

# Galerie Imane Farès

24/7

Basma Alsharif

25.04 - 20.07.2019

Solo exhibition

Opening on Thursday, April 25, 2019

A 24/7 neon sign flashes relentlessly on the gallery's vitrine. Reminiscent of Benjamin Franklin's infamous maxim ("time is money") that came to exemplify the spirit of capitalism<sup>1</sup>, it signals a commercial space that is permanently open, accessible at all times. Such is the threshold that welcomes the visitor into Basma Alsharif's second solo-exhibition at Galerie Imane Farès.

A fragment of the complex and polysemic project titled *24/7*, this sign alludes at once to the normalization of labour time and the increasing pervasiveness of consumerism in both public and private spheres. The neon appears to be emblematic of the uncanny world that the artist has forged : a world in which the banknotes of imperial countries and former colonies are juxtaposed with a photograph showing the veined body of a pregnant woman. A "nonplace"<sup>2</sup> that telescopes entertainment, consumerism, labour, colonialism, the male gaze and maternity and signifies a whole other form of exploited labour.

Through drawings, photographs and light installations, the artist looks at the visual culture of neo-colonialism, which has come to dominate today's globalized world. Each piece calls on the viewer to reflect on the means through which these "isms" have extended their control on us, seeping into even the most confined regions of our private lives.

Announcing a new phase in Alsharif's practice, this overwhelming, almost totalitarian macrocosm is, however, not disconnected from her previous works. While the artist's earlier projects tackled the semiotics of representation, *24/7* subtly reveals how representations can insidiously transform the eye, the mind and the body into submissive entities.

- Line Ajan, April 2019

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1 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Routledge, London/ New York, 2001 [1930 for English translation, 1905 for original publication]

2 Marc Augé, *Non-lieux, introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1992

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## Basma Alsharif

Film / Video / Photography / Installation

Born in 1983, Koweit (of Palestinian origin). Lives and works nomadically.

Between fiction and reality, Basma Alsharif's work considers the transmission of the history of Palestine. Sequences which have been filmed or recorded, collected in the media or on social networks are collated into montages with a highly developed plasticity, where subtitles, and therefore the text, has as much individual presence as the soundtrack (found, borrowed from the repertoire of middle-eastern popular music, or mixed) and yet they remain very separate. Memory appears to be in full mutation, uncertain and subjective. Locations, temporalities and personalities are blurred, veering from raw documentary-type images to landscapes of pre-apocalyptic paradise.

In 2014-2015, Alsharif was artist in residence at the Pavillon Neuflyze OBC creative laboratory of the Palais de Tokyo, Paris. In 2017, she finished her first feature-length film, which premiered at the 2017 Whitney Biennial and was in the official selection of Locarno International Film Festival.

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