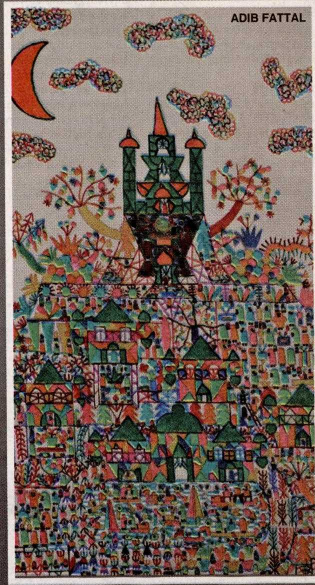


Contemporary narratives from Turkey and beyond



Within the scope of its 10th year anniversary celebrations, Istanbul Modern presents 'Neighbors - Contemporary Narratives from Turkey and Beyond,' an exhibition that investigates contemporary art practices in Turkey and the surrounding region



The exhibition 'Neighbours' examines common approaches to visual culture in 17 contiguous countries through the works of 35 artists.

ETERI CHKADUA



İSTANBUL

In the exhibition "Neighbours: Contemporary Narratives from Turkey and Beyond," organized within the scope of its tenth year, Istanbul Modern presents an extensive selection of contemporary artworks from the vast geographical area of which Turkey is a part.

Sponsored by the Eczacıbaşı Group, the exhibition, which opened on Jan. 9, will be on view until May 8. The show examines common approaches to visual culture in 17 contiguous countries through the works of 35 artists. It brings together works by pioneering contemporary artists from places in the Balkans, Caucasus, and the Middle East that share historical, political, and cultural ties with Turkey. Rather than defining artists according to increasingly artificial national identities, the exhibition looks at how these practitioners convey local culture and experience in their work.

Istanbul Modern Executive Board Chair Oya Eczacıbaşı stated that this vast geography, once shaped by the socio-cultural and political influence of the Ottoman Empire, had now caught the attention of the global art world: "Not only does the museum assume an influential role in the transformation of this geography in terms of historical legacy, it also attempts to act as a mediator for the common context and the associations between borders and identities. In the past 10 years Istanbul Modern has proved to be one of the foremost museums of modern art in the region, and with this first com-

prehensive regional exhibition it brings together the contemporary art of the surrounding countries to reveal their shared memory and sensitivity as well as their deep-rooted ties, she said.

The exhibition is curated by Çelenk Bafla and Paolo Colombo from Istanbul Modern, with the assistance of regional art experts Negar Azimi, Zdenka Badovinac, and Magda Guruli.

The exhibition focuses on work relating to or employing the vernacular of today's art practice, particularly narrative, oral tradition, and popular theater – forms that lie at the heart of social interaction and express individual voices within the public arena.

It looks at how deeply rooted social customs such as spectacles and celebrations have seeped into the visual arts to inform the work of contemporary artists from this diversified and historically interconnected area. The exhibition addresses the themes of storytelling and travel, common denominators in the cultures and arts of the region. These two themes are invoked in many works, along with the notions of mobility, nomadism, migration, and itinerancy and nuances of language, translation, and cultural transmission, among others.

Narrative in every form of human creativity

An essential element of culture and civilization, narrative is found in virtually every form of human creativity. The artists in the exhibition often research and produce in various fields, presenting a "polyphonic company or orchestra of narratives" that hones in on a pluralistic narrative spirit. The nomadic nature of many of the region's communities is reflected in the artists' works in narratives characterized by mobility and displacement; their

cultures and histories have been carried along largely through oral and visual accounts. Thus the concepts of journey and narrative are intrinsically intertwined.

While "Neighbours" features the formal genres of performance and spectacle, it also treats disciplines developed outside academic art circles, such as caricature and traditional crafts.

An extensive schedule of activities has also been prepared alongside "Neighbours," including screenings, performances, panels, talks, and workshops dedicated to the region's art and culture.

Artists featured in the exhibition include Abdülcanbaz (Turhan Selçuk), Furat al Jamil, Mounira Al Solh, Maja Bajević, Sonia Balassanian, Vesna Bukovec, CANAN, Eteri Chkadua, Ana Cigon, Rena Effendi, Nezaket Ekici, Cevdet Ereğ, Adib Fattal, Mona Hatoum, Hamlet Hovsepian, Gül Ilgaz, Babak Jalali, Lamia Joreige, Hayv Kahraman, Hatice Karadağ, Sevdalina Kochevska, Pavlos Nikolakopoulos, One Square Meter (ACCEA: One Square Meter Theater Festival), Fahrettin Örenli, Adrian Paci, Michail Pargelis, Younes Rahmoun, Yehudit Sasportas, Wael Shawky, Slavs and Tatars, Aslı Sungu, Nasra Şimmes, Burcu Yağcıoğlu, Nil Yalter, Zivadinov Zupancic Tursic. ● HDN



MOUNIRA AL SOLH

