

REPORT
"Art-criticism and Curatorial Practices, East of the EU"
International Workshop and Round-table in conjunction with the
8th Istanbul Biennial

18TH- 21ST SEPTEMBER 2003
BORUSAN ART AND CULTURE CENTER, ISTANBUL
ISTANBUL BILGI UNIVERSITY

organised by
AICA INTERNATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL BUREAU of AICA (Paris)
INTERNATIONAL MANIFESTA FOUNDATION
AICA-TURKEY

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Istanbul Bilgi University
Borusan Culture and Art Center
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The Turkish Section of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA Turkey)
organised its first
"International Workshop and Round-table of Art Criticism and Curatorial Practices"
in conjunction with the 8th Istanbul Biennial.

The workshop and the Round-table is funded by the **European Cultural Foundation** (Amsterdam), organised in collaboration with the **International Bureau of AICA** (Paris), the **International Foundation Manifesta** (Amsterdam), **Istanbul Bilgi University**, **Borusan Culture and Art Center**, **European Cultural Association**, **Bir Culture and Art Center** and is sponsored by **Eczacıbaşı Holding**, **Om Yayınevi** and **Municipality of Beyoğlu**.

The Round-table, conceived as a critical and theoretical contribution to the 8th Istanbul Biennial, focused on defining current practices in international networking and co-operation, on available models and tools for co-production, on funding opportunities and curatorial independence, as well as on the Istanbul Biennial, as a model within the current biennial system and within the cultural infrastructure of the region. The accompanying **Workshop** was designed as a training opportunity for young professionals from the region East of the EU, who are engaged with the curatorial practice, with art criticism or cultural journalism.

Please find below the summary of all presentations and discussions arranged in order of date and time into the initiative program.

17 September 2003

The participants arrived to Dedeman Hotel and Richmond Hotel. At 5 pm a Welcome Meeting was held in BM Contemporary Art Center / Akkavak sok 1/1- 80200 Nişantaş. At 7pm the guests attended the exhibition "Avec ou Sans Intention" in Institut Français d'Istanbul / İstiklal cad. 8 Taksim.

18 September 2003

The WORKSHOP started at Borusan Culture and Art Center, İstiklal cad. 421-423- Tünel Beyoğlu.

09.30-10.00	Registration
10.00-10.15	Henry Meyric Hughes , Introduced the Turkish section of AICA and the theme of the workshop as a training occasion, a change for people in the region to get together and to explore the points in common, the differences, and indicated that Istanbul is the gateway to the West and that he first visited the city in the early 60s, was informed of the Istanbul Biennial in 1987 when he took up his job as the director of visual arts of the British Council, but could not come at the time. He said that he was privileged to be involved also in the 1992 Biennial, which happened after the Berlin Wall, and presented Damien Hirst and Hannah Collins. He reminded that for the

	<p>first time in Europe an extensive cultural exchange started and ex Soviet countries and Russia itself was represented in this biennial. He further said that Istanbul is now very much a part of the international art world and again in a historical moment the biennial opens a forum for crucial themes because Istanbul is on the fault line as is Venice in a sense, between different ideologies, different religions, beliefs. He said that art doesn't know bounds or rather it only knows the bounds that we ourselves impose, those of our making or those of our choosing, that its function is to test those bounds and to test those limits. He said that there are themes that are absolutely central to our discussion, to what extent we welcome the kind of breaking down of barriers and to what extent we are actually trying to put up our own personal fences in a sense. He indicated that this is a biennial like many others, but it is worth asking ourselves, what is specific to having it in Istanbul, what is specific to the buildings in which the works are displayed and what is specific to the city, to the city's history tradition? He thanked for the contribution which we receive from AICA Hellas in memory of Pierre Restany and to the European Cultural Foundation, Istanbul Bilgi University, the Center here of Borusan Culture Art Center, the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts and the Bir Culture and Art Center and also the Eczacıbaşı Holding and the generous owners of the hotel who sponsored some of our accommodation and wished a most interesting and fruitful discussion.</p>
10.15-10.30	<p>Beral Madra introduced AICA Turkey, as still being established and welcomed the participants and said that AICA Turkey will become an important NGO, a tool in the arts and cultural policy of Istanbul, of Turkey and in the cultural communication and exchange in the region and said that in this international meeting there are representatives of AICA-Turkey and European Cultural Association, another young NGO with almost common goals. Thanked to all the participants, renown and established art critics, curators and institution directors and publishers who have accepted this invitation and generously sharing their knowledge with the participants. She presented in detail all the sponsors and contributors of the workshop and the round-table (as indicated above). She also pointed the main objective of this workshop as providing a forum for discussion and the exchange of information for the young participating professionals who are all actively engaged in the fields of visual art and culture as critics, curators, journalists, tv producers, academics and theoreticians. She said that Preference has been given this time to participants from Turkey, Greece, Egypt, Lebanon, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Serbia Montenegro.</p>
10.30-11.00	<p>Vanessa Reed said that the foundation is supporting this meeting through the programs for exchange and collaboration, in and around the Mediterranean and that it is just one sort of aspect of its multi-layered work as a European foundation with quite a broader remit. She indicated that the main reason that ECF was keen to support this workshop and the symposium was not only due to the importance of a critical contribution in the framework of the Istanbul Biennial, but most specifically to ensure the different group of young or emerging curators or critics from the Eastern Mediterranean would be involved in AICA's activities. She pointed that ECF was founded in 1954 to promote cultural participation and co-operation in Europe and beyond and unlike the EC, it treats Europe in its broadest sense, which means that it supports and works with regions around the borders of Europe, including the South Mediterranean, including North Africa and Middle East and including the new neighbours of Europe as from 2004 onwards so Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, etc. She said that, at the moment ECF is working on supporting the cultural dimension of EU integration and enlargement running a new program or action line called "Enlargement of Minds" which brings together artists, journalists, policy makers and intellectuals to formulate innovative proposals for cross-cultural exchange with advocacies, trustees that could make these proposals a reality. She further said that ECF is now focused quite strongly on Mediterranean dialogue whether North, South or horizontal which began with <i>Mémoire de la Méditerranée</i> which was a large scale literary project in which over fifty contemporary Arabic works were translated into nine European languages. She also said that, ECF is working in the fields of academic research and has a partnership with the Robert Schumann Center for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute in Florence in Italy. She indicated that in the field of performing arts ECF supports a very specialised fund for mobility called the Roberto Cimetta Mobility Fund which stimulates the mobility of performing artists and cultural managers in the Mediterranean and to involve a younger group.</p>

11.00-11.10	<p>Efi Strousa said that associations such as AICA is mostly needed because any structural form association not really determined and controlled by state policies can do work if it is in the right hands, that to this end the Turkish AICA section could definitely be an instrument for doing a few things that have not been done so far because it can have a different policy. She indicated, that the question of policy and strategy in relation to this workshop, is another very important practical question that has to be discussed amongst the young critics and curators, in front of the new completely different cultural and political reality that we are living through over the last ten years, that ten years is nothing, so that one must be patient, as the rhythms are different. She said further that rhythms that are being created by the new conditions of technology, of structuring because of these enlarged political entities like the EU can not be always that effective unless one can be a little more inventive referring to people who belong to the field of arts and criticism and theory. Although new occasions that are being offered right now, we have to analyse today's reality, which is a theoretical work, and curatorial work must have very strong theoretical support, because being managers of things is not enough, because it can have no substance and it can not convince very much. To the question why are we here, she answered that we are here, because most of us come from countries which were in the periphery throughout the modern times in terms of art production and art promotion, in terms of ideas as well. She pointed that ideas did spring from different centres, ideas that we conversed with, but we always were the side that would approach an idea which could instigate stimulators we were not the mothers or fathers of it; but in relation to what she asked, and said, that either in relation to hegemonic cultural policy that exists today or in relation to another alternative policy that we have to propose. She said that one cannot do it only by curating exhibitions; one must support and encourage this work on a theoretical level. She said, that the wider region of the periphery lack instruments of information like journals, editorial work and lack to trust each other to keep the communication on a high level therefore we have to create alternative forms of institutions to compete with very big institutions, museums, art centres because they have their own policy and that there should be some form of coordination all of those initiatives because the neighbours should not know less of each other than definitely they know for what's going on in New York, in London, in Paris.</p>
11.10-11.20	<p>Ahu Antmen introduced the international student triennial held since 1997 in Marmara University Faculty of Fine Arts as the only one of its kind in the world because it brings together not only students of art but all fields of design as well and tries to create a dialogue between art and design schools from all over the world. She said that the issues the triennial raises is quite relevant with the issues that come up in discussion in relation to the big international shows of the nineties: the East of the EU wants to be part of this art world but at the same time it is paranoid about being tokens in it; international shows like Documenta, Manifesta, Venice, are so international, but when one looks more closely and examines the biographies, then one can see that many of these artists are actually living in a close knit society. She said that Western art education institutions are flooded with students from non-EU countries, that this situation apparently has an immense effect on education practice in these schools and that during the triennial many professors of participating schools voiced their concern about their hardships art schools have in trying to find the correct position for themselves in a global environment; first of all they have to speak in a language that the professor calls "airport English" to be understood and they have to simplify everything. She quoted one professor's statement: "when a student comes from a country where a decorative style has a different and important meaning compared to Western European art we could not use our ideas to criticise that work according to the principals of Western Europe. It is the same when students show us images about their experiences of situations of war in their countries. Sometimes it is necessary for them to make that work, in such a situation you can not just talk about it as a normal work of art realised according to some laws of aesthetics". She said, looking from a non-EU country this point of view seems really important because here, East of the EU, students of art have always tried to adapt themselves to Western perspectives. The idea that art education in the West can adapt itself to differences it now accepts as parts of its agenda seems exciting. She concluded her speech with the following questions: Or should artist live in the West and try to be a part of this scene, no matter what? . Should I be saying to a young artist or to</p>

	myself, I should be living in the West to become a part of this circle, to become a part of this discussion?
11.20-11.30	<p>Susan Barnes Bubic said that, European cultural institutes now in Istanbul work increasingly closely together and find the more we talk, the more we have in common. We're all heading in similar directions and that it is a priority for all these institutes to find common ground and to work with their Turkish colleagues and partners and with our European partners, to achieve common goals. She indicated that the council is charged with the task of handling cultural relations on behalf of the United Kingdom with other countries and agrees the principles of what it does with the British government and it receives a substantial amount of funding, but the Council is very privileged to be allowed to work substantially at arms length from the government and to interpret the principals that it agrees with the government, in the light of the circumstances in which it operates in countries around the world, hundred and ten countries at the moment. She said that it encompasses not just the arts but also education and English language learning and English language teaching, science and technology and innovation in the science sector, as well as sectors like governance and human rights and social inclusion with an underlying principle that links all of these quite divers areas of work which is mutuality. She quoted the British Council's statement of purpose: To build mutually beneficial relationship between people in the UK and other countries and to increase appreciation of the UK's ideas and achievements". She pointed further that as well as mutuality, diversity is a fundamental of the Council's work these days. the Council's work has shifted its focus and therefore changed how it works and what it does to take account of this very young audience that it is looking at all around the world now. Moreover she said that The Council's work in Turkey covers most of the themes that the Council covers up globally so, human rights, governance, science, But very significantly the arts these days because not only is there a realisation that the arts are a central accord and a growing interest amongst the young community; therefore the governance team in Ankara has just launched a disability rights, disabled rights program in Turkey which is part of the work that the Council is doing to support Turkey's preparations for EU accession. She said that th Council recognises that it's a priority for Turkey to make changes in many areas of governance and civil society in order to prepare and to position itself for eventual entry to the EU and there's work that it can do and there are groups of people with similar interests in the UK and human rights and social inclusion is one of those key areas. She said as Young people rely on the Internet and on electronic new media for their information, their entertainment, their networking, the virtual network is an innovation that empowers many young people and that is becoming a core part of what the British Council does and what are many of its European partners are doing here. She concluded that the demographic changes which bring to the fore the power of the young generation in Turkey influences what and how British Council works.</p>
11.40-11.50	<p>Jeroen Boomgaard He questioned one of the themes of the forum, namely 'redefinition of justice & poetry in contemporary art within the current world affairs and to what extent the artworks in the Istanbul Biennale come closest to matching up to the Curator's initial statement of intent' and said that art critics have a lot of fantasy, but as he has not seen the exhibition yet, he will make preliminary remarks very shortly in "airport English" and do a proposal. For the first part of this question he asked "Do we really think that art can play a role on such a huge stage as the current world affairs?" and answered that the political leaders and terrorist are not influenced by them. He answered the next question " how should or how can art deal with issues like this one?" as an artwork is an individual reaction to a certain set of rules or codes and in that sense, it comes very close to the definition of poetic justice as it is supposed to be the key concept in this exhibition. He said, that art and artists claim the right of the individual to set his or her world against the world; therefore when poetry or the codes of justice are different, artworks will take on a different position, and in countries where codes and rules regarding justice and the individual, are religiously orthodox, the tendency in art to search for more individual forms of poetic justice will be clear but in countries where individual justice seems to become the leading principal, artists may be seem to search for more consensual or even coded forms of poetic justice, as it's apparent in works of artist groups in Western Europe. He questioned further "Can art influence by doing this the world it reacts</p>

	<p>to?" and answered that it should do without setting its hopes too high, because there is no other way art can deal with the world then in this idealistic way.</p> <p>He answered the next question "To what extent the artworks in the Istanbul Biennial come closest to matching up to the Curator's initial statement of intents?" as one should think about the totality of the exhibition, because an exhibition is always a story and a story you can read in the way the exhibition unfolds itself, from work to work, from room to room, from artist to artist. in the last Biennial of Venice because I never could understand there what these works were doing together in the same exhibition. He further said that an exhibition should be like any good story, it should grasp you and lead the viewer, but also make the viewer wonder and think about things he/she have never thought about before.</p> <p>He proposed to try to answer these questions with the help of some of the participants here.</p>
11.50-12.00	<p>Haşim Nur Gürel</p> <p>He said that as the director of the the Eczacıbaşı Virtual Museum, this project has taken a good part of his last five years and the history of this museum shows in a way what critical, free critical texts can deliver or realise. He said that in 1998, since it looked quite unlikely that the needed museum organisations will take quite a time to be established in Turkey, in the meantime one should prepare the concepts of future institutions, the future collectors, creators, researchers of Turkish visual arts by installing a virtual museum on the Internet.</p> <p>The site is www.sanalmuze.org. was launched in 1999 and after four years and have an allied mail group of about ten thousand, about hundred and fifty thousand visits are realised every year and two thirds of them are from small cities of Anatolia and that the objectives of Eczacıbaşı Virtual Museum is putting together a memory of Turkish visual art history, providing a platform of discussion encompassing also contemporary art, connecting curators, critics, art historians, collectors, art teachers and art lovers in Turkey by Internet, create new projects for visual art education of schools children to exhibitions and educational projects realised interface by real exhibitions realised interface. He said that the other activities are mobile exhibitions, going to schools and realising education projects there, and real exhibitions, as realized 2002 at a big fair in Beylikdüzü which put together 60 contemporary artists of Turkey expressing themselves in all kinds from painting to videos.</p> <p>He indicated that the exhibitions of the virtual are easy to realize because there are no security, insurance and copyright problems, and gave as an example of an exhibitions of autoportraits of Van Gogh on his 150th anniversary and another of Gauguin on his centenary of his death.</p> <p>On the Istanbul Biennale he said that Dan Cameron is very romantic and unreal in his approach, that Poetic Justice concept and his ABD citizen being the curator of the Istanbul Biennial at time of Iraq War is very ironic and that the main sponsor of the Biennial is the Japan Tobacco Company, which is also very ironic. He further said that a few days ago he was listening to the Cancun Summit and there was an analysis about it, about the industrialised countries giving subsidies to their farmers then dumping all these vegetables and foods on the market and destroying the small countries' farmers and connected it to art saying that in a way the same is happening with art, namely the Western countries are subsidizing their artists and dumping them on the international market so that the other countries hard time promoting their own artists.</p>

12.00-12.45	<p>Open Discussion</p> <p>HMH- said that one should also look to the structures and gave Manifesta as an example, which compensates for the imbalance in the type of work and the type of artist shown in Western Europe and indicated that it came after the fall of the Berlin Wall. He said that even in the big events like Venice Biennale, Kassel, Documenta artists who had dealers are shown, but the dealers are also part of the economic system that there is a real need to create a new kind of platform for young artists, before they'd reach the gallery system; however in the case of Eastern artists they would not make it at all.</p> <p>He said that one should look very carefully at funding structures, that there is a danger of becoming too self-conscious, that young artists cannot simply promote their own country's culture and that artists don't belong to a given geographical environment. He said that even an European biennial like in the initial stages could not find to find funding structures that correspond to what it wanted to do, that it had assistance from ECF at the beginning and later it took the organisers some time to get into European money and that Manifesta survived on the whole because of the basically the funding institutes of the subsequent cities. He further came to the problem of "dumping" and said that one must find alternative policies, but the question of finding money prevails and even this biennial depends on tobacco sponsors.</p>
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After lunch in LOKAL, Sofyalı sok. Beyoğlu, the participants attended the launch of the first issue of *MJ* - Manifesta Journal at PLATFORM GARANTI CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER and they proceeded to the Prees Opening of the 8th Istanbul Biennale, until 8.p.m. At 8.30pm, Beyoğlu Municipality gave a dinner in Kervansaray Hotel /Taksim.

19 September 2003

Session 2 of the workshop started at Borusan Culture and Art Center, İstiklal cad. 421-423- Tünel Beyoğlu

09.40-09.50	<p>Ali Akay</p> <p>He said that within the conditions of art systems in Turkey, in the Middle East and in the Balkans, there are serious problems in curating the shows and gave some examples of his work:</p> <p>One of the problems is the distance of official institutions to contemporary art, particularly for exhibitions that touches political issues and to be delicately handled. In 2000, he was involved in co-curating an exhibition in Cyprus, he wanted to attend the meeting organised in Ledra Palace with Eva Mela, Ümit İnatçı and Helen Black, but he could not get a permission to enter South Cyprus; he even could not reach the people waiting for him in Ledra Palace by telephone. The next day, he could meet an Italian officer in North Cyprus, who could travel from South Cyprus, together they decided to make the exhibition in Brussels. Once again because of political conflicts related to Turkey's admission to EU, the exhibition could not be realised. What was left from the project is an archive of on-line letters. An exhibition of political reconciliation cannot be realised, because of the officials cannot agree on the timing. The ministry of Culture in Turkey does not support the curatorial and theoretical work. Another example is an invitation to ARCO conference, when he could not get the support of the Turkish government, due to the general elections. The new government has stopped all financial flow to the foreign representations. Another ignorance of the Ministry prevented the representation of Turkish artists in a Balkan forum. The same obstacles occurs in the private sphere; coincidentally the administration has changed during his project with French artists in Project4L; technical equipment could not be provided.</p>
09.50-10.00	<p>Stephen Wright</p> <p>Related to the title of the forum he said, that the topographical, geographical, geo-political metaphors implicit in that title have a powerful explanatory value, but in some ways they pose a certain amount of trouble; he examined territoriality and extraterritoriality or situatedness not so much with regard to East-West-North-South but with regard to extraterritoriality within the world of art itself. Related to Ahu Antmen's speech he said that art being involved in sectors, in worlds which are not specifically, reserved to art, that the sort of <i>biennialmania</i> which seems to have affected large cities around the planet, that young artist today living in a situation of sort of forced exile and she described them as "universal strangers".</p> <p>He questioned "Is there a link in today's world between art and territory?" and said that until a relatively recent time it was a self evidence that art</p>

	<p>was indeed linked to its socio-economic and geographical context, but now with the radical de-skilling that characterised so much of art in the course of modernity, it became more difficult to see an intrinsic link in all cases and an art critic, cannot see any intrinsic link between very contemporary experimental practices and art as a historical phenomenon, that in this radical de-skilling one distinguishes within three basic postures which roughly correspond to three historical moments as well as three kinds of art making today, all three of which coexist within contemporary artistic production: The first category is <i>territorial artists</i>. For territorial artists activity is territorialised, the context being an integral part of the productive framework. The second category is <i>world artists</i> -and I take that idea from of course the notion of world fiction and world music. The third category is <i>reciprocal extraterritoriality</i>, which means cultural dialogue, but in exchange between two extraterritorial time-spaces. He said that, in practice one finds a good deal of overlapping interpenetration between these three aesthetic and profoundly ethical attitudes, just as one does amongst territories themselves and world artist may even go so far as to argue that an artwork is meaningful only outside its original context, leaving the initiative to the constitute of gaze. And of course the way the white cubes, they characterise the architecture of museums and galleries, seem to fit hand and glove with the purposes of world artist.</p> <p>Like territorial artists, he said that artists of reciprocal territoriality situate art in a bigger picture, but for them this broader context is not given, it has to be created. Their practice consists of implanting certain aspects of the general economy into the symbolic economy of art, encouraging the creation of a broader interdisciplinary context. These artists have become in a sense entrepreneurs of the self and of science, in short managers of the contingencies which arise in the course of their various undertakings. Their point is not merely to do away with the acknowledged autonomy of the artwork but to confront the know-how specific to the field of art, the competencies, the skills, the aptitudes, perceptions with competencies stemming from other fields of knowledge, thereby establishing a reciprocity between art and the sciences for instance and in so doing dislocating borders and the conventions and habits they were set up to protect, the special interest they were set up to protect and prompting innovative collaborations.</p>
10.10-10.20	<p>Farid Abdullayev</p> <p>He said, that we all live in a changing environment and the only way not to lose yourself is reflection of yourself and of what you are doing in the context of the social and geo-cultural processes; that the contemporary art is in a post-historical situation provoked by the postmodernism; that to understand it, we should describe the outlines of actual civil context at whole, because it is the background of all road processes. He further said that globalisation is as civil mechanism of broadcasting of postmodernist meta-ideology and human history consists of destiny making events and macro processes, in different scales and importance, thus globalisation is this kind of destiny making event and it influenced all spheres of social, political reality, including contemporary culture, contemporary art. He asked "Is there a possible function of art in context of globalisation?" and answered that contemporary art should fight the aggression of the society with information, by potential culture of remixes, by repeating all the died forms of art and with art resurrected by the energy of newest digital technology.</p>
10.20-10.30	<p>Vittorio Urbani</p> <p>He said that stimulated very much by what Mr Wright said, that collaboration is useful because the original differences among the partners and that he finds interesting being here and generally speaking in a Middle East scene he does not know until now, very much; that maybe more interesting than exhibitions, biennale and festivals is the prestige of art, which makes the stance of an artist stronger against intolerance and dictatorships; that these can be regained by contemporary art just using all the tricks, such as sometimes becoming invisible.</p> <p>He gave as an example the famous beautiful goldsmith arch that is in Venice, in the main church, the Pala d'Oro (the golden panel), which is made of enamels stolen by Venetians who are proud to keep it in memory; now it is seen everyday from nine to six p.m., but in good old times the Pala d'Oro was closed at the eye of everybody, if not for the anvil feast - the raise of Maria Madonna to the sky, so only on day the Pala d'Oro shown in the</p>

	<p>candle lit dark interior of the San Marc basilica and that gave it a tremendous spiritual power, but now under the eyes of all tourists it has completely lost its aura and it is only a precious metal work.</p> <p>He said that he established a link with this country, that is very fragile but very important and in ten years of activities he has established this non-profit activity called Nuova Icona, particularly in Venice, but if it was located in any other major town of Italy, it would be a commercial gallery, but not in Venice, because Venice is a village of sixty thousand inhabitants receiving all the art and cultures of the world.</p> <p>He said that in the first years he concentrated mostly on artists and shows, but now it is his point to get collaboration of public institutions, to put together cultural bodies from many other countries than just having a one-to-one relationship with eventually a fantastic artist; that he worked the British Council, with foreign embassies or other institutions, like universities, like other non-profit art space from all over the world; that networking is vital in this sense, even before having any idea about art, even before knowing how manage funds that are obviously necessary; that his connections to the so called Western institutions always lead to the obvious pass of power and there was not real interest, so he ended in discovering on his skin the burden of new colonialism that maybe is strange from here to believe, but can be felt even in the affluent and eventually beautiful Venice. In this sense, he further indicated that Turkey helped the curtain to lift and no one of the parties (Venice and Istanbul) is strong enough to desire to overdo on the other part. He said that problems are always a call for solutions and that is why we need the problems and that he invented a kind of a brand for this link with Turkey and eventually a growing situation of interest with the Middle East, and called it "by-pass"; that his future as the director of this activity in Venice is more to concentrate on this activity. He said that Venice is not East of the EU, but is on the border, on the edge.</p>
10.30-10.40	<p>Eva Fotiadi</p> <p>She said that she will talk generally about her experiences, that during the last about six months she was living in the Netherlands in Amsterdam, doing her Ph.D. at the University of Amsterdam on "public art" which is ephemeral and participatory- ephemeral meaning that it is mainly the process which might take lots of years, and participatory meaning that the artist chooses to make the participation of others or any other kind of involvement of others, a major prerequisite for the implementation of these projects.</p> <p>She said that the prerequisite of other peoples involvement still reflects the 1960s or 70s attempt of artists to bring art to the society and to have more contact to socialise in political issues which is very near to the reason of the most biennales; that the in her research she questions the effect of these projects on the public and on the art world, the context and the circumstances of their commission implementation during the 1980s and 1990s. She said that before that she was in Greece and working at the Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art in Thessaloniki; that as curator she was doing the entire research for a forthcoming show, maintaining the archives of about hundred past exhibitions, artists, parallel events, contact with other museums, with various institutes, also arranging the ordering of invitations, of banners, writing text, translating texts, collections management, coordinating the transportation and the storage of artworks, guided tours and educational programs. She said that before working at the Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art she was in Britain to do a museum studies course, because at that time it was not possible in Greece to have a course like that. She said that during all these years of studies she has been working in approximately six different institutions, museums, exhibition venues most of the times voluntarily, not always, and all of them were not profit making which must be very familiar to most people in Eastern Europe doing similar things, everybody has a lot of voluntary work or semi-voluntary work; that she has never come across anyone who was approximately her age from Turkey and Lebanon and Greece and Egypt, Azerbaijan or Georgia and studying art theory and art history. She said that she has chosen to spend so much time abroad for two main reasons; the first one is that she likes it; the second one is that Greece has not satisfying and adequate resources both for academic studies in the art of the past decades, as well as first hand contact and that Netherlands is a center from where one can follow what is happening to the rest of Europe and also in terms of developing projects and providing the opportunities to develop projects there are many opportunities.</p> <p>She concluded that, the different circumstances, opportunities and resources very much depend on the cultural and the educational policies of the country</p>

	and this really determines whether people of younger generations are going to stay in the country or try to go some place else and it is the case of many people from Greece and it may be also the case of many other people from the East of Europe.
10.40-10.50	<p>Sajid Rizvi</p> <p>He said that his magazine <i>Eastern Art Report</i> has started as a newsletter about twelve years ago, initially with the idea to present a magazine which would bring together the five or six major cultural systems plus all the cultural sub-systems of Asia and North Africa, and also to focus on the Diasporic communities in Europe; that the magazine has evolved from that period to full colour, with some support from the Arts Council of England; that in addition to <i>Eastern Art</i> there is twice yearly <i>East Asia Journal</i>, a journal of material cultures of East Asia starting from China to Japan which focuses on the material cultures of that region, not necessarily in a contemporary sense but more from a circle point of view but also looking at, where possible, the contemporary context of things; that next year he will launch a new journal called <i>Art Criticism Today</i> which is aimed at bringing together art criticism from various cultural systems in one volume because at the moment, publications are either focused on Western art criticism or Eastern art criticism or art criticism written in the original languages; that he was involved with an AICA project a few years ago, and the result of the conference on Africa was a publication <i>Art Criticism in Africa</i> and this is a look at the issues in Africa of art criticism where, there isn't really lot of academic art criticism being made accessible; that the new journal will bring together art critical writing from vast regions of the world, He said further that he was a journalist and for many years, covered many different current affairs, events, including the revolution in Iran, coups in Turkey and civil wars in Lebanon, so that he has come to art criticism from a different perspective and one of the things that he sees art criticism is being coloured by the politics; that this background as a journalist has given him a perspective that has certain advantages as not taking a lot for granted.</p> <p>He asserted that he finds it difficult to believe that biennials are having any great influence at all on the politics of the day, because at this particular juncture the art is actually being used for political ends and it is something that has been going on, particularly since the Iranian revolution.</p> <p>He said that Roland Ferrier wrote an excellent book on arts of Persia which was published about eight nine years ago, soon after the hostage crisis and in one of the reviews in a newspaper it was asked, how is it possible that people who are hostage takers and criminals like the ones that rule Teheran can possibly create such works of art. He said that this kind of remark makes it inconceivable that people who on the one hand can be described as political rivals or political adversaries can be allowed a platform for artistic activities that could help soften their image; that it is a fact that in the USA there is almost a complete stop to anything that is about exhibitions of Islamic art or classical Islamic arts, also in Europe there is less willingness to show Islamic art at the moment because of reactions, of anticipatory reactions of people.</p> <p>He said that something that should be addressed head-on and bring to the attention is that although the Istanbul Biennale addresses the problem to some extent, some of the biggest, most populace Islamic nations who are way relevant to the debate being initiated here, are absent</p> <p>He said that there was an event in England last year called <i>Shisha</i> that had excellent work from the South Asian subcontinent and it was also interesting in view of 9/11; that it presented the work that was being produced in two of the most important countries in the context of 9/11, Bangladesh and Pakistan, it showed the way the artists reacted to 9/11 and the way they interpreted it, which was not necessarily hostile to the West because this is something which is also a reason in this current debate.</p> <p>He rectified that every time a Muslim artist produces a work of art in the context of 9/11, it is considered to be a hostile act as if that is the only thing that can be done and that he did not agree, because he has seen work which is teasing out issues in 9/11 which have not been brought to the fore in Western spaces. He said that, the biennale should show aside from the young British artists, artists of Chinese and British Asian origin and the work that they are producing which is quite interesting, which should be shown, because it is very relevant to what we have to confront today.</p>
10.50-11.00	Khaled Hafez

He said that he is writing about art since 1996 and will not cover the artist part in his country, as Stephen and Sajid covered the issues about the artists, the types of artists and the context of the political influence on the artists and the interest of artists to be global. He said that he will describe the curatorial practices and the art criticism in his country; that the word curator in Egypt is really new, because the whole system is very hierarchial; than it is hierarchial in terms that everything is sponsored by the government, subsidised by the government and monopolised and dominated by the government; that there is the minister who is also an artist, and under him there is the national centre of fine arts of which the president is also an artist, and all members of the system represent the committees of everything; that this hierarchial system is sort of like aborted any possible facility to have independent art writers, independent curators, independent critics because everything is really subsidised, monopolised, dominated. Yet, he said that in the past ten years, due to changes, to evolution in the generations, to awareness , because of satellite culture, because of the possibility and the ease to travel and because of political openness to some extent, artists and independent intellectuals were able to travel and share their practice with their counterparts abroad.

He said that since three four years even artists are able to participate in international shows, whether due to foreign curators who come over or due to their own personal contact with the outside world; that the curatorial practice, is exclusive to the public secto, because the public sector has galleries, spaces for exhibitions; that there is no education of curatorial practice. the arrangement of works is based upon 'this works looks better here', and not upon thematic or philosophical issues; that the private galleries mus be commercial, as there are no official grant for this kind of work, so that the curatorial practice was based upon the fact 'which artist sells, which type of art sells'. Therefore he said that installations were less popular than sculpture and sculpture is less popular than photography and photography is less popular than painting, and painting of course is the hero because it sold better and like that private galleries could sustain themselves for a while. He said that this situation definitely creates some sort of a barrier between the progress in the art world and the curatorial practice and everything related to the art world including art management is hindered and limited by those constrains, the constrains of money.

He said further that the art criticism is a big issue in Egypt, because actually Egypt had or still has a flourishing art criticism movement in theatre and music but there is a problem in visual arts; that there has been a problem ever since the 50s when Nasir aiming at pan-Arabism dreams, joining all the Arab world together, when this ideology combined both the right political wing of being national and the left being Soviet pattern of socialism, eventually this combination of right and left could not succeed and it collapsed, but still it produced and flourished a generation of writers and critics who actually not just defended that, but actually created their own school of social realism, the school of visual arts' criticism and other art criticism adopted by the ex Eastern Block but there was an Egyptian School for it; that criticism at the time combined what Sajid said it, was journalism and those people are still consultants, they are retired yet they own pages in public papers, weeklies, monthlies etc., so literally they monopolise everything in Arabic and still at the same time the type of criticism they produce is very limited because in the 60s and 70s they were allowed only 100 words, 200 words, one column; that critics write either in English or French, not Arabic and that's really cynical and ironic. He also said that there is a problem of space and a problem of thought and a problem of not being able to tolerate and adapt and adopt the contemporary art theory because simply they belong to a different ideology, they would not allow younger blood and generation to take over and progress in that field; that he writes in English iin *Middle East Times*, 400 words weekly.

He concluded that there is a huge area of improvement and that independent people should unite working in both practices, apart from the independent moves like what Mai , his Egyptian colleague who is an independent curator, who curated workshops.

11.00-11.10	<p>Vicky Karaiskou</p> <p>She said that there is a very remarkable change in the artistic matters in Greece mainly because of the private initiatives which were taking place some decades before, starting from the 60s and around the 80s there were some results and that the Arta Fina art fair organised for ten years now, is the most concrete result of all this private initiative; that from the beginning of the 90s the geography of the galleries in Greece changed, moved in an area of the downtown city which at that time was not very much developed, around the Psirri zone and the Piraeus Avenue; that she underlines the presence of the foreign artists, alternative places, alternative artists, alternative works, young artists in the new development. She said that Arta Fina has made a difference in the artistic scene in Greece, so that all Greek galleries and foreign galleries do participate with big number of artists, up to some thousand of visitors and there are many educational programs running during fair and that she thinks educating people is a long term solution for art appreciation. She indicated that collecting art, is a tradition in Greece but there are rare collectors of contemporary art and the existing ones are very serious, to fund foundations, organising exhibitions, events, shows, and inviting international artists, organising workshops.</p> <p>She said further that sponsoring, finding money is the weak point and lately a change in the legislation in Greece made sponsoring more difficult; that some multinational companies or national companies do sponsor, as a policy of the company, events or artists or specific type of artistic styles, because it matches with the profile of the company or because there is an institution.</p> <p>The Greek part of AICA, she mentioned, is a contribution with workshops, meetings, a network between the members and that foreign institutes like the British Council, the French Institute, the Greek-American Union much less the Italian Institute do have cultural presence; that the national policy on culture in Greece is reflected in the school of fine arts, which in the past very closed and traditional organisation, but since the beginning of the 90s it changed its place and premises and has become much more with its first big space in Athens, more than thousand two hundred square meter which is excellent for this kind of events of the contemporary art and is open to accept proposals and projects from independent curators, Greeks or foreigners to implement exhibitions; that in the middle of 90s th government opened a cultural Web which was aiming in setting the infrastructure of continuous activities, not of local character but with foreign international art and artists, with flexible structures</p> <p>She said that Athens is not any more the only centre of art in Greece, but Rethymno in Crete, the island of Skopolos (photographic meetings every year), the State Museum of Contemporary Art in Thessalonica, the Institute of Contemporary Art again in Thessalonica which is linked to the State Museum, the Macedonian Museum with their permanent collections of international and Greek artists. are the other important centres.</p> <p>Another weak point in Greek art scene, she said, is the press and publications magazines of the the 90s do not exist any more, because the target group is very small, however there are art critics, projects, events to be reviewed butt except the newspapers, there is no medium to write; that the same lack is in the archives of contemporary art, although there are Web sites from galleries, from private museums one cannot find adequate information.</p> <p>She concluded that there is an explicit need to accept, to collaborate, to implement joint productions and for sure positive steps towards the international artistic scene, because there the will to get much more involved and intimate with colleagues from abroad.</p>
11.10-12.30	

Massimiliano Gioni

He said that he is one of the co-curators of Manifesta 5 which is going take place in San Sebastian in the Basque region of Spain and that he works for a private foundation in Milan and that he is focused on curatorial projects even though his experience was mostly in magazines as an editor of *Flash Art* for a few years and as the USA editor of *Flash Art* for two years in New York.

He said that lately a continuous swapping between writing and curating has emerged and people are against it, they find a conflict of interest but he thinks it could be very refreshing if people could play around with more flexibility and without generating conflicts of interest; that it helps to see more, to refresh and to change position; that it is interesting when competencies and disciplines can be overlapped in and out of close circuits and open circuits.

He answered to Henry M. Hughes' question of how to open up the membership in AICA to crossovers in disciplines, which is being discussed, he answered that one should refer to artists, because from the 90s onwards, they played a role of catalyst in terms of writing and criticism and they had a different flexibility.

He added that Manifesta is an interesting model of a biennial which in a way refuse the model of national representation; that is a biennial that comes after the idea of national states; that as a matter of fact Europe itself is changing so fast that really coming up with a geographical definition of our continent would be quite bizarre and that the first trip he did during the Manifesta research was to Israel which clearly is not Europe but still is somehow a mirror of Europe and it's a sort of microcosm in which many other worlds come together and that this was suggested by the position of Manifesta in the Basque Region which is a region which has aspiration to become a state, or has at least negotiated a very peculiar autonomy within the Spanish state.

On the other hand he said that they didn't try to stress the research geographically because there is also a big danger when one travels and comes back with more doubts than answers. Moreover he said that, one asks the questions "what's the point of this continuous anxiety to travel?" or "this anxiety to explore new territories, to find new artists, how much is that liberating", that these are also an aspect that should be really discussed among curators, artists and writers.

Conclusion & Open Discussion

Christian Chambert addressed Khaled Hafez concerning the situation for art criticism in his country: What are the possibilities to activate AICA Egypt and what is the future for art criticism there?

Khaled Hafez answered that AICA Egypt is represented by charming people; *Association internationale des critiques d'art* is a big name, expectations are really big there is no publication for AICA, each AICA member is actually acting independently if they ever publish and there is no presence of AICA except during the Cairo Biennial and during the Salon of Young Artists where there is a prize called The AICA Prize allocated by the AICA; that there are limited number of members, most of them belong to the same profile, they represent most of the communities, they're art professors, at the art education or fine arts, that AICA is a closed community in Egypt and that the independent writers don't approach them, because they label themselves and they took the stand of a closed community.

Zoran Eric asked to Massimiliano Gioni how he is telling that he does not want to think in geographical terms but have this constraint of European exhibition.

Massimiliano Gioni answered that they discussed a lot and concluded that it helps to have some specificity, specially today, when, there are so many biennials; that it's very easy to fall into the trap to explore the whole world and find a new artist; that even if Europe might be a limit and might be just a geographical concept or just an abstraction it's helpful to have some sort of dimension or direction to establish a research.

Ramon Tio Bellido said that since yesterday the talk is about curators, artists travelling extensively; that there is a possibility to travel but Europeans do not travel so much, and therefore he is puzzled of a very fantastic and idealistic situation where everybody's free to travel.

Massimiliano Gioni answered that it's clearly like an idealistic view and it's wishful thinking to believe that everybody can travel and again he is not so sure it's necessary to do it or he doesn't think it should be the priority of a curator or an artist, because then it becomes just a sort of performance anxiety, to go everywhere. On the other hand he said that it is sometimes good to be idealistic, so there is something quite liberating about it.

Stephen Wright said that in the art world there is a certain recognition of privilege and people enjoy a certain privilege from the symbolic violence in a certain way that art or the symbolic capital that art represents within our society. Based on the talks he indicated that there are two competing paradigms in the different presentations of the biennale, namely Manifesta wants to represent post national state, which he calls "the world art paradigm", but is it realised? He mentioned that Sajid Rizvi said that it would be important to bring in artists from Islamic countries, in he was really talking about their territorial anchorage that would be reflected somehow in the work that ought to have been represented in this Biennial. He further said that he is wondering why to create a journal called *Art Criticism Today*? Because there really is no art criticism, today, in the sense of a differentiated evaluation of the relative aesthetic success of symbolic configurations.

Massimiliano Gioni said that it is true that criticism is not really in a healthy phase and asked "is it a consequence of a territorial issue or is it connected to the emergency of a global world art? He answered that it has lot to do with money and that strangely enough the strongest art criticism is not in art magazines but in *The New York Times* and in *The Village Voice*; that criticism in art magazines have become press releases. He said that criticism has nothing to do with geography, it has to do with the fact that many of the magazines are supported by the very same galleries and the magazines now mostly running features about the single artist, the idea of the panoramic overview is kind of disappeared from *Frieze*, *Flash Art*, (*Platform*). He further said that new ways to make criticism which can still be competitive with other systems should be created.

Sajid Rizvi said that many carriers have been made or destroyed by *New York Times*, it is to a great extent, a truly powerful and to some extent independent medium and that a lot of magazines are rigorously stating what the PR people put out and there is a lot of interaction between what gets get invited to the next five private views in such and such venue?', that there is a kind of self-censorship
He said that in some of the African societies where art criticism is equated criticism of the regime in power because a lot of the art is sponsored by the state and to criticise an art exposition means criticising the state. He said that his idea in bringing together the art critics of the various cultural systems is to give them a platform which they would not

	<p>I get invited to the next five private views in such and such venue?', that there is a kind of self-censorship</p> <p>He said that in some of the African societies where art criticism is equated criticism of the regime in power because a lot of the art is sponsored by the state and to criticise an art exposition means criticising the state. He said that his idea in bringing together the art critics of the various cultural systems is to give them a platform which they would not have otherwise and that it would be interesting and it may not contribute a huge amount but it would start a new debate.</p>
14.30-14.40	<p>Zoran Eric</p> <p>He opened up certain questions, raised in the morning discussions and yesterday as well, about geography, about space, about regions and about the curators, and about the title 'Art criticism and curatorial practice East of the EU' namely 'how some projects or how some platforms are conceptualised?', 'are there any impact of the/a funding bodies on the conceptualisation of certain projects?', 'what are the criteria of selection of certain people?', 'and what are the geographical criteria?'. He said that people have the privilege to take part in this panel discussion and conference and they're specially the ones the countries like Lebanon, Turkey, Greece, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Macedonia, Serbia Montenegro and where is logic in this kind of choice and why Georgia and Azerbaijan and not Armenia? And asked how he can relate to this position he is speaking from the countries out of this EU.</p> <p>He said that Michel Foucault pointed out that, we are thinking more in spacial concepts these days, we are thinking more in geographical concept; we always have this geographical boundaries and constraints imposed on us; at the beginning of the century discussion was about time relapse, (historicity in Proust, the lost time and Bergson), but now we are speaking more of simultaneity, of globalisation, of localism, nomadism and all those terms that have spatial metaphors.</p> <p>He said that some regions are being chosen as a very interesting localities and as very interesting topics for curators indicated a panel discussion of artistic identity in South East Europe at ARCO Madrid, and three major exhibitions dedicated to the art of the Balkans, namely of Peter Weibel <i>In Search of Balkania</i> held in Graz, of Harald Szeemann <i>Blood & Honey</i> and of René Block, with the bizarre title <i>In the Gorges of the Balkans</i>.</p> <p>He said that he did not have the chance to see all these shows, but the question for which he has no answers is: 'Why is one region put in focus?' He said that there are three major curators who are legitimating art of a certain region but, this legitimisation should be questioned, namely what will happen afterwards, are we done, are we thorough with the Balkan exhibitions now, who will remember those artists after some years and is this topic closed?</p> <p>Speaking from the position of a curator from one of those countries, which is not yet in the EU, he said that it is very hard position to blame, to put the blame on those major curators accepting to arbitrate on one region, but it should be accepted that art of these regions is legitimised by the omnipotent figure of the curator.</p> <p>Looking to the Balkan region, the problematic is the infrastructure, he said and the art system as it was described in the 80's by Bonito Oliva or by Artur Danto is lacking, such as the private initiatives, private galleries, collectors and art market; at the bottom line art market is something that doesn't exist in most of the Balkan countries.</p> <p>The problem of the education was mentioned by Ahu who made some good points, he said but he said in education technical skills in using different media are easy to achieve, as many artists are using video because it is cheap and easy to handle, however to educate in terms of projects is difficult, because education is still in terms of painting, in terms of sculpture, in terms of technique, and not in term of a project, of an exhibition, of a show to conceptualise.</p> <p>His final comment on curators was that education for curators is diverse, there are many academic programs, there is Bard College, there is De Appel, and his personal experience comes from one program in Vienna in the Institut für Kultur [und Geschichte], a project for curators from Eastern Europe. There he said twenty curators were to take part in a two weeks program with a set topic by coaches with different themes like everything that is done in a big museum; that first team was curatorial shaping up the concept, inviting artists ; other themes were a PR theme, an educational theme</p>

	<p>preparing guided tours, communication, educational projects and an organisational theme; that the concept was of cooperation in art, cooperation between artists and different professionals, but although it was a very interesting concept it was just a virtual game and after two weeks of hard work it ended up with nothing, because of the Belgrade war the participants could not stay in contact with all these curators; that afterwards nobody really wanted to communicate with him again, because he is from Belgrade and there is nothing interesting there and they wanted to stay with the Austrian context. He understood that a blockbuster exhibition cannot be realised in the existing infrastructure. With his friends he started preparing curatorial workshops based on this negative experience and did for example <i>Curating in Transition</i> because the transition is something that is really happening in some countries, transition from socialism to the free market and market economy; that consequently they invited Henry Meyric Hughes who presented the exhibition <i>Art and Power</i>, which is very important for the regimes in totalitarian countries, invited Bojana Pejic who did <i>After the Wall</i> dealing with post-communism, invited Lóránd Hegyi who did some major shows on Central and Eastern Europe like <i>Aspects/Positions</i> and invited Igor Zabel from Moderna Galerija in Ljubljana who presented the <i>Collection 2000+</i> exclusively dedicated to the art from the Eastern Europe. He said that they had these models, discussed and tried to work on another possible model, which is not done by one curator, who has to do a research, go to twenty countries in two days to find artists, but in collaborating with local representatives of the art communities, bridging many gaps, inviting people that know best what is going on their local art scene, and have broader impact in their regional tendencies and even wider; that in this way one can create a democratic process for an exhibition and break through the omnipotent figure of the curator. He concluded that the next project will be on globalism and on transglobal art ground; that any initiative can be organised in countries East of EU and it depends on private initiative basically, it depends on the institutional support with regard from the museum of contemporary art and it depends on the ability to find partners and to find people that will be engaged to work on this project.</p>
14.40-14.50	<p>Mai Abu el Dahab</p> <p>She said that like Zoran Eric she questions the title, which is obviously proven to be something problematic particularly for her, because no matter how much the EU expands, it will never include Egypt; regional, peripheral and unclear regions are giving her uncomfortable feelings that she is periphery. She said that the second issue Zoran touched was the regional shows and Arab shows are the second most popular topic today to the Balkan shows; where Szeemann says <i>Gorges of the Balkans</i>, Catherine David says <i>Contemporary Arab Representations</i>, and that in the Balkan situation they are a little bit fortunate, because the curators are from the same continent, but for the Arab world the curators are certainly not involved. As to the art criticism and curatorial practice she said that she will intentionally ignore East of the EU label, because she finds it very problematic to also label herself and those working in her own context in the same way that others are labelling these contexts, as she did not want to propagate the same ideas.</p> <p>She said that she started out in Cairo working at a commercial gallery and then she actually attended De Appel Curatorial Training Program last year and it was very interesting because she got in sort of insight and an education in the sense in an EU system way, which she has then taken back to Cairo and it helped her to start to re-articulate her own understanding of what is needed in a context like Egypt, where the infrastructure is very weak and sort of there are a lot of absences, whether in terms of critics whether in terms of private initiatives and certainly in terms of artist run initiatives or projects.</p> <p>In the last only nine months, she said, she is working in Cairo independently, putting art criticism and curatorial practice together, because in Egypt these distinctions don't really exist, that art critics tend to be very far from the actual artwork, that there is very little discourse about what contemporary art is. Therefore she said that she is trying to work somewhere between curatorship and criticism but only by working very directly with artists in project-based work and not really sort of big exhibitions that present somehow very young ideas which in large part will become historical although it'd be very premature.</p> <p>During the Iraq war, she said, she could make a discussion project with Egyptian and foreign artists and they have spent two weeks in the desert; that this is absolutely new in Egypt in a context where artists do not</p>

	<p>discuss their work together, are often very inarticulate about their work and And it actually gave the local artists an opportunity to learn more about international context with which they had a very superficial understanding; that projects like this are really what's needed in Egypt and now there's been another project that's very similar, it's taking place at a commercial gallery in Cairo; the town house and it's actually started an influx of international artists into this city and also engaging with local artists; that another project that she is working with is a project that attempts to actually bring art into public space in Egypt. Where there is absolutely no access to public infrastructure, commissioning four artists from Egypt to make billboards which we are going to use as advertising on public buses in the city. She said that this project is introducing the idea of "how can we infiltrate public space" and "in what manner do we want to"</p>
14.50-15.00	<p>Levent Çalikoğlu He said that because of the Biennale openings this week Istanbul is illuminated or reflects a brilliance to the guests but at the same times it lives through its own history, that in reality curators or and art critics living in the cities like Istanbul where modernism and post-modernism is a chaotic blend, these people have a series of difficulties, but after the visitors will leave Istanbul, they will still be debating and discussing their own interior problems; that the problems are based, anchored on several different levels, namely the curatorship and art criticism as a profession, has no official [veridity] in our system and the persons who would chose to be art critics and curators or both professions together, are only a few and the reason behind this lack of system is actually the missing infrastructure in Turkey; that there are few institutions where an independent curator can work or show his work or raise his voice; that there is no art magazine, art journal where a critic can continuously contribute with its reviews and art criticism texts, particularly when the texts are criticism in the real sense; that there are only popular magazines, which present these text as if they relate to a foreign country or to a foreign context rather than that they relate to Turkey ; that art criticism is a little bit old fashion or behind the stage now and curatorial practices are in front of the stage. He said that since seven years he is teaching in several universities in the departments of art management and curatorial practices but since now he has not met a student who had the obsession or the desire to be an art critic. He sais that there is no contemporary art museum; that the biggest bank in Turkey, İş Bankası, which has a collection of 2500 paintings does not work with a curator and most of the employees working in these institutions are not art critics, curators or any relation to the cultural disciplines and as this is the situation in Turkey, there are only three persons who are working as professional curators in Istanbul, the others have to work in other fields or disciplines, or they have to teach in the universities, obviously it is very prestigious to work in an university or in an educational system, but in these educational institutions, you don't only teach your students but also the administration of the institution and your fellow professors, from time to time, this relationship can destroy the professional status of the curator; that on the other hand the title curator is being discussed as the latest headache in the art scene; for example the painters with modernist concepts even don't want to hear the name of the curator, yet, even after all these discrepancies and impossibilities, curatorial practice is being a significant profession. Coming back to the relationship between the institutions and the curators, he said that these institutions, maybe called as 'contemporary art spaces', have no clear concepts, there are very few institutional art galleries such as Borusan Art Gallery where we are now in, where the contemporary art concepts are almost clearly defined, there are only few of these examples; the other institutions only work with curators because they don't want to be in the backstage or to be backward in this venture, but not because they feel it is necessary to work with a curator.</p>
15.00-15.10	<p>Tea Paichadze She said that it is her first visit in such forums, that art situation in Tibilisi nowadays is in a the worst situation than all the countries represented here, that the curatorship is a very new, there is no chance to go, study, and work abroad and have information from abroad, because there is even no internet access; that there is a kind of isolation therefore her experience is not enough to exchange.</p>

15.10-15.20	<p>Sandra Dagher.</p> <p>She said that living in Lebanon for more than three years, she opened her gallery Espace SD which is not really a gallery and it's not really an art centre neither, because it's private, therefore the best term was 'polyvalent artistic space' where young Lebanese artists in various domains like plastic arts, audio-visual, design, fashion, music can exhibit. She said that her first aim was to be a contemporary gallery but the problem in Lebanon is that there are no funds or support of anyone basically, therefore to auto-finance the gallery it is essential to find a way to sell.</p> <p>The gallery, she said, has three floors , the first one is the exhibition space where every months an exhibition (paintings, photography, sculpture and installation and sometimes collective exhibitions) are realised, the two other floors are dedicated to every other kind of designers, creators; that basically sponsors are looking for bigger events than events that can happen in a gallery; that she created a small room 'the Laboratory' where she invites every month a different young artist most of the time to present more conceptual artwork, and this is the way to introduce to the public what is contemporary; that there are some festival and events, one of them is realised by Christine Tohme, the most important curator of Lebanon and there was <i>Eylul Festival</i> that had to close because of financial problems; that there is a small minority of people interested in contemporary art and in three years she has seen everyone, already; that there are very good contemporary artists but they don't really have either space or help from Lebanon officials and society.</p>
15.20-15.30	<p>Ramon Tio Bellido</p> <p>He said that he is very glad to see that a lot of questions and discussions are raised which can be resumed to a very simple reality and this reality is just a matter of generations, because the idea or the condition that the ECF has asked us to invite young curators and art critics for this workshop is of course more than welcomed; that he would like to add to this that also because this happens here in Istanbul, that kind of special focus for the Eastern side of Europe sort of makes sense.</p> <p>However, he said that he noticed with surprise that participants are not really talking about the same phenomena or at least not talking about them in the same way. Namely there are differences in what Massimiliano, Eva, Jeroen Boomgaard have expressed yesterday and this morning and that he agrees with Stephen's point of view</p> <p>He thinks that it's just a matter of age first, the <i>avant-gardes</i> and the modernism were drawing a very strong mainline and making easy, what was or is art and what was or is not art and the criteria of this kind of evaluations were based on a very utopian, but not idealistic idea of progress, and it worked perfectly, because this matched with the Western imperialism and cultural and economical system and it just interested a limited number of people. He is convinced that in the postmodern decade, two very important things happened, first, the artist, as a whole accepted the rules of the art market and of the institutional recognition; second, modernism came to a kind of death end that allowed at least the artist to work as freely as they desire, with any kind of materials, contents or proposals; that these two points might look quite contradictory unless one condition, and this condition is that the Western world understood that it should be changed and proposed the so-called new or different object matters, the art market; that this was more or less the situation that was running and frankly to admit the art critics were quite puzzled by which position to take; that in the midst 80's when it become more obvious, it was clear that curating should be a substitution to art criticism, as curating was a way of working that emphasised more or less point of views, discourse or even commitments for arts and artists that, up to a certain point the (former) type of writing has left.</p> <p>He indicated that art integrated a system of diffusion with not only the biennials but all the big exhibitions , all the new museums, art centres that are build here and there -about twenty of them have been build in France in the 80's and 90's; that early 90's he was asked to be the director of a Fondation in Paris where he worked for three years and then was invited to be the director of the curatorial mastership at the University in Rennes which in French is called <i>Maîtrise et Science des techniques et métiers d'exposition</i>.</p> <p>He said that he would like to record what he has done there because up to a certain point it gives some explanations about this generational affair; that the value of this course is undoubtedly to be very much related to professional matters and it is why he accepted to do it; that the basis is quite evident, it consists in working from a theoretical and a practical</p>

	<p>point, namely the theoretical is divided between history of art, aesthetics, museology or museography, management, mediation, economic etc. whereas the practical one is made possible because there is a quite good gallery in this campus four exhibitions per year take place.</p> <p>He said that he had a double function, was the director of the department and also of the gallery however, he had to chose and to make clear what was going to be his directions and purposes and what he wanted to give to this teaching; that he decided to work as much as possible from an analysis of the symptoms of artistic practices and purposes today.</p> <p>He said further that this implies of course to be very much aware about what is going on and how and it also might represent one of the escape ways for a critical discourse submitted to any up-to-date consensual theme, concept or idea and it also gets rid, of all the political red quarters etc.; that more than that, this was necessary because of the reality of the students that started these kind of studies, because their knowledge of contemporary art was quite often not very strong and quite all of them were coming from rather low social families; a possibility due to the very modest fee that they had to pay to do that kind of course; that they had students from all over the world anyhow; that the critical work was analysis and understanding of everything that related with "everyday's reality" or "social framework".</p>
<p>15.30.- 15.40</p>	<p>Serhan Ada</p> <p>He said that he considers himself being on the edge, would take the subject to a broader context then, make it a narrower come back to the curatorial and art practices field; that based to the talks of yesterday and today he feels that the shadow of Edward Said is somewhere in the room.</p> <p>He based his presentation on what Zoran Eric has said about projects, because he is an academic and a chair of a cultural management department at Istanbul Bilgi University, trying to share the concept of project culture with his students, and exclude the area of curatorship, mainly due to reasons that Levent Çalıkoğlu has mentioned; that the demand is so narrow and problematic, while the supply is very confuse. He mentioned the Diyarbakır Art Center and said that Diyarbakır which is the most Eastern part of Turkey where one could easily recall the civil war and the Kurds and the cultural differences, but for a group of people it was cultural difference as an asset for dialogue and a production in common, so it became a concrete project and only weeks ago the centre had the first year done</p> <p>He said that considering Istanbul as being in the framework of the forum, as the East of the West, at the other end just at the Eastern end of Turkey there is Diyarbakır, which is more than a million population town and one of the most important cities of the Mesopotamian civilisation, cross-road of religions, sects, nationalities and also an artistic literary background and that in this respect, Diyarbakır is the West of the East. He said further that Diyarbakır and the whole South Eastern Turkey was submerged in civil war, chaos and also social disorder creating also drastic psychological consequences and was left sort of voiceless, so not silent but voiceless; that an art centre, maybe a place to share mutual experiences so trying to give voice to a voiceless town and people was the aim and that after the first contacts, discussions with artists, intellectuals, also representatives of artistic institutions, foundations, NGO's, the project started to be a bridge between here, the East of the West, and the West of the East.</p> <p>Diyarbakır Art Centre was founded in a shopping mall in Diyarbakır, in a space consisting of a conference hall, a screening hall, workshop places, an exhibition space and since a month a small library and the whole program started with contemporary exhibitions organised in the beginning mostly by Beral Madra, then workshops, film screenings every week and some of the events have attracted more attention than any other; that the people there not only participated in the activities, but also suggested projects and acted jointly namely first common project started to happen, young artists have curated their own exhibitions, they took part to exhibitions here in Istanbul then lately to the shows in the Balkans and to the latest one which is René Block's in Kassel, and finally the Biennale, will have a satellite annex in Diyarbakır with ten artists' works to be exhibited there and the conference by the curator and two other artists participating. He concluded that he just wanted to share with te forum this experience of differences as an asset for dialogue and a production in common which is an open project to the forums contributions and also all source of concrete critic.</p>
<p>15.50-16.15</p>	<p>Rene Block</p> <p>He said that he wanted to talk about the Balkan Exhibition in Kassel together with a young colleague, with Natasa Ilic, curator from Zagreb, and</p>

	<p>give an idea about it from my eye, from a Western eye and her eye, but because of a change she can not participate this afternoon.</p> <p>He said that the place he is working in is the Kunsthalle Fridericianum in Kassel, the building of Documenta exhibitions which was build as a museum, but it does not have a collection and therefore to avoid all this confusion that is involved within the museum the name is changed into Kunsthalle Fridericianum and this year as a kind of personal answer to last Documenta of himself he organised this Balkan exhibition <i>In the Gorges of Balkan</i> quoting the very famous book of Karl May who lived about hundred fifty years ago and wrote his travel book on Orient and South Eastern Europe. He indicated that in his book he is very precise about certain conflicts between Sunnite and Shiite, something that was still very actual, very interesting to remember when these problems in Iraq, Iran, the war between Iraq and Iran between Sunnite and Shiite happened about twenty years ago. He further said that this title is a little bit speculation and, everybody in Germany might be curious.</p> <p>He said that they invited eighty eight artists from twelve regions; that he worked five young curators to come to Kassel to the Fridericianum to start a kind of curatorial workshop, two of them came from Eastern Europe, one from the Ljubljana, one from Zagreb and that this team realised this exhibition; that the exhibition involves fifteen artists from Turkey and Istanbul and Turkey is the strongest participation in this exhibition, maybe also in term of works. He said that what makes this exhibition fascinating for him, is the concept to have an exhibition as a trilogy. So this exhibition <i>In den Schluchten des Balkan</i> in Kassel is part number one including by mid of October a conference about the situation in Balkan which is organised by Boyana Pejic and Marius Babias, and the second part of this exhibition is here in Istanbul. He said that this project is also supporting conferences and publications, namely the special magazine <i>ART-IST</i> done by Halil Altindere in relation with the exhibition that took place here in July in Project 4L, with the young artist from Diyarbakır; that there will be a conference organised by Garanti Platform with participants of all the Balkan countries and opening up also to countries of the Near East.</p>
16.15-17-30	<p>Conclusions&Open discussion</p> <p>Stephen Wright said that Natasa Ilic is a particularly insightful art writer and curator from Zagreb and should be invited take part in the roundtable tomorrow.</p> <p>René Block said that it will be not easy to meet someone tonight; that she is a person who makes a general coordination for the second part of this project because Kassel will not play the role to make any coordination and suggestions; that the project will give a chance to make inner connections between artists of different countries possible.</p> <p>Henry Meyric Hughes asked René Block, why biennales happen and why they spring up everywhere and what about the crisis in Western institutions, about the relative importance of these temporary events and what he hopes to drive from it for his instituton?</p> <p>René Block answered that he thought there would be a much better communication between formal communist countries of Balkan -except Turkey and Greece - but there was really no communication between them and they really were quite separated from each other, also culturally quite separated from each other, they have not much information what's culturally happening in those countries, probably much less than the Western curators, with the opportunity to travel around.</p> <p>Zoran Eric asked how this show is fitting into the general concept and policy of his institution of Fridericianum and what was the motive and initiative.</p> <p>René Block answered that it fits extremely good in the policy and concept of his institution; when he was invited to take over the Fridericianum as artistic director in 97 it was a time of Catherine David's Documenta and he had a similar exhibition, kind of answer to that Documenta, this exhibition when he started in 98 was called <i>Echolot</i> and it showed eight women artists from Central European periphery, like Mona Hatoum, Shirin Neshat, Ayşe Erkmen, Gülsüm Karamustafa, Ghada Amer, Tracey Moffatt, Soo-ja Kim; that he will follow up concentrating on this area very intensively for the next four years.</p>

After the workshop the participants attended the Official Opening of the Biennale.