

# Elmas Deniz

[www.elmasdeniz.com](http://www.elmasdeniz.com)

## Three Hues of Water Solo Exhibition at Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul, 2020

Excerpt from the exhibition text:

Elmas Deniz is a concept-driven artist whose works focus on the human-nature relationship, the idea of nature throughout history and ecological concerns. In her newly produced works Deniz not only critically exposes the faults of the system and its ecological problems but also points to the ways in which nature and people relate to each other. The exhibition philosophically investigates the evilness of humankind, the damage that people can cause and further points to different possibilities for a new value system. Believing that we must refocus our attention on to that which has slipped from it, she searches for a remedy for our potential extinction that will be caused by our learned defects, such as not being able to hear a seed crack or to notice the three distinct colors of a creek.

Three Hues of Water is an extension of Deniz's works that were exhibited in the 16th Istanbul Biennial: The Seventh Continent. In this new exhibition, she continues to unfold our relationship with nature; the included works focus on the invisible history of this relationship and its trajectory, create a personal, exemplary archive, grasp its place in our contemporary lives and may even shape a future for it. / To see the full text follow the [online ink](#)



Sorrow, 2019, Video 15min [each] [details](#)



Eluding "humans", 2019, lightbox [details](#)



The Camera Trap of Inequalities, 2019, interactive installation [details](#)



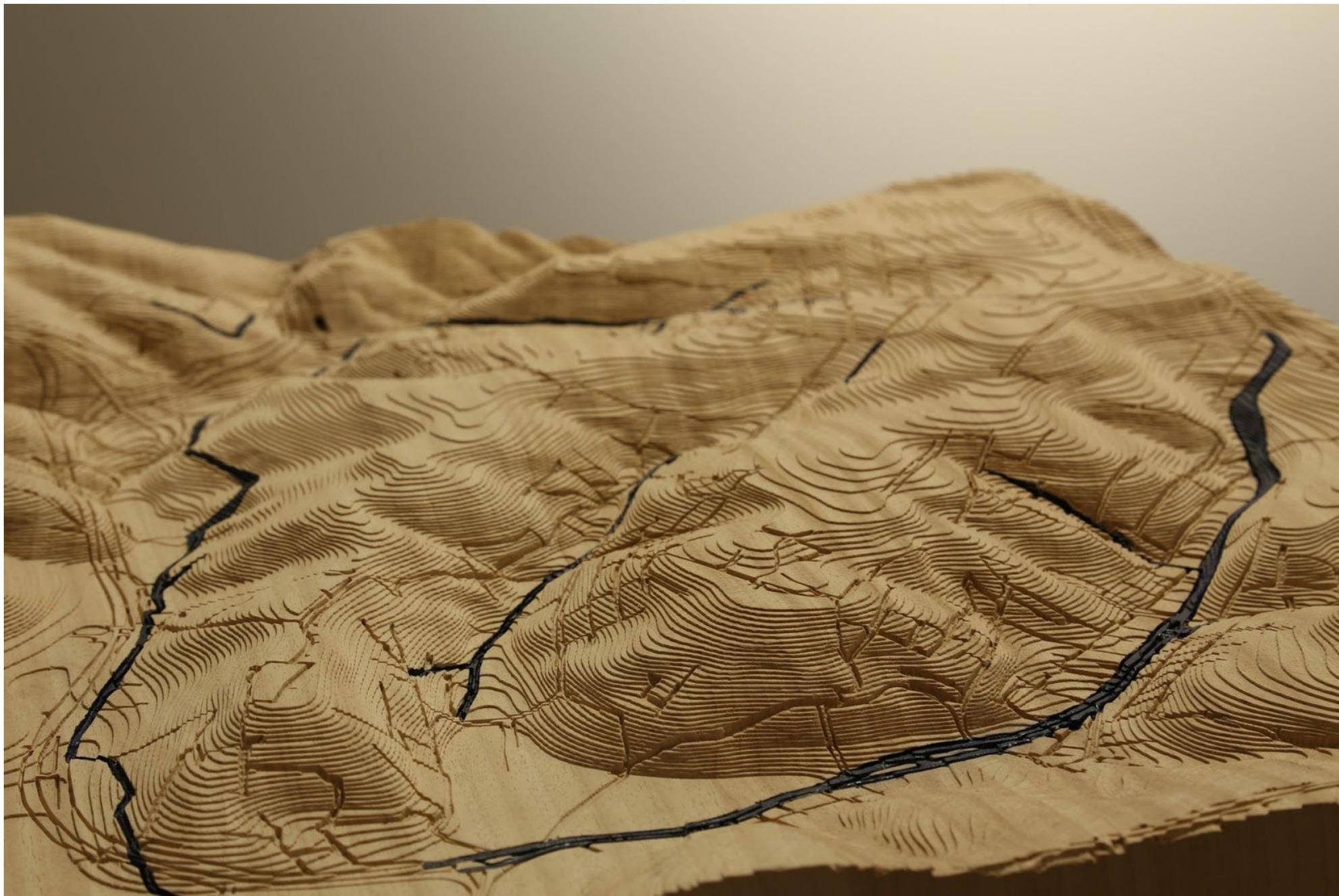
About soft bodied evils, 2019, Video, 05min 30 sec [details](#)



Three Hues of Water, 2019, View from the exhibition

## The Seventh Continent 16th Istanbul Biennial, Curated by Nicolas Bourriaud, 2019

In her conceptual works, Elmas Deniz calls attention to ecological changes occurring with capitalism and the age of the Anthropocene. She examines the changing of the landscape and the deterioration of the nature by humankind. Deniz is showing two works about disappeared flows of water. The first one is a three-dimensional topographic relief of Istanbul, spanning the area from Şişli to Taksim Square. On this relief, lost rivers and creeks are marked on the current roads. Deniz's other piece centres on a creek near which she grew up, near Bergama. This wall installation, while focusing on the small and insignificant, calls attention to natural and human-caused environmental transformations and extinctions./ To see the page [online ink](#)



Lost Waters, 2019, 3d wooden relief, 68 × 100 × 75 cm [details](#)



History of a particular nameless creek [Pinna Nobilis], 2019, Pinna Nobilis shells, 73 x 96 cm [details](#)



History of a particular nameless creek [Pinna Nobilis pearls], 2019 [details](#)

## A Year Without A Summer Solo Exhibition at Pilot, Istanbul, 2018

Excerpt from the exhibition text:

The exhibition is based on Deniz's new video and her artist book she produced in Sri Lanka, and brings together her new paintings, sculptures, texts and objects. Deniz asks how humans relate to nature from economical, cultural and historical points of view. The exhibition borrows its title from a historic natural phenomenon. The volcanic eruption in Indonesia on 17 April 1815 affected most of the world and led to a change in climate. The following year marked by widespread crop failures and famine, later became known as “— year without a summer”... / To see the full text follow the [online ink](#)



Made to be Seen, 2017, Video 6min 8sec [Vimeo link](#)  
[details](#)



Year Without a Summer, Solo Exhibition, Pilot, 2018

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A Year Without a Summer, Solo Exhibition, Pilot, 2018



Greenhouse for Nothing, 2018 [details](#)



Mistake no:1 and no:2, 2016, non-biodegradable and biodegradable plastic bags. [details](#)

A Year Without a Summer, Solo Exhibition, Pilot, 2018



A Year Without a Summer, 2018



Ravens have a Theory of Mind Say, Scientists, 2018 [details](#)



Raven Portraits, 2018 [details](#)



# Flying Plants, Dogs and Elephants

Elmas Deniz

## Encounters with the companion species

We live in a world that flows in relation to our height. Everything that's around us is fixed to the height of someone slightly shorter or slightly taller than us. Right parallel to us is a life level slightly higher. There is a 1 m<sup>2</sup> area that we never leave.

There is a 1 m<sup>2</sup> area that we cannot leave. For example, always look below when I'm walking—not at my feet, below that, the weeds, the plants. There are also those who look above when they are walking.

We sit on the street, a crowded venue with lots of pedestrians, the stray dog is right there. We are colliding on to a universe in which we don't even know the perceptions of another level. (Here, the surface collapses, hugging the dog.) This is also a place that we don't know, but that we could relate to.

The two-legged approaches the four-legged, hugging, like thousands of years ago. What happens takes place on me and there. There is direct eye attention to the tree. (He will has spoken)

It is very difficult to hug dogs, but it works out. When they have their head against you, an indescribable feeling emerges that comes from the same place as hugging a person that you love. Nobody dares to pet you. I see. This is the kind of word things that I love, heroic things unimagined.

Stray dogs know that they are not loved, even if they are fed. You can pet it in their eyes. That's what I can't handle. People also disregard each other the same way. I also can't handle that. I see knowing their level, but being able to understand the expression in their eyes, that familiar stray dog.

## Transport Guidelines GUIDELINES FOR TRANSPORTATION OF LIVE PLANT SPECIMENS

### I. General

1.1 Shipments of live plant material have to comply with applicable international and national phytosanitary regulations. These regulations very often dictate the way in which plant material may be transferred from country to country, they not only cover the form in which the plant specimens may be transferred but also the materials and methods which may be used in packaging.

1.2 Plant specimens should be given high priority over non-living items during all phases of transportation and handling.

Generally, only healthy, free-living plant specimens should be transported. Certain plants may need preconditioning to meet environmental conditions to be encountered at transit or at the final destination.

1.4 To obtain optimum success in propagation and substratum, live plant material should be transported as rapidly as possible, which usually means by air, using the pressurized compartment of the aircraft. Except for seeds, surface mail should not be used for long distance transport of plant specimens.

1.5 Quarantine authorities should not impose stringent treatments that will injure plant specimens, particularly specimens of taxa included in Appendix I of CITES.

### 2. Advance arrangements for transport

2.1 It should be the consignee's responsibility to ensure that adequate advance arrangements are made to care for the plant specimens until the consignee takes them into his charge.

2.2 All possible precautions should be taken in advance to ensure that shipment containers are kept dry, and not exposed to freezing conditions, and that they are not left exposed to the sun, extreme heat, or freezing conditions (temperatures). Plants should be stored in such a manner that they have adequate ventilation.

2.3 The estimated time of arrival of the plant specimens should be notified in advance to the consignee, and, also the route of the consignment.

Sofa dog, the year is 2007 or 2009. There was a small dog. I wish I had hugged it, we called it the sofa dog, because it was like a small sofa. You'd smile looking at it, you could even laugh. The sofa dog had a wide body on top of its short legs. We'd see it at night near Tunnel on Istiklal Avenue. (always were about the same encounter.)



Then there are 3 of them, I'm on the ground, first I let it smell my hands I know that this means hello for you. They're in front of a cafe bar, I first look into the eyes of the large white dog coming towards me, there is no threat there. Just that steady motion of 'I've never been loved.' It's shaking its tail, when one comes, the others catch up, I hug all of them, I'm on their neck. They follow me for a bit when I leave, my friend is travelling, I'm going to find her car. One of them appears with a glove in its mouth, they play, we play. They disappear at the end of a long street.



Flying Plants, Dogs and Elephants, 2018 [details](#)

It is very difficult to hug dogs, but it works out. When they lean their head against you, an indescribable feeling emerges that comes from the same place as hugging a person that you love. Nobody dares to pet you, I say. This is the kind of weird things that I love, heroic things unimagined.



Unsellable Artwork, 2018 Organic seeds in box [details](#)

# TILL IT'S GONE Group Exhibition at Istanbul Modern, Curated by Celenk Bafra and Paolo Colombo, 2016

From the exhibition catalogue:

In her conceptually driven productions, Elmas Deniz intermingles artistic, editorial, and curatorial practices. Based on drawings, sculptures, installations, moving images, and writings, her works explore economic, political, and ecological problems caused by urbanization, development, and globalization. She investigates nature, a topic with which she has long been preoccupied, particularly through the system of economic values and commercial relationships. She questions the ways in which global capitalism redefines and re-presents nature and the ways in which the individual perceives and consumes nature and natural beauty as a result of that commercialization. According to the artist, in the urban environment defined by the neoliberal order, everything that is proposed for the sustainability of nature is actually paradoxical. Because the sustainability of the capitalist system depends on constant growth, even the depletion of natural resources can be presented in a commercialized manner.

In her video “Human-less”, made specially for this exhibition, Deniz presents, with only small artistic interventions, camera recordings taken from unmanned aircraft known as “drones”. The artist uses as “found” materials the camera shots she obtained from a media organization during the Alanica art symposium held in Russia’s North Ossetia-Alania region. In the video, we get a bird’s-eye view from a drone of the pristine southern Caucasus Mountains. While at first we admire the landscapes, but eventually they lead us to question humankind’s ambivalent relationship with nature as well as our ways of observing and perceiving nature. The eye watching this extraordinary natural landscape is neither a bird’s eye nor a human eye; it is mechanical. When we take into consideration the drone’s highly controversial uses, such as surveillance, “Human-less” emphasizes the fact that in their relationship with other living beings and nature, too, humans place their own interests first. The preservation of nature has been reduced to symbols and representations, which means that over time, everything related to nature is consumed and rendered banal more and more rapidly. Increasingly, the preferences and demands of present-day humans are geared toward experiencing natural environments that are “human-less”, untouched by human hands, and ever more realistic simulations of nature.

“Human-less” questions the ways in which humans and human technology perceive, present, and exert power upon nature. The basic artistic intervention in the video is done through writing, a recurring element in Deniz’s artistic practice. As we watch in awe, as if we were birds soaring through the succession of natural landscapes, writing appears, which reads: “but you are not a bird”. This intervention made by Deniz in the video is like a representation of all the interventions made by humans into nature. It makes us feel that experiencing the world from the perspective of a bird is not enough to understand either the bird or nature. The artist further emphasizes this by displaying, along with the video, the sculpture of a drone- bird hybrid she calls “Synthetic”. Although with today’s technology it is possible to control even pristine natural environments undisturbed by human activity and experience them virtually, like a bird, it can only be an illusion.



Human-less, 2015, Video, 6min 11sec. [Vimeo link](#)  
[details](#)



Synthetic, 2016 [details](#)



Till It's Gone Exhibition, Istanbul Museum of Modern Art, 2016.

## SALTWATER 14th Istanbul Biennial, Drafted by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, 2015

From the catalogue;

Born in 1981 in Bergama, Elmas Deniz lives and works in Istanbul. Her conceptually-driven practice includes different media and centres around issues such as economics, globalisation and consumption culture as well as nature and the perception thereof. Her piece on display titled *Under the Panorama* (2012) is a separate work produced in combination with her video work *Quality of Life for One*, and takes up precisely from the point when the dialogue ends in the film. Alluding to the problem of global waste that is becoming ever more relevant in our time, the work originates from the artist's realisation during a stroll along the Bosphorus that the amount of manmade material within the sand far exceeds the amount of natural stones. Beautiful views can be deceptive due to the human tendency to ignore what is out of sight, hidden and not easily recognisable. The work illustrates this fact by rendering the invisible visible, and showing us what is at the bottom of the sea: garbage, indicated by sand and a nylon bin liner. This is where all consumption ends up, slowly suffocating us by filling up the sea, a breath of fresh air in a metropolis bustling with endless construction.



Under the Panorama, 2012-2015 [details](#)

## Seeing the Black Panther Solo Exhibition at Pilot, Istanbul, 2014

Excerpt from the press release:

'Nature' and 'the economy', which are issues the artist has been preoccupied with for a long time, had constituted the foundation of her solo exhibition at Maçka Art Gallery in 2012. The issue of "poverty" that she tackles through the individual is opened up to discussion via the questioning of a more global system of values in this exhibition with a focus on money as an instrument of change and the act of monetary valuation itself. Particularly the commodification of nature and the normalization of this commercializing, and works on humans' perception and consumption of nature (and even natural beauties) are among the issues explored in the exhibition.

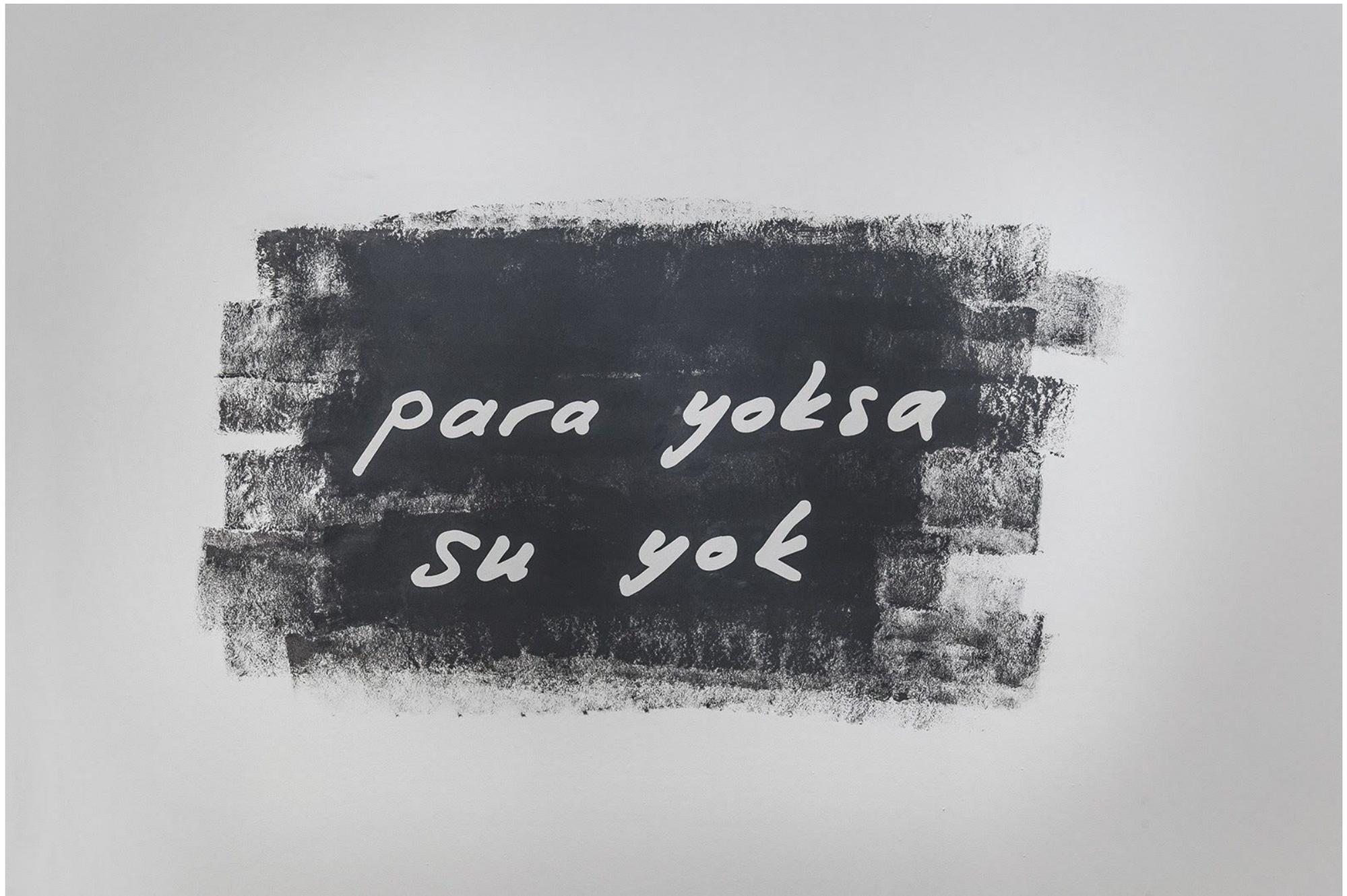
A series of works the artist developed around a five centuries old oak tree in Stockholm constitute the basis of the exhibition. The artist wanting to buy a tree as a symbolic gesture, regardless of her own economic situation, comprises both the starting point of the work and the cipher for her video. Alluding to that which was formerly not for sale and/or inconceivable that could be sold, the work also contemplates buying land and (being able to) buy everything on the land alongside it. Human beings wanting to buy things they love and consider useful reinforces their conception of ownership as the only way as another layer. In this absurd position she puts herself in, the artist questions where nature, wedged between private property and commercial goods, is. Shaped around the desire to buy a tree, the exhibition consists of videos, writings and drawings. The value system –especially monetary valuation of something– is scrutinized through a series of drawings based on certain parameters the artist speculates. These calculations, which at first glance seem to be logical, in effect remain inadequate in terms of naming the price for nature.

What does it mean to want to buy a tree?

In consumer society along the axis of neo-liberal capitalist habits, perception of nature as a consumable can be shaped not only by purchasing with money, but also through clean air, scenery, or touristic attraction, since now for the urban human being nature encompasses "humanless" spaces. The installation composed of photographs taken in such spaces, both underscores this state of consumerism, and also tackles our callousness to images of nature. The installation pertaining to how dearth and abundance affect value highlights our growing insensitivity to images of nature, just like our insensitivity to war or other images. Trying to buy a tree and banknotes made of trees cannot coalesce in our minds. Elmas Deniz frames banknotes of different dimensions, makes them invisible. Everything pertaining to the necessity of preserving nature is bound to a paradox. Since the sustainability of the capitalist system depends upon constant growth, the depletion of natural resources also falls within the sphere of consumption with a capitalist approach. The preservation of nature reduced to saving symbols in turn leads to excess of information and the rapidly growing invisibility of images of nature. The image of a small found object –a framed image– depicts a black panther on black background, which also lends its name to the exhibition. This time, the artist uses this found object in her installation as means to render the invisible visible. / To see the full text follow the [link](#)



Seeing the Black Panther, Solo Exhibition, 2014, Pilot, Istanbul.



No Money No water, 2014 [details](#)



Seeing the Black Panther, 2014, Installation [details](#)





Work with Money, 2014, Series of six framed money, 20 SEK, 35x25cm. Others; 100 TRY, 50 TRY, 10 EURO, 20 TRY, 1 USD. [details](#)



Seeing the Black Panther, Solo Exhibition, Pilot, Istanbul, 2014.



Everybody buys things...  
Herkes birşeyler alıyor...

The Tree I Want to Buy, 2014, Video, 4min 55sec. [Vimeo Link](#)  
[details](#)



Calculations, 2014, Installations of drawings [details](#)

## Universal Minimum Wage Commission Solo Screening at SVILOVA, Curated by Oscar Ramos, Stine Östberg, 2014

Excerpt from exhibition text by Pelin Tan

...Universal Minimum Wage Commission is a TV discussion program featuring four participants invited by the artist to explore issues revolving around minimum wage. The program aims to articulate a universal minimum wage standard by referencing the commission that determines the rate of minimum wage. The debaters are of different fields: historian, economists and a unionist curator.

Is it possible to discuss the possibility of a universal minimum wage in a context where capital production and its dissemination are uneven in most parts of the world; consider underpaid Chinese laborers working in the mass production of a cheap European fashion brand (H&M) or workers at Fox company in China, who produce components for Apple... By posing this self-contradictory question (maybe to provoke the Eurocentric mind) Elmas Deniz attracts attention to the contradictory notion of minimum wage decisions being made in an uneven global economic landscape. Can we imagine a universal minimum wage beyond the borders, state or EU, that tend to be the basis for the setting of these standards? How can we establish an ethics of labor in spite of boundaries? When local and national unionists negotiate with states or the EU, do they consider the conditions of the Chinese worker? Though it is often denied by the EU's top countries, the welfare system has already collapsed in Europe. As Stefan Schulmeister explains in the video, EU policies on wages are fostered by neo-liberal conservative governments and always benefit the elite classes and countries, with the purpose of controlling union influence... / to see the full text follow the link:

[http://svilova.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Elmas\\_deniz.pdf](http://svilova.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Elmas_deniz.pdf)

## UNREST OF FORM/Imagining the Political Subject, Group Exhibition at SECESSION, Academy of Fine Arts, MuseumsQuartier, Vienna, Austria, Curated by Georg Schöllhammer, 2013

Universal Minimum Wage Commission produced for Imagining the Political Subject Exhibition by Wiener Festwochen, SECESSION, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in cooperation with MuseumsQuartier Vienna in May 2013.



Universal Minimum Wage Commission, 2013, Video, 30 min. 30 sec. [Vimeo link](#)  
[details](#)

## “ELMAS” [Fear of poverty] Solo Exhibition at Maçka Art Gallery, Istanbul, Curated by Nazlı Gürlek, 2014

Excerpt from the exhibition text:

In her exhibition entitled ELMAS, Deniz renders visible various norms and signifiers of the notion of poverty, and accepted value systems as well as their fear-based psychological reflections. The show consists of a dual arrangement of works, one spilling onto the street with a banner and the other filling the gallery space with a set of ready-made objects and installations. The latter involves the application of these objects and installations through habits such as gathering, hoarding, reproducing, heaping and collecting.

Things that appear in the show include a bent fork; an overused Sümerbank bag with stitches on tears; a hand-woven bird nest made with a credit card, a wrist-watch, and a lighter mixed with natural elements such as branches of trees and dried bushes. Happy Collection (2012) is another installation that comprises a selection of empty food, drink and detergent boxes in the niches of the gallery that normally host valuable objects.

Among all these disparate objects, Poverty Line (2012) appears as the backbone of the show as a document piece. The copies of documents sent to Deniz by the Execution Office of her neighborhood are installed in a straight line on the main arc that divides the gallery space into two equal parts, reaching as a border both vertically and horizontally through the space. Outside, where the internal tiling of the gallery extends, the viewer is greeted with a banner with statistics in poverty in a global scale.

In this arrangement where everyday objects, official documents, and pure data becomes an art object these objects, documents and texts have been chosen by Deniz for their roles as signifiers of the larger contexts from which they have been severed rather than for their formal qualities. These objects, documents and texts are class and economic signifiers of a certain culture of consumption and lifestyle. On the other hand, each seem to betray these qualities as they are displayed in niches and on plinths as absolute sculptural presences.

Deniz brings together conceptual binaries that are part of our class consciousness today such as wealth/poverty, independence/belonging, consumption object/art work, document/art work, private/public, center/periphery, artificial/natural, new/used, singularity/plurality etc. by way of turning them into the basic material and production method of her art.

<http://www.mackasanatgalerisi.com/index.php?/project/elmas-eng/>



ELMAS, 2013, Solo Exhibition, Macka Art Gallery, Istanbul.



Poverty Line, 2012, Installation; Copies of original letters of overdue payments of the artist, length variable. [details](#)



Fork, 2012, Ready-made object bent fork on IKEA frame. [details](#)



ELMAS, 2013, Solo Exhibition, Macka Art Gallery, Istanbul.



Bird "Head", 2012 [details](#)



Happy Collection, 2012 [details](#)



Sumerbank, 2012 [details](#)

Elmas Deniz, Detailed documentation of the works:



***Sorrow***, 2019, Two channel Video 15min [each] *details*

Sorrow (2019) It carries river streams from the Longoz forests in Ígneada ,on which a nuclear plant is planned to be built, to the gallery. A catalog of the moments of a stream, this sculpture makes us ponder on the holism that is associated with nature. What does the river encompass? When should a stream get our attention? Can water that runs by itself have rights of its own, can it be a legal person? The video-sculpture installation made by the recycled materials from the previous exhibition at Zilberman, Pedro Gómez-Egaña's ISLANDS, stands as a complete contrast to the fast-paced, crowded and even chaotic state of Istiklal Street on which the gallery resides. [back to the page 2](#)



***Eluding "humans"***, 2019, lightbox,

In Eluding "humans" (2019) we encounter animals which stay away from people, as if dodging their wrath, in their natural habitats. These images are captured by sensor camera traps that were built in order to investigate the nocturnal animals, mostly for scientific purposes. [back to the page 3](#)



***The Camera Trap of Inequalities***, 2019, a camera trap- computer code-screen and disclaimer text

In The Camera Trap of Inequalities (2019), Deniz captures and then deletes the images of the visitors of the exhibition via a camera trap she constructed herself with a motion sensor. The accompanying legal text, outlining the legal issues that arise when photographing people, indicates the discrimination between people and other species. [back to the page 4](#)



***About soft bodied evils***, 2019, Video, 05min 30 sec

Inspired by a game she played as a child, in her video work *About Soft Bodied Evils* (2019) Deniz places thorns on our soft and harmless bodies. Accompanying the video, texts by Aristotle and Pilny the Elder from the antiquity and the medieval anonymous text, point to the historical trajectory of the relationship between humans and nature. Since prehistory, this relationship was shaped through the evil, hypocritical, arrogant, self-absorbed and cruel deeds of humankind, who ironically lack the tusks or claws. With the help of the thorns that plants possess for self-defense, Deniz extricates the evilness and selfishness that is specific to humans from where they hide – under the softness of their bodies. [back to the page 5](#)



***Lost Waters***, 2019, 3d wooden relief, 68 × 100 × 75 cm

See the map:

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1b7LM9sbvHVsq1NqCBqf5Y\\_biZuOJMdjz&ll=41.063746687713014%2C28.986485942413424&z=11](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1b7LM9sbvHVsq1NqCBqf5Y_biZuOJMdjz&ll=41.063746687713014%2C28.986485942413424&z=11)

Elmas Deniz examines the changing of the landscape and the deterioration of the nature by humankind. Deniz is showing two works about disappeared flows of water in 16th Istanbul Biennial. The first one is a three-dimensional topographic relief of Istanbul, spanning the area from Şişli to Taksim Square. On this relief, lost rivers and creeks are marked on the current roads. [back to the page 8](#)



***History of a particular nameless creek [Pinna Nobilis]***, 2019, Pinna Nobilis shells, 73 x 96 cm

Broken Pinna Nobilis shells are displayed on fabric in frame. These mediterranean endemic species are dying in large numbers because of a parasitic bacteria which is related with the climate change. Artist underlines the unknown extinctions of the unknown species, where in the exhibition venue very few people understand that it is indeed a bivalve sea mollusc, when a freshwater disappears it impacts on the surrounding species. How we are going to protect the unknown.

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**History of a particular nameless creek [Pinna Nobilis pearls]**, 2019, , 25 years old pearls, museum glass, wooden frame, 12 x 35 x 22 cm

Pinna Nobilis pearls are displayed in glass box. These mediterranean endemic species are dying in large numbers because of a parasitic bacteria which is related with the climate change. Artist underlines the unknown extinctions of the unknown species, where in the exhibition venue very few people understand that it is indeed a bivalve sea mollusc's pearls, when a freshwater disappears it impacts on the surrounding species. How we are going to protect the unknown. These pearls are from the early 90's where artists dive and collect them, without knowing that they are going to become extinct in the future. [back to the page 10](#)



**Made to be Seen**, 2017 HD DVD Video, colour and sound, in english with subtitles, 6min 8sec.

Complete video on low res. <https://vimeo.com/258750924>

Made to be Seen, 2017 borrows the features and conceptual roots from advertisements, especially those for luxury goods. In the, video the advertised product is 'a true unsellable thing' which is in this case the green natural beauty of Sri Lanka. Deniz wishes to focus on how for centuries advertising has been a main tool of manipulation through the use of language and play with the ways that nature becomes a popular element in commercials today. The video was commissioned for the Colomboscope festival exhibition "Re/evolution" in 2017 and supported by SAHA and Turkish Embassy in Colombo. [back to the page 12](#)



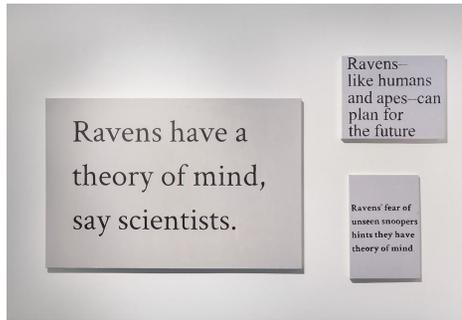
**Greenhouse for Nothing**, 2018, Sculpture; iron, glass and soil, 45 x 30 x 43(h) cm.

*Greenhouse for Nothing*, 2018 is a sculpture made of iron, glass and soil, a kind of terrarium. Starting with the aesthetics of greenhouse and how this architectural form artificializes our relationship with nature, the work proposes to re-consider the function of this structure constructed for cultivating plants to overcome the adversities of the climate. [back to the page 15](#)



**Mistake no:1 and no:2**, 2016, Mixed media object, non-biodegradable and biodegradable plastic bag, 40x48 cm each.

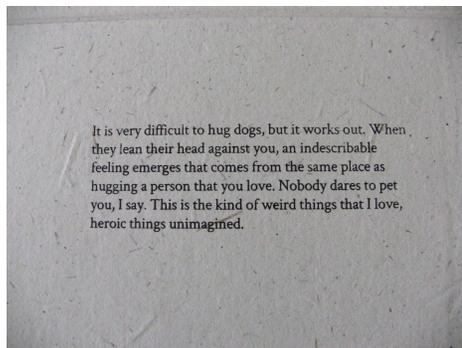
Mistake refers to man made mistakes. Mistakes are two plastic bags of similar color. Both made out of compostable plastic, it takes thousands of years for Mistake no:1 to compose while it only takes a few years for Mistake no:2. Unfortunately, neither of them are transform into organic materials. [back to the page 16](#)



***Ravens have a Theory of Mind Say, Scientists***, 2018, Acrylic paint on canvas; 90 x 135; 40 x 80; 44 x 54 cm; 55 x 37 cm; 35 x 50 (x2) cm.  
*Ravens have a Theory of Mind Say, Scientists*, 2018 is a collection of headlines on a specific scientific research on the intellect of corvacea family from various magazines and newspapers including the Guardian, Hackernews and VICE. Human-nature experience is mediated not only by science but also by the media channels that are disseminating edited and altered versions of these scientific researches. In contemporary urban environments we have birds around us but we lack the direct contact and relation with these animals. [back to the page 18](#)



***Raven Portraits***, 2018, Acrylic paint on canvas; 90 x 135 cm.(each)  
*Raven Portraits*, 2018 refers to the portrait tradition in the history of painting and deals with the human-nature relation. Portrait as a genre functions to separate one individual among the others and makes this specific individual important, relevant and visible as a unique persona. Anthropocentric thinking prevents us to see animals as person(s). The paintings are appropriated from photos by Jana Mueller. [back to the page 19](#)



***Flying Plants, Dogs and Elephants***, 2018, Artist book, silk print on elephant dung paper, in english.  
 The artist book *Flying Plants, Dogs and Elephants*, 2018 draws attention to our perception of nature and focuses on our bond with other species. Silk-printed on a special paper made of elephant dung, the book includes drawings, stories about stray dogs written by the artist herself (mainly hugging stray dogs) and international transportation regulations of living plants (CITES). Elephant dung paper is in support of saving the elephants.  
 "...Imagine suddenly collapsing to the ground as you are walking. Hugging a stray dog is exactly the same sudden collapse.... Life continues on the different, upper levels...Like a dance, to let yourself sink down, to hug a dog this intensely, as if it was a human being."(From the book)  
 The book was produced for the Colomboscope festival exhibition "Re/evolution" in 2017. Supported by SAHA and Turkish Embassy in Colombo. [back to the page 22](#)



***Unsellable Artwork***, 2018, Object; organic seeds, wood and fabric, 16 x 22.5 x 8 (h) cm.

In *Unsellable Artwork*, 2018 Deniz uses a selection of vegetable and fruit seeds she bought from a local organic market. It highlights Turkey's, as well as many other countries', ongoing restrictions on seed exchange and sales. The title questions the value attributed to an artwork as well as to its material content, seeds.

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***Human-less***, 2015, HD DVD Video, Pal 16:09, color and sound, 6min 11sec.

Complete video low res at <https://vimeo.com/193716544>

*Human-less*, 2015 presents camera recordings taken by a drone. In the video, we get a bird's-eye view of the pristine Caucasus Mountains. At first we admire the landscapes, but eventually they lead us to question humankind's ambivalent relationship with nature as well as our ways of observing and perceiving nature. The eye, watching this extraordinary natural landscape is neither a bird's eye nor a human eye, is mechanical. As we watch in awe, as if we were birds soaring through the succession of natural landscapes, the main artistic intervention in the video is done through text.

The video was commissioned for the ALANICA International Symposium in Vladikavkaz in March 2015.

Post-production support for Till Its Gone Exhibition at Istanbul Museum of Modern Art. [back to the page 26](#)



***Synthetic***, 2016, Sculpture; Polyester, balsa wood and feathers, 44x50x67 cm.

*Synthetic* 2016 is a handmade sculpture of an imagined hybrid of a military drone and a bird. The title stands for all human-made products created to replace what is originally found in nature, in natural ways.

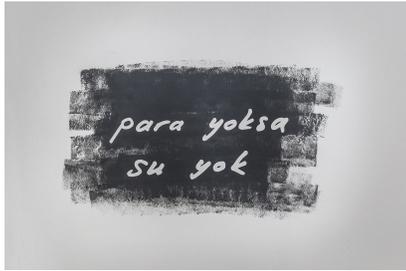
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***Under the Panorama***, 2012-2015, Mixed media object, Framed Bosphorus photo, sand and plastic bag, 47 x 98 cm.

The work is horizontally divided into two by using distinct materials. Above; a slightly blurred photo of Bosphorus is placed. The remained surface at the bottom is filled with sand and in the middle of the sand there is a black plastic bag, a very commonly-seen material in Turkey and its sea landscape. The artist tries to expand a possible framed panoramic image symbolically, through making the bottom of the sea visible. The work is on a basic logic that all consumption ends up in the sea. Man-made damage to the ecosystem is devastating, however invisible from the surface. —ED

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**No Money No water**, 2014, Installation, wall painting, dimensions variable.

*No Money No Water* is a wall-painting of folio letters in artist's handwriting. The main theme of this work is the commercialization of the basic sources of life. Water was once available and free. Now it is heavily commercialized. If one lacks money, cannot reach clean water, especially in an urban environment. —ED [back to the page 33](#)



**Seeing the Black Panther**, 2014, Installation; Illuminated lens, found framed photo.

*Seeing the Black Panther*, 2014 is an object installation about our perception of wildlife and its images. The small-sized found photo of a black panther on black background highlights the way we miss out on seeing the animal because of the indifferent stance towards the wildlife embedded in our culture, while the illuminated lens Deniz places in front of makes the subject both physically and symbolically visible.

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**Work with Money**, 2014, Series of six framed money, 20 SEK, 35x25cm. Others; 100 TRY, 50 TRY, 10 EURO, 20 TRY, 1 USD.

We discern money in a particular way. Let's imagine a table full of things - books, paper, pens, so many other items. If there is money somewhere among these items, it gains our immediate attention. The artist hides money in order to underline this attitude and to invite us to rethink our hierarchy of perception. Why? How our visual perception through nature falls into a familiarity trap, on the contrary appearance of money always gains immediate attention.

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**The Tree I Want to Buy**, 2014, HD DVD Video, Pal 16:09, color and sound , 4min 55sec.

In the video, we see the artist with a 600-year old oak tree in Ekerö, Stockholm. She has the intention to buy the tree. She walks towards it, moves around it, touches its trunk to see if it is in good condition. Towards the end, she takes some notes of money out of her pocket and counts them several times. The film ends as she walks away from the frame and mistakenly drops her money. The film has sound, an ambient noise. However, we never hear her voice, except when she is pointing out the tree at the beginning. But through the subtitles, the viewers have access to her inner dialogue. The video was produced under the auspices of the IASPIS in Stockholm in March 2014.

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**Calculations**, 2014, Installations of drawings, 35.5x32.5 | 61.5x 43.5 | 34.5x 30 | 66.5x 42 | 57.5x42.5 | 48x20 | 67.5x48.5 cm.

This piece is an inquiry on determining the price of a tree through simple calculations, notes, and illustrations. Each drawing corresponds to a calculation based on actual measurements and considerations such as the tree as wooden floor, as the land it occupies, as a plant, as coal etc. A living tree is always 'valuable' but never has a precise monetary price.—ED [back to the page 39](#)



**Universal Minimum Wage Commission**, 2013, Video-TV Program, Still from the Video, 30 min. 30 sec.

*Universal Minimum Wage Commission* is a TV discussion program with the participation of four people who explore issues revolving around minimum wage. The program aims to articulate a universal minimum wage standard by referencing the commission, which determines the amount of the minimum wage. The program initiated by the artist includes debaters from different backgrounds—historian, unionist curator, and economists. The moderator of the program is the delegate of the artist in symbolic manner. Produced for *Imagining the Political Subject* Exhibition by Wiener Festwochen, SECESSION, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in cooperation with MuseumsQuartier Vienna in May 2013. [back to the page 41](#)



**Poverty Line**, 2012, Installation; Copies of original letters of overdue payments of the artist, length variable.

The installation consists of the folded letters, copied and put together in single line. This piece plays with the difference between the intellectual approach to poverty and the experience of poverty itself. Between statistics and the experience of life itself. Revealing these personal documents for public review is an important part of the work. There are a lot of colorful advertisements all visible to the public, but documents of enforcement offices, documents related to the inability to pay and bankruptcy, rarely become public. If a person is unable to pay for an advertised product or services, instead of colorful advertisements, the person gets these dull documents, sent in an almost clandestine way to a private mail address. We all see what people through ubiquitous and intrusive advertisements are assumed to be able to pay but we never see the difficulties that people might be facing. An artist can be an agent to make public what people normally don't have the space for. —ED [back to the page 44](#)



**Fork**, 2012, Ready-made object, bent fork on IKEA frame, 23x23cm.

The fork belongs to the artist's family and has been used for almost 50 years. This item, a bent fork, symbolises a kind of stasis in the financial level of the artist's and of any family. Also provides another possibility through insisting to use things until the end of their true lifetime, against over consumption. —ED [back to the page 45](#)



**Bird "Head"**, 2012, Sculpture, Bird nest made by objects and tree branches, r: 44 cm.

The work basically deals with the value system that is operative in our capitalist societies. In a symbolic manner, it proposes us to think about other possibilities than money directed, consumerist culture through use of nature as a tool for it. Is it possible to have empathy with a bird? to learn from a bird? Is it possible to change our extremely logical perspective about value? We -as humankind- have developed a very sophisticated look to nature. We had a certain value system that uses money to evaluate the value of the things. In this way creates hierarchies of the items around us. We name things not related with the material but with the name of the brands. Producing a copy of a bird nest is a symbolic gesture which is an important part of the work. —ED [back to the page 47](#)



**Happy Collection**, 2012, Installation, packages and waste, numbered items, dimensions variable.

*Happy Collection*, 2012 is based on the value system that speculates the difference between personas of a hoarder and of an art collector. A hoarder collects invaluable objects, while the latter collects the precious ones. Hoarding, in fact suggests being free from the material-usage value of objects. Being an artist, this little collection of Deniz's own trash becomes valuable in the system of art, even deserves identification through numbers that implies documentation and valuation. The hoarded objects gain a new value dimension when they are defined as an artwork. [back to the page 48](#)



**Sümerbank**, 2012, Object, stitched original Sumerbank store bag, 51 x 39 cm.

Sümerbank was established in 1933 as a state owned bank for funding the construction of textile factories and the development of the textile industry in Turkey with the help of Soviets. Designed, financed and equipped with machinery by the Soviet Union, it was a direct replica of similar Soviet cotton plants. When it was built, Sumerbank's textile plant produced most qualified and relatively cheap textile products of that time. As a representative of social state policy, that prior policy was the public benefit, however in the late 80's it became subject to privatization. The half a century of state-led industrialization represented by Sumerbank and its subsidiaries were closed and became a historical milestone in 2002. Closure of Sumerbank represents the loss of social state. The original Sumerbank store bag, is made of old plastic that can't dissolve by itself in the nature dated 1986 has been used for this piece. Artist used this bag for a long time as a handbag and when it got damaged she stitched damaged parts. The work is rather performative in this sense and the result of this performance displayed in the exhibition space. Also trying to repair it, the artist's treats a plastic bag as a valuable thing. The old Sumerbank advertisement reads: "If your income is low, buy cheap but high quality products from our store" advertisements of current corporations for example H&M uses Madonna in advertisements, obviously their customers are not wealthy, with the appearance of Madonna instead they create the illusion of wealth. —ED [\\_back to the page 49](#)

Further information and for other works and contact: [www.elmasdeniz.com](http://www.elmasdeniz.com)