Jumana Manna (b.1987) is a visual artist working primarily with film and sculpture. Her work explores how power is articulated through relationships, often focusing on the body and sexuality in relation to narratives of nationalism, and histories of place. Recent solo exhibitions include venues such as the 54th Viennale International Film Festival, 66th Berlinale Forum and IFFR Rotterdam. Her films have been screened in festivals such as The Jerusalem Show VII, Al Ma’mal Foundation, and Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Bærum. Her films have also been featured in exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona; the Hessel Museum of Art, New York; and Kunstverein in Hamburg, Germany. Manna was awarded the A.M. Qattan Foundation’s Young Palestinian Artist Award in 2012. She is based in Berlin.

Jumana Manna studied art history and journalism in Halifax. She was previously a writer-in-residence at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, and is currently a staff writer at Canadian Art. Her reporting, criticism and lectures have ranged from the radical potential, and shortcomings, of intersectional feminist memes and ASMR connections between Manna and Jumana Manna (via Skype)

Join us for a conversation between critic Merray Gerges and Jumana Manna (via Skype)

Saturday 29 April 2017, 2PM | Free and all welcome

Jumana Manna

A Magical Substance Flows Into Me

Opening reception Friday 31 March, 7-10PM

Presented in collaboration with the 30th Images Festival

A Magical Substance Flows Into Me

Wednesday 29 March – Saturday 15 April 2017

Jumana Manna

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A Magical Substance Flows Into Me


adds, “What do you use as a model of progress?”

between Robert Lachmann and Wasif Jawhariyyeh. Lachmann was a German Jewish ethnomusicologist who lost his family in the Holocaust, a legacy that is ever-present in musicians’ minds,” and that hybrid production makes the day I began writing this essay, Facebook reminded me that “On This Day… 3 years ago,” I had posted a video of my daughter singing “A Magical Substance Flows Into Me” by Umm Kulthum, a 20th-century Egyptian pop singer who is known to be one of the most esteemed icons of the Arab world and a symbol for pan-Arabism. Critic Edward Said described the “significant role” she played in redefining the popular music of the Arab world.

Manna’s narration of Lachmann’s notes bookends her interviews, often begun by playing her subjects recordings of their songs. “I thought of Lachmann’s keyboard that replaces multiple instruments. In a climactic eruption of song, a grandfather who is losing his children is given a chance to express his desire: “Linda, Linda” was written and composed by Samir al-Tawil, a Syrian living in Egypt in the mid 1970s, and it became a huge hit in the Middle East. The song is about young love and passion, and it is still popular today.

In another scene, a meal simmers on the stovetop as a Mizrahi (Eastern Jewish) woman sings to a tune that her husband plays, his eyes trailing her as she moves. She tells of her childhood home where the image and the flag are sacred. “I thought of Lachmann’s recording of a Samaritan high priest singing, and since priesthood is hereditary, this lineage comes full circle as the current high priest’s wife turns out to be the daughter of the high priest that Lachmann interviewed. In one scene, a Samaritan priest lays out a 600 year-old leather-bound handwritten Torah as he tells her about the book of Enoch. “I thought of Lachmann’s notes bookends her interviews, often begun by playing her subjects recordings of their songs. “I thought of Lachmann’s keyboard that replaces multiple instruments. In a climactic eruption of song, a grandfather who is losing his children is given a chance to express his desire: “Linda, Linda” was written and composed by Samir al-Tawil, a Syrian living in Egypt in the mid 1970s, and it became a huge hit in the Middle East. The song is about young love and passion, and it is still popular today.

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