

# VOLKAN ASLAN

GALERIE PARIS-BEIJING

We Forget Because It Works

16.11.19 — 11.01.20

Opening on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2019

After Volkan Aslan's participation in two group exhibitions – *Home is where the (he)arts is* and *A Pillar of Smoke* – in its spaces in 2018, Galerie Paris-Beijing is pleased to announce that it now represents this major figure in the Turkish contemporary art scene. We are also delighted to present his first solo exhibition in November 2019 : *We Forget Because It Works*.

Volkan Aslan questions manifestations of the “social imaginary” in daily life. His exhibition will comprise a body of works situated at the intersection of various media, including collage, video, installation and watercolour. All of the pieces respond to the artist's desire to anchor his practice within the collective memory of his birthland.

In line with his previous works, Aslan uses found objects and finds interest in banal situations, particularly in the direct or indirect relationships of domination that we experience in daily life. While his exhibition *Don't Forget to Remember* at the ARTER Museum in 2013 explored the “rules” of memory, six years later, *We Forget Because It Works* marks an evolution in his work, focusing on the healing power of forgetting.



© Volkan Aslan, Chapter #4, 2019. Courtesy Galerie Paris-Beijing



© Volkan Aslan, Fragile series, 2013. Courtesy Galerie Paris-Beijing

The video installation *Best Wishes* will be presented for the first time. It constitutes the main axis around which all of the other pieces are articulated. Aslan juxtaposes an anonymous letter and real images filmed with his telephone in Istanbul, thus expressing the state of isolation in which peoples confronted with social conflicts find themselves. The figurines from the series *Fragile* (2013), shown facing the two screens, resonate with the video and are permeated by it, suggesting a new interpretation.

The neon *Mais* (But) glows in the gallery space, denouncing the state of oppression that reigns in the artist's country. Aslan plays with this transitional word that we use every day, communicating a message that is as poetic as it is political. Defined as "an opposition, a specification, a correction with relation to what has been said", the word *mais*, in the artist's eyes, is also a symbol of the relationships of power exercised through language.

The *Elections* series is composed of five watercolours that emphasise the absurdity of the elections that take place in Turkey nearly every year. In these paintings, Aslan humorously alludes to this senseless spectacle. Hidden behind curtains, the scenes that unfold suggest both an orgy of self-segregation in Turkey's very patriarchal society, and a homoeroticism that still remains disturbing and shameful in the eyes of the State.



© Volkan Aslan, *Installation view, The Moving Museum Istanbul, 2014. Courtesy Galerie Paris-Beijing*

Throughout his oeuvre, Aslan explores the idea of memory, both as a burden and as a position of power. This exhibition extends this line of questioning, highlighting the connections that exist between his past and present pieces, and asking: do we forget because it works?

*Born in Ankara in 1982, Volkan Aslan studied painting at the School of Fine Arts in Mersin. He participated in the 15th Istanbul Biennial in 2017. He currently lives and works in Istanbul, Turkey.*



© Volkan Aslan, *Home Sweet Home, 15th Istanbul Biennial, 2017. Courtesy Galerie Paris-Beijing*