

GALERIST

HALUK AKAKÇE

'DEFINITION'

SEPTEMBER 6 –OCTOBER 6 2007

Haluk Akakçe is one of the leading Turkish contemporary artists, who continue to live and work in London and Istanbul. He received his B.A. on architecture at Bilkent University, and later studied video and performing arts at Royal College of Art in London and the Art Institute of Chicago. His works have been included in various solo and group exhibitions such as Louis Vuitton / Paris; 100th Anniversary Celebration of Las Vegas / Las Vegas; Tate Britain / London; Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris / New York and Drawing Room / London among others.

Galerist presents Definition, an exhibition of Haluk Akakçe's latest video installations, reliefs and drawings. This exhibition, where he explores Mevlana's conception of "unity", will be on view from September 6th through October 6th. Inspired by Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi's poetry and principles, Akakçe believes that the word "definition" has slowly began to lose its meaning and to contradict itself. According to the artist, in today's world "reality" is being channeled into people's minds through many different sources and the concept of definition keeps constantly changing.

This notion of constant change is found in Akakçe's two video works included in the exhibition. The video They Call It Love, I Call It Madness is based on a site-specific project that the artist was commissioned to carry out in Las Vegas as part of the city's 100th anniversary celebrations. Inspired by the Vegas's glamorous neon lights and fantastic appearance, Akakçe offers the viewer an abstract visuality. While the Las Vegas projection extended over the world's largest video screen of 450 meters, the exhibition version has been modified to a different format. In Garden, the second video of the exhibition, Akakçe continues to create a similar world of abstractness and constant change. These abstract works that make historical and futuristic references create captivating surroundings while inducing meditative qualities. Using technology's many advantages, Akakçe skillfully blends film, architecture, dance and music in his video animations and portrays life and time in their continuous process of transformation. These videos, whose beginnings are identical to their endings and where forms are forever in flux and no entity is fixed, draw the viewer into an abstract world of woozy uncertainty.

In his reliefs, Akakçe continues to explore this notion of constant transformation and sense of uncertainty in three dimensions. The abstract world in Akakçe's videos are carried into real space as the entirely mirror-covered uneven wood surfaces distort the images and cause the viewer to continuously capture a different reflection. The large sizes of the reliefs help the viewers to completely immerse themselves into this world. These parted, repetitive and reflective surfaces defy the way we usually perceive things and situate ourselves in relation to them. Thus the viewer is forced to reevaluate the concepts of relativity and definition.

The rest of the exhibition consists of Akakçe's drawings, a medium that is exceedingly important in his creative spectrum. In the drawings and reliefs, what emerge are compositions that are given their equilibrium through artist's mastery of proportion, perspective and light. Akakçe finds drawing as natural as writing and uses this technique at the start of the creation process of his reliefs and videos. He first sketches the forms in his videos freehand, which are then scanned, redrawn on the computer and set into motion in digital space. The drawings included in this exhibition are an expression of a precise technique that encompasses mechanical tracing and manual brushstrokes.