

**“The Sound of Earth”
LÜTFİ ÖZDEN**

07.03.2025 – 18.04.2025

“On The Sound of Earth Exhibition”

Lütfi Özden's exhibition titled "The Sound of Earth," which he has been continuing his productions in a place he calls "workshop house" for a long time, is an ecological awareness call interpreting the relationships between sound and image. The workshop house is a productive space where nature and technology are blended, housing over a hundred original instrument designs, most of which are patented, as well as drawings, paintings, microphones, mixers, sound pedals, and all kinds of waste and excess that are organic witnesses of production processes like shavings and branches.

In choosing the title "The Sound of Earth", Özden relates the potential sound of the instruments as a metaphor for the multiple and variable structure of the earth. Therefore, among the collaborators of the workshop house, there is a selected bibliography containing natural and found items such as fir, sour mulberry, beech, spruce, apricot, mulberry, boxwood, hazelnut, maple, cherry, olive, coconut and mahogany, leather, iron, stone, four hundred million years old fossil, steel and concrete. For Özden, the phenomenon of earth has a diversity that includes humans as well as air, water, soil and plants.

The exhibition focuses on exploring the dynamic relationships between nature, sound, melody, echo, tone, noise, and space, where the sound element sometimes appears as a chaotic interaction and sometimes as an improvisational space. Özden transforms sound not just as an auditory element but into a form, establishing new dialogues between visual and auditory worlds. The space is set up as a realm that hosts this dialogue, where sound and visuality resonate and transform simultaneously.

In his book "On the Spiritual in Art" (1912), Kandinsky suggested us to see sound and hear color. In this sense, Özden's improvisations, which he applied on wooden cases with minimal impressions, should be perceived as linear and spotty counterparts of sounds. Özden questions the relationships between art-craft, design and function on different levels, starting from the organic potential data of the earth. Instruments with triplet and fifth chord patterns are subjected to tonal changes with delay and reverb plug-ins in electronic pedals, thus resulting in an experimentalism that pushes the limits of the current sound potential of the material.

There is also an indirect criticism here between tonal deterioration in sounds and ecological deterioration. The more unforced and spontaneous the sounds coming from the instruments are, the more simple and natural the elements falling on the surface are. On the other hand, by giving permission to touch the instruments, Özden invites the audience to realize the importance of contact and togetherness. This approach also signifies the concept of resonance, which Özden brings to the fore at the process of questioning sound in structural and intellectual terms. The resonance focuses on the idea of completing and disrupting with the audience-participant through sound instruments in workshop house. Based on interactivity with the audience, the sound which is the determining subject of the environment that is sometimes disturbing and sometimes calming; refers to the disruptions caused by humans in the ecosystem.

Lütfi Özden's plain objects integrated with the design add sound to the static structure of the space and include it in a dynamic experience. In this context, he questions the anthropocentric perspective by accepting the noise of the earth as sonic data. The object-sculptures and object-paintings in the exhibition should be perceived as signs of sensitivity towards the deteriorating urban texture and industrial destruction. These designs, which take the audience on both a physical and metaphorical journey through sound mechanisms that are either random, atonal or based on a certain harmony, keep the audience on a thin line between "hearing" and "feeling". The space is no longer a passive carrier of exhibition but turns into a platform of ideas that interact and transform with sound and the scents of various trees are sensed as well.

Ferhat ÖZGÜR / February 2025