

Taner Ceylan

www.tanerceylan.com



Spring Time, 55.12 x 84.65 inches, oil on canvas

*Text and images provided by Paul Kasmin Gallery
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Well-known for his provocative, emotional realism paintings, Ceylan began *The Lost Paintings Series* as a contemporary exploration of the Orientalist gaze in all its facets. Upsetting both western and eastern master narratives, *The Lost Paintings Series* presents Eastern figures in a fascinating navigation of history, power and narrative. *Esma Sultan*, Ceylan's depiction of an eighteenth century Ottoman princess, renowned for her cruel disposition, draws on the empowering mythology of passionate, ruthless and assertive womanhood that characterizes accounts of her life. Visualizing feminine agency and even social transgression as at the heart of history, Ceylan interrogates the historically invisible. Rummaging through the past to make a startling com-

ment very much about the present, *The Lost Paintings Series* assembles a cast of lost characters and voices that embody the many silenced by both Orientalist and official nationalist histories. An Ottoman man gazes defiantly, cigarette in hand; a pair of male lovers betray a chaste farewell; a veiled woman stands before Courbet's *L'Origine du Monde*. In the words of curator Dan Cameron, "[Taner Ceylan makes] paintings that bespeak absolute technical mastery and precision, but which are also freighted with an emotional and sexual dimension usually absent from the genre—qualities that have set him apart from the prevailing tendencies in contemporary Turkish art, and which at times have also brought him outright abuse in the press."



Birth of Hope
84.25 x 54 .75 inches
oil on canvas