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Louder Than Bombs

By Furkan Temir

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Photographs of war from the border of Turkey and Syria.

In October 2014, Turkish photographer Furkan Temir, then nineteen, brought his camera to Suruç, a Turkish town near the border with northern Syria. Nearly 200,000 people were seeking refuge there from the besieged Syrian city of Kobani, which had become a critical foothold for Kurdish militias and US-led forces as the Islamic State approached the Turkish frontier. In April 2015, three months after the Islamic State retreated from Kobani and with citizens returning to rebuild their communities, Temir crossed over to take pictures of the wasted landscapes along the border.

Temir photographs with an immediacy that conveys the shock of displacement and the underlying resilience in these Syrian and Turkish towns. He finds beauty and foreboding in rising smoke, in sunlight falling on stones, tall grass, tents, broken foundations, and improvised public spaces. His eye rests empathically on people waiting, grieving, protesting, and celebrating Newroz—the Kurdish new year. In these images fire assumes a syncretic significance, as a symbol of destruction and rebirth, in the holiday of Newroz, and an instrument of vision and obfuscation. *Louder than Bombs*, the body of work Temir developed during these travels,

considers physical and existential boundaries, and through them that renewal becomes possible in moments of violent uncertainty.

—*Marisa Nakasone for Guernica*



During Newroz, people build large fires and jump over them. In this photo, a child jumps over the fire with a YPG (the Kurdish People's Protection Units) flag tied over his face. March 17, 2016. Suruç, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.



Memorial honoring the lives lost over decades of conflict between the Turkish army and the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party). March 20, 2015. Lice, Diyarbakır, Turkey.



A woman mourning her husband, who was electrocuted by faulty wiring at a construction site where they had been living. October 7, 2014. Suruç, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.



Children climbing Mount Judi during Newroz in Cirze. March 18, 2015. Cizre, Şırnak, Turkey.



A woman crossing the border from northern Syria into Turkey with her son in her arms. October 2, 2014. Suruç, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.



Abandoned government office in Kobani. April 18, 2015. Kobani, Syria.



Civilians return to Kobani. April 23, 2015. Kobani, Syria.



The site of one of three schools in Kobani. Though it was used as military headquarters during the conflict with ISIS, the site has been reclaimed for teaching. April 19, 2015. Kobani, Syria.



In the city of Nusaybin, Turkey, members of YDG-H , a youth movement within the Kurdistan Worker's Party, attacked police with fireworks. They built barricades with tires that were burned during the Newroz celebration. March 19, 2015. Nusaybin, Mārdīn, Turkey.



Two girls wearing traditional clothing during the Newroz celebration. March 18, 2015. Cizre, Şırnak, Turkey.



Newroz celebrations dedicated to the victory in Kobanî. In Diyarbakir, millions of people gathered in the square. March 21, 2016. Diyarbakir, Turkey.



The dust of passing tanks on the road to Kobani. The Republic of Turkey deployed tank battalions to the Syrian border. October 2, 2014. Suruç, Şanlıurfa, Turkey.

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Furkan Temir is a self-taught photographer and artist born in a small town in eastern Turkey. After spending his childhood and adolescence in his town, he earned a scholarship for the Department of Cinema at State University and moved to Istanbul. By that time, he had developed an interest in photojournalism and traveled many times across Turkey and abroad for his projects. He combines different techniques of painting, video, photography, and installation to create works focused on minorities in the Middle East. Temir's photos have been published in the *New York Times*, *TIME*, CNN's Photo Blog, *Stern*, *Paris Match*, and *The Guardian*. He has also had solo and group exhibitions in Germany, Italy, France, Poland, and Turkey. Currently he is represented by VII Photo Agency as part of the Mentor Program. He lives in Istanbul.