

ARTFORUM

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ARTS AND CULTURE

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BIG DATA AND DIGITAL DESIGN

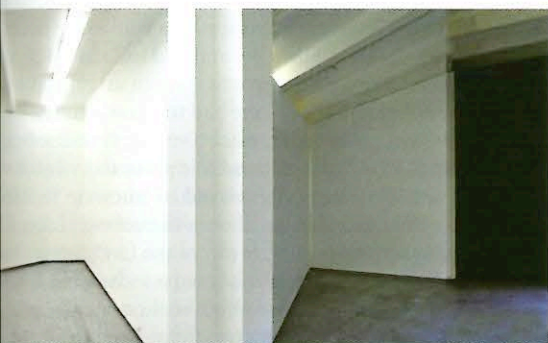


ous art-world millennial. His working methods are deliber-
 ospective, allowing him to gradually explore and question
 the moving image and its politics of representation. The
 os are subtle, almost inconspicuous. His works in this
 defined by a commitment to the camera, an almost osten-
 of linearity, and a complete rejection of narrative. Using
 movements to gradually unveil fragments of a selected
 ned with sudden bursts of speed that rapidly pass over
 of the same space, rendering certain elements in it almost
 č examines but also manifests a distribution of power
 ator and director, stage and auditorium. It is not a coin-
 most of the locations Takáč chooses for his videos are
 in their nature: empty theaters, cabarets, or the circus
 d in his latest video, *Black Is Then* (all works 2013).

ost recent exhibition was called “Retrospective Studio,”
 le suggests, it took the form of a return to the past—but
 se of reevaluating past projects. Rather, the exhibition was
 nstruction, and restaging of isolated elements used in the
 eral of his older videos, among them a heavy red curtain
 lean white wall (*Back-Ward*), words printed on the walls
 lettering determining the position of the spectator in the
Back, Left, Right), and a rotating wall creating an illusion
 ace continuing behind it (*I’ll Be Right Back*). In these
 č completely rejected the medium of the moving image,
 rly with real objects. Their relationship to the initial work
 ed by their titles, which are the same as those of the
 s.

orks, self-appropriated objects function as cinematic
 ily constructed elements through which the artist ques-
 ected the movement of the spectator around the gallery.
 moving image aside yet retaining a strong sense of the
 is play on illusion, feelings of uncertainty and suspense,
 e between the visible and invisible, the artist elaborated
 ality of cinematic representation. By stepping out of the
 eo, Takáč managed to project the power struggle that he
 plored there directly onto the bodily, immediate experience
 or, who now became the protagonist of his staged drama.
 a was resolved as the spectator reached the final room of
 n, the dark space in which *Black Is:Then* was projected.
 st safely returned to his medium, placing the props used
 on back in front of the camera. The spectator also experi-
 ern, a reversion to a comfortably passive, uncritical posi-
 ewer sat down, the old cinematic equilibrium seemed
 the journey that brought us to this point was not forgot-
 d placed himself into his own video with his back to the
 e position of a silent observer who, like those of us in the
 itnessed the somehow fragmentary and confusing nature
 being constructed.

—Markéta Stará



ISTANBUL

Inci Eviner

GALERI NEV ISTANBUL

Suspended existence has been a recurring theme for Turkish artist Inci Eviner, and her 2012 video *Nursing Modern Fall* continues to convey this condition both in content and form. This single-wall projection presents a scene that resembles both Escher’s labyrinths and Bruegel’s town scenes in a three-minute loop, a filmic assemblage combining drawing and live action in which various figures perform repetitive gestures as if in broken images from a collective memory. Eviner’s drawings of humans in odd postures and fragmentary renderings of imaginary/real spaces superimposed by video techniques are uncannily familiar and communicate a sense of displacement. The spaces seem strange and the humans uncomfortable in this fabricated world.

In previous video works such as *Harem*, 2009, and *Parliament*, 2010, Eviner employed illustrations of the Topkapi Palace Harem and the European Parliament, and with similar techniques formed a stage by populating these settings with figures engaged in seemingly normal but potentially disruptive acts to create narratives entirely different from those we might imagine appropriate for such buildings. This mismatch of components is both the content and the form Eviner uses not only to show the tension between the irrational and the desirable but also to question the position of the outsider, the misfit in these man-made schemes. Buildings of this nature are architectural manifestations of power but become stagnant in Eviner’s remakes, as they are challenged by the subversive presence of the odd characters she creates.

Such figures reappear in *Nursing Modern Fall*, but this time, the ground they are dangling on is also suspended; it moves. In this video—commissioned by Marseille-Provence 2013, Capitale Européenne de la Culture, for the exhibition “*Ici, Ailleurs*” (Here, Elsewhere) at La Friche Belle de Mai art center in Marseille—there is not one but a conglomeration of places that together form a hybrid construction site, a working space synthesized from architectural renderings of the Pratt & Whitney aircraft-engine factory in East Hartford, Connecticut (built by Albert Kahn Associates in 1941), drawings of interiors by Andrea Palladio, and Auguste Perret’s plan for Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, among others.

In *Nursing Modern Fall*, Eviner employs parallax to show that not only humans but their concepts, their plans to shape their own societies, are on slippery ground; all is displaced and suspended in our modernity. Eviner is trying to “nurse” this modern fall, trying to find a remedy for the fault in the great scheme of things, and she seems to suspect that panacea is in the hands of the misfits and the obsessively curious, such as her nurse figures in *Modern Fall*, whose gestures recall those in Rembrandt’s *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, 1632. Perhaps when their energy finds its proper outlet, our societal models will be transformed and become better able to sustain all the subjects that are not perfect but do exist.

As Eviner continues to tackle gender issues and architectonics, her works and academic teachings overlap. At last year’s Istanbul Biennial, her piece titled *Co-Action Device: A Study*, 2013, was formed as a working space where forty students produced collaborative works in various media addressing body politics. It is no coincidence that in June 2013,



Inci Eviner, *Co-Action Device: A Study*, 2013, mixed media installation with live performance by Sirma Öztaş. Galata Greek Primary School, Istanbul.

Erdem Gündüz, a trained dancer and ex-student of Eviner's, became a protagonist of the Gezi Park resistance. As the "standing man," he started a peaceful act of protest that was quickly adopted by thousands. It seems that odd but compelling gestures like those of Eviner's figures can indeed become real and influential in the bigger scheme of things.

—*Mine Haydaroglu*

MAKHACHKALA, RUSSIA

Taus Makhacheva

REPUBLIC OF DAGESTAN ARTIST UNION EXHIBITION HALL

The most populous republic in Russia's North Caucasus, Dagestan is bordered by Azerbaijan to the south and the Caspian Sea to the east. Literally, *Dagestan* means "country of mountains." Yet, as home to two and a half million residents belonging to some thirty different ethnic nationalities, it has, since the tenth century, also been known as *Jabal al Alsinah*, or "Mountain of Languages." Across millennia, the multiethnic/multilingual region has crafted a vibrant carpet of culture. For "Story Demands to Be Continued," contemporary Dagestani artist Taus Makhacheva, with support from the Peri Foundation, traveled from Moscow (where she grew up) to Makhachkala (where she is now based) to stage this exhibition, which, curated by Alexey Maslyaev (of the Moscow Museum of Modern Art), is structured around the pattern of a Dagestani style of kilim. Filling both floors of Makhachkala's Artist Union, the show formed a complex narrative engaging the fate of cultural traditions in the post-Soviet era, a time when national and ethnic identities have undergone radical restructuring. But the titular story also pointed to the artist's personal history, namely her connection to the legendary Dagestani poet and writer Rasul Gamzatov, author of "My Dagestan"—a narrative that Makhacheva, as Gamzatov's granddaughter, sought to carry forward with this show.

Aiming "to merge the traditional with contemporary art in a common field of semantics and signs," Maslyaev anchored the theme of this show by hanging a local nineteenth-century kilim at the hall's entrance. The carpet's polygonal arrangement evoked the interlocking narratives of history. Both symbol and notion were asserted repeatedly throughout the exhibition as Makhacheva recycled myths and signs vis dialogical poetics. For example, viewers saw, in the approximately minute-long video *Carpet*, 2006, the artist rolled-up lengthwise in a kilim bearing a pattern intended to symbolize the Garden of Eden—a place scholars historically site in the Caucasus. On another screen, the short video *Gamstul*, 2012, pointed toward the performativity of man and nature in a Dagestan *aul* (mountain village). With its architecture

grafted onto alpine slopes, the *aul* is a palimpsest of glacial features—formations, geological and man-made, that have accrued across generations. In the piece, a male dancer interprets scenery by Franz Roubaud in his 1886–98 series of monumental murals known as "Conquest of the Caucasus." At other points, the dancer's body moves to rhyme with the landscape's terraced buildings and rocky surrounds.

If tangled histories constituted one theme in this show, another was gender and the changing ideation of masculinity in the region. In a three-channel installation *Let Me Be a Part of the Narrative*, 2011, the artist feed streamed segments of an old Soviet documentary about a professional wrestler Ali Aliev, while the other two featured documentaries of dogfighting in present-day Caucasus. The various ways at which masculinity continues to be articulated were further explored in *The Fast and the Furious*, 2011, which, via photography and video, plunges into the subculture of street racing to examine the hierarchy of competition, spectacle, and consumer society. In *Beast Car*, 2011, a fur-covered "beast car," the work hints ironically at the emergence of a new Caucasian he-man. The staged video *Space of Tradition*, 2009, meanwhile, frames two people, each enveloped in bride-like garments, flitting between tables in a wedding hall with gold and white—a not-so-subtle commentary on the kitsch commodification (and reification) of traditional Dagestani aesthetics. The photo documentation of the performance *Delinking*, 2011, perhaps best advances Makhacheva's story: a video wherein the artist painted her face with multiple traditional *mehndi* patterns—ostensibly not yet woven into her biography—as though in search of authenticity in the era of post-representation.

—*Lali*

SEOUL

Jewyo Rhii

ARTSONJE CENTER

Another version of Jewyo Rhii's solo exhibition "Night of the Living Dead," curated by Sunjung Kim, was previously on view at the Van Gogh Museum in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, and the Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt under the title "Walls to Talk to." The exhibition tour began in January 2013, but the journey behind the work dates back in 2008, when the artist moved into an apartment on Itaewon street in Itaewon, one of Seoul's hippest commercial districts. More than twenty-two objects and fifteen installations on display were produced in this apartment during the nearly three years that she lived there. The space was not only by a few invited visitors. And this intimate environment dictated the conditions of their display; Rhii not only transported her works to the three venues but also transformed the spaces to mirror the layout of her apartment as closely as possible, since all of the works were a direct response to what she felt and experienced there.

Curiously, the Itaewon apartment was Rhii's first permanent home in almost two decades. Since becoming a full-time artist, she has been drifting around the world to participate in artist-residency programs or to prepare for exhibitions. She had to make a living by "residing" as an artist in foreign countries, since a young practitioner with no income could never find an affordable place to live and work in Seoul. Indeed, when she eventually moved to Itaewon in 2008, it quickly became apparent that she had chosen the wrong place. Her apartment was located in a narrow alley, far from the fancy restaurants and cafes that fronted the main street, but home to a cheap market for laborers. At night, the entire neighborhood sank into total darkness except for the rare sound of a street fight. No one in the neigh-



Taus Makhacheva, *The Fast and the Furious*, 2011. C-print, 35% x 23%.