

TRANSFIGURATIONS

Curatorial and Artistic Research in an Age of Migrations

Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona

Friday 20 June – Thursday 26 June 2014
Opening: Thursday 19 June 2014, 7.30-10pm
Public Programme: Friday 20 June 2014, 7-9.30pm

How are globalisation, digital media and changing patterns of migration affecting our understanding and experience of the contemporary work of art, and how are contemporary artists engaging with curators to think about the condition of the contemporary through their work, its display and collection? How are curators working with new forms of artistic production, particularly 'immaterial' works of art, that fall outside conventional forms of display, collection and archive?

This 'research exhibition' brings together international artists and curators who have been working in collaboration as part of the major European MELA research project 'European Museums in an Age of Migrations' to consider these and other questions of artistic and curatorial urgency as museums begin to think about their future and role in the 21st century. The six collaborations are:

- MACBA in Barcelona with curator Bartomeu Marí and artist Lawrence Abu-Hamdan
- Bétonsalon in Paris with curator Mélanie Bouteloup and artist Camille Henrot
- Whitechapel Gallery in London with curator Sofia Victorino and artist Kader Attia
- Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam with curators Jelle Bouwhuis / Kerstin Winking and artist Quinsy Gario
- Royal College of Art in London with Paul Goodwin and artist Leo Asemota

In particular, the research exhibition reflects on the challenges and opportunities of curatorial and artistic research in the 21st century, and the rise of new forms of practice such as performance, sound, and video which are both expanding the range of artists' interests and challenging conventional ideas of the 'art object' in museums and galleries. Following what has been described as 'the curatorial turn' and 'the educational turn' the exhibition considers how complex the interface is between issues of representation, globalisation, collection and object, curating, programming, audiences, and technology.

Free admission

Opening times: Weekdays: 11 am to 7.30 pm. Tuesday closed. Saturday: 10 am to 9 pm / Sunday 10 am to 3pm

Location: MACBA - Capella, Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona, Plaça dels Àngels 1, Barcelona 08001, Spain.

Further press information and images please contact:

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Further Information

Public Programme: Friday 20 June 2014:

7-8pm – Lawrence Abu-Hamdan, Talk

8.15-8.45pm - Leo Asemota - Film screening and discussion

9-9.30pm – Quinsy Gario, Performance

MeLa - European Museums in an Age of Migrations

MELA is a four-year interdisciplinary research project funded in 2011 by the European Commission under the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Programme (Seventh Framework Programme), which is focused on questions of how the practice of artists, museums and curators, and the relationship between them is being transformed by an age characterised by intensive migration flows; fluid circulation of information, cultures and ideas, and by the political, economic and cultural process of creation and consolidation of the European Union.

BIOGRAPHIES

Project Team:

Victoria Walsh (Project Director, MeLA, Research Field 04, Curatorial and Artistic Research)

Victoria Walsh is Head of the Curating Contemporary Art Programme at the RCA. Focused on interdisciplinary, practice-based, and research-led teaching she is the co-author of *Post Critical Museology: Theory and Practice in the Art Museum* (Routledge, 2012). From 2005 to 2012 she was Head of Public Programmes at Tate Britain during which time she was Co-investigator of the major three-year research project, 'Tate Encounters: Britishness and Visual Culture', funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council under their strategic programme 'Diasporas, Migration and Identities'. A collaboration between Tate Britain, Chelsea College of Art and Design and London South Bank University, the project addressed the relationship between curatorial practices in the art museum, audience development and engagement, and the impact of cultural diversity policy. The research findings centre around the limits of the politics of representation and identity and aesthetic modernism as a curatorial trope within an analysis of the contemporary cultural condition of hypermodernity, globalisation and digital distribution.

Website: www.rca.ac.uk/more/staff/dr-victoria-walsh/

Paul Goodwin (Curatorial Research Advisor)

Paul Goodwin is Professor of Black Art and Design at Chelsea College of Art and was previously Curator of Cross Cultural Programmes and Curator of Contemporary Art at Tate Britain. Goodwin's curatorial and research work currently evolves around African diaspora art in the UK and US since the 1980s; art and sculpture in public spaces; and postcolonialism and globalisation in curatorial and museological practices. At Tate, Paul created platforms for international cultural dialogue by curating a programme of talks. He was Consultant Curator for the international survey exhibition *Afromodern: Journeys Through the Black Atlantic* at Tate Liverpool in 2010 and co-curator of the Tate Britain exhibition, *Migrations: Journeys Into British Art*, about migration in the history of British art from 1500 to the present day, 2012. He is also Curatorial Research Fellow at King's Cultural Institute, King's College London. In 2012 Paul participated in the RCA's Mela research programme through the symposium on *Coloniality, Curating and Contemporary Art* organised by CCA, RCA and the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Sevilla, Spain.

Bartomeu Marí (Director of MACBA - Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona)

Bartomeu Marí was born in Ibiza (Spain) in 1966 and since 2008 Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona (MACBA). He was the Curator of Exhibitions at the Fondation pour l'Architecture in Brussels (Belgium) between 1989 and 1993, and was also the Curator at IVAM-Centre Julio González in Valencia (1994-1996). He has been director of Witte de With, Centre for Contemporary Art in Rotterdam (The Netherlands) during 1996 – 2002. Between 2002 and 2004, Marí was the coordinator of the Centro Internacional de Cultura Contemporánea in Donostia-San Sebastián (Basque Country). In 2002 he co-curated with Chia-chi Jason Wang the Taipei Biennial and in 2004 he co-curated with James Lingwood the exhibition "Juan Muñoz. La Voz Sola. Esculturas, dibujos y obras para la radio", shown at La Casa Encendida, Madrid. In 2005, he was the Curator of the Spanish Pavillion at the 51st Venice Biennial, where Antonio Muntadas was the invited artist. Between 2004 and 2008 he worked as Chief Curator at MACBA, Barcelona. Since August 2013 is the President of CIMAM.

Bartomeu Marí has curated exhibitions by artists such as Raoul Hausmann, Lawrence Weiner, Rita McBride, Eulàlia Valldosera, Francis Picabia, Frederik Kiesler, Marcel Broodthaers, Michel François, and Francis Alÿs, among others. He has written numerous prefaces and articles about contemporary art and is currently working on a volume of essays about the art of our time.

Maite Muñoz Iglesias (Head of MACBA Archive)

Maite Muñoz (Spain, 1981) holds a B.A. in Fine Arts (Universidad Miguel Hernández, Elche, Spain), focused in New Media. She has completed a Master's degree in Design and Communication Studies, where she specialised in Video-game Studies (Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, Spain) and a degree in Media Art Curating (ESDI/Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain). Since 2004, she has combined her professional activity as a graphic designer with a deep interest in and involvement with contemporary art. She is part of the MACBA Study Center team since 2008 and currently Head of Archive since 2012. She has co-curated the exhibition and the seminar about artist's publications 'Whole, in part' (MUSAC, 2013).

Pamela Sepúlveda (Research Coordinator)

Her academic background spans the arts, conservation and restoration, and archive/documentation areas. She has a degree in Fine Arts, a postgraduate degree in Conservation and Restoration and a master in Digital Documentation. Since 2001 she has held various positions at contemporary art institutions as the Antoni Tàpies Foundation where she was co-responsible for the creation of its innovative and award-winning website as the web manager. More recently, between 2008 and 2012 she participated in the development of the new MACBA Study Center in Barcelona. From 2010, as the Head of Archives at MACBA she had the opportunity to put into practice innovative perspectives in the management and dissemination of a comprehensive documentary collection devoted to contemporary art, aiming to overcome the classical discrimination between document and work of art. Currently she is working at the Royal College of Art in London as Research Co-ordinator of the MeLa project and as Archivist of the Whitechapel Gallery.

Artists:

Lawrence Abu-Hamdan (b. 1985 Amman)

Lawrence Abu Hamdan's work frequently deals with the relationship between listening and borders, human rights, testimony, truth and law, through the production of audio-visual installations, graphic design, sculpture, photography, workshops and performance. His work with sound and its intersection with politics originate from his background in DIY music. His work was submitted as evidence at the UK asylum tribunal where the artist himself was called as an expert witness. His solo exhibitions include *The Freedom Of Speech Itself* (2012) at Showroom, London, *The Whole Truth* (2012) at Casco, Utrecht and most recently *Tape Echo* (2013) at Beirut in Cairo. His works have been part of group exhibitions at Tate Modern London, M HKA Antwerp, Van AbbeMuseum, Eindhoven, the Beirut Art Center and The 2012 Taipei Biennial. Abu Hamdan's writing can be found in *Forensis* Sternberg press, *Manifesta Journal* and *Cabinet Magazine*. Abu Hamdan curated events at the Reitveld Academie in Amsterdam and at Batroun Projects Lebanon. He is part of the team Forensic Architecture at Goldsmiths College London where he is a PhD candidate and lecturer.

Website: www.lawrenceabuhamdan.com

Leo Asemota

London based Nigerian artist Leo Asemota has been working on 'The Ens Project' since spring 2005. The works in the exhibition continue his evolvement of the live art work 'Eo ipso', which is the catalyst in the multipartite art work informed by a ceremony to the Head practiced by the Edo people of Benin City in Nigeria, Victorian age of invention, exploration and conquest and the seminal essay "A Work of Art in the Age of Technological Reproducibility" by the late German thinker Walter Benjamin. Asemota considers 'Eo ipso' to be the last component in 'The Ens Project'.

Website: www.eotla.com/home.html

Kader Attia

Kader spent his childhood between France and Algeria, between the Christian Occident and the Islamic Maghreb. Using his own background that has been defined by several cultures simultaneously, he explores the impact of Western cultural and political capitalism on the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America, as well as how this residual strain of struggle and resistance to colonisation impacts the mind of any immigrant as a territory. Having lived in the banlieues in the suburbs of France, his work is influenced by his life experiences between different cultures and places, and their contrasting structures. In series of works that employ different materials, symbols and scale, Attia explores questions of community, diversity, belonging and exile and the tangle of identity conflicts in the age of globalization. While each new series employs different materials, symbols and scale, Attia's practice continually returns to a sustained look at the poetic dimensions and complexities of contemporary life, which examines our constructions of realities. Attia's work has been widely exhibited at major international institutions including the ICA, Boston (2007), the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2011), the Tate Modern, London (2011), MoMA, New York (2012), DOCUMENTA(13) (2012), and KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2013). Kader Attia is represented by Galerie Christian Nagel, Berlin and Cologne, and Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna. Awards include the Cairo Biennial Prize (2008) and the Abraaj Capital Art Prize (2010).

Quinsy Gario

Quinsy Gario was born in Curaçao and raised in St. Maarten and the Netherlands. He studied Theater, Film and Television Studies at the Utrecht University with a focus on Gender and Postcolonial Studies. Under the pseudonym T. Martinus, Gario has self-published two poetry collections. He won the Hollandse Nieuwe 12 Theatermakers Prize 2011 and was a finalist of the Dutch National Poetry Slam Championships 2011. In 2012 he started his own radio show called ROET IN HET ETEN (Spanner in the works).

His video work produced under the banner of NON EMPLOYEES has been shown on MTV Netherlands, and he is a member of the pan-African artist collective State of L3. His work has been part of exhibitions in Galleri Image (Denmark), Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen (Belgium), SMART Project Space and Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam (Netherlands). He has performed in MC Theater (Amsterdam, Netherlands), Contact Theater (Manchester, United Kingdom) and Ballhaus Naunynstraße (Berlin, Germany).

Camille Henrot

Camille Henrot (born 1978) lives and works in New York. Recent solo exhibitions include the New Orleans Museum of Art (2013); Slought Foundation, Philadelphia (2013); kamel mennour, Paris (2012), Espace

Culturel Louis Vuitton, Paris (2010). Group exhibitions include *_Companionable Silences_*, Nouvelle Vague, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2013); *_A Disagreeable Object_*, SculptureCenter, New York (2012); *_Elles_*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2010). Henrot was nominated for the Prix Marcel Duchamp in 2010 and received the Silver Lion at the 55th Venice Biennale, 2013. She is shortlisted for the Hugo Boss Prize 2014 and has a forthcoming solo exhibition at the New Museum, New York, opening in May 2014.

For the project European Museums in an age of migrations, Camille Henrot and Bétonsalon's team wish presenting the ongoing process of the artist's collaboration with the National Museum of Natural History, the "behind the scene" aspects of the developing exhibition. Putting into question the typically western obsession with the archives and cultural data preservation, this work will shape what Camille Henrot calls a "retelling of a collection". It will take the shape of a series of postcards reflecting Camille's research in the National Museum of Natural History and especially in the taxidermy department.

Curators:

Mélanie Bouteloup / Bétonsalon - Centre d'art et de recherche (Paris)

Mélanie Bouteloup is co-founder and director of Bétonsalon in Paris, Centre for art and research. Bétonsalon - Centre for art and research strives to develop a space of reflection and confrontation at the confluence of art and university research by giving form to discourses from the realms of the aesthetic, cultural, political, social and economic. Integrated into the site of the University Paris 7 at the heart of a neighbourhood undergoing reconstruction, the ZAC Paris Rive Gauche in the 13th district of Paris, Bétonsalon aims to ally theory and practice, with the objective of rearticulating the position of research and artistic creation in society. Numerous projects in Bétonsalon's programming explored the questions raised by cultural heritage and the role of Museums and contemporary art institutions in this issue. Participating to the Mela project gives us the opportunity to develop a new approach of the topic by working with an artist in close collaboration with an heritage institution. Through an intercultural point of view, it will explore the human need to preserve and classify knowledge, as well as its inherent limits.

Website: www.betonsalon.net

Jelle Bouwhuis & Kerstin Winking / Stedelijk Museum Bureau (SMBA Amsterdam)

Jelle Bouwhuis is Curator of the SMBA and Kerstin Winking is Global Collaborations Project Curator for the Stedelijk Museum & Stedelijk Museum Bureau. Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam (SMBA) is a project space of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, located in the city centre. The objective of SMBA is to present contemporary art from an Amsterdam context and therefore to create an international platform by organizing exhibitions, lectures, debates, publications and a residency programme that brings international curators together with cultural producers based in Amsterdam. The publication 'Project 1975 - The Postcolonial Unconscious in Contemporary Art' which summarises, reflects upon and contextualizes SMBA's Project 1975. With contributions by Ashely Dawson, Alfredo Jaar, Kari-Kacha, Koyo Kouoh, Charl Landvreugd, Sven Lütticken, Senam Okudzeto, Vincent Vulsma and Katarina Zdjelar More info: <http://blackdogonline.com/all-books/project-1975.html> 'Made in Commons' A program of events & exhibitions organized by Stedelijk Museum (Bureau) Amsterdam and KUNCI Cultural Studies Center in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Website: www.stedelijk.nl/en/global-collaborations

Sofia Victorino / Whitechapel Gallery (London)

Sofia Victorino is Daskalopoulos Head of Education and Public Programmes at the Whitechapel Gallery where she is responsible for leading a programme of artists residencies, commissions, schools and community projects, talks and events. Recent projects include “The Spirit of Utopia” (2013), Heather and Ivan Morison’s “Smile All the While” (2013-2014), the series of talks “Inhabiting Art, Assembling Collectivities” with UCL (2013), “Exhibition Histories” with Afterall, the lecture performance “Pixelated Revolution” by Rabih Mroue (2013), and the symposium “Beyond the Former Middle East” with Omar Kholeif. She lectures on the MA Curating the Contemporary, run by the Whitechapel Gallery in partnership with London Metropolitan University. Before working at the Whitechapel Gallery she was Head of Education and Public Programmes at Serralves Museum of Contemporary art, Porto (2002-2011), where she worked in projects including “To the Arts Citizens” (2010-2011) with Chto Delat, Carolina Caycedo, Rigo 23, Bureau d’Etudes, Carlos Motta, among many others. She has recently contributed to “The Spirit of Utopia” online catalogue with an interview to Claire Pentecost, and in 2006 published “Serralves: Projects with Schools”. Her research interests focus on socially engaged and collaborative art practices, the impact of globalisation in cultural institutions and programming, and the place of the performative in reconfiguring new relationships with the public.

Website: www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/kader-attia