

For Immediate Release

## Mercer Union presents Aimée Zito Lema's first solo exhibition in North America

24 August 2022 (TORONTO, ON) — **Mercer Union** presents *Scryer in the Archive*, a new commission and first North American solo exhibition by **Aimée Zito Lema** from **17 September to 19 November 2022**. Working across photography, sculptural installation, and video, Zito Lema engages with questions of social memory, and the body as an agent of resistance. In this new body of work, the artist reflects on her family's experience of living in Argentina during the political turmoil of the 70s, and traces its intergenerational impact from her own childhood through to that of her children.

"We are delighted to present our newest commission which brings artist Aimée Zito Lema's practice to Canadian audiences," says **Julia Paoli**, Director and Curator at Mercer Union. "It's been a personal pleasure to work with Aimée since 2018 to develop this exhibition which opens up timely questions about how we share our truths across generations, and the material history that assembles around—and sometimes about—our lives. In the broadest sense, these new works ask us to reconsider how we determine the social value of photographic histories, both personal and collective."

*Scryer in the Archive* is a sprawling sculptural installation that weaves together photographic reproductions from the anthology of an Argentinean revolutionary magazine overlaid with tracings of family photographs rendered by the artist. At Mercer Union, large basins of water carrying these submerged works sit on the floor of the gallery, along with Zito Lema's distinctive photographic sculptures that appear to float on the water's surface. The artist uses the metaphor of the scryer to disrupt the notion of a stable archive, holding the water's capacity to reveal the unseen, in tension with what cannot be found in the material record of a prevalent history.

Zito Lema's exhibition is accompanied by a suite of public programs informed by the artist's long engagement with archival documents, both as formal source and artistic material. Details on all programming, including a public talk, virtual exhibition tour, and readings of texts by key thinkers, will be announced this fall.

*Scryer in the Archive* opens with a free reception on Friday, 16 September 2022 from 7PM – 10PM. A cash bar will be available.

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**Aimée Zito Lema** is a Dutch-Argentinean visual artist who engages with social memory, using archives as a main source of inspiration and material. She studied at the National University of Arts in Buenos Aires, and graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam. She holds a master's degree in Artistic Research from the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague, and was a resident at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam (2015–16). Her work has been exhibited at Oude Kerk, Amsterdam (2021); Grazer Kunstverein (2021); Eye Filmmuseum, Amsterdam (2019); Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon (2018); MACBA, Barcelona (2017); the 11th Gwangju Biennial (2016); and Centre Pompidou, Paris (2016).

Aimée Zito Lema's commission was initially developed in collaboration with Grazer Kunstverein and If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution, Amsterdam.

*Scryer in the Archive* is made possible with Leading Support from Nuyten Dime Foundation, Mondriaan Fund, and Support from the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Toronto.



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*Scryer in the Archive* is presented as part of *Artist First*, a Mercer Union commissioning platform. *Artist First* Commissions are made possible with the generous support of Kaye & Paul Beeston, Rebecca Carbin, Jane Corkin, Popsy & Bob Johnstone, David & Erica Neligan, Nuyten Dime Foundation, Jeanne Parkin & Jennifer Parkin, and Morden Yolles.

artistfirst

### **About Mercer Union**

Mercer Union is a non-profit, artist-run centre dedicated to commissioning and producing new works of contemporary art, and providing an engaging program that encourages critical inquiry and conversation. We champion ambitious exhibitions that empower diverse Canadian and international artists in formative and established stages of their practice.

Press kit

<https://tinyurl.com/ScryerInTheArchive>

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