

Artist in Focus

Hande Sekerciler Instagram Story Q&A

‘How has the isolation period impacted your creative process?’

Hande Sekerciler: I’m very happy to stay at home and focus on my work without any interruption. Usually I’m working a very busy schedule between exhibitions and traveling but now I have lots of time for reviewing pieces and ideas. I found a new idea for my next solo show and now I am working on it. I guess so far so good...

‘Did you ever try tin (Sn) for your works? Which is the most difficult material to work on?’

Sekerciler: I haven’t used tin yet. Actually, all materials have their own difficulties. But I like that challenge.

‘Have you always gravitated towards sculpture? Do you consider other mediums?’

Sekerciler: Actually, when I started art education in University, I assumed I was going to be a painter. But destiny called and I met with clay. Nowadays I also do character animation and modelling too. But I think these are very similar to sculpting.

‘What does the fusion of two figures represent in your artworks?’

Sekerciler: It represents different states of a person’s mind.

‘What outside of your beautiful figurative artwork is your biggest passion?’

Sekerciler: I have an artist duo called ‘ha:ar’. If I’m not working on my own sculptures, I usually work on this. We use digital tools for creating our artworks.

‘As your figures reference Classicism, is that your favourite art period?’

Sekerciler: Yes. I am highly inspired by that era.

‘What inspires you in creating sculptures and how did you meet JD Malat?’

Sekerciler: I’d like to start with the second part of this question. When I was in artist residency at Residency Unlimited in New York, 2018, my phone rang. JD was calling. He said he saw my sculptures in Contemporary Istanbul in 2017 and he was starting his own gallery and would like to work with me. The journey begun!

We are on a technological level where we are able to modify human calls but we are still concerned what our neighbour wears, where she spends time and with who. These contrasts are sources that feed my inspiration. I also admire Classical and Hellenistic periods of art. I feel inspired from that era’s forms, sculpting techniques and their craftsmanship.

‘What is the strongest inspiration you draw from your Turkish roots?’

Sekerciler: I travel a lot (before the COVID-19 virus of course). For two years I went back and forth between the US and Turkey. This lifestyle gives me a very wide perspective for reviewing culture, seeing differences between lifestyles... I realised in Turkey we are living on very rich heritage. Istanbul is the capital of Rome and Byzantium. We have the Ottoman Empire, we have Gibeklitepe where the written history begun. We have lots of stories to tell. And I am working on it.

‘What digital technology are you working with right now?’

Sekerciler: For my drawings I use Procreator and Adobe Fresco on my Ipad Pro. In addition to traditional sculpting I also do motion capture, 3D sculpting, character animation and modelling using lots of softwares including Zbrush, Cinema4D, Marvelous Designer and more on my MacBook Pro.

‘Who are your top 3 sculptors?’

Sekerciler: Antony Gormley, Ron Mueck and Rodin.

‘You use state of the art technologies, how did your methods intersect with technology?’

Sekerciler: A couple of years ago I started my artistic duo with Arda Yalkin, called ha:ar. We decided to research how to mix new media and traditional art, especially sculpture. After that thanks to Arda I’m learning to use lots of software and hardware. Nowadays I use these tools in my own work too. For example, I make my sculpture sketches in Zbrush.

‘Do you work along or with a team?’

Sekerciler: Actually, I like to do everything by myself. But unfortunately, it’s not possible. Especially if you work with bronze. At least you need power for pouring melted metal which is not easy to do. Also, after the casting process you have tons of work to do for seeing the final work. You should clean mold pieces from bronze, sand it, polish it, do the patina... My assistant helps under my supervision, like cleaning and sanding bronze. After that I do the final touch and patina.

I use a very special kind of chemical patina. It requires more attention than paint. Because it’s not like painting something. I mix a couple of chemicals and apply this on hot bronze. In that way they reach with each other and the sculpture gains colour from this. You need to pay attention from the very beginning until the end or you can’t achieve the correct colours and textures. So long story short, I work alone and with a team.

‘What do you feel when you see your work at a museum, at a collector’s exhibition or home?’

Sekerciler: I like to think of myself as a writer/thinker who uses form. So when I see one of my works at a collectors house, a museum etc, I feel I’ve been understood by someone, and I have touched people’s lives.

‘Would you consider sculpting more than the human figure?’

Sekerciler: I believe sculpture means human, even if there is no human in it. For me, making sculpture is talking or writing about ideas by using forms, textures, colours. For example, I'm working on figurative-abstract version of 'ecstasy' series and I'm looking forward to seeing the results.