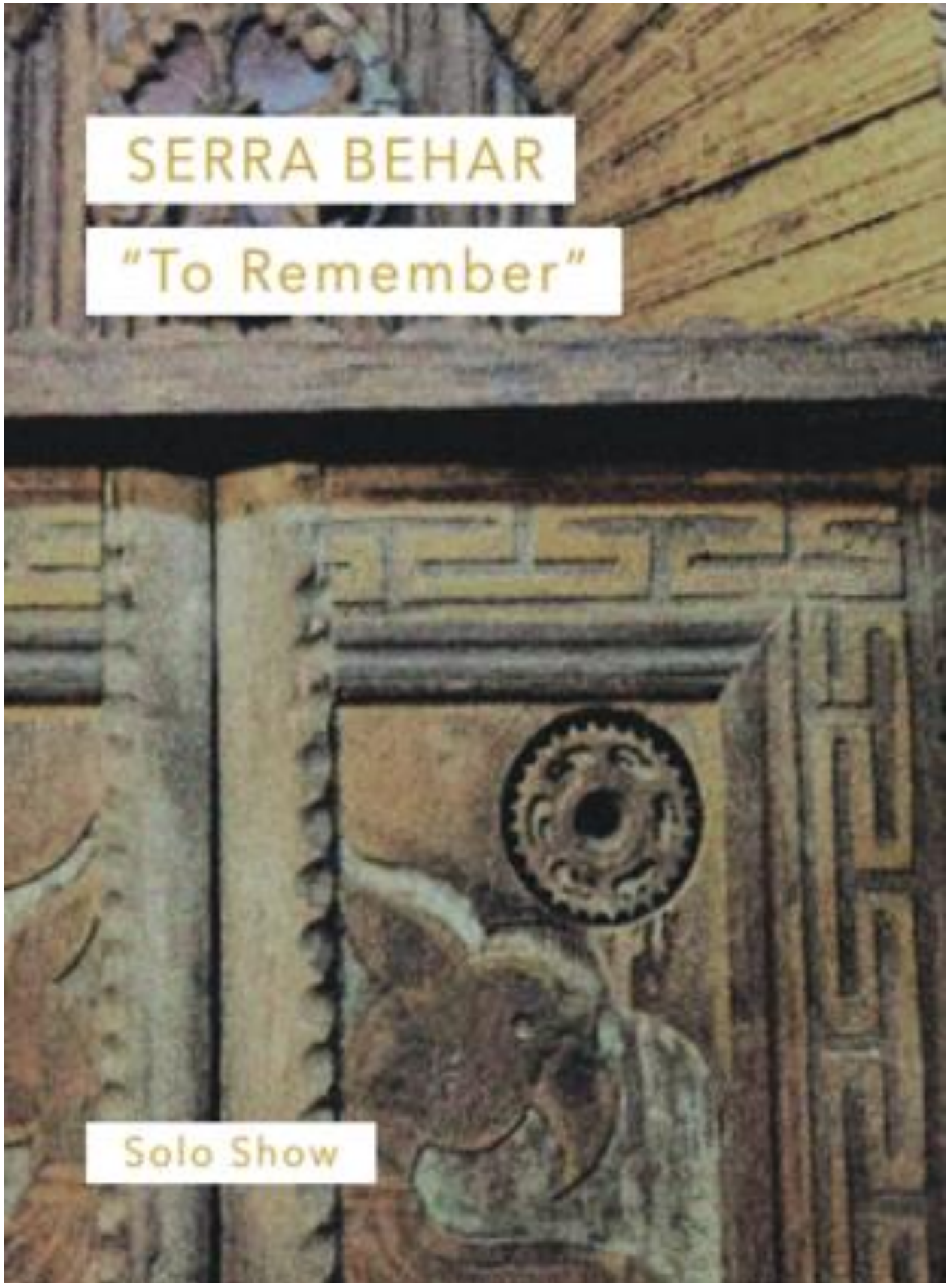


SERRA BEHAR

SERRA BEHAR

"To Remember"

Solo Show



# SERRA BEHAR

The artistic production of Serra Behar is subject to the course of life; in another words, her creating process is a modest and silent outcry that reminds us the unity of the verbs "to be" and "to make"; it is a voice, a breath coming from the antiquity to the present day by passing through the corridors of time. It is an attempt to make the harmony in existence, the god(s) in us, the "me and us" in our interiority visible so that we do not perceive it as a cacophony any more.

Life bestows an absolute dynamism. If the existence is considered as a web of actions, Behar's works, by reproducing the movement over and over, make us question our lethargy. Each piece of work produces a movement in its own singularity, and by articulating with the other, each piece grows and multiplies unceasingly. Yet where the art works open up to the plural, they reveal the love in a way far different from the simple, mundane concept of love. The continuity of this dialogue between her works, is the result of Behar's spontaneity. Her art can be considered as pebble stones that she leaves on the path during her journey in her personal nonfictional labyrinth; yet with a difference... In the tale, as we know it, Hansel and Gratel had left the pebbles to be able to find the way back; but Behar knows that there is only one way without a return. When the black bile of melancholy is increased in the mirror held by her works, she recalls the unifying power of a friendship and continues the way without hesitation in the lightness of knowing herself.

Her retrospective exhibition "To Remember", is a call for a companionship to pursue the way to the unkown so that it can be transformed into a transparent element in those precious shared moments.

Nihan Çetinkaya

Curator, Writer & Translator

## EDUCATIONS

Bachelor's Degree at University of Mimar Sinan (Istanbul/ Turkey) Department: Fine Arts- Stage Design Costume and Puppetry,

Master's Degree at University of Mimar Sinan (Sculpting),

Nottingham Trent (Nottingham / United Kingdom), Experimental, Conceptual Design and Casting,

The Artist currently lives and works in Istanbul.

## COMMISSIONED PROJECTS

2011 Monument bust of Mexican leader Emiliano Zapata for the Şişli Municipality

2008 Award design (figurine) for SIYAD (Association of Film Writers)

2007 Monument design for Ali Ekber Çiçek (famous Turkish minstrel) for

2001- 2002 Design of lifesize character models of 6 sultans of Ottoman Empire and 11 merchants for City Museum of Bursa

## UPCOMING EXHIBITION

**2017 " To REMEMBER"**

Solo Show Adahan Hotel, İstanbul

## EXHIBITIONS

### **2016 Artists Pick Artists**

Group Show Artsümer, İstanbul

### **2015 Grace Of Another World**

Group Show (curated by Nihan Çetinkaya) Artsümer, İstanbul

### **2012 Contemporary istanbul**

### **2012 Impudence of Good Intent**

Group Show (curated by Nihan Çetinkaya ) Artsümer, İstanbul

### **2012 Self Portrait**

Artsümer, İstanbul

### **2011 Destruction**

Group Show İstanbul

### **2010 Up and Coming Artists**

Gallery Bonnington, UK

## NEW ART PROJECTS

### **2017 "HOPE"**

Animatronic installation

### **2017 "Implant"**

Video Art

### **2017 "Oblation"**

Video Art

### **2017 "Belonging" series Vol. 1-2**

Photo Project

## ART PROJECTS

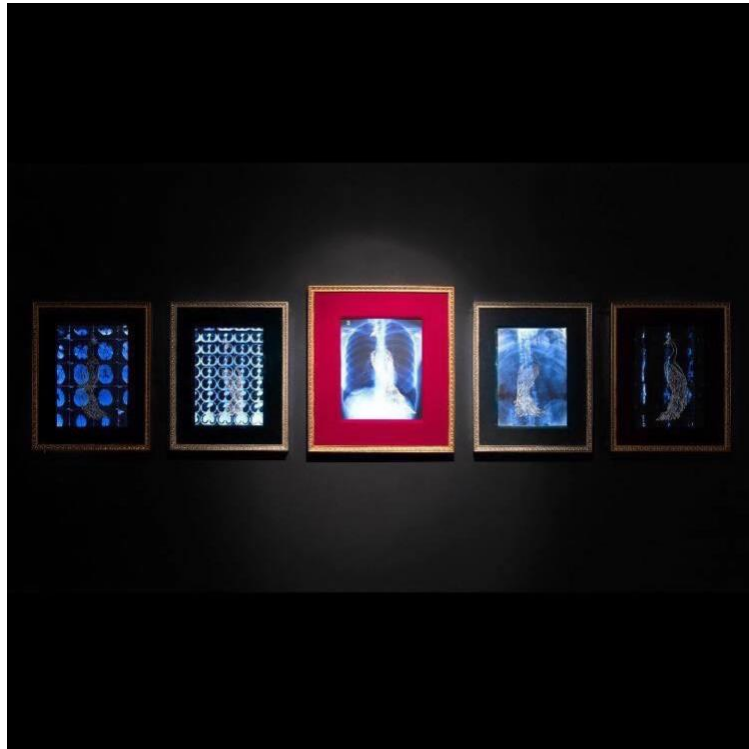
- 2016**        **“untitled”**  
37x45cm Antique Medicine Cabinet, Rosary
- 2015**        **“Can You See Us”**  
5 Pieces 57x50cm, 51x41cm frame, drawing on x-ray, lightbox
- 2013**        **“First Supper”**  
85x119 cm; Installation Set Up Photograph, Fine art print unique frame
- 2012**        **“Self Deception “**  
184x50x104 cm Animatronic installation, Mixed Media
- 2012**        **“Me In The Mirror You Within Me”**  
(selfportrait) 8 Pieces (36x26cm each), Mixed Media
- 2010**        **“Paradise Bird”**  
Animatronic installation-vac forming with acrylic plastic, silicon, polyester resin, electronic junk.
- 2009**        **“Organ INC.”**  
Animatronic model made of organic materials: genuine leather, animal bones, stuffed with papier machet and organic ropes.
- 2009**        **“Geometry 2” (Sexism)**  
Stop-motion project
- 2009**        **“Geometry 1 (DNA)**  
Stop-motion project
- 2000-2001**    **“Embryo ( BELONGING )”**  
Performance puppet made of polyester resin



2016 "untitled"

37x45cm Antique Medicine Cabinet, Rosary

This work "untitled" on first aid and recovery, which refers to the emotions / values we hold onto during the phase we pass through, contains prayer beads of different beliefs within an antique medicine cabinet.



"Can you see us?" 2015,  
Drawing on x-ray, light box, frame 57x50cm (center), 51x41cm (others)



## **CAN YOU SEE "US"**

The X-rays of body parts seem regular as they appear before the eyes of the viewer. They remind nothing but the ordinary fractions of our nature, which we think we have known for so long...Yet when illuminated with a blue fluorescent light, this very nature unfolds a part of itself which we have forgotten to know.

The x-rays of different individuals from different backgrounds and segments of the society reflect that our physical nature, which is an extension of our soul, is one and the same for each and every human being.

This ordinary sameness hides a glamour which is indescribable with words: It is our very essence which hides its beautiful colors behind the skin color covering our physicality.

It is the awe-inspiring peacock in our deep self.

The much adored peacock had a prominent place in various cultures around the world.

Originating in India, the symbolism of peacock moved to West through Babylonia, Persia and Greece while it has always been of great importance in Far East. Serving as a vehicle for many deities such as Skanda, Brahma, Karttikeya, Lakshmi and Saraswati in India, symbolizing grace, joy, victory and love. In China, the peacock is associated with the goddess Guan Yin. The peacock eats the snakes and transforms evil into beauty while the goddess Guan Yin helps the suffering and transforms their suffering into beauty.

When the peacock displays its tail, it looks like hundreds of eyes are watching us. Because of this, the peacock has been associated with the all-seeing eye of God. In Greece, symbolized the goddess's starry heavens and omniscience, while Roman empresses used it as their royal symbol.

While its unmatched feathers spread glamour across the world as the bird opens its beautiful tail, peacock has been taken to represent the ego or vanity in some Western beliefs and Medieval bestiaries as well.

Da Vinci has written that peacock is more inclined to vainglory than any other creature.

Peacock reflects our noble and unparalleled beauty only when our 'self' is awake and conscious; when the human becomes the divine.

Only when the self becomes 'en-lightened', the human may become aware of a more divine nature in him.

Only when the body parts are illuminated by the blue fluorescent light, the human can see the Peacock behind, which will transform his physicality into the divine spark.



## SERRA BEHAR

The human is then dead and reborn once again, awakened to a deeper nature. It is the resurrection.

Because of the belief that the peacock's flesh did not decay after death, it became a symbol of Christ and the resurrection.

The symbolism of the peacock, the phoenix and the Iranian Simurgh, a mythical bird described as a benevolent, mythical flying creature, interconnect at a deeper level, where we see they signify the very identical qualities, only slightly differing according to the different parts of the world...

In Greek mythology, phoenix is a long-lived bird that is cyclically regenerated or reborn. Associated with the sun, a phoenix obtains new life by arising from its ashes.

Since the simurgh and Phoenix are reborn again and again, they are believed to possess the knowledge of all the ages.

The Persian spiritual allegory *The Conference of the Birds* beautifully describes the mystical and divine nature of Simorgh...

The story recounts the longing of a group of birds who desire to know the great Simorgh, and who, under the guidance of a leader bird, start their journey toward the land of Simorgh. One by one, they drop out of the journey, each offering an excuse and unable to endure the journey.

The birds must cross seven valleys in order to find the Simorgh: Talab (Yearning), Ishq (Love), Ma'rifat (Gnosis), Istighnah (Detachment), Tawheed (Unity of God), Hayrat (Bewilderment) and, finally, Fuqur and Fana (Selflessness and Oblivion in God). These represent the stations that a Sufi or any individual must pass through to realize the true nature of God.

Eventually only thirty birds remain as they finally arrive in the land of Simorgh - all they see there are each other and the reflection of the thirty birds in a lake- not the mythical Simorgh.

The birds realize that the One they had been looking for, is nothing but themselves.

The land is our beautiful Earth itself; the birds being no one but the very essential parts of beautiful divine shrines, namely our bodies.

The very Self, which the birds devoted themselves to discover, was the glorious SIMORGH...

## SERRA BEHAR

Our identities ornamented with our overstated characters are what strike our attention at the first sight; just as the golden and silver frames enclosing the x-rays catch our eyes...

Meanwhile the singularity of our skeletons and organs lies dormant, silently waiting to be explored underneath the differences of race, skin color or nationality that are crushed and distorted between the creases of the velvet fabric in the frames...

There is one singular reflection of splendiddness that manifests through our bodies which opens before our eyes only when we change our perspective and attempt to see what lies behind the ordinary visibility...

It is the splendiddness of the peacock that reminds us that we have had and still have what's indestructibly beautiful; our Spirit...

Just as the peacock whose beautiful skin does not decay, our Spirit is the ultimate truth that stays as beautiful as it has been once, independent of time...

Serra Behar ingeniously dwells on the profundity of the layers of human nature in her artwork as she sheds light on the covered mysteries of the all-time myths... She brilliantly invites us to question our perception of the boundaries of human psyche while leading us to look from an 'unbounded' territory where any 'body' is genuinely the same in its very essence regardless of their identities. They are each a temple through which the magnificent Peacock shines and spreads Her wings with glamour...

She encourages the audience to challenge themselves and go beyond the blue fluorescent light that illuminates the x-rays...

She wants the viewer to explore whether it's the flesh, the spirit or the very darkness itself that asks the question: 'Can you see Us?'

The clarity in our inner vision reveals the transparency of our bodies.

It is the transparency of ego that breaks the walls of time and space.

Behar whispers in our ears that her artwork is a resemblance, a reminder...

Close your eyes and see inside.

It is not the light that brings the peacock to life; the peacock is already alive.

The peacock is eternally alive.



"First Supper" 2012  
85x119 cm (3ed.+1ap), fine art print unique frame



"First Supper" 2012 (detail)  
85x119 cm (3ed.+1ap), fine art print unique frame

"First Supper" is a deceptive feast table in which all the identities that are desired to make a present to our innocence in the world we born in. It's too early to know what to sacrifice.

## SERRA BEHAR



“Me in the mirror, you with in me” (Self - portrait), 2012  
8 pieces (36x26cm each), mixed media



“Me in the mirror, you with in me” (Self - Portrait), 2012 (detail)  
8 pieces (36x26cm each), mixed media





“Me in the mirror, you with in me” (Self - Portrait), 2012 (detail)  
8 pieces (36x26cm each), mixed media

Serra Behar presents a solid work with the installation titled "me in the mirror, you with in me" consisting of plaster mold replicates of the people she finds close to her.

Installation goes far beyond mutual physical collaboration, revealing the projection of interaction and communication between the artist and participants.



"Self Deception", 2012  
184x50x104 cm, animatronic installation, mixed media



### **“Self Deception”, 2012**

Belief, faith and not internalizing the process and feelings during the course of personal development, opting for the easy way out is being two faced towards oneself, in other words, deceiving oneself. Come on let's be honest! How much do you actually feel and how honest are you with yourselves?

“Within my works I always asked myself how I feel and why I feel the way I do. Because, I figured if no answer is forthcoming from me then it may come from someone who feels similarly. These are the questions I asked myself, I ask you, him/her: Firstly, why can't I belong after I am born? Because I don't feel safe (embryo). Then I feel the control, conscience and paradoxes of being a human (organ inc). Then how we forget that we are single as we disintegrate into becoming the “other” (geometry 1,2). Then I realize that I simply want to “be” and wonder if I can become (paradise bird) and on this journey I question the sincerity and honesty of the love and faith in my heart (self-deception).”





“Paradise Bird”, 2010  
130x40x50 cm, animatronic installation, mixed media



“Paradise Bird”, 2010  
130x40x50 cm, animatronic installation, mixed media

**“Paradise Bird”, 2010**

Bird has always been a symbol of freedom in every aspect of art, literature, even religions and mythology. Jung describes the bird as change of body, mind and thought.

In a struggle to survive, man is sociologically, psychologically and physically 'bound' by many factors such as culture, society, sex and religion.

Paradise symbolizes the state of getting free from those bounds, a state which one just gets to 'be.'

Paradise Bird's transparent body and cables represent one's rebellion to way of existence in this world and pursuit.

“Making a sad confrontation with human nature, Paradise Bird is a geopoetical meditation on ‘being’, which is related to immigration and cultural identity.”

Will McCrory

“ Paradise Bird “

What do you do if you feel  
that you don't **belong**  
to a place,  
a people,  
or a belief system?  
Are you **lost**?

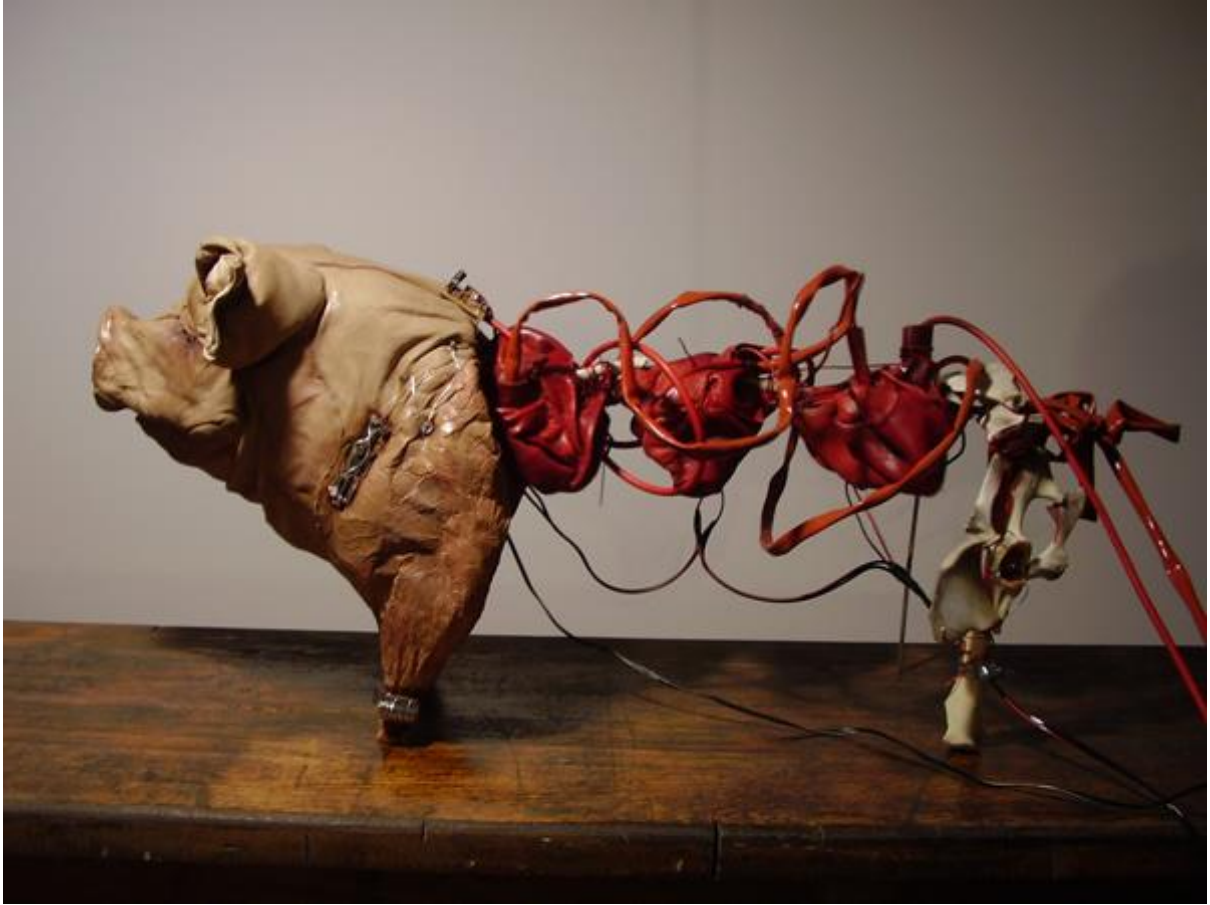
Should you try to belong  
once again,  
or is this the feeling of  
freedom  
you have always **feared**  
yet embraced...

Does being **free** mean  
you are lonely?

that make you what you are  
just let you **go**...  
What then ...

If you simply '**be**' ...  
Could you 'be' ?  
And what of the body,  
If all you want to reach is  
light and tranquility ...?


*Serra Behar / July 2010*



"Organ INC." 2009  
35x70x40 cm, organic materials: genuine leather, animal bones, stuffed with *papier machet* and organic ropes

DO YOU WISH A BETTER  
PERFORMING HEART?  
DID THE TIME LIMIT OF YOUR  
HEART END?  
DO YOU NEED A NEW HEART?  
THERE SHOULD BE A  
SUITABLE ONE FOR YOU  
AMONG ORGAN LTD'S  
HEARTS.

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CALL US NOW!  
WE CAN BREED SPECIAL  
GENETICALLY MODIFIED  
PIGS.



ORGAN LTD. ŞTİ.



"Organ INC." 2009 (detail)  
35x70x40 cm, organic materials: genuine leather, animal bones, stuffed with  
*papier machet* and organic ropes

## **“Organ INC.” 2009**

This futuristic art project's intent isn't to tell something against the scientific research. It dwells on questions such as “Is there an ethic about human's interference with nature?” and “What should be the dose and purpose of this interference?”

We live in an age when nature is a material which can take any form in humans' hands. We can see it on the paper we hold history which extends to destroyed forests or genetically engineered vegetables and meat which food industry sneaks on our table.

Work on genetics has split the world in two: One side assets possible unpredictable metabolismic changes on genetically engineered organisms might be the end of the nature and humanity eventually. On the other hand, one siteds advocates the process saying there is no danger and any considerable negativity.

As the subject matter has generated a serious public interest, it was easy for me to find references. On every article I've read, by every click on the internet, I've reached to numerous documents about subject matter. On those references, one creature which is most associated with the experiments was pig.

Skin transplant from pig to human  
Lung transplant from pig to human  
Limbs and organs which was grown in pigs  
Tissue reconstructed with pig DNA...

This gave me inspiration to build a new corporation: Organ INC!

Corporation's first product is also indicates first step of customized organ production: 'super pigs' inside of which human hearts gets cultivated.

Latest miracle of genetics, super pigs indicate one small step for a pig, one giant leap for mankind on the road to immortality.

When you consider fast development in the age of science, technology and marketing we are living in, you will hear the sound of that giant leap and see that ORGAN INC is already beyond of being fiction.





“Embryo ( BELONGING )” 2000-2001  
poliester resin





"Embryo ( BELONGING )" 2000-2001  
poliester resin

EXHIBITION

May 23<sup>rd</sup> - June 20<sup>th</sup>

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