

EXHIBITION-EVENT BEDRİ BAYKAM :

LES DEMOISELLES REVISITED

Presented by Art Engagement Consulting at the new S/Beaubourg Gallery

EXHIBITION: *LES DEMOISELLES REVISITED*

DATES : May 2 - June 14 2025

OPENING : May 6 from 6:30 pm

PRIVATE VIEWINGS : starting May 3rd, private viewings available by reservation only

LOCATION : S/BEAUBOURG GALLERY

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ARTIST'S WEBSITE : <https://www.bedribaykam.com/en>



EXHIBITION MAY 2
JUNE 14, 2025

LES
DEMOISELLES
REVISITED

BEDRİ
BAYKAM

OPENING
TUESDAY MAY 6
6:30 PM

Galerie S/Beaubourg
35 Rue Quincampoix 75004 Paris
galerie@artengagementconsulting.com

Under the direction of Art Engagement Consulting (Micaela Neveu) and *Art Mouance – Société pour l'Art* (Patrik Gunnteg), *Les Demoiselles Revisited* marks a highlight of the 2025 season at the S/Beaubourg Gallery. Extending an uninterrupted dialogue with Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* — intensified on the occasion of the painting's centenary in 2007 — the exhibition follows in the continuity of BEDRİ Baykam's approach, the major figure in the introduction and dissemination of new pictorial abstraction in Turkey during the 1980s. Rejecting any mimetic reinterpretation, Baykam offers a post-orientalist re-reading of Picasso's foundational work, where collective memory, geopolitical critique of the gaze, and the subversion of Western aesthetic canons intersect. Through a stylistic approach of fragmentation, the artist unfolds a *quasi-baroque* and plural language, made of

disjointed sequences, juxtapositions, and superimpositions, liberating the visual narrative from any linearity to establish a perpetual movement. This formal variability, constitutive of his practice, places *Les Demoiselles Revisited* within a phenomenological logic: the exhibition becomes an active experience of perception, where the viewer, confronted with a plurality of signs, continuously reconfigures their relationship to the image. Between homage and subversion, Baykam reactivates the blind spots of modernism — coloniality, fetishization, scopophilic eroticism — and, through a fragmented approach, reconfigures a critical memory of art history. The eroticized aesthetics of bodies, languorous postures, the sensuality of silhouettes, and the play of feminine shadows critically interrogate the representations of the feminine in a Western perspective.

THE ARTIST - BEDRİ BAYKAM



BIOGRAPHY

Born in Ankara in 1957, BEDRİ Baykam is a leading figure in contemporary art in Turkey, particularly known for pioneering the new abstract painting movement in the 1980s. A child prodigy, he began exhibiting at a young age and has since presented more than 150 solo exhibitions worldwide. Trained at the Sorbonne, *Actorat* (Paris), and later in painting and cinema in California, Baykam became one of the representatives of neo-expressionism and multimedia political art in the 1980s. A key figure in the New York graffiti scene, he early on combined subversive practices with aesthetic commitment. Since the 2000s, he has created "4D" works that merge digital technologies, material transparency, and sensory immersion. A prolific theorist and committed intellectual, he is the author of more than thirty books. He was appointed World President of the International Association of Plastic Arts (IAA/AIAP), an official partner of UNESCO, and is the initiator of World Art Day, launched in 2011 and officially recognized by UNESCO as an international observance since 2019. Founder of the independent art center *Piramid Sanat* in Istanbul and an editorialist for the daily *Cumhuriyet*, BEDRİ Baykam advocates for an approach to art as a critical field, a place for civic interaction, and a lever for reinterpreting cultural imaginaries.

EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

The exhibition *Les Demoiselles Revisited* by BEDRİ Baykam, presented at the S/Beaubourg Gallery, stands out for its innovative expographic approach based on a methodology of *performative curating*, where the act of exhibiting becomes a staging in itself. This paradigm, inspired by Austin's principle of *How to Do Things with Words*, extends the reflection of art historian Micaela Neveu, for whom "looking is organically integrating what is given to be seen, making it active within oneself." The exhibition thus becomes an immersive space, where the viewer actively engages in a perceptual experience. In a continuous critical dialogue with Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* — further intensified by the centenary of the painting — Baykam offers a contemporary reinterpretation that goes beyond mere homage. The central figure in Turkish contemporary art and a pioneer of new abstractionist painting in the 1980s, he situates his reinterpretation within a thematic, philosophical, and political framework. His work is deeply rooted in Western metaphysics while also engaging with contemporary geopolitical tensions. Committed to an aesthetics of the "*Beau*", Baykam questions canonical masters through the lens of current ideologies, particularly critiquing the interpretative excesses of orientalism, both in the United States and Turkey. Drawing on Cubist principles — the multiplication of perspectives, perspectival fragmentation — he

deploys both visual and narrative fragmentation, where female figures, detached from their original contexts, are projected into ambiguous spaces, charged with the eroticism of the body. For Professor and art critic Hasan Bülent Kahraman, the composition thus becomes a theater of intersecting gazes: women who look and are being looked at, Picasso observed by Baykam, who in turn scrutinizes him. This *mise en abyme* of the gaze questions its very production, as well as the position from which it is exercised. Baykam thus generates an open, polyphonic narrative, freed from any univocal storytelling and structured around a perpetual movement of interpretations. This architecture of the gaze, where subjectivity and specular reflections intersect, as suggested by Kahraman, recalls that of *Las Meninas* by Velázquez, where the *baroque* device of representation reflects the nature of the gaze and the act of artistic creation as a world that is a dream, an illusion. Formally, Baykam employs collages, free brushstrokes, transparency effects, and lenticular surfaces to craft a *baroque* aesthetic of narrative multiplicity. Through these techniques, he revitalizes the imagery of the body, shadow, postures, and the eroticized feminine figure, while renewing the modes of perception and contemporary visual language. Through his often-faceless *silhouettes* and bodies abandoned to nudity, Baykam posits voyeurism and interrogates how the spectator's

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gaze imposes itself upon the feminine figure. He also interrogates the stereotypes embedded in the history of Western art, where the female body is often reduced to a mere object of desire or the enduring figure of the prostitute. Through this approach, the artist highlights established visual conventions, offering a new reading of the feminine body and shedding light on the complex dynamics of power, desire, and domination that underpin its representation. The performative scenography designed by *Art Mouvance* transforms the encounter between artwork and viewer into a reflective experience, where the identities of the Self are redefined in the very act of perceiving. In contrast, the second part of the exhibition, located in the basement, adopts a minimalist scenography, conceived as

a space of retreat conducive to concentration. This setup isolates a series of works that directly address nudity and sexuality, not as provocation, but as tools for deconstructing visual and cultural norms. Restricted access to adults aims to preserve the symbolic and critical intensity of this confrontation. Under the direction of Micaela Neveu and Patrik Gunnteg, *Les Demoiselles Revisited* goes beyond the simple juxtaposition of works to question the very function of the exhibition. It explores the boundaries of art, its ability to awaken both the intellect and the senses, embodying a continuous quest to renew artistic languages in a world that is constantly reconfiguring the relations of power, identities, and narratives.



Bedri Baykam, *Vous Êtes Bien Chez Madame Claude*, mixed media on canvas, 168x238 cm, 2025.



Bedri Baykam, *Consommer Avec Modération*, mixed media on canvas, 150x220 cm, 2025.

ABOUT S/BEAUBOURG GALLERY & ART ENGAGEMENT CONSULTING

Under the direction of art historian and founder of Art Engagement Consulting, Micaela Neveu, the new S/Beaubourg Gallery —located just steps from the Centre Pompidou —has, since its reopening in mid-March 2025, been reimagined as a space for reflection, experimentation, and critical thought. More than a venue dedicated to aesthetics, the gallery has become a true laboratory, where art questions, deconstructs, and redefines our relationship to the world by challenging artistic and cultural conventions. Its inauguration on March 21, 2025, was marked by the exhibition *Entropie* by Antoni Taulé, praised by both critics and the public for its powerful spatial conception and its resonance with contemporary concerns. This foundational project launches a new program focused on *performative curating*, developed by *Art Mouvance – Société pour l'Art*, represented by Patrik Gunnteg, where the exhibition itself becomes an act of thought, exploring the

boundaries between art, culture, and critical discourse. In this spirit, a partnership with *Art Mouvance* has given rise to the *Club Dumas*, a monthly literary and artistic circle. Each meeting will introduce a theme in dialogue with the current exhibitions, creating a space of exchange among writers, artists, thinkers, and audiences around the resonances between text, image, and society. The *Club Dumas* embodies the gallery's ambition to become a vibrant space of intellectual engagement, where art nourishes both thought and vision. Beginning in September 2025, S/Beaubourg Gallery will launch a new series of projects devoted to the intersection of art, artificial intelligence, and emerging forms of creativity. These initiatives reflect a clear commitment to exploring how new technologies can act as sensitive, critical, or poetic extensions of contemporary artistic practice.

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