

Press release

Tarik Kiswanson

13 September – 27 October 2019

Opening: 12 September 2019, 5–10pm

carlier | gebauer, Madrid, is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of recent works by Tarik Kiswanson, opening Thursday, 12 September from 5–10 pm. This will be the artist's third exhibition with the gallery and the first time his work is exhibited in Madrid.

Tarik Kiswanson's interdisciplinary practice encompasses sculpture, writing, performance, sound, and video. The exhibition assembles a selection of sculpture, sound, and textile wall-works that address questions of origin, transformation, memory, and loss—all central considerations in the artist's ongoing exploration of the human condition, particularly as it relates to coming of age and the context of first-generation migration.

The works included in the exhibition adopt more realistic and easily recognizable forms than some of Kiswanson's other bodies of work, however this "shift" is less a question of moving from abstraction towards figuration, and more of an extension of the artist's ongoing artistic inquiry into the body and its place in the world: its movement, its dissolution, its absence, its renewal.

A four-channel sound work entitled *Vadim* forms the core of the exhibition. In a poem that is loosely structured as a deconstructed interview, the voices of the artist and a young boy—a first generation migrant named Vadim—entwine, multiply, and at times cancel each other out. Running on a loop from four speakers, the migrating sounds quite literally pull you in different directions, heightening a feeling of disorientation, displacement, and instability. Two sculptures, entitled *Mother Form* and *Birth*, provide a scenography of sorts for the related sound work. *Mother Form* (2018) is a recreation of an empty neo-natal incubator. For Kiswanson, this incubator-archive is a hybrid object. It functions as a kind of narrative machine, positing a link between an absent body and its history. His exploration of the hybrid self also extends into a series in which Kiswanson reproduces 1930s-era pre-adolescent mannequins made by the mannequin house Siegle. Each part of the original mannequin that inspired the work *Birth* (2018) was crafted by a different artisan in a different material, an operation the artist duplicates and extends when he disassembles the mannequin in his Paris studio and then sends the various appendages to different foundries to be cast in different metals. This gesture elicits both a form of homecoming and renewal, bringing the mannequin back to its origin only to send it out into the world again—quite literally enacting a body's deconstruction, transformation, and reconstruction in the process of the work's production.

Kiswanson's new series *Passing* (2019) also concerns itself with questions of roots and migration, in an equally haunting and ghostly manner. These works relate to a recent performance and exhibition at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, which explored the intertwined experiences of coming of age and first-generation migration: a dynamic flux in which different languages, cultures, and values mix and merge. To create *Passing*, Kiswanson made x-ray scans of traditional Middle Eastern, North African, and Asian costumes from the Tiraz Foundation in Amman, Jordan and superimposed them with the sportswear that has replaced such costumes in contemporary multi-cultural migrant communities. Such garments are not only a question of economy and practicality, but also play a vital role in affirming and recreating identity. Compressing hundreds of years of textile history, these works become simultaneous carriers of the past and present. If Kiswanson has dematerialized, distorted, and melted historical objects in past project, here he renders them skeletal and transparent, transpiercing them with light.

Tarik Kiswanson (b. 1986) lives and works between Paris and Amman. Recent solo exhibitions include *Dust*, Centre Pompidou, Paris; *AS DEEP AS I COULD REMEMBER*, *AS FAR AS I COULD SEE*, Lafayette Anticipations, Paris; and *Come, come, come of age*, Fondation Ricard, Paris. His work will be included in the forthcoming 2019 editions of PERFORMA and the Ural Biennial, as well as solo exhibitions with the Calder Foundation and Carré d'Art - musée d'art contemporain de Nîmes. Further selected exhibitions include MUDAM, Luxembourg; Musée Gallo-romain de Saint-Romain-en-Gal as part of the Biennale de Lyon; Collège des Bernardins, Paris; Swedish Institute, Paris; Musée Régional d'Art Contemporain, Sérignan; Institut d'Art Contemporain, Villeurbanne; and Espace 251 Nord, Liège.