

August 2005

EindhovenIstanbul

1 October 2005 – 29 January 2006

The Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven presents a selection of key artworks drawn from the famous Istanbul Biennial exhibitions of the past 18 years. The exhibits from 40 international artists include large scale installations, video projections, sculpture, painting and drawing. Never seen together in this combination, the selected works make up for an imaginary Istanbul collection and reflect the memory of that special yet always temporary event - the Biennial in one of the world's most significant cities.

In the 21st century, biennials of contemporary art take place all over the world, from São Paulo to Gwangju, Venice to Havana. The old idea of a world exhibition of exotic objects shown to Europeans and Americans has been displaced and transformed through this process. Biennials spread out over the whole globe and create a circulating system of artworks and discussions. Positively, they have great flexibility and encourage cultural exchange to happen in different directions. Yet they often leave little long-term physical impact. As the subject of mass media promotion, they also run the risk of slipping harmlessly into the cycle of leisure activities from which art has usually kept itself apart.

Historically, museums are the counter models of biennials. The original task of a museum was to keep, research and present art works, thereby building up a reservoir of ideas over time that would be available to the public in sober surroundings. That traditional role of the museum today is pressured by demands for immediate economic or social returns. Yet the nature of accumulating knowledge through a collection still requires a different perspective - one that values time spent looking and enlivens the idea of the museum as our collective cultural memory.

EindhovenIstanbul brings together the biennial and the museum in one exhibition for the first time. It gives a biennial a place to rest and reflect on its own past – at least for the limited time of four months. At the same time, it sets the Van Abbemuseum's collection in motion. Works by artists unknown to the collection will be juxtaposed with the Van Abbemuseum's own art history. Until now, the biennial and the museum were regarded as being opposing systems of presenting art. *EindhovenIstanbul* proves that both could go hand in hand, showing that one is potentially no more or less exotic, exclusive or popular than the other.

The visitor will encounter a stunning variety of art pieces in the exhibition. From the Istanbul Biennial, some will focus on more general philosophical questions of mankind, of life and existential human issues. Each of those works forms a little cosmos in itself, hoping to approach the viewer without any regard to geographic context or ethnic difference. It points to the fact that art could still be a kind of universal language able to speak directly to an individual viewer.

Other works will point in an opposite direction, dealing specifically with given social, economic and political contexts. In many cases, they directly relate to the city of Istanbul,

whose art community has grown hugely in the last 15 years. These works will be placed in close encounters with the collection of the Van Abbemuseum, helping to turn the museum into a series of conversations with lived experience. The exhibition understands its purpose as one of opening up to Eindhoven and another distant but important city. It seeks to give space to all the pleasures of seeing, thinking and reflecting that a museum makes possible.

EindhovenIstanbul seeks to bridge differences. Differences between two cities, between institutions, between artists and audience. It is an attempt to portray two places in the world by a selection of art works that have special connections to a specific place. For the public, it will provide a fresh view of the unique possibilities of the Van Abbemuseum, an extraordinary international jewel in the city of Eindhoven.

The exhibition *EindhovenIstanbul* is curated by Eva Meyer-Hermann and Charles Esche. It will be accompanied by a two volume visitor's guide in Dutch and English. This year's *9th Istanbul Biennial* will be held parallel from 16 September until 30 October 2005.

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EindhovenIstanbul

40 international artists selected from 18 years of the Istanbul Biennial in dialogue with the collection of the Van Abbemuseum

Absalon	Hoeck, Richard
Alptekin, Hüseyin B.	Höllner, Carsten
Altay, Can	Jacir, Emily
Alÿs, Francis	Karamustafa, Gülsün
Bajevic, Maja	Kentridge, William
Bruly Bouabré, Frederic	Lassnig, Maria
Bryce, Fernando	Murtezaoğlu, Aydan
Byrne, Gerard	ODA Projesi
Cardiff, Janet & George Bures Miller	Onur, Füsün
Duwenhögger, Lukas	Rist, Pipilotti
Eichhorn, Maria	Sala, Anri
Erkmen, Ayse	Sangar, Bülent
Ersen, Esra	Sone, Yutaka
Floyer, Ceal	Tenger, Hale
Frize, Bernard	Trockel, Rosemarie
Gediz, Leyla	Weerasethakul, Apichatpong
Genzken, Isa	Zbanic, Jasmila
Goldstein, Zvi	Zobernig, Heimo
Grigely, Joseph	en anderen

Note to editors:

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