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Made in Istanbul: exploring heritage through a cultural intervention

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Made in Istanbul

Exploring Heritage through a Cultural Intervention

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Abstract

Made in Istanbul explores the heritage potential of the Galata area in Istanbul, Turkey. The research is focused on intangible heritage which is the craft networks, trade and community that brought the Galata district into being. Craft networks are embedded in the city and have been established over generations. Currently this trade is threatened due to greater municipal plans to make these areas touristic and convert buildings into cafes, bars and hotels. There is value in having craft and productions sites in the city and is an authentic reading for the city that dates back to Roman/Ottoman times. The aim of this project is to empower the existing community of craftsmen by using cultural interventions and tourism in a positive way to strengthen this trade.

The design component of this research is a design residency and public space which becomes a platform for collaboration between creators (artists, designers, architects, writers, film makers and etc) and master craftsmen. The site for this project has an historic byzantine city wall that dates back to the 1500's. This wall is one of the few that still exist in the Galata area today. Careful consideration was taken to integrate this historic relic into the design with respect and sensitivity and to create a dialogue between old and new. This resulted in a contemporary light glass and steel structure to enhance and contrast with the historic stone wall.