

Iman Issa

Renée Green, *Mise-en-scène: Commemorative Toile*, 1992–94

I have always thought that the power of Renée Green's *Mise-en-scène: Commemorative Toile* lies in assigning intention to objects that are usually treated as mute remnants from the past. The artist printed typical 18th-century French upholstery fabric with violent scenes of enslavement and then covered furniture and wallpaper with it. The fabric is foreign to its context, not because it portrays an under-represented history, nor because it switches this history around by exchanging its players' roles (for example, by portraying blacks lynching whites), but because – regardless of its accuracy – it refuses to read history as something in the past. Green's installation doesn't exist to serve as evidence of well-established narratives, nor does it accept a distance from the present by virtue of being a 'mere' display. It is alive and wilfully screams

its own difficult-to-decipher messages. It does this using the walls, plinths and polished floors on which it is placed – a space from which we would least expect such a flow of pulsing, intentional speech to emanate, but which seems perfectly fitting for it.

Iman Issa lives in Berlin, Germany. She has had recent solo shows at Rodeo, London, UK, and Spike Island, Bristol, UK. This year, her work has been included in the group exhibitions 'Stories of Almost Everyone' at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA, 'Space Edits' at the Beirut Art Centre, Lebanon, and at Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, Switzerland. Her work is currently on view at the Borås Internationella Skulpturbiennal 2018, Sweden.

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