

**Sabine Vogel, Artforum Web, Critics' Picks, October 2005**

***International Istanbul Biennial***

The last two Istanbul Biennials lost touch with the city's roots. This year's curators, Charles Esche (Director of the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven) and Vasif Kortun (Director of the Platform Garanti Contemporary Art Center, Istanbul) are determined to correct this. To that end, more than half of the approximately fifty participating artists were invited to take part in temporary residencies to develop projects specific to the city. Rather than being exhibited at historical sites, as has been the case, these projects are shown instead in seven apartment buildings and warehouses.

Dan Perjovschi, for instance, offers his observations of the everyday life of locals and tourists in his caustic comic strips. Other works deal with cultural difference, such as Yael Bartana's video of "The Evacuation of Gilad's Colony," a teenage game played by an insular and codependent group that must be broken up by two people, and Hala Elkoussy's impressive video, which tells a story of the outskirts of Cairo from a child's perspective. Both works lead us to greater knowledge of others' realities. Yochai Avrahami's installation deals with public transportation between Israel and Palestine; Alexander Ugay's work shows the artist's hometown in southern Kazakhstan in an attempt to depict the "everywhere-ness of small towns across the world."

