

Biography

Working across public spaces and art institutions, Altay's 'settings' provide critical reflection on urban phenomena and artistic activity. Through 'narrative devices' and 'spatial instruments' the work brings together social practice, spatial design, sculpture, photography, exhibition-making, and design products. Altay's work is often staged and manifested through the spaces, exhibitions and publications he co-produces.

Altay is an Associate Professor and the **Graduate Programs Director** of MA/MDes Adaptive Reuse at the Department of Interior Architecture in the Rhode Island School of Design. Prior to RISD, Altay worked as the **Head of Department of Interior Design** (2019-2022), as well as teaching Design Studio courses and seminars, incorporating theory and practice of space-making and its impact on society at Istanbul Bilgi University. During Fall 2021, Altay was on Sabbatical Leave, and contributed to Studio Courses at the **MA Interior Design, Royal College of Art** in London, U.K. Between 2012-2019 Altay was the **Head of Department of Industrial Design**, where he established a critical curriculum based on his experiences in contemporary art, architecture and the urban context. Resulting in a body of student work that challenges the norm especially with regards to contingencies of locatedness and production methods in design education. Together with students and graduates he co-authored publications on topics such as anonymous design, queering objects, and hybrid technologies.

As a designer, artist and collaborator, he was engaged in opening up public spaces to common use, exchange and collective reflection. His public projects include: MÇPS (Istanbul, 2017); "Loughborough Records Present Presence" (Loughborough, 2016); "Distributed" (London, 2012); "The Church Street Partners' Gazette" (London, 2010-13) and "PARK: bir ihtimal" (Istanbul, 2010). His work has been included in **Biennials of Istanbul, Havana, Busan, Gwangju, Marrakech, Coventry, Thessaloniki, Taipei, Yinchuan**. Exhibitions in museums and galleries include **Walker Art Center** (Minneapolis), **ZKM** (Karlsruhe), **Artists Space** (New York), and **SALT** (Istanbul). Altay's works are included in public collections such as VanAbbe Museum (Eindhoven), ARTER-VKV (Istanbul).

He was one of the co-curators of the **4th Rotterdam Architectural Biennale** with Philipp Misselwitz. He has been involved in exhibition making practices curatorially and through spatial design. With Future Anecdotes Istanbul, he designed the permanent collection display for Van Abbemuseum and the User-spaces and workshops that accompany the exhibition. **He has designed numerous exhibitions from archival and research exhibitions to displays of artistic work.** A recipient of Individual Research Grant from the **Graham Foundation**; and Keynote Speaker at **Architectural Humanities Research Association's** International Conferences, Altay gave lectures, ran studio crits and held workshops on art & design at **Princeton University, Bard College, AA School of Architecture, UCL Bartlett School of Architecture, Royal Institute of Art Stockholm, Konstfack, Glasgow School of Art, NABA Milano, UniBZ, Dutch Art Institute, ETH Zurich**, among other international institutions and schools.

Altay is the host of Ahali Conversations, a podcast on the future of cultural production. He is also the editor of Ahali: an anthology for setting a setting, published by **Architectural Association Publications** in 2013. Altay's own research has been published in periodicals such as **Frieze, Artforum, AD (Architectural Design), domus, Design & Culture, Digital Creativity** and the **Journal of Architectural Education**; and as book chapters from publishers such as **Routledge**, and **MIT Press**.

Academic Degrees

1999 – 2004 Ph.D. in *Art, Design and Architecture*, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

2003 – 2004 Post-Graduate Degree *Critical Studies*. Malmö Art Academy & Lund University, Sweden.

1997 – 1999. M.F.A. *Interior Architecture and Environmental Design* Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

1993 – 1997. B.F.A. in *Interior Architecture and Environmental Design*. Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

Academic Positions

2024-ongoing Associate Professor of Interior Architecture and Graduate Programs Director of MA/MDes Adaptive Reuse, at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD).

2024-2025 Graduate Program Director (interim) of MDes Exhibition Design and Narrative Environments at the Department of Interior Architecture, RISD.

2021-2022 Prof.Dr. Department of Interior Design, Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Bilgi University. (*partially on Sabbatical*)

2021 Visiting Professor (*During Sabbatical*) at MA Interior Design, Royal College of Art, London.

2019-2022 Guest Professor at MA Visual Arts and Curatorial Studies, NABA Milano. *Courses: Exhibition Design; Visual Arts Practice.*

2020-2021 Guest Professor at Free University of Bozen. *Course: Artistic Production I-II*

2016-2021. Assoc.Prof.Dr. in the Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Bilgi University, Istanbul. *Courses: Design in Context; Object and Space in Contemporary Art; Urban Interiors; Design Studio.*

2019-2020. Head of Department. Interior Design. Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Bilgi University. *Responsible for Curriculum Development, Academic Recruitment, Program Coordination and Department Budget, working in close collaboration with Dean's Office and other Heads of Departments in the Faculty of Architecture.*

2012-2019. Head of Department. Industrial Design. Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Bilgi University. *Responsible for Curriculum Development, Academic Recruitment, Program Coordination and Department Budget, working in close collaboration with Dean's Office and other Heads of Departments in the Faculty of Architecture.*

2011-2016. Asst.Prof.Dr. in the Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Bilgi University, Istanbul. *Courses: Spatial and Product Design; Urban Interiors-Problematising Public Space; Art & Architecture.*

2009 - 2012. Guest Professor at the Faculty of Art and Social Sciences, Department of Visual Art, Sabancı University, İstanbul. *Courses: Issues and Debates in Contemporary Art; Art & Institutions; Fine Art Studio; Fine Art Practice "Art in Public".*22

Artistic Activity

Solo Exhibitions & Projects

- 2024 “Been Waiting for the Rain to Flow” solo exhibition, Flat Time House, London, U.K.
- 2023 “A Skein of Waterfowl” solo exhibition, ÖktemAykut, İstanbul, Turkey.
- 2022 “Dreamers’ Library Station” solo exhibition, CURA Basement Roma, Rome, Italy.
- 2019 “The Missing Planet” spatial intervention and display curated by Marco Scotini, Centro Pecci, Prato, Italy.
- 2017 “MÇPS: Manifaturacılar Çarşısı Plakçılık Sunar” setting and public space intervention, IMC5533, İstanbul.
- 2016 “VFI: Virgolo Future Institute” solo exhibition, ar/ge kunst, Bozen, Italy.
- 2016 “Loughborough Records Presents Presence” as part of Market Town, series of public commissions curated by Nick Slater, for RADAR, Loughborough University. Loughborough, U.K.
- 2015 “Such Territorial Claims Transform Spatial Imagination Into Obscure (Studio Virgolo third fragments)”. Happening and Situated Object. Lungomare and ar/ge kunst, Bozen, Italy.
- 2015 “Split Horizon (Domestic Disobedience)”. ÖktemAykut, İstanbul, Turkey.
- 2015 “Such Territorial Claims Transform Spatial Imagination Into (Studio Virgolo second fragments)”. City-wide Public Poster Campaign. Lungomare and ar/ge kunst, Bozen, Italy.
- 2015 “Such Territorial Claims, (Studio Virgolo first fragments)”. Lungomare, Bozen, Italy.
- 2014 “Carricola Bazaar”. Carricola, Valencia, Spain.
- 2014 “You Don’t Go Slumming: Can Altay & Jeremiah Day” SALT Galata, İstanbul, Turkey.
- 2014 “Normalization Parts 1 and 2 and 3” SALT Beyoğlu, İstanbul, Turkey.
- 2013 “Inner Space Station” Seward Park & Protocinema. New York, USA.
- 2012 “Rogue Game” (with Sophie Warren and Jonathan Mosley). Spike Island, Bristol, U.K.
- 2012 “Distributed”. Frieze Projects East, London, U.K.
- 2011 “COHAB: an assembly of spare parts”. Casco: office for art, design and theory, Utrecht, Netherlands.
- 2011 “The Ground was Divided, We Jumped”. Transeuropa Festival. Curated by Emanuele Guidi. Simultaneously in London, Paris, Bologna, and Cluj Napoca.
- 2010 “The Church Street Partners’ Gazette”. The Showroom, London, U.K.
- 2010 “PARK: bir ihtimal” Nisantasi Cumhuriyet Parki. İstanbul, Turkey.
- 2009 “Trainer Monument (prototype)” Static Gallery, Liverpool, U.K.
- 2009 “You Don’t Go Slumming: Can Altay & Jeremiah Day” Arcade, London, U.K.
- 2008 “Setting a Setting / Forecasting a Broken Past”. Künstlerhaus Bethanien. Berlin, Germany.
- 2007 “Ey Ahali! / Setting a Setting / Letting a Setting Go”. Spike Island. Bristol, U.K.
- 2006 “No Bar, Just Bottles”. Sala Rekalde. Curated by Leire Vergara. Bilbao, Spain.

Exhibition Design and Curatorial

- 2021 “Kundura Hafıza” exhibition design for the archives and oral history of the Beykoz Shoe Factory. İstanbul.
- 2020 “Empathy Revisited: 5th İstanbul Design Biennial” (with Asli Altay, Future Anecdotes) Spatial and Exhibition Design including interior displays and a series of ‘stations’ in public space.
- 2019-2020 “The City of Tomorrow” (with Asli Altay, Future Anecdotes) Design of travelling exhibition on Soviet Modernisms. Curated by Georg Schölhammer and Ruben Arevshetyan. Yerevan, Minsk, Moscow, Nowosibirsk (ongoing)
- 2017 “Werksalon” (with Asli Altay, Future Anecdotes) User-spaces at the Van Abbemuseum. Curated by Loes Janssen. Eindhoven.
- 2017 “The Way Beyond Art” (with Asli Altay, Future Anecdotes) Permanent Collection Exhibition at Van Abbe museum, curated by Charles Esche, Christiane Berndes, Steven Ten Thije. Eindhoven.

2016 “Who Owns The Street?” Exhibition Design at Van Abbe museum, curated by Willem Jan Renders. Eindhoven.

2014 “A Parallel Modernity / Uma Modernidade Paralela” Design Collaboration with Future Anecdotes Istanbul for Exhibition at CCSP Centro Cultural Sao Paulo, curated by Georg Schölhammer and Ruben Arevshetyan. Sao Paulo.

2013 “Yerelde Modernler / Trespassing Modernities” Design Collaboration with Future Anecdotes Istanbul for Exhibition at SALT Galata, curated by Georg Schölhammer. Istanbul.

2010 “Açık Şehir / Open City Istanbul” three exhibitions co-curated with Philipp Misselwitz (Open City Forum; Refuge; Bas Princen 5 cities portfolio) at DEPO, Istanbul.

2009 “Refuge” exhibition for the International Architecture Biennial of Rotterdam. Co-curated with Philipp Misselwitz. This exhibition is one of the six main parts of the Biennial titled “Open City: Designing Co-Existence” curated by Kees Christiaanse, taking place at NAI, Rotterdam.

Selected Group Exhibitions

2025 Tarihin Neresindeyiz? Curated by Onur Karaoglu, HARA, Istanbul, Turkey.

2024 Backstage Engelberg. Curated by Dorothea Strauss, Engelberg, Switzerland.

2023 Coventry Biennial “Like a Shortcut Through the Brambles” Coventry, UK.

2023 “The Space Between Us” VanAbbe Museum, Eindhoven, Netherlands.

2022 8th Çanakkale Biennial. Curated by Azra Tüzünoğlu. Çanakkale, Turkey

2022 17th Istanbul Biennial (with Marco Scotini) Curated by Ute Meta Bauer, Amar Kanwar, David Teh. Istanbul, Turkey

2021 “Burası” YKKS. Curated by Kevser Güler. Istanbul, Turkey.

2020 “Qalqalah: Plus d’une Langue” (with Ashkan Sepahvand and Natascha Sadr-Haghigian) Curated by Virginie Bobin and Victorine Grataloupe. CRAC Occitanie/ Pyrénées-Méditerranée, Sète, France.

2019 “Haydi! Come On: Participation and Collaborative Practice in Contemporary Art”. Plato Sanat. Curated by Markus Graf. Istanbul, Turkey.

2018 “Believe” Curated by David Liss. Toronto Museum of Contemporary Art. Canada.

2018 “A School of Schools” 4th Design Biennial of Istanbul. Curated by Jan Boelen. Istanbul, Turkey.

2018 “Starting From the Desert: Ecologies on the Edge” 2nd Yinchuan Biennial. Curated by Marco Scotini. MOCA Yinchuan, China.

2017 “The Way Beyond Art” Van Abbemuseum. Curated by Charles Esche, Christiane Berndes, Steven Ten Thije. Eindhoven, Netherlands.

2016 “We Are the Center for Curatorial Studies”. CCS Bard Hessel Museum. Curated by Paul O’Neill. Anandale-on-Hudson, NY, USA.

2016 “Spatial Practices and the Urban Commons”. Tenderpixel. Curated by Borbola Soos. London, UK.

2015 (with Jeremiah Day) “Istanbul. Passion, Joy, Fury”. MAXXI. Curated by Hou Hanru et al. Rome, Italy.

2015 (with Jeremiah Day) “Between the Pessimism of the Intellect and the Optimism of the Will” 5th Thessaloniki Biennial. Curated by Katerina Gregos. Thessaloniki, Greece.

2015 “Every Inclusion is an Exclusion of Other Possibilities” SALT Beyoglu. Istanbul, Turkey.

2014 (with Asli Altay). “The Future is Not What it Used to be: 2nd Istanbul Design Biennial” Curated by Zoe Ryan and Meredith Carruthers. Istanbul, Turkey.

2014 (with Aslı Altay). “Where are We Now? 5th Marrakech Biennale” curated by Hicham Khalidi. Marrakech, Morocco.

2013 “HotSpot Istanbul” Museum Haus Konstruktiv. Curated by Dorothea Strauss, Zurich, Switzerland.

2013 (with Archive) “How to Tell a Story”. DEPO. Curated by Emanuele Guidi and Cathy Larque. Istanbul, Turkey.

2011 (with Natascha Sadr Haghigian and Ashkan Sepahvand) “That’s The Way We Do It: The Techniques and Aesthetic of Appropriation From Ei Arakawa to Andy Warhol”. Kunsthaus Bregenz. Curated by Yilmaz Dziewior, Bregenz, Austria.

2011 “Huseyin Bahri Alptekin: I am Not a Studio Artist”. SALT Beyoglu. Istanbul, Turkey

2010 “From A to B, From B to P”. Bielefelder Kunstverein. Curated by Thomas Thiel and Yann Chevalier. Bielefeld, Germany

2010 “TB10: Taipei Biennial”. Curated by Tirdad Zolghadr and HongJohn Lim. Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.

2009 “The Columns Held Us Up” at Artists Space, New York, U.S.A.

2009 “There is No Audience” at Montehermoso. Curated by Adnan Yildiz. Vitorio-Gasteiz, Spain.

2009 “A Fantasy for Alan Kaprow” at CIC. Curated by Mai Abu-El Dahab and Philippe Pirotte. Cairo, Egypt.

2008 “Annual Report: 7th Gwangju Biennale”. Gwangju, South Korea.

2008 “Social Diagrams. Planning Reconsidered” exhibition at Kunstlerhaus Stuttgart. Curated by Axel John Wieder and Jesko Fezer. Stuttgart, Germany.

2008 “Representations of the artist as an intellectual” exhibition at D21. Curated by Leif Magne Tangen. Leipzig, Germany.

2006 “How to Build a Universe That Doesn’t Fall Apart Two Days Later” exhibition at CCA Wattis Institute. Curated by Will Bradley. San Francisco, U.S.A.

2006 “A Tale of Two Cities: Busan Biennale”. Directed by Manu Park. Busan, South Korea.

2005 “EindhovenIstanbul” exhibition at the Van Abbe Museum. Curated by Charles Esche and Eva Meyer-Hermann. Eindhoven, The Netherlands.

2005 “Cork Caucus: on art, democracy and possibility” Symposium and Events Organized by Charles Esche and Annie Fletcher. Cork, Ireland.

2005 “Normalization” exhibition at Platform Garanti Contemporary Art Center. İstanbul, Turkey.

2004 “Common Property – Allgemeingut 6th Werkleitz Biennial”. Halle, Germany.

2004 “Call me İstanbul” exhibition at ZKM Center for Art and Media. Curated by Peter Weibel, Roger Conover, Eda Cufer. Karlsruhe, Germany.

2003 “4D: four dimensions, four decades - 8th Havana Biennial” Curated by RAIN. Havana, Cuba.

2003 “Poetic Justice: 8th İstanbul Biennial” Curated by Dan Cameron. İstanbul, Turkey.

2003 “How Latitudes Become Forms: Art in a Global Age” exhibition at Walker Art Center. Curated by Philippe Vergne. Minneapolis, U.S.A.

Publications Books

Altay, C., V.Kortun, M.Elveren (eds) PARK: bir ihtimal (Hatirlama) Istanbul: SALT, 2017

Altay, C. Split Horizon (Domestic Disobedience): A Guide by Can Altay including an essay by Tankut Aykut. İstanbul: Öktem&Aykut, 2015.

Altay, C. (ed.) Ahali: An Anthology for Setting a Setting. London: Bedford Press, AA Publications, 2013.

Altindere, H. (ed.) Can Altay: Pigeons are People. Istanbul and Berlin: art-ist and Revolver Verlag, 2010.

Altay, C. “We’re Papermen” he said, 2003 including essays by Helen Westgeest and Jeremiah Day. Istanbul: Self-published, 2009.

Vergara,L. and C.Altay No Bar, Just Bottles. Bilbao: Sala Rekalde, 2006.

Freeform Publications

Altay, C. (ed.) The Church Street Partners' Gazette, issue 2, Local Newspaper focusing on social and urban issues. Commissioned by The Showroom. London, 2013.

Altay, C. A Guide to Some Doorknobs in Waltham Forest. Pamphlet for "Distributed". Commissioned by Frieze Projects East. London, 2012.

Altay, C. (ed.) The Church Street Partners' Gazette, issue 1, Local Newspaper focusing on social and urban issues. Commissioned by The Showroom. London, 2010.

Selected Articles, Essays, Interviews

Altay, C. "Here, A Conduit Deliberates Its Own Becoming: Dispatches From The Missing Planet" in The Missing Planet: Visions and re-visions of Soviet Times, Centro Pecci, Rome: NERO Editions, 2021. pp.32-41

Altay, C. and G.Oz "Dialogic Weaving: A Favorable Tension Between Design and Crafts" Digital Creativity vol.30 no.1, 2019.

Altay, C. "Ahali: a journal for setting a setting" in G.Allen (ed.) The Magazine (Whitechapel Documents of Contemporary Art) Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016. pp.221-222.

Altay, C. "A Public Presence versus Greed, Brutality, and Control: Gezi Park" in P.Weibel (ed.) Global Activism: Art and Conflict in the 21st Century. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015.

Altay, C. "Rogue Game: An Architecture of Transgression" in L.Rice and D.Littlefield (eds.) Transgression: Towards an Expanded Field of Architecture. London: Routledge, 2015.

Altay, C. "Transgression in and of the City" A.D. Architecture of Transgression November 2013 Wiley UK. pp: 102-109.

Altay, C. "The Empty Pedestal, or Folly as Experience" in N.Hirsch, P.Misselwitz, E.Y. Chun (eds.) Gwangju Folly II. Otsfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2013. pp.124-127.

Altay, C. and Dan Graham "Social Spaces" (interview) Frieze, Issue 147, May 2012. pp.170-175

Altay, C. "Setting and Remaking" in Nikolaus Hirsch, Shveta Sarda (Eds.) Cybermohalla Hub. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012. pp. 140-142

Altay, C. "We're Papermen, He Said" in Condorelli, C. Support Structures. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2009. pp: 204-207.

Altay, C. "The Directed Gaze" in Guidi, E. (ed.) Urban Makers: Parallel Narratives on Grassroots Structures and Tensions. Berlin: B_Books, 2008. pp.248-267

Altay, C. and D. Altay "Counter-Spatialization (of Power) (in İstanbul)" in Guidi, E. (ed.) Urban Makers: Parallel Narratives on Grassroots Structures and Tensions. Berlin: B_Books, 2008. pp.76-101.

Altay, C. "Europe 2050" in Miessen, M. (ed.) East Coast Europe. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2008. pp: 283-287.

Selected Reviews

Gotti, S. "How to Deal with Dystopia" Mousse Magazine March 2020.

Ulusoy Akgul, I.L. "Critics' Picks: Can Altay" artforum.com September 2015.

Larsen, L.B. "Can Altay" Artforum Vol.50 No.3, November 2011.

Fite-Wassilak, C. "Can Altay" Art Papers Vol.35 issue 2, March-April 2011.

Zolgadhr, T. "Can Altay" CREAMIER: Contemporary Art in Culture. London: Phaidon, 2010.

Westgeest, H. "The Changeability of Photography in Multimedia Artworks" in Van Gelder, H. and H. Westgeest (eds) PHOTOGRAPHY BETWEEN POETRY AND POLITICS: The Critical Position of the Photographic Medium in Contemporary Art. NY: Cornell University Press, 2008.

Schulte-Fischedick, V. "Niche Communities" Be issue 15, 2008.

Bradley, W. "Can Altay" Frieze, issue 92. June/July/August 2005. Page 148.

Selected Grants and Residencies

2021 Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in Fine Arts and Architecture.
Individual Grant for “Ahali Conversations” Podcast Season 3.
2014 - 2016 “Radical Hospitality” Artist Residency and Production Grant by
Lungomare and ar/ge Kunst, Bozen-Bolzano, Italy.
2007 – 2010 Honorary Research Fellow. Fine Art, Wolverhampton University, U.K.
2010 My City - Artist in Residence awarded by British Council, Warsaw.
2010 IASPIS International Grant from the Swedish Visual Arts Fund. Stockholm.
2010 Artist in Residence awarded by FRAC Corse, Corsica.
2008 “International Studio Artist in Residence” at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin.
2007 “International Artist Fellow” production residency at Spike Island, Bristol.
2007. Academic Affiliate. Architecture, UCL Bartlett Faculty of Architecture,
London, U.K.
2003 – 2004 Research Scholarship from the Swedish Institute and the Swedish
Consulate of Istanbul.