

ARTFORUM

"Till It's Gone"

ISTANBUL MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Meclis-i Mebusan Ave. Liman İşletmeleri, Sahası Antrepo No: 4
January 13, 2016–June 5, 2016

An apple, then two, three, five—the fruit on Mario Merz's *Spiral Table*, 1989, is piled up in neat groups as a reference to the Fibonacci spiral, an additive sequence thought to be present in many natural life forms. Indeed, while the catalogue heralds "Till It's Gone" as focusing on sustainability in a post-COP21 world, the more salient topic appears to be the impact of alterations to the relationship between humans, nature, and artistic production. Works explicitly following this thematic thread exude an air of critical negativity that embody a rich taxonomy of patterns borne from the Anthropocene's war on nature.

Less territorial than Merz's iconic igloo pieces in the way that it allows the viewer to follow its curve, *Spiral Table* also declines to tread the strictly ordered triangulation of perception, conception, and abstraction inherent to post-Enlightenment thinking. Master confectioner Francesco Garnier Valletti's wax fruits manifest a typically Romantic desire to orient forms toward a deep awe of nature's plenitude, while Elmas Deniz's video of drone footage from an untouched valley in the Caucasus, *Human-less*, 2015, and the accompanying drone-turned-bird sculpture with a white flag in its plumage, *Synthetic*, 2016, probes the sinister self-exclusion of human beings from their own representations of nature. The ideal state of purity—nature unmarked by human activity—ceases to exist in the presence of the very same mechanical eye that captures this Edenic landscape.

Canan Tolon's five long canvas slabs with garment patterns topped by decaying organic materials, *Untitled*, 1992, stands poignantly opposite Bas Jan Ader's video loop *Broken Fall (Organic)*, *Amsterdamse Bos*, Holland, 1971. The latter shows the artist plunging from the tip of a tree branch into a stream, reminding one that the creative act is often the brief illusion of having achieved permanence against nature's cyclical mandates.

— Gökcan Demirkazık



View of "Till It's Gone," 2016. From left: Elmas Deniz, *Synthetic*, 2016; *Human-less*, 2015.

All rights reserved. artforum.com is a registered trademark of Artforum International Magazine, New York, NY