

VARDİYA

16. Uluslararası
Mimarlık Sergisi,
Venedik Bienali,
Türkiye Pavyonu

16th International
Architecture Exhibition,
La Biennale di Venezia,
Pavilion of Turkey

26/05 – 25/11/2018

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la Biennale di Venezia

16. Mostra
Internazionale
di Architettura
Partecipazioni Nazionali

**THE PAVILION OF TURKEY TO OFFER AN OPEN
SPACE FOR CREATIVE ENCOUNTER AND
COLLABORATIVE PRODUCTION AT THE 16TH
INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION OF
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA**

**Curated by Kerem Piker and coordinated by
Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts
(İKSV), the Pavilion of Turkey will present
Vardiya (the Shift¹) at the 16th
International Architecture Exhibition of la
Biennale di Venezia, taking place from May
26th to November 25th 2018. Co-sponsored
by Schüco Turkey and Vitra, the Pavilion of
Turkey is located at Sale d'Armi, Arsenale,
one of the main venues of the biennale.**

Conceived in response to the theme of *Freespace*,
the title of the Biennale Architettura 2018,
Vardiya offers a programme of public events with
the Pavilion of Turkey, providing an open space
for encounter, exhibition and production.

Envisioned as a spatial and temporal staging
base, the Pavilion of Turkey will provide a
participatory platform for workshops, digital
roundtable discussions and meetings. Piker's
curatorial programme will welcome **122**
international architecture students, as well as
academics, professionals, keynote speakers and
visitors, inviting a diversity of voices to
participate in a continuous process of learning
and production throughout the twenty-five weeks

1 Shift: "Vardiya" in Turkish: noun (va'rdiya) | in
Italian, "guardia"

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of the Biennale. Placing the study of architecture at the centre of the programme, Vardiya launched an open call for video responses to the questions: **Why does the biennial exist?, What does the biennial do?, For whom does the biennial exist?. 452 students from 29 different countries and 70 cities** from USA to China, India to Costa Rica applied for the project. 80% of the applicants were undergraduate students and 20% were graduate students; 70% of the applicants were female and 30% were male.

Out of these applicants, **122 international architecture students** will be invited to visit the Pavilion of Turkey in weekly shifts as active producers of the evolving exhibition content. These students are currently studying at universities such as Cornell, Columbia, Cape Town, Harvard, Princeton, Rice, Rhode Island School of Design, Pratt, Politecnico di Milano, Sri Venkateswara, Sumatera Institute of Technology, Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University and Yale, as well as Çukurova, Dokuz Eylül, Erciyes, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts, Istanbul Technical University, Mardin Artuklu and Middle East Technical University in Turkey.

The programme will kick off with **video installations**, through which participating students question the purpose and role of the biennial; **12 workshops** run by invited professionals and student groups, focusing on a variety of topics; around **50 digital meetings**, with participants from a range of disciplines; and **6 lectures** by keynote speakers, including an international roster of leading architects.

Vardiya is intended to solicit a critical dialogue amongst invited guests, visitors and architecture and design professionals around the role of the biennial. In addition to creating a space for all parties to benefit from this opportunity of interplay,

the Pavilion of Turkey hopes to incorporate individual and collective experiments from young creative minds into the locus of contemporary architectural agendum.

Vardiya is curated by **Kerem Piker**. The associate curators are **Cansu Cürgen, Yelta Köm, Nizam Onur Sönmez, Yağız Söylev** and **Erdem Tüzün**.

The Pavilion of Turkey exhibition is coordinated by **İKSV**, and realised through the co-sponsorship of **Schüco Turkey** and **VitrA**, with the lighting support of **TEPTA Lighting**, the contribution of the **Ministry of Culture and Tourism** and under the auspices of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey**. The Pavilion of Turkey opened for the first time at the 14th International Architecture Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia in 2014, upon a 20-year allotment of the Arsenale with İKSV's initiation and the contribution of 21 supporters.

Press Conference in İstanbul, 6 March 2018
SALON İKSV – Nejat Eczacıbaşı Binası, No:5
Şişhane/İstanbul, Turkey

A press conference was held at Salon İKSV on Tuesday March 6th between 16:00 – 17:00 GMT to present further details of the *Vardiya* programme and to announce participating speakers. The curatorial team was present to present the design of the pavilion and discuss the outcomes of the open call. The conference was structured in a roundtable format in order to recreate the experience of the pavilion.

The General Manager of İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSV), **Görgün Taner** made an opening speech saying: *“As the İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, our journey at La Biennale di Venezia began when we took over the coordination of the Pavilion of Turkey in 2007, and has*

continued to develop after securing a long-term venue in 2014, with the contributions of 21 supporters. It is always a great pleasure to coordinate the exhibition, which we believe enriches the creative sectors in Turkey as well. This year, we are very excited to be hosting a project that enables us all to witness the formation process of the pavilion. We would like to thank, first and foremost, Kerem Piker and the curatorial team, all of our sponsors, and all the individuals, institutions and corporations that support the Pavilion of Turkey.”

Schüco Turkey General Manager **Can Eren** said: “I am pleased to be with you once again as a supporter of the Pavilion of Turkey at the International Architecture Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia. At the two previous biennials, we watched very precious projects with admiration and pride. In this year’s exhibition, we find it especially meaningful that our young architects do not only consider “production” in abstract terms; they also put it into practice in the ‘free space’ they are provided with, in times when we need to produce more than ever, rather than consume. We wish our distinguished curator and associate curators all the success in this brand new and exciting project.”

Speaking on behalf of Vitra, Executive Vice President of the Eczacıbaşı Building Products Division **Ali Aköz** said, “Our Vitra brand promotes and supports projects that contribute to the development of architectural culture. In all of these projects, we make an effort to engage diverse groups and create an environment of collaborative production. So, we are very excited that this year’s exhibition theme opens the door to a similar production approach. Since the acquisition of a permanent space for Turkey at the Biennale di Venezia, the world’s most important architectural event, we have co-sponsored

the Pavilion of Turkey. This is our third shift as co-sponsor, and we are prepared to take on more shifts and continue to produce jointly in the years ahead."

The curator **Kerem Piker** explained the conceptual framework of the project:
"Architecture is a field that is constantly expanding, transforming and renewing itself. As such, there is a need for environments where architectural knowledge is reproduced, shared and discussed, and the voices of new participants are heard. As the International Architecture Exhibition at La Biennale di Venezia is one of the most important informal learning arenas in architecture, we prefer to describe the Pavilion of Turkey as a space for meeting, encounter and production rather than merely an exhibition space. In order to strengthen and diversify participation, as well as expand the curiosity of new actors in the field, we organised an open call for applications to imagine the Pavilion of Turkey as a meeting space for architecture students from all over the world. 122 selected young architects will meet with professionals, academicians and enthusiasts from different backgrounds, co-produce with scheduled programmes and co-create an exhibition that expands on these productions. Along with the participants, who we believe are a crucial part of contemporary culture and architectural debate, as curious individuals asking questions and constantly improving themselves, we strive to understand each other and be productive together. We also see this exhibition and the preparation process as an opportunity to rethink what a biennial does, for whom, and why it exists in our time."

**The Pavilion of Turkey at the 16th
International Architecture Exhibition:
Vardiya (Arsenale exhibition space)**

Website: iksv.org/en // vardiya.iksv.org

Facebook: [facebook.com/istanbulkultursanatvakfi-](https://facebook.com/istanbulkultursanatvakfi)
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Notes to Editors:

**The 16th International Architecture
Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia**

Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara are the curators of the 16th International Architecture Exhibition, that will take place from May 26th to November 25th 2018 in the Giardini and the Arsenale, and around other venues in Venice where 65 national pavilions will present contributions from around the world, including the Pavilion of Turkey. The Biennale Architettura 2018 will be titled *Freespace*, word which describes a generosity of spirit and a sense of humanity at the core of architecture's agenda, focusing on the quality of space itself. For further information:

www.labiennale.org/en/architecture/2018

**About Istanbul Foundation for Culture and
Arts İKSV)**

Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSV) is a non-profit cultural institution that was founded in 1973. The general objectives of the Foundation are: to make Istanbul one of the world's foremost capitals of culture and the arts; to create continuous interaction between national and universal values, and traditional and contemporary values via culture and the arts; and to contribute actively to the development of cultural policies. With these objectives, İKSV organises the Istanbul Festivals of Music, Film, Theatre and Jazz, as well as the Istanbul Biennial, the

Istanbul Design Biennial, autumn film week Filmekimi and other special events. The Foundation hosts cultural and artistic events at Salon located at the Nejat Eczacıbaşı Building. İKSV organises the Pavilion of Turkey at La Biennale di Venezia and coordinates an artist residency programme at Cité International des Arts, France. İKSV also conducts studies and drafts reports with the aim of contributing to cultural policy development. For further information: iksv.org

The Selection Committee for the Pavilion of Turkey at the 16th International Architecture Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia

The Selection Committee chose *Vardiya* among the applications made in response to an open-call, after a series of evaluation meetings. The Committee's members are Prof. Dr. Sibel Bozdoğan, Levent Çalıkoglu, Prof. Dr. Arzu Erdem, Prof. Dr. Murat Güvenç, Yeşim Hatırlı, Prof. Dr. Süha Özkan and Prof. Dr. Uğur Tanyeli.

Curatorial Team

KEREM PIKER, curator

Kerem Piker was born in Ankara in 1978. He received his B Arch degree in 2001 at Istanbul Technical University and his MSc in Architecture degree in 2004 at TU Delft. In 2010, he was celebrated as one of "The Best 40 Architects Under The Age Of 40 in Europe" by The Chicago Athenaeum: Museum of Architecture and Design. He is the winner of many architectural competitions both nationally and internationally. In 2016, his design of Akyazı Cultural Center project was awarded by XVth National Architecture Awards, in the category of "Design". Since 1998, Kerem Piker has taught in architecture schools as a visiting lecturer and juror, including Istanbul Technical University, Yıldız Technical University, Gebze Institute

of Technology, Bilgi University and Kültür University. Kerem Piker is the founder of KPM-Kerem Piker Mimarlık, architectural studio.

CANSU CÜRGEN, associate curator

Architect and academic. She works in İstanbul Bilgi University and pursues her PhD degree in İstanbul Technical University. Her specific topics of interest are the culture of daily life, open design practices and architectural debates on regulating principles.

YELTA KÖM, associate curator

Architect and researcher. He has graduated from Städelshule Architecture Class. He lives and produces in Berlin and İstanbul. He is one of the co-founder of the organisation Architecture for All, based in İstanbul. His research areas includes commoning practices, landforms and spatial practices in conflict areas.

NIZAM ONUR SÖNMEZ, associate curator

Architect and academic. He lives in İstanbul, Turkey and works at İstanbul Technical University. His research topics include artificial intelligence for design, utopian / visionary / narrative architectures, and personal identity.

YAĞIZ SÖYLEV, associate curator

Architect. He received his B Arch degree at İstanbul Technical University in 2014. He lives in Rotterdam, works at TU Delft while continuing his graduate studies. He is interested in common spaces.

ERDEM TÜZÜN, associate curator

Architect. He lives in New York and works with Eisenman Architects. He is the co-founder of Architecture for All, an independent architecture organization based in İstanbul. He received his B Arch degree at İstanbul Technical University and MS Arch degree at Pratt Institute. He was presented

VARDIYA

with the National Architecture Award in Turkey in 2016 with his Giant Machine project.

For videos from the press conference:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X0If2H0wV6oeLy3wEyAPdt-DZI50G_Fa or
<https://files.secureserver.net/0fx9xMkLR4QR1U>

For media related questions regarding the Pavilion of Turkey: media@iksv.org

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