

Imane Farès

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Alia Farid

Alia Farid, a solo exhibition

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41 rue Mazarine, Paris 6^e

Alia Farid, *Maske Paske Wi*, 2020, video still
Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris



Imane Farès is proud to present Alia Farid's second exhibition at the gallery, originally curated by Rosa de Graaf for Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art. The exhibition presents a newly commissioned film installation, along with her earlier film *At the Time of the Ebb*, 2019.

The newer work is shot in Haiti, and centers on the after-effects of the country's historic revolution. Her earlier film was also shot on an island, in Qeshm, Iran; it is a melancholic meandering through local rituals performed in reverence of nature on summer solstice. In both films, Farid delves into how group rituals, social ruptures, and individual acts of resistance may admit, escape, alter, or reject definition.

This exhibition was held at Witte de With between 19 January and 19 April 2020. It was curated by Rosa de Graaf, associate curator, Witte de With, and co-produced in collaboration with Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, United States, and The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada.

The atmospheric work of Alia Farid explores contemporary urban life against the backdrop of postcolonialism in mostly Latin America and the Middle East where the artist lives and works. Her practice is motivated by an interest in exploring correlations between perceptions and the shaping of environments.

Since 2014, Farid has shown in a string of the most prominent biennials; the Bienal de São Paulo in 2016, the Gwangju Biennale in 2018, the Sharjah Biennial in 2019, and the Whitney Biennial 2021 (forthcoming).

Recent and upcoming solo exhibitions of her work include « In Lieu of What Was » at Portikus (Frankfurt), « Alia Farid, a solo exhibition » at Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art (Rotterdam), The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery (Toronto), and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (St. Louis). Lately, she's drawn on her background — she was brought up between markedly distinct but equally liminal societies, Kuwait and Puerto Rico— while also privileging conceptual rigor and ambition over personal biography.

Claire Tancons, co-curator of the Sharjah Biennial 14, said of Farid: « At a time of revival of identity politics, she knows not to flaunt her dual Gulfic and Caribbean background, but rather to put both to task to sharpen a distinctly individual authorial mark. »

Alia Farid Abdal has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from La Escuela de Artes Plásticas de Puerto Rico (San Juan), a Master of Science in Visual Studies from the Visual Arts Program at MIT (Cambridge, MA), and a Master of Arts in Museum Studies and Critical Theory from the Programa d'Estudis Independents at MACBA (Barcelona).

At the Time of the Ebb, 2019

Single-channel video-loop, stereo, master 4K

15:43 minutes

Commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation for the 14th edition of the Sharjah Biennial.

At the Time of the Ebb saw the artist travel one-hundred nautical kilometres from the easternmost tip of the Arabian Peninsula to the Iranian island of Qeshm. Here, she filmed the annual celebration of Nowruz Sayadeen ('Fisherman's New Year'). Such is the stage for Farid's film essay, a melancholic meandering through the surviving festival traditions of an island seemingly cast out of time or, rather, living according to a rhythm very much of its own, attuned to ancient seasonal cycles. The work foregrounds a number of local residents, whose performances draw attention to their customs, ancient traditions, material surroundings and natural environment – from a brightly decorated domestic interior to an expansive sea view overlooking the Arabian Gulf.

Maske Paske Wi, 2020

Two-channel video-loop, stereo

18:47 minutes, 13:37 minutes

Commissioned by Witte de With, The Power Plant, and Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

Maske Paske Wi saw Farid travel to one of her two regions of origin, the Caribbean. Specifically, a number of neighborhoods within Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince. The work is developed after Farid's time spent on the island this winter, during which time protests against the country's current administration intensified considerably in the face of rising inflation, high rates of unemployment, currency devaluation, and violence. As one of a number of activities, Farid worked closely with local residents on the realization of an informal structure that could both generate the possibility of income, while seeking to carve out space and time for conviviality. What resulted was a dance and costume contest titled, in Haitian Creole, *Maske Paske Wi* ('Perform because why not').