

PRESS RELEASE NOVEMBER 2021

Dina El Kaisy Friemuth: *No History at All*

Dina El Kaisy Friemuth

No History at All

[O—Overgaden](#)

6 November – 31 December 2021

Vernissage: 5 November, 5–10pm

[Download press images](#)

In their first institutional solo exhibition *No History at All*, Dina El Kaisy Friemuth critically investigates the power structures implicated in history writing and asks whether it is, in itself, an imperialistic practice. The exhibition presents a multitude of poetic new works consisting of a commissioned floor carpet, a video installation, a series of posters, a cartoon, and a curated series of events intervening in Overgaden's institutional program. El Kaisy Friemuth invites visitors to take a seat on a carpet decorated with political quotes, rather than moving through the exhibition space in an upright position, as is usually the case at museums. From the carpet visitors can watch the video work *House of KA* (2021), which was filmed at the Neues Museum in Berlin, among other places. The artist and two family members are the main characters in the film, alongside some historical artifacts that were stolen by the West during the colonial era.

Accompanied by a horror-inspired soundscape, and with filmic references to *Night at the Museum* and the TV series *Pose*, we follow El Kaisy Friemuth and their closest relatives as they observe Egyptian sculptures at the museum after hours. El Kaisy Friemuth's mother, who used to be an Egyptian tourist guide, tells stories about the Egyptian faith in the soul wandering around the Earth. Meanwhile, the video jumps between footage of the mother and her audience sitting in the museum and scenes shot in the home. In this way, the museum's grand storytelling is juxtaposed with the feminist gathering and their personal experiences. The words of anti-Islamophobia activist Houria Bouteldja are quoted on the carpet: "I am here because white people were in my country." All the works in this exhibition seem to communicate that statement. Thus, El Kaisy Friemuth questions the very notion of history writing and asks: When can you define something as past?

Historically colonized peoples and nation across the world continue to ask for the returns of the stolen cultural and historic artifacts currently in the collections of countless Western museums. El Kaisy Friemuth's film and exhibition call for reflections on how the stolen objects can be returned to their origin countries without just being handed over to "another museum"? As a kind of decolonial evasive maneuver, *No History at All* investigates alternatives for history writing by animating the Egyptian artifacts through personal stories and visual works rather than presenting them as lifeless and fixed objects in vitrines.

“Daring to address society’s deeply distorted power structures, to point at the institution’s racist structures—the existence of which we, as Danes, would rather not acknowledge—and to insist on the dismantling of Eurocentric history writing, demands a strong and clear voice. With their artistic practice, Dina El Kaisy Friemuth presents us with this voice. El Kaisy Friemuth enables us to accept the necessity of understanding that we—as part of a white, Danish art institution—have a job to do in decolonizing and multiply our institutional space,” says Aukje Lepoutre Ravn, Interim Director at O—Overgaden.

El Kaisy Friemuth is known for their activist, collective, feminist, and critical artistic work. Their practice often takes shape in collaboration with other cultural workers and involves curating, text, performance, and video. The exhibition *No History at All* therefore also includes a series of events at which Friemuth makes space for more voices and their perspectives on the themes of the exhibition. Among other things, the newly founded union for racialized artists and cultural workers—The Union—is initiating talks on the carpet.

Dina El Kaisy Friemuth (b. 1988, DE) lives and works in Copenhagen and Berlin and is, among other things, the co-founder of the artistic collective FCNN – Feminist Collective with No Name together with Anita Beikpour. They hold an MFA from the Royal Danish Academy of Art in Copenhagen and UDK in Berlin (2010–16) and are currently enrolled in the Berlin Programme for Artists 2021–23.

The exhibition is supported by Aage og Johanne Louis-Hansens Fond and the Danish Artis Foundation.

Artist from O—Overgaden’s *INTRO* program

With the exhibitions *No History at All* by Dina El Kaisy Friemuth and *Organizing Principles* by Sóley Ragnarsdóttir, O—Overgaden highlights two rising artistic practices of an international standard.

O—Overgaden’s most important task is to make space for new voices on the Danish art scene. The *INTRO* program, O—Overgaden’s tailored development program for young artists in Denmark, makes it possible to collaborate with selected young artistic voices throughout a full year prior to their solo exhibition and to investigate what a best practice model for supporting the artistic growth segment can look like. The program selects two artists each year based on an open call and culminates in large-scale solo exhibitions with accompanying publications.

INTRO is a three-year pilot project supported by Aage og Johanne Louis-Hansens Fond. Dina El Kaisy Friemuth and Sóley Ragnarsdóttir’s exhibitions are the third and fourth in a series of six. The next deadline for the *INTRO* program is 1 November 2021. [Read more about *INTRO* at Overgaden’s website.](#)

For further information, interviews, and press images please contact Head of Press Line Brædder at lb@overgaden.org or 0045 2782 3929.