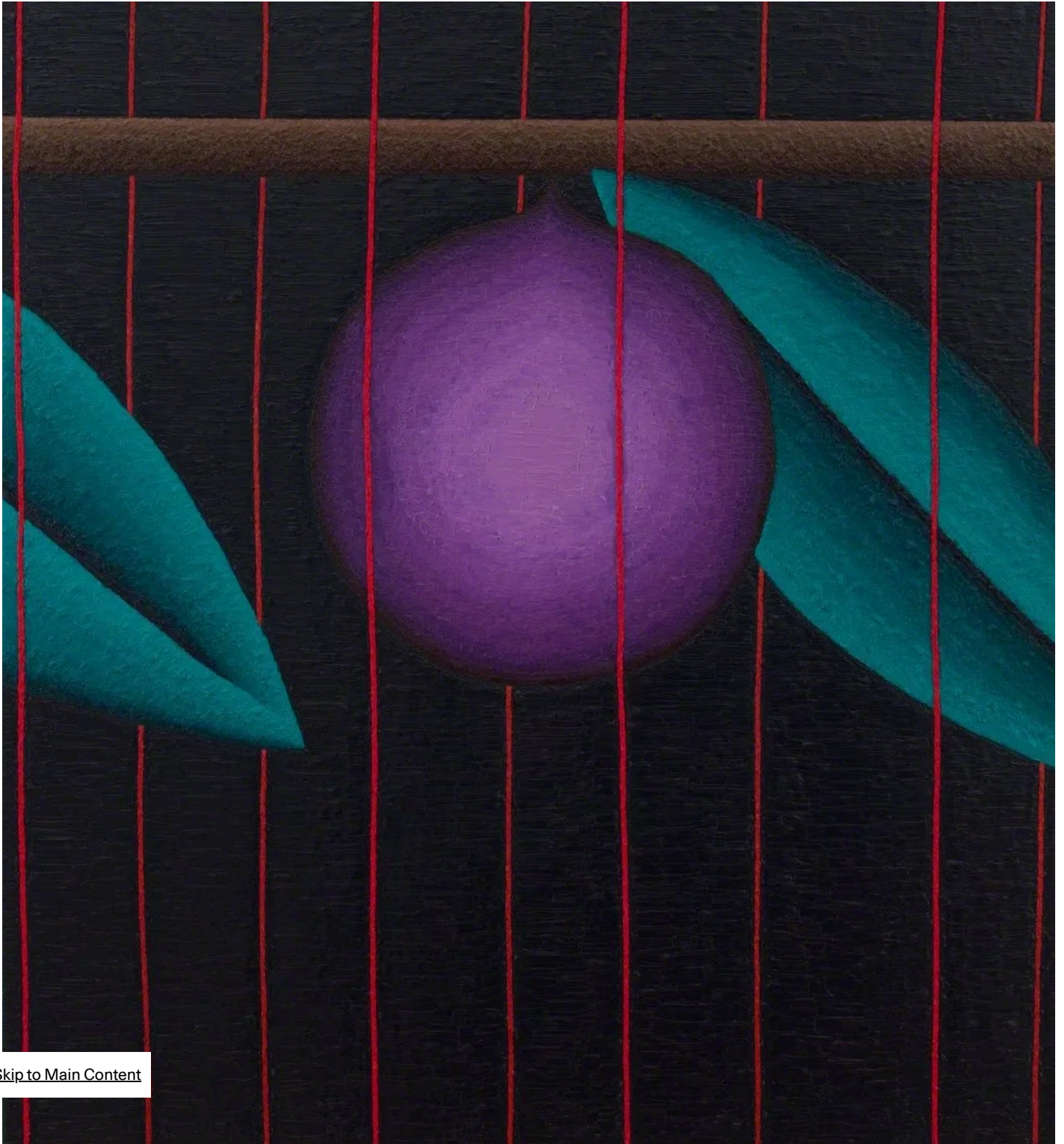




Consider the Fig: Brooklyn Artist Nadia Ayari Sees Fresh Growth for the Famous Fruit Artsy

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As a painterly subject, the fig has a popular streak. Over the centuries, it has been depicted in works ranging from Caravaggio's *Basket of Fruit* to Cézanne's *Plate with Fruit and Pot of Preserves*. In "Bricks," a new collection of artwork at Taymour Grahne in New York, artist Nadia Ayari plucks the fig from the classic still-life and finds new power in its history.



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Untitled (Fountain I), 2016
Taymour Grahne



viewed through a microscope. Elsewhere, plump and purple figs are rendered in thick oil on linen, floating orblike in a black void. In *Easy* and *For A. Martin* (both 2016), the fruits are buoyed by verdant leaves; in *Diamond* (2015), the fig is suspended from a branch, gleaming like a jewel. And in *Fountain II* (2016), the fruit sits in a tree, thin red threads spurting from the top and raining down like blood.

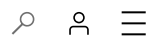
As art writer Kareem Estefan says in the exhibition's catalog, the fig is “an eyeball” amid the “lips and limbs” of branches, leaves, and rivulets of blood. “The lush fruit,” Estefan says, “aggregates poetic associations with sexuality and mystery, snowballing into a series of metaphors through its material repetitions and juxtapositions.”



Diamond, 2015
Taymour Grahne

Indeed, there's something vaguely erotic about many of the show's works. Fruit—ripe, full, and ultimately decaying—has long served as an artistic and literary symbol of the human body, particularly the female form. Interestingly, however, Ayari chooses an entirely different fruit, one that stands in stark contrast to the perishable fig, for the show's title and several of its featured pieces.

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another, just as the fig is repeated again and again in its tree. One is enduring, the other ephemeral—the artist’s comment, perhaps, on the transitory nature of human life, played out in physical spaces that are destined to outlast us.

—[Bridget Gleeson](#)

“[Nadia Ayari: Bricks](#)” is on view at Taymour Grahne, New York, Mar. 10–May 7, 2016.

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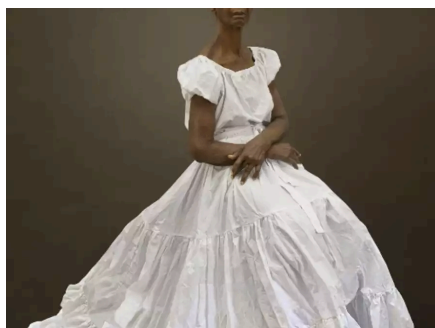
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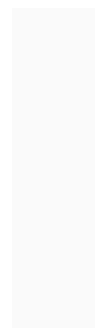
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