

BAKSI MUSEUM EXHIBITS LIFE OF ACCOMPLISHED ARTIST

Located in a village 28 miles from the city center of Bayburt, Baksı Museum is hosting an extraordinary exhibition by founder **Hüsamettin Koçan**, reflecting on his childhood memories and longing for his father who went abroad to work



THE 44TH personal exhibition by academic and artist **Hüsamettin Koçan**, titled “Ayağımdaki Diken” (The Thorn on My Foot) opens at Baksı Museum in Bayburt on July 12. Granted the European Council Museum Award, Baksı Museum was founded on the hill where the artist used to wait for his father to come back from abroad during his childhood.

Koçan told Anadolu Agency (AA) that Bayburt has been the city from which the most emigrants have come for years.

Explaining that his father used to earn his living by working abroad, Koçan said: “When I was a child, I used to wait for my father to come back from abroad on the hill that is now home to the museum. Maybe the reason why the museum was founded there is this tradition of waiting. I tried to understand that waiting child and help him. I founded this museum as I didn’t want to make that child wait on the hill any more. I tried to transform the exhibition into a long story that also embraces the foundation process of the museum.”

Koçan said that waiting for a husband or father who went abroad to look after family members is a traumatic situation, and added: “A father would go somewhere unknown, and no one knew when he would return. This childhood trauma forces a person to remember the past on and off and to develop a relationship with the past. As it is the deepest trace, the most powerful stress in my life, that waiting process radically affected my art. Hence, one side of my art kept the tradition alive while I tried to found a brand-new future with the other side of it.”



Koçan spoke of the iron hooks fixed on dog collars to protect them from predators and said that in the exhibition there is an up-to-date work consisting of iron hooks scaled up 100 times in reference to the old ones.

THE EXHIBITION OPENS TODAY

Koçan said that waiting is a thought of the future and hope: “You experience longing and suffering while waiting, but it is such an enriching case that waiting is full of hope for the future.”

Koçan mentioned his childhood memory about a thorn, which could only be pulled out four months after it pricked his foot. He explained that is why he named the exhibition that will open “The Thorn on My Foot.”

Ruminating that everyone has recurring memories, Koçan said: “I completed my work in the exhibition with the intention of feeding the work with my memories. At the exhibition, which will feature the concept of absence from home with various techniques, I tried to express various incidents and situations nearly everyone experiences through art. Starting from the traditional floor table, I set up a journey to infinity. What I set up tells about going and the deepness it has. We used to sleep, play games and listen to stories in a room with a floor furnace in it. I think the table in that room played a strategic role in my life. That table was always too high for me and I had to climb over it all the time. Now, I set out a table for the exhibition, which is so high that I cannot climb over it as an adult.”

Koçan spoke of the iron hooks fixed on dog collars to protect them from predatory animals and said that in the exhibition there is an up-to-date work consisting of approximately the iron hooks scaled up 100 times in reference to the old ones.

The exhibition also features a painting and a plastic sculpture inspired by a local tree, an arrangement he produced taking one of his primary

school homework as the basis and several paintings about the departure of Sona, a former neighbor of his who was adopted by another family.

BOTH ACTOR AND NARRATOR

Explaining that the work in the exhibition has two interpretations about his childhood and life, Koçan said: “My works are primarily based on my childhood memories. I reinterpreted them with my 70 years of experience. I’m both the actor and the narrator of the themes in the exhibition. Hence, here we can talk about two separate **Hüsamettin Koçans**.”

He reiterated that he interpreted a process that started with his childhood and goes to today in the exhibition, and added: “I don’t want this exhibition, which is presented at the museum on an isolated hill above Çoruh Valley, to be a strict and assertive one that doesn’t spell the visitors. I wanted it to be an exhibition that invites the visi-

tors to itself by silence and share its own deepness just like my life itself. The themes belong to my childhood. Here visitors will experience silence and set out on a journey in this silence.”

Koçan said that visitors will re-experience various incidents suspending their minds since their childhood: “Beyond observation, the exhibition proposes sharing with visitors. It tells about my perception and my attitude toward life. With its silence, the exhibition will offer a private space to visitors. I think that they will be the witness of an artist’s journey starting from his childhood and reaching until his age of 70.”

Combining contemporary and traditional arts since 2010 and offering education and employment opportunity to the local people, Baksı Museum was granted the 2014 European Council Museum Award. He was also granted an honor award by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TMBB) in 2014. **BAYBURT / AA**



“Starting from the traditional floor table, I set up a journey to infinity. That table was always too high for me and I had to climb over it all the time. Now, I set out a table for the exhibition, which is so high that I cannot climb over it as an adult,” Koçan said.