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**Review of the doctoral dissertation by Mr. A. Alperen Şahin entitled „Sites of Psyche. Exploring Raw Spatial Interventions“ prepared in connection with the doctoral proceedings in the field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art conservation, initiated by the Academic Board for the Discipline of Art at the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław.**

Mr. A. Alperen Şahin is a doctoral student at the Doctoral School of the Academy of Fine Arts in Wrocław. In 2020, he defended his Master's degree at the same university, in the Faculty of Interior Design, majoring in Design and Scenography. In 2016, he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Interior Design from Anadolu University in Eskişehir, Turkey. During his studies, he also participated in the Erasmus programme at Wrocław University, studying Interior Design.

In 2021, Mr A. Alperen Şahin participated in the *Mentorship Program In Bloom: Sebastian Mullaert, a full scholarship programme* focusing on improvisation and live performance.

At the same time, during his doctoral studies, he obtained a professional practice-internship, teaching classes in Generative Visual Coding and live performance implementation.

Mr A. Alperen Şahin is a multimedia artist whose artistic output - documented in his CV, portfolio and website - includes multimedia and spatial realisations related to temporal media. Over the years, he has developed an original style combining video, music, interventions, and audiovisual performances, presented both in independent spaces and cultural institutions.

## **EVALUATION OF THE ARTISTIC OUTPUT**

The artistic output of Mr. A. Alperen Şahin is not strongly rooted in the traditional institutional-gallery circuit, which can be explained both by the nature of his creative approach and the character of his artistic practice. His body of work is dominated by spatial interventions of a multimedia nature as well as audiovisual performances, realized and exhibited across a wide range of venues—from cultural institutions such as Pawilon Czterech Kopuł, BWA Wrocław through clubs and concert halls, to found spaces and interventionist actions in the urban environment.

Between 2019 and 2024, the artist participated in several dozen such artistic events. In 2023, he undertook an artistic residency at SÍM (Samband íslenskra myndlistarmanna) in Reykjavik, Iceland. Additionally, he took part in conferences of an artistic and scientific nature.

Below is the complete list of artistic achievements according to the submitted documentation:

**Solo projects:**

**2024**

- **“illithianeE”** – Spatial intervention/ Audiovisual performance, Otwarta Przestrzeń Kultury, Wrocław

**2023**

- **“a rite kept in shadows”** – Spatial intervention Audiovisual performance, Korpulfsstadir, Reykjavik
- **“noctshore”** – Video mural, Kinomural Nadodrze, Wrocław
- **“fromthedepths”** – Spatial intervention, Wyspa Tamka, Wrocław
- **“Ashen Lands”** – Immersive virtual environment, Pawilon Czterech Kopuł, Wrocław
- **“inner earth: transatlantic (w/nthng)”** – Audiovisual performance, Tamka, Wrocław
- **“Spectral Scape”** – Audiovisual performance, WRO Media Art Biennale, Wrocław

**2022**

- **“Enchanted Wing”** – Spatial intervention, Ciało, Wrocław
- **“ø-l”** – Spatial intervention, Konekt Festival, Pałac Gorzanów
- **“annnnmn.outofpills”** – Spatial intervention, SURVIVAL XX, Wrocław
- **“xycknss”** – Spatial intervention / Audiovisual performance, Ciało, Wrocław
- **Fairycore Syndicate x Somahaus Collective** – Audiovisual performance, Ciało, Wrocław
- **Transformator** – Audiovisual performance, Wrocław
- **“Made of and Unto”** – Audiovisual performance, Musica Polonica Nova, NFM, Wrocław

**2021**

- **“rawWxwW”** – Video screening, Neo Shibuya TV, Tokyo
- **“RAWWXWWXXWX”** – Video mural, Kinomural Nadodrze, Wrocław

**2020**

- **“Ø”** – Spatial intervention, ASP 411T, Wrocław
- **“nonplaces”** – Audiovisual performance, Sacrum Profanum (online)
- **“Invisible Exhibition”** – Audiovisual performance, Galeria Studio BWA, Wrocław
- **“nstrctrd”** – Audiovisual performance, CeTA, Wrocław

**2019**

- **“znasz tę stronę miasta?”** – Video mural, Kinomural Nadodrze, Wrocław
- **“Metastasis”** – Spatial intervention (co-artist), SURVIVAL 17, Wrocław
- **[Untitled]** – Spatial intervention, Instytut Festival, Garnizon Modlin, Warsaw
- **[Untitled]** – Projection, Minsk Design Week, Old Town, Minsk

- **“blackhole”** – Audiovisual performance, CeTA, Wrocław

2018

- **[Untitled]** – Spatial intervention & tutoring, Diversity MEDS Workshop, Byblos, Lebanon

#### Group projects:

2023

- **“A World That Is No Longer There”** – Group exhibition, ASP-Traugutta, Wrocław
- **“Artificial Behaviour”** – Group exhibition, ASP Wrocław / Accademia a Roma, Frosinone

2022

- **“Projection Mapping”** – Lille Video Mapping Festival, Palais Rihour, Lille

2021

- **“Homeostasis Lab”** – Digital art project, homeostasislab.org, Portugal

2020

- **“3rd Room”** – Group exhibition, Neon Gallery, ASP, Wrocław

2019

- **“Aufbruch”** – Assisting artist for Xenorama, MOSAiC Expedition, Tromsø
- **“breakfast at ten”** – Video mural (group AOAC), Kinomural Nadodrze, Wrocław
- **Group AOAC** – Audiovisual performances: Klub Proza, Kultura na Poziomie (Góry Sowie), Kazimierz Dolny
- **Group AOAC** – Audiovisual performance, Minsk Design Week, Hangar OK16, Minsk

2018

- **“Best Graduation Projects”** – Anadolu University, Eskişehir, Turkey
- **“Domar”** – “10. Night with Design”, Galeria Wnętrz, Wrocław

2016

- **“Jakiej Odry chcemy?”** – Wroclove Design, Wrocław
- **International Festival of Good Designs** – Bielany Wrocławskie

2015

- **“Virtual Spaces”** – Escuela de Arte y Superior de Diseño, Alicante, Spain

#### Published Artworks

2024

- **Electronic Music Track: “w---y trav----s”**, released on compilation *Cities Are Also Nature* by SomaHaus Collective, mastered by Adam Salamon (1 June 2024)

2021

- **Series of Artworks: *The Raw Art Review* SUMMER/FALL (ed. Henry Stanton)**, UnCollected Press / The Raw Art Review, 2021, pp. 66, 68, 70, 80, 100, ISBN: 978-1-7378731-9-8
- **Artwork and text: *Mimarlar Neden Bachelard Okur?*, *Khora Issue #1*** (ed. M. Taha Tunç, Sümeyye Yıldız), Ketebe, İstanbul, 2021, p. 25, ISBN: 978-625-7587-94-5
- **Artworks and Article: “Sublime Trashes”**, *Art Market Magazine* May 2021 Issue #59 (pub. Dafna Navarro), pp. 128-139

## **Publications**

**2021**

- **“Understanding the Sublime in Street Art”**, Warsaw European Conference On Interdisciplinary Scientific Research Full Textbook Volume I, ISBN: 978-625-7720-53-3
- **“to a place: an immersive spatial installation”**, MFA Thesis, published online in LABS Collections by Pomona College and Leonardo International Society for Arts, Science and Technology

## **Conferences**

**2023**

- **Under-the-Radar festival and interdisciplinary conference**, Vienna, Austria – “New Media Improvisations in Space”

**2021**

- **Online 16th International Conference on the Arts in Society**, Perth, Australia – “*A Raw Approach for Audiovisual Situational Arts*”
- **4th International European Conference on Interdisciplinary Scientific Research**, Warsaw, Poland – “*Understanding the Sublime in Street Art*”

I assess Mr. A. Alperen Şahin artistic output as coherent and consistent in the context of his artistic development, naturally leading to the realization of his doctoral dissertation. An important aspect is the fact that the candidate has an education in interior architecture, which he has transformed in an interesting and original way by transferring his acquired experience to the field of strictly artistic activities. This interdisciplinary perspective constitutes a significant element of his work and influences the unique character of his projects.

## **SUBSTANTIVE EVALUATION OF THE THEORETICAL PART OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

Right from the introduction to the theoretical part of the dissertation, there is a clear awareness of the choice of space for presenting the doctoral candidate’s works, in accordance with the idea of the “raw approach.” This stems from a subcultural, punk style characterized by low costs, the use of found materials, presentation in “outsider” spaces, and working in the spirit of DIY. As I mentioned earlier, this approach is what distinguishes Mr. A. Alperen Şahin creative practice in the evaluation of his artistic output. His theoretical work elaborates on this method and the creative inspirations behind it. The dissertation is entitled “Sites of Psyche: Exploring Raw Spatial Interventions” and consists of three chapters: “Atmosphere,” “Raw Approach,” and “Sites of Psyche,” preceded by a prologue and concluded with an epilogue. The graphic layout of the dissertation deserves recognition—it is a carefully designed publication whose visual form harmonizes with the nature of the subject addressed. The bibliography includes extensive list of titles in both Polish and foreign languages, which attests to the author’s thorough and broad research approach.

The main subject of the doctoral dissertation is the analysis of the "mental and emotional dimension of spatial art," understood primarily as audiovisual performance realized in the form of site-specific spatial interventions. These interventions affect the viewer in an immersive and emotional way, creating distinctive sound and visual landscapes with an emotional character. They influence the audience by evoking a sense of the sublime—an aesthetic category realized in art through the presentation of grand, extraordinary, awe-inspiring, or even terrifying phenomena. The sublime, which combines beauty with a sense of fear, is an aesthetic concept associated with dark Romanticism and the Gothic literary tradition. This tradition explores themes such as melancholy, ominous empty spaces, as well as misty and gloomy landscapes that represent sadness and the darker sides of human life. These motifs find reflection in contemporary culture, particularly in the aesthetics of the Gothic scene and the dark ambient genre, which explore emotional states of melancholy and darkness.

In the first chapter, titled "Atmosphere," Mr. A. Alperen Şahin analyses the concept of the sublime, treating it both as a starting point for his own inspirations and creative practice, and as a key to understanding people's fascination with the dark and frightening aspects of life. This chapter, beyond its analytical character, is also intended to set the tone for the reader, creating an atmosphere conducive to engaging with the remainder of the dissertation. The author complements the text with a link to a musical piece, which may serve as a background while reading the content.

In the subsection "Spatial and Temporal Realms," the candidate defines his understanding of spatial art, considering the context of his own artistic practice. The concept of spatial art is explained here in broad terms and defined primarily by the interaction between the properties of the space and the presence of the viewer within it. Art understood in this way creates a situation of immersive engagement with the experience, one that the audience perceives through multiple senses. The interdisciplinary nature of spatial art is expressed in the combination of various media and in its relationship with the site and its architecture. This approach may stem from the candidate's academic background, as he also studied interior architecture, and thus writes in the dissertation that one of the functions of spatial art is "to shape and animate space in order to evoke emotional and physical responses in the viewer."

Analysing spatial art from the perspective of a creator, Mr. A. Alperen Şahin distinguishes between two concepts: the art installation and the intervention, noting that the intervention relates more closely to the emotional and sensory sphere, which resonates more with his practice. Spatial art is also a meeting point of two temporalities—the time of the artwork as a time-based medium, and the time of the space in which it is presented. This space carries its own history and identity, which, along with other factors, influence perception and help shape the atmosphere. The candidate defines atmosphere as an immaterial result of the interaction between the physical elements of a space—such as lighting, materials, sound, and layout—which together create an invisible layer that is often experienced instinctively by the viewer, even before conscious observation begins.

The issue of atmosphere creation is further explored through the example of virtual worlds and video games, where mood-building is essential to shaping the user's experience. The author emphasizes that his main objective in this part of the dissertation is to explain the mechanisms behind the creation of this feeling in the context of spatial art, drawing on the similarities in interdisciplinarity and expressive methods shared by both fields. Video games are an important source of inspiration for him—both aesthetically and in terms of user experience design and the construction of emotionally engaging spaces. The candidate highlights the use of spatial properties to guide the player's movement and shape the experience. He stresses that the goal is not to create a rigid script of movement but rather to design a space that encourages exploration and presence. For this reason, the comparison between video games and spatial art seems valid—in both cases, the aim is to create an engaging, immersive experience that invites the audience to remain within the environment, explore it, and evokes an emotional response and influences the viewer.

In the next chapter, “Raw Approach”, Mr. A. Alperen Şahin describes this concept as broadly defined extra-systemic actions that remain on the margins of the official art world, resulting from a refusal to conform to the conventions and rules imposed by the system. These actions are often presented in alternative spaces, where expression is more important than perfection of technique. The author refers to the spirit of the punk subculture and the words of Iggy Pop, who described such an attitude as a form of creative expression of a person wishing to create something uncompromising and sincere. Artistic training, acquiring a workshop, can be seen in this context as a form of training - submission to certain rules and conventions.

The author points out that in the context of spatial art, high production costs can be a problem. High-budget productions, both artistic and commercial, have a much more impressive form and production capacity - which independent or young artists simply cannot afford. This situation, however, opens up room for DIY and “raw approach” artists who treat adversity as a creative challenge.

In the subsection “Letting Go,” Mr. A. Alperen Şahin describes the “raw approach” as a mindset in which the artwork reflects the artist's tools, ideas, and skills at a given moment, acknowledging their temporary nature. This resembles improvisation, where the artist works with a set of techniques and ideas—a so-called “toolkit”—and freely adapts them to the existing situation, engaging with it through a process of creative play.

The last chapter, entitled “Sites of Psyche,” develops the concept of “toolkit”, understood as a set of tools used in a series of interventions that form the practical part of the PhD. Mr. A. Alperen Şahin describes the means he uses - lighting, its modulation techniques and a computer system that synchronises video (“mapping”), light, sound, as well as special effects such as smoke. The “toolkit” is meant as the basic artistic means of expression with which the doctoral student, in sometimes completely different spaces, tries to create interventions in the existing environment. The artist is particularly drawn to spaces with a strong historical presence—such as old, abandoned buildings or subcultural sites. The

interventions are a “small anomaly in the atmospheric history” of a space that has already been shaped, yet they simultaneously become a part of it.

## EVALUATION OF THE PRACTICAL PART OF THE DOCTORATE

The dissertation, entitled “Sites of Psyche”, is a series of spatial interventions:

Intervention [1]: **xycknss**, klub Ciało, Wrocław, Polska

Intervention [2]: **Ø,-I**, Gorzanów Palace, Gorzanów, Polska

Intervention [3]: **annnnmn.outofpills**, the former hospital building, Wrocław, Polska

Intervention [4]: **a rite kept in shadows**, Korpúlsstaðir, Reykjavík, Islandia

Intervention [5]: **illithianeE**, Wooden Church, Park Szczytnicki, Wrocław

Mr. A. Alperen Şahin, whose work was created over the course of several years of doctoral studies, defines his art project through a number of key terms such as: 'spatial intervention', “live audiovisual performance”, “digital art”, “DIY”, “site-specific”, “off-space” and “raw approach”. These terms are not mere buzzwords - they form the core of a creative methodology that has been based on conscious experimentation with space, sound and image since the beginning.

The spatial interventions are created by Mr. A. Alperen Şahin with specific places in mind. These are spaces marked by history—often forgotten or marginal—such as abandoned clubs, hospital attics, decaying palaces, rural barns, or parks with historic churches. They carry an atmosphere of mystery, and simply being in them evokes a sense of unease in the viewer, linked to their aura. The artist does not treat them as neutral backdrops—on the contrary, their selection is a key element of the creative process. His works are site-specific in nature—designed for a particular location and not fully transferable or reproducible in a different context. These interventions can be interpreted as manifestations of Romantic sublimity.

At the heart of the intervention is an audiovisual performance - a spectacle in which music, light and video images (often in the form of “mapping”) build an intense, immersive experience. The key element here is sound - raw, disturbing, building a mood and resonating with the emotional rhythm of the place. The accompanying visuals - light and video projections - enhance the atmosphere, giving the space an almost theatrical feel. Directed lighting, improvised set design, video projections all combine to create an experience close to total performance, which does not tell a story in a narrative way but works on the level of emotions and senses.

These interventions can be interpreted as contemporary manifestations of the Romantic concept of the *sublime*. In the spirit of horror aesthetics and Gothic mystery, the artist designs liminal experiences—ones that provoke a shiver, disrupt everyday perception, and are at once fascinating and unsettling. This is intense art, deliberately operating in extremes—raw, wild, and emotional.

The artist works intuitively and quickly, following DIY principles—constructing installation elements himself, using found materials on site, often repurposed or salvaged. This approach expresses his creative credo: simplicity, improvisation, and authenticity. The style of these actions could be described as “raw technological romanticism”—combining a primal artistic gesture with the tools of contemporary digital culture.

In his practice, the artist resembles a wanderer or nomad—moving through various spaces, artistically claiming them through his “toolkit”: a set of visual and sonic tools that he composes differently in each context. These actions form a coherent language—not only in formal terms but also as a worldview. The goal is not to decorate the space, but to transform it into a field of experience—intense, often liminal, and transcending conventional boundaries of art.

In this way, the doctoral candidate creates a consistent artistic statement that can be described as an expression of an individual style, resisting rigid classifications and conventions of the art world. His interventions escape traditional exhibition conventions—they are spontaneous, unpredictable, and alive. Thus, they fit into a broader contemporary trend at the intersection of art, technology, and social space—where art becomes less an object and more a process of experience.

However, in the case of works based on such ephemeral qualities—intensity of experience, atmosphere of the place, direct engagement—there is a significant challenge when it comes to their review. The reviewer cannot fully participate in the artistic event; they can only get to know it through descriptions and documentation. And these, as is often the case with ephemeral art, do not fully convey the experience. Video recordings or photographs fail to capture the true scale, intensity, or mood of the intervention. What is more, they do not transmit what is most important—the emotional impact that comes from simply being present in the space.

As a result, the artistic experience that the doctoral candidate emphasizes so strongly in his description remains something the reviewer must, to some extent, imagine for herself. The atmosphere must be reconstructed by the reviewer based on fragments, descriptions, and visual cues. This is a challenging task, fraught with the risk of misunderstanding. Here, systematic descriptions included in the theoretical part—context of the place, explanations of intentions, course of the intervention, and the means used—prove helpful. They allow for a better understanding of why the artist enters a given space and what he aims to achieve within it.

I am also reflecting on the overarching concept of the titular project *Sites of Psyche*. While the term appears meaningful and potentially engaging, its current articulation lacks full clarity. It evokes a punk



aesthetic — raw, subversive, and alternative to institutional modes of operation — yet without a clearer context, it remains difficult to interpret unambiguously. Is it about exploring mental states? About places resonating with the subconscious or trauma? Or perhaps about mapping emotional states within a space? Without a clear explanation of this concept—its origins, the meanings attributed to it by the author, and how it relates to their artistic practice—"Sites of Psyche" remains more of an intriguing term than a comprehensible notion. However, this may be intentional, as the author declares in the doctoral thesis a deliberate avoidance of analysis and description of their works, so as not to create a predetermined "guide" to experiencing them.

On the other hand, the method of working—based on intuition, spontaneity, and attentive engagement with space—appears both interesting and original. It demonstrates a clear aesthetic coherence and consistency, indicative of a well-developed, strong authorial style. The artist seems to possess a refined sense of form and distinctiveness that sets their work apart. Nevertheless, even with such an authentic and expressive approach, there remains a need for description—not only on a formal level but also on a conceptual one.

The descriptions of the practical part focus primarily on the technical aspects, yet there is a lack of deeper reflection on the motivations and assumptions underlying the undertaken actions. The formal means are clear and effective, but a more strongly articulated meaning could lend the artist's actions even greater depth. For a fuller understanding, introspection is needed - reflection on the motivation and meaning of creative choices. Only then does artistic practice gain not only aesthetic coherence, but also philosophical and emotional justification. In a sense, this meaning is supplemented by the theoretical part of the doctoral dissertation, but it would also be advisable for the individual interventions themselves.

## CONCLUSION

Mr. A. Alperen Şahin consistently builds his own world—away from the centre, on his own terms, shaped by his interests and life experiences. This independent attitude manifests itself clearly in every aspect of his work - from the design of his texts, the layout through the consistent handling of certain motifs, to the construction of a unique language of artistic expression. Importantly, this means of artistic expression does not relate solely to the art itself but also encompasses all related spheres - building a coherent silhouette of a total artistic and life attitude. Mr. A. Alperen Şahin work bears the hallmarks of a "dirt" aesthetic - it consciously draws on the experiences of subcultures, the margins of culture, peripheral spaces. At the same time, it remains sincere, personal, and devoid of calculation. The artist explores these areas with genuine commitment, treating them as a field of experimentation—a place where he can test the limits of form, perception, and expression.

In the context of the increasing professionalization of the artist's role and the ongoing commercialization of art, such practices deserve special recognition. On one hand, they represent a manifestation of a sincere creative attitude; on the other, a conscious contestation of prevailing institutional mechanisms. This is an example of an artist whose artistic practice not only creates but also redefines the conditions under which art can exist. A practice based on quick, low-cost actions, utilizing found materials and characterized by a nomadic approach, offers an interesting proposition in times of endless production of new objects and their fetishization. It demonstrates that it is possible to operate within the art world in a manner different from the commercial—by forging one's own paths and creating an alternative map. This approach also embodies an eco-conscious attitude, emphasizing harmony with the environment and responsiveness to the site's context rather than continuous production.

After all, every high-cost exhibition generates a huge amount of waste - because that is what the specially built space arrangement often becomes: artificial walls, displays, which eventually end up in warehouses inaccessible to the public. Forgotten, covered in dust years later, they become spaces of exploration for successive generations of artists who, like Mr. A. Alperen Şahin, find these spaces inspiring.

In conclusion, the dissertation is characterised by coherence in both the theoretical and practical parts. A consistent image of the artist emerges, one who continuously develops his individual means of expression down to the smallest detail, based on creating spatial atmosphere as a sensory experience. This aspect forms the very essence of his creative work.

Therefore, taking into account the artistic and theoretical content of the doctoral dissertation submitted by Mr A. Alperen Şahin, I hereby affirm that the dissertation constitutes an original and innovative artistic achievement and fully complies with the requirements set forth in Article 187 of the Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science.

Accordingly, I fully support the motion submitted to the Academic Board for the Discipline of Art at the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław to confer upon Mr A. Alperen Şahin the academic degree of Doctor in the field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art conservation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "A. Orlikowska". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'A' being large and prominent.

dr. hab. Anna Orlikowska, prof. AS