

Dear Theaster Gates,

I am very happy to invite you to participate to the 13th Istanbul Biennial that will take place between the 14th of September and 10th of November 2013.

The notion of the public domain as a political forum will be the focal point of the 13th Istanbul Biennial. This highly contested concept will serve as a matrix to generate ideas and forms on other controversial subjects such as: civilization and barbarism; democracy; spatio-economic justice; and the role of contemporary art.

Taking the city as the spatial component of the democratic apparatus, the exhibition aims to rethink the issue of freedom and examine the notion of equality in relation to spatio-economic justice. Aiming to produce, probe and celebrate public spaces, the art projects will open up the grey areas for debate.

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 do hope that the focus and conceptual approach of the 13th Istanbul Biennial is of your interest and your schedule allows you to participate.

During the opening weekend of documenta 13, I came two times to Huguenot house at Kassel to be able to meet you in person. It wasn't possible. I do hope that we have the opportunity to meet in Istanbul!

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further details.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Very best,

Fulya Erdemci

Curator,

13th Istanbul Biennial