

Press release

Tarik Kiswanson, *In the Wake*

08.03.-13.04.2024

Opening: Thursday, 7 March, 2024, 6 - 10 pm

Tarik Kiswanson is a poet and an artist. His Palestinian family exiled from Jerusalem to North Africa and then Jordan before subsequently settling in Sweden in the early 1980s where he was born in 1986. Kiswanson's practice encompasses sculpture, writing, drawing, video, sound, and performance. A legacy of displacement and transformation permeates his works and is indispensable to both their form and the modes of sensing they produce. While retaining an attachment to the intimate and personal, his work speaks to universal concerns and to social and collective histories of rupture, loss, and regeneration. His oeuvre can be understood as a cosmology of related conceptual families, each exploring variations on themes like refraction, multiplication, disintegration, levitation, and polyphony through their own distinct language.

Kiswanson's exhibition in Madrid continues his reflections upon the weight of history and the idea of levitation, which he explores as a psychological state of mind and as a physical phenomenon. These lines of inquiry coalesce in a work that takes the form of an elevated room, which he describes as a "mental space," a nurturing shelter amidst the forces of history, loss, and time. An ova the size of the artist's body levitates beneath the structure's floor. An archetypal shape that recurs in the origins of all life forms as an egg, seed, or chrysalis, *Cradle* suggests that such forms can move seamlessly throughout the world and grow wherever they are given space to take root.

Throughout his practice, Kiswanson has continually returned to moments of trauma, upheaval, and regeneration—whether drawn from particular associations with his own family's exile or broader reflections on moments of historical rupture. Within the room, a child-sized resin ova hovers on the wall close to a reconstruction-era wardrobe. As a surrogate body and container of objects both precious and quotidian, the wardrobe has been a recurring form in Kiswanson's oeuvre and references both the displacement and renewal that occurs in the face of loss. As Jean-Marc Prévost writes, "the wardrobe can be seen as a memorial monument, but the potentialities of the cocoon's life force seem capable of challenging the contingencies of history." The installation therefore creates a perplexing situation, at once gesturing towards the floating sense of uncertainty that defines our transient times while also positing rootlessness as a generative state of being, a state of boundlessness.

Tarik Kiswanson (b. Halmstad, 1986) was awarded the Marcel Duchamp Prize in 2023. His work has been the subject of several solo exhibitions at institutions, most recently at Bonniers Konsthall (2023), Salzburger Kunstverein (2023), Museo Tamayo (2023), M HKA-Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp (2022), Hallands Konstmuseum (2022), and Carré d'Art-Musée d'art contemporain (2021). He has participated in group exhibitions and biennials at institutions such as Centre Pompidou, Gothenburg International Biennial for Contemporary Art, 16th Lyon Biennial of Contemporary Art, The Ural Biennial, Performa 19 Biennial, 12th Gwangju Biennial, and MUDAM-Museum of Contemporary Art Luxembourg.