

# Istanbul Technical University Art Collection Inventory: Analysis and recommendations for its development

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## Abstract

Over the years, several artworks have been compiled at various campuses of Istanbul Technical University (ITU) forming a modest collection. These artworks, however, have never been identified, documented, catalogued, and/or studied in an art historical manner. The purpose of this paper is to identify and analyze the artworks in the ITU Art Collection Inventory for the first time and provide suggestions for its development. Initially, all campuses and faculties/facilities of ITU were visited and the artworks found in each location were recorded based on the guidelines set by the International Council of Museums (ICOM). The findings have been categorized and presented according to different campuses of ITU as well as the types of artworks, which include forty-five paintings, nineteen sculptures, four engravings, one mural, and one panel, a total of seventy works. Recommendations have been developed based on the content of the inventory in accordance with ITU's mission, vision, and history. The relationship between science, technology, and art has been the main focus of the general suggestions, which have been made for ITU to build a strong relationship with artists and academics in the campus as well as with ITU's Rectorate Art Gallery to innovate new forms of artworks in the contemporary art field. It should be noted that most of the artwork were tributes to prominent Turkish scientists and scholars. The relationship between art and science observed in most of the artworks is suggested to become the binding factor for the cohesiveness of the ITU Art Collection.

## Keywords

University, Art, Collection management, Inventory.



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## 1. Introduction

The term “collection”, in general, refers to a set of material or intangible objects, which have been assembled, classified, selected, preserved, and displayed by an individual or an establishment. In order to compose a real collection, the set of objects collected must form a consistent and meaningful whole. Therefore, a group of objects gathered according to personal taste with no selection criteria and intention to build a coherent whole is not considered to be a collection but may be referred to as “fond” (Desvallées and Mairesse, 2010, 26).

Collections may vary in their form or content; however, they share similar principals when it comes to their care and management. Thus, the term “Collection Management” is applied to the various technical, ethical, legal, and practical methods by which the collections are gathered, organized, and preserved (Ladkin, 2004, 17). “Collection Management” concentrates on taking care of the collection while focusing on its long-term physical well-being, safety, preservation, and record keeping. In order for collection management to function successfully and effectively, a well-designed policy in align with the mission of the institution and its collection must be created and presented as a written document (Edson and Dean, 1994, 69). There are ten main issues that every Collection Management Policy (CMP) should cover: The purpose of the collection according to the corporate mission; acquisition methods; disposal methods; loan policies; record-keeping of objects; care and preservation; cataloging systems; insurance processes; inventory of the collection; and access to the collection (Malaro, 1995, 11-12).

An “inventory” consists of the basic collection management information about each object in a collection, including the details that are essential for accountability and security (CIDOC, 1995). The whole collection can only be created, examined, recorded, and studied after a detailed inventory is established and CMP can be determined (Atlığ, 2017, 14). Inventory management and planning

are as important as cataloging, protection, and maintenance of the collection. In this context, following the realization of the inventory and catalog, the institution has the opportunity to evaluate the relationship between CMP and its collection. In this way, a process that will pave the way for the development of the collection is initiated (Edson, 2004, 135).

“Art” initially comes to mind when discussing museums or collections even though there are myriad types and functions of museums (Rosset, 1991). Regarding university museums, art is the major activity in collecting where the focus of “education” is an important function (O’Hagen, 1998, 198). Also, the “question of definition” rises whether the collection defines the nature of the university museum or vice versa (Brattli and Steffensen, 2014, 96). Therefore, the university museum studies require both connoisseurship research as well as analytical approach to the museums and/or collections.

The root of the university museum concept can be traced to the seventeenth century with the foundation of Ashmolean Museum at Oxford established in 1683 (Boylan, 1999, 46). Between the seventeenth and twenty-first centuries, developments in teaching, scientific practice, and knowledge of the natural and cultural world have resulted in the accumulation, utilization and even disposal of innumerable artifacts and specimens within the university museums (Kozak, 2016). Collections formed and/or maintained in these universities were used for learning in the laboratory or tutorial room as well as provided the material evidence of research achieved in the name of an institution. The university museum is created when a university dedicates institutional space and facilities to the exhibition of collections, (Simpson, 2014, 18). According to Lourenço (2019), “...There is no definition of ‘university museum’ outside ICOM’s. Museums are museums. The only definition that we can give is that a university museum is a museum in the ICOM sense that belongs to a university or, more broadly, a higher education institution.”

University Museums and Collections (UMAC) of the ICOM is a significant subsidiary committee that is the global advocate for university museums and collections of all disciplines. UMAC acts as a source with its database covering museums of higher education internationally for all those working in, or associated with, academic museums, galleries and collections (Url-1). The database of UMAC presents five university museums in Turkey: three of which are housed at the Anadolu University (Museum of Modern Arts, Cumhuriyet Museum, Museum of Cartoon Art), one in Ege University (Natural History Research and Application Center, Natural History Museum) and the other as part of Sabancı University (Sakıp Sabancı Museum) (Url-2).

For decades, several artworks have been acquired and/or commissioned by Istanbul Technical University (ITU) and they were exhibited/erected in various venues. However, a major problem was that these works of art had never been documented nor examined to form a proper inventory. Thence, there was no data on these pieces in order to conduct a research through the use of existing information. Consequently, the initial research problem occurs: whether these objects constitute an actual collection; and if indeed they do, issue arises in determining the scope of the collection and the current condition of its pieces. Hence, the purpose of this paper has been to identify and analyze the artworks present at ITU Campuses to compose an ITU Art Collection Inventory by using methods of art history and provide suggestions for its development as a coherent collection.

Basic methodology used in this study includes but is not limited to; physical identification, observation, and documentation of the artworks; personal interviews with living artists (or communication via their Facebook and/or Instagram accounts); document analysis (archival documents and records); additional ITU sources such as internal correspondences and inventory lists; printed materials like *Journal of ITU Foundation*, ITU 2012 Calendar, ITU web site, press

bulletins proving the existence of the unseen artworks as well as identifying/dating them; second-hand information acquired from the employees via face-to-face interviews.

It was apparent during the inventory gathering process that artworks at ITU were not accumulated with the vision or the intent of establishing a collection. However, the term “ITU Art Collection” has been preferred as a reference to these highly valuable collective works of art. Regarding the information gathered about all the artworks within the ITU premises, “ITU Art Collection Management Policy Draft” has been prepared and proposed by Atlıĝ (2017) in align with ICOM’s recommended standards. ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums* has published a series of ethical rules that organizations must follow when managing their collections (ICOM, 2013). This list of ethical rules includes the physical, legal, financial, administrative provisions that are expected to be complied by the museums/institutions as well as the main topics that are related to the formation, preservation, and exhibition of the collections (ICOM, 2013, 1-15).

The starting point of this study has been to compile the inventory of the artworks that are in possession of ITU, to examine them in detail, and to present a complete catalog of the collection. Accordingly, faculties and facilities<sup>1</sup> in Maslak/ Ayazaĝa, Taşkışla, Gümüşsuyu, Maçka, and Tuzla campuses were visited in order to investigate and record each artwork at its present location, based on the standards set by the ICOM (ICOM, 2013, 1-15). The basic information about the artworks in the inventory includes the identification number, name of the artist, title, date, type, material, and dimensions of the artwork, location of the artwork, way of accession and accession date, physical description, the condition of the artwork as well as publications if applicable.

During the establishment of the inventory, the main difficulty was the lack of proper information and documentation about the artworks and their artists. Moreover, there were

<sup>1</sup> The research has been carried out only at the official facilities of ITU excluding the private entities such as the Alumni Center (Çamlık Clubhouse) that houses temporary display of the contemporary Turkish artist Genco Gülan (b. 1969) and Cascara Cafe (at the Faculty of Science and Letters) which has a permanent mural by a Turkish graffiti artist Ahmet Serdar “Color Wagon” Tünay (b. 1991).

no accession records about how and when the artworks were acquired. Archival and art historical research was conducted to accommodate for the lack of information, yet, there are still major deficiencies that need to be addressed and completed over time. Another important issue was improper display methods and inadequate curating techniques.

The outcome of this research contributes to the academic literature and university community in various ways. The initial result of this study is a detailed inventory, proper documentation, and cataloging of the ITU Art Collection for the first time, considering the basic guidelines set by ICOM. Another valuable aspect is the formation of a CMP for the university's art collection in order to act as a manual for future acquisitions and management of other collections that might be established within ITU. One more contribution of this study is identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the ITU Art Collection by conducting a SWOT analysis, since such research on university collections is scarce in the academic literature. The studies on university museums and their collections generally concentrate on the numbers, types, and collections rather than strategic planning or CMP proposal (Bagdasarian, 2015, 16-18). This paper presents one of the first studies that approaches an art collection established at a public technical university in a managerial and holistic manner, considering the collection itself, the documentation, the inventory, and the "tailormade" CMP.

The study, however, has some limitations and exclusions. Being the home of the Faculty of Architecture, Department of Fine Arts and Institute of Social Sciences, Taşkışla houses many artworks and various design products by the faculty and students. It should be mentioned that these works could not be integrated into the collection since the university did not officially acquire them. Moreover, the architectural survey illustrations by Sedat Çetintaş at Taşkışla Campus were not included in the ITU Art Collection

**Table 1.** ITU campuses and distribution according to the type of art.

ITU	MASLAK	TAŞKIŞLA	MAÇKA	GÜMÜŞSUYU	TUZLA	TOTAL
PAINTING	24	16	2	0	3	45
SCULPTURE	14	2	0	0	3	19
ENGRAVING	4	0	0	0	0	4
MURAL	0	1	0	0	0	1
PANEL	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>70</b>

**Table 2.** Artists, art types, number of works and location at the ITU art collection.

Artist	Painting	Sculpture	Engraving	Panel	Mural	Location
Günseli Kato	17					SDKM&Rectorate
Ercüment Kalmık	9					Taşkışla
Cemal Akyıldız			4			Rectorate
Şadan Bezeyiş	3					Taşkışla
Sezer Ilgın	3					Tuzla
Tamer Aydın		2		1		Maslak
S. Güner		3				Maslak
Rudolf Belling		2				Taşkışla
Süleyman Sami	1					Habitat Hall
Kıztaşı Ali Rıza	1					Rectorate
Ziya	1					Rectorate
Ahmet Şahit	1					Rectorate
Nurullah Berk Abdurrahman Oztoprak Yaşar Yeniceli Oktay Dikmen					1	Taşkışla
Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu	1					Taşkışla
Murat Çakan	1					Rectorate
Işık Güner	1					Rectorate
Ekber Yeşilyurt	1					SDKM
Mehmet Erkök		1				Maslak
Mehmet Aksoy		1				Maslak
Ferit Özşen		1				Maslak
Fatih Semiz		1				Maslak
Attila Onaran		1				Maslak
Nilhan Sesalan		1				Maslak
Ayşegül Coles		1				Maslak
Oya Sabahlar		1				Maslak
M.E		1				Maslak
Unknown	5	3				8
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>70</b>

either, as they constitute a separate collection which was cataloged by Prof. Dr. Ayla Ödekan in her seminal book *Yazıları ve Rölöveleriyle Sedat Çetintaş* (2004).

## 2. Analysis of ITU Art Collection

ITU Art Collection includes seventy artworks in total: Forty-five paintings, nineteen sculptures, four engravings, one mural, and one panel. Two Ercüment Kalmık (1908-1971) and two Şadan Bezeyiş (1926-2017) paintings that have been documented but were not physically seen are also included in the collection. Most of the artworks are located at the Maslak campus with a total of forty-three pieces. The Faculty of

Architecture located at Taşkışla campus contains nineteen works including the two unexhibited Ercüment Kalmık paintings. There are six works at Tuzla campus and two unexhibited Şadan Bezeyiş paintings at Maçka campus. There are no artworks at Gümüşsuyu Campus. The distribution of artworks according to type and campuses can be seen at [Table 1].

All detailed information regarding each artwork in the ITU Art Collection inventory has been cataloged within the Master of Arts thesis “Istanbul Technical University’s Art Collection Inventory and Suggestions for its Development [“İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi Sanat Koleksiyonu Envanteri ve Geliştirilmesi için Öneriler]” by Atlığ (2017). Although, all the pieces in ITU Art Collection will be briefly mentioned in this article, only the iconic and most esteemed works are focused upon in detail. In Table 2, the distribu-

tion of artworks by artists and types as well as their current locations are listed [Table 2].

The artist with the highest number of artworks in ITU Art Collection is Günseli Kato (b.1956). Kato has seventeen paintings that constitute the *Japanese Series* (1999) and in a sense form a collection of their own. Fifteen of these artworks are exhibited in Süleyman Demirel Cultural Center and the remaining two are displayed in the Rectorate Building, both at Maslak Campus. Kato used Japanese pigment paint as well as silver and gold leaf on Japanese paper in the artworks. The artist has marked her signature as a *hanko* (red Japanese stamp) on all the paintings. Three pieces from the *Japanese Series* by Kato can be seen in [Figure 1].

In her interview, Kato mentioned that she created the *Japanese Series* (which is originally formed of nearly seventy abstract pieces) as a personal therapy to soothe her panic and pain after the 17 August 1999 earthquake. Therefore, these seventeen pieces in ITU Art Collection are part of the greater *Japanese Series*. Kato stressed that the seventeen pieces that are displayed in ITU, are among her favorites in the series. Furthermore, the artist emphasized that she was very pleased to have her works exhibited at the ITU “because I always had a good relationship with the University” (Kato, Interview, April 20, 2017). The minimalism of the abstract paintings of the *Japanese Series* is well-fitting for the contemporary architecture of the Süleyman Demirel Cultural Center.

Following Günseli Kato, Ercüment Kalmık has the second greatest number of artworks in the collection with nine paintings. Eight of Kalmık’s works were located in various rooms and offices in the Faculty of Architecture at Taşkışla. The only unseen and presently unexhibited work is known to exist since it is printed in the 2012 ITU calendar (April page). The two most significant paintings by Kalmık are displayed in the Dean’s office: *Balıkçıların Çalışması* (Fishermen at Work) [Figure 2] and *Ord. Prof. Emin Onat Portresi* (Portrait of Ord. Prof. Emin Onat).

Ercüment Kalmık had founded the “Chair of Color, Form and Composi-

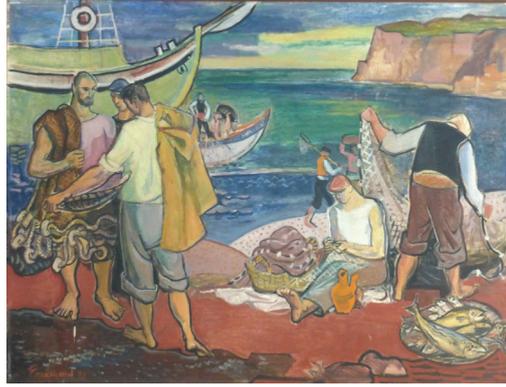


**Figure 1.** Günseli Kato, *Japanese Series 5* (Japon Serisi 5), 1999, pigment on paper, 162 cm x 174 cm, İTÜ Maslak Campus, Süleyman Demirel Cultural Center (Photo: Atlığ- Erkmén, 2019).

tion in Architecture” at the Faculty of Architecture in ITU in 1950 and had remained as its head for twenty years (Rona, 1997, 937). During this time, the artist’s paintings evolved stylistically from Cubism to Impressionism and Abstract Expressionism. Thus, Kalmık’s paintings reflect and represent the contemporary art of his time. French Impressionist painter Henri Matisse (1869-1954) especially inspired Kalmık during the time he spent in Paris and Lyon. This influence may be seen in the painting *Balıkçıların Çalışması* in form, color, and general scheme. Ord. Prof. Emin Onat’s portrait is Kalmık’s tribute to as the first dean of ITU’s Faculty of Architecture and moreover as the architect of Anıtkabir, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s Mausoleum.

Another prominent academic-artist is Şadan Bezeyiş, who donated his works to ITU like Ercüment Kalmık. Two of Bezeyiş’s artworks have not been seen but are considered as part of ITU Art Collection since they are on ITU’s 2012 Calendar (August and September pages). In the 1950s, Bezeyiş was one of the first artists in Turkish painting to lean towards Abstraction and Surrealism (Tepeci, 1997, 238). The only work by Şadan Bezeyiş that is presently exhibited is his monumental oil painting in the northwest tower of Taşkışla, which also houses the Department of Fine Arts [Figure 3]. It is befitting that this special painting is located at this particular hallway where Bezeyiş had been the department head for almost ten years. The painting is a tribute to Atatürk and his reforms during the early stages of the Republic of Turkey. The fantastical elements, abstract movement and organic forms of this oil painting reflect Bezeyiş’s artistic style.

Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu (1911-1975) is one of the most famous Turkish artists of his era. The painting *Köy Düğünü Betimlemesi* (Portrayal of a Folk Wedding) by Eyüboğlu is presently hung in the Dean’s office in the Faculty of Architecture at Taşkışla [Figure 4]. This oil painting embodies Eyüboğlu’s unique style, which blends Western painting techniques that he came across from his time in Paris, with



**Figure 2.** Ercüment Kalmık, *Fishermen at Work* (*Balıkçıların Çalışması*), 1948, oil on canvas, 90 cm x 116 cm, İTÜ Taşkışla Campus, Dean’s office (Photo: Atlıĝ-Erkmen, 2019).



**Figure 3.** Şadan Bezeyiş, *Untitled*, undated, oil on canvas 130 cm x 270 cm Taşkışla northwest tower hall (Photo: Atlıĝ, 2017).



**Figure 4.** Bedri Rahmi Eyüboĝlu, *Portrayal of a Folk Wedding* (*Köy Düğünü Betimlemesi*), 1946, oil on canvas, 71 cm x 101 cm, Taşkışla Dean’s office (Photo: ITU Calendar, 2012).



**Figure 5.** Nurullah Berk, Abdurrahman Öztoprak, Yaşar Yenice, Oktay Dikmen, *ITU Taşkışla Mural*, 1954, fresco, 5 m x 12 m, Taşkışla ground floor, north-west side, east wall (Photo: Korkut İlhan, 2014).

Turkish and Anatolian folkloric subject matters. The Western influence in this painting can be observed from the post-impressionist composition with the blue tree in the foreground merged with Matisse's color combinations. The theme of the painting is a typical Turkish wedding in the countryside. Therefore, this particular painting may be considered as one of the most valuable pieces in the ITU Art Collection since it truly reflects Eyüboğlu's distinctive style.

The monumental mural [Figure 5] in ITU Art Collection is located on the ground floor of the northwest Tower at Taşkışla Campus. This fresco is one of the most iconic imagery in the collection since it represents ITU's role as the country's one and only technical university at the time (Ödekan, 2014, 112).



**Figure 6.** Mehmet Erkök, *250th Year Sculpture (250. Yıl Heykeli)*, 2016, stainless steel, 7.5 m x 2 m x 2 m, Maslak Campus (Arı Entrance) (Photo: Athğ, 2017).

The five sections of the mural correlate to the five initial faculties of ITU: Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mining Engineering, and Architecture. It was commissioned by ITU's Rector Ord. Prof. Emin Onat in 1954 and is the product of a combined effort by the artists Nurullah Berk (1906-1982), Abdürrahman Öztoprak (1927-2011), Yaşar Yenice (1931-2014) and Oktay Dikmen. According to Ödekan, this mural represents the aspirations of the twentieth-century Republic of Turkey and reflects the excitement of ITU's role as being the "first leader" (2014). This enthusiasm continues to be seen in ITU's current vision of becoming "a leading international university through its expertise and creativity in science, technology, and art" (Url-3).

While the major part of the paintings in ITU Art Collection -except for Kato's *Japanese Series*- are exhibited at Taşkışla Campus, majority of the sculptures in the collection are erected in the public spaces of the Maslak Campus. The most recent work is *250. Yıl Heykeli (250th Year Sculpture)* by Mehmet Erkök (b. 1963), which is located in front of the main pedestrian entrance (Arı Kapısı) of the Campus. This iconic artwork commissioned by the Rectorate and sponsored by Vakıfbank, was completed in 2016 [Figure 6].

Mehmet Erkök is an ITU academic-artist in the Department of Industrial Product Design at the Faculty of Architecture. In an interview with Erkök, he mentioned that he was inspired by calligrapher Nihat Dükhan and he wanted to merge the circular motions of the calligraphy with the shape of the earth. He also stated that the structure of the circular spheres represents the continents of the earth, the linear top part of the structure signifies science and engineering while the 250 figurines symbolize all the people who have been part of ITU for the last 250 years (Erkök, Mehmet, Interview, April 3, 2017).

*The 250. Yıl Heykeli* may also be read from an art historical perspective considering its "traditional" and "contemporary" features. Founded in 1773, ITU has always been the pioneer academic education of its time, which

witnessed major changes and revolutions as being an institution both in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. From this point of view, the form of the statue, a reminiscent of a tughra (imperial signature), can be interpreted as the traditional history and culture of ITU. The fact that the artist is inspired by the works of a calligrapher strengthens this argument. The vertically extending rods may be a symbol of the rise and development of ITU with materials such as stainless steel and bronze plates that reflect the spirit of the university's technological superiority. Finally, ITU's mission and vision of being a leader in science, technology, and art are embodied in this sculpture where it places people in the center emphasizing the indispensable role of the people of ITU.

*The statue of Hezarfen Ahmet Çelebi* by Mehmet Aksoy (b. 1939) is another monumental structure that symbolizes ITU's vision. This gigantic statue (10 m x 10 m x 3 m) is composed of marble, granite, and stainless steel and is located in front of the Mustafa İnan Library at Maslak Campus [Figure 7]. The project, which was commissioned by the Rectorate and sponsored by Keskin Keser, an alumna of ITU, took seven years to complete. Hezarfen Ahmet Çelebi (1609-1640) was believed to be the first Ottoman/Turkish scientist/aviator to fly with artificial wings over the Bosphorus during the reign of Murat IV (r. 1623-1640). Rector Prof. Dr. Mehmet Karaca commented at the opening ceremony (May 23, 2014) of Hezarfen Ahmet Çelebi about the significance of having this structure at ITU: "It commemorates a visionary who pushed the boundaries of knowledge and technology as ITU has for the past 241 years". (İTÜ Vakfı Yayınları, 2014, v. 65, 128). The mission of ITU is "to expand the borders of knowledge and its applications in science, technology, and art for contributing to the sustainable community" (Url-3). As Ödekan explains, "this structure reminds us of the incredible flight that Hezarfen accomplished in the seventeenth century and provokes us to look forward to the future" (İTÜ Vakfı Yayınları, 2014, v. 66, 109). In this sense, the sculpture symbolizes



**Figure 7.** Mehmet Aksoy, *Hezarfen Ahmet Çelebi*, 2013, marble, stone, stainless steel, 10 m x 10 m x 3 m, Maslak Campus (In front of Mustafa İnan Library) (Photo: Atlığ, 2017).

the courageous leap into the unknown by physically emphasizing the motion of flying through expanding its wings. Moreover, visually, the curvature of the wings contemplates the curvature of the roof of the Mustafa İnan Library. Therefore, both ideologically and aesthetically, it is absolutely fitting to have this structure to be placed in front of the main library of the University.

There are two more stainless steel structures at Maslak Campus; *Ballerina (The Ballerina)* by Attila Onaran (1932-1976) in front of the Faculty of Electric and Electronic Engineering and *Sonsuz Döngü (Infinite Loop)* by Fatih Semiz in front of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

*The Ballerina* was initially displayed in front of the Galatasaray Han at İstiklal Street in Istanbul. GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals' employees and Kültür Bilinci Geliştirme Vakfı (Foundation for the Development of Cultural Awareness) had restored the sculpture as a social responsibility project in 2012. Afterwards, as indicated on the plate in front of the statue, *Ballerina* was donated to ITU by the family of the artist and the ITU academic Hüseyin Coşkun. In an interview with the artist's daughter, she mentions that Onaran had wished the *The Ballerina* to be exhibited at a public area (Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, April 14th, 2013). While the sculpture was displayed on İstiklal Street in Istanbul, it could only be observed from one side, due to the position of its placement. However, in ITU, *The Ballerina* can be viewed from



**Figure 8.** M.E, *Untitled*, 2007, marble and stone, 1 m x 1 m x 1 m, Maslak Campus (In front of Süleyman Demirel Cultural Center), (Photo: Atlığ, 2017).

all sides and thus its circular movement can be observed and appreciated better because of its site. Moreover, it is located on one of the most popular routes at the Maslak Campus following the artist's wish (Atlığ, 2017).

The then Rector of ITU Prof. Dr. Faruk Karadoğan commissioned *Infinite Loop* by Fatih Semiz in 2008. This sculpture also emphasizes movement in a spiral shape combining geometrical and mathematical concepts in a modern form of art (Atlığ, 2017). The circular shape of the statue seems to follow the "Fibonacci sequence" where each number is the sum of the two preceding numbers starting from 0 and 1, forming the Fibonacci spiral. In this sense, it is well-fitting to have this sculpture be placed in front of the Faculty of Science and Letters, which houses the Department of Mathematical Engineering.

There are some artworks that are acquired after special organizations like the first ITU Open-Air Sculptural Symposium (1-17 May 2007). The four marble/stone contemporary sculptures at the campus are from this workshop (which are all untitled), created by artists M.E, Nilhan Sesalan, Ayşegül Coles, and Oya Sabahlar. For the symposium, the artists were asked to create sculptures out of 100-centimeter cubic

marble stones. The first marble sculpture by M.E is situated in front of Süleyman Demirel Cultural Center and is a representation of a figure holding a book [Figure 8].

The second sculpture by Nilhan Sesalan is located in front of the Faculty of Mining Engineering and symbolizing eight geological layers (Atlığ, 2017). The third marble piece by Ayşegül Coles is designed like a four-piece puzzle, which is located on the North Road, at the side of the Faculty of Science and Letters' parking area (Atlığ, 2017). The last marble sculpture is by Oya Sabahlar, which is located across the Coles sculpture, on the other side of the North Road that embodies a figure resting its head sideways in a contemplating manner (Atlığ, 2017). These works of art with a minimalistic style combine themes related to human knowledge, science, and education when considered in a holistic manner.

Besides these major artworks, there are four engravings by Cemal Akyıldız, two sculptures and a panel by Tamer Aydın, three busts by S. Güner, two busts by Rudolf Belling, one Atatürk statue with a marble structure by Ferit Özşen, three paintings by Sezer Ilgın, a painting by Ekber Yeşilyurt, a painting by Süleyman Sami, a painting by Kızıtaşlı Ali Rıza, a painting by Ziya and a painting by Ahmet Şahit ITU Art Collection (Atlığ, 2017). Significant features of the collection are commemorative busts and paintings of the important leaders and figures in Turkish history as well as ITU's own scholars, such as: Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (statue and paintings), Piri Reis (bust), Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa (bust), Çarkçibaşı Hamit Naci Özdeş (bust), Başhoca İshak Efendi (painting), Ord. Prof. Emin Onat (portrait and bust), Ord. Prof. Dr. Bedri Karafakıoğlu (bust), Prof. Dr. Mustafa İnan (bust) and Prof. Dr. Mustafa Santur (bust). Furthermore, there are five paintings and three sculptures in the collection whose artists could not be identified.

Important progress on the development of the ITU Art Collection is the foundation of the Rectorate Art Gallery (RAG) in February 2014. The collection is enriched with acquisitions from the RAG exhibitions including

one painting by the ITU academic Murat Çakan and a flower-illustration by Işık Güner from their solo exhibitions<sup>2</sup>. It is noteworthy to state that the RAG exhibitions will definitely be a precious source of collection development if properly managed.

Aside from the identification and documentation of the artworks, there are several findings regarding the collection management: There is a serious lack of record keeping and collection management policy, absence of an inventory, missing information about the artworks and artists, and curatorial issues. To exemplify, Günseli Kato emphasized that information about her series and labeling of the artworks as well as proper lighting fixtures were determined during the assembly and exhibition process (Kato, Interview, 20 April 2017). However, there are no panels and/or labels related to the artist and works in the present exhibition. As for the marble sculptures, the names of the artists could only be determined with the help of a press bulletin that was prepared for publicity at the time of the symposium.

The case with restoration needs and vandalism problems are more serious, as these artworks are in the public spaces of the university and they are vulnerable to natural and human-related affects. ITU's most recent commission *250th Year Sculpture* has been vandalized since its erection by spray painting and destruction of the figurines symbolizing ITU's community of the last quarter century (Atlıg, 2017, 44, figure 3.3.1.4.2). The oil painting of Şadan Bezeyiş at Taşkışla has also undergone a careless handling and was damaged by "drilling" it to the wall through the canvas.

As for the content of the ITU Art Collection, the relationship between science, technology, and art may well be observed in most of the major artworks. For instance, on the *The Statue of Hezarfen Ahmet Çelebi*, Rector Prof. Dr. Mehmet Karaca stated that Hezarfen Ahmet Çelebi was the first Turkish man to fly and having a sculpture dedicated to this visionary and successful scientist was most worthy of ITU (İTÜ Vakfı Yayınları, 2014/65, 128). The *Infinite Loop* by Fatih Semiz is

inspired by Mathematics where Nilhan Sesalan's marble sculpture symbolizes eight geological layers. The most important inspiration can be observed in the *Taşkışla Mural* which not only canonizes the pioneership of engineering and architecture faculties of ITU but also representing them in an aesthetic manner. Such works are very relevant when considering ITU's historical and current role as a leading institution in the aforementioned areas, to have this relationship be the core theme of its collection.

### 3. Recommendations for the development of ITU Art Collection

As mentioned previously, ITU Art Collection was not formed with the intention of establishing an art collection as the pieces were accumulated over time without any specific vision and/or mission. However, after the inventory was developed and evaluated, it was observed that it could indeed become a cohesive art collection with the right scientific approach. In this sense, the foremost consideration for the development of these accumulated artworks into a proper collection requires the formation of a "Collection Management Policy" (CMP) in accordance with ITU's vision and mission.

As a first step for the improvement of the collection, a detailed CMP was drafted for ITU Art Collection according to the standards set by ICOM (Atlıg, 2017). The most essential part of the CMP was to define the purpose of the collection. In line with the vision and mission of the University, the purpose of the collection is proposed as: "to have an Art Collection that emphasizes the relationship between art, science, and technology through acquiring and preserving artworks by innovative contemporary artists of its time" (Atlıg, 2017). After the purpose statement, policies regarding accession of artworks, de-accession procedures as well as loaning instructions were listed in the draft. Also, for the upkeep and safety of the collection, record keeping guidelines, condition report procedures, insurance policies, and rules of accession to the inventory were itemized. Additionally, ITU Art CMP draft addressed administrative strategies by

<sup>2</sup> An ebru (marbled paper) by Hikmet Barutçugil is integrated into Atlıg's MA thesis due to an error in fact. We, hereby, rectify the mistake and correct the number of artworks in this article.

proposing a “Board of Administration for ITU Art Collection” which include the Rector, an Assistant Rector, Communications and Marketing Director, the Head of the Rectorate Art Gallery, the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, the Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration, the Head of the Department of Fine Arts, an Academic from the Department of Fine Arts, the Head of the Department of History of Art, an Academic from the Department of History of Art, the Head of Department of Industrial Products Design, and the Head of the Humanities Department. Furthermore, an executive curator would need to be appointed as the “Manager of ITU Art Collection”. Thus, duties, as well as the responsibilities of both the board and the curator, were classified.

Development of a “Collection Management Strategy” (CMS) is another essential part in order for the collection to be well maintained and improved in the long run. This strategy is formed through a realistic evaluation of the present condition of the collection. For this purpose, a SWOT analysis was prepared by examining the strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats to ITU Art Collection. The strengths include; the presence of the Rectorate Art Gallery, having an in-house academic staff in the fields of art and management as well as technicians and necessary equipment. In addition, there are valuable artworks in the collection that reflect ITU’s clearly stated mission and vision along with various locations for exhibition. The main weakness of the collection is the lack of a record keeping system and thus the shortage of information. Other weaknesses include; curatorial problems concerning labeling, installation, and lighting, a significant number of damaged artworks, the absence of an insurance policy for the artworks, and lack of financial independence. On the other hand, one of the main opportunities the collection has is the presence of powerful ITU alumni network for sponsorship. Moreover, the prestigious status of the university is a great advantage for both donations and collaborations with contemporary artists. Also, the threats to the collection include

wear and tear of the artworks in public areas as well as issues of vandalism. Finally, there is a great risk of theft and destruction due to fire and natural disasters.

Additionally, a gap analysis was conducted to evaluate the “gap” between the current and the ideal state of the collection. Some of the artworks in the collection, like *Hezarfen Ahmet Çelebi*, *Taşkılla Mural*, and *250th Year Sculpture*, are in align with the essence of the ideal collection. These three artworks, which were commissioned by the Rectors, reflect the visionary skills and artistic approach of the institution and its executives. Therefore, in order to reach the ideal state, the Rectorate should continue to consider acquiring and/or commissioning such iconic works of art in accordance with the purpose of the collection.

ITU is a public university and therefore as a state institution its main purpose is to educate and serve the interest of the general public. Having a valuable art collection will serve both of these purposes by appealing to the aesthetic needs of the public as well as contributing to the artistic education of the ITU community. According to Watson (2001), university museums have a special responsibility not only to present their collections to visitors, but also to ground those presentations in the context of new research (15). Although the ITU Art Collection is not a division within a university museum, it is evident from the analysis that it should be treated with the mindset of a museum collection due to its unique value and diversity.

The recurring theme of ITU Art Collection is the relationship between art, science, and technology. ITU has several laboratories in various scientific and technical fields, which provides with an opportunity for interdisciplinary collaborations with artists. This is beneficial for contemporary artists as well as ITU to push forward new boundaries in art and science. For example, artists may use new technology and materials in creating their artworks at the laboratories and academics in ITU may be inspired by the artists’ creative approach to be pioneers in their fields. All this collaboration will subsequently

enrich ITU Art Collection with innovative artworks by contemporary artists. This approach will also encourage donations and sponsorships that result in the inclusion of valuable pieces, which will be in align with the purpose of the collection. Moreover, the collection would be enriched with the addition of diverse innovative works in contemporary art. As seen in the analysis, workshops led by ITU establish an artistic environment for artists to create artworks relating to education and knowledge that combine the theme of art and science.

The presence of an art gallery within the university provides a great opportunity for the development of its art collection. In the CMP, RAG is proposed to become an integral part of the board where it should also be encouraged to be influential in the development of art collection by hosting exhibitions that support the collection's purpose and to potentially contribute new pieces to the inventory. Another suggestion is to establish a permanent exhibition hall for the collection with the collaboration of RAG, either within the Rectorate Building or at a separate location. This project will provide for the exhibition of the collection to reach to audiences outside of the institution besides the community of the university. All these efforts will enhance ITU's prestige by raising awareness of ITU's commitment to art besides being a prominent technical university.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study initially reveals that ITU has a modest but also a promising collection of artworks owing to the generous donations of its prestigious artist-academics, smart acquisitions, and major commissions. In this context, it is observed that ITU, which is a leading technical university, should approach its art collection in a scientific and academic manner to formulate a management policy according to the developing international standards. In line with this policy, it should be ensured that the collection is protected and developed by ITU with an original planning by experts.

The intensive identification study and analysis of the pieces in ITU Art

Collection proved the fact that the collection needed to be handled professionally following the well-accepted protocol of major institutions. The lack of a protocol and inventory alone is an example exhibiting the unprofessional approach to such a potentially valuable collection. If there was a written document, like CMP, there would not be any missing artworks, any damaged pieces, any curatorial problems such absence or inadequate labeling, lightning, etc.

The main outcome of this research is the recording and proper documentation of the existing material, which consists of seventy artworks distributed on four campuses. Except for three unexhibited paintings, all the artworks were physically seen, measured, photographed, and catalogued. Information that was missing has been thoroughly investigated and recorded. A condition report for each piece was prepared and artworks have been categorized according to type and location. The artworks were also interpreted in an art historical approach where in some cases interviews were conducted with their artists so as to understand the fundamental motivation and to place the piece within the general scope of the collection. This research also enabled to propose a management and development plan for the ITU Art Collection. After the inventory has been compiled, a CMP has been drafted with an analytical approach adhering to the standards set by the ICOM. Also, a CMS was proposed for the long-term development and protection of ITU Art Collection.

During the research, the formation of a special art gallery supported by the Rectorate is encountered which is a remarkable opportunity for improving the collection. The RAG housed many exhibitions since its foundation that constitute a wide range from plant illustrations, paintings, photography, graphic arts, traditional arts and crafts to textiles, accessories, rare books, rag dolls, various designs, and historical events (Url-4). Such diversity is also another asset in integrating different media to the ITU Art Collection.

ITU Ayazağa Campus is suitable for exhibiting public artworks due to its vast outdoor space. In addition to the

existing pieces, many more artworks can be commissioned or curated in order to create a fully art-integrated campus. Moreover, the laboratories of different faculties can collaborate with contemporary artists which would result in the formation of original works. This approach will both contribute to the development of ITU Art Collection and enable contemporary art awareness to be assimilated by all ITU stakeholders. Furthermore, the existence of such an art environment inspires academics and students and encourages creativity in science as well as positively influencing the development of aesthetic and intellectual consciousness. In this sense, it is recommended that the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the Faculty of Architecture, the Department of Fine Arts and the RAG collaborate to increase projects and symposia such as the Open-Air Sculpture Workshop in 2007. Hence, the role of public art on university campuses is to make places fertile for creativity, critical thinking, and the search of truth (Grenier, 2009, 34). Public art can embody and reflect the intellectual and creative missions of the institution. It can foster campus community spirit, and memorialize both key individuals and events of significance (Mankin, 2002).

The major focus of this study was to compile the artworks in possession of ITU and to determine if they indeed constituted an art collection. The analysis proves that the artworks may actually form a valuable art collection if the recommendations that have been suggested are followed and the right collection management system is established. During the course of this study, the relationship between art and science as the core of the collection was mentioned several times and it would only be fitting that ITU Art Collection is approached in the latest scientific methods of collecting. As a pioneer and contemporary education institution ITU has the necessary sources, potential, feasibilities, and facilities to enhance its art collection, which will fit its vision, mission, and quality policy.

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Url-4: Rectorate Art Gallery (<http://www.rsg.itu.edu.tr/>)