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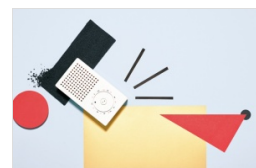
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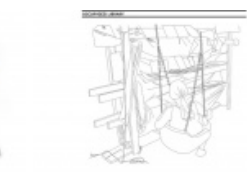
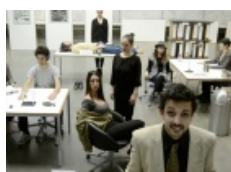
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The second incarnation of the Turkish design event steers away from utopian thinking in favour of practical solutions to real-world problems, says the Art Institute of Chicago head of

Words  
Debika Ray



## architecture and design

When curator Zoë Ryan arrived in Istanbul last summer to start work on the city's second design biennial, protests against the development of Taksim Gezi Park were in full swing. "There was a lot of emotion," she says of the demonstrations, which sparked widespread civil unrest across Turkey. "We'd set up a series of discussions with local architects and designers and, through these, we got a sense of this rapidly changing socio-political situation."

Perhaps as a result of these events, Istanbul's particular circumstances have been central to the thinking behind the biennial. Atelier Bow Wow, for example, is planning to do a communal drawing of Istanbul's landmark Galata Bridge, local group 72-Hour Urban Action will work with public space institution TAK to develop a series of radical but simple urban interventions, while Architecture for All's #occupygezi project will examine what happens when architecture is removed from the hands of architects.

The biennial's title, *The Future Is Not What It Used To Be* – a quote from 1930s French philosopher Paul Valéry – is an attempt to apply the lessons of the past to forge a path forward for design and architecture.

Ryan asked for responses to take the form of manifestos. "In the mid century, the traditional manifesto fell out of favour, as it was seen to be too dogmatic, but it started to come back in a different form by the end of the century," she says. "In 1996, Robert Venturi called *Complexity and Contradiction* a 'gentle manifesto'. Rem Koolhaas said his 1978 *Delirious New York* was a 'retroactive manifesto' and then, later, Bruce Mau wrote what he called an 'incomplete manifesto'.

"We wanted to ask whether it was possible reclaim the manifesto for the 21st century. We didn't necessarily expect people to have written a text. Couldn't a manifesto equally be an object, a building or even a process or way of working?"

An open call for ideas yielded a diverse range of responses, from projects that grappled with large-scale problems such as natural resource scarcity to those with a more domestic focus, such as one entrant's "housewife's manifesto".

The 75 projects that were eventually included suggest practical ways forward rather than utopian ideas. "We were interested in ideas that were focused on real-life situations and what we can do to change them," Ryan says.

Among these are plans to tackle our imminent global food shortage by cultivating grasshoppers for human consumption and "bug out bags" – kits for short-term evacuation and everyday survival.

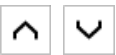
A more satirical approach came from Italian disturbATICollective, who sent in a video mocking the idea of a manifesto and was then surprised to be asked to participate in the biennial – their ABC Manifesto Co-operation will make personalised manifestos for anyone who visits their space.



ABC Manifesto Co-operation will make personalised manifestos for anyone who visits their space



## Diary



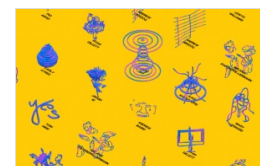
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In a way, curating the second incarnation of an event is more difficult than the first, as it carries with it expectations to surpass the original. Ryan is reluctant to compare her biennial with the inaugural one, choosing instead to focus on the long-term impact such events can have. "I hope it will galvanise an already vibrant architecture and design community. At the moment, there aren't many forums in Turkey for such groups to get together. Informal, non-institutional, gatherings like this could allow people to get to know one another, find work together and promote Istanbul's voice on the world's stage."

*The 2nd Istanbul Design Biennial takes place from 1 November to 13 December*



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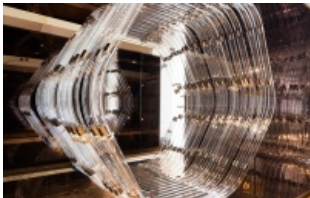
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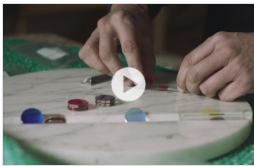
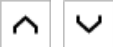
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