

***Play: A Third Space Experiment***

Filson Ali, Halima Handulleh, Daniel Jaghobi, Mikaela Karlsson, Abbas Sbeity  
Skånes konstförening  
NOV 12–DEC 12

Artist Talk: DEC 4th, 14:00–15:30

**Curatorial Statement**

This exhibition grew from a prompt given to all of the artists in our Third Space Residency at Skånes konstförening this autumn. Like last year, each resident was asked to create an artwork based on a theme. This year's theme was "play." The prompt is simple on purpose, so that it remains open for more possibilities: games (literal play), interactive elements (playfulness), subversion (power play), manipulation (playing with perception and/or the use of objects), and more.

Some of the artists in the exhibition use whimsical structures for serious questions. Others prefer the reverse. Mikaela Karlsson and Abbas Sbeity opt for interactive elements to explore social critiques, while Halima Handulleh and Daniel Jaghobi use more formal approaches as frameworks for further reinterpretation of play. Filson Ali's work lands in an in-between space, where light and heavy understandings of "play" feel equally present in both medium and content.

In ***WiLO***, **Halima Handulleh** plays on Buraanbur—a Somali orature (oral literature) tradition—to create a sonic love letter to the wiilo (tomboy) subculture. This sound installation uses the artist's own voice and lyrics to reflect on queerness and community, on mutual love and protection, on hiding in plain sight together, on collective imagination. Only three visitors at a time may listen through headphones as they move in the gallery, each aware of the other's sonic experience in that moment. —in quiet symmetry with the subculture Handulleh explores.

**Mikaela Karlsson's *DYKEA*** is a sculptural installation that examines queer community and (figurative and literal) queer home. Karlsson distorts the use of pre-fabricated IKEA furniture to explore social and spatial barriers to making a queer sense of home. The installation wanders through zoning laws and heteronormative social codes, comical white cubes and home goods—all for the question: what are these things that make it so hard to envision queer futures together?

***The Urban Planning Department of \_\_\_\_\_*** is **Abbas Sbeity's** collaborative game and performance analyzing how we co-create the social structures of cities. At the large round

table, participants can add blocks labeled as anything they wish. This could be as ordinary as a park or as fantastical as a unicorn factory. Sbeity's only directive is not to destroy anything. As this co-imagined city grows, each new build affects how everything interacts—and the people who live there.

**Filson Ali's** dynamic portrait installation *saga* reinterprets her child's gaze. Using her daughter's imaginative vision as inspiration, Ali photographed herself and her husband and reimagined them with magical realism and child-accessible staging. At the heart of this whimsical installation is an examination of love: Ali created this work alongside her daughter with children's aesthetics in mind.

**Daniel Jaghobi's** photographic series *this was fun! let's do it again* 🍑 plays with color and the body to explore ways of subverting the power dynamics between the photographer, the model, and the viewer. Each model controlled their session, their poses, and their boundaries. Using an altered language of Greco-Roman sculptural poses, Jaghobi makes a dreamy visual ode to queer bodies, queer safety, and queer friendships.

While these works show deeply different interpretations of play, both fun and serious elements intertwine in each piece. Though this exhibition moves through disparate topics—urban planning's effect on interactions between different socio-economic strata, a child's perspective of adults, a discursive journey around queer home, queer nude bodies spaces of safety, a soundwork dedicated to Somali wiilo—at the core is a sense of curiosity, community, and play.



C. Grace Chang, Curator

## ARTIST BIOS

**Filson Ali** is a writer, filmmaker, and producer who worked as a photographer before entering the film world. She received both her BA in photography (2005) and MFA in film studies (2017) from Long Island University. In her work for the residency, she uses conceptual photography to create inclusion using the whimsy of a child's point of view.

**Halima Handulleh** (b. 1988, Mombasa) is a queer multimedia artist based in Malmö. Their work focuses on threading known pieces of their ancestral history in an attempt to fill in the gaps. Though they are primarily a visual artist, they are currently steering their practice more towards sound and other media.

**Daniel Jaghobi** (b. 1994, Gothenburg) is an engineer and self-taught photographer based in Malmö. From surreal landscapes to dreamy nude portraits, Daniel does not cement himself into a particular genre within the photographic medium. Instead, his curious drive pushes him to explore the physical world and interpret it in an otherworldly way.

**Mikaela Karlsson** (b. 1995, Torrence, USA) is an artistic researcher and urban planner. She works with complicity and points of contention by finding comfort and coherence in queer space. In her work, she explores alternative methods for urban planning and focuses on subverting space, performativity, and community.

**Abbas Sbeity** (b. 1991, Beirut) is a community- and human-centered researcher, designer, and facilitator based in Helsingborg. Abbas is a cultural producer with experiences in Lebanon, Egypt, the USA, and Europe. He is passionate about bringing the community into creative processes through participatory art and design practices.

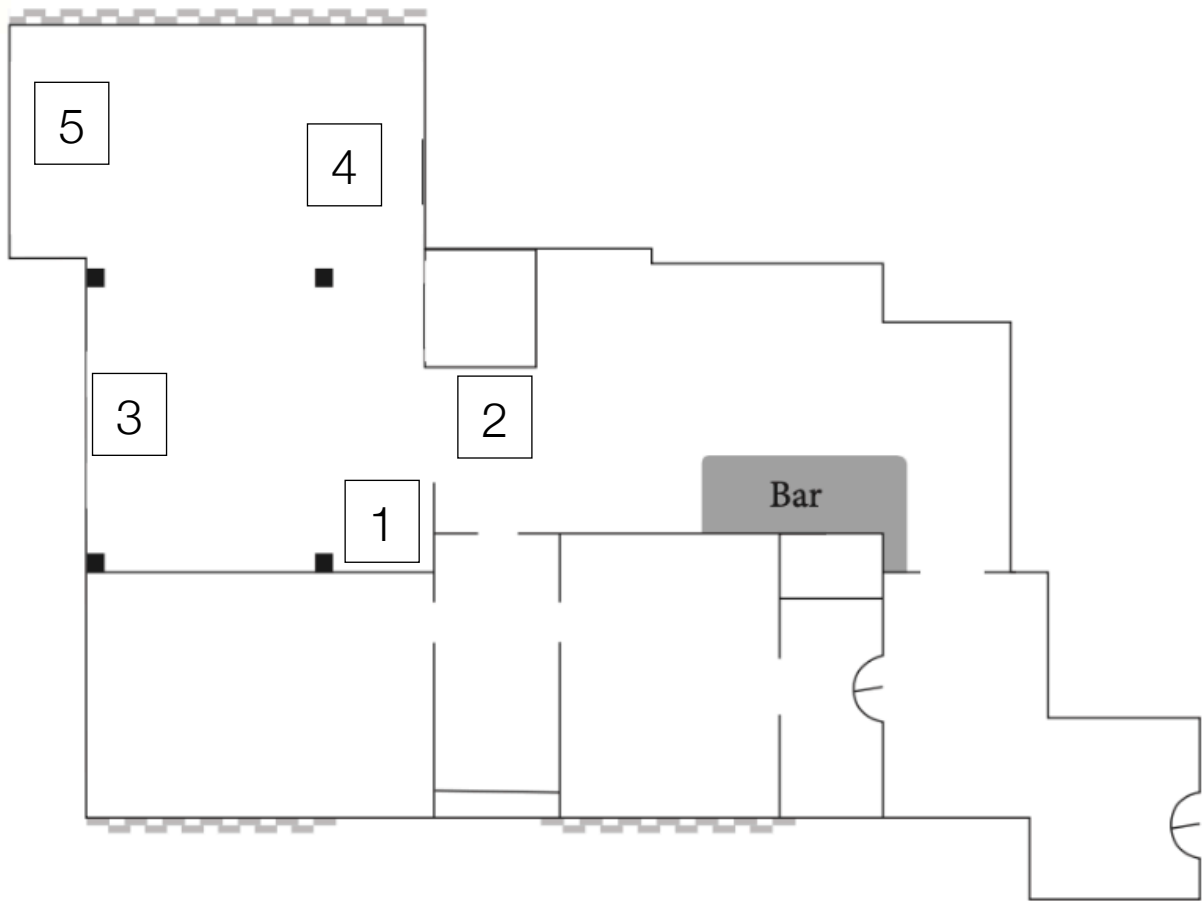
## ABOUT THE RESIDENCY

Play: A Third Space Experiment is the exhibition for our Third Space Residency, which focuses on QTBIPOC artists in Skåne. Though some participants have arts degrees, we choose *not* to focus on traditional criteria, e.g. formal backgrounds. Instead, we select based on ideas, talent, and drive. The residency's overall aims are to create community and opportunity, and to nurture local talent.

The term "third space" is used by a few disciplines. Postcolonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha uses it to describe the social and cultural in-betweenness that follows colonization. We use "third space" to reflect on the ways in which marginalized people form spaces where they are not only the ones being talked about—they're also the ones doing the talking.

This year's mentors were Dr. Temi Odumosu, Cia Kanthi, and Khamlane Halsackda.

Third Space Residency was created by Skånes konstförening's curator C. Grace Chang.



1. **Filson Ali, *saga***  
video installation, 01:50
2. **Halima Handulleh, *WiiLO***  
sound installation, 01:40
3. **Daniel Jaghobi, *this was fun! let's do it again*** 🍑  
photographic series
4. **Mikaela Karlsson, *DYKEA***  
mixed media
5. **Abbas Sbeity, *The Urban Planning Department of \_\_\_\_\_***  
interactive installation/game