

## Contemporary Art Meets Istanbul

***Contemporary Istanbul is meeting for the fourth time between December 3th and 6th with the art lovers and international contemporary art environment. Under the sponsorship of Akbank Private Banking, the event will take place at Lütfi Kırdar Congress and Exhibition Centre where national and international galleries participate and contemporary art pieces will be exhibited.***

Contemporary Istanbul, which is one of the most comprehensive contemporary art events in Turkey, opens its doors to the visitors for the fourth time in Lütfi Kırdar Congress and Exhibition Centre. More than seventy national and foreign galleries with hundreds of works will take part in the event and turn Istanbul into the centre of contemporary art between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2009. *Contemporary Istanbul'09* will be held under the sponsorship of *Akbank Private Banking* this year too.

The press conference held at The Sofa Hotel Art \*8 Lounge, Ali Gureli , Chairman of Contemporary Istanbul, Emin Mahir Balcioglu, Director of Contemporary Istanbul and Fikret Onder, Ass. General Manager of Akbank Private Banking conveyed to the press the details of Contemporary Istanbul 2009. Ali Gureli discussed the negative effects of the global crisis on the art market and the downfall of prices but also stated the fact that the volume of buying and selling art has remained stable. Ali Gureli also expressed the excitement of the rapid acceleration in the growing number of collectors and young collectors along with the rising value of Contemporary art as we come to the end of 2009. At Contemporary Istanbul'08 %56 of the total value of artworks was sold and the target goal for this year as Ali Gureli is expecting is %65 to %70 as the predicted participation of visitors will reach 50.000 people.

At the speech, Fikret Onder , Ass. General Manager of Akbank Private Banking expressed the honor of supporting the most comprehensive contemporary art event in the country and the great contribution of this event has, on the vision of Istanbul being the 2010 European Capital of Culture. Emin Mahir Balcioglu, Director of Contemporary Istanbul informed the press on the participation of 306 local and international artists presented by 73 galleries and Contemporary Istanbul providing the space for 12 prominent institutions for their promotion.

### **Contemporary İstanbul'09 has overcome the crisis...**

*Contemporary Istanbul*, which becomes more enriched with additional activities every year, takes place with an increasing interest and participation of more galleries this year despite the global crisis. Besides more art galleries, *Contemporary Istanbul*, in which diversity of artists and works increases constantly, gives eleven art institutions including Sabancı Museum, Akbank Art Center, Istanbul Modern Museum, IKSİV (Istanbul Foundation of Culture and Arts), Doğançay Museum a chance to get together with art lovers. Contemporary Istanbul adding a different dimension to the art events in Turkey not only creates a contemporary art atmosphere in Istanbul, but also introduces the cultural and art life of Istanbul to the world.

On the other hand, Akbank and Contemporary Istanbul have carried forward their cooperation this year. For the Wings card owners there is a special opportunity to enter to Contemporary Istanbul'09. Contemporary Istanbul's tickets can be purchased at the event place with a 20 percent discount to the Wings card.

### **What are the activities?**

*Contemporary Istanbul'09* will begin with a opening performance called "aKabi" under Aydın Teker's choreography where two parts of it will be showed on the preview day, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December and thousands of visitors is expected to come. "aKabi" is described as " the outstanding performance about the balance and a piece on sculptural beauty that make people feel dizzy..."

Moreover, during the event, many interesting projects will draw the attention of art lovers. Within the framework of this event which hosts the pictures, sculptures, photographs, installations, video arts and digital artworks of many local and foreign artists, art lovers will encounter with the works of the

prominent representatives of contemporary art for the first time this year. In addition, mini-concerts will take place in the field of activity.

At Contemporary Istanbul'09, special activities will be held with the participation of German galleries and collectors in the commemoration of 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Berlin and Istanbul becoming sister cities. Interesting examples of German Contemporary Art will be displayed in the field of Art from Berlin. Six art galleries and the governors of states representing this city with the aid of Berlin State Senate will participate in the most important contemporary art meeting of Turkey.

The outward face of Contemporary Istanbul'09 will by no means be limited to the West. Contemporary Istanbul'09, opening its doors to the contemporary art of the geography in which Turkey is located, involves exhibitions displaying some striking examples from Russian and Middle Eastern art. Within the same framework, in "New Horizons" part, which will be repeated every year, Syrian contemporary art will meet the art lovers for the first time this year.

One of the projects of *Contemporary Istanbul* which makes a great impression is *CI Dialogues*. It takes place within the scope of *Istanbul Conferences Series* and the first one was held in September 2008. During the Art Forum which will take place within the framework of *CI Dialogues* and *Contemporary Istanbul'09* activities, Robert C. Morgan (The Annihilation of Criticism in Contemporary Art), Nadim Karam (Urban Art) and Başak Şenova (Being Unable to Read: The Absence of Critical Thought) will discuss the different aspects of contemporary art.

### **Contemporary art finds its place in the economy**

Following the foreign collectors, Turkish art collectors' interest to contemporary art is gradually increasing. As a result of this interest Turkish contemporary works of art are getting the value and the place they deserved at the international art scene while million dollars are mentioned for some artists' pieces.

Art pieces of 12.5 million dollars were exhibited last year at Contemporary Istanbul while the graphic of sales were really high. While considering the sale rates of the Turkish contemporary art auctions that took place in Turkey and internationally this year, we see that the global crisis did not affected the art market. In this context, there is an expectancy of high collectors' interest to Contemporary Istanbul. The fact that contemporary art is bought and sold to millions of dollars shows how contemporary art is crucial for culture art industry.

### **The kids will meet contemporary art under the sponsorship of Akbank Private Banking!**

The events will not only be limited to adults. There will be a special program at Contemporary Istanbul which will meet the kids with contemporary art under the sponsorship of Akbank Private Banking. The children will experience creating their own contemporary art by doing collage, painting and they will be visiting the fair place where the best examples of contemporary art are exhibited with the company of experienced guides. Moreover to this event where kids aged between 8 -11 will profit, a special art history book prepared by Akbank Private Banking will be given as a present to the kids who has participated to the program.

### **The world's focus will be on Contemporary Istanbul!**

While Contemporary Istanbul has the opportunity of reaching large audiences with the national media's interest, on the international press platform 35 magazines from 16 countries and 10 portals will be publishing articles and adverts about Contemporary Istanbul. Thanks to this, Contemporary Istanbul plans to reach nearly 4 million readers predominantly its main target of audience from the art platform (gallerists, curators and art critics). With the participation of many editors from different publications, a wide range of reflections about Contemporary Istanbul is predicted to be spread.

Contemporary Istanbul plays a crucial role in Turkey in contemporary art production and in spreading awareness in this field. In this context, while local collectors' interest in contemporary art is increasing, Istanbul is becoming one of the most important centers of contemporary art in the world.