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NADIRA HUSAIN

Rider, Path, and Vehicle

Opening reception: Friday, September 8, 6 – 9 pm
Duration of the exhibition: September 9 – October 21, 2017

For her third solo exhibition with PSM, which will also be the first in PSM's new location, Nadira Husain has made a series of new paintings. Continuing her interest in how economic and cultural globalization conditions our response to images, Husain has embedded a broad spectrum of motifs within her latest work. While images such as Smurfs, centaurs, and Furies and other therianthropic or hybrid characters usually occupy their own cultural space, in Husain's compositions they become seamlessly blended in a dynamic painted realm. The most prominent image, however, is that of the hobbyhorse rider: a young woman in sports clothes atop a stick with a horse head, who runs and jumps as if she were part of the horse. Husain came upon a video link of a hobbyhorse riding competition a number of months back and became fascinated by the activity, which is quite popular in Scandinavia. This new sport of hobbyhorse riding blends rider and mount, and it is this hybridization and fusion that Husain became interested in.

The way cultural elements and themes can become intermingled or amalgamated has been with us throughout human history: just think of the some of the other elements in Husain's paintings, like the centaur—a being that contains elements inherited from myth and reality. It is the dynamism between inherited tradition and lived experience that has created these beings and gods, just as it has all cultural products, including those of pop culture. Husain highlights this dynamic and creative alteration in the content of her works by populating the painted canvas with vivacious images from our (cultural) life, treating them as equals in a postcolonial world. But Husain's work goes beyond activating the viewer's visual understanding of the dynamism between the images of our past and our present. By often adding sculptural elements or architectural interventions—as she has done in the new gallery space—her work further flattens the hierarchy of imagery at work in our visual life by creating an environment where the transmigration and alterity of contemporary images can be physically experienced as part of the viewing. As the title of Husain's exhibition alludes, we are at once an active participant as well as a vehicle or vessel for continual change.

Nadira Husain (b. 1980, Paris, France) has exhibited widely, including solo presentations at PSM, Berlin, DE (2017); Artissima, IT; Tempo Rubato, Tel Aviv, IL (2016); Tobias Naehring, Leipzig, DE (2015); Künstlerhaus Bremen, DE (2014); and in Positions, at ArtBasel, Miami, US (2013). She has been in numerous group exhibitions in Europe and elsewhere, including the Skulpturen-Triennale, Bingen, DE (2017); *Unorthodox*, curated by Jens Hoffmann, at the Jewish Museum, New York, US (2015); *Painting Forever*, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, DE (2013); and *The Happy Fainting of Painting*, curated by Günther Reski and Hans-Jürgen Hafner, Zwinger Galerie, Berlin, DE (2012). Husain lives and works in Paris, France, and Berlin, Germany.