

Sarkis

UNTITLED

SEPTEMBER 10–OCTOBER 25, 2020

OPENING: SEPTEMBER 10, 10:00–20:00



Sarkis

Red stained glass series no: 3

Glass, lead, steel, LED (by Charlie)

49 x 65.3 x 10 cm

2020

2 + 1 a/p

Dirimart is pleased to announce the exhibition of Sarkis titled **UNTITLED**. It is where materials such as light, glass, wood, threads; and media such as photography, neon, video, stained glass intertwine.

The future begins to form but as fragments: In an effort to repair them, Sarkis puts them together with lead with a technique he created inspired by the Japanese art *kintsugi*. The photographs he takes in Istanbul of three graffiti featuring angels are rendered in red and fragmented to be re-combined. A found Istanbul photograph depicting a scene that resembles the aftermath of destruction, similar to that of a grand explosion or earthquake: an upturned car, papers scattered around the streets, and a smoking man in the middle of all, staring at the camera, foregoes the same process. Sarkis captures the paradoxical relation between buildings in a quarter where a multicultural populace dwells. Aliye Berger's *Fire* (September, 1955) that she painted thrilled at the sight of her studio on fire, a painting that evokes Munch's *The Scream* (1893), becomes another stained glass of Sarkis. As does the photograph of a graffiti of side-by-side caricatured figures opening and closing their mouths: perhaps parodying a scream. Sarkis installs his new stained glass series based on his red-filtered photographs of various sites in Istanbul vis-à-vis a red-filtered installation shot of his stained glass works from his recent Paris show at Galerie Nathalie Obadia in 2019. To those stained glasses in the installation shot Sarkis carries spoils of war, beginnings, *respiro*, his *19380-19920-20200*, the Çaylak Street, the goddess of memory Mnemosyne, and by installing a seven-color rainbow neon on top of that, starts a new dialogue with the red series on the facing wall. All that red evokes both a fire and an alarming moment.

With this exhibition in which the memory stands at the very beginning of a new formation, Sarkis offers an opportunity to have a glimpse at today through stories told from history. The wound in the *red punctum* (2019) starts bleeding. A red watercolor mark made on paper with the tip of a wet brush slowly begins to dry as Morton Feldman's fifteen-minute composition dated 1976 inspired by the story of a mythical carpet woven for the Sassanid ruler Khosrau I, and which is said to have depicted a luxurious garden named Spring of Khosrau bearing the same name plays in the background. And on the shelf next to the screen is today's version of the painting. An Iranian carpet with animal and tree motifs is laid in front of the video. And the red mark on the screen, formed like an eye, is watching over the exhibition.

The artist exhibits his work *19380-19920-20200* that emerged in 1992 in Maçka Art Gallery, with newly added layers. On one side of a scorched crate positioned on wheels, ready to set into motion, Sarkis' birth year plus a 0,



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19380 reads in yellow neon letters. On the opposite side is 19920, the year when the crate had emerged plus a 0. And today 19920 becomes 20200. On the crate's lid, a blue ceramic bowl containing two houses, one painted with green, one with red watercolor and placed in water, rotates, thus allowing the colors to mix. Each piece recalls another, supports, rests against another: to unite. **UNTITLED** is where meticulously chosen fragments of memory are placed within a space and time.

In the next hall, Library for Memory and Eternity, which was first exhibited in 2005 at Aksanat, bears Sarkis' books and catalogues. Time of this hall that hosts the library is the time of Sarkis' mythology. Aliye Berger's *Fire* (September 1955) is hung on one of its walls. And a copy of the sixth issue of *Aç Yazı* magazine with Sarkis' cover, a glass of water, and a book-clock are placed on a shelf. The water is refreshed every morning.

Hence the artist names his exhibition which brings together images, sounds, and lights that reflect the uncertain atmosphere of seemingly irrelevant social and cultural issues **UNTITLED**, with red capital letters

The QR codes distributed throughout the exhibition allows the viewing of exhibition carrying a flame in the palm of your hand.

Sarkis (b. 1938). A graduate of Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts, Istanbul, he had his first exhibition at the Istanbul Art Gallery in 1960. He then moved to Paris. His works have been exhibited worldwide in established institutions, such as Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Kunst-und-Austellungshalle, Bonn; Musée du Louvre, Paris; Bode Museum, Berlin; Fondazione MAXXI, Rome; and Kunsthalle Düsseldorf. Important group exhibitions include *When Attitudes Become Form*, Kunsthalle Bern (1969); documenta VI & VII, Kassel (1977 & 1982); and Venice, Sydney, Shanghai, São Paulo, Moscow, and Istanbul biennials. Among his recent solo and group exhibitions are *What Time Is It?*, Arter, Istanbul (2019); *Paradjanov with, Sarkis*, Pera Museum, Istanbul (2018); *Mirror*, Dirimart, Istanbul (2017); *Sarkis avec Paradjanov*, Villa Empain-Fondation Boghossian, Brussels (2016); *Il Grido*, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Brussels (2016); *Istanbul: Passion, Joy, Fury*, Fondazione MAXXI, Rome (2015); *Salt Water*, 14th Istanbul Biennial (2016); *Respiro*, 56th Venice Biennale, Turkish Pavilion (2015); *Armenity*, 56th Venice Biennale, the Armenian pavilion group exhibition (2015); *Sarkis-Cage/Ryoanji Interpretation*, Arter, Istanbul (2013); *Site*, Istanbul Museum of Modern Art (2009). The artist lives and works in Paris.

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info@dirimart.com
dirimart.com

DIRIMART
Irmak Caddesi 1-9
34440 Dolapdere İstanbul
+90 212 232 66 66