



ART FIRST PROJECTS

GÜLER ATES

Threshold

6 September – 6 October

AF Projects is pleased to present its first exhibition of photographic works by Güler Ates. This new series of darkly elegant images is the result of two residencies that Ates undertook in 2010/11, both in historically significant buildings: Great Fosters – A royal hunting lodge built in the 1550's (now a hotel) and Leighton House – home of the renowned Victorian artist Frederic, Lord Leighton.

The work with Leighton House is especially resonant for Ates, whose art school background was in painting and who is consistently sensitive to the absorption of oriental and middle-eastern influences in our culture. Leighton House's Orientalism is a 19th century manifestation of that painterly and cultural cross-fertilisation also evidenced in the Greco-Byzantine traces running through the use of colour in the early Italian painters such as Duccio and Simone Martini. This clearly governs Ates' choices and interest in each colour's impact.

The works themselves – shot in entirely natural light – have a cinematic quality, capturing the gestural movements or carefully posed stillness of the professional model Ates employs as her subject. From the rich visual material available to her Ates weaves a series of evocative tableaux that through the intervention of her model, swathed in silk, explore the sympathies and tensions in our current idea of the exotic, and of the historical significance of cross-cultural visual awareness. Past and present concerns merge as the *arabesque* tapestries and furnishings of the C15th interiors are juxtaposed against contemporary readings of the veil.

Born in Mus in eastern Turkey, Ates studied painting at the University of Marmara in Istanbul before moving to the UK and completing her BA at Wimbledon School of Art in 2004. She went on to graduate in Printmaking (MA) from the Royal College in 2008.

Her work has been exhibited internationally, showing in museum & gallery spaces in the UK, USA, Brazil, Japan, India, France and the Netherlands, and is in the collection of several major institutions, including the Royal Academy of Arts and the V&A.

For further information please contact: afprojects@artfirst.co.uk

Art First, 21 Eastcastle Street, London, W1W 8DD

www.artfirst.co.uk