

Pi Artworks Istanbul: Farniyaz Zaker

Something There Was That Must Have Loved A Wall

9 January – 7 March 2016

Talk: Farniyaz Zaker, Ceren Arkman, Friday, 8 January, 17:00

Private View: Friday, 8 January, 18:30 - 20:30

Pi Artworks Istanbul is pleased to announce Farniyaz Zaker's new exhibition, *Something There Was That Must Have Loved A Wall*. Zaker was first introduced to the art scene in Turkey through the group show *Rewind, Pause, Fast Forward: Mirrors on Iran*, which took place at Pi Artworks Istanbul in 2012. Recent works by the artist were exhibited in solo shows at The University of Oxford and Sharjah Art Museum in 2014.

In her upcoming solo show at Pi Artworks Istanbul, Farniyaz Zaker positions the body, architecture and clothing in a reciprocal relationship. *Something There Was That Must Have Loved A Wall* dwells mostly on the interactions between and within different built environments. By quoting the historian Charles S. Maier in the title of her exhibition, she reminds us of the importance of architecture and the politics of space in the construction of the modern world.

Since the early 20th century, architects and theorists of architecture have paid increasing attention to the links between clothing and architecture. A striking example is that both modern architecture and women's clothing became more functional and less ornamental. With a series of works across the rooms of the historical Mısır Apartment building, Zaker investigates these connections.

In *Primeval Relationship* / the artist covers the walls and floor of the gallery with four hand-woven carpets and their elongated fringes. This references 19th century theories on the origins of architecture and the importance of textiles and woven carpets in the production of space. In her other installation a cloth 'caryatid'* stands in the middle of the gallery, a striking echo of the room around it. Transforming and redefining the space with this kind of extraordinary intervention, Zaker highlights that the built environment is not a static and neutral space, but that it is empowered by (and empowering) human subjects, and both reproduces and challenges dominant gender conventions.

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The two-channel video installation, *Somatic Memories I*, shows the marks of recently worn clothing gradually disappearing from the skin. Each video is approximately 70 minutes long, which is itself a statement about the gravity of the fabrics' intervention. With this simple and effective video, Zaker draws our attention to the enduring physical and emotional effects of different built environments on us. Conceptualizing women's clothing as an edifice through which - and in which - women live, Zaker suggests a discursive reading of clothing.

Farniyaz Zaker, b. 1982. Major exhibitions include *Primeval Relationship* (solo), The Ruskin School of Art, The University of Oxford, UK (2014); *I.A.F.* (solo), Sharjah Art Museum, Eastern Section, UAE (2014); *Arte Laguna Prize*, Arsenale, Venice, Italy (2014); *Repeated Return* (solo), Dolphin Gallery, St. John's College, Oxford, UK (2013); *The Wall of Europe*, Paese Museo, San Sperate, Sardinia, Italy (2013); *In site*, The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, UK (2012); and *Pardeh*, Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Arts, Oxford, UK (2011). Public collections holding her work include Art and Video Insight Foundation Collection, Bologna, Italy and the Vehbi Koç Foundation, Istanbul, Turkey. Zaker received her DPhil in Fine Arts from the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, St. John's College, Oxford in 2013. Zaker received her Doctorate of Philosophy in Fine Arts from The Ruskin School of Art, The University of Oxford, in 2014, and has been invited to be a post-doctorate fellow at Koç University Gender Studies Centre (Koç-Kam).

* **Caryatid:** Draped female figure used as a pillar and support in classical architecture.

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