

PASCALE MARTHINE TAYOU

Transgressions

Opening: Saturday, the 14th of May 2011 at 12 pm
14 May – 2 October 2011

Galleria Continua / Le Moulin is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Pascale Marthine Tayou.

Jean Apollinaire Tayou was born in Cameroon. In the middle of the 1990s he changed his name, declining it in the feminine form to become Pascal(e) Marthin(e) Tayou. This marked the beginning of an unceasing artistic, geographic and cultural nomadism that has brought Tayou to prominence on the contemporary art scene.

Tayou's work, like his name, is deliberately fluid and eludes pre-established schemes. Multiple, ungovernable, gripping, profound, unexpected, proliferating and varied, it is always linked to the idea of travel and the encounter with what is other to self. Being a traveller is not just a condition of life for Tayou, but also a psychological condition capable of subverting social relations and the political, economic and symbolic structures of our lives.

Tayou's work is conceived in situ, in close association with the here and now. Every new exhibition project is viewed by the artist as a celebration of life and as a relational experience with everything, that is, with place, people, culture, history, and the materials and objects that populate that world. "A mix between salt and sugar", is how the artist defines his shows. "This is life. We are happy then sad, and vice versa, and so it goes on. This is harmony: a little light, a little darkness. When I create a show I always try to play with this condition of the human being."

This perspective is embodied in the artist's most important exhibition projects in recent years. It can be seen in *Human Being @ Work*, the large installation presented at the Venice Biennale in 2009, a microcosm teeming with life that functions by way of accumulation and profusion, the stratification of matter and the superimposition of planes and volumes, and which recounts a reality consisting of rituals and the everyday, necessities and contradictions. Then there is *Matiti Elobi*, realized at the castle of Blandy-les-Tours in France in 2008. And finally there are his most recent solo shows, *Always All Ways. Omnes viae Malmö ducunt* (Malmö Konsthall in Sweden, and, from 24 February to 15 May 2011 at the MAC in Lyon) and *Traffic Jam* (Lille, France, 2010), two extraordinarily rich and complex projects where old and new forms enact the metamorphosis of the world, redefining postcolonial issues through the European experience and analysing the identity and cultural conditions created by globalization.

In *Transgressions* Pascale Marthine Tayou's aesthetics once again embarks on a ceaseless return journey between the African continent and its perception by others. The works, for the most part new or realized in situ, form a path along which the artist invites us to meet various different characters, telling their stories and staging moments of life, places, atmospheres, realities and fantasies.

The two life-size bronze sculptures represent a legendary figure of an Egyptian village. The sculptures are based on two small fertility talismans, and are accompanied by this ancient tale: a man who is physically incapable of taking part in a long battle stays at the village together with the women and children. When they return from the war, the menfolk realize that the number of young people in the tribe had greatly increased in their absence.

The gallery of characters continues here, photographic landscapes form a background for other human figures made from crystal, a series of masks dot the walls, and a long ritual, to which one can only gain access through the gaze, permits us, for an instant, to share the intimacy and secrets of that world. For a solo exhibition held recently at the Goethe Institut in Johannesburg, South Africa, the artist produced the neon writings that spell out phrases and announcements appropriated by Tayou in one of the busiest meeting points of the city, and the series of gates, drawn by Tayou and enriched with a series of details: images and objects that are part of African tradition, and lots of colons, dark faces and Western clothes – a representation of postcolonial modernity, a reality that is undergoing constant transformation, infused with energy and vitality but also complex and contradictory.

Mandela's victory in the presidential elections in 1994, and the consequent policy of recruiting blacks into the administrative and public service sectors led to the birth of a new social category, the Black Diamonds. This is also the title of a new cycle of works the artist has produced for *Transgressions*. It consists of figures drawn on a wooden, dust-covered surface battered with holes and covered with masses of colourful, glistening sequins. In these works Tayou reflects on the many problematic

issues relating to the extraction and trade in diamonds in many parts of the world (in this case, Angola, Congo, China). And he does so, as is his custom, starting from human beings and the history of the individual.

With *Me as my Mother* (2004) and a large-scale installation in the stalls area. Here, using tables, chairs and televisions found locally, Pascale Marthine Tayou reconstructs the daily life of a domestic interior, where the rhythm of life is marked by cable television programmes.

Pascale Marthine Tayou was born in Yaoundé (Cameroon), in 1967. He lives in Ghent.

Active since the middle of the 1990s, the artist has taken part in a number of important international exhibitions and events, ranging from Documenta 11 (Kassel, 2002) and the Münsterland Skulptur Biennale (Münster, 2003) through to the biennials of Istanbul (2003), Lyons (2005), Venice (2005 and 2009) and Havana (2006).

Tayou has shown his work extensively in important museums and exhibition spaces around the world, including the Kunsthalle of Vienna, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Grand Palais in Paris, the SFAI in San Francisco, the Talpiot Beit Benit Congress Centre of Jerusalem, Tate Britain in London, the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain in Toulouse and the Hayward Gallery in London. He has had solo exhibitions at: MACRO (Rome, 2004), S.M.A.K. (Gent, Belgium, 2004), MART (Herford, Germany, 2005), Milton Keynes Gallery (Milton Keynes, UK, 2007), Château de Blandy-les-Tours (Blandy-les-Tours, France 2008), Benedengalerie Cultuurcentrum (Kortrijk, Belgium, 2009), International Film Festival (Rotterdam, Holland, 2010), Malmö Konsthall (Malmö, Sweden), Gare Saint-Sauveur, lille3000 (Lille, France), Goethe Institut Johannesburg (Johannesburg, South Africa) in 2010 and the MAC (Lyons, France) in 2011.

GALLERIA CONTINUA / Le Moulin

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Le Moulin is open from Friday to Sunday, from 12 pm to 7 pm and by appointment.

From Paris, by car or train, allow an hour's journey.

On Saturday, the 14th of May, a bus is at your disposal leaving Paris at 11 am, Place Valhubert 75005, in front of the entrance to the Jardin des Plantes (Gare d'Austerlitz metro, line 10 or RER C).

Please confirm your presence at: lemoulin@galleriacontinua.com

Expected arrival in Paris around 4.30 pm

How to come to Le Moulin:

- By car:

> By highway: highway East A4 towards Metz / Nancy. Take exit 16, Coulommiers then the N34, go through Coulommiers. Follow signs for Boissy-le-Châtel on the D222 and turn right onto the D66 towards Chauffry until the Moulin de Boissy.

> By main road: highway East A4 towards Metz / Nancy. Take exit n°13 and continue on the D231 (Provins road). Then follow the D231 (Coulommiers road) for 25 minutes and go over four roundabouts: 1st roundabout, take the 2nd exit; 2nd roundabout, take the 2nd exit opposite, drive for 10 minutes; 3rd roundabout (called the Obélisque) take the 2nd exit opposite, drive for 15 minutes; 4th roundabout, take the 3rd exit to the left, towards the Coulommiers road, on the D402. Follow signs for Coulommiers. Pass the Moulin de Mistou and go through Mauperthuis. Drive for 5 minutes. At the 5th roundabout, continue towards Coulommiers on the D402 (by-pass south-east of Coulommiers). Arrive at the 6th roundabout and take the D934, 2nd exit. Go into Chailly-en-Brie. At the traffic lights at the church, take the rue Saint-Médard (D37) on the left. Go past Chailly-en-Brie. Go into Boissy-Le-Châtel. Drive along the rue des papeteries and go past the level crossing and the former Moulin de Sainte-Marie paper mill on your left. At the stop sign, turn right onto the D66 (rue de la Ferté-Gaucher) until Le Moulin on the right.

-Public transport: train from Gare de l'Est to Coulommiers. Then bus at the entrance of the station towards La Ferté Gaucher: exit at Moulin de Boissy / Chailly Boissy-le-Châtel stop.

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