

GÖZDE ILKIN

INVISIBLE BONDS, COMPANION ROOTS

Curated by Joana P. R. Neves

26.10.23 — 23.12.23

Opening on October 26th

PARIS-B is delighted to welcome artist Gözde Ilkin for her second solo show at the gallery, entitled «Invisible Bonds, Companion Roots», unveiling her latest group of works.

Gözde Ilkin has been working for fifteen years with found fabrics and embroidery. Through this handcrafted method, she engages in a critical approach to memory and history to deconstruct notions of gender, community, and forms of belonging.

She started by reworking photographs and identity documents through a painstaking sewing technique on found fabrics and decorative rugs with strong imagery such as floral decorative patterns.



Şaman / SHAMAN, 2020, stitching and painting on pillowcase, dyed with plant extracts, 86 x 98 cm © Nazlı Erdemirel

However, her drawings gradually developed a metaphorical quality, whereby the human body is associated with other entities, human and non-human. Ilkin engages in a deep re-evaluation of values, beliefs, and personal stories through slow-making, sometimes with collaborators, including her mother. Indeed, collectivity is important for the artist, from the making of the fabrics to the exhibition space, where she often works with choreographers, curators, and dancers.

A decade ago, Ilkin became aware of the reciprocity between the organic and the political, and how ineptly we live in both realms separately. She started collecting plants whose shape and extracts

she now often incorporates in her iconography as seen recently in the solo exhibition *As the Roots Spoke, the Cracks Deepen* (Mac/Val Ivry, 2019) and the group show *Rooted Beings* (Wellcome Collection, Londres, 2022) which included a series of works produced for the 13th Gwangju Biennial, *Minds Rising, Spirits Tuning*.

In these series, the humanoid figures of her embroideries expand and interconnect like carnal roots or braided fibres in what seems to be an organic process of becoming rather than the capitalist notions of evolution and progress. This is apparent in the layering of her textile drawings: the cloth pattern, the embroidered figures often overlapping each other, the plant extract expanding on the textile, and the interplay between both sides of the fabric, to name but a few.

In 2022, Ilkin started a project with the Turkish curator Duygu Demir called *The Entrusted Ground* and which has now evolved into the plural *Entrusted Grounds*. It is an ongoing reflection on “natureculture”, wrote Demir, citing the American eco-philosopher Donna Haraway. This concept is multifaceted, but it mostly expresses the overlapping of new intersecting histories of species living together in the Holocene, and the need to tell them.



Those who remember their Births, 2022-2023, embroidered fabric cover on collected stones and driftwood material, exhibition « Entrusted Ground », 2022

Entrusted Grounds thus invites the viewer to consider the exhibition as an immersive experience rather than a critical evaluation. Hence, its first iteration at artSümer gallery in Istanbul presented embroidered fabrics, suspended modular interactive sculptures, performance and sound to create a tridimensional 'landscape'. It enriched an art history genre, the landscape, by using landforms as an approach to the exhibition space, for instance. Here, the cave was the framework for the installation as a real space where humans first interacted with the world through drawing, and as a metaphor.

Ilkin's second individual exhibition at PARIS-B gallery, is part of the *Entrusted Grounds* series of exhibitions and events. This iteration is titled *Invisible Bonds, Companion Roots*, thus expressing the complex interweaving socio-politics of an ecosystem.

The sand dune will be the new framework to approach the exhibition space. This powerful metaphor talks about the nomadic quality of both geology and concepts: a dune moves and is reshaped by the wind, the critters living in it, and the quality of its material, the sand, a powerful symbol of time. But it may also be created by our presence on earth and our interaction with it. *Invisible Bonds, Companion Roots* comprises sculptures, embroideries on found cloths with natural elements added to them, as well as installation.

As in the first iteration of the project in Istanbul, *The Entrusted Ground*, Ilkin will present the beautiful sketches she makes for each installation.

- Joana P. R. Neves



Gözde Ilkin (born 1981 in Kütahya) studied painting at the Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts and obtained a master's degree at Istanbul's Marmara University. Her solo exhibitions include *Entrusted Ground*, artSümer, Istanbul (2022); *Comme les racines parlent, les fissures se creusent*, MAC VAL, Vitry-sur-Seine (2019); her group exhibitions include *UnNatural History*, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, United Kingdom (2021) and *Gaia has a Thousand names*, Elgiz Museum, Istanbul (2019). She will also be exhibiting at the 4th Autostrada Biennial in Kosovo (2023), the 13th Gwangju Biennial, South Korea (2021) and the 15th Istanbul Biennial (2015, curated by Elmgreen & Dragset). She lives and works in Istanbul.



Gel-git, ben birkaç kişi / The Tide, Me, Myself and Multitudes, 2020, stitching, painting, and patchwork on fabric dyed with plant extract, 112 x 185 cm © Nazli Erdemirel