



sit
stand
walk !

Curated by: Inez Piso

Artists: Fatma ifti, Burak Delier, Nejbir Erkol,
Okay zkan and Belim Yavuz

23.11.2018 - 26.01.2019

Tuna Ofis
Altunizade Mahallesi, Kısıklı Cad. No:20
34662 skdar / İstanbul

Sit, Stand, Walk!

The exhibition *Sit, Stand, Walk!* takes place in the headquarters of Tuna Ofis, a company that designs and produces office furniture. Furniture and objects like these condition the way we work, sit, stand, walk, the way we separate the space and thus, the way we move and use the space on a daily basis in a working environment.

This exhibition discusses the hidden power relationships behind these objects, their forms and colors, but also the agenda behind the usage of certain words and sentences in the creation of a workspace. It questions the assumptions that are at play when designing and using a workspace regarding hierarchy, prejudgments and gender roles. The exhibition is about the appearance of innocence and modernity, where actually complex power relationships are at work.

Installations, video works, interventions, workshops and performances by the artists: Fatma Çiftçi, Burak Delier, Nejbir Erkol, Okay Özkan and Belçim Yavuz.

Inez Piso

Fatma Çiftçi

Şah and *Satranç* from *Strategy Series*, 2018

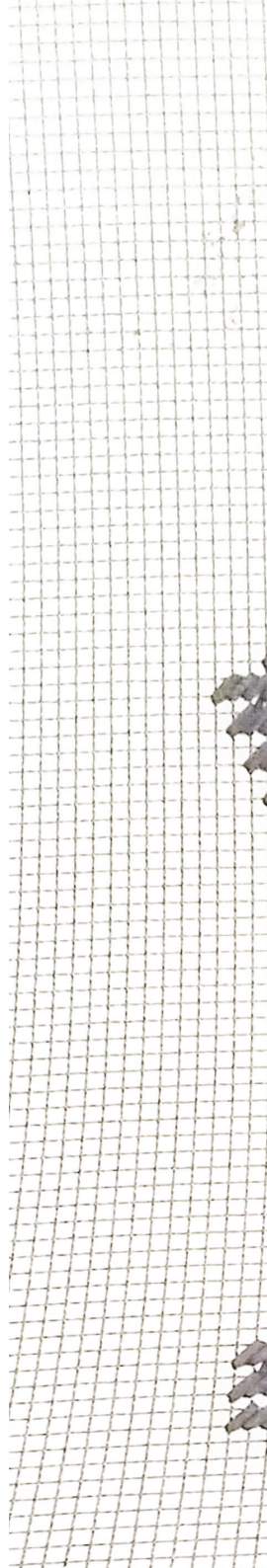
Fatma Çiftçi's works consists of two interventions in the Tuna Ofis space. An installation on the ground floor inspired on the space separator for offices and a change in the carpet on the first floor inspired by the pattern of a chess board.

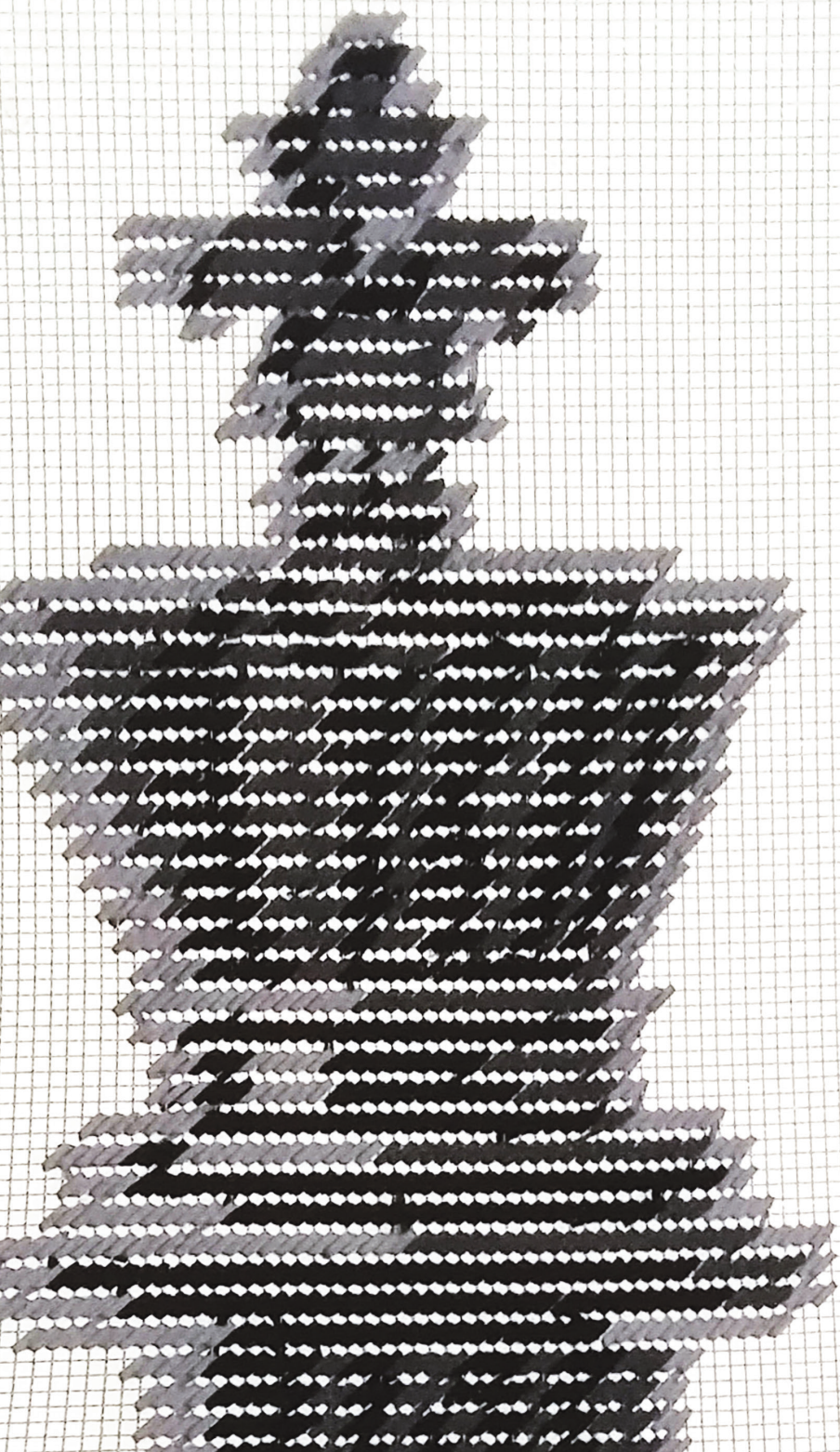
In her artistic practice she uses embroidery patterns and juxtaposes them with icons of rough male power. Embroidery is considered a traditional handicraft method that is associated with femininity and tenderness. She makes us aware of the imbedded connotations we have concerning power and gender by combining unusual masculine related depictions with this method considered to be a feminine handicraft.

For this new work she applied a gobelin weaving technique on a large scale that depicts the figure of the chess king. This icon is called *Şah* in Turkish. The chess queen, a female figure in the English language with a more powerful position on the chessboard is called *Vezir* in Turkish. This makes both the *Şah* and the *Vezir* both male high-rank political figures in the Turkish understanding of chess.

Fatma Çiftçi uses the chess metaphor to refer to the hidden hierarchies and strategies that are played out in the office spheres. To visualize the chess board in black and white, contrasting with the colors of the Tuna Ofis identity, she addresses the apparent innocence of the office design. In the other work, an intervention on the floor of the 1st floor, she does this by literally underlining the square chess patterns and replaces parts of the clean office floor by a dirty old carpet that she found in the garage of the Tuna Ofis. This is an attempt to uncover the pretentious slick and clean design that could fool the real tactiques designed to sell a modern office image that might be very far from the traditional values woven into the office reality.

This is a newly commissioned work by Tuna Ofis and artnovo and made for this exhibition.





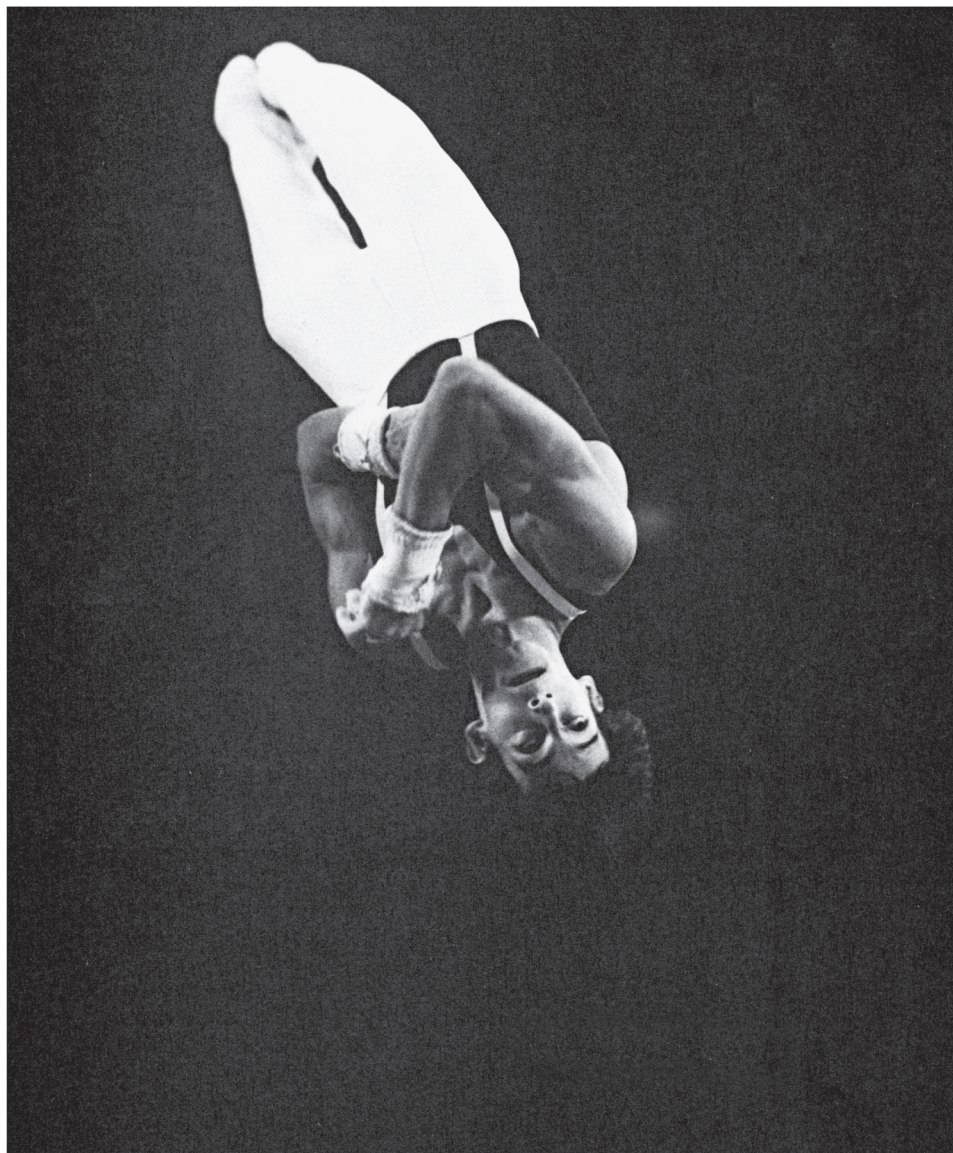
Burak Delier

Gymnastics of Economy and Faith: Six Compulsory Six Artistic Routines, 2014

The work consists of different posters that each have a visual element and a short sentence written over it. The visuals are taken from sports and economical magazines and cropped in a certain, sometimes uncanny way. By leaving out small parts of contextual information it is left unsaid in what void a swimmer is going to fall or on what scale we are looking at people in a pool.

The short sentences are taken (and sometimes adapted) from philosophical texts, folk tales or urban legends and only consists of a few words written in capital letters, without any reading marks like dots or exclamation marks. The way these words come together evokes the idea of a universal truth or a puzzly metaphor referring to roughly three domains defined by the artist: 1. economics, money and finance, 2. the domain of metaphysics, believes and placebo effects and 3. the domain of extreme sports, gymnastics and work.

Even apparent contradictions in the words are rhymed with each other pushing the reader to obliterate the semantic value of the individual words. This dictates a rhythm that reminds one of a slogan, or a motivational sentence as many more are present in the Tuna Ofis. The posters are not only visible inside of the headquarters of the Tuna Ofis, but also spread in the surroundings of the building in the streets of Altunizade, where many office employed people pass by every day in order to come and go to work in this growing business district in Istanbul.



IF YOU LOVE YOUR WORK ENOUGH, THEN YOU CANNOT BE EXPLOITED





Nejbir Erkol

Sınır (limit), 2018

Nejbir Erkol's work often revolves around the assumption that we can use our feet for moving without even thinking about it. As her father is unable to walk and his world is limited by the walls of one room, she questions how our world is designed for a certain type of body that stays within the range of the 'normal'.

During the opening of the exhibition *Sit, stand, walk!*, she will realize the performance *Sınır*. Throughout the duration of the opening she will not be able to move because she is limited by a specially designed pair of woman's shoes that are bound together by a strap.

The impediment of a woman moving her legs is rooted in an old tradition, even the Christian figure of the Holy Mary has been depicted with a strap around her ankles as an icon for her lasting virginity in byzantine mosaics found in Turkey.

Nejbir Erkol questions the very agency of movement, from the most basic one that is separating one foot from the other in order to displace our bodies: walking. Our movements are submissive to the forms in which they are casted. The form of the shoe dictates how you move and becomes part of your identity, gender declaration and even the way you move when you walk, stand or sit. After the performance the shoes will turn into a static object that contradicts itself in functionality, as it is obviously designed for feet but not for walking.

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Okay Özkan

Daydreaming, 2018

Daydreaming is an installation made out of a composition of office material that fully covers one of the larger desks in the Tuna Ofis building. Okay Özkan first started making these playful objects by combining pencils, erasers and sharpeners when he was still in primary school. He imagined the objects could represent tanks, but actually they could be anything: weird cars or different animals. The work is an exercise to disconnect from the intended design and singular function linked to the object. The employees at the office are invited to a workshop by Okay Özkan, that aims at sharing this experience of daydreaming.

This workshop is done during official working hours and in that sense steals some time in order to be unproductive and let the imagination run wild beyond the functionality of the daily objects that surround us.





The breath, 2014

When the artist studied history of modern art in Turkey, he learned about the Calder sculptures and would imagine how they would move beyond the static depiction in his books. The first time he encountered one of these moving sculptures in a museum in Western Europe, he was disappointed to see the sculpture wasn't moving at all.

The attempt of being modern as a museum, as part of a modern identity of a city, felt fake to the artist and he decided to make a small critique on this pretension by simply blowing his breath in the direction of the sculpture. Eventually he made the sculpture move by blowing his breath into the modern forms.

The choice to leave the documentation of this small performance of resistance in black and white, underlines the problem of modern aesthetics that become dated very fast. The design of the office is a continuous attempt to update the visual elements in a modern vision. But the modern is also constantly outdated, and turns into a conditioned space where even movement is impeded.

Belçim Yavuz

Sit, Stand, Walk! A Workshop on Movement in the Office, 2018

Belçim Yavuz comes from a background of dance and architecture. In her workshops she explores how bodily movements are conditioned by social structures and given physical spaces. Through a combination of simple exercises she reveals how movements become part of our identity marked by categories such as class and gender.

In the office she addresses the many unwritten rules that limit the way we use our bodies. The history of the office tells how physical exhaustion was decreased to the minimum, until a point where it became even unnatural. Surrounded by desks, chairs, stationary and elevators that smoothly facilitated the shift from the physical labor to mere brain activity, the modern employee is allowed to pick from a vast set of movements dictated by the environment that the office provides. Higher productivity and acceleration doesn't mean running with our whole body anymore, but clicking faster with our right finger. While we are extending the borders of our mind, we have abandoned the potentials of our body.

Have we designed the furniture and architecture according to our body, or did our bodies adapt to them? In this workshop, we will rediscover the potentials of our bodies re-writing the new possible scenarios in the office spheres.

There is a gap between the possibilities of the bodily movements and the way we are limited by who we admire, respect or even fear. Belçim Yavuz aims at bridging that gap with defining the so-called comfort zone and slightly pushing the conditioned bodies outside of that zone. It is a way of experiencing the common spaces and physical relationship in a fresh way, obeying both the environment and the bodily interaction with that space.



Exhibited Works

Belçim Yavuz, *Sit, Stand, Walk! a workshop on movement in the office*, 2018, Workshop

Burak Delier, *Gymnastics of Economy and Faith: Six Compulsory Six Artistic Routines*, 2014, 12 Posters, 68 x 48 cm (each)

Fatma Çiftçi, *Şah (Chess King) - Strategies Series*, 2018, Embroidery on wire fence, 265 x 150 cm

Fatma Çiftçi, *Satranç (Chess)- Strategies Series*, 2018, Intervention with found carpet, 250 x 250 cm

Okay Özkan, *Daydreaming*, 2018, Installation with stationery and workshop

Okay Özkan, *Nefes (The Breath)*, 2014, Video, black and white, looped, 1 min

Nejbir Erkol, *Sınır (Limit)*, 2018, 4 hour performance and designed pair of shoes

Participating Artists

Fatma Çiftçi is an Istanbul based artist. Çiftçi develops her projects by using found objects and images, and edits her daily life experiences through them. She interprets different materials and prepares a series of works with an ironic and critical approach. She also gained experience to transform traditional handcrafts that she was familiar since her childhood into a new production process. Çiftçi had solo shows at Spike Island (Bristol-UK), Masa Project (Istanbul-Turkey) and Goyang Art Studio (Seoul-Korea). Group shows include In the Topography of the Irregular Mind, Roumelie Han (İstanbul-Turkey), Şebeke, Center d'art, Maison Des Arts (Cajarc-France), Freekick-9th International İstanbul Bienial, Hospitality Zone (İstanbul- Turkey), Affording an Opportunity, K2 Art Centre (İzmir, Turkey). Residency programs and workshops include PiST/// Research and Production Residency: PIRPIR (İstanbul-Turkey), MAISONS DAURA, International Artists Residences, Maison Des Arts Georges Pompidou (Cajarc- France), Spike Island-Platform Garanti CAC Production Residency (Bristol-UK), and Asian Artists FellowshipProgram, Goyang Art Studio (Seoul-Korea).

Burak Delier studied in the Fine Arts Faculty of Marmara University and the Faculty of Art and Design at Yıldız Technical University (receiving an M.A. and Proficiency in Art). Currently working as an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at Sakarya University, Delier's essays discussing the relationship between art and politics were published by Koç University Press under the title Scenarios of the Art World (2016). Producing in multiple formats, the artist carries out collective projects such as Barzine: The Magazine that Takes Itself for a Bar (in collaboration with Eylem Akçay, Emre Tansu Ketten and Taylan Kesanbilici, 2018) along with his solo exhibitions such as Free Society of Fools and Crooks (Pilot Gallery, İstanbul, 2016), Play Your Part and The Script Will Follow (Pilot Gallery, İstanbul, 2013), Freedom Has No Script (Iniva, London, 2014), The Collector's Wish (Pilot Gallery, İstanbul, 2012). Among the group exhibits he has participated in it is possible to mention: İstanbul. Passion, Joy, Fury, MAXXI Museum, Rome (2015), Artists' Film International, İstanbul Modern, İstanbul (2015) and Whitechapel Gallery, London (2014).

Nejbir Erkol was awarded with a degree to Mardin Artuklu University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Painting in 2014. During her university education, Erkol was also interested in theater and she participated in various plays at theater festivals in Izmir, Ankara and Mardin with the Mardin Troupe Campaign. She took part in the short film project directed by Nilüfer Ovaloğlu and Romain Kronenberg. In 2018, she participated in Mixer Sessions III with her work 'BURDEN' and a performance workshop of Pınar Derin Gencer's "Performative Bodies" organized by Istanbul Performance Art in Diyarbakır. Erkol lives in Mardin working in different medias such as performance, photography, installation, painting and video.

Okay Özkan's works critically focuses on political, economic, social and cultural issues. His works are loaded with poetic irony which he discusses from his own local perspective, he does this by sabotaging the invisible power structures and thus addressing the universal hierarchies. Recent exhibitions of Özkan's art work include the Young Fresh Different 9/ Zilberman Gallery (2018), Rotary Art Prize/ Elgiz Museum (2018), Still Life with a Curtain/ Galerist (2018), 'Temporality – Difference' and Beyond, Marmara University (2017), Session I, Mixer Gallery (2016), Border and Orbits, Tütün Deposu (2016), Mümkün, Karga Art Gallery (2015), Skinny Deeping in the Void, Nordwall, The Hague (2014) and Word and Things, Yüksel Sabancı Art Gallery (2013). He was also awarded the Istanbul Rotary Art Prize (2018), the 2nd Contemporary Art Project Competition for Youth, Ankara (2016), and the Siemens Art Prize, Istanbul (2015). Özkan received a bachelor's degree in visual arts from Marmara University and a master's degree in art and design from Yıldız Technical University, Istanbul.

Belçim Yavuz graduated from Istanbul Technical University with a Bachelor of Architecture degree in 2018. Between 2016-2017, she took classes from diverse disciplines such as scenography, curatorial practices, urban sociology, architectural theory. She worked in Moda Stage's dance-theater piece 'ballerina' where she took part as a project assistant. Between 2002 and 2015, she has been trained in classical ballet and modern dance, also worked as classical ballet assistant. She continues to study and discover in the field of contemporary dance. In Croatia, she worked as a co-tutor together with two contemporary dancers and carried on issues such as body awareness, the movement of the body in space, transformation of body-space concepts. She continues to work on subjects such as architecture, city, space, movement and body, both practically and theoretically.

Exhibition Curator

Inez Piso resides between Amsterdam and Istanbul. She studied Art History and holds a MA in History of Contemporary Art and Visual Culture from the Universidad Autónoma Madrid. She worked at the exhibition departments of the MNCARS Reina Sofía and CA2M Dos de Mayo Art Center. Her recent curatorial projects have been Breathing Space, a performative project at the Arnhem Museum (NL), De Schaduw van de Haan at the Vishal, Haarlem (NL) and Silent Squares in Karaköy, Istanbul (TR). She gives workshops where she researches what can be found beyond language structures, like Silent Dance at Akbank Sanat and Silent Borders in the Mardin Biennale 2018. Her projects often unfold around invisible structures that have tangible consequences. Currently she holds a grant from Mondriaan Fund for a research project about contemporary art and silence in language or topics of (un)translatability.

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