

Dear Professor,

My name is Annemie Maes, I am an artist participating in the exhibition project '25th anniversary of Koç University', project curated by Basak Senova. Last march our group visited Koç University and its different research departments. Since then, we are working on the concept for the exhibition.

My artwork is inspired by ecological processes. As an artist, beekeeper, herbalist and gardener, I have my laboratory on the open fields. Since a few years I am researching the co-evolution between city honeybees and urban ecosystems in the OpenGreens project and the Bee Monitoring program. Bee colonies are now threatened in all industrialized nations, and given that the survival of bees is crucial for human sustainability, there is a great urgency to improve by all means the ways in which colonies could thrive. With my installations, in which I present the results of my artistic research, I try to raise awareness by the public. It is remarkable to see how a bee population functions and evolves very much in accordance to the human activities we are developing around them: gardening and (urban) agriculture. The production of honey is different related to the flowers we grow, the plants we like, the garbage or pollution we produce. Bees are very responsive to the different biotopes that we share.

Though we seem to have rather few insight into what constitutes the diversity of our surrounding living place, and that's something we want to research on a deeper level. As bio-markers, bees can give us valuable information about living conditions in our continuous productive urban landscapes. Momentary, I conduct a microscopical research on the pollen(grains), brought back by the bees.

My research surveys in an artistic way the multiple fields of interaction between honeybees and the (urban) ecosystem. It connects fields and disciplines so distant as entomology, architecture & design, ecology and ICT and the artistic works are dealing with notions of environment and perception. For the exhibition project, I would like to ask for your collaboration. I am preparing a book, aimed at the wider audience of the exhibition. In attachment you can find a preliminary setup (a pdf with a limited amount of the pictures, without texts) that can give you an idea of what the result will be.

The focus is on the honey bee. The pictures are made by me and document the the research project. The bee is represented on different levels. As a social group (social insects) decentralised power, self organisation and democratic decision making, as a subgroup (matriarchal society), as bee-technology (gps for homing, wing-hooks, compound multi faceted eyes, proboscis pump system, antennae with thousands of receptors, sensors and actuators), historically (the queen-bee and the bee cultus), as architects (comb building), as foragers (pollen and nectar collectors), and much more.

I would like to ask all of you, to contribute to the book with a text. The aim is to make a link, conceptual or literal, from your own research domain towards one of the multiple facets of the honey bee. The text should be around 15.000 characters, or 2.500 words, and the deadline is september first. If you find it useful, you can also include diagrams and or photos or drawings.

If you agree to collaborate, I might also use quotes out of your text in the installation set up during the exhibition in Yapi Kredi Cultural Center in Istanbul.

I would be very pleased also with an artefact of your choice, an artefact referring to the content of your article. This artefact will also be exhibited in the installation. Of course it will get back to you after the exhibition. I am thinking of a drawing, a photo, a small object, a piece of technology, a notebook,

Besides you, dear Professor, I asked following of your colleagues to contribute with an article: Associate Professor Levent Koçkesen (Economics), Assistant Professor Alkan Kabakçioğlu (Physics), Assistant Professor Murat Yüksel (Sociology), Professor Hakan Ürey (Electrical & Electronics Engineering), Prof. Dr. Aslıhan Yener (Art History and

Archaeology), Associate Professor Çağatay Başdoğan (Mechanical Engineering).

In case you are interested in the project and the collaboration, but you have a lack of time, please ask a close collaborator to contribute with an article covering your research domain - I will be very grateful to you!

With my best regards,

Annemie Maes, artistic researcher,
Brussels.

<http://opengreens.net>