

Press Release

Ayşe Erkmen
scrolling

March 12 – April 17, 2021
Opening Friday, March 12, 11am–6pm
Gallery hours: Tue–Sat, 11am – 6pm

Galerie Barbara Weiss is pleased to present a solo exhibition with new works by Ayşe Erkmen. The show's title — *scrolling* — alludes to an all too frequent activity in our everyday lives. Comparably, the works that make up the exhibition frequently touch on the nature and pervasiveness of digital media. Erkmen approaches these topics with a sense of lighthearted skepticism, pointing to both the capacity and limits of technology.

The room-scaled installation *Itself (green)*, 2011/2021 is made up of hundreds of images collected by Erkmen through googling her name. In this instance, Erkmen filtered her image search by color. Otherwise disregarding the quality and relevance to her, Erkmen brings these images together as one portrait. In doing so, she reveals the way in which we come to understand ourselves through algorithms that are outside of our control. In this non-hierarchical landscape, portraits of the artist are given the same weight as documentation of her artworks, promotional material for exhibitions, or, stranger still, images that do not immediately seem to relate to her at all.

In the next room, *Scroll Movie*, 2020, narrows the focus. The video scrolls through assorted projects of Erkmen's. In its 15 minute run time, this work collapses some three decades of the artist's career, gliding past projects that took months or years to plan and realize and wholly excluding contextual and temporal details. In *Capable*, 2019, on the opposite wall, Erkmen's Bitmoji avatar jumps rope, frowns at the weather, gets stuck in traffic and springs out of a slice of birthday cake. These formats of easy consumption are almost soothing in their superficiality. In collecting them, Erkmen demonstrates the new ways that technology can foster understanding — and misunderstanding.

Placed on the gallery floor, two sculptures, both titled *not the color it is/not the size it is*, 2021, depict an inverse, or negative space. Each was created by digging a hole in a sandbox and subsequently filling the irregular cavity with molten bronze. These little hills form a topology that is informed by what was previously a void, making a presence in place of an absence. The casting and glazing process that Erkmen has selected transforms the tactile — and often temporary — act of digging into another type of documentation.

Erkmen's practice has long examined the social and political implications of physical space — including infrastructure, urban planning and architecture. As our lived experience increasingly takes place in digital space, Erkmen's artistic inquiry has followed. With an approach that privileges subtlety, Erkmen's works across all mediums inspire charged and revelatory encounters with what might otherwise seem familiar.

Ayşe Erkmen has participated in numerous international exhibitions and biennials, including representing Turkey at the 54th Venice Biennale (2011); contributing site-specific installations for Skulptur Projekte Münster in 1997 and 2017; and conceiving contributions for the first Manifesta (1996), the Shanghai Biennial (2018), Gwangju Biennial (2000), Berlin Biennial (2001), and three Istanbul Biennials (1989, 1992, 2013). Her work has been exhibited at institutions around the world, including a retrospective exhibition at the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2008); as well as major exhibitions at Kunsthalle Vogelmann, Heilbronn, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Barbican Centre, London, SculptureCenter, New York, Centre Pompidou, Paris, and SMAK, Ghent, among others.