

# annet gelink gallery

PRESS RELEASE

## CONSTANT COMPANION

MINNE KERSTEN

15 January – 12 February 2022

In the Bakery, Annet Gelink Gallery is proud to present *Constant Companion*, Minne Kersten's first show at the gallery.

Originally conceived as part of an installation, the video *Constant Companion* brings forth the mythological figure of the Raven as its main protagonist. The bird is used as a leitmotif to speculate about concepts like the Stone Tape theory and place memory. Both these concepts hold the idea that some buildings are receptive to the energy produced by traumatic or emotional events, which they record and store.



Minne Kersten, *Constant Companion*, 2021

The Raven is a bird with strong symbolic connotations; they are often interpreted as an omen, connected with tragedy and darkness – or seen as spirits from the supernatural world. In *Constant Companion*, several interpretations are allowed to exist next to each other and create friction between symbolism and reality. By repurposing a domestic scenery as the backdrop for a twisted fable, attention is drawn to how the domestic is intended to satisfy our need for protection, comfort, and affirmation, but that this space is often multidimensional and can hold a multiplicity of stories and emotions.

Once used as the set for the video, the installation of *Constant Companion* now houses the feeling of (human) absence - leaving visible traces of an action behind. Haunting happens when a place is stained by time, or when a particular place becomes the site for an encounter with broken time. Such residues are explored in this work, as they cling to and animate spaces and things.

A shelter is commonly understood as a place we go to for affirmation and comfort, a site that promises safety. But in these unprecedented times we also experience shelters shifting, as access, distance and norms are constantly (re)negotiated.

Throughout her practice Kersten has returned to the idea of domestic spaces as a psychological construct, one that we believe to be a shelter but which is in fact often porous and unstable. There is a general investigation in her work of how spaces function as expansions of consciousness and how architecture contains memories of embodied experience. Through video and sculpture Kersten seeks to visualise these intangible concepts. This installation in specific explores spaces of shelter as narrators of their past events.

**Minne Kersten** (1993, NL) lives and works in Amsterdam and Brussels. Kersten works with installations, videos, sculptures and painting which form the backdrop of a fictional world. In this world, which has its own often absurd logic that blurs the boundaries of reality and the imagined, people, objects and architectural elements find new relationships to each other. In her work she has a literary approach: telling visual stories and constructing sculptural environments that support stories or add to their reading and interpretation.