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## MURDER IN THREE ACTS

Basak Senova

"There is no route out of the maze. The maze shifts as you move through it, because it is alive."

Philip K. Dick (*Valis*, 1981)

Xavier Hufkens

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Asli Cavusoglu has constructed a mental maze for her multi-layered project *Murder in Three Acts*. With a successive set of episodes, the project constantly shifts as it interacts with the space in which it takes place. Furthermore, the artist perpetually rearticulates the process with diverse and uncontrollable collaborative input. *Murder in Three Acts* was first designed as a real-time performance in three episodes, mounted during Frieze London in 2012. The art-fair booth was separated into two parts: an exhibition of artworks/objects and an ad-hoc forensics lab in which a professional cast of actors examined objects as evidence. The project questions the processes of legitimization that surround us by posing a set of questions: *What is truth? What is scientific fact? What is witnessing? What is seeing? What is believing? How do we define knowledge? How do we filter information?* Not only the art fair context, but also knowledge in general was challenged and questioned in this booth. As a space for knowledge production, the paired exhibition space demanded a reciprocal relationship between the project and the audience. Hence, the crime drama was even discussed and rehearsed as an improvisational act. This act constantly oscillated between staging the process and losing control over it.



Murder in Three Acts, HD film, 3 Episodes, English with sound, 2012-13

As the next step, Cavusoglu changed the reference points of this context by moving the project to NON in Istanbul. NON is a distinctive gallery with a history of working with artists with sharp political and ideological views. This time, the project disguises itself as an exhibition in multiple formats: the screening of three episodes of *Murder in Three Acts*; behind-the-scenes footage of the process, filmed by Taylan Mutaf; and the props, which were used in the real-time performance of the project, reproduced and modified for the exhibition. Hence, each object claims its own territory in such a way that it becomes a spatial installation. These installations unfold the following quote cited in the third episode by the female detective: "If we find out what the collection means, we will also find out what murder is." Cavusoglu again circulates her questions in this new exhibition context by documenting her "facts" in a maze of overlapping paths.

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Mom,  
am I barbarian?

collezione maramotti



They lived in different periods and different continents! Car paint on fiber, 36cm in diameter, height 40 cm, 2013

*Murder in Three Acts was created in partnership with Delfina Foundation's artist-in-residency program. The project was produced in association with Manifold Projects. NON presents the exhibition from March 1 to April 13, 2013, in Istanbul.*







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