



Press Release

GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst



Jala Wahid

I Love Ancient Baby

18. November 2023 – 17. March 2024

Opening: Friday, 17. November 2023, 19 h

Press Talk: Thursday, 16. November 2023, 11 h

GAK is happy to present the solo exhibition *I Love Ancient Baby* by Jala Wahid (*1988, lives in London) featuring a new video work and a set of new sculptures within an affective and seductive staging of form, material and space.

Wahid delves into the idea that time and feelings are cyclical, that we display the same anxieties and desires ancient civilizations lived out thousands of years ago and that artefacts are charged with these emotions.

Employing juxtapositions and montages between museum documentation, playing cards for soldiers utilized within the war machine, sculpture, wall painting and lighting the artist develops a narration of objects and people who are lost and found. The ambivalences of this narration and its relationship with archaeological discovery and isolation, cultural appropriation and colonialism are being acted out playfully as if rolling a dice or dealing the set of cards anew to shift or correct the underlying meaning.

The starting point of the works created for Jala Wahid's exhibition at the GAK are the cultural, historical, and individual webs of relationships into which a person is born and that are tied into the intricate and toxic relationships of monuments, symbols, and affects. They position themselves between people who have already died and people who are yet to be born, between someone else's and their own history, between location and placelessness. The routes and journeys taken through these webs are being repeated both literally and metaphorically, life comes and goes and comes again amidst feelings of joy and grief. *I Love Ancient Baby* is also a very intimate work in which Wahid addresses her deceased father and her then unborn child and their (re)incarnations within the ancient

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sculptures. Releasing the abstract and archived objects from the museum's distance makes them carriers of the desires and fears again that were once put into them. History and histories, loss and retrieval converge.

The emotive connections which mankind is prone to establish seem to defy time through archaeological discovery or memory. *I Love Ancient Baby* suggests to look at how these feelings are specifically linked to their sculptural formation. Jala Wahid creates her own contemporary symbolism within present day complex relationships of cultural and individual identities. Drawing on both ancient sculpture and contemporary Kurdish history she emphasizes the importance of counter-hegemonic voices and emotional aspects in the context of ostensibly patriarchal (and neo-colonial) narratives of economic and political dependencies to which sculpture, artefacts, collections and monuments are linked as well.

Jala Wahid (*1988, lives and works in London) studied Fine Arts at the Royal Academy of Arts and at Goldsmiths College in London. Recent solo exhibitions a.o. 2023 Kunstverein Freiburg; 2022 BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead/GB, Niru Ratnam Gallery, London/GB; 2021 CAS Batumi, Batumi/GE, Two Queens, Leicester/GB; 2020 E.A. Shared Space, Tbilisi/GE; 2019 Sophie Tappeiner, Wien/AT; 2017 Seventeen Gallery, London/GB. Selected group exhibitions: 2022 Goldsmiths CCA, London/GB; 2021 Timothy Taylor Gallery, New York City/US; 2020 SculptureCenter, New York/US; 2019 Sophie Tappeiner, Wien/AT; 2018 Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham/GB.

The accompanying programme will be announced shortly.

Please contact us for high-resolution images.

Installation views available from 16.11.2023.

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GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Teerhof 21, 28199 Bremen

More informationen: www.gak-bremen.de

Opening hours: Tue–Sun 11 am– 6pm

Admission fee: Euro 3.– / reduced 2.– / Members free

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