Undesire
curated by:
Vasif Kortun

April 18 - May 17, 2003
Fikret Atay
Phil Collins
Inci Eviner
Dan Perjovschi

Undesire came on the heels of the so-called coalition forces’ invasion of Iraq. The war prompted me to seek a different exhibition altogether; I was already extremely worried with the swift unrolling of the new USA masterplan following 9-11. It seemed that 9-11 was just an excuse to enforce part of a new world plan with the arms (usa), drugs (afghanistan) and oil (iraq) scheme. The United States, a country where I had spent many happy years, became uncanny. It was no longer a place I could recognize or want to visit again. I suspect the same would hold true for many people living in the USA or elsewhere. I am not the kind of person to give fast response to political situations, and I continue to live in a country that along with Israel is considered ‘high on the list’ in terms of the disregard of UN resolutions. I have never relied on contemporary art as a tool for directly communicating political issues. Whatever can be reduced to language is often articulated more effectively and quickly through different media. Hence, Undesire as an exhibition is not about representation. It is not even political. I would rather pivot on a notion of proximity, that the exhibition feels close to your skin, closer than one would have liked, but it does not ask for empathy.

Fikret Atay lives close to the Iraqi Turkish border in a small city by the Tigris called Batman. Batman is a sad, oil-producing town with a phenomenally high suicide rate amongst women. The city has suffered under extraordinary security measures and...
The home, to the contrary, is the flag-bearer of tradition, and the final border.

Dan Perjovschi works in the most efficient way possible. He makes simple and direct drawings with very brief texts that then travel across the web to any exhibition. He has created in the last few years a structure that has turned a fragile and disempowered situation into one of brilliant mobility and access. At apexart, they will be projected with the aid of a presentation program, and updated during the run of the exhibition responding to the changes in the international situation and the bloody war that I hope will end soon no matter who the victim may be.

Vasif Kortun ©4.13.2003

Inci Eviner has made wallpaper for this project. The wallpaper resonates at different levels. The wallpaper is something that conceals a place and turns it into a surface, and often covers up the poverty. Eviner’s work recalls, as well, the eternal sunsets, the Alpine views, and the idyllic large landscape images used as “wallpaper” from the late 1960s and the 1970s. The images on them, however, invite a rethinking of the interior, almost holy for the various cultures of the eastern Mediterranean, as a site where conspiracy and terror, such as live bombs, can be designed intimately. In the eastern Mediterranean, the street is often thought of as a site that belongs to the colonizer, the state and an ascriptive modernity.