

Thursday, 25 March 2021, 15:00-16:30

**BANU KARACA** (EUME Fellow of the Volkswagen Foundation Forum Transregionale Studien, Berlin)

## Book talk for *The National Frame*

Based on long-term ethnographic research in the art worlds of Istanbul and Berlin, *The National Frame* rethinks the politics of art by focusing on the role of art in state governance. It argues that artistic practices, arts patronage and sponsorship, collecting and curating art, and the modalities of censorship, continue to be refracted through the conceptual lens of the nation-state, despite the globalization of the arts. By examining discussions of the civilizing function of art in Turkey and Germany and particularly moments in which art is seen to cede this function, *The National Frame* reveals the histories of violence on which the production, circulation, and, very understanding of art are predicated. Karaca examines this darker side of art in two cities in which art and its institutions have been intertwined with symbolic and material dispossession. The particularities of German and Turkish contexts, both marked by attempts to claim modern nationhood through the arts, illuminate how art is staked to memory and erasure, resistance and restoration, and why art has been at once vital and unwieldy for national projects. As art continues to be called upon to engage the past and imagine different futures, *The National Frame* explores how to reclaim art’s emancipatory potential.

**Banu Karaca** works at the intersection of political anthropology and critical theory, art and aesthetics, nationalism and cultural policy, museum and feminist memory studies. Her publications interrogate the freedom of expression in the arts, the visualization of gendered memories of war and political violence, visual literacy, and arts restitution. She is co-editor of *Women Mobilizing Memory* (Columbia University Press, 2019) and author of *The National Frame: Art and State Violence in Turkey and Germany* (Fordham University Press, 2021). She

is the co-founder of Siyah Bant, a research platform that documents censorship in the arts in Turkey. She has been Visiting Assistant Professor of Cultural Studies at Sabanci University and Faculty Fellow at Columbia University’s Center for the Study of Social Difference. Currently a EUME Fellow of the VolkswagenStiftung at the Forum Transregionale Studien Berlin, Banu is continuing her research how looted and dispossessed art has shaped the legal and scholarly knowledge production on art in Turkey and the wider European context.

