



*Avow 2/38 (2017), Oil on Tin, 12.7 cm x 17.78 cm*

## Hajra Waheed

### **VIVA ART VIVA, 57th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia**

**Exhibition Dates:** May 13 – November 26, 2017

**Preview Dates:** May 10 – 12, 2017

**Venue:** Central Pavilion, Venice, IT

Curated by **Christine Macel**, the **57th International Art Exhibition — La Biennale di Venezia**, titled **VIVA ARTE VIVA**, brings together 120 artists' practices from 51 countries.

Québec artist **Hajra Waheed** is currently exhibiting in *VIVA ARTE VIVA* at the Central Pavilion in the Giardini. This is the first time in over a decade that an artist from Québec or anywhere in Canada has been invited to exhibit in the International Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennale.

In an immersive installation that inhabits one room in the Central Pavilion, Hajra Waheed brings together five bodies of work from her widely acclaimed visual novel *Sea Change* (2011- ). *Sea Change* chronicles the disappearances of nine characters over nine chapters and the artist's lifetime. Over the last six years, the artist has been working on Chapter 1, which compiles manic field notes, pseudo-scientific drawings, geological maps and survey guides, returned love letters, dragged and left objects and spliced photographs and film. Conceived as a reading room or library, the artist's exhibition encourages viewers to circumnavigate it, and in exploring the works, to browse and piece together a journey taken by Character 1.

Waheed revisits her intimate painting practice with new work *Avow 1-38 (2017)*, debuting alongside a selection of recent works from *Sea Change*, within Curator Christine Macel's "Pavilion of Joys and Fears." Inspired by votive offerings, these 38 oil paintings on tin act as apparitions in the night. Using the cosmos as a marker of time, this personal testimony hints at love, longing and loss through the eyes of Character 1.

The works on view present only a slice of the hundreds of works comprising this lifelong project.

## List of Exhibited Works

*A Short Film 1-321* (2014), 321 Negative Glass Slides, Collaged Photographs, Wood Shelves  
7 cm x 7 cm (each slide)

*A Short Film 1-100 1/2* (2014), 100 Negative Glass Slides, Collaged Photographs, Wood Shelves  
7 cm x 7 cm (each slide)

*A Short Film 1-100 2/2* (2015), 100 Negative Glass Slides, Collaged Photographs, Wood Shelves  
7 cm x 7 cm (each slide)

*Our Naufrage 1-10* (2014), Gouache on Masonite Mounted on Brass & Wood  
30.5 cm x 18.5 cm (each)

*Avow 1-38* (2017), Oil on Tin  
12.7 cm x 17.8 cm (each)

## Artist's Biography

Hajra Waheed's multidisciplinary practice ranges from interactive installations to collage, video, sound and sculpture. Prompted by news accounts and extensive research, Waheed uses complex narrative structures to explore issues surrounding covert power, mass surveillance, cultural distortion and the traumas and alienation of displaced subjects via mass migration. Over the last decade, Waheed has participated in exhibitions worldwide, most recently including the 11th Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2016); The Cyphers, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK (2016); Still Against the Sky, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2015); L'avenir (Looking Forward), La Biennale de Montréal, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, QC (2014); Sea Change, Experimenter, Kolkata (2013); (In) the First Circle, Antoni Tàpies Foundation, Barcelona and Lines of Control, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, NY (2012). She received the prestigious 2014 Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award for outstanding achievement as a Canadian mid-career visual artist and was shortlisted for the 2016 Sobey Art Award, Canada's preeminent contemporary art prize. Waheed's works can be found in permanent collections including MOMA, New York; British Museum, London; the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Burger Collection, Zurich/Hong Kong and Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi. Hajra Waheed (b. 1980, Canada) lives and works in Montréal.

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## Contact

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**Artist's Website:** [www.hajrawaheed.com](http://www.hajrawaheed.com)

**Official Website of La Biennale Arte 2017:** [www.labiennale.org](http://www.labiennale.org)

**Official Hashtag:** #BiennaleArte2017



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