

OCULA

Contemporary Istanbul 2023: Four Fantastic Sculptures

Touted at the premiere art fair in Turkey, Contemporary Istanbul returns for its 18th edition, from 28 September to 1 October.

Featuring 67 galleries, with 8 initiatives and museums representing artists from 22 countries, Contemporary Istanbul focuses on the promotion of integrating culture into the Turkish city.

Ocula Advisory headed to Tersane Istanbul, a former Ottoman imperial shipyard on the Golden Horn, and found four fantastic sculptures showing at the fair.



Marion Verboom, *Achronie 34* (2022). Plaster, pigment, paint. 220 x 50 cm. Photo: Nicolas Brasseur.

Marion Verboom at THE PILL, Istanbul and Paris

Although calling Paris home, Marion Verboom's series of totemic sculpture, titled 'Achronies', was born during a residency in Istanbul in 2015. At this time, Verboom was preparing for a solo exhibition, and debut with THE PILL, which saw her experiment with the idea of stacking disjointed fragments of pigmented plaster in modular combinations.

Inspired by the timelessness of columns in the course of history, Verboom looked at how images and inscriptions were adopted and adapted throughout the Mediterranean—starting from Egypt and Turkey, then moving west to Greece and Spain.

With galleries in both Paris and Istanbul and a split programme to reflect this, THE PILL boasts a strong collector base in both regions. Speaking from the fair, the gallery's director, Alca Ağabeyoğlu has observed a notable rise in young local collectors engaging with their programme and speaks of increasing efforts to showcase local talent within the city.

At Zeyrek Çinili Hamam, three of Verboom's large-scale totem poles are included in *Healing Ruins* (30 September–11 November 2023), a group exhibition at the newly restored Ottoman

hammam.