

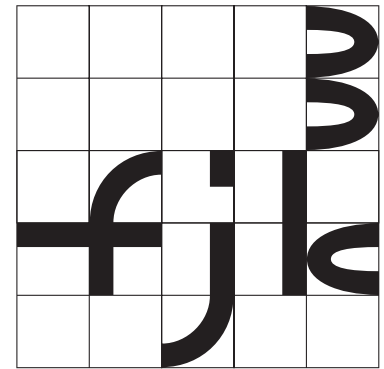
fjk3 – Contemporary Art Space

Franz-Josefs-Kai 3
1010 Wien, Austria

Oscar Tuazon Words for Water

Opening: Tuesday, October 10, 2023, 7 pm
Exhibition: Oct 11, 2024 – Feb 9, 2025

Opening hours:
Wed – Sun: 12 noon – 6 pm
Fri: 12 noon – 8 pm



Contemporary Art Space

Words for Water is Oscar Tuazon's first solo show in Austria. The programmatic exhibition title speaks to the environmental, social, and political engagement that is central to his art. In recent years, his work aims above all to raise awareness of water as the basis of all areas of life. Climate change and the privatization of natural resources make access to clean water and control over the water supply one of the most pressing issues of our time. **Words for Water** presents an appeal to raise our voice for water and to "look at the world through the lens of water" (Oscar Tuazon).

Tuazon's sculptures and architectural installations often consist of a combination of industrial and natural materials such as wood, concrete, glass, and steel. They are inspired by do-it-yourself strategies of the alternative and protest cultures of the 1960s and 1970s as well as the traditional building culture of indigenous North American peoples, and they require participation of visitors.

The exhibition centers on Oscar Tuazon's long-term project **Water School**, a nomadic architectural structure designed to serve as a place of informal learning and collective generation of knowledge. Based on an exchange with indigenous environmentalists on their ecological knowledge, this project focuses on local water policies so as to promote the sustainable and appreciative use of water. The formal structure of **Water School** draws on the passive solar zome house (1971/72) created by eco-pioneers Steve and Holly

Baer in New Mexico, which can be adapted to meet specific needs thanks to its polygonal structure.

Tuazon's **Cedar Spring Water School** was conceived as a form of protest architecture to rally opposition against a pipeline project that would have diverted groundwater from Nevada's Spring Valley area to Las Vegas. It would have caused lasting damage to the ecosystem and interfered with indigenous nature-based rituals. Another core element of the show, **Building** is a 1:2 scale model of the framework of a longhouse with a fireplace and windows. It is inspired by the nomad building culture of the Coast Salish, which the artist has been familiar with since childhood.

Oscar Tuazon's artistic practice is geared more towards collective thinking than individual authorship. The work **Great Lakes Water School** in the semi-basement of the exhibition space was realized through collaboration with Austrian sculptor Peter Sandbichler. Made from recycled cardboard, Sandbichler's works are based on modular construction principles and frequently explore the intersection between sculpture and architecture. The idea to conceive of the **Great Lakes Water School** as a retreat where visitors can immerse themselves in books on the subject, has taken shape once more in the design of **Words for Water**. It reflects the thinking of both artists: The notion of a living, unfinished sculpture that is only completed through its use by visitors.

About the Artist

Oscar Tuazon was born in Seattle in 1975 and lives and works in Los Angeles. He studied at the Cooper Union School of Art and completed the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York. His solo exhibitions include Bergen Kunsthall; Kunst Museum Winterthur; Kunsthalle Bielefeld (2023); Eli and Edythe Broad Museum, Michigan (2019); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2016); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2014); Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin (2013); ICA, London; Kunsthalle Bern; Künstlerhaus Stuttgart (2010); Seattle Art Museum (2008); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2007).

Tuazon has staged numerous projects in public spaces, including at Central Wharf Park, Boston (2019); Place Vendôme, Paris, Skulptur Projekte Münster (2017); and Art Basel (2016).

In 2011, he designed one of four para-pavilions at the 54th Venice Biennale.

Talks accompanying the exhibition

Thursday, October 10, 2024, 5.30 p.m.

Artist Talk

Oscar Tuazon in conversation with Peter Sandbichler

Friday, November 8, 2024, 7 p.m.

Words for Water

The human right to water and sanitation was first recognized by the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council as part of binding international law in 2010. Nonetheless, billions of people are still deprived of this right, especially in lower-income countries in the Global South. Taking Oscar Tuazon's Water School as a starting point, we will discuss the global dynamics and power games that regulate access to land, water, and infrastructure, as well as anthropogenic stressors on water systems.

Friday, December 13, 2024, 7 p.m.

Better Do It Yourself?

Many of Tuazon's projects were inspired by alternative and utopian architectures from the 1960s and 1970s, as well as by DIY buildings and early eco-efficient and self-sufficient housing models. We will discuss sculptures as functional objects and community-building structures, nomadic and open lifestyles, and housing as a living, never-ending process.

Friday, January 17, 2025, 7 p.m.

Water, We Love You.

We Thank You.

We Respect You.

In 2016, Oscar Tuazon joined the water protectors at the Standing Rock encampment in North Dakota in order to take part in the protest against the Dakota Access Pipeline. He subsequently developed the Water School to educate people about water and connect them in their respective environments. In Vienna, it forms the starting point for a journey through the environmental history of the water landscapes between the Vienna Woods, the Danube, and the Pannonian Plain. We will be talking about the importance of water for Vienna, the only city in the world to protect its famous mountain spring drinking water through a constitutional provision that was adopted in 2001.

Sunday Guided Tour

October 20, 2024, 5 p.m.

November 24, 2024, 5 p.m.

December 15, 2024, 5 p.m.

January 12, 2025, 5 p.m.

February 9, 2025, 5 p.m.

Guided tours are held in German/English

For further press information please contact presse@fjk3.com

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