

**Acquittal Report of the “Istanbul Pedestrian Exhibitions 2: Tunel – Karakoy”  
(İstanbul Yaya Sergileri 2: Tünel - Karaköy)**

“Istanbul Pedestrian Exhibitions 2: Tunel – Karakoy”, organized in collaboration with the Istanbul Foundation for Art, Promotion and Research, dDf (Dream Design Factory) and the Metropolitan Municipality of Istanbul & Beyoglu Municipality, held between September 16 – October 22, 2005 has been received very positively by the audience and the press.

Istanbul Pedestrian Exhibitions 2, the most comprehensive international urban art exhibition realized in Istanbul, in a district where, according to the municipality statistics, one million five hundred pedestrians pass everyday, was able to reach a wide-range of audience and public. Since most of the works were in urban scale and took place in the streets, squares, parks, it can be claimed that most of the passer-bys in Tunel and Karakoy area experienced or at least noticed these large-scale interventions. Although it is difficult to give an exact number for the visitors of the pedestrian exhibition in general, the main Info Center of the exhibition which was located at the major pedestrian zone of Istanbul, the Istiklal Street (Beyoglu) was visited by almost 34.000 local and international audience in five weeks period.

With the presence of 23 participating artists, the Istanbul Pedestrian Exhibitions 2 hosted in total 2.500 guests at the opening including 200 international guests, curators and other art professionals. The exhibition was visited by the representatives of the art and cultural institutions like Dutch Art Institute, Stiftung Geisstrasse, Mondriaan Foundation, Australian Art Council, Castello di Rivoli, Amsterdam Sandberg Instituut, Office for Contemporary Art Norway and curators and critics like Rosa Martinez, Yuko Hasegawa, Ute Meta Bauer, Hsiao Hwei, Elenor Heartney, Jorg Heiser and Silke Hohman. Besides the positive critiques and comments by the international art circle, the strong respond from the general public on the Pedestrian Exhibition points out that the exhibition fulfilled its goals and encouraged us for its continuity.

Most of the participating artists produced site-specific, urban scale, yet, temporary works for the exhibition like Haluk Akakce’s 8 meters-diameter green hill in the courtyard of historic Narmanli building on the Istiklal Street, Kemal Onsoy’s “Mutual Aid” installation which covered the already-existing sculpture of Ayse Erkmen with styrofoam walls in the Tunel Square and Ioannis Savvidis’ intervention with the traditional monument of Architect Sinan which was placed on a high pedestal in Persembе Pazari Park. Through such interventions, the exhibition created an awareness on the different possibilities of public space art, brought out contemporary perspectives and novel forms of interventions and also questioned the established understanding of sculpture in public space. Auke de Vries’ sculpture “After the Rain” installed on top of one of the towers of Galata Bridge exemplified the use of unusual, non-conventional places/locations for art, especially for sculpture.

The reactions from the city to the pedestrian exhibition varied immensely, even, it reached a destructive level in one case. Unfortunately two weeks after the opening, the intervention of Kemal Onsoy was put into fire and destroyed together with the sculpture inside. Yet, this violent reaction caused a strong public debate on public space art and

vandalism. A similar discussion has started through another event related to the Turkish Calligraphies that were included in the exhibition, “This too shall pass” and “What a pleasure” by two famous calligraphers, Ismail Hakki Altunbezer and Halim Ozyazici, applied on a side façade in Karakoy Square. The work was taken down by the authorities just three days after the opening, fortunately, we were able to install a new version of it after time taking negotiations with them. This unfortunate event led to an encouraging result generating a debate on the reception of calligraphy in public space context and its mismatched connection with the radical Islamic tendencies.

John Kormeling’s 52 meters long, 2.5 meters wide and 6 meters high alternative pedestrian road, which was visually dominating the Karakoy Square, was a major attraction for the public and for the art professionals with its neon work “New Place/New Peace”. The painted cranes, rain drainage pipes and satellite dishes of Fuat Sahinler – Murat Sahinler – Ayten Basdemir – Yakup Cetinkaya put an emphasis on the already-existing structures of the urban space by converting them into sculptures and making them appear in the city panorama.

In the Persembе Pazari Park, all the interventions were related to the social, architectural and economic transformation that this area has been going through; Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset’s “Use House”, Canan Tolon’s installation of swings installed at the windows of a run-down empty building and Callum Morton’s “Stonewash” Levi’s shop window. Elmgreen & Dragset’s roofless modernist villa referring to the homeless kids living around the neighborhood, offered the passer-bys and the exhibition visitors a place to rest with a view. The exhibition presented three video installations by three artists; Eve Sussman & Ioannis Savvidis’ interactive video work in the city line boats terminal in the Karakoy Quay, Omer Ali Kazma’s projection under the Galata Bridge that the images of airplanes were projected while taking off and his second work “Today” that he showed the poetic and industrial details from Karakoy area he shot and edited everyday.

There were also projects related to the alternative means of urban communication like the stickers of Hale Tenger and flyers by Ayse Erkmen. Karin Sander and Hans Winkler created publications for the exhibition; Karin Sander’s work is a book project, a photo album in which the visual index of the area prepared by the pedestrian team was depicted. This work is printed in 1000 copies and distributed free of charge to the audience and art professionals at the main info center. Hans Winkler made a workshop on “walking” with the architecture and urbanism students from the Yildiz Technical University and created a video and a newspaper which was distributed also free of charge.

The design of the two Info Centers were realized by the renown Turkish designer Aziz Sariyer. In the main info center, the presentations of the workshops realized by the Istanbul Technical University, Mimar Sinan University and Yildiz Technical University were shown. Besides, in order to help the audience to walk through the exhibition, a documentary film of the promenade and the making of the exhibition was shown in the main info center. Map indicating the locations of the works, brochure giving a general idea of the exhibition and other printed information material were available at the info centers. 2000 posters, 6000 guiding brochures, 30.000 maps were distributed to the audience.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 2005, a panel discussion was realized with the participation of the artists; Canan Tolon, Auke de Vries, Carmela Gross and curators; Emre Baykal and

Fulya Erdemci. Every Sunday there were guided tours free of charge and on the last day of the exhibition there was a projection by Omer Ali Kazma at the main info center with the participation of the art world and press.

Istanbul Pedestrian Exhibitions 2 received extensive coverage from local media, 15.109 column/cm + 46 pages in press whose coverage value is 1.995.055 USD and circulation in total is 21.089.264. Major national radio and TV channels addressing a wide range of audiences broadcasted the news of the exhibition for 3 hours 25 minutes and 36 seconds.

An exhibition book, a documentation of the promenade with the works exhibited in the Pedestrian Exhibition accompanied with several essays by art professionals will be available by the end of April 2006.