

# PRESS RELEASE

## Miron Zownir – Istanbul

**Opening:** Thursday, 8 December 2022, 5 – 9 pm

**Duration:** 8 December 2022 – 18 March 2023

**Location:** Galerie Bene Taschen, Moltkestrasse 81, 50674 Cologne



Istanbul, September 2019 (left) / Istanbul, November 2019 (right), both: © Miron Zownir, Courtesy Galerie Bene Taschen

**Bene Taschen Gallery** presents a new solo exhibition featuring works by **Miron Zownir** that were realised in Istanbul in 2019 and 2021. The Berlin photographer has been documenting the zeitgeist of world-famous cities such as New York, Moscow or his adopted city of Berlin for 40 years. On the streets of **Istanbul**, he captures portraits of passers-by, of which there are thousands in the hustle and bustle of the city.

The black and white photographs reflect Zownir's interest in the desolate and the bizarre. Driven by curiosity, he adapts to his surroundings, capturing fleeting moments on Tri-X film – the same analogue film he has used since the 1970s. Through exposure and cropping, he intuitively draws attention to details that propel the visual events to a deeper, more narrative level.

Zownir focuses his attention on people who stand out for their diverse characteristics and actions. Istanbul offers space for various cultural contrasts that Zownir highlights by placing tradition and modernity in context with one another: the Istanbul skyline features a mosque in close proximity to a taller, more modern skyscraper.

Zownir's work focuses on everyday life in Istanbul without any judgement. His works are authentic and at the same time impact the viewer radically. The viewer's gaze is guided to social issues that take on relevance in his work. His attitude towards people is one of respect, and he photographs them as such without ostentation.

However, empathy and contrast are not the only driving forces behind his motifs: instead, Miron Zownir also perceives a clear social cohesion in Istanbul. He takes photographs of people communicating with each other and approaching and helping each other.

Beyond Taksim Square and the Hagia Sophia, Miron Zownir experiences Istanbul as a tolerant, cosmopolitan, and lively city where great contrasts exist between people, values, and dreams. Unbiased and unfiltered, the Istanbul exhibition shows the multi-layered complexity of the metropolis and the people who live there.

Miron Zownir's works were shown in a group exhibition at the Museum Turm Zur Katz in Constance in 2022 and at the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg in 2020. In 2021, Zownir's work was exhibited in solo exhibitions such as the retrospective 1977–2019 at the Centro Internazionale di Fotografia in Palermo, as well as in Romania Raw at the Goethe Institut in Bucharest. The eponymous publication Romania Raw joins seven published monographs of the individual series such as Berlin Noir and NYC RIP at Pogo Books. The book of the same name 'Istanbul' will be published by Pogo Books to coincide with the solo exhibition.



Istanbul, September 2019 (left) / Istanbul, November 2019 (right), both: © Miron Zownir, Courtesy Galerie Bene Taschen

**About Galerie Bene Taschen:** Founded in 2011 in Cologne, Galerie Bene Taschen represents some of the world's leading artists in contemporary photography and painting. The gallery is committed to promoting its international artists through regular participation in major art fairs such as Paris Photo and Art Cologne, as well as its extensive exhibition program. In 2011, Galerie Bene Taschen made its debut with LA photographer Gregory Bojorquez; in 2013, it began working with Joseph Rodriguez from New York. In 2014, the acclaimed Berlin-based photographer Miron Zownir joined the gallery's program, followed by American photographers Jamel Shabazz and Arlene Gottfried from New York in 2015. The gallery has been pleased to represent New York-based photographer Jeff Mermelstein and German painter Charlotte Trossbach since autumn 2017 and has been working with renowned photographers Sebastião Salgado and Larry Fink since autumn/winter 2019.

**Contact for information about the gallery and the artworks:**

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