

***Afiafi* (2023), Leuli Eshragi Audio Description transcript**

You are listening to the visual summary of Leuli Eshragi's 2 channel video work with sound called *afiafi* (2023) as part of *Interfacial Intimacies* an exhibition of photography, film, painting, installation, textile, and performance by artists who hold and express tenderly the multiple aspects of their selves through a series of portraits and anti-portraits. The exhibition has been curated by Caine Chennatt, developed by the Plimsoll Gallery and toured by Contemporary Art Tasmania.

Afiafi, which means 'day', 'afternoon' and 'fire' in Sāmoan, was made in Naarm with Spacecraft Studio and in Honolulu with kekahi wahi and a multigenerational cast of local performers and collaborators, and was commissioned by Aupuni Space, the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, the University of Tasmania, and Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden.

The 2 screens of the 5 minute 42 second video work are displayed side by side on the back wall, as part of an installation that also features vinyl text presented on the two perpendicular adjacent walls either side. All walls are painted warm yellow. In the foreground of this area, to the left and above, a 2.5 by 1,5 metre cotton 'ie' or sarong drapes between 2 bars on the ceiling, and to the right, another 2.3 by 1.5 metre cotton 'ie' hangs from ceiling to floor. The ie is tan and was made using screen printing techniques and feature hand-drawn motifs inspired by 18th and 19th century Sāmoan bark cloths that the artist discovered in French, British, German and Australian colonial collections. Both ends of the sarong have zig zag edges.

Afiafi belongs to an ongoing series dating from 2020, which proposes a tropical futurism where sensuality, pleasure and sexuality co-exist in harmony the natural, physical and spiritual realms and affirms the joy of communities bound by other forms of connection and kinship.

Eshragi states *Afiafi* is a tender yet rigorous offering for today's challenges of intersecting violences against queer, trans and non-binary bodies, and of Indigenous territories spanning the Great Ocean bearing the brunt of climate catastrophe."

The videos feature plain coloured slides with multilingual poetry written in Samoan, English and French, at various intervals throughout.

The gathering of 10 people are by the sea, overlooking the ocean.

Their 'ie' in the opening scenes are made of metallic foil. Some wear red coloured ie's, others yellow, and each in their own unique way, as skirts, shawls, wraparounds, tails without coats, with either bare skin, or a few with black undergarments.

Some sit, some stand, some touch the rocks, as the waves wash in.

The image changes. There is a person on right, another on left who are being adorned with a braided lei by another, after which one pair will honi, greeting each other nose and foreheads touching, while the other pair hold an intimate embrace.

Another shot is of a trio, 2 of whom circle a long lei around the third person who stretches their arms towards to the sky, looking up.

The middle 2 minutes feature all except two in cotton printed ie's, flute glasses full of liquid in hand, some standing, most sitting on woven and overlapping mats, where in the middle a spread of foods in ceramic and wooden bowls and plates sit.

They gently smile at each other, show acts of care and connection, leaning into each other's napes. They are happy. They toast before eating and feeding each other.

The final images of the videos show people laying on the rocks by the water again, connected to each other in various comfortable positions, resting peacefully.

Léuli Eshrāghi, Seumanutafa Sāmoan, Persian, and Cantonese, born 1986, intervenes in display territories to prioritise global Indigenous and Asian diasporic visuality, sensual and spoken languages, and ceremonial-political practices.

In 2022, Eshrāghi presented new work at the Tate Modern (London), the Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, and the Centre d'exposition de l'Université de Montréal.

Their work is held in the Royal Bank of Canada and Regional Contemporary Arts Fund France, and in private collections in Australia, Canada, and Norfolk Island.