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JUMANA MANNA: WILD RELATIVES ART BASEL PARCOURS 2022

Picassoplatz, Kunstmuseum Basel
Exhibition: 13-19 June 2022

For Art Basel Parcours, Hollybush Gardens presents Jumana Manna's video installation *Wild Relatives* (2018) alongside two sculpture series: *Cache* (2018-2019) and *Water-Arm Series* (2019). Deep beneath Arctic permafrost, the Svalbard Global Seed Vault contains seeds from all over the world, providing an essential reserve should disaster strike. Manna's *Wild Relatives* provides a contemplative account of an event related to this reserve in 2012 which sparked international media interest: the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) was forced to relocate from Aleppo to Lebanon due to the Syrian revolution, provoking an unprecedented and intensive process of planting their seed collection from the Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

Following the path of this transaction of seeds between the Arctic and Lebanon, a series of encounters unfold a matrix of human and non-human lives between these two distant points on Earth. *Wild Relatives* captures the articulation between this large-scale international initiative and its local implementation in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon, carried out primarily by young migrant women. The film's meditative pace ruminates on the convergence between two modalities of displacement and survival as well as revealing tensions between state and individual, industrial and organic approaches to seed saving, climate change and biodiversity, witnessed through the journey of seeds.

Manna's sculpture installation, *Cache*, displays anthropomorphic abstractions of khabyas, a historical feature of rural Levantine architecture. These seed storage chambers occupied domestic interiors to preserve grains for sowing and annual consumption. The ceramic sculptures are positioned as fragments upon a shelving unit, suggesting storage systems found in seed banks, ethnographic collections or museum vaults. Complicating the taxonomic compulsion of such institutions, *Cache* considers the transformation of systems of sustenance and knowledge. Manna's *Water-Arm Series* considers the influence of agricultural production and labour upon a corporeal sphere, proposing bodies as infrastructure in an unstable or incomplete system. Referencing ancient and contemporary irrigation and draining facilities, the singular units become a plural concatenation, evoking an ever-expanding or receding network.

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Jumana Manna (b. 1987) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Manna's work explores how power is articulated, focusing on the body, land and materiality in relation to colonial inheritances and histories of place. Through sculpture, filmmaking, and occasional writing, Manna deals with the paradoxes of preservation practices, particularly within the fields of archaeology, agriculture and law. Her practice considers the tension between the modernist traditions of categorisation and conservation and the unruly potential of ruination as an integral part of life and its regeneration.

Manna was awarded the A.M. Qattan Foundation's Young Palestinian Artist Award in 2012 and the Ars Viva Prize for Visual Arts in 2017. Manna will present a major solo exhibition at MoMA PS1, New York in October 2022. Recent solo exhibitions include *Jumana Manna / MATRIX 278*, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, San Francisco; *Sketch and Bread*, Balade Berlin-Charlottenburg, Villa Oppenheim, Berlin; *Thirty Plumbers in the Belly*, M HKA - Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (all 2021); *Wild Relatives*, Tensta Kunsthall, Sweden (2020); *Jumana Manna*, Tabakalera, San Sebastian, Spain (2019); *Wild Relatives*, Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2018); *Jumana Manna: A Magical Substance Flows Into Me*, Mercer Union, Toronto (2017); *Wild Relatives*, Jeu de Paume's Satellite 10 program at MABA and CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, France (2017); *A Magical Substance Flows Into Me*, Malmö Kunsthall, Sweden (2016); *A Magical Substance Flows Into Me*, Chisenhale Gallery, London (2015); and *Menace of Origins*,

SculptureCenter, New York (2014). She has participated in numerous significant group exhibitions and festivals, including FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial (2022); Toronto Biennial of Art (2022; 2019); 11th Taipei Biennial (2018); Nordic Pavilion, 57th Venice Biennale (2017); Liverpool Biennial (2016); Marrakech Biennale 6 (2016); 54th and 56th Vienna International Film Festivals (2016 and 2018); 66th and 68th Berlinale (2016 and 2018); and CPH:DOX, Copenhagen (2018), where *Wild Relatives* (2018) won the New:Visions award.

Manna's work is held in significant public and private collections internationally, including MoMA, New York; MCA Chicago; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Carre d'art, Nîmes, France; National Museum of Norway, Oslo; and Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE.