

MIKE BERG

İKNA

PERSUASION

30.03 - 28.04.2018

Galeri Nev İstanbul is excited to present a 7th solo show by Mike Berg. The artist transforms the atmosphere of the gallery space with a site-specific installation. In recent years Berg has focused on creating and constructing new spaces within a given space. His new architectural construction bears signs of his minimal and geometric aesthetic seen in his earlier works. Describing himself primarily as a builder and a self-taught engineer, he aims to display his previous bronze sculptures in a different layout in this show. The diptych and triptych bronze sheet sculptures he made in 2008 and 2012 respectively, at times become windows or doors in his construction and give the space a familiar quality.

One of the most striking aspects of Berg's practice is his fascination with materials and enthusiasm in exploring the potential of the medium. He produces his drawings and motifs in different media, such as ink, metal and kilim, and emphasizes properties gained by each step of this transition process. Converting his gouache drawings to hand woven kilims, or ink drawn calligraphic designs and gestural stains into metal sculptures is a principal aspect of Berg's practice.

The artist has been living in Istanbul for over 10 years. He has been influenced by the non-representational quality and power of abstract patterns found in eastern culture. Inspired by the traditional and craft-based artistic work of the culture he is currently living in, he has managed to synthesize these with his own unique forms. He collaborated with many craftsmen over the years. He brought together his highly modernist forms with the uniqueness of craft and labor-intensive skill.

The artist is not concerned with attributing a meaning to his works. He considers that the uncertainty of a meaning allows his works to have limitless possibilities. Berg believes that the attribution of a meaning is best done by the viewer. Therefore rather than explaining or describing, he aims to persuade the viewers with the visual qualities of his show titled *Persuasion*.

Mike Berg enrolled in Fort Wright College after graduating from the University of Washington in 1971. He received a BFA degree in 1972. During the summer of 1972 he attended the prestigious Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture from which he was awarded the painting scholarship to attend the New York Studio School. From then on, Berg lived in New York City until moving to Istanbul in 2000. During his years in New York he had several solo exhibitions. His work was shown at the 56 Bleecker Gallery, a famous venue frequented by the Rene Ricard and Warhol Factory crowd. During his career, Berg had numerous solo exhibitions in galleries and museums in New York, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Seattle, Rome, Mardin, Ankara and Istanbul. Mike Berg lives and works in Istanbul and the United States.

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