

● **8 Ways of Holding On**  
**Nadia Ayari**

Apr. 6 – 17, 2019

Opening: Apr. 6, 6 – 9 pm

Address: Arch 402 Cremer St, London E2 8HD

Opening times: Every day, 11 am – 7 pm



Nadia Ayari, *Fold 7*, 2018, Oil on linen, 152.5 x 152.5 cm, 60 x 60 in

Taymour Grahne Gallery is pleased to present *8 Ways of Holding On*, Nadia Ayari's first London solo show. In this exhibition, Ayari furthers her investigation into the interaction of her works' primary forms: the leaf and the branch, which in this new body of work, bend onto themselves and fold into each other like bodies entangled in a series of quiet embraces. These elements convey a new narrative, one that although told through abstract and allegorical means, appears instantly intelligible as it delves deeper into the personal, yet universally shared, struggle for survival and pursuit of growth at a time of wide spread political instability.

Lush coiling leaves and thick knotting branches are set against vast backgrounds of visceral red and enigmatic purple that imbue the work with a sense of peril. Within these heavily impastoed compositions, Ayari opens up windows into a world where there is no escaping the formal qualities of one's emotions. In *Fold 2*, one senses the consideration with which the leaf, central to the composition, wraps itself around a single branch gently searching for a way to hold on. In *Bend 1* two leaves are witness to the branches' ingenuity, as the latter begins to chain link together in an attempt at strengthening one and other. In *Fold 7*, four leaves curl themselves around three distinct branches in a complex sequence that indicates a sophisticated governing system and suggests the daunting necessities of growth. These anthropomorphic movements of the branches and leaves are a tangible reflection of the artist's sensibility for the political realm, and they impart unusual familiarity to these abstract compositions.

The works in the exhibition explore ways of finding a resolution to the artist's conflictual relationship with her desire to serve and advance her communities and the belief that art does not possess the means to solve urgent social issues. Ayari confronts this dichotomy in *8 Ways of Holding On* by juxtaposing visual imagery of vulnerability and peril with the works' luxuriant physical presence. While she further abstracts the subject matter, stripping down the compositions of redundant elements, the enriched tactile qualities of the paintings present the viewer with a visualization of growth.

Nadia Ayari (b. 1981) is a Brooklyn-based artist who earned her MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design (2007) and has been a resident at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Drawing (2006), the Fine Arts Work Center (2010) and AiR Dubai (2014). Ayari has had solo projects at Luce, Turin (2009), Monya Rowe, New York (2011), The Third Line, Dubai (2013), and Taymour Grahne, New York (2016), and has participated in the 12th International Cairo Biennale (2010), the 3rd Thessaloniki Biennale (2011). Her work has also been exhibited at the Saatchi Gallery, London; Monica DeCardenas, Zuoz; Maraya Art Center, Sharjah; Institut Du Monde Arabe, Paris; Gallery Diet, Miami; DC Moore, New York; American University Museum, Washington DC; Samson Projects, Boston; Abrons Art Center, New York; and Produce Model Gallery, Chicago.

Taymour Grahne is a London based contemporary art gallery with a focus on emerging, mid-career, and underrepresented artists. The gallery presents an ambitious, challenging, and rigorous exhibition program with an international roster of artists. Founded in New York City in 2013, Taymour Grahne relocated to London in 2017 and operates its exhibition program nomadically.

For more information, please contact:  
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