

JUST WHO  
DO YOU  
THINK  
YOU ARE?

FORUM AT CINEMA  
ZUID IN ANTWERP  
14.06.14

1 0 : 0 0  
COFFEE & INTRODUCTION

directs the Centre for New Aesthetics. He is one of the founding editors of *Notes on Metamodernism*. He lives in Dusseldorf, Germany.

## ACT 1

In the first act, we question where art and culture are heading now. Perhaps complexity is the fundamental condition of today's world, certainly for artists who are seeking to identify themselves and their practice within it. Can there be a return, of sorts, to the idealism of modernity, or can we only think of new, more relativistic paradigms for cultural progress?

1 1 : 3 0  
P A N E L

Donna Kukama and Timotheus Vermeulen in conversation with Nav Haq (curator, M HKA), followed by a Q&A.

1 2 : 4 5

1 0 : 3 0  
LECTURE PERFORMANCE

Lunch at M HKA and visit to the exhibition (with activated works by Patrizio Di Massimo and Liesbeth Doms running throughout the day).

Donna Kukama

Donna Kukama opens with a lecture performance produced for this forum.

## ACT 2

Donna Kukama is an artist living in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In the second act, we consider notions of subjectivity and selfhood in relation to practice. To what extent could (and should) biography be a factor in the production of art? What role can objects, including artworks, play in the formation of the self? Should artworks also be considered as subjects with their own biographies?

1 1 : 0 0  
K E Y N O T E

Timotheus Vermeulen, *Who Could I Be(come)? Historicising the Post-Historical Subject*

1 4 : 0 0  
P E R F O R M A N C E

Hedwig Houben, *The Hand, the Eye and It*, 2013

A plasticine replica of a hand becomes the mediator in a collaboration between the performer, the creator's eye, and the elusive 'it' - the thing that wants to be made. The various elements take on both literal and symbolic roles that investigate the lines between subject and object, performer and creator, hand and eye.

Hedwig Houben is an artist living and working in Brussels, Belgium.

1 4 : 3 0  
R E A D I N G

Travis Jeppesen, *16 Sculptures*

Travis Jeppesen will read from *16 Sculptures*, an object-oriented writing project. In his installation *16 Sculptures*, visitors – sitting while blindfolded – listen to recordings of

F O R U M

JUST WHO DO YOU  
THINK YOU ARE?

14 JUNE 2014  
10:00 18:00

*Just Who Do You Think You Are?* is a forum in three acts with performances, screenings, keynotes and talks with artists participating in the exhibition *Don't You Know Who I Am? Art After Identity Politics* and invited speakers acting as *agent provocateurs*.

The forum will explore important shifts that seem to be taking place in culture today, as led by artists and observed by intellectuals of a younger generation. The contributions will consider notions from 'universality' and 'populism', to 'selfhood', 'normality' and 'difference', all in relation to the 'I word' of the exhibition subtitle.

Free entrance.

Language: English

From the fall of the financial system to the rise of ecological awareness, from the rise of right wing populism to the Indignados, and from web 2.0 to the post-millennial 'generation A' with their genuine fondness for slow-food, urban gardening and craftsmanship: postmodernism as we know it is over. A new cultural logic has taken its place: metamodernism. In the arts, this structure of feeling has been expressed most vividly by movements such as the 'new sincerity' (literature), 'freak folk' (music) and 'quirky' (film); and, individually, by strategies like the manifesto, post-irony, speculation and storytelling, empathy, and conceptual craftsmanship (visual and performative arts). This talk will trace, with broad strokes, the relationships between these socio-economic, ecological, technological, demographic and artistic developments, focusing in particular on the notions of 1. History (with a capital H); 2. The Subject (who are we post-postmodernism?); and 3. Truth (what!?).

Timotheus Vermeulen is assistant professor of cultural theory at the Radboud University in Nijmegen, The Netherlands, where he also

### ACT 3

Jeppesen reading his object-oriented re-creations of sculptures. Depriving us of our usual faculties for experiencing works of art—sight and visual-spatial reasoning—Jeppesen’s texts instead stage an encounter with objects through language that nonetheless retains the texture of embodied, physical experience, an imaginative realm in which he attempts to summon the autonomous essences and interior lives of objects themselves.

Travis Jeppesen lives and works in London and Berlin.

1 5 : 0 0  
S C R E E N I N G

Pedro Barateiro, *We Belong to Other People When We’re Outside*, 2013

HD video, colour, sound, 19’43”  
Voices: Ana Moreira, Miguel Loureiro and Pedro Barateiro

In this film Pedro Barateiro shows a series of images of artworks that he has been collecting for some years. By intertwining personal and historical narratives, the film suggests that we all collect images in our memory and activate them for determined situations and/or in specific moments, as a way to write and live a personal history. Barateiro only uses images of artworks that are not his own and juxtaposes them with a narrative written and performed by himself and two actors. It is exactly in the merging of these two elements that Barateiro questions the romanticized aura of the artist and places authorship in the process of editing. As in previous projects, he explores how throughout time not the object we look at seems to change, but rather the way we look at them, and thereby its meaning.

Pedro Barateiro is an artist living and working in Lisbon, Portugal.

1 5 : 3 0  
Q & A

Q&A moderated by Anders Kreuger (curator, M HKA), followed by a coffee break.

The third and last act brings perspectives on the question of identity and national politics. How do ideas of ‘normal’ and ‘different’ get legitimated in different contexts? What is the relation of place and politics towards the formation of identities? Who gets to decide?

1 6 : 0 0  
K E Y N O T E

Merijn Oudenampsen, *The Politics of Cultural Identity*

Cultural identity has emerged as the defining political issue of our time. In Europe, even the economic crisis is largely understood in cultural terms: that of profligate southerners and frugal northerners. After 9/11, it was Samuel Huntington’s clash of civilizations theory that provided a burgeoning right wing movement with intellectual ammunition. Part description, part instruction manual, it posited that cultural conflicts, especially that between Islam and the West, would take center stage and replace the ideological fault lines of the Cold War. In the decade that followed cultural identity, presented as static and monolithic edifices erected on a concrete foundation of core values, replaced former paradigms of identity based on race and ethnicity. The newfound architects of cultural identity subsequently took aim against multiculturalism and the ‘cultural relativism’ of progressive elites. Is there a way to reconstruct the edifice of cultural identity? To open it up, and unearth the emancipatory promise bricked up inside?

Merijn Oudenampsen is sociologist and political theorist currently researching populism and the political right at the University of Tilburg, the Netherlands.

1 6 : 3 0  
P E R F O R M A N C E

Lawrence Abu Hamdan, *Contra-Diction: Speech against Itself*

Abu Hamdan connects the fundamentals of how the human body conveys meaning by setting airwaves in motion – tone, voice, words and what makes them begin and end – with the demands and pitfalls of legal systems. His recent lecture *Contra-Diction: Speech Against Itself* (2014) explores the linguistics of *Taqiyya*. This piece of jurisprudence among the esoteric

sects of Islam allows believers to deny their faith and break other laws when they are at risk of persecution or in a condition of statelessness. Abu Hamdan indicates how such minor speech acts can help us re-appraise the precision of speaking, and of remaining silent. Such concerns also underpin the research he is doing as a PhD candidate at Goldsmiths College in London, where he is part of the Forensic Architecture team. The word ‘forensic’ etymologically derives from the word *forum* of Roman antiquity. The art of public speaking is to turn narrative into fact and then into a shared truth supported by proof everyone can agree upon. Abu Hamdan analyses fundamental concepts – the oath, the right to silence, freedom of speech – as micro-political acts of forensic listening, demonstrating that the battle for free speech is now about control over the conditions in which we are being heard.

Lawrence Abu Hamdan is an artist living and working in London, UK.

1 7 : 0 0  
P A N E L

Lawrence Abu Hamdan and Merijn Oudenampsen in conversaton with Victor Wang (researcher-in-residence, CAHF).

Victor Wang is a curator and researcher living and working in London, UK.

F I N A L E

1 7 : 3 0  
P E R F O R M A N C E

Nástio Mosquito

As the final contribution to the forum, Nástio Mosquito will perform a new work.

Nástio Mosquito is an artist living and working in Luanda, Angola, and Ghent, Belgium.

After the forum a shuttle bus will take anyone who wants to Extra City Kunsthall, for the opening of Miriam Bäckström’s and Laure Prouvost’s exhibitions, where drinks, snacks and music will also be offered.



For more information please contact M HKA at [info@muhka.be](mailto:info@muhka.be) or CAHF at [info@cahf.be](mailto:info@cahf.be)

More information on the exhibition *Don't You Know Who I Am? Art After Identity Politics* at M HKA can be found at [afteridentity.muhka.be](http://afteridentity.muhka.be)

*Just Who Do You Think You Are?* is co-organised by M HKA and CAHF and is the first of two collaborative events to take place in 2014, exploring formats and scenarios for engaging with a new generation of emerging artists in the institutional framework of museums and their collections.

*Just Who Do You Think You Are?* takes the form of a public conversation between artists and intellectuals, while *Emerging The Museum*, the second event to take place, serves as a workshop for curators and conservators of the museums that form the CAHF partnership. How can museums collect and/or program artists whose practice is still in the making? How can the contradiction between the museum's position in the contemporary (whatever this really means) and its role as a collector of heritage be made productive?

Contemporary Art Heritage Flanders (CAHF) is a collaborative knowledge platform initiated by and built around the collections of four leading contemporary art museums in Flanders, Belgium: S.M.A.K. (Ghent), Mu.ZEE (Ostend), M HKA (Antwerp) and Middelheimmuseum (Antwerp).

Through a series of projects and actions CAHF both strengthens and questions the institutional practice of collecting, by accommodating dialogue and collaboration between its four partner museums and an international community of art professionals.

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