

EXHIBITION GUIDE 08/02/-27/04/2014

# MARC QUINN

THE SLEEP OF REASON

ARTER

British artist Marc Quinn's first solo exhibition in Turkey brings together more than 30 works the artist has produced since 1999. Presenting the wide range of media and materials used by Marc Quinn, the exhibition features a number of his seminal works along with some of his most recent paintings and sculptures, which are shown for the first time at ARTER. "The Sleep of Reason" revolves around history, time and space, body and identity related themes, which the artist has been exploring since the 1990s and proposes an investigation into the relationship between nature and culture as well as the interaction between art and technology through dependency.

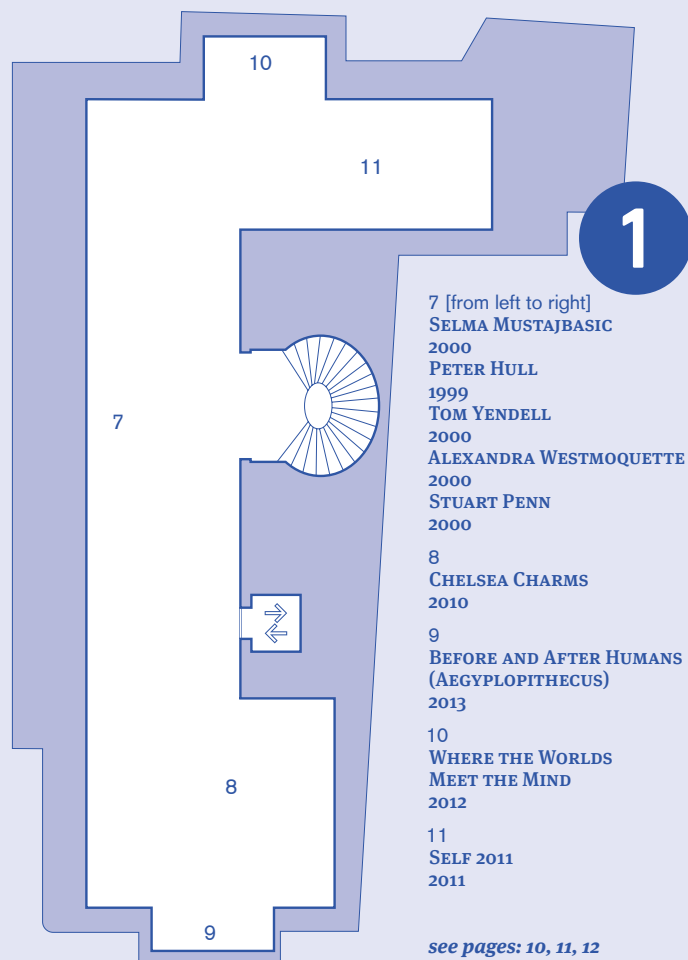
The exhibition's title is inspired by Goya's etching "The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters" (from the series of aquatint plates entitled "Los Caprichos", 1799). In the etching, the artist represents himself sleeping, surrounded by the products of his own imagination, monsters and nightmares. Named in reference to this etching and departing from its moral and historical context, "The Sleep of Reason" proposes an extension of our perception towards the realm of the immaterial or that of the invisible by connecting the particular to the universal and challenging our framing of reality.

Marc Quinn's works often abound with references to the complex process of Creation, linking human history to the cyclic temporality of the universe. The self-portraits he has been producing since 1991 using his own frozen blood, or his sculptures that invert the aesthetic norms culturally standardized for the human body, underline the artificial, temporal and historical nature of dualisms that define human life (Self/Other, Body/Mind, Nature/Culture) while exploring the mutual belonging of differences or binary oppositions such as Life/Death, Birth/Destruction. In his works, "the body" operates as a site through which the artist suggests new readings of the relationship between the "inside" and the "outside".

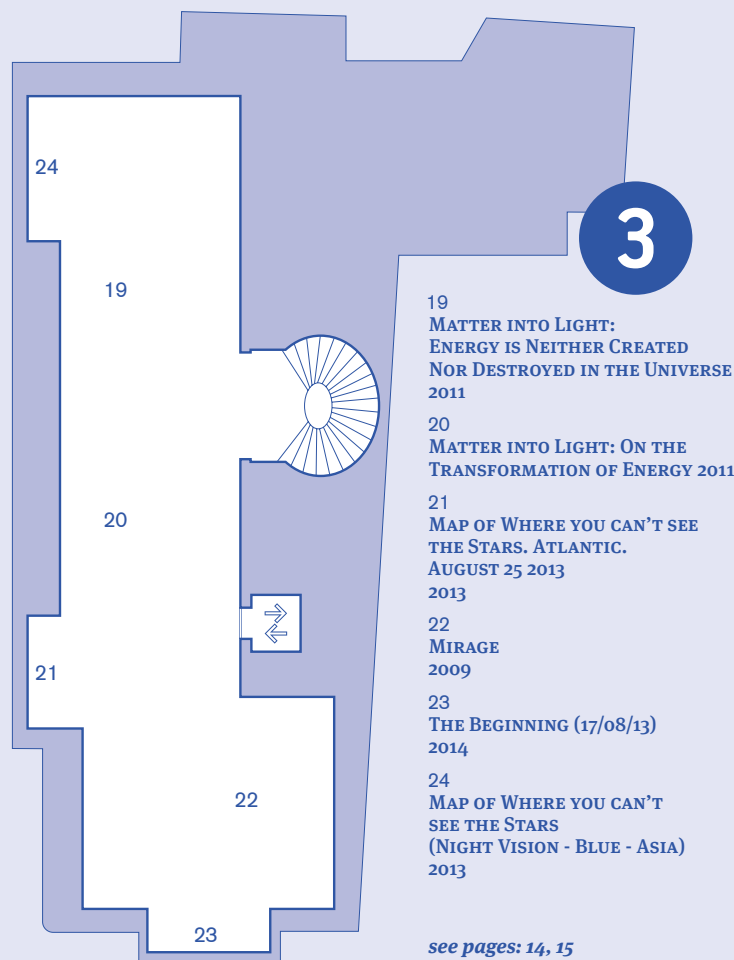
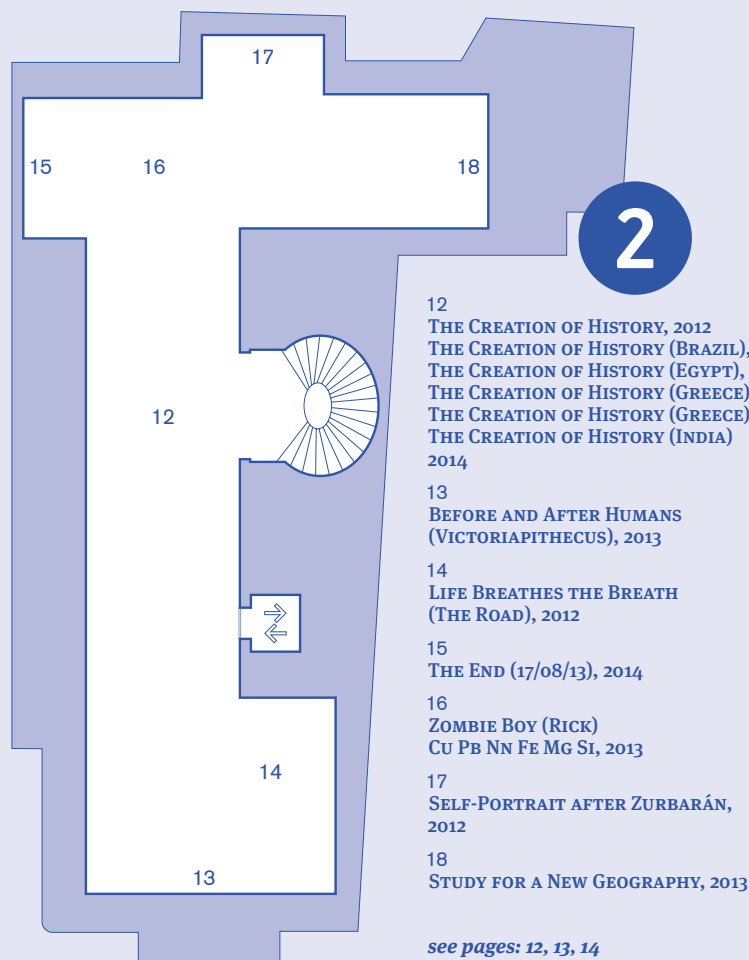
Marc Quinn's works offer the "inside" a new, fascinating and troubling visibility, whereas the "outside" is revealed as being constitutive of the "inside", both finding a common ground by being re-cast in the artificiality of the artwork. Art theoretician Selen Ansen has devised the exhibition around the theme of "threshold", as a passageway and as a space of reversibility between internal and external: the historical and abstract notions which refer to the categories that shape our understanding of the world, as well as our relationship to the Other in the construction of our selves.



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## 1 THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD (CASSIS

MADAGASCARIENSIS) ATLANTIC OCEAN, 310, 2012

THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD (CASSIS MADAGASCARIENSIS) ATLANTIC OCEAN, 310 is an enlarged bronze sculpture of a shell which was created using 3D scanning technology. The shell is a found object, a complex form that was created by this invertebrate for its own protection. Quinn's sculpture seems to collapse time: its exterior, heavily marked by striations, is evidence of the passage of time past; whereas its highly polished, shiny interior suggests something new that reflects the present. Through its enlargement and transformation into sculpture, various questions start to emerge: is art always a man-made creation or is it something that exists in the world, simply waiting to be 'discovered' by man?

## 2 FLESH PAINTING (ON A HOMEOPATHIC DIET), 2013

## 4 FLESH PAINTING (ON ATOMIC EQUIVALENCE), 2014

In a new series of paintings titled "Flesh Paintings" (2012–ongoing), Quinn captures both the beautiful and grotesque nature of raw meat. In these two meat paintings, the marbling of the fat and deep red of the veins becomes abstracted by being magnified. Influenced by the long tradition of Dutch still life painting, here Quinn has drawn our attention to the detail, taking a biopsy of the larger picture to turn the smallest element of the still life into the main subject. Similar to his "Labyrinth" series of fingerprint paintings, which reference portraiture through their means of identification, he draws our attention to the wonder of biology and the inherent beauty found within the complex layers of one's own flesh. The meat paintings are a paradox in that they are at once beautiful and repulsive, abstract yet completely figurative as the figure is composed entirely of meat itself.

## 3 TERMINAL VELOCITY, 2014

TERMINAL VELOCITY is a painting of a bird in the actual moment of the transition from life to death. Painted from a photograph taken by the artist, we are reminded of Robert Capa's iconic photograph of the "Falling Soldier" (1936). A crucifixion of the animal kingdom, we witness the bullet that marks the bird's heroic move from life to death.

## 5 BUCK & ALLANAH, 2009

Quinn's portrait sculpture of transgender couple BUCK & ALLANAH depicts the couple standing hand in hand, like a latter day Adam and Eve, striding out into their future as radically altered beings. Although all modelled from life, these bodies seem to exist beyond the normal boundaries of classification—appearing almost 'trans-gender', or 'trans-corporeal'—throwing the very notion of identity into question, exposing it as a fragile, complex and multi-layered construction, interminably co-existent with their external physical selves. Quinn's work observes that now people can become their own mythological creatures.

## 6 HELD BY DESIRE (SQUARE ROOT), 2014

HELD BY DESIRE (SQUARE ROOT) is another work that has been developed using 3D scanning technology. The work also uses a natural form, this time that of a 250 year-old bonsai tree which is part of the artist's own collection of plants. Historically used as a focus for contemplation, the bonsai tree is, for Quinn, a microcosm of our relationship with nature: one in which human desire attempts to manipulate nature to its own ends, however, ultimately an untended bonsai will reclaim its natural size and state. This is about our lack of control of the world, as this is the ultimate image of

human wish to control nature. By controlling it obsessively, but making the sculpture two and a half meters tall, Quinn demonstrates how the symbol of control has lost itself to become a symbol of lack of control.

- 7 SELMA MUSTAJBASIC, 2000; PETER HULL, 1999; TOM YENDELL, 2000; ALEXANDRA WESTMOQUETTE, 2000 AND STUART PENN, 2000  
(THE COMPLETE MARBLES SERIES)

Highlighting how the conflict between the ‘natural’ and ‘cultural’ has a grip on the contemporary psyche, in 1999, Quinn began a series of marble sculptures of amputees as a way of interpreting Greek and Roman statuary and their depictions of an idealised whole. These sculptures celebrate different kinds of beauties by reminding us that while the fragmented body appears to be accepted in art, we should accept it in life as well. One such work depicted is Peter Hull (1999), a British Paralympics Gold medalist. The other disabled people depicted are Stuart Penn (2000), Alexandra Westmoquette (2000), Selma Mustajbasic (2000) and Tom Yendell (2000).

## 8 CHELSEA CHARMS, 2010

Taken from a larger series made by the artist, these sculptures (CHELSEA CHARMS, BUCK & ALLANAH and ZOMBIE BOY CU PB NN FE MG SI) explore the public’s obsession with the body, its perfection and flaws, and how this obsession has led some people to alter their bodies in increasingly extreme ways. Our bodies can now morph into cultural objects through varying degrees of manipulation. Chelsea Charms is an American model who has had multiple breast augmentation surgeries. The sculpture titled CHELSEA

CHARMS is life size, but seems small compared to her extraordinarily large breasts. Apart from her breasts, Chelsea’s body is completely natural, her hair wisps around her neck and the drapery hangs loosely off her hips mimicking classical sculpture, a modern day Venus.

- 9 BEFORE AND AFTER HUMANS (AEGYPLOPITHECUS), 2013

- 13 BEFORE AND AFTER HUMANS (VICTORIAPITHECUS), 2013

The “Before and After Humans” series (2013–ongoing) depicts the powerful churning seawater from which all life has come. Aegyptopithecus and Victoriapithecus refer to the earliest primates who lived and breathed in these waters. Painted from photographs taken for the artist, the sea becomes a mythical open space, which could be interpreted as the sky or clouds. Humans are hypnotised by water and need it to survive. The entire cycle of life is present in these paintings as we see also in *THE BEGINNING* and *THE END*, sunrise and sunset paintings, as an attempt to reflect back to us our paradoxical selves in the mirror, controlled and held by our own desires.

## 10 WHERE THE WORLDS MEET THE MIND, 2012

*WHERE THE WORLDS MEET THE MIND* is a painting of the inside of an eye, at the retina. Imagery enters the eye and is sent through the retina and transmitted to the brain. This tiny layer of tissue is responsible for filtering all the beauty and horror of the world, it is the lens which allows for us to compute the macro and the micro; where light becomes thought.

## 11 SELF, 2011

Quinn's diverse and poetic work meditates on our attempts to understand or overcome the transience of human life through scientific knowledge and artistic expression. Quinn has used freezing as a medium since the early nineties, when he created the first sculpture *SELF* 1991, a frozen portrait of the artist's head, cast in his own blood. An ongoing project, Quinn recreates the work every 5 years. The blood documents Quinn's current physical state and the process of both ageing and self-preservation. Quinn's fascination with DNA is seen throughout his practice.

## 12 THE CREATION OF HISTORY SERIES, 2012 / 2014

Marc Quinn's 6 tapestry 'paintings' all entitled *THE CREATION OF HISTORY* show images of nameless insurgents whose faces remain anonymous in the shadow of their hoods. These are iconic images captured by journalists reporting on recent uprisings in Brazil, Greece, Egypt, India and the UK over the past three years. These are images of anarchy, revolution and rebellion. The tapestry carpets are sculptures of images woven from disparate threads and are made using a jacquard loom, the first digital image machine in the world dating from early 19th century.

## 14 LIFE BREATHE THE BREATH (THE ROAD), 2012

This bronze sculpture depicts a hooded young woman sitting cross-legged and holding a skull in her hands. Perhaps a *memento mori*, the skull is a reminder of the inevitability of death and this young woman holds it almost like a crystal ball, looking for a sign of her own mortality. Based on a Zurbarán painting of a monk, this figure is like a pilgrim from the streets on her own spiritual journey.

## 15 THE END (17/08/13), 2014

## 23 THE BEGINNING (17/08/13), 2014

In the new series titled "One Day at a Time", Quinn took photographs of the sunrise and sunset every day over a summer. This daily, repetitive documentation (canny to Beckett's use of repetition in his plays in the place of narrative) forced Quinn to be aware of his own existence every day and remember that each day is a new beginning. Each photograph becomes painted into expansive sunscapes, turning the documentary into something more nostalgic and sublime. Through *THE BEGINNING* (2014) and *THE END* (2014), we experience life and death with the sun rising and setting.

## 16 ZOMBIE BOY CU PB NN FE MG SI, 2011

*ZOMBIE BOY CU PB NN FE MG SI* is a bronze sculpture of Rich Genest, a Canadian actor whose body is covered in skeletal tattoos. Made with Cu Pb Nn Fe Mg Si (copper, lead, manganese, iron, magnesium, and silicon), the tattoos are not just layered here but are engraved and seem to come to life. Quinn is interested in areas that used to be bound in ritual, like tattooing for example; but with the breakdown of the cultural frameworks they existed in, tattooed people now are creating their own outsider cultural framework. *Zombie Boy* lives in the moment by wearing an image of death on his face.

## 17 SELF-PORTRAIT AFTER ZURBARÁN, 2012

This oil on canvas painting is a self-portrait of the artist disguised as a rioter. The portrait is re-interpreted by using deep chiaroscuro in the vein of the Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbarán. An artist's job can be seen as that of a disrupter of social order, here Quinn disguises both the artist and the rioter through the use of dark colours and classical portraiture.

## 18 STUDY FOR A NEW GEOGRAPHY, 2013

STUDY FOR A NEW GEOGRAPHY is a black and white map of the world. Covered in splatter marks of black oil paint (referring to humans' need to find natural resources at any cost to the land), the lands in the map suddenly become divided and territories reconfigured. With real shifting land masses, we are constantly being reminded of both the geological decay and political turmoil which is chipping away at our world.

## 19 MATTER INTO LIGHT: ENERGY IS NEITHER CREATED NOR DESTROYED IN THE UNIVERSE, 2011

## 20 MATTER INTO LIGHT: ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF ENERGY, 2011

MATTER INTO LIGHT: ENERGY IS NEITHER CREATED NOR DESTROYED IN THE UNIVERSE and MATTER INTO LIGHT: ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF ENERGY are two sculptures which depict scenes of transcendence. Set in a dark space, the bronze bodies are engulfed in flames but are depicted in serene yogi-like poses. The sculptures identify the continuous state of creation and destruction in the world. Death liberates energy locked into the matter of the body, which becomes something new in the universe.

## 21 MAP OF WHERE YOU CAN'T SEE THE STARS. ATLANTIC. AUGUST 25 2013, 2013

## 24 MAP OF WHERE YOU CAN'T SEE THE STARS (NIGHT VISION - BLUE - ASIA), 2013

The "Eye Paintings" are a series of works that depict human irises on a magnified scale, some with maps of the world superimposed upon them. These works attempt to navigate the interaction between man and the planet. Globalization has created a kind of paranoia where we have eventually become our own Big Brother, we see the world through a media filtered lens which we are both in front of and behind. For example, in the works MAP OF WHERE YOU CAN'T SEE THE STARS. ATLANTIC. AUGUST 25 2013 and MAP OF WHERE YOU CAN'T SEE THE STARS (NIGHT VISION - BLUE - ASIA), the land mass is painted black with specs of white, littered mostly along coastal areas. These white dots show us where stars are invisible to people who live in these areas, perhaps addressing the debate on population and energy consumption.

## 22 MIRAGE, 2009

MIRAGE is a sculptural representation of what became an internationally famous photograph of a prisoner being tortured at Abu Ghraib prison during the Iraq War. This is a cultural image that resonates with others, as seen throughout art history from the "Laocoön" to sculptures of Christ the Redeemer, to Goya's war images. By taking an image which has become disembodied through its ubiquity and making it physical again the artist grounds the reality of the situation and draws our attention to the best and the worst of humanity.



# MARC QUINN

## THE SLEEP OF REASON

08/02–27/04/2014

Curator: Selen Ansen

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

ALEXANDRA WESTMOQUETTE, 2000

BEFORE AND AFTER HUMANS  
(AEGYPLOPITHECUS), 2013

BEFORE AND AFTER HUMANS  
(VICTORIAPITHECUS), 2013

THE BEGINNING (17/08/13), 2014

BUCK & ALLANAH, 2009

CHELSEA CHARMS, 2010

THE CREATION OF HISTORY, 2012

THE CREATION OF HISTORY (BRAZIL), 2014

THE CREATION OF HISTORY (EGYPT), 2014

THE CREATION OF HISTORY (GREECE), 2014

THE CREATION OF HISTORY (GREECE), 2014

THE CREATION OF HISTORY (INDIA), 2014

THE END (17/08/13), 2014

FLESH PAINTING  
(ON ATOMIC EQUIVALENCE), 2014

FLESH PAINTING  
(ON A HOMEOPATHIC DIET), 2013

HELD BY DESIRE (SQUARE ROOT), 2014

LIFE BREATHES THE BREATH  
(THE ROAD), 2012

MAP OF WHERE YOU CAN'T SEE  
THE STARS. ATLANTIC.

AUGUST 25 2013, 2013

MAP OF WHERE YOU CAN'T SEE THE  
STARS (NIGHT VISION - BLUE - ASIA),  
2013

MATTER INTO LIGHT: ENERGY IS  
NEITHER CREATED NOR DESTROYED  
IN THE UNIVERSE, 2011

MATTER INTO LIGHT: ON THE  
TRANSFORMATION OF ENERGY, 2011

MIRAGE, 2009

THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD  
(CASSIS MADAGASCARIENSIS)  
ATLANTIC OCEAN, 310, 2012

PETER HULL, 1999

SELF 2011, 2011

SELF-PORTRAIT AFTER ZURBARÁN,  
2012

SELMA MUSTAJBASIC, 2000

STUART PENN, 2000

STUDY FOR A NEW GEOGRAPHY, 2013

TERMINAL VELOCITY, 2014

TOM YENDELL, 2000

WHERE THE WORLDS  
MEET THE MIND, 2012

ZOMBIE BOY (RICK)  
CU PB NN FE MG SI

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