

In-between Frame and Gallery

Framing and installing as architectural practice

sergi mekanı
çerçeve
yerleştirme
mesafe
yakınlık
exhibition space
frame
installation
distance
proximity

Bu makale, bir mimarın sergi ve müze projelerine katılımı üzerine teorik bir inceleme sunmakta, sergi yapımını alternatif bir mimari uygulama olarak anlamak için bir temel oluşturmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çerçeveleme ve yerleştirmeyi birer araç olarak tarifleyerek mimarın sergi alanına katılımının kolektif üretim süreçlerine nasıl katkı sağladığını incelemektedir.

Sergi yapımının fiziksel ve entelektüel alanlarında mimarın incelikli konumu, bireylerle, kurumlarla, malzemelerle ve mekanlarla ilişkilerdeki sürekli dönüşümler yoluyla ortaya çıkar. Makale, sergileme pratiğindeki farklı katılım biçimleriyle ilişkili olarak bir mimarın kendisini sanatsal ve mimari üretim arasındaki eşikte nasıl konumlandırabileceğini araştırmaktadır.

Aynı müzede eşzamanlı olarak düzenlenen iki sergiye odaklanan metin, birinde mimar aktif olarak geri çekildiği, diğerinde mimari tasarımda proaktif bir rol üstlendiği birbirine zıt iki yaklaşımı ön plana çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma, mimarlık ve sanat sınırında faaliyet gösteren sergilerin üretiminde çerçeveyi birincil araç olarak, çerçeveleme ve yerleştirmeyi ise birincil eylemler olarak odağına almaktadır.

This article presents a theoretical investigation into the participation of an architect in exhibition and museum projects. The study seeks to establish a foundation for understanding exhibition making as an alternative architectural practice. It examines how the architect's involvement in the field of exhibition making contributes to the collective production processes with a focus on the tools of framing and installing.

Within the physical and intellectual realms of exhibition making, the architect's nuanced position emerges through constant transformations in relationships with individuals, institutions, materials, and spaces. The paper investigates how an architect can position herself on the threshold between artistic and architectural production, in relation to different modes of involvement in the practice of exhibition making.

Focusing on two simultaneous exhibitions held within the same museum, the text showcases contrasting approaches. In one the architect actively withdraws, and in the other she takes on a proactive role in architectural design. The study introduces *frame* as a primary tool, and *framing* and *installing* as primary acts in the production of exhibitions operating on the boundary of architecture and art.

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INTRODUCTION: FROM THE SITE

This study began with a paragraph written by one of its authors, Duygu Doğan, which began to reveal the relations of an exhibition architect with various institutions, models, materials and spaces. It stated:

In my architectural practice; I have been involved in exhibition and museum projects in various institutions. At some stages of the production of the exhibited works and at many stages of their exhibition; I have worked closely with various actors such as artists, curators, technicians (sound, light, AV...), craftsmen (carpenters, blacksmiths, painters...), institutions such as museums, sponsors, biennials, independent art initiatives and collectives, foundations, municipalities, workshops such as the artist's studio, iron workshop, conservation workshop, carpentry workshop, print workshop, places such as museum galleries, artwork storage facilities, inn rooms, warehouse buildings, school buildings, parks, parking lots, and vacant lots, materials such as plasterboard, fabric, cardboard, paper, paint, iron, stone, wood, and tulle. I was part of the physical and intellectual processes of creating various exhibitions. My relationship and positioning as an architect with the people, institutions, materials, places and objects above, which came together with changing constructs and weights each time, were similarly re-established in different forms and weights each time. I took various roles in different exhibitions, including spatial design, planning, production coordination in some, and research in almost all, installation in all of them. Therefore, this work inevitably stems primarily from the foundation laid by practical knowledge and intuition in the field; it continues as a process where experiential knowledge acquired through physical space interaction, confronts and resonates with ideas and concepts.

The initial motivation for the work is to open a discussion on the field of exhibitions as an alternative architectural practice

and a collective production space. Through this it aims to explore the architect's position in the exhibition making processes and how architectural knowledge and thinking practices contribute to artistic production. It seeks to investigate how the convergence of art pieces within a conceptual framework can bring about the constant renewal of a relational space, and how the viewer's experience can lead to the transformation of architectural modes of action and thought with the introduction of new concepts and tools.

There comes a pivotal moment in every exhibition's production process when it begins to be conceived within a spatial context. At this juncture, the ideas, artworks, and texts intended for the exhibition start to be envisioned within a physical setting. The artists, architects, curators, and other actors gather at the exhibition venue usually with a gallery floor plan, perhaps a preliminary list of works accompanied by measurements and photographs, and occasionally a few paragraphs outlining the exhibition's conceptual framework. Concepts, texts, paintings, and visuals then begin to coalesce into an exhibition through the establishment of physical relationships within the space, and numerous curatorial and architectural decisions aimed at moulding the space into an exhibition. The exhibition architect plays a dual role in this meeting: she possesses an intimate understanding of the existing architectural space, its spatial requirements, and the technical details necessary for its transformation, while also



Fig.1 - Gallery Space, First Day of The Installation of "Passage" ©A. D. İpek.

contributing creatively to the production of the new exhibition space. Simultaneously tending to the architectural framework housing the exhibition and activating it to delineate the temporary exhibition space within, she navigates the interface between the building and the artwork; the artistic domain and the architectural realm.

As an architectural practice focused on designing spaces for the experience of art, exhibition architecture interacts with various scales and forms of art production, blending art-related spaces, materials, and forms. Additionally, it leverages architectural knowledge pertaining to fabrication, construction, and materials within the context of tectonic relationships (Fig.1).

In this article, we explore the evolving role of the architect in exhibition production processes, which is illuminated by a diverse range of participants and variables. Our focus is on two exhibitions; *Endless* by artist Sarkis, and *Passage* by artist Nuri Kuzucan simultaneously presented at ARTER, an art gallery in Istanbul, in Turkey. Each exhibition exemplifies distinct aspects of the architect's involvement; *Endless* showcases the architect's contribution characterized by an "active withdrawal" gesture in which she designs the convergence details and coordinates the process. In *Passage* the architect actively contributes to the exhibition's narrative with an architectural design. Through these examples, we will analyze how an architect can position themselves at varying distances within the processes of exhibition making process.

VARIABLES IN EXHIBITION PLANNING

Exhibition architecture isn't always about creating an architectural design. At times, it involves spatial strategies to accommodate artworks with a nuanced approach requiring an active retreat, while other times it focuses on defining essential elements for the exhibition experience, such as wall color, lighting, hanging height, and circulation routes. The architect navigates her role and proximity in different exhibitions, continually assessing thresholds to shape her practice. This approach is influenced by various factors, including the exhibition type, gallery space characteristics, and the requirements of the artworks and exhibition itself, all of which shape the exhibition production processes differently. Below we share Duygu Doğan's approach to exhibition design that will be brought to the two exhibitions we will study later in this paper.

Art exhibitions can be organized with a variety of approaches based on the selection of the works to be exhibited and the artists to participate or to be represented. Exhibition types may depend on variables such as whether the artist is living or not, how many artists will take part in the exhibition and whether the works are original work or will be reproduced.

Retrospective exhibitions discuss the artist's work from a historical perspective. Such exhibitions include in-depth research on issues such as the times, places, conditions of the production of the work and the intentions of the artist. If the artist is deceased, exhibition organizers are expected to treat the artist's legacy with respect. Solo exhibitions focus on the current work of a single artist. Unlike retrospective exhibitions, solo exhibitions generally focus on the artist's current work or pieces produced around a specific concept. Exhibitions of new work often require close collaboration with the artist. Such exhibitions

include a detailed research process within the production stages; the materials used, the choice of venue and the content of the works. Group exhibitions bring together artworks produced by different artists in different contexts and times. These exhibitions involve combining different techniques and mediums, and must be carefully planned to present the works in a new context. Exhibition makers manage complex collaborations by carefully orchestrating the choice of venue and the interaction between pieces.

The architect's field of operation in the exhibition making processes consists of various scales including the construction closest to the artwork, such as the frame, the gallery in which the work is shown, the building or city or piece of land, where the exhibition is located, and the various possible spatial relationships around these scales. The architect organizes the inter-scale relations in the intellectual and production aspects of architecture and art, enabling the exhibition to emerge as a space within all these relations. The article stems from twenty years of experience in the field of exhibition making and aims to reveal these relations through discussing the role of the architect in the collaborative production processes.

In this context, the architect makes a series of decisions, starting from the arrangements within the gallery, to the general architectural structure of the building or area where the gallery is located, in order to display the work of art in the most appropriate way. This organizes various structural elements that frame, highlight or interact with works of art. It also informs how visitors will experience the exhibition, the relationships between works, lighting and other spatial details.

There are a number of important steps and responsibilities in the process of exhibition making to produce spaces suitable for the conceptual framework of the exhibition. One of the first steps is the selection of the exhibition venue that best suits the conceptual

structure and goals of the exhibition. Then, the necessary legal and institutional processes must be arranged, the exhibition must be planned and organized in accordance with the legal regulations.

Technical preparation processes include the production or conservation of the works to be included in the exhibition before they are brought to the venue. At this stage, the technical and architectural infrastructure required for the exhibition is prepared. The placement of the works in the space and how the visitor will encounter the works are planned in line with the artistic demands of the exhibition, display units to be used are designed and produced. Finally, during the installation process when the works, exhibition units, technicians, craftsmen, artists, curators and other team members are all present in the space, the exhibition emerges as a form.

During the design and production processes, a suitable space for the aesthetic and technical requirements of the exhibition is created under the coordination of the architect in collaboration with others such as the artist, curator, museum or gallery director, technical team and craftsmen who contribute to the production (carpenter, blacksmith, painter...). In addition, necessary permissions are obtained by contacting institutions such as museums, municipalities or the state and the necessary procedures are followed.

In its most simplified definition, an exhibition organizes the encounters and associations of works, viewers and spaces. Each exhibition is a sum of its decisions to come together and bring together the relationships it proposes and produces. It takes its form through the organization of a multitude of things that it includes or excludes, enables or disallows, provokes or rebukes, brings closer or further away, protects or highlights.

The exhibition itself is a form of unity that aims to produce other associations. Even though their institutional or conceptual

approaches may be different, it would not be wrong to say that each exhibition will realize its potential to the extent that it can diversify and multiply the relationships between its components. Both the established structures such as museums, and fragmented structures, such as biennials, aim to establish new relationships and multiply these relationships through the exhibition format. In terms of its objectives, capabilities, and limitations, an exhibition can serve as a subject of both aesthetic and political inquiry. Exhibitions, serving as platforms where spatial manifestations of established connections can be explored, also intersect with the domain of architecture and provide new ways of thinking and operating for the practice of architecture.

Philosopher, psychoanalyst and artist Bracha Ettinger coins the term *copoiesis* to explain the communication taking place in the *psychic sphere* between "individual psychic boundaries" happening as a "transgressive encounter", and she discusses about "co-poietic transformational potentiality" that produces particular knowledge through resonance and influence (Ettinger, date, page number). Ettinger's complex description of *matrixial borderspace*, through which fields continually inspire one another, is the theoretical inspiration of the idea of exhibition as a relational performative space.

The matrixial borderspace, as proposed by Ettinger, represents a fluid, interconnected space where subjectivities merge and boundaries blur (Ettinger, 2005, 703-704). In the context of exhibition architecture, this could suggest creating an environment that fosters a sense of interconnectedness and relationality between the viewer and the exhibited works.

The architect performs two modes of action to organize the conditions of the encounter and coexistence of the works, people, objects and spaces in the exhibition: installing and framing which are performative tools of art and architecture.

INSTALLING

Installing is a mode of action in architectural production that differs from *constructing* in many ways. Installing creates temporary structures and activates existing spaces and pieces, whilst constructing produces buildings that are more static and often intended to exist for long periods of time. Installing is an alternative way of practicing architecture which uses knowledge of construction and produces new knowledge for the field of architecture.

Installation within exhibition design is a form of artistic production in which the work of art consists of various parts, demands space in the space, transforms with the movement of the viewer, and is re-performed in each place, time and in the context of each exhibition. Exhibitions that bring together works of art in a physical gallery space can also be considered as site-specific installations. Exhibitions are performative structures that are reconstructed each time by the artist, curator and architect. They hold all the characteristics of the gallery space and the variables mentioned above, and constantly transform with the participation of the audience.

The process of exhibition making at the venue (site) is often called installing an exhibition. The works in the exhibition are installations in themselves; whether a new work is produced or the pieces of an existing work kept in the warehouse are brought together. *Installing* is a delicate balance; all the pieces are there for a reason, nothing is fixed. There are support mechanisms; failure of one of the pieces does not stop the functioning of the whole.

The installation has a life (duration) and life-sustaining care relationships, with its own sensitivities and priorities. It emphasizes the needs of temporary unions such as balance and distance rather than permanence and solidity. Without the complex burden of construction processes that might take years, and come with high costs, installations can

be followed by the participants in each step. Here the architect can coordinate the entire construction process from the beginning and take part in all stages. Installing, as an architectural act, differs from construction in terms of the relationships established with time, materiality and construction methods, and allows us to rethink our ways of making through proximities, distances and sensitivities.

In art history, the first experiments in which the work moved away from the wall and the exhibition experience was determined by the movement of the viewer were carried out by avant-garde artists and architects. In the installation titled *Proun Room*, El Lissitzky incorporated the space into the work by distributing the two-dimensional pieces throughout the gallery, including different walls and ceiling. Lissitzky, describes the space as follows: "Space: that which is not looked at through a key hole, not through an open door. Space does not exist for the eye only: it is not a picture; one wants to live in it" (Lissitzky, 1923). In his manifesto for the *Proun Room* installation at the Great Berlin Art Exhibition of 1923, Lissitzky related his function as an exhibition designer to his artistic practice, and to his desire in the *Proun Room* to establish an "interchange station between painting and architecture... to treat canvas and wooden board as a building site" (Greenberg, 1996, 218).

Innovative exhibition design such as this was a popular field in the period between the 1920s and the 1960s in Europe and America (Staniszewski, 1998, 3). Images and techniques from fields such as mass media, video and avant-garde theatre were used extensively by avant-garde artists, designers and architects in the design of exhibitions. Architects and designers such as Friedrich Kiesler, El Lissitzky, Moholy Nagy, Lilian Reich, and Herbert Bayer were experimenting with exhibition structures in order to create new compositions for the viewer and to activate viewers participation (Staniszewski, 1998, 4).

Herbert Bayer, one of the important installation designers of this period, explains how this new approach contributed to the field of design in his article titled *Aspects of Design of Exhibitions and Museums* dated 1961:

Exhibition design has evolved as a new discipline, as an apex of all media and powers of communication and of collective efforts and effects. The combined means of visual communication constitutes a remarkable complexity: language is visible printing or as sound, pictures as symbols, paintings and photographs, sculptural media, materials and surfaces, color light movement (display as well as the visitor), films, diagrams, charts. Total application of all plastic and physiological means (more than anything else) makes exhibition design an intensified new language (Staniszewski, 1998, 3).

While the avant garde artists and architects were dealing with exhibition design as a new tool, on the other hand, the norms of the 'white cube', the new "ritual space" (Von Hantelmann, 2019, 56) of modern man, was being established under the leadership of MoMA, the first modern art museum in America in 1929. The pure white background, neutralized interior, evenly distributed artificial lighting evolved a generic fiction that this provides neutral environment for the artworks. For a long time to come the white cube norms became the defining rules of exhibition practice. The way of holding exhibitions seemed to be frozen. It would not be wrong to say that even today, museums are mostly designed as structures containing white cube areas. The white cube concept not only determines the form of exhibition, but also becomes the material of the work of art (Klonk, 2009, 137).

From the 1940s, there were, however, gradual shifts away from this approach. There was an increase in the understanding of the space demanded by the work of art in the space where it is exhibited, and a melting of the physical boundaries between the work of

art and the architectural space. A convergence in architectural and artistic production styles also caused significant changes. By the 1970s, the institutional walls of the gallery were the subject of the works of artists like Robert Smithson, Robert Morris, Richard Serra who challenged the definitions of the sculpture, architecture and landscape (Krauss, 1979, 41). The physical boundaries, material and medium of the work of art has now evolved beyond producing objects, to engage in performance and happenings (Kwon, 2002, 1-9).

As the boundaries between space and art work transform, the architect becomes an active participant in an increasingly complex production process, with both the practical knowledge on tectonics and the knowledge of the space. In parallel discussions in the field of art and architecture expand from frame - wall - space relations, to situations where the gallery space itself turns into a frame. This then goes on to include works of art that leave the gallery space, and are produced and exhibited in public space, evolving theoretical discussions on space - place - site - non-site - multiple sites (Rendell, 2007, 15-19).

FRAMING

The frame (and its derivatives, showcase and pedestal) is a conceptual and practical tool for both art and architecture that enables the architect, artist and curator to perform the act of associating between works, spaces and viewers in the exhibition space. The transitional space between the work of art and the space where it is exhibited can be investigated through the function of the frame with the concepts of interior/ exterior, territory/boundary, wall/ frame. Proximities, distances, groupings and area determination in the exhibition space can be called framing. In this context, the exhibition itself and all kinds of relationships in the exhibition can be considered as a frame.

The history of the exhibition space is fundamentally the story of the

painting with its frame, sculpture with its base, the frame's relation with the wall and the artwork. Until the early 20th century in Europe, artworks were presented in thick frames not only to define their boundaries but also to provide the artwork its own existential space within their academic creation rules. That is how, in early exhibitions, many frames could be presented from floor to ceiling, next to each other and still considered to have their own representational area. The emancipation of the artwork from the frame to the wall and to the void is a spiry history, which tells a lot about the experience of artwork in the physical material space, and of course a lot about the ways we imagine the world, even today (O'Doherty, 2010, 15-33).

Interestingly, cave painting are unframed. These paintings belong to a time when there was no distinction between art and life, in a sense, culture and nature, as we understand today. Therefore, there was no need to create a boundary between the work itself and the space.

Known for his alternative art history studies that enable interdisciplinary research, Meyer Schapiro reveals that the frame in art history appears at a later time than we may think; in the late second millennium BC. Until this date, a closed frame that "surrounds an image homogeneously and continuously, like the city walls surrounding a city" has not been encountered. However, he notes there are various horizontal lines that connect the figures or form the ground (Schapiro, 1972, 9-19).

In addition to its material meanings as a border to be crossed or a limit to be exceeded, the frame has conceptual meanings that enable the act of inclusion and exclusion. In this respect, the framework has become one of the subjects of the field of philosophy (Derrida, 1987, 31-35). For both paintings made directly on the wall or onto a canvas, this concern for inclusion or exclusion forms the basis of discussions about whether the frame is a part of the

artwork or an external element that determines the boundaries between the work of art and the exhibition space.

There appear to be a number of aspects at play within the notion of framing. The distance between two works of art is measurable spatial data, but what determines this distance is various spatial, material and artistic proximity-distance relations. In this context, distance refers to a measure that takes into consideration and cares for the priorities, sensitivities, fragility, boundaries, dimensions and materials of the artworks. The works may be located in the gallery space; according to eye level, whether they are loud or quiet, hard or soft, sensitive or durable. It is possible to think of distance as relations of being on top of each other and side by side, with spatial data such as the color of the wall, its material, its height or the thickness of frames.

The initial question can be multiplied to consider encounters between spaces, works, and viewers: What is the distance between the transparent surface of a video work projected onto the wall and the wall? How can each of these surfaces, one above the other, continue to be their own surface? What are the new boundaries produced by being on top of each other? How does the fragility of a work affect the distance to approach it? How does the glass in front of a frame change the conditions of approaching the work? Or what is the distance between a work and its frame? What relationships does the framework regulate?

The frame, as a space definition tool and a way of establishing proximity, determines both the location of the work and the viewer's position and movement in the gallery space. The frame can be turned into a showcase by changing the direction and conditions of proximity. What determines the area of a work on the ground is the plinth, which is another form of the frame.

The presence and absence of the frame is itself a form of proximity. The frame is a tool that creates

both the encounters of individual entities, and the conditions for their coexistence in the exhibition space. The frame is one of the tools to protect the artwork. A delicate work needs a sturdy frame, or a fragile work needs a carefully designed base. One of the roles and responsibilities of the architect who works with works of art in the exhibition making process is to ensure that the works are placed in the exhibition space taking into account their fragility, and to make the necessary support constructions for this purpose without compromising the artistic decisions and integrity of the work.

In the exhibition, which is a space of relations, the frame makes it possible for works, objects and different spaces to exist singularly. While exhibitions, as a place of encounter and gathering, bring singular or collective bodies together, the frame creates the singular spaces of the encountering bodies (works, viewers, spaces), and the framing creates the conditions of being together.

CASE STUDY EXHIBITIONS

The role and responsibilities of the architect emerge during the design process of each exhibition, as the type of exhibition, venue, selection of works, and texts such as conceptual framework, are redefined each time. The context created by the conceptual framework, the physical properties of the gallery space, spatial constraints, legal restrictions, sensitivities and conservation conditions of the works, open new positions for the architect at various thresholds such as care - display, fragility - support, severality - shareability, intimacy - proximity, orientation - appropriation, reattunement - transformation. A new understanding of tectonics appears in the *restless*² area at the in-between space of art and architecture that does not only depend on physical and international standards of measures but reproduces case specific measures each time. The

role of the architect is redefined by different actors and variables within each new exhibition. We will explore modes of framing through two exhibitions which show polar positions for the architect's involvement.

Two exhibitions Duygu Doğan worked on will now be explored through the concepts of installing and framing in relationship to the role of the architect within the exhibition design process.

SARKIS, ENDLESS

Sarkis' exhibition titled *Endless*, was opened at Arter on May 4, 2023. The works were placed in the gallery space without any structural intervention.³ In this exhibition there are no walls, partitions or structural additions dividing the existing space inside the gallery or in the foyer where the exhibition continues. The gallery space is arranged as it is, free from additions. The process involved working on location with Sarkis. This meant finely arranging the contingency details established with the architectural space, the points of contingency of the works with the space, and the tectonic relationships of the materials and structures that approach or touch each other. The architect participated in the process of re-execution of the works with her material-technical-tectonic knowledge. Her role was to design the adaptations of the works to the gallery space and their contingency points with the physical space (Fig.2).

FRAMING

Endless assembles five works by Sarkis from the Arter Collection within Arter's gallery space. Each piece, functioning as an installation, contributes to the overall site-specific arrangement, blurring boundaries between individual artworks and the exhibition as a whole (Fig.3).

The centerpiece of the exhibition is *Respiro*, which is positioned in a central area characterized by long, high walls. Illuminated by shifting neon lights and natural



Fig.2 - Endless Exhibition Space, *Endless* ©S. Taştekné.



Fig.4 - *Respiro* in *Endless* ©S. Taştekné

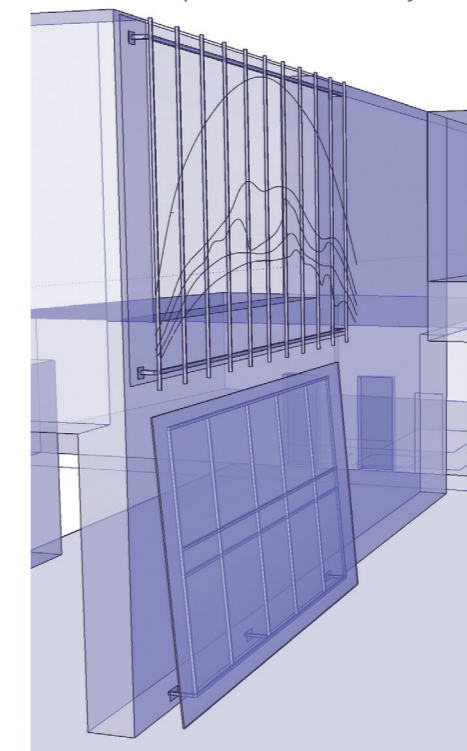


Fig.5 - Detail for *Respiro* in *Endless*.

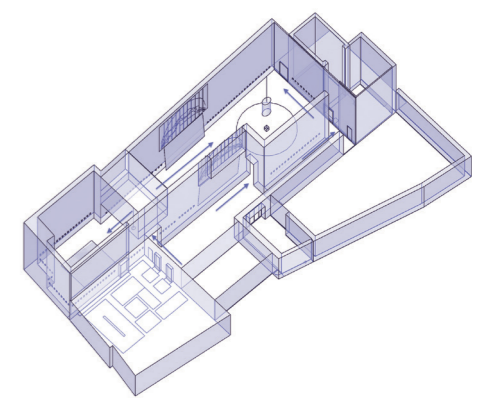
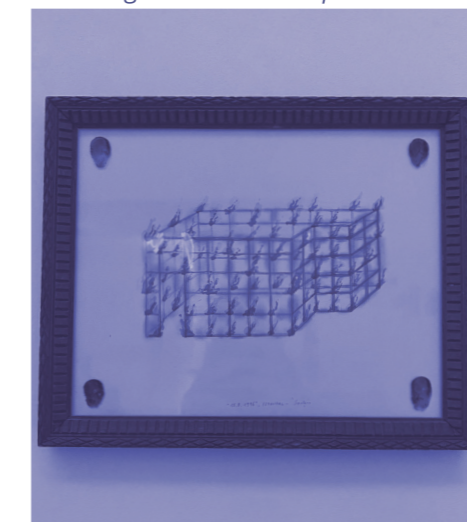


Fig.3 - Drawing for *Endless*.

light reflections, the artwork infuses the exhibition with dynamic color and light, with Sarkis eschewing additional lighting sources. The work was originally conceived for the Venice Biennale, but underwent a transformation for this exhibition at Arter. Its components were rearranged to establish new spatial relationships, supported by a custom-built carrier without imposing a rigid frame (Fig.4, Fig.5).

Sarkis's approach challenges conventional framing practices, emphasizing the frame as a spatial element that delineates the artwork's relationship with its surroundings. *Icons* are the only framed works in the exhibition, reflecting Sarkis's avoidance of traditional museum display tools such as frames, showcases, and pedestals. Instead, he views these displays as enclosing artifacts, arresting artworks in specific moments. For Sarkis, the frame itself becomes a spatial element, delineating the work from its surrounding environment (Fig.6).



Fig.6 - From *Icons* in *Endless* ©Flufoto.

Icons surrounds all the walls of the gallery space at equal intervals activating a gesture that Sarkis calls "drawing the space" (Sarkis, 2024, n.p.) (Fig.7). Ninety icons, all produced in Istanbul, reinterpret the boundaries of the gallery by following the inclined walls with a determined rhythm. Even when they are interrupted by other works (mirrors) on the wall they determinedly pass them at the same distance. These icons are arranged sequentially according to their serial numbers as their dates of birth. None of them are separated, stand out or are grouped. It is only the length of the walls that determines the intervals. Hanging heights are above the standard viewing height that is usually 155 cm (Fig.8). This boundary line is also relatively high in the gallery space, and the height of other works in the exhibition are located in relation to this. Through this Sarkis reinterprets the height of the space by lifting the entire space slightly above human eye level. At both ends of the gallery there are two further works that complete the exhibition. While *Respiro* creates the height of the space in the middle, the exhibition sits on the ground at both ends.

INSTALLING

Sarkis opts to maintain the architectural integrity of the exhibition space, refraining from additional structural alterations. In *Endless*, the architect's role is to refine the details of the works' interaction with the space, adapting load-bearing structures to fit the architectural context and harmonizing tectonic relationships between materials (Fig.8, Fig.9).

During installation meticulous attention is paid to ensuring the seamless integration of the works with the gallery space. To these ends there are discussions involving the artist, curator, and technical team to refine wall contact points and construction details. Each element retains its individuality, yet collectively contributes to a unified, ephemeral whole. The conceptual framework of this exhibition revolves around contingency, with a focus on exploring the architect's

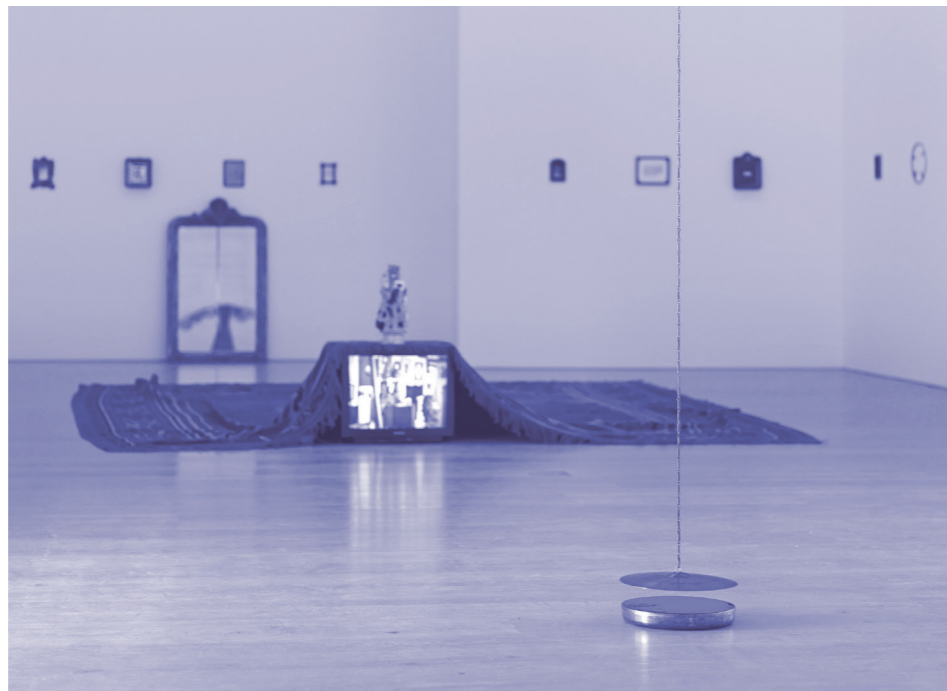


Fig.7 - Icons on the walls with other works ©Flufoto.



Fig.8 - Construction of *Respiro* in *Endless*.

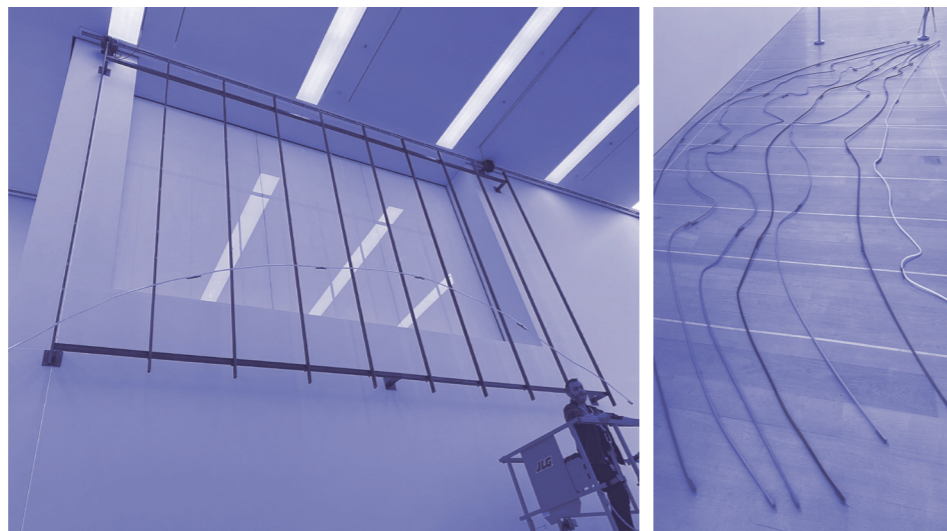


Fig.9 - Construction of *Respiro* in *Endless*.

role through considerations of touch, approach, and material integration.

NURI KUZUCAN, PASSAGE

For Nuri Kuzucan's exhibition titled *Passage*, which was opened at Arter on June 1, 2023, the gallery space was transformed with a specially designed architectural structure. The architectural structure and most of the works were produced simultaneously. The architectural structure comes together with the works and co-exists in the exhibition space to create the spatial experience. The artworks and the architectural work emerge from each other and sustain each other, and can be described as a painting-space, or a space-painting experiment. While the surfaces of the architectural structure form frames for the works in the exhibition, the viewer moving inside the structure experiences the works in countless different ways. The architectural structure creates new relationships of perspective, closeness, distance, fullness, emptiness, light and shadow on the painting surface that adds to the physical experience of the works and creates spatial intervals and crevices, multiplying the perspective qualities of artworks (Fig.10).

FRAMING

All the artworks in the exhibition were paintings, most of them canvases without frames attached to the canvas (Fig.11). Nuri Kuzucan produces surfaces that create their own frame by continuing the painting surface in the thickness of the canvas. The series in the exhibition was an experiment in which the artist thought of the frame as a space and explored the possibilities of this frame space. There is a noticeable gap between the glass surface in front of the thick frame and the wall, with the effect of broken light on the glass being sharply reflected behind the framed surface. The deep frame of the work becomes a space performed through the movement of light and shadow (Fig.12).



Fig.10 - *Passage*, Exhibition Space.



Fig.10 - *Passage*, Exhibition Space.



Fig.12 - Frame from *Passage* ©Flufoto.

The artworks in the exhibition were produced simultaneously with the architectural structure. The architectural structure consisted of the two-entrance, walk-through gallery space, the opening of the preparation stages of the exhibition that resembles a passage, then the white walls of the building serve as a frame for the works, and the movement of the viewer and the frames connected to the space create different compositions (Fig.13).

INSTALLING

The gallery space in which the exhibition was located was a single volume. The architectural design of the exhibition was an adaptation of the passage idea within the architectural space of the gallery. The aim was to diversify the routes of movement between the two doors of the gallery with new passages throughout the gallery to enable the viewer to wander around the spaces in the works. The aim was to create an architectural structure that interpreted "the experience of walking in the side streets of a metropolis" (Fig.14).

The work called *Diptych Painting* was already finished when the preparations for the exhibition began, and these paintings became another starting point for the architectural design. We set out to search for the architectural equivalents of surfaces created with paint, transitions between surfaces, spaces and intermediate spaces in physical space (Fig.15). One of the fundamental decisions was to make the surfaces legible on orthogonal axes, echoing the paintings. All horizontal and vertical components of the architectural structure can be read as surfaces with their own thickness, that relate to each other as an assemblage.

The relationship between the walls of the exhibition space and the gallery space was planned in such a way that none of the new walls touch the walls of the gallery. The walls of the gallery continue without interruption within the entire exhibition space and maintain their existence with their own heights

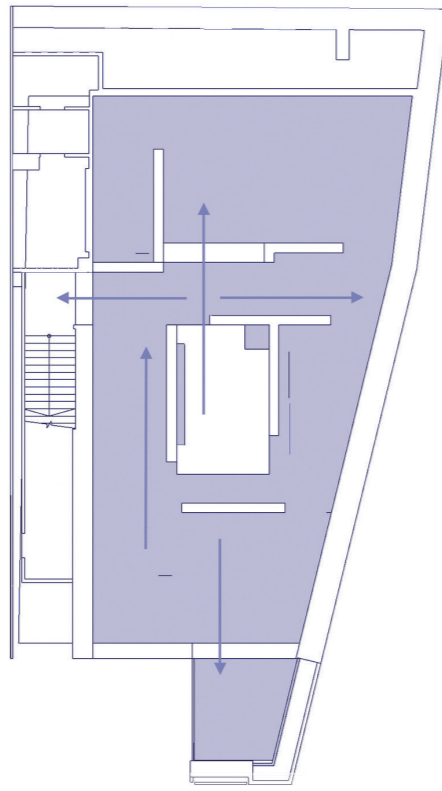


Fig.13 - Floor Plan of Passage.



Fig.14 - Passage, Exhibition View.



Fig.15 - Diptych Painting from Passage.

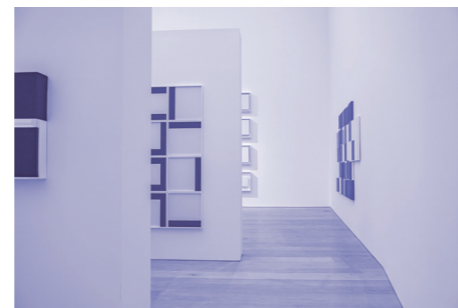


Fig.16 - Exhibition View from Passage.

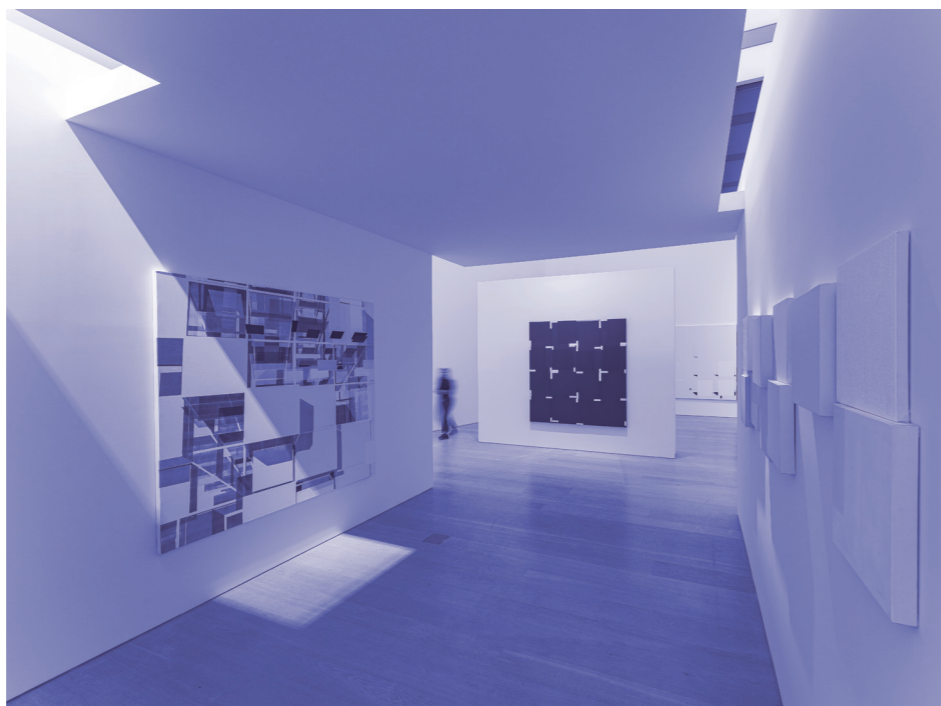


Fig.17 - Exhibition View from Passage ©Flufoto.

and dimensions. These walls also provide large wall surfaces required for various tasks (Fig.16).

The space's own circulation axes are used to transform the idea of a passage into an architectural structure. The aim is to create new transitions and new routes with new spaces, surfaces, areas and volumes where these transitions still remain legible. It was planned that various surfaces could be passed through, stepped under, stood in front of, and come together as a fiction. The aim of the paintings is to make the depth provided by perspective physically active, thus increasing the experience. While walking through the gallery space the viewer passes through corridors that sometimes approach each other, sometimes offer a defined square space, with all experiences of intermediate areas and gaps in the established architectural space created by the coming together and dispersing of various surfaces (Fig.17, Fig.18).



Fig.18 - Exhibition View from Passage.

Movement is the conceptual tool of this exhibition. The crucial role of the architect as a designer was in establishing a performative exhibition experience in which works and architectural structures produce compositions that change with the movement of the viewer.

CONCLUSION

The role of the architect in exhibition production emphasizes the architect's dynamic engagement with diverse actors and variables at both polar ends of engagement. By introducing "framing" and "installing" as modes of action in the exhibition making processes the text examines the architect's operational field on the threshold. This navigates a transitional space between art and architecture in

the delicate balance between permanence and temporality, solidity and fragility, singularity and shareability.

As the architect orchestrates the exhibition's spatial dynamics, they inherently engage in a discourse contributing to the transformative potentiality of the exhibition space. In a world undergoing rapid change the architect's position becomes a crucial lens through which to reflect on the evolving nature of architecture within the context of dynamic and performative exhibition environments. The study concludes by proposing that understanding and embracing the in-between within architectural practices can enrich the discipline's capacity to respond to contemporary challenges, and contribute meaningfully to the broader cultural and spatial discourse.

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NOTES

1. The term "active withdrawal" is borrowed from the title of the book "Active Withdrawals, Life and Death of Institutional Critique" which refers to the seminar organized in Guangdong Museum. There the term is used to describe how active withdrawal becomes a meaningful gesture directed against often celebrated mass production and the symbolic process of progress (Ciric, Yingqian Cai, 2016,12).

2. "Restless" is a term bused both by Bernard Tschumi (while discussing real and ideal space in architecture) and Hans Haacke (while criticizing the institution as a frame) (Kaye, 2000, 46).

3. Excerpt from exhibition's press release text: Conceived to coexist with a space, to embrace spatial references and associations, or to forge a different space altogether, the works of Sarkis are reinterpreted and transformed by the artist on every occasion they are exhibited. The exhibition titled ENDLESS, presented on Arter's 2nd floor, brings together a selection of the artist's works from the Arter Collection in the same gallery space for the very first time, endowing them with a new life and new experiences. SARKIS: Endless [online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.arter.org.tr/EN/exhibitions/sarkis-endless/1233> [accessed 22 May 2024].