



Image: Inas Al-soqi, Ameles Potamos

AMELES POTAMOS

3/26-4/16

Press Release

Orenda Art Works is pleased to virtually present **Ameles Potamos**, a collection of collages by Romanian-Palestinian artist Inas Al-soqi. A heritage driven artist, Al-soqi enfolds socio-political commentary and bits of humor into her compositions, striking at the heart of contemporary issues pertaining to women's rights, the role of religion, and government. She uses playful layering and painterly colors to hint at specific news stories. **Ameles Potamos** gathers recent works created during the pandemic and the chaotic last months of the Trump administration. Derived from Greek (Αμέλης Ποταμός) meaning the "Water of Lethe", **Ameles Potamos** refers to the propensity of humanity to forget its past and repeat history. The past year including the pandemic made the use of symbolism more relevant for Al-soqi. One symbol she often uses is the claws of crustaceans, which symbolize the tight control of government over information and access to healthcare. For example, in *Controlled Access*, lobster claws grip medicine in reference to the closing of hospitals in Transylvania. The piece stands for the marginalized regions, such as camps in the Middle East, or gypsy camps, and the helplessness of receiving controlled aid.

Al-soqi also addresses the misinformation of media in the U.S. under the Trump administration. In *Paraphyletic*, a clueless Don Quixote stands by as a conflict occurs before him, and the claws of crustaceans juggle inside a magician's box, much in the way citizens were forced to ingest conflicting information regarding the pandemic. Even pieces of levity, such as *Feathery Hat*, contain stark images that are a reminder of humanity's inclination towards violence. Protection against violence is a motif that Al-soqi works with frequently. This motif is present in the works *Fortunate Shell*, and *Keep me Safe V - Conserva de Cireșe*. In *Keep me Safe V*, the bottom feeders represent a different aspect of the government: that of cleaners. They guard the precious cherries, a symbol of womanhood, in a tin of sardines, and clean a path by "eating the violence." The many nuances in Al-soqi's work gives each piece a crawling depth, and dimensionality in which frivolity and austerity ironically entwine to arouse the sensibilities of the viewer.