Abstract

Creativity, aesthetic, design and originality are the terms commonly taking part in architecture and art disciplines. Hence, it can be said that architecture discipline is engaged with art. By its nature, architecture education is a process aiming to bring in design skill in which the creativity and visuality is effective to the student. Within the training, it should be ensured that the students are aware that they are within the design and art area. Research offers a free work environment for students and covers the process of creating various designs with individual and group works. The practices including educational activities are carried out with a sample group composed of students studying in the 3rd class of Department of Architecture in Faculty of Architecture of Karadeniz Technical University. Obtained products of two and three dimensions are presented by evaluating the selected objects in terms of perception, interpretation and abstraction.

Keywords: Art, architecture training, creativity, design, abstraction.

1. Introduction

For the students having an architecture training, activities such as observation, perception, evaluation and re-interpretation are essential. Development of the visual world of the individuals and accordingly development of visual power of thinking starts with the perception of built environment/external world. During the architectural training process, it is essential to be able to guide students towards aesthetic and ideational area and to be able to awaken their art awareness in viewing and perceiving the environment. Architectural training should include explorer and tester activities that will improve the originality and creativity of the students. When considered from this point of view, each student should be dealt as a value creating resource. Each individual having different mental and physical skills also causes a differentiation in manners of understanding and conveying a work of art.

Museum training that has started to gain importance in our country in recent years emerged as a field offering different and effective opportunities of art teaching (Buyurgan and Mercin 2010). Conducting studies in different locations by moving the training outside of the workshop environment contributes to the improvement of creativity of the students and enables them to comprehend some basic factors such as aesthetic, form, function and material.

As being the institutions that gather information, conduct researches, certify, display and train, museums convey the evolution of the human from past to present along with the objects (Atagök, 2006). Museums are the places that enable individuals to be trained in affective, kinesthetic and cognitive terms (Özsoy, 2001). Training in the museum
differs from traditional teaching process due to arousing the interest and curiosity of the student and being highly dependent on visuality. Moreover, it can be said that museums provide the students with an active learning atmosphere based on the experiences, with its environment atmosphere and enabling the close view and touching of the objects.

Differently from the traditional class environment, this study has enabled students to be in a direct interaction with the museum thus enabled them to learn by living their own experiences. Amongst the practices organized by the researcher activities intended to improve the observing, analyzing, evaluating, interpreting and designing actions of the students take place. Studies in which students can present their abilities allow them to take part willingly in researcher and experiencing actions. Students being in touch with each other during the process enable the sharing of experiences and enrichment of training environment. When it is considered in terms of architectural training, it can be said that the activities applied contribute to improvement of creativity and ability of expressing of students and different interpretations, expressions and experiences are gained via group works.

2. Method

Museum usage as a learning environment in different disciplines shows that it can be adapted to architectural training as well as an area giving importance to aesthetic and visual values. In this regard, Hagia Sophia Museum is selected as a working field since it is an important work of art for Trabzon and carries both historical and cultural values.

![Figure 1. Museum and its neighborhood (Ballance, 1968)](image)

Being an ancient and the most important Byzantine structure of the region, Trabzon Hagia Sophia Church was constructed during I. Manuel Kemmenos (1238-1263). Construction with a square cross plan has a high central dome. Building is highly rich in terms of stone decoration and fresco. Niches with stalactites and column caps on western front, medallions with geometrical compositions on northern front have the characteristics in stone dressings of Seljuk. Inside, there are various portrayals of Jesus, Virgin Mary and saints along with the various themes taken from the bible. On the west wing of the church The Last Supper and Washing Foot scenes are portrayed. On other wings, portrayals such as Baptism, Evangel, and Crucifixion take place. (Ballance, 1960, Horuluoğlu, 1978, Karpuz, 1990).
Study that is lasted in 4 hours has been conducted with 12 female and 6 male, total 18 third grade students of Architecture Department of Karadeniz Technical University in 2011-2012 fall semester. Museum building and garden is visited by arriving at the area along with the students on predetermined date and time. After keeping the students informed about the museum, “Hagia Sophia Museum Worksheet” is given to the students. Students are requested to walk around the museum as individually and meanwhile write the following:

I. Define the object that mainly attracted their attention,
II. Analyze all the details regarding the object,
III. Express the object in two dimension by abstracting,
IV. How they abstract and interpret the object, by thinking what,

on the relevant boxes provided in the worksheet. After the completion of practice, students are divided into the groups of 3 people. By selecting the object of one person amongst them, groups have formed a narration of that subject. Then, same groups have designed a sculpture of that subject with a wauk. When the activity is completed all groups have examined the resultant sculptures. Study is completed by listening the narrations about how the sculptures are designed and how are they interpreted. Two and three dimensional products obtained after the practices are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Student works

| Group | Description |
|-------|-------------|
| 1. Group | They have abstracted the bull by considering it as a symbol of power and plenitude. |
| Bull Header | ![Bull Header Image] |
| 2. Group | As the symbol of Christianity- “cross” occurs in the plan platform when the stairs descending to grave, space and part where the grave is located combined, they have obtained the design by abstracting the “cross” symbol. |
| Monk Grave | ![Monk Grave Image] |
| 3. Group | They have abstracted as a flower seen as “+” on plan that changes color in daylight and has twirls. |
| Colorful Cross on the dome of Narthex | ![Colorful Cross Image] |
3. Findings and Results

Museums are being effectively used in training process as multi-directional learning fields based on experiences (İlhan and Okvuran, 2001). In the architectural training based on practice, using museums as a learning environment provides students with various experiences. Museum training contributes to the improvement of creativity which is an important factor in art and architecture fields.

It is considered that students actively using their visual, tactual, audial and intellectual competences throughout the practices have an impact on their being curious, concerned and willing during the study. Students participated in the research have stated that they have never visited a museum in that way before and enjoyed the study.

Statements on the “Observation Form” given to students so as to learn their opinion and feelings with regard to museum study conducted are as follows: “We have seen how a religious belief can be reflected to structure, form and front piece.”, “Activities conducted were different and enjoyable than the previous ones.”, “Narrations told attracted my attention.”, “Museum visit has turned into a fun activity in groups.”, “Activities conducted have made learning permanent.”

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