

Introduction -

Sanart Association was founded by a group of friends from the art world: art historians, architects, critics, curators who simply wanted to live in an environment with more aesthetic and artistic experiences. They thought the solution was to create the possibilities oneself. The initiative was given by Benoit Junod, a Swiss diplomat who had developed the habit to enliven where he lived by bringing art there. The idea evolved to include the organization of a symposium around which art events could have more impact. This grew into the concept of unifying art, discourse and text in a single international event. This was the basis of Sanart's International Symposia since 1992: Identity, Marginality, Space; Art and Taboos; Art and Environment; Art and Science; and Aesthetics. I believe that the discipline that unites all artistic interests is aesthetics and it is therefore proper that Sanart which started as the association for the promotion of visual art in Turkey grew into an association of Aesthetics and Visual Culture. It is also befitting that the first symposium with this change of identity should be on Aesthetics.

Aesthetics as a philosophical and critical discipline is quite new and its adherents very few in Turkey.* On the other hand, the need for a conscious concern for aesthetics, and the problems that are related to it are overwhelmingly pressing and urgent. Notwithstanding the fact that Anatolian soil has been the home of many rich civilizations with their aesthetic sophistication, the rapid changes brought in by industrialization and urbanization have created a convulsion in aesthetic sensibilities. The symposia that Sanart has organized since 1992 on various subject matter related to cultural interests that were actual at the moment, could all be considered as discourse and subject related to aesthetics. However, because of the urgent need for implementation as well as discourse and discussion, Sanart's method of combining art events and philosophical or critical inquiry seem to be very appropriate within this cultural context.

We hope that organising conference series that deal mainly with aesthetics will also bring another dimension to our interests, namely it will create a podium where people interested in aesthetics in Turkey will come together and meet their colleagues from all over the world. The first of these conferences of which this little book is a document proves what a wide variety of topics are possible for aestheticians even in such a small gathering. It also proves that when aesthetic discourse is interdisciplinary there can be no limits to its richness.

As one of the most continuous and loyal of Sanart fans, I would like to thank all those who have made this conference and this publication possible: many of them have their names as speakers or authors, artists and editors, but there are also many whose names do not show and who were the quietly listening audience of students without whom our work would not have much significance.

The Middle East Technical University, The Rector's Office and the Faculty of Architecture have cooperated with SANART and supported the organization of the conference and the publication of this proceedings book.

* With all due respect to Professor İsmail Tunalı who has done pioneering work on Aesthetics in Turkey.

