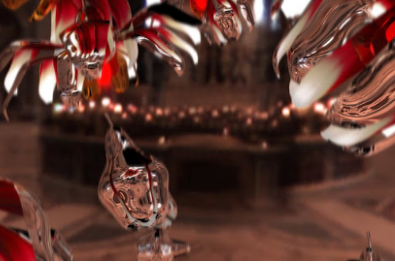


Birth of Art

05.03.2024 – 30.03.2024

MERDİVEN ART SPACE



Haluk Akakçe

Birth of Art, 2003

Video installation, 4' loop

(Still from video)

Merdiven Art Space is proud to announce Haluk Akakçe's exhibition titled "Birth of Art". The exhibition, consisting of Akakçe's single-channel video work selected from the Banu & Hakan Çarmıklı Collection, is on view between March 5th and 30th.

Akakçe's imagery world consists of a distinctive style and form. For Akakçe, everything happens, everywhere, all at once. Working with a myriad of mediums; video, painting, sculptures, and drawings, his works arise around a concept, and work with each piece simultaneously, just like a conductor. His moving images, as well as his drawings, mesmerize the viewer with hyper-realistic, biological, botanical, architectural, and mechanical imagery/sources. Although his formal language consists of abstraction and colors, his works cannot be reduced to shape and form merely; he uses abstraction as a form of his language "Drawing starts where the words lose their ability to communicate" he says. The exhibited work, as well as his whole practice, unveils the possibility of a non-existing space formed by objects or architectural elements that come to life and become more visible as they move.

The exhibition aims to pay tribute to the memory of Akakçe, who passed away in 2023, and his traces in art history. The only work shown in the exhibition, *Birth of Art* (2002), is a single-channel video with two parts. In both parts, viewers observe an endless transformation of forms that can be deemed neither geometric nor organic. In the first part, DNA sequencing-like moving images accompanied by hyper-realistic flowers hypnotize the viewer. Both the musical theme composed by Michael Vecchio, and the images act hand in hand to push the audience to think in a virtual dimension. In the second part consisting of a cathedral-like space, flowers bloom, and multiply. Just like in his other works, Akakçe's spatial way of thinking carries its traces in *Birth of Art*.

Not only in 2002 but today, his works carry their contemporariness throughout the years. Remembering Agamben's quote; "Contemporariness is, then, a singular relationship with one's time, which adheres to it and, at the same time, keeps a distance from it."¹. In fact, in Akakçe's own words in an interview, he claims to be coming from the future and that ones who search for them can find him there. His interest in the futuristic, unknown, spiritual, and transformation is at the center of this exhibition. Running through an abstract and figurative tunnel the exhibition invites viewers to a dreamy, gravity-free environment; what is heavy flies in the air and what is light falls to the ground.

¹ Giorgio Agamben, "What Is an Apparatus?" and Other Essays, 2009, Stanford University Press

Haluk Akakçe (b. 1970, Ankara, d. 2023, İstanbul) lived and worked in both New York and İstanbul. His work has appeared in numerous solo exhibitions, notably at the Centro Nazionale per le Arti Contemporanee (Rome), at the Bernier/Eliades Gallery (Athens), at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center (New York), and the Berlin Kunst-Werke. The New Museum of Contemporary Art (New York), the San Paulo Biennial, the Walker Art Center (Minneapolis), the Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (Gand), and the İstanbul Biennial are among the spaces in which his work has appeared in group exhibitions.