

Berk Kır's First Solo Exhibition "Extimacy"

Opens at Merdiven Art Space on January 5

Berk Kır's first solo exhibition, **Extimacy**, curated by Nazlı Pektaş, will meet the audience at Merdiven Art Space between January 5–31, 2024. The artist's first solo exhibition in Turkey brings to the agenda an ontological field of discussion based on the corporeality of photography. Taking its name from the French thinker Jacques Lacan's concept of "extimacy," which can be understood as a kind of "closeness outside," the exhibition emphasizes things that are outside of personal boundaries yet somehow belong to our inner world.

As Nazlı Pektaş states in the curatorial text: "In this exhibition, the distinction between private/public becomes blurred, forming an in-between state. Sound transforms into image, image into sound. While Lacan's concept of 'extimacy' moves between self and other, outside and intimate, home and city, *Closeness Outside* becomes an ironic contact in this exhibition."

In *Extimacy*, Berk Kır brings the viewer into an experience of seeing, hearing, and touching the contact that the body makes with the objects of the sensible world. The artist conveys what happens between bodies and objects through his ongoing photo series, **You Have a Place Above My Head**, which he has been developing over a long period through his photographic practice. Bodies posing with found objects from the city demonstrate, on the plane of gender, the connection that constructs and fictionalizes the identity between object and human.

On the other hand, in this series, the artist experiments with new forms of being by placing domestic items and objects associated with women/gender onto other bodies in the street. It is precisely here that the exhibition comes into contact with the state of being an object. For Berk compares the viewer—whom he invites inward with a "shhh" sound—with the trapezoidal sheet metal material he has extracted from the city, which blocks/covers/seals off space, in accompaniment with the photographs. These new urban furniture pieces, positioned on the ground, standing upright, leaning against walls, or resting on one another, are clothed in the artist's **You Have a Place Above My Head** photo series.

In the exhibition, sounds specific to each object can be heard through headphones. These are frequencies made audible from the temperature values of the heat radiated by the colors on the surface of the photographs. While transforming photographs into objects and objects into sound, the artist attempts to combine the singular senses of seeing, hearing, and touching within a field of multi-sensory experience. He thinks through and makes connections with Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of embodiment, Gilles Deleuze's concept of forces, Graham Harman's object-oriented ontology, and Timothy Morton's thoughts on objects and causality.