

**Press release**

**Iman Issa | *Proxies, with a Life of Their Own***

28.02.-12.04.2020

Opening: Friday, 28 February, 2020, 10 am - 3 pm

carlier | gebauer, Madrid, is pleased to announce Iman Issa's first solo exhibition in our Madrid venue. The exhibition includes new works from the artist ongoing series *Heritage Studies* and *Proxies, with a Life of Their Own* as well as the sound installation *The Revolutionary* from 2010.

Begun in 2015, the series *Heritage Studies* derives its name from a field of academic and applied inquiry that relates to the understanding and use of history. Rather than proposing a stable reading of history, *Heritage Studies* instead examine dynamic sets of relationships—between cultures, sites, and artifacts—to articulate their relevance today. A historic artifact that Issa feels has a particular resonance and communicative ability in the present provides the basis for each work in the series. The accompanying caption describes the material, dates, and dimensions of the original artifact, as well as the museum collection that holds it. The dual structure of the work—which proposes an interplay between object and text—resists categorical stability in favor of an open interpretive framework. Thus Issa's *Heritage Studies* are neither formal abstractions, nor “pared-down citations of reality,” but attempts to communicate the act of perceiving the original objects and the relevance that they might hold for the present. “What do these new elements share with their sources if it is not the material, color, appearance, or shape?,” Issa asks, “...they share a speech act. They are addressing or saying something similar to each other, and it is perhaps through doing that that they become the same.”

Alongside *Heritage Studies*, the exhibition includes a work titled *Self-Portrait (Self as Doria Shafik)*, 2020. This work is part of the series *Proxies, with a Life of Their Own*, which Issa started in 2019. In this series, as in the *Heritage Studies*, the interplay between text and object play the same role. Here the text collaborates with the forms presented as portraits/self-portraits, giving them context and reasoning to their form, while turning on our imagination to the infinite possibilities of reality.

*The Revolutionary* is an audio piece written by the artist and narrated by text-to-speech software which creates an image of a potentially revolutionary character.

**Iman Issa** (b. 1979, Cairo) lives and works in New York and Berlin. She is a recipient of the 2017 Vilcek Prize, the 2015 Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award, the 2013 Abraaj Group Art Prize and HNF-MACBA Award in 2012 and was nominated for the Preis der Nationalgalerie 2017 among others. Recent group and solo exhibitions include Kunstmuseum, St. Gallen; DAAD, Berlin; Whitney Biennial, New York; Bielefelder Kunstverein, Bielefeld; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Kunsthalle Lissabon, Spike Island, Bristol; Lisbon; MACBA, Barcelona; Perez Museum, Miami; the 12th Sharjah Biennial; the 8th Berlin Biennial; MuHKA, Antwerp; New Museum, New York; and KW Institute of Contemporary Art, Berlin. Her work is held in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art; New York, MACBA, Barcelona; Guggenheim Museum, New York; and Magasin III, Stockholm among others. Issa is a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Thanks for their help in bringing about the exhibition to: **Arne Clemens, Alexandra Dominic, Holger Hönck, Hisham Issa, Shahira Issa, Ihsan Kenawi, Nicolas Linnert, Sandra Stemmer.**