

Dubai

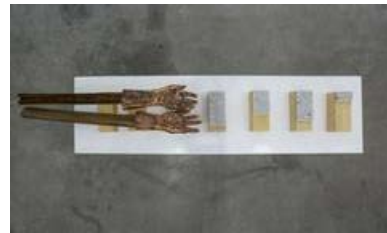
Hera Büyüktaşçıyan

GREEN ART GALLERY

Al Quoz 1, Street 8, Al Serkal Avenue, Unit 28

March 13, 2017–May 6, 2017

Writing on marble is not easy, but the title of Hera Büyüktaşçıyan's latest solo exhibition, "Write Injuries on Sand and Kindness in Marble"—a proverb found in many cultures, including Gulf countries and France—seemingly ignores this fact. In fact, marble emerges as a deceptively attractive menace, an elusive signifier of slippery semiotic value, in such works as *Chanting if I live, forgetting it I die*, 2016, a kinetic sculpture that features a row of moving piano-key-like off-white marble slabs on a simple plank of wood. Compared to an earlier, larger wooden version twice exhibited in Istanbul, whose motion-activated "keys" together resembled a pier, these levers are short and narrow; their significantly quieter mechanism, as a result, harkens back to a transcultural history of automata for the world's elite across ages. However, implying a similar loss of ground with the uncoordinated movement of individual slabs, the work also constitutes an eerie overture about the past of Al Quoz, where the gallery is located, as a former marble factory.



Hera Büyüktaşçıyan, *The Relic*, 2016, wood, bronze, and marble mosaic, bronze hands, each 30 x 7 3/4"; wooden blocks, each 6 1/2 x 2 3/4 x 2".

In this narrative, *The Relic*, 2016, overturns the prevailing disappearance of laborers' traces from the end products of grand projects by allowing small mosaic pieces to leave their imprints on bronze-cast hands. The work is a sly take on the myth that builders who worked on Taj Mahal lost their fingerprints from sanding marble. With the same laborer-commissioner relationship in mind, the monumental *Everflowing Pool of Nectar*, 2017, reverses the tiling pattern and water-current flow in the titular, sacred pool in Amritsar, India, through eight thirty-two-foot-long scrolls with large circumflex marks pointing upward. The installation is vaguely Situationist in its bicolored, geometric demarcation of space, and upon closer inspection, its circumflexes reveal manually reworked details of Byzantine, Mughal, and Italian illustrations of builders and building. And so against the tide of history, Büyüktaşçıyan's deeply political claim surfaces once more: that artisans—not rulers—are, in her words, "the main pillars of . . . representation."

— Gökcan Demirkazık