

THE NEXT GENERATION OF PRINTMAKING IN TURKEY

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Socio-political elements directing to art contribute to formation process of producing art along with all the gainings from current time. Printmaking which has been included into ranges of production of many young artists at the axis of contemporary art in Turkey also nourishes with changes of social and political life. Printmaking taking shapes according to circumstances being experienced has the characteristics of sometimes protest, sometimes praise, or even historical evident. Today's art of printmaking enables to express concerns on art as a product of a combination of different technical uses and experimental approaches. Being a versatile art form along with its old and new methods, printmaking is a fascinating arena that reveals potentials and creative aspects of artists. In today's art of printmaking in which individual liberties are unlimited, it is encountered with courageous and creative approaches of young generation artists. With this paper, it will be shed light on the today and tomorrow of printmaking, and made a study of young generation printmaking artists in Turkey by referring the subject matters and technical practices they chose to use within the frame of their own artistic concerns.

Contemporary Printmaking In Turkey

One of the major factors leading to art is the gainings of the experienced time. Economy, politics and technology are either individually or cooperatively contributing to creating art. Artists who take shapes according to the conditions they experience are creating works having protest, eulogistic or sometimes historical aspects. Printmaking that has been affected by the change of social and political life in Turkey is of interest to many young artists as a practice in the scope of contemporary art. When considering today's printmakig art in which individual freedom is unlimited, we encounter with diverse, bold and innovative approaches of the young-generation artists producing works on printmaking processes in Turkey. Today, it is seen that young-generation artists are inclining disciplinary and experimental understandings as well as the traditional printmaking approach.

The contemporarily progress of printmaking in Turkey has begun with the endeavours of the institutions studying art. The actualities of Turkey have been dealt in prints through a universal perspective owing to both educational system adopting a western attitude and the artists who studied in foreign countries. The living conditions reshaping with the effects of the cultural change, politics and globalization after the 1980's have forced the printmaking to alter its perspective. Along with the characteristic of reproducibility of printmaking, national and international competitions have increased the attention on this artistic manner of creating. Internet that now makes opportunities for communication to reach to an unlimited dimension has made young-generation artists to follow international activities easily, and provided them to an opportunity for representing themselves.

It's seen that the young academician-artists who recently prove themselves in the printmaking discipline produce works in a manner both traditionally and experimentally. In the context of contemporary art, some figures who have adopted the printmaking discipline as a primary manner of creating such as Mete Erdoğan, Aysun Gökçe Kaya Kılıç, Sezin Türk Kaya, Burçak Balamber, Özgür Uğuz, Tezcan Bahar as well as others who have produced works using many different disciplines including sculpture, ceramics, graphic art such as Seyit Mehmet Buçukoğlu, Mine Küçük, Ali Can Metin are young-generation artists representing the present of printmaking and allowing us to have an idea about its future. Today's sense of art along with the conceptual and up-to-date perspectives of the selected academician-artists reveals the world of printmaking in a universal way.

Representatives From Young Generation



Tezcan Bahar, Untitled, Intaglio, 49x82cm, 2013



Ali Can Metin, Untitled, Lithography, 2010



Mete Erdoğan, Untitled, Digital Print, 2013



Özgür Uğuz, It Is Pop It Is Art, Serigraphy-Watercolor, 2012



Burçak Balamber, Untitled, Stencil On Canvas, 106 X 151cm, 2011

A lecturer of the Department of Fine Arts Education in Samsun 19 Mayıs University, Tezcan Bahar who usually prefers to produce works on the intaglio technique creates prints in which the colours decomposed, fragmented and re-collected together, and the images integrating continuously with each other while repeated are like a blended rainbow. 'Abstraction and repetition' have been presented as an expression in the works bearing some traces of the intersection points of the Eastern and Western arts. The works with the attempt of going beyond themselves by being related with each other, by changes in short time-frames, and by creating a new and different image at every turn are not the products of such understanding that perpetually reproduces same patterns and designs. (Akbayır, 2011)

Ali Can Metin working as a research associate in the Department of Graphic Arts of Faculty of Fine Arts in Marmara University, produces prints as well as his works on graphic arts. In the works he creates using the potentials of the lithographic method, the geometrical forms give an impression ruined within the infinity and re-discovered. These are composed as a both organic and inorganic form in a concept between the absence and the presence depending on coexisting of abstract and concrete approaches. While the quiet and calm atmosphere created in the works sustains the profoundness and randomness, the interrelation of the images turns the compositional order into a timeless universe, and establishes its presence through this connotation (Baykaç, 2011).

In the artworks by Mete Erdoğan who is a research associate in the Printmaking Department of Faculty of Fine Arts in Balıkesir University, it is explicitly seen that the visual perception, techniques and manners have been changed with the impact of the digital technology that allows a more independent and participant world become possible, and makes the communication and the access easier in a maximum level. Apart from the real life that we experience and perceive through the naked-eye, the dijital realm that communicates with us through the monitor/computer screen, manipulates our way of thinking and perception on objects, and tranforms/alters our aesthetical senses abrades rapidly and re-positions the walls inbetween the real and the virtual. Starting with this fact, Mete Erdoğan thus discusses the impact of the dijital culture on both the real life and the disciplines of plastic arts in term of themes, manners and technical approaches. The artist positions himself in a point where the printmaking tradition meets the digital culture as he digitally prints the limited editions of his virtual printing plates of photographic images and/or painting works on paper by using computer-mediated digital manipulations.

Özgür Uğuz who is a research associate in the Printmaking Department of Faculty of Fine Arts in Anadolu University considers printmaking as a textual problem attempting to bear new meanings in itself and to make a language by which the printmaking either tells a narrative or just reveal itself. The artist putting in the effort of creating an orchestra along with the encrypted images in the prints pursuits the timeless connotations gaining meanings differently every time, and what is felt by them. Although an evocation of an image in our minds subsists its own existence, meanings resulting from viewers' interpretations on some juxtaposed objects are diverse and plural. The artist creates scenes encrypted and waiting for a solution, by using some half-way-ordinary themes such as an elder, a half-naked woman, lampposts or a musician through their oppositions outside of their own boundaries.

Composing his works within the frame of the potentials of the method of stencil printing, Burçak Balamber is a research associate in the Printmaking Department of Faculty of Fine Arts in Balıkesir University. The artist combines the traditional methods with the gainings of modern times within in the conceptual discussion that in a universe taking forms in accordance with possibilities, different results will be likely to happen at the same time. The artist who has gone beyond the limitations of papers when producing his works of art adopts a more independent understanding by using contemporary technical applications on his canvases. Producing his stencil works on the basis of the printing method of silk-screening printing, he transfers his paper-cut stencil designs onto surfaces such as canvases or papers by using spreypaints. It's possible to consider his method as only an up-to-date version of the printing process in which stencils cut from materials such as leaves etc. have been transferred onto cloths or fabrics by using madders in the ancient times.

Working on the collographic process by making experimentations, Sezin Türk Kaya who is an assistant professor in the Painting Department of Faculty of Fine Arts in Uludağ University uses the textural effects offered by the process. Portraying old-fashioned houses having connections with life and the identities they harbour, the artist presents these houses through her own stylistic manner by restructuring them in a deconstructive way. The works seem to tell what has been already experienced and is now experiencing inside those houses created by a plastic manner of producing which is allowed to become possible by the technique itself. The artist in her works produced with the collographic method having its unique advantages creates scenes living inside of their own atmospheres, by composing occasionally furious dark and light compositional elements and the transparency with the textural effects by using black and white colouring.

Seyit Mehmet Buçukoğlu producing works on printmaking as well as on painting is a research associate in the Department of Plastic Arts of Faculty of Fine Arts in Yeditepe University. He discusses the urban concept with a different perspective. The artist composes the battlefield portrayals that he creates using certain fields and co-ordinate lines derived from some tracks left in a battlefield after a war, through the cold and dead colours referring to the dreadfulness of wars. By limiting the image surface, he achieves the concept of contrast between the compositional areas by using a variety of symbols, texts or sections spreaded on the surface.

A research associate in the Graphic Department of Fine Arts Education in Anadolu University, Mine Küçük discusses the urban culture in her digital works/prints. Using this theme as a reference, she shares the feelings she profoundly experiences by integrating the cities into both their inhabitants and her own life and by individualising them only with their structural figures on the basis of a metaphorical expression. Buildings are considered as not only just a structure but also a meeting point or, sometimes, an area for escaping. Individuality represented by the scribble lines turns into a focal point along with the buildings. The computer-mediatedly created works discussing such themes including unplanned urbanization, urban life and business life blend humanly feelings such as love, loneliness or reactions.

Gökçe Aysun Kaya creating her own stories with the motives of both creation and forming woodblocks to a certain extent of potentials of blocks is a lecturer of the Printmaking Department of Faculty of Fine Arts in Balıkesir University. The artist using the subtraction method in the traditional woodcut printmaking technique discusses the figures she combines with the textural serenity of a wood by referring the concept of 'authority' via the female body. The gravity-free female figures with a serene face seek a way out of daily-life chaoses. Corrosion of personality, being marginalized, impositions of life and memorization of the image of sovereign ideas strive for an ordinary tour de force as stereotyped personalities, bodies that are not themselves anymore due to routinized lives, and fashioned forms. The bodies suffering from the erosion of identity create their own inner-rhythms by varying in small and large formats. The small female figures with their undisclosed meanings intend to create the authority's very own realities through the relations of compositional forms and colours.

It Can Be Concluded As Follows:

The relation with printmaking and technical seeking as a reflection of the fact that a Western-originated artistic culture has been adopted in Turkey can be discussed in the context of Contemporary Art. As a result of environmental and social consciousness from the 1960's and 1970's to now, the impact of such themes discussed frequently in works including globalization, technology and human relations on which contemporary art concerns about is commonly seen on the artworks by the young-generation printmaking artists.

Young-generation artists today strive for establishing their presences in this field through not only consolidation of the institutional system, but also the international biennials and triennials themed on the art of printmaking. In today's Turkey, young-generation artists creating artworks on printmaking give preference to the traditional and experimental processes suitable for their own artistic manners.

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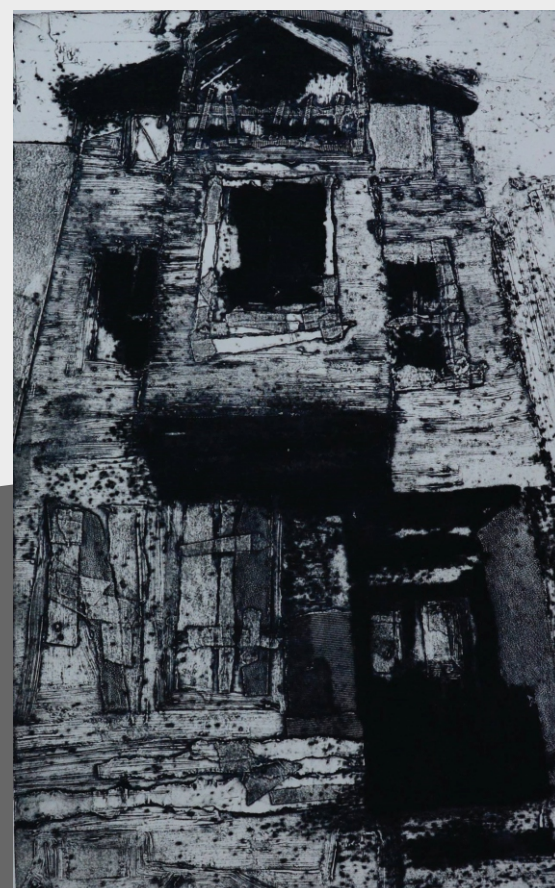
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Gökçe Aysun Kaya, Untitled, Woodcut, 97x68.5 cm, 2008



Sezin Türk Kaya, Untitled, Collography, 65x40cm, 2014



Seyit Mehmet Buçukoğlu, Battlefield, Woodcut, 97x68.5 cm, 2008



Mine Küçük, I Can Watch The City From The Hill, Digital Painting, 20x20cm, 2013