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A P S M D I N A
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THE MEDITERRANEAN: A SEA OF CONFLICTING SPIRITUALITIES 2017

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D I N A B I E N



Tondo I, 2017
 Medium: lightbox | Dimensions: 180cm diameter
 Image courtesy of the artist

HANIA FARRELL

Lebanon

TONDOS

Hania Farrell was born in Lebanon and now lives and works in London. Farrell has exhibited widely in London (National Portrait Gallery; Royal Albert Hall; Royal College of Art), around the UK (The Beaney, Canterbury; Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens; Banbury Museum; City Arts Centre, Edinburgh) and internationally in Beirut, Lebanon (Ministry of Tourism; Bellevue Medical Centre; Beirut Art Fair; Beirut Art Week), Dubai (Art Dubai), and Singapore (Singapore Art Fair).

Her work has been included in the biennial *Of the Sea, Art in the Dockyard 2016* (The Historic Dockyard Chatham, UK) and in major shows such as the Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2016.

She was a finalist of the SOLO Award (2017); RPS International Images for Science (2016) and Saatchi Magazine ART&MUSIC's Point & Shoot (2013). Farrell was awarded the ArtGemini Prize for the Photography and Digital category (2016) and The Dockyard Prize (2016).

Tondo I and *Tondo II* are part of *Tondos*, a larger ongoing series of sizable lightboxes featuring digital collages. The series borrows its name and circular format from the Italian Renaissance *Tondos*; round paintings, sculptures or architectural elements often depicting religious scenes. Each collage fuses together a variety of architectural elements, frescoes, sculptures and digital technology, representing different religions, faiths and philosophies throughout history and within the confines of the Mediterranean and its Diaspora.

The framing of the collages within the confines of lightboxes serves to reinforce the metaphorical value of light as a metaphysical path of faith and equally as a vehicle towards Enlightenment.

The elements included in *Tondo I* and *Tondo II* in particular are sourced from the artist's own photographic archives, including amongst others, images of the Basilica Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari in Venice, Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, the Temple of Haroeri and Sobek in Kom Ombo, Saint Isaac's Cathedral in Saint Petersburg, CERN in Geneva, Angkor Wat in Siam Reap, and Jantar Mantar in Jaipur. Some portions of the imagery might be more easily recognisable than others. Because of the digital processes of layering and juxtaposing, the collages invite the viewer to spend time in contemplation, seeking to unearth a web of hidden symbols.

This complex and multilayered syncretism ultimately attempts to generate a new iconography, which is of course, not aiming to substitute traditional religions. Yet, it might represent a *third way*, where sets of beliefs from different faiths and philosophies merge, to provide the foundation and facets for the identity of truly global, open-minded individuals. For instance, Christian teachings could then live through and alongside Islamic ones by means of Buddhism and ancient polytheistic religions as well as rationalist philosophies explaining the world through measurable sciences.



Tondo II, 2017
Medium: lightbox | Dimensions: 180cm diameter
Image courtesy of the artists