

ART AS A SOCIAL PROCESS:
HYBRID CONSTITUTION OF NEW MEDIA ART FORM

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ABSTRACT

ART AS A SOCIAL PROCESS: HYBRID CONSTITUTION OF NEW MEDIA ART FORM

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This thesis attempts to analyze the formation of art as social process by focusing on hybrid constitution of new media art form. Hybridization in new media art is taken into account as intersection of different spheres by which limitations of different spheres transcend and new possibilities arise. Accordingly, not only new media art form is established via various types of relationings but also it leads to formation of different types of social relations.

Keywords: Art, Relationality, Hybridity

ÖZ

TOPLUMSAL BİR SÜREÇ OLARAK SANAT: YENİ MEDYA SANAT FORMUNUN MELEZ İNŞASI

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Bu tez toplumsal bir süreç olarak sanatı, yeni medya sanat formunun melez inşasına odaklanarak analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Melezlik farklı alanların birbirleriyle iç içe geçmesi olarak düşünüldüğünde, farklı alanların sınırları aşılmakta ve yeni ihtimaller ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu kapsamda, sadece yeni medya sanat formu muhtelif ilişkilendirmeler ile kurulmamakta, aynı zamanda farklı türlerde ilişkilerin oluşmasına neden olmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Sanat, İlişkisellik, Melezlik

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Advancements in the field of science and technology provide new digital mediums and technological tools which have been subsequently adapted to the field of art. As Lovejoy demonstrates that “artists in all eras have used whatever tools are at hand to make art and have learned how to adapt new technologies to their needs”¹; following that, increased digitalization in the field of art is not surprising as digitality becomes marker of today’s culture as stated by Gere.²

Digitalization expands possibilities of different spheres as digital technologies become significant resources for new forms of artistic, scientific and technological experimentation within such information era. In this way, new research agendas develop and new object of inquiries open up possible combinations of different spheres. Those possible combinations and interactions among different spheres produce new hybrid forms which are in particular interdisciplinary and collaborative in their nature. And usage of new technologies within new forms addresses larger social formations and transformations as different kinds of collaboration among different spheres produce new relations.

More specifically, production of a hybrid form does not simply refer to changes in form through multidisciplinary subject of inquiries, but rather it accounts for production of new social relations which allow for production of such hybrid form. Besides, such hybrid form establishes new types of relations which evolve within

¹ Margot Lovejoy, “Art, Technology, and Postmodernism: Paradigms, Parallels, and Paradoxes,” *Art Journal* 49, 3. (Autumn,1990): 262

² Charlie Gere, *Digital Culture* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2008), 16.

conditioning process. All these relationings within constitution of such hybrid form highlight process-oriented nature of it and bear the form unstable as potentially being changeable by means of new connections and also questions.

To be able to understand potentials of hybridity by means of different relationings among different spheres, I will specifically concentrate on new media art as it is one of hybrid outcome of collaboration among different spheres. In this way, I will primarily investigate how do various types of social relations and art form mutually produce each other? In the context of new media art, merging of various spheres and formations of social relations create new possibilities for interaction of different disciplines and communicative practices. Following that, what significant for constitution of new media art form is its hybridity. In the construction of new media art form, *hybridity*³, which emerge from intersection of art, science and technology, is one of fundamental principles.

It seems that hybridity of new media art form transcend limitations of different spheres that are involved within the process. That is, hybrid constitution calls forth possibilities of various spheres as there are not established rules and principles which belong to or privilege specific field. Thus, new media art form could carry out different potentials of different spheres and could propose them within the process. Herein, process-orientedness of new media art form is as significantly important as its hybridity. By process-orientedness, new media art form exemplifies how idea and process itself precede final form and object within formation of hybridity.

In this line of thought, I will develop my primary question along three different and interconnected lines of inquiry which are new media art form, new media art practices and new media aesthetic. This kind of differentiation based on form, practice and aesthetic is meaningful for this study since each of these constituents has been changed in accordance with hybrid and collaborative nature of new media art.

³ "Hybridity has become a term commonly used in cultural studies to describe conditions in contact zones where different cultures connect, merge, intersect and eventually transform." (Yvonne Spielmann and Jay David Bolter, "Hybridity; Arts, Sciences and Cultural Effects," *LEONARDO* 39, 2. (2006): 106.)

However, they do not form a unity as each one accounts for distinct potential; so, opens up new possibilities and leads to separate challenges in the field of arts. Besides, changes in form; practice and aesthetic indicate the particularity of new media art and the way relations have been changed. To put it differently, form, practice and aesthetic in the context of new media art is incorporated into this study as they could be considered as “condition of deciphering the work of art supplied to a given society at a given time.”⁴ It is decipherment *distinctive of stylistic characteristics*⁵ of new media art which enables new media artistic representation with its particularity within contemporary art worlds. And the rupture resulted from kind of newness and hybridity of new media art on account of changes in form, practice and aesthetic could be considered, in Bourdieuan sense, as part of *periods of rupture* since it is about the fact that “new art of creation is devised and new generative grammar of form is created, breaking with the aesthetic traditions of a particular period and environment.”⁶

New media art, in its broadest sense, “have amassed around [...] a varied nomenclature, including *art & technology, art/sci, computer art, electronic art, digital art, digital media, intermedia, multimedia, tactical media, emerging media, upstart media, variable media, locative media, immersive art, interactive art, and Things That You Plug In.*”⁷ That is to say, new media art is a kind of blurry concept that is challenging on behalf of specifying a work of art as of new media art. In the same vein, it is really hard to find an artist who is specifically called as new media artist. Also, artists are not problematize not being named as new media artist; in a sense they are not pure artists as being already involved in different spheres such as field of technology, science, design or academy. Thus, rather than particularly new

⁴ Pierre Bourdieu et al., *The Love of Art: European Art Museums and Their Public* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990), 39.

⁵ Ibid., 40.

⁶ Ibid., 43.

⁷ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: The MIT Press, 2010), 4.

media artists, there are researcher/artists, engineer/artists and designer/artists. In relation to idea of hybridity in the context of new media art, not only works but also artists embody different characteristics of various spheres. So, artists and works are partially attached to field of art.

About what new media works of art covers; they are commonly video installation, sound installation, mapping, data visualization, site-specific installation, virtual reality installations, robotic devices, hyper-presence and telepresence based artistic applications and web based, network driven artistic projects. The list could be extendible since new media art resides in a hybrid zone and opens to varying combinations; so, the term is flexible on its own.

This shows that new media art form embody different principles of different spheres but they are not well established and structured since new media art form is potentially open to various combinations. In this sense, one of possible questions will be: *How does new media art form gain recognition within field of art as it is not specifically adhere to principles and rules of this field?* Accordingly, another question that will be asked is: *How does institutional authority over recognition change regarding the intersection of art, science and technology within new media art form?* And; *Does hybridity of new media art feature network for conditioning of intersection of art, science and technology within art worlds?*

Herein, I could talk about multiplicity of institutional authority in the context of new media art since it is more than about art worlds' dynamics and it is academy and various disciplines that lead to formation of particular new media artistic field. So, in this sense, I will try to examine how new media work of art, as hybrid constitution, has been formed through intersection of art, science and technology although they seem as principally divergent spheres all by itself. By this, I will aim to show the ways through which they are linked.

For this purpose, I have chosen certain new media art works by which I could open up different potentials of new media art. Those works, which will be analyzed in details in further chapters, embody different characteristics. So, I could touch upon

different compositions of different spheres; and relationings of those several works with each other in the context of new media art. Those works are co/produced by artists, designers, engineers, researchers who are interviewed in Istanbul, 2012. One of reasons of carrying out this study in Istanbul is about unsettled status of new media artistic field. New media artistic field in Turkey has been transformed through partnerships between art, science and technology. In this manner, we can talk about new types of relations and new functioning mechanisms which assist formation of new media artistic field. However, we have faced with blurred picture of new media art since what new media art and who new media artist are still ambiguous. Although it seems as a challenge for that kind of study, it is this uncertainty that makes this study thought-provoking. That is to say, hybridity as intersection of art, knowledge and technology on account of new media art produce different types of relations and include ambiguity in its nature. In relation to hybridity within new media art, positions are ambiguous since they could change with different ways of relationings. Here we can see potentials of new media art and its particularity within art worlds in details as it is not structured; so, not functioning in a certain way. Thus, new media art points out its hybrid construction by means of its own potentials.

1.1. Introductory Remarks on New Media Art

It is nearly impossible to talk about categorically fixed new media art as it is still ambiguous and potentially open to new compositions. Thus, rather than specifically addressing new media art in a classificatory sense, we will try to understand potentials and possibilities of new media art by using some art works and projects which can –also- be identified as new media art. For this, I will primarily look at basic characteristics of new media art.

To begin with, Paul specifies new media art as putting emphasis on “process-oriented, time-based, dynamic, and real time; participatory, collaborative, and

performative; modular, variable, generative, and customizable”⁸ characteristics. They are not conditions but rather possibilities of new media art. Herein I will examine how combinations of those characteristics are embodied in new media art. Thus, I will begin with clarifying them briefly. Initially, Paul’s identification seems to be founded, first and foremost, on the basis of process-oriented nature of new media art since other characteristics, that are arrayed, represent the way process proceeds. New media art is indeed characterized by shift from object-based art to process-oriented art. That is, rather than things or objects; process and the idea itself characterize the work within the context of new media art. Thus, the whole process itself is the work that it is open to new possibilities and integration of new dynamics. In this manner, new media art work is not a finished product but rather continuing process. With its process oriented nature, new media art work is open to manipulation; so, enable changeable and individualistically adaptable end results in accordance with modes of interaction. So, it is dynamic and it is this dynamism that could identify new media art work as open-ended project rather than finished art object. Following that, viewer can be involved in the process and interact with the work; so, brings out various outcomes which could be adapted individualistic account of approaching it based on customizability.

Via Bager Akbay’s Big Head [See Photo 1, 2 in Appendix A], I will try to delve deeper into embodiment of those characteristics in a new media art work. Big Head is a kind of research project which invites viewers to collaborate as the process proceeds with viewers’ experiences. For this project, Akbay designed a helmet which creates a big head feeling and enables viewers to see the world from totally different perspective. Herein, we critically face with a question whether we identify helmet or Big Head as the project itself is the new media art work. It is possibly not the helmet itself as it does not tell so much about new media art without any participatory act or practicing. Thus, the whole process itself is the new media art work. By its very nature, it is dynamic process and obtains its continuity and operability via viewers’

⁸ Christiane Paul, ed., *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond: Curatorial Models for Digital Art* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2008), 4.

involvement within the process. In this project, digital medium and new technologies advance interactive nature of the work. Via inherent possibilities of digital medium, the work is interactive, participatory and customizable. Each interaction is meaningful in the context of the project; so, evolvement of the project is variable depending on how viewers establish relationship with the work; and as well as with each other. Following that, the project is carried out in collaboration as viewers actively involved in.

It could be observed that the characteristics, which are identified by Paul above, are situated in Big Head by means of its process-oriented and interactive nature. Thus, as it was mentioned previously, process-orientedness and interactivity are significant premises of new media art.

To be able to make comparison to point out how two new media art work could differ from each other, we will look at Candaş Şişman's Isofield.[See Photo 3,4 in Appendix A] Isofield is an audio-visual installation that question intertwinement of originally physical and non-physical information; and re-digitizing of the physical result. Within details,

ISOFIELD has been produced using the izohips map that provides information about physical surface shapes and by making a physical layer from the graphics of the percentage of the population compared to the internet users (1990 – 2010) obtained from Google Publicdata. Ultimately, the acquired digital parametric surface has been dressed with a digital layer. This work is an audio-visual sculpture that tries to bring together physical information with a non-physical information (izohips-digital media) and finally with the physical result obtained it re-digitalize and makes intertwine and reverse the intended use of these nested two concepts.⁹

Comparison of two spaces; one is new media as more unsettled and diversified and the other is public space as limited and power centered, is one of driving of the work.¹⁰ Thereupon questioning the physical subsistence of these spaces, Şişman tries to mould those abstract spaces physically by means of physical data visualization of non-physical information. The form questions the reality between “physical” and

⁹ Candaş Şişman, Installation page, <http://www.csismn.com/Isofield> (accessed May 21, 2013).

¹⁰ amberTXT/BIS. Commons Tense: New Media Arts from Turkey exh. Cat. Edited by Fatih Aydoğdu, Ekmel Ertan, Istanbul, 2012, 96.

“digital” with respect to “reification of the real-world space and value of the new media and coating the resulting resultant parametric surface with a digital layer”.¹¹

Within Isofield, “different manifestations of information”¹² constitute the form. The data, which include statistical information of multi-user system, is beyond what we do know about its form and way of adaptability. The work is also produced in collaboration on account of technical support. With all that, we could observe how various spheres intersect and constitute such hybrid art form; and it is Isofield in the present case. Isofield could be considered as conceptual inquiry about new media related dichotomies such as new media and public space; and physical and digital. For that kind of inquiry, Şişman utilizes from possibilities of digitalization and digital technologies. The work could be considered as neither participatory nor collaborative art work on viewer’s account; however, it could be considered as participatory by its very nature, corresponding to application of the data within the work which is obtained via multi-user inputs. And we could see how the form of knowledge is adapted to artistic practices and challenges viewer’s relation to knowledge as it is modified and fold in new form. And the work is in motion which means that it is a dynamic process; so, when viewer enters into exhibition space s/he faces with transitory and floating forms.

The primary emphasis on commonality of Big Head and Isofield is about their hybrid constitution. In both cases, artists utilize from various sources of different fields so that they are not merely artistic inquiries but rather involve technological and scientific curiosities. For instance, via Big Head, artist composes piece of art, technology and science within the constitution of the form. The subject of inquiry is also not merely artistic as it is scientific more than artistic indeed. In Isofield, scientific sphere does not construct a subject of inquiry as in Big Head; rather the work shows possibilities of digital technologies and their potentials within an art form such as networked nature of the digital. Both works exemplify how new and

¹¹ Ibid., 96.

¹² Christiane Paul, “Renderings of Digital Art,” *Leonardo* 35, 5. (2002): 472.

digital technologies transform form of art via dynamism and process-orientedness. That is, the idea of dynamism is apparent; and both works are in a state of flux within exhibition. Employment of digital medium in both cases eases the way of making experiment between art and technology. As it is clear, they are not art centered works; but rather differentially knowledge, technology and science positioned works. Besides, forms of art are “functioning like information processing systems”¹³ in both cases. There is also not any certainty about being classified as new media art since Big Head and Isofield could be adapted to any other artistic category by their hybrid nature. And both works are also meaningful and worthy in field of science and technology. Under these circumstances, we could claim that new media art is comprehensive artistic category by which not any technique and style has been privileged yet.

New media art is mainly used to describe the projects that make use of emerging media technologies and possibilities of new tools. Cook identifies that “New media art encompasses a range of works, among them Web based projects, sound events, virtual reality installations, mobile cellular or PDA¹⁴ projects, and practices-conceptual art practices, network-based practices, software coding or sampling.”¹⁵ It is also very much related to the pioneering influence of computer usage in art¹⁶ which is advanced in a fantastic way and brings with “mapping¹⁷, data-visualisation, multi-user environments, telepresence, virtual reality, artificial intelligence

¹³ Edward Shanken, “Art in the Information Age: Technology and Conceptual Art,” *Leonardo* 35, 4. (2002): 433.

¹⁴ Personal Digital Assistant

¹⁵ Cook, S. (2008). *Immateriality and Its Discontents: An Overview of Main Models and Issues for Curating New Media*. C. Paul within, *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond* (pp. 26-49). Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, p.27.

¹⁶ For Gere, also, increasing usage of personal computers is one of significant and also productive factor that leads to transformation within fields of art and culture. For detailed information see Gere, *Digital Culture*.

¹⁷ ‘Specialized software is used to warp and mask the projected image to make it fit perfectly on irregularly shaped screens. When done right, the end result is a dynamic projection installation that transcends ordinary video projection.’ (<http://videomapping.tumblr.com/> accessed on 26.06.2013)

(impressions of themes and forms are addressed by interactive digital installation) [which] provide different angles on prominent themes in this medium.”¹⁸ In addition to usage of those media technologies, new media works of art also benefits from nanotechnology and biotechnology; in other words, it takes advantages of new technologies in a broader sense. New technologies such as “virtual reality, artificial intelligence, robotics, simulation, and telecommunications”¹⁹ are also applied within the artistic practice by means of new forms of representation. Thus, the term new media art is mainly used to take advantage of new technologies through transformations in artistic practices and based on the idea that forms, tools and mediums are changing by the agency of new technologies.

This change uses the shift from analog to digital as the starting point for usage of divergent technologies appeal to not only visual senses but also audial and tactual senses as the idea of digital diffuse almost all steps of life. As Gere states; “digital refers not just to the effects and possibilities of a particular technology. It defines and encompasses the ways of thinking and doing that is embodied within that technology, and which makes its development possible.”²⁰ Digital technologies are not necessarily employed in new media art but commonly have been used in certain stages of production and exhibition. And this makes the issue a bit confusing since new media art does not exclusively account for art works in which new media and digital technologies are employed.

Herein increasing adaptation to usage of computer and internet has significant effects on artistic practices. The more computerization become part of everyday life, the more sophisticated applications are developed and used. Margot Lovejoy, in her book *Digital Currents: Art in the Electronic Age*, points to important advances in technology and possibilities that have emerged within the artistic field since

¹⁸ Christiane Paul, “Renderings of Digital Art,” *Leonardo* 35, 5. (2002): 473.

¹⁹ Margot Lovejoy, *Postmodern Currents: Art and Artist in the Age of Electronic Media*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1997), 248.

²⁰ Gere, *Digital Culture*, 17.

computer has become personal tool for artist.²¹ As Gere also validates that the greater availability of computer and increasing computerization become part of everyday life and “offer new insights into the complex ways in which systems were organized and how that organization might arise”²² Use of the personal computers makes artists curious about new applications and interactive media technologies and then provide them to reach probable different outcomes in an expeditious way. Following that, technology is employed with varied techniques so that multilayered works appear within the artistic field. In this respect, art works facilitated by digital technologies touch upon diverse intersections of artistic practices and technical mediations. Therefore, we could talk about multiplicity of technical combinations on the same artistic ground where digital mediums could be employed within varied artistic practices from visual to audial with varying combinations. In this way, art practices have been also diversified and have not corresponded to single artistic genre.

With respect to putting emphasis on technology with great interests, “novelty seems to consist in the advancement of digital technology to the stage where it offers entirely new possibilities for the creation and experience of art.”²³ So, the question needs to be asked here is; *what are the new possibilities that are offered by digital technologies in new media art?* or *In what ways do creation and experience of art change by new media art?* And one another question; *in which levels digital technologies that are employed in new media art work or project lead to kind of change?* I argue that these questions have been able to open up possibilities of new media art in some ways.

To be able to delve deeper into specificity of hybrid new media art form in art worlds, it needs to be probed through artistic techniques, methods and methodology of new media art. By reason of the fact that the main issue in this study is not to

²¹ Margot Lovejoy, *Digital Currents: Art in the Electronic Age* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 173.

²² Gere, *Digital Culture*, 126.

²³ Paul, *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond*, 2.

make explanatory statements about new media art in particular, it would be futile attempt to go through artistic account of new media art itself. Thus, I will continue with positioning and conditioning of new media art within art worlds as they also represent significance of new media art. About being easily incorporated into the name digital art, how new media art constitutes its particularity is significantly important in order to touch upon changeable dynamics in art worlds by dint of potentials of new media art practices. The practices and the nature of the work itself could be thought in the matter of challenging object based understanding in art; the very idea of spaces of art as institutional art settings: galleries and museums; market driven functioning in art worlds; the very idea of ownership in art; and certain type of relation among artist, curator, viewer or audience and work of art.

New media art with its process-oriented nature, also, challenges object-based formulation on the level of institutionalization and commodification. For sure, I could not assert that such a process-oriented art form could not be objectified or commodified. That is to say, it has not been commodified yet; but this does not mean that new media art form will not be commodified, integrated to the market, or institutionalized. As I put an emphasis that relations within the context of new media art are constitutive for conditionings. Existing relations within the field arouse potential capacity of new media art on account of alternative ways of art-making and structuring. Obviously, this could also be altered with new types of relations and new contextual designations. This is very much related to contextual ambiguity in the field of new media art that it sustains potential of being appeared in new contexts with new meanings.

With respect to characteristics of new media art and its challenge to dynamics of traditional art worlds, it could be said that when object-based status of art is dissolved, then different strategies and functioning mechanisms could come forth. It could be either named as a rupture or a challenge; but what it significantly provides is transformation within art practices some of which were mentioned above. Now, I will look at significance of new media art in Turkey, corresponding to its unsettled and hybrid characteristics.

1.2. Significance of New Media Art in Turkey

Since artists started to make experiments with technology, “The term "digital art" has become an umbrella for a broad range of artistic practices and does not describe one specific aesthetic.”²⁴ Similarly, regarding new media art in Turkey, many studies on the grounds of digital arts are also considered as comprising new media art. And new media art in particular could be seen as somehow foreclosed within mainstream contemporary artistic field in Turkey since it is still highly new concept; so, could not make room for itself yet. There could be several reasons for this kind of silent suppression. One of the reasons could be related to lack of technical qualifications in traditional gallery and museum spaces. The other one could be in relation to financial circumstances and market based dynamics. That is, cost of new media work of art is technically high and not a proper art object to be bought and sold. And investing in today’s field of new media art is, probably, not a proper strategy in compliance with dynamics of art market in Turkey.²⁵ In this manner, it is clearly seen that new media art in Turkey has unsettled status as aforementioned. As it is unsettled, it does not maintain stability, so the relations within the field produce variable readings about new media art. Besides, intersection of various spheres produces new relations and makes room for commonalities. In this manner, new media art might keep the dialogue among artist, work of art and viewer open; so, there is always possibility to extend conditionings of new media art. This unsettled status also results in disentangling of classificatory positionings in the field; and includes potential for changes in form and practices with the possibility of existing in new contexts.

²⁴ Christiane Paul, “Renderings of Digital Art,” *Leonardo* 35, 5. (2002): 472.

²⁵ Herein corporate companies founded by Eczacıbaşı Family, Koç Family, Sabancı Family, Sevdâ and Can Elgiz (Elgiz Museum of Contemporary Art), Suna and İnan Kırâç Foundation (Istanbul Pera Museum), Akbank, Garanti, Yapı Kredi Bank, Siemens and Borusan Holding are the names who are considered as ‘art patrons’ who are substantially arbiters of art market with their large scaled artistic investments at institutional level.

For details, see <http://artradarjournal.com/2012/02/29/turkish-art-market-private-collectors-replace-wealthy-patrons-cn/>

Touching on significance of new media art in Turkey, it is about how art, knowledge and technology are brought together by means of new media artistic practices. Unlike white cube model exhibition strategies, new media art practices aim to be organized around non-invasive environments where viewers could exert agency over how they involve in the process and construct the meaning of the work. Indeed, “outside of institutions, the crossover between curatorial and interpretational roles is much more fluid throughout the contemporary arts and is reflected in the growth of “platforms,” or discursive events that evolve from group discussions.”²⁶ Herein NOMAD, TECHNE Digital Performance Platform, Amber Platform and BIS (Body-Process Arts Association) are significant examples that reflect changes in spatial organization of art and practices. Ekmel Ertan’s review, which could be thought as the first comprehensive study on formation of new media artistic field in Turkey, informs readers about evolvement of organizational practices in the field. In his own words:

The earliest attempt to create a platform for new media in Turkey was a media art and theory magazine called HAT (Hybrid Arrested Translation). Only one issue was published in 1998. [...] In 2002, NOMAD was founded as an independent group and officially registered as an “association” in 2006. NOMAD, in their own words, aims to produce and experiment with new patterns in the digital art sphere by using the lenses of various other disciplines.²⁷

In 2006 TECHNE Digital Performance Platform was organized and contributed to the field by organizing several seminars, workshops, presentations and conferences. One of the intentions of TECHNE is “to promote the field of digital technology in Istanbul and to create a new network of collaboration in the European periphery.”²⁸ And then BIS was founded in 2007 as an association with the participation of artists and researchers coming from various disciplines.²⁹

²⁶ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*.

²⁷ Ekmel Ertan, “Brief History of New Media Art in Turkey,” *The Rozenberg Quarterly*, May 23, 2013, <http://rozenbergquarterly.com/?p=5101>.

²⁸ Techne:International Istanbul Digital Performance Platform, home page, <http://www.techneplatform.org/about/> (accessed May, 2012).

²⁹ Ekmel Ertan, “Brief History of New Media Art in Turkey.”

Ertan points out objectives of BIS:

BIS aims to create an international discussion and production platform. It defines its area of interest in its subtitle. The concept of body-process arts encompasses artistic forms that explore, embody and question the complex, multifaceted relationship and fluid boundaries between body and technology and the consequences of their interaction.³⁰

In the same year, 2007, initiators of BIS organized amberFestival (amber Art and Technology Festival) and amberFestival is an annual event organized in Istanbul since 2007. And in 2009, the first amberConference was organized aiming to “creating a platform of discussion and dissemination of various themes and topics in which science, art and technology converge.”³¹ And planning to be actualized later on, there is one other project called amberFabLAB which “will be a fabrication laboratory that aims to democratize the production and to disseminate the making of culture as a node of the international fablab network.”³²

There are also many group discussions, symposiums and artistic talks on the subject matter of new media art that are organized by several art and culture institutions in İstanbul. Though these institutions have not been used as exhibition places, they provide place as theoretical zone to be able to follow new advancements in art. Also, certain universities have contributed to development of new media art scene in Turkey. They support artistic events by offering technical assistance or promoting research activities; also, they take part in the organization as one of local host institutions.

As it could be seen, Ertan’s study ‘Brief History of New Media Art in Turkey’³³ specifically addresses new media art and artistic practices in Turkey in connection with art and technology collectives and remarkably touches upon development of Turkish new media (artistic) field. In this manner, one of the important points that he

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

points out is about emergence of new media art scene in close connection to Visual Communication Design Department(s). That is, new media art dates back to second half of the 90s which makes the issue highly new subject matter. He interprets organizational attempts in the context of new media art regarding to common motives which have been shared more particularly among young generation artists, designers, engineers, researchers, academics et al. having similar artistic, cultural and educational background. And Ertan underlines that all these people came together as for “the need for an independent institutional organization”³⁴ since contemporary art scene has been guided by certain museums and galleries in Turkey. That is to say, contemporary art scene was directly market oriented and privatized field in Turkey as stated by Ertan:

Today’s art scene is primarily comprised of national corporations which support their own cultural institutions, with some commercial galleries for a small elite audience and collectors. Therefore corporations and a small group of galleries and collectors have been leading the art scene.³⁵

In this manner, art, science and technology based platforms were organized and have been struggling for the idea of independent sphere for artistic and cultural production. In this regard, new patterns in digital arts (such as new media art) have started to become visible within mainstream contemporary art worlds and encourage many artists to attend to digital art and new media art sphere. This leads to development of local networks in which many art and culture framed projects have been carried out, and several workshops, seminars and exhibitions have been organized. As it aforementioned, NOMAD³⁶, TECHNE Digital Performance Platform³⁷, Body Process Arts Association as “the first and only independent NGO in the field”³⁸ have contributed to development and enrichment of digital and new

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Organized in 2002 and registered as association in 2006.

³⁷ Organized in 2006.

³⁸ Organized in 2007.

media art sphere in Turkey. And the amberFestival (amber Art and Technology Festival) ,which was started by BIS in 2007 and also curated by BIS for six years, provides “international visibility for art and technology field and new media art in Istanbul”.³⁹Besides, many young local artists had chance to exhibit and present their works in the festival which is “a great opportunity for networking”⁴⁰both in local and international context.

Namely, as it is also mentioned by Ertan, new media art in Istanbul operates in art and design network. Based on this, Nerdworking is one of network projects and organized in 2009. Many artists, designers, engineers, coders, architects and researchers get in on Nerdworking and work in collaboration both in art and design fields. Artists, in this sense, practice on team working and get involved in one of esteemed art and design network. Indeed, network support is very decisive for working conditions. The ways in which new media art and design occur and how they are practiced are coproduced by networks in which artists participate. And not only recognition but also support is provided within the network that artists, who come together at the common ground, need to consider common interests of each other. For Becker, this adjacency and support among artists first and foremost ‘convince them that what they are doing is worth doing’, and therefore “if artists act under the definition of “art”, their interaction convinces them that they produce are valid works of art”.⁴¹ And in today’s fragmented art worlds, it is seen as necessary for an artist to be recognized by her/his style, method of working and the way s/he handles the issue. Thus, artists have been making an effort not for the ‘art’ but specifically for the ‘new media art’; and for being recognized as ‘new media artist’ rather than an ‘artist’. Though this effort is very conducive to reproduce similar power mechanisms of mainstream contemporary art worlds, it is presently considered

³⁹ Ertan, “Brief History of New Media Art in Turkey.”

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Howard S. Becker, *Art Worlds*, 25th ed. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2008), 39.

as somehow necessary on behalf of publicity of new media art within mainstream contemporary art scene in Turkey.

In the same vein, many artists prove that they, as new media artists, do not have any idea about how new media art should be. However, many of them think that it would be substantial to distinguish artists who worked on the basis of the possibilities offered by new media technologies from new media artists in order to gain esteem and support by means of any style or artistic theme. Ertan puts emphasis on the issue

Not all of these artists come from a digital background, but they are also not from conventional art education or practices. Of course there are many established artists in Turkey who use new technologies among other techniques and media. I did not mention them here as New Media Artists. Mainly because new media or technologies are not their main medium and even if they create such works, they do not shape their artistic repertoire. Although I believe that these artworks deserve the same merit as others, it is a completely different artistic approach and methodology which distinguish new media artists from the conventional ones.⁴²

Following that, it is clearly seen that attachment of certain qualifications to works creates contextual ambiguity because those qualifications could overshadow substantiality and significance. In this manner, any art genre or style could be directly linked with the one of notable characteristics such as technique; so, the meaning of the work itself could lose its significance. When it comes to job definition, it mainly depends on the context within such a hybrid environment. As the field of new media art itself is ambiguous, how to call her/himself is also unclear for artist. However, almost all artists, with whom I made interview, think that ambiguity of job definition affect recognition of new media art.

Corresponding to hybridity and ambiguity in new media art, artists, who occupy position within the field of new media art, foreground their works on account of their artistic status. In this way, even the work does not change but the value of it does. Although none of artists is named her/himself as solely new media artist, the work is attached to field of new media art by means of network based conditioning.

⁴² Ertan, "Brief History of New Media Art in Turkey."

As Bourdieu puts it;

Offering positions that are relatively uninstitutionalized, never really guaranteed, therefore open to symbolic challenge, and non-hereditary (although there are specific forms of transmission), this is the arena *par excellence* of struggles over job definition. In fact, however great the effect of position, it never operates mechanically, and the relationships between positions and *position-takings* is mediated by the dispositions of agent.⁴³

That is, new media artist and art work get their value from hybrid environment. In this sense, artist need to struggle for positioning of her/his work within art worlds; and her/his own artistic position within such a hybrid environment. As we will see via interviews, almost all artists are attached to field of new media art on the basis of structuring of the network that they get involved. And the relations among agents are very determiner for the positioning of new media art in mainstream contemporary art scene.

In order to delve deeper into practical part of the new media art in Turkey, I made semi-structured in-depth interviews with artists, designers, curators, lecturers, engineers, producers who works with a focus in new media art and living in Istanbul. These are not separate occupational categories because almost all interviewees profess in different fields at the same time. Indeed it is nearly impossible to talk about pure and concrete category of new media artist, such as researcher/artist or engineer/artist, in relation to ambiguity of job definition resulted from hybrid nature of new media art. One of reasons could be seen as financial difficulties in the field of new media art. Many new media artists do not live off with art making, peculiarly with new media art making; so s/he necessarily works within different sectors. For sure, many artists earned money with their new media works of art but this does not refute the fact that it is not possible to live off just by being busy with new media art as underlined by almost all interviewers in various ways. Also, employment of interdisciplinary attitude, research oriented processes of the work and academic guidelines within the field of new media art lead to contextual uncertainties. To put it differently, considering relatively newness of new media art and its interdisciplinary

⁴³ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* (US: Columbia University Press, 1993), 61-62.

nature, there was ambiguity in relation to who could be named as new media artist and what new media art covers. In the same vein, a thin line between design and art gave rise to professional uncertainty, because same work could be identified both as design and art work at the same time.

The interviewees, with whom I made in-depth interview, are Bager Akbay, Burak Arıkan, Candaş Şişman, Ekmel Ertan, Erdem Dilbaz, Genco Gülan, Nagehan Kuralı, Osman Koç and Selin Özçelik.

To begin with, Bager Akbay got his BS degree from Visual Communication Design department at Yıldız Technical University and then studied Interfaces Cultures at Linz University of Arts. Akbay is currently teaching at Visual Communication Department in Plato College of Higher Education and also director of the department. He has mainly worked within a focus of art-science experiments.

Burak Arıkan is one of known new media artist in Turkey. He got his BS degree in Civil Engineering from Yıldız Technical University in 2001 and then got an MA in Visual Communication Design in İstanbul Bilgi University. Then, he completed his master degree at MIT Media Laboratory. His works has been presented in many international art institutions and initiatives. He has been mainly working with complex networks. One of his project, Artist Collector Network: Phase I, is in the permanent collection of Borusan Contemporary Museum in Perili Köşk, İstanbul. He has lectured and given workshops mostly within focus of network mapping and analysis at institutions including Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rhode Island School of Design, New York University Interactive Telecommunications Program, İstanbul Technical University, Bogazici Universtiy, Sabanci University, and İstanbul Bilgi University.

Candaş Şişman finish İzmir Anatolian Fine Arts High School and then graduated from Animation Department at Eskişehir Anatolian University. During his education, he took one year multimedia design education in Netherlands. He has participated in many art and technology, new media festivals and received many awards. He is co-

founder of NOHlab Studio and also one of members of Nerdworking. He named himself as multidisciplinary artist.

And Ekmel Ertan works as artist, curator. He is also lecturer in Sabancı University. Ertan is founder member and artistic director of amberPlatform and BIS (Body-Process Arts Association). He has been curating Amber Festival since 2007. His installations and cooperative performance works have been presented in several international art venues and Turkey. He got his BS degree from Electronics / Communication Engineering Istanbul Technical University and MA degree on Interactive Media Design from Yıldız Technical University. Ertan is one of important figures in new media art scene in Turkey.

Erdem Dilbaz is called himself as producer rather than artist. He is founder and director at Nerdworking; and pursues new projects and explores newness within the field. He also contributes to research and development part of the new media art and design fields. He graduated from Management of Performing Arts Department in Istanbul Bilgi University. He has been researching on cybernetics based performing arts and technology - human interaction.

Genco Gülan is conceptual artists and interested in new media and performance arts. He is also lecturer in Boğaziçi University and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University. His works are presented in many prestigious museums such as Centre Pompidou, Pera, ZKM, MAM, Rio and La Triennale di Milano. Besides, he is making net-art and founder of the Web-Biennial project.

Selin Özçelik and Nagehan Kuralı are founders of Design In Situ –design and research initiative- and both of them are also members of Nerdworking. After their graduation from Visual Arts and Visual Communication Design at Sabancı University, they studied Digital Media at the University of the Arts Bremen in Germany and got their M.A. degrees. Both Özçelik and Kuralı gained professional experience in Germany and worked in several companies. As Design In Situ, they mainly work with a focus of combination of technology and design. Their art and design works contain site-specific interactive installation, experience design, indoor

and outdoor projections. With their interaction-themed works and projects, Özçelik and Kuralı take part in new media art and design fields. They prefer to name themselves as designer since they are actively take part in the design sector in Istanbul.

Osman Koç works as mechatronics engineer and interaction designer. He got his BS on Electronics Engineering Department and MS on Mechatronics Engineering from Sabanci University. He has focused on the notion of interaction and user experience in his works. Besides, he does prototypes for industrial, advertorial and artistic applications.

It is clearly seen that all of interviewees are involved in different spheres. The great majority of respondents have had profession in design sector. Almost all of them involve in the same professional or artistic network and work in collaboration. Regarding this, Amber Art and Technology Platform and Nerdworking provide opportunity for networking in this field. Each respondent has different kinds of relation with new media art resulted from being categorically ambiguous. The imprint that stems from their common interests in art and technology is noticeable in their ways of art making. However, relatively newness and un- institutionalized practices of new media art revitalize sense of community within the field on the basis of an effort to publicizing. Discoveries of affinities have a bearing on collaborative form of art making and formation of different networks. In this manner, support is established within network which enables artists to acquire position within different fields. Distribution of new media art is also provided by means of potentials of network which have very much effect on conditioning of new media art. Distribution practices, in this manner, have close connection with recognition of new media art in general.

As it could be seen that new media art in Turkey is constituted via intersection of different spheres within an intellectual environment; and network of relations is very decisive for conditioning of new media art in mainstream contemporary art worlds.

The commonalities, in this sense, are established by types of dynamics that govern those relations.

1.3. Content of the Thesis

The first chapter of the thesis will address constitution of new media art form. For this, three main characteristics of new media art form will be incorporated into the study as they are hybridity, process-orientedness and interactivity. By opening up possibilities of these characteristics, new types of relations and relationings that are in effect within the constitution of new media art form will be investigated.

In relation of constitution of hybrid and process-oriented new media art form, collaborative and research driven new media art practices will be focus of the first part of the second chapter. In the second part of the chapter, spatial organization of new media art practices will be addressed. Challenging potentials of new media art practices, then, will be opened up by exhibition, archiving and documentation, and distribution practices.

By depending on above-mentioned characteristics of new media art form and practices that will be studied, how aesthetic experience and aesthetic valorization within the context of new media art has changed will be incorporated into the study in the third chapter. This chapter will be organized in consideration of aesthetic potential of such hybrid constitution. Also, how aesthetic mechanisms within the context of new media art differ from conventional ones is aimed to be examined. For this, the idea of creativity, innovation and originality will be questioned assuming that they are value-laden characteristics in relation to hybridity of new media art.

CHAPTER 2

NEW MEDIA ART FORM

In this chapter, I will investigate how art form has changed within the context of new media art. And this analysis is not merely about changes within the form but also covers new types of relations that constitute that form. I will handle new media art form on account of its hybrid constitution since hybridity is one of important characteristics of new media art and resulted from intersection of different spheres within new media art context. Indeed, various types of social relations, relationings and cultural practices have effect in constitution of the form. In this sense, new media art form at the same time refers to various types of social relation that take new form.

Since the main question of the thesis is ‘how do various types of social relations and art form mutually produce each other?, I would like to show up what types of relations offer what kinds possibilities in the constitution of new media art form. Following that, I will address how new media art form challenge established art forms via its three main characteristics: hybridity, process-orientedness and interactivity. To be able to delve deeper into those characteristics and their challenging potentials, I will first address hybrid constitution of new media art form via intersection of different spheres. Then, in order to grasp significance of new media art via its hybridity, I will ask in the first part of this chapter: How does intersection of different spheres within the constitution of new media art form act upon principles and structures of art worlds? In what ways well established art practices are challenged by hybridity of new media art? And my questions will continue with asking: In such a hybrid art form, how the context of institutional authority over recognition has been changed? By these questions, I aim to discover challenging potential of hybridity within the context of new media art and the

relations that facilitate new media art's conditioning and positioning within art worlds.

In the second part, I will pay attention to significant shift from object-based art to process-oriented art. Assuming that art worlds' dynamics have changed with process-orientedness of new media art, I would like to consider what kinds of changes have experienced by asking: In what ways well established art practices are challenged by process-oriented nature of new media art? Does shift from object-based art to process oriented art feature network within the context of new media art? By these questions, I also would like to bring attention to significance of new media art's process-orientedness.

Then in the third part, I will address interactivity and its potentials in the context of new media art. Since the interactivity is not new issue in art, I will specifically ask: What is the significance of interactivity in the case of new media art? Considering viewer's involvement within process and her/his interactive way of experiencing the work, I will relate interactivity with process-orientedness; and continue with asking: In what ways interactivity within new media art changes roles of viewer and artist?

All these questions could also be opened up with new questions within the study as investigating new possibilities and potentials could expand frame of the analysis. Now, I will begin with addressing hybridity within the context of new media art.

2.1. Hybridity of New Media Art Form

Hybridity basically refers to intersection of different spheres. And the conditions of hybridity in the context of new media art refer to the circumstances in which art, technology and knowledge centered practices and cultures connect, intersect and transform toward constitution of new media art form.⁴⁴ In this regard, as also

⁴⁴ Yvonne Spielmann and Jay David Bolter, "Hybridity; Arts, Sciences and Cultural Effects," *LEONARDO* 39, 2. (2006): 106.

underlined by Spielmann and Bolter, convergence of art, knowledge and technology in new media art form would account for artistic, technological and scientific⁴⁵ amalgamation towards “new, incoherent and heterogeneous forms”⁴⁶ of new artistic practices. That is to say, depending on the way of intersection of different spheres, the form, which I identify as art form within the context of new media art, has the characteristics of different spheres that are contained in the form. In this manner, the form could not be specified on the basis of one sphere such as art form since the work technically and methodologically accounts for separate units. Besides, principles of each sphere are ambiguous within the constitution of the form which means that none of them is privileged by artist. In this sense, there is not a dominant form and leading sphere even it is identified as art form within the context of new media art. Thus, I could identify such a hybrid form as *heterogeneous* as Spielmann and Bolter did. When it comes to its newness, new types of relations that allow formation of hybridity within the constitution of the form qualify newness of the form. And it is incoherent as it includes different composition of various components. In other words, new media art works and projects are technically and artistically differentiated among themselves in relation to hybrid constitution of the works. Via intersection of different spheres and their various ways of engagement, new media art produces new possibilities whereby potency of new media art has been open to various composites. When I look at the new media art scene in Turkey, I could observe that it is nearly impossible to talk about distinct ways of new media art making. Following that, apparent difference could be seen between two of new media art works on account of technique, tool and methodology.

Spielmann and Bolter touch upon the usage of hybridity in cultural studies and underlines the very usage of the term as describing ‘conditions in contact zones where different cultures connect, merge, intersect and eventually transform.’ In this regard, hybridity is used to refer intersection of art, knowledge and technology in the constitution of new media art form. (Ibid.)

⁴⁵ In this thesis, usage of ‘scientific’ refers to academy and the sub disciplines; and knowledge in science and engineering. While underlining collaboration among art worlds, academy and field of technology; ‘knowledge’ is used to specifically concentrate on the way how knowledge, research and innovation come into play in new media art scene.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 106.

More specifically, hybridity within the context of new media art has close connection with ambiguity in naming, process-oriented characteristics of new media art works and network based relation in addition to intersection of different spheres within the field of new media art. To be able to detail hybridity within the context of new media art, I will look at those indicants. Before jumping into them, I will address intersection of different spheres; specifically, art, knowledge and technology as one of constituents of new media art form. For this, I will show the ways through which those different spheres are linked with each other. This examination will lead to several questions: ‘What kinds of relations are possible among art, knowledge and technology?’ How technological and scientific inquiries are approved within artistic agendas?

2.1.1. Intersection of Art, Knowledge and Technology within the Constitution of Hybrid New Media Art Form

Howard S. Becker highlights co-operative activities of art-making and addresses organization of art worlds on account of activities of participants in his book *Art Worlds*⁴⁷. And the participants of the art worlds are identified as “all the people whose activities are necessary to the production of the characteristic works which that world, and perhaps other as well, define as art.”⁴⁸ And co-operation among participants are conducted by artistic conventions; so, his point of departure is discipline of art; and any other disciplines that could be in effect within the art making are taken into account as adapting to functioning of art worlds. That is, artistic conventions are considered as if they arrange relations among participants of art worlds in accordance with a kind of convenient way of art-making. In the field of new media art, however, different fields intersect, establish new types of relations,

⁴⁷ Becker, *Art Worlds*

⁴⁸ Ibid., 34.

and constitute hybrid new media art form. And none of discipline privileges its own principles; rather, disparity between different disciplines is removed by joint creativity and then features notable diversity. In the same vein, Lovejoy underlines that via complex collaboration among different spheres within the context of new media art, “boundaries between disciplines are often erased, leading to a new form or field, or making a work equally important in the context of each field, such as art and/or science.”⁴⁹ Similarly, Giannetti considers interconnection of art, technology and science as leading factors for the idea of interdisciplinarity within media arts which generates new form of art through non-hierarchic collocation of those spheres.⁵⁰ It shows that the relationship among different spheres within the constitution of new media art form is not one-sided and partial. To put it differently, none of disciplines intersect with the field of art as for contribution. In this sense, concurrence of various spheres form kind of unity which is called new media art form in this study.

For Becker,

...art is social and beyond demonstrations of the congruence between forms of social organization and artistic styles or subjects. It shows that art is social in being created by networks of people acting together, and processes a framework for the study differing modes of collective action, mediated by accepted or newly developed conventions.⁵¹

Within the field of new media art, however, art-making is carried out via commonalities rather than conventions. The commonalities mostly established upon the idea of research and its employment within creative practice. That is to say, conventional way of art-making could be limiting within the context of new media art since hybrid constitution of new media art brings out possibility of different composites of different spheres. Thus, ways of art-making could be identified as

⁴⁹ Margot Lovejoy, “Defining Conditions For Digital Arts: Social Function, Authorship, and Audience,” in *Context Providers: Conditions of Meaning in Media Arts*, eds. Margot Lovejoy et al., 13-31. (UK: Intellect, 2011), 17.

⁵⁰ Claudia Giannetti, “Aesthetic Paradigms of Media Art,” *Medien Kunst Netz*, http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/aesthetics_of_the_digital/aesthetic_paradigms/scroll/ (accessed May 18, 2013).

⁵¹ Becker, *Art Worlds*, 369.

experimental rather than conventional within the context of new media art. Experimental, here, simply refers to conditioning of new media art practices on account of its interactive and research-oriented bases.

Art and technology centered networks constitute a common ground for crossbreeding of different practices of different spheres. That is, networks of relations also cover hybrid practices and give way to collaborative research. And the very ideas of research and innovation have been closely connected to each other since digitalization in artistic practices has started to be common. This is not only about employment of complex tools and mediums and discovery of their possibilities but also related to artists' own intentness to improve qualities of the tool and mediums as for/within new methods of art making. So, digitalization in artistic practices brings along experimental production methods which often bear technically or artistically convoluted new media art works. As art becomes kind of research on account of art and technology, then different fields are combined on the basis of research. Inter-adaptation of art and technology, in this manner, become one of constitutive elements during the formation of new media art scene in Turkey.

How to handle intersection of art, knowledge and science in the context of new media art could be clearly observed on the basis of organizational motives and new media art prioritizing platforms. As it was mentioned earlier that agendas of NOMAD, TECHNE Digital Performance Platform, Body Process Arts Association (BIS), Amber Platform have been based on research and innovation in the field of arts and technology. In this regard, those platforms or NGOs do not specifically adhere to new media art; rather new media art is formed in those organizations through employment of new technologies in common. Thus, new media art scene in Turkey could be well observed within intersected zones where different spheres merge and intersect; and artistic practices are transformed. Moreover, as Scott and Bisig propose that the knowledge which is employed within art is situated knowledge as "it is a reflection, interpretation, and appreciation of a local cultural

community”.⁵²Following that we could observe that positioning and conditioning of new media art are situated within the agendas of those platforms.

As it could be seen through Amber Platform and Amber Festival that they are one of key actors whilst field of new media art has been formed; however, they are specifically identified as art and technology platform and festival. Indeed, new media art is not sole and specific subject matter in those cases. People from different spheres come together within those artistic arenas and work in collaboration. Ertan as curator and director of Amber Festival states that “we try to say ordinary things that today’s artist say with today’s technology.”⁵³So, one of motivations within those platforms is possibility of expressing herself/himself via possibilities of today’s new technologies and new mediums. And those arenas could also be taken into account as new communication zones where people from different spheres discover new means of expression via networking and knowledge sharing. Following that new media art is formed within those arenas in relation to utilization from new technologies for new artistic expression models. Thus, the primary goal is not to make new media art but rather bringing together art and technology by making use of means of different spheres.

2.1.1.1. Newness of New Media Art

As intersection of different spheres and even specifically art, knowledge and technology has been discussed before, in this part I will look at newness of new media art in this context. New media art form includes transitivity among different forms and digital artistic practices; and highlights hybrid channels of digitalization

⁵² Jill Scott and Daniel Bisig, “Art and Science Research: Active Contexts and Discourses,” in *Context Providers: Conditions of Meaning in Media Arts*, eds. Margot Lovejoy et al., 299-329. (UK: Intellect, 2011), 316.

⁵³ Interview with Ekmel Ertan, October, 2012.

via intersection of art, science and technology. And intersection of different spheres features flexibility and openness in their relationings.

Shanken proposes that

Art-and-technology has focused its inquiry on the materials and/or concepts of technology and science, which it recognizes artists have historically incorporated in their work. Its investigations include: (1) the aesthetic examination of the visual forms of science and technology, (2) the application of science and technology in order to create visual forms and (3) the use of scientific concepts and technological media both to question their prescribed applications and to create new aesthetic models.⁵⁴

That is, science and technology; and even art are not separate units within the constitution of such a hybrid new media art form. They are merged within the new media art form so it embodies potentials of different spheres as being open to transitivity among different forms. And the artistic premises for new media art apply to aesthetic formation of hybrid channels within the constitution of the work.

In a sense, rapid developments in field of science and technology lead to new technical and technological facilities in field of art. In the vast expanse of tools and mediums, artist could utilize from new means of expression. Actually, the rapid developments within the field of technology and innovative dimension of the change have transformed art form since art is an expression of its period. Tanumihardja commented on the issue:

Today's artists may be employing new technologies to reflect contemporary issues, but the purpose is the same as it has always been: to engage and, at the same time, transcend the social context in which they live. Quite simply, artists working with digital media are just utilising another medium for expression while observing our contemporary context and the ramifications that the increasing digitisation of day-to-day life has on our society.⁵⁵

In other words, artist considers works of art's familiarity with the tool and medium since an appreciation of the new one remarks dynamics of artistic change. This, of course, is not an account of very progressive quest for new technologies; rather,

⁵⁴ Edward Shanken, "Art in the Information Age: Technology and Conceptual Art," *Leonardo* 35, 4. (2002): 434.

⁵⁵ Patricia Tanumihardja, *Digital Age* (July- August 2001), excerpted, <http://www.ekac.org/gensing.html> (accessed April 09, 2013), 24-26.

searching for convenient technological medium and tool for means of expressions. Many of today's young generation artists, who were born within digital culture and grew up with computer and its several applications, apply for a technological medium as means for expression. Now, concerning the new media art exhibitions as arguably being follower of new technologies, epochal value of new media art derives from recognition and making a sense within the artistic field. The very augmentation of the usage of digital technologies has the effect on its use for art and brings with its own capacity. That is to say, "each type of tool offers its own possibilities, its own strengths and weakness. Each is characteristic of a particular epoch, and its marks are a reflection of that period. [...] the influence of tools and of technological conditions transforms the production and dissemination of art."⁵⁶ It can be important to note here that the epochal value of work of art should not depend on the basis of historical comparison of the technique and the tool because of the fact that all periodization in art reflects upon technologies of its day on the grounds of newness and availability. But, the interpretation of new tools and techniques and their very critical adaptation to previous art forms and practices enable questioning capability of art-making and ways of doing. In this manner, many works of art come together on the same ground but each experience is intrinsic to significant form which is represented in a particular way. For instance, in new media art case, new art form shares similarities with performance art, conceptual art, Fluxus on the basis of usage of multimedia technologies in artistic practices and idea of interactivity which have been also qualified as one of the markers of media art. In this way, new media art form can be considered as re-mixture of practices of conceptual art, Fluxus and performance art. One of distinguishing characteristics of new media art could be considered as its process-orientedness since the functioning of the work could require physical involvement of viewers. This also underlines the idea that functioning of a work, which corresponds to the whole creative process, is the quality of significant form of new media art and it is this immaterial art form that can be modified by the flow of interactive acts.

⁵⁶ Lovejoy, *Postmodern Currents: Art and Artist in the Age of Electronic Media*, 31.

In accordance with material, technique and style, form is accepted as representative of intentionality; in other words, actualization of ideas in physical reality. New media work of art, however, with its process-based nature emerges in a dematerialized art form. In this manner, it is not the known, traditional art form which manifests transformation of aesthetic and artistic resources into an object so as in a physical form. New media work of art, in this respect, can be seen as a critique of art work's object status. Fluxus, Performance Art, Situationist and Conceptual Art touched upon immateriality by means of detaching art from material realization and led to different experiences of immateriality in art as aforementioned. From this point forth, it suggests the idea that new media works of art have been experienced as more than objects. It is neither shape nor form that presents artistic character of work; on the contrary, beyond its thingly character relations that subject to process and conditions of functioning and continuity of the project make it artistic matter. That is to say, for the continuity of the project, each participatory act is meaningful on contextual basis and leads to transformation of such a project. Thus, visual display of the process could differ in each case with each new participatory act and all relations actualize within this new art form depending on its own reality. As Saarinen touches upon that meaning behind the form comes to our consideration with the matter of *expression* and the form has its own language which also represents intercommunication between *art*, *artist* and *public*.⁵⁷ He also criticizes the idea that the degree to work of art achieves perfection is best understood in relation to possibility of direct reception of meaning of the work. And he proposes:

It is believed that the more artist is concerned with the exact finishing of his work, the more perfect the work and the more permanent its value. This, however, is a misconception in the evaluation of art. One should never forget that the highest artistic quality is not achieved by mere refinement of surface but by expressiveness of form.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Eliel Saarinen, *Search for Form: A Fundamental Approach to Art* (Washington, N.Y., London: Kennikat Press Port, 1969), 121-122.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 151.

In this sense, it is the whole process in the context of new media art that I could discover, enter into connection and valorize the work itself.

One another thing about newness of new media art is related to new modes of dialogue among artist, viewer and work of art. Lovejoy considers that meaning construction via interactive negotiation within such kind of dialogue leads to more democratic art experience.⁵⁹In the light of Lovejoy's consideration, it could be asserted that art work is not merely produced by artist but also attached relationship between artist, viewer and work of art as meaning construction in collaboration refers to potentially transmutable context. Viewer's relation to the work is more attached to experiential dialogue among the work and viewer. And the familiarity with the medium, which is enabled by usage of technology of its day, affects the way of experiencing the work. Although familiarity is not a bound condition, meaning is generally constructed via dynamic exploration of familiarity within the medium which could potentially open up new possibilities for meaning and functioning of the work. So, the work itself and also experience and meaning of it are dynamic within the context of new media art. And in relation to its hybridity, different spheres are also in dialogue so that dialogue among viewer, artist and work of art is more miscellaneous than before.

2.1.2. Ambiguity of the Names: New Media Art and New Media Artist

As I mentioned, new media art and new media artist are ambiguous categories. One of reason for that kind of ambiguity is due to hybrid constitution of new media art form via intersection of different spheres. Within hybridity, principles of all spheres are also ambiguous. In this way, becoming acquainted with new media art works and practices could be considered as a bit incidental, thus occurring at the least in a serendipitous way. For sure, this does not mean that neither artists nor viewers or

⁵⁹ Lovejoy, "Defining Conditions For Digital Arts: Social Function, Authorship, and Audience,".

audiences experience new media art unintentionally. Rather, it underlines that even artist can meet with new media art and artistic practices while being involved in the process of creative activity, without having something specifically about new media art in his/her mind. Bager Akbay underlines during the interview that “I named myself as new media artist but without knowing the reason of it. I was called by that. They called me that “you made new media study and had its education”. Maybe I should not name myself like that; it is funny as an art genre. I am an artist and I work with people who are in sight of new media art.”⁶⁰ And Akbay continued with the ambiguity in the case of new media art in general:

There is a problem; ambiguity of definitions has two reasons. First, everything seems as ambiguous while you are living with it. That is, when you turned back to fifty years ago, you could see in a more lucid way. Second, 20th century was based on specialization; so, everybody became expert in one topic. We are on the exact opposite mind. Thus, we proceed as trying to be familiar with everything and then establishing something with them. So, we are expert on no account. In this regard, naming what we do as art is right half the time; and it is sometimes wrong since it corresponds to art, design, commercial product, science. You can skid among them.⁶¹

Akbay’s statement highlights two different points on the ground of hybrid nature of new media art. One is ambiguity of names; and the other is intertwinement of different spheres within the constitution of such a hybrid art form. In the first instance, ambiguity of names could be considered as separate from hybrid nature of new media art. However, ambiguity within the context of new media art mostly depends on hybridity. That is, when different spheres merge, their disciplinary boundaries have been resolved. In this way, practices of different fields have mixed within the context of new media art and the work contains distinctive features of different fields within itself. And there is not a dominant form so diversity and multiplicity are apparent within the work. As it could also be understood from Akbay’s statement, art-making in such a case is occurred in an experiential way in which artists in collaboration put forth distinct qualifications and skills within the process.

⁶⁰ Interview with Bager Akbay, October, 2012.

⁶¹ Interview with Bager Akbay, October, 2012.

That is, ambiguity of new media art have had a potential for new alliances; so, apart from process-oriented nature of new media art works, new media art is a process itself. And new media artists – better to say, who are named as new media artists- are not pure artists as new media art itself is not specialized artistic profession. Following that, visual artists, who are named as new media artists in accordance with contextual determination of the works or projects, have come from different disciplines and collate different practices and instructions within hybridized intellectual environments. Thus, many interviewers have trouble based on the very idea that s/he is neither artist, designer; nor engineer, researcher in strict sense. This was clearly seen during the interviews. None of interviewers was named her/himself as new media artist although s/he has directly involved in new media artistic field in Turkey. New media art in Turkey has been welcomed through interaction and engagement of different spheres. As it could be clearly considered through formation of new media art scene in Turkey, it is not merely about development or transformation within the fields of art but rather it emerged through convergence of different fields such as field of art, science and technology. Thus, new media art gets its dynamism from all those fields; so, it does not merely dependent on mechanisms of artistic field. In this manner, this creative association opens up new possibilities which could be in effect not only in artistic field but also other fields. These possibilities could be considered as integration of the idea of creativity in all fields; blurring boundaries of different disciplines; constitution of new hybrid forms which could open up new commonalities among different fields; exploration of new technologies for multi-disciplinary purposes; employment of versatile strategies rather than one-sided or goal oriented ones; and active dialogue among actors from different fields. All these possibilities have close connection with the idea of hybridity and ambiguity that is resulted from hybridity.

Depending on artist's intention or network driven premises, the work is categorically open to different namings. Akbay, for instance, states that

I do not care about the name. [...] You name it as for people grasp it more easily. If the person across know what new media art means, then I say it so; or if it is published in a magazine and readers of the magazine are designers and artists. [...] The work which

we made with Candaş and others at Ars Electronica was exactly performance art and it had code, yes. I do not say new media art for it but Ars Electronica did.⁶²

The work that Akbay mentioned is Deep Space Music⁶³. [See Photo 5 in Appendix A] The work as a live visualization includes different components such as sound, image, music and computer animation.⁶⁴ And the work is a live performance which is performed via interactive visual art direction of artists and pianist Ms. Namekawa's spontaneous improvisation. So, the work is simply based on interaction between pieces of music and visuals. The work, for sure, could be identified as performance art rather than new media art. However, if we could identify Deep Space Music also as new media art work, then the conditions that enable it point to positioning and conditioning of new media art. Turning back to our example Deep Space Music, role of Ars Electronica could not be disregarded. That is, Ars Electronica is one of prestigious and important media art festivals and has been held annually since 1986 in Linz, Austria. As we could get from Akbay's statement, while Ars Electronica identified the work categorically as new media art work, Akbay prefers to use performance art. And within the context of Ars Electronica, primary emphasis is put on media arts so that Deep Space Music is more meaningful as new media art work. For sure, new media art has close connection between performance art as it aforementioned; and try to find hard-edge differences among artistic genres is a kind of futile attempt while everything engages with each other both technically and ideationally within the context of art.

Here, it is important to mention that usage of new technologies within an art work does not enough to identify the work as new media art work. In relation to that, Ertan highlights that in some art works, artists do not use any technology but they are exactly new media art works because 'constituents of the work, generated concepts

⁶² Interview with Bager Akbay, October, 2012.

⁶³ Candaş Şişman, Performance page, <http://www.csismn.com/Deep-Space-Music> (accessed May 26, 2013).

⁶⁴ Ars Electronica 2012, Festival for Art, Technology and Society, *The Big Picture: New Concepts for a New World*, <http://www.aec.at/thebigpicture/en/2012/08/15/deep-space-music/> (accessed May 26, 2013).

and surely artist's approach' are decisive for telling new media art status. And Ertan continues; "in the first place, it is not about technology in use."⁶⁵Ertan's point indicates that the technology does not characterize the work by oneself. In a similar way, Arıkan notes that

The thing that we call new media is very ambiguous. [...] Because every one step into everything as technology is part of our lives. In this sense, the works and artists, which are criticizing the technology that becomes invisible; and making self-critic within it, are very interesting. [...] Today, all kinds of mediums are intertwined; physical, digital so is the hybrid.⁶⁶

New media art and artist have not been artistically recognized; and new media art practices have not been institutionalized within Turkish art scene. In this regard, coping with new media art is not easy as artists face with difficulties in relation to financial and artistic support. For the artists who are living in abroad, on the other hand, conditions for art-making are more established and feasible. As Ertan also mentioned that "you busy with design to make money in Turkey; so, you could not get round to your artistic production."⁶⁷And working as a designer for daily concerns could limit artist's creativity and also freedom as compared with employing design skills while art making. For instance, Kuralı and Özçelik work as interaction designers and also participated in many local and international new media art festivals as new media artists. They underline that when they make commercial works within the field of design, it is technological medium rather than conceptual background of the work that has been prioritized. And they emphasize that although production motives and strategies are different from each other in the field of art and design, they start to intertwine some time later. And this hinders their artistic production because design based concerns reveal themselves within process of art-making.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Interview with Ekmel Ertan, October, 2012.

⁶⁶ Interview with Burak Arıkan, October, 2012.

⁶⁷ Interview with Ekmel Ertan, October, 2012.

⁶⁸ Interview with Nagehan Kuralı and Selin Özçelik, October, 2012.

It could be seen that new media art is not a pure artistic category. Hybridity and ambiguity in new media art transcend limitations of different spheres. An art work's or artist's relation with new media art, first and foremost, depend on conditions of art making. This is very much related to hybridity and ambiguity within the context of new media art in particular and unsettled status of new media art in general. In this regard, I argue that new media art work and artist need to be supported by any channel to be able to maintain account of new media art. In relation to unsettled status of new media art, artistic status of new media work of art does not depend on rules and principals of the artistic field, but rather it seems that it gains its recognition within art worlds through linkages of networks that facilitate entering into art worlds. I argue that context of institutional authority over recognition has been changed in the case of new media art and network takes active role in maintenance of artistic status of new media art works and artists. For this, motives of the network are critical for maintenance of new media art. As new media art form has been analyzed on account of intersection of art, knowledge and technology within the constitution of the form, it leads to a question: 'how are technological and scientific inquiries approved in artistic agenda?' This question could also touch upon motives of network driven support in the case of new media art.

2.1.3. Technological and Scientific Curiosities within the Constitution of Hybrid New Media Art Form

Technological and scientific curiosities motivate art-making within the context of new media art. New media art works and projects are mainly technology driven ones but differ from other technology employed art works and projects as employing technology not solely as a tool; rather, as also being medium itself. In this manner, technological mode of representation characterizes new media art works and projects as technology and knowledge centered works and projects choose artistic modes of expression since the initial purpose is not merely making art but rather combining

technology and knowledge centered curiosities with artistic modes of expression. In the same vein, Osman Koç states that

My purpose is not to make work of art. I have curiosity and an idea. Thus, new media art works are mainly turned into intellectual or technique masturbation. It is such a great machine that it is not poetic in any way; but s/he makes such beastly machine that you feel admiration for it. The worst thing that new media art experiences is technology fetishism. It is all about nerd things. I have recently begun visual works. My latest works are related to hyperpresence⁶⁹ and telepresence since they all preoccupy my mind. I do not tell something about myself in my works; in other words, there is nothing personal. They are all about issues in my mind.⁷⁰

Koç's statement underlines scientific and technological curiosities could have impacts on ways of art making. An art work could be considered as scientific on basis of prioritization of knowledge production through research based practices in the field of academy. Many artists from different departments employ research and innovation based practices in their artistic agendas. As it could be seen in Koç's instance, it is more than about the idea of artistic research because artist conducts in different spheres at the same time; so, the work emerge within networked sphere of production with different worries. In that way, the line between art and science has been blurred as artist does not only practice art but s/he also practices science. In this manner, it is not surprising that many artists are named as researcher artists and many art workshops are organized as research labs. Under these circumstances, art and science are generally integrated on the grounds of the idea of research particularly in the field of academy. Here, we are talking about particular kind of knowledge in the context of art – it is new media art in particular- where the knowledge is utilized by application and employment of new technologies.

Continuing with Koç's instance, his projects and works generally privileges viewer's physical experience via interactive technologies. Indeed Koç prefers to call himself *interaction designer* rather than *new media artist*; following that, his works are mainly implemented in accordance with interactive and participatory bases. Herein

⁶⁹ The work 'Hyperpresence: Telepresence via Quantum Cinema' was implemented in collaboration with Fethi Can Tüzel in 2010; and for the video documentation of the work see <http://vimeo.com/56951442>

⁷⁰ Interview with Osman Koç, October, 2012.

Koç's project 'HyperPresence: TelePresence via Quantum Cinema' [See Photo 6 in Appendix A] offers interactive cinema experience to audiences and the project was held within If Istanbul, 2012 and the installation was exhibited for the first time in Salt Beyoğlu. With his own words;

HyperPresence is an interactive video installation, which is designed as a single user experience. User's reactions are fed to the system via EEG device, which alters the flow of the video, thus protagonizes the user while creating customized videos (with a finite number of possible videos) for each user.⁷¹

In a more detailed way; the theme of the film is about incubus dream. As Koç talks about his project in detailed way in his article that "the film used in the project is montaged in a non-linear way time-wise, which is linearized by the software depending on the responses of the user and the diachronical state of the film."⁷² "The film starts from a single part which evolves to different narratives and endings as it is observed, and each inversion creates different possible films customized by the user."⁷³ That is, by using electroencephalogram (EEG), amount of the activity of the brain is measured. And the narrative of the film is diversified based upon user/viewer's process of interaction. At that point, user/viewer's affections and sensual responses are one of the constituents of the film since state of affairs could vary in accordance with differentiated forms of bio-data.

As it could be observed through Koç's project, art, knowledge and technology have been intersected in highly miscellaneous ways. That is, the work or project comes out in hybrid environment and transforms traditional art forms with possibilities of new technologies of its day. For instance, the very idea of cinematic experience of viewer could be changed by telepresence applications within Koç's project. As he problematized the concepts of hyperpresence and telepresence on the level of

⁷¹ Osman Koç, projects page, <http://www.kocosman.com/index.php?/projects/hyperpresence/> (accessed May 21, 2013).

⁷² Osman Koç, "Hyperpresence: Telepresence via Quantum Cinema," ISEA 2011 Istanbul The 17th International Symposium on Electronic Art, September 14-21, 2011, <http://isea2011.sabanciuniv.edu/paper/hyperpresence-telepresence-quantum-cinema> (accessed May 21, 2013)

⁷³ Ibid.

interactivity, his method of study privileges creative processes both as an art work and scientific query. In this manner, this project exemplifies hybrid construction of new media art form via merging of different disciplinary practices in an art form. In addition to artistic mediums, artist utilizes from bio-data, multiple sensory mechanisms, robotic systems, bio-sensors, virtual haptics and many other technological facilities. Thus, it is not possible to define this project merely within the field of arts. In this manner, it could be said that this project as hybrid construction obtains its dynamism from different spheres rather than strictly from one sphere.

Within this project, context of the film as an art work is modified by means of new technical and technological applications of its day. It offers interactive cinema experience to users/viewers; and it is potentially open to any kind of manipulation that could derive from brain waves of users/viewers and contribute to the scenario. In this way, Koç and Tüzel aimed to “construct subjective experience via “unconscious interaction” methods.”⁷⁴ Employing bio sensors and using brain waves of user/viewer, the scenario has been manipulated via user/viewer’s interaction as being unaware of the mechanism of the work.

By using Hyperpresence as an example, it is clear that previous art forms have been transformed by dint of the possibilities of new technologies. Tanumihardja touches upon the issue with reference to Lawrence Rinder’s⁷⁵ remarkable analysis:

"Previously distinct media such as photography, video, and film are merging as artists from diverse disciplines turn to digital media to extend the boundaries of their work. This is a watershed moment in the entire field of contemporary art, one which will bring

⁷⁴ If Film Festival, If Events Page, <http://2012.ifistanbul.com/en/if-events/event-detail.asp?id=20> (accessed on May 21, 2013).

⁷⁵ Larry Rinder is Director of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA)

For more information see
[http://www.artdaily.com/section/news/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=24011&b=consej#.UVxhQ5Mqz4M\[/ur\]](http://www.artdaily.com/section/news/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=24011&b=consej#.UVxhQ5Mqz4M[/ur])

new, previously unimagined forms of artistic expression as well as new possibilities for more established forms."⁷⁶

Following the same line of thought with Rinder, it is not entirely new art form; rather, it is new since it embodies potentials of different spheres in itself. Presumably, viewer who enters into cinema salon to watch the Hyperpresence as the film in a traditional sense; and does not presume that s/he can manipulate the scenario of the film via own brain waves. Thus, Koç and Tüzel named that kind of interaction between the work and viewer as unconscious experience. At the end, what was watched was still a film but it was customizable as offering interactive cinema experience via interaction between machine and brain. Koç also underlines in the interview that one of main motives of him for art making is based on the idea of play and toy making that could be provided with employment of new digital technologies, and especially the interactive ones, within art works. With regard to the idea of toy making, Koç as a mechatronic engineer at time same time, likes working on new technologies and creating new robotics as new artistic applications so as to make viewers surprised and amused. In this manner, his method of artistic study interconnects with potentials of new technologies and mediums on the basis of offering unexpected one.

Considering Rinder's statement, once again, it is possible to argue that new media art form is modified forms of traditional ones in one respect. If this is the case, this modification could also be considered as challenge toward object based formation of art. In this manner, it could be considered as striking particularly in Hyperpresence and new media art in general is that what viewer experiences is mainly unfinished form of art. In a detailed way, it is the idea; so, the process itself that viewer establishes relationship and get involved. As in the case of Hyperpresence, it is the initial idea that viewer will interact with the work and contribute to the scenario via brain waves. In this manner, what was exhibited is not an art work in a finished form; but rather it is digital and potentially interactive set up or ongoing process. And this

⁷⁶ Patricia Tanumihardja, *Digital Age* (July- August 2001), excerpted, <http://www.ekac.org/gensing.html> (accessed April 09, 2013), 24-26. <http://www.ekac.org/gensing.html>

is process oriented and dematerialized new media art form that characterize new media art and challenge the very idea of art as object. That is to say, thingly character of work of art is questioned via proposing the idea of ‘art as idea and an action’ instead of ‘art as object’. In this vein, this new art form can be addressed through re-interpretation, re-contextualization and re-combination of earlier art forms with one another in a creative way.

It is the notion of dematerialization that assists in re-thinking on art object and its potential beyond its physical existence; and emphasizes the new mode of interaction with art and new art form. “Art became ‘dematerialized,’ as expressed through energy and time-space-motion concepts. The medium itself defines objecthood. It is dispersible through transmission; it is reproducible, interdisciplinary, and can call for interactive participation.”⁷⁷ Considering Hyperpresence again, the medium is employed as *remote location medium*⁷⁸ in order to provide operability to the project between virtual and physical environment. Dematerialization, in this sense, is closely connected to digitality. They are digital tools and mediums that contribute “to the art work to go beyond the mental event of experiencing it.”⁷⁹ Digitality shifts the focus from object to process; so, it increases possibilities of interaction and participation. And that kind process-orientedness directly refers to dynamism and creativity in their multiplicities. Digitality, in this sense, leads to multidimensional and unpredictable experience that could enrich the process. On the other hand, it could be argued that dematerialization in art projects dynamism of the process in broader terms. Considering Hyperpresence again, it is group of relationships that identify the work. Thus, it is neither a closed form nor finished material object. Beyond completion of the work, user/viewer is means for work of art. In this sense, interaction could be

⁷⁷ Lovejoy, *Digital Currents: Art in the Electronic Age*, 101.

⁷⁸ Osman Koç, “Hyperpresence: Telepresence via Quantum Cinema,” *ISEA 2011 Istanbul The 17th International Symposium on Electronic Art*, September 14-21, 2011, <http://isea2011.sabanciuniv.edu/paper/hyperpresence-telepresence-quantum-cinema> (accessed May 21, 2013)

⁷⁹ Christiane Paul, “Renderings of Digital Art,” *Leonardo* 35, 5. (2002): 472.

seen as necessary condition of the work. That is, without any participatory act, the work could be seen as meaningless since the work is constructed to provide interactive cinema experience to viewer. At the end, artist aims to create customized narrative via bio data of the user/viewer. And it is one of the significant characteristics of new media art works that they are customizable; namely, they could be potentially manipulated by viewer and could be adapted to viewer's personal demands. That is not free from the shift towards object to process in the context of new media art. As it could be observed in Hyperpresence, user/viewer's relation to the work could also be different in each watching as the work itself is dynamic process and obtain its dynamism not only from inner but also from external factors. Besides, each interactive act could be potentially distinct, because it is constructed through organic relationship between the work and user/viewer. By employing bio-sensors as the medium of interface, the film proceeds with unconscious interaction of the user/viewer. As Koç states, the effectiveness of the designed experience is observed and sustained via bio-data of the user/viewer.

As it is clearly seen with respect to Hyperpresence, new media art work as such a hybrid form embodies various factors in its constitution. Besides, as a process oriented art form, it continues to change, evolve and transform. And this possibility is provided by the immaterial nature of those works. Here, the notion of immaterial could seem as a bit confusing since it does not mean negating the materiality of those works. That is, qualifying new media works of art just in terms of dematerialization and immateriality can result in neglecting the material components of works. What make a new media work of art accessible are its material components. Namely, all production, presentation, exhibition, circulation and preservation events are driven by coding system which is enabled by hardware of the digital medium. In this line of thought, Grammatikopoulou declares that

...“immaterial” should not be taken in a strict sense; those objects do have a material aspect –whether this matter is the computer hardware or the infinitesimally small particles used in electronic systems. So, the question of the immaterial is more related to

an evolution, where the artwork is more than an object; it has become a creative process.⁸⁰

She also put emphasis on new relations which constitute "... art object (or the non-object)' and change '... the focus of attention [...] from purely visual perception to other senses –like hearing and touching- and different processes –like communication."⁸¹ In this manner, the work is neither a material entity nor an end in itself. Instead, it is continued project. And the conceptual query handled not by the art object; rather, by the process which is guided by communication and interaction. In the same vein, Lovejoy examines dematerialization in consideration of immaterial nature of the works and states that: "when art's importance lies beyond what can be seen or touched, it thus becomes 'dematerialized' ".⁸² That is, it is the idea, and the whole process that characterize new media art form. And dynamism, under those circumstances, takes its source from /within the process itself. As compared to traditional art forms, new media art form is constituted and found as an idea. That is to say, it is potentially open; and, not in a final form.

2.2. Shift From Object-based Art to Process-oriented Art

New media art first and foremost proposes a shift towards process oriented and dematerialized art forms. That is, change in the form from object to process refers to *dematerialization of art object*.⁸³ For sure, neither dematerialization nor process-

⁸⁰ Shades of the immaterial: Different approaches to the 'non-object'
<http://interartive.org/2012/02/shades-of-the-immaterial/>

⁸¹ Christina Grammatikopoulou, "Shades of the immaterial: Different approaches to the 'non-object'," *Interartive: a platform for contemporary art and thought*,
<http://interartive.org/2012/02/shades-of-the-immaterial/> (accessed June 23, 2013).

⁸² Lovejoy, *Digital Currents: Art in the Electronic Age*, 73.

⁸³ Jacob Lillemose, "Conceptual Transformations of Art: From Dematerialization of the Object to Immateriality in Networks," in *Curating Immateriality: the Work of the Curator in the Age of Network Systems*, ed. Krysa, Joasia, (New York: Autonomedia, 2006) See more at:
<http://interartive.org/2012/02/shades-of-the-immaterial/#sthash.0vzGo3Ks.dpuf>

orientedness in art is new. In this manner, Christiane Paul in her article *The Myth of Immateriality -- Presenting & Preserving New Media*, handles newness of process-oriented and dematerialized new media art form on account of proposing significant challenge within field of arts.⁸⁴ Thus, she specifically touches upon the fact that

New media art in its multiple manifestations has become an important part of contemporary artistic practice that the art world cannot afford to ignore, but accommodating this art form within the institution and "art system" raises numerous conceptual, philosophical, as well as practical issue.⁸⁵

Following the same line of thought, this is about systematic and organizational challenge to art worlds on account of the very idea of presenting, collecting, archiving and preserving art objects in a traditional sense. That is, basically, art practices in general have to be recast in the context of new media art. In other words, new media work of art, by its very nature, could not be adapted to traditional art practices and entails new functioning mechanisms that could enable practicing of process-oriented new media art within art worlds.

Paul also states; "Like other art forms before it, new media art has shifted the focus from object to process: as an inherently time-based, dynamic, interactive, collaborative, customizable, and variable art form, new media art resists "objectification" and challenges traditional notions of the art object."⁸⁶ And all these categories, which characterize new media art, introduce new art practices in accordance with the characteristics of the digital medium. With reference to Paul's examination on distinguishing characteristics of the process, depending on the very nature of digital medium the work is potentially in flux. In this sense, neither physical manifestation nor material condition of the work identifies the work. The viewer, in this manner, needs to get involved within the process. There is not an end product in this case; but rather, the work is constituted within the process. Thus, the process does not refer to functioning or operationalization of the work; so, each

⁸⁴ Christiane Paul, "The Myth of Immateriality -- Presenting & Preserving New Media," np.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Paul, ed., *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond: Curatorial Models for Digital Art*, 1.

interaction is meaningful and influential for constitution of the work as we pointed out within the case of Hyperpresence above. That is, the work “maintained some kind of constancy but its meaning becomes unsettled within the changing contexts of its display. [...] Developments in this object suggest a paradigm shift for art practice from the art object to the postobject conditions of possibility and a fluid interaction between different manifestations of information.”⁸⁷ And the constancy comes from code which enables functioning of the work. But the work itself is kind of dynamic scene and there are not foregone conclusions.

One of significance of new media art is considered as shift from object based art to process-oriented art. And one of significance of process-orientedness of new media art work or project is privilege of the idea of research. Now, I will continue with the idea of research as it is one of motives that influence collaboration among different spheres and constitution of form as hybrid.

2.2.1. The Idea of Research within the Process

New media art form includes mixed techniques, materials and tools likewise digital and analog connections and cross-cutting appliances of art, science and technology. Hybridity, in the context of new media art, could be considered as a kind of transdisciplinary approach to digital arts in which one of leading characteristics is research-centered dialogue among different spheres which is carried out within process itself. To put it differently, merging of different spheres features process-oriented characteristics of new media art as practices of different fields are mixed within the process. The process-oriented nature of the new media art enables collaboration among different spheres and also research-oriented practices as for constitution of such hybrid art form. And collaborative and creative activities

⁸⁷ Christiane Paul, “Renderings of Digital Art,” *Leonardo* 35, 5. (2002): 472.

become the work itself or identify the work better than the end result by giving and showing the idea behind it.

Collaboration among different spheres is generally motivated by the idea of research. With its process-orientedness, new media art works and projects are very convenient for carrying out research. So, the process itself could be seen as inquiry in art, science and technology. And the research in new media art is conducted in experiential system so that research could be reconfigured via new possibilities. In this way, the work itself has capacity to challenge and change the established one.

Gülen considers process-orientedness of new media art as distinguishing from the idea of completed work. For him, it depends on the way artist handles the work. In this sense, he addresses his various methods of art-making and underlines that new media art works could easily be complexified. For this, he states that

Form of the work could be changed so rapidly that the work of him is sound indeed. However, the man was occupied in producing this sound for a year as using printed photos and then transforming those photos. If you look at the work, it is sound in simple terms but it is the whole process, the background, which is used for producing that sound indeed.⁸⁸

And this new art form, by its very nature, challenges previous forms of art on that process oriented basis. That is to say, the form itself is the process in the context of new media art. And dynamism of the process presents new media art as unfinished art project. It could be named as project, indeed research project, rather than physical art object since it gets involved in continuous and never-ending dialogue that is less concrete; so, much immaterial than ever before. In this manner, new media art work could be identified as intangible property by which there is not any concrete direction to foresee completed form of it. Therefore, it is not concrete and finished form; rather it is a process which gets its dynamism from the experiences. In this manner, the process becomes the form itself which comprise each participatory and interactive act as part and depictive unit of the process.

⁸⁸ Interview with Genco Gülan, October, 2012.

2.2.2. Dematerialization within the Process

In the first instance, there is a need to talk about dematerialization of art object within the context of new media art. In simple terms, when idea and process itself becomes art work; then art object is dematerialized necessarily. The term ‘dematerialization’ in the context of new media art refers to dissolving of thingly characteristics of art but not as negating material conditions; rather, it is re-contextualization of material bases. In order to visualize this, we will analyze Burak Arıkan’s MYPOCKET⁸⁹. [See Photo 7,8 in Appendix A] With Arıkan’s own words:

MYPOCKET is a living physical/digital process that predicts what will I buy next. It explores and reveals essential patterns in the daily transactions of my bank account and discloses my personal financial records to the world. Archived on the site, and updated daily, more than three years of my spending history is analyzed by the custom software to predict future spending everyday; these predictions sometimes determine my future choices, creating a system in which both the software and myself adapt to one another. Influenced by today's techno-cultural milieu, MYPOCKET presents a hybrid interface to this living physical/digital process.⁹⁰

Presentation of the work was composed of “Online software, HD video, list, receipts, installation”.⁹¹ Each of new predictions stemming from Arıkan’s expenses provided continuity to the process which was work itself. Indeed, the work could be considered as software itself since the outcomes which were receipts of predicted transactions were showed up on the basis of functioning of the program. Although we could talk about unique predicted objects which were receipts of predicted transactions, the art work is ideationally the dynamic relation between artist’s expanses and predicted transactions of the future. That is, art work was not finished product; rather, it was potentially evolving process. “A predicted object is the physical evidence of a future event, [...]. Predicted objects are the products of

⁸⁹ See <http://burak-arikan.com/tr/mypocket>

⁹⁰ Burak Arıkan, “My Pocket,” *Turbulence Commissioning and Supporting Net Art for 18 years: 1996-2013*, <http://turbulence.org/Works/mypocket/> (accessed May 18, 2013).

⁹¹ Burak Arıkan, Works Page, <http://burak-arikan.com/mypocket> (accessed May 18, 2013)

deliberate analysis and living, they are the readymades found in the future.”⁹² And the art is dematerialized within the data in MYPOCKET. That is to say, we could talk about materiality of the work but immaterial condition of the work is identified by whole process. There is not and product; that is, there is kind of ongoing and flexible relationship between commercial activities of Arıkan and visualization of their rebounds. As the work itself is this flexible relationship than the work is dematerialized idealistically.

As Lillemose points out, new conditions of materiality could be talked in respect to digitalization in artistic practices.⁹³ And he discovers new possibilities of this new materiality specifically concentrating on digital networks. In this regard, he searches for artistic involvement in system and process based circumstances in order to delve deeper into conceptual framing of materiality in different contexts. For Lillemose, adaptation of technology within art leads to new conceptualizations and new ways of thinking about artistic practices.

In pursuing the idea that art is more than about a stable object, Lillemose argues that abolition of limitations of materiality in social, cultural and economic contexts call for new aesthetic proposals as expressions of artistic and technological concerns of its day. Lillemose aims to question different aesthetic interests in network based artistic practices in which new materials and tools provide necessary means for artists to go beyond institutionalized context as a field of interrelated systems or processes.⁹⁴

Changing aesthetic discourses within the context of new media art could be related to hybridity, digitality and interactivity as they lead to new aesthetic and artistic experiences. At that point, dematerialization of an art object in relation to process-oriented characteristic is another component of this new experience. Besides, new

⁹² Burak Arıkan, “My Pocket.”

⁹³ Lillemose, “Conceptual Transformations of Art: From Dematerialization of the Object to Immateriality in Networks.”

⁹⁴ Ibid., 125.

media art practices are organized via networks of relations. Thus, rather than institutional practices, networks of relations are constitutive within the context of new media art. Herein, web-based practices and web-based dissemination of new media art should also be included as internet is another important medium in new media art. Lillemose's account of new materiality, in the first place, refers to new material condition that is supplied by possibilities of digital medium. Now, considering this new materiality, I could assert that evidence of existence of new media art works are more than material bases of the works. That is, this new materiality is introduced by digital evidences of the existence of the work rather than physical evidences. For instance, a web-based new media art work could just be reached and actualized via viewer's access to it. However, the work itself is found within virtual network but without any access it exists as software. Lillemose identify this kind of existence as digital materiality which expands on network based artistic practices and transformations of relations. Namely, Lillemose also put emphasis on networks in the following remarks:

networks can be understood as expanded, more dynamic, and complex systems; networks tend to have a horizontal, distributed and open-ended structure, anticipate direct and versatile interactive communication and be connected to heterogeneous set of interdependent contextual relations that blur established positions and boundaries.⁹⁵

Moreover, each experiential relation to the work identifies different kinds of materiality which goes beyond thingly characteristics in the context of new media art.

As it could be seen, when the art work is not an end product itself, then it refers to either its immateriality or dematerialization as an idea. Lippard considers potentiality of dematerialization as constitutive force for alternative way of structuring in art world. Lippard realizes that there is a need for new cultural designations which could provide solidarity and collaboration by means of new ways of art making. For her, established paths of art-making are simply dependent on buying and selling; and being opposed to this operative system is nearly impossible. In this sense, she calls

⁹⁵ Ibid., 129-130.

for a new artistic apprehension held by artists of different culture on the ground of possibility of “no-art and non-art”.⁹⁶ The issue could be related with platforms of new media art where new forms of expression and new ways of art-making are welcomed. Those platforms as kind of production and distribution channels of new media art are potentially conducted with self-organizing principles out of hegemony of market economy. It seems that new media art has not been underpinned by art market economy yet by its process-orientedness and dematerialized form. This does not mean that new media art condition within art worlds independently of market forces. Rather, it shows how different market mechanisms are in effect. This could be considered as new media art works and projects are produced not aiming at selling on market. In the same vein, these works and projects do not appeal to museums and galleries in a collectible form. Thus, recognition and reputation provide symbolic profit more than economic profit and works become economically valuable within different fields.

It seems that dematerialization in new media art has close connection to digitalization in artistic practices. It could be argued that it is not a new subject matter within historical account of art. Interactivity and immaterial art form were emerged in new art forms “by the Dadaists, Constructivists, Fluxus and Conceptual movements when they invented new forms such as performance, free-from installation, and diverse kinds of theater events.”⁹⁷ They, all, shared the same ground on account of interactivity so that they challenged the idea of art form’s materiality. In this manner, the art movements as listed above also introduced process-oriented and dematerialized art form. But the actual point that should be emphasized here is that dematerialization of new media art is about both digitalization of practices and process-oriented nature of it in which primary emphasis is the idea itself; accordingly, work itself is the process rather than object. Besides, beyond physical

⁹⁶ Lippard, Lucy (1973), *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*, New York: Praeger, p.8. - See more at: <http://interartive.org/2012/02/shades-of-the-immaterial/#sthash.0vzGo3Ks.dpuf>

⁹⁷ Lovejoy, *Postmodern Currents: Art and Artist in the Age of Electronic Media*, 166.

materiality and existence, new media works of art not only includes real time existence but also emerges in virtual reality; and “reality can now be paralleled by a completely simulated (virtual) one. Digitization has destroyed the faith in the truthfulness in representation.”⁹⁸ Herein, Lovejoy also argues that “new imaging technologies have more and more challenged conventional notions of representation.”⁹⁹ For her, how things appear to the eye is no more have fixed representation. Image structures have been adapted to interactive capabilities since means of representation and way of representation has been intersected. Thus, depending on varied point of perspective and spatial or temporal relationships, representation is no more fixed and no more refers to what the eye sees but rather what have not seen before. And Lovejoy demonstrates:

With virtual reality, we enter a world of complete simulation moved by a new perspective and new kinds of constructed forms. All of this has led to the destabilization of the image, of the art object, and of the function of art in daily life.¹⁰⁰

Hereby it can be said that artistic practices has been changed since medium, tool, content and context have been changed. In new media art case, technology in a practice directly linked to experimental character of a work and collaboration between varied actors. In such a manner, new media work of art is evolved through either by participatory practice or by use of it. Considering this, I will address interactivity and its potentials within the context of new media art.

2.3. Interactivity and Its Potentials

Interactive and participatory quality of this new form indicates intricate dialogue among artist, art work and viewer as constitutive component of the interactive

⁹⁸ Ibid., 255.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 255.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 257.

system. In this vein, work of art introduces viewer to a significant experience as being involved in the process.

Before going into details of new media art practices, it could be eloquent to delve deeper into interactivity and its bearing on artistic conventions. Any reference to interactivity, still in new media art, depends on developing a mutual relationship between work of art and viewer which is pre-condition for establishing a dialogue. Initially, interactivity in new media art case is mostly considered as technology and human body encounter by which participant could also step in the process by means of either physical engagement or visual, audial and tactual experiences. New media work of art, however, does not have to be driven by interactive technologies and participatory acts. In such a case, viewer needs to stand around work of art in order to approach matter of expression in some such way that viewer involves in the process anyway and work of art is re-created depending on process-oriented nature and actual time of data flow. It is whether a computer graphic animation or a sound installation, the interaction between work of art and each viewer is vary since process is comprised of flow of events and each event depends on both human and technological needs within temporal and spatial dimension of the work. That is to say, there is not fixed spatial and temporal relationship between viewer and new media work of art. Rather, there are always alternative realities depending on operation of digital medium and capacity of technological media tools.

As it was mentioned several times, new media art form is constituted via convergence of different fields. And different types of relationings introduce different effects since each sphere includes its own possibility in new ways of structuring. One of significant effect is the fact that process gives way to interactivity within the context of new media art. As this analysis was built on the idea that process itself is an art work in the context of new media art; I investigated that the process vary from viewer to viewer. That is, each interaction constitutes its own specificity. In this manner, the work, not as a finished product, acquires its artistic and aesthetic value from separate units of interaction. Following that, I could assert that potentials of such an interactive and process-oriented nature of new media art

could challenge the very idea of art since art herein is interaction between art work and viewers or within the exhibition of space in broader terms.

Many of new media works of art are called interactive since they need viewer's involvement; in other words, active participation to the project. Herein, project could be used to illustrate process-oriented nature of work of art and its stage based characteristic. To be a project, continuity and gradual development is needed in order to attain what was aimed initially. And there is not an end product but rather evolving process in which each participatory act in relation to work of art is an end product itself in new media art case. As the terms *interaction*, *participation* and *collaboration* will be heard at many times in this part of the thesis, Graham and Cook's analysis on these terms could be illuminative starting point:

Interaction: "acting upon each other." Interaction might occur between people, between people and machines, between machines, or between artwork and audience.[...] *Participation: "to have a share in or take part in."* Participation implies that the participant can have some kind of input that is recorded. In common language, "more interactive" can actually mean "participative" –that is, not just getting reactions, but also changing the artwork's content. [...] *Collaboration: "working jointly with."* Unlike *interaction* and *participation*, the term *collaboration* implies the production of something with a degree of equality between the participants. [...] whereas interaction and participation concern primarily the relationship between artwork and audience, collaboration usually concerns production, which may be between artists, or between curators or a combination both.¹⁰¹

These terms, they argued, differ from each other according to *levels of engagement* to the work of art or the art project.¹⁰² Though there are complex similarities, particular relations that are constructed in relation to work of art lead to differentiation in the meaning of involvement. In this manner, characteristics of work are identified through varying degrees of engagement. And contextual basis of meaning of the work of art is constructed in regard to forms of engagement.

So, medium with its networked and interactive characteristics sets mode of representation and without viewer's participatory interaction to the art work, it is mere presentation of a setup. Herein all these concepts, which are exemplified upon,

¹⁰¹ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 112-114.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 112.

are entwined in new media art case. Also, it could arguably said that it is basically *interactivity* that advance the discussion. Thus, there is no need to differentiate interactivity in such a conclusive manner.

All these discussions based on interactive nature of new media works of art do not point out a dictum says that new media art is interactive. That is to say, it is not possible to make this kind of generalization about new media works of art since technological conditions of new media art has been transformed rapidly due to artists' interest in up-to-date scientific developments and technological applications. Nevertheless, many new media works of art could not be thought without interactive capabilities of computers or digital technologies that offer range of possibilities for advancement of an art work. But, neither medium nor visualization practice is new or peculiar to new media art, rather the way that computers and digital technologies are used throughout artistic processes and potentials of them are new.

Why new media art is considered as interactive should be clearly defined in order to build an analysis on interactive nature of new media art and its potentials in art worlds. When interaction or participation is called to mind, it is generally performance art that is remembered first. Surely, new media art has close connection with performance art as long as its interdisciplinary and multi-vocal nature is considered. Besides, I could find commonalities between new media art and any other art genres such as Conceptual Art, Fluxus and Dada as it was touched upon. Thus, particularly in this part, I handle the issue on the grounds of interactivity and process-orientedness. As Bager Akbay, new media artist and designer, states; "our works are closer to theatre. And our work in Ars Electronica was exactly the performance art; and yes, it had a code."¹⁰³ In this case, it could not be asserted that potential of technology in use could manifest itself by means of interaction. In the light of my discussion made in the previous part on constitution of such a hybrid form via intersection of art, knowledge and science; knowledge becomes research

¹⁰³ Interview with Bager Akbay, October, 2012

tool with interest in technology. As it was also touched upon that such hybrid constitution of the work could be seen as experiment between art and technology. In this manner, context of the interactivity could be taken into account as kind of data by which artist could reach various outcomes. Lovejoy examines the issue considering the way that interactive nature of new art form differs from interactive basis of traditional art form. For Lovejoy, the meaning is constructed through dialogue between work of art and viewer in both traditional forms of art and new forms of art. And this dialogue could just include viewing and interpreting the work without any physical engagement or participation.¹⁰⁴ “In interactive digital works, however, the interface meeting point between art work and viewer becomes an interplay between form and dialogue.”¹⁰⁵ That is to say, interaction moment is condition of art form in interactive digital works. Herein, dialogue between viewer and work of art is at the root of active participation; so, ‘it leads to forms of agency and forms of shared authorship and social exchange.’¹⁰⁶ It also brings on changes in roles of artist and viewer. Furthermore, viewer’s choices direct continuation of events; in other words, work of art is completed by means of participatory acts. Thus, it could be said that viewer pursues process as co-creator of work of art in one respect depending on the contextual designation of the work. Lovejoy also talks about Net art and its interactive nature in order to touch upon art works accomplished by collaboration. Thus, she emphasizes dynamic relations between artist and viewer. For Lovejoy, it is participant who actively engaged in the process and makes contribution for completion of the project. Notably, within its hybrid context, “to produce such works, the artist in the end will need to become an inventor and adventurer in collaboration with many others, including programmers, scientists, designers, and musicians to create new forms of experience.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Margot Lovejoy, *Digital Currents: Art in the Electronic Age* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 226.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 226.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 226.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 229.

As Osman Koç declares that

Many of those works are like research projects. Thus, when there is not so similar works with mine, each work is experiential. You do not know what kind of outcome you will get from there. I used modeling clay in my last work and I imagined reaction of people differently but the reactions were far removed from my expectation. Thus, I could not know it till I try. For me, it would result in accordance with what was in my mind but there was no such thing. I did utterly different reading.¹⁰⁸

It seems that such interactive projects prioritize the process and each interaction on account of completion of the work. With reference to Koç's declaration, it could be observed that the art work as the idea and process itself is found out by artist. However, evolvement of the process and contemplation of it depends on viewers' interaction with the work. Based on its hybrid nature, the very effect of knowledge and technology within such a project could be different as offering new possibilities on the basis of potential of each sphere. In this manner, interactivity is meaningful within the context of hybridity as it provides different outcomes which are meaningful in distinct ways within different contexts.

The interactivity, again and perhaps as similar to previous cases, occurs through communicative and dialogic processes. Interactive characteristic is meaningful when "interaction itself reinforces the transformative effects of the overall piece and plays a constructive role in creative change and exchange."¹⁰⁹ Thus, interactivity is an important concept in general and about new media art in particular. Namely, the very idea of interaction could be achieved, as one by means of participatory act that concurrently occupies production and exhibition stages; and the other, as in perceptual level when the meaning of work of art is questioning, interpreting or manipulating by viewer. Interactivity, here, could be considered as process of encounter among artist, viewer, work of art and even collaborators; in other words, inter-subjectivities. Addressing Bourriard's *relational aesthetics*, new possibility of art should be thought in line with the idea of social production of art as including

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Osman Koç, October, 2012.

¹⁰⁹ Kristine Stiles and Edward A. Shanken, "Missing In Action: Agency and Meaning In Interactive Art," in *Context Providers: Conditions of Meaning in Media Arts*, eds. Margot Lovejoy et al., 31-55. (UK: Intellect, 2011), 36.

negotiation and confrontation between artist, viewer and work of art. Nearly each stages of interactive new media works of art are adorned by multi-vocal responses of viewers that a kind of open-ended new media artistic project proceeds by means of random encounters among viewer and work of art. As Koç mentioned above, viewer's interaction to the work or involvement within the process could change the way artist does reading of the work. And each unexpected outcome has a potential to change continuity or structuring of the work.

Umberto Eco uses the term 'open work' in order to touch open interactive nature of arts and new aesthetic forms in his article *The Poetics of Open Work*.¹¹⁰ Though his formulation of *open work* did not address new media art in his period, the term is applicable in today's new media art case. Namely, Eco addresses the idea of *openness* in art moving on to the consideration about collaborative nature of work of art through which viewer or audience is active receiver and able to manipulate the meaning of the work. In such a manner, he pays attention to the fact that viewer's relation to work of art is first and foremost interactive and performative in theoretical level since each interpretation that is made by viewer reflect his/her own expression. Thus, Eco underlines the fact that viewer's relation to work of art is "always modified by his particular and individual perspective."¹¹¹In this fashion, "every reception of a work of art is both an interpretation and a performance of it, because in every reception the works takes on a fresh perspective for itself."¹¹²Applying this argument to new media art case, each viewer's and participant's relation to art work is meaningful first and foremost at the subjective and individual level. Then, the way of interaction whether at the physical level or perceptual level is meaningful on the grounds of contextual basis of the work as for continuity and evolvement of it. To make it a step further, the issue could be examined in relation to compositional aspects of the works in a detailed way. As it was already mentioned, new media art

¹¹⁰ Umberto Eco, "The Poetics of Open Work," in *Participation: Documents of Contemporary Art*, ed. Claire Bishop, 20-41. (London: Whitechapel Gallery Ventures Limited, 2006).

¹¹¹ Ibid., 22.

¹¹² Ibid., 22.

with its hybrid and interdisciplinary nature welcomes many artistic disciplines and strategies around one work of art-art project. Thus, each interaction with work of art means reception of different compositional patterns of the work whether as partial or unitary. Obviously, experiencing different compositional components of a work of art in their particularity could replace the very idea of co-authorship since experiential relation does not reach meaning of the work with its completeness. Namely, many new media artists complain about viewers' fragmented relations to work of art by which the message that is intended to speak directly to viewer get lost. For Stiles and Shanken such a participatory and multi-layered meaning is constructed as being subjected to interaction process that

...varying forms of and degrees of agency negotiated and exchanged between artists, participants, and technologies in multimedia works of art become even more convoluted,[...] In this context, the contemplation and construction of meaningful interaction matters even more.¹¹³

New media work of art or art project is meaningful; without doubt, with its networked dynamism on account of hybridization of many artistic disciplines and technologies. Interaction process is highly influential for modification of form. Thus, each modes of interaction is supported by artist as it allows for great flexibility in meaning construction while gathering series of interactions into a coherent whole. Also, any work of art (whether in relation to new media art or not) is planned on reaching viewers through an effort to sustain communicative or dialogic interaction in order to invite viewer or participant to aesthetic affection by which collective enhancement of meaning around representation arises as a point of artistic matter. Herein, it should also be mentioned that while Eco's account of work of art is very adaptable to new media art, there is also contrary relation established through Eco's account of the form of work of art. Namely, his point of departure is work of art that is 'a complete and closed form in its uniqueness'¹¹⁴ contrary to open and flexible form of new media art. Nevertheless, one of the main targets of his investigation is, to be sure, participatory and interactive characteristics of work of art. And the

¹¹³ Stiles and Shanken, 37.

¹¹⁴ Eco, 22.

forthcoming remark of Eco highlights social dimension of interactive nature of work of art and the idea of participation; basically:

The *possibilities* which the work's openness makes available always within a given *field of relations*. [...] In other words, the author offers the interpreter, the performer, the addressee, a work *to be completed*. He does not know the exact fashion in which his work will be concluded, but he is aware that once completed the work in question will still be his own.¹¹⁵

Here, Eco puts emphasis on artist's intention that it conditions first and foremost layout and proceeding of the work of art. In such a manner, random components of work of art, which occur in interaction processes, just enrich the process; in other words, they are not separate works or definite units for the completion of the work. Surely, interactive work of art is completed by means of interaction or participatory act but this does not result in the fact that artist withdraw from the process. Rather, artist invites viewer to interacting with the work of art but already knowing that s/he needs to play by considering organizing instructions of the project. "Therefore, to sum up, we can say that the 'work in movement' is the possibilities of numerous different personal interventions, but it is not an amorphous invitation to indiscriminate participation."¹¹⁶ This thesis of Eco could be related to the idea that artistic practices are mediated by artists in any case. In other words, modes of interaction and kinds of quality of interaction are moderated by artists; correspondingly, strategies for organization of artistic practices are also specified by them. Similarly, Koç relates the issue on the basis of the idea. For him, "artist is master mind of the work. It is not about practice but rather it is based on the idea."¹¹⁷ He continues his speech by emphasizing collaboration among people from different specialized fields and privileges role of artist within this collaboration stating that

It depends on how you approach new media work. If you look at this as if it is sculpture, then you see that the work belongs to all of people that use the work and users also acquire ownership rights. However, the real ownership moves the next upper stage. That

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 36.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 36.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Osman Koç, October, 2012.

is, I design interaction so probable coming events could not be away from my predictions since I make the work, I write the code.¹¹⁸

2.3.1. Performativity within the Context of New Media Art

New media art with its process-oriented nature introduces performativity in addition to interactivity and flexibility. I addressed interactivity above, now I will look at significance of the idea of performativity and its potentials within the context of new media art.

To begin with, performativity as active participation or involvement within the process has effect on knowledge formation with respect to hybrid and interdisciplinary nature of new media art. Besides, performativity is significantly important since “performance is a desired *quality* as well as a necessary *condition* to media arts production, analysis, presentation frameworks and value.”¹¹⁹ That is to say, functioning of the work is dependent on performativity as each participatory act potentially manipulates the meaning of the work and can change flow of the process. Within its hybridity on account of intersection of art, science and technology, performativity emerges on the basis of shift from representational model knowledge production to performative one.¹²⁰ That is, knowledge exchange among different spheres within constitution of such hybrid new media art form also includes performativity as any collaborators, including viewers, are involved in either knowledge production or dissemination of knowledge. As performative acts could be considered as kinds of response, reaction to contextual designation of the work so

¹¹⁸ Interview with Osman Koç, October, 2012.

¹¹⁹ Valérie Lamontagne, “Wearable Technologies: From Performativity to Materiality,” *Studies in Material Thinking* Vol. 7, ISSN 1177-6234 (February 2012), p.1, <http://www.materialthinking.org> (accessed July 26,2013).

¹²⁰ Ibid., 4.

performative acts have potential to change the meaning of the work as re-contextualizing it with each interposition.

In the light of Lamontagne's consideration, I will investigate why performance in new media art work is such a desired quality. Initially, as I also mentioned above, performance is necessary for the contemplation of many new media art works or projects. For sure, this is not such a new subject in arts. In the context of new media art, however, the notions of performativity and performance address potentials of such hybrid art work. That is, as new media art work is not an art object or finished product, then performance is directly part of the process which means part of the idea so the art work. For sure, performance, in this context, is beyond planned or contextualized act. That is to say, performance within the context of new media art is closely linked to experiencing of space. Performances of viewers within spatial context of the work are constituents of the work since aesthetic and artistic valorization of the work are constructed within the process. And it could be identified as desired quality as Lamontagne does because interactive new media art works gain functionality by means of viewers' acts.

Now, I will try to open up performativity via Kuralı and Özçelik's Probable Needlework. [See Photo 9,10 in Appendix A]

During Today's Art Festival in Den Haag in 2012, "Probable Needlework" invited the visitors for a contribution. They took the needle, stitched the goblen canvas and created an artwork at the end of 10 days. The visitors who entered the exhibition area were presented a set of political icons and were asked to stich a part of the icon onto a goblen canvas. The goblin stitch played a role as the "common" that gathers the collective act of reproduction. The action of the visitor, stitching each political icon on the screen, occured as a new alternative common created by the visitor.¹²¹

In Probable Needlework, viewer interacts with the work and involve in the process by stitching on the goblen. As the work needs to invites viewer; and calls viewer's attention for experiencing it, artists utilize from the idea of common and use known and familiar images- political icons. Viewer's involvement or engagement needs to be in effect within the process; that is to say, it needs to bear meaning for the process.

¹²¹ Design In Situ, Projects Page, <http://design-insitu.com/4610267> (accessed May 21, 2013).

For this, political icons are convenient for such kind of meaning construction as they could make sense for almost all viewers. As the work is in process and finish at the end of the ten days with viewer's participation by stitching on the goblen, it seems that there is need for performing creativity as artists use not all images that are stiched on but rather select among them considering integrity and meaningfulness. And it should be remembered that not all viewers are performing creativity while experiencing the work. For the work, however, performance of viewer is significant and meaningful only if it brings forth any reflection within the process. Performing creativity, in that sense, refers to creation which could extend the idea of completing the work and become art making itself.

2.3.2. Welcoming Flexibility via Changing Roles of Artist and Viewer

It was already mentioned that technology and knowledge become part of the artistic and creative activity in the context of new media art.

On one hand, new media art welcomes the idea of flexibility by means of possibilities of interactive computer technologies and digitalization within the art practices; and on the other hand, idea of flexibility gets involved in the process and the work itself.

In the first instance, in consideration of our previous discussions on new media art form and art practices, interactive computer technologies lead to changes in form of art and art practices on the grounds of flexibility in creative process. And this flexibility characteristic also touches upon networked dynamism of the process if it is driven by networked digital medium. That is, it is computer or digital medium that makes new media art interactive in one respect. And new digital technologies are transforming within participatory digital culture where possibilities of open sources well accepted; so, increasingly employed within artistic practices.

Herein, it should be specifically asked that how idea of interactivity and participation in new media art case should be interpreted in order to understand potentiality of new media art in highly institutionalized art worlds? There are many discussions on interactivity and participation on the grounds of viewer studies. At that point, changing roles of the viewer in new media art case is also significant matter in order to understand the way of challenging orthodox understanding of art thanks to new media art's capabilities. And as it aforementioned, employing interactive technologies by means of computer or any other digital tool in an artwork challenge the very idea of art-making and its orthodox practices. By introducing the idea of flexibility, interactivity and performativity on account of the idea of publicity of art, new media art form also lead to changes in roles of artist and viewer. Within the constitution of new media art form, viewer is not passive receiver but rather active participant. As the work itself is flexible within the context, viewer is freer to get involve and manipulate the meaning of the work via dialogue among art work, artist and herself/himself. The dialogue, herein, characterizes communication aspect of the interaction between those actors. That is to say, the relation between artist, art work and viewer has potential to transform the process as it is flexible in itself.

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, addressing the general question of the thesis *how do new types of social relations and new art form mutually produce each other?*, I tried to examine constitution of new media art form in details. For this, I specifically concentrated on three main characteristics of new media art form which are hybridity, process-orientedness and interactivity as each one appeals to significance of new media art and different types of relationings within the constitution of the form. Each section, which was built upon particular questions, led to new questions and opened up new discussions. The questions of each (sub) section were organized in a way to open up challenging potentials of new media art form within art worlds.

As the point of departure in this chapter was specific questions about constitution of the form, main characteristics and their potentials and possibilities, now I will put forth what I got from my investigation.

In the first part, I concentrated on hybridity of new media art and tried to investigate the way through which different spheres are linked, their motives and commonalities that lead to formation of such kind of togetherness. Hybridity was identified as intersection of different fields – art, knowledge and technology- within the constitution of the form. I observed that such kind of intersection is not only motivated by the idea of art making but also satisfaction of scientific and technological curiosities within art practice in which there is more room for creativity. Accordingly, hybrid constitution of new media art showed that fields of art, science and technology have close relationship with each other mainly on the basis of idea of research and innovation. Herein, digitalization and usage of new technologies and mediums were seen as facilitators for such kind of relationings. As new technologies and mediums; and the idea of digitalization diffuse more into different fields, they enhance accessibility of information and knowledge. This also indicates that research and innovation driven projects, many new media art works and projects that are included, are utilized from new technologies as they have become important resources for formation and dissemination of information and knowledge.

Via constitution of new media art form, it was observed that hybridity is not only significant characteristic for new media art but also significant condition for intersection of different spheres. Hybridity, in that sense, transcends the limitations of different spheres and lead to ideationally creative and technically complex works. Hybridity potentially challenges reductionist determinations within art worlds by opening more space for flexibility. In this sense, new media art is neither artistically nor technologically in dominant form. Thus, art world's dynamics are challenged by hybridity of new media art that its principles are not in effect within such hybrid constitution.

In the second part of the chapter, I addressed process-orientedness of new media art. I examined that change in the form on the basis of process-orientedness takes a new approach in sociality of new media art as it is more open to collective and collaborative ways of art making; engagement of dialogue among viewer, artist and work of art; and exchange of ideas among different spheres. Via process-orientedness of new media art, it was observed that the work itself is the whole process and idea itself. Within the process, how significant viewer's relation with the work was seen as her/his involvement within the process could potentially change the process itself. Thus, new media art works and projects could also be considered as flexible in their contexts. What was observed within the context of new media art is that technologically mediated digital works are more open to manipulation, so they are more flexible than before.

Both hybrid constitution and process-orientedness of new media art works and projects featured network based relations not only for recognition but also idea of collaborative art making. Moreover, how significant contribution of art and technology driven networks and platform in the formation of new media art scene in Turkey was examined. Collaborative art making, in that sense, carried out within those networks that many people from different disciplines work in collaboration in the case of new media art. In relation to recognition of new media art, it was observed that network driven relations are significantly important.

In the third part, interactivity and its potential were examined. It was observed that dynamism and hybridity open space for negotiation in constitution of both form and meaning. So, I could build upon my analyses on relation among artist, art work and viewer as dialogic within interactivity part. It was seen that interactivity in new media art enables decentralization of authority by introducing collective and shared authorship.

Therefore, we could talk about new types of relationing among artist, viewer and work of art within the context of new media art. The process is formed through interaction among different agents of the work. And the process is non-linear

constitution that it does not have fixed structure; so, it is constantly changing system under favor of its process-oriented and interactive nature.

It could be understood from the study that hybrid nature of new media art form and ambiguity in the constitution of this form contribute to openness of possibilities and potentials that the form is unstable and contains the tension in itself as being accessible for interventions on the level of art, knowledge and technology. And those possibilities and potentials of hybrid new media art form transform the very idea of social construction of art and call forth new types of relations.

All these challenges and possibilities that were mentioned above could be taken into account as potentials of new media art. The ways and conditions that these potentials could be actualized should be thought with conditioning and positioning of new media art and relations that govern it. More specifically, they do not represent how new media art work or project is but rather they put forward potentials of new media art work or project which could be opened up by line of inquiry or applied for positioning of new media art in artistically recognized environment. Indeed, such kinds of potentials are not central focus of many of artists' art. For many of them these potentials are incidental features of what they are doing.¹²²

Nonetheless, these potentials, here, are significant for this study since constitution of such hybrid art form has close connection with exploration of new capabilities. And artists take in various stances for such kind of exploration. Besides, diffuse of the idea of hybridity within different fields prioritize the idea of commonalities with various motives. It could be understood throughout all these discussions that motives and interests that shape art making, which could be identified as new media art making in this study, are part of social forces.

Constitution of above mentioned new media art form depicts that art form is form of relations. More specifically, relations, ideas, motives, and inquiries are all embodied in the form. Drawing upon the above mentioned new media art works, all these

¹²² Indeed, it does not need to be new media art.

discussions on the constitution of new media art form highlights how art form could be unstable as it is the process itself.

All in all, all these characteristics should not be thought as kinds of criteria for new media art work or project. Rather, they should be considered as socially constructed framework for art making within hybridized environment. Following that, it could be said that I was seeking what might be called as new media art throughout all these discussions.

CHAPTER 3

NEW MEDIA ART PRACTICES

In the second chapter, I would like to ask whether idea of collaboration and research in new media art open up new possibilities. Afterwards, my question in this chapter will continue along the discussion on how organization practices of new media art challenge well established art practices. In this line of discussion, the initial emphasis in the following part will be on the question: How is the idea of collaboration integrated into new media art making as hybrid new media art form is constituted via collaboration among different spheres. And this leads to another question: In what ways are well established art practices challenged by collaborative new media art practices?

Following that I will look at organization of new media art practices in detail and ask: In what ways are well established art practices challenged by new media art? This line of questioning will be supported by asking: In what ways do creation and exhibition of art change by new media art? This question leads to others: What cultural changes and institutional formations do emerge and enable kind of interdisciplinary collaboration among fields of art, science and technology? How research based art practices within the context of new media art lead to changes in roles of artist and viewer?

New media art practice leads to reconfiguration in the structure of traditional art practice by substantially process-oriented and participatory nature. As Ride and Dewdney states:

new media practice operates on a kind of fault line between established forms of production and new and different forms of production. I will also go on to claim that

one of the defining features of the medium itself is that the division between author and audience is challenged by new media interactive quality.¹²³

That is, structure of organization and exhibition changes with respect to interactive nature of new media works of art since they give more control over the work by giving more agency to viewers and audience. Paul, in this manner, identifies new media art practice as participatory practice which is carried out through network and platforms of exchange.¹²⁴ New media art is potentially open to participation and even manipulation of viewers. Including that kind of dynamism, there is a need for new practical skills as the process itself is being composed of several components that are gathered to create a meaningful whole. Thus, new practical skills should provide continuity and practicality within process. For this reason, probable production methods, exhibition models, dissemination and preservation practices are constantly changing within the context of new media art.

In an effort to clarify the term new media art in the context of mainstream contemporary art, artistic practices that are arrayed by intricate dialogue among art, science and technology foster own domain of new media art. These practices at the same time are included in mainstream contemporary art; specifically putting emphasis on further possibilities related to cooperation of art and technology. In this manner, in new media art's specificity production and exhibition processes are intersected since new media work of art is not principally established object and once it introduced in exhibition circuit the work of art has been subject to continuing transformation with each meaningful connection between viewer and the process.

From this point forth, new media art practices are analyzed regarding changing form of art and its impact on production, dissemination, exhibition and consumption processes. As it was mentioned before, potential of art form leads to changes in interior dynamics of practices. Thus, new media art practices could be appraised as varied due to interactive aspect of works breed open-ended projects. It could be easily

¹²³ Andrew Dewdney and Peter Ride, *The New Media Hand Book*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 112.

¹²⁴ Christiane Paul, *New Media Art and Institutional Critique: Networks vs. Institutions*, n.p.

argued that practices that are emerged around the potentiality of immaterial art form could highlight possibility of alternative practices in mainstream contemporary artistic field which lead to re-thinking on notion of art and ever-changing roles of artist, viewer, curator, gallery and museums throughout structuring of artistic practices. That is to say, new media art practices correspond to several compounds which are included in the process; thus, it is not easy to mention about standardized works of art and artistic practices in new media art. Namely, using new technologies for whatever the reason can adorn artistic practices since they provide new ways of doing and thinking so that frame of art is enhanced and rigid separation between artistic and non-artistic is dissolved.

Ride and Dewdney highlight that new media as *provisional and relational process* broadens “our conceptual understanding of the current possibilities and purposes of new mediums.”¹²⁵ That is, possibilities of new media are also relevant for artistic practices of new media art as regards continuous advancement of new technologies and the revision of previous ones. Therefore, when the new media art is in question, mainstream contemporary art and technological and technical developments are also addressed; partly because traditional and new ones “overlap and boundaries between previously distinct operations of production blur.”¹²⁶ In this sense, new media art practices could be considered as new in organization but also could be adaptable to structuring of previous organizational methods as once it draws into trajectory of art then the new ones are re-contextualizing the old ones in some way. That is to say, new media art practices follow different pattern and form different composition as including operational familiarity with established ones in order to function at institutional level.

¹²⁵ Dewdney and Ride, *The New Media Hand Book*, 68.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

3.1. The Idea of Collaboration in New Media Art Practice

Any attempt to understand new media art characteristically while distinguishing between varied artistic styles in the mainstream contemporary artistic field; practices that provide essential conditions for new media art work come forth. Each practice, which gains practical recognition by means of artistic tools and mediums in the artistic field, defines patterns of art. And art in the context of these practices determines the principles behind production, exhibition, dissemination and consumption processes and also transforms traditional activities and social relations among individual agents in order to gain recognition through practical designations for the new artistic theme and style.

Howard S. Becker, in his book *Art Worlds*¹²⁷, makes sententious discussion on social production of art. Including the entire society in the analysis of construction of cooperative links within art, he focuses on art worlds as a primary unit of analysis. One of the significant arguments of the book is to evaluate art as collective action which gives chance to putting art into interdependent practices considering its social character. As artistic and cultural productions are not free from social context then his attempt to investigate the circumstances surrounding production of artistic and cultural activities necessitate including all agents whose collective actions and co-operations constitute the organization of art. Namely, Becker explores the significance of artistic conventions while incorporating established network of cooperative links among participants into the study. How art world participants interact with each other in the process of artistic production, which is a complex process, is examined considering separate components of the processes around the effects of artistic conventions.

When I look at the organization practices of new media art, and conceptualize my field of study as new media art world, the dynamism of the field points out various types of social relations. In this manner, I could observe that beyond artistic

¹²⁷ Becker, *Art Worlds*.

conventions, there are hybridized zones where different spheres merge; and then produces new types of relations and such a hybrid art form. As Becker identifies art as a collective activity, cooperative links within the context of new media art are constituted through artistic, scientific and technological accounts of new media art. In comparison with *cooperative links*, which is called by Becker, these kinds of cooperation among different spheres primarily execute production process as being constituent of hybridity in new media art. In Becker's account, however, there is not such an initial emphasis for production process due to the fact that different actors involve in different domains as contributing to the end result that is art making.¹²⁸

Organization of new media art practices, however, does not feature the links between different actors within artistic activity. Rather links between different actors and spheres indicate entwined curiosities of different spheres in relation to cultural affirmations and technologies of its day. Art, in this sense, is one of the components of formation of such a hybrid form which support development of the initial idea. That is to say, people from different spheres collaborate in the case of new media art on behalf of common interests and curiosities. In this sense, it could not be primarily art making but rather sharing and developing an idea with the use of new technologies and tools.

More specifically, the constitution of such a hybrid form also points out knowledge and information sharing among different disciplines as the very idea and motive of that kind of collaboration in art making is based on accessing different results via testing hypothetical proposals and fulfill initial curiosity. As Dilbaz states;

all the time you think, find problems and create problems. And then I want to make something with my friends. For this, Istanbul is really rich. Moreover, almost all people dwell in same places; so, you can easily meet and work together. That is, you construct temporary autonomous zones. So, you can easily go and support different projects in the same day.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Becker, *Art Worlds*.

¹²⁹ Interview with Erdem Dilbaz, October, 2012.

All those people from different fields contribute to the working process with different motives and object of curiosities. Therefore, the work itself could not appeal to specifically field of arts. Nonetheless, herein pertaining to commonality is important for works or projects which are carried out in collaboration. In this case, commonality is seized on art and technology driven interests; and supported by art and technology networks.

3.1.1. Art and Technology Networks

Although collaborative art practices date back to earlier times, form of collaboration in production has been changed owing to increasing usage of complex and new technique and technologies. In such a manner, there is a need for specialized assistance as the technical and technological arrangements are highly complex and grift in the case of new media art. New media art practices, which are mainly established with idea of collaboration, are supplied through network of relations. As in the case of new media art in Turkey, art and technology networks and platforms enable collaborative ways of art making. It could be seen via Nerdworking;

Nerdworking is an Istanbul based art & science network which is founded in 2009 to research and to develop unique softwares and hardwares for artistic, commercial, experimental interactive media works for the public space, fairs and performing arts. Nerdworking has many multidisciplinary artists, illustrators, designers, real-time animation designers, coders, mechatronics, robotics, electronics professionals. The core team's aim is to create new way for experience of between man - machine - codes.¹³⁰

The team, as they name themselves like that, is composed of people from different spheres who are expert in her/his own field. Works and projects of the team are mostly driven by complex technical assistances and many of them are large scaled and showed in public spaces; so, enable public distribution of new media art in flashy ways. One of the magnificent works of the team is Yekpare [See Photo 11,12 in Appendix A], which was video mapping; urban screening performance, and

¹³⁰ Vimeo, Nerdworking Page, <http://vimeo.com/nerdworking> (accessed May 24,2013).

projected on Haydarpaşa Train Station in Istanbul, 2010. Production manager of Nerdworking; Erdem Dilbaz talks about Yekpare in the following words: “You work collaboratively therein. Yekpare is all of ours work. It belongs to architecture, me, ones who work as art and animation director; and ones who make sound design of it. The work belongs to all of them.”¹³¹ This project is one of large scaled new media art works in Istanbul that is accomplished as a team project. Via Yekpare, how new media art practices differ from traditional art practices on the grounds of collaboration could be seen. As Dilbaz also touches upon, vast numbers of artist, designer, producer, technician, architecture, researcher from different disciplines and (potentially) part of this art and technology network involve within the process. For sure, there is a need for common interest among those actors. For this, artistic and technological curiosities could be considered as one of common interests. Besides, need for technical and artistic assistance in large-scaled projects, which require kind of specialization on the matter, could be considered as another driven factor for such kind of collaboration. Also, professional reputations are provided within such networks which could also lead to favoring of particular artistic styles. In this way, artists are recognized and get support not only for their artistic but also commercialized artistic works and projects.

For the Nerdworking, as Dilbaz many times emphasizes, the idea of advancements in the field of technology and making something new as for contributing the development of technology hold them together. The team, as group of people from various disciplines and spheres, calls for collaborative art making by means of new technologies and digital mediums of its day. Thus, one of main motives could be considered as interests in new technologies and the interaction between human, machine and code in its technical sense.¹³² Applying such interests also for their commercial works, the team is commonly recognized in local design scene.

¹³¹ Interview with Erdem Dilbaz, October, 2012.

¹³² For detailed information see <http://nerdworking.org/about.php>

New media art practices, which are organized around the idea of collaboration, could blur the disciplinary boundaries and show up artistically and technically in gift works and projects. In this manner, those works and projects call for well-structured research and development studies as there are many factors influencing the process. Besides, with reference to dematerialization in the case of new media art, it is highly arguable to talk about control over in new media art form considering its immaterial character and unfinished form. Traditional forms of art, however, are open to manifestation of control mechanisms and even determined spatial harmony and formalism. Thus, research and development parts of the work or the project could be considered as important as the work itself. In the same fashion, also counting Yekpare in the matter, Dilbaz touches upon how effortful and so important research and development parts of the new media art works and projects as they are also commissioned by research and development investments. As the principles of new media art form are not well established, then there is a need for making detailed research on probable state of affairs in order to provide continuity for the process.

Considering all these discussions made above, it could be said that with respect to being a collaborative art practice, new media art practice could be considered as a kind of research based on common endeavor of different actors. When new media art scene in Turkey is considered, those people, who become involved with new media art in some way, are interested in new technologies and mediums; and their possibilities. Ekmel Ertan touches upon intersection of art and technology as exemplifying the issue on account of Amber Platform.¹³³

We found this association and then start to festival when we realize existence of this field, possibility of different ways of using new media and technology. We suggest the idea that technology is not merely consumption material; so, we need to hack it otherwise it can bring us under its control. Thus, we need to be aware of this and form a basis for that kind of approach. In this manner, this festival bears what goes on around the world. If we use the technology, live within it as being integrated to it so much, then

¹³³ It is important to note here that organization structures of Nerdworking and Amber Platform are different from each other. Nerdworking, as the team being composed of professionals from different spheres, works like production team as dealing with not only artistic but also commercial and industrial products. The team also provides technical and artistic assistance for various sectors. Amber Platform is art and technology platform and being active in the field of art.

it is not impossible for it to become a means of expression. We make art with what we find around us; wherewith we live as being nested then we use it as material of art. Thus, technology has to be, inevitably, within the art.¹³⁴

Following the similar way of thought, it could be argued that new technologies have been artistically potent tool for works of art and this potentiality has become more multifaceted since artistic practices have called for them. In this manner, the way new media art occurs through utilization of new and digital technologies and potentials of them characterize new media art practices.

Employment of the new and kind of technical curiosity about possibilities of the new within the field of art call forth comprehensive artistic and technical research as for discovering new ways of art making via new technologies and mediums. Thus, collaboration and support are very crucial within the field on account of providing technical assistance and artistic recognition. As Koç states:

I feel obliged to help within the field. There is support among each other and I do not know how and why we support each other. All of us are aware of the fact that we are few in numbers who work on and interested in those works. None of us is strong enough to walk and rush around by oneself. All of us proceed more or less at the same level. Thus, she/helps me and I help her/him. On the other hand, we are curious people, so, we learn many things from each other.¹³⁵

Indeed initial curiosity resulting from the query of what I can do with bag of tricks go for not only field of art but also other fields that are engaged in the production. In this manner, new types of communities come along and adopt the idea of collaborative working in different spheres.

Here, Scrivener and Clements analyzes collaborative aspect of new media art practice in terms of different art worlds and; specifically, illustrate how new media, gallery and academic art worlds are connected historically and economically with each other within the artistic field.¹³⁶ In this way, they go through Howard

¹³⁴ Interview with Ekmel Ertan, October, 2012.

¹³⁵ Interview with Osman Koç, October, 2012.

¹³⁶ Stephen Scrivener and Wayne Clements, "Triangulating Artworlds: Gallery, New Media and Academy," in *Art Practice in a Digital Culture*, eds. Hazal Gardiner and Charlie Gere, 9-27. (England and USA: Ashgate Publishing Limited and Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010)

Becker's¹³⁷ and James Young's¹³⁸ arguments about plurality of art worlds. Initially, for Becker, circumstances surrounding production of artistic activities are socially organized and are cooperative. In his analysis, beginning from the producing an idea up to the validity of reputation of an art work; all these elements are engaged in the process as aforementioned. In this manner, artistic event occurs through collective activity and cooperation which then constitutes what he calls art worlds. "Art worlds consist of all the people whose activities are necessary to the production of the characteristic works which that world and perhaps others as well, define as art."¹³⁹ Becker also emphasizes cooperative links among participants of art worlds by which each one contributes to the work and "makes it art."¹⁴⁰ With his own words, art worlds are composed of:

... groups of people who cooperate to produce things that they, at least, call art; having found them, we look for other people who are also necessary to that production, gradually building up as complete picture as we can of the entire cooperative network that radiates out from the work in question. The world exists in the cooperative activity of those people, not as a structure or organization, and we use words like those only as shorthand for the notion of networks of people cooperating.¹⁴¹

Considering cooperation of networks of people, it is likely that; artistic practice as research achieves recognition and prestige by means of academic art world since research is institutionalized within the academy.¹⁴² In such a manner, having social and financial support is easier both for artist and the gallery since academic art world provides legitimation to the artistic practice and support cooperation between gallery art world and new media art world for research based network activity. This kind of network activity could also include challenges as gallery art world directly operated in art market with respect to market oriented responsibilities. The academy art world,

¹³⁷ Becker, *Art Worlds*.

¹³⁸ James O. Young, *Art and Knowledge*, (London: Routledge, 2001).

¹³⁹ Becker, p.34

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p.35

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p.35

¹⁴² Scrivener and Clements, "Triangulating Artworlds: Gallery, New Media and Academy," 9.

correspondingly, satisfy “knowledge and art perspective”¹⁴³, arguably. Thus, Scrivener and Clements proposed collaborative development in networked practice based research in order to ease “managing the demands of the two artworlds on their time and creative outputs”¹⁴⁴ at the institutional level. Here it is important to note that resources of academic research are utilized by new media art world as for the development of new art discourses since new media art is composed of several components which are not recognized within artistic field as posing challenge to marketing. Thereby, new media art practices potentially more attached to collaborative practices for the very reason for doing the new. It may be that the more new technologies employed in new media works of art, the more complex and experimental new media art practices occur. Besides, it could be understood that as well as organizational structures enable art practices, they could also constrain them. Nonetheless, new media art could still act as experimental social formation as it has still capacity to call forth interests in innovation and originality.

For Graham, collaborative practices arise across disciplines that research projects employ new tools, techniques, methods and forms of knowledge as for constituting instance within different spheres.¹⁴⁵ In this sense, those hybrid works that are produced in collaboration via research based practices are meaningful and valuable within different spheres since they appeal to new ideas, new fields of research based on the idea of innovation. Also, those works allow the discovery of new object of curiosities for further inquiries.

For sure, above mentioned features are also welcomed within commercialized field of art. The ideas of innovation, originality and new are applied across different spheres. However, their adaptation to practices and manipulation within practices could differ. That is to say, there could be significant difference in artistic approach

¹⁴³ Ibid., 17.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 17.

¹⁴⁵ Berly Graham, “Tools, Methods, Practice, Process ... and Curation,” in *Art Practice in a Digital Culture*, eds. Hazel Gardiner and Charlie Gere, 165-175. (England and USA: Ashgate Publishing Limited and Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010), 173.

of different art and technology driven networks. Thus, functioning of these labels should be taken into account in relation to network driven relations as art and technology networks could fit the purpose of creative economy.

3.1.1.1. Performers of Collaboration: Viewers

As collaboration among professionals was specifically addressed above, now collaborative role of viewer is incorporated into the study. Depending on the structure of the work, viewer's role could be very decisive for the continuation and contemplation of new media art works. As the sample of the new media art works are established out of web based new media art works in this study, I will specifically concentrate on the works where collaboration is occurred within physical environment.

Within new media art's contextual flexibility, viewer could perform creativity within the process. That is, viewer could be involved within process as using her/his creativity; and viewers within this context could be named as performers as their active participation within the process has impact on the work either for contemplation of the work or functioning of it. In any way, viewer's involvement could be seen as necessary condition for the continuity and functioning of the work. Additionally, Gülan states that "it is not passive viewer but rather active audience"¹⁴⁶ within the context of new media art. He underlines that the work necessitates "physical and intellectual involvement"¹⁴⁷ to be able to interact with audience and function. In the light of Gülan's statements, it could be said that the mode of viewer's involvement depends on the conditioning of the work by artist. In this sense, artist's one of key roles could be considered as framing collaboration in accordance with viewer's involvement.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Genco Gülan, October, 2012.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Genco Gülan, October, 2012.

Remembering Kuralı and Özçelik's Probable Needlework¹⁴⁸, viewers have crucial role within the process. As the modes of participation have changed, participant has turned into a performer. When participant becomes performer as in the case of Probable Needlework, there is not a distance with the work as being performer s/he steps into the process and opens up a space for her/himself. Performer has chance to introduce new insights within the process. Participant, on the other hand, ride on flexibility of the context and acts in accordance with it. Performer, in this sense, could be seen as active as producer who primarily collaborates for production rather than functioning or dissemination of the work. In that sense, each performance was meaningful and valuable within the context of the work since each act of stitching an icon on gobelin canvas was part of the idea of showing up commons. And viewer's multilayered interaction with digital screen and gobelin canvas demonstrates how commons could be interpreted differently depending on subjectivity within interaction. At the end of the ten days, the art work was created collaboratively.

Herein, it could be asked whether status of author changes in regard to collaboration among collaborators and performers within the context of new media art. In the case of Probable Needlework, it could be seen that viewer involved in production process as performing her/his creativity while interacting with the work. In this manner, it could be asked whether collaboration in production challenge the very idea of authorship.

3.1.1.2. Collective Authorship

Daniel underlines that modernist notion of authorship is challenged when “audience as viewer” becomes “audience as collaborator”¹⁴⁹. As I tried to touch on

¹⁴⁸ For detailed information see <http://design-insitu.com/4610267>

¹⁴⁹ Sharon Daniel, “Collaborative Systems: Redefining Public Art,” in *Context Providers: Conditions of Meaning in Media Arts*, eds. Margot Lovejoy et al., 55-89. (UK: Intellect, 2011), 77.

collaborative new media art practices, viewer has chance to involve in the production process. Depending on how to handle the notion of authorship, I could say that the very idea of authorship is challenged at the collaboration level within the context of new media art. That is, status of author is resolved within collaborative practices and none of the collaborators establish a relationship with the work via authorial concerns.

Lovejoy underlines that the role of the author has changed as s/he relinquishes *total control of artwork* and just frame structure of the work in accordance with collaborative ways of art making.¹⁵⁰ Within that, digital nature of the work has effect on collaborative process as introducing dynamism to the production which leads to “openness for play and agency”.¹⁵¹ In this manner, the meaning of the work is constructed via negotiation which takes the form of “shared authorship and social exchange”.¹⁵²

And collaboration, for sure, also takes different forms “from jointly authoring and producing work, working with people from different disciplines, or working within an agreed division of labour within a set production”¹⁵³ depending on relations among collaborators and organizational models of works. Although skill based differentiations could be clearly observed in both cases, the former one identifies organizational model in which collaborators combine distinct knowledge and skills from different spheres for hybrid constitution of the work. This could be clearly seen in organizational model of Nerdworking. As Dilbaz mentioned that the work is all of the team’s work from artist to technician. With his own words: “Although the work is all of their works who work in collaboration, honor is mostly attributed to art directors and producers. However, everyone’s name is written within our work. We

¹⁵⁰ Lovejoy, “Defining Conditions For Digital Arts: Social Function, Authorship, and Audience,” 15.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 17.

¹⁵² Ibid., 19.

¹⁵³ Dewdney and Ride, *The New Media Handbook*, 10.

consider it as all of our work.”¹⁵⁴ In this sense, artist is not the author of the work even categorically. Besides, artist is not a pure artistic category any more. In regard to hybrid and interdisciplinary constitution of new media art works, even artist receive technical or artistic assistance from different fields in any manner. For sure, this does not mean that the work is produced collaboratively but rather artist works in collaboration with people from different disciplines and takes advantages of knowledge sharing among those people. As Lovejoy emphasizes that complex collaboration among people from different spheres can change the role of collaborator ranging from “contractor or consultant to a full-fledged collaborator”.¹⁵⁵

When artist’s primary role becomes providing necessary condition for collaboration, then viewer’s way of involvement could be qualified as success of the artist. In this way, artist arranges procedures of how the work is done in the last instance; and the idea of creativity is directly linked with artist. Thus, collaboration in the work is somehow organized on the basis of technically supporting the creative idea. However, to be able to talk about resolution of authorship category within the context of new media art, we need to address works and projects in which collaborator is actively involved in the process as *full-fledged collaborator*. And new media art with its participatory nature include potentials of challenging authorship on the basis of shared and collective authorship.

There is also another facet of this issue regarding the relation and interaction between machine/computer and human. As it was slightly mentioned in previous discussions, the very effect of digital culture and possibilities of internet could not be disregarded in this study as they provide free access to work via internet, open sources, peer to peer networking. All these point out transformation within field of communication where distribution channels of messages have changed. When Net becomes medium, interactivity is based on human-machine or human-computer interaction and this interaction could be either in real or virtual sense. Maintaining this relationship

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Erdem Dilbaz, October, 2012.

¹⁵⁵ Lovejoy, “Defining Conditions For Digital Arts: Social Function, Authorship, and Audience,” 16-17.

barely necessitates long-term strategies since this relationship is much more reactive than being interactive. And Graham's remark on the issue, in a nutshell, is:

Interaction between human and computer programme can [...] potentially offer a different kind of relationship where a certain intimacy, engagement and responsibility can be offered; but what cannot be offered, of course, is a full conversation between human and computer.¹⁵⁶

One of missing parts of the conversation could be considered as not being able to negotiating for the meaning and operation of the work since structuring of the work is first and foremost framed by the artist via codes and software. Nevertheless, possibilities of participation, for sure, enlarge by virtue of internet, telecommunication and computer networks and satellite technology. This enlargement on the grounds of sharing and accessibility challenges notions of ownership and authorship in art just as broaden the concept of interactivity by introducing new modes of interaction. According to Inke Arns, this interactive movement in art leads to change in the concept of author. For her, it is “«distributed » or collective authorship”¹⁵⁷ which identifies interactive and collaborative form of art. That is to say, new media works of art are produced on the basis of communication process that is open to all who want to establish a dialogue with artist and work of art. In the same vein, the meaning of work of art relies upon the dialogue by which it is diversified and becomes multilayered. In this manner, artists could be considered as context providers for participants and participants are co-authors of work. Arns, probably, touches upon net based or internet based art whither access is provided by means of network sharing or open sources. Similarly, Lovejoy stresses that “an interactive works adds a new dimension to the process of providing agency for collective communities and shifts the role of the artist to that of one who

¹⁵⁶ Berly Graham, “Interaction/Participation: Disembodied Performance in New Media Art,” in *Dead History, Live Art? Spectacle, Subjectivity and Subversion in Visual Culture since the 1960s*, ed. Jonathan Harris, 241-263. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, Tate), 253.

¹⁵⁷ Inke Arns, “Interaction, Participation, Networking Art and Telecommunication,” *Medien Kunst Netz*, http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/overview_of_media_art/communication/print/ (accessed May 18, 2013).

creates the framework and tools for interactive dialogue.”¹⁵⁸ Both Arns and Lovejoy pay attention to possibilities of “complex model of democratic art experience”¹⁵⁹ by virtue of interactive works and mediums that ease accessibility to art. Although it seems that they are two different points, it is medium that provide access to work all the way. Thus, it could be arguably said that it is medium which enables achievement of artist’s purpose as making representation possible and should be integrated into authorship discussion.

3.2. New Media Art Practice as a Research Practice with Its Hybrid Nature

I never made a painting as a work of art, it’s all research.

—Pablo Picasso

Artistic practices have changed as well as the form has changed. And the constitution of such a hybrid art form materializes, surely, within hybrid environment. In this manner, artistic practices compose dynamism of this hybrid art form as standing for any kind of processes as decisive conditions for occurrence of new media works of art. For sure, new media art, as hybrid construction, carried on via different ways of practicing. That is, it is not only art that is experienced and practiced but also science and technology. Thus, new media art practices are composed of distinctive practices of different spheres as aforementioned.

For Sullivan, art practices embody “ideas that are given form in the process of making artworks.”¹⁶⁰ Significantly, Sullivan also points out that “art practice can be

¹⁵⁸ Lovejoy, *Digital Currents: Art in the Electronic Age*, 236.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 258.

¹⁶⁰ Graeme Sullivan, “Artefacts as evidence within changing contexts,” *Working Papers in Art and Design* 4, ISSN 1466-4917 (2006), http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/artdes_research/papers/wpades/vol4/gsfull.html (accessed August 08, 2013).

seen as a form of intellectual and imaginative inquiry, and as a place where research can be carried out that is robust enough to yield reliable insights that are well grounded and culturally relevant.”¹⁶¹ He builds his analysis on the idea that art practice is very similar to research practice on the grounds of contextual complexities. That is, both the art and research are based on systematic inquiry on their own rights. Considering new media art practice, it could be argued that the way agents of process engage in art practice has changed in dynamism of the process. As Sullivan states that “art practice can be conceptualized as a form research that can be directed towards a range of personal and public ends”,¹⁶² so, depending on modes of established relations with the work and levels of involvement within the process, forms of research and research outcomes could be varied. In relation to collaboration within the process of art, research practice itself becomes multifaceted. As new media art work or project is composed of different components, there is a need for common curiosity to conduct a research within the process.

Attraction of the idea of new diffuses in all of art, science and technology spheres. Rather than visual, knowledge is more centered in new media art. In other words, knowing is much more decisive than seeing while experiencing new media art works. For sure, it depends on the form and content of the work. Nonetheless, new media art works, as also getting involved with science and technology spheres and cutting across disciplinary boundaries, is much more knowledge centered even this is the case just for the author¹⁶³ rather than the viewer. So, it could be argued that new media art practices are established on the basis of the idea of research in an intellectual environment. Herein Burak Arıkan’s art works that are based on complex network analyses could be considered as challenging as those works are contextually knowledge centered and get involved in social, political, cultural and economic issues. As Arıkan states in the interview, he mainly concentrates on network

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Graeme Sullivan, “Research Acts in Art Practice,” *Studies in Art Education* 48, 1. (Fall,2006): 33.

¹⁶³ Here author is used as for speaking to any actors who take part in the production process.

structures within society. And he underlines that “power is not within institutions or companies rather it in networks in this epoch that we live in, as also Manuel Castells stated. Thus, I try to make works that are featuring, revealing power relations; so, showing unforeseen ones.” And for the works, “there is continuous both aesthetic and political continuous research.”¹⁶⁴ Arıkan’s work Artist Collector Network as an example,

is an ongoing data collecting and mapping research on the “nature” of the society of art. In the process of generating the data, each collector in the map was asked to convey a list of artists in their art collection. These lists of shared artists connect the collectors on the diagram, which organizes itself by running as a software simulation. The names naturally find their position on the screen through connecting forces, revealing the central actors, indirect links, and tight clusters.¹⁶⁵

Artist Collector Network questions art market dynamics and relations of artists and collectors. The work investigates “the art world which depends on status, privilege and secrecy via contemporary technological systems that rely on principles of free access, open sharing and participation.”¹⁶⁶ In this sense, the work could be considered as a critique to closed functioning system of art market. Viewer’s interaction with the work could also be considered as accessibility of art market via possibilities of digital medium as touch screen represents changing dynamics and various types of relationings within art market.

In addition to doing a research on subject of inquiry, Arıkan’s work is a kind of research on its own. More specifically, Arıkan is concerned about network structures and various types of relationings within art worlds. His work Artist and Collector Network is also part of the same issue of concern. And artist utilizes from existing knowledge about power dynamics within art worlds and specifically concentrates on artist and collector relationship within this context.

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Burak Arıkan, October, 2012.

¹⁶⁵ Burak Arıkan, Works Page, <http://burak-arikan.com/artist-collector-network> (accessed on May 18, 2013).

¹⁶⁶ Burak Arıkan, Works Page, <http://burak-arikan.com/artist-collector-network> (accessed on May 18, 2013).

To be able to identify art practice as research, rather than addressing usage of knowledge, the way that knowledge is created in the process of art making should be examined as Sullivan puts it.¹⁶⁷ And he underlines that art work in a research form “is replete with potential evidence of knowledge.”¹⁶⁸ Viewer’s interaction with the work, in this sense, could be considered as illustrative reading of networks of relations between artists and collectors as the work itself is data source. As Sullivan touches upon, “mapping is a process of locating theories and ideas within existing conceptual frameworks so as to reveal underlying structures and systems of connection.”¹⁶⁹

As artist states, his works include complex messages; so, it is a little bit hard to analyze the messages while one is working with the digital at the same time. Thus, those works are not produced in classical formats as we know it. “That is more conceptual; so, conceptually depth works. Actually, let’s call it as techno conceptual; namely, it is thinking like ex-conceptual art but conceptual art is different in this epoch.”¹⁷⁰ Following that, as it could be observed via Artist Collector Network, this work is a kind of proof by which viewer could observe dynamics of art market on the basis of collection and patronage. And this work could also be considered as site of knowledge which is accessible with digital technologies.

The data, which includes structuring of market-oriented relations between collector and artist; and relationing within art market in a broader sense, is both research material and also art work itself. For this work, Arıkan selects relevant pieces of information about structuring of art market; then visualizes particular relation between artists and collectors. As Sack mention that “ “Information visualization,” as a named of area of research and development, was originally an outgrowth of pragmatics of contemporary science and engineering. [...] It is, in short, a means for

¹⁶⁷ Graeme Sullivan, *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in The Visual Arts* (Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2005), 79.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 110.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 194.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with Burak Arıkan, October, 2012.

providing context.”¹⁷¹ And the process of artistic and aesthetic valuation of these kinds of works are different from conventional ways of aestheticization. Worth of information visualization, in this sense, is disguised within details as for meaning of the work within different contexts. In the similar way, Janis Jefferies explores that artist becomes researcher within computer mediated culture as practice based works are favored both in the field of art and technology.¹⁷² In that case, “environments and contexts for production have shifted to become more complex, discipline boundaries have become increasingly blurred.”¹⁷³ As it could be observed in the case of new media art, disciplinary boundaries have been already resolved as new media art itself is situated in hybrid context.

Sullivan proposes that

Digital technology serves as a site for inquiry where information is clearly no longer a form within which knowledge is found, nor a unit of analysis that lends itself to neat manipulation or interpretation. Yet this uncertain realm of investigative opportunity is just the kind of place where artists, scientists, researchers, cultural theorists, and community activists are speaking to each other in a fresh language of images and ideas.¹⁷⁴

Although Sullivan does not specifically refer to hybridization, following the similar line of thought; changes in the artistic practices could be related to the increasing hybridization towards crossing of cultural, political, technological and economic spheres in which research practice is necessarily prioritized within the complexity.¹⁷⁵ That is to say, those artists are much more closed to be named as researcher artists as the way they handle the question and their method of study are strictly dependent on their educational background and cultural affinities. Thus, within such kind of

¹⁷¹ Warren Sack, “Aesthetics of Information Visualization,” in *Context Providers: Conditions of Meaning in Media Arts*, eds. Margot Lovejoy et al., 123-151. (UK: Intellect, 2011), 123.

¹⁷² Janis Jefferies, “The Artist as Researcher in a Computer Mediated Culture,” in *Art Practice in a Digital Culture*, eds. Hazel Gardiner and Charlie Gere, 27-43. (England and USA: Ashgate Publishing Limited and Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010)

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁷⁴ Graeme Sullivan, *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in The Visual Arts*, 24-25.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

hybridized intellectual environment, object of curiosities are established via common associations of networks.

It is through potentiality of new media art and immaterial art form that we can grasp transformation of artistic practices; specifically, new media art practices. They are also means of practices that enable invention of new art forms as new modes of expression. As mentioned at the very beginning of the study, enhancement of new technologies within artistic practices is also kind of attempt to re-interpret and re-contextualize previous art forms and practices by means of new and potent forms of technological knowledge. Dilbaz, in the same way, underlines the way they deal with the technological knowledge in their works and projects. He underlines how it is important for them to follow advancements in the fields of science and technology in order to use new forms of knowledge and give them back as working up into new and complex technological tools and mediums.¹⁷⁶ In this regard, via competent use of acquired knowledge, experience and the outcome –the work and the whole process-, artist interprets the work on hand; and creates the new ones.

3.2.1. Art Labs as Sites of Research Practice

When production and exhibition processes in the context of new media art are mostly accompanied by research practices, art labs become alternative spaces for art making and exhibition within new media art scene. Art labs are mainly organized as part of an artistic event such as conference, symposium or festival. In those practicing areas, participants take part in the whole process as labs are conducted by experimental method of art making via collaborative practice among participants and artist. Claire Bishop considers media labs as art spaces where participant has chance to experience

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Erdem Dilbaz, October, 2012.

creativity.¹⁷⁷ Indeed, viewer also has chance to perform creativity as it aforementioned.

Graham and Cook characterize labs as “experimental, interdisciplinary, and research-led”.¹⁷⁸ For authors, labs are organized as dealing with “process rather than object, with participant rather than audience, or with production rather than exhibition.”¹⁷⁹ Experimental methods are welcomed both in production and presentation processes that exhibition or presentation itself is process of making the work. In this manner, viewer or participant actively gets involved in the process. In this case, establishment of the meaning of the work via negotiation is more apparent than conventional ways which are conducted by artists.

Collaboration within new media artistic production and research-led art practices are well suited within organization structure of art labs. Interdisciplinarity of labs contributes to information sharing via collaborative modes of working. In those areas, viewer or participant as actively being involved in production process does not establish her/his relation with the work on the basis of consumption. In this sense, what viewer consumes is what s/he produces in collaboration. And all the discussions that have been made from beginning of the study shows that viewer’s relation with the work of art, which is new media art work or project in this case, is not established upon the idea of consuming but rather producing and experiencing. In other words, although art labs are art spaces where the work is presented and exhibited, those people attend art labs not for artistic consumption but rather artistic production. Thus, these kinds of art labs are very suitable art places for new media art practices in which production process goes along with presentation and exhibition processes.

Labs are also convenient research and development areas for market and industry driven projects since new techniques and tools develop in collaboration. Besides,

¹⁷⁷ Claire Bishop, “Antagonism and Relational Aesthetic,” *October Magazine* 110, ?. (Fall 2004): 52.

¹⁷⁸ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 234.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 235.

labs have intellectual environment where people from different disciplines share their ideas and knowledge among each other. In this sense, labs could fulfill expectations of market and industry via broad array of exchange of ideas. Within such research areas, participants work with the accompaniment of artistic, technological and scientific assistances. Labs, as practicing zones of people from different disciplines, further interdisciplinary partnerships mostly among university and art and culture organizations. In Turkey, some of galleries and museums have organized art labs in collaboration with both international and local research institutions and universities. For instance, .doc:LAB was organized particularly for the field of design and media arts in Istanbul; and partners of the organization were .doc, Sabancı University, Ars Electronica, dDf.¹⁸⁰ Although media or new media art labs are few in number, increasing number of art labs shows how they have become art practicing zones and how way of art making and art practices have started to change.

How the idea of research has diffused in different fields and led to formation of creative industries in collaboration with academy, industry and fields of art and design could be clearly seen via call of .doc:LAB :

Academia is going through a phase of change all over the world. Having established itself a respected position in the fields of academic research, commercial initiative and design practice, makes it inevitable for the concept of creative professional to be though within a hybrid research, education and application, rather than interdisciplinary. The substantial focus on specific subjects in higher education program curricula, makes it economically impossible to realise educational activities within these so called institutions. However, programs with titles referring to a wide range of disciplines, in order to attract more students, presents only vague and circuitous career courses. Particularly in the fields of design and media arts, constantly changing and converging ways of expression, technics of production and presentation, forces the institutions in this field into a continuum of transformation. Some institutions, most of which are state schools, cannot keep up with this speed of change.¹⁸¹

As it aforementioned, Clements and Scriver also addressed collaboration among new media, academy and gallery art worlds. Their analyses on such kind of collaboration, however, put primary emphasis on collaboration within new media art making. In the case of .doc:LAB, however, initial aim is to effectuate partnership

¹⁸⁰ Detailed information about the event could be seen on <http://dotdoclab.org/>

¹⁸¹ .doc:LAB, Home Page, <http://dotdoclab.org/>

among different fields on the basis of professionalization via creativity. As it could be also observed in the case of .doc:LAB ,innovation driven partnerships among different fields lead to formation of creative industries which are ideationally adhere to neo-liberal policies. Richard Florida considers such kinds of partnerships as leading to formation of creative class.¹⁸² By Florida, creativity partnerships are first and foremost important for “innovation and high-tech industry growth”.¹⁸³ And the diversity within partnerships is reinforced since forms of creativity as “artistic and cultural, technological and economic”¹⁸⁴ could intersect and lead to multifarious outcomes.

It seems that for these kinds of partnerships, new media art could be significant facilitator. Such kinds of partnerships, which arise from neo-liberal agendas, have started to establish very recently in regard to capabilities of art labs for technological innovation under favor of experimentation among different spheres within the constitution of new media art form.

3.2.1.1. Is Art Work an Experimentation?

In this part, whether new media art works and projects could be characterized as experimentation in relation to interconnection among art, science and technology will be questioned.

Initially, how to situate knowledge within the context of new media art is very decisive for identifying works either as kind of experimentation or not. That is, experimentation could be considered as one of the means of acquiring knowledge. In

¹⁸² Richard Florida, *Rise of Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*, (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

¹⁸³ Richard Florida, “Cities and Creative Class,” *City&Community* 2, 1. (2003): 8.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

relation to this, many new media art works and projects could be characterized as kind of experiment within which artist tries to reach new forms of knowledge while observing viewer's interaction to new tools and mediums. For instance, interactive new media art installations suit with researching as focusing on experimenting on different ways of physical interaction in particular. Each interaction is potentially part of the test for artist by which s/he could identify the process with different variables and then optimize the functioning of the work. More specifically, probable process variables are reached within the process via interactions of viewers. In accordance with design matrix of the work, artist can observe how different factors change process in different ways. In this sense, the work itself, which is an ongoing process, could be considered as kind of experiment design.

Bager Akbay's Big Head and Osman Koç's Doppelgänger¹⁸⁵ could be exemplified for experiment based works considering the case of new media art. Within draft paper of Artificial Stupidity and Big Head, which were reached thanks to artist, process of the works was explained as stages of experiment. Artist worked on the project as being cautious about the development of the process step by step. All of those works are constructed as experiment set up within which viewer has key role for contributing to following of progress during the experiment. In this sense, viewer's experience could be considered as experimental subject for artist by whom s/he could examine capabilities of technological tools and mediums. As Gere states that "the more powerful the tools the greater is the capacity to make useful experiments and meaningful statements. The greater the degree of access to such tools, the greater is the capacity for experimentation."¹⁸⁶

It could be seen that in relation to technologies-in-use and process-oriented characteristics of new media art works and projects, artistic process itself has close connection with idea of experimentation. Even the work is an ongoing process, it is

¹⁸⁵ See <http://www.kocosman.com/index.php/projects/doppelganger/>

¹⁸⁶ Charlie Gere, "Research as Art," in *Art Practice in a Digital Culture*, eds. Hazel Gardiner and Charlie Gere, 1-9. (England and USA: Ashgate Publishing Limited and Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010), 4-5.

still an art work as visual forms and aesthetic models within process are occurred by means of artistic use of technology.¹⁸⁷ Further, that kind of hybrid process contributes to resolution of disciplinary boundaries as artist utilizes from means of different spheres without privileging one another as it also abovementioned. And it is primarily an art work as the work is practiced artistically. So, categorical identification of such hybrid works mostly depend on methods of working. As Akbay puts it:

If it is necessary to art and science, because science can act upon its own inquiry, then it is about method of working. That is, as long as you do not follow utilitarian method then it automatically gets inside art as art is broad identification. For instance, I make design and in accordance with my purpose I name it as art work; or call it scientific work if it suits my book; or I sometimes make it as for earn money. All of these, art and science, are modes of work. That is, your methodology is changing.¹⁸⁸

It shows that what makes such hybrid works valuable and meaningful in different fields is the idea of innovation. As it could also be get from Akbay's statement, working on the new one and unfolding of idea of innovation within continuum ease transivity among different spheres. And it shows how the idea of innovation is well-accepted in different spheres, even in art.

3.2.1.2. The Idea of Innovation

With its interdisciplinary nature, new media art could be perfectly matched with the idea of innovation. Interconnection between field of art and science advances idea of innovation as for also supporting the idea of creativity. Herein usage of new technologies and following new scientific and technological development for their adaptation in field of arts also support the idea of innovation.

¹⁸⁷ Edward A. Shanken, "Art in the Information Age: Technology and Conceptual Art," *Leonardo* 35, 4. (2002): 434.

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Bager Akbay, October, 2012.

Indeed, the very structuring of funding and commission mechanisms in the field of new media art in Turkey are indicative of how science and technology investments support the very idea of innovation within this field. For sure, primary motives of these investments are not supporting art making but rather providing grant for field of research and creative development within field of science and technology. Art, in this sense, characterizes creative idea behind the production. Dilbaz, as producer of Nerdworking, puts emphasis on difficulties related to new media art commissions as they are given for research-led and more industry-friendly projects.¹⁸⁹ As it was also mentioned that Nerdworking also carries out commercial projects which are very much similar to artistic projects of the team in terms of methods of working. For instance, indoor mapping project that was carried out with Nerdworking for Finansbank¹⁹⁰ was very similar to their outdoor mapping project of the team that was performed at Haydarpaşa Train Station. Both projects were mapping projects and commissioned by different foundations. These two projects differ from each other on the basis of framing of the creative idea via contextual requisition. The project for Finansbank was contextually framed by demands of the clients; so, artists took notice of institutional demands. In the case of Yekpare, however, artists had more space for their creative activity and primary motive was creative fulfillment of the team. And Finansbank invested in new media art project as new media art works and projects are considered as spectacular and catchy depending on the very usage of new technological and digital tools and mediums. Besides, most of the projects are large scaled and technologically complex projects by which they arouse curiosity in any event.

Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology in Turkey offered funding for kinds of new media art works or projects¹⁹¹. Osman Koç as new media artist got funding from

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Erdem Dilbaz, October, 2012.

¹⁹⁰ For Details, See <http://nerdworking.org/works-finansbank.html>

¹⁹¹ Ambiguity of naming is still valid for funding criterias. Open calls for funding do not specifically address new media art works and projects but rather call for projects in which art and science meet and contribute to industrial or technological research and developments.

there. And he underlines that also TÜBİTAK¹⁹² offers funding for especially technology used and research based projects. He also adds that

to be able to carry out your artistic work, you need serious effort. You are an artist and have an idea; and also you have a coder which means you have also another technical team from which you can get support. You develop something here. Thus, those works could fit with grant criterias of their¹⁹³ funds.¹⁹⁴

And Dilbaz put emphasis on qualification of those funds as calling attention that

They are not culture framed project but rather they are related to developing technology and research & development investments. [...] If you use it within artistic field as making it useful product for public and society, then you could get support. That is, you make material for market in the eyes of them; however, its intended purpose is different for you. As we do not have politics specifically for new media technologies and creative industries, we could not get support from the state.[...] Even there is not tangible support from state, you can get it indirectly.

Shanken specifically investigates “artist-engineer-scientist collaborations in industry and the academy”¹⁹⁵ and touches upon how knowledge sharing among different disciplines is critical within hybrid researches. Some of universities, mostly private ones, support collaboration among university and industry both technically and financially. Most of programs at research institutions encourage students for conducting hybrid researches and working on research and development areas on behalf of expanding the languages of different fields and enhancing new sights of creativity and invention.¹⁹⁶

By using the works and projects of Nerdworking, it is clearly observed that; commercial ones, which are more likely to be identified as products, are produced on sectoral basis and mainly stand out with their uniqueness so that require extensive research and development strategies. In this manner, technical consultant and support

¹⁹² The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey

¹⁹³ He refers to Republic of Turkey Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology and TÜBİTAK.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Osman Koç, October, 2012.

¹⁹⁵ Edward A. Shanken, “Artists in Industry and the Academy: Collaborative Research, Interdisciplinary Scholarship and the Creation and Interpretation of Hybrid Forms,” *Leonardo* 38, b. (2005): 415.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 417.

is mainly provided from academic sphere as using means of academy in any manner. To be utilizing from academic sphere, one does not need to be found in there; that is, practical, professional and disciplinary skills that are gained in the academy are applied in the production process. Thus, educational backgrounds of participants of the networks are highly decisive for the agenda both as artistically and technically. And collaboration, in this case, eases the contextual complexity of new media art practice.

When the work is named as commercial product, it is identified as design work rather than art work. Almost all interviewees who also work as designer underlines that basic difference between new media art work and design work is interference to creativity of artist by requests of clients. New media design works have become preferable for many clients from different sectors in connection with glamour of the new technologies. And corporate companies spare no expenses for large scaled projects or technically and financially high-pressure works. Artists get chance to access new technological tools and mediums as being participant within large-scaled projects.

3.3. Spatial Organization of New Media Art Practices

Now, I will look at the spatial organization of such research-led and collaborative art practices. This analysis will also address constitution of such a hybrid art form within kind of interdisciplinary spaces. Following that, I will show differentiation of spatial organization of new media art within art worlds as it challenges conventional ways of organization by its interactive and hybrid nature.

Indeed, what is significant for our discussion in this part of the chapter is about how new media art handle spatial dynamics. Rather than specifically addressing space, spatial dynamics are used since the subject matter is not merely about experience of or experiencing of space in the context of new media art. Spatial dynamics, here,

covers spatial designations in new media works of art and new media works of art in spatial context. Thus, it could be considered as bilateral investigation of space.

To begin with, possibility of interaction is directly linked to spatial and temporal dynamics and their potentiality. As Aylish Wood observed, initial part of interacting to the work is directly motivated by viewer's spatio-temporal relationship to a work of art.¹⁹⁷ And interactive new media art works change viewer's experience "from an engagement with the space of artwork towards an engagement with its spatio-temporal organization."¹⁹⁸ And the ways by which inhabitants experience the space establish the content of the work. As O'Doherty states in a similar tone; "space now is not just where things happen; things make space happen."¹⁹⁹

To make it one step further, Bourriard's discussion on relational character of art could be added to discussion. Bourriard pays attention to relational character of art on account of artistic practices that gather agents of the work together. It is also about dynamic nature of art in which point of departure is artistic process itself, rather than the art object. In his study, relationality among intersubjectivities and social encounters that advance functioning of the work not only in effect for meaning construction but also reflect communicative characteristic of work of art that let the meaning construction within social relations. For Bourriard,

Objects and institutions, and the use of time and works, are at once the outcome of human relations-for they render social work concrete-and producers of relations-for, conversely, they organize types of sociability and regulate inter-human encounters. Today's art thus prompts us to envisage the relations between space and time in a different way.²⁰⁰

Thus, experiencing the work or interacting with the work has been aroused in accordance with contextual designations of the work; on the other hand, contribute to

¹⁹⁷ Aylish Wood, *Digital Encounters* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 148.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 139.

¹⁹⁹ Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, Expanded Edition (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press), 39.

²⁰⁰ Nicolas Bourriard, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods (n.p: Les presses du reel, 2002), 48.

the contextual designations themselves. In addition, contextual basis of the work could also be evolved in relation to types of sociability and modes of relationships among practitioners of the work and work of art itself. It means that each moment covering functioning of the work takes part in the construction of space. That is, experiential dialogue is constructed within the frameworks of time and space. Herein, space construction could be taken into account as relational space directly with reference to Bourriard's conceptualizations of *relational art* and *relational aesthetics*. Production of such relational space is governed by conditionings of new media work of art; that is mostly an artistic event, and spatial features in this context appear as experiential relation between viewer and work of art. Obviously, if the work of art is driven by participatory or interactive technologies, spatial and temporal dimensions of interaction cover process-oriented pattern of the work.

As I tried to point out in previous chapter, the new (media) art form is process itself since each interaction composes multifaceted and hybrid form of new media art. New media art is not necessarily interactive as it was mentioned in several times; however, its significant characteristics such as computability, adaptability, customizability make new media art potentially interactive, even only in contextual basis. In this regard, viewer's or spectator's or even participant's relation with space and spatial organization of the work construct an environment where social encounters among several actors take place as for multifaceted responses that enable continuum for the work. Indeed, heterogeneity of interactions in physical and virtual spaces in the context of new media art enriches the very idea of art and its environment. At that point, continuum of the dialogue provides continuity for the work by means of rearrangement of the work and space. Besides, exhibition arena could be considered as space of communications where production of space is evolved in response to interactivity and participation. And the hybrid nature of new media work of art is directly related to hybrid identities that take part in the process. This hybridity aspect also covers multiplicity of responses to the work which is vary with respect to motives that evoke viewers to act. For sure, physically being active in the process is not a necessary condition for the construction of the space since spatial

configurations of new media art cover both motivated and circumstantial engagement.

And representation in the context of new media art is directly related to spatial and temporal dynamics since these components are not fixed. The space, as an ongoing production, represents subjects and objects of the work and also the interrelationship among them. Also, viewer's relation to work of art on the basis of interactivity and participation could be understood as spatial practice as viewer's experiential relation to space refers to actualization of new media art in space.

Spatial and temporal orders of new media works of art determine the very structure and conditioning of the work. To make it clearer, think about process-oriented and interactive new media work of art. At first, the work necessitates interaction in order to be function or even completed. Thus, viewer's interaction to work could be seen as one of decisive factor that form characteristic of the work. And modes of interaction is, for sure, changed on account of spatial and temporal orders since interactivity and even performativity moments are distinctive in accordance with specific modes of spatial and temporal organizations. To make it a step further, it could be said that artistic practices are also changing in accordance with spatial and temporal organizations of the work. Thinking through new media art, spatial factors are arguably much more decisive both in production and exhibition practices. As new media work of art is not a stable art object, then characteristics of the work and evolvement of the project is subject to spatial and temporal features necessarily. In this regard, space is also open and dynamic similar to open and dynamic nature of the work of art. Herein it could be arguably proposed that environment of the work as a spatial component is part of new media art form. That is, spatial organization of the work of art is creative in its own right and visual representations are subject to modes of interaction in accordance with the use of space.

Employment of space in the context of new media art also brings forth the issue of control in terms of curating since exhibition practices are taken part in a collaborative atmosphere and needs to be oriented in accordance with artistic and technical

dynamics. For sure, exhibition and curatorial strategies could change according to structural and contextual designations of the work. Christiane Paul reminds that contextual designations of the work give a clue about conditioning of the work in general, and form of interactivity in particular. Thus, she asserts:

Context is a complex construct: it can be physical (bound to a location), social (connected to human interactions), organizational, and economic (attached to structures of governance and systems of value). From a global perspective, context is about location, enriching the specifics of a particular place. From a local perspective, context is about activity and agency, the ability to engage with location.²⁰¹

It could be named as an artistic event, visual show, virtual game or an exhibition. And no matter how it is named, use of space in the context of new media art is about organization of artistic practices which renders artistic and aesthetic qualifications meaningful in accordance with the work's very nature. Use of space in the context of new media art is very much decisive for the very structure of the work since spatial and temporal organization of art are challenged in new media art case. Namely, space and time dynamics in art were challenged by conceptual art practices at first. Specifically, the very understanding of space for art or artistic space was challenged in terms of de-institutionalization of art. As Graham and Cook put it, "artists who were working with these new methods and methodologies were not just adopting a style of working, but an entirely new process. The process involved getting art out of the gallery as much as getting it out of the system, or the commercial model of art making."²⁰² Following similar line of thought, new media art presents new models of spatial design; so, new models for spatial organization based on conditioning of the work. Obviously, it does not necessarily take its point of departure from a radical stance; but, the conditioning of new media art is in a radical tone since it carries on de-institutionalized artistic practices by its very nature. New media works of art that employ digital technologies as a tool or medium could be possibly out of engagement with museums and galleries due to several factors in relation to nature of the works.

²⁰¹ Christiane Paul, "Contextual Networks: Data, Identity, and Collective Production," in *Context Providers: Conditions of Meaning in Media Arts*, eds. Margot Lovejoy et al., 103-123. (UK: Intellect, 2011), 103.

²⁰² Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 53.

As we mentioned in several times, it is mainly about obscurity about how to cope new digital technologies within a museum or gallery space. For sure, there are many digital art works in museums and galleries. The main problem is about ephemeral nature of digital art works since they could easily be destroyed or need to be updated for functioning for a long time.

Graham Cook's significant comments on new media art points out the fact that

...video and time-based practices cannot easily be commodified and are experienced over a duration rather than consumed static objects; the same can be said of dematerialized, system – or network- oriented artworks. Many new media art projects (though certainly not all) are not interested in the object outcome, but rather in the process, the engagement, and the interaction. They are interested in how the system becomes both the space and material of the work.²⁰³

And the system, here, comes into scene as collective system which is driven by creative acts of participants. It also reserves certain social relations and frames the contextual basis of the work. In this manner, system is a living environment in which dynamics of it form the visual composition within certain context. That is, not only digital system driven by digital technologies; but rather, it is an artistic and aesthetic system in general. In this regard, system could be taken into account from a broader perspective in this study in order to touch upon transformation of art object toward system based artistic processes. Now, in line with this argument, I will continue with exhibition strategies of such system oriented new media art.

3.3.1. Exhibition Strategies of New Media Art

Graham and Cook proposes a significant question on exhibition practices of new media art and question the spaces of new media addressing 'white cube or black box or other –is the space of Web-based art?'²⁰⁴ According to Graham and Cook, exhibition and distribution models of new media works of art are identifier

²⁰³ Ibid., 61.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 60

components of the work. And ‘how it “behaves” in space and what physical manifestation, what material form, it takes’²⁰⁵ are also formed characteristics of the work as being reflect both physical and virtual elements in relation with each other. As it was mentioned in several times, new media works of art are subjected to not only physical environment and its components, but also virtual environment. It is about characteristic of the medium that is employed in the work of art. ‘Most artists attracted to work with virtual reality as a medium want to create imaginative interactive environments where they can control all the objects or all the spatial coordinates and sound in order to achieve an aesthetic effect.’²⁰⁶ Graham and Cook, and also many other art critics, classify new media works of art as *technology-driven art projects*.²⁰⁷ With respect to this classification, exhibition practices of new media art are vary in accordance with technical and spatial necessities of the project. For sure, there are many complex needs for functioning and continuity of the project. There are possible models of exhibitions such as iterative, modular and distributed as explained in a detailed way by Graham and Cook.²⁰⁸ Since covering all artistic modes and strategies in the context of new media art is nearly impossible in this study, then I will attempt to touch upon spatial organization models of new media art in relation to institutionalized practices of mainstream contemporary art in order to narrow my subject matter and specifically concentrate on kind of survival strategies that are employed in new media art. Thus, rather than concentrating on exhibition models in a detailed way; I will question exhibition strategies of new media art in terms of new exhibition practices which are out of traditional structure of museums and galleries. At that point, exhibition practices of new media art could be named as alternative since these strategies are beyond re-interpretation or re-conceptualization of the old ones. That is to say, in order to be an alternative to previous ones, the new one needs to carry on significantly new and original strategies; so, it could offer an alternative.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Lovejoy, *Postmodern Currents: Art and Artist in the Age of Electronic Media*, 202.

²⁰⁷ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 149.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 154.

In this manner, alternativeness depends on the very structure of exhibition and nature of the work.

Almost all interviewers declare that galleries and museums in Turkey have started to welcome new media art exhibitions very recently; for sure, following Western contemporary art scene. Japan Media Arts Festival exhibition was hosted by Pera Museum, Istanbul in 2010.²⁰⁹ And Borusan Contemporary includes some new media art and video art in the collections and advertises their planning to open a new media art museum in Istanbul; but this has not been implemented yet. There is also Şekerbank ‘Açık Ekran’ (Open Screen) New Media Arts Gallery in Istanbul which is declared to be the first new media art gallery in Turkey and opened in 2011. The exhibitions, as being far from the usual, are organized concurrently with some other branches of the bank. And there are some other galleries, not so much in number, welcome new media artworks in exhibitions. They are not specifically new media art exhibition, but rather video art or media art exhibitions. And very recently in 2012, media art exhibition called ‘Neighborhood X.0’ took place at Goethe Institut Ankara. This was one of the projects of ArtUp! Internet platform and conducted by Goethe-Instituts in Ankara, Sofia and Athens.²¹⁰

Ekmel Ertan underlines that

The Istanbul art scene, or perhaps more accurately the “art market”, has developed considerably in the last years. More single new media works are part of contemporary art exhibitions. I prefer to call it art market because the arts have been left almost completely to, the private sector; the state is not a real actor in this area anymore.²¹¹

In line with Ertan’s statement, it is clear that new media art is welcomed in museums and galleries on account of market based strategies by which new media art is featured as representative of innovator institutional practices. Thus, these attempts,

²⁰⁹ For detailed information about the organization and participant artists see the <http://www.peramuzesi.org.tr/pdf/Sanatci%20Sunumlari%20-%206%20Agustos%202010.pdf>

²¹⁰ For detailed information see <http://www.goethe.de/ins/tr/lp/prj/art/aus/nr1/en10025478.htm>

²¹¹ Ekmel Ertan, “Brief History of New Media Art in Turkey,” *The Rozenberg Quarterly*, May 23, 2013, <http://rozenbergquarterly.com/?p=5101>.

rather than contributing to field of art and technology as publicizing new media art works and artists in Turkey, put greater emphasis on gallery or museum itself.

New media artists, as their choices, exhibit their new media works of art or art projects outside of formal art institutions; as such in festivals, open spaces, platforms, ateliers and even on the web. And this is not only about technical inadequacy in gallery and museum or not being willing to invest in technical infrastructure, but also it is about potentiality of greater accessibility, publicity, participation and collaboration outside of gallery and museum. Indeed, artists do not side with the idea of *framing appreciation of art*²¹², owing to control of such formal art institutions. That is, museums in particular; and private galleries in general, establish their exhibition strategies on corporate model on the grounds of long term financial planning, as similar to Di Maggio's argument.²¹³ Also, as underlined by Zolberg, functioning of museums in art worlds is carried out by patrons, donors, clients and curators.²¹⁴ And "collegiality in this case is a type of multiple leadership' promoting such interpenetration of functions that it is difficult to distinguish between administrative (managerial) and substantive (aesthetic) policy."²¹⁵ In line with the Di Maggio's and Zolberg's arguments on institutionalization practices of high culture, the new art practices and changing demands in field of arts require new organizational models and institutionalization practices since the old ones, which have been directly speak for elites, do not concede the "*triumph of the new*",²¹⁶.

²¹² The term 'framing', here, is used with reference to Di Maggio. Namely, Di Maggio underlines, high culture is institutionalized through *entrepreneurship, classification and framing*. And by framing he refers to 'the development of a new etiquette of appropriation, a new relationship between the audience and work of art.' (Paul Di Maggio, "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America (1982)," in *The Sociology of Art: A Reader*, ed. Jeremy Tanner, 178-194. (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 180.)

²¹³ Ibid., 190.

²¹⁴ Vera Zolberg, "Conflicting Visions in American Art Museums (1981)," in *The Sociology of Art: A Reader*, ed. Jeremy Tanner, 194-207. (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 195.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 195.

²¹⁶ The term 'triumph of the new' is used by Zolberg to identify transformation of museums with contemporary art practices. (Zolberg, "Conflicting Visions in American Art Museums (1981).")

Even new media art enters into museums and galleries from quota of the ‘new’ in contemporary art, the work of art could be exposed to operation of institution. As Genco Gülan, new media artist, touches upon the issue “regarding someone as new media artists is really hard because this field has difficulty in managing to production and exhibition.”²¹⁷ That is, organizing a new media art exhibition or funding such a project needs more effort and less profit. For sure, this case comes true only if new media art is not fully recognized within the field and do not adapt itself to profit making agenda of the institutions. Obviously, market driven dynamics are closely involved in exhibition and collection politics of the museums and even galleries. For Zolberg, “collecting involves the transformation of material into symbolic capital and is, therefore, a process in which museums play a pivotal role.”²¹⁸ And new media art is not still very adaptable to artistic conventions of contemporary art scene. Thus, exhibition and also distribution practices of new media art represent its intrinsic characteristics in art practices.

And Gülan continues:

There is not so much exhibition in Turkey which is particular to new media art. Nonetheless, new media art has been entered into more exhibitions; this is good indicator but new media art exhibitions on their own are few in number due to infrastructure problems. [...] All of new media works of art need maintenance since one of characteristics of new media works of art is about being lively works of art. Herein lively is really substantial concept. And all these are about record problem, and also representation and preservation; in other words, preservation methods. Thus, I –i.e., as an artist- can plan and even do it but it is not enough. These (works) need to be maintained. For instance, one of my sculptures, which could be named as video sculpture, stands in Cer Modern, Ankara. This is video sculpture but they exhibit it as taking out the plug. I did the sculpture, mounted the video camera on it, and then gave it to them as being switched on. When a man unplugs it, then the work is transforming.²¹⁹

In the light of Gülan’s statement, it could be observed that entering into museum and gallery space does not mean that new media art is fully recognized within the field of arts. Such kind of institutional attempt could be seen as innovatory since new media art works could be considered as still new within the field of arts. In such case,

²¹⁷ Interview with Genco Gülan, October, 2012.

²¹⁸ Zolberg, 204.

²¹⁹ Interview with Genco Gülan, October, 2012.

primary motive is generally not to exhibit new media art work but rather giving place to renowned artist's work. Thus, whether the work is plugged in or out during the exhibition could become negligible technical detail. This shows that new media art works in highly institutionalized exhibition areas are not as practical as they are prestigious. Accordingly, many new media art works incur intervention for the technical and spatial practicality if they are not site-specific works²²⁰.

Many new media artists, to whom I made an interview, underline that they want to be free while making an art, because nearly all of them feel control of institution and clients whilst occupied in field of design. For Yue-Ling Wong, art and design are distinguished from each other on the grounds of "their intentions, communication approaches, and the origin of the ideas."²²¹ In his account, intention in art is basically for "*aesthetic purpose and self-expression*"; design, on the other hand, addresses functional usage. And the way they communicate to audiences differ from each other as art apply poetic and contemplative way, whereas design uses clear and effective message in order to speak for clients and employers.²²² However, organizational practices of exhibition in galleries and museums are mostly carried by curators in accordance with institutional and spatial feasibilities. In this manner, art works or projects could be subjected to modification by curatorial strategies in which relationship between artist and curator is very similar to designer's relation to employer. Graham and Cook, specifically, talks about curator's key role *as a producer or project manager*²²³ in the organization of exhibition. If the basic idea of exhibition could be considered as proper combination of content and context, then the basic premise of exhibition could also be interpreted with reference to Graham

²²⁰ Although site-specific works are exhibited out of gallery and museum in order to challenge white-cube model understanding of those exhibition areas, there are site-specific art works that are few in number and envisioned in accordance with site of museum or gallery as part of artistic event or project. Detailed information on site-specificity in arts could be reached on <http://www.sitespecificart.org.uk/1.htm>

²²¹ Yue-Ling Wong, *Digital Media Primer*, 2nd ed. (USA: Pearson Education Inc., 2009), 10.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 158.

and Cook's formulation of curator's role as matching "art (content) to space and place (context)".²²⁴ In new media art exhibition, however, spatial and temporal experiences of viewers and their interactions to the work extend curatorial matters beyond physical organization. Thus, curator needs to concern about different elements which lead to continuity and operation of the work. And the quality of the process, which is directly in relation to fame of curatorial strategies, depends on modes of interaction and sort of communication that include viewer as part of the process. As organizing "sites of action"²²⁵ in white cube models art spaces, the meaning of the work is constructed through the way how viewer consumes the work. Thus, curatorial and exhibition strategies in museum and gallery space could fix frame and meaning of the work.

Unlike white cube model exhibition strategies, new media art practices aim to be organized around non-invasive environments where viewers could exert agency over how they involve in the process and construct the meaning of the work. Indeed, "outside of institutions, the crossover between curatorial and interpretational roles is much more fluid throughout the contemporary arts and is reflected in the growth of "platforms," or discursive events that evolve from group discussions."²²⁶ Herein NOMAD, TECHNE Digital Performance Platform, Amber Platform and BIS (Body-Process Arts Association) are significant examples that reflect changes in spatial organization of art and practices.

There are also many group discussions, symposium and artistic talks on the subject matter of new media art that are organized by several art and culture institutions in İstanbul. Though these institutions have not been used as exhibition places, they provide place as theoretical zone since following new advancements in art is highly prestigious itself for institution. In this way, the institution also consolidates its

²²⁴ Ibid., 154.

²²⁵ The term is used with reference to Aylish Wood (Aylish Wood , *Digital Encounters*, 143.)

²²⁶ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 161-162.

position in mainstream contemporary art worlds by employing several strategies for permanency.

With respect to all these discussion made above, exhibition strategies of new media art represent changes in production and consumption units of artistic activity. That is, production and consumption processes are highly intertwined in the case of new media art. It is not only about how new digital and communication technologies provide greater accessibility of art, but it also covers discovering the very idea of collaborative art making as structure of new media art formed by collectivity.

3.3.2. Archiving and Documentation of New Media Art Works

Archiving and documentation could be considered as most problematic issue in the context of new media art. In the same vein, there are a few new media works of art in the permanent collections of museums due to lack of capability in conserving and preserving digital works of art. In addition, new media works of art are short-lived and easily breakable because of its digital nature. Thus, attempting to provide permanency to a new media work of art is highly costly and problematic in new media art case. Also, new media art itself is marginalized within institutionalized context of arts as works of art are not easily commodified as traditional art objects. Namely,

The digital and media art forms listed above have confounded traditional museological approaches to documentation and preservation because of their ephemeral, documentary, technical and multi-part nature and because of the variability and rapid obsolescence of the media formats often used in such works. [...] Owing to lack of documentation methods, and thus access, such artworks often are not used in research and instruction. In many cases these art forms were created to contradict and bypass the traditional art world's values and resulting practices. They have been successful to the point of becoming victims of their own volatile intent.²²⁷

²²⁷ Richard Rinehart, "The Media Art Notation System: Documenting and Preserving Digital/Media Art," *Leonardo* 40, 2. (2007): 181.

As being process oriented and system based art, one of possible archiving methods of new media work of art is saving codes or software packages of the work. Since they are in a digital format, they are very predisposed to get out of order. In addition, digital work of art needs to be updated over time which means that it could be subjected to technical modification. Also, these kinds of digitally available forms necessitate proper machine and hardware in order to be functioning. As it could be imagined, it is not easy to find or preserve proper technological tool with respect to rapid transformation in the field of technology and science.

Further, digital preservation strategies are not new in the field of arts; and they also provide access to new media works of art as Almeida mentions in her article.²²⁸ In her examination, she also underlines the fact that new media works of art are considered as creative objects rather than work of art in traditional sense, since employment of technology and digital media shift exhibition paradigm on account of interpretation of display rather than just observing or viewing work of art within passivized environment. Herein, introducing new media art in traditional museum and gallery setting is a bit problematic because experiencing it and interpreting the work of art in this way is an artwork itself and it is vary at the individual level and not in a preservable form. Namely, archiving practices in new media art include documentation of the work of art which is just elected moment of interactive dialogue among viewers and work of art. In this case, documentation of the works could be also considered as a new art work in itself since it is not the initial work as it subjected to editing and technical modification. Thus, archiving practices could be taken into account as re-contextualization of initial work which historicizes interactive moment of the work for recognition and legibility. It means that archiving and documentation practices in the context of new media art are combined practices in one way, but do not preserve the work itself. However, digital preservation strategies such as preserving code or data of the work are short-lived, but that is what sold as a work as well.

²²⁸ Nora Almeida, "Dismantling the Monolith: Post-Media Art and the Culture of Instability," *Art Documentation: Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America* 31, 1. (spring 2012): 5.

The significant point of discussion, here, is about the fact that lack of documentation or archiving practices means lack of access. In this manner, new media artists need to employ several strategies in order to provide continuity for artistic reputation. As Becker also touches upon in his significant study *Art Worlds* that artist needs gain recognition within art worlds for legitimation. That is, one of the ways of gaining recognition within art worlds could be made possible by valuation of his/her name or the works of art. Thus, archiving and documentation practices are not only significantly important for museum or gallery while comprising their collections; but also they are significantly important for artist as s/he gain recognition as well as artistic status in terms of publicity. And publicity provides continuity, recognition, status which is directly linked to artistic valuation in art worlds. Marketing of name is as critical as marketing of work of art in art worlds, then artist needs to be accessible in order to be knowable. In this manner, artistic portfolio of an artist could be considered as an identity card in art worlds. Besides, it is indicator of artist's productivity in art worlds. The portfolio, as a kind of written proof of artistic productivity, is much more important for non-commodified art forms since they are not collectible items which could be valorized over time. That is to say, archiving and documentation practices in the context of new media art are beyond the understanding of collections and could be seen as significant investment for the future though they are not work of art itself but the only proof in the records of art history. Herein, archiving and documentation practices could be seen as historically important in terms of being registered and approved. In this manner, though these works could be considered as lather works by its very nature, archiving and documentation practices relieve them from oblivion when they maintain short-term availability and access.

As it aforementioned that archiving and documentation of new media works of art are not as effectual and long-term as in the case of traditional art objects. Though it is not the original object that is archived or documented, the original work of art is only available within particular time and space which could not be renewable. In its particularity, even if the interactive performance is organized at the second time, it

would not be same with the first one. Thus, what is archiving or documenting in the context of new media art is not the original art object but rather representation of the artistic idea and its materialization in space.

Rinehart proposes the very idea of *formal notation system*²²⁹ in order to contribute discussions on preservation and archiving matters in the context of media arts in general. For Rinehart, formal notation system is, basically, an expression of conceptual model and reflects the nature of art. And conceptual model ease access to media works by means of preserving strategies. It could be seen as significant in his investigation that formal notation system intends to include all parameters which take part in whole process of completion.²³⁰ He clearly declares that

It must be able to describe the artwork not just as an object or collection of objects, but also as an event or activity (or any combination of these). It must accommodate not just the declaration and location of files and objects, but also the explicit declaration of behaviors, variables and contingencies.²³¹

Selin Özçelik and Nagehan Kuralı, who mainly work on interactive new media art and design works, discuss issue of archiving and documentation during the interview. Özçelik touches upon the difficulties; the tool, which you use in documentation, has limits. And (interactive) works are inexpressible since you need to experience it. In the same vein, Nagehan Kuralı underlines that the film need to be mounted very well in order to narrate that experience as so re-experience it. That is to say, it is not filming people. For sure, it is a film in a normal sense but it is documentation of the works all by itself. Also, they talked about their experiences about ‘Is Uncle Adnan a Cyborg?’ installation which was realized for Amber Art and Technology Festival in 2009. This was an interactive installation and initially located in Taksim; and then travelled different districts of the city. Özçelik and Kuralı talked about documentation of such an interactive installation by emphasizing how significant

²²⁹ The term is used by Rinehart.

²³⁰ Rinehart, 183.

²³¹ Rinehart, 183.

was the story of whole process. Thus, they complained about incompleteness of the documentation. Osman Koç, also, complains about the matter;

One of the reasons of non-formation of new media art market is directly in connection with archiving and documentation problems which also refer to non-collectable works of art. This is also in relation to the fact that such works could not give guarantee of operation or have product guarantee.²³²

Graham and Cook mentioned that all these characteristics of new media art do not mean that new media art does not sell. Rather, it is an emphasis on the fact that new media art does not sell as easily commodified and objectified art object in the global economy. With respect to all these discussions that made above in relation to new media works of art, it is documentation of the new media art works that are commonly sold in the art market. And as it was touched upon, documentation of the work is not the original work itself but rather a new art work in itself.

Graham and Cook specifically assert that many commercial galleries and museums include video art works in their permanent collections and also they are artistic goods that could be easily bought and sold.²³³ For new media work of art, however, it is not well accepted in the market, yet. As Bager Akbay, new media artist, states that “if you do not make conceptual art, then you need to say that these works are not different from theatrical performance; in other words, they are momentary. Thus, you could not archive; i.e. could not place in a museum.”²³⁴

Among the interviewers, only Burak Arıkan’s new media work of art is exhibited in permanent collection of a museum, Borusan Contemporary. And Arıkan talks about exhibition process and involvement in the collection:

They organize an exhibition and commissioned me for the exhibition. Borusan, in general, tries to collect techno cultural products or new media focused works. That is, they show an interest in today’s technologically produced works. Video art was another way of addressing new media art at one time but this was not really important. Namely, that kinds of naming, labeling just ease communication and are not about intellectual

²³² Interview with Osman Koç, October, 2012.

²³³ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 202.

²³⁴ Interview with Bager Akbay, October, 2012.

profundity. Thus, you need to steep yourself in the subject matter. Borusan shows an interest in that period and call me to commission. In a word, we made the works and then this became a collection.²³⁵

And getting involved in the collection is significantly important due to the fact that “once in collections, new media art can then benefit from the deeper exploration and historicization of new media art work in general”²³⁶ This argument affirms the very idea of collection as it is selection of works of art which is or potentially will be masterpieces and representatives in their own context. Obviously, collection is based on the criteria which adhere to corporate identity of the institutions and their art agenda. Herein, institution based dynamics are in the foreground that only if returns of symbolic and economic profits could be guaranteed, then the work is selected to permanent collection. Institutional strategies are notably different for permanent exhibition and temporary exhibition. Permanent exhibition directly refers to collection of the museum. Organization of temporary exhibition, however, is periodic so that strategically more dependent on artistic and cultural concerns of its day. This, of course, is one of capitalism’s maladies. While permanent exhibitions, i.e. collections, are based on long term financial planning; temporary exhibitions depend on the very idea of employing institutional strategies as for securing its position within the field. In this manner, following Western contemporary art scene and changes within the field is one of celebrated strategies. What seems confusing, here, is about advancing new media art in contemporary art scene in Turkey. And the one of reason as also stated by Gülan is about difficulties in managing exhibition, and the other one is about highly problematic archiving and documentation practices which could be well-suited to characteristics of the works.

In relation to the issue, Graham and Cook propose that “what appears to have worked well for introducing new media art to collections has been starting a collection via a broad approach to documentation, including self-documentation, and in

²³⁵ Interview with Burak Arıkan, October, 2012.

²³⁶ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 210.

commissioning artworks that are then collected.”²³⁷ In line with this statement, that is to say, museums and galleries should sacrifice institutional interests in order to support maintenance of new media art. It seems that it will not happen in the near future since privatized field of art demand commercially viable art forms. In this manner, new media art could potentially stay in non-commercialized field of art and object-based art worlds.

3.3.3. New Media Art in White Cube and Beyond

‘New media art is deeply interwoven into our information society-the network structures and collaborative models that are creating new forms of cultural production and autonomy and profound shape today’s cultural climate- it will always transcend the boundaries of the museum and gallery and create new spaces for art.’²³⁸

As it was mentioned in several times, new media art challenge white cube model modern exhibition spaces by its very nature and organizational practices. And to be able to touch upon new media art’s challenge in this context, I will discuss the very structure of white cube first.

White cube model gallery and museum do not specify exhibition spaces with white painted walls. Rather, white cube model is used as being specifically address white cube model understanding in art spaces. Clearly, architectural design of gallery space and interior design specifically put a distance between viewer and work of art either symbolically or physically. Spatial organization still could be considered as decorative in one way; however, this organization is strictly depend on ‘please, don’t touch’ account of gallery and museum. For sure, there are many interactive art works in galleries and museums but interactive moment is taken place in accordance with demands and rules of gallery and museum. Herein curator is the key person who organizes exhibition and specifies exhibition strategies. In this manner, curator could

²³⁷ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 211.

²³⁸ Christiane Paul, ed., *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond: Curatorial Models for Digital Art* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2008), 2.

be seen as mediator person who also mediate dialogue among viewer and work of art. Though these organization practices are seen as so obvious, these are generally performed without being noticed in order to lessen strain of spatial construct.

And the engagement with the work of in a white cube model gallery space generally specify concentrated and educated gaze on symbolically worthy works which could provide status acquisition both for gallery owner and artist; and also viewer. That is, white cube model understanding within art worlds clearly specify who could come in what ways. These are socializing areas, kind of meeting places that directly speak to particular community, thereby viewer's relation to gallery or museum space is beyond artistic and aesthetic interests. For sure, white cube model gallery or museum space does not specifically address elitist values; however, elitist tastes are prioritized in terms of organization practices. Indeed, these spaces are characterized by and for sociability. In other words, white cube model art spaces as museums and galleries are socializing environments and should be thought in the light of the fact that they are historical constructs as also underlined by O Doherty.²³⁹ Namely, these spaces produce and mediate high culture. Artistic and cultural consumption practices in these art spaces are status based and constructed upon the idea of competence. And once the work of art enters into white cube, it refers to the fact that it is 'art'.²⁴⁰ As also underlined by O Doherty, white cube model art spaces, -i.e. galleries- have closed value systems, laws by which objects are sanctified and gain status as work of art in there.²⁴¹ Then, these particular works, which are valued as work of art, bestow prestige to viewers, i.e. consumers. And the communication in gallery and museum space is organized around tastes and styles as Bourdieu asserts.²⁴² Art museums and galleries are specialized on particular artistic matters so that each artistic event organized in accordance with focused area of the institution. In this manner, they

²³⁹ O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

²⁴² Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production."

appeal to certain groups of people and fulfill their expectations on the grounds of dealer and client relation.

New media art is far beyond white cube model understanding and organization of art. For Paul, “new media art seems to call for a “ubiquitous museum” or “museum without walls,” a parallel, distributed, living information space that is open to artistic interface-a space for exchange, collaborative creation, and presentation that is transparent and flexible.”²⁴³ White cube model exhibition spaces pose an obstacle to viewer’s engagement to the art work or project. These exhibition spaces as taking advantages of ghettoization of art have control and power over structuring of the exhibition. Organizational practices of exhibition directly address consumption motives of viewers who are galere themselves. As Arıkan talks about gallery system:

When you made the work, you do not make it for the public. The public is not the issue any more; today, there are completely networks. Network is daisy chain of people and systems; and their interrelation among each other. Thus, when you present a work in the gallery, you construct network of the institution at first. And the extended network of it could be thought as your friends, and then their friends.²⁴⁴

In this manner, evolvement of the process is shaped through homogenous responses of the viewers. Thus, it is not possible to talk about variety in responses which could diversify the process. New media work of art, however, requires larger public in order to further the process in multi-vocal tone.

For sure, organizing an exhibition in a gallery is highly prestigious itself. However, as it could be seen clearly that new media work of art, by its very nature, could not be adapted white cube model exhibition spaces. On the one hand, exhibition process of new media art proposes practical challenges; on the other hand, process-based structuring of artistic practices do not well-matched with consumption based organization of white cube models. Thus, new media art construct spaces for

²⁴³ Christiane Paul, “Challenges for a Ubiquitous Museum: Presenting and Preserving New Media,” n.d.

²⁴⁴ Interview with Burak Arıkan, October, 2012.

exhibition beyond the White Cube. And the several strategies that are employed by artist and organizational practices could provide continuity and publicity for new media art. That is, new media art practice potentially expands the understanding of spaces of art which could not be ignored by institutions, but also could not be welcomed anyhow.

3.3.4. Festivals

As new media art is not welcomed in gallery or museum spaces insomuch as providing recognition for itself, then festivals step in public distribution of new media art. Festivals, notably in the context of new media art, are significant agents that carry out public distribution of art and art works. Though there are many other options for distribution of art practices in the context of new media art, festivals are probably seen as most recognizable and prestigious ones since internet distribution still is not taken seriously in the context of art. Indeed, internet or web based distribution is highly accessible and cheap as compared with other ways. Expressly, in Turkey, internet and web are not favored mediums for '*serious art*²⁴⁵'. That is to say, internet or web is employed in production and distribution practices much more appealingly beside exhibition practices which use internet and web peculiarly initial channel. There are many new media works of art, art projects themselves are about modes of online participation on the web or internet; and primarily exhibited in the museum or gallery space. After then online distribution channels are used in order to provide access to work even it is not the original one itself but the documentation of it.

Apart from online distribution channels, new media art has acquired publicity and mobility mainly by means of festivals. These festivals are mostly organized concerning cooperation among science, technology and art. Festivals are also

²⁴⁵ The term is taken from Theodor W. Adorno.

significant in the context of new media art since initial purpose is dealing with ongoing process rather than finished art object. Unlike any other art festival, new media art festivals “have a shorter run, which is more conducive to complicated technological setups; and they allow for a fluid and interactive process, including the presentation of prototypes or work still under production rather than just distribution of the finished product.”²⁴⁶ In this manner, festivals could also be seen as research areas where viewers or participants have chance to actively take part in the process and can negotiate for the meaning and the course of the project. Besides, workshops and labs, which organized throughout festival, facilitate publicity of transparent production process. And this could be considered as one further step for resolution of boundaries between work of art and viewer as giving viewer chance to be involved in whole process. As distinct from the idea of exhibition in a gallery or museum space, festivals comprise of non-commercial dynamics. That is, rather than centering upon consumption practices, production practices are in the foreground. This enables viewer to explore uncertainty of art making by which potential of the idea of creativity could be discovered.

Also, these workshop and labs bring artists from several disciplines together and further collaborative art making in a multi-vocal environment. In this manner, new media art as being compose of research based and ever-evolving art practices find chance for further developments in the field of new media art. These festivals are also significantly important both in international and local art context as Graham and Cook put emphasis on the issue that “these international events-temporary, often site specific, well attended, and seen to influence the curatorial selection of works for museum exhibitions for years to come-have specific histories. They are on the one hand global in scope and on the other intensely local in impact.”²⁴⁷

And the amberFestival, which is considerably significant event for the field of technology and art in Turkey, has been organized annually since 2007, in Istanbul.

²⁴⁶ Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 224.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 216.

The festival was started by BIS aiming to contribute to art and technology scene in Turkey and open up a new space for young generation artists for their recognition in both local and international artistic field.²⁴⁸ And the objectives of the festival as declared by Ertan:

To promote research and production in new forms of artistic expression that exploit new technologies ; provide visibility to artworks and young artists working in the field of art and technology; present international artworks to young artists and the general Turkish public; bring critical topics in art and technology to public attention; improve young artists' perception of technology by encouraging active and creative use of it; create a new international art and technology network between East and West.²⁴⁹

Again with reference to Ertan's study; "218 artists and researchers have presented their work; Stelarc, Bill Vorn, Marcel.li Antunez Roca, Mladen Dolar, Robert Pfaller among them. Over 149 installations were exhibited, 26 workshops, 18 performances, 14 lectures, more than 100 paper presentation and talk and 53 artist presentations were realized"²⁵⁰ since the beginning of the festival. This shows that amberFestival has been highly productive in new media art scene. As also underlined by Ertan,"for most young artists it is the first international presentation of their work and a great opportunity for networking."²⁵¹In such a noncommercial environment, artistic motives come into prominence and production process is held in collaboration. Thus, festivals are spaces for collaborative modes of art making.

These festivals are mostly organized around volunteerism and try to provide its continuity by virtue of being commissioned by corporate entities or EU culture frame projects or sponsorship. Besides, there are financial and technical supports on a local scale. Technological devices and equipment could also be borrowed, purchased or commissioned since they are really expensive and not affordable for this kind of non-commercial organization.

²⁴⁸ Interview with Ekmel Ertan, October, 2012.

²⁴⁹ Ekmel Ertan, "Brief History of New Media Art."

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

It is significantly important in the context of new media art and its festivals that these events are not motivated through market driven acquisitions, rather, these festivals are organized on account of skill sharing, research development and collaborative art making. And ‘the economic valuing of art inherent to the international art fairs’ become inoperative in the context of the festival since affairs of the festival propose “a direct challenge to the idea of commodifiable art object.”²⁵²

3.4. Conclusion

After putting emphasis on hybrid constitution of new media art form in the first chapter, I tried to investigate new media art practices as developing questions through the idea of collaboration in new media art and research-led new media art practices. Then, I examined spatial organization of new media art assuming that collaborative nature of new media art could lead to new spatial strategies within exhibitions and festivals. Archiving and documentation practices were also incorporated into study considering questions raised about challenges of process-oriented nature of new media art works within art practices. Archiving and documentation within new media art seemed the most problematic issues as they first and foremost challenge conventional preservation and distribution practices.

Firstly, I questioned how the idea of collaboration integrated into new media art making in the first part. This part showed that idea of collaboration in new media art practices is directly related to hybrid constitution of the form. Besides, based upon the idea of art making by using technologies of its day there could be need for specialized assistance in different processes. Employment of new and advanced technologies with a kind of technological curiosity and experiencing them and also make them being experienced within kind of scientific and technological experimentation call for collaboration. On the basis of the idea of learning by

²⁵² Berly Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*, 217.

playing, artists mostly employ interactive technologies within their works and utilize from research-led practices that I examined.

It was also examined that research-led and collaborative nature of new media art practices enable contextually more flexible and technically more complex works and projects. Discussion on new media art practices showed that idea of innovation and experimentation in art; and collaborative research-led practices are supported each other in the context of new media art.

Significance of the idea of collaboration in new media art seemed to be related to viewer's involvement within the process which made her/him as also one of collaborator within the work. For sure, collaboration is not always so much effectual for viewers but many work and projects –especially interactive ones- enable viewer's active involvement within the process.

Then, it was observed that collaborative and research-led new media art practices lead to reconfiguration in conventional art practices and challenge institutionalized art practices. That is, new media art practices are organized in hybrid zones where collaboration in art making and conducting research, and even making artistic and technological experiments are possible. Accordingly, rather than galleries and museums, art labs and art and technology festivals become important art spaces. And those areas enable both collaborative art making and discursive negotiation of meaning among collaborators. In this sense, artistic worth and aesthetic value of the works and projects seem to be collaboratively constructed during the research as artist/s establish interpretative framework for meaning construction via practicing. Herein artistic worth and aesthetic value are inherent to research process itself that contextual interpretations and meaning of the work could evolve up to it takes final form. As it was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, narration in the context of new media art is potentially temporary and fragmented when the work is collaborative by its very nature. Also, narration and meaning of the work are closely connected to collaborators' experiential relation to space; so, spatial experience that is offered by labs and festivals has significant role in negotiation process. Spatial

practices and configurations are thus significant for the discussion since valorization of spatiality in the context of new media art derives from relational and social characteristics of production and exhibition processes. As experiential involvement to the process and diversity of lived experience refer to dynamism both in creative process and space, how interactive and participatory acts and performances establish state of affairs within the process was examined considering spatial configurations in the context of new media art. In this manner, how the very idea of ‘gallery and museum as spaces of art’ is challenged by means of production and exhibition practices of new media art were incorporated into the study. And the festival was included since it enables getting out of the gallery and museum system as organizing around voluntarism, collaboration and funding, aiming publicity and permanence rather than sale within art worlds; and procures public distribution of new media art.

More specifically, in the second part of this chapter, I examined that structures of museums and galleries are challenged by new media art works and projects specifically in two respects. Firstly, new media art works and projects are generally process-oriented and technology driven. Thus, these works are technically complex and almost all galleries and museums do not have convenient technical infrastructure to host new media art works and projects. Secondly, many new media art works and projects are collaborative by their very nature that galleries and museums as privatized art spaces restrain collaborators from going beyond spatial criterion. For the works, however, experiential way of interaction is well accepted in most of the time. That is, most of interactive works are designed and placed in a way to enable serendipitous relationing. This could also be considered as ideational challenge to galleries and museums on account of accessibility and institutional recognition because viewer’s experience of gallery or museum depends on cultural codes that are tied to spatial use. While traditional museum and gallery cultures are more consumption based, new media art spaces are much more production based. Thus, exhibition practices of new media art are mainly carried out outside of institutionalized artistic settings where intertwined practices could function with greater flexibility.

In addition to production; exhibition; and distribution practices, archiving and documentation practices of new media work of art (by its site specific nature) was incorporated into study since archiving and documentation practices of such dematerialized and process-oriented new media work of art challenges market based strategies on account of the very idea of collection and value of subsistence use. For the maintenance of the works, new preservation strategies are required in the context of new media art. Archiving and documentation are taken into account as almost a burden on the basis of market integration of new media art.

In a nutshell, via organizational practices of new media art, it was observed that new media art results in a rupture and calls for rethinking on conditioning of art and functioning mechanisms of art worlds.

It was also understood that style of the work and project could be an important criteria for art world's status. In this study, it was clearly observed that it is also very decisive for sectoral recognition of commercialized artistic works and projects. Many of artists make their livings by working in design sector or providing technical assistance to corporate companies or making industrial and commercial products depending on their education and professionalization. Thus, there could be found many similarities between their art making practices and professionalization practices.

In this chapter, I tried to investigate Istanbul centered practical account of new media art. I could talk about different organizational models beyond formation of new media art scene in Turkey. And above examined new media art practices are more than about new media art as they depict dynamics of collaboration among different actors and participation within network driven practices. Thus, this examination should be thought on the ground of formation of art. Focusing on dynamics of collaboration in the formation of such art form, it is observed that art is social process which is driven by relations that governs it. Following that, practices that give shape the art form include kinds of procedures as for legitimation within practicing zone. That is to say, new media art practices, although many of non-

conventional ways of organization distinguish them from conventional ways of art making, need to function at the legitimate level within art worlds. For sure, this is not a requirement but rather kind of ways of showing artistic relevancy by means of adaptation of legitimate ones.

Moreover, the above mentioned spatial organization practices could be seen as more diverse in new media art as compared to conventional ones. However, as the new media art practices gain more recognition within art worlds, they become likely to be integrated into existing structures. That is, it is difficult to draw a kind of separate line between conventional and non-conventional art practices since being legitimized within the field require certain level of validity. Although above made discussions on new media art practices are very likely to be understood as operating autonomously, such kind of consideration is more about its sort of artistic newness and technical complexity rather than attempts for seeking autonomy. To put it differently, artists seek autonomy as well as they seek legitimation. New media art practices, in this sense, are formed by such contradictory attempts. On the one hand, working on innovative and original works and projects is seen as kind of attempt to lead in autonomous practicing spheres. On the other hand, operation of innovative and research based set of art practices is seen as adaptation of market logic within these practices. Such contradictory organizational structures lead to formation of new relations which could define conditions of meaning of the work or project. That is to say, depending on organizational practices, the meaning of the work or project changes as the same work could be identified as art work or project whereas it could also be identified as commercial and design work and project in the different context. Herein, context should be taken into account as frame of the organization practices.

By observing how new media art practices are organized, art needs to be interpreted as a process whereby relations and relationings are formed. That is to say, art is made out of social processes and should be thought as being emerged from interaction between existing structures and people. To put it differently, social formations enable art practices as it could be observed within structuring of new media art practices. More specifically, I could assert that the work or project is named as new media art

work and project during the process. And the process, herein, covers both conditioning and functioning of the work or project. It was also observed throughout above made discussions that many of interviewers –almost all of them- even do not name themselves or their works and projects as new media artists and art works, they are recognized within new media art scene in Turkey. One of reason for such contradictory situation could be related to validity of new media art as a name within institutionalized settings. Many of them even do not care about naming when primary motive is art making. However, naming becomes important to be able to function and position within institutionalized art settings. Thus, as it was observed, naming could change for the same work based on premises of distribution channel. It also shows that naming for artist and work could be beyond artist's preference.

By considering hybrid characteristic of works and projects, again, artistic meaning of the works and projects articulate themselves within the process by dint of relations that govern them. To put it differently, conditions of publicity of the work or project as new media art are not given but rather formed during the process via relations among artists, collaborators, viewers, institutions and networks. This conditioning process is thus relational.

CHAPTER 4

NEW MEDIA AESTHETIC

Considering hybridity in new media art, I tried to examine how art form and artistic practices have been changing. Herein, one another component of the study, that is aesthetics, will be incorporated into the examination by asking: Does reception of the work change along with changes in creation and dissemination processes in the context of new media art. Following this line of questioning, I also would like to ask in this chapter: What kinds of aesthetic experience do new media art works and projects offer in relation to process-oriented and interactive natures? As it was examined in previous chapters, new media art practices are collaborative in their nature. And works and projects are open to viewer's involvement and even manipulation. In this way, not only ways of art making but also ways of experiencing the work has also changed. Accordingly, motives; and dynamics of artistic and aesthetic appreciation and valuation seem to be changed. In this line of thought, one another question that will be asked: Do usage of new and advanced technologies affect viewer's way of experiencing the work? And this question will lead to other questions: In what ways are different components of the work aestheticized? How is the idea of creativity shared among participant agents of the work? Does employment of new technologies contribute to the idea of originality? How interaction between field of art and science; and art and technology affect valorization mechanisms within field of art in particular? Following this line of questioning, I will ask: How does relationality in new media art offer new aesthetic models? Applying those questions within the study, I aim to put emphasis on the ways that aesthetic principles have challenged by new media art works and projects in this chapter.

Changes in the form could be related with changes in the aesthetics since aesthetic valuation in art is mainly object-based even art work is process-based in itself. That is to say, the idea of aesthetic valuation is commonly constructed upon materiality of art object. New media art work and project, however, challenge object-based aesthetic appreciation and proposes new aesthetic inquiry considering dynamics of the work via its dematerialized nature. For sure, this is not a new aesthetic discourse that directly appeals to new media art works and projects. Rather, it is a more comprehensive aesthetic model which includes dynamics of hybridity in the discussion. And those dynamics mainly refer to the way of intersecting art, knowledge, technology and relational constitution of the works and projects. So, aesthetic examination of such hybrid new media art works and projects could include adaptation of science and technology to art as visual forms, in one respect. And the other way could be based on technologically mediated operation of the work. Those works are generally considered as technology worthy rather than art worthy as technology arouses curiosity more than art in that era of information technologies. In the similar way, Kuralı and Özçelik, mainly concentrate on interaction design in their works underlining the very attractiveness of technology which moves ahead of artistic and aesthetic features of the works. For Özçelik, the first step of the artistic work is content; and the form is shaped or rendered comprehensible with content. By this, she tries to touch upon that technology or tool that is employed in the work are not the work itself. Rather they try to give utterance to their initial concern by utilizing from technological tools and digital mediums. So, what artist primarily puts emphasis on in her/his work is the content of it in which s/he collates artistic and technological curiosities and frames them. In this sense, artist intends to establish a relationship between conceptual and technical understanding of the work as they complete each other toward aesthetic experience. However, as Özçelik complains, “technology is such amazing thing that people do not jump over the phase of narrative (story) while dealing with it.”²⁵³ That is, when technological tool and especially the machine come into the forefront, for the very reason of technological

²⁵³ Interview with Selin Özçelik, October, 2012.

and technical concerns, content is slighted. In this manner, narrative of the work of art is relocated by experimentation within the process in which intriguing technical details could conceal contextual details. Even employment of technology or technological application in the work or project is not as complex as expected; there is still expectation for being surprised by technology as occurred throughout Kuralı and Özçelik's project *Postponed*²⁵⁴. [See Photo 13,14 in Appendix A] That project, interactive installation and realized as part of Shamba Event, motivated by the idea of seasonal cycle of life. The installation, in simple terms, is being composed of a wooden pen, a calendar out of paper and a cheery tree. This cherry tree was in the garden and it was covered with a half transparent screen. In this manner, viewers could see both the cheery tree itself and digital animation of the tree at the curtain. As viewers changes the pages of the calendar or mark any date on it, that was commonly date of birthday, reflected image of the tree went to that date. Kuralı states for the project; "as if you display this via seasonal cycle of life of the tree and your birthday and what people need to be busy with are just a calendar, paper and a pen."²⁵⁵ And Kuralı continued her speech via viewers' reactions and interactive relations. With reference to Kuralı, although they hide the camera system, people interact with the work in the expectation that there was a camera system and it records them. "Many of them think that there was a camera at the peak of the pen. And many others click to the calendar. [...] Whereas they are so familiar and known things as paper and pen; there is not any other thing."²⁵⁶ Technology, in the context of new media art, seems as challenging due to the fact that increasing adaptation to technology and its rapid development make technology today's one of objects of curiosity. Thus, viewers could head towards technology or digital applications rather than artistic or aesthetic representations of the work as it could be observed in Kuralı and Özçelik's instance *Postponed*. It is also about familiarity of viewers' relationship

²⁵⁴ Detailed information about the project and photography documentations could be reached on <http://design-insitu.com/912791>

²⁵⁵ Interview with Nagehan Kuralı, October, 2012.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

to technology that could change the very effect of technology employed works and projects. It seems that there is close connection with the idea of play and interacting with technological tool. Technological tools have integrated so much into viewer's daily life that s/he experiences the work with a kind of technical curiosity by which s/he intends to experience possibilities of the tool and being surprised by them. The role of technology, in that sense, turns into mediating between the work and viewer while technology was one of constituents in itself. In this manner, viewer's interest can be both technological and artistic at the same time as far as experiencing the 'new' and the 'original' one is concerned. While the viewer is making sense of the new media art work, which can also be identified as an artistic project, experiencing the technology like solving technological puzzle can come into the forefront and may remove the attention from the very idea of artistic and aesthetic gaze. That is to say, technology attracts attention as an amazing tool for viewers such that viewers could just deal with the technological construct rather than fussing about aesthetic and artistic claims.

4.1. Aesthetic Experience Concerning New Media Art

Attractiveness of technology and its reflection to the process was examined briefly above. Now, I try to understand sort of aesthetic experience that is offered to viewers/participants in the matter of new media art. For this, I will utilize from interviews and specific new media art experiences, again, in order to grasp how medium itself contributes to the appreciation of the work. Technology itself and digital medium, as aforementioned, could manipulate experiencing of the work. That is, it is technological medium rather than artistic medium that makes sense. And the sensation, which is basis of relation between viewer and the work, needs to be considered in the light of historical and cultural formations. By using Postponed, again, some viewers interact with the calendar as clicking on it due to familiarity within touch-operated tools. This has close connection with the Gere's examination

about today's culture as being marked by *digitality*.²⁵⁷ For him, artistic practices and art itself have been digitalized since personal computers have become popular. Thus, viewer's expectation on the basis of the very usage of technological medium is not surprising. However, whether technology in use makes sense for viewer or not depends on either viewer's interest or accessibility to it. And the work is an art work in the long run. Thus, artist needs to make technology in use operational in order to enable functioning of the work which then could invite viewer for an aesthetic experience. For this, Dilbaz talks about their one of strategy for making technology in use works effective:

Sometimes you express it in plain language and sometimes with the difficult ones. For instance, our testers in our works are either my father or my friend's mother. My father does not involve in technology.(...) He encounters with it for the first time because he does not use it. It is better as zero knowledge. In this way, he follows up the work more excitingly; and you can learn how you could advance your next work while observing his experience.²⁵⁸

It could be seen that viewer's interaction with the work is primary condition for aesthetic experience. Namely, aesthetics have been related to sense of perception in simple terms. Aesthetic discourse of new media art is as flexible and dynamic as new media art work itself. Obviously, changes from object-oriented art works towards process-oriented ones have also effects on aesthetic experience. In this manner, aesthetic experience is more about the process rather than the object itself; so, the gaze is not at the center when it is more than about seeing. Experiencing and appreciating such process-oriented and hybrid new media art work with aesthetic concerns could be seen as futile attempt as aestheticization of such a work is also potentially dynamic in itself. It seems that aestheticization is also in a constant state of flux as work itself. Thus, there is a need for new aesthetic language and realm for new media art.

²⁵⁷ Gere, *Digital Culture*.

²⁵⁸ Interview with Erdem Dilbaz, October, 2012.

When technology is in use so much so that creativity seems to be shared between artist and machine, advanced technological application. As it is, then the idea of aesthetic and artistic conventions that have been clichéd within artistic discourse need to be re-thought re-interpreted and re-contextualized. That is, intersection of art, knowledge and technology within the constitution of hybrid new media art form potentially opens up a new path to discover new artistic expressions. As the way of experiencing the art is changed, aesthetic appropriation of the work is also changed. George Dickie, for instance, basically builds his analyses on interrelation between experience of art and changes in aesthetics and underlines that aesthetic appreciation is about finding what you experiencing is worthy and valuable.²⁵⁹ Obviously, this kind of value affirmation in a classificatory sense is recognized within institutionalized artistic discourses. As Zolberg²⁶⁰ and Di Maggio²⁶¹ examines in their studies on institutionalization of art, it is art object that achieves artistic status and aesthetic value. Thus, when such a process oriented art practice is at stake, as in new media art, aesthetic and artistic valuation is evaluated considering the whole process as performing in its own right.

By using Özçelik and Kuralı's Playface Interacult [See Photo15 in Appendix A] interactive installation, which was performed at Museums Quartier Vienna in April 2011, how aesthetic appropriation of the work is being composed of different dynamics could be investigated. The event was organized as collaborative exhibition of Amber Platform and Interface Culture Lab (Linz). Özçelik and Kuralı were participated in that residency program under the name of In Situ. And with their own words:

For this exhibition we developed Soundedge concept as a project we combine architecture, light and sound via interaction. The visitors encounter a microphone and a light stripe on the wall. The microphone invite them to interact, although it is not

²⁵⁹ George Dickie, *Introduction to Aesthetics: An Analytic Approach* (New York, Oxford: Oxford Universit Press, 1997), 84.

²⁶⁰ Zolberg, "Conflicting Visions in American Art Museums (1981)."

²⁶¹ Di Maggio, "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America (1982)."

connected to the loud speakers. With the visitors' involvement the line on the edge of two walls starts to gain a characteristic of their sounds. The sound produces more colors and more forms as long as the interaction continues. The line turns into a generative colorful collage which is controlled by the sound.²⁶²

Soundedge with its dynamic and process-oriented nature runs on with viewer's interaction. As it aforementioned, work is in progress and the project proceeds with voices and their digitally visualized forms on the walls. As it could be imagined, the installation extends the idea of aestheticization beyond one directional and object-oriented understanding. Conditioning and contextual references of the work are not dependent on any aesthetic principle; rather they have close connection with shared information among viewers and its adaptation to multi-directional, flowing system of exhibition. Organization of exhibition space has also place in aesthetic experience as degree of viewer's interaction and engagement are motivated with spatial factors. Spatial organization, in this sense, is crucial since it carries out dynamism of the project.

In Soundedge, how to handle aestheticization of digital representation of the sound is related to contextual dynamics and characteristics of that kind of performance. The meaning of the work is constructed through interconnectedness of several dynamics in such a hybrid form of art. All those elements, which are combined via interaction in that installation, are part of aesthetic discussion. Besides, structuring of the project integrates artistic and technological forms to collective experiment. And viewers make sense of works and projects via their experiential and experimental modes of relating. In this manner, viewer's own relation to work goes beyond individual experience and contributes to collective experience of the work. The meaning of the work, in this case, is constructed as much more dependent on collective experience since this is all about functioning and epitome of the process.

²⁶² Design in Situ, Projects Page, <http://design-insitu.com/2494517> (accessed on June 12, 2013).

4.1.1. Could It Aestheticize the Work? : Collective Experience

With regard to its immaterial art form as process-oriented nature; it may be that meaning of new media work of art appears in contextual framework as similar to conceptual art work. Herein, the process is in question rather than mere visual representation when calling for the meaning of the work. And there is no fixed image in a process based art so that the meaning is changing and being detailed at the subject level. Thus, perception in new media art is more associated with experiencing the work or better to say involving in process in terms of direct engagement either physically or sensory. And it is dematerialization of art object that this experiencing is beyond entity of an object. In such a manner, contextual framework could be realized in the form of process by means of representation of artistic experience and this experience may grant aesthetic and artistic value of art work. By using Soundedge, again, I could argue that aestheticization of the work, it is whole process indeed, occurs with interactive or participation as such. In a more detailed ways, visual representation of the voices of viewer/participant on the wall is not the work itself because base of the work is installation itself and the idea that materialize the project as such. However, aesthetic rather than artistic appropriation of the work is actualized at interaction moment. Obviously, this could be seen as no different from any other ways of aesthetic appreciation as viewer's relation to work of art is based on various ways of interaction. In the case of such an interactive installation, however, physical interaction in addition to sensory interaction is needed for the contemplation of the work. And each interactive moment carries out its own aesthetic and artistic value that viewer's relation to the work does not only call for subjective experience; rather, it is collective; so, aesthetically worthy depending on viewer's interaction and relation with the work and each other.

More specifically, viewer's involvement within such work is not only based on her/his subjective experience. As it was mentioned above, as the interaction continues, the visual forms change. In that sense, the form is changing not only depending on viewer's interaction with the work but also viewers' interaction with

each other as it aforementioned. Besides, by reflections and melding of different sounds, imageries are constantly changing and unique visuals are formed as immediately responding to sound of each viewer's. And the work, in that sense, could be considered as visual and also sound performance which supports experimental and experiential art making that as developing collectively. Accordingly, each interaction carries out value of shared experience as viewer's relation with the work is meaningful within that context. And in each interaction aesthetic context of the work is reconfigured. Physical presence of each viewer is also part of this shared experience that each act could potentially manipulate continuation so that meaning of the work. On the other hand, viewer's aesthetic experience of work could change via one another viewer's direct involvement within process. That is, in such work, aesthetic reception is in relation to both her/his one-to-one interaction and her/his spectatorship within another viewer's interaction. The dynamism of the process, in that sense, could transcend one-sided aesthetic perception of the work. About being process-oriented and interactive art work, those works differ from aesthetic and artistic valuation processes of object-based art. As a comparison think about an art object, beyond its artistic status in art market, that art object is valorized aesthetically and artistically as regards artistic conventions of the day. That is, an art object could maintain the idea of potentially being valuable within art worlds since it is durable and finished product. New media art, on the other hand, offers momentary experience to viewers; so, generally being composed of temporal works with its ephemeral nature. And aestheticization of the work or project is realized within the process with respect to sensory stimulus that potentially effects process of affairs. We could observe how each interactive act could change the work characteristically while images, movement of the images is one of parts of the epitome of the process, have been changed in accordance with sound. Calling it as atmosphere, it is made up of all factors that are in effect during exhibition process. And the light, sound and as such factors, which could be considered as part of spatial organization, are in effect while viewer establish a relation with, interpret, interact with and experience the work. If aesthetic appropriation of such a work is dependent on the way of experiencing, then it is experience and the idea of the work that is

aesthetically valorized. To put it differently, it is still difficult to talk about aesthetically valuable new media art work. This has close connection with its process-orientedness and dematerialized nature in one respects, and the other is about its hybrid characteristics. Namely, new media art works could be identified as hybrid constitutions via intersection of art, knowledge and technology. And while talking about aesthetic designations of such hybrid forms, aestheticization of knowledge and technology need to be incorporated into the aesthetic quest matter of the study.

4.1.2. Aestheticization of Knowledge and Technology

Hybridity of new media art has been examined from the beginning of the study as being related to intersection of different spheres, which are specifically art, knowledge and technology. For art, it seems more possible to be in equation with aesthetic in comparison to knowledge and technology. In this regard, I will question how knowledge and technology are considered as aesthetically relevant in an art form. Either, the question will be asked as how knowledge acquisition and experience of technological artifacts could be part of an aesthetic experience.

For sure, art, knowledge and technology as constituents of new media art form do not separately characterize the work. Aesthetic contemplation of the work thus covers meaningful situatedness of art, knowledge and technology within the context of the work. In this sense, aesthetic value of the work is derived from relationing of constituents as a whole. And position of knowledge and technology in hybrid new media art form is critical as they make visual means of expression available for viewers. Specifically for machine in use works, Nadin asserts that

Such machines are even helping us understand that there is no intelligence without an aesthetic component that makes communication of knowledge easier and adds expressive power to balance the precision sought. [...] Intelligence, whether natural or artificial, finds the balance.²⁶³

²⁶³ Mihai Nadin, "Science and Beauty: Aesthetic Structuring of Knowledge," *Leonardo* 24, 1. (1991), 71.

Accordingly, what qualifies such a hybrid work as an art work is artistic creativity and intelligence that frame the work.

In this manner, knowledge and technology are aestheticized primarily within the context and then the form. And the work itself is collective and social entity which is constituted within realm of interaction. Aesthetic discourse, in that sense, needs to speak for collectives. So, aestheticization of knowledge and science in new media art occurs when those different spheres merge and create meaningful whole.

And the merging of art, knowledge and technology is aesthetically worthy if the work enables comprehensive experience that could enable discovery of contextual meaning of the work. In that sense, aesthetic value of the work is based on whether they offer kind of aesthetic experience within formation of an art form. Aestheticization of the work is thus as dynamic as the work itself. It seems that it is more related to aestheticization of artistic activity as the work itself is neither a completed object nor it has well established principles. Thus, aestheticization could also be considered as continuing reassessment within new media art.

4.1.3. Aesthetically Worthy without Aesthetic Principles

It seems that to be able to talk about certain kinds of aesthetic principle in new media art, we need to integrate technology and science to aesthetic scheme of new media art works and projects. Talking about aesthetic principles has been considerably debated since there are not any certain features and characteristics in new media work of art to which other work of art could be compared. Thus, rather than searching for a new aesthetic discourse adhering to new media art, we try to understand in what circumstances the idea of aesthetic differs from settled aesthetic discourse in the context of new media art; and, to what extend aesthetic experience is impressed by hybrid factors.

By using aesthetic principles, here, the idea beyond aesthetic experience which gives worth and meaning to work is referred. To put it differently, what evokes aesthetic pleasure could also be considered as aesthetic principles that are embodied within the form. For the new media art, however, it seems that aesthetic worth and meaning are inclined to be disclosed by fascination of technological medium. Thus, viewer's experience of technological medium, especially at the level of physical interaction, could become means of aesthetic experience. In this way, technological medium rather than aesthetic principles could be primarily brought into aesthetic appraisal of the work or project since the meaning of the work is first and foremost established upon what technology gives viewer during the process. In this way, for many viewers, new media art could be a process in which s/he meets with new technologies. Thus, little attention could be given to artistic and aesthetic qualities as compared to technical ones. Rather than what the work tells, viewer could question what the technology provides, in such a manner.

For sure, this does not mean that new media art work or project does not have aesthetic principles. Rather, in this part of this chapter, by questioning aesthetic principles in relation to new media art, conditions that artistic and aesthetic worth is being questioned. I could assert that aesthetic worth of the work or project seems to be measured by different criteria as compared to conventionally made art work or project. That is, beyond aesthetic principles viewer's relation to different components guide experiencing and meaning of the work or project.

For Koç, it is nearly impossible to talk about *de facto* aesthetic judgement in new media art since aesthetic valorization of a work is realized by viewer her/himself. For him, also, in previous art genres, individual account of aesthetic and *de facto* aesthetic could make consensus. In the case of new media art, however, there is not such consensus that we could take reference. In the light of Koç's ideas, aesthetic of new media art is potentially undetermined and beyond the very idea of aesthetic conventions. Besides, he talks about in what ways value mechanisms mediate among viewers and art work. Thus, for him, new media art work, such as a robotic, differs from industrial robotic with respect to artist's motivation based on the way of

viewer's interaction to the robotic on account of psychology and affect. In a more detailed way, he asserts that

Normally, system design is composed of input, operation and output. When interaction is entered into the project, two new sections are added to beginning and ending of the project. The beginning part; I made it but why anybody wants push the button? Thus, psychology and value mechanism in there is involved to the process. The last part is affect. How will he feel when he pushes the button? What sort of button should it be to transmit the effect that I want to give? Experience design is entering into field from now on. Thus, there is curiosity based actuating mechanisms; so, we must play with the curiosity. We need to make him read through curiosity. What I mean by reading; why I touch upon that button? Why this button is red? For sure, this is also related to education.²⁶⁴

In a similar tone with Koç, Dilbaz underlines that aesthetic attitude has close connection with artistic affinity, educational and cultural background, and individualistic relevancy; and curiosity.²⁶⁵

As the interaction is not a kind of monologue; then viewer needs to search for the meaning of the work in order to communicate and establish a dialogue between art work or project and her/himself. At that point, the way of discovering new artistic and aesthetic expressions has been changed in accordance with the way of application of science and technology. Aesthetic experience in new media art, in that sense, is discovery of technological and scientific discourses as they are deeply involved in artistic and aesthetic meaning of the work.

Nadin deals with the issue on the basis of changes in the medium and underlines the way that technology is applied as aesthetically. For Nadin, artist's intelligence ease selection or even invention of convenient medium and the decision for selecting the appropriate one is closely connected to the aestheticization of the work.²⁶⁶ In the light of Nadin's remarks on aestheticization of machine in use art works, including new media art, performance of the machine includes aesthetic components; and functioning in accordance with balancing relationship among art, knowledge and

²⁶⁴ Interview with Osman Koç, October, 2012.

²⁶⁵ Interview with Erdem Dilbaz, October, 2012.

²⁶⁶ Nadin, 67.

technology and enabling aesthetic experience. In the light of Nadin's statement, balancing employment of different components in such hybrid art works is significantly important on behalf of artistic and aesthetic appreciation of the work. For this, artist's intelligence and also intention have important role for creating artistic composition with different components. Arthur Danto thinks that the aesthetic has impact on how the meaning of work of art is presented by visual means. As such, he proposes that "By aesthetic, I shall mean the way things show themselves, together with the reasons for preferring one way of showing itself to another."²⁶⁷ In this manner, what artist intends to tell of primarily by her/his work is decisive for conditioning of the work.

For Arıkan, for instance, his works on networks systems are regarded as art works primarily and principally in relation to his intention. Those works that show factual analyses by means of visualization of the data differ from visualized forms of social researches on the grounds of aesthetic components of the work. Arıkan, on the other hand, distinguishes his art works from scientific works on account of theoretical framework of the works. He underlines that those works could also have theoretical frameworks. Nonetheless, he clearly states that

As there is no need for something like that [theoretical framework] in art, it could be but I do not find it necessary; so, you can scout at the very beginning which is open-ended discovery. What you produce differ from science as it powerfully speaks to your sensations. I deal with science in a closely manner; so, my works stroll around the frontier. I talked within the scientific conference; and then in the artistic conference or work politically. They are all nested and we could not give a name to it now. Maybe we could name it differently in the future. Today we call it as art but as I mentioned I am in a hybrid situation; that is, I utilize from both technology and science and sometimes actively stay in touch with people.²⁶⁸

In this sense, aesthetic designation of such hybrid new media art works have close connection with artist's intention; and creativity for composing and creating meaningful connections and worthy representations in accordance with the

²⁶⁷ Arthur C. Danto, "The Future of Aesthetics," in *Rediscovering Aesthetics: Transdisciplinary Voices From Art History, Philosophy, and Art Practice*, eds. Francis Halsall et al., 103-117. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009), 103.

²⁶⁸ Interview with Burak Arıkan, October, 2012.

contextual precedents. To put it differently, aesthetic and artistic quality of the work is grounded in skill and artistic creativity that are applied while framing the work for artistic expression. As the work is process itself, then artist's skill and creativity as means that provide the context in which conditions of meaning of the work come up. And the meaning of the work is constructed via viewer's very act of reading the context with interaction. But the idea of skill is not free from the new mode of artistic expression in order to be thought as a category of art. In such a manner, the category of aesthetic should also be considered in relation to new way of perception since aesthetic designations hold the meaning of a work.

4.1.4. Is it Creativity of Artist or Technology?

Considering today's aesthetic discussions, it is possible to say that aesthetic discourse is mainly taken into account as providing a model of confirmation about how come it is an art or subject matter of art. According to Elkins, certain sort of arts and some works of art are supported by aesthetic discourses, whereas some of them are totally invalidated.²⁶⁹ However, rather than concentrating on this kind of designation within field of art and aesthetic, main discussion on the basis of aesthetic of technology based work of art goes through to what extent the technique of the work and the tool could be subject of art. By the fact that machine can retain creative process, in itself; skill seems to be disappeared from artistic creativity. And the tool is considered as more attractive than medium; so, superiority of new tools are discursively constructed on the ground of the idea of technological progressiveness and convey the impression of being a subject matter of field of technology. It is clearly related to the idea that the meanings that are given to works of art are not related to what they form literally. In respect to new media art, reference to skill and

²⁶⁹ James Elkins, "Aesthetics and the Two Cultures: Why Art and Science Should be Allowed to Go Their Separate Ways," in *Rediscovering Aesthetics: Transdisciplinary Voices From Art History, Philosophy, and Art Practice*, eds. Francis Halsall et al., 34-51. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009).

creativity could easily be undervalued since the machine is in use and welcomed in an arty manner. In such a case, artistic practices take their aesthetic point of departure as functioning of the machine and coherence of its forms.

To put it differently, usage of high-tech and new machines and tools; and their functioning within the work could attract viewers more than inherent aesthetic and artistic qualities. And the functioning of the machine on its own could be considered as creative that viewer's experience of the work is then established upon exploration of technology. In relation to this, viewer could face with experiential duality of creativity of artist and smartness of technology as technological tool or machine is not passive instrument but rather one of active agents within the process. Then, smartness of technology could overcome creativity of artist even it is artist who primarily has control over conditioning of it within the work. But when technological tool or medium could act rather than function within the context then it could be possible to talk about autonomous technology.²⁷⁰ According to Rammert, technological agency proposes a challenge to ascribed status of individual agency on account of autonomy.²⁷¹ In the same vein, he asserts that "idea of an individual and autonomous actor is an illusion when all agency is attributed to only one human actor."²⁷² In the light of Rammert's assessment, it could be said that agency that perform creativity is not merely artist any more. Besides, creativity is no longer a kind of stance that is involved within production process. Rather creativity is associate of any action which diffuses the whole process. Herein, it could be proposed that an agent who engages in creativity within the process could develop initial creative idea by interacting with it. It seems that when there is no passive recipient in such a dynamic and interactive process then the dialogue among agents is built on the basis of creativity, presumably. That is to say, once getting in creative

²⁷⁰ Werner Rammert, "Distributed Agency and Advanced Technology. Or: How to Analyze Constellation of Collective Inter-Agency," in *Agency Without Actors: New Approaches to Collective Action*, eds. Jan-Hendrik Passoth, et al., 89-113. (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 89.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 90.

²⁷² Ibid., 90.

conduit agents interact with each other in some way creatively. Although interaction of the machine is initiated by viewer, the high-tech technologies have capacity to transcend limitations of expected functioning. Thus, it is neither artist nor viewer or technology alone that performs creativity within the work. Rather they together maintain creativity.

Aesthetic has been basically related to sense perception and construction of meaning since the beginning of this chapter. Necessary condition of aesthetic experience, in that sense, could be thought as interaction with the work. And when the work is kind of technically complex, high-tech new media art work then in relation to its technology based experimental character, viewer could explore the meaning of the work via primarily experiencing technology. Even complex and advanced technologies are not used; viewer's expectation could be in direction of that. Accordingly, viewer interacts with the work as being motivated by discovering experimental character of technology. As it was aforementioned, in Kuralı and Özçelik's interactive installation *Postponed*, most of viewers headed towards the pen with the thought that if the technology is in use then there is a kind of trick to make someone surprised. That kind of relationing with the work could easily hold over artistic and aesthetic experience. In the same vein, significance of artist's skill and creativity could also be undervalued as technology could potentially reduce the meaning of the work to attraction of it.

Crowther investigates that 'If something is to be legitimately described as creative, it is surely because it refines or innovates in relation to a practice's established procedures, or establishes an entirely new kind of procedure'.²⁷³ In the light of Crowther's argument, it could be said that newness within technology in use new media art works could easily be attributed to functioning of the tool. However, it is artist who decides on how to apply this technology. But when viewer primarily interacts with the tool itself, the whole process seems to be established upon

²⁷³ Paul Crowther, "Artistic Creativity: Illusions, Realities, Futures," in *Rediscovering Aesthetics: Transdisciplinary Voices From Art History, Philosophy, and Art Practice*, eds. Francis Halsall et al., 133-147. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009), 136.

functioning procedures of the technology; and artistic and aesthetic nuances could be overlooked. Thus, creative agent of the work could be considered as technology itself even the work is the whole process and established on the idea of participation in order to enable all agents within process to put some sort of creativity on account of collective art making.

4.1.5. Both Aesthetically and Scientifically Valuable

Elkins analyzes intersection between art and science with reference to “standard art-science narrative”²⁷⁴. According to him, this narrative touches upon changes in vision, quality of art, aesthetic concepts and includes a discussion on achievability of being scientific and artistic at the same time. He mainly questions problematic relationship between art and science and difficulty in writing on art and science and general persuasion of separating their ways from each other even if artist and scientist belong to same tradition. Thus he criticizes art history as being written around ‘standard art-science narrative’ and neglecting scientific content while paying more attention to artistic one. For Elkins, intersection of art and science is not a new issue; however, this intersection has been included in the discussion on aesthetic discourses recently. In one respect, it is due to the fact that “...artists have been more interested in the application of science in technology, new media, and engineering than in science itself.”²⁷⁵ Similarly, many artists, who received engineering or science education, prefer to apply their scientific curiosities while practicing art. It could be related to interplay among field of art, science and technology which is motivated by diverseness of potentials within hybridity. Besides, multiplicity of ways of interaction between different spheres opens up new possibilities. Akbay states in the interview that

²⁷⁴ Elkins, 35.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 38.

Art has not had concrete definition yet; so, it ambiguous. Science is also same but it is more prone to uniformity. [...] And what we need is ways of thinking that are different from each other. In that sense, art is so much open. Art is more dynamic [than science] and super speculative. The reason why I could proceed in art is related not dictating something to me.²⁷⁶

In this regard, artist engages with science within hybrid art form rather than producing scientifically dominant form. And the artist's dynamic experimentation with science within constitution of hybrid form enables new kinds of narrative development within the context of art. In the same fashion, that kind of unconventional combination of different disciplinary skills and values introduce such work as unique; and make it valuable within different spheres via its uniqueness.

However, there is another discussion about aesthetic and artistic value of new media works of art on account of ambiguity of the new. Although artist does not take advantage of new tools and technological medium in order to challenge former art medium and means of expression, the new one is generally considered in the capacity of defiance. Thus, dominant medium and recognized means of expression in art have been guarded by art authorities and the new one is taken into account in a doubtful manner with respect to determined standard criteria as for aesthetic, artistic and technical qualities. It means that work of art is appraised with regard to common quality which includes the idea of standardization and affirmation of consistency in artistic practices. However, new media art works and practices challenge standardization by ambiguity and hybridity in new media art. Besides, digitalization brings new media art into discredit since the notion of digitized image is brought to art scene with its possibilities and incompetence. Thus, new media art works could also be artistically and aesthetically undervalued. Since the visual image has been romanticized in a manner of sentimentality²⁷⁷, digitized image has been criticized as being insincere because of its easily alterable nature. Ironically, traditional media is as alterable as digital media and opens to serendipitous discoveries as similar to

²⁷⁶ Interview with Bager Akbay, October, 2012.

²⁷⁷ Here sentimentality does not refer to 'sentimental art' which evokes a sentimental response. Sentimentality, rather, is used in order to pay attention to comparison between analogue and digital with reference to 'emotional' aspect.

usage of digital media. Candaş Şişman, an artist, distinguishes digital production techniques from traditional ones on the basis of sensual affairs. Şişman concerns about to what extent he could take pleasure in production process; and whether it is digital media or traditional media, the way the work can make sense is important.

With respect to all these discussions, it could be arguably said that aesthetic, as well as artistic appropriation of the works are dependent on the way that technology and knowledge take visual forms. And aesthetic appropriation of the work leads to discovering new artistic and aesthetic expressions. In this sense, components of artistic and aesthetic valorization have been changed on the basis of becoming worthy within intersected zone of art, knowledge and technology.

4.2. Aesthetic Valorization in the Context of New Media Art

It is quite simple to talk about artistic and aesthetic value formulation of traditional art works which are recognized within artistic field so as to maintain institutional values with established practices. When it comes to new media works of art, which is still qualified as new and unfamiliar for many people, objectives and statements could not be clearly defined. In such a case, traditional art practices are positioned in institutionalized artistic practice and knowledge; whereas, it is not that easy for new media art. There is also not a given measure to compare the new with the old. The new media work of art is utilized by new technologies that process is open to possibilities and unintended consequences; in other words, this kind of creative practice also opens up new insights and challenges when the interactivity is at stake. There is a need, however, to be clear about discursive practices that identify and also construct new media art. This kind of discursive analysis about new media art practices can also provide certain path to follow key characteristics of new media art which constitute its reality. As already mentioned, new media art as such a hybrid art form has close connection with various art practices such as digital art, video art, sound or mixed-media installation, performance art, internet art, computer art and

conceptual art. According to Paul, new media art is one of the forms of digital art.²⁷⁸ She constructed her argument towards newness of new media art and states that:

Whenever a new art form comes along, it is usually accompanied by a classifier, such as "video art" or "digital art." Today's qualifier of choice, "new media," renders the newness of yesterday's new art form obsolete and already implies its own datedness.[...] It takes a while until the "new" (insert video or digital) art becomes Art (with a capital A), integrated into thematic surveys and exhibitions that include all kinds of media. This doesn't mean that the qualifier forever vanishes, but that the art form moves beyond the medium itself and the way in which it complements, augments and/or challenges traditional concepts of art. This requires an introduction to the public.²⁷⁹

In the light of Paul's statement, it could be said that art's relations to technologies of its day welcome new art forms. And the form is primarily classified via tool as familiarity is mainly established with the tool first. That is, being acquainted with the medium require more detailed exploration as medium itself is dynamic and comes along within different processes. As Paul put, the term 'digital' mainly has been used to characterize the tool but it is not just for the tool anymore; and discussion goes through relating 'digital' to medium. And the digital medium is used in varying combinations since inherent possibilities of the medium - which are enabled by interactive, dynamic and collaborative characteristics of it as they were analyzed at the beginning of the study- open up new art making zones.²⁸⁰

Namely, new media art works are generally well accepted within hybrid artistic spaces. There are complex interdependencies in a social network that artistic practices and procedures can be changed and also can change the dynamic of the network. Also, aesthetic narratives within the specific artistic network are social constructions maintained by social practice. In this manner, artists can success through following archetypes within the new media artistic field. This does not mean that copies or replication of the prior works would be successful but rather means that following the pattern of the field as being creative and original allow artists to reach recognition and success. In other words, search for competency coincides with

²⁷⁸ Christiane Paul, "Renderings of Digital Art," *Leonardo* 35, 5. (2002).

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 471.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 472.

search for legitimacy in order to promote conformity within social network and address to establish a kind of control system to promote and sustain corporate contributions to artistic community. New media art work's value is not reducible to technology which is used in a fascinating way whereas the value comes from ideas and symbols within the composition. Non-market mechanism of the new media art functions through interaction between knowledge and interests of several actors. Therefore, artists and curators need organizational objectives to achieve their practical aims by dint of shared aesthetic frameworks and established markers for interpreting the works. Similarly, aiming to guarantee social and economic power depends on producing aesthetic and artistic values.

There are no objective criteria on which valuation and valorization process take place. Artistic discourse is monopolized by intermediaries within art worlds such as art critics, art historians and curators –elites-. Although they have crucial role to give legitimacy to new art discourses and artistic practices, new media art as relatively new artistic discourse is admitted within the artistic field by the agency of amateurs within new media art world who struggle against elitist construction of art. In other words, although new media art is not counted in contemporary artistic practices in Turkey, it continues to take place within the artistic field by applying several strategies which makes it visible. Attending art fairs, organizing exhibitions out of gallery and museum art spaces, organizing art and technology related events such as workshops, festivals, symposiums in collaboration with other institutions- as universities are significant contributors- are part of those strategies.

4.2.1. Originality as Value-laden Element

It is possible to talk about kind of consensus about aesthetic and artistic value of mainstream artistic practices but within the new media artistic practices, valuation is not related to quality concerns or about discursive aesthetic and aesthetically oriented gaze as other goods in the market. Rather, it is about originality depending on mostly

being new as an art work and being creative as an idea. The way that how new technologies are used in the work and especially within interactive ones contributes to the idea of originality. Herein, what is meant by originality seems to be a critical question. And originality assessment of new media art works is derived from newness and kind of innovativeness of the works and projects. In this line of thought, hybrid constitution of the works, which correspond to intersection of different spheres, have share in the idea of the originality as I have tried to touch upon from the beginning of this study.

In relation to positioning of new media art in art worlds and its artistic strategies which could also be considered as ways of art-making; and viewer's nonconventional ways of experiencing the work which stems from either surprising processing of the work by its unprecedentedness or viewer's unfamiliarity with new media art, new media art works and projects are valorized as being original. It seems that there are two different determinants in relation to originality of new media art works and projects; one is art world's dynamics and the other is viewer's personal experience. Considering this, I will investigate new media art's originality in relation to art world's dynamics at first.

In relation to unsettled status of new media art within art worlds, new media art works and projects hold potentials of ambiguity in themselves. That is, there are not established principles which are in effect within valorization of the work as providing reference for making comparison on the basis of artistic and technical qualification. And ways of art making in the field of new media art is mostly considered as complex in regard of usage of new and mostly advanced technologies within the work. In this manner, new media art works and projects could be seized upon via complexity of artistic processes that they are regarded as challenging. Originality, in that sense, is established upon distinctiveness of the forms and practices of new media art in one respect. Also, in relation to processing of different principles of different spheres within the constitution of the form, originality comes from the way through which those different spheres are linked. Thus, there is not a valid criterion that could be applied within artistic judgement of the work. I argue

that in order to be valid, the criteria should speak to commonality within those different spheres. As artistic and aesthetic principles are more attached to art world's dynamics, hybridity of form breaks the older principles of art worlds. That is to say, new media art transcends the limitations of art world's dynamics by its very nature. Paul Crowther states that "anything can be designed as art through being related to an appropriate display procedure."²⁸¹ In the case of new media art, however, talking about any kinds of procedure seems impractical as the form itself is ambiguous and hybrid; so, art practices are organized in accordance with conditioning of this unstable form. In the light of Crowther's statement, it could be critically asked about new media art whether it is appropriate display procedure or the idea of itself that makes it art. As it was mentioned before, the idea itself is the work but it is not the any idea that characterizes art work itself. The idea that is mentioned as art work, thus, needs to be creative, new and distinct. And when it comes to the art work, it needs to be original which means that it could differ from other works. Moreover, uniqueness and originality of new media art works, in one sense, bring forth collective authorship of the work as originality is also evolving process similar to unstable nature of new media art works.

New media art work's newness within field of arts does not refer to the idea that it is idealistically new also in scientific and technological spheres. That is to say, robotic new media art work could make viewer surprised when s/he experience the work by considering it as an art work. But the reaction of the viewer and also meaning of the work for viewer could be different if s/he primarily considers the work as kind of technologic device. In the case of new media art, there are different value mechanisms which are in effect within meaning construction of the work and experiencing of it. In that sense, aesthetic valorization of new media art works are more attached to aesthetic and artistic meaning of the work that are constituted via subjective experience.

²⁸¹ Crowther, 137.

Interactive new media art works and projects are mostly qualified as original in regard to viewer's relation with the work which is established upon intriguing experience. And many new media artists pay attention to make viewers' surprised mainly via their experience design works. In this way, many new media art works and projects carry out the potential of the unique and original within the process. And the more feel free artist when apply new technologies and frame the work, the more unprecedented viewer's experience is. Creativity that is applied within the process is proposed not only by artist but also viewer and the machine. So, the creativity in general covers variety of practices on conditioning and functioning level of the work. Indeed interactive nature of new media work of art "enables the development of fluid and seamless transition between work, play, public and personal environment."²⁸² Obviously, all these characteristics are about participatory nature of interactivity. And new media art's participatory nature of interactivity gives viewer or audience 'co-creator' potential which could be realized only by means of artist's consent. Viewer's relation to work of art or artistic event is comprised of access to content which is very similar to idea of experiencing narrative of an art work aesthetically. That is to say, experiencing new media work of art in interactive manner is beyond the scope of interpretation or sensory reception of the content. Surely, there need to be aesthetic and artistic motives in order to experience work of art as being intervene in artistic practices. It means that artistic and aesthetic motives directly address artistic and aesthetic experience of work which is resulted from the idea that

the aesthetic often plays a definitive role in characterizations of our responses to or interactions with artworks.[...] aesthetic responses distinguish our responses to art, and that art objects can be defined in terms of the aesthetic [...] what an object is can be captured through an account of its function. The art object is something designed to provoke a certain form of response, a certain type of interaction. [...] So the artwork is an object designed with the function of engendering aesthetic experiences, perceptions, attitudes, and so forth.²⁸³

²⁸² Mary Flanagan, "Play, Participation, and Art: Blurring the Edges," in *Context Providers: Conditions of Meaning in Media Arts*, eds. Margot Lovejoy et al., 89-103..(UK: Intellect, 2011), 93.

²⁸³ Noël Carroll, "Art and Interaction," in *Reading Aesthetic and Philosophy of Art: Selective Texts with Interactive Commentary*, ed. Christopher Janaway, (Usa, UK, Australia: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.), 58.

However, as declared by many artists who make experience design works, art and design works differ from each other on the grounds of limit of creativity. And many design works' originality is interrupted by clients' demands which block experimental ways of art making and framing the work prior to artist.

Each technology and new artistic practices commit autonomy temporarily until they are exploited by the corporate entities and integrated into market. In this vein, new media art world participate in the construction and development of alternative economy and culture through its potential richness such as participation and interaction and new forms of production and distribution which first and foremost challenge property rights issue and elitist construction of art. It does not mean elimination from interoperability of traditional artistic practices but rather revising boundaries and rethinking on them.

4.2.2. Thinking through Relationality

Bourriard proposes the idea of relational art and relational aesthetic occupies critical stance in the artistic field and re-interprets art of today. Namely, Bourriard's comments on relational art and aesthetic touch upon changing dynamics in artistic field by means of increasing adaptation to new technologies and new forms and formations within the field. By relationality, he tries to highlight the social context that artistic activities emerge in. And art is not about objects; it is about relations that constitute and give meaning to it. For him, aesthetic judgement of work of art should be made on the basis of *inter-human relations* and it is relational aesthetic that proposes the idea of judging artworks on the basis of interactions, relations, cooperative creative processes. This idea also suggests that the work of art proposes a relational model depending on the way it is produced, circulated and exhibited. Therefore, his attempt to further the idea of relational aesthetic could be seen as challenge to monopolized aesthetic discourse. Also, relational aesthetic with its critical stance towards elitist construction of art, and cultural, economic

conditionings, welcomes the idea of flexibility and sociability by alternative ways of art-making. As stated by him; “the possibility of relational art (an art taking as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and private symbolic space), points to a radical upheaval of the aesthetic, cultural and political goals introduced by modern art.”²⁸⁴

Also, he proposes interpreting contemporary art practices in terms of ‘formations’ rather than ‘forms’.²⁸⁵ For him, patterns of a dialogue between artist, viewer and work of art are occurred in ‘formations’ since “form only exists in the encounter and in the dynamic relationship enjoyed by artistic proposition with other formations, artistic or otherwise.”²⁸⁶ Accordingly, it could be argued that formations mostly surround production relations and include several direct actions which follow establishment of a dialogue among several actors and characterize work of art in itself. And the form is constituted as manifested reality of relationality. In this regard, the art of relational aesthetic points to the way that

Every artist whose work stems from relational aesthetics has a world of forms, a set of problems and trajectory which are all his own. They are not connected by any style, theme or iconography. What they do share together is much more decisive, to wit, the fact of operating within one and the same practical and theoretical horizon: the sphere of inter-human relations. Their works involve methods of social exchanges, interactivity with the viewer within the aesthetic experience being offered to him/her, and the various communication processes, in their tangible dimension as tools serving to link individuals and human groups together.²⁸⁷

Relevance of Bourriard’s framework of relational aesthetic to new media art is related to participatory and networked nature of new media art. As Bourriard privileges the notions of dialogue, communication and interaction in his analyses, new media artists also notice possibility of dialogue and communication between humans as well as among human and machine. Candaş Şişman underlines how the tool could transform the very effect of the work and modes of interaction. As he states,

²⁸⁴ Bourriard, *Relational Aesthetics*, 14.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 21.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 21.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 43.

Identifying the work as interactive does not mean that viewer needs to sit and use it; as viewer interact with the work mentally or sensual just by looking. [...] The things that I want to do and experience is making viewers use those technologies. Then only then you could build field of play for viewers in interactive art.²⁸⁸

Idea of interaction, as we could observe from the very beginning of the thesis, has been changed in the context of new media art. Interaction, herein, has close connection with the idea of play. It is such that the work itself is constructed as playground where viewers can play either by her/himself or in collaboration with each other not with the intention of art making but rather with the motivation of playing around for satisfying her/his curiosity. When this is the case, relationality among constituents directly has an impact on the way of relationing and constitution of the work. And it is important to note here that Bourriard's examination of relational art touches upon production relations rather than objects. What is significant here is that artistic production relations project how network relations come into prominence. As it can be clearly seen in new media art case, developing personal relationships and working collaboratively provide alternative ways of art-making in which consumerist tendencies are not at the center of artistic production. In the same vein, Grammatikopoulou highlights the fact that "abolition of limits of the material has opened up new possibilities for the art object, liberating it from the established paths of circulation and projection that are related to the art market and traditional art spaces."²⁸⁹ Certainly, it is mostly related to nature of the work and changing artistic and aesthetic drives with respect to its non-market driven interoperability. Moreover, by applying the idea of flexibility to production and exhibition processes, "artist has the freedom to play with ephemerality, fluidity and participation."²⁹⁰ In such a manner, consumption practices have also been changed since work of art is only available at a certain performing time. All these characteristics address enrichment of artistic practices but with result that aesthetic

²⁸⁸ Interview with Candaş Şişman, October, 2012.

²⁸⁹ Christina Grammatikopoulou, "Shades of the immaterial: Different approaches to the 'non-object'," *Interartive: a platform for contemporary art and thought*, <http://interartive.org/2012/02/shades-of-the-immaterial/> (accessed June 23, 2013).

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

and artistic appreciations of work of art alter traditional identification of aesthetic and artistic. With regard to such entwined practices, it is more than an object that provides artistic and aesthetic experience.

In one of his interviews, Bourriard states that “I like art that allows its audience to exist in the space opened up by it. For me, art is a space of images, objects, and human beings. Relational aesthetics is a way of considering the productive existence of the viewer of art, the space of participation that art can offer.”²⁹¹ Herein he pays attention to viewer’s engagement to the process as actively taking part in production process. Thus, Bourriard’s emphasis on that kind of engagement underlines the way viewer participates within the process of construction of the work which is different from the idea of completing the work via any kinds of interaction.²⁹² Following that, each participatory act could be considered as one of components of aesthetic valorization in the context of new media art.

He also puts emphasis on the idea that exhibition and production could be joined processes since interactive work of art is evolved throughout the exhibition as part of a “flexible matter”.²⁹³ In order to touch upon designations of new paths of production and exhibition on account of flexibility, he identifies these joint processes in terms of ‘exchange’ in a participatory fashion. Namely, Bourriard refers to Paul’s ‘*platforms of exchange*’ by using ‘*arena of exchange*’ while portraying exhibition of participatory works of art.²⁹⁴ Paul proposes the term ‘platforms of exchange’ in order to include all levels of exchanges that are “occurring in multiple spaces” whether physically or virtually, but constituted the work.²⁹⁵ Herein, similar to Paul’s argument, he considers ‘arena of exchange’ as area of encountering where degree of participation

²⁹¹ Nicolas Bourriard, interview by Bennett Simpson, *Art Forum*, (April 2001), 2. For Details See <http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/simpson1.pdf>

²⁹² Ibid., 2.

²⁹³ Bourriard, 39.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 18.

²⁹⁵ Christiane Paul, nd.

yield to artistic project. Therefore, he proposes the idea that "...‘arena of exchange’ must be judged on the basis of aesthetic criteria, in other words, by analyzing the coherence of its form, and then the symbolic value of the “world” it suggests to us, and of the image of human relation reflected by it.”²⁹⁶ The reason why he values the ‘arena of exchange’ in virtue of aesthetic criteria could be explained through the idea that aesthetic and artistic quality of form depend on value of experiences since form proceeds with each participatory act in each real-time work. And the exchange, which is mainly based on interactive communication, characterizes the work. In the same vein, meaning of the work that is constructed in line with aesthetic and artistic propositions emerges in ‘arena of exchange’. That is to say, meaning of the work is potentially manipulated by viewers’ participation. And each different mode of interaction and participation result in new aesthetic proposals as well as new meanings that change capacities of reception in accordance with multilayered nature of the work. Besides, intersected zone of art, knowledge and technology, which is an intellectual environment as it aforementioned, is a kind of platform of knowledge exchange where hybrid form of new media art is constituted. So, how the work is situated and makes sense within different spheres, as conceptually and also contextually flexible, frames new aesthetic expressions in the context of new media art.

For Lillemose, adaptation of technology to art leads to new conceptualizations and new way of thinking about artistic practices. In this manner, he specifically concentrates on immateriality or new conditions of materiality through "...aesthetic possibilities, challenges and problems that networks – especially digital networks – present.”²⁹⁷ In pursuing the idea that art is more than about a stable object, Lillemose argues that abolition of limitations of materiality in social, cultural and economic contexts call for new aesthetic proposals as expressions of artistic and technological concerns of its day. According to this line of argument, it could be said that it is

²⁹⁶ Bourriaud, 18.

²⁹⁷ Lillemose, "Conceptual Transformations of Art: From Dematerialization of the Object to Immateriality in Networks," 130.

dematerialization in thought that provides aesthetic account of new media art. Namely, immaterial form of new media work of art in relation to artistic practices expands the category of art since they introduce flexibility, hybridity and interrelatedness of art, science and technology. And new aesthetic approach, which fills the gap between art, knowledge and technology via aestheticization of the work, also needs to address new possibilities and conditions of art-making.

After breakdown of traditional art disciplinary boundaries with the fusion of technology and science into art, modes of artistic expression and ways of art making come on the art scene with the idea of hybridity. In such a case, work of art is identified with its hybrid nature and challenges the idea of standardization in any manner. More specifically, new media art with its hybrid characteristics appeal to different disciplines. In this manner, value-laden art works or projects in the context of new media art also hold particular importance for field of science, technology and design. But it is significantly important in ordinary language to put emphasis on artistic value of something. Thus, identifying same work as art work rather than design work could be considered as conferring status to an object. In new media art case, however, it is not an art object that acquires artistic status. That is, neither work nor object is adequate benchmark to attain artistic and aesthetic value in itself. Thus, within the context of new media art, all constituents and the process itself involve in aesthetic valorization process; and should be integrated into the aesthetic discussion considering positioning and conditioning of the work within intersected zone of different spheres.

4.3. Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, it was underlined that shift from object-based art to process-oriented art in the context of new media art result in new types of relationing with the work. Following that, I tried to discuss how reception of an art work has changed for viewer of new media art. All these discussions pointed out that viewer's relation with

the work is beyond visual or perceptual reception of it; and has greater dependence to interactive dialogue during experiencing the work. For sure, such kind of dialogic experience is not significant for new media art but viewer's direct involvement within the process as having greater chance for negotiating meaning of the work could be considered as one of distinguishing characteristics of new media art works or projects. And viewer's co-producer and co-author potentials lead viewer to take heed of modes of involvement within the process and ways of experiencing it. As the focus becomes way of experiencing the work, then aesthetic appreciation has been shaped throughout process itself. In this manner, aesthetic experience within the process itself is also collective experience since each participatory act could potentially manipulate the meaning of the work and change process.

Indeed, discussion on aestheticization of new media art works that were made above showed that there are many components that are in effect during aestheticization of the work. In that sense, aestheticization of the work has close connection with meaningfulness of the interaction process for viewer. As the interaction process is a kind of discovery in relation to hybrid constitution of the form, then not only work itself but also viewer's own experience is aestheticized during the process. It was observed above that motives and dynamics of aesthetic experience within the context of new media art vary so that aesthetic valuation does not depend on aesthetic conventions or principles. Rather aesthetic valuation is mostly driven by common utility of all collaborative spheres. It was observed that the idea of creativity and originality are artistically, scientifically and technologically worthy in the context of new media art which makes the aesthetic commonality being mainly established upon them.

One important point that I observed throughout the discussions is related to usage of advanced and new technologies within new media art works. Since new media art work is marked by usage of new and interactive technologies, it is necessary to reconsider understanding of creativity as advanced technologies are magnified by viewers via their capacity of captivation. Even creativity is not ascribed to technology, skill and creativity could be easily undervalued within the context of

new media art. It was observed throughout the discussions that when the technology in use is identified as advanced and new, then it has maintained a kind of superiority within the process. Since then aesthetic appreciation of the work depend on the way functioning of the technology takes visual form. Considering this, it was examined that aesthetic valorization within the context of new media art does not depend on aesthetic principles but rather based on relationality among different constituents and the experience offered by them. Certainly, as it was discussed, the aesthetic value of new media art works and projects are quite different from art works which are constituted in accordance with conventions and procedures of art worlds. Such hybrid construction thus evokes new value mechanisms.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to identify constitution of the form as social process. For this, I tried to investigate how social relations and art form mutually produce each other. Aiming to specify my field of inquiry, I concentrated on social conditions that generate new media art form and the linkages through which network of relations are established within the constitution of new media art form.

Throughout the study it was observed that artistic practices have been transforming with technological and digital intervention within field of arts on account of digitalization in practices.²⁹⁸ That kind of transformation has led to integration of different spheres since employment of the digital and idea of using new technologies within creative act have been supported by different spheres. Indeed, it does not only cover employing the new ones with a kind of technical concern; but is also directly related to impact of very adaptation of techno-scientific curiosities on doings which then contribute to development of new ventures and new ways of art making as in the new media art.

It was also observed that digitalization activates potentials of hybridity within different spheres and leads to merging of them within constitution of new media art form. Digitalization, in that sense, fulfills hybridity potentials within different spheres. Although digitalization and possibilities of digital were not at the center of

²⁹⁸ Charlie Gere, in his book *Digital Culture* (2008), concentrated on digitalization of artistic and cultural practices. For Gere, point of departure is digital culture and its radical and critical stance in general. Thus, he considers this kind of transformation as highly challenging and reproductive within field of culture and art.

this study, it has been observed throughout the discussions that all those people, who are making new media art in a sort of way, have utilized from possibilities of the digital either ideationally or technically. Following that, I could assert that mingling with the digital and experiencing potentials of it become effective in their ways of art-making. As Gere puts emphasis on the digital that ‘digital refers not just to the effects and possibilities of a particular technology. It defines and encompasses the ways of thinking and doing that is embodied within that technology, and which make its development possible.’²⁹⁹In this line of thought, it could be argued that new media art practices are organized in consideration of potential of the digital. To further the assertion, I could argue that as the way of relationings have changed within digital environments; art practices and motives have also changed.

That is to say, many similarities could be found between new media art practices and organizational models of digital distributed networks. Accessibility and flexibility, in that sense, characterize organizational practices of new media art as tools and mediums in digital context put emphasis on them. In the same vein, it was seen that viewer is welcomed in art making as being participant and collaborator within the process. In this way, I argue that viewer, artist, author could be rethought in regards of their roles within the context of new media art and possibilities of new media art that are offered. Collaboration in art making and participatory nature of new media art open up co-producer, co-creator or co-author potential for viewer and also collaborators, and challenge conventionally formed artistic categories. Following that, viewer is not passive receiver but rather active participant as it aforementioned. Following that, instead of using viewer as delineative concept, collaborator/viewer or participant/viewer could be more relevant for new media art making conditions. Moreover, conceptual formation of art form could be broadened by including sources of hybridization since it is not pure artistic category in its constitution. Accordingly, it seems that there is a need for more flexible and transitive categories which could speak for evolving relationship among viewer and artist, changing roles and new formations. Besides, in consideration of new media art in Turkey, there is no pure

²⁹⁹ Gere, *Digital Culture*, 17.

artistic category as new media artist. Instead, there are researcher/artist, engineer/artist and designer/artist who are interested in art but could not take up new media art as profession for two main reasons that I observed. One of the main reasons is, to be sure, material and social conditions of life; they need to work within different fields mostly in which they acquire professions in accordance with their educational background but this is still not a burden for them as disciplinary boundaries are resolved within hybridized working conditions. And the second, also in relation to the first one, new media art itself does not have art in itself ideals. It could be said in consideration of new media art that scientific and technological curiosities could have greater account in an artistic activity. And collaboration within this context also includes cooperation among different spheres that arises from kinds of artistic and technological curiosities and research based relationships. Field of new media art is therefore being composed of complex relations among different spheres.

Following all these, another significant point that I observed throughout this study, about ambiguity within new media art, which covers ambiguity in naming and ambiguity of definition of new media art as art genre, has been always thought-provoking. It could be get from this study that hybridity makes the forms more ambiguous so that more challenging than principally established and stable forms. New media art form shows that art form does not need to be established upon artistic principles such that it could embody different principles of different spheres even if it is primarily identified as art work. And this means that art form could carry out different potentials of different fields and take advantages of different spheres. This also reveals that hybridity transcends limitations of different fields. Thus, there is not dominant form or definite conception that depicts new media art or new media artist categorically as it was mentioned above. In this manner, hybridity of new media art leads to rethinking existing categories which are taken into account as fixed and culturally standardized. Conventional conceptions and roles of artist, art work and viewer are all challenged within the context of new media art. In this manner, rather than pure artistic categories, we could talk about new categories which are themselves becoming increasingly divergent.

Hybridization, which includes possibilities of ambiguity, enables various combinations. That is, hybridity as condition of interaction between art, science and technology within the context of new media art follows relationings through new linkages as fields of encounters are expanded by multiplicity of hybrid possibilities. Hybridity, in this study, allows us to investigate intertwinement of different practices of different fields toward constitution of contextually flexible and organizationally unconditioned forms.

All these discussions show that hybridity in new media art follows partial attachment to art worlds. According to Becker,

...in principle any object or action can be legitimated as art, but that in practice every art world has procedures and rules governing legitimation [...] Those procedures and rules are contained in the conventions and patterns of cooperation by which art worlds carry on their routine activities.³⁰⁰

In that scheme, conventional ways of art making seems to be requisite for legitimation of art. Becker's statement underlines that there is certain art making patterns which are needed to be followed. Still, when formation of new media art scene in Turkey is considered, new media art is far from conventional ways of art making. Accordingly, as being not confounding, new media art is taken into account as anomalous within institutionalized art settings. As it was mentioned, we could not talk about dominant artistic form within hybridity of new media art. This could be considered as almost a burden under the principles of art worlds. However, this could also open up possibilities and potentials of different spheres and make negotiation much more possible. I could assert that new media artist and new media art work and even new media art are categorically constituted during art making process. In other words, they are not principally established categories that portray artist and art work or art genre by themselves. Within institutionalized context, however, such kind of categories are well-established and categorically constative. About legitimation of new media art, they are not art in itself principles or procedures but rather network of

³⁰⁰ Becker, *Art Worlds*, 163.

relations that govern legitimation. Thus, I consider social relations and interactions as core constituents within formation of new media art.

It is clear that new media art work is appreciated not only artistically but also scientifically and technologically in its great scope of hybridity. In the same vein, new media art is not only valorized in the realm of art. Yet, there is not a specific value system that is functioning within the context of new media art. Valuation of new media art work or project, in that sense, has primarily established upon social worth of the work. That is to say, new media art work as social entity is valorized through social relations that constitute it as there is no definitive criterion but rather different forms of relations that are inherent in art work.

This study also shows that ambiguity, which also refers to kind of uncertainty, could not be necessarily obstacle for acceptance. Namely, ambiguity of new media art could allow acceptance even within institutionalized art settings. Herein, distribution practices of new media art have important role within public recognition and institutional acceptance. That is to say, an art work is accepted and recognized as new media art work within domain of distribution. Distributional channels of new media art could be regarded as exhibitions, public presentations, festivals, art labs and web. Although web as a medium for distribution of new media art were not specifically included in this study, web is one of important distribution channel for new media art. There is not any given logic or distinct image of new media art when new media art scene in Turkey is considered. Accordingly, how the work is named and identified mostly being depended on relations that govern them as it was emphasized many times previously. For instance, same work could be named as new media art work and design work at the same time; besides, work could be identified as electronic art, digital art or performance art and even kind of technological device as there are many components within the work and none of them adheres to any classificatory technique. While examining formation of new media art scene in Turkey, I have observed that such kind of classifications or categorizations are not decisive since different spheres intersect within new media art and none of them is privileged. In relation to hybridization in different fields, common realm is primarily

established with a motive of information exchange among different spheres. Commonalities between different spheres lie in the idea of sharing; and it is potential of the common realm that various possibilities become sources of new media art form.

Indeed, positioning of new media art within mainstream contemporary art worlds could be considered as autonomous space for creative practice in a broadest sense. It is autonomous since autonomy is used in relation to self-organizing principles of new media art. Obviously, this is not an attempt to construct self-legislative zone within mainstream contemporary art worlds; rather, it is a naïve way of welcoming the very idea of collectives.

One another point which I have not put emphasis on in this study but it should be in focus to further research is about positioning of new media art in neo-liberal agendas. In consideration of this, I try to touch upon formation of knowledge economy and its technological orientation slightly. It could be understood from the study that intersection of art, science and technology take an important place in formation of knowledge economy. By utilizing from new technologies in a creative way and working on innovation, boundaries of art, knowledge and technology are resolved. Besides, acquiring and creating knowledge for further artistic, scientific and technological inquiries lead to creative advancements within the field of science and technology which then become motives for market-oriented approachment to new media art. Following that, new media art could get institutional and organizational support from academy and industry. Herein, relationship – or better to say partnership - between academy and industry is established upon research and development schemes and provides access to new markets and technologies. Aiming to strengthen collaboration among academy and industry, art and technology based projects are subsidized by state institutions and private sector. And some of universities operate in new media art scene in Turkey as artistic agents.

This shows that the idea of creativity, although it has different understandings within different fields, is valid and worthy for each; and applied in market-based policies.

Accordingly, creativity is considered as key component in technological development especially among high-tech industries and their partner universities. Many new media art works are thus considered as attractive investment tool since these hybrid constructs have capacity to fulfill the demand for creative and innovative technologies.

Ambivalence in staging of new media art becomes clear after all these discussions. While process-orientedness and dematerialized nature of new media art has played significant role in conditioning of positioning of art worlds, now it is material ground of new media art which is discovered by industrial channels. By reducing the new media art work on an object - or technological and robotic device depending on its technique- , new media art itself stands for contradictory contextures. This is, in one respect, resulted from variability of linkages across different constitutions of new media art. Besides, it could be related to networks of relations in which artistic and economic centrality could differ.

More specifically, these relations are very decisive in constitution of new media art. Depending on motive and centrality of networks of relations, there occur discursively divergent practices which could be identified with new media art, notwithstanding. Once industry and commercial interests frame the production, positioning of the work or project in the field of art is increasingly dependent on processing of the work or project and relations that are in effect. That is, its validity as art depends on to what extent various connections and relations gain recognition in the field.

It could also be seen in this study that networks of relations matter in formation of art. Regarding complexity of networks of relations, it could be possible to distinguish direction of the networks based on their centrality and motive. The resulting separations could depict different patterns in art making. To illustrate the issue, one could be directly related to commercialization of art whereas other one could first and foremost account for artistic production with art in itself ideals. The first would aim at increasing economic value of the work so that the meaning of the art work or project does not fulfill artistic ideals and motives of relatively autonomous field of

new media art. Even this is the case, the work and project could be conditioned as new media art depending on relationings within and by the process. Formation of new media art, herein, gives an idea about social, economic and cultural structures of its day and their functioning in different spheres. Thus, new media art work or project needs to be taken into account by regarding parameters by which work or project and producer(s) are related with art. These parameters become clearer in distribution practices as they refer to publicity of what is done. On the other hand, at the level of distribution, artistic meaning of the work or project is produced. More specifically, even artist does not specify her/his work as new media art and also does not attach importance to naming, categorical identification of the work or project develop throughout the process. It shows that naming in art based on sociality. And distribution practices, in this manner, could give different meanings to the work in accordance with interests of distributional channel. This is another dimension of the discussion that underlines how art is the product of practices.

Calling to formation of hybrid artistic categories such as engineer/artist, researcher/artist and designer/artist, again, it could be now clearly observed that these categories could be even preferable as being mediator categories particularly at the intersection of creativity, knowledge and neo-liberalism more than art, science and technology as it was discussed. However, by investigating creative economy and knowledge economy that function as infrastructure in the formation of commercialized field of new media art, relatively autonomous field of new media art should be distinguished from the commercialized one as centrality of motives differ within positioning.

About commercialization, different skills and competences are collaborated in networked sphere of collaboration. Regarding commercialization of new media art, it was observed that labels such as new, original and innovative sell within the market. For sure, these terms are formalized within neo-liberal repertoire. Following that, artistic, technological or scientific agendas of many institutions and organizations have changed in accordance with funding or partnership criteria. It needs to be

underlined that such partnerships and funding are not art or culture framed but they obtain place in new media art in a sort of way.

Various industries and companies aim at creative potential of new media art works and projects at the intersection of art and technology. Following that, partnership between industry and university is also promoted. As practice-led research is increasingly preferred by some universities which are transformed into sites of research, manifestation of multidisciplinary within new media art practice is favored as are hybrid practitioners.

I could assert that new media art scene in Turkey portrays different network configurations so that patterns of new media art making are multiplied. Variation of patterns also diversifies networks of relations by potent effects on different spheres. Thus, hybridity and ambiguity stemming from it in new media art is either as kind of opportunity or burden to tolerate various effects of different types of network configurations on ways of art-making. All these discussions that are made throughout this study thus aim to investigate social relations and conditions that facilitate the hybrid formation of new media art and to have an insight of how such art form brings about particular relations in turn. In a nutshell, the point that I could put forward is that an art work becomes new media art work via relations that govern it.

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APPENDICES

A. PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATIONS



Photo 1.

Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/amberplatform/5221605339/in/photostream/>

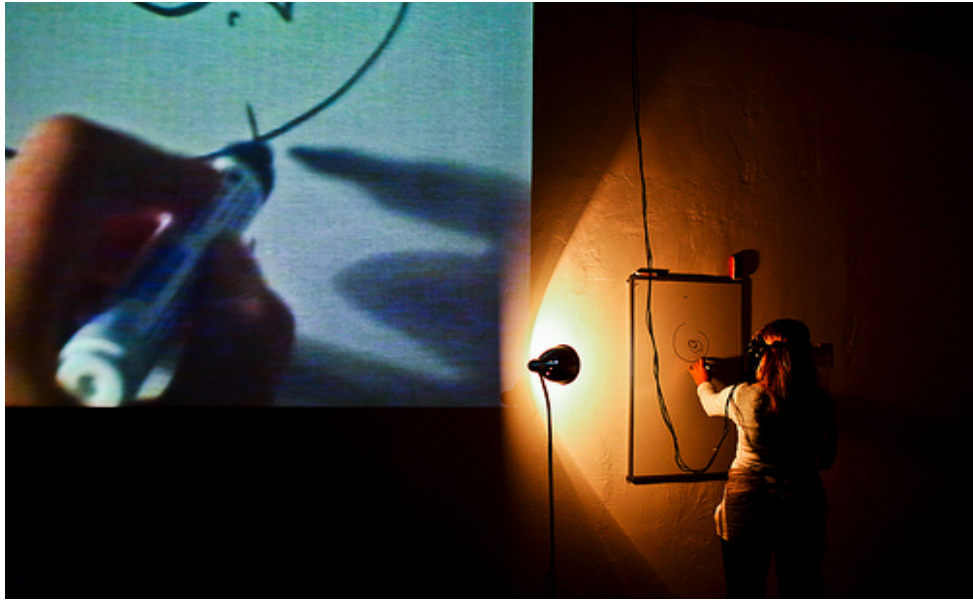


Photo 2

Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/amberplatform/5222203218/in/photostream/>

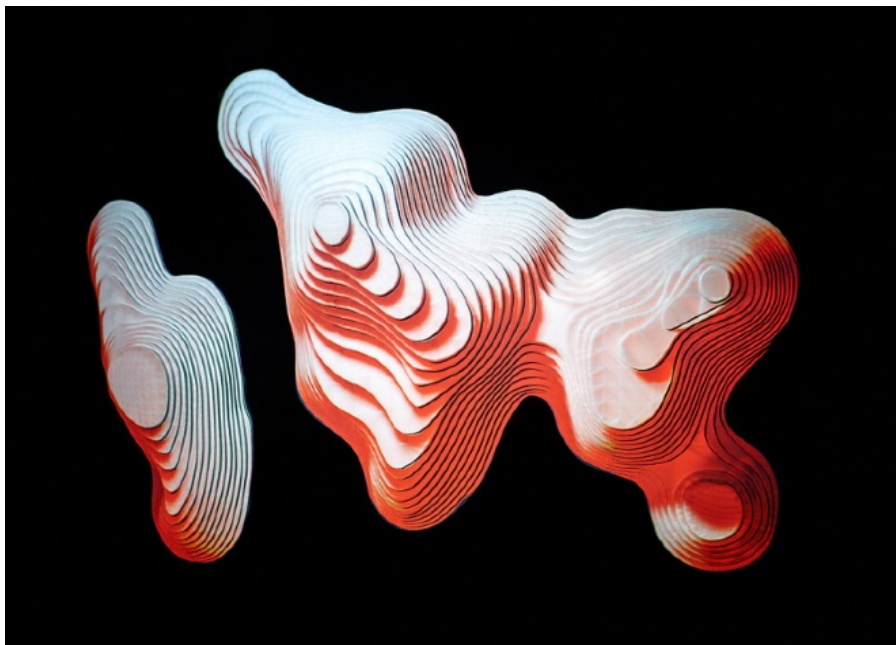


Photo 3

Source: <http://www.csismn.com/Isofield>



Photo 4

Source: <http://www.csismn.com/Isofield>



Photo 5

Source: <http://www.csismn.com/Deep-Space-Music>

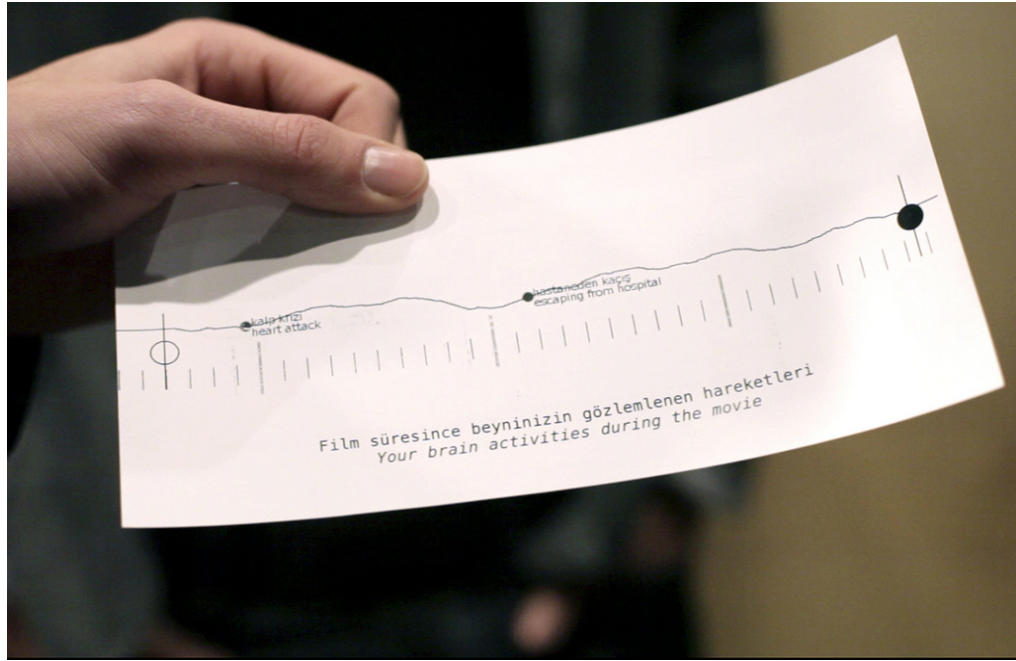


Photo 6

Source: <http://www.kocosman.com/index.php?/projects/hyperpresence/>



Photo 7

Source: <http://burak-arikan.com/tr/mypocket>



Photo 9

Source: <http://design-insitu.com/4610267>



Photo 10

Source: <http://design-insitu.com/4610267>



Photo 11

Source: <http://nerdworking.org/works-yekpare.html>

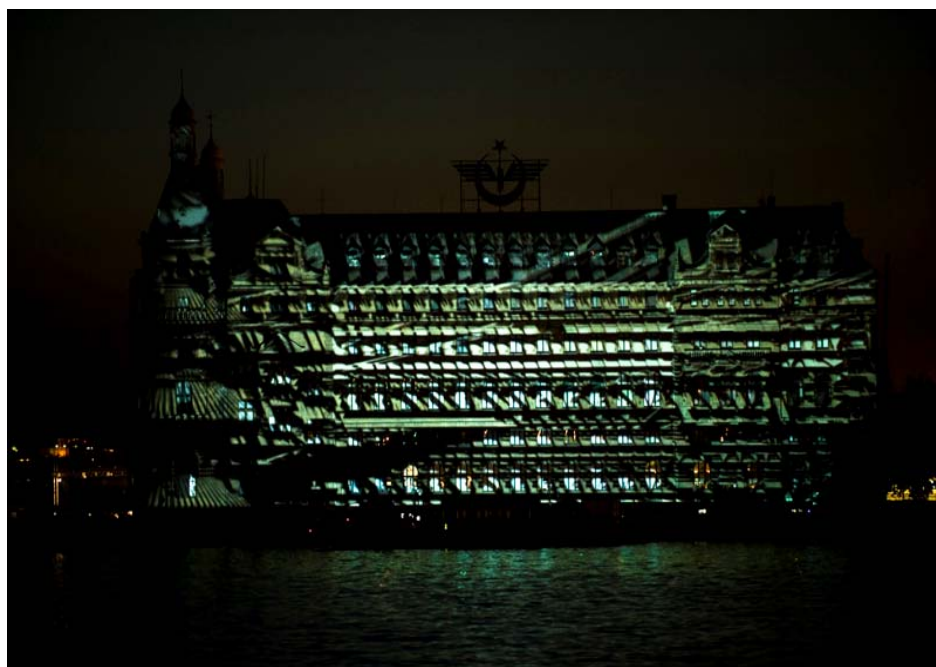


Photo 12

Source: <http://nerdworking.org/works-yekpare.html>



Photo 13

Source: <http://design-insitu.com/912791>



Photo 14

Source: <http://design-insitu.com/912791>



Photo15

Source: <http://design-insitu.com/2494517>

B. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

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TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

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