

Curator's Choice: Mari Spirito, Director of Protocinema

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Mari Spirito, director of Protocinema
(Ali Taptik)

Which works of art would you own and live with, if cost and logistics were no obstacle?

Instead of *with*, how about *inside*? I would be very happy living in “Photographs Taken from Hotel Room Windows While Traveling,” by Hans-Peter Feldmann, which is a small group of photos taken by the artist on his travels. In doing so, I could be everywhere and with Hans-Peter and Uschi all the time.

What’s the last great book you read?

The Trauma of Everyday Life, by Mark Epstein. It is a fascinating look at the development of the mind at the intersection of Western psychiatry and Buddhist ideologies.

You do a lot of your work in Istanbul. What’s one site in the city that you’d tell a first-time visitor to explore?

I tell every first-time visitor to get on a terrace and a ferry: which ones are up to you.

Speaking of travel—where did you find yourself over the course of 2015?

Mexico, New Orleans, Detroit, New York, Moscow, Basel, Istanbul, London, Paris, Beirut, and Miami.

What's next for the nonprofit you founded, Protocinema?

We'll collaborate with P! in New York to present a selection of [Vahap Avsar](#) (/artists/vahap-avsar-967932) works in the form of postcards printed from a found archive in eastern Turkey, on view through December 13. The postcards—from the late 1970s and early '80s—illustrate what was happening with Turkish politics at the time, which parallels what is happening now. And in January 2016, the Garage in Moscow and Protocinema are presenting a new work by Köken Ergun about cultural expansionism through a network of schools.

What might you be doing if you weren't a curator?

I would be doing everything possible to keep Planned Parenthood funded.

If you could have a drink or a coffee with any art world personality, living or dead, whom might you choose?

If you are going to let me talk to dead people, I would have coffee with my father, as I miss him very much and am very curious about his view of the afterlife.

What projects do you have in the works for 2016?

We will present a Lara Ogel intervention at Dhaka Art Summit; [Mika Tajima](#) (/artists/mika-tajima-1118087) and Abbas Akhavan in Istanbul; and more exhibitions of emerging curators via Proto5533, a collaboration between Protocinema and 5533, an artist-run nonprofit based in Istanbul.
