

Dear Roberto,

It was wonderful to meet you in person though very shortly.

As I mentioned to you during our meeting, the biennial exhibition will focus on the notion of the public domain as a political forum. This highly contested concept will serve as a matrix to generate ideas and develop practices that question contemporary forms of democracy, challenge current forms of spatio-economic justice, question given concepts of civilization and barbarity as standardized positions and languages and, above all, question the role of contemporary art as an agent that both makes and unmakes what is considered public.

Focusing on urban public spaces in Istanbul, the Biennial will use public buildings left temporarily vacant by urban transformation. These may include courthouses, schools or military structures, post offices, former transportation hubs like train stations, ex-industrial sites such as warehouses, dockyards and the very contested Taksim Square and Gezi Park. Furthermore, the hallmarks of current urbanism such as shopping malls, hotels and office-residential towers will be used as sites for artistic interventions.

Through the exhibition, we intend to create a public domain, autonomous to official slogans and discourses, in order to be able to discuss the way we are governed and forced to live. We will ask if art can foster the construction of new subjectivities, after all, to reinvent the possibly of “publicness” today.

I see your practice very much in line with the aims of the exhibition and I am specifically interested in your “Venus: the Currency of Desire” (2002 – 2006) project. I would like to hear your ideas on this proposal and on how to re-adapt and present it in the exhibition context.

Attached I am sending you the draft conceptual framework of the 13th Istanbul Biennial. As we will have a press launch on the 8th of January 2013, I would appreciate if you can keep it confidential including the title.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,

Fulya Erdemci

Curator, 13th Istanbul Biennial