

Resume

Aslihan Demirtas, LEED AP, is the principal of Aslihan Demirtas Design and Research Studio, an interdisciplinary design studio based in Istanbul and New York. Her practice purposefully crosses territories and boundaries of disciplines in the forms of building, landscape and installation projects, exhibitions, and art projects, as well as research and activism.

Aslihan Demirtas has a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the Middle East Technical University (METU), Turkey in 1987 and a Master of Science in Architectural Studies from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 2000. She worked in Ankara, Turkey for several years after graduating from METU, and won second prize in the national competition Gateway to Ankara and an honorable mention in Ankara State Opera and Theatre Competition. At MIT, she was the recipient of tuition scholarship awarded by the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture and later the Aga Khan Travel Award for her research in Southeast Anatolia. Her research at MIT was focused on modern water infrastructure in Turkey and its place in Turkish modernization and landscape.

After receiving her masters degree, she worked for Rogers Marvel Architects in New York before joining I.M. Pei in 2001. With I.M. Pei, she worked as his lead designer for the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar, and the Miho Chapel in Kyoto, Japan among others. Aslihan was involved in the Museum of Islamic Arts project starting from concept design through the construction phase until its opening in Doha, Qatar where she coordinated on-site construction.

After working for I.M. Pei for over 8 years, she started her own practice in New York. In 2010 she partook in Blind Dates Project which culminated in a group exhibition at Pratt Manhattan Gallery. In collaboration with Silva Ajemian and with Lebbeus Woods as moderator, she co-produced work that articulated architectural and geographic narratives in the archeological city of Ani in Kars, Turkey and the broken bridge at the Turkish-Armenian border in. Same year, she designed, curated and produced an exhibition at the Arnold and Sheila Johnson Galleries at New School, collaborating with activist community groups in Brooklyn to turn Williamsburg's Engine 212, a defunct FDNY building, into a community and arts center.

In 2011, Aslihan Demirtas founded her Istanbul office to oversee her projects in Turkey and Europe. In May 2012, she designed, curated and produced the exhibition *Modern Essays 5: Graft* at SALT Galata, Istanbul which investigated the role of water dams in Turkish modernization as well as the larger question of modernity's relation with nature based on her research at MIT. This exhibition was reinstalled at SALT Ulus, Ankara in 2014 with additional material. As a parallel contributor to Istanbul Design Bienale 2012 and 2014, she co-curated and produced work for the exhibitions 'Alterations: Weaving an Exception' and 'Instructions/Interpretations'. These exhibitions collaborated with a traditional kilim maker and his weavers in the village investigating modes of collaborations and the art of kilim-making. Her office has completed a knit wall out of nautical ropes and a restaurant renovation at SALT Galata and SALT Beyoglu. Currently her office is working on developing spaces and toys for children for a client that focuses on engaging a child to become a 'maker' and providing spaces for 'movement'.

In 2013, Demirtaş received a Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts grant to continue her research and to produce the e-publication *GRAFT* in collaboration with SALT. The e-publication will culminate the investigations carried out in the exhibition *Modern Essays 5: Graft* at SALT about the technological water landscapes of the modernization project in Turkey.

Demirtas is a member of Yedikule Historical Gardens Protection Initiative where she actively participates in community organization, negotiations with municipalities, workshops with the community children and design/research. The historical urban gardens were destroyed by the municipality to make a park project in 2013, erasing an urban practice (urban farming) and an urban typology of urban agriculture unique to Istanbul since Byzantine times. Within the initiative, Aslihan Demirtas produces schemes of landscape design in order to use design as a negotiating medium.

Aslihan Demirtas teaches master's degree studio focused on landscape design at Bilgi University, Faculty of Architecture in Istanbul and is an adjunct faculty at Parsons SCE at New School. She has lectured at *Landscapes of Development* Conference at GSD, Harvard, at *History and Practice* Conference at MIT and at Bauhaus University at Weimar at *In-Transit* summer workshop lectures among others. Her lecture at the GSD has become a chapter in the book *Landscapes of Development: The Impact of Modernization on the Physical Environment of the Eastern*

Mediterranean, (ed. P. Pyla), printed by Harvard University Press. The lecture '*Watching Tankers Go By*' was about her research regarding the transnational and local sea traffic on the Bosphorus and its impacts on the urban and natural practices of the Bosphorus and has been published by Bauhaus University.

She has published articles in journals, and chapters in books published by MIT Press, Verlag der Bauhaus and Harvard University Press as well as XXI, Betonart in Turkey . In addition to Parsons SCE and Bilgi University, he has taught at Fordham University, MIT, and City College and attended reviews at Yale.

Curriculum Vitae

Education

- 1998–2000 Master of Science in Architecture Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, MA
- 1987–1991 Bachelor of Architecture, Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey

Work

Aslihan Demirtas Design and Research Studio in New York & Istanbul 2007-present

Çevre Theatre, Istanbul, restoration and renovation project,
Schematic design, 2014-, SEMAVER KUMPANYA

'Instructions/Interpretations', co-curator and designer for a kilim weaving project for Dhoku, parallel participant for Istanbul Design Biennale Kilim, 2014, DHOKU

Restaurant, SALT Galata, Istanbul, renovation project
Completed, 2014, SALT/GARANTİ KÜLTÜR AŞ

Courtyard redesign at SALT Galata, Istanbul, Turkey
Schematic design phase, 2013, SALT/GARANTİ KÜLTÜR AŞ

Gayret Apartment Building, İstanbul
Schematic design, 2014-, BARAKA İNŞAAT LTD.

Halep Passage, interior renovation of entrance and corridor, Istanbul
Construction drawings, 2013-, stopped, HALEP PASAJI VE HANI YÖNETİMİ

Knit wall at SALT Beyoglu, Istanbul, Turkey
Schematic design phase, 2013, SALT/GARANTİ KÜLTÜR AŞ

'Modern Denemeler 5: Aşır', SALT Ulus, Ankara, Türkiye
<<http://www.saltonline.org/tr/#!/tr/623/modern-essays-5/>> ve
<graftonline.org>
Curator, researcher and designer
Exhibition 2013, SALT

Suyurdu Thermal Baths and Physical Therapy Hospital, Karahayit, Denizli, Turkey
Design Development phase, 2011, ÇIRALI GRUP

'Alterations: Weaving an Exception', collaborative weaving project for Dhoku, parallel participant for Istanbul Design Biennale Kilim, 2012, DHOKU

'Modern Essays 5: *GRAFT*', SALT Galata, Istanbul, Turkey
<<http://www.saltonline.org/en/363/>> and <graftonline.org>
Curator, researcher and designer
Exhibition, May 2012 Istanbul & September 2013 Ankara

Eco Retreat, Canar, Spain
Schematic Design 2011-, On hold, MAURA O'DONNELL & DAVID ROMAN

'Engine 212: Activist Interiors', Aronson Gallery, Parsons School of Design, New York
Exhibition and studio project, 2010, PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN

'Projected: Engine 2122, art installation at Engine 212 building at NTHCC with Nandini Bagchee
Installation, 2010, NORTHSIDE TOWNHALL

'Remains Connected', a collaborative art/landscape project with Silva Ajemian
Part of Blind Dates Project <<http://blinddatesproject.org>>
Exhibition, November 2010, BLIND DATES PROJECT

Erika's Garden, Brooklyn, NY, design and construction of a permeable moss & slate landscape,
Completed 2008, ERIKA JAKUBASSA

House Goktan, Weekend house Istanbul, Turkey,
Schematic design, 2009—on hold, AHMET GÖKTAN

Miho Chapel, Miho Institute of Aesthetic, Kyoto, Japan 2007-2009,
Design Consultant to I.M. Pei for schematic design and design development phases, completed, 2013, SHUMEI

I. M. Pei – Architect, Lead Project Designer 2001–2008

Museum of Islamic Arts, Doha, Qatar, completed November 2008, Lead Designer

Louvre Museum – Design and coordination of I.M. Pei section of "From Córdoba to Samarkand: The Future Museum of Islamic Art, Doha" exhibition

Athens Modern Art Museum, Athens, Greece,

Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Washington, DC, completed 2010

Rogers Marvel Architects, Project Designer 2000–2001

Dartmouth College, Hopkins Center Performing Arts and Hood Museum Master Plan Studies

Çinici Architecture and Planning Office, Lead Project Designer 1991–1998

Awards & Prizes

- 2014 Honorable mention, Gallipoli Peninsula Historic National Park Focus Areas Competition
- 2013 Recipient of Graham Foundation Award, Individual category for Graft, e-media
- 2013 Honorable mention, Kemal Kurdaş Memorial Grave Competition
Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
- 1999 Recipient of the Aga Khan Travel and Research Award, MIT, Cambridge, MA
- 1998 Aga Khan Tuition Award for Graduate Study, MIT, Cambridge, MA
- 1995 Honorable Mention, Ankara Opera House, Theatre and Congress Center
Competition (Ministry of Public Works), Ankara, Turkey (with H. Zelef and C.
Cinici)
- 1993 Third Prize, 'Gateway to Ankara' Competition (Ankara Metropolitan
Municipality), Ankara, Turkey (with F. Geveci)

Written and Published Work

Infrastructure: Water issue, guest editor for Betonart, 2014

"Rowing Boats in the Reservoir: Water Infrastructure as Transplanted Seascape,"
chapter in *Landscapes of Development: The Impact of Modernization on the Physical
Environment of the Eastern Mediterranean*, (ed. P. Pyla), Cambridge, MA: Harvard
University Press, August 2013

"Modern Aşl", article about the exhibition Modern Essays 5: *GRAFT*, Betonart, 09, 2012

"Silence of the Land," (ed. by Hakan Topal), Silence, *ArteEast*, 12, 2010
(<http://www.arteeast.org/pages/artenews/Silence/470/>)

"Watching Tankers Go By," *In-Transit: The Bauhaus – In Between Local and
International*, Verlag der Bauhaus-Universität Bauhaus, Weimar, Germany, 2009

Artificial Nature: Water Infrastructure and its Experience as Natural Space, unpublished
Master's Thesis, Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2000

"Winding Ankara," *ANYTIME* (ed. C. Davidson), Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999

"10 Francs," *Thresholds 18*, Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1999

“Turkish Grand National Assembly New Public Relations Building,” publication of the competition entry and text in *Arredamento/Mimarlık*, 11, 1997

Conferences, Lectures & Exhibitions

- 2015 Açık Radyo, Açık Mimarlık, Mimarlığın Kadın Halleri
- 2014 Vitra ile "Bienalin Ardından", Panel, Bilgi University
- 2014 ‘Graft’, Seminar, METU
- 2014 “Taşı mı yonttun? Geri dur bak. Yontmana şaşma, taşa şaş.” Lecture, Bilgi University.
- 2014 ‘Instructions/Interpretations’, co-curator and designer for a kilim weaving project for Dhoku, parallel participant for Istanbul Design Biennale
- 2013 ‘Modern Essays 5: *Graft*, SALT Ulus, Ankara, Türkiye
<<http://www.saltonline.org/tr/#!/tr/623/modern-essays-5/>>
<[graftonline.org](http://www.saltonline.org)>
Curator, researcher and designer
- 2013 Becoming Local, AESOP, İstanbul, Workshop leader, Advisory Board and moderator,
- 2012 ‘Alterations: Weaving an Exception’, collaborative weaving project for Dhoku, parallel participant for Istanbul Design Biennale
- 2012 ‘Modern Essays 5: *GRAFT*’, SALT Galata, Istanbul, Turkey
<<http://www.saltonline.org/en/363/>>
<[graftonline.org](http://www.saltonline.org)>
Curator, researcher and designer
- 2010 Pratt Manhattan Gallery, Blind Dates Project Conversation
Presentation of ‘Remains Connected’ with Silva Ajemian, moderated by Lebbeus Woods
- 2010 Brown University, Arts in One World Conference
Presentation of ‘Remains Connected’ with Silva Ajemian, presentation
- 2009 MIT, Workshop: *History and Practice: Exploring Role of History in Contemporary Architectural Practice*
Presentation entitled “Negotiations”.
- 2009 Bauhaus Universitat Weimar, Germany, Seminar: *In-Transit*
Presentation entitled “Watching Tankers Go By”

- 2006 Louvre Museum: *“From Córdoba to Samarkand: The Future Museum of Islamic Art, Doha”*, coordinator for IM Pei
- 2004 Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Cambridge, MA, Symposium: *Landscapes of Development: Modernization and the Physical Environment in the Eastern Mediterranean*
Presentation entitled “Rowing Boats in the Reservoir: Water Infrastructure, Nature and Imagination”
- 1998 ANYTIME, Ankara, Conference: *Anytime*
Presented two projects and conceptual work under the title “Winding Ankara” in the Beginnings session (text published in ANYTIME, 1999)
Designed and installed the exhibition “Winding Ankara,” the visual complement to the lecture.
- 1994 Participated in the 4th Turkish National Architecture Exhibition and projects were selected for the exhibition catalogue

Teaching Experience

- 2011-present Adjunct Faculty, Bilgi University, Department of Architecture, Graduate Degree, Istanbul
- 2008-present Adjunct Faculty, Parsons School of Constructed Environments, AAS Interior Design Studio II & Principles of Design
- 2008-2009 Studio Co-Leader, Fordham University + Pablo Neruda Academy, as part of Bronx River Crossing, Workshop, organized by SLO Architecture, recipients of the Van Alen Institute Prize.
- 1998–2000 MIT, Cambridge, MA

Teaching Assistant, graduate studio for Maryann Thompson (Thompson and Rose Architects, Boston, MA) and Dimitris Antonakakis (Atelier 66, Athens, Greece)

Teaching Assistant, undergraduate design studio for Prof. Ellen Dunham-Jones
- 1998–present Rhode Island School of Design (Elizabeth Dean Hermann’s studio), Providence, RI
Roger Williams University (Hassan Uddin Khan’s studio), Bristol, RI
City College, NJIT & The New School, New York, NY
Guest reviewer and lecturer for architectural and landscape design studios and courses
- 1997–1998 METU, Ankara, Turkey

Memberships, certificates

Chamber of Architects, Istanbul, Turkey

LEED AP, US Green Building Council

Member of Yedikule Historical Gardens Protection Initiative

Becoming Local, AESOP, İstanbul, Advisory Board member

Northside Townhall Community and Cultural Center, Arts Council Board Member,
Brooklyn, New York

Languages

Turkish (native), English (fluent), Italian (fluent), French (intermediate)