

BERLIN BIENNALE

PRESS INFORMATION

Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art announces curatorial team

Berlin, April 29, 2017

Gabi Ngcobo, curator of the 10th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, has invited Moses Serubiri (Kampala, UG), Nomaduma Rosa Masilela (New York, US), Thiago de Paula Souza (São Paulo, BR), and Yvette Mutumba (Berlin, DE) to collaborate with her as the curatorial team. In addition, Gabi Ngcobo selected graphic designer Maziyar Pahlevan to create the visual identity for the 10th Berlin Biennale.

Each of the collaborators has ongoing, malleable, and open-ended research interests ranging from the politics of opacity to projections on life after the end of the world, to unconventional processes of organizing, and is interested in texts and events that resist power dynamics enacted in the writing of narratives. Their creative strategies continuously reflect historical and current shifts and their uneasy entanglements. Over the years each of the collaborators has been engaged, individually and together with Gabi Ngcobo, in dynamic initiatives of building counter-institutions and instigating creative interruptions.

The 10th Berlin Biennale will be imagined and shaped through these collective dreams and actions. In conversation with artists and contributors who think and act beyond art, the curatorial process will confront the incessant anxieties perpetuated through the misunderstanding of complex subjectivities. Facing the current widespread state of collective psychosis, and starting from the position of Europe, Germany, and Berlin as a city in dialogue with the world, the curatorial process will be selective, non-comprehensive and will not provide a coherent reading of histories or the present of any kind. The curatorial team's key starting points will be strategies of self-preservation as acts of dismantling dominant structures and building from a non-hierarchical position.

The 10th Berlin Biennale proposes a plan for how to face a collective madness.

Biographies of the curatorial team

Moses Serubiri is an independent writer and curator based in Kampala, UG. He is interested in meta-narratives and scholarly practices beyond the field of art. Serubiri's book chapter on the Uganda Museum is forthcoming in the edited volume *How Institutions Think* from MIT Press. He was recently on the selection committee for the 2017 Cape Town Art Fair, ZA. In 2014 he co-curated the Kampala Contemporary Art Festival (KLA ART), with a team advised by Gabi Ngcobo. In 2013 Serubiri organized *A History of Kadongo Kamu*, a radio documentary on the history of recorded music in Uganda. He also edited the online journal START – A Journal of Arts and Culture in East Africa. In 2011 Serubiri was a critic at The New Vision, one of Uganda's leading daily newspapers. In 2015 he received a fellowship at the University of Bayreuth, DE, as "Stadtschreiber" (City Writer) and is an alumni of the Àsikò International Art School at the Centre for Contemporary Art in Lagos, NG. His writings are featured in The Trans-African, Frieze, Manifesta Journal, and Chimurenga Chronic.

Nomaduma Rosa Masilela is a writer, historian, and artist based in New York, US. She is currently completing a doctorate in Art History at Columbia University in New York. Her dissertation examines public and performance art of 1980s Dakar, SN. Masilela's art interests converge around underrepresented aspects of history, collective work and strategy,

and the ambivalence inherent within the public and the private. She has received grants and awards from the Ford Foundation, SSRC Mellon Foundation, and Columbia University, among others. Masilela has previously taught an introductory art history course at Columbia University, worked at The Kitchen and the Brooklyn Museum in New York, and assisted the Secretary General of the Dakar Biennale Dak'art in 2006 and 2009. Most recently, she held a year-long research post at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. She published texts in various books and magazines, amongst others in the publication *DON'T/PANIC*, which accompanied the exhibition of the same name curated by Gabi Ngcobo in 2011.

Thiago de Paula Souza lives and works in São Paulo, BR, where he worked as an educator at Museu AfroBrasil between 2014 and 2016. In 2016 he co-curated the exhibition *Living On – In Other Words on Living?* at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, AU. At the 32nd Bienal de São Paulo de Paula Souza joined the Accra Study Days team, organized by Gabi Ngcobo as part of the public program, and was also part of the Bienal's *Oficina de Imaginação Política* ("political imagination workshop"). He collaborated with *lanchonete.org*, an artist-led cultural platform focused on daily life and progressive actions in contemporary cities with São Paulo as a reference point, and co-created *We Cannot Build What We Cannot First Imagine* (WCB WCFI), a visionary platform that gathers works and perspectives from racialized artists and thinkers. De Paula Souza currently researches on the depiction of art from South America and the African Diaspora in the German-speaking context. This research will soon extend to non-Western circumstances where he will investigate how the art communities engage in the deconstruction of hegemonic readings of histories.

Yvette Mutumba is co-founder and editor-in-chief of the art magazine *Contemporary And (C&)*. From 2012 to 2016 she was working as curator at *Weltkulturen Museum* in Frankfurt am Main, DE, where she co-curated the major exhibitions *FOREIGN EXCHANGE (or the stories you wouldn't tell a stranger)* (2014–15), *El Hadji Sy: Paintings, Performance, Politics* (2015), and *A Labour of Love* (2015–16, with Gabi Ngcobo). In 2016 she co-curated *Focus: African Perspectives* at The Armory Show, New York, US. Mutumba studied Art History at Freie Universität Berlin, DE, and holds a PhD from Birkbeck, University of London, GB. As author and editor she has published numerous texts and books on contemporary art from African perspectives as well as Global Art History. Her most recent publication *I am built inside you*, edited by ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) and C&, was published in April 2017 by Sternberg Press.

Biography of Maziyar Pahlevan, graphic designer of the 10th Berlin Biennale

Maziyar Pahlevan is an independent graphic designer and writer currently based in New York, US. In his practice he focusses on projects in art and music, such as his continuous collaboration with *Other People*, a sound, image, and data archive based in the US. Recent work include the book *Network*, published in 2017 by *Other People* and *Printed Matter Inc.* Prior to moving to the US, he was based in Berlin, DE, where he, together with Gabi Ngcobo, designed *Digging Our Own Graves*, a newspaper published by *Center for Historical Reenactments* within the 8th Berlin Biennale in 2014. He received his BA from the *Royal Academy of Art* in The Hague, NL, in 2012, his MFA from *Yale University*, New Haven, US, in 2016, and is currently doing an MFA in psychoanalysis at *New York Graduate School of Psychoanalysis*.

The 10th Berlin Biennale will take place from June 9 to September 9, 2018, at various venues in Berlin.

The Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art is funded by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) and is a division of the KUNST-WERKE BERLIN e. V.

The BMW Group is Corporate Partner of the 10th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art.

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

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