

# TEMPO RUBATO

## **NADIRA HUSAIN**

*INTERIM*

March 10 – April 28 2016

Tempo Rubato is pleased to announce Nadira Husain's second solo show at the gallery. Combining paintings, ceramic work and a work on fabric, Husain returns with a site-specific installation that crystallizes her inclination towards ancient and traditional crafts and political engagement.

In a new series of Kalamkaris, a traditional Indian craft deeply connected to her own personal cultural heritage, Husain composes intricate and multi-layered tableaux that are seductive in appearance yet bear her ongoing concern with specific zones of transit or conglomeration for vulnerable populations. Revealing Riace and Lampedusa (Italy) or Park Lewinsky (Tel Aviv) as points of entry and exit, sorting areas, as well as daily living environments for thousands of refugees, Husain emphasizes the scarcity of a positive model in recent times. Ongoingly making use of the "Femme Fondation" motif that has become ubiquitous throughout her production, Husain also addresses feminist concerns within the overarching frames of physical displacement, political violence, and human struggle in general.

Using a child-like playfulness characteristic of her practice, Husain manages to strike a balance between humor and tragedy, assessing the absurdity of disturbing social realities while retaining a forceful and hopeful stance. In a three-fold work on ceramic tiles, Husain highlights tools of potential social connection. Cell phones, DNA strands, craft instruments, online icons, molecules and various mechanical chain reactions are combined in a dance of symbols that point to the uselessness of the abundance of contemporary knowledge in dealing with harsh social situations. Rendered in a cartoon-style and encased in mobile, table-like platforms, these tiles exist as semi-functional, semi-precious objects that populate the overall installation in a provisional manner.

Tucked in the back of the gallery space, a mezzanine-like structure complete with a staircase allows for a downwards contemplation of the exhibition, offering an additional and unusual vantage point on Husain's carefully-crafted composition of signs. At once a shelter, a nest, a tree house, this peculiar area functions as a space within the space and makes whole an installation imbued with a tangible sensitivity towards the teachings of History, the potent power of the art object, the ever-changing nature of human relations and a very personal sense of empathy for the Other.

**Nadira Husain** (born 1980, lives and works in Berlin and Paris) is a graduate of ENSBA, École nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris. Recent solo exhibitions include *Femme Fondation*, Tobias Naehring, Leipzig (2015); *Onion Skinning*, curated by Timothée Chaillou, L'Apartment, Paris (2015); *Feature Furry*, Städtische Galerie im Haus der Kultur, Waldkriburg (2015). Husain is currently featured in the group exhibition *Unorthodox*, curated by Jens Hoffmann, Daniel Palmer and Kelly Taxter at The Jewish Museum, New York.