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ANDREW RAFACZ is pleased to announce *Medium of Exchange*, a solo exhibition of new work by Sheida Soleimani in Gallery Two.

Chicago, IL, September 15, 2018– ANDREW RAFACZ commences the 2018 fall season with *Medium of Exchange*, a solo installation of new photographs by Providence-based artist Sheida Soleimani. The exhibition continues through Saturday, October 27, 2018.

Medium of Exchange investigates the relationship between the leaders of oil rich OPEC countries, as well as Western military leaders, complexes, and governments that have been involved in warfare as a result of oil interest. With previous iterations of this series, Soleimani has presented portraits of each OPEC Oil Minister, alongside leaders of non-OPEC countries who have been in conflict over the oil trade, probing the interplay of love, sex, and politics that the petroleum industry has created at the hands of those in power. The artist constructs sculptural backdrops that source images of specific oil fields and refineries in the landscape of each OPEC nation. She adds these powerful figures to her scenes by way of actors wearing masks and dressed in costumes in accordance to each politician's specific background and role.

Pulling from public archives, photographs from the media, official OPEC documents, and conflicting news stories, *Medium of Exchange* aims to expound upon the role of petroleum trade in concert with inadequacies of governments to provide for their citizens.

For her exhibition with the gallery, Soleimani has produced three new large-scale photographs that exclusively present the backdrops of these theatrical scenes, engaging in a direct conversation with the constructed photograph and set building, while maintaining the implications of the source imagery (from Saudi Arabia, Angola, and Qatar) and the political situations they document and represent.

SHEIDA SOLEIMANI (Iranian-American, b. 1990) lives and works in Providence, RI. She received an MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2015 and a BFA from the University of Cincinnati College of Art in 2012. She has had recent solo exhibitions at Atlanta Contemporary (Atlanta GA), CUE Arts Foundation (New York, NY), the Contemporary Arts Center (Cincinnati, OH), Edel Assanti (London, UK), and Williamson/Knight (Portland, OR). Recent group exhibitions include the Library Street Collective (Detroit, MI), VACATION (New York, NY), George Washington University (Washington D.C.), and Club Pro (Los Angeles, CA). She will have a solo exhibition at the Southern Utah Museum of Art (Cedar City, UT) in 2019 and will participate in the deCordova Biennial (deCordova Museum, Lincoln, MA) this fall. Soleimani has been exhibited widely at art fairs in Chicago, Miami, New York, Mexico City, and Amsterdam. Her work is included in numerous private and public collections. This is her first exhibition with the gallery.