

Press release

**in situ**

# Igshaan Adams



May 5 – November 1, 2026



in situ: *Igshaan Adams*  
*Unsettling Dust: The Body's Archive*

- Dates: May 5 to November 1, 2026
  - Curator: Lekha Hileman
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- Working across weaving, sculpture, and installation, Adams employs materials such as rope, beads, wire, and found objects—each carrying tactile and cultural associations—to construct intricate surfaces that register the entanglement of race, religion, sexuality, and memory.
  - At once immersive and introspective, *Unsettling Dust: The Body's Archive* gives material presence to invisible forces—memory, rhythm, empathy—while proposing weaving as an embodied and communal act.
  - His ongoing collaboration with Garage Dance Ensemble in O'okiep, in South Africa's Northern Cape—his maternal family's place of origin—has opened a dialogue between weaving and dance.

The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao is pleased to present *in situ: Igshaan Adams. Unsettling Dust: The Body's Archive*, the third chapter of the Museum's *in situ* series, a program that invites artists to create site-specific works in dialogue with the gallery's architecture. Conceived as a platform for ambitious projects by leading contemporary artists, *in situ* highlights practices that expand the possibilities of sculpture, installation, and multimedia. Each presentation engages directly with the Museum's distinctive gallery dedicated to the series, transforming it into environments where architecture and artistic imagination converge.

Igshaan Adams (b. 1982, Cape Town) is a multidisciplinary artist whose work navigates the intersections of personal history and broader social structures. Raised in Bonteheuwel, a suburb shaped by the forced removals and spatial segregation of apartheid, Adams has long been attentive to how ideology is inscribed onto the body and the built environment alike. Working across weaving, sculpture, and installation, he employs materials such as rope, beads, wire, and found objects—each carrying tactile and cultural associations—to construct intricate surfaces that register the entanglement of race, religion, sexuality, and memory.

Adams's early works often drew on found materials and the patterned linoleum floors of domestic interiors, translating these familiar geometries into intimate abstractions. Over time, his practice expanded into an engagement with so-called "desire lines"—paths formed by the repeated movement of bodies through space, often in quiet defiance of imposed routes. These works marked a shift toward understanding movement not only as trace, but as a collective, embodied negotiation of space and belonging.

In recent years, Adams has extended this inquiry into movement as both process and form. His ongoing collaboration with Garage Dance Ensemble in O'okiep, in South Africa's Northern Cape—his maternal family's place of origin—has opened a dialogue between weaving and dance. Through a series of workshops, dancers move across canvases laid over painted linoleum, generating what Adams describes



as “dance prints”: layered monotypes that record gestures of contact, rhythm, and release. For the artist, such movement carries a reparative potential, a means of dislodging trauma held within the body and reconfiguring it through collective action.

The works presented in Bilbao originate in performances directed by Adams in Athens at NEON where South African and Greek dancers collaborated in a six-day workshop titled *When Dust Settles: The Body's Archive* (2024). The resulting “dance prints” were used as templates that have been translated into a new body of large-scale woven tapestries for the Bilbao exhibition, suspended in space to allow viewers to move around and between them. Some hang from curved supports that reveal both sides of the weave; others are accompanied by smaller, cloud-like forms, as if fragments of color and motion had drifted free.

At once immersive and introspective, *Unsettling Dust: The Body's Archive* gives material presence to invisible forces—memory, rhythm, empathy—while proposing weaving as an embodied and communal act. In Adams’s work, movement becomes both a record of lived experience and a means of transformation, tracing pathways through which histories of division might be reimagined and, tentatively, repaired.

## Biography

In 2024 Adams presented the solo exhibition *Weerhoud* at the Hepworth Wakefield, England, which travelled to ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, Denmark in 2025; and MUDAM Luxembourg in 2026. Adams has held solo exhibitions internationally, including at the Institute of Contemporary Art Boston, Boston MA, USA (2024); The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago IL, USA (2022); Kunsthalle Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland (2022); Hayward Gallery, London, England (2021); SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah GA, USA (2020); Akershus Kunstsenter, Oslo, Norway (2019); and The Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa (2018).

His work is held in the collections of the ARoS Art Museum, Aarhus, Denmark; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia; Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago IL; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore MD; Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates; The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, England; Inhotim Museum, Brumadinho, Brazil; Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles CA; Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York NY; Standard Bank collection, Johannesburg, South Africa; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Tate Collection, London, England; Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo OH; and the University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa, amongst others.

## DIDAKTIKA

As part of the Didaktika project, the Museum designs on-site educational spaces, online content, and special activities that complement the exhibitions, offering visitors additional tools and resources to deepen their engagement with the works on display.

Located in gallery 204, this educational space focuses on the processes underlying the new body of work presented in *in situ: Igshaan Adams. Unsettling Dust: The Body's Archive*. At its core is a video documenting the performative actions realized at NEON where South African dancers—including a member of Garage Dance Ensemble (O’okiep)—collaborated with Greek dancers in sessions of improvised movement.



The works presented in gallery 208 originate in this performance. The Didaktika space features the tapestry *Dissolving into me* (2025) alongside the dance print *Residue of Togetherness: Athens IV* (2024) from which it was developed, offering insight into Adams's process of translating movement into woven form. The movement generated through the performance at NEON gave rise to the prints, which in turn served as the basis for the large-scale tapestries through which the artist explores questions of identity, race, and gender.

## Public programs

### Opening talk (May 4)

A conversation between Igshaan Adams and Lekha Hileman, curator of *in situ*.

### Wonde Pop-up and performance by Garage Dance Ensemble (May 4 and 5)

- *Wonde* Performance Garage Dance Ensemble (May 4)
- Pop up Museum main facade outdoors & Atrium (May 5)
- *Wonde* Performance followed by a conversation among Igshaan Adams and Garage Dance Ensemble (May 5)

Artistic Director & Choreographer: Byron Klassen. Tech Manager: Faroll Coetzee. Dancers: Georgia Julies, Manon Saal, Keanu Samuels and Druwayne Strauss.

\*With the support of WORKS & PROCESS, the A4 Arts Foundation and the Hill Art Foundation.

### Cover image:

Igshaan Adams

*Breaking linear*, 2025

Cotton twine; polyester and polypropylene rope; glass, stone, metal, wooden, shell and stone beads; denim ribbon; cotton and silk fabric; cotton and mohair wool; silver ball and gold chain; and tiger tail wire  
213 x 914 cm

Courtesy Igshaan Adams, Thomas Dane Gallery & blank projects

Photo: © FMGB Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa, 2026

### For more information:

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*in situ: Igshaan Adams*

Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

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Igshaan Adams portrait

Photo: © Mario Todeschini



Igshaan Adams

*Dissolving into me*, 2025 (detail)

Cotton twine, polyester and polypropylene rope, plastic, wooden, glass, metal, stone and shell beads, cotton and silk fabric, mohair wool, polyester and velvet ribbon and tiger tail wire

242 x 374 cm

© Igshaan Adams, Bilbao 2026

Courtesy the artist, Thomas Dane Gallery and blank projects

Foto: © FMGB Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa, 2026



# GUGGENHEIM BILBAO



Igshaan Adams

*Bright spot*, 2025

Cotton and sisal twine, polyester braided and polypropylene rope, plastic, wooden, glass, stone and shell beads, cotton fabric, mohair wool, silver chain and tiger tail wire

232 x 364 cm

© Igshaan Adams, Bilbao 2026

Courtesy the artist, Thomas Dane Gallery and blank projects

Foto: © FMGB Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa, 2026



View of the installation *in situ*: Igshaan Adams

in the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, May 2026

Cortesy the artist, Thomas Dane Gallery and blank projects

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