

2012 TCF Cultural Exchange Fellowships Experiences and Observations of Fellows

Dr. Utku Dervent, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Fine Art, Istanbul Aydın University

“In my work at VSC, I combined Wittengstein’s language game theory with Bach’s method of variation based on repetition and transformation and with technical elements and solutions inherent in kilim weaving. As a result of this project, I now plan to realize my sketches and scale models in 3 dimensional formats, first preparing an effective presentation of them using computer modelling and looking for galleries and sponsors to actually realize them. To be able to work and create in an uninterrupted work environment and in the company of fellow artists with whom I was able to conduct in depth conversations about my work led to an invaluable state of mind. Therefore, I would like to thank TCF for your contribution to make this become a reality.”



Nazlihan Eda Ercin, a creative drama and performance teacher at Eskisehir Gelisim College

“The experience I had with Double Edge Theatre changed my path as a researcher/performer/educator. It was a gradual, challenging (individually, socially and environmentally), and spiritual rediscovery: ‘a rediscovery of who I desire to be and potentially can become as a performer/researcher.’ I am immensely grateful for the TCF Cultural Exchange Fellowship that provided me with to have this unique and transforming experience.”



Gonca Gumusayak, MA student in Modern Dance at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

“I was selected as one of the participants of danceWEB Scholarship 5 weeks Residency Programme 2012 in the frame of ImPulsTanz – Vienna- International Dance Festival, taking place from July 11 - August 15, 2012. My residency was made possible by two partners: Turkish Cultural Foundation İstanbul, Bimeras Dance Association Wild Card Holder Danceweb Programme 2012 in Impulstanz Festival Danceweb Programme 2012. Through my residency, we had everyday workshops and coaching projects, every night one or two different performances to see. Thank you for this opportunity.”



Dr. Selin Ipek, Historian, Topkapı Palace Museum

“I attended 13th Biennial Symposium on Textiles and Politics of “The Textile Society of America”, in Washington, D.C. , 19-22 September 2012. I had a chance to listen the academic papers of speakers related to my area. Also, I attended a special viewing of materials from the collections in the Library of Congress with librarians. During my presentation at the symposium, I introduced selected examples of fabrics woven in Ottoman workshops during 18th and 19th centuries. The purpose of this presentation was to exhibit Turkish textile art at an international platform. On this stage of my career, it was a great chance to attend an international symposium to meet scholars and colleagues working in the field of textile and to exchange information. In that regard, I appreciated to have the honor of receiving this fellowship from the Turkish Cultural Foundation.”



Dr. Ilkay Kanik, food writer and lecturer at Marmara University

"I attended the "Global Gateways and Local Connections: Cities, Agriculture, and the Future of Food Systems" conference in New York (NY-USA) on June 20-24, 2012. I presented a paper titled "Food, Identity and Cultural Heritage: Examples from Turkey". The impression left through participating in this conference was that the faculty members worldwide who attended the conference have now been acquainted with the cultural culinary activities in Turkey, especially those that are carried out by the TCF Culinary Arts Center-YESAM. Thank you for giving me this opportunity."



Berna Kurt Kemalolu, folk dance performer and Ph. D. candidate in Traditional Culture, Performing Arts, and Social Sciences at Yildiz Technical University

"Thanks to the support of the Turkish Cultural Foundation, I have been able to participate in the 27th Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology organized by The Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick, Ireland, between July, 22nd – 29th, 2012. With the presentation of my paper on the Turkish folk dance scene, I had a chance to contribute to my academic realm preserving Turkey's artistic and cultural heritage. Thanks to the support of TCF, I must say that such experience abroad broadened my perspective and inspired me to engage in more artistic and scientific projects I plan to realize in Turkey, after my dissertation. Thank you again for your support which contributed much to me."



Tuba Kurtulus, Curator, Topkapi Palace Museum

"I attended the 13th Symposium Biennial "Textiles and Politics" organized by American Textile Society on 19-22th September 2012 with the support of the TCF fellowship. I presented a paper during the Symposium titled "A Group of Heated Stamped Designed Textiles in the Topkapi Palace Museum." Sharing this unique subject related to Ottoman textile art –which has never been researched before- with the American Textile Society members was very special. At the end of my presentation, I received very positive reactions. I also joined a workshop about "Warp-Patterned Weaves" instructed by Ann Pollard Rowe at the Textile Museum. Upon their request, I presented my paper again to the staff of the Metropolitan Museum Textile Restoration and Conservation Department. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Turkish Cultural Foundation for giving me this opportunity."



Ferit Odman, Jazz Musician

"The generous help of the Turkish Cultural Foundation made it possible for me to attend the "JazzNL - Gateway to Global Jazz" conference held in the city of Amersfoort in the Netherlands. It was a great opportunity for me to present my music to a knowledgeable jazz audience who were keen to discover my project and I've made so many significant connections with international artists and professionals. I am thankful to TCF for this opportunity and I believe that my participation to JazzNL will open more doors for me to represent my music, thus the level of Turkish musicians around the world."



Elif Temucin Uyaniksoy, playwright and co-founder of Theatre BeReZe

“I was invited as a playwright to 12th theatre biennial named "New Visions New Voices", which was organized by the Kennedy Center in Washington DC on May 13-20, 2012. I also participated as a representative of ASSITEJ Turkey at the "Write Local Play Global", which is the playwrights' network of ASSITEJ. I had the opportunity to meet many playwrights, actors, directors, educators, dramaturges, producers, publishers, festival coordinators, and discuss different plays, different approaches, and different cultures.”



Füreyâ Ünal, Pianist, Member of Faculty, California State University Fullerton and Santa Ana College, founder and co-artistic director of the Divan Consort

“My trip to China was a wonderful experience for me on so many levels. Not only was I able to meet several Chinese musicians and composers, but I also got to see many important places such as the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, and a lot of important Buddhist Temples, just to name a few. My chamber music ensemble Divan Consort will be releasing a CD in the very near future. One of the pieces we will record is by a Chinese composer, Chen Yi. During my time in China, I had the opportunity to go and see the Beijing Opera, which gave me a better understanding of this piece. I would like to thank the Turkish Cultural Foundation for making this concert tour possible by awarding me with the TCF Cultural Exchange Fellowship.”



Dr. Beata Biedrońska-Słota, Curator, Textile Department of the National Museum in Krakow, Poland

“In connection with the fellowship received from the Turkish Cultural Foundation, I spent three weeks in Istanbul. During my stay in Turkey I visited primarily Istanbul and Bursa. In Istanbul, I also delivered a lecture on Turkish Works of Art in Poland as part of the TCF Lecture Series on Turkish Culture and Art. My stay in Istanbul helped me to gain a deeper knowledge of Turkish art and culture, necessary for me to better describe and help develop the Turkish art collections preserved in Poland. After this visit, I plan to write and publish a book about Turkish textiles in Polish collections, about their quality, level and meaning.”



Roberley Bell, Sculptor, Professor at the College of Imaging Arts & Sciences at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)

I received a fellowship from the Turkish Cultural Foundation to participate in the 7th edition of the Contemporary Istanbul Art Fair. I was represented at the fair by Alan Gallery Istanbul. The gallery exhibited sculptures, from my series “Other Landscapes”. Along with the increase of international galleries and artists represented, the fair was stronger and becomes an important model for a growing contemporary art scene. I am truly pleased to have participated in this event. I am appreciative to both the Turkish Cultural Foundation and to my gallery Alan Istanbul and the gallery director Efe Korkut Kurt for your support.



Judith Dennis, Film Director

"With the generous support of the Turkish Cultural Foundation, I was able to participate in Flying Broom International Women's Film Festival's 15th Anniversary season. My visit to Flying Broom in 2001 had been something of an epiphany. I understand that what may have seemed tangential in this visit may prove to be most valuable creatively. My trip was a whirlwind, but at such an important juncture for me. The trip offered a kind of renewal - new horizons, new friendships and a new look at old thoughts. I thank you wholeheartedly for this opportunity and for your support, and look forward to updating you as my new work unfurls."



Hallgerdur Hallgrimsdottir, Photographer, Journalists and Educator

"The TCF fellowship enabled me to participate in a 9 day intensive workshop held in July in Canakkale, Turkey. I had previously spent a month traveling around Turkey photographing and also working more sporadically around my home country, Iceland. In the workshop I preceded to combine these images, from both countries, to make a sort of album of my travels, of my collected moments. The work takes form of an artist book, an on-wall exhibition and a multimedia version. Furthermore an exhibition catalogue is being made, including the work of all participants. The extent of the impact is perhaps not fully clear yet, but my work, brought to the finishing line by the workshop, will be exhibited in several places in the next months."



Margaret Mahan, Paper artist and co-Director of Peace Paper

“Due to the support of the Turkish Cultural Foundation, the Kagithane Municipality, and Darussafaka School, Peace Paper was well-received for a two-month residency in Istanbul this April through early June. While our time and activities were mostly divided between Kagithane’s new paper studio and Darussafaka’s new paper club, we still managed to bring our studio to outside conferences and host extra one-day workshops. These events include: an interactive demonstration at the Kocaeli Papermaking Conference; a demonstration at IRCICA’s conference The Family in Muslim Countries & Communities International Symposium; a public workshop for the Volunteer Festival on Heybeliada Island; and a presentation at Darussafaka’s annual Rice Day Celebration. I hope that because of our work, more and more interest will be directed towards Turkey as a site for future paper and arts projects.”



Lucy K. Mensah, Ph.D. candidate in English at Vanderbilt University

“With the support of the Turkish Cultural Foundation, I was able to attend Harvard’s second annual Institute for World Literature (IWL), which was held on June 25-July 21, 2012 in Istanbul, Turkey. What drew me to the Institute for World Literature initially was the opportunity I had to broaden my research archive to include sites beyond the United States. Apart from the enlightening courses I took during the IWL program, I also had the opportunity to participate in a small group setting with other graduate students who study modernism and postmodernism. It was through the IWL that I was first introduced to Orhan Pamuk and Turkish literature in general, and I took it upon myself to read his Museum of Innocence prior to hearing his lecture and visiting his museum in Taksim. I plan on teaching Pamuk’s work during my teaching assistant position at Vanderbilt.”

