

Emre Zeytinoğlu

Everyday life is always a matter of making a choice. While a person is experiencing “the present time” or as A. Cem Sahin says “right now”, consistently performs this job of making a choice. Because “the present time” is never the practice of a monotonous situation. Even if the ones who carry the intention to dominate the practice of "the present time" wanted to format that thing, which is defined as "right now", as a state of choiceless and absolute truth, and also strived to normalize this choicelessness, they can not be successful.

The dominants' abandoning the practice without options can be seemingly perceived as followed by a successful process. In other words, the information may be classified as "valid" or "invalid". Some feelings can be referred to be “worn-out” and by mentioning this “worn-out” feelings one can be dragged as “outdated”. Tastes can be changed and some of the tastes can be legalized by the concept of “fashion” or can be deactivated by the concept of “out of fashion”. In this context, thoughts can be manipulated as well. To be brief, a force being dominant at “the present time” means that it attributes its own values and realities (as if there is no other choice) to the audience. Thus it means that those values and realities are both legalized and normalized at the same time.

But, as stated at the beginning of the article, this state of legitimacy and normalization is definitely deceptive. Those who were given to the audience over a long period and through extremely ingenious maneuvers and persuasion sessions, there comes a moment when they can suddenly fall apart like “a house of cards”. The most striking example of this must be experienced during the disappearance of the “indestructible” empires and all of their values and realities.

Additionally, the ones who witnessed the period of the Cold War watched the aforementioned point of falling apart with the most powerful emotions and of course the most powerful astonishment. The masses who are sure about the fact that a bipolar world order will last forever, welcome the complete destruction of the Berlin Wall as astonishingly as one welcomes the aliens. However, there are also many artists claiming that such a sudden change is within the possibilities and one of these artists is René Magritte'tir. In the works he painted dubbed “The Key to Dreams” between the years of 1927 and 1930, he demonstrates the difference between how we merely “see” and comprehend certain objects, and their expressions in the written form. These pictures in the triangle of "visual-sense-identification" contain a number of problematic, they also imply another situation. That situation indicates that in fact how “fragile” are those things which we see them as they are never going to change.

Magritte has painted some forms such as a horse, a pitcher, a clock, a bag and written the names underneath. These forms and these names do not match with each other; so the names are written incorrectly: Under the picture of the horse is written the door, under the picture of the pitcher is located the bird and so on. And these forms and the “wrong names” apply in each section of the image. A person who follows them at first is amazed, after a short period of time decides that it is farce; however after a period of time gets used to this fallacy of the picture. The audience now understands that there is a wrong name written under each form he knows and that this will go on like that in other sections. However, in the last frame he encounters with something “weird”: He sees the word of “bag” under the picture of the bag

and gets confused. This is a weird situation indeed; because the audience gets confused while he shouldn't. So much so that though he has learned throughout his life, and approved as a state of reality, he gets confused for writing "bag" under the bag.

This means that even a small image was able to erase the unquestionable and absolute truth and to replace it with another. Art has always such a power.

Here are the meanings of all these descriptions: It is inevitable that all values and realities are going to fall apart one day... This is because the state of plurality of the values and realities which form the practice of living. More explicitly, no matter how much one tries to rationalize the practice of living to the level of a unified and ultimate reality, the practice of living exists in a continuum that encapsulates not just those imposed ideals and realities, but much, much more. When it comes to plurality, it always brings with it the possibility to make a choice. This also applies to the art itself.

A. Cem Sahin's pictures show us that we are faced with multiple values and realities in our daily lives, and that we on one hand we tend to accept these and on the other hand (especially with the help of our memories) we sometimes tend to see other options and chose among them. The choices made in A. Cem Sahin's pictures are not necessarily related to the past, nor should be assumed to be cultural, ideological or art related. On the opposite, all choices are tied to "right now" rather than the "past" keeping into account the individual's own "reflection".

During its interview with Efe Korkut Kurt, A. Cem Sahin explains the "right now" as follows: *"This is a situation where there a great deal of excitement but also there is a certain degree of concern. In these kind of transformational situations, you never know what to expect."* (Warhola, no:2, page:44). That's indeed the case, the transformation process will always give us some "new" things but it never only about new things, it always carries pieces from our past. That's the exact reason why we can't know what is waiting for us in the future. If "right now" is formed of multiple pieces (although people typically tend to believe the opposite), so will the "future".

One should never forget Jacques Derrida's definition of "future". He makes a differentiation between the words "future" and "l'avenir". Because "Future" means tomorrow, later, next season etc. it implies that it is predictable, as we can predict based on the situation "right now" what is going to happen in the "future". This is estimation based on today. Planning based on the situation present today. On the opposite, "l'avenir" is totally different: it is to expect achieving something that is not expected. The only expectation in this case relates to achieving something, that's about it. Similar to "right now", "l'avenir" is also open to choices, so the results would be unexpected.

If A. Cem Sahin's pictures surprises us by replacing a watermelon by a Rubik's Cube this is because the values and realities of "right now" may change in the future due to the choices one faces. This also ridicules any "prediction" related to the future.