



FEATURE

YOUNG TURKISH ARTISTS *TO WATCH*

BY NICOLE O'ROURKE

To celebrate the art season in Istanbul, we met with three up-and-coming Turkish artists that should be on your radar...

ATALAY YAVUZ

Atalay Yavuz was born in Sakarya, and now lives and works in Istanbul. With plans to move to Berlin at the end of September to start his studies at the Berlin School of Art, he is brimming with that back-to-school excitement as we sit down for a çay (tea) near the Bosphorus to talk about and look at his work.

Atalay's work is experimental, installation based, and he uses found, everyday materials. While still an undergrad studying pharmacology at university, he began making artwork at the end of 2010. Despite acquiring the degree, he hasn't practiced it since graduating in 2012. Though it can be said that the laboratory nature of his undergraduate studies have infiltrated his practice as an artist.

The materials he uses are accessible and available: map pins, flowers, a pilates ball, instant coffee, a potato—or even things you can find within a pharmacy: toothpaste, shaving foam, prozac syrup, sedatives. His works are rife with a sense of trial-and-error, a feeling of an open and unmonitored laboratory; they teeter between happenstance and calculation and always maintain a sense of humor (like his installation piece *Untitled*, 2013,





which consists of a heap of instant coffee laying atop a pedestal with water dripping and slowly disintegrating and deforming the perfectly pyramidal coffee tower). Atalay plays with the way a light is changed by a substance, the effect water or a mirror has on something, or how a passing body can manipulate an installation. You can even go so far as to say the work is performative, it both reacts and interacts with the spectator. Really though, his work

is about the spectator, and our daily—sometimes meaningful, mostly trivial—tasks, and the absurdity and humor and sadness and futility of that.

His first work of art was an installation using dust bags from vacuum cleaners, framed and hung on the wall (Cleanroom, 2011.) The piece is meant to document the passing of time in different locations, the idea of a collective memory within

an object that is so haphazardly and happily disregarded. This piece, like many of his works since, uses everyday materials to document the experiences we, in our daily lives have, and the objects or items we interact with. Fittingly, his next exhibition, called an ‘intervention,’ will take place at a market. It will open in mid-September and is organized by the Istanbul-based non-profit, Protocinema. (see our events section for details).



Atalay Yavuz, Untitled, 2013
Courtesy of the artist