

Mana Contemporary Presents
**Mali De-Kalo: *Relaying #2: Testimonies on
Motherhood Lost***

*A site-specific, multi-channel video installation from
Israeli artist Mali De-Kalo*

October 18 – December 30, 2015

Media reception: October 16, 2015, from 11AM–1PM

Public reception: October 18, 2015, from 1PM–6PM



Digital video still. Mali De-Kalo, *Relaying #2*, 2015.

JERSEY CITY, NJ, October 14, 2015—Mana Contemporary is pleased to present a new multi-channel video installation from multidisciplinary artist, Mali De-Kalo, who lives and works in Israel. The work is situated in the Middle East Center for the Arts (MECA) gallery on Mana's third floor.

In 2011, Mali De-Kalo, a multidisciplinary artist based in Tel Aviv, began collecting interviews with Middle Eastern women whose children have rejected them following the dismantling of the family unit: a divorce, a fall-out,

or separation. Without sufficient agency, and under the negative influence of the other parent, these children have estranged themselves from their mothers.

De-Kalo spent three years speaking with the women who have suffered this trauma. With the help of two writers, she condensed her findings into vivid first-person monologues, four- to five-minute testimonies that reveal intense pain and sorrow. These are being read by performers and filmed in their own homes, to fully protect the identities of the

mothers. This anonymity reflects the larger societal issues of the official and unofficial laws of motherhood and femininity.

The narrators, several of whom are gender activists who espouse collaborative acts through solidarity with women, volunteered their services in support of the mothers. As friends and colleagues of the artist, they participated in the *Relaying* series at her invitation out of a profound sense of empathy.

Relaying #2: Testimonies on Motherhood Lost is the second iteration of a previous work, *Relaying #1: Testimonies on Motherhood Lost* which first appeared at the Meadows Museum of Art in Shreveport, Louisiana, in 2014. Both works are site-specific and part of a larger continuum. For this installation at Mana, De-Kalo expanded even further on her footage and stories, developing and modifying the narratives and spatial elements.

An enormous projection of the eight women leads to the inner room, like a Greek chorus in contemporary clothing, each appearing briefly before vanishing, to be replaced by another. They stand in silence, mutely beckoning the viewer inside. At the inner gallery, their silence evolves into a story being told. The performances are timed not to overlap but to move from one video to the next. The stories sequence each other, drawing in the visitors who are now witnesses. Everything connects and loops into one, constantly evolving relay.

De-Kalo calls these disquieting stories “readymades” that she retrieves and reconstructs. Her narratives are real and scripted, factual and fabricated, and are meant to be regarded as such. The documentary, once categorized as reportage, now more often than not slips back and forth between the objective and subjective, the journalistic and the aesthetic. For De-Kalo, the act of telling the stories in *Relaying* is of critical importance, an “act between art and activism,” she says, offering solace, healing and perhaps, eventually, even justice.

The languages spoken in *Relaying #2* are English, Hebrew, and Arabic. De-Kalo continues to collect testimonies, and as this project grows and finds new locations, the artist plans to introduce more languages and countries, expanding the relay as much as possible.

About Mali De-Kalo

Mali De-Kalo is a multidisciplinary artist and art lecturer at Kibbutzim College, Tel Aviv, and formerly at Musrara School of Photography, Jerusalem. Her work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions around the world. She has received support from the Tel Aviv Art Council, the New Fund for Cinema and Television, and the Meadows Museum of Art. She lives and works in Tel Aviv. For more information, please visit www.dekalomali.com.

About Mana Contemporary

Founded in 2011, Mana Contemporary is a leading arts destination dedicated to celebrating the creative process. Headquartered in a former tobacco warehouse in Jersey City, Mana unites artists’ studios, exhibition spaces, and ancillary services in a single location, facilitating conversation and collaboration among its burgeoning creative community. Together with its sister campuses in Chicago and Miami, Mana serves as a lively center for all members of the art world. Mana Contemporary is home to the Richard Meier Model Museum, Ayn Foundation, the International Center of Photography, The Florence Academy of Art, Gary Lichtenstein Editions, Eileen S. Kaminsky Family Foundation, Armitage Gone! Dance, Keating Foundry, Shen Wei Dance Arts, Mana Urban Arts Project, and many others. For additional information, please visit manacontemporary.com.

PRESS CONTACT:
Selena Ricks—Public Relations Director
sricks@manacontemporary.com
T. 201 484 1495 Ext 672

MANA CONTEMPORARY
888 Newark Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07306
manacontemporary.com