

Turkey: Cevdet Erek

Kunstforum

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On the upper floor of the Sale d'Armi in the Arsenale is a huge wooden structure made out of stairs and bridges. In the middle there is an open passage where visitors can freely move between the different countries' contributions. - "I wanted to open up a road between the countries", as Cevdet Erek allusively declared at the press conference. He calls it the "international route" between neighbouring states. Born in 1974, he studied art, architecture and music and participated in documenta 13 with his "Room of Rhythms" in 2012 and developed sound installations for Orhan Pamuk's Museum of Innocence in Istanbul. Now in Venice he combines architecture and music in his impressive, subtle political installation "ÇIN". The title evokes a sound, similar to 'ding' in English, and at the same time recalls the sound we hear in a buzz in the ear. At the top of the bridge there are seven towers that hold loudspeakers, the sound of a total of 35 channels fill the room and create a "sound-ornamented" façade without the actual formation of walls.

Sometimes it is only sound that can be heard here, a hiss, then a whisper. In the narrative, one reads the few condensed observations, some on the political situation in Turkey, the other about the installation: "block your ears / tinnnn / tinnitus / no cure / face history" or "drummer in the battlefield scene / a momentary hesitation in her hand / may the war end", but also "a biennial event marked with a ding, 2 years scaled-down to seconds" and "whatever is square is a record cover to us ". On the right and left steps lead up to the bridge, partly blocked on one side by a massive fence.

Erek calls it a "guest stage", a closed off public space, visible but out of use. It also reminds us of a state of imprisonment, of conflicts and borders, of confrontation, the stairs like benches facing each other would suppose a resting place but give a restless impression. With this installation, Erek has given a complex reflection of present Turkey and our time.

Translated from German by Inez Piso

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