

"IN THE BEGINNING, A DAZZLING NIGHT" BERAT IŞIK & SARKIS

21.12.2018 – 26.01.2019

Merdiven Art Space is proud to host a collaboration between two prominent contemporary artists from different generations, from December 21 to January 26. The exhibition titled "*In the Beginning, a Dazzling Night*", initiated by Berat Işık and joined by Sarkis upon his invitation, opens to the public on the longest night of the year.

Known for his sociopolitically charged works, Berat Işık draws inspiration from José Saramago's novel *Blindness* for this exhibition. Employing various media in his practice—from video to photography, installation to sculpture—he presents a wall installation titled *Dazzling*, where a dominant light source is imbued with symbolic meaning. Within a gold-colored frame—an object of kitsch aesthetic—the artist places a panel composed of 54 strobe lights. The flashing white light at the center, intensely bright, breaks through the pictorial boundaries imposed by the frame. Associated in our collective memory with official vehicles and military zones, these strobes lie at the heart of the work, referencing the blindness we collectively endure. The blinding white light metaphorically simulates a societal blindness toward tools of power, authority, and systemic control.

While the piece was still in development, Işık enthusiastically invited Sarkis to deepen the conceptual framework of the show. Sarkis contributes with his 1997 video *Au Commencement la Nuit (In the Beginning, the Night)*, thus becoming an integral part of the exhibition.

Işık's decision to involve Sarkis—visibly or invisibly—in the narrative constructs a layered and cohesive structure that progressively envelops the space. Feeding off the contrast between darkness and light, the images and sounds that fill the room act at times as burden, at times as shield—inviting the viewer into a silent confrontation with the past. Echoing Kazimir Malevich's *White on White*, which pushed the boundaries of modernism in its time, the exhibition offers a parallel art-historical reading. As a result, the space becomes the stage for a dazzling dialogue between two works, both in terms of visual language and conceptual depth.

"*In the Beginning, a Dazzling Night*" can be visited from Tuesday to Saturday, between 11:00 and 18:00.