

Press release: participation at art fair



Trafo Gallery at Contemporary Istanbul

24 – 27 October 2024
Curator: Blanka Čermáková

We are pleased to announce that our gallery has been selected to participate at the prestigious international art fair Contemporary Istanbul, which is celebrating its 19th year of operations. Between October 24 and 27, 2024, exhibitions from around the world presenting a high-quality selection of contemporary art will be made available to the public at the location of the historical docks of Tersane Istanbul. Trafo Gallery will be represented by the works of two talented Czech artists, Ester Knapová and Pavel Dušek, with whom it has long collaborated. So please come and support young Czech art and visit us in Istanbul!

Istanbul, a city on the border between Europe and Asia, has been the seat of the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires throughout its long history, making it a fascinating mix of Eastern and Western culture. Today it is a modern metropolis, but one that does not deny its historical soul. The contemporary art scene in Istanbul is very vibrant and rivals even world centres such as London or New York. It can be seen as an imaginary bridge between East and West, where contemporary art develops within the context of global social change and local history.

This year's 19th year of the renowned art fair Contemporary Istanbul will be open to the public from 24 to 27 October 2024 and will be participated in by almost 80 galleries from around the world. This year it will again be located in the historical dockland district of Tersane Istanbul, which was once the site of one of the largest shipyards in the Mediterranean and is often compared to the Arsenal complex in Venice in terms of its genius loci.



ESTER KNAPOVÁ

Ester Knapová (b. 1993) is a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague (2013--2019, Painting Studio II, Vladimír Skrepl School). In 2019, she spent some time working at the Browse and Darby Gallery in London. Her paintings can be read as highly sensitive and allegorical introspective investigations. We encounter a world of expression analogous to the character of archival photography, but with painterly shifts and dreamlike interpretations. The clarity of memory is blurred in favour of more generally conceived, complex communicativeness. Knapová situates the recurring motifs of landscape cut-outs, forgotten places, initiatory events and rituals in the period of childhood, which she thus elevates to a natural laboratory of a multiplicity of simultaneous processes transforming the human being in time. And since time as an independent referent is elusive, it is replaced by places, spaces, figures and objects.



PAVEL DUŠEK

Pavel Dušek (b. 1992) is an artist whose interventions in public spaces cleverly torpedo the boundary between the private and the public. However, his work is not limited to large-scale concrete mosaics. Dušek is a painter fascinated by material, both in respect of form and content. The question of the energy, temperature and visuality of individual materials is a strong theme that he subjects to analysis. For him, material is not merely the formal, necessary and definitive carrier of the artist's ideas, but becomes the fundamental subject matter of the content of a painting. In 2012--2018, Dušek studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague at the Michael Rittstein Painting Studio III.



CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL TIPS FOR VISITORS TO ISTANBUL

When wandering around Istanbul, we cannot recommend highly enough a visit to the [Istanbul Modern Museum](#) and the [Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art](#). Of the many historical monuments, the [Galata Tower](#), the [Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque](#) and the [Suleiman](#) or [Blue Mosque](#) are all well worth a visit. Also of great interest is the [Basilica Cistern](#), with tours of the vast underground space featuring a ceiling supported by 336 Corinthian marble columns and walls of ancient concrete, which in the past served as a reservoir for the city. Now flooded to a height of only half a metre or so, the space offers a remarkable light spectacle. However, if you'd like a break from the art and historical monuments, feel free to stroll through the local markets, which offer an endless array of colourful spices, exotic fruits, fabrics and carpets, and wooden products.

Many thanks to the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, specifically Mgr. Martin Bax, and the PPF Foundation, without whom our presentation at the fair would not have been possible.

Contacts for visits and media: Blanka Cermáková (trafogallery@trafogallery.cz, 739 517 758), Lucie Kropáčová (lucie@trafogallery.cz, 773 520 675), Šárka Samková (sarka@trafogallery.cz, 724 349 590), Viktorie Varvařovská (viktorie@trafogallery.cz, 733 709 705).

Trafo Gallery, Hala 14, Pražská tržnice, Bubenské nábřeží 306/13, Prague 7, trams 1, 12, 14, 25, metro Vltavská (300m), open Tue–Sun 3–7pm, Sat 10am–7pm, www.trafogallery.cz, IG: trafo_gallery, FB: trafogalerie