Istanbul, Turkey (2010).