

Leyla Yenirce  
*Eye Level*

October 30 – December 14, 2024

35 East 67th Street



Petzel



## Eye Level

Petzel is pleased to present an exhibition of new paintings and a musical album by Kurdish-born, Berlin-based artist Leyla Yenirce. The show marks her debut solo exhibition in New York and first time showing with the gallery. *Eye Level* will be on view from October 30 to December 14, 2024, at Petzel's Upper East Side location at 35 E 67th Street, Parlor Floor. Combining portraiture of female Kurdish freedom fighters and archival material with the spectral sonic landscape of her music project *Rosaceae*, Yenirce explores archives of resistance alongside cultural, spatial, and structural systems of dominance.

Using oil paint, acrylic spray paint and silkscreen ink on canvas, the paintings in *Eye Level* include printed motifs depicting female Kurdish freedom fighters using binoculars to survey the land and sky, except for one fighter, who sits and reads a book. While she reads in *Fireball*, the Sumerian language appears as cuneiform in *Gold*. The Sumerian script, familiar to the artist through her Yazidi background, signals the written word, while her brushstrokes evoke associations of inscription or signature.

Additionally, Yenirce layers blueprints of F-16 fighter jets, used extensively by Turkey in conflict with these women fighters, and Google Earth views of the controversial Ilisu Dam project, built and finalized by Turkey in 2018. Mapping tools of ruin, the images relate to each other in various ways: while the jets are used to control the area where the women operate from above, the dam has flooded about 200 villages from below, as rising water levels overflow the banks of the Tigris River and submerge regions where people have lived for millennia. As the artist states, only between the earth and the sky, "on eye level, can these women exist."

*Fuel*  
2024  
Oil paint, acrylic spray  
and screen print on canvas  
70.86 x 78.75 inches  
180 x 200 cm  
(LY 24/006)





Installation view, *Leyla Yenirce, Eye Level*, Petzel, 2024.



*Campfire*  
2024  
Oil paint, acrylic spray  
and screen print on canvas  
70.86 x 78.75 inches  
180 x 200 cm  
(LY 24/003)



*Scouting*

2024

Oil paint, acrylic spray  
and screen print on canvas

70.86 x 78.75 inches

180 x 200 cm

(LY 24/011)



Installation view, *Leyla Yenirce, Eye Level*, Petzel, 2024.



*Fireball*

2024

Oil paint, acrylic spray  
and screen print on canvas

70.86 x 78.75 inches

180 x 200 cm

(LY 24/014)



*Gold*  
2024  
Oil paint, acrylic spray  
and screen print on canvas  
70.86 x 78.75 inches  
180 x 200 cm  
(LY 24/013)





*Stock*  
2024  
Oil paint, acrylic spray  
and screen print on canvas  
78.75 x 33.5 in  
200 x 85 cm  
(LY 24/016)



Installation view, *Leyla Yenirce, Eye Level, Petzel, 2024.*



*Binocular*  
2024  
Oil paint, acrylic spray  
and screen print on canvas  
70.86 x 78.75 inches  
180 x 200 cm  
(LY 24/008)





*Tigris*  
2024

Oil paint, acrylic spray  
and screen print on canvas  
70.86 x 78.75 inches  
180 x 200 cm  
(LY 24/005)



*Focus*  
2024

Oil paint, acrylic spray  
and screen print on canvas  
70.86 x 78.75 inches  
180 x 200 cm  
(LY 24/004)



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### Souvenirs

Yenirce also debuts a new album, *Souvenirs*, which the artist composed under her music project Rosaceae during a residency in Paris in January 2024. During her stay, the artist visited the Sacré-Cœur cathedral in Montmartre, overlooking the city. Yenirce was reminded of the construction of the Ilisu Dam and the subsequent flooding in her home region, as the artist's family had to exhume and relocate their ancestral tombs to the tops of neighboring mountains. Through *Souvenirs*, the artist imagines a space in which the listener can convoke with the dead, where the living are long gone. Yenirce shapes sound through recorded vocals, field recordings, and ambient instrumentation. The album cover includes a self-portrait of the artist en route to her brother's wedding, once again layering the artist's personal archive with larger geopolitical realities.

[Listen to \*Souvenirs\* digitally here.](#)



## About Leyla Yenirce

Leyla Yenirce is an artist based in Berlin, Germany. Born in Kurdistan, Yenirce moved to Germany as a three-year-old to seek asylum as an endangered Yazidi ethnic minority. At the Hamburg University of Fine Arts, Yenirce studied under Simon Denny and Jutta Koether. In her practice, Leyla explores figurations of resistance in the face of military, media and cultural structures of dominance – whether through dark-web-sourced guerilla tactics that she reconfigures in her videos, images of armed female militants peering through her densely layered canvases, or archival sound snippets of activists that figure in her rave performances. The different strands of Leyla's practice, from painting to her music project Rosaceae, often activate each other.

Her first solo exhibition, *SO MUCH ENERGY*, took place at the Kunsthau Hamburg in 2022. In 2024, Yenirce's video work *Being Strong is Hard* was screened at the International Film Festival Rotterdam. The artist will also participate in group exhibitions at Museum Folkwang, Essen. Among other notable institutions, Yenirce has exhibited at the Kunsthalle Münster (2024); Haus der Kunst, Munich (2023); Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig (2023) and Halle für Kunst Lueneburg (2022). Yenirce is one of the recipients of the 2024 Kunstpreis Berlin and 2022 ars viva Prize. In addition to numerous other scholarships and prizes, including Federal Prize for Art Students, Bonn (2021), the Playground Art Prize, Nuremberg (2021) and the Hamburg Music Prize (2019), Yenirce has been part of various group exhibitions, including *Video Digest #1*, Molkerei, Cologne (2023), Gallery Weekend Festival, Studio Mondial, Berlin (2023), *Kein Schlussstrich Festival*, Kampnagel, Hamburg (2021), *Paradise*, Kurdish Film Festival, Berlin (2020) and *Hi Ventilation*, Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof, Hamburg (2019).

Her work is held in the permanent collection of the Mudam, Luxembourg; Detroit Institute of Arts Museum and Kistefos Museum, Norway.