



McMaster Museum of Art presents solo exhibition of work by Canadian artist Sameer Farooq

Hamilton, ON – September 26, 2024 – This fall, McMaster Museum of Art – M(M)A – will present a solo exhibition of works by Cape Breton born, Toronto based interdisciplinary artist Sameer Farooq. Curated by Mona Filip and originally presented by Dalhousie Art Gallery in 2023, [The Fairest Order in the World](#) will be on display at the M(M)A from October 1, 2024, until December 20, 2024. The presentation at the M(M)A is the first stop for the touring exhibition.

The exhibition offers a poetic and thought-provoking exploration of museums' colonial histories through a mixed media installation that probes notions of provenance, repatriation, and repair. Following the M(M)A's collection exhibition [Chasm](#) (2023), which expanded on the emergence of more critical curatorial frameworks for exhibitions at the M(M)A, *The Fairest Order in the World* continues to explore and build upon these critical perspectives. The exhibition reflects on and challenges the history of institutions, their collections and display practices from the unique perspective of the artist. Farooq's practice works to reveal some of the blind spots around how museums have written and located history, while also questioning the value bias in collecting.

In *The Fairest Order in the World*, Farooq arranges a series of new and recent sculptures and images to articulate unique ideas for repurposing the emptied spaces of museums devoid of their spoils. The works prompt reflection on the fraught and violent histories that have prevailed in these institutions over time and suggest what they might become through the mechanics of restitution, what they may shift to collect and document, and what kind of experiences they could nurture.

The exhibition entices visitors to spend time with the objects, contemplating their physical and emotional presence as well as the absences they evoke. The artworks may serve as tools for meditation, revealing a deeper potential that transcends their aesthetic value. An audio environment composed by Farooq's collaborator Gabie Strong (Los Angeles, CA) sets a deliberately slow pace, encouraging six-minute intervals at each vantage point. Lyrical texts contributed by poet Jared

Stanley (Reno, NV) unsettle the rigid format of institutional labels and imagine the objects' own voces. Farooq's film produced in collaboration with Mirjam Linschooten (Amsterdam, NL), *The Museum Visits a Therapist*, offers a reflection on trauma and recovery, personifying the museum and imagining therapeutic strategies for healing historic wounds.



Sameer Farooq, *If it were possible to collect all navels of the world on the steps to ASCENSION*, 2019. Installation view at Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2023. Photo by Steve Farmer.

Sameer Farooq is a Canadian artist of Pakistani and Ugandan Indian descent, born in Cape Breton and based in Toronto. Farooq has held exhibitions at institutions around the world including The Venice Biennale of Architecture (2023), Fonderie Darling, Montréal (2022); Susan Hobbs, Toronto (2022); Koffler Gallery, Toronto (2021); Patel Brown, Toronto (2021); Lilley Museum, Reno (2019); Aga Khan Museum, Toronto (2017); Institute of Islamic Culture, Paris (2017); Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2016); The British Library, London (2015); Maquis Projects, Izmir (2015); Artellewa, Cairo (2014); and the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2011). Reviews dedicated to his work have been published by Art Forum, Canadian Art, The Washington Post, BBC Culture, Hyperallergic, Artnet, The Huffington Post, and C Magazine. He is an alumnus of the prestigious Bemis Center Residency.

Mona Filip is a contemporary art curator and writer based in Toronto. Originally from Romania, she received her BFA from the Corcoran School of Art, Washington DC, and her MFA from SUNY at Buffalo. With an idea-driven and dialogue-focused approach, Filip collaborates with artists to produce experiential installations that engage the public on sensorial,

emotional and intellectual levels. Filip's curatorial experience spans over forty exhibitions and site-specific projects, collaborations with guest curators, and a broad range of public programs.

An opening reception for the exhibition will be held on Thursday, October 24th from 5 –8 pm. Remarks will begin at 6 pm and everyone is welcome to attend.

Exhibition organized by Dalhousie Art Gallery.

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About McMaster Museum of Art

The McMaster Museum of Art is a meeting space for both the University campus and the community situated within the traditional territories of the Mississauga and the Haudenosaunee nations. The M(M)A engages and inspires through arts presentation and promotion, as well as by: growing an awareness of the interconnectivity of the past, present and future; advancing de-colonization; engaging in innovative and imaginative research; dismantling institutional and ideological boundaries; partnering and collaborating with intentionality; diversifying the collection; and building capacity.

Museum Hours:

Tuesday: 11am-5pm

Wednesday: 11am-5pm

Thursday: 11am-7pm

Friday: 11am-5pm

Saturday – Monday: Closed

The museum is open to everyone, and admission is always free.

For more information please contact:

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