

ARKEN

PRESS RELEASE

SOUVENIRS

5.12. 2021 - 01.11. 2022

ARKEN Museum of Modern Art, south of Copenhagen, is pleased to present a new and experimental exhibition format with the artist Deniz Eroglu.

The keys to a satellite space of the museum – a commercial retail space in a shopping mall in the suburb of Ishøj, outside of Copenhagen – have been handed over to the artist Deniz Eroglu for one year. Here, in the most culturally diverse municipality in Denmark, Eroglu has created an experimental exhibition in the form of a souvenir shop containing wares that convey the characteristics of the local area.

To become self-employed is a common emancipation strategy for many diaspora communities across the world. As an immigrant in Denmark in the late 1970's, Eroglu's father ran a short-lived store specializing in Turkish antiquities. Eroglu considers his exhibition *Souvenirs* as a reestablishment and redemption of his father's original idea: to introduce and disseminate foreign culture into communities that often react in unwelcoming ways to what is considered different.

For this exhibition Eroglu's work takes on a confessional nature. Mixing the personal with the political, Eroglu recounts his family story as one that takes place both inside and outside dominant culture and institutions. Eroglu's souvenirs are conceived as miniature sculptures, but are deliberately sold at a low price, contrary to expensive art works available through the conventional art market.

Eroglu's aim is to explore and interrogate the interrelations between culture and capitalism as they are revealed in operating a small business. One of the artist's souvenirs, for example, is a ceramic ashtray whose triangular form mimics the shape of ARKEN Museum itself. Here, we are invited to stub out our cigarettes on a representation of a building that embodies the institutionalization of high art. Through works such as this the artist asks us to reflect on the role of art institutions today when social justice and (in)accessibility prove some of the most pressing issues.

The word souvenir /,su:və'niə(r)/ comes from Latin (sub + venire) and means "to rise from beneath." For the artist, the very word suggests the way a memory emerges to the surface. The souvenirs exhibited here appear to be simple objects, but looking more closely we find multiple layered meanings. As such the exhibition title can be interpreted as signifying how the overlooked and undervalued can ascend socially and ontologically.

The artist will do a series of performative lectures in *Souvenirs* on the following dates:

Thursday 28th April at 5-6 pm

Friday 29th April at 5-6 pm

Thursday 16 June at 5-6 pm

Friday 17th June at 5-6 pm

Deniz Eroglu (b. 1981) lives and works in Crema, Italy and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. In recent years his work has been shown at Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof (2022), The Danish National Gallery (2021), MAXXI Museum (2019), Sharjah Art Foundation (2019), Stedelijk Museum (2018) and Kunstmuseum Brandts (2018).

Other artists and filmmakers represented in the exhibition include Mirak Jamal; Chantal Briet; Agnes Varda; Reza Haeri and Oscar Perez Ramirez.

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