

# The 5 Most-Talked About Projects At The Istanbul Design Biennial

“The trouble with our times is that the future is not what it used to be,” French poet and philosopher Paul Valéry famously said before the start World War II.

Today, his quote is the theme for the [2<sup>nd</sup> Istanbul Design Biennial](#), which opened October 29<sup>th</sup> and runs until December 14<sup>th</sup> at Galata Greek Primary School and other locations across the city. Curated by Zoë Ryan, curator of architecture and design at the Art Institute of Chicago, it’s a biennial of ideas more than objects. “Istanbul is going through a deep transformation,” she says, “So it is fitting to be here talking about the future and the changing of ideas.”

Eighty-five percent of the 53 projects on display are new commissions; the rest are ongoing works. In turns provocative, innovative and cheeky—but always accessible—the designs can be appreciated on multiple levels. All explore the critical role design and architecture play in everyday life.

Housed in a former primary school, the biennial is structured into different departments: Norms and Standards, Personal, Civic Relations, Resource and Broadcast. Banner quotes along walls and dividers come from the biennial’s featured designers and also serve as the curatorial voice. (Sample: “Technology is not magic.”)

These five buzzed-about projects will have an impact long after the biennial ends:

a b c d e f  
g h i j k l m  
n o p q r s t  
u v w x y z

typeface: Dyslexie Regular

**1. Dyslexie Typeface:** The biennial's breakout star is a font developed by Christian Boer that makes reading easier for people with dyslexia. About 10 percent of the world's population has the neurological disorder, which causes a disconnect between language and visual processing. When someone with dyslexia looks at a printed or written word, he or she sees the letters rotating and flipping in space. Boer, who has the condition, created the typeface as his thesis project at the Utrecht Art Academy in the Netherlands. His font has a heavier baseline, longer ascenders and descenders, larger openings in the letterforms and a slight slant, making it easier for dyslexics to read.



**2. New Survivalism:** About 50 percent of people in earthquake-prone Turkey have portable kits called “bug-out bags” that contain survival gear like first aid supplies, clothing and non-perishable food. (In the states, you might know them as “go bags.”) Designers Jessica Charlesworth and Tim Parsons’ alternative bags take this idea one step further. Their series of alternative bug-out bags are modeled on different personality archetypes and become building blocks for a new society. For example, The Decision Maker’s kit includes a jacket stuffed with dice, the farmer’s almanac and various fortune-telling tools in its pockets.



**3. No. 41 Workout Computer:** Fashion design studio BLESS created a computer whose keyboard is a series of punching bags—complete with a teeny tiny exclamation point. Typing becomes a full-body experience, and a way to rage against a work routine that forces you to stare at a screen all day.



**4. Nap Gap:** Architect Jurgen Mayer-Hermann's one-room installation of glowing pink light, pillows and carpet pipes in "pink noise" (the noise-cancelling frequency often called "white noise") in public spaces to encourage sleeping wherever and whenever we like.



**5. ABC Manifesto Corporation Writers and Consultants:** On the rooftop is a mock consulting firm to help biennial-goers create their own bespoke manifesto. (The interactive project takes its name from Tristan Tzara's "Dada Manifesto.") Viewers are encouraged to follow a prescribed process—pulling items from a shelf, placing them into a manifesto generator machine, reading their computer-generated manifesto into a microphone—all the while being encouraged by workers at The Corporation to be confident, develop a point of view and declare it to the world.

Link: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/maridelreyes/2014/11/12/the-5-most-talked-about-projects-at-the-istanbul-design-biennial/>