

NATALIA LUDMILA

Mexican, born Mexico City, Mexico, 1980

The State of Affairs, 2013

Five watercolors on paper, 30 x 22 1/2 inches each

Gift of Melih and Zeynep Keyman, 2016.11a-e

In these five watercolors [FOLLOWING PAGES], Natalia Ludmila recreates images of public protests culled from news photographs in 2013—a year marked by civil unrest across the globe. The artist’s decision to leave each image unidentified distills these disparate international conflicts into solo acts that capture the common threads that bind episodes of civil unrest and the efforts to quash them.

Isolated from their antagonists or victims, and extracted from any identifying backdrops, these combatants illustrate both the primal and dehumanizing nature of the skirmishes that mark our existence and continuously pour into our newsfeeds. Yet here we see not a clash of individuals and ideologies, but the universal struggle with our collective selves, devoid of judgment about who is right or wrong in these encounters. As the viewer faces off with these lone warriors, we wrestle with the eternal question: “What are we fighting for?”

—Charles Whitaker

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