

PRESS RELEASE

Journeys With No Return

Three exhibitions of Contemporary Art taking place in Berlin,
London and Istanbul

ISTANBUL 10 SEPT 2009 – 31 OCT 2009

LONDON 18 FEB 2010 – 14 MARCH 2010

BERLIN JUNE 2010 – JULY 2010 (Berlin dates to be confirmed)



Photo: Nevin Aladag *Freeze* 2003

Akbank Cultural Centre, Istanbul: **Kiran Kaur Brar, Adam Chodzko, Melanie Manchot, Mike Nelson, Olaf Nicolai, Zineb Sedira**

Curated by Peter Cross and Alice Sharp
Exhibition organiser Denizhan Ozer of Koridoor

Journeys With No Return opens its Istanbul exhibition this week alongside the 11th International Istanbul Biennial 2009 with the curators' collective What, How & for Whom / WHW.

Inspired by the celebrated book of poems ***Journeys With No Return*** by Turkish writer and political figure, Nâzım Hikmet, this project explores the influence of Turkish migration on contemporary art. It is taking place in three cities: Istanbul, London and Berlin and includes residencies and conferences. The different identity of each city, their varied histories and relationships to the phenomenon of migration, has resulted in three individual but strongly interrelated exhibitions.

Artists from Germany, Great Britain and Turkey uncover themes around migration from the last 50 years. Once planned and organized, like the German Gastarbeiter programme, migration has become a global phenomenon involving many millions of people, in constant movement around the world. Migration has become a crucial question informing political thinking and popular emotion, transforming ideas of nationhood and subjective senses of identity. Many of the 15 artists in *Journeys With No Return* have themselves experienced some form of displacement. They all work within this turbulent, fractured area of human exchange and desire.

The 6 artists in the Istanbul exhibition share an interest in the poetic, human emotions and real experiences, and they reach out with methods of communication that echo mainstream and popular cultural forms.

Kiran Kaur Brar's new commission *Barber* draws from similarities between her native Punjab and Turkey, revealing ancient connections along the old Silk Road between Asia and Europe. Her outsider video portrait of Istanbul barbershops gives an insight into Turkish masculinity and traditions.

Adam Chodzko's *White Magic* shows the exchange of red and green second-hand clothing between two charity shops in the UK and USA through a silent video of 80 still images.

Melanie Manchot's *Double Portrait (Displaced)*, is a new work of 5 photographic diptychs taking a traditional European painting genre, the double portrait, and through photography, restores connections between people separated by migration. In asking her participants in London to nominate their counterpart in Istanbul Manchot's project suggests that the portrait resonates in the space between the two people.

Mike Nelson's installation, *Procession, process. Progress, progression. Regression, recession. Recess, regress.* is also specially commissioned for Istanbul, his concrete carpet made from casting Ottoman wood creates a fiction that seems to parody the artist's own longing to catch and hold a disappearing memory of a city he loves.

Olaf Nicolai's new work for the exhibition *MUNDUS TOTUS*, is a pair of gold rings, which read *MUNDUS TOTUS EXILIUM EST*, 'he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land', quote 12th Century Hugo de St. Viktor, a key reference for Erich Auerbach and Edward Said, and evidence that human displacement is as ancient

as it is contemporary.

Zineb Sedira's *MiddleSea* video installation deals with waiting, crossing and borders, with a dreamlike feeling of amnesia and rootlessness that is nevertheless charged with life-transforming drama and longing.

To continue the discourse *Journeys With No Return* is collaborating with **The International Curators Forum** to present an Istanbul Biennial curators workshop on the Moving Image at the **Akbank Sanat on Saturday 12th September 2.30-5pm**. Speakers include the curators and artists from the exhibition.

The work of artists Melanie Manchot and Kiran Kaur Brar was created while in residence as part of the project in Istanbul in February and March 2009 supported by the **British Council**, Turkey.

Alice Sharp is a London based independent curator who works on the Big Chill and recently coordinated the Fourth Plinth, (London UK). **Peter Cross** is an independent curator based in Berlin who previously worked for Arts Council England.

The three exhibitions include: **Nevin Aladag, Kiran Kaur Brar, Ergin Çavusoğlu, Adam Chodzko, Jürgen Eisenacher, Margareta Kern, Melanie Manchot, Olaf Metzler, Mike Nelson, Olaf Nicolai, Denizhan Ozer, Maya Schweizer, Zineb Sedira, Asli Sungu, Nasan Tur, Clemens von Wedemeyer**

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Contact:

Simon Steven
Press Office
'Journeys With No Return'
+44 (0)1843 596 194 (UK)
simon@simonsteven.net

Notes for Editors:

Gallery Address:
Akbank Cultural Centre
14-18 Istiklal Cadessi
Beyoglu
Istanbul
<http://www.akbanksanat.com>

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