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Art21 to Release New Film: “Shahzia Sikander: Melting Boundaries”

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New York, New York – Art21 is proud to announce the premiere of “Shahzia Sikander: Melting Boundaries” on Wednesday, May 17 at 12:00 PM ET. The first 2023 release of Art21’s digital film series, *Extended Play*, “Shahzia Sikander: Melting Boundaries” offers a look into the artist’s monumental sculptures that make up the public exhibition “Havah...to breathe, air, life” (2023), currently on view in Madison Square Park, New York City.

“Females are often the markers when boundaries are melting,” says artist Shahzia Sikander. “Since the work has been up, there’s been a lot of commentary on abortion and women. The context in this particular project is allowing the work to have meanings that it would not carry otherwise. It animates people’s politics and fraught relationships.”

Installed in Madison Square Park and atop a courthouse of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, artist Shahzia Sikander’s “Havah...to breathe, air, life” reimagines the monument as a marker of boundary-breaking, feminine spirit, and collective visibility. Drawing from her

decades-long exploration of colonial histories and feminine representation in Indian and Persian manuscript painting, Sikander's public works ask viewers to think more deeply about lawmaking in a time when women's reproductive rights are threatened in the United States.

“As a fellow immigrant woman from Asia, I was struck by the idea of self-rootedness that Shahzia explores in these sculptures,” says Andrea Yu-Chieh Chung, Art21 Associate Producer. “Beyond asserting that we can carry our roots wherever we go, Shahzia also invites everyone to think about how we all inhabit a transitory, in-between space, and can be many things at once.”

Tune in to the premiere of “Shahzia Sikander: Melting Boundaries” on Wednesday, May 17 2023, at 12PM ET at Art21.org and on Art21's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/art21org. To learn more email Art21 Manager of Communications, Hannah DeGarmo, at hannah@art21.org.

Teachers are invited to join Art21 and artist Shahzia Sikander on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, when the artist will lead a tour of her newest installation in person. Attendance is free, but spaces are limited and advance registration is required. Register at <https://a21.tv/3APpAiX>.

About *Extended Play*

Art21's *Extended Play* digital series provides unmediated, behind-the-scenes access to today's leading artists. Through process-revealing footage and intimate interviews, these curatorially-driven films chronicle a diverse scale of international projects, ranging from major commissions to exploratory sketches. Produced in close collaboration with artists, *Extended Play* uncovers the provocative ideas, timely cultural influences, and biographical anecdotes that inspire the artists featured throughout the series.

Extended Play is made possible with support from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, the Art21 Contemporary Council, and individual contributors.

About Art21

Art21 is a celebrated global leader in presenting thought-provoking and sophisticated content about contemporary art, and the go-to place to learn first-hand from the artists of our time. A nonprofit organization, Art21's mission is to inspire a more creative world through the works and words of contemporary artists. Learn more at Art21.org.