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Press Release

Yumna Al-Arashi
Aisha



Aisha is Yemeni Egyptian American photographer and filmmaker Yumna Al-Arashi's first artist's book. This powerful, delicate publication, inspired by Al-Arashi's great-grandmother, Aisha, is an homage to the lineage of women that she descends from; women of the multidimensional and many-layered landscapes of the MENA region. Searching for an understanding of the tattoos that graced her great-grandmother's body, Al-Arashi embraces the complexities of a symbolic matriarchal tradition. Unable to visit one of her places of origin, the war-stricken Yemen, Yumna traveled through Northern Africa meeting and photographing a diverse group of women belonging more or less to the same generation: all standing, sitting, looking, moving and laughing with assuredness and joy. By refusing the violence of selection and definition surrounding women's practices, Al-Arashi publishes every single photograph from her journey in this 392 page monograph, moving the work into an ethereal cinematic celebration.

Al-Arashi's images are gentle yet strong in composition, conscientiously connecting the woman to the land surrounding her and vice versa; they are incredibly rich in detail and color; and they are intimate, beautifully defiant and full of community and alliance. *Aisha* also includes Al-Arashi's writing and poetry in which she reflects on memories of her great-grandmother and the scent of oudh "that left a trail of magic wherever she floated in that home." In her genre-stretching texts, Al-Arashi also speaks on colonial archives, intergenerational storytelling and on the complexities of transnational female identity in patriarchal, capitalist, and imperialist societies at-large.

Yumna Al-Arashi (b. 1988, Washington, DC) is a visual artist based in Zürich. She's had gallery solo shows in Berlin, New York and Los Angeles. Her award-winning short film *The 99 Names of God* (2018) premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and her images of the Bolivian Cholitas graced the cover of *Vogue Mexico & Latin America's* 20th Anniversary Issue, in 2020.

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Yumna Al-Arashi *Aisha*

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320 images

23.2 × 16.5 cm

With texts by Yumna Al-Arashi

in Arabic and English

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