



Manal Kara, *Aging grist population at the desiring-production mill fails to unionize whilst chaff has a pint with its m8s down the local*, 2022. Ceramic, photographic prints on fabric, 23 x 28 x 4 inches.

## **Manal Kara**

### ***Conjectures***

March 26 - May 7

Opening Saturday, March 26

Walk-ins welcome, masks required.

Shulamit Nazarian is pleased to present *Conjectures*, a solo exhibition by Moroccan-American, Gary, Indiana-based artist Manal Kara. This is the artist's first solo exhibition at the gallery.

# Shulamit Nazarian

## Los Angeles

As a self-taught interdisciplinary artist living outside of a city center, Kara is immersed in the forests that surround their studio. Chronicling a lived experience within the boundaries of an urban forest, the artist produces photographs and poems, synthesizing their diaristic practice to create hybrid sculptures that are equally cryptic and confessional.

Utilizing materials such as printed fabrics, wire, chain, hair, pins, and found objects, Kara attaches photographic imagery to forms made of glazed ceramic, establishing window-like arrangements that function as incomplete field notes, guides, or memory maps to lived experience. Expanding on this methodology, the exhibition title *Conjectures* points to our tendency to posit opinions, conclusions, and ideas from fragmentary information in a vain attempt to understand the contradictions and complexity of the world around us.

Employing the seemingly contrasting mediums of photography and ceramics, Kara creates forms that can appear earthen, metallic, plastic, or iridescent. The stoneware serves as a space for them to include text from poems, symbols, and theories, concretizing observations into physical form. The photographic images draw viewers into a documented space, creating a visceral and, at times, violent connection to the interplay between manufactured objects and the natural world. Their sculptures function as spells, incantations of what is already present and close to hand.

Kara's work sublimates an anthropocentric view of the universe, shedding human exceptionalism and portraying a myriad of entanglements with our surroundings. At the heart of this action of gathering words, images, and objects is the artist's rejection of the idea that humans and nature are fundamentally separate from each other—that this flattened dichotomy of humans as superior and disconnected from nature is false.

*Conjectures* makes the viewer implicit in the construction, destruction, and adaptation of our environment. Quoting cultural critic Edward Said, Kara reshapes, "Our characteristic mode, then, is not a narrative, in which scenes take place seriatim, but rather broken narratives, fragmentary compositions, and self-consciously staged testimonials, in which the narrative voice keeps stumbling over itself, its obligations, its limitations."

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Manal Kara (b. 1986 Pennsylvania, based in Gary, IN) is a Moroccan-American self-taught interdisciplinary artist. Their work has been exhibited extensively in Chicago and New York as well as in Istanbul, Vienna, and Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include XYLEM & PHLÖEM, No Place, Columbus; THE VIEWING-ROOM vs. THE ADORING-GAZE, Interstate Projects, Brooklyn; and Song of the Other Worm, Prairie, Chicago. They have participated in residencies at ACRE, Ox-Bow, September Spring at the Kesey Farm, and Project Freewill. Upcoming exhibitions include Hair + Nails, Minneapolis, and Projet Pangée, Montreal.