



13 Mansfield Avenue, Unit G, Toronto, ON, M6J 2A9 | Tel. +16474475303 | info@crutchcac.com | crutchcac.com

JAWA EL KHASH: THE UPPER SIDE OF THE SKY

APRIL 12—MAY 12, 2019

Just like the monarch butterfly, I too am an immigrant that has migrated 2000 miles away from home, looking for a place to rest. Just like the caterpillar that becomes a monarch, to protect my self from predators, I match my skin colour to the same shade of green of my milky plant, to render myself invisible. As I shed my skin, I will do it again, and again, and again. After four weeks of eating milk leaves, and shedding four skins, my cells are ready to morph, to grow. I will need to find a spot to metamorphose safely, as this body as I know it is no longer mine. My time with these six legs and sixteen eyes is over, and it is time for me to move on, to crystallize and fly. I find a spot to hang upside down from, the silk I radiate carries the weight of my body. I thread myself a cocoon, and trust that this will hold me as I transform. Trusting in the ability of my body to create magic and to take me into my next life. As I find the leaf, branch, and root that will hold me through metamorphosis, to be the place of birth for my next life, I change the hues of my skin to match my environment, protecting myself in this delicate transformative process. Are you ready to fly, to crystallize, to have wings?

“The Upper Side of the Sky” is a virtual reality work that resurrects Syrian agriculture and architecture. This digital ecosystem consists of a greenhouse, courtyard, chrysalis chamber, butterflies and other ancient monuments native to the Syrian desert, Palmyra. The monuments rendered in VR have been destroyed, and the species rendered in VR have recently gone endangered or extinct as the collateral damage of the Syrian Civil War. This digital reconstruction is a gesture towards resilience, affirming biocentric autonomy over the anthropocentric. The digitization of lost architectures and plant life allows them to live on unharmed in an XYZ dimension.

Jawa El Khash (born 1995, Damascus) is a multidisciplinary artist that uses virtual reality, holography and painting to investigate nature, architecture, and immigrant refugee culture. Recent exhibitions include "Digital Deserts" at Kit & Ace in Toronto (2018), "Sites of Reconstruction" at Ignite Gallery in Toronto, (2017) "Frame;works" at OCAD University in Toronto (2017), The Augmented Cinema Festival at the The Royal Cinema in Toronto (2017), and "Life/Death/Life" at 187 Augusta in Toronto.