



For Immediate Release:
KUTAY TUFEKCI | *COLL3C70R 613*

January 9 - February 21, 2026
Artist Reception: Friday, January 9, 6-8PM

High Noon is pleased to present ***COLL3C70R 613***, New York based artist **Kutay Tufekci's** solo debut examining memory, surface, and the uneasy entanglement of art, industry, and legacy. The exhibition title and the titles of the works themselves are rendered in *leetspeak*, an alphanumeric code that substitutes numbers for letters (0 for O, 3 for E, 7 for T, etc.). Originating in early internet and hacker subcultures, leetspeak functions here as both a generational marker and visual cipher, establishing translation, distortion, and coded meaning as central themes of the exhibition.

Born in Turkey and now based in New York, where he moved to attend graduate school, Tufekci repeatedly returns to his father's automotive body shop in Istanbul as a foundational site of influence. That environment, defined by passion, repair, and improvisation, echoes throughout the work both materially and symbolically. The paintings are constructed on wood panel and frequently collaged from multiple panels to form aggregate, uneven surfaces. These physical seams mirror the conceptual layering at the heart of the work: overlapping cultural histories, personal narratives, and mediated imagery compressed into a single plane.

The physical construction of the panels is integral to the image. Uneven seams are fastened with screws and grout, which act simultaneously as structural supports and visual elements. Sanded grout lines form a ghostly scaffold that introduces subtle shifts in the painting plane, producing an interplay between the real shadows cast by the surface and the painted illusions of depth. Within these layered structures, Tufekci hand-renders what appear to be decals of family photographs, translating intimate source material into flattened, graphic forms. His handling of the imagery recalls the visual language of circulation and consumption as seen on stamps, screen prints, posters, advertisements, and packaging, creating a deliberate distance between lived experience and its reproduced image.

Tromp l'oeil also plays a central role in the compositions. Using airbrush and painter's tape, Tufekci creates convincing illusions of rips and tears that suggest images pulled apart, partially removed, or aggressively re-layered. Alongside the hand-rendered decals, the surfaces evoke walls repeatedly wheat-pasted with notices and posters. These torn forms sometimes resemble Arabic lettering, though just as often they function through visual pareidolia. As a compositional device, the rips organize content in a non-linear way, allowing the paintings to unfold like fragmented graphic novels.

A recurring motif throughout the exhibition is a graphic rendering of Tufekci's eyes, referencing the Evil Eye, a symbol believed to deflect harmful energy and offer protection. When embedded among personal images, the eyes function as guardians of memory and subject matter alike. Extending this motif beyond the gallery, Tufekci has produced the image as an eggshell sticker accompanied by the phrase "Post Bills," which he places on streets, in bar bathrooms, and amid clusters of other stickers as an informal contribution to the urban visual ecosystem that mirrors the layered logic of his paintings.

The exhibition title, ***COLL3C70R 613***, translates ambiguously to "Collector 613," a tongue-in-cheek nod to the transactional dynamics between art, industry, and capitalism, or alternatively to "Collect or Die," invoking the anxiety surrounding legacy, accumulation, and artistic survival. This dual reading underscores the exhibition's preoccupation with value— what is preserved, what circulates, and what risks disappearance.

Kutay Tufekci (b. 2000, Istanbul, Turkiye) lives and works in New York. He received his BFA from the School of Art Institute of Chicago (2023) and MFA degree at School of Visual Arts (2025). He's a previous resident of SVA Summer Residency through the Turkish American Society Scholarship in 2022. His work has been previously exhibited at Morgan Lehman Gallery, New York, NY; Artzone Project, Istanbul, Turkiye; and Kaio Space, Honolulu, HI.

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