it's collage *The Chinese Nightingale*, 1920, should be
: of the most important contributions to the project. In
i sculpture that never existed except on paper. Man Ray
similar by documenting mere readymades—including
s—as if they were artworks. But why show these in an
ormat for which they were never intended?
econd question presents itself: What does this exhibition
to the Museum of Modern Art, New York, this summer)
out such works on paper right now? This question, at
r answers in the catalogue. She wants to reconstitute a
s" that never appeared, making it readable as a declara-
ational collaboration." She understands language and
itation as means of communication, trumpeting peace
r I. Yet it is enough to just read Tzara's public announce-
ject, published in *New York Dada* in 1921 and possibly
Marcel Duchamp, to see that he thought otherwise. The
ough with the language of cosmetics advertising. The
cream" of Dada is to cover the face, the eyes, and every
i doing so, it destroys the subject as a communicable
r letterhead used for the invitations to participate in
ara and Picabia used the French word *mouvement*, with
oth *e*'s and the *t* capitalized—a deliberate misspelling of
he work of art has to go through a complete mimicry of
orms of commercial tautologies.
eturn to our first question. Back in the little cabinet at
, not even the most elaborate wall label could disperse
bscurity of the always too small, too weak, too insignif-
its of paper. Organizing them geographically, or adding
orks of art, like a relief by Hans Arp and a small sculp-
Taeuber-Arp, could hardly change this impression. The
bed the works shown of their now-empty promise of
tion. Dada's war on communication was lost on this
e. Yet stuck in the logic of the museum, the works still
to resist its relentless will to capitalize everything as
tion.

—*Simon Baier*

IKI, GREECE

akou

OS INTERNATIONAL FINE ARTS

t can beauty be convincing in contemporary figurative
a century filled with so many examples of distorted and
epictions of the human figure, any encounter with a
ed sense of beauty seems almost suspicious, particularly
through a technique that is reminiscent of old-master
is the case with Thessaloniki-based painter Lia Kazakou,
gs ask, What context does beauty need to make us feel

h as the shadows produced by a fold in a jacket or the
undance of a flower pattern on a dress draw the eye into
ntings. The human figure was at the heart of her most
on, but little was visible of the figures themselves in the
gs on display, all *Untitled*, oil on canvas, and dated from
years. Only in two cases did we find a clear portrait, an
w of the face. In most, there are just occasional glimpses
s a hand coming out of a sleeve, or a filtered view of a
through a lace blouse—in fact, it is the clothing more
that comes into focus with exacting attention to detail.
gures are framed makes this emphasis that much more

Lia Kazakou, *Untitled*, 2015, oil on canvas, 19¾ × 23⅝".

explicit. Most of the paintings zoomed in close, cutting off the head or legs, or presenting the figure so that only the hair and not the face was revealed. When skin was revealed, it was most often that of the hands, which were prominent in several works.

While a quick glance gives the viewer a seductive, possibly nostalgic impression of figurative virtuosity, a closer look reveals considerable differentiation in atmosphere, texture, and sense of historical time between the individual paintings. Posture and style of clothing are parameters that shape the characters and make them look either static or alive, clinical or elegant. Then there is the artist's eye for abstraction, which shifts attention from the figure itself to other aspects of the painting. The feeling of depth was ambiguous in the large frontal view of a dress, from 2015; the embroidery of the dress also acted as an independent patterned layer spread over the canvas. In two paintings, a figure was shown from behind with a dramatic play of light and shadow around the folded hands, creating a mood of suspense.

Despite any clues the paintings might convey, the individual identity of the figures is not the underlying subject of Kazakou's paintings. Rather, the accent is on how we look at people and draw conclusions from appearances. Beauty is certainly part of the painter's program, a tool to draw the viewer in; but once there, he or she comes up against the absence of real characters. What we experience then is a revelation of how paint can create a second skin, or even a third. Kazakou's particular, sometimes harsh way of framing her figures counteracts the feeling of classic beauty that is suggested through her old-master-style technique. We get only a fragment, not the full picture. The proximity of the figures, the zoom that causes too close a view, mixes unease and suspicion with the pleasure of looking.

—*Jurriaan Benschop*

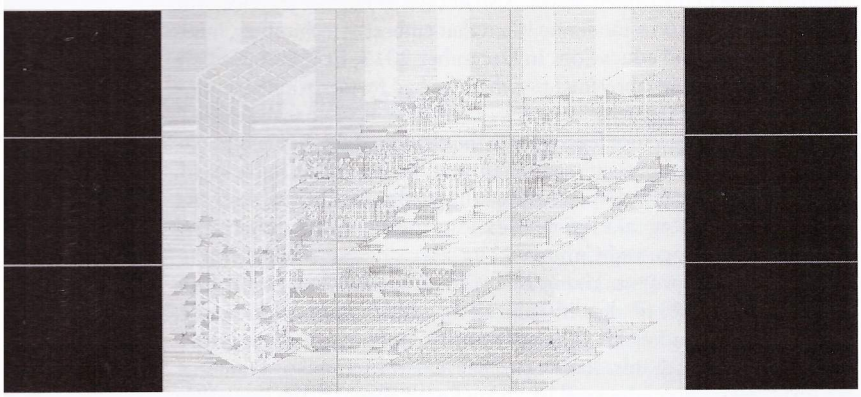
DUBAI

Seher Shah

GREEN ART GALLERY

There is a sense of ambiguous monumentality to Brutalist architecture—for example, structures such as Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation (Housing Unit), known as "the radiant city," completed in Marseilles in 1952 and described by the architect as "the first manifestation of an environment suited to modern life." This three-dimensional *béton brut*

(rough-cast concrete) grid comprises 337 apartments designed to house some sixteen hundred residents alongside shopping areas, a hotel, and a rooftop terrace. Its design has been adapted worldwide since, at times with glorious results: for example, the interlocking concrete blocks that make up the sprawling Barbican Estate, completed in 1982, and developed by architects Joe Chamberlin, Geoffry Powell, and Christoph Bon as an attempt to bring a utopian future to a bombed-out post–World War II London. In other cases, these concrete forms haunt cities like looming specters, habitable sculptures created by men of a bygone era whose ideals would ultimately fail in practice yet whose ideas continue to influence the design of cities worldwide. Take the Robin Hood Gardens complex in East London, designed by Alison and Peter Smithson and built in 1972: In 2008, amid a battle for the complex's future, English Heritage stated that the design had ultimately "failed in its original brief to create a housing development which worked on human terms."



eher Shah, *Flatlands (scrim)*, 2015, ink on paper, fifteen panels, each 31¼ × 43".

Prince Charles once suggested that such buildings were more offensive than the Luftwaffe's rubble. Regardless of how anyone feels about them, these structures represent histories that are—in keeping with the name of the style—brutal. Such was the case of the Palika Kendra, finished in 1983 according to the designs of Kuldip Singh and spawned under Jawaharlal Nehru's postwar, postindependence project to industrialize India. Nehru was said to have seen industrial structures as "modern temples" of a new nation. The building features in this exhibition, "The Lightness of Mass," in the graphite drawing *Brutalist Traces (NDMC—New Delhi)*, 2015, in which Seher Shah has rendered the structure as a series of faint lines that recall the thin mechanical marks printed out from a machine with barely any ink left in its cartridge. Part of the series "Brutalist Traces," 2014–, the work was hung in the gallery along with a line of similar renderings of other buildings, such as the Ernő Goldfinger studio's Glenkerry House in London. Two plinths were positioned nearby, with small cast-iron sculptures placed on them, geometric and modular in form. In *Untitled (curved wave)*, 2015, for instance, an angular swell emerges out of a cast-iron grid that resembles the blueprint of a building's interior. This abstraction of architectural elements, reflected in the exhibition's title, points to the artist's interest in "the ambiguous relationship between landscape and object," which was grounded by a series of black-and-white photographs she created in collaboration with Randhir Singh in 2014. These show the prehistoric standing stones of Scotland's Machrie Moor. The images complete a considered spectrum, between nature and modernization, in which an uneasy lightness is produced as a countermeasure to the overbearing histories contained in the historical designs—and traditions—that Shah subverts.

In the fifteen ink-on-paper panels of *Flatlands (scrim)*, 2015, architectural form—or drawing—is broken down, fragmented, and somehow elegantly exploded in order to resemble a graphic score. Here, the urban grid is no longer made up of neatly composed compartments; they burst out of their own forms, and curves are abstracted and freed to dance along a nondescriptive route, liberated from function in the abstract landscape offered by the paper—a space within which form is reimagined.

—Stephanie Bailey

KIEV

Carlos Motta

PINCHUKARTCENTRE

At the time of writing, the chilling echo of "Kill! Kill! Kill!" can still be heard. The cry came from right-wing Ukrainian nationalists as they disrupted and ultimately shut down a LGBTI festival in the city of L'viv, Ukraine, on March 19. The event is but one example of the social discord that has been raging across the country since it was splintered by a revolution in 2014. Responding to this context, at Kiev's PinchukArtCentre, Colombian artist Carlos Motta exhibited *Patriots, Citizens, Lovers . . .*, 2015, a multimedia installation on the theme of Ukrainian LGBTI visibility, or lack thereof.

The work, a commission produced on the occasion of the institution's 2014 Future Generation Art Prize, comprises a series of ten-minute video interviews with local LGBTI activists, including Olena Shevchenko, a member of the advocacy NGO Insight, which organized the contested festival. On a wooden base resembling both a stage and a public square, ten large flat-screen monitors were mounted vertically on posts so that they resembled protest placards. The monitors were staggered, oriented so that the viewer would weave through the ensemble as if shuffling through a picket or a crowd. Each video featured a short report by an activist standing against a ground of blue or yellow—the colors of the Ukrainian flag—and the subjects were framed in such a way that they met the viewer at eye level. Mirroring the palette of the videos, each monitor had either a blue or a yellow panel on its verso. These became backdrops to the viewer's experience, formally inscribing the audience into the piece and situating them in a space that was sympathetic to that of the interviewees; it was the grand aesthetic gesture of the artwork.

The videos address such issues as the history of anti-LGBTI legislation in the Soviet Union, unequal social protections for LGBTI indi-