

MUSTAFA HULUSI

PRESS RELEASE

“Iznik – Cyprus – London”

01–29 March, 2008

Public Opening: 01.03.2008, 19.00–21.00

[Galerist / Hall - B]

Galerist is pleased to present the first solo show in Turkey of London born, Turkish Cypriot artist Mustafa Hulusi. The exhibition 'Iznik-Cyprus-London' uses photography and painting to articulate the process in which culture makes itself manifest within the art object and deconstructs how this functions within its surrounding social and political structures. The title 'Iznik-Cyprus-London' refers to a migratory route of people and the trade route of art objects. As both are carriers of intellectual ideas, the exhibition discusses how visual forms function as indicators of social identification.

The show contains two components; two sets of paintings and two types of photography. In the first room are the 'Expander Iznik' paintings. They amalgamate two disparate aesthetic regimes: mid-C20th geometric abstraction with the colour schemes of C16th Ottoman period Iznik ceramics. Alongside them are presented the 'Expander Icons', a set of smaller scale gold leafed, framed paintings using the same abstract motif, but painted in darker colours referencing early Christian icon painting. This strategic reappropriation of colour and aesthetics, highlights their symbolic and ideological function within a specific historical context. The 'Expander logo' by contrast acts as a hollow signifier. Whilst its visually arresting presence demands our attention, it offers no apparent meaning, only that which is projected by the imagination of the viewer. This engagement requires an active and complicit relationship rather than one which is prescribed.

The second room contains 'Photo Set', a series of photographic images of heavenly fruits, intensified with heightened colours that points towards an inner landscape of bliss and rapture. The idea of a timelessness (or a *deep* time) in these works proposes that there is a continuity in the human will to represent Edenic, otherworldly paradises in visual art. 500 years ago this would have been the floral motifs on the original Iznik ceramics however today it is using the photographic medium presented within this photographic installation. The exhibition shifts from short range to long range in its use of art historical references and navigates around apparently unrelated art movements and opposing ideologies. Its purpose is to build a unique, highly personalized version of the potential for pleasure within visual language and the drive towards creating a more free and poetic space for human thought to wonder within the framework of conceptual art.

Mustafa Hulusi (b. 1971, London, UK) is a Turkish Cypriot and lives and works in London. In 2007 Hulusi represented the Republic of Cyprus at the 52nd International Exhibition of Contemporary Art of La Biennale di Venezia and had solo exhibitions at A-Foundation, Liverpool, and Max Wigram Gallery. Since 2002 he has taken part in group exhibitions in the UK and internationally including When We Build, Let Us Think That We Build Forever, BALTIC, Gateshead, UK; Into Me Out of Me at P.S.1/MOMA (NY) and Kunst-Werke (Berlin); East International 05, Norwich Art Gallery (Norwich).

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