

MODEM Dialogues - In conversation with Andreas Murkudis

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Andreas Murkudis - Founder of ANDREAS MURKUDIS

Portrait Andreas Murkudis - Photo credit ® Heji Shin

Questions conceived and hosted by [Florian Müller](#)

MODEM:

Which early experience shaped your sensitivity for objects, rooms, and how people move through a space so deeply that it later became visible in your stores?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

My work at Museum der Dinge is really the foundation for all of this. I grew up in the GDR, and the experience of material scarcity is something I still recall vividly. I don't remember one specific early experience from that time that I could quote here, simply because there wasn't much in my surroundings to be inspired by. I started at Museum der Dinge as an intern and stayed there for 15 years. What the museum taught me goes far beyond the design history of objects - it taught me how to exhibit things in a way that does them justice, how to convey their aura and magic to the viewer.

MODEM:

You were actually the managing director of the museum you mentioned before, and later decided to open a concept store. Did you want people to also buy things instead of only looking or what drives you?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

In my small museum shop, I made the decision to sell only things that I would personally like to own as well. I was very interested in the distinction between shops and museums. I wanted to see how people would react to the products and whether they would like them enough to take them home, or whether they were content with looking at them and learning about them. It's interesting because things change once they are taken off the pedestal and integrated into one's life. They are woven into life in a different way. I still like this idea and it still drives me: how do we live with beautiful things?

MODEM:

In an interview you described the process of giving away presents in remarkable detail. What would you say still works well in 2026 and what should one better not hand over as a gift anymore? Do customers buy for themselves or for others more often?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

The act of giving, in my understanding, is an intentional gesture that requires thought and empathy. I wanted to have a range of things under 100 Euro from different categories, of good quality, that I consider good gifts and that are accessible. Our selection changes surprisingly little. Sometimes we don't continue with certain products, sometimes we find new things. A glass or a candle, a bracelet or a book - the whole gifting department is an integral part of our business. I wouldn't recommend clothing or shoes as gifts. They are too dependent on size and personal taste.

MODEM:

You started with your first commercial space in the early 2000s in a courtyard in Berlin Mitte, then moved through a series of carefully placed locations as the city changed around you. Today you are back in a quieter courtyard in the western part of Berlin. Is it silence, space, or movement that allows your way of curating objects to unfold?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

When we started in Mitte in 2001, it felt much quieter than it does today. It was a very special journey there, almost as if spaces opened up along with my ideas. I'm aware that this has been a true blessing - right time, place, and people. But Mitte changed and became increasingly commercial, and I wanted to escape the crowds. I wanted to take on the challenge and be somewhat tucked away so I could make sure whoever came to the store really wanted to be there. It has been a risk, of course, but I wanted focus and intention. Colette was always crowded, but how much did people really buy there? The space on Potsdamer Strasse has been such a gift for us and our ideas. So I think it's all of these things - silence, space, and movement - that belong to our story.

MODEM:

That your main shop sits in a former daily newspaper printing facility is almost an antiphrasis to fast trend fashion, a place that embodies exactly the opposite. What makes a contemporary fashion concept store for you?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

I always like to talk about the moment of surprise. It's an ethos for me to have a surprising selection, an unusual mix of brands and categories. I like to look closely and I like to show newness. I'm not interested in overly commercial product placement or selling items that are already in the minds of customers because the images have been distributed so widely. I like when customers come to us with an open mind and trust us enough to be drawn in by

something they discover or a story they hear from the team.

MODEM:

For nearly three decades, you have evolved different retail concepts under the Andreas Murkudis universe. Were there considerations to expand into other cities and what has led to your loyalty to Berlin?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

Not really. The space on Potsdamer Strasse is one of a kind. The team as well. I'm not interested in replicating this concept - I'm interested in refining it, intensifying it, and pushing its limits. Copying the ANDREAS MURKUDIS concept is no guarantee of success, and I suppose it would become a very administrative job. I like the contact and challenge of being in this space, daily and through the years. It is part of our identity, as a team and for me personally, to push the possibilities of the space as far as they can go. Contrary to popular opinion, I'm still a big Berlin fan. It's home for me both privately and professionally, and what I found and built here is a real stroke of luck. I can only imagine it here in Berlin.

MODEM:

In your work, objects are carefully placed within a narrative before they are purchased. What changes for you at the moment an object leaves the store and enters someone's private context - does it end the story you construct, or does it continue in a different form once it is no longer under your curation?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

I have a sense of where something would belong in my personal context and, of course, if I know the customers, I'm happy to give my input. But in general, I don't overstate the importance of my own thoughts or ideas. For me, the process also has a natural ending. I'm happy when things are in good hands. From there, those hands continue to shape their own stories. Sometimes I have separation issues, but that's how it is. That's part of the business.

MODEM:

Many of the environments in fashion are designed to attract attention, while the people moving through them are often expected to absorb an increasing number of impressions, demands and expectations. Have you noticed a change in how this affects individuals, and what helps to preserve a sense of balance today?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

Our hope has always been to offer an interesting enough assortment to create loyalty among customers. That's why we work with over 200 brands. At their best, our customers are willing to engage with what we offer and take their sweet time - to stroll, to revel in the discovery, to pick up on a detail in a story that speaks to them. The store stands for slowness and simplicity. I love the idea of discovery. This is the environment I want to be in - one of discovery and surprise.

MODEM:

Alongside your stores, you have repeatedly created temporary formats, exhibitions and encounters that introduced emerging designers and brought different creative disciplines into dialogue. What continues to draw you towards these initiatives, and what becomes possible there that cannot arise within the framework of a store alone?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

Just as our stores and their different focuses found perfect spatial answers, our projects, exhibitions, and events have grown organically alongside the main store over the years. We are blessed to interact and work with interesting people and brands, and using the store as a platform feels completely natural to me. I can shine a light on a designer or collection, or give space to an artist's project. I love interiors and art, and all these disciplines and their interplay with fashion and accessories are part of what defines this place. It's a lot of extra work and often it's not commercially successful, but I don't want it any other way.

MODEM:

Suppose you could close one of your current retail areas for a single night, without customers, without sales, without obligation, what would you do inside that is otherwise never possible?

ANDREAS MURKUDIS:

I have a very fond memory of our last renovation. It was during the pandemic, and we emptied the whole store to renew the floors. I loved the space, its emptiness. It took me back to the beginnings here. When the daily focus is on things, emptiness can feel incredibly refreshing and peaceful. I would just like to be alone in that space for a little while and maybe listen to some music. And then we'll see... it's not so easy to make this happen, but who knows, maybe we will one day.