



Caline Aoun, *Dispersion 4*, 2017, inkjet print on hahnemuhle paper, 45 x 59".
BEIRUT

"That Is Water, That Is Earth"

MARFA'

1339 Marfa' District

September 20–December 2

Named for the port district in which it's located, Marfa' Projects is awash with waves for the third time in as many years. Following Tamara Al-Samerraei's wistful paintings of shores from 2014–15 and Caline Aoun's twenty-four-hour live stream of the Mediterranean Sea from the largely inaccessible port (*Seascape*, 2016), Istanbul-based artist Hera Büyüktaşçıyan has unleashed a regiment of diminutive wavelike structures in the gallery space (*The Wanderer's Storm-Song*, 2018). These waves are in fact pillowcases that appear to be getting rolled up by invisible hands. Each one stands on a humanoid extremity made of brass, stranded between ebb and flow.

For this venue's first group show, "That Is Water, That Is Earth," curator Mari Spirito brings together four of the Mediterranean's outstanding young voices. Their works do not explicitly address any pressing historical or sociopolitical reality—works by established contemporary artists almost always do in Beirut—but instead rely on repeated gestures, such as

Büyüktaşçıyan's rows of waves, to evoke a sense of suspension if not stalemate. To this end, Athens-based Zoë Paul's impossible game of interlocked, fragile-looking, and sometimes even half-broken ceramic hoops (*Hoops at the shoreline of the sea*, 2018) and Dala Nasser's coating of a crumpled and punctured gold emergency blanket (*I'm not going to talk about that*, 2018) with resin and liquid latex cast disruption as an aesthetic tool.

However, here such gestures are far from being written off as acts of unadulterated negation. Seemingly purposeless, mechanical repetition culminates most achingly in Aoun's *Dispersions*, 2017—. After the artist continuously fed a simple ink-jet printer with large, folded papers, the toner ran out, resulting in dark violet and symmetrically creased color fields replete with dramatic, paper-jam-induced creases. Each one resembles a rippled surface of water, but also a bed, abandoned moments ago.

— Gökcan Demirkazık

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