

İz Öztat

Selected Works 2008 - 2023

Every name in history is I and I is other

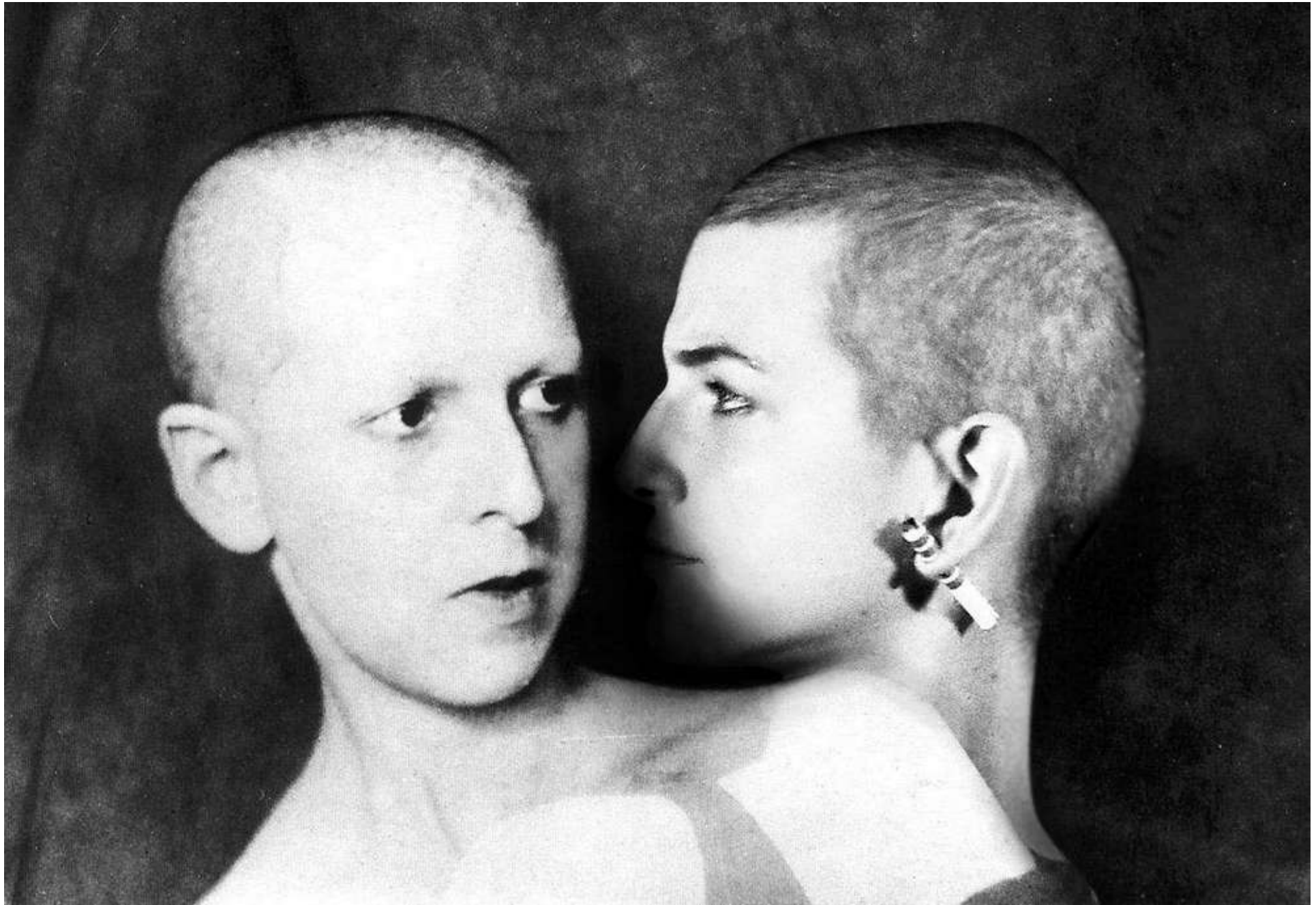
Untimely collaboration with Zişan

İz Öztat and Zişan, 2010 – Ongoing

In the ongoing body of work titled *Every name in history is I and I is other*, İz Öztat fabricates the (auto)biography of Zişan (1894-1970), who appears to her as a historical figure, a ghost and an alter ego. She takes on Zişan's work to construct a complex temporality of action that enables the suppressed past to intervene in the increasingly authoritarian present. By subverting official narratives with the possibilities of fiction, she opens up the horizon of futures that never came to be. In writing Zişan into the art historical canon, she challenges Eurocentric narratives of the avant-garde by widening its scope in relation to “alternative” modernities and “peripheral” geographies; and by providing a critique of the European avant-garde's relationship with its multiple others.

Born of an affair between Nezihe Hanım, a teacher from an upper class Turkish family and Dikran Bey, an Armenian photographer, Zişan's destiny was marked by an ambiguous belonging from the outset. She fled Istanbul with her father in 1915 to escape the Armenian Genocide and meandered through the canon of avant-garde art without ever being noticed. Disseminating her work anonymously, she didn't identify as an artist. Rather, she considered her most important role as that of a catalytic figure, taking part in multiple radical collective experiments. Her archive consists of texts, sketches, photographs, photomontages and objects.

İz Öztat's untimely collaboration with Zişan was initiated at Maçka Sanat Galerisi (2012) with *Inherited Weights*. Each of the following exhibitions were accompanied by a publication; *A Selection from Zişan's Utopie Folder* at Matadero Madrid (2013), *Every name in History is I and I is other* at Rendez-vous 13, Institut d'art Contemporain (2013), *Conducted in depth and projected at length*, Heidelberger Kunstverein (2014), *Tö*, French Cultural Institute (2017), *Would you miss me if I disappeared?* Zilberman (2023).



Sisters (After Claude Cahun), İz Öztat, 2003
Digital archival pigment print, 20 x 30 cm



Portal, Iz Öztat, 2010
Copper, 22 x 43 x 30 cm

Underbelly

İz Öztat, 2022

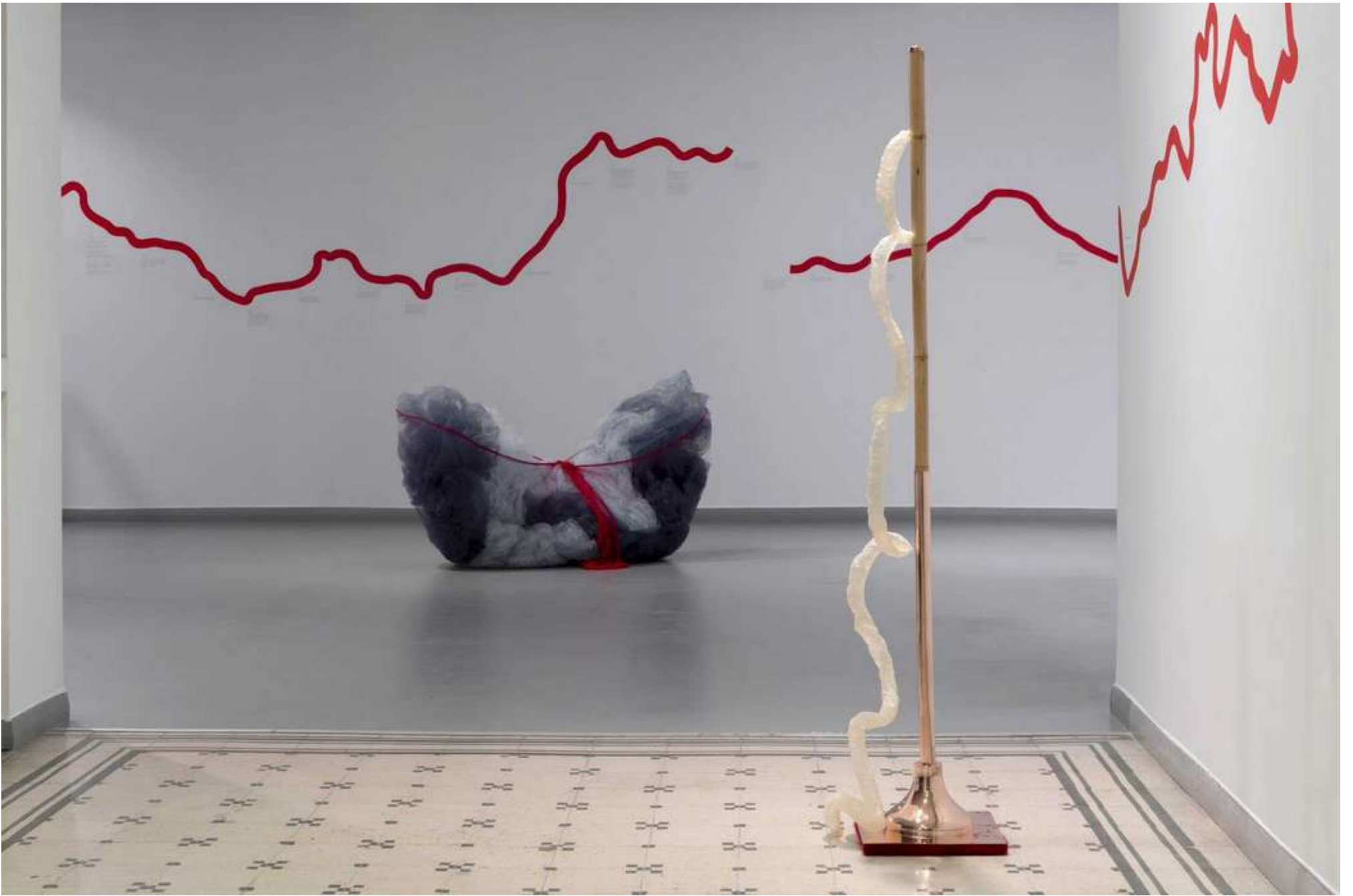
Zilberman, Istanbul

Underbelly addresses the boundaries between the public and the private by highlighting the fictional and conventional aspects of the narratives that construct “the artist” figure by posing questions about the formative effect artists’ (auto)biographies have on the manner in which their work is experienced, interpreted, and canonized.

Since 2010, İz Öztat has been engaged in an untimely collaboration with Zişan (1894-1970), who appears to the artist as a historical figure, a ghost and an alter ego. In their collaboration, they address official histories, artist myths, as well as the myriad dynamics that inform art historical canons. As part of this ongoing body of work titled *Every name in history is I and I is other*, Öztat embraces the power of fiction to temper life, employing methodologies that propose multiple selves, contradicting and fragmented narratives. The exhibition reveals the (auto)biographical layers that inform the creation of two chapters; *Boo Boo*, which focuses on the love affair between Zişan and Vita that transpired in Istanbul in 1913, and *Dead Reckoning to Her Folds*, which revolves around sculptures to propose a narrative on queer desire and immigration.

In *Danube as Biography: Reduced and Simplified*, Öztat departs from a historical depiction of the Danube on a military map and references Zişan’s journey along the river in 1915, as she fled from Istanbul to Berlin. The ruptured flow of the red line that spans the gallery walls, is accompanied by a text titled *Would You Miss Me If I Disappeared?* which chronicles the friendship and love between two women. The work touches the complex connections that lie at the underbelly of artistic process and mother-daughter relationships.

The chapter titled *Dead Reckoning to Her Folds* correlates the struggle of making way in the absence of guiding and anchoring reference points to the experiences of artistic production, falling in love as well as immigration. In these works, Öztat locates sculpture as an object of queer desire and problematizes the figurative and normative depictions of the female body. The artist works with feelings of desire, loss, and longing by upholding a stark tension between the horizontal forms she has created using soft, permeable, and loose materials and the vertical forms comprised of rigid elements.



Installation view from Zilberman, 2023

Would you miss me if I disappeared?

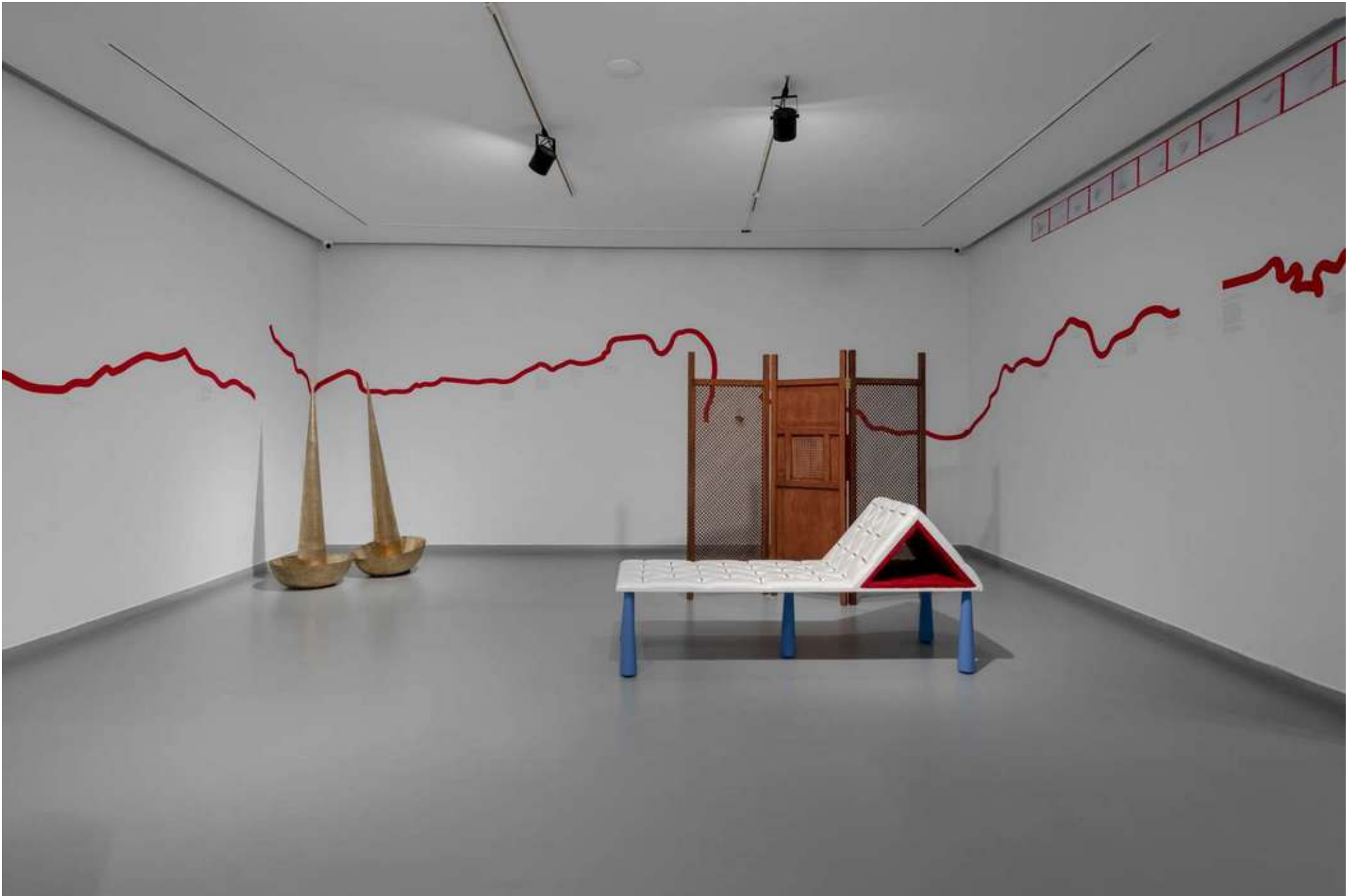
Vita Sackville-West to Virginia Woolf
30.08.1927

Ortadan kayboldsam beni özler miydin?

Vita Sackville-West'ten Virginia Woolf'a
30.08.1927



Would you miss me if I disappeared?, 2023
Pencil on wall, Dimensions variable



Installation view from Zilberman, 2023



Installation view from Zilberman, 2023

Boo Boo

İz & Ra, 2022

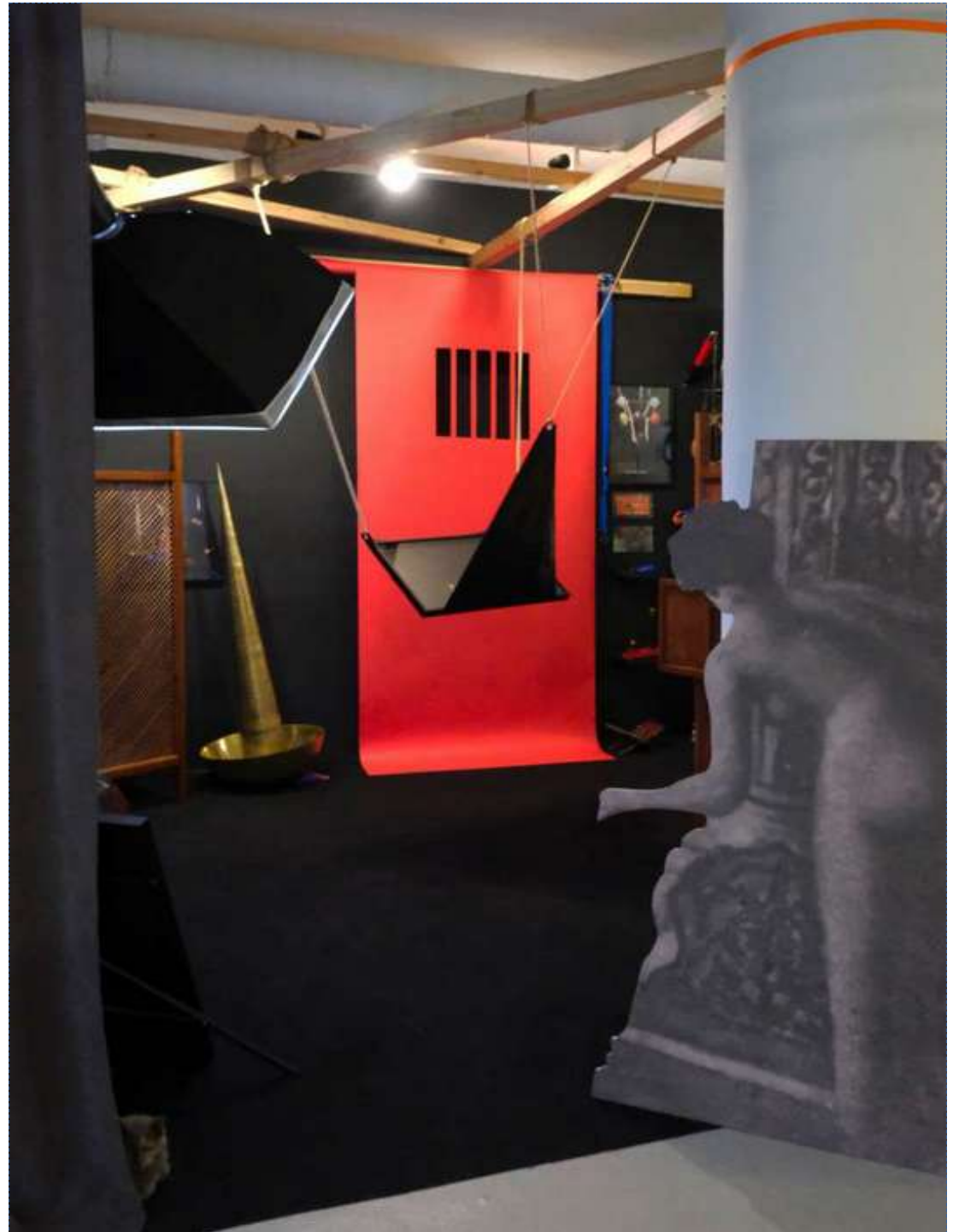
Saha Studio, Istanbul

Meşher, Istanbul

The chapter of Zişan's (auto)biography, entitled Boo Boo, focuses on the love affair between Zişan and Vita Sackville-West (1892–1962) in Istanbul. Vita Sackville-West, a writer, poet, and garden designer, lived in the Cihangir neighbourhood of Istanbul in 1913. Vita and Zişan met at the photography studio of Zişan's father, Dikran Bey, where she was working at the time. During the year that Vita stayed in Istanbul, they spent time at the photography studio and constructed themselves in the representations that they produced by recognising each other's desires and documenting their love.

In the video titled Boo Boo, İz and Ra perform both themselves as well as Zişan and Vita. The two subjects, whose assigned genders are female, construct their selves in relation to each other in the experience of love, which they build as a field of research. The video is centered around the photography studio where Zişan and Vita initially met and spent time together. It is constructed from the moments that took place at the studio, and the viewer is placed in a voyeuristic position. This construction is steered by the orientalist elements that could have been found in a photography studio at the beginning of the 20th century and the prevailing orientalist aesthetics of the contemporary era, the myths about an artist's studio, and the fantasies that are inherent to the experience of a love that ignites desire.

Installation view
Saha Studio, 2022





Boo Boo

İz & Ra, 2022

UHD Video, 13'

Contract for the Process Titled *Boo Boo*

Hereby "Contract for the Process Titled *Boo Boo*" has been shaped in a process spanning five months and is signed between Iz and Ra on 05.20.2022. Iz and Ra will be referred to individually as the "party" and together as the "parties".

In the love story, which begins as Zişan and Vita meet in a photography studio in 1913 and ends as Vita leaves Istanbul, the parties situate themselves as Zişan and Vita, as well as Iz and Ra. They construct the experience of love between two subjects, whose assigned genders are female, as a field of research. The site of the research is the improvisation process that takes place in the studio. The recording of the improvisation process is edited to culminate in artworks that are co-authored by the parties. The relationship between the parties is determined by the consensual framework outlined below.

In the improvisation process, there is no physical contact between the parties. The interaction is mediated by objects.

In the process, which includes negotiation of assigned roles; imitation and re-enactment of existing representations; evocation of past experiences and unconscious associations; exploration of sexual orientations that invent pleasure, the parties take on various and changing roles.

In case of triggering situations for one of the parties, the process is stopped by uttering the determined safe word.

The power dynamics formed in the process are negotiated. If either party aspires to a position in which they dominate or surrender, they assume the responsibilities that come with these roles; they provide the necessary safe space, taking into account the needs of the other party.

After the improvisation processes, the parties talk about the feelings that emerge and shoulder them together.

The recording of the process is interpreted as artworks in various mediums necessitated by the contexts in which they are displayed. The images approved by both parties are included in the artworks.

The parties decide together in which contexts the works produced will be exhibited. In the event of the death of one of the parties, artworks are disseminated in contexts deemed appropriate by the surviving Party.

This contract accompanies the display of all artworks produced from the recordings of the process.

In the continuation of the process, if there are other questions that have not yet surfaced and decisions that need to be made jointly, action is taken by adhering to the principles determined under the contract. If necessary, the scope of the contract is extended.

The parties may request that the framework determined by the contract be changed in line with their needs.

Iz


Ra


Uf Adlı Süreç İçin Kontrat

İşbu "*Uf* Adlı Süreç İçin Kontrat" beş aya yayılan bir süreçte şekillenip Iz ve Ra arasında 20.05.2022 tarihinde akdedilmiştir. Iz ve Ra ayrı ayrı "taraf" ve birlikte "tarafklar" olarak anılacaktır.

Zişan ve Vita'nın 1913 yılında bir fotoğraf stüdyosunda karşılaşmaları ile başlayan ve Vita'nın İstanbul'dan ayrılmasıyla sonlanan aşk hikâyesinin içine tarafklar, hem Zişan ve Vita hem de Iz ve Ra olarak yerleşirler. Atanmış cinsiyeti kadın olan iki öznenin aşk deneyimini bir araştırma sahası olarak yapılandırırklar. Stüdyoda vuku bulan doğaçlama süreç, araştırmanın gerçekleştiği alandır. Doğaçlama sürecin kaydı kurgulanarak tarafkların ortak müellifi olduğu yapıtlara dönüştür. Tarafklar arasındaki ilişkiyi, oluşturdukları nızıya dayalı çerçeve belirler.

Doğaçlama süreçte, tarafklar arasında tensel temas olmaz. Etkileşime nesnelere aracılık eder.

Atanan rollerin müzakeresini; var olan temsillerin taklit edilmesini ve yeniden canlandırılmasını; geçmiş deneyimlerin ve bilinçdışından çağrışımların hortlamasını; hazzı icat eden cinsel yönelimlerin araştırılmasını içeren süreçte tarafklar çeşitli ve değişen roller üstlenir.

Tarafklardan biri için tetikleyici durumların oluşması hâlinde, belirlenen güvenli kelime söylenerek süreç durdurulur.

Süreçte oluşan güç dinamikleri müzakere edilir. Tarafklardan biri hükmettiği veya teslim olduğu bir konumlanmaya arzularsa, bu rollerle birlikte gelen sorumlulukları üstlenir; diğer tarafkların ihtiyaçlarını gözetenerek gerekli güvenli alanı sağlar.

Doğaçlama süreçlerin ardından tarafklar, hâletiruhiyeleri üzerine konuşurlar ve ortaya çıkanları birlikte sirtlanırlar.

Sürecin kayıtları, sergilenenleri bağklamların gerektirdiği mecralarda yapıtlara dönüştürerek şekilde yorumlanır. Tarafkların onayladığı görüntüler yapıtlara dahil edilir.

Üretilen yapıtların hangi bağklamlarda sergileneneğine tarafklar birlikte karar verir. Tarafklardan birinin vefatı hâlinde yapıtlar, hayatta olan tarafkların uygun gördüğü bağklamlarda dolaşıma girer.

Sürecin kayıtlarından üretilen tüm yapıtların gösterimine bu kontrat eşlik eder.

Sürecin devamında henüz yüzeye çıkmayan başka sorular ve ortak verilmesi gereken kararlar oluşursa, kontrat kapsamında belirlenen prensiplere bağlı kalarak eyleme geçilir; gerekirse kontratın kapsamı genişletilir.

Tarafklar, kontrat ile belirlenen çerçevenin, ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda değişmesini talep edebilir.

Iz


Ra


Charmer with Snake

iz & Ra, 2022

Pigment print on photography paper
56 x 53 cm (framed)



***Longing (From the Investigations into
the Etiology of a Formseries)***
İz Öztat, 2022
Brass, ceramics | 170 x 65 x 65 cm



Suspended

İz Öztat, 2019

Pi Artworks, İstanbul

The installation reflects on the current political context in Turkey, where agency in public space is suspended. The departure point for the installation is a phantasy of suspension from a monument in Galatasaray Square, which has been a site of protests and is blocked off with security barriers since 2018. Öztat evokes the public square by dividing the exhibition space with security barriers that are stripped of their fences and by proposing her own version of the monument erected on the site in 1973 for the 50th anniversary of Turkish Republic.

Behind the abstracted security barriers, the video titled *Suspended*, a collaboration between Iz Öztat and Ann Antidote, portrays a scene of suspension. As a response to freedom of expression being suspended in the public sphere, Öztat explores being a body without agency through her own performance. The scene, negotiated through a consensual contract between the dominant, the submissive and the voyeur, interrogates the power dynamics experienced in daily life. The body of the submissive is wrapped, tied and suspended by the dominant in a white parchment that resembles both a swaddle and a shroud.

After calls geometric abstraction to aid as a possibility, when reality defies representation. Zişan's black square titled *Catastrophe*, dated 1923, carries the burden of losses in a place where mourning is interdicted. A contemporary interpretation of Zişan's work points to the continuity of political violence perpetuated by denial. Red triangles, each containing a black square, placed side by side, invoke a crowd in solidarity. The pamphlets, produced by BAÇOY KOOP (Printing, Duplication and Distribution Cooperative), trigger associations with recent political events in Turkey by relating the geometric abstractions with bodily gestures. BDSM inspired sculptures invite associations of pain, pleasure and loss.



Sketch for *Suspended*, İz Öztat, 2018



Suspended, İz Öztat, 2019
Installation view from Pi Artworks Istanbul



Suspended, İz Öztat & Ann Antidote, 2019
UHD video, 5'05"

Askıda Adlı Sahne İçin Kontrat

İşbu "Askıda Adlı Sahne İçin Kontrat" ("**Kontrat**" olarak anılacaktır), aşağıdaki taraflar arasında 25.04.2019 tarihinde akdedilmiştir.

- Ann Antidote** ("Hükmeden" olarak anılacaktır.)
- İz Öztat** ("İtaat Eden" olarak anılacaktır.)
- Ali Taptık** ("Gözetleyen" olarak anılacaktır.)

İşbu Kontrat'da Hükmeden, İtaat Eden ve Gözetleyen ayrı ayrı "**Taraf**" ve birlikte "**Taraflar**" olarak anılacaktır.

Bu Kontrat ile tanımlanan sahne bedensel bir deneyim ortaya koyar. Taraflar, rızaya dayalı güç değişiminin etik imkanlarını araştırmak için bir araya gelir. Güçle olan ilişkilerini kişisel hikayeleri, tarihsel bağlam ve içinde yaşadıkları kültürle ilişkilendirerek müzakere ederler.

Hükmeden bağlar. İtaat Eden bağlanır. Gözetleyen kayda geçirir.

Hükmeden, "The Strange Life of Savages" [Yabancıların Garip Hayatı] manifestosunda, kolektif çalışmalarının ortak paydasını "ütopyalar, seks-pozitif yaklaşım, bağlama, çok aşkıllık, dayanışma ile oluşturulan kolektifler, tüm bilinçli ve rızaya dayalı hayat tarzları, kimlikler ve seçimlerin özgürce ifade edilmesi" olarak tanımlar. Kontrat ile tarif edilen bağlama ve askıya alma sahnesinde kendi rızasıyla aldığı Hükmeden rolünü, bu tavır ile devamlılık içinde icra eder.

İtaat Eden, ifade özgürlüğünün askıya alınması ile deneyimlediği iradesiz bir beden olma duygumunu araştırır. İtaat Eden'in bedeni, kendi rızasıyla Hükmeden tarafından sarılır, bağlanır ve askıya alınır. Keşen, kundak, fetiş ve sansür çağrışımlarıyla, İtaat Eden'in bedenini saran parşömen sürece dahil edilir. Askıya almada fetus pozisyonu tercih edilir.

Kontrat'da dinamikleri belirlenen sahne, Gözetleyen tarafından kayda geçirilir. Gözetleyen, emeğini, İz Öztat'ın *Bıçak Üçgeni* (2018) işinin sanatçı kopyası ile takas ederek *Askıda* adlı videonun üretimini mümkün kılar.

Kontrat ile belirlenen sahnenin kayıtlarından kurgulanan ve Hükmeden ile İtaat Eden'in ortak işi olan *Askıda* adlı video, 3+2 (sanatçı kopyaları) olarak edisyonlanır.

Müelliflerinin fikir birliği ile onayladığı bağlamlarda, üretimini belirleyen koşulları içeren bu kontrat ile birlikte gösterilir.

İz Öztat

Ann Antidote

Ali Taptık

Contract for The Scene Titled Suspended

Hereby "Contract for the scene Suspended" (hereinafter to be shortly referred to as the "**Contract**") has been signed between the parties on April 25, 2019.

- Ann Antidote** (hereinafter to be shortly referred to as the "**The Dominant**")
- İz Öztat** (hereinafter to be shortly referred to as the "**The Submissive**")
- Ali Taptık** (hereinafter to be shortly referred to as the "**The Voyeur**")

Hereby in this Contract, The Dominant, The Submissive, and The Voyeur will each be referred to as a "**Party**" and collectively, they will be referred to as "**Parties**".

The scene described by this Contract reveals a bodily experience. The parties come together to explore the ethical possibilities of consensual power exchange and negotiate their relationship to power through their personal narratives, the historic and cultural contexts in which they live in.

The Dominant ties. The Submissive is tied. The Voyeur records.

The Dominant, in their manifesto "The Strange Life of Savages", defines the common denominator of their work as: "utopias, sex-positiveness, bondage, polyamory, solidarity, communities, and the free expression of all conscious and consensual lifestyles, identities and choices." In the bondage and suspension scene described in the Contract, they take on The Dominant role to carry it out in accordance with the attitude stated above.

The Submissive explores being a body without agency as freedom of expression is suspended in the public sphere. The Submissive consents to her body being wrapped, tied, and suspended by The Dominant. The parchment, wrapped around The Submissive's body by The Dominant, is included in the process with the connotations of shroud, swaddle, fetish and censorship. The fetal position is preferred in the act of suspension.

This scene—dynamics of which are defined by this Contract—is recorded by The Voyeur. The Voyeur makes the production of the video titled *Suspended* possible, by bartering their labor in exchange for the artist's copy of İz Öztat's work *Knife Triangle* (2018).

The video titled *Suspended*, a work by The Dominant and The Submissive, is edited from the recordings of the scene described by the Contract and is editioned 3+2 (artists' proof).

It is exhibited alongside this Contract, which includes the conditions of its production, in contexts that are agreed upon by the authors.

İz Öztat

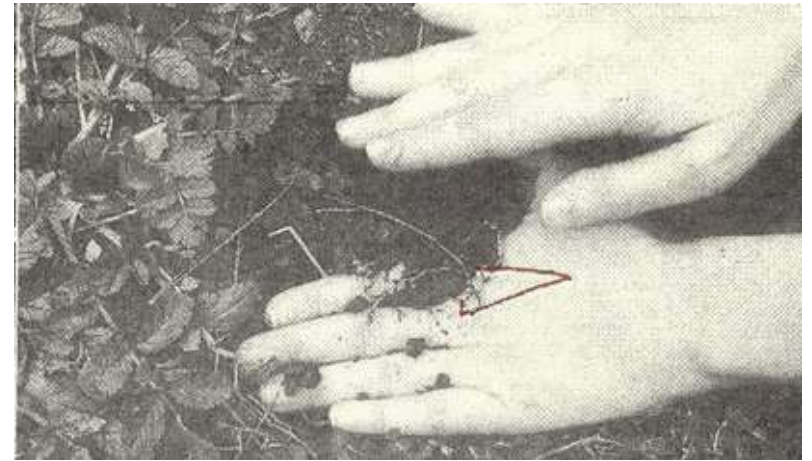
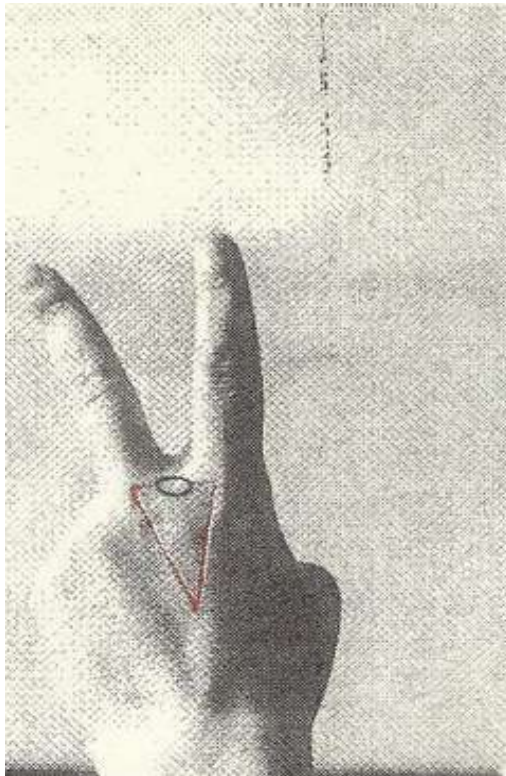
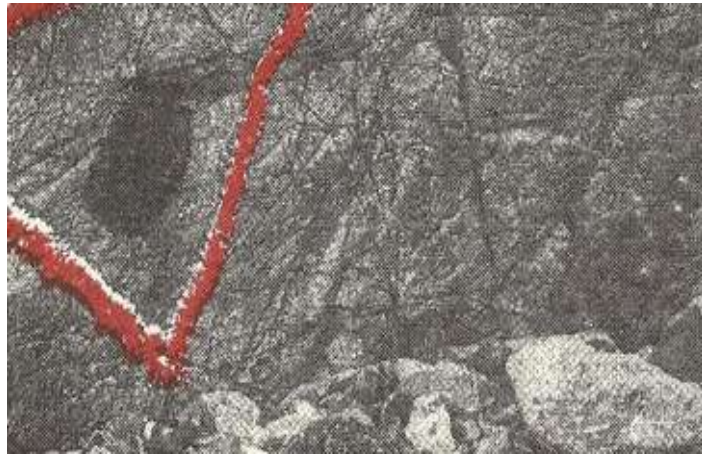
Ali Taptık



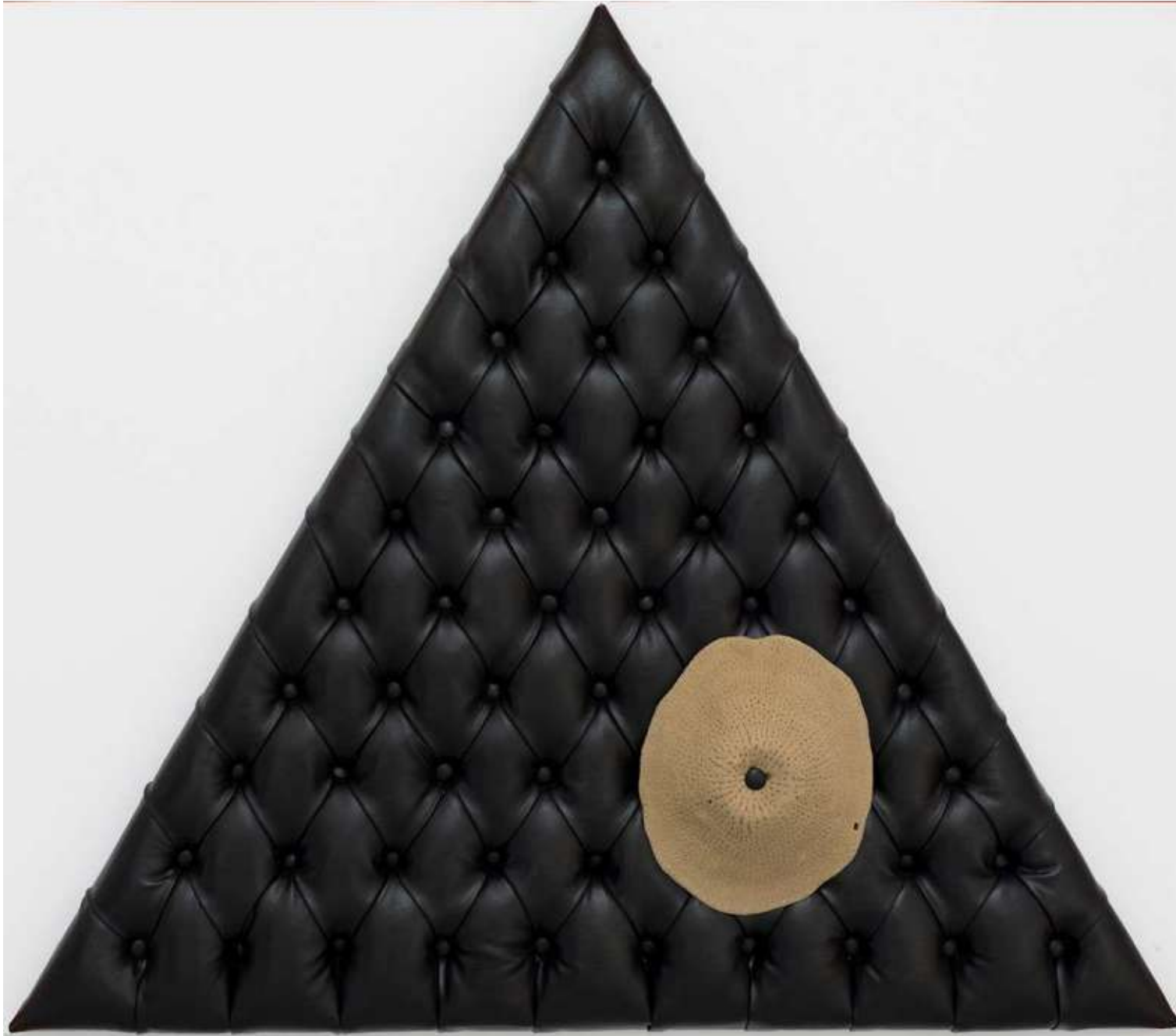
Suspended, İz Öztat, 2019
Installation view from Pi Artworks Istanbul

Felaket (Catastrophe), Zişan, 1923
Ink on paper, 25,5x18 cm
From Zişan's archive





After | *Birding*, BAÇOY KOOP, 2016
Mimeograph printed flyers, 15x10 cm each



Capitone Triangle (After Altan Gürman), İz Öztat, 2019
Artificial leather, sponge, needles, plywood, 104x90x15 cm



Haz/Cizzz I [Pleasure/Sizzle I], İz Öztat, 2019

Sponge, needle, artificial leather, tassel, tape, cardboard toilet paper tubes, wall mount, 55 x 8 x 5 cm

Tö

İz Öztat and Zişan, 2017

Flaneuses, French Cultural Center, İstanbul

In the installation titled *Tö*, Öztat investigates Zişan's convergence with Acéphale, an avant-garde experiment that took place in Paris throughout 1930s. Following his determination that fascism makes use of people's deeply rooted yearning for sensual excess and fanaticism, Bataille proposed to form a community that had no objective beyond existence and negated the creation of any work. This collective experiment materialized with Acéphale and resisted the rise of fascism in the 1930s by inventing new myths. Öztat interprets the crossing of Zişan's path with Acéphale through documents from her archive, and constructs her own myths in order to cope with the rising authoritarianism in Turkey. Working with various bodily remnants such as parchment and intestines, she weaves a narrative that can be connected both to the past and the present.



Tö, İz Öztat and Zişan, 2017

Dried intestine casing, parchment, cotton thread, buckets, water, publication | Dimensions variable
Installation view from French Cultural Center, İstanbul



Tö, İz Öztat, 2017
HD video, 1' 52'', endless loop

Tö, İz Öztat, 2017
Parchment, cotton thread, buckets, water
Dimensions variable
Installation view from French Cultural Center, İstanbul





Müfredat-ı Biser (Program Relative to Acéphale), Zişan, 1930s
Parchment, ink, 80 x 90 cm
From Zişan's archive



Tö

Tö, İz Öztat and Zışan, 2017
Publication, 22x12 cm

[Click here for the PDF of the publication](#)

Conducted in depth and projected at length

İz Öztat and Zişan, 2013 - 2014

Solo show, Heidelberger Kunstverein

This secret world that exists right there in public, Rampa, Istanbul

What Time is It?, Arter, Istanbul

Live Among and Turn Together, Galerie La Box, Bourges

The exhibition and the publication titled *Conducted in Depth and Projected at Length*, bring together narratives, archival documents and artworks that attend to the imaginary potential of a river island and the destiny of Adakale, a submerged island in the Danube River within the borders of present-day Romania. On her escape route from the Armenian Genocide, Zişan encounters Adakale as an Ottoman exclave in the Balkans and a site of projected imperial longings. The encounter inspires her utopian fiction titled *Island of Cennet/Cinnet (Paradise/Possessed)* and related drawings. In response, İz Öztat depicts a drifting river island articulated collectively on the Danube River, where there once was an island, before the construction of Iron Gate Dam in 1968.

جنت

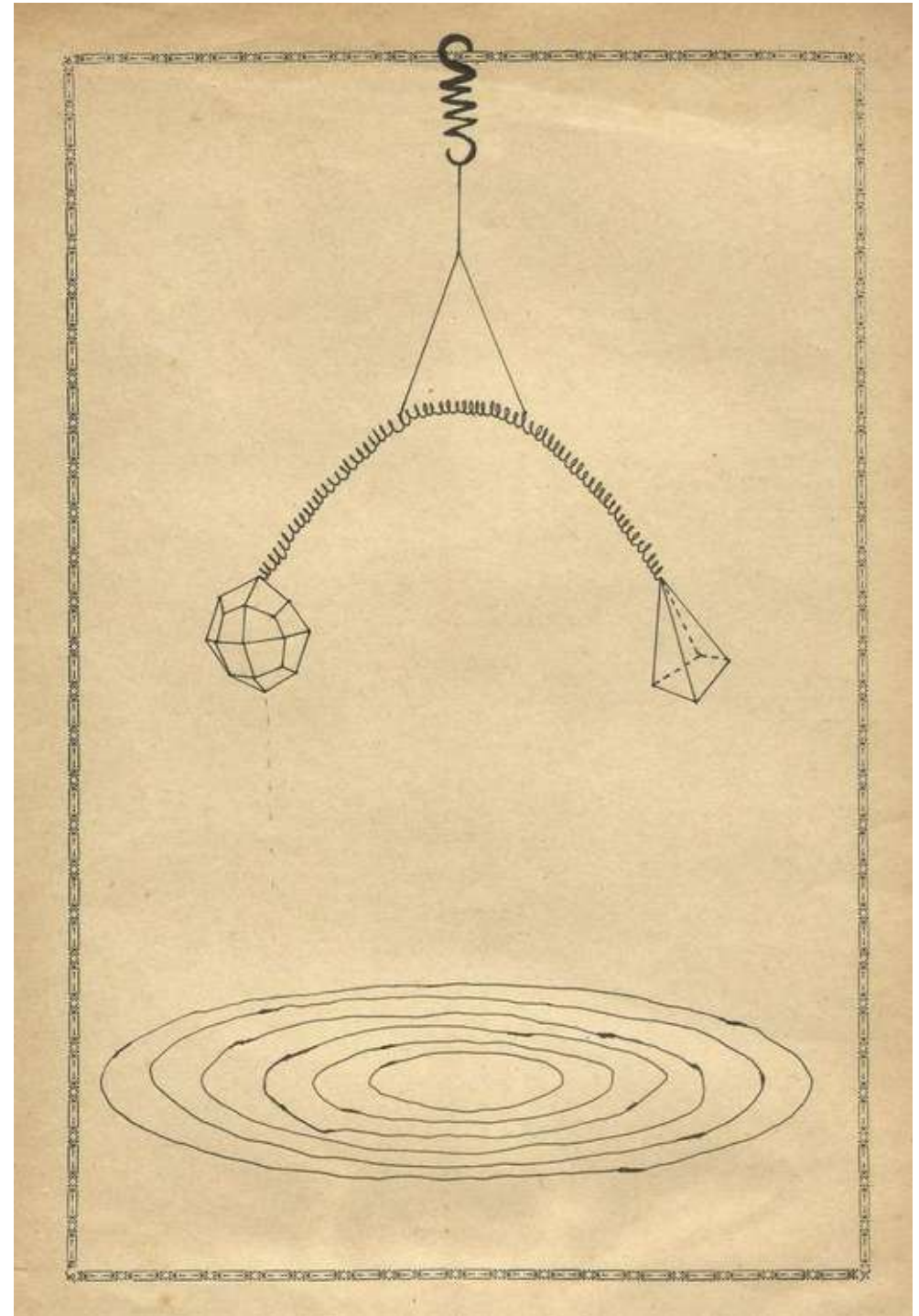


Map of Cennet/Cinnet (Paradise/Possessed), Zişan, 1915-1917

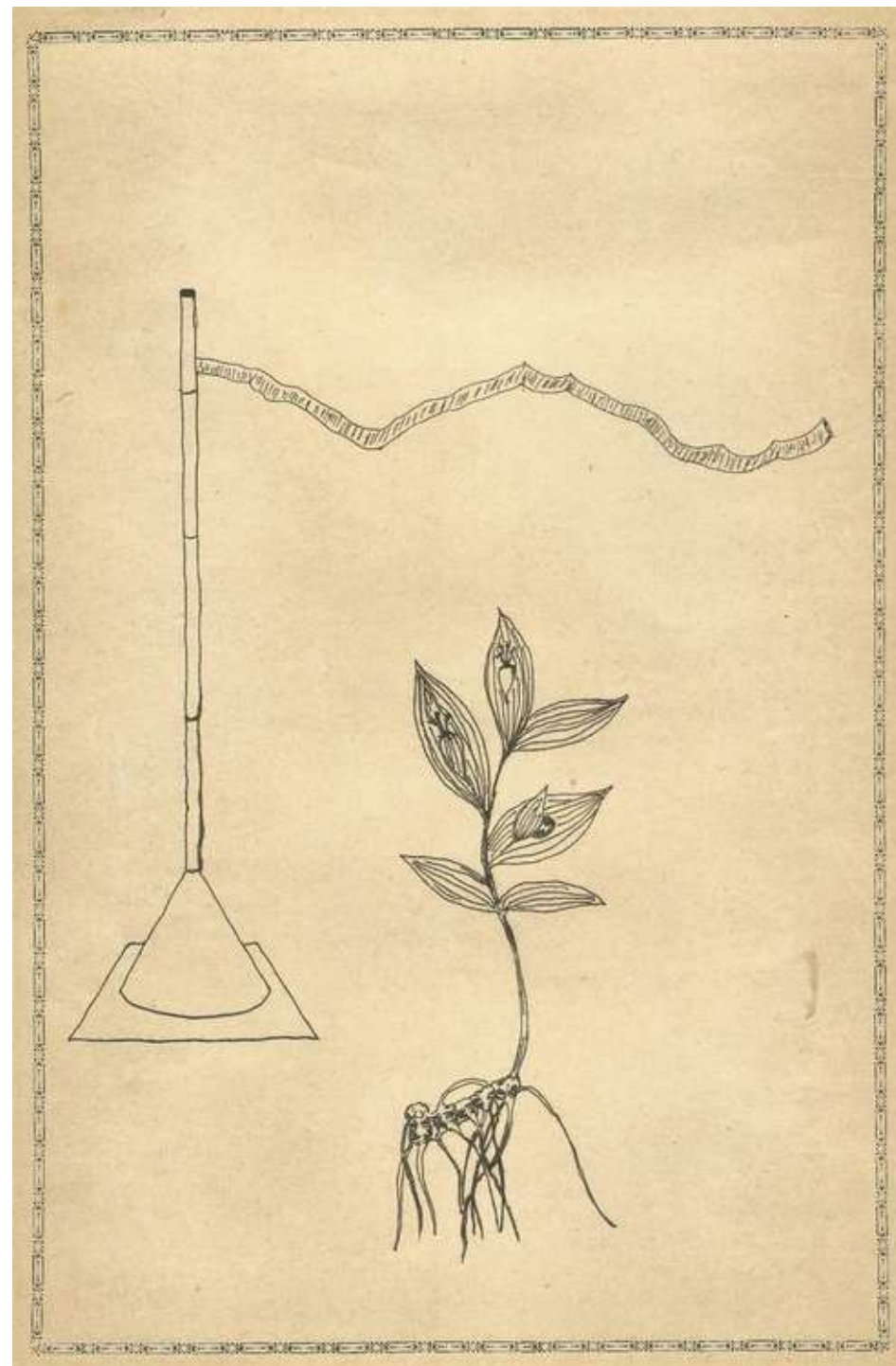
Ink on paper, 25,5x18 cm

From Zişan's Archive

Circle of Eternal Return, Zişan, 1915-1917
Ink on paper, 25,5 x 18 cm
From Zişan's archive



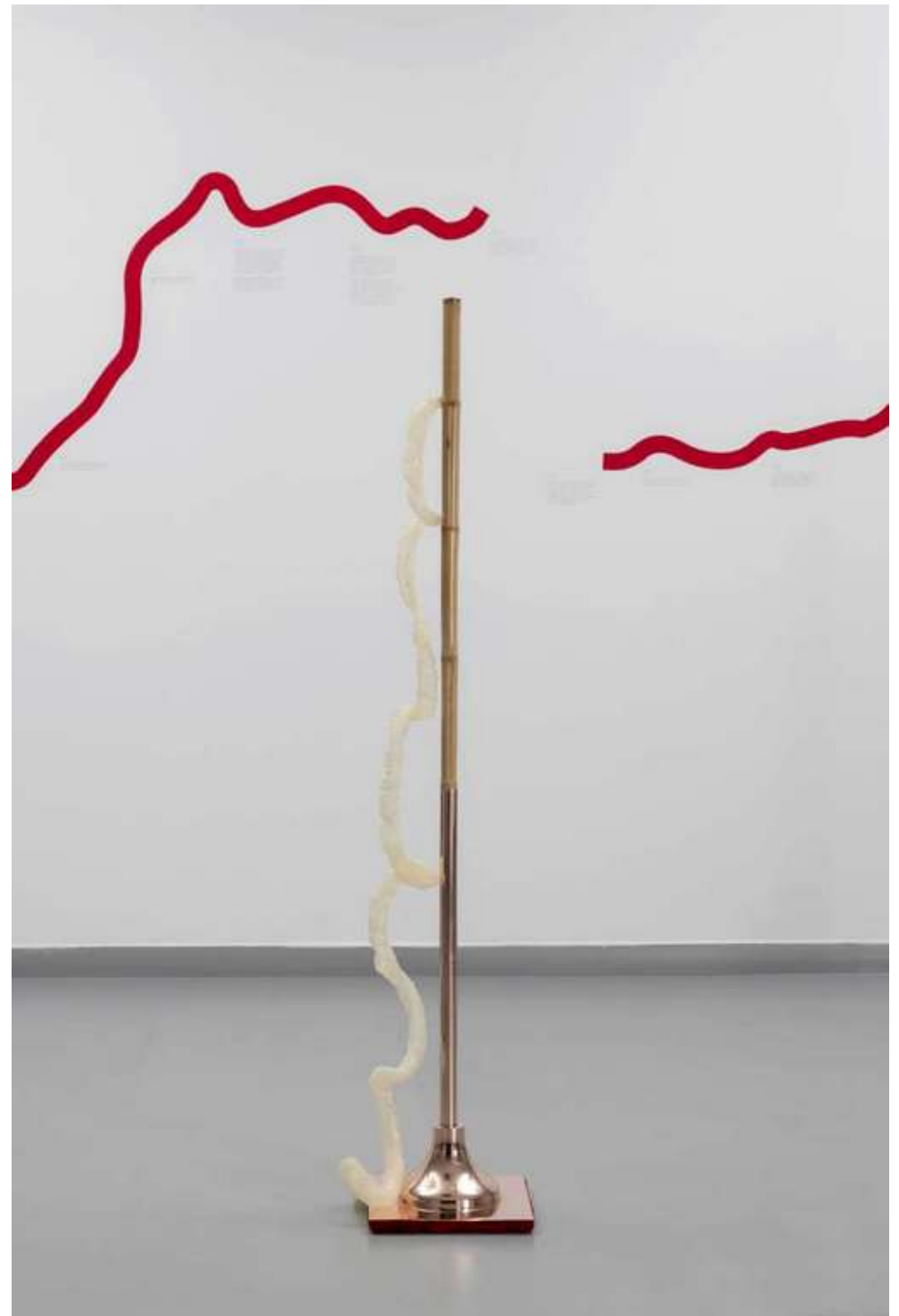
Conductor, Zişan, 1915-1917
Ink on paper, 25,5 x 18 cm
From Zişan's archive



Circle of Eternal Return (After Zişan), İz Öztat, 2013
From the *Posthumous Production* series
Vegetable fibers, spring, thread, 120 x 80 x 80 cm

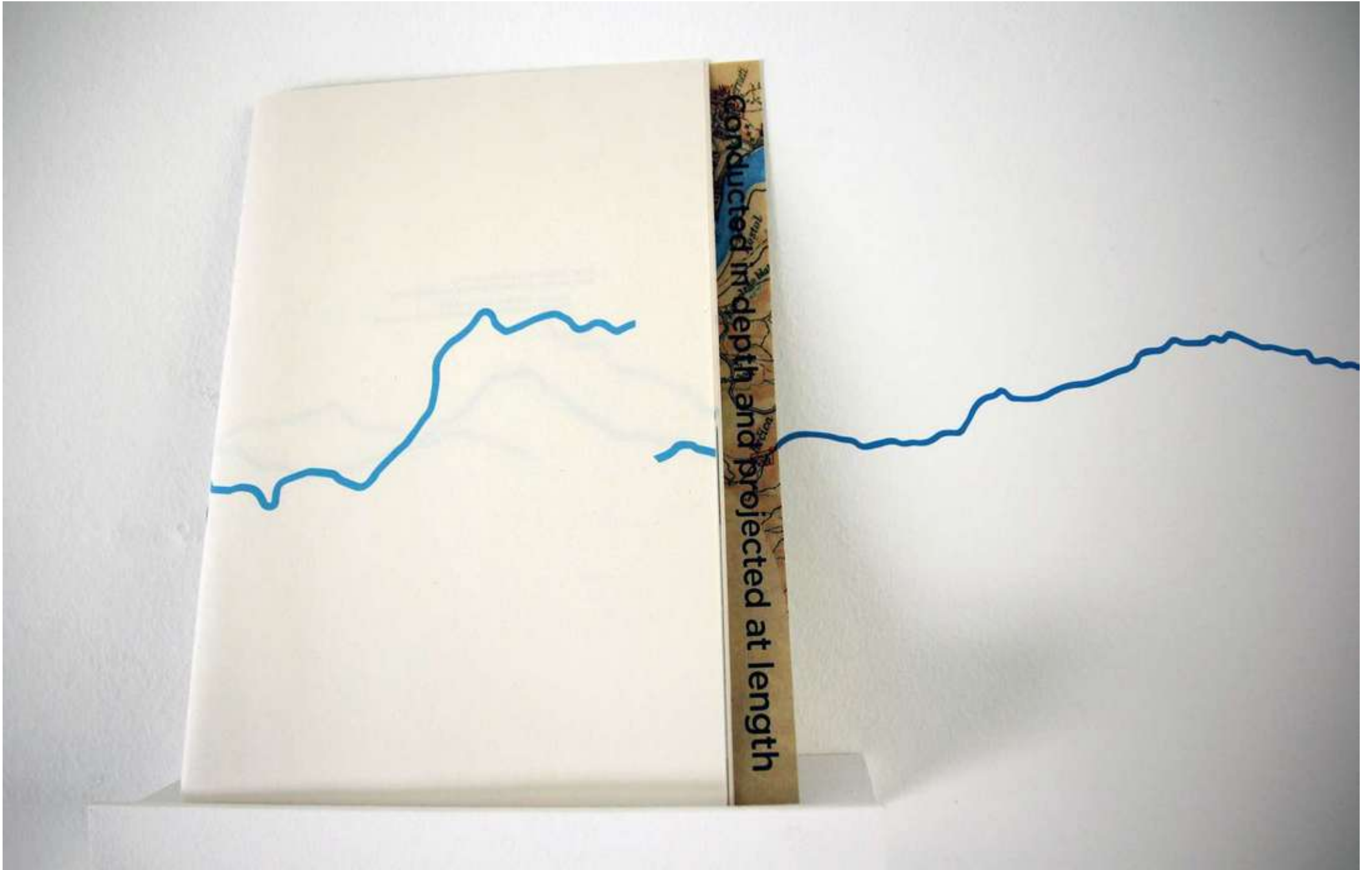


Conductor (After Zişan), İz Öztat, 2014
From the *Posthumous Production* series
Copper, felt, bamboo, dried intestine casing, 160 x 60 x 60 cm





Constituting An Island, İz Öztat, 2014
HD video, 1'46", endless loop



Conducted in depth and projected at length, İz Öztat and Zışan, 2014
Publication, 22 x15 cm

[Click here for the website of the publication](#)



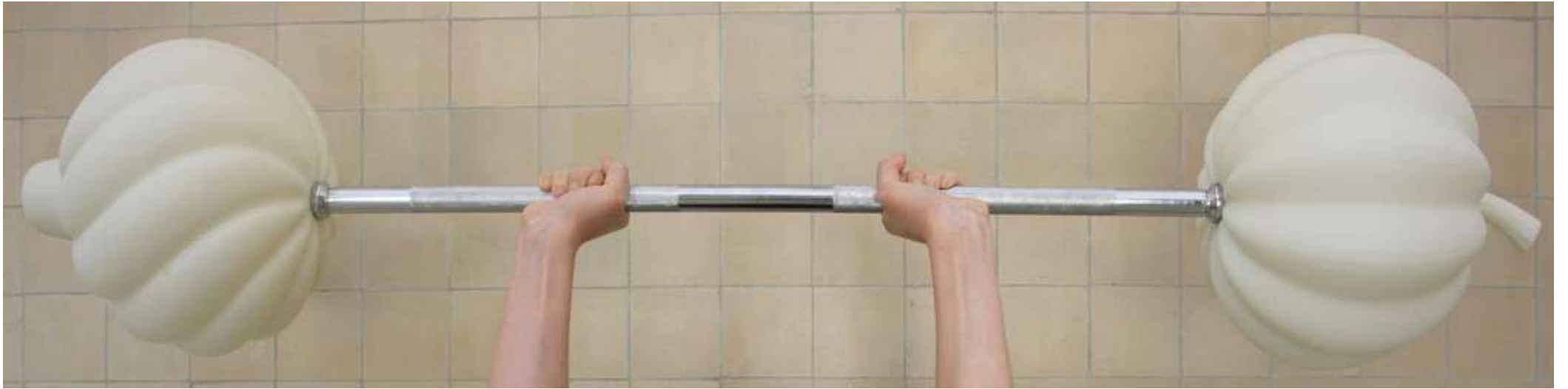
Self-portrait, Zışan, 1944
Black and white photograph, 9x6 cm
From Zışan's archive



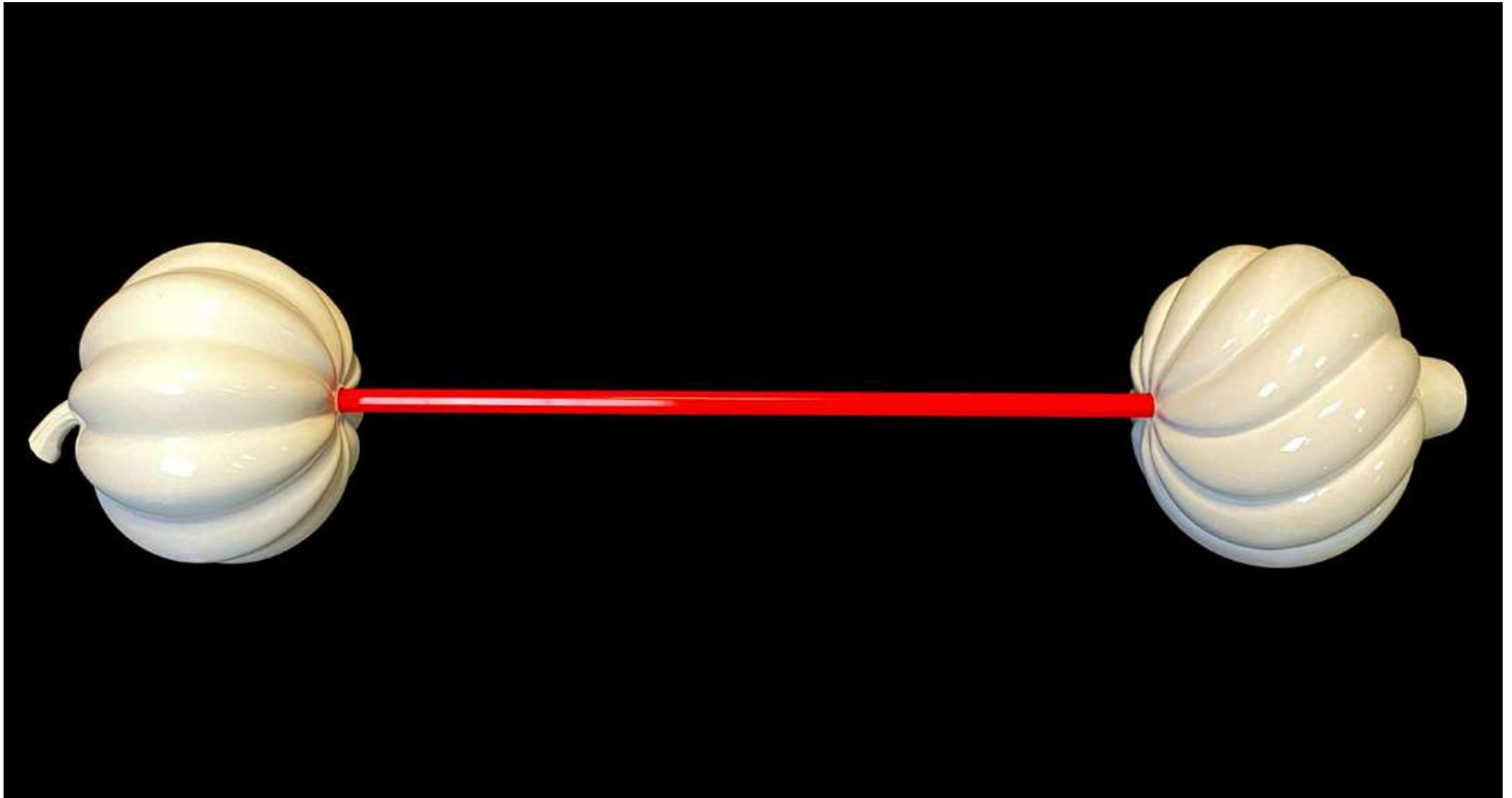
Untitled (After Claude Cahun)
Zişan, 1928 / 2012
Photo-collage, 25 x 25 cm, framed
From Zişan's archive

“İÖ:..Unlike generations of artists, who have been sent to Europe—mostly to Paris—by the late Ottoman Empire and later by the Turkish Republic to study fine arts to teach the European masters’ style to their students on their return, Zişan finds herself drifting with the avant-garde in a dialogic relationship, tactically oozing in and out of it. For the *Untitled* collage that I came across in the Maçka Sanat Galerisi collection, Zişan places a tombstone in the shape of a turban and a pumpkin on a test print for a photograph by Claude Cahun’s *Don’t Kiss Me I am in Training* Series. She juxtaposes the turban—a fascination for the Oriental gaze—with a pumpkin, which is similar in form and holds the promise of magical transformation as engrained in the collective memory through the Cinderella story. She appropriates one of Cahun’s works to establish a playful relationship between life and death; projected cultural perceptions and enchanted transformations... Zişan will eventually demand her own myth in (art) history as a non-European traveller through the avant-garde and as an “untimely” dissident figure in the lineage of contemporary art in Turkey.”

From the publication titled *Every name in history is I and I is other*, A conversation between Nazlı Gürlek and İz Öztat.



Inherited Weights (After Zişan), İz Öztat, 2012
From the *Posthumous Production* series
Digital archival pigment print, 34 x 138 cm



Inherited Weights (After Zişan), İz Öztat, 2012
From the *Posthumous Production* series
Polyamide, steel, 32 x 136 x 32 cm

Decleration of Çete-i Nisvan (Women's Gang)

Zişan was a member of the Ottoman anarcha- feminist collective Çete-i Nisvan (Women's Gang). In 1925, *Declaration of Women's Gang* was produced and placed inside the fourth issue of Turkish Women's Path journal to criticize the journal's attitude that is supportive of statism, nationalism, militarism and conservative moralism.

- Being a wife and a mother are neither commands of nature, nor sacred duties.
- Compulsory conscription should be abolished and children should not be granted to the nation.
- Faith in morals and the nation do not free women, instead they instrumentalize women for societal stability.
- Ethnic nationalism is not patriotism.
- In a single party regime, political rights cannot be gained by voting or entering the parliament.
- Education should contribute to personal freedom and will, instead of the motherland and nation.

Declaration of Women's Gang, Çete-i Nisvan, 1925 / 2010
Silkscreen on paper, 21 x 12 cm
From Zişan's archive



Sketch for an anti-conscription poster, Zişan, 1917
Collage on paper, 20 x11 cm
From Zişan's archive



کافه انسانلری خلاص ایدمک اولان بو یکی
 دنیاوسویالیزم دنیاسی در. که معنده مترضلرچیده
 مسلم که-سویالیزمک آرق برموهوه Utopie
 دگی برتحقق اینجمن مفکوره در. بنسأه علیه
 سویالیزم هرستف ایچون موجب حذر برشی
 دگی: انکس دنیا به سرمایہ سز، حبابه سز،

وساطعلسز کان انسانیتک استراحت ورفاه
 وسیلهلری احضار ایتدیکندن موجب تنی
 برطریق سالم در.
 نفوسنک بوزده طقسان بشی بروله تاریا
 اولان تورکک منفعت ورفاهنی سویالیزمده
 آرامهسی یک معقول و طوغری برچاره در.

سویالیزم وصنعت : ۱ رسام نامق اسماعیل

- حجاب اینجلی اوسمه تکارکه هنری پیوده
 صرف ایدر وبلدک قابوسندن فائده سز
 مقنیلرکمی چینار -
 والهنر (معز شانور)

یا کایش واسکی اساسات اوزررنده بوجالایان
 اختیار مدنیّت بزه صولک جیچککی، شیددی به
 قدر گوروله مش، ایشینده مش اولان بو عظیم
 قتل عامی هبه ابتدی وصیربته رق کیدیور ..
 محقق بر دورک سوکنده بر دیگرینک باشنده
 بولنوز. جمعیت بشریه دریندن درینه قابیور.
 و (توتوی) نطن ایتدیکنر خیالار بعضاً سطحه
 جیقیور وال ایله ناس ایدم بیلوروز. انسانلر
 وجودلرندن آقیدقاری قانلرک دورمقاهندده،
 آرقی، خرس، گن دگی حریت وعشقی
 ایستورلر، بوتون بشریته مستقبل برسعادت
 ورفاه وعدایدن وتوتی انسانلرک نیروجودمرد
 حسلرندن آلان یکی وآئشلی فکر جریالری
 یقین سارده شمشکار کی دولاشیور وهریکی
 کون. جمعیت حاضره نك حقسزلفنه. ریاسته
 قارشو عصبان حسی دویان متفکرلرک انتد فیله
 بوویور ونازه قونلر آلیور. بوتون بوجریالری
 هب بریره متوجه: خلقه، چالاشانلرک ساطتته ..
 بوتون مدنیلرک معیاری عدایدیان سنتمک
 بوکی جریالر اوکنده یکی اجنای شمشکار

آلتنده آلاحنی وضعیت وماهیت نه اولاجق؟
 بو یک مهم سؤاله جواب ویرمک قابیدن خبر
 ویرمک قدر امکانسزدر. آتحق ممکن اولان
 بو خصوصده دوشونیله بیله جک احتمالاری
 سوبله مک وندقیق اینجکدر.
 صنعت بو یولک فکر و حسی جریالرندن
 دائما متأثر اولمشدر. داها صریح اولارق ادعا
 ایدیله یایرکه، صنعت، تاریخک قید ایتدیکی
 تصادفی وقایع وحادثاتک دکل دوشریدن دوشری به
 بوجریالرک اثریدر. آرقامزه باقدیفمز زمان
 کوروزکه هر دین بر ایزنده برصنعت کتیرمشدر.
 انسانلری سعادتیه دوشری باقلاشدرهق
 ایسته بن، کیچی نوکل و صبر ایله، کیچی رحم
 وشفتت ایله بر چاره قلاح آرایان دینلر
 و کلیکز خلاص بو اده دراه، دییه ن، پیشلرندن
 میایونلرجه مضطرب روح سورولکلرین بو یولک
 فکر جریالرندن بشقه برشی دکلددر. دینلر،
 عصرلرجه او یویان قوملری او یاندیرهش
 سیکرلری قلمجیلامش وآ نلره نازه خیزویکی
 حبات برمشدر. عهه لری باروت سرعته

A page placed on the cover of Zışan's Utopie Folder
 Taken from the first issue of Kurtuluş journal dated September, 1919.
 Published by Turkish Workers and Peasants Socialist Party
 39x28 cm
 From Zışan's archive



***Utopie, Wayward Script & Cover of Zışan's Utopie Folder*, İz Öztat, 2013**

From the *Posthumous Production* series

Cane, esparto grass, thread & Digital print of page taken from the first issue of Kurtuluş journal dated September, 1919, published by Turkish Workers and Peasants Socialist Party , 140 x 80 cm each

Installation views from Musée d'art contemporain and The Colony, Istanbul

كافىيە انسانلارنى خىلاص ايدە جەك اولان بۇنىكى دىنىي سوسىيالىزىم دىنىيەسى دۇر. الكەمىندە مەزىنە خىلاص جەدە مەسلىم كە سوسىيالىستىك آرتۇق بىر مۇھۇمە Utopie دىكى بىر تىخىقۇق ايتىش مەفكۇرەدۇر . بىنەئەلەيە سوسىيالىزىم ھەسنىف ايتىچۇن مۇجىب خىلەر بىر شى دىكى : بىئەكس دىنىيە سىر مابەسىز ، جە مابەسىز ،

سوسىيالىزىم ۋە مەدەنىيەت : ۱ ۋە ۲ نەمەتۇ رسام نامتۇ اسماھىل

- خىتاب ايتىلى اۋستىتە ككارگە ھەزرىتى بىر مۇدە
 صرف ابدۇر و بىلەن ك قاپۇستىدىن قاندىمەسىز
 مەنقىلەر كەي چىنار -
 وانغۇر (مەتر شانتۇر)

آلتىندە آلا جەنى ۋە مەدەنىيەت ۋە مابەسىت نە اۋر لاجىق .
 بۇ بىك مەھم سۇالە جەۋاب و بىر مەك غا ئىدىن خىلەر
 و بىر مەك قەدەر امكانسىز دۇر . آ تىخىقۇق مەكەن اولان

با كلىش و اسكى اساسات اۋر زىندە بۇ جەلاليان
 اخىتار مەدەنىيەت نىزە سۈك جىيىچىكەنى ، شىمەنىيە بە
 قەدەر گۇرۇرۇلە مەش ، ايتىدىمەش اولان بۇ عەقەم

Cancelled Confessions

İz Öztat, 2021

Beats of A Fabulous Machine, Saint Joseph High School, İstanbul, Turkey

Taking its title from Claude Cahun's 1930 book *Aveux non Avenus (Cancelled Confessions)*, the installation evokes the previous function of a confessional from the school's holdings, which today is camouflaged in its daily use as a library housing the school's administrative materials. The archival materials encountered during the research process, which played a role in shaping the work, are displayed in showcases surrounding the work.

Activating the history of autobiography as a literary genre that spans thousands of years from Saint-Augustine to Jean-Jacques Rousseau to Claude Cahun, the installation examines the possibility and impossibility of a confession that does not hide anything and conveys the truth as it is.

Cancelled Confession, İz Öztat, 2021
Confessional, curtains, shelves,
Saint-Joseph High School student records (1886-1966)



Confused Examination Under Given Circumstances

İz Öztat, 2020

Crystal Clear, Pera Museum, İstanbul

The video titled *Confused Examination Under Given Circumstances* is a contemplation on crystallization; engaging with historic methods of representing and studying crystals such as verbal description, drawings and three-dimensional models. The pedagogic attitude of the work draws its inspiration from multiple sources. In John Ruskin's book titled *The Ethics of the Dust: Ten Lectures to Little Housewives on the Elements of Crystallisation* (1866), the Old Lecturer addresses a group of students as he raises philosophical questions through the study of minerals. In the video, a similar line of inquiry is followed by drawing connections between the process of crystallization and current circumstances. The "given circumstances" in the title refer to temperature, pressure and volume in the case of crystal formation, as well as the conditions of isolation, contagion, mutation and surveillance. The interdependence between extraction (of minerals, of data) and capital accumulation is addressed from a perspective that challenges the organic and nonorganic divide. Associations of crystals with energy and memory storage are explored in relation to existential questions. Ultimately, the work is a speculation on vita, what life is, entangled within nonlinear temporalities and processes.



Tek bir matematiksel sistem, aralarında hiçbir ilişkisellik yokmuş gibi görünen olayları açıklayabilir.

Who Carries the Water

İz Öztat and Fatma Belkıs, 2015-2017

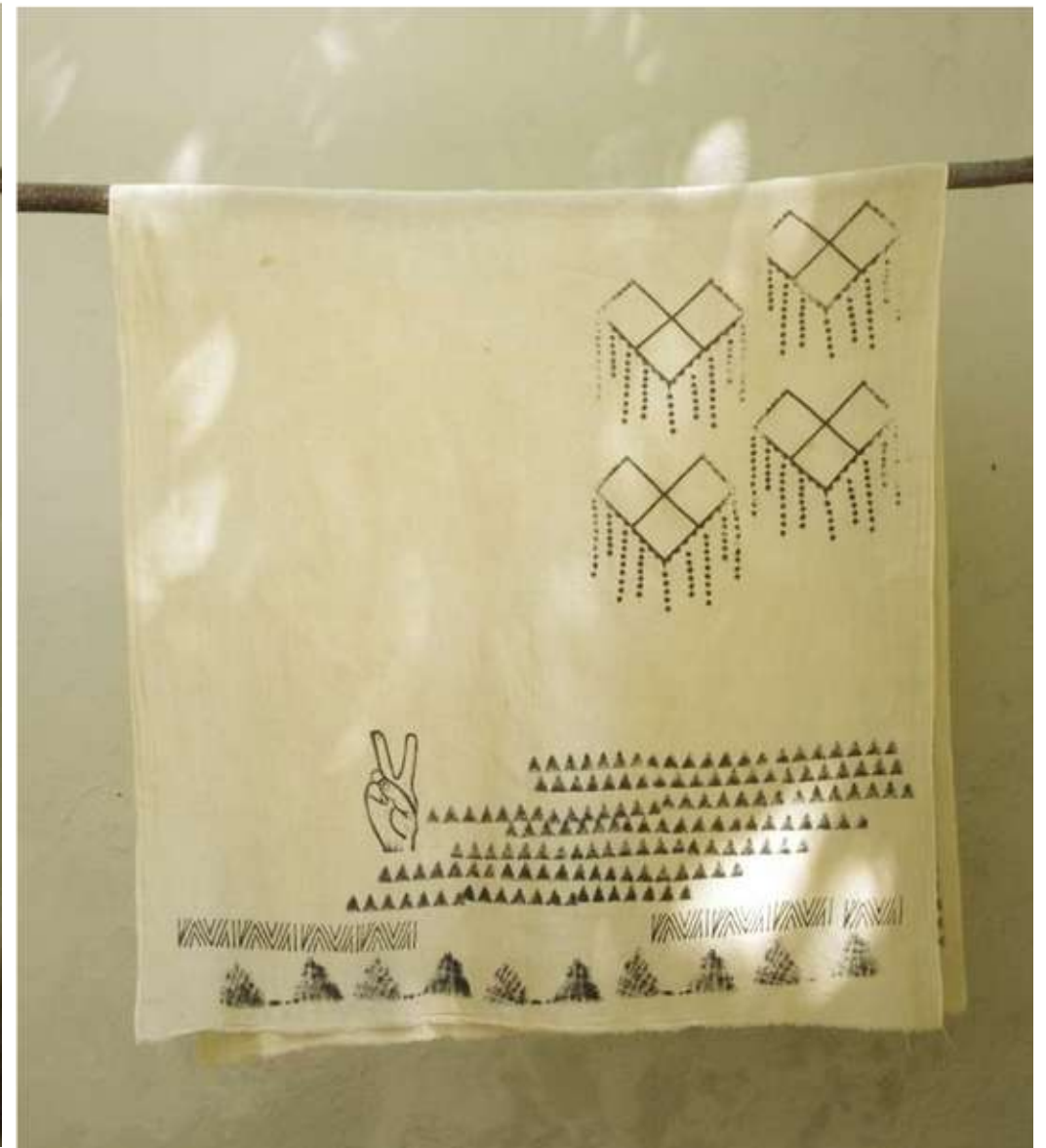
Sharjah Biennial 13, UAE

14th Istanbul Biennial, Turkey

Who Carries The Water has been shaped by what the artists learnt from the grass-roots struggles against the construction of run-of-the-river hydroelectric power plants in numerous valleys of Anatolia since 1998. Öztat and Belkıs worked with processes and materials that reflect the values articulated and protected by the struggles. The sarı yazma (yellow kerchief)—used by the women of the Loç Valley, and a symbol of the struggles since 2010—was the point of departure for articulating a language of wood-printed patterns and symbols. Wielded by the women, when they are confronted with armed forces and with the corporations, and used extensively in daily life, the hazelnut sticks are the main supporting element of the installation. Bringing together multiple discourses proclaimed by the struggle; myths, folk tales, requiems that transmit oral histories, academic sources and legal procedures, the artists wrote a dialogue-based text which positions the whole ecosystem as agents in the struggle. Becoming acutely aware of what it takes to produce electricity, the artists resorted to manual processes that do not require electric power. Revisiting the work for Sharjah Biennial 13, the artists replaced the hazelnut sticks with areesh (palm-leaf fronds), a local and vernacular building material.



Who Carries The Water | Will Flow Free, İz Öztat and Fatma Belkıs, 2015 – 2017
Naturally-dyed and woodcut printed muslin, palm-leaf fronds
Installation view from Sharjah Biennial 13



Who Carries The Water | Will Flow Free, İz Öztat and Fatma Belkıs, 2015
Naturally-dyed and woodcut printed muslin, 180x90 cm



Who Carries The Water | Scapegoat, İz Öztat and Fatma Belkıs 2015

Basket woven with crafted hazelnut sticks, carobs (“keçiboynuzu” in Turkish literally translated as “goat’s horn”), rags
Dimensions variable | Installation view from 14th Istanbul Biennial



Who Carries The Water, İz Öztat and Fatma Belkıs, 2015

Text reproduced with the mimeograph, 30x21 cm, 19 typed mimeograph stencils, 36x23 cm each
Installation view from 14th Istanbul Biennial

WHO CARRIES THE WATER

play, diary, fairy tale, theory, letter, declaration,
travelogue, news, poetry, report, oral history,
tongue twister, record, dirge

AGENTS river, Chorus of Goats, Peasant, Oak, Spruce, Stick,
State Company, Pipe, Concrete, Citizens, Comrade, Friend,
Police, Prosecutor, Lawyer, Ghost, Committee, Witch, Artist,
Academician, Translator, Master, Student, Feminist, Parliamentarian
Philosopher, Poet, Traveler, Psychologist, Writer, Pigeon Bird

VENUE mountain, valley, river, forest, village, shrine, cemetery, cave,
bed, spring, square, custody, state office, meeting room,
workshop, dam, run-of-the-river-type small hydroelectric power pl
ant (SHP)

WEATHER unpredictable

TIME layered and infinite

Chorus of Goats 7 cranes, 3 luxury cars with tinted windows, 85 trucks.
How many does that make? 35 vehicles.

Crone Who
Went to the SHP^ We'll stand here. We'll lie on the ground. It's not like
they will run us over, they can't.**

Peasant
Peasant
Crone Who
Went to the SHP They can't na.
Peasant
What if they do?

Crone Who
Went to the SHP Come on, they can't! Take this stick***. Can they?
Peasant
They can't.

Chorus of Goats 700 sold for 5. 100 special forces, 300 riot police,
400 private security. How many does that make? Exactly 1500.

Crone Who
Went to the SHP We'll stand side by side, look arm. We'll closeranks.
They can't make us budge. They'll never get through,
not for the life of me.

Peasant
Crone Who Went
to the SHP What if we are arrested?

Peasant
Crone Who Went
to the SHP It's not like they'll arrest me too! Don't you have a stick?
I do. They can't arrest us.

Chorus of Goats 550 gas capsules. Many plastic bullets. 37 in custody.
5 under arrest. 32 days in prison.

Police
Chorus of Goats First take the 85 year old ringleader.
300 sticks. 200 kerchiefs****, 12 banners, 2 bagpipes,
42 empty bottles of spray paint. 556 pieces of evidence.

Peasant Leave the stick at least! How should this old crone walk
without a stick?

Police The ringleader is not backing down. Take her for resisting
the police.

Crone Who
Went to the SHP I'll give my life, I won't give up my water!

* This is how the women, who stood guard in Ahmetler Village against the SHP,
introduced themselves.

** "Obstruction of EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) information meetings;
preventing company vehicles from entering the valleys, chasing away the company
officials they run into in the valleys, press statements with the participation
of the masses, rallies, marches, keeping guard in tents are the pillars of the
struggle against SHP in the region. In these demonstrations, the people are frequently
confronted by the security forces of both the companies and the state."
Hansici, Halmut. "Karadeniz'in İncisi: Yenilayen Yeni Toplumsal Hareketler: HES Karşısı
Mucaddeleler! Emerging Social Movements That Renew The Image of The Blacksea: Anti-SHP
Struggles! Karadiz: Karadeniz [The Blacksea Tarnished]. Ed. Uğur Biryol. Istanbul
İletişim Publishing, 2012.

*** Hazelnut sticks held by the resisting women when they are confronted with armed
forces and the company, are also used extensively in daily life as a support for the
body, for plants, for herding and beating carpets.

**** Yellow kerchiefs are still used by women of the Log Valley and have become
a symbol of the struggles against SHP during the Log Valley resistance in 2010.



Who Carries The Water, İz Öztat and Fatma Belkıs, 2015
Text reproduced with the mimeograph, 19 pages, 30x21 cm
Copyleft

[Click here for the PDF of the publication](#)

Recounting nightmares to running water

İz Öztat, 2015

The Moving Museum, SALT, Istanbul

Testimony as Environment: Violence, Aesthetics, Agency, London School of Economics

Watercolor on Paper, Pi Artworks, Istanbul

İz Öztat started working with watercolors during her research on the struggles against the construction of run-of-the-river hydroelectric power plants, which demand rivers to flow free. Departing from the Anatolian folk belief that nightmares flow away as they are recounted to running water, Öztat imparts her nightmares to a series of watercolors flowing horizontally in the video. The accompanying narrative begins with a shamanic ritual initiated by reciting the names of rivers and moves through various states of consciousness in an attempt to resist drought.

The watercolors were made with the water Öztat harvested with *Sculpture for Rainwater Harvest*.



The company's saliva is released as compensation water.

Recounting nightmares to running water, İz Öztat, 2015
HD video, 8' 56''

Watercolor on Paper

İz Öztat, 2014 – 2020

Pi Artworks, Istanbul

The exhibition brings together a selection from the watercolour series *In the Rivers North of the Future* (2014-2017), *Pleasure/Sizzle* (2018-2019) and *April Diary* (2020), along with the video titled *Recounting Nightmares to Running Water* (2015), which is based on a series of watercolours. Since 2014, Öztat's watercolour works accompany the artist's research processes like a diary; bearing abstract traces of their transient making, as well as the contexts with which they are associated.



Watercolor on Paper, İz Öztat, 2014-2020
Installation view from Pi Artworks Istanbul



From the series Pleasure/Sizzle, İz Öztat, 2018-2019
Watercolour & mixed media on paper, 37 x 27 cm, Framed

Sculpture for Rainwater Harvest

İz Öztat, 2014

The Moving Museum, Şişhane Park, İstanbul

With *Sculpture for Rainwater Harvest*, İz Öztat appropriated 0.80 m² of surface from Şişhane Park's rainwater harvesting area during The Moving Museum exhibition. In the course of these 47 days, the sculpture accumulated 82 kg of rainwater. After the exhibition, the harvested water was used as raw material that makes the production of a series of watercolors possible.



Sculpture for Rainwater Harvest, İz Öztat, 2014

Galvanized metal, plastic pipes, second-hand water tank | Installation view from The Moving Museum, Şişhane Park

We are on the same boat...

İz Öztat, 2013

Here Together Now, Matadero Madrid, Spain

two mouthsful of silence, Balkan Artist Guild, London, UK

Reunion, Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Istanbul

İz Öztat's work began with research on meanings of the word "strike", which was first used to describe "stopping work" when sailors struck down the topgallant sails of merchant ships to prevent them from sailing. She matches the sail with the "hand fan", a cliché symbolizing rest and pleasure. Depicting a hand striking a fan against the sail to fill it, Öztat produces a poetic image of a desperate effort but also of hope to achieve the impossible.

We are on the same boat..., İz Öztat, 2013
Sail and projection, Dimensions variable
Installation view from Sakıp Sabancı Museum



I am not dealing with triangle, square and circle

İz Öztat, 2012

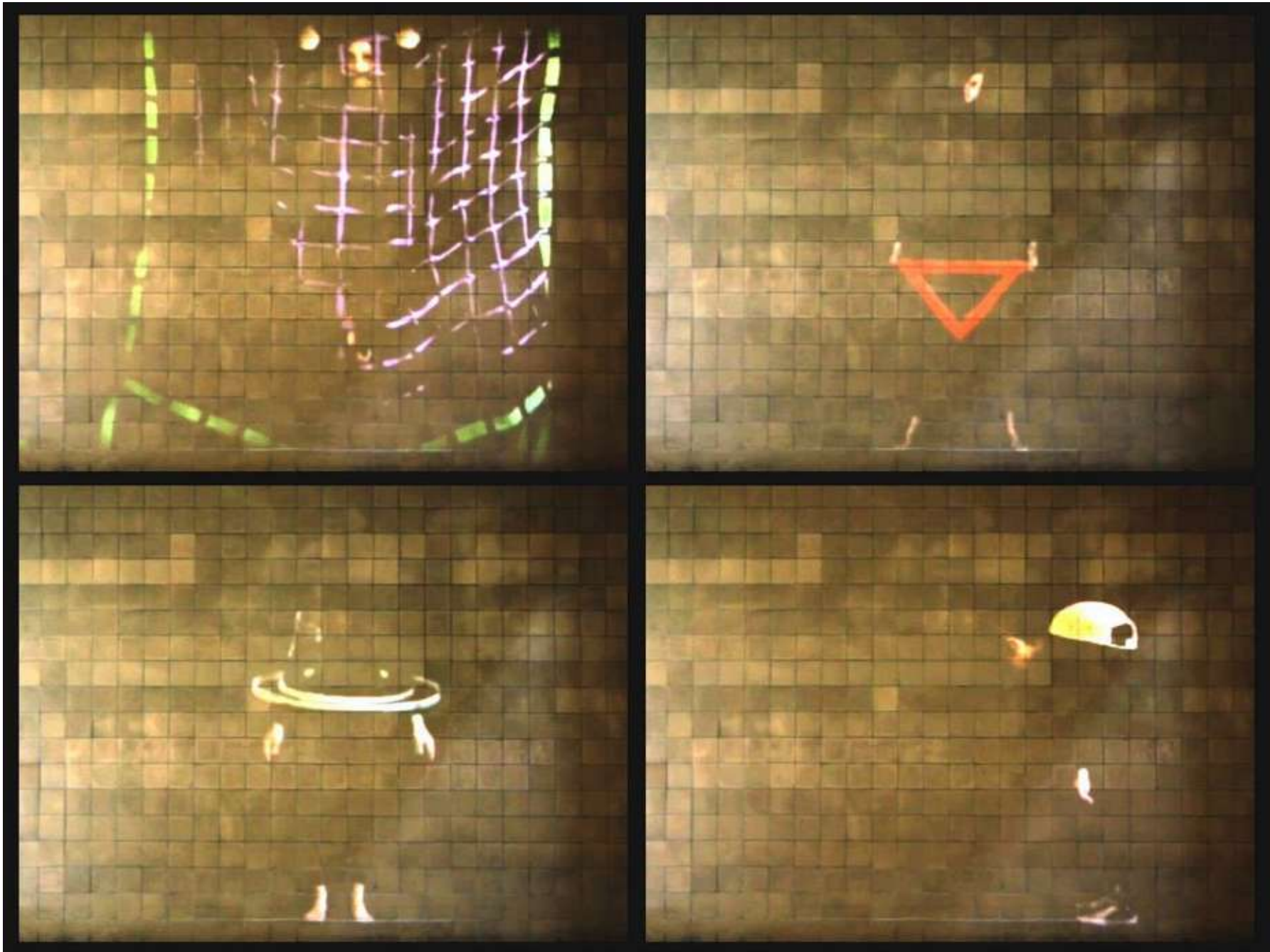
Maçka Sanat Galerisi, İstanbul

İz Öztat's solo show at Maçka Sanat Galerisi, which has been dedicated to showing conceptual tendencies since its conception in 1974, came out of the time İz Öztat spent among the recordings and documents from the gallery archive.

The title of the work, *I am not dealing with triangle, square and circle* is a quotation taken from the discussions in the gallery, which revolved around the potential of geometric forms to suggest a universal language versus their rootedness in local heritage. The four objects that are basic geometric forms with references to artworks previously shown in the gallery, tools and materials of everyday life are precariously placed and can be manipulated by the audience. In the video, a fragmented female figure emerges like a ghost from the tiled walls, which have been there since the conception of the gallery, and tries to access the knowledge embodied in the objects through an animistic quest.



I am not dealing with triangle, square and circle, İz Öztat, 2012
Installation view from Maçka Sanat Galerisi



I am not dealing with triangle, square and circle, İz Öztat with Gökçe Yiğitel, 2012
HD Video, 3' 06" and four objects | Dimensions variable

I prefer to answer questions

20 Anonymous Interrogators and İz Öztat, 2016

Maçka Sanat Galerisi, Istanbul

İz Öztat departed from the sound recordings of discursive events in the Maçka Sanat Galeri archive for her work titled *I am not dealing with triangle, square and circle* in 2012 and has been invited to work with the archive once again as the gallery was about to close. Preferring to produce a new document to be included in the archive, Öztat revisited interrogation as a methodology that she encountered both in the recorded talks and as a political tool widely used by state authorities.

İz Öztat positions herself as the interrogated subject by appropriating a sentence from the recordings as the title of the work, *I prefer to answer questions*. She invited 20 anonymous interrogators—including artists from different generations, art critics, curators, her mentors and friends—to interrogate her in Maçka Sanat Galerisi. The roles of “the interrogator” and “the interrogated” were outlined by a contract. The sound recording of the interrogations that last over 20 hours were exhibited along with a publication of questions compiled from the interrogations and were introduced to Maçka Sanat Galerisi archive as a contemporary document.



I prefer to answer questions, İz Öztat and 20 Anonymous Interrogators, 2016
3-page mimeographed publication and sound recording, 20 hours and 41 minutes
Installation view from Maçka Sanat Galerisi

Display and Conservation

İz Öztat, 2010

ARTER, İstanbul

Display and Conservation has been commissioned by ARTER for the *Second Exhibition*, which has been curated with a focus on institutional critique. The installation suggests a display iconography with architectural fragments, referencing the pavilions constructed by the Ottoman Empire for World Fairs in the second half of 20th century. The chosen fragments reference ideological use of exhibitions by the late Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic. The installation is intended to create a theme-park feeling, allowing the historical references to materialize towards today's festivalism, city marketing and ephemeral architecture.

The physical installation is represented as a 3-D model in a touchscreen display on the wall, which links the chosen fragments to historical references and allows the visitors to navigate through an associative archive. This interface suggests multiple connections and entry points for a historical narrative that situates contemporary art practice in relation to the secularization and westernization projects of the nation state. It is placed on the wall, somewhere between the installation and the institution.



Display and Conservation, İz Öztat, 2010
Installation, Dimensions variable | Installation view from ARTER



Display and Conservation, İz Öztat, 2010
Installation, Dimensions variable | Installation view from ARTER



Sacred Relics

Sacred Relics is an attempt to reflect on the interdependency between the context and the ontology of objects.

Hacer'ül Esved Cover

İz Öztat with Barocco Silver, 2007

Hacer'ul Esved is a black stone placed on the eastern corner of Kaaba to mark the beginning place of the circumambulation. It is believed to be sent from heaven. In 756, when the Emevis besieged Mekke, a catapulted stone hit the Hacer'ul Esved and broke it to pieces. Abdullah bin Zubeyr put the broken pieces together in a silver cover. During Ottoman rule, the worn out covers (due to pilgrims' touch and kisses) were replaced with new ones. This object is a reproduction of the old Hacer'ul Esved cover, which is displayed at the Pavilion of the Sacred Relics in Topkapı Palace.

Surp Hrant

İz Öztat with Dikran Taş, 2008

Hrant Dink committed his life to constructing dialogue across differences and reworking memories to allow us understand each other's pain. By establishing Agos, a newspaper published both in Armenian and Turkish, he gave voice and visibility to Armenians in Turkey, while creating public awareness about their social and political demands. Hrant Dink was put on trial for insulting Turkishness (with clause 301) and was made a target of Turkish nationalism both by the state and by the media. He was murdered on January 19th, 2007. The state and the police were complicit in the murder, the trial still goes on... The silver revetment is made in reference to metal coverings that protect icons.

Sacred Relic of the Future | GMO-free Wheat Seed

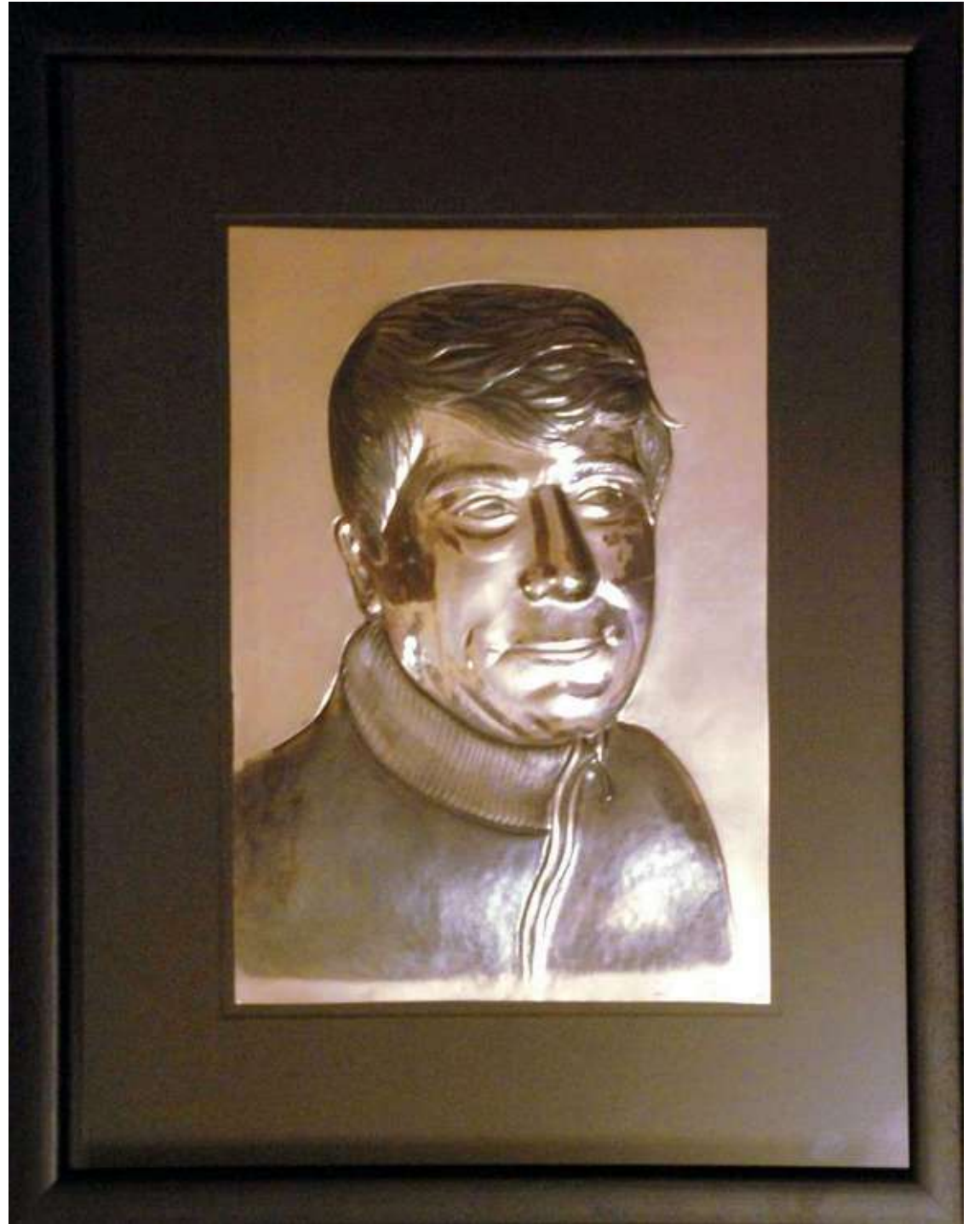
İz Öztat with Barocco Silver, 2010

Sacred Relic of the Future is based on a reliquary made for preserving Prophet Muhammad's hair. It calls attention to a heritage, GMO-free local seeds, that will be completely destroyed with genetic engineering unless we find a way to preserve them.

Hacer-ül Esved Cover, İz Öztat with Barocco Silver, 2007
Brass, 54x32x10 cm



Surp Hrant, İz Öztat with Dikran Taş, 2008
Silver, 30x20 cm



Sacred Relic of the Future | GMO-free Wheat Seed
İz Öztat with Barocco Silver, 2008
GMO-free wheat seed, silver, glass, seal, 12x7x7 cm



Sisters

İz Öztat, 2008

When Ideas Become Crime, DEPO, Istanbul

Counting Thoughts, The Running Horse Gallery, Beirut

Two Şahmaran, mythical creatures depicted in miniatures and folk art, move through vertical landmarks of history. They kiss and stare at the audience. The work tries to open up a fantastic space to question assigned gender roles and social taboos.



Sisters, İz Öztat, 2008
SD video, 3D animation, 30''



İz Öztat (1981, Istanbul)

In her collective and individual artistic practice spanning diverse media defined by her research, İz Öztat explores the persistence of violent histories through forms, materials, space and language. She responds to absences in official historiography through spectral, intergenerational and speculative fictions. İz Öztat fabricates the (auto)biography of Zişan (1894-1970), who appears to her as a historical figure, a ghost, and an alter ego. She takes on Zişan's archives and interprets them through her practice to construct a complex temporality of action that enables the suppressed past to intervene in the increasingly authoritarian present. The values and methodologies driving her practice have been articulated in relation to struggles against the taming of running waters for profit and progress, queer desire and consensual negotiation of power.

Selected exhibitions include Underbelly, Zilberman Istanbul (2023); I am Nobody. Are You Nobody Too?, Meşher, Istanbul (2022); The Colony, Schwules Museum, Berlin (2018); Tamawuj, Sharjah Biennial 13 (2017); Land without Land, Heidelberger Kunstverein, (2016); Salt Water: A Theory on Thought Forms, 14th Istanbul Biennial (2015); Second Exhibition, Arter, Istanbul (2010). Her academic articles, essays and fictional texts have been published in various media. Öztat participated in artist residency programs in Amman, Berlin, London, Istanbul, Madrid, Mexico City, Oslo, Paris and Yerevan. İz Öztat is represented by Zilberman and she lives and works in Istanbul and Berlin.

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