

Art, Culture & Museums

Our curated guide to the best exhibitions and happenings in the city

Top 5 events

Lessons from 'Standing Man'

Performance art takes its next steps with a festival this month



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- Resistance Art, Culture &
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Top 5 venues



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- Art, Culture & Museums - Elipsis Gallery
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Events



© VestAndPage 2010. 'Without Tuition or Restraint', The Exchange Gallery, Penzance (UK)

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August, 2013

by: Alexandra Ivanoff

Performance

artist Erdem Gündüz's silent, motionless "Standing Man" protest in Taksim Square in June – and the thousands of other standing people he inspired - has newly exposed many in Turkey to the power of performance art.

This

little-understood form of artistic expression is actually "sculpture-based," according to Burçak Konukman, the director of the 2013 edition of the International Performance Association (IPA) Festival, which will be held in Istanbul this month. "Performance art is live art, and it treats the body like sculpture, by using the body in a space in a certain way,' Konukman told Time Out Istanbul in an interview.

Performance-art

training helps a person contact and strengthen his or her inner sensors by means of particular physical and emotional exercises. Konukman offers an example: "One student was doing a performance in a stairwell. She was shouting 'What's the next step?' while she was cleaning the stairs, one by one. Watching that was so strange, and I can still hear it in my head!'

Konukman

cautions, however, against confusing performance art with such populist

actions as flash-mobs, or putting large signage (no matter how revolutionary the language) or costumes on one's body and marching down a boulevard. "Those things are usually promotional and could



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- 1. Lessons from 'Standing Man'
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Event Calendar



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be perceived as advertising," he explains. "İstiklal Caddesi is one long shopping mall, and companies are always doing promotions there. Real performance art is wide-open; we use it in a way that encourages responsibility."

The IPA Festival

Konukman

and an international group of young participants will meet August 12 for a series of IPA Summer Camp workshops, to be followed by a workshop

performance on August 17 and a festival from August 22-24, capped by a

conference and panel. Fittingly, given the uncertain political and social climate in Turkey right now, this year's theme for the IPA Platform for Young Performance Artists will be "What's the Next Step?"

IPA

co-founder Jürgen Fritz, from Germany, will be one of the IPA Summer Camp's international team of teachers, alongside Agnes Nedregard (Norway) and VestANDPage, the name used by the duo Verena Stenke (Germany) and Andrea Pagnes (Italy). The venues for the festival will be the Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Siemens Sanat, Maumau, Quit, Tophane-i Amire, MIXER, Sanatorium, Istanbul Modern, SALT Galata and SALT Beyoğlu.

Konukman's

affinity for the techniques of performance art stems from training

directly with Fritz in Berlin for an IPA Summer Camp in 2011. Fritz's curriculum included such exercises as "riding the mad horse," explains Konukman. "For two hours, we had to imagine riding a wild young horse to figure out how you would do it, and how the horse rides you. It creates an awareness of how the space around you changes." For this year's camp and festival, Konukman will take Fritz's list of questions attached to the theme "What's the Next Step?" to examine what's next for 1) You; 2) Istanbul; 3) Turkey; and 4) Life. "We actually chose this formula at the beginning of the year, long before the Gezi [Park] protests happened," he says. "It's a response to all the infrastructure changes [we've been seeing] in the city."

But

after what we've witnessed over the past few months, is there a risk of police intervention in work performed in public spaces? "Our outdoor performances will only be in spaces that are connected to a venue. And these venues have their own security. We don't need to get permits [for public assembly]," Konukman says. "We are also not doing anything violent or [threatening]. Any police intervention will be handled by the venues. And the beauty of IPA's platform is that it's portable."

Nexus in Tophane

In

the IPA's seventh year of producing programs around the world, the organization has selected a new gallery in Istanbul's Tophane neighborhood as the meeting point for its 2013 program. An active gallery with its own permanent collection of 500 pieces of contemporary art and new exhibits every two weeks, MIXER also functions as a venue for lectures, films and music, and has a small café inside. This month, in addition to its regular exhibitions and events, the space will be home base for the IPA program.

MIXER

co-owner Bengü Gün and artist-relations director Mehmet Kahraman are excited about the IPA's impending residency there. "We have a big, wide-open space that is perfect for this kind of collaboration," Gün says. And Kahraman sees the partnership as a natural blend of MIXER's mandate to launch emerging visual artists and curators with the IPA's core activities of teaching the techniques of performance art.

Though

Aesthetics of Resistance This volunteer-led exhibitio

This volunteer-led exhibition inspired by the Gezi Park protest movement includes 135 artworks donated by 62 professional and amateur artists working in nine different discip... Park Art 10:00

Art, Culture & Museums Close Quarters

This new exhibition focusing on contemporary photography in Turkey gathers 18 artists around the idea of creating a personal documentary. In the exhibition, individual photog... Istanbul Modern 10:00

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Connecting the Dots: Workshops Pera Museum hosts selected works from the 6th International Student Triennial in collaboration with the Marmara University Faculty of Fine Arts as part of its



	the program's theme seems anchored to Turkey and Istanbul, the topics that will be examined are only catalysts for thinking globally by acting locally. "Yes, it's site-specific," says Konukman. "But art is such a powerful thing we can't see its parameters."
	The International Performance Association Festival runs Aug 12-24 at various locations. For more information on the workshops, platform, performances and conference, visit www.i-pa.org. Workshop program is limited to 40 people; email ipasummer@i-pa.org for application information. Event home base MIXER (www.mixerarts.com) is located at Boğazkesen Caddesi 45 in Tophane.
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