

Erden Kosova

Dispersal of a Constellation: The Shortcomings of the Engaged Art Practice in Turkey

The adventure of contemporary art practice in Turkey has been considered for a while as a remarkable success story. A number of artists whose works have been heavily based on an interest in the social issues of the geography and engaged in political criticality, have succeeded to receive acclaim on the global scale.

The Istanbul Biennial have had a sparkling performance and functionality, a series of new art institutions backed by bourgeois families and financial companies and some experimental departments in the academies have been emerging. Things couldn't be better.

Yet, in the last couple of years there is an observable stagnation in terms of production. There have been some changes in the political character of the works of this constellation of artists. Their anti-nationalist stance has started to be challenged by the rising nationalist tone within the cultural field, exposing the shift in the general politics of the country.

My presentation will attempt to map out briefly the highlights of the current crisis in the art context in Turkey.