

# PI ARTWORKS

**Pi Artworks Galatasaray: Ahmet SEL**

**“Oriental Illusions” // 15.12.2011 - 12.02.2012**

**Ahmet Sel is at Pi Artworks Galatasaray with his solo exhibition “Oriental Illusions” between the dates December 15th 2011 - February 12th 2012.**

Ahmet Sel’s photography series “Oriental Illusions” investigates the west’s orientalist gaze rooted in the past with reference to its relevance today and in so doing reflects on our subconscious at present.

Tellaks<sup>1</sup>, belly dancers and zennes<sup>2</sup> portrayed in this series are characters familiar to the orientalist gaze. Subjects are asked to take the stage and pose. However, these large format portraits are carefully designed to transcend mere portrayals of their subjects’ vocations. To this end illusory moments from the past of an orientalist gaze are cleverly referenced in these scenes while the illusory constructs of such scenes are daringly revealed in quirky details. For example, in that gorgeous bath house where a certain tellak lies you suddenly notice the plastic Made in China blue slippers he is wearing, or you cannot help but notice that “far-out” tattoo on some belly dancer’s leg who strikes a pose in her workplace that looks like a jewelry box lined with velvet.

These photographs that live and breath between two worlds are much more than the reflection of a memory frozen in time. Ultimately then they are about the uneasy confrontation of a postmodern and conservative society with nudity and eroticism.

His works have been exhibited at Paris, Lyon, Monaco, Seoul and Lisbon as well as his exhibitions in Turkey. He has four published photography books since 2001 that are Moskova İnsanları (Istanbul, 2004), Galop (Editions Horizon Illimité, Paris, 2003), Kaboul Portraits Poses (Editions Horizon Illimité, Paris, 2003), Gens de Moscou (Catleya Editions, Paris, 2001).

**Ahmet Sel’s Oriental Illusions** can be visited between 10:30 – 19:30 except Sundays between the dates **15.12.2011 - 12.02.2012** at **Pi Artworks**. (0212.293.71.03)

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<sup>1</sup> Men who helped wash clients by soaping and scrubbing their bodies in traditional Turkish baths (hammam).

<sup>2</sup> Traditional male entertainers dressed in women’s clothing.