

Elif Erkan

In the Off Hours

February 22nd - April 3rd 2022

Opening: February 22nd 2022, from 4 pm to 9 pm

Critical text by **Valeria Schäfer**

Renata Fabbri arte contemporanea is pleased to present **In the Off Hours**, the first solo exhibition in Italy by the artist **Elif Erkan** (b. 1985, Ankara, Turkey). On show, a series of new sculptural works which, accompanied by a video, draw attention to ecological and environmental sustainability issues.

By means of a process-oriented approach, Elif Erkan's artistic practice looks into the emotional and psychological connotations that lie inside socio-economic, political and cultural structures of the contemporaneity. This affective and ever-changing dimension is at the core of the artist's production, marked by the use of traditional sculptural materials combined with elements and iconographies of today's consumerism and its addictions. Through repetitive gestures of imprinting, accumulation, and removal, Erkan acts expressively and spontaneously on the material she uses, leaving its irrational behavior, the faculty to generate mysterious and accidental objects. These objects, apparently contradictory but linked by a delicate organicity, hold and exalt in their state of "completion", the trace of the transformative action of the artist, who defined their appearance, bringing about the vulnerable and transitory essence, hidden behind their illusory plastic solidity.

On the occasion of her first solo show, Erkan presents a group of new works which, influenced by a personal experience spent on a cruise ship, questions the presumed environmental sustainability of the tourist shipping companies - boasted as being a primary corporate responsibility. Exhibited on the gallery walls, are a series of sculptures realized with a biodegradable plasticine and chromatically allusive to the dangerous and at the same time vital nature of the sea. Obtained by casting packaging molds or even using fragments of billboards - found on board with the aim of boosting the passengers' and the employees' environmental awareness - these ambiguous artifacts reveal the hypocrisy of a system masked by alluring promises: aimed at economic profit at the expense of safeguarding the environment.

In dialogue with the works on the wall, several stalagmitic-shaped sculptures are dispersed on the floor and made of a mixture of clay, gypsum and cement. They seem to convey us into the sea abyss, into the recesses of planet earth, into the incessant,

silent and opulent flow of global waste. Chained to each other, they characterize the exhibition spaces, simulating - through their divisional and maze-like structure - the tourists' long waiting times in queues before embarking. Thus suspended, like in states of "potential activation", the works on display - accompanied by a video of intimate and participatory dimension - invite the spectators to meditate on the value of a temporality which, limited by commitments and restrictions, can force them to think critically about the world. A kind of interval during which it is possible to experience a different thinking.

* Free access.

Super Green Pass required at the entrance

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BIOGRAPHY

Elif Erkan (b. 1985, Ankara, Turkey) lives and works in Vienna. She holds an MFA from Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, USA (2016) and HfBK Städelschule Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Recent solo shows include: *Where you they form*, The Pill (Istanbul, 2020), *What is that possesses me*, Weiss Berlin (Berlin, 2018), *Ex Oriente Lux*, Park View (Los Angeles, 2016); *Lotus Eaters*, Weiss Berlin (Berlin, 2016); *Standards for Living*, Maison des Arts, (Brussels, 2015), *Konzentration der Kräfte*, Portikus, (Frankfurt, 2015).

She took part in several group shows worldwide including: Biennale Sculpture Garden, curated by Devrim Bayar (Geneve, 2022) *Desillusionarium V*, Night Gallery (Los Angeles, 2021), *What Remains Is What The Poets Found*, PS120 (Berlin, 2018); *Work Loves Me*, Lanserhaus, Appiano sulla strada della vino (Italy, 2018), *LA Should Die Vor Glück*, *Just Married* (Alhambra/Los Angeles, 2017); *The New Normal*, Ashkal Alwan (Beirut, 2017); *Paroxysm of Union*, Kunsthalle Freeport Union (Athens, 2017); *The New Normal*, Supa Salon (Istanbul, 2017); *We remember it for you wholesale*, CTA Building, Sydney (Australia, 2017); *Cum-Ex*, Kunsthalle Freeport Union (Berlin, 2017); *We remember it for you wholesale*, Part II, Minerva (Sydney, 2017); *Home*, Night Club (Chicago, Illinois, USA 2016); *Capital. Debt, Territory, Utopia*, Hamburger Bahnhof, (Berlin, 2016); *Gut Instinct*, The Gluckman Museum (Cork, IR, 2016); *The Social Register*, Park View (Los Angeles, 2015); *A Possible Collection*, Honolulu (Zurich, 2015), *Career Woman*, Holz Kohle Koks (Berlin, 2015), *Villa Aurora Revisited*, organized by Park View, Balice Hertling (New York, 2015); *Cookie Gate*, Ellis King (Dublin, 2015); *Caught in the Act*, Kriya 3000 (New York, 2015); *My, My a Body does get around*, Wilfried Lentz Gallery (Rotterdam, 2015); *Lemon Leaves*, Villa Aurora (Los Angeles, 2015).

She is the recipient of numerous grants including: Hessische Kulturstiftung (2020), Paris Studio Residency (2016) Villa Aurora Berlin Fellow (2015). Relevant residencies include: La cité internationale des arts (Paris, 2010/2021); *Eau et Gaz*, Appiano sulla strada del vino (Italy, 2018); Villa Aurora Berlin Fellowship (Berlin, 2016); WIELS Residency Program (Brussels, 2014).