

## **Current Affairs**

Group show at Tel Aviv Museum of Art

Curator: Doron Rabina

**Karam Natour**

**Nothing Personal, 2017**

**2-channel HD video, 21:03 minutes**

The video is part of the exhibition "Current Affairs" at the Helena Rubinstein Pavilion for Contemporary Art.

Karam Natour's video is split into two screens that present two simultaneous views: one turning into the artist's studio, and the other looking out from the studio to the corridor and entrance hall leading into it.

The video opens with the artist lying on a bed in the middle of the studio, weakly calling the emergency medical service, Magen David Adom. Soon a team of paramedics arrives, who question the artist and apply first aid. Natour addresses the switchboard operator in English and uses this language in the conversation with the paramedics who come to his assistance. The choice of this language liberates him from choosing one of the two immediate languages relevant to his identity as an Arab-Israeli artist: Hebrew and Arabic. This choice creates uncertainty and disorientation for the medical team about the patient's identity and the cause of his distress.

Natour describes his inability to move. This state of being stuck is a centrally significant focus in the film: the documentation of an artist, who is also an Arab-Israeli citizen, lying in bed and unable to move his body. This situation welds together the two identities and snatches the political values inherent to both concepts (artist and citizen).

The call for help also envelops both identities—a young artist at the start of his career and an Arab citizen in Israel—and exposes the fragility, the charged complexities tied to them. Natour's video merges fiction and reality, truth and lies, and creates an allusive, symbolical system of religious, national and linguistic identities.