

## TAMI IZKO & FEDERICO CLAVARINO - THE CRAB'S HOUSE

*What does it mean to belong when you are always leaving?*

The Crab's House takes its name from the hermit crabs' way of inhabiting found shells or other objects and the social mechanism that allows them to move into a new "home" once they grow out of the one they have: by forming a queue, biggest to smallest, hermit crabs pass on their house to the next ones in line so that none of them will be left unsheltered. Following several years of continued migrations that have meant moving into many temporary homes, we have recently started to work on this autobiographical project that entails the construction of ephemeral "houses" made from the impressions we collect in the different places The Crab's House takes shape.

We believe it is urgent to reflect on notions and practices of dwelling. The way in which the idea of home is traditionally conceived has been altered not only by technological hyper-connection, but also by the forced movements of people due to economical and environmental crises. In The Crab's House, we use our own biographies of migration to speak of the hybrid identities that are born out of the shifting reality of this unsteady moment in history. Our methods, as a photographer and a sculptor, are based on the sampling and recombining of our surroundings, and are here deployed both critically and speculatively. Our work is in fact meant to be as much a critique of current socio-economical structures as well as an elixir for the imagination.

Each iteration of the Crab's House takes on the form of an installation, which entails a previous period of research and collection of impressions, mainly using casting, photography and note-taking. Our goal, every time, is to build a space that others can inhabit and modify, finding resonances with their own biographies within it. Images and stories, just like the shells of hermit crabs, are things that we find lying around, inhabit, share and exchange. They change us. To us, a home is something that is caught in a similar process of mutation, one that materially and affectively relies on the existence of others. Our work draws on and adapts to every place we dwell in, which means that our practices also morph in accordance to local idiosyncrasies, available materials and facilities, and above all what we learn from the people we meet. Perhaps, in fact, the hermit crab is mistakenly named, as its way of dwelling is built on receiving and passing on.

**Tami Izko** is a ceramist and sculptor. After studying film-making in Buenos Aires and journalism in Madrid, she was introduced to ceramics in Lisbon, where she learnt the practice from local artisans. Her work has been exhibited internationally. Her most recent projects focus on connections between trauma and resilience (*Wounds*, 2020) and on the mechanisms behind magical thinking (*Bezoar*, 2021). In 2022 she was commissioned an open-air sculptural work by Fondazione La Raia in Italy.

**Federico Clavarino** is a visual artist, researcher and educator. He studied creative writing at Scuola Holden in Turin and photography at BlankPaper Escuela in Madrid. He also holds a Master of Research degree from the Royal College of Art in London, where he is currently pursuing his PhD. Seven of his books have been published so far and his works have been exhibited in museums, galleries and festivals around Europe. He lectures and gives workshops internationally.

**Tami and Federico** have so far collaborated on two projects: *Eel Soup*, which was exhibited in Brussels, Milan and Łódź before being published as a book in 2022, and *Via Spaventa*, which was recently on view in at Espace JB in Geneva. The Crab's House is their third collaboration.