

# firstdraft

Gallery 2

8–29 Oct 2020

## In Their Finery

Eddie Abd

*In Their Finery* explores the familial performance of inherited traditions, the temptation of embodying your own exotic, and the politicisation of the chickpea. The works in this exhibition, which have personal starting points, investigate the interlocking of seemingly incongruous constructs while interlacing religious and textile motifs as metaphors for transcultural interplay. Based on photographic and video portraits of the artist and her family, with painted white faces, the staged tableaux engage the viewers in heightened performances of identities. These works were created with the artist's family on the traditional lands of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples, they pay their respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

**Eddie Abd** works with mixed and digital media to create composite works that feature costumed characters inhabiting hybrid spaces. Informed by her experience of living in Lebanon and Australia, her practice is rooted in her interest in ornamentation, symbolic gesture and self representation. Eddie has worked as a broadcast journalist and an artist facilitator and creative producer of CACD projects. She was awarded a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Painting) from the Lebanese University and a Bachelor of Digital Media from the College of Fine Arts, UNSW.

Media Player Partner

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Gallery 1

**Argileh at Wedding Cake Rock**

Gillian Kayrooz

Gallery 3

**Ribwreck**

Tamara Baillie

**13–17 riley street  
woolloomooloo  
nsw 2011  
+61 2 8970 2999  
[firstdraft.org.au](http://firstdraft.org.au)**

**We acknowledge and pay respect to the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which Firstdraft is built and operates.**

**Firstdraft is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW; and assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.**



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### Artworks (clockwise from left)

*She Made Hommous Till Her Hands Bled*, 2020

triptych, digital prints on archival rag paper

100 × 55 cm; 100 × 124 cm; 100 × 55 cm

Added to Tahini paste, lemon juice and salt, the chickpea becomes a vehicle for expressing nationalism (act of resistance), an offering for acceptance in adopted countries (conditional) and pride in tradition (eat my hommous!).

*My Shrine Is In My Head – with Aram and Yasmeen El Haddad*, 2020

two-channel video with audio, 5 minutes

3 toy and object installations, 90 × 40 × 20 cm (approx.)

In my grandmother's house in El Mina, Trablus, there was a shrine in the bedroom. It had a few statues of the Virgin Mary and various saints including Mar Charbel and Mar Takla meticulously placed on satin fabric and doilies, surrounded by flowers (often Gardenia) in small water-filled dishes, prayer books, a rosary and photos of living and deceased family members. 30 years later, my young children Aram and Yasmeen started to build intricate, beautiful arrangements of their toy figurines, mixed in with flowers and 'borrowed' family heirlooms, in dedicated spaces around our house. While making the video and the toy shrines with Yasmeen and Aram I embraced the two worlds coexisting in my head. I asked Yasmeen why she likes to do her displays, she said "because they are really nice and I want you to look at them and love them". Aram said that it makes him feel creative and excited.

*In Their Finest*, 2020

single-channel video with audio, 3 minutes 24 seconds

*In Their Finest* explores the conservation of tradition as negotiated by families experiencing immigration. Referencing long exposure Victorian death portraits and the traditional textiles of Greater Syria, the family is dressed in the garments of its forgotten ancestors and lives in a paper doll house amidst restless Blue Mountains winds. As the video unfolds, the notions of practicing tradition and social conformity are challenged by an unexpected turbulence within the family.

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