

## KEREM AĞRALI

### Et cor natura / The Heart of Nature

December 24, 2019 – February 15,

2020 Bozlu Art Project Mongeri

Building

In his exhibition *Et cor natura / The Heart of Nature*, Kerem Ağralı, whose practice is built on topics such as myths, symbolic narratives, human nature and humanity's search for itself in nature, alludes to efforts by mankind to prioritize his own existence over that of nature. The exhibition consisting of drawings in which the artist has created a fictional world will be on view at the Bozlu Art Project Mongeri Building from December 24<sup>th</sup> 2019 to February 15<sup>th</sup> 2020.

The relationship between humans and nature is a process that begins as soon as one is born unto this world. In his exhibit named *Et cor natura / The Heart of Nature*, Kerem Ağralı looks at this process and emphasizes how humankind and nature are an inseparable whole. Presenting viewers with a fictional world full of symbolic meanings belonging to both Eastern and Western culture, the artist incorporates opposing concepts such as life and death into his paintings. His reference point is the universe and humankind that is part of that universe. In attempting to combine the past, present and future, he in a way arrests time. Any image from one artwork may shift shape and appear in another.

His paintings both include elements such as *vanitas*, emphasizing the ephemerality of the world, and figures in search of immortality over the centuries. This is somewhat reminiscent of “*yin/yang*” – and it is the heart of nature that truly embodies the concepts in question. Using fantastic, figurative and surreal elements together, the artist adds red into his overall monochrome paintings heavily in black and white. Red, for him, is practically the colour of life.

Figures, structures, angels, masnawis, DNA helices, throne depictions that refer to the human ambition for power emerge as a symbolic language in the fictional world he creates.

Ağralı's drawings are marked by mankind's effort to find and make sense of his place in nature while on a continuous journey between life and death. With the following words: *"Resonances emanating from nature's very bosom, its heart (cor meum) mould humans just like clay and announce: "You cannot exist without me, mankind!" Nature and its children have continued existing up until now against all odds, despite all massacres and wars created by mankind. This journey is etched in our common consciousness... A brand new world is unfolding before us out of information encoded in the DNA of both nature and mankind,"* what Ağralı seeks to depict is the world, Earth itself. And, for him, this world finds expression in Et cor nature, that is, the Heart of Nature.

## **Kerem Ağralı, 1977**

Born in Istanbul in 1977, Kerem Ağralı graduated from the Marmara University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Sculpture in 2004. As of 2010, he focused on drawing and painting. His reference point is the universe and the human typology that belongs to it. Creation and the universe are topics that most interest him. His main sources of inspiration are Eastern philosophy, science fiction, animation, fantastic and animated movies, in addition to an interest in quantum physics. Taking part in various national exhibits and events as well, the artist has been based in his studio in Kadıköy, Istanbul since 2006.

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