



Oscar Tuazon: *Water School*, Installation view, Chicago Architecture Biennial, 2019. Photo: Cory Dewald

Bergen Kunsthall presents a large-scale exhibition with new works by the American artist Oscar Tuazon. Tuazon is known predominantly for his sculptural work, but his practice expands also towards architecture and activism. His work often uses architectural techniques and materials, producing quasi-functional objects, parts or representations of spaces, or constructions that are open to use and appropriation. His well-known fireplace sculptures, for example, shown often in public sites, provide a space for collective gathering. Many of his projects are inspired by alternative and utopian architectures of the 1960 and 1970s, do-it-yourself buildings and early eco-efficient and self-sustainable living models. Tuazon explores these to inquire their potential for today, not only in terms of their technological principles, but also their use of space and the models of subjectivity they propose.

The exhibition at Bergen Kunsthall presents new works and a large-scale installation connected to Tuazon's ongoing project «Water School». With this project, starting in 2016, Tuazon together with collaborators explores the dynamics and power plays that regulate access to land, water, and infrastructures. The first iteration was a pavilion structure, presented initially as a sculptural proposal. In 2018, Tuazon founded the Los Angeles Water School (LAWS) as an educational centre focusing on water as the connective tissue between people and their surroundings, which has since then opened also in other locations, through exhibitions and social work. The physical structure of the «Water School» is based on a design for a «Zome House» (1969-1972) by the architects and engineers Holly and Steve Baer, an early radical design based on the use of passive solar

energy. As the artist explains the project, «Water School is a public art project guided by Indigenous ecological knowledge to connect people through the medium of water. «Water School» moves, following water as it cycles across vast geographies, linking mountains to oceans and subterranean aquifers to the skies above them. From Albuquerque to Zürich; Los Angeles to White Earth, Minnesota; the Great Lakes to the Salish Sea; Cedar Spring to Paris: «Water School» is a mobile architecture, learning from the fluidity of its medium and the collaborative process of its construction.»

For his exhibition at Bergen Kunsthall, Oscar Tuazon presents a scaled-down version of the initial «Water School» pavilions, built with a new material technology reusing recycled packaging materials. The structure will occupy all four main gallery spaces of the Kunsthall and create a series of rooms in which inside and outside blurs. Additional works will create useable situations, provide reading materials, and document previous iterations of the «Water School». Further works explore the artistic imagination of water. An ensemble of powder-printed windows echoes the architecture of the «Water School» physical structure and contain further image material, like drawing or paintings. In the center of the exhibition, a new fountain sculpture will bring water, its materiality as well as the sounds we connect with it, directly in the exhibition. The exhibition will also include a series of works by Larry «Ulaaq» Ahvakana, a Native Alaskan artist and early mentor of Tuazon.

The exhibition is produced in cooperation with Kunst Museum Winterthur and Kunsthalle Bielefeld.

Oscar Tuazon (b. 1975 in Seattle, WA) studied art and architecture and is a graduate of the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York. He has shown widely in museums and with outdoors commissions, most recently at the Bellevue Arts Museum, Washington and the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University (both 2019), the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2016), Le Consortium, Dijon (2015), Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2014), Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2013), and the 34th Bienal de São Paulo 2021, the Chicago Architecture Biennial 2019, Skulptur Projekte Münster 2017, Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York 2012, and the 54th Venice Biennale, for which Tuazon was one of four artists invited to create a “para-pavillion” for the main exhibition.

Related events:

Plattform – In conversation:
Oscar Tuazon
28 Jan 2023 14:00
Upstairs and streamed online

Opening party
Fri 27 Jan 20:00 – 23:00 Free

Members preview
Thu 26 Jan 18:00



Oscar Tuazon: *Water School*, installation view at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University, 2019. Photo: Eat Pomegranate

About Bergen Kunsthall

Bergen Kunsthall is a centre for contemporary art and presents exhibitions and events by international artists. Landmark is our vibrant strand of live events, including concerts and club nights. We organise a broad range of learning activities and debates open to everyone. Established as Bergens Kunstforening in 1838, the Kunsthall is based in an early functionalist building designed by the architect Ole Landmark in 1935, with gallery spaces, a café, and a bookshop. We are grateful for the support of the Ministry of Culture, the City of Bergen, and Vestland County.

Press contact

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Upcoming exhibitions

Oscar Tuazon: «Water School»
27.1.2023–9.4.2023

«On Self-Defense – A Cassandra Press Reader In Action»
(Puppies Puppies & Kandis Williams)
18.11.2022–11.4.2023

The Festival Exhibition: Camille Norment
25.5.2023–20.8.2023

Bergen Kunsthall

Rasmus Meyers allé 5
5015 Bergen
Norway
Tue–Sun 11:00–17:00
Thu 11:00–20:00

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