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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alia Farid presents a folkloric vision of contemporary life on an Iranian island



Alia Farid, *At the Time of the Ebb*, 2019. Single-channel video, stereo sound, 15:43 minutes. Commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation. Courtesy the artist.

November 8, 2021 (St. Louis, MO) -- The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis presents the first solo museum exhibition in the United States of multidisciplinary artist Alia Farid. Through writing, drawing, sculpture, and film, Farid gives visibility to narratives that are obscured by hegemonic power. The artist explores the ecological devastation of southern Iraq and the forced displacement of its people, the under-told histories of Arab and South Asian migration to Latin America and the Caribbean, and the intersectional Palestinian-Puerto Rican solidarity movement. Co-produced with Kunstinstut Melly, Rotterdam, *Alia Farid: a solo exhibition* is on view as part of the spring/summer exhibitions at the Museum, March 25 through July 24, 2022.

At CAM, Farid presents the video installation *At the Time of the Ebb* (2019), a poetic meandering through *Nowruz Sayadeen*, the Fisherman's New Year festival in Qeshm, a vast island along the southern coast of Iran in the Persian Gulf. *Nowruz Sayadeen* takes place annually on the summer solstice, when members of the community dress up, don costumes, and dance in celebration of nature. Farid's magical film conveys multiple images and moods: a trance ritual on an island, a festival between desert and sea, fishermen in animal masks, a camel chewing trash, and a young man dancing to a love song—all accompanied by entrancing sounds and melodies. The work foregrounds a number of local residents, whose performances draw attention to their customs, traditions, material surroundings, and natural environment.

Farid has been long invested in the overlapping circumstances of communities in the Caribbean and the Gulf, where histories and local customs have been subject to erasure by dominant political forces. The artist urges us to move beyond the prescribed parameters of what it means to inhabit a place, to transcend national and ideological borders, and insist on a diversity of experiences of contemporary life.

Alia Farid: a solo exhibition is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Misa Jeffereis, Assistant Curator.

Alia Farid (b. 1985, Kuwait City; lives and works in Kuwait City and San Juan, Puerto Rico) received a BFA from la Escuela de Artes Plásticas de Puerto Rico (San Juan),
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an MS in Visual Studies from the Visual Arts Program at MIT (Cambridge, MA), and an MA in Museum Studies and Critical Theory from the Programa d'Estudis Independents, Barcelona Museum of Contemporary Art. She has presented solo exhibitions at Portikus, Frankfurt, and Kunstinstituut Melly, Rotterdam. Recent and upcoming group shows include participation in the 32nd Bienal de São Paulo, the 12th Gwangju Biennale, Sharjah Biennial 14, the 2nd Lahore Biennale, *Theater of Operations: The Gulf Wars 1991-2001* at MoMA PS1, Yokohama Triennale 2020, and the 10th Asia Pacific Triennial. She has forthcoming solo exhibitions at The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto; Rivers Institute, New Orleans; and Chisenhale Gallery, London, all in 2023.



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About the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis creates meaningful engagement with the most relevant and innovative art being made today. Founded by civic and cultural leaders in 1980, the Museum transformed from a small gallery into an internationally recognized arts institution, now permanently housed in a flexible, open, and inviting building designed by renowned American architect Brad Cloepfil. CAM's distinct architecture reflects the organization's values and supports a dynamic range of exhibitions, public programs, educational initiatives, and community collaborations. The only museum in the region solely dedicated to contemporary art, CAM is one of the preeminent non-collecting institutions of its kind in the United States. We are a site for discovery, a welcoming space, free and open to all. For more information, visit camstl.org.

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