

BIOGRAPHIES

Clémentine Deliss

Clémentine Deliss is director of the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. She studied contemporary art in Vienna and holds a PhD in social anthropology from the University of London (SOAS). From 1992 to 1995 Deliss was the artistic director of *africa95*, an artist-led festival of new work in all media from Africa and the diaspora. In 1996, she edited and published 11 issues of the international writers' and artists' organ *Metronome* and *Metronome Press*. Deliss has acted as a consultant for the European Union and numerous cultural organisations, has held guest professorships at the Städelschule in Frankfurt and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Oslo.

Between 2002 and 2010 Deliss initiated and directed the international research lab Future Academy, which investigated the global future of independent research and production within the art academy. Deliss' theoretical interests include research into bridging mechanisms between artists working in different parts of the world, forms of experimental education, and curatorial modalities that go beyond the exhibition. She is on the advisory committee of Theatrum Mundi/Global Street, the long-term research project initiated by Richard Sennett and Saskia Sassen.

Elvira Dyangani Ose

Elvira Dyangani Ose is Curator of International Art, Tate Modern, Supported by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc. She is currently curating the on-going series 'Across the board' and has co-curated the exhibition 'Ibrahim El-Salahi: A Visionary Modernist'. She is an art and architecture historian, currently completing a PhD in History of Art and Visual Studies at Cornell University, New York. She is also Artistic Director of 'Rencontres Picha de Lubumbashi' 2012/2013, the third edition of the Biennale.

Jan Goossens

Jan Goossens is the artistic director of the KVS Royal Flemish Theatre, Brussels. He studied literature and philosophy in Antwerp, Leuven and London.

Since becoming artistic director of KVS in 2001, together with his team, Goossens has established an artistic project that embraces the diversity of Brussels, the Belgian and European capital. KVS wants to make an artistic contribution to the intercultural city of the future, through the development of a contemporary European repertoire, exchanges with major French-speaking theatres in the city, and intense collaborations with artists from the Arab, African and other communities in the city. Since 2005 KVS has also been very active in Kinshasa, DRC and other parts of Africa. KVS activities have included structural support for individual artists and their companies, co-productions with these artists, and also the organisation of an annual and international performing arts festival, Connexion Kin.

Elizabeth Harney

Elizabeth Harney is Associate Professor in the Department of Art, University of Toronto, where she teaches modern and contemporary African and diasporic arts. Harney was the first curator of contemporary arts at the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian (1999-2003) where she organized numerous exhibitions on the modern and contemporary arts of the continent and the Diaspora. Harney received her doctorate as a Commonwealth Scholar at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and served as postdoctoral Faculty Fellow at New York University.

Harney is the author of *In Senghor's Shadow: Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal, 1960-1995* (Duke, 2004), a book that won the Arnold Rubin Outstanding Publication Award from the African Studies Association (2007). She is also editor of *Ethiopian Passages: Contemporary Art from the Diaspora* (Philip Wilson/Smithsonian Institution, 2003) and co-editor of *Inscribing Meaning: Writing and Graphic Systems in African Art* (5 Continents Press, 2007). She currently has two books in progress, *Prismatic Scatterings: Global Modernists in post-war Europe* and *The Persistence of Primitivism: Questions on the practices and discourses of Contemporaneity*.

Neo Muyanga

Neo Muyanga is a composer, librettist and musician. He studied the Italian madrigal tradition with choral maestro, Piero Poelen, at Collegio del Mondo Unito, in Trieste, Italy (1990 – 1993), and co-founded the acoustic pop duo, *BLK Sonshine* with Masauko Chipembere in 1996, which tours extensively throughout Africa and the world. Muyanga composes music plays, works for choir, instrumental songs for chamber and large ensemble. His operetta *the Flower of Shembe* premiered to critical acclaim in South Africa in 2012. He has collaborated with a broad range of creators and institutions including *the Royal Shakespeare Company* (The Tempest, SA and UK tour, 2009), Cape Town Opera (The heart of Redness, Cape Town 2013) and William Kentridge (Second hand reading, New York, 2013).

Muyanga continues to tour widely both as a solo performer and in various ensemble guises. He co-curates the Pan African Space Station - a live music festival and cyber-stream portal that hosts and showcases cutting-edge music and art from the African continent and diaspora. He is a member of the curatorial team for the Cape Town World design capital 2014 campaign. Muyanga is a fellow at the Aspen global leadership initiative, Aspen institute, Colorado, USA and a research fellow at the Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape, SA, where he investigates Aesthetics in songs of protest.

Simon Njami

Simon Njami is an independent lecturer, art critic, novelist and essayist. He is the co-founder and editor-in-chief of the cultural magazine *Revue Noire*. His publications include two biographies (*James Baldwin*, 1991 and *Senghor*, 2007), essays in the catalogue for the Sydney Biennale, Documenta and other exhibition catalogues. Njami has been the artistic director of the Bamako photography biennale from 2000 to 2010, and was co-curator with Fernando Alvim of the first African pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007. He has curated numerous exhibitions, including 'Africa Remix' (touring exhibition 2004, 2007), 'A collective Diary Tel Aviv', 2010, a 'Useful dream' (Brussels, 2010) and the first African Art Fair held in Johannesburg in 2008. He was artistic director of the Luanda and Douala triennials, and of the Lubumbashi biennale (2000) He is the art advisor of the project 'Art at Work' a touring project by Moleskine. Njami is currently working on his last show, 'The Divine Comedy', which is to open at MMK in February 2014.

El Hadji Sy

El Hadji Sy (El Sy) is a Senegalese contemporary artist and curator. El Sy's artistic practice is embedded in performance and painting. His participation in experimental performance has for over twenty years informed his visual art practice. In the 1970s and 1980s he painted primarily with his feet – a rejection of the ideals of negritude once proposed by President Senghor as a foundation for art and independence in Senegal. His positioning of the body into his paintings and sculptures places him as both witness and actor in works, which can be politically controversial.

El Sy is a founding member of Laboratoire Agit-Art in Dakar. His curatorial work includes co-editing the *Anthology of Senegalese Contemporary Art* with Friedrich Axt and creating a collection of contemporary art from Senegal for the Weltkulturen Museum in 1989; curating the first Triangle workshop held in Senegal in September 1994; co-curating 'Seven Stories about Modern Art in Africa' for the Whitechapel Art Gallery and Konsthalle Malmö (1995/1996). He is a co-founder of Huit-Facettes Interaction, and initiated the Village des Arts in Dakar together with members of the artists' collective Tenq in 1996. He was President of the Association of Visual Arts of Senegal (ANAPS) in Dakar for several years and is Chevalier de l'Ordre du Lion and Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of the Republic of Senegal. His works are in major collections in the US, Africa, and Europe.

Note: We regret to inform you that due to unforeseen personal circumstances El Sy is unable to participate in this symposium.

Catherine Wood

Catherine Wood is Curator of Contemporary Art and Performance at Tate Modern since 2003, when she founded the live programme. She was curator of *A Bigger Splash: Painting after Performance*, and co-programmed the opening of the Tanks, Art in Action, in 2012. She has organised numerous performance events with artists including Mark Leckey, Joan Jonas, Katerina Seda, Pablo Bronstein and Keren Cytter, as well as co-curating *Pop Life* (2010) and *The World as a Stage* (2007). She is author of *Yvonne Rainer: The Mind is a Muscle* (MIT/Afterall 2007) and writes for *Artforum*, *Afterall*, *Frieze*, *Kaleidoscope*, *Mousse* and *Flash Art* magazines. She is currently preparing an exhibition of Yvonne Rainer's early dance work for Raven Row in 2014 and a book on the history of performance for Tate Publishing.

Curated by Elvira Dyangani Ose, Curator International Art, Tate Modern, Supported by Guaranty Trust Bank, and Catherine Wood, Curator Contemporary Art and Performance, Tate Modern, in collaboration with Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Commissioned and produced as part of Corpus, new collaborative network for commissioning performance-related work co-founded by If I Can't Dance, Amsterdam, Playground (STUK & M), Leuven and Tate Modern, London (as part of BMW Tate Live). With the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union.

On Friday 21 March 2014 a sequel to this symposium will take place with a day long programme of lectures and performances in Amsterdam curated by If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution. This programme will take place in the frame of Studium Generale, an annual transdisciplinary theory programme organised by the Rietveld Academie.

If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution is an association dedicated to exploring the evolution and typology of performance and performativity in contemporary art. If I Can't Dance initiates, produces and presents projects with artists, curators and researchers on the basis of long-term collaborations. These projects are presented (inter)nationally through a network of partner institutions.

BMW Tate Live is curated by Catherine Wood, Curator, Contemporary Art and Performance, Tate and Capucine Perrot, Assistant Curator, Tate Modern.

BMW Tate Live is a partnership between BMW and Tate, which focuses on performance, interdisciplinary art and curating digital space



BMW Tate Live: Experience as Institution

Part 1: Artist collectives and cultural platforms in Africa

Friday 29 November 2013

Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium

10:00

Registration

10:15–10:20

Catherine Wood: Welcome and Introduction

10:20–11:00

Elizabeth Harney:
'Spectrums of the Modern: Senegal and the Birth of a Canon'
Harney will look at key aesthetic and critical components that characterised the 'story' of Senegalese modernism, its arena of debate around the role of art and artist, its formal engagement with traditions (real and imagined), and its legacies within the history of a nation. How has it assumed canonical stature in discussions of global modernisms?

11:00–11:40

Simon Njami:
'Issa Samb: the stranger'
Njami introduces the work of multifaceted artist Issa Samb, founding member of Laboratoire Agit-Art, together with artist El Hadji Sy and writer Youssoupha Dione among others. Samb's radical aesthetics encompasses painting, drawing, performance, installation, but also art criticism and poetry. This talk explores the politicised social environment in which the collective was founded, as well as Samb's individual contribution to the collective and to the art scene in Senegal.

11:40–12:40

Clémentine Deliss:
'Responsabiliser le compagnon'
Actions of dialogue and communicational abstinence'
As a member of Laboratoire Agit-Art since 1995, curator and publisher Clémentine Deliss will present a critical and personal overview of artists' groups in Dakar during the 1990s including Laboratoire Agit-Art and Tenq. In her talk, she will question the contradiction between an historicisation and dissemination of past conceptual models and the intentional retention of unmediated, initiate codes within artistic practice.

12:40–13:00

Q&A with Elizabeth Harney, Simon Njami & Clémentine Deliss

13:00–14.15

Break

14.15–14.55

Elvira Dyangani Ose:
'Experience as Institution: Artist collectives and cultural platforms in Africa'
Tate Curator Dyangani Ose examines the current status of artistic practice on the continent. Her talk explores in particular the work of artists and artist collectives, whose projects formulate new institutional models and engage local and international audiences by means of ephemeral interventions.

14.55–15.35

Jan Goossens:
'Kinshasa connections'
Jan Goossens discusses how to build a performing arts festival in a global African city that at the same time engages with the reality of that city and its local arts scene, enters into a dialogue with some of the cultural developments across the African continent, and is in connection with major developments in the international performing arts.

15.35–15.55

Q&A with Elvira Dyangani Ose & Jan Goossens

15.55–16.15

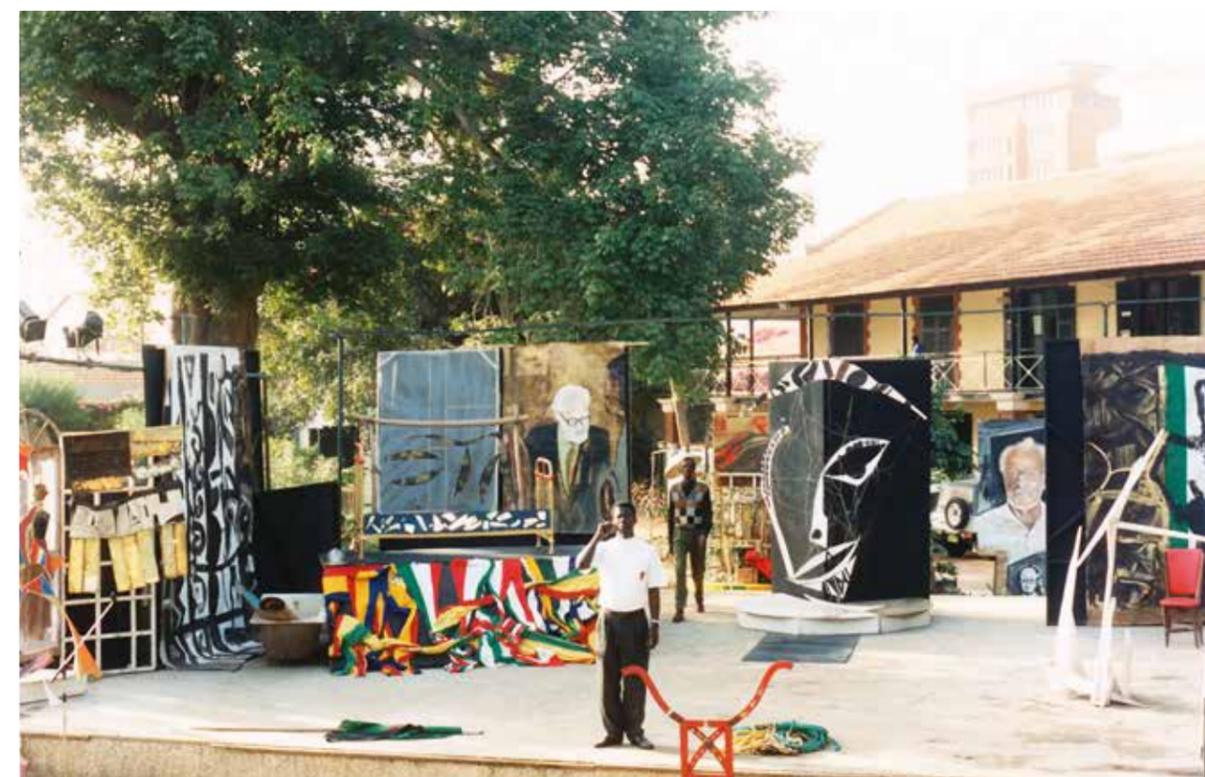
Break

16.15–17.00

Neo Muyanga:
'Curating an African Space Programme'
The artist Muyanga will look at various projects in which musicians are interested in broadcasting themselves as Africans in the XXI Century, including the pan African Space Station – a music platform available on internet and physically in Cape Town, but also Muyanga's current research on aesthetics protest music in South Africa, Egypt and India.

17.00–17.15

Closing Remarks



Plehanov 7, Les Cendres de Pierre Lods, 19 January 1990, Théâtre de Verdure du Centre Culturel, Dakar. Reproduced with kind permission of the Weltkulturen Museum, Frankfurt am Main, Collection Axt/Sy.

Could an art experience be considered an institution? What is the legacy of an experience which deliberately refused the conventions of art-making in order to engage with a more critical social dialogue?

Founded in 1974 in Dakar, Senegal, the artist collective Laboratoire Agit-Art aimed to agitate existing institutional frameworks, to question the tenets of Leopold Sédar Sengor's *Négritude* and to encourage artists to adopt critical approaches toward their practices. At that time, Dakar was a place where political consciousness was actively being articulated, and artist collectives such as Laboratoire Agit-Art went beyond aesthetic experience to critically promote the development of cultural and artistic endeavours. The goal of artists participating in the collective was to blur

disciplinary boundaries and to propose the experience of a 'total art' that was powerfully influenced by vernacular cultures and languages. The artist's studio was a place in which the making of objects was understood in a continuum with the performances and conversations taking place there. It represented a microcosm of the wider political shifts in its radical re-arrangement of aesthetic and social relations.

This symposium uses Laboratoire Agit-Art's modus operandi, and particularly its explorations of performance, as a case study to reflect on the current presence of cultural platforms and artist collectives in Africa. Such collectives use performance, visual art and music staged within public space in attempts to engage with socio-political concerns affecting their immediate environment.