

CULTURE

## STORYTIME WITH NEÏL BELOUFA

NEÏL BELOUFA FOLLOWS UP LAST YEAR'S GIGANTIC MEGA-EXHIBITION AT  
PALAIS DE TOKYO WITH A VIDEO ARCADE OF DREAMS AT HIS NEW GALLERY,  
KAMEL MENNOUR.

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PORTRAIT OF NEÏL BELOUFA.  
PHOTO BY POLLY THOMAS.

In “The Moral of the Story,” Neïl Beloufa’s first solo exhibition at galerie kamel mennour, the Paris-born French-Algerian video, sound and installation artist creates a powerful meta-narrative that considers exploitation on multiple levels. The exhibition is accompanied by the story of an old and thirsty camel who gets some young fennec foxes to build a wall at the expense of the worker ants. On the ground floor of the gallery the artist presents a series of attractive light sculptures made from epoxy resin and filled with leftovers from his studio, which are reminiscent of cubist collages and pop art. On the first floor is an immersive, refractive installation of projections mapped onto bas reliefs, video arcade-like sculptures and number drawings. Two beige canvas couches, where the visitor can take a rest, start moving and heavily disturb the sound installation. The awkwardness this creates between the lazy and active visitor constitutes an integral part of the exhibition. Even if you visit this space several times, it feels impossible to grasp the installation in its entirety. The video starts with a cheesy homemade video of the artist’s three-year-old daughter who, says Beloufa with poignant humor, “is being exploited as she is made an efficient tool of the exhibition.” The floor is taped in a grid, alluding to the signature works of François Morellet, a major representative of post-war geometric abstraction, whose estate Mennour represents. Beloufa questions the gallery system, the labor in the studio and his own move to a bigger gallery. How compromised has the artist and the art world become, he seems to ask, now that galleries call for institutional critique and sell that criticism of their own system to collectors?



INSTALL VIEW OF "THE MORAL OF THE STORY."  
COURTESY OF GALERIE  
KAMEL MENNOUR.