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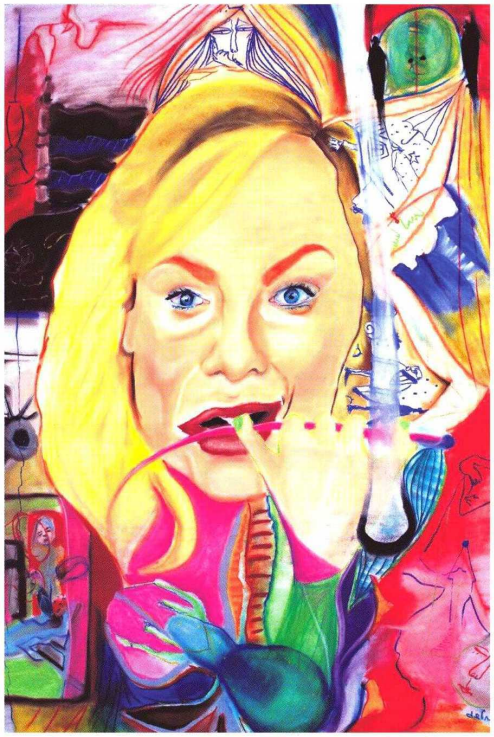
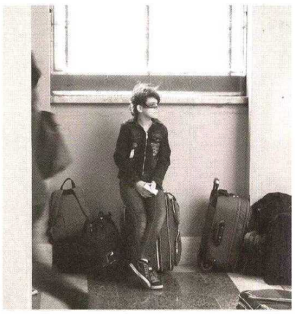


The Darüşşafaka Society is a nongovernmental organization that was established in 1863 with the aim of providing equal opportunity in education for talented and needy children who have lost their mothers or fathers and who have limited financial resources.

Young students to open painting exhibition for equal opportunities



ZEYNEP ESRA KOCA - ISTANBUL

THE DARÜŞŞAFAKA Society, which has been offering education to orphaned students for 152 years, will bring three of its students together at a painting and photography exhibition on National Sovereignty and Children's Day - dedicated to the children of the world by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The exhibition, which will run from April 19 to April 26 at Gallery Bu in Istanbul's Beyoğlu district, will feature the paintings of eighth grade student Defne Hadiş and photographs of 2012 Darüşşafaka High School graduate Çağdaş Torbacıoğlu. The visual design of the exhibition will be undertaken by 2012 Darüşşafaka High School graduate Tuğba Eke.

Thirteen-year-old Hadiş will present 20 of her works, which will enchant people with her talent. Hadiş has been studying at Darüşşafaka for the last five years, and opened her first solo exhibition last year. "I want to be a painter, buy a caravan, travel the world and help people in need. Everybody tells me to be a doctor or an engineer, but I will choose the profession that I dream of. When I grow up, my biggest source of happiness will be becoming a woman who accomplished all her dreams," Hadiş said. Stressing that Darüşşafaka has changed the course of her life, Hadiş said that she always dreams high. "Since I got here, I have been telling everyone that I want to be a painter. If I had studied at a school that does not help me realize my dreams, being a painter would have been impossible. Being a Daçka [a nickname given to the students of Darüşşafaka], means achieving the impossible," she said. She also said that her friends remind her not to forget them when she becomes someone important in the future. She claimed that most of her friends gave up their dreams at a very young age, as they have seen the difficulties of life. "Because when you face the realities, dreaming is not enough," she said.

Third-year sociology student, Çağdaş Torbacıoğlu of Abant İzzet Baysal University, will exhibit his photographs, which are also featured in his book "Se Fossi Fuoco" (If I Were Fire), focusing on his life at Darüşşafaka. Stating that he discovered photography while he was studying at Darüşşafaka, Torbacıoğlu said, "People describe the situation they are in the best." He stressed he tried to describe the place and the atmosphere he was in for 10 years through his photographs. "Darüşşafaka holds a different place in everyone's heart, so I worked hard to mirror my self-awareness with these frames and the book came into being," he continued. Torbacıoğlu explained that his aim with this project is to revive people's memories of life at Darüşşafaka, and make other people realize that life there is more intimate and natural than they might suppose. "The school has changed physically in the last 152 years and it will continue to change. However, I have realized that emotions, memories and the joy experienced remain the same throughout the years. I guess this is a force that pulls people to it," he concluded.

Third-year performing arts management student, Tuğba Eke of Istanbul University, will undertake the visual design of the exhibition. She said that she will display life behind the black and green doors of Darüşşafaka at the exhibit.

The Darüşşafaka Society is a nongovernmental organization that was established in 1863 with the aim of providing equal opportunity in education for talented and needy children who have lost their mothers or fathers, and who have limited financial resources. Since then, the institution has offered high-quality and contemporary education to its students, and teaches them to become intelligent, confident and curious individuals who are responsible for their society and country. Nearly 1,000 children from all around Turkey who qualify by passing an entrance exam are able to continue their education in the Darüşşafaka Society's schools with full scholarship for 10 years from the fourth year of primary school through to the end of high school. The schools run on donations from benefactors, organizations and companies. Moreover, all university expenses, including clothing, health service, books, cultural events, a monthly allowance, accommodation, food and other funds for Darüşşafaka alumni are provided by donations and grants from philanthropic citizens, charitable institutions and corporations.

Çağdaş Torbacıoğlu, a graduate, said that the school has changed physically in the last 152 years and it will continue to change. "However, I have realized that emotions, memories and the joy experienced have remained the same throughout the years. I guess this is a force that pulls people to it," he said.