

The Nudes of Istanbul Opens in Berlin with 14 Turkish Photographers and Texts by Turkish Nude Art Models

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info@burakbulut.info The Nudes of Istanbul Opens in Berlin with 14 Turkish Photographers and Texts by Turkish Nude Art Models

THE NUDES OF ISTANBUL · Die Akt Galerie, Berlin · 3–19 July 2026 · 14 Turkish photographers · 5 women participants · Turkish nude art model-authors · English-language photobook

Berlin, May 2026 — Die Akt Galerie Berlin will present The Nudes of Istanbul from 3 to 19 July 2026, a group exhibition and accompanying English-language hardcover photobook bringing a fourteen-year Istanbul-based fine-art nude photography practice into public view.

Curated by Berlin-based photographer, artist and educator Burak Bulut Yıldırım, the project brings together 14 Turkish photographers selected from a sustained curator-directed studio practice in Istanbul. Five of the participating photographers are women. The accompanying book includes not only photographs, but also texts by three Turkish nude art model-authors writing from inside the practice: Zeynep Renda, Su Yeşil and Marmelat.

The project's central fact is direct: these works were made in Istanbul, with Turkish models working in fine-art nude photography, by Turkish photographers, over a period of fourteen years. The exhibition and book bring that collective body of work into public circulation in Berlin for the first time.

The location is not a neutral detail. The photographs were produced in a social context in which the public visibility of nude imagery has become increasingly difficult. The project does not turn that difficulty into spectacle. It treats it as one of the real conditions under which the work was made: the city, the studio, the model, the light, the permission and the decision to make the body visible.

The participating photographers are Adem Tayfun Eser, Burak Özcan, İbrahim Cem Özoral, Didem Okumuş, Enis Onur, Mehmet Akif Yalın, Mehmet Naci Demirkol, Mertkan Hergül, Meryem Aydın, Neslihan Bilginer, Nevra Topalısmaioğlu, Ozan Dengiz, Selda Bal Coşar and Umut Altun.

The Nudes of Istanbul is not presented as a general exhibition about Turkey or a national survey of nude photography. It is a public record of a long-term collective practice that developed in Istanbul through real bodies, real light, constructed sets, physical materials, model presence and the discipline of photographing the body through explicit consent.

A FOURTEEN-YEAR PRACTICE FROM ISTANBUL

The project grows out of Yıldırım's nearly twenty years of work with the body as an artistic subject. Across that period, he has worked with hundreds of models and produced hundreds of thousands of body-based fine-art frames, while exhibiting body-focused works in several European contexts. Since opening his first studio in Istanbul in 2005, Yıldırım has worked across body-based fine-art projects, photographer education and curator-led production environments.

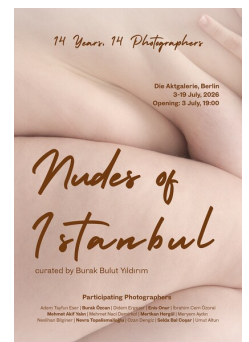
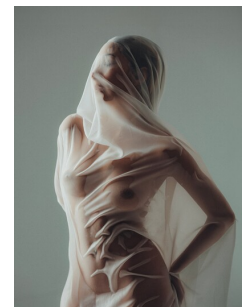
For the past fourteen years in Istanbul, that experience has been transmitted through concept-led nude art workshops and studio productions, working with photographers across different visual premises, lighting structures, model situations and material interventions.

The fourteen participating photographers were not selected through an open call. They were selected from a collective field formed across fourteen years of curator-directed photographic production in Istanbul. Selection was based on continuity of participation, technical and visual coherence, distinctness of photographic decision-making and the ability of each photographer's work to contribute to a collective body without dissolving into it.

AN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PHOTOBOOK

The accompanying English-language hardcover photobook is conceived as an autonomous book-length publication rather than a standard exhibition catalogue. Within the very limited publication history of fine-art nude photography from Turkey, the book is positioned as a significant English-language record of

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the field.

The publication brings together 14 Turkish photographers, five women participants, three Turkish nude art model-authors, a historical framing of nude photography in Turkey and six categories of the photographed body: Surface, Matter, Opacity, Rooms, Duration and Self-Possession.

The book includes a foreword and extended curatorial essay by Burak Bulut Yıldırım. It is intended for art book circulation, institutional outreach, academic use, selected library acquisition proposals and future public programming.

THREE MODEL-AUTHORS WRITING FROM INSIDE THE PRACTICE

The model-author texts are central to the project. Zeynep Renda writes from inside a long modelling practice, addressing trust, boundaries, contracts, the need to see the image while posing, unsafe and professional working conditions, and the move from being photographed by others toward becoming a self-portrait artist.

Su Yeşil writes through the body as lived experience: family reaction, shame, gendered norms, body dysphoria, movement, nature, performance and the refusal to reduce nudity to sexuality.

Marmelat, writing under a chosen pseudonym, brings a further position to the project: the experience of a Turkish nude model who has also worked within a fine arts faculty, addressing the rarely documented question of nude modelling in Turkish higher education.

Together, these texts shift the model from silent subject matter to witness, collaborator and author. In this project, the photographed body is not only an image. It belongs to a person who consented, posed, waited, moved, resisted and held the room.

SIX CATEGORIES OF THE PHOTOGRAPHED BODY

The works are organised across six categories: Surface, Matter, Opacity, Rooms, Duration and Self-Possession. Surface names form, light, contour and the tactile feeling of skin and photographic surface. Matter focuses on pigment, water, fabric, light, reflection and physical materials acting with the body. Opacity gathers images in which visibility is interrupted by tulle, haze, covering, glass, shadow, water or translucent surfaces. Rooms considers the body in relation to beds, windows, doors, walls and interior space. Duration holds movement, time, balance, resistance, muscle tension, dance and long exposure. Self-Possession brings together works in which the body protects its own presence, boundary, gaze or inwardness.

A CAMERA-BASED RESPONSE TO THE SYNTHETIC IMAGE ECONOMY

The exhibition opens at a moment when AI-generated and synthetic sexualised body imagery circulates at industrial scale, often without consent. Against that background, The Nudes of Istanbul insists on the nude photograph as a camera-based artistic act: a real body, real light, real materials, a room, a model and a set of explicit permissions.

No exhibition image is AI-generated. AI training and synthetic-image use are explicitly excluded from the project's written rights and consent framework.

BERLIN AS OPENING CHAPTER, LONDON AS PRIORITY NEXT CONTEXT

Die Akt Galerie's focus on artistic nude photography makes it a precise Berlin context for the project. Berlin is the opening chapter of the project's public circulation: a first international platform for a body of work made in Istanbul and held there, with limited public visibility, for years.

After Berlin, London is being developed as a priority next context for the project's international circulation, including UK-facing press outreach, institutional conversations, book presentation possibilities and future exhibition enquiries. The project is also intended to continue through public programming, academic conversations and selected institutional contacts in Turkey and other European cities.

FROM THE CURATOR

"For fourteen years, we worked in Istanbul with Turkish models, Turkish photographers and explicit consent. I did not want this project to treat the model as silent subject matter. Their voices had to be part of the book. With fourteen photographers from Istanbul, five women participants and texts by three model-authors, The Nudes of Istanbul brings into public view a sustained collective practice from a field

that has remained only thinly visible in Turkey.”

— Burak Bulut Y?ld?r?m, Curator

EXHIBITION DETAILS

The Nudes of Istanbul

Die Akt Galerie, Krossener Str. 34, 10245 Berlin, Germany

3–19 July 2026

Opening: Friday, 3 July 2026, 19:00

Gallery hours: Friday–Sunday, 15:00–19:00

Admission: Free

Press images, photographer biographies, curatorial material, publication previews, interview availability and reading copies are available on request.

Press contact: info@burakbulut.info

Project page: <https://burakbulut.org/the-nudes-of-istanbul>

Press release page: <https://burakbulut.org/nudes-of-istanbul-press-release/>

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