

REGEN PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

KADER ATTIA

The Hubris of Modernity

May 22 – June 21, 2025

Opening reception: Thursday, May 22, 6 – 8 p.m.

Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Regen Projects is pleased to present *The Hubris of Modernity*, **Kader Attia**'s second solo exhibition with the gallery. Attia's practice highlights and challenges the enduring legacies of Western colonialism via a rigorous, research-based process that examines the psychoanalytical and sociological effects of shared histories. This presentation of new sculptures and large-scale installations builds upon the artist's longstanding critical inquiries and delves into the complex exchanges between nature and society, history and culture, and tradition and modernity.



Kader Attia. *A Descent into Paradise*. MO.CO. Montpellier Contemporain © Kader Attia. Adagp, Paris. Photograph by: Laurent Lecat

An installation of mechanically choreographed rainstick instruments visually and aurally centers the exhibition. Activated by rotary motors, the percussive instruments evoke the sound of rain through poetic, circular movements. Moving collectively and individually, the clock-like motion of the rainsticks alludes to the cycles of falling rain and the passing of time. The work addresses humanity's illusory superiority over nature and meditates on the rhythms of our collective existence.

With *Urban Rivers*, a free-standing, gate-like metal structure, **Attia** traces the legacies of colonialism and empire apparent in urban environments. Elevated from the ground as a screen, the sculpture's chaotic latticework references cracks found in asphalt or cement, wounds within society's built environment. A memorialization of interstitial spaces, the sculpture confronts the fantasy of a utopian metropolis untouched by time and nature. The exploration of these lesions is extended in a projected slideshow of Attia's photographs of urban environments. Echoed by an installation of windows in the gallery wall, these interventions reveal unexpected dimensions and fragmented perspectives as framing devices.

Attia's preoccupation with fragmentation and perspective is further evident in a series of zoomorphic *Mirror Masks*, each depicting an animal (panther, monkey, lion, and bull). The sculptures, composed of replicas of African masks covered with mirror fragments, act as metaphorical portals to non-western, premodern cultures, where the artist is not pursuing mimetic representation restricted to the gaze, but rather an emotional and physical experience through the body. This visual strategy speaks to what historian Rolando Vázquez describes in *Vistas of Modernity* as "the hubris of the zero point"—the western claim to an absolute, objective viewpoint grounded in linear, one-point perspective as codified by Brunelleschi. This gesture reenacts the moment when Cubists like Picasso and Braque encountered the angularity of African masks and became fascinated by the absence of a singular perspective. Encountering their own "cubicized" reflection on the surface of the sculpture, the contemporary viewer will see their image fragmented, a portrayal of the multifaceted nature of being.

Deploying evocative formal, critical, and material strategies, *The Hubris of Modernity* surveys themes of colonial ambition in urban and natural environments, historical legacies of trauma and repair, and ongoing attempts to resist mechanisms of power.

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Kader Attia (b. 1970, Dugny, France) lives and works in Berlin and Paris. He is currently the subject of a solo exhibition at the Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC), Mexico City, which will travel to Museo Amparo, Puebla, MX.

Solo exhibitions of his work have been shown at institutions such as Bogotá Museum of Modern Art (MAMBO), Bogota (2024); MO.CO., Montpellier (2024); Berlinische Galerie, Berlin (2024); Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha (2021); Kunsthaus Zürich (2020); Sesc Pompeia, São Paulo (2020); Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (2019); Hayward Gallery, London (2019); The Power Plant, Toronto (2018); Musée d'Art Contemporain du Val-de-Marne (MACVAL), Vitry-sur-Seine (2018); Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (SMAK), Ghent (2017); Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2016); Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt (2016); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2013); Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris (2012); and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2007).

Recent group exhibitions include *Project a Black Planet: The Art and Culture of Panafrica*, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL (2024); *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present*, Sharjah Art Foundation (2023); *YOYI! Care, Repair, Heal*, Gropius Bau, Berlin (2022); *The Roaring Twenties*, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2021); *Smoke and Mirrors. The Roaring Twenties*, Kunsthaus Zürich (2020); *Down to Earth*, Gropius Bau, Berlin (2020); *Global(e) Resistance*, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2020); 12th Shanghai Biennial (2018). In 2022 Attia curated *Still Present!* the 12th Berlin Biennale.

Attia has received several prestigious awards including the Joan Miró Prize (2017), the Yanghyun Prize (2017), and the Prix Marcel Duchamp (2016). As the prestigious 2025 Hôte du Louvre, **Attia** has taken up residency in the museum and is leading a series of lectures through September 2025.

He has received degrees from Ecole supérieure d'arts appliqués Duperré, Paris (1993), Escola Massana, Centre d'Art i Disseny, Barcelona (1994), and Ecole nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, Paris (1998).

His work is included in numerous public and private collections including Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Fonds national d'art contemporain, Paris; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Museo Jumex, Mexico City; Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Sharjah Art Foundation; Société Générale, Paris; Guggenheim Museum, New York; and Tate Modern, London.

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