

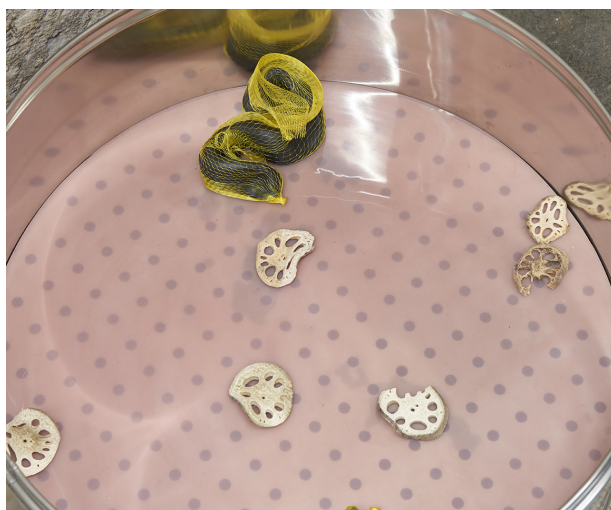
# Water Works

*A group exhibition exploring the washroom as an aesthetic resource*

September 15, 2022–February 17, 2023

Opening reception and  
performance by  
Fatima Moallim: Thursday,  
September 15, 6–8pm

Gallery Hours:  
By appointment via  
info@iscp-nyc.org  
Monday–Friday  
10:30am–5:30pm



Laurie Kang, *Bodied, burgeon*, 2020, stainless steel steamer, pigmented silicone, dried lotus root, polymer clay, fruit mesh bags, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Franz Kaka. Installation view, *In Practice: Total Disbelief*, SculptureCenter, New York, 2020. Photo by Kyle Knodell



Ajay Kurian, *Bather*, 2018, vinyl, grommets, curtain hooks, LEDs, steel, 64 × 20 × 20 in. (162.56 × 50.80 × 50.80 cm). Courtesy of the artist

The International Studio & Curatorial Program announces the group exhibition *Water Works*, curated by Danielle Wu.

Whether inside the sauna, the hammam, the beauty salon, or the shower, the act of washing oneself has served as grounds to destabilize bodily integrity. *Water Works* brings together seven artists who turn to the washroom as an aesthetic resource: Hana Al-Saadi, Laurie Kang, Ajay Kurian, Fatima Moallim, Mia Raadik, Pauline Shaw, and HaeAhn Woo Kwon.

As a phrase that references both civic irrigation systems and a crying fit, *Water Works* draws a line between one's own flesh and the broader, social body. The "cultivation of oneself," as Michel Foucault observed, despite its occurrence in private, is also a deeply social practice that reflects revolving attitudes towards cleanliness, pleasure, health, and morality throughout a range of cultures.

Mia Raadik's installation *Self-care* (2022), comprised of pastel shaving creams bearing similar consistency to cake frosting, lays bare the alluring fantasies that drive the so-called feminist "self care" industry. Also conflating flesh with food is Laurie Kang's *Bodied, burgeon* (2020); using porous materials such as mesh bags and lotus roots inside a steamer filled with a mysterious viscous solvent, the artist asks what possibilities—naughty or otherwise—are allowed to materialize under the comforting cloak of vapor?

The exhibition also looks at washing as more literally embedded within artistic processes, such as Pauline Shaw's felted work formed from denatured wool that has been soaked in water and reconstituted anew into cell-like arrangements.

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Meanwhile, Ajay Kurian and Hana Al-Saadi directly borrow elements from the bath to consider how racial and gendered Otherness supplies the sensual appeal or repulsion in one of the most intimate daily rituals. Kurian's *Bather* (2018) hides a glowing grin behind the veil of a dark shower curtain; its ominous aura emanating from its lack of belonging to any bodily form. Al-Saadi's new work *Sneaky and Pure* (2022) is comprised of silicone casts of handheld bidet sprayers that are ubiquitous to her native Qatar and neighboring regions but are foreign entities in the United States, echoing her personal experience as a visitor traveling abroad.

Fatima Moallim will stage a spontaneous drawing performance during the exhibition opening at an unspecified time. Using dry erase markers, Moallim improvises figures and forms from her imagination that seem to emerge like denizens from the shower drain of a wall sculpture by HaeAhn Woo Kwon. Taken together, Moallim and Woo Kwon's collaboration *It Gives Skin* (2022) celebrates the wild imaginary bred while languishing in the euphoria of getting clean.

A handout with an introduction by curator Danielle Wu and a guest essay by UCLA professor Summer Kim Lee will be available in conjunction with *Water Works*. Further public events and details will be forthcoming on ISCP's website and newsflashes.

**Danielle Wu** is a writer and curator based in Brooklyn, New York. Her reviews have been published in *Art in America*, *Artforum*, and *The Offing*. Previous curatorial projects include *Ghost in the Ghost* at Tiger Strikes Asteroid, New York, with scholar Anne Anlin Cheng. She is currently working on a group exhibition to be presented at Pearl River Mart, New York, in 2023.

About the artists:

**Hana Al-Saadi** is a Qatar-based artist whose work explores aspects of culture, society, and social media to generate discussions about what remains anonymous and privacy, and what is public. She works with archives, sound, and household items to create and assemble installations. She has exhibited work at Cosmoscw, Moscow; The WaterFire Arts Center, Providence; and Fire Station – Qatar Museums, among others. Al-Saadi was an artist-in-residence at ISCP in 2022.

**Laurie Kang** is a Canada and US-based artist who uses sculpture, photography and site-responsive installation to explore the body as an ongoing process. She has exhibited work at COOPER COLE, Toronto; Gallery TPW, Toronto; and Galeria Raster, Warsaw, among others.

**Ajay Kurian** is a United States-based multimedia artist whose work deals with mythologies of American life. Kurian's practice engages with race, nature and the intersection of the personal and the social. Unbound by any material fidelity, his practice uses all human senses to generate an understanding of sculpture unbound to any single material, universal or ideal body. He has exhibited work at MoMA PS1, New York; Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai; SpazioA, Pistoia, Italy; and Galerie Max Hetzler, Paris & Berlin, among others.

**Fatima Moallim** is a Sweden-based self-taught artist who works with performance, drawing and installation. In Moallim's installations, drawings expand into the room, blending boundaries between the figurative and the abstract, the self and the other, memory and oblivion. She has exhibited work at Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art, Göteborg; and KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin, among others. She is currently an artist-in-residence at ISCP.

**Mia Raadik** is an Estonia-based conceptual feminist artist whose work challenges social norms and highlights their underlying causes. She addresses socially stigmatized topics like dysfunctional menstrual cycles, reproduction, abortion, menopause, sexual and mental abuse, trauma recovery, and mental health. She has exhibited work at The Naked Island Project Space, Tallinn; Tallinn Art Hall; Kogo Gallery, Tartu, all Estonia, among others. Raadik was an artist-in-residence at ISCP in 2021.

**Pauline Shaw** is a United States-based artist whose work questions how personal history and cultural knowledge is acquired, preserved and rendered. Her practice draws upon personal experience and perception processed through material transformations—felt wool, blown glass, ceramics. She has exhibited work at Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore; The Shed, New York; and Almine Rech Gallery, Paris, among others. Shaw was an artist-in-residence at ISCP in 2020.

**HaeAhn Woo Kwon** is a Canada-based artist whose installations and assemblages bring together disparate materials and means of production, including hand-built, manufactured, found, and organic objects and images. Her work often reflects on the availability of excess goods and the necessity of inventiveness in our current moment. She has exhibited work at Franz Kaka, Toronto; Jack Barrett Gallery, New York; and Clint Roenisch, Toronto, among others.

This exhibition is supported, in part, by Hartfield Foundation; Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council; New York State Council on the Arts and the New York State Legislature; and William Talbott Hillman Foundation.

#### About ISCP:

Founded in 1994, ISCP is the fourth-largest visual arts residency program in the world and a global leader in the field of visual arts residency programs. ISCP supports the creative development of artists and curators, and promotes exchange through residencies and public programs. Housed in a former factory in Brooklyn, with 35 light-filled work studios and two galleries, ISCP organizes exhibitions, events and offsite projects, which are free and open to all, sustaining a vibrant community of contemporary art practitioners and diverse audiences. Over 1,800 artists and curators from more than 90 countries, including the United States have undertaken residencies at ISCP.

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