**Osman Bozkurt’s Exhibition “HATIRLA [REMEMBER]”**

**Opens at Merdiven Art Space**

Osman Bozkurt’s exhibition **HATIRLA [REMEMBER]** opened on **September 4** at **Merdiven Art Space**. Focusing on the city’s social geography, architecture, and cultural history, the artist’s works in this exhibition stem from methodical research into demography, urbanization, and cartography. In **HATIRLA [REMEMBER]**, Bozkurt draws on his witnessings of the ongoing cycles of demolition, construction, and reconstruction in Istanbul. He investigates this endless loop using building remnants he has collected from the city's ruins.

Exploring the notions of time and memory, Bozkurt presents concrete evidence of a city whose memory has been eroded through photographs, videos, sculptures, sound, and installations. This exhibition marks the first time he is presenting these recent and select earlier works in Istanbul. The exhibition will remain on view through Saturday, October 26.

At the entrance level of the exhibition, **MŌLĒS** **I** (2024) and **MŌLĒS** **II** (2024) establish a link between the past and the future. Constructed from rubble collected across the city, these totems could be interpreted as attempts to reconcile with a past that left no stone unturned, or as signs of a potential new future built upon ruins. The artist engages in stone stacking—an act considered to bring good luck and seen as a meditative search for inner balance—using the debris he gathered. This hopeful yet cautious rewind into the future calls for a PLUMB LINE (2024). Bozkurt’s work begins to intersect with archaeology on this floor. CYCLE (2024) unites two black-and-white photographs in a single print: on the left, a recent pile of rubble; on the right, Norşuntepe mound, which began to submerge after the Keban Dam was completed in 1975. This work recalls how even the oldest structures can fall into ruin, connecting ancient times to today through the human urge to build.

**DESTRUCTION** (2007) freezes a perfect moment that Bozkurt encountered during a visit to Budapest. In front of the MÉMOSZ (National Union of Hungarian Construction Workers) congress building, then under renovation, workers are seen carrying planks in front of a monumental relief on the building’s façade. Constructed in 1950, the relief illustrates a communist ideal—a co-ed construction site. In Bozkurt’s photograph, taken in 2007, contemporary workers echo this history in their actions, forming a layered commentary on time. This photograph draws attention to the often-overlooked labor force and subtly ties into the works upstairs: **TILES** (2024) and **BRICK** (2024).

The upper floor features works that encompass the artist’s ongoing investigation into layered subjects and processes. During the Covid-19 lockdown, Bozkurt spent his time collecting leftover materials from a neighboring building where demolition had been halted due to the pandemic. Roof tiles from Marseille and Thessaloniki, bricks, concrete fragments, pipes, and nails form a modest yet telling collection. The video **DOMESTIC ARCHEOLOGY** (2020), composed of photographs taken during these discoveries, summarizes the artist’s field research. Works such as **TILES** (2024), **BRICK** (2024), **PİK 60/500** (2024), and **ANTENNA** (2024) go beyond being ordinary construction remnants to serve as tangible evidence of lived experience in a city reduced to rubble.

On the gallery’s street-facing façade, the photograph **SPRING** (2024) represents all the found objects with a playful reflection of a spring day. The upstairs self-portrait **QUARANTINE DAYS – INTERRUPT** (2021) portrays the artist’s transformation during his days of isolation with striking candor.