

Biography

Kutlug Ataman was born in Istanbul, Turkey in 1961 and graduated with an MFA in film from University of California in 1988. Since then, Ataman has pursued a celebrated career both as filmmaker and contemporary artist, working with single and multiple-channel installations as well as making films documenting the lives of marginalised individuals.

One of Ataman's seminal works was in the 48th Venice Biennale (1999). *Women Who Wear Wigs* featured four women - a revolutionary whose face remained obscured, a well-known journalist and breast cancer survivor Nevval Sevindi, an anonymous devout Muslim student, and an activist transsexual prostitute.

Another popular work is *Never My Soul* where Ceyhan Firat, a breathtakingly gorgeous Turkish transvestite living in Switzerland, tells stories from her private life—a nightmare of abuse, contempt and persecution. But whether the violence, the rape experienced in childhood, or the relationships with men, everything is told in the type of sea-green mood that brings to mind earlier Fassbinder films, and the rawness of Warhol productions. In six locations, the viewer sees different chapters of her life, related while on the telephone, in conversations, or having sex.

In addition, Ataman was commended for his work, *Testimony* – a controversial film that documents Ataman interviewing his Armenian nanny, Kevser, who was brought into the family by his great-grandfather after her family was killed in 1915. It raises one of the most disputable issues in Turkey's history — Armenia says the Ottoman government orchestrated a genocide of the Armenian population during World War I. Turkey denies that what took place was a genocide, arguing that thousands of Turks also died in a brutal conflict.

Ataman is represented by Thomas Dane Gallery, London.

“My art practice has always been a strong part of who I am. Who I am is not something I can give up, even if I wanted to.” – Kutlug Ataman