

BERLIN BIENNALE

PRESS INFORMATION

Launch of the public program *I'm not who you think I'm not*

Berlin, June 30, 2017

The curatorial team of the 10th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art inaugurates the public program titled *I'm not who you think I'm not* on July 7, 2017. A little less than a year before the exhibition opening, the inaugural event program presents a variety of actions in collaboration with Each One Teach One (EOTO) e. V., an association located in Wedding, Berlin. EOTO opened its doors in 2014 with a library and projects directed at activating spaces for collective knowledge transfer. Their aim is to develop, impact, and change future narratives.

The association is named after the slogan "Each One Teach One," which has come to stand for unconventional ways of overcoming states of unknowing through non-hierarchical learning processes. Historically, the phrase designates moments of knowledge production as forms of resistance against oppressive systems. As a philosophy, "Each One Teach One" declares a platform for reciprocal affinities and intergenerational conversations in their most complex, sometimes even uneasy characteristics.

I'm not who you think I'm not disavows assumed beingness and know-hows. Those assumptions are based on existing, constructed social frameworks and their associated speculations about particular subjectivities. Throughout the 10th Berlin Biennale until its conclusion in September 2018, the public program will create situations evading these assumptions.

The inaugural event features EOTO members Philipp Khabo Koepsell and Victor Omere and guests Donna Kukama, George Shire, and Jota Mombaça. In performative gestures, they reflect on the relationships between visionary fictions, unteaching, monstrosity, and humanity as ways of resisting and nourishing potentials of self-preservation.

Participant biographies

Multimedia artist **Donna Kukama** works in performance, sound, text, and video. Her work resists established ways of doing, often presenting institutions, book chapters, monuments, or historical archives that are as real as they are fictitious. She has presented performances at the South African National Gallery in Cape Town, SA; the Museum of Modern Art in Antwerp, BE; the New Museum in New York, US; and participated in the 12th Lyon Biennale, FR; the 6th Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, RU; the 32nd Bienal de São Paulo, BR; and as part of the South African Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale, IT. She is the 2014 recipient of the Standard Bank Young Artist Award for Performance Art and was nominated for the MTN New Contemporaries Award (2010) and the Visible Award (as NON NON Collective) in 2011. She currently unteaches at the Wits School of Arts in Johannesburg, SA.

George Shire is an independent Zimbabwean intellectual, decolonial thinker, cultural theorist, DJ, and Jazz saxophone enthusiast. He is associate professor at Bergen Academy of Art and Design, NO, and formerly a visiting scholar at the Institute for Art Education, Zurich University of the Arts, CH. Over a period spanning more than thirty-five years, Shire has taught at many universities and higher educational institutions across Britain, including the Surrey Institute of Art & Design, Farnham, Surrey; Richmond upon Thames College in Twickenham; the University of London; the Open University in Milton Keynes; and the

University of the Arts London with research interests in visual culture and postcolonial theory. Shire is on the editorial boards of *Soundings: A journal of politics and culture* and of *DarkMatter*, a journal of post-colonial theory and culture. He lives in London.

Jota Mombaça is a writer and performance artist born and raised in the northeast of Brazil. They are a non-binary “bicha” (Brazilian Portuguese, offensive, vulgar for homosexual; “bitch”) whose writing, performances, and academic research focus on the relationships between monstrosity and humanity, kuir (queer) studies, decolonial turns, political intersectionality, anti-colonial justice, redistribution of violence, visionary fictions, the end of the world, and tensions between ethics, aesthetics, art, and politics in the knowledge productions of the global “south-of-the-south.” Current works include a collaboration with Oficina de Imagem Política, São Paulo, BR, and an artistic residency in conjunction with the Capacete program 2017 at documenta 14, Athens, GR/Kassel, DE.

Philipp Khabo Koepsell is a Berlin-based author and spoken word performer of German and South African descent. On stage, he mixes Afropolitan poetry with Black German activist messages and theatrical bits for his performance poetry. While touring Europe and South Africa, he has focused on empowerment and negotiations of race and identity. He is the author of *Die Akte James Knopf. Afrodeutsche Wort- und Streitkunst* (2010, UNRAST Verlag) and editor of the anthologies *Afro Shop* and *Arriving in the Future: Stories of Home and Exile* (2014), as well as *The Afropean Contemporary* (2015, all Epubli GmbH, Verlagsgruppe Holtzbrinck). He worked as a curator and dramatic advisor for Ballhaus Naunynstraße and is currently the project coordinator at EOTO.

Victor Osarobo Omere is a spoken word performer from Benin City, NG. He moved to Berlin in 2014 for a taste of Western culture and to further his education in applied computer science and is currently learning German to do so. In his poems he gives voices to inanimate objects and empowers and encourages people to live a positive life. He performs at open mic events such as the *Poetry Meets Series*. Currently he works as a “Kiezläufer,” passing on information between EOTO e. V. and the African communities, churches, and shop owners connected to the association.

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**Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art
KUNST-WERKE BERLIN e. V.**

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