

**istanbul Modern presents a retrospective of Burhan Dogançay in May**

# Í Fifty Years of Urban WallsÎ

For its new show, **istanbul Modern** presents a comprehensive exhibition of 50 years of work by **Burhan Dogançay**, one of the leading names of contemporary art in Turkey. *Fifty Years of Urban Walls: A Burhan Dogançay Retrospective* presents 14 periods of the artist's work, now in prominent collections worldwide. Sponsored by Y1d'z Holding, the exhibition displays Dogançay's half-century-long artistic career. The show will be held between **May 23-September 23, 2012** in istanbul Modern's Temporary Exhibitions Hall and is curated by **Levent Çaliko lu**.

Burhan Dogançay, who says walls are the mirror of society, has been exploring since the 1960s the social, cultural, and political transformation of modern and contemporary urban culture through walls. As an urban traveler, for half a century he has been mapping walls in various cities worldwide. From posters to slogans, and messages with sexual content to newspaper clippings, like an anthropologist he has been examining these surfaces that are open to all the interventions of time. He depicts the way personal narratives and messages shape walls in public spaces, and through social and political images, points to the social transformations in urban life. The diversity in Dogançay's work comes from the series he treats using different styles and techniques.

Since his days in school Burhan Dogançay has been traveling to the four corners of the Earth and exploring urban culture. Since the 70s he has been recording with his photographic camera walls in the 114 countries to which he traveled. Recreating urban walls on the canvas surface, Dogançay's 50-year-long odyssey proceeds parallel to his photographic career. He compiles photographic archives of urban walls around which his work is centered, and, drawing from this resource he performs his wall art. Today the artist's extensive archive exceeds 30 thousand photographs. In 1982 he held a photography exhibition entitled *Les murs murmurent, ils crient, ils chantent* at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.

His series *General Urban Walls*, begun in 1963, serves as an introduction to both the exhibition and Dogançay's wall art. *Fifty Years of Urban Walls: A Burhan Dogançay Retrospective* continues with the series *Doors*, *Detours*, *New York Subway Walls*, *Breakthrough*, *Ribbons*, *Cones*, *Housepainter Walls*, *GREGO Walls*, *Formula I*, *Double Realism*, *Alexander's Walls*, *Blue Walls of New York*, and also *Framed Walls*, a series the artist started in 2008 and is ongoing.

In 1965, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York purchased a work by Burhan Dogançay, which for the first time was included in the permanent collection of a major museum. Today the artist's paintings of walls can be found in prominent museums worldwide and in major institutional and private collections.

Burhan Dogançay's works are part of over 70 prominent museum collections around the world including The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Victoria & Albert Museum in London, Centre Pompidou in Paris, The British Museum in London, Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, Moderna Museet in Stockholm, and The Guggenheim Museum in New York.

With his work *Ribbon Mania* being included this year in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Burhan Dogançay is now the first Turkish artist to have entered this collection.

The exhibition catalog, which will help share Dogançay's work with a wide audience, was sponsored by Y2d2z Holding. Published by Prestel Publishing, based in Munich, it will be sold worldwide. In his catalog article *The Recording of History and the Anatomy of Walls*, exhibition curator Levent Çal2ko lu writes about the artist's 50-year-long career. **Brandon Taylor**, professor of art history at the University of Southampton, continues the analyses he began in his 2008 book *Urban Walls* in which he writes about the works of Dogançay. Also among authors in the catalog is **Richard Vine**, senior editor of the magazine *Art in America*. Vine individually refers to the series and works in the show and accompanies his explanations of the artist's work with biographical details. Writer, editor, and graphic designer **Clive Giboire**'s article analyzes all of Dogançay's series and examines the techniques developed by the artist.