

A FEW PIECES FROM NATURE: CREATING FOCAL POINTS VIA THE
TECHNIQUE OF ASSEMBLAGE

A Master's Thesis

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ABSTRACT

A FEW PIECES FROM NATURE: CREATING MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES VIA THE TECHNIQUE OF ASSEMBLAGE

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M.F.A., in Media and Design

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Andreas Treske

2022

The subject matter of this thesis is analyzing the artistic research project “A Few Pieces from Nature” theoretically and technically. The aim of this analysis and thesis project is to problematize perspective, and investigate the relationship between perspective and focus by creating three-dimensional objects that can be considered assemblage boxes.

Keywords: Assemblage, Collage, Focus, Nature, Perspective

ÖZET

DOĞADAN BİRKAÇ PARÇA : ASAMBLAJ TEKNİĞİ İLE ÇOKLU PERSPEKTİF OLUŞTURMA

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Bu tezin konusu, “Doğadan Birkaç Parça” adlı projenin teorik ve teknik olarak açıklanmasıdır. Projenin amacı, perspektifi sorunsallaştırmak ve asamblaj olarak kabul edilebilecek üç boyutlu objeler aracılığıyla perspektif ve odak arasındaki ilişkiyi sorgulamaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Perspektif, Odak, Doğa, Kolaj, Asamblaj

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CHAPTER 1

MOTIVATION AND INTRODUCTION

A Few Pieces from Nature is a project which tries to create experimental areas that can be viewed and contributed from multiple perspectives when the project is experienced. With these areas, I aim to question, "Can problematizing perspective also be considered as problematizing focus?"

Looking at art history, Cubism, which emerged from the methods developed by problematizing perspective and became an art history movement even though these methods were not developed to become a movement, also questioned the realities of the period because of modernity. Consequently, compositions that create multiple perspectives have been established by moving away from the perspective approach born with the Renaissance, directing the eye to a single place, and creating within the set of rules (Guagliumi, 1990). A similar approach is used in this project.

To create variations of perspective, I created five boxes of varied sizes and placed mirrors inside that are the size of the eyes in these boxes. With these mirrors in each box, I created opportunities for the spectator/audience to contribute to the experience of perspectives. Thus they interactively affected the composition of the boxes.

I placed the mirrors in the boxes at the depths formed by the layers that make up the composition in the boxes. For each box, the mirrors, placed in various parts of the boxes, were the first objects placed. I created then different compositions in each

box around these mirrors and aimed to create paths that would direct the eye to the mirror. The elements that make up these paths are the layers themselves and the elements in the photographs that make up these layers, such as color, light, and texture.

The mirror allows the viewer to change the composition and add himself to the composition. Such an attitude is also seen in Diego Velázquez's 1656 painting *Las Meninas*, one of the most controversial renaissance paintings. In this painting, in which Velázquez also places himself in the composition, the subject is the king and queen, but we see the king and queen through the mirror's reflection. The painting features courtiers, the princess, a dog, and Velázquez himself. Most of them look directly at the pictured, the king and queen we see in the mirror. By looking at the painting, the audience stands in the place of the king and queen. People in the composition look at the viewer, and the viewer is involved in the picture.

However, as Foucault stated while analyzing *Las Meninas* in the first chapter of his book "The Order of Things," which was published in 1966, the audience's involvement in the painting is limited and can only be included if the people in the painting turned to the king and queen.

In my work, the circumstances are different. The mirror changes according to what the viewer wants to show in the mirror. This way, the viewer can determine the subject of the composition. The mirror offers a space of freedom to the viewer.

However, this freedom area is also limited according to the environment in which the boxes are located. The distance viewed from the boxes due to this environment and the rest of the boxes' composition cannot be changed except for the mirrors.

The layers in the boxes consist of plant photos that I have collected over the years and turned into an archive. I printed these photos on papers ranging in weight from 80-100 grams and then cut them into waves. I aimed to fill the cardboard boxes by placing the papers that I cut on top of each other. For this, I made elevations using cardboard under the wave-shaped papers I cut, and I was able to create depth by placing them on top of each other.

While creating the compositions in the boxes, I determined the photographs I used according to the colors, textures, and light conditions. These elements are the elements that direct the eye to the mirror by wandering around the boxes. However, color is the first element I observed during the formation of the boxes, and I tried to determine the other elements after their colors were determined. For example, I put together photos with intense pink color and decided to create a composition in which this color would appear intensely. Later, while superimposing the waveforms I cut from these photographs, I tried not to add situations that could disturb the overall balance of the composition to the boxes. Even if the photos contain pink, shades of pink create light states or texture states in photographs. In other words, during the process of the composition, I decided whether to add the photographs I brought together to form a composition.

I followed the textures in the photos while cutting the papers on which I printed the photos. With this texture tracking, lines, and shapes that the eye can follow were formed in the composition. During the depth created during the stacking of these papers, these lines and shapes created some other unexpected lines and shapes.

Since I was trying to create a balanced composition and aimed to direct the eye to

the mirror by wandering around the box, I let these unexpected shapes stay where they were if they also served the composition. If not, I intervened and created other shapes.

In addition to this unexpected situation, another unexpected situation was that I intuitively added the leftover pieces that emerged during the formation of the layers to the composition. The leftover parts of the pieces I cut in the form of waves were also in the form of waves, and I decided to use them in the boxes as well. Thus, each of the layers that I cut one by one, independently of each other, was unique to itself. With the addition of the leftover pieces born from these unique pieces to the composition, each box turned into a unique and independent composition.

Sometimes only black and white layers can be seen in boxes. These, in turn, create states of light and shadow that the eye can follow. The black layers direct the eye to the more colorful areas that develop after them, so those colors and textures follow the paths created. White layers help the eye's circulation by providing light support where necessary. In addition, the shadow at the depth point formed as the layers overlap is an element that guides the eye to the paths that the eye will follow.

This project, which is one of the last points of my analog collage works that I have been continuing for many years and the archive that I created by taking photographs, reflects the knowledge I gained by researching perspective, collage, and Cubism. While thinking about how this reflection was for me, a question chain that came to my mind became the subject of the project: "Does how I look at the subjects, hence my perspective, my interpretation of the subjects, and therefore the reality that I ascribe to these interpretations, turn into the realities I live in? Is it then

to look from other perspectives to have other focal points and realities?"

As a result of this approach, I create multiple focal points by combining and superimposing. I place mirrors in-depth, and thus those areas that can be perceived as the focal points. My motivation for placing mirrors is to offer the viewer the freedom to influence the composition. Thus, I am dedicating a tradition that is also seen in *Las Meninas*, but my attitude is modernist and cubist. As a person who has worked for years and aimed to develop the collage technique, especially the analog collage technique, which developed thanks to Picasso and Braque, who laid the foundations of Cubism, I also use the freedoms offered by collage as a technique in this project. In this project, where I cut each visible layer one by one with scissors or a utility knife, one of my motivations is to take my analog collage practices one step further and produce works in the assemblage technique. In addition to these, my plant photo archive, which I created by taking photos of plants for years, is the main reason for the emergence of these assemblages. I reduce the space to two dimensions by taking a photograph of an area that is three-dimensional, that is, by looking at that area from a lens, from a one-point perspective. Then, by placing these two-dimensional planes on top of each other, I produce three-dimensional compositions again.

Finally, in the project, I create assemblages that adopt a cubist approach working with multiple planes.

CHAPTER 2

ON APPROACH TO PERSPECTIVE

2.1. Perspective as a Technique

Erwin Panofsky refers to perspective as an invention that happened in the Renaissance as a method of correct geometrical construction (Panofsky, 1991). During the formation of this construction, the perspective analysis that Leon Battista Alberti included in his book *On Painting*, which he created in 1435, influenced by Brunelleschi's architectural studies of perspective before 1413, had a significant impact. In this book, Alberti talks about the perspective that will come "right" to the eye with optical geometry (Alberti, 2004). With the way of building something "correct," perspective turned into the basement of painting, and it gives the focal point. Using a one-point perspective on a plane, creating a depth that the eye can follow, and placing a subject in that depth gives the idea of idealization, the fixated, the correct one as a story of a subject as it is seen in Renaissance paintings. Also, it is seen and imagined as a method that turns the understanding of canvases and panels into windows (Elkins, 1992). Audiences investigate space from the window. For instance, in Masaccio's "The Tribute Money" (1425), the depth that the eye follows shows the head of Christ and makes him the center of the painting.



Figure 1, Masaccio, The Tribute Money, 1425

As it can be seen in Figure 1, all parallels from all angles share a common vanishing point, the head of Christ. After drawing the eyes of the spectator to his head inescapably, it is seen that Christ points to the left. Also, Peter next to him shows that direction. The disciples are also elements of the story built around Christ. This eye movement, placement of objects in the foreground and the background, and using the tones of colors are the results of single-point perspective. All those elements come together and create an illusion of depth. Using one single and stable visual focal point and seeing this through a perspective turns the midway point into the constituent element. This method started with the Renaissance, and it was done commonly.

2.2. Evaluation of Perspective as a Technique

As opposed to Renaissance art, a sense of direction and illusion of lively movement started to be seen in the first Baroque period (Wölfflin, 1961). In the Baroque era, political riots, changes, and developments, according to them, the Counter-Reformation, traveling around the world, and diplomacy were the general sociological background of all kinds of artistic practices (Price, 1993). The bourgeoisie and capitalism improved and changed. This situation created class differentiation and economic imbalances. It was dividing into classes more brought along the understanding of a second plane. In this way, two-point perspective occurred. Based on this situation, it is possible to say that the changing focus with the changes in daily life also leads to changes in perspective.

As a painter of one of the most controversial paintings of art history and who lived in the Baroque period, Diego Velazquez's reproduction of perspectives splits the plane. The number of points the eye can follow and catch because of the depth and ability of corners; therefore, seeing things close to three-dimensional structures increased. Those situations and the development of the understanding of painting give the sense of movement that is followed by the eye of the audience. This circumstance brings more "alive" compositions. The use of light was one of the things that brought about this understanding.

2.2.1 Las Meninas

In his painting *Las Meninas* (1656), Velazquez determined the place as his own workshop or a hall of the Escorial palace and painted himself in said place with his canvas (Foucault, 1994). His posture and gaze are directed straight ahead and look at

the subject of the painting. Velazquez, in the painting illustrates the subject. There are other people in the place with him. As Foucault stated while analyzing Las Meninas in the first chapter of his book "The Order of Things," which was published in 1966, determining who these people were will help to understand what Velazquez, the painter, is looking at and understand the subject. As it is seen in Figure 2, Princess Margarita; nannies, maids, dwarves, and courtiers stand next to Velazquez, and most of them, like Velazquez, is looking directly at the subject of the painting. Behind the painting, where the depth is created, a mirror catches the eye. King IV. Philippe and his wife Marianna are seen in the mirror (1966).



Figure 2, Diego Velazquez, Las Meninas, 1656

In Las Meninas, the constituent element is the king, as the elements seen in the

center of the painting, which is the vanishing point, are the constituent elements of the painting. Here, however, the constituent element appears as the reflection of a mirror. The mirror thus creates a new plane, in which case the plane becomes the constitutive element. All the other elements in the picture are placed to serve this new plane that has been established. In this painting, the mirror is not in the center, contrary to the understanding of symmetry. The center should be in the middle in the Renaissance tradition. The perspective lines are in focus. It can be seen when they are drawn. The focal point is located slightly to the left and slightly down when looking at the picture from the opposite side. This situation allows other focal points to be created in the picture and to create paths that the eye can follow between these focal points with the play of light and shadow. Princess Margarita, for example, is one of the focal points in her position and the light in which she is drawn. At the same time, the door we see next to the mirror and the person standing in front of the door and looking back are other focal points due to the light and location. The painting may appear to be about the painter or the princess. However, the painting is related to the king because the elements in it are facing and looking at the viewers. Putting the king in the center of the picture. In other words, the viewer becomes the subject of the painting. This situation makes the mirror a constitutive element until the viewer notices it. After the viewer notices the mirror, he realizes that it is the king who is being looked at, and all the elements in the picture are only facing the viewer as much as they are facing the king. While the painting is being made, it is established who the official is.

2.3. Questioning The Perspective by Producing Images

When we look at art history, it is possible to come across mechanisms created by problematizing perspective. This problematizing is also a state of criticizing an attitude that starts with the Renaissance and directs the image producer to a single direction within specific perspective rules. In this section, the movements and techniques that break the tradition will be explained. Also, the artists that are inspired in the project of the thesis will be included.

2.3.1 Cubism

George Braque and Pablo Picasso were two artists that gave start to Cubism with Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)* (1907) and Braque's *Houses at L'Estaque* (1908) (figure 4) (Ganteführer-Trier, 2019). However, as Arthur Robert Guagliumi mentions in his thesis written in 1990, "Assemblage Art: Origins and Sources," it is crucial to see the influence of Paul Cézanne's later works on both Picasso and Braque (Guagliumi, 1990).

Braque's work in Cubism was heavily influenced by Cézanne's work exhibited at the Salon d'Automne from 1904 to 1906 (1990). In 1907, when Picasso painted *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)*, the foundations of Cubism began to be laid. After this painting, Picasso and Braque came together and formed Cubism by interpreting Cézanne's insights and technical work in their way (1990). However, as both Guagliumi and Anne Ganteführer-Trier mention in her book *Cubism* in 1934 Picasso explains this situation in a letter to Christian Zervos, "As we developed Cubism, we did not do it intentionally, rather we wanted only to express what was inside of us. Nobody dictated a program to us, forcing anything upon us." (2019, p.6).

It is possible to see this freedom in their works that can be evaluated as examples of Cubism. For instance, in Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)*, which can be seen in figure 3, the opportunity of observing a painting without the rules of space, colors, and proportions has been decided as naturalistic (2019).



Fig.3, Picasso, *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)*, 1907

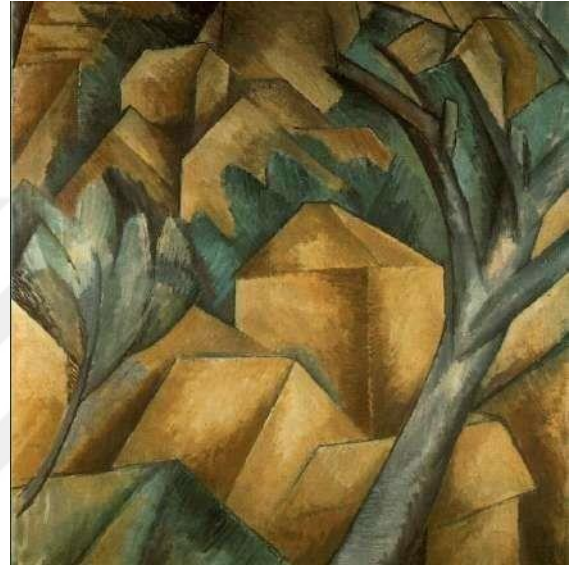


Fig.4, Braque, *Houses at L'Estaque*, 1908

Cubism has led people to see forms as increasingly transparent and fragmented. That means; contours that create borders to make the forms more logically understandable. With the development of analytical Cubism, they have become increasingly fragmented and transparent. In other words, contours dissolved into space (Markus, 1996). With this development, the relationship between object and placement changed, and objects no longer had to be in a specific location with a specific meaning.

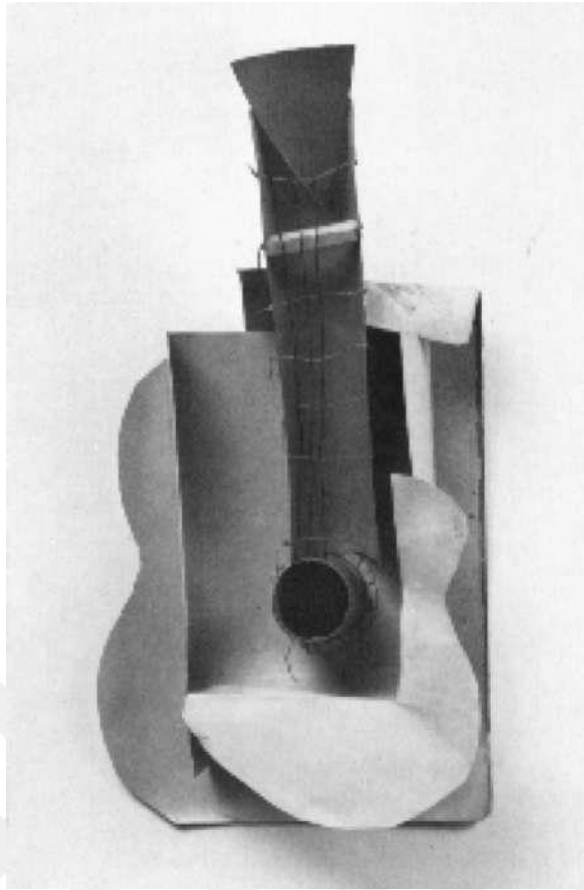


Fig. 5: Picasso, *Guitar* (maquette), 1912

However, it is possible to reconstruct an object by "assembling" its parts (1996). For instance, Picasso's *Guitar*, which can be seen in figure 5, which was made in 1912 by using cardboard and string, it is possible to see that the work is one of the first assemblage art pieces, and it is a result of Picasso's research on representing things by using different methods (1996). It is a piece that can be evaluated as different pieces of cardboard come together, and the shapes of cardboard create the shape of a guitar with the help of a string.

As can be seen in these examples, Cubism creates multiple perspectives by superimposing multiple planes, and this is how the image was produced in that era. This form of image production, which is problematizing perspective and is created by multiplying perspective in response, also increases the number of focal areas.

When the focus is increased, the meanings are amenable to change. Thus, a fixed meaning is not followed.

2.3.2 Collage

Guagliumi mentions in his thesis that collage was a natural outcome of Cubism's search for a new plastic language of surface, shape, and material essence (Guagliumi, 1990). In this case, the modern collage, the ancestor of the assemblage, was the result of the endeavors of Braque and Picasso (1990, p.36). The works developed by these artists with the materials they wanted to add to the surface of paintings form the basis of modern collage.

Collage brings together seemingly independent materials during the formation of the composition or to create the composition. The collage includes this freedom of assembling. Thus, while creating a composition with this freedom, it is unnecessary to make any determination. Even if it is to be determined, it depends on the initiative of the collage maker. This free working environment made possible by the destruction of a set of rules that happened since the Renaissance with the work of Braque and Picasso and the replacement of new methods. As Thomas Brockelman states in his book "The Frame and the Mirror," it plays with movement by denying limits that can be seen in history (Brockelman, 2001). In collage,

elements in the composition interrupt the linear or continuing structures. In this way, it is possible to encounter unprecedented meanings in the composition with the intention of representing multiple discourses (2001). It is possible to see collage works of Braque and Picasso in figure 6 and figure 7.



Fig. 6: Braque, Fruit Dish and Glass, 1912



Fig. 7: Picasso, *Guitar*, 1913

2.3.3 Assemblage

As described in the exhibition "The Art of Assemblage," curated by William Seitz at The Museum of Modern Art in 1961, assemblages are three-dimensional artworks created from a combination of materials not intended to be used as art materials (Guagliumi, 1990). This situation offers the opportunity to work freely, which is also seen in collage. It is accepted that the cubist collage is one of the foundations of the

assembly. As Arthur Robert Guagliumi mentions in his thesis "Assemblage Art: Origins and Sources," William Seitz states in the exhibition *In the Art of Assemblage* (1990):

The Cubist transformation of reality, accomplished in successive plastic statements, is undoubtedly a significant background to the method of assemblage as is the recourse to pasting: cubist collage was as much an outcome as a deviation or a cause.

As a situation that can distinguish an assembly from a collage, the material and method used when creating it. The assemblage is separated from the collage by becoming three-dimensional with the material used.

Materials such as glued wood fragments, textile products, welded metal pieces, and found objects can be used. Found objects can be many things, depending on the preferences of the person who created the assembly. These objects can be found on the street, in antique markets, in other people's homes, or in materials from one's own home. Even if the materials used do not make sense to the artist who produced the assemblage, they can have various meanings for the viewer.

2.4. Path to Composition

During the formation of the project, which is the subject of this thesis, there were artists whose works were examined and inspired. Joseph Cornell is one of those names because of his usage of boxes in his assemblage pieces. The artist works on collage and movie making and is one of the leading names in assembly art. The artist works with found objects and produces his own boxes. In this respect, it

differs from the project, which is the subject of the thesis. In *A Few Pieces from Nature*, boxes are found objects, and the insides of the boxes are made up of layers of paper cut out one by one so that they fit on top of each other. The overlapping of these layers forms compositions. David Hockney, who continues to work with a remarkably similar technique and attitude, is one of the artists who inspired the project. In this section, David Hockney will be examined.

Georgia O'Keeffe is also one of the inspirations during the project. The artist's motivation in reflecting on the plant observations she has continued for many years in her paintings and the concept of nature in *A Few Pieces from Nature* and the motivations for creating the compositions show similarities. Georgia O'Keeffe will also be mentioned in this section.

2.4.1 David Hockney

Hockney has a particular interest in art history and the pictorial tradition and combines this interest with the era in which he lived. He explores painting through technology using mediums such as analog and digital photography, computer design programs, fax machines, iPhones or iPads, high-definition multi-screens, and three-dimensional photography (Spathoni, 2022). However, photography is the artist's method in his works, which he continues by conducting experiments. With the invention of photography in 1839, photography began to be used as a tool for painting. Things could be handled in a more accessible way when used for this purpose. It was also valuable for realistically transferring the image to canvas, especially in portrait drawings (2022).

Even before photography began to be used in this way, David Hockney studied how

Renaissance artists developed their perspectives by using the lens and mirror as tools for their drawings during the invention of the camera. It can be clearly seen in his work titled 'Secret knowledge: rediscovering the lost techniques of the old masters,' which he carried on with the attitude of a historian, the lens and mirror, which the artists used as a secret in their drawings, played a significant role in the realism of the drawings. During this work, David Hockney redraws famous Renaissance paintings using the techniques used by his artists.

On the way to this research work, David Hockney begins to look for numerous ways of looking because of his interest in the pictorial tradition and his productions on this subject (2022). In the late 1970s, Cubism and Picasso became one of the great discoveries and sources of inspiration during the artist's quest. Hockney sees Cubism from a unique perspective. He sees the case of Cubism as breaking the single point of view perspective and opening to multiple perspectives as a much more complete view of what has been the subject of these studies. Thus, he disagrees with the abstract interpretation of Cubism. On the contrary, he sees it much more realistic (2022).

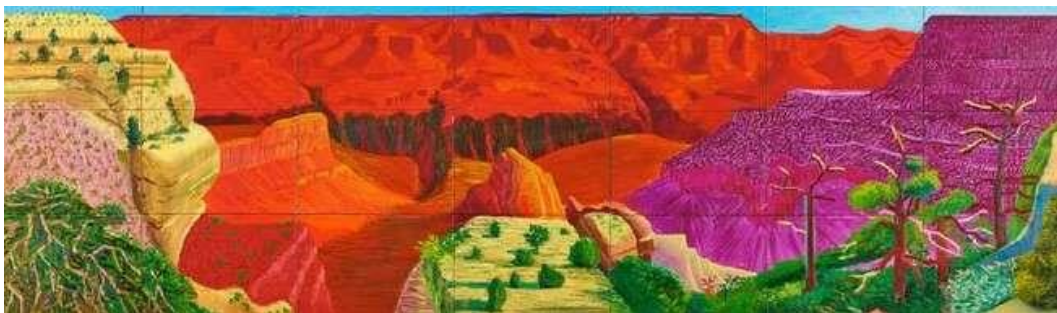


Fig. 8: David Hockney, A Bigger Grand Canyon, 1998

When David Hockney is mentioned, it should be said that he works in landscapes, moving away from the idea that the eye is wandering in restricted areas by working

on small surfaces. In figure 8, A Bigger Grand Canyon is one such example. According to Hockney, Grand Canyon is “the world's biggest hole” (2022). Such a dimensional situation makes Hockney question space. According to Hockney, it is not possible to photograph such greatness and the experiences that a person can experience in the face of that greatness. A lens is an inadequate tool for this because the canyon is not viewed from a single perspective, and a single focal point is not encountered. The eye moves non-stop in the canyon (2022). Hockney creates photo collages influenced by Cubism and juxtaposes photographs. An example of Cubist photo collage made by him can be seen in figure 9.



Fig. 9: David Hockney, Pearblossom Highway, 1986

2.4.2 Georgia O’Keeffe

O’Keeffe reflected her observations of nature in her paintings. The artist who paints

by observing the plants uses a technique that she built in the frame of her own perception of nature. She wants to reflect on her observations of nature through her works. As Britta Benke mentions in her book *Georgia O'Keeffe, 1887-1986: Flowers in the Desert*, O'Keeffe wrote to William Milliken in 1930 that (Benke, 2003:28):

I know I cannot paint a flower. I cannot paint the sun on the desert on a bright summer morning, but in terms of paint color, I can convey to you my experience of the flower or the experience that makes the flower significant to me at that time.

The artist reflects her observations of nature in an almost abstract way.



Figure 10, Georgia O'Keeffe, Jimson Weed/White Flower No. 1 1932



Figure 11, Georgia O'Keeffe, Jack-in-the-Pulpit No. IV, 1930

Examples of these abstract reflections can be seen in figure 10 and figure 11. She believes that even objective representations in the paintings can reflect reality only if

it is good in an abstract sense (Benke, 2003). The artist reflects the realities she observes together with nature. The plants' colors, lines, and textures in her observations are the elements she created as forms of nature in her paintings.



CHAPTER 3

PROJECT: A FEW PIECES FROM NATURE

The project investigated the question of "Is problematizing perspective can also be considered as the problematizing focus?". To investigate this question, it is crucial to understand the term perspective in art history. The focus established with the one-point perspective in the Renaissance shows the ideal. Ideally, it is placed in the center. In the Baroque period, two-point perspective began to be seen with the social and political changes experienced after the Renaissance. With the use of perspective, the focus areas where the eye is directed help to understand, read and code the image specified in works. In this case, it is possible to say problematizing of focus means problematizing of coding and perspective.

From this perspective, coding determines our perception. In the project, it is also asked if we can go to other codes. While the same question was questioned by producing images in Cubism, Braque and Picasso aimed to go to different codes by shifting the focus and increasing the focal points. For this, they used multiple perspectives in their practices. They juxtapose by placing the planes on top of each other. Thus, they created multiple focal points. As a practice of this, multiple perspectives have been created in the project by juxtaposing the layers used in the boxes.

The word "nature" in the project's name does not exclude people and what they produce. The word nature used here is all-encompassing. In the project, the

compositions created by taking photos of plants that are a part of nature and placing photos on top of each other are also a part of nature. The project, along with its title, wants to remind the audience that everything, including themselves, is a part of nature by questioning the concept of nature and allowing them to use mirrors to include themselves or the things they want to show the mirror in the composition. Also, I wanted to show the audience my perception of nature, just as Georgia O'Keeffe did.

This project consists of five different boxes coming together and completing each other. The differences in these boxes are caused by color, light, texture, size, and the position of the mirrors placed in them. The layers in the boxes are created by placing them on top of each other, and they are the main elements of the boxes. At the same time, leftover pieces consisting of parts used in layers, which reveal the elements that occur during the formation process of each box and that can enable them to become completely independent from each other, are also included in the boxes.

To technically examine the project, which aims to create environments where the perspective will be seen as a question, it is necessary to explain the elements used in the project.

3.1. Project Process



Figure 12, Elif Gözde Korkmaz,
Wanderlust - Piece 5, 2020



Figure 13, Elif Gözde Korkmaz,
Wanderlust - Piece 6, 2020

To explain the project in a more inclusive way, it is necessary to mention the evolution process that brought the project to the present and the decisions taken during the construction of the boxes as headings. Thus, the analysis of the boxes can be done.

The evolution of the previous project, 'Wanderlust,' is encountered in the project. In Wanderlust, three photographs from the photographic archive which differ in elements such as color, light, and texture, are brought together and placed on top of each other. In this installation process, the elements that cause the photographs to differ from each other are used to establish similarities between them. Thus, while placing them on top of each other, light, texture, color, lines, and continuity are created between the edges where the photographs connect with each other. The project consists of nine pieces, and two of the pieces can be seen in figure 12 and figure 13. All of them contain different photographs taken from the artist's photograph archive.

Between each piece, which means the only surface where three different photographs come together to form a single composition, the elements that complement each other show differences. With this project, scenes, items, people, that is, things that seem independent from each other come together. It is aimed to explain that they act with integrity in life and, therefore, everything is interconnected. As can be clearly seen in this project, the eye is directed to the center. When placing photos on top of each other, the size changes create a front and back relationship between the photos from the point where the eye will be directed. The photograph, which appears at the front and in the smallest size, is in the front and creates the focal point, although it should be at the back due to its depth. As can be seen clearly in this project, a one-point perspective is used. The eye is directed in one direction, to center. The images around the center photo also become supportive of the photo in the center. It is a coherent project within itself, as it is a project that expresses integrity, singularity, and unity in terms of its subject. It includes

pieces from the collection of plant photographs that are photographed during nature observations. It is a sustainable project for every period where the artist expands her collection by continuing her observations. Production for this project can always continue and progress in parallel with life.

The project named "A Few Pieces from Nature," which was founded and developed with this project, includes pieces from the plant photography collection that the artist took during nature observations. Nevertheless, unlike each other, the plane breaks in A Few Pieces from Nature. In this project, the photos were placed on top of each other before being placed in a box a little distance from each other. Thus, a three-dimensional composition is created by filling the boxes with these layers. In this way, these layers also create depths. Mirrors are placed at the depth points formed separately for each box. These mirrors also create new planes by breaking the plane.

3.2. Photography as a Technique to Produce Images

Photography is the image generation technique used during the project. The camera obscura, which is the first camera example, was used in paintings, as well as in places where perspective problems need to be solved, for example, in interior and exterior architectural work (Scharf, 1974). Francesco Algarotti (1712-1764) states in his "Essay on Painting" (1744):

Painters should make the same use of the Camera Obscura, which

Naturalists and Astronomers make of the microscope and telescope; for all these instruments equally contribute to make known, and represent nature.

This state of representing nature for the camera obscura, which is the basis of cameras, is the perspective used in this project, and the photographs were taken during nature observations to represent nature. In the project, it is seen that three-dimensional space is reduced to a two-dimensional surface by looking through a single lens through the camera. These areas are then placed on top of each other and become three-dimensional again in the composition. Thus, a three-dimensional space, which is made two-dimensional from a fixed focus and one-point perspective, is transformed into multiple perspectives.

3.3. Used Materials

Papers of different weights, between 80-200 grams, were used as material in the project. These papers are especially used during the formation of layers. The photographs used were printed on these papers. While creating layers by cutting these papers, cardboard is used to create a distance between them. They are cut into small pieces according to the desired distance between the layers and glued to the bottom of the paper.

The residual papers formed while cutting the layers are also used as material. These can be tiny pieces or the size of the longest side of the box, and they



Figure 14, A Photo from the Production Process, 2022

can be of any shape. Depending on the development of the boxes themselves, which of the pieces will be used is selected. The balance to be seen while looking at the composition is aimed, and the choices are made for this balance.

The boxes are made of cardboard and then covered with a black photo block on each side, including the bottom, as shown in figure 14. Thus, while the boxes appear black, attention is drawn to the color, light, and texture balance created by the layers inside the boxes. It becomes irrelevant what the colors of the boxes are, and hence the attributes of the boxes other than their size. Thus, more attention is drawn to the size differences between the boxes. The differences can be seen in figure 15. When evaluating boxes, only differences in size are visible.



Figure 15, An Overview of the Project from the Exhibition COMD EYE 2022

3.4. Color Arrangements

The colors used in the project are significant for the project's construction process. Colors are selected separately for each box and are an element that determines the relationship between the boxes.

While determining the photographs to be used in the project, the colors to be used in the boxes were decided. For this, first, the available photographic archive was scanned. The archive, which is organized according to the types of plants, is placed in a system where plants can be re-categorized within the framework of their colors. The colors in the boxes were chosen according to common colors that were accumulated and deemed appropriate to be used. The themes of the boxes were shaped according to these colors. The colors most used are blue, pink, purple, and dark

tones of these colors. There are also boxes with themes where black and white are mostly seen. It is aimed at creating different moods with colors.

Color plays a significant role in the relationship of the five boxes, forming the relationships between purples, blues, pinks, and blacks that refer to each other when juxtaposed. Instead of boxes that seem very separate from each other without thinking, it was preferred to go for compositions that can be related to each other.

3.5. Light and Movement of Eye

Light, which has an essential role in the decisions taken during the formation of the boxes, means the light conditions seen in the photographs and caused by factors such as the time of day and whether they were taken indoors or outdoors. The photographs come together to form a composition of light. The combination of this formation with other compositional branches, such as color and texture used while working on the layers, is observed during the formation of the project. As a balanced composition is desired to be achieved at the end, it is something that is considered during the working process according to which the light intensity will be distributed. During the formation of the layers, light conditions were also observed while the wastes formed from the cut pieces were placed. It is preferred that they should not be used if the light conditions in the residues will disturb the balance of the composition. An example of balanced composition can be seen in figure 16.

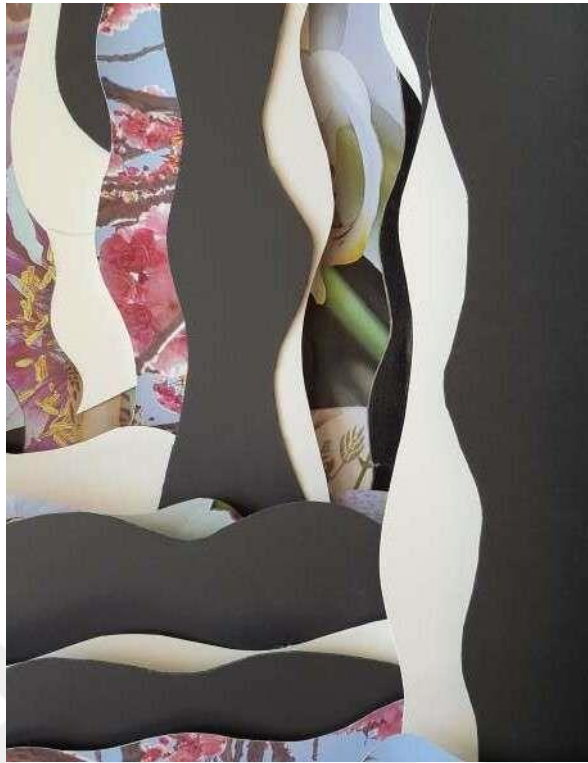


Figure 16, Detail from the Biggest Box in the Project

Light situations created with color are also considered while creating layers. For example, the placement of yellow tones in the plants is placed after considering the harmony with the other color scales in the layers, considering the light conditions in other photographs. In other words, if the yellow color combines with other light situations and causes a lot of shine in the area where it is located, it is not placed there. Where the light intensity accumulates, another focal area arises where the eye can be directed. For this project, however, the focus is primarily centered around mirrors located at the depth point inside the boxes. For this reason, light is an auxiliary element when directing the eye to the mirror.

3.6. Texture and Form

The textures created by the plants photographed were considered when creating layers by placing the photographs on top of each other. These tissues act in away that complements and balances each other through the lines, protrusions, and folds they contain from place to place. Sometimes shadows in photos also create texture.



Figure 17, Detail from the Fifth Box

The forms created in the boxes are created by considering the textures in the photographs. An example segment can be seen in figure 17. Photo prints, each of which is cut individually in wave form, are obtained by following the forms and textures in the photographs. This follow-up is unique to each segment. Waveforms are sometimes created by following the contours of the plants. The forms formed by staying inside the contours are followed.

It is thought that the mechanism that is formed as the layers are cut and placed on top of each other and established to create a depth around the mirror looks balanced to the eye and does not create a depth space independent of the mirror.

In some sections, the front and back relationship between the layers also creates form. These forms are formed by the small depths between the layers placed in a scattered manner and the distances forming this depth, and the layers placed on top of each other. In such a case, it is possible to say that each box in work creates forms that are unique and in themselves. This experimental state of work has given birth to spontaneous forms. These forms also emphasize the depth combined in the mirror for the composition shaped around the mirror. Thus, the study includes the unexpected. It incorporates the unexpected in the process.

3.7. Uses of Mirrors and Layers

Each of the layers in the boxes is set up around the mirrors. Thus, layers create a depth around the mirrors. Mirrors are the first object placed in each of the boxes. After deciding on the mirror's location and placing it there, the layers are placed to surround it. Thus, it is ensured that the mirror remains in depth. Orienting the eye towards the mirror thus becomes something thinkable in the process. Examples of different placing of mirrors can be seen in figure 18 and figure 19.

The mirror creates different planes in the boxes, as can be seen in *Las Meninas* or the *Arnolfini Portrait*. However, unlike these pictures, boxes do not just make the viewer the subject of what they are looking.



Figure 18, The Biggest Box in the Project



Figure 19, The Smallest Box in the Project

The mirror includes the viewer in working with these planes. However, the viewer has the power of interactivity that can change or determine the image seen in the mirror, namely the focus and its movement. This circumstance creates different focal issues that can occur as the mirror is viewed from different perspectives.

In some cases, the mirror can be something that cannot be seen for the first time and needs to be noticed, as in *Las Meninas* or the *Arnolfini Portrait*. If we place the boxes side by side, the viewer cannot see the deep mirrors when looking from the side. The spectator turns the mirror that he/she notices into a game with his/her movement. He sees the images he places in the mirror, which may be the image of his own body, in a dense composition of plants that have become almost abstract.

What the viewer sees varies according to the placement and location of the boxes.

The boundaries of the place where the boxes are located draw the boundaries of what can be seen in mirrors. At the same time, the boxes offer the viewer a limited range of motion when looking at the overall composition. The viewer cannot change all the boxes. It can make itself a constituent element only by its movement in the mirror's area. However, this is not the state of being an eternal constituent element. It is an area of freedom.

Placing the mirror at the depth center can make it inevitable that the eye is directed to that depth. The mirror, which is an object that also reflects movement, can be something that the eye would like to notice and follow. However, features such as light, color, and texture used in the layers are shaped separately for each box. The main goal was to allow the eye to wander inside the box. The layout of the layers is different for each box. For example, while in the largest box, the mirror appears almost rectangular due to the layers placed in vertical and horizontal shapes, in the smallest box, we see the mirror in a round shape, with an understanding that remains true to the wavy cut nature of the layers.

3.8. **Boxes**

While the boxes are explained one by one, it is necessary to explain the boxes in the order of their construction. The reason is that each order has been considered separately and the techniques used have changed and developed in each box. As the boxes are made in order, it is aimed that the compositions formed with the placement of the separate are not a repetition of the previous one. Therefore, if the boxes are described in order

of construction, the cases that have been applied and left behind when moving to another box are also described. These relationships emerge further as the relationships between the boxes are also crucial to the project.

3.8.1 Project Process of the Boxes

Before analyzing the boxes one by one, technically, it is essential to talk about the development process of the boxes as an M.F.A. program project. My meetings with my advisor Andreas Treske were influential in the order of formation of the boxes. Therefore some of the decisions I made while forming the compositions. When I edited the first box and took it to my advisor, I explained that I was making perspective and focus an issue and that I wanted to create spaces for the audience to question these issues. When the first box was formed, many factors that would be decided later, such as the number of boxes, whether the mirrors would be in various places, and whether the sizes of the boxes would be different from each other, were not yet clear. My advisor and I started to think about these issues from the first box. When I took the first box, which was 23x34 cm in size, Andreas suggested that he wanted to see my idea in a much larger box, that the size change would also affect the composition, and that I could move with this effect. The second box I made upon this comment was 36x52 cm in size and in colors that would make the audience experience much different moods than the first box. I also placed the mirror in a different place from the first box because this way, the perspective change would be better explained. The change in the size of the box, indeed, affected the composition and acting with this effect enabled compositions that could be

developed with new methods. Along with this box, I made boxes of many sizes and mirrors in various places. At the same time, my decision to move forward with a different theme in each box was resolved at this stage.

After the second box, I made the third box, which is the most oversized box in the project, with dimensions of 50x70 cm, again with Andreas' suggestion. The size change in this box influenced the course of the composition in the box. Since I decided to set up a different composition in each box, I also added layers that were only black and white in this box and placed the mirror in a different place from the mirrors in the other boxes. Together with this box, boxes that were different from each other when placed side by side but that referred to each other were formed. I was reading Leon Battista Alberti's book "On Painting," which was published in 1435 and influenced Italian painting and relief work with its perspective instructions and comments on Alberti's work, as it was a project that made perspective a problem. Thereupon, with the suggestion of Gülden Treske, who was in the office during our interview with Andreas on the third box, and who teaches Screenwriting at Bilkent University Communication and Design Department I started reading the book Anne Friedberg wrote "The Virtual Window: From Alberti to Microsoft." I had taken lessons on writing and storytelling before her. Thus, I started perceiving the boxes I created by taking perspective as a problem as frames. To balance these frames with each other due to elements such as color, texture, light, shadows, and dimensions, I decided to create two more boxes, so I created the smallest box in the project with a size of 14x20 cm and the fifth box, which will be the last box in the project with the size of 32x42 cm.

3.8.2 Box 1



Figure 20, The First Box Made in the Project

This box is the first step in which the methods that will bring the continuity of the project are developed and revealed. The box measures 23x34 cm. Since it is also the first box made, the mirror is placed in the middle, as can be seen in figure 20.

Seeing the mirror in the middle and at the depth point as the first idea is a reference to the work called "Wanderlust," mentioned when talking about the evolution of the

project. Turning the middle into the center, which is seen there, continues here as well, but with significant changes. For example, here, the inside of a box is chosen as the area for the composition. The layers are placed on top of each other at a certain distance to fill the inside of the box.



Figure 21, Detail from the First Box

Blue is seen in this box. The whites in places are the points of light that the eye follows. The mirror is surrounded by a form that was created with the aim of placing it around the mirror. The forms that are seen at the front and below the form that stands out due to being around the mirror are also cut, like the form in the front. However, since each form is cut individually and independently from the other, each form is different and unique.

Since this box is the first of the project experiments, images not seen in other boxes

can be encountered. Recognizable images such as tree branches, plant roots, caterpillars, and aquatic creatures can be found in this box. These are used to create the jungle image that each box also targets. This box also has thin stripes that may not be found in other boxes. These strips are auxiliary elements used in creating the layering and are leftovers from other cuts. These stripes also form lines that the eye can follow. In the box, there are intense plant photos and images taken from a microscope.

3.8.3 Box 2



Figure 22, The Second Box Made in the Project

Unlike the previous box, darker color tones and black and white are heavily featured in this box, as it can be seen in figure 22. For boxes that aim to create different moods with the colors used, this box is the one that calls for a darker one. Photos with sharp contrast and taken using flash in the evening are heavily featured here. The subjects of the photos are plants and their details. Images of plants photographed with flash at night are vastly different from plant photographs taken without flash during the day, even if they are the same plants. For example, colors change as light conditions change. Figure 23 and figure 24 are photos of the same part of the tree, whose scientific name is *Prunus Cerasifera*, taken day and night in a spring month.



Figure 23, Photo of a *Prunus Cerasifera*, 2022



Figure 24, Photo of a *Prunus Cerasifera* - 2, 2022

As can be seen here, the use of flash in the evening can make the photographed plant more prominent in the photograph. With this highlighting, the appearance of the details that appear in the photos may also change. This image change may occur when the light generated by the flash causes color flashes on the plants. These flashes are seen as glitter for some plants. Especially the black and white versions of the plant photos taken at night using flash make these sparkles more easily visible. Examples of this situation can be seen in figure 25 and figure 26.



Figure 25, A Photo Used in the Box - 1

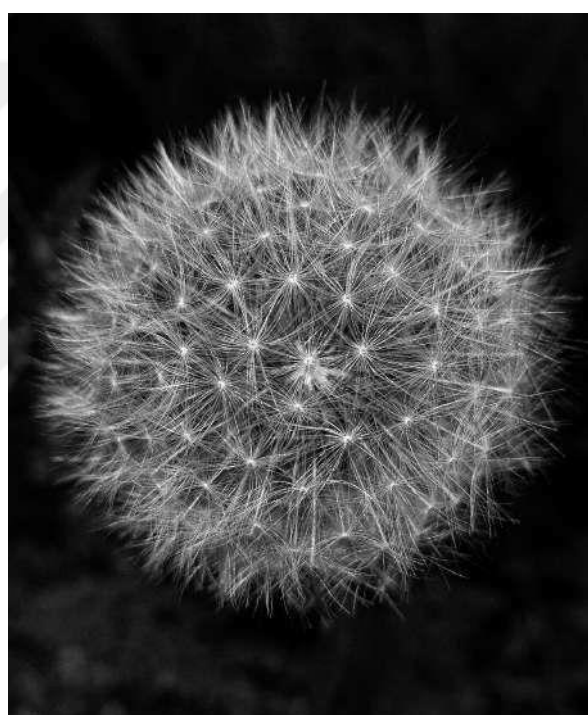


Figure 26, A Photo Used in the Box

In the second box, these photos are also included.

These similar photographs in the boxes reveal the light situations the eye will follow in the composition. These plant photos, converted to black and white, are also contrasted, making them ideal for dark moods. At the same time, some photographs with intense white lines also draw paths that the eye can follow. These are all details created to direct the eye to the mirror.

The mirror is placed at the bottom left of this box, as can be seen in figure 27. The fact that the mirror is placed down in the 36x52 cm box opens distinct experience possibilities than other boxes. For example, for a person with an average height of 1.60, if the box is hung at eye level, the viewer would have to bend over or look from a distance to play with the mirror. Considering that other boxes are hung at the same distance, this box and mirror placement offers playgrounds that mirror placed higher in boxes may not. At the same time, the spaces in which the boxes are located create possibilities and limitations for the images that can be created in the mirror. Thus, the mirror placed below allows for different games.



Figure 27, Detail from The Second
Box - 1



Figure 28, Detail from The Second
Box - 2

In this box, the layers are placed horizontally and vertically, as can be seen in figure 28. Changes in the dimensions of the layers also create the anterior and posterior relationships of the layers between each other. The depths that occur during these formations also reveal different forms and the unexpected and include them in the composition. These layers, each of which has been cut one by one by considering the textures in the photographs, draw the paths the eye can follow and direct the viewer to the mirror.

3.8.4 Box 3



Figure 29, The Third Box in the Project

The third box is also the largest box in the project, with a size of 50x70. As can be seen in figure 29, for the first time, only layers available in black or white are used in this box. These layers, which do not have any texture features, are auxiliary elements for directing the eye to the mirror with light and shadow formations. The eye follows the white layers seen in both horizontal and vertical directions. In addition to these layers, the prominent pinks and blues are also suitable for circulating the eye in the box. Blue has been used extensively, especially in the areas close to the edges. They are used in boxes to form a balanced composition due to their placement. For example, when looking at the box, as in the photo, the blue used on the left edge directs the eye to the blue at the top edge. From there, the eye turns to the blue at the bottom of the box, which completely covers it. Thus, a path formed by the blues followed. The use of black layers helps to follow this path. It prevents the eyes from slipping to the points where they are and reveals the paths created by the colors. The white layers also draw a trailing path that leads to the mirror.

In this box, the mirror is placed in the upper left. Since it is also the largest box, this layout also provides opportunities that other boxes cannot provide. Suppose a person with an average height of 1.60 looks at this mirror at eye level, which is placed at the opposite top of the mirror placed below in the previous box. In that case, it may be necessary to rise to a height or look from a certain distance to meet the eyes with the mirror. This viewer still notices the mirror as the paths formed by the layers are followed, and the mirror reflects the movement.

3.8.5 Box 4



Figure 30, The Fourth Box Made in the Project

This box is made to create a balanced composition when the boxes are placed side by side and is the smallest box with a size of 14x20 cm. It shows similarities with the largest box. The black and white layers are used to create these similarities.

In addition to these layers, it is preferred that the plants in the photographs are dominantly purple. In this box, where purple and black are seen, the light conditions in the photographs and the paths that the eye can follow are created. Violet photos are placed at the top and bottom edges of the box when viewed from the opposite

side, as in figure 30. These placements direct the eye to the insides of the box.

Inside, the white layers used to continue to guide the eye toward the mirror. The black areas, also seen in photographs, create neutral, dark areas that will encourage the eye to continue wandering over these whites. The second box balances the black areas in the photograph because of the dark moods they can create in the viewer.

Yellow parts are also found in this box. This color is placed to work on the same principle as white. The outermost yellow color directs the eye to the inner yellow areas and takes it towards the mirror. The balance between the textures was considered in the placement of the wave-shaped layers created by following the textures in the photographs.

The mirror is placed in the lower left corner of this box. Because it is the smallest box when placed at the eye level of a 1.60 person, the spectator may have to bend over to meet the mirror, but it may not create significant playing field differences like the mirror placement in the second box. This situation is due to the size differences between the boxes.

3.8.6 Box 5



Figure 31, The Fifth Box Made in the Project

This box is the last box made for the project. With the colors used in the box, it is desired to create a cheerful and bright mood. Purple, pink, and yellow color tones stand out in this 32x42 cm box as can be seen in figure 31. The mirror is placed near the right edge, and the composition is placed around the mirror, as in the other boxes. The layers, which are seen in the middle region and placed in a way that

cannot be seen in other boxes, are leftover pieces arising from other layers and play a prominent role in the composition.

They are bright and light tones that allow the eye to circulate over the layers. It is aimed to create the feeling of a sunny and bright spring day.

When this box is juxtaposed with the other boxes, it is balanced with the pink hues in the largest box and the colors in the first box. Layers placed in thin strips as remnants of other layers are also features that are in equilibrium with the first box. It is offset by the smallest box with its purple color. This box was made as the last box, and it was preferred that all boxes contain features that would balance their relationship with each other.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

In *A Few Pieces from Nature*, I aimed to create spaces that could be viewed from and contributed from multiple perspectives when the project is experienced.

The project problematizes perspective. The project, which started with the question of “Can problematizing perspective also be considered as problematizing focus?” investigated compositions that can be evaluated as assemblage pieces. Therefore, I questioned the relationship between perspective and focus.

With this problematizing, I started working inside a cardboard box. I placed a mirror in the middle of the box, the size of the viewer's eyes. Then I started to create the composition that would take shape around this mirror and direct the eye to the mirror. For the composition, I printed a selection of photographs I created from a photographic archive consisting of plant photographs I took on paper of various thicknesses. I started filling this box by cutting pieces in the form of waves from these prints. Since the papers would be thin, I made cardboard risers under them and thus placed them on top of each other. The result was an assemblage composition that directed the eye towards the mirror with features such as light, shadows, texture, and arising color from the photographs.

With this method, I created five boxes of varied sizes from each other. I proceeded to place the mirrors first inside each box. Nevertheless, unlike the first box, each mirror is right in the middle and away from the other. The mirror in the middle of

the first box refers to the perspective tradition that started with the Renaissance and directed the eye to the middle. By placing the mirrors in other boxes in various places, I aimed to increase the ability to act with multiple perspectives. I contributed to the understanding of the perspective that Cubism shaped.

As the boxes and method progressed, the dimensions of the boxes, the themes seen in the boxes, and the moods that emerged because of these themes also changed. The effect of the viewer, who experiences these changing states, on the compositions in the boxes through mirrors is not only a liberating state but also a state with boundaries. These limits are situations such as being able to be included in the composition only through mirrors and not being able to interfere with other areas. Also, the location of the boxes and the way the boxes are hung are determined. The distance from which the viewer can look at the mirrors is affected according to this display method.

Project, like the painting *Las Meninas*, in terms of creating a new plane using a mirror, incorporating the viewer into the composition with this mirror, but at the same time being within a specific limit of this inclusion. Another plane created with a mirror is seen in *Las Meninas*. The viewer can be included in the composition. Because many people in the picture are looking straight ahead, that is, at the viewer. However, this inclusion has its limits, as in *A Few Pieces from Nature*. As Foucault stated while examining *Las Meninas* in the first chapter of his book *The Order of Things*, the audience can only be included in the composition until the king and queen are returned. This situation sets the limit.

I had the chance to experience how the audience was involved in the project at the exhibition organized within the program I was authoring this thesis for. In the exhibition, I hung all the boxes side by side at the eye level of a person with an average height of 1.60. During this arrangement, I paid attention to the alignment of all the boxes, not the mirrors, calculated from the middle. The planning sketch of the exhibition can be seen in figure 32.

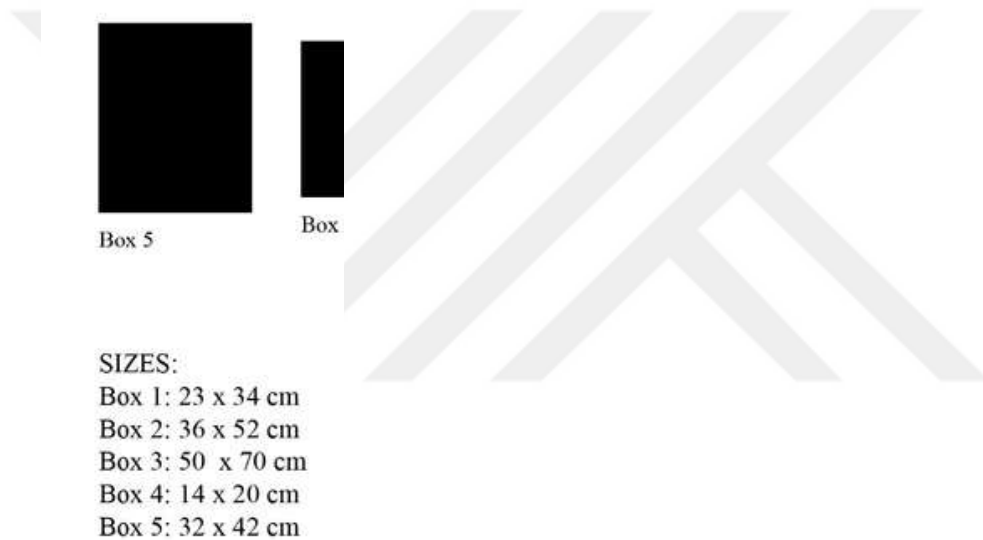


Figure 32, Exhibition Sketch

Those shorter than 1.60 mtall, who encountered this arrangement, could only see their own eyes when they looked from a certain distance from behind. When they were not looking in this way, they encountered various parts of the exhibition hall visible through the mirror. This situation also affected the way he intervened in the composition. They make various contributions by extending their arms or jumping. Viewers taller than 1.60 m had to bend over various boxes, as shown in figure 33.

Some could see the mirror placed near the upper left corner in the largest box, like a mirror at their eye level, in a way that those shorter than 1.60 could not. When these viewers looked at the boxes from a distance, they began to see their bodies. As I tested with this exhibition experience, While the viewers were experiencing this work in which he could be included in the composition, they played with the ability to affect the composition by moving bodily and thus turning towards different perspectives. This game environment and the situation of directing the audience to look at various perspectives was precisely the experience I wanted to create with the project.



Figure 33, A View from the Exhibition – 1



Figure 34, A View from the Exhibition – 2

In the project, with my plant photo archive, I reduce the space to two dimensions by photographing a three-dimensional area, that is, by looking at that area from a lens, from a one-point perspective. Then, by juxtaposing these two-dimensional planes, I produce three-dimensional compositions. The audience experienced the boxes and took a photo of the boxes. Figure 34 is an example scene from the exhibitions for this situation. In this way, they produced the image that I created again digitally. The project can be considered a hybrid media product in this case.

While the project refers to the tradition that started with the Renaissance, it consists of five different assemblage works, consisting of layers placed on top of each other and created with cubist techniques. The techniques also can be seen in the photo collages of David Hockney. The abstract forms of layers, which are created by plant photos and the compositions at the end, are made by a similar motivation that Georgia O'Keeffe had while creating her paintings. I wanted to reflect my understanding of nature in the boxes. Boxes created using cardboard, paper, glue, and mirrors can be developed and improved with varied materials and different

exhibitions. Since the areas where the boxes are located, and the way they are displayed impact the boxes and the audience experience, studies on these issues can be improved by organizing.



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