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FRIEZE LOS ANGELES  
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Three monumental works by Igshaan Adams (b. 1982, Cape Town, South Africa), Kevin Beasley (b. 1985, Lynchburg, VA), and Caroline Kent (b. 1975 Sterling, IL) are the focus of Casey Kaplan's Frieze Los Angeles 2023 presentation. With distinct vernaculars based in abstraction, each artist explores memory, legacy, and the connection to site from the viewpoint of either personal experience or fictitious narrative. Compositionally, conceptually, or through physical location, the three artists utilize collage to render landscapes steeped in existing histories or imagined outcomes.

Culturally inspired materials of personal relevance exist within fields of color and texture in *Valentines Pines (residence)* (2022), a substantial two-panel work by Kevin Beasley originally exhibited at the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago in 2022. Two distinct, side-by-side 'slabs,' a term used by the artist to describe the wall-based sculptural forms that draw from millennia-old traditions of relief sculpture, bridge overlapping narratives of historical and contemporary ties to production and site within the landscape of the American South.

*Valentines Pines (residence)* (2022) is comprised primarily of raw cotton, set in polyurethane resin. The cotton is harvested near a century-old property in rural Virginia owned by the artist's family. Home to the Beasleys for generations, the property is a place for family gatherings, and its surrounding cotton fields have become a material source for Beasley's artistic practice. Beasley connects his familial origins with the complex, shared histories of the broader American experience as it relates to the production of cotton and black land ownership in the South.

On the left panel—dye-sublimation t-shirts are collaged to reveal an image Beasley photographed of the property in Valentines, VA. Over the years, the land has been partitioned by invisible lines and divided amongst the generations of family. Signifying pine trees rise from the ground, splitting the horizon line into segments. Like the property's evolution, Beasley's family tree and its branches of bloodlines extend and grow, remaining invested in and intertwined with the soil from which their shared histories are rooted.

On the right panel—housedresses sourced from a former Harlem dress shop that was frequented for decades by Beasley's grandmother and great-grandmother have been cut into strips and presented as a colorful confetti of geometric fragments. Guinea fowl feathers serve as symbols of protection. With transparent color fields of dyed resin, Beasley allows the viewer to see the space behind the work, through the work. This visual access to the preexisting environment brings a new element to Beasley's established material formula of cotton, clothing, and resin. The inner workings of the slab are brought to the forefront, urging a new consideration of the viewer's physicality within the site the work is viewed in. Beasley's own body is inscribed in each sculpture, as he works with the resin for as long as time allows before the polymer hardens, joining the absent bodies implied by the artwork's very materials: those bodies who once wore or were intended to wear the clothing before said garments are redirected to the studio.

A core element within Igshaan Adams' practice is the ground upon which we dwell and inhabit. The artist considers not only the physical body in space, but also the imprints left by gestures and footsteps—the mark-making of collective existences. For Frieze Los Angeles, Adams presents *Op Hitte Voet (on hot ground)* (2022) an earth-toned tapestry that depicts collaged aerial views of a space between Bonteheuwel, Langa,

and Bridgetown, three separate townships in Cape Town, created by Apartheid—a system of institutionalized racial segregation that existed in South Africa from 1948-1994. Rather than lifting directly from a photographic image, the artist constructed this tapestry with a blended focus on and an embrace of loss—the negative space that exists within image documentation, the re-imagination of territory lines, and the consistent erasure of living histories. In re-mapping this region through overlapping color fields, Adams takes artistic liberties to underscore the migration of communities through “desire lines” (the invented, dirt pathways etched into the earth from years of collective movement). Irregular sections of the Northern Cape Region are rendered here in forest green, burnt umber, blues, and red tones, producing an abstracted composition made from locally sourced beads, shells, polyester braids, threading wire, and cotton twine. Cascading areas of gold chain activate the flat ground, while white beads speckle the surface of the tapestry to further enliven and create dimension. Within the textural trenches of this landscape, the histories of segregation, a posited new beginning, and the power of imprint unfolds.

Caroline Kent’s practice is an ongoing exploration of language, taking shape through an intuitive approach to color and form. Through abstraction, the artist unpacks and liberates signifying schematics that inform meaning-making to expand upon and develop new modes of communication. For Frieze Los Angeles, Kent presents *An entrance/An invitation* (2023), a black cosmos in which symbols scrawl, float, align, and disappear across an unstretched canvas. In Kent’s invented language, geometric shapes are pillars. They hold structural ground, making room for improvisation. A large angular shape in the center of the canvas echoes a triumphal arch—the formation of a passageway informs the viewer’s experience, offering an architectural frame in which to pass through. In the artist’s vast arenas of color and form, vibrant coexistences emerge as new tools of dialogue, and unexpected conversations unfold. Creatures undulate, expansively taking form and receding as they transect, leaving silhouettes in their wake. Within Kent’s cryptic symbols and unfolding scenes are traces of history that are embedded in her practice and are reflective of broader discourses.

Alongside their large-scale counterparts, each artist presents intimate insights. Beasley’s *Vista* series delves deeper into the representation of landscape through Sharpie transfers achieved during a casting process in which material and drawing are fused as one. Here, his mind’s renderings of past spaces become physical—from New Orleans’ Lower Ninth Ward and the Blue Ridge Mountains of the northern Shenandoah Valley to the Ohio skies that acted as backdrop to the road trips made between his hometown of Lynchburg, VA to Detroit, MI.

A selection of Kent’s paintings on paper chronicle gestures and impressions. The overlapping arrangements of color and form that comprise her paintings on canvas are culled from an expansive archive of works on paper, which began in 2014. Diaristic in nature, the shapes (originally conceived as cut paper, since her process excludes sketching) bleed into one another the way words might in one’s mind while formulating a sentence. These exploratory compositions become points of recollection that inform what is to come.

As companions to his tapestry, two three-dimensional objects by Adams hover above ground, one on the wall and another at waist height. *Klip Gooi (stone throw) vi* (2021) and *Mossies Bou Neste In Die Kinders Se Maë (sparrows build nests in children’s bellies)* (2022) are constellations of coils that mimic the dust clouds formed by indigenous South African dance, transforming ephemeral material into a permanent fixture. These works are nebulous and assembled over time, operating as studio time capsules collecting stray beads and various parts over weeks, months, or years. As all works meet on site, their shared and diverging narratives serve as points of departure for individual stories not yet told.