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A HISTORY OF INSPIRATION

FROM 20/06/2013 TO 07/09/2013

A seemingly incongruous encounter between an Ottoman miniature from the 16th century and a standard Microsoft screen generates an exploration of the imagination.

Between Stuttgart and Istanbul, with stops in Stockholm, Adnan Yildiz sets in motion a subtle art of the exhibition. At Palais de Tokyo, it involves bringing together a seemingly incongruous pair: an Ottoman miniature from the 16th century and a standard Microsoft screen. The motif of the sky – the astrologers' complex sky or the artificial sky of computer users – emerges between the two. From this juxtaposition, an exploration of the imagination surfaces.

A History of Inspiration is a conceptual attempt to investigate the epistemological relationships between two spaces of imagination, sky and screen, via two image references separated by five centuries: a 16th century miniature and a Microsoft wallpaper. By bringing them together, the exhibition promises to develop a methodological approach to the phenomena of curiosity and imagination, and in particular how our conception of the future can be seen as a history of inspiration.

The miniature from the 16th century depicts Takiyüddin's observatory house in Istanbul. It shows the ulemas, i.e. Islamic scientists; academicians, researchers and intellectuals, who had worked in an advanced level of interdisciplinary approach combining mathematics, astrology, biology, poetry and other disciplines. With tools and apparatus of their time such as rulers, clocks, and telescopes, they bodily perform the acts of curiosity and experiment with the inspiration of nature. The Microsoft wallpaper is a generic image, a sample design produced and distributed all around the world. This "plasticized" representation of sky and nature was delivered to millions of users to organize their computer desktop.

The curiosity for knowing what will happen in the future has been an important dimension of human psychology. From astrology to tarot, geography to science, the sky we share seems to operate as an open field to imagine a future and create a perspective for human beings. Today's visual technologies are based on translating, distributing and editing information via screens, projectors and monitors, which are getting smaller and more personal. In most of the designs and structures, the sky keeps its archetypical role for developing a conceptual base. However the virtual reality takes over the physical understanding of space, the instinctive motif of looking at the sky is still embodied in the experiments and methodologies of science and technology. Associations with the sky always bring curiosity and interest in what will happen next. The levels of predictability differ from practical to spiritual; for example, from the condition of whether it will rain or not, to the presence or absence of god(s).

A.Y.

CURATOR

Adnan Yıldız (born in Karaman, Turkey; lives and works in Stuttgart) participated in the traveling curatorial research program Curatorlab/Konstfack in Stockholm (2006-2008), and was recently nominated for ICI's Independent Curatorial Vision Award in 2012. Since January 2011, Yıldız has been the Artistic Director of Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, focusing on the solo exhibitions series, *Artistic Dialogues*, at Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, Methodical Inquiries at Polistar Gallery, Istanbul, and a discussion-based event program, Critical Voices, at Künstlerhaus Stuttgart and Platform3 in Munich.

WITH

Erdağ Aksel, Aaron Angell, Mariechen Danz, Michael Dean, Cevdet Ereğ, Nilbar Güreş, Toril Johannessen, Ahmet Ögüt, Wael Shawky, Slavs and Tatars, KIBLENÜMA

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