

**International local living**

# Kadıköy mural brightens church wall and community

**→ UP IN THE AIR**

Join fans of death-defying acrobatics at the Ataköy Open Air Show Center on Saturday, July 11 at 9 p.m. Thrills courtesy of the Chinese National Acrobats group that performed at the 2008 Olympics. 23 to 45 liras. E5 Karayolu Üstü Havaalanı Kavsağı, Ataköy www.biletix.com

**→ SHORT FILM SHOWING**

Selections from the previous Akbank 4th Short Film festival are showing Saturday, July 11 at 6 p.m. at Akbank Art in Beyoğlu. Applications are being taken for the 6th Short Film festival now. İstiklal Cad. No: 8 [0212] 252 35 00 www.ak-banksanat.com

**→ BALKAN BOAT**

Take a Sunday morning boat ride on the Balkan Ferry as part of the 16th International Istanbul Jazz Festival at 11 a.m. on July 12. Boat departs from the Kabataş Vapur İskelesi and returns at 4 p.m. 28 to 39.50 liras. www.biletix.com

**→ 50 CENT ON STAGE**

Hip-hop fans won't want to miss this performance on Monday, July 13 at 9 p.m. at the Kuruceme Arena. 75 to 150 liras. Muallim Naci Cad. No: 60 Kuruceme www.biletix.com

**→ MUSICAL RECITAL**

Venezuelan Gustavo Colina will perform a free concert in the garden of the Nazim Hikmet Kultur Merkezi on Tuesday, July 14 at 9 p.m. Ali Suavi Sokağı Sanatçılar Sokağı, No: 7, Bahariye [0216] 414 22 39 www.nazimhikmetkulturnerkezi.org/

**→ FILM SCREENING**

Cinema lovers won't want to miss this selection of eight films of the late actor-filmmaker Yılmaz Güney showing July 16 at the Beyoğlu Theater in Istanbul. www.beyoglusinemas.com.tr

**→ MOONLIGHT ON THE WATER**

Take a nighttime cruise along the Bosphorus on Saturdays throughout the summer with İDO. The ferry departs from the Bostancı jetty at 6:10 p.m. with a one-hour stop at AnadoluKavağı and then returns at 12:35 a.m. to Bostancı. 20 liras. [0212] 444 44 36 www.ido.com.tr/en/

**→ ADVENTURES IN PAINTING**

Brush up on Turkish painting history by viewing the works of artists born in the nineteenth century at Voyage to the West at Sabancı University's Sakıp Sabancı Museum through August 2. Open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Closed Mondays. 3 to 10 liras. Sakıp Sabancı Caddesi, 22 Emirgan [0212] 277 22 00 http://muze.sabanciuniv.edu/

**→ URBAN PHOTOGRAPHY**

Witness American artist Michael Wolf's exploration of the city and architecture at Galeri Elipsis through July 27. This veteran expat has been living in China since 1994. Open Tuesday - Friday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. Cafer Hatun Kuloğlu Mah. Faik Paşa Apt No: 37 Giriş kat, Çukurcuma Beyoğlu [0212] 249 48 92 www.galerielipsis.com

**→ CLASSICAL MUSIC AT TOPKAPI**

The Whitehall Orchestra and pianist İdil Biret are performing compositions by Tchaikovsky, Beethoven and Edgar with conductor Michael Nebe in the Topkapı Palace courtyard on Saturday, July 11 at 8 p.m. DJ Doğan Hızlan starts off the night with his own special brew of music. Tickets: 30 to 70 liras. Sultanahmet, Eminönü [0212] 293 65 42 www.biletix.com

**→ ANTALYA MUSIC FOR TODDLERS**

Get the little ones off to a musical start with parent-child courses. Lessons are held at 4 p.m. on Wednesdays at Cem Yuva. At the International Community College of Antalya, classes are held for 0-2 and 2-3 year olds on Tuesdays and Fridays. The first lesson is free. 20 liras per music lesson. www.zigzagzebras.com/

**→ KEEPING UP WITH THE İSTANBULLUS**

To find out what's current and fun in Istanbul, check out http://www.pukkaliving.com and its newly arrived cousin, http://www.dailyandy.com/travel.

Last week Kadıköy residents and passersby stopped, gawked, stared and snapped photos as a group of foreign and local artists painted over a stretch of a church wall that's been inviting trouble ever since the invention of the spray can.



**İSTANBUL**  
Hürriyet Daily News  
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The 27-meter stretch of graffiti-ridden wall near the Kadıköy center on Misbah Muhayyes street by the water utility building got a paint job unlike any it has ever had thanks to the collaboration of expatriate, foreign and local artists.

"The whole aspect of the wall has changed," said a Kadıköy businessman who walks by the wall to work every day. "It is really beautiful! They did a beautiful job on it and from now on no one will destroy it," said the man of the wall as the painters worked away, with the frequent distraction from comments and questions of curious and enthused onlookers.

The team of artists from the United States and Turkey picked up paint brushes and palettes in a self-motivated project to clean up the wall that belongs to one of the city's few Turkish Protestant churches and leave something to inspire the community with images of the neighborhood's daily life and fixtures.

The mural's organizer, Emily Sommers, who has been living and doing art in Turkey for three years, invited her creative friends from Pennsylvania to join her in the project since they were planning to visit Turkey anyway, she said.

"Six artists came from the United States for this project," she said of her friends. "They are artists and creative people who are interested in seeing and experiencing Turkey but also wanted to give a gift back to the community because they are creative."

Sommers, a mural artist by training, has painted murals in five countries around the world, including Turkey. This marks her second Turkish mural, and she said the idea behind it was pretty simple: a long wall needed painting.

"There's a big empty wall and I live in Kadıköy," said Sommers. "I've walked by this wall for the last three years and have always wanted to paint it, so this group, coming with its talents and gifts, asked the church if we could paint their wall."

Two Turkish congregations meet in the building and are part of the small yet growing community of Turkish Christians struggling for recognition from their peers, rights to worship freely and a place in their communities.

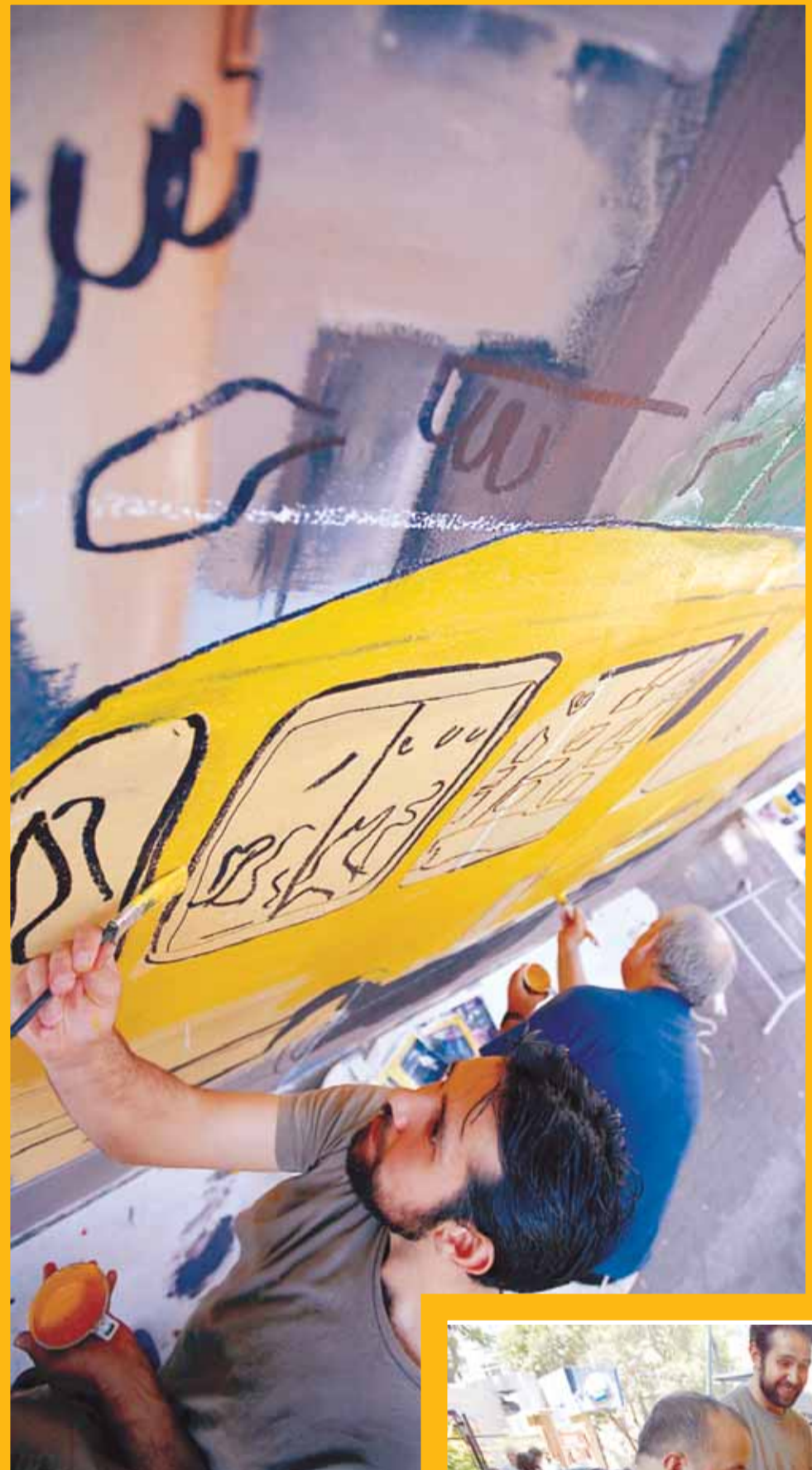
"We have had a lot of fun getting to know the church community," said Sommers. "They are very excited about this as well and a few of them have put in a few strokes here and there and are very excited to have something that is good for the whole community on the whole wall and be able to share part of that gift with the community."

By the end of the week over 20 people from the church community and neighborhood had pitched in to cover the wall with paint.

**The undertaking of a mural**

Sommers spent three days taking photos of Kadıköy and landmarks of the municipality on the Asian side before tackling the wall with her friends. With her collaborators they made a poster which they projected onto the wall after sunset on Tuesday evening

**Last week foreign and local artists put their brushes together to give a church wall and its neighborhood a facelift. Where graffiti once adorned the 27-meter stretch, now a collage of Kadıköy monuments remind passersby to slow down and enjoy all Kadıköy has to offer**



**MURAL:** Members of the community watch or pitch in, as a group of artists paints one Kadıköy wall.



tracing over the collage of images: The bull, the Sureyya Opera house, neighborhoods, the tram, people walking on the streets.

"We came up with the idea of painting images of Kadıköy because we love it, its history and all it has to offer, and we wanted to somehow display that as a gift to the community," said Sommers. "So we hope when people walk by they can appreciate it as a work of art and also feel good about what they see and bring a little joy to their day instead of seeing a big blank wall and some symbols that maybe they don't understand."

The Protestant church wall is not the only one that has attracted the spray cans of graffiti artists and others wanting to leave their mark or message, but Sommers said she hoped somehow that these night artists would be discouraged from leaving senseless messages on the walls and perhaps instead be inspired to reach a little higher.

"We are aware that before there was a lot of graffiti on the wall, some of it negative, because this is a church building," said Sommers.

The mural artist said she and the team of painters hoped that by painting the wall not only would it discourage graffiti, but also encourage those who want to be involved in a creative collaborative project with them in the future.

"We would even offer an invitation especially to those who are graffitiing in different places and seem to want to make their mark on the city somehow," said Sommers. "It would be great if we could bring those people together and work on a project that we can all have our hands on and make something beautiful and constructive instead of destructive."

**Turning heads**

One of the participating muralists from the United States, Melissa Engle, 26, said she was encouraged by the constant flow of positive feedback they had received.

"I hope it can be a positive thing and bring transformation and inspire people to paint a mural somewhere else," said Engle.

By the third day of the project, the group of artists said the flow of passersby stopping for a look, or to ask a question or thank them was overwhelming.

"We get many people stopping by and watching and are very excited about what we are doing," said Sommers. "Many people are saying thank you for doing this and that when they walk by they'll be able to see this and enjoy it."

Although some have expressed concern that the mural might be short-lived and surely spray-painted over once more, most seemed positive and excited about the project.

Working long hours in the heat has taken its toll on the artists who say they expected to have at least half the mural painted by the weekend.

"I'm starting to feel it but it's all good," said Sommers. Sommers plans to complete the mural although she admitted it will be slow after her vacationing friends leave to see the rest of the country.

## CONSULTANT'S CORNER



**Gary LACHMAN**

### Istanbul still attracts real estate investment

A recent survey of 500 real estate professionals in Europe ranked Istanbul third in Europe as a real estate investment market and first as a development market in 2009 from among 27 major urban locations. The survey determined that Istanbul is still of great interest to real estate professionals, falling only one position from its 2008 investment ranking by a similar survey. Economic stress and related problems such as lease and loan defaults haven't had the same impact on Istanbul's commercial real estate as they have with many other European cities. However, according to the survey published by a leading economic and tax advisory, Turkish economic growth appears to be stunted due to political uncertainty and delays in government eco-

conomic reforms required by the European Union. Despite this economic deceleration, investors continue to look for opportunities within the city. One investor who participated in the survey said, "Istanbul will be more favorable and will be our primary location for real estate investments."

**Offices, hotels, residences needed**

Class A office supply in the central business district is insufficient to meet demand as land in this area is limited and quite expensive. Fifty-three percent of survey participants agree, rating the Istanbul office market as a

buy. Interest in the hotel sector is also strong; as 48 percent believe this sector offers buy opportunities. According to the Turkish Ministry of Tourism, tourists have almost tripled in number between 2000 and 2007, exceeding 6 million. European real estate professionals are in accord with the report stating, "Projects in Istanbul are still relatively attractive."

"Development of residential real estate projects in Istanbul and coastal Turkey is needed," the report continues. Even with this interest, investors in 2009 are obviously concerned with the risk Istanbul brings as it is viewed as the eighth-riskiest city in which to

invest. One interviewee agrees, "Istanbul is still good, but too exotic for us."

The survey ranked the top six real estate investment markets for 2009 as Munich, Hamburg, Istanbul, Zurich, London and Moscow. Investors and industry experts believe that in general, German urban markets are relatively stronger compared to most other cities in Europe. Istanbul and Moscow are still underserved by high-quality building facilities in many sectors and have better growth potential than all other cities. The once exorbitantly-priced London is now correcting rapidly and will offer opportunistic

plays later in the year. Zurich is a relatively stable real estate market and prospects there have not fallen as much as those in other markets, raising its rank relative to other cities. Due to its strong need for more high quality office space and its steadily growing population, development prospect ratings place Istanbul in first place. Following close behind were Zurich, Munich and Moscow. Unfortunately for investors in Russia, Moscow is rated as the riskiest city, followed by Dublin and Madrid.

Gary Lachman is an international lawyer formerly with the U.S. Department of State, real estate developer, and associate professor at the Johns Hopkins University with a consulting practice in Istanbul. He can be contacted at glachman@lachmanyeniaras.com.