



# SHADES OF WHITE



## ABOUT THE PERSON

#1 PROJECT  
IAOIZ NU Professional and  
Technical Private High School  
İzmir, Turkey



**FACTS**

Dürrin Süer has been working at M artı D Mimarlık as founder and partner since 2007. Dürrin is the author of many articles on the effects of globalisation on spaces and architectural education. Her work has been published in architectural magazines such as Yapı, Mimarlık, Arradamento Mimarlık, Ege Mimarlık. Furthermore, she has been part of the jury in many architectural competitions and has been a speaker at various conferences. Dürrin graduated from Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Architecture in 1987. She has completed her Master' and PhD degree there as well; she also used to work there as an academic.

**ARCHITECT DÜRRİN SÜER**  
IN THE INTERVIEW

**WHAT WAS THE MAIN REASON YOU BECAME AN ARCHITECT?**

Although I think it is not a conscious choice, the way I relate to the environment I live in, my tendency to observe, change, and organise the environment may be the reasons. I am happy to be an architect. I think that architecture, beyond being a profession, is effective in the formation of our attitude towards life.

**THREE ATTRIBUTES THAT BEST DESCRIBE YOUR OWN ARCHITECTURE?**

I can say that our attitude in architecture is to suggest simple spatial constructions with a contextual, rational disposition.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE CONTEMPORARY BUILDING AND WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE ARCHITECT?**

It is not possible to talk about a single architect and building. Different structures, different people have affected me in different ways. Cengiz Bektaş, affected me through the way he associates the cultural values, the built and natural environment with the production of architecture. Scarpa affects me through his attitude towards re-functioning, as his intervention to the existing structure in the Olivetto Showroom, while Topkapı Palace

affects me by the modest relationship it has with its environment as a building complex built in the 15th century by a powerful Sultan, by its simplicity and by its perception on the human scale. The Byzantine Culture Museum of Thessaloniki affects me through the perfection of the details of the combination of gross concrete and brick materials, while The Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilisations in Marseille - (MUCEM) affects me through the innovative use of the material, the concrete shell designed like a lace that surrounds the building, and through the shadow plays that it creates inside.

**ARCHITECTS WEAR BLACK BUT DESIGN THEIR BUILDINGS WHITE. DOES THAT APPLY TO YOU?**

I do not have such a fixed preference, but I prefer to wear dark colours such as black, gray, dark blue, or single colours that reflect the natural colour of the yarn. We design white structures. I think this is a legacy of modern architecture to us. I think that modern architecture uses white as a representation of the attitude that criminalises embellishment, is free of all claddings and breaks its ties with the past.

### WHAT SHOULD ARCHITECTURE ALWAYS STRIVE TO ACHIEVE AND WHAT SHOULD NEVER BE DONE?

Architecture is a profession that should be carried out by preserving the decision-making reflex with an awareness of public responsibility. On the other hand, we need to shape the savings or capital of the user or investor based on their demands. Sometimes it can be quite difficult to harmonise these two situations in design decisions. The attitude of the designer is very important here. I find it necessary that public responsibility should not be forgotten.

### HOW MUCH GLASS DOES ARCHITECTURE NEED?

Glass is a very powerful material in providing indoor-outdoor relationship, visual communication between spaces, and natural lighting. It is a material that liberates the space, has a harmonious interaction with different materials, and we care about its use in our designs.

### HOW DO YOU SEE THE CURRENT VALUE OF ARCHITECTURE?

Architecture reflects the social values of the period. In the period when religion was dominant, typologies such as cathedrals, mosques, and monasteries became founders in the built environment, while the built environment was established with palaces and castles in the period of the empires. In every period, it reflected the power mark on the built environment. Today, I think we have a built environment determined by the capital-representing power.

### WHICH ARCHITECTURAL TASK IS PARTICULARLY APPEALING TO YOU?

Design itself. It is exciting that different designers can produce different solutions in case of a situation that will be intervened and solved. The pluralism of design impresses me.

### URBAN OR RURAL ARCHITECTURE?

I think every place has a unique value. We are very excited to do projects both in urban and rural areas. But I guess I am a city person, I find urban life and dynamism more motivating.



## ARCHITECTURE, THE FUTURE & THE COLOUR WHITE

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#2 PROJECT  
İzmir Chamber of  
Geological Engineers  
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## THE FUTURE OF ARCHITECTURE? WHERE WILL IT GO TO?

Sustainable orientation promoting a common consciousness for a better tomorrow.

## FEW SENTENCES ON THE SUBJECT OF SUSTAINABILITY?

Today, it is an integral part of any industrial planning process in architecture, design, the automotive industry, and so on. It is a broad concept of a conscious lifestyle that is necessary for a better tomorrow.

## DO YOU APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE OF GLOBALISATION IN ARCHITECTURE?

Even though we talk about globalisation, we are always in a particular environment, presenting a particular case. Globalisation should not greatly affect local values and the spatial context. However, a greater variety of cases generally contributes to a wider range of both technological and investment solutions.

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## WHAT DOES THE TERM "GREEN BUILDING" MEAN FOR YOU? THE FUTURE, THE PRESENT, ONLY A TREND OR SIGNIFICANTLY MORE? ARCHITECTURE?

Green architecture – green infrastructure – green planet, such concepts will definitely be an integral part of the future lifestyle.

## WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE COLOURS IN ARCHITECTURE?

In general, we prefer to use a language in which the structural material is insulated from the coating layers, such as exposed concrete, and the material felt in the space or the surfaces covered with natural stone and brick are reflected in the space. We prefer to use white on painted surfaces.

## WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT COLOUR DESIGN IN ARCHITECTURE?

We use colour in products that reflect the nature and colour of the material or in materials such as coloured glass and ceramics that will emphasise certain points. I find the use of colour in the designs of architects such as Baragan and Legoretta very impressive, who use colour as a language that reflects local culture in architecture.

## MIXTURE OF MATERIALS ON THE FACADE – A LONG LASTING TREND?

We see it as a situation that we do not prefer in our designs and which creates problems in application and use. Buildings that use a wide variety of materials give me the feeling of a building catalogue. I find plain and serene designs closer to myself.