

Kubilay Mert Ural

Teletext Lover

23.03.—27.04.2024

In Kubilay Mert Ural's work, uncanniness is a muscle exercised in an obsession with blurring the lines between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the ordinary and the extraordinary, the absurd with the reasonable. His practice threads painting, sculpture, video, and performance around a highly imaginative stream of consciousness that populates dreamworlds with an array of fascinating characters. The hybridity and elusiveness of his work is a result of a continuous experimentation with different media that not only seeks to access different realms of his imagination, but also to address sociopolitical issues in a visceral and thought-provoking manner.

Central concerns of his work are consumerism, power structures, and societal inequality. Being a keen and empathetic observer, he strives to address injustice and decadence through a bizarre and off-the-wall language which, far from the impression of an apparent sarcasm in its outlandish aesthetics, it seeks to ultimately arise an emotional response.

In *Teletext Lover*, Kubilay Mert Ural articulates a multi-media exhibition comprising painting, video, and musical performance. His new film *Bad Seed* (2024) follows the prison break and wrongdoings of a group of criminals called 'Bad Seeds'. By means of the tropes of B-movies and absurdism, Mert Ural takes on a generic story from American cinema and approaches its drama with a sardonic and scatological language, ultimately reflecting on the binary between good and evil.

The paintings in the exhibition are entryways to Mert Ural's daydreams. His pictorial language is profuse and not bound to specific conventions of the medium. At times, his paintings come across as vignettes of a film-to-be, as scenes from an oneiric journey; at other times, they strike as improvisations or, rather, the inception of new characters in his artistic repertoire.

Aside from the film and paintings, Mert Ural shows two video works that remind us of the political engagement of his practice: a motherboard with a refugee counter on the one hand—perhaps an comment on the automation and dehumanisation of migration—a bird-eye's view of a dystopian cityscape on the other, at which the more we look, the harsher the sight becomes.

Kubilay Mert Ural will also be performing original music a couple of times throughout the run of the exhibition. In fact, his artistic career began in the performing arts as a musician, and music has remained an intrinsic part of his multidisciplinary practice.

Kubilay Mert Ural was born and raised in Istanbul and currently lives and works in Amsterdam. He holds a BA in Management of Performing Arts and an MA in Applied Arts from Sandberg Institute. He completed a residency at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten between 2017 and 2018. Recent exhibitions include *Pigs and Sheep and Beasts*, Nieuw Dakota, Amsterdam (2023); *Scattered - Hidden Narratives Through Archives*, Framer Framed, Amsterdam (2023); *Pink Prison* (with Afra Eisma), Hotel Maria Kapel, Hoorn (2022); *On the Threshold of a Dream*, 38CC, Delft (2022); *Cheapskate*, Ellen de Bruijne PROJECTS, Amsterdam (2019); *Earthlings and the Space Problems*, PILOT, Istanbul (2018); *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, KIT Düsseldorf (2018).