



"Cenin". 2007. Digital photograph

Will you Jump, Fall or Fly ?

On "I Love you" series by Genco Gülan

Flying is one of the oldest dreams of man kind. The image of birds in the sky, which are able to leave the surface with all its chaos and mess behind, can trigger various feelings like romanticism, sorrow and sometimes jealousy or even anger. In contrast falling is one of the worst nightmares of people. It even hunts us in our dreams in which we wake up before we slam on the ground. People cannot fly but fall. Therefore, flying is a poetic fantasy and falling is a hurting reality.

Both actions represent the entrance into another sphere which we earthlings normally are not allowed to enter. Physical laws are stricter than any human made law and prevent us from entering this clean, pure and infinite area. On planet earth, you have to deal with its people, animals, buildings, diseases and wars. In the sky, you are alone with yourself and the clouds. There, in the silence of the void, you are able to hear yourself while the whispering of the wind is telling you secrets about the stars.

In Genco Gülan's photo series "I love You", we see people who are in the state of falling down. Nevertheless, it looks as if they were freed from all ballast of the planet and all weight of their bodies. On the images, in the stillstand of the moment, these people fly forever. The artist is using photography's power to stop time, and freeze a fragile glimpse of reality so that the spectator can carefully observe the incident.

Genco Gülan is an interdisciplinary artist who is often using photography to create images that draw connection to real incidents, in order to review reality. He usually merges the found images with pictures and discussions of other contexts in order to go beyond the known ideas about the world we live in. In Gülan's works, the spectator is confronted with fragmented reflections of our current reality in which a strange balance between beauty and ugliness, as well as poetry and politics create a visual platform for the analysis of society's state of today.

In the current series "I love you", his focus lays on the moment of the artistic process where reality and imagination melt into a new construction called art. Through observing and deconstructing the known, Gülan reveals the contemporary world's unstable essence in which the "obvious and ordinary" are perpetrated by the "wired and irritating".

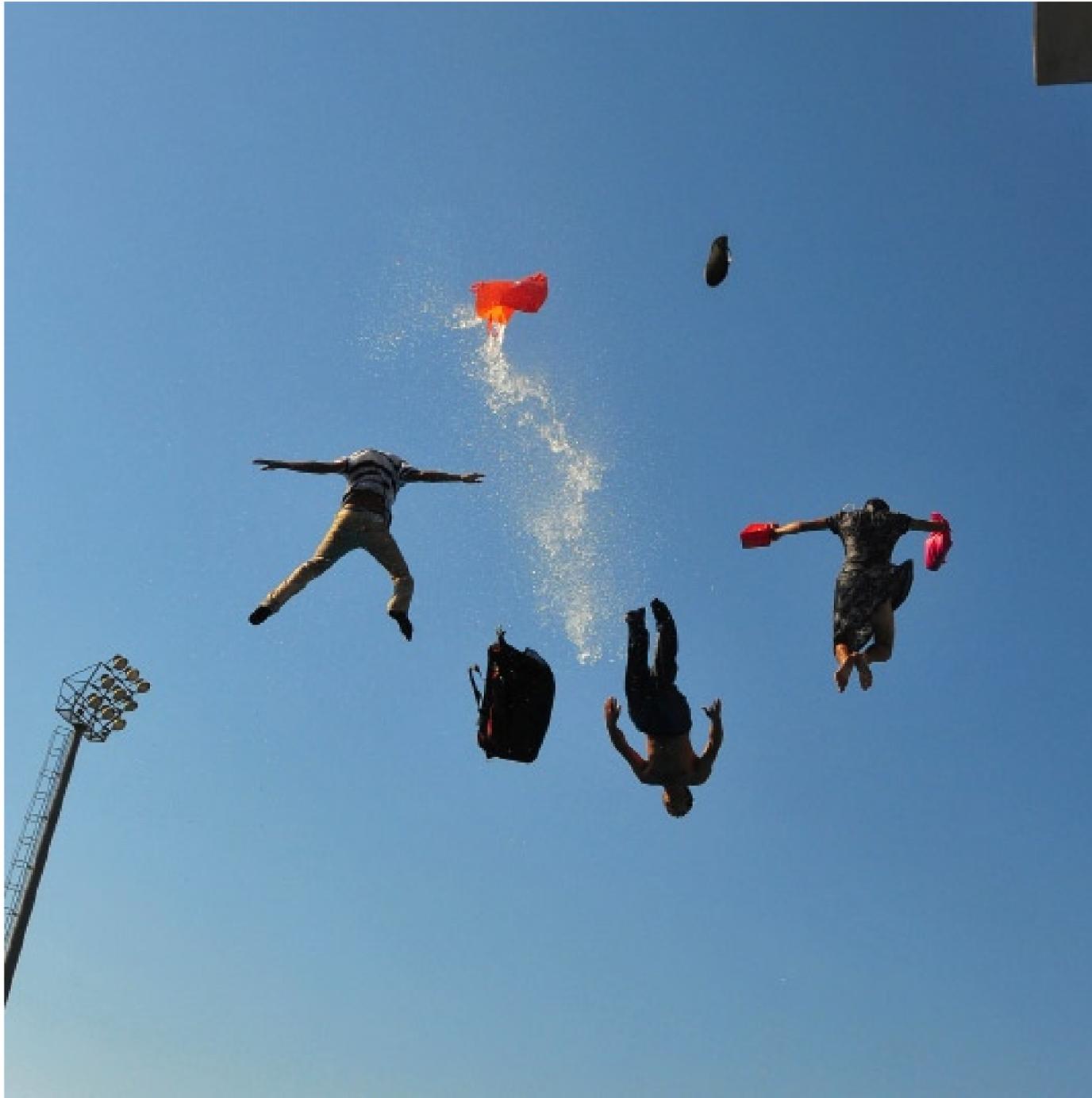
Genco Gülan is creating no fiction, and the protagonists of his series are really falling from extraordinary height. We neither see the beginning nor the ending of the jump. Various men, women and children are dressed in suits, skirts or school uniforms fly as if they were falling out of nothing. Gülan freezes the people with the help of his camera. On the image, the high speed of the fall is paused for a moment so that we can observe certain details of the people and their accessories: Strange expressions of the faces, which vary between concentration and sensation, as well as wired positions of the bodies, occur. Shoes fall off, bags open and water spills out of bottles.

Although we witness a part of a very fast movement, the images seem calm and silent. The peace of the moment is supported by the interconnection of the space and the figures. The clear blue sky in which the people hang, gives the scenes a contemplative background. In the endless blue, your mind can travel and draw lines on the sky like airplanes do. On the other hand, some small details of buildings make references to the concrete set of the scene. Nevertheless, the architectural parts seen on the images are more compositional parameters than story telling factors. Gülan needs them to show the parting of his figures from the real world. On the ground, the figures would be imprisoned between the walls of our buildings made out of concrete, steel and glass. In the air, at least for a moment, they are free.

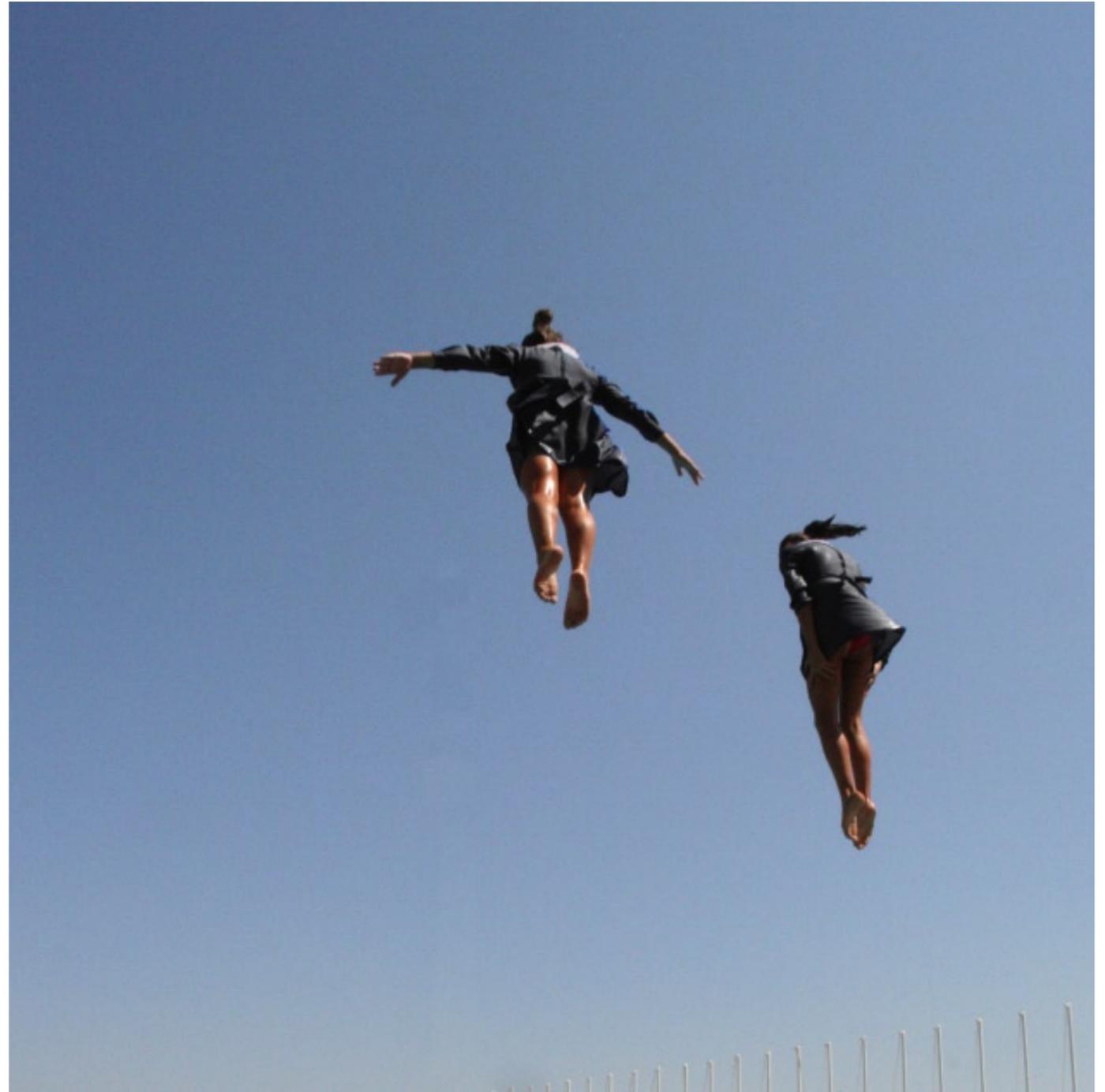
Genco Gülan's series points to photography's possibility of freezing time for observation and creating parallel worlds for imagination. In his photos, the spectator has the chance to choose between the poetry of the flying moment, the sensation of the jumping action or the danger of the fall. What ever side he takes, he will have the chance to transfer his mind into the body of the protagonists in order to be part of the image. There, he will see, whether he jumps, falls or flies; in love. At least for a moment, hopefully, he will be able to forget all physical laws and part from his concrete stand point. We believe in images so why should we not believe in the possibility of flying?

Marcus Graf

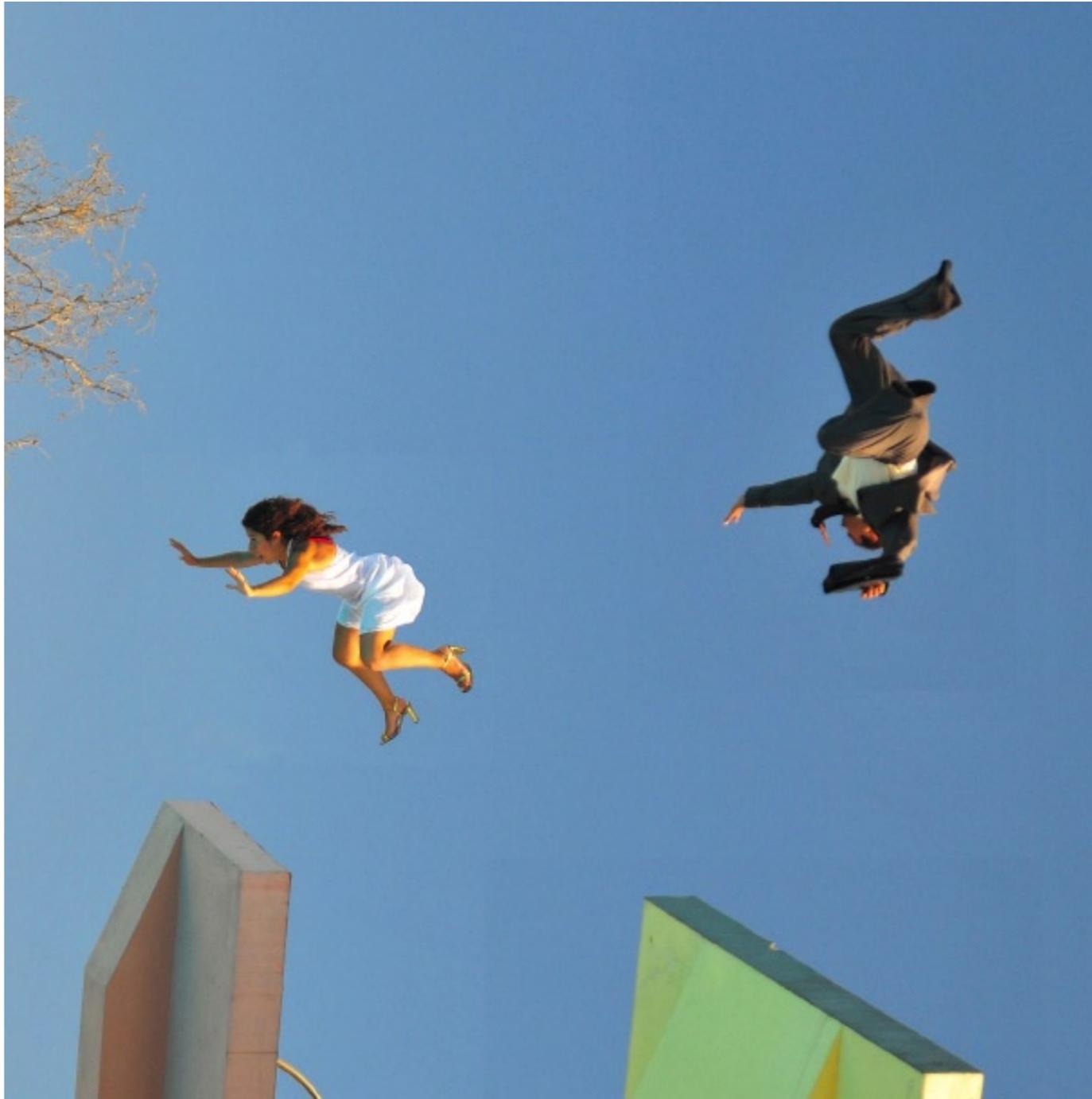
Genco Gülan is represented by PG Art Gallery. Istanbul



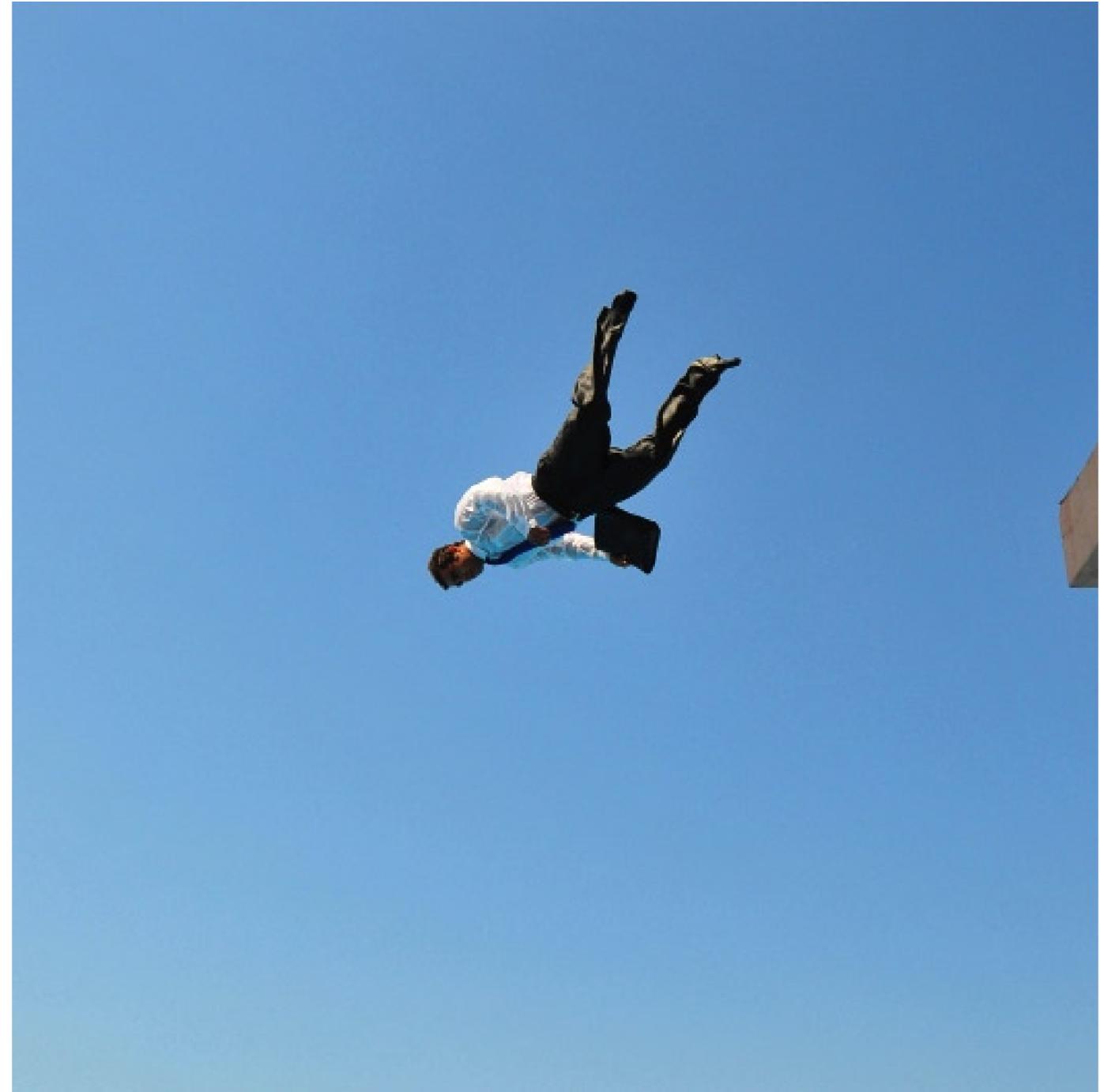
"Pure Water". 2008. Digital photograph



"Twice". 2007. Digital photograph



"I love You". 2008. Digital photograph



"Business Man". 2008. Digital photograph

Genco Gülan is a conceptual artist with a focus on new technology and art. He studied Political Science and Art at Bogaziçi University, Istanbul. Then he pursued an MA degree on Media Studies at New School University, New York. His name appeared in exhibitions at museums such as; Centre Pompidou et du Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris; Proje 4L/ Elgiz Cagdas Sanat Müzesi, Istanbul; ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe and Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro. He participated to festivals such as; Steirishes Herbst, Graz, 1997; Ars Electronica, Linz, 1998; Mediaterra, Atina, 2000; Free Manifesta, Frankfurt 2002; prog:me, Rio de Janeiro 2005, Balkan Art, Novi Sad 2007, Triennale, Milano 2008. His net-art pieces have been exhibited at irishmuseumofmodernart.org, rhizome.org, kanonmedia.com and webbiennial.org/ And listed in the required reading lists at; New York City University, Rice University and U.C.S.B. He got prizes from BP, New School and E.M.A.F. (as Balkan Wars Project) Gülan gave conferences at Yale, S.V.A., New York Institute of Technology, Bilgi Üniversitesi and Universität zu Köln. Genco Gülan and his art has been referred to by publications such as Newsweek, Herald Tribune, NY Arts, Art in America, Das Kunst, Beaux Arts and Sanat Dünyamız. Gülan is a member of Unesco AIAP UPSD and he was in the International Program Comitee of ISEA 2008 Singapore. Currently he lives and works in Istanbul.