

DEEPIISM

by Yucel Donmez

Yucel Donmez is an artist who has spent many years working in the United States, opening exhibitions in the most select establishments, has become a reputed artist and entered art encyclopaedias. Despite this, he is still considered a foreigner in the United States, because his art is not a product of American culture.

Returning to Turkey for this reason, Donmez aims firstly to begin a new artistic career in his native land and then to take his place in the international art world with his original national identity. This is because the mix of contemporaneity and national-originality is accepted as an important criterion within the value judgements of this arena. In our opinion there should be some weight in looking at his art works from this perspective.

Yucel Donmez's art lays out in front of our eyes, an unusual, surreal and dramatic world. When we draw a little closer to the paintings, it is possible to see elements belonging to traditional Turkish art forms such as Ottoman Calligraphy, Tugra (Sultans' signatures in Ottoman Calligraphy) decorative art, ornamentation and above all Ebru (traditional Turkish marbling), weaving together a multicolored dream-like blanket. But on lifting this blanket, we become aware that we have reached a space of limitless thought and emotion.

This designed unreal space is one of forms and experiences brought together by a contemporary abstract interpretation of existence that can stand up against traditional values. His paintings are part of this understanding of space. This understanding of space goes against the preconceived notions of being that we inherited from the Renaissance, taking its a priori opposition of reality and unreality and

uniting the two in - for example, a digital reality. Within his unreal experience the opposition between the conscious and subconscious is also surpassed by a new dimension, the dimension of depth, or Deepism.

Deepism is accepted as a basic category representative of the new era in which we live... For example, just as physics reached depth only in the last hundred years with the theory of relativity (Einstein) and the uncertainty principle (Heisenberg), so did biology reach the lowest possible layers of the organism, with genetic research.

Psychology sees the subconscious as the most basic layer of the human spirit, therefore forming a psychology of depth (Freud). Then there is the realm of philosophy... Having taken appearances that collide with our sensations as reality for hundreds of years, philosophy accepts appearances that slip away beneath us as devoid of being, putting forward that being is to be found in the depths of human existence (Heidegger). All of these understandings establish the cosmic structure we call earth in which humans also play an important role, firmly within a dimension of depth. It is the will of this era that art takes place within this dimension of depth. Yucel Donmez's paintings constitute a perfect example of this dimension. Within the irrational, abstract space of forms and experiences that Donmez displays and which makes up the axis of his art, Donmez enters into a settling of scores with being, from the darkest conceptions and images of the conscious and subconscious, reaching from the individual to the historical, through to the layers of thought and emotion. This in turn, is reflected on the dynamics of the irrational and abstract forms of the painting and exteriorises the polyphony of the painting. From this is borne the

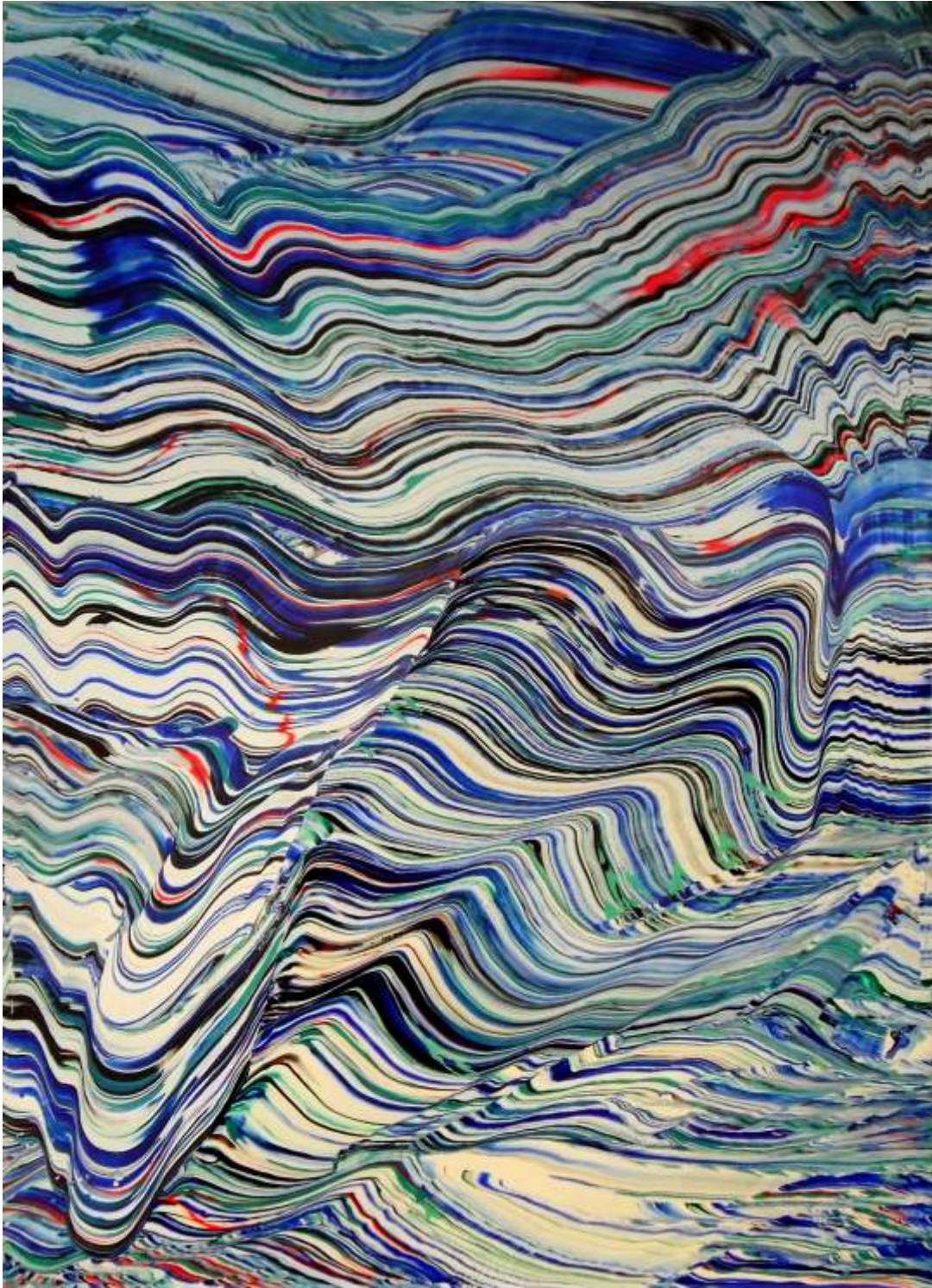
painting's individual language and semantic background. Within such a tableau, the painting is, on the one hand, a tangible language, or expression that we already know the meaning of, with tradition at its source and on the other hand, an abstract and liberal language, or expression that is open to interpretation and different understandings.

These two attributes of his paintings constitute the two basic categories of being that make them national paintings. It is at first a little difficult to fully gauge the meaning of his paintings because of the language they use.

Another factor contributing to this difficulty is the polyphony of his paintings. This polyphony is not merely a harmony of colours that we are accustomed to, or a colorist musicality, but to a far greater extent, a pop-musicality composed of the hard beat created by the percussive-like mingling of the colors, forms and all other elements of a painting. This is an irrational arrangement or installation synonymous to the architectural style of the painting, which is at the same time at the core of the aesthetic value of the painting. Naturally, it has to be expected that the audience have an original aesthetic attitude and again an original aesthetic empathy that is demanded by the painting in order to fully feel an aesthetic appreciation for such an arrangement and musicality.

What we ultimately want to convey is the national, contemporary originality of Yucel Donmez's painting-style. His originality represents a universal value formed by national and contemporary values. We hope that Yucel Donmez will take his deserved place in international art in the near future.

by Prof. Ismail Tunali (Art Historian)



Tsunami
160 x 220cm
Acrylic on Canvas
2011
www.yuceldonmez.com