

Institute for Creative Arts Book Launch

Acts of Transgression: Contemporary Live Art in South Africa

The Institute for Creative Arts (ICA) kickstarts its rich programme for 2019 with the Cape Town launch of the ICA's highly anticipated new book, *Acts of Transgression: Contemporary Live Art in South Africa* – the first book on live art in the country. **Okwui Enwezor**, former director of Haus der Kunst, Munich and artistic director of the 56th Venice Biennial, has described *Acts of Transgression* as 'an illuminating and indispensable gathering of the most critical voices thinking today about the role of performance in the shaping of the self, identity, agency, community, and nation.' The launch takes place on **Saturday 16 February, 5:30 for 6pm**, on UCT's Hiddingh Campus, featuring an immersive lineup of performances, addresses, and reflections.

Acclaimed visual artist **Sikhumbuzo Makandula** and renowned singer/songwriter **Mthwakazi** will present a new iteration of Makandula's performance *Ingoma ka Tiyo Soga*, with an installation created specifically for the event, that draws from, and responds to, hymns composed 160 years ago by pioneering intellectual, composer and evangelist Tiyo Soga.

Fresh off the back of their latest single, 'No Match', released on 18 January, experimental performing artist **Mx Blouse** will present a musical performance that transforms the stage into a sonic fusion of electro, R&B, hip-hop, kwaito, gqom and House.

Shose Kessi, Deputy Dean of Humanities at the University of Cape Town, will place the publication of *Acts of Transgression* in the context of the University's decolonisation project, and editors **Jay Pather** and **Catherine Boule** will speak about the vision for the book and its significant contribution to developing a discourse for reading and critiquing the burgeoning field of live art in South Africa.

The audience will be drawn into the process of writing for the book – the difficulties and thrills of capturing experimental and often anarchic interdisciplinary performances in words – with reflections by three contributors: writer, artist and academic **Bettina Malcomess**; performer, writer and educator **Mwenya B. Kabwe**; and performance artist and provocateur **Nondumiso Lwazi Msimanga**.

The event will also feature a Q&A session between the editors and audience, facilitated by award-winning writer and playwright **Nadia Davids**.

The ICA invites artists, art enthusiasts, students, academics, writers, researchers and members of the public to join the Institute on the penultimate day of Cape Town Art Week to celebrate the launch of this remarkable publication – positioned to become the definitive text for explorative, nuanced readings of contemporary live art in South Africa, and the go-to reference for future studies.

About *Acts of Transgression*

In this groundbreaking collection of critical essays published by **Wits University Press**, 15 writers explore the experimental, interdisciplinary and radically transgressive field of contemporary live art in South Africa. Set against a contemporary South African society that is chronologically 'post' apartheid, but one that continues to grapple with material redress, land redistribution and systemic racism, *Acts of Transgression* finds a representation of the complexity of this moment within the rich potential of a performative art form that transcends disciplinary boundaries and aesthetic conventions.

RoseLee Goldberg, art historian and author of the seminal text *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* has called *Acts of Transgression* 'essential and important,' and **Catherine M. Cole**, Professor of Drama and Dean of the Arts at the University of Washington, notes that the book 'makes an important contribution toward placing live art in South Africa on the scholarly map as something that must be recognised and reckoned with by researchers and artists in all performance fields, including dance and theatre studies.'

Panashe Chigumadzi, author of *These Bones Will Rise Again*, writes that *Acts of Transgression* 'seeks not to contain the complex worlds of some of South Africa's most compelling live artists, but instead pulls us in with simultaneous urgency and pause, forces us to surrender our certainties cast in stone, smashes them up, and in so doing makes us *alive* to the destabilising, transformative, power of the serious, playful, and radical acts of imagination that are both *of* and *beyond* this postapartheid apartheid.'

The collection's 15 authors include nationally and internationally acclaimed curators and artists, as well as prominent figures who straddle the fields of art and academia – luminaries such as professor of literature and director of the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, **Sarah Nuttall**; curator-in-chief of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, **Khwezi Gule**; manager of the Standard Bank Gallery, **Same Mdluli**; art historian and artist, **Nomusa Makhubu**; and multidisciplinary artist and 2019 Standard Bank Young Artist award winner, **Gabrielle Goliath**.

The diverse essays comprising *Acts of Transgression* analyse the works of more than 25 contemporary South African artists, including in-depth explorations of **Albert Khoza**, **Steven Cohen**, **Donna Kukama**, **Chuma Sopotela**, **Dean Hutton**, **Mamela Nyamza**, **Sello Pesa**, **Athi-Patra Ruga**, **Buhlebezwe Siwani** and **iQhiya** – some of whom are written about for the first time in this book.

The essays are accompanied by a striking visual record of over 60 photographs.

FAST FACTS

When: Saturday 16 February 2019, 5:30 for 6pm

Where: UCT Hiddingh Campus

Entrance Fee: Free, but attendees must RSVP by emailing ica@uct.ac.za with the subject line 'CT book launch'.

Queries: Email ica@uct.ac.za

JOHANNESBURG BOOK LAUNCH

The Joburg launch of *Acts of Transgression* will take place on the evening of **Wednesday 20 February** at the **Keyes Art Mile**, where editors Jay Pather and Catherine Boule will be in conversation with multi-media artist Donna Kukama.

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ABOUT THE ICA

The Institute for Creative Arts (ICA) is an interdisciplinary institute in the University of Cape Town's Humanities Faculty – formerly the Gordon Institute for Performing and Creative Arts (GIPCA). The ICA facilitates research projects in the creative and performing arts that disrupt boundaries, while underscoring creative education and practice across discipline and faculty. Interdisciplinary, Live Art and Public Spheres are key themes of the Institute, and projects are imbued with innovation, collaboration and a dialogue with urbanism and community.