

## POPARTISTANBUL

*At Pop Art, the shuttle movement between the surface and the depth is inevitable  
and is the feature of its own traumatic reality.*

**Hal Foster**

If we are to approach the history of art as the summation of systematic development stages, we can observe that POP ART is the distinctive breaking point throughout the chronology of the art history. POP ART is regarded as the “terminus a quo” of “art after the end of art” as introduced by Arthur Danto in citing this systematic narration, or as the point of defeat of the genealogy that emerged during Renaissance. It is evident that the final stamping ground of the development process of contemporary aesthetics has been the abstract expressionism. This era of abstract expressionism during which the European-centered art also migrated to the new continent, just as the case for all poises altering in the economy and politics during the post-World War II period, and New York gained influence again emerged from this city in an unexpected manner within the dynamics of this American geography. As expressed by the theoreticians of the post-modern trend, manifestation of the cultural center that moved from Europe to America somehow started with POP ART.

Well then, let's look back and think how POP ART had such influence? If we are to give a concise (and somehow structuralist) response, it was clearly inevitable. It was an era when late capitalism was propagating its own reality and the cultural medium, where such recent reality iconized, naturally found a post-modernist reciprocity. By looking into this more elaborately, we can mention that POP ART fed on the tools introduced by capitalism and the variables of the consumption culture of the era. From this point of view, it is a natural fact that the art evolving out of the self-content of the system at the spot where discourses based on the antagonisms of the modern strategies failed (or will fail), revealed itself as a sound trend and marked the entire course of affairs. This is the creative and enthusiastic aspect of the art: an unaccounted for minor movement and an open-ended complexion. As majority of the artists are somehow loathsome from Andy Warhol, the era that we live in to some aspect, we are also irritated and found the reflection of a reality where even we cannot free ourselves from that insipidness revealing the desire and intention of any artist solely to become popular and earn money.

Today, we can see how influential POP ART was. Anyone in search of the genealogy of the contemporary art within the contemporary art itself explicitly put forward that such history incorporates Warhol and Linchostain as it also incorporates Duchamp and there are linear bonds between each other. If we are to link such bonds that extend from ready-made objects of Duchamp to Marilyn of Warhol; at this age of globalization scattered from a seat to multiple seats, the reflections of that epoch continues to regenerate itself within this transformation imposed by that era. This is an unavoidable outcome of this gruesome late capitalism era where almost all major metropolitans of this Earth are transformed into small-scale Americas. The concept of “Pop” at any geography is reshaped within its inherited local feature and reveals it in a flexible manner. Thus, while POP ART corresponds to a pattern-demolishing functionality within the meaning of its origin on one hand, it also seems to become institutionalized within its own structure on the other hand; as is the case for all things. What will be the destination of this biaxial situation? Rather than any destination, the situation emerges into infinity of possibilities within the existent. This abundance of possibilities coincides with the existence of contemporary art and somehow must be acknowledges “as is”.

As Istanbul is (being) in transformation into one of the recent cultural focal points frequented by the aforementioned global capitalism from its standing as a major metropolitan of an underdeveloped third world country, protean artistic developments adequate to the concept of reality experienced reveal themselves. The innovative private schools besides the traditional academic education, innovative young artists educated in western centers, new multinational actors getting into the circulation of this ancient metropolis from various locations of the World, numerous new spaces varying in the range of small initiatives to the corporates naturally revives a new and vigorous art environment and makes out an ample artistic production dynamics. Thereby, distinct presences and dialects within this redundancy offer new opportunities without generating the threat of extinction the other. An environment to complicate the modernist art to breath with POP ART and similar trends within an academic continuity is substantially surpassed for Istanbul. At the modern society befuddled with visual images under a bombardment of information and subjected to the manipulation of all tempting objects of consumption as an obligation within the prevailing steep capitalist torments of our era, the young artists in this metropolis create their artistic strategies within their self-auras, which, in turn, introduce itself as a sound artistic performance and output.

The three artists attending POPARTISTANBUL exhibition should be approach in the context of their link to this genealogy and process. The concomitance of different works of 3 distinct artists within the frame of a single exhibition generates a situation open for multiple perusals. This is exactly what is intended with an exhibition on POP ART substantiated in Istanbul: to accommodate the multiplex layers of production and exhibition aspects of the art within a specific timeframe with its completely authentic characteristics. In this aspect, being exhibited in a gallery space located at Beyoğlu Tünel, such as ALANistanbul, that underwent a significant transformation is yet extremely meaningful for the monolithic statement of the exhibition.

At her photographs, Kezban Arca Batıbeki introduces us images on daily urban life in Istanbul. These photographs sometimes coincide with the controversies within the reality of the metropolis by presenting fetish consumption objects and sometimes with reproduction of the reality over these objects. The large scale of these photographs virtually enables perceiving of the elusiveness which transforms into a kind of show and simulation that we currently reside in by thoroughly absorbing the spectators into the image. We are invited by a perception that is difficult to distinguish the fiction from the reality within the construct reality of the pictures.

The works by Ardan Özmenoğlu present the quid pro quo of POP ART from many aspects, but authentic to the bone. The prints by the artist on harlequin post-it papers transform into striking clip art or compositions. The referrals of such compositions are again various images that the daily life imposes on the society as a bombardment. Such images return to the spectators by reiteration within itself at the works of Ardan Özmenoğlu. In this aspect, a very image of the soundest POP ART strategies reveals itself in these works.

Bahar Oganer attend to the integrity of the exhibition with, in particular, use of colors as a style at her large scale paintings. This striking color selection consolidates with an expression bearing graphical features at large scale canvas. Oganer's plain attitude converging to the American POP ART artists disposing comics, posters, advertising boards, fashion, and newspaper illustrations reveals itself as a background at her authentic works.

POPARTISTANBUL is like an epochal initiative for an exhibition that could be further elaborated. It is an initiative on generating multiplex meanings for contact, parallelism and confrontation of different artists and works at the broad perspective of the contemporary art. It is a local and universal anthology running over millions of images and codes that the capitalist machine, far stronger than 60s, introduced to circulation via popular culture.

**Efe Korkut Kurt**