

# Dr. Didem Pekün

Didem Pekün (b. 1978, Istanbul) is an award-winning artist-filmmaker and academic based in London and Istanbul. She works across moving image, text, photography, sound and theory. Both in her education and in her approach as an artist and educator, Didem's work is characterized by a synthesis of theory and practice. She has made several works that address political violence, displacement, and their many intersections. A recent shift in her practice moves from 'history' to 'futurity,' focusing on interspecies ethics in her current artistic research project.

## CONTACT

+ 90 537 416 0103  
didempekun@gmail.com  
Birthdate: 01.11.1978  
Turkish – British nationalities  
[www.didempekun.com](http://www.didempekun.com)

## EDUCATION

Goldsmiths, University of London, UK Ph.D., Visual Cultures (supervisors Dr. Nicole Wolf & Prof. Tony Dowmunt) Examinors: Dr. Alisa Lebow & Gail Pearce	2014 – 2016
Goldsmiths, University of London, UK M.Phil. Visual Cultures (supervisors Dr. Nicole Wolf & Prof. Tony Dowmunt) Examinors: Dr. Mark Fisher & Dr. Ros Gray	2011 – 2014
Goldsmiths, University of London, UK M.A. Screen Documentary – <i>Merit</i> “ <i>Improvisation in Documentary Film</i> ”	2006 – 2007
SOAS, University of London, UK BA (Hons) Ethnomusicology – <i>Merit</i>	2002 – 2005

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Goldsmiths, Fine Arts Department, Lecturer in Fine Arts (part-time) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Critical Studies (BA)</i></li><li>• <i>Portfolio of Art Writing (BA)</i></li></ul>	September 2025 - current
Boğaziçi University (part-time) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Experimental Film and Video (BA)</i></li></ul>	Jan 2025 - August 2025
Fellow @ Berliner Künstlerische Forschung / Berlin Senate (full-time)	Jan 2022 - December 2024
Kadir Has University Istanbul, Film and Television Department (full-time) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Experimental Cinema (BA)</i></li><li>• <i>Visual Grammar (BA)</i></li></ul>	Sept. 2021 – April 2022
Universität der Künste, Berlin Centre for Advanced Studies in Arts and Sciences (BAS) / Graduiertenschule Fellow (full-time)	April 2019 – April 2021

Central European University, Budapest, Fellow, Visual Studies Platform & Institute for Advanced Study (full-time)	Sept. 2017 - May 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Visual Grammar (MA and PhD)</i></li> <li>• <i>Artistic Research (MA and PhD)</i></li> </ul>	
Goldsmiths, Visual Cultures Department, Visiting Research Fellow	2017-2018
Koc University; Lecturer (full-time)	Sept. 2013 – January 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Documentary Film: Theory and Practice (BA)</i></li> <li>• <i>Video Art and Installation: Theory and Practice (BA)</i></li> <li>• <i>Video Basics (BA)</i></li> <li>• <i>Film Theory (BA)</i></li> <li>• <i>Independent and Graduation Projects (MA and final year undergraduate level)</i></li> </ul>	
Sabancı University; Lecturer (part-time)	2011 – 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Documentary Film: Theory and Practice (BA)</i></li> </ul>	
Bilgi University; Lecturer (part-time)	2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Non-Linear Editing</i></li> </ul>	

### **AWARDS AND RESIDENCIES**

Gabriele Münter Prize (longlisted)	2024
Between Bridges Residency	2024
Residency at IASPIS	2021
Grant by SAHA for new film	2020
UdK Grant for two years residency (monthly stipend + studio)	2019/2021
Foundation for Arts Initiatives Research Grant	2019
Best Documentary in Human Rights, Sarajevo Film Festival	2018
Visegrad Grant	2018
Grant for new production New Film Fund	2018
Grant by SAHA	2017
Commission for a new film – Locus Athens	2017
ZK/U (Zentrum für Kunst und Urbanistik), Berlin, Artist in residence	2017-2018
Nominee for A 38 Production Grant Kassel.	2017
Commission for a New Project by SAHA.	2015
Commission for a New Project by SALT.	2014
Delfina Foundation, London. (2 months)	2013

Research Residency, SALT, Istanbul. (2 months)	2012
Ph.D. Scholarship, Royal Holloway, University of London (declined).	2011
Nominated to Best Documentary by SIYAD (Turkish Film Critics Association).	2011
British Council, 'Creative Entrepreneur of the Year Award in Cinema'.	2010
Greenhouse Documentary Development Project, funded by the EU.	2009
Berlinale Talent Campus.	2008
Dolby Digital Award for the School of Sound Symposium.	2007
University of London Award for the School of Sound Symposium.	2007

### **SELECTED SCREENINGS AND EXHIBITIONS**

AKEBI Screening and talk, Istanbul Archivist Screening and talk, Berlin	2026
Ayvalik Film Festival Munich International Film Festival Hrant Dink Foundation Screening Filmkoop Screening	2025
Istanbul Film Festival, Documentary Competition Between Bridges, solo exhibition, Berlin Istanbul Modern, film screening Goldsmiths, Visual Cultures Public Program, screening and talk	2024
STATIONS, Berlin Sinema Transtopia, Berlin	2023
Tavros, Athens Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven Stroom, Den Haag Netwerk, Aalst Council of Europe, Strasbourg	2022
Shifting Patterns @ Kunstverein Tiergarten BFI London Film Festival	2021
Van Abbemuseum 'Araf' solo exhibition Lulea biennale, Sweden	2020
Moderna Museet, Stockholm 'Where is cinema going?', Istanbul	2019

Forum Expanded, Berlinale Geometries, Athens Istanbul Film Festival, Documentary Competition Alchemy Film and Moving Image Festival, Hawick Summer Nostos Festival, Athens Sarajevo Film Festival, Documentary Competition Festival Diritti Umani, Lugano Lulea Biennale, Sweden Gezici Festival, Ankara, Focus on Didem Pekün's films in a program titled "I want to feel" Human Rights Foundation Cinema Days, İzmir	2018
"Sen ve Ben", 5533 "Sis", DEPO 'In Spite of', Documenta 14 Public Program Athens / Kassel "Thickness of Time", Locus Athens	2017
33 <sup>rd</sup> Kassel Dok Fest "Freundschaftsspiel", Museum für Neue Kunst Freiburg "Of Dice and Men", solo at Delfina Foundation "Through the Fog", State of Concept, Athens	2016
"Joy, Passion, Fury" MAXXI, Museum of Contemporary Art, Rome 56 <sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, Curriculum, Creative Arts Summit "A Century of Centuries", SALT Istanbul	2015
Screening of The Dream of Shahrazad (dir. Francois Verster, Associate Producer. Didem Pekün) 27th IDFA, Masters Section	2014
59 <sup>th</sup> Oberhausen Film Festival, Germany. Sheffield Fringe, UK. Arnolfini, UK. "Panorama Méditerranéen" du Festival Millenium, Belgium	2013
Tropentheater, Amsterdam, Netherlands. Culture Unplugged, India	2012

### **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**

Assemblies, in conversation with Taous Dahmani @ Ibraaz, London	2025
"On bodies, choreography and political violence" in conversation with Sandra Noeth @ Between Bridges Foundation, Berlin	2024
Stroom, Symposium on "re...", Den Haag Tavros, Discussin on Disturbed Earth, Athens Council of Europe, Screening and lecture on, about Disturbed Earth, Strasbourg University of Sarajevo, "Fllms of Didem Pekun", discussion within the Conference of "ottoman histories on Bosnia"	2022

Berlinale Forum, conversation with Clarissa Thieme Interflugs, Conversation with Övül Ö . Durmuşoğlu Art in Dark Times, Conversation with Galit Eliat & Erden Kosova	2020
Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Conversation with Petra Bauer and Kim West as part of Filmclub	2019
Stuck in Migration. Waiting Zones and (Internment) Camps, A joint international conference in Budapest and Munich, co-organized by IAS CEU and CAS LMU. "Between Movement and Stasis: Aesthetics and Politics of Migrant Itineraries in Contemporary Essay Filmmaking"	2018
Hebbel Am Ufer, Berlin, Violence of Inscriptions 58 <sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, Chicago, Illinois	2017
DAI, Roaming Assembly#7 intraAction: TransUrbanism Visible Evidence XXIII, <i>New Frontiers in Documentary</i> , Montana State University Conference: <i>Cinema and Time in Films from Turkey</i> , Kadir Has University, Turkey, In conversation with Teju Cole, UK In conversation with Nick Aikens, UK	2016
Symposium: <i>Crossing Borders, Traversing Narratives</i> , University of St. Andrews, "Two Essay Films from Turkey" Conference: <i>World Cinema and the Essay-film</i> , University of Reading, UK. "Two Essay Films from Turkey" In conversation with November Paynter, SALT, Turkey	2015
Conference: <i>Video Vortex</i> , SALT Istanbul and Bahcesehir University. [With Hale Tenger] "Art, Archives, and Activism."	2014
Conference: <i>Performing Documents</i> , University of Bristol, UK. "Performing the Self". Seminar <i>Of Dice and Men</i> , Audio-Visual PhD Group, Goldsmiths, University of London	2013
Perspectives from Turkey in the New Millennium Conference, University of Exeter. "Tülay German: A Forgotten Icon."	2010
Conference: <i>Mental Health and Human Rights: Sociological Perspectives</i> [with Margaret Jessop]. University of Warwick, UK. "Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered: Coercive Treatment within Mental Health Services and Films for Education of Professionals"	2007

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Pekun, D. [2026]. Monograph in progress.

Pekun, D. [2025]. "At night, on faultlines, in Istanbul" in Trigger.

Pekun, D. & Mohaiemen, Naeem [2017]. "Never liked goodbyes anyway" e-flux

Pekun, D. (2017). "Can't help it; the oldest mind on the planet is hot" Laure Prouvost in Conversation with Didem Pekün, e-flux

## **OTHER ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE**

### **Workshop and Screening Organization**

Organizer of the seminar by Vasif Kortun, Koç University.	2015
Organized weekly documentary screenings titled "Stranger than Fiction".	2014
Organizer of a seminar given by Aylin Zoi Tinel, Koç University.	2014
Organizer of the screening and seminar given by Orhan Eskiköy, Koç University.	2013
Organizer of the panel discussion led by Aaron Cezar, Director of Delfina Foundation, London. "The Artist's Toolkit for International Opportunities" at Sabancı University. (Aaron Cezar was accompanied by Abbas Akhavan and Aslı Çavuşoğlu.)	2013
Organizer of an artist talk given by Banu Cennetoğlu (Venice Biennale Turkish Pavillion, 2009), at Sabancı University.	2012
Organizer of an artist talk given by Yasemin Özcan, at Sabancı University.	2011
Organizer of an artist talk given by Ali Kazma (Venice Biennale for Turkish Pavillion, 2014), at Sabancı University.	2011
Organizer of a seminar given by Necati Sönmez (Director of Documentarist) at Sabancı University.	2010

### **Departmental Service**

Chair, BA Student Staff Forum, Goldsmiths	2026
Film Certificate Coordinator, Koc University	2013 – 2017

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Founding member of Beyond Istanbul: Center of Spatial Justice  
<https://www.mekandaadalet.org/>  
Audio-visual PH.D. Group, Goldsmiths, University of London.

### **LANGUAGES**

Turkish (native), English (native fluency), French (fluent), Spanish (beginner), German (A2.3)