

LUBOV



MIRA DAYAL

Anagen

January 19, 2019–March 3, 2019

Reception: Saturday January 19, 6–9pm

You notice a string of fortuitous coincidences. The artist's given name is an invitation for you to look, if your ears are primed to another of the many languages spoken in this city. In other tongues it conjures the ocean or myrrh, but at this point the matter at hand is optical, not aural. You come to a building erected in 1915, featuring an Art Deco facade of which there is hardly a trace inside, where mazes of office spaces are replicated in each of its six floors. All doors are identical; the signs beside them are their one distinguishing trait. You don't know what to expect. You walk into suite 207 and find nothing inside. The fifth wall is a dropped ceiling. Ubiquitous in institutional spaces and basements, dropped ceilings were patented in 1961, their purpose both cosmetic and acoustical. You wonder where else they might be in the building, which otherwise boasts tin ceilings as markers of its past. Later you'll find out that the union in charge of "Operation Price Watch," which monitored violations of Nixon's 1971 anti-inflation ceiling on prices and wages, once had this address. The union's offices conceivably had a ceiling like this one. *You wouldn't want to go around exposing your wiring and ductwork, would you? Who doesn't want to hide their structural damage? Even less on the big day.* You're having thoughts of the intrusive, incongruous variety. You look up. A satin sky. *If walls have ears and doors have eyes, why can't the ceiling grow hair?* Hair is everywhere, trying to tell you something. *Dropped ceiling.* You repeat the phrase to yourself enough times to find it absurd, or comical. Dropped or fallen? When something has been dropped it hasn't fallen on its own, as hair does. Women lose between fifty and one hundred strands a day on average. What you witness, however, falls in the category of the supernatural. Causes of abnormal hair loss include stress; eating disorders; and styling routines such as daily blow-drying or curling, harsh or compulsive brushing, and the application of bleach, dyes, and relaxers. The unmistakable drone of dryers leaks down to the gallery space from the AK Beauty Bridal salon immediately above, in suite 307, but as you leave the building, there are no brides to be seen.

—Mónica de la Torre

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Mira Dayal is an artist, critic, and curator based in New York. She is the founding editor of the *Journal of Art Criticism*, co-curator of the collaborative artist publication *prompt:*, co-organizer of the email project *of missing out*, and an assistant editor at *Artforum*. Past exhibitions include “Object Intimacies” at NURTUREart, Brooklyn; “Material Metaphors” at NARS Foundation, Brooklyn; and “Volley” at Abrons Art Center, New York. She was recently in residence with Art in General in Brooklyn and previously in residence with A.I.R. Gallery on Governor’s Island. Her studio practice is concerned with language and materiality, structures and the body; she often works collaboratively.

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