



SPEAKER SERIES #3

June 5, 2013, 6 p.m.

Stevenson

160 Sir Lowry Road

Woodstock 7925

CONVERSATION BETWEEN MICHAEL STEVENSON / JOOST BOLAND AND MESCHAC GABA

A discussion around the practice of Meschac Gaba and its relevance to curatorship and thinking the museum.

“This museum does not exist in reality. It is a concept, an idea that takes shape at some location and disappears again, or travels to another space, altered and is never the same again. Some spaces, like the Museum Restaurant, only existed once and will never be repeated. But who has visited a presentation of this museum, or has taken part of the event that this presentation always is, will never forget its strong physical impact. The body of the visitor is almost at every occasion involved, one way or the other.”

Bert Steevensz, *Library of the Museum – Museum of Contemporary Art* (Artimo, 2001)

Meschac Gaba was born in 1961 in Cotonou, Benin. He studied at the Rijksakademie voor Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam in 1996-7, and currently lives in Rotterdam. It was at the Rijksmuseum, Leiden, in 1997 that Gaba inaugurated his major work, the *Museum of Contemporary African Art*, a project in which the artist installed 12 'rooms' of a nomadic museum in various institutions over a period of five years, culminating with his presentation of a 'Humanist Space' at Documenta 11. Other 'rooms' include the Museum Restaurant (shown at W139, Amsterdam, in 1999), the Games Room (shown in Besançon, France, in 1999 and in Brussels and Gent in 2000), the Library of the Museum (Witte de With, 2001, and published in book form, also 2001), and the Salon (Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2002). Gaba's survey exhibition *Museum for Contemporary African Art & More* showed at the Museum de Paviljoens in Almere, the Netherlands; the Kunsthalle Fridericianum in Kassel, Germany; and the Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno in Las Palmas, Canary Islands, in 2009/10. His *Tresses* series has showed at inIVA in London (2006) and the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2005). Other solo shows include *Glue Me Peace* at the Nobel Peace Center, Oslo (2006), and Tate Modern, London (2005). Group shows include *The Global Contemporary: Art Worlds after 1989* at ZKM Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, Germany (2011); *Touched*, the 2010 Liverpool Biennial; Gaba's curatorial project *Glück - Welches Glück*, at the Deutsches Hygiene-Museum in Dresden, Germany (2008); *Port City* at Greenland Street Gallery, Liverpool (2008); *Africa Remix* (2004-2007) and, in 2006, the São Paulo, Gwangju, Sydney and Havana biennales.

Gaba is included on the Biennale Bénin 2012 - *Inventing the Word: The Artist as Citizen* (8 November to 13 January), showing the *Residence Library* from his *Museum of Art and Active Life (MAVA)* as part of Special Projects; and on *When Attitudes Became Form Become Attitudes: A Restoration / A Remake / A Rejuvenation / A Rebellion*, at CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco.

Also see www.museumofcontemporaryafricanart.com



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