

Dear Mrs. Karamustafa

- 1. Your long-standing multidimensional, international artistic oeuvre and career reflects on the sociopolitical and economic shifts over the past years and it retrieves from oblivion painful historic memories. Do you consider that as an artist you have a personal and political mission? Which are your means for getting across your values and your personal statement?**

I do not think that all artists have to have political missions related to their artistic outcome. Also if they really wish to be entangled with politics the best is to choose to continue with real politics itself as some artists do. Anyway I believe artists have the power to be the chronicler of their time and if they wish they can take the mission of creating memories. I think that is also a political issue though not direct. Probably that is the way I prefer to deal with politics with my art.

- 2. Your artistic act is rendering indiscernible the boundaries between art and life. What is the role of tradition and the presence of the so-called orient in your work?**

I always choose to start my works with my own connotations as I know them best. They could be my memories, my belongings or the stories that link me to my own realities. When the work finishes and presented publicly, to my surprise I find that it shares a lot with the audience wherever it is shown. To reach the international through the personal always gives me great happiness. It gives you confidence that when a story is transferred the right way it will always have the power to communicate.

- 3. Your solo exhibition at Nitra Gallery in Athens in *entitled 'The Peculiar Song'*. Please describe to us briefly the concept of your exhibition project and what it will entail.**

I have a feeling that the history and the memories of the city I am living in, nowadays are being quickly buried under heavy dust. In the near future one will have to dig so deep to find the traces of what have been lived there with the reminiscent of its diverse cultures. I believe that the artist can take over this mission and claim the responsibility of carrying this precious legacy to the future. Paintings, assemblages with found objects, collages executed with small casual photos from residents who once survived in Istanbul with their humble lives, will turn into artworks that will find new dimensions on the Nitra Gallery's walls.

- 4. Taking in consideration that you have exhibited your work in Greece also in the past what is your view on the current critical situation Greece faces**

**today? (crisis, refugee crisis, class division and lack of social prudence, gender issues, feminism etc.).**

I have produced two works that were particularly made and presented for Greece. One was for EMTS contemporary Art Museum in 2011 and the other was for Thessaloniki Biennale in 2013. While “Porters Loading” talking about the orientalist way of abusing the image of porters within the touristic scenery, “The Apartment Building” on the other hand was directly talking about the 1955 pogrom in Istanbul and its consequences. By the time I was in Athens things were at a very crucial moment and the highest level with the economic crisis was in the scene. Within the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century though there were many expectations, not only in one particular point but in the whole world scene you confront with such inequalities and crisis

**5. And how would you comment the sociopolitical situation in your country and on the issues of displacement, border-crossing, and identity? Finally how would you describe your relationship with Istanbul nowadays?**

Istanbul has gone under a very big change through those past 20 years. Unfortunately not to the better or the best but towards a chaotic disorder. The growth of population, the effect of the wars that are taking place at neighboring countries, issues of the war migrants, pollution, insoluble traffic situation is one part of it. The other part which I find very important as well is the uncontrollable construction sector. The outlook of the city changed so much that in a near future we will not be able to find any corner in the city that would remind us of the past. This is why I wish to stop for a moment and look back as I will do with my exhibition in Nitra Gallery as I believe that while living the anxieties or the excitements today it is very important to link it with our memories.

Thank you