

Biographies

The curator:

Sandrine Colard is a Belgian-Congolese curator, researcher and writer, based in New York City and Brussels. She is a doctor of African art history (Ph.D. Columbia University), and her past curatorial projects include *The Expanded Subject: New Perspectives in Photographic Portraiture from Africa* (co-curator, Wallach Art Gallery, New York, 2016); *The Way She Looks: A History of Female Gazes in African Portraiture. Photographs from The Walther Collection* (Ryerson Image Center, Toronto, 2019); and *Multiple Transmissions: Art in the Afropolitan Age* (Wiels, Brussels, 2019). In 2019, she was the artistic director of the 6th edition of the Lubumbashi Biennale in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Currently an assistant professor of art history at Rutgers University (USA), Colard is also an international lecturer (MoMA, EHESS, Tate Modern, European Parliament, Bozar ...) and the author of multiple publications. Based on research conducted in Belgium and the DRC, her current book project examines the history of photography in the colonial Congo (1885-1960) and has been supported by several fellowships.

The artists:

Pascale Marthine Tayou was born in Cameroon in 1966 and lives and works in Ghent, Belgium, and Yaounde, Cameroon. At the beginning of his career, the artist feminized his first and middle name into "Pascale Marthine" with the intention of undermining the importance given to authorship and gender in the art world. Tayou works with a multiplicity of media and topics. Whether in the form of sculptures, installations, videos, drawings, or objects, his practice centers around the hybridization of cultures, the individual journey in the globalized world, and the place and perception of his African identity in it. Tayou's work has been presented in solo and group shows all around the world, including at the Mu.ZEE (2019), Bozar (2015), Kassel documenta 11 (2002), Venice Biennale (2005, 2009), Turin (2008), London Tate Modern (2009), Gwangju Biennale (1997 and 1999), Santa Fe (1997), Sydney (1997), and Havana (1997, 2006).

Kapwani Kiwanga was born in 1978 in Ontario, Canada. She lives and works in Paris, France. Kiwanga studied anthropology and comparative religion at McGill University (Montreal). Kiwanga was the inaugural winner of the 2018 Frieze Artist Award, the Sobey Prize for the Arts (Canada), and of the 2020 Marcel Duchamp Prize. Among other venues, she has held solo exhibitions at MIT List Visual Arts Center (Cambridge, MA), at the Power Plant (Toronto), and at the Jeu de Paume (Paris). Kiwanga also participated in group exhibitions at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, in addition to the Whitechapel and Serpentine Sackler galleries in London. Kapwani Kiwanga is a multimedia artist working with sound, film, performance, and objects. Her practice relies on extensive research into African and African diasporic archival material, which she then turns into historical

investigations. Kiwanga is not only invested in the past but also the future, telling Afrofuturist stories and creating speculative archives from future civilizations to reflect on the impact of historical events.

Maurice Mbikayi was born in 1974 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, and currently lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa. He holds a BA in graphic design from the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Kinshasa. He completed his Master of Fine Arts degree at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town. Mbikayi has had a number of solo exhibitions, which most recently include: *Coucou Crumble* at Gallery MOMO, (2019, Cape Town) and *Masks Of Heterotopia* at Officine dell'Immagine (2018, Milan). He has also been part of a number group shows including: *Still Here Tomorrow To High Five You Yesterday...* at Zeitz Mocca (2019, Cape Town); *Congo Stars* at Kunsthaus Graz (2018, Graz, Austria); *ON/OFF* at Casa Victor Hugo (2018, Havana); *Biennale de Lubumbashi* (2017, Lubumbashi). Mbikayi's practice focuses on contemporary technology and the dumping of its waste in Africa and in the Congo in particular. Mbikayi collects these remnants and appropriates them in his work, resulting in sculptures, photographs, and performances that link the materials back to their political contexts, namely, low-wage labor abuse, as well as to the ecological and health hazards of e-waste on the African continent. Equally important, this appropriation also allows for highlighting, in the artist's words, "the resilience of African people, who have found a myriad of ways to make use of limited resources."

Jean Katambayi was born in 1974 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He lives and works in Lubumbashi, DRC. Trained as an electrician, his entire artistic practice is imbued with his fascination for mathematics, engineering, geometry, and technology. Profoundly marked by his upbringing in the workers' camp of his mining hometown and by its mechanization, Katambayi creates fragile and complex installations and drawings inspired by sophisticated electrical circuits and technological studies. His works are part of a search for solutions to social problems in current Congolese society, as well as to the country's depletion of its enormous energetic resources. Often made of recycled and impermanent material, such as cardboard and recycled electronic material, the artist's poetic pieces attempt to redress the imbalance of the world's hemispheres. Jean Katambayi has had numerous solo shows (Trampoline Gallery, Antwerp; Stroom, The Hague; and more) and group exhibitions (Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Dak'art, Havana, and Lubumbashi biennales; Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg; and so on). Among other places, he has been in residency at the École Supérieure d'Art d'Aix-en-Provence (Aix-en-Provence, France), at WIELS (Brussels,), and at the Visual Arts Network for South Africa (Johannesburg). His work is part of the collection of Muhka (Antwerp) and Mu.Zee (Ostend, Belgium). Lately Katambayi has been participating in the ongoing *On-Trade-Off* research project, a collaboration between Enough Room for Space (Belgium) and Picha (DRC).

KinAct Collective is a collective and an international festival of performers born in the streets of Kinshasa in 2015. Co-founded by Eddy Ekete and Aude Bertrand, this variable-geometry community of performers immerses itself yearly in the neighborhoods of the Congolese capital for six weeks. KinAct Collective creates direct actions that address the street audiences and the hyper-reactive field of the city, while continually calling into question the place of the artist in society, on an international, national, or even internal level. The collective's trademark costumes are made of salvaged waste— cans, condoms, and so forth—which draw upon the African ancestral traditions of masquerade as well as test its capacity for constant innovation. Eddy Ekete was born in Kinshasa and lives and works between Paris and his hometown. He was trained in the Académie des Beaux-Arts of Kinshasa and at the Ecole supérieure des Arts décoratifs in Strasbourg. Founding member of the collective Eza Possible (2008) and co-founder with Aude Bertrand of the artist cooperative Ndaku Ya La Vie Est Belle (2018), Ekete is also a painter and a sculptor. His work has been shown around the world, and he has co-curated “Megalopolis: Les voix de Kinshasa” for the Musée Grassi (Leipzig) in 2019. Aude Bertrand is trained in anthropology and museology and works on projects crossing art with cultural and intangible heritage (Vodou Museum in Strasbourg, Grassi Museum in Leipzig). In Paris, she works with the group of artists Belladonna. For the Middelheim Museum, KinAct Collective is collaborating with performers Louis Van Der Waal (1979, the Netherlands), Precy Numbi (b. 1990, DRC), and Charlien Adriaenssens (b.1988, Belgium).

Pélagie Gbaguidi was born in 1965 in Dakar, Senegal, and is of Benin origin. Since graduating from the School of Fine Arts of Liège (Belgium), she has worked and lived in Brussels. Defining herself as a contemporary griot, Gbaguidi's paintings, writings, drawings, and installations are musings of individual and collective memory. She critically engages with the misuse of history; deconstructing stereotypes, rewriting meta-narratives, and using myth as an open space to create a simulacrum of the present in flux. Among other venues, Gbaguidi has participated in numerous international exhibitions such as the Biennale of Dakar (2004, 2006, 2008, 2014, 2018), *Divine Comedy: Heaven, Hell, Purgatory Revisited by Contemporary African Artists*, MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt in 2014; the National Museum of African Art Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, in 2015; *Afriques Capitales*, Gare de Saint Sauveur, Lille in 2017; the documenta 14 in Athens and Kassel in 2017; *Decolonizing the Body* at the Eternal Network Gallery in Tours in 2019; and *Multiple Transmissions: Art in the Afropolitan Age* at WIELS in Brussels in 2019. In 2018, she was a fellow at Civitella Ranieri Foundation in Italy.

Zahia Rahmani was born in Algeria in 1962 and educated in France. She is a writer, an art historian, and a curator. Rahmani teaches at the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (Paris), where she directs the program “Histoire de l'art mondialisée” (“Global Art History”). From 1999 to 2003, she created and directed the post-diploma Research Program for the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-arts de Paris. She has worked at the Villa Arson / National School of Art in Nice and at the National Gallery of the Jeu de Paume. In 2012, she set up at

INHA, “Made in Algeria”, a program dedicated to colonial mapping and capture, and she co-curated the eponymous exhibition at MuCem in Marseille (2016). In 2015, she launched the “Observatory: Global Art Prospective” program at INHA, with a group of researchers and exhibition curators. A regular lecturer in France and abroad, Rahmani is the author of several books, including *France, récit d’une enfance* (Sabine Wespieser, 2006), and *Made in Algeria, généalogie d’un territoire* (Mucem, 2016). She is a member of the Collège de la Diversité and Chevalier des Arts et Lettres. She developed and designed the installation *Sismographie des Luttes – Towards a global history of critical and literary reviews*, first presented in the off-program of the 2018 Dakar Biennale (RAW Material Company). This work is the result of a long process of collective, multilingual, and decentralized research led by the INHA within the framework of the program “Observatoire: Globalisation, Art et Prospective” and the project “Global Art & Cultural Periodicals.

Hank Willis Thomas was born in New Jersey (USA) in 1976 and lives and works in New York City. He holds a BFA from New York University, New York, NY, an MA/MFA from the California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA, and he has received several honorary doctorates. Thomas is a conceptual artist working primarily with themes related to perspective, identity, commodity, media, and popular culture. His work has been exhibited throughout the United States and the world including: the International Center of Photography, New York; Guggenheim Museum Bilbao; Hong Kong Arts Centre; and the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, the Netherlands. Solo exhibitions of his work have been featured at the California African American Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; among others. Major group exhibitions of his work include the 2017 inaugural show at Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, Cape Town; P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, NY; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY. Thomas’ work is included in numerous public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, among others. His collaborative projects include *For Freedoms*, which was awarded the ICP Infinity Award for New Media and Online Platform in 2017. Thomas is a recipient of numerous fellowships, such as the Gordon Parks Foundation Fellowship (2019) and the Guggenheim Fellowship (2018).

Ibrahim Mahama was born in Tamale, Ghana in 1987, and he lives and works in Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale. Mahama obtained a MFA in painting and sculpture in 2013, and a BFA in painting in 2010, at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. His solo shows include: *Parlement of Ghosts*, The Witworth, The University of Manchester, UK (2019); *Labour of Many*, Norval Foundation, Cape Town (2019); *On Monumental Silences*, ExtraCity KunstHall, Antwerp (2018); *Fracture*, Tel Aviv Art Museum (2016); *Material Effects*, Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University (2015); *Factory machines and trucks*, Kumasi (2013); and *Cannon Wax*, Jamestown, Accra (2013). His work has appeared in numerous collective international exhibitions such as: the 22nd Sydney Biennale (2020);

the 6th Lubumbashi Biennale (DRC, 2019); documenta 14, Athens and Kassel (2017); the 56th Venice Biennale (2015); *Artist's Rooms*, K21, Dusseldorf (2015); *An Age of Our Own Making*, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen and Holbæk (2016). Mahama's work has also been featured in Ghana's first national pavilion at the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019. The artist is furthermore the founder of the Savannah Centre for Contemporary Art (SCCA) in Tamale. The artist is best known for his large-scale installations using jute sacks, once used to carry cocoa and now employed as containers for coal. Stitched together and often draped over architectural structures, these materials are used by Mahama to explore themes of commodity, migration, globalization, and economic exchange.

Elisabetta Benassi was born in Rome, Italy, in 1966. In her work she critically observes the cultural, political, and artistic legacy of modernity, as well as broader, often controversial political and cultural themes of our time. Using diverse media – installation, photography, video – she thus emotionally engages and questions the viewer while tracing troubled and contested timelines. From the background of her pieces emerges a questioning of contemporary identity and of the conditions of the present. Her work has been featured in several solo shows: Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Altemps (Rome, 2019); MOSTYN (Llandudno, Wales, UK, 2019); Magazzino (Rome, 2016, 2010, 2006); Grand Palais (Paris, 2011); Museo d'Arte Contemporanea (Rome, 2004); École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, (Paris, 2003). Her work has been included in numerous collective exhibitions around the world, such as the *Vidéo et après*, Cinéma 2, Centre George Pompidou (Paris, 2017); *More Than Just Words [On the Poetic]*, Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna, 2017); *The Raft. Art is (not) Lonely*, Mu.ZEE and various locations (Ostend, Belgium, 2017); *D'une Méditerranée – L'autre*, FRAC (Marseilles, 2016); *NERO SU BIANCO*, American Academy in Rome (Rome, 2015); *Retour à l'intime, la collection Giuliana et Tommaso Setari*, La maison rouge (Paris, 2012). Her work has been presented at the 2011, 2013, and 2015 Venice Biennale, this last time as part of the Belgian Pavilion.

Sammy Baloji (1978) was born and raised in Lubumbashi, DRC, and lives and works between Brussels (Belgium) and his hometown. He studied computer and information science and communication at the University of Lubumbashi, and continued with photography and video at Ecole Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, in Strasbourg. A visual artist and a photographer, Baloji has been exploring the memory and history of the Democratic Republic of Congo. His work is a perpetual investigation into the cultural, architectural, and industrial heritage of the Katanga region, as well as an inquiry into the effects of Belgian colonization. His most recent solo shows include *Sammy Baloji, Other Tales*, Lund Konsthall and Aarhus Kunsthal (2020); *Congo, Fragments d'une histoire*, Le Point du Jour, Cherbourg (2019); *A Blueprint for Toads and Snakes*, Framer Framed, Amsterdam (2018); *Urban Now: City Life in Congo*, *Sammy Baloji and Filip de Boeck*, The Power Plant, Toronto, and WIELS, Brussels (2016-2017). Among other venues, his work has been shown in collective exhibitions such as the Fotofest Biennial 2020, Houston; the Palais de Tokyo, France (2020); the 2019 Chicago Architecture Biennial; the 22nd Sydney Biennale (2020); the

Kassel/Athens documenta 14 (2017); The Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2017); the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, DC (2017); the Venice Biennale (2015). A Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres, Baloji has received numerous prizes and was a 2019-2020 resident at the French Academy of Rome-Villa Medici. In 2008 Sammy Baloji co-founded the Biennale de Lubumbashi.

Sven Augustijnen (1970) was born in Mechelen, Belgium, and he lives and works in Brussels. Working primarily in film and installation, Augustijnen's practice has long been exploring political, historical, and social themes, constantly challenging the genre of the documentary and reflecting a wider interest in historiography and a predilection for the nature of storytelling. He has had solo shows at the following institutions, among others: Cultuurcentrum Strombeek Grimbergen (2019); The Hugh Lane, Dublin (2016); Kunsthall Trondheim, Trondheim (2015); CCS Bard & Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY (2014); VOX, Centre pour l'Image contemporaine, Montreal (2013); Malmö Konsthall, Malmö (2013); Kunsthalle Bern, Bern (2011); De Appel, Amsterdam (2011); WIELS, Brussels (2011). Recent group shows include: *The Unfinished Conversation: Encoding and Decoding*, Museo Coleção Berardo, Lisbon (2016), and *The Power Plant*, Toronto (2015); *Gestures and Archives of the Present, Genealogies of the Future*, Taipei Biennial (2016); *Art in the Age of ... Asymmetrical Warfare*, Witte de With, Rotterdam (2015); *Europe – The Future of History*, Kunsthaus Zürich (2015); *Ce qui ne sert pas s'oublie*, CAPC, Bordeaux (2015); *Enthusiasm!*, *Rencontres Picha – Biennale de Lubumbashi*, Lubumbashi (2013). Sven Augustijnen teaches at ERG (École de Recherche Graphique), in Brussels, and is one of the founding members of the production and distribution platform August Orts.

Simone Leigh was born in Chicago in 1967, and lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Leigh received a BA in fine arts with a minor in philosophy from Earlham College, Richmond, IN, in 1990. She works primarily with sculpture, ceramics, installation, and video, as well as with Social Practice, to foreground black female experience and reframe stereotypes associated with it. The artist's practice is imbued with references and sensibilities sourced from Pan-African vernacular culture, ranging from early Egyptian terracotta vessels and the rammed-earth dwellings of the Cameroonian Mousgoum to Nigerian *ibeji* figures and 19th-century African American face jugs. She held recent solo exhibitions at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2019); the High Line, New York (2019); the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2016); Studio Museum in Harlem in Marcus Garvey Park, Harlem, New York (2016); Tate Exchange at Tate Modern, London (2016); New Museum, New York (2016), among other institutions. Leigh has participated in numerous group exhibitions including *The Future As Disruption*, Kitchen (2008); *30 seconds off an Inch*, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2009); Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of America Art, New York (2012 and 2019); *Radical Presence: Black Performance in Contemporary Art*, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (2013); Dak'art Biennial, Dakar, Senegal (2014); *Greater New York*, MoMA P.S. 1, Long Island City, NY (2015); *Trigger: Gender as a Tool and a Weapon*, New Museum of Contemporary Art (2017); Berlin Biennial (2018); and Vancouver Biennial (2019).

Simone Leigh has been the recipient of numerous prizes, including a Creative Capital Award (2012), a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship (2016), and the 2018 Hugo Boss Prize.

Ângeila Ferreira was born in 1958 in Maputo, Mozambique. In 1975 she settled in Cape Town, South Africa, where she studied sculpture at Michaelis School of Fine Arts, obtaining a Master in Fine Arts degree in 1983. In the early 1990s she moved to Lisbon, where she has been a teacher at the School of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon since 2003. Ferreira's sculptural practice has been the starting point leading to installations which combine other media, such as videos, drawings, photographs, and written texts. Through thorough research and frequent use of architectural elements and structures, Ferreira's practice explores the effects that colonialism and post-colonialism have had on contemporary society. The artist's work has been shown in numerous exhibitions around the world. Notable among her recent solo exhibitions are: *Murais, Makeba e Moçambique*, Arte d'Gema Gallery, (Maputo, 2019); *Ângeila Ferreira. Pouco a Pouco*, CGAC (Santiago de Compostela, 2019); *Zip Zap and Zumbi*, DePaul Art Museum (Chicago, 2017); *Messy Colonialism, Wild Decolonization*, Zona Maco SUR (Mexico City, 2015); *Political Cameras, Stills* (Edinburgh, 2013); "*Ângela Ferreira—Stone Free*", Marlborough Contemporary (London, 2012). In 2007 Ferreira represented Portugal at the 52nd Venice Biennale with *Maison Tropicale*. Some of her recent group exhibitions include: *After the End: Timing Socialism in Contemporary African Art*, Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University (New York, 2019); 12th Gwanju Biennale / Imagined Borders (Gwanju, South Korea, 2018); 10th Taipei Biennale / Gestures and Archives of the Present, Genealogies of the Future (Taipei, Taiwan, 2016); 3rd Lubumbashi Biennial (2013); *Between Walls and Windows*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin, 2012); "*Appropriated Landscapes*", The Walther Collection (Neu-Ulm, Germany, 2011); *Monument und Utopia II*, Steirischer Herbst (Graz, Austria, 2010) and *Modernologies*, Museum of Modern Art (Warsaw, 2010) / MACBA (Barcelona, 2009).

Bodys Isek Kingelez was born in 1948 in the village of Kimbembele Ihunga in the Belgian Congo, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 1970, he relocated to Kinshasa—the capital of the newly independent nation renamed Zaire—to pursue an education at the University of Lovanium. After learning some concepts about industrial design there, he felt the strong urge to start creating models with the materials available at hand, and all his production is made of recycled cardboard, paper, plastic, commercial packaging, straws, and more. After some years working as a restorer of traditional sculpture at the National Museums Institute of Zaire, he devoted himself to making art full-time in the early 1980s. His participation in the 1989 blockbuster exhibition *Magiciens de la Terre* at the Centre Pompidou Paris marked the beginning of an international career, and since then his work has been shown in numerous worldwide exhibitions. Some of his recent group shows include *Art/ Afrique: le nouvel atelier – Les Initiés: un choix d'oeuvres (1989-2009) de la collection d'art contemporain africain de Jean Pigozzi*, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris (2017); *Beauté Congo – 1926-2015 – Congo Kitoko*, Fondation Cartier, Paris (2015-2016); *100%*

Africa, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (2006-2007). Kingelez presented solo exhibitions at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (1992); at the MAMCO Contemporary and Modern Art Museum, Geneva (1996), among others. In 2018 he received a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Bodys Isek Kingelez' thirty-year career entirely revolved around the creation of what he called "extreme maquettes", phantasmagorical models blending architecture, sculpture, and design, ranging from individual buildings to complex cities. A life-long resident of the DRC capital Kinshasa, the city, its bombastic chaos, rapid transformations, creative resourcefulness, and inventive spirit have been the artist's inexhaustible source of inspiration and of the transfiguration of a bleak urban reality. Kingelez passed away in 2015.