

THE
WALTHER COLLECTION

Recent Histories: New Photography from Africa
Simon Gush, Délio Jasse, Lebohang Kganye, Dawit L. Petros, and Zina Saro-Wiwa

September 22—December 17, 2016



Délio Jasse, *Terreno Ocupado*, 2014

Opening Reception: Thursday, September 22, 6pm-8pm

The Walther Collection Project Space
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The Walther Collection is pleased to present the third exhibition in its multi-year series on contemporary photography and video art from Africa and the African Diaspora. Presented thematically and surveying a varied range of work, the series builds upon the collection's longstanding focus on African photography, providing a platform for engaging current practices. The series began in fall 2015 with *The Lay of the Land*, a group show examining the postcolonial African cityscape, and continued in spring 2016 with *Close to Home*, an

exhibition highlighting new visions of portrait photography in Africa. The third installment, *Recent Histories*, opens on Thursday, September 22, 2016 at The Walther Collection Project Space in New York.

Recent Histories features work by Simon Gush, Délio Jasse, Lebohang Kganye, Dawit L. Petros, and Zina Saro-Wiwa, five emergent figures from a new generation of multidisciplinary, lens-based artists dedicated to exploring African narratives from a diversity of perspectives. Common to their disparate practices is the use and embellishment of documentary modes to portray the vicissitudes of modern life. Engaging an array of sociopolitical concerns—including migration, lineage, the legacies of colonialism and Calvinism, and local custom—the works in the exhibition are so finely attuned to the broader contexts in which they have been made that they might also serve as veritable, if fragmentary, records of our time.

Working vigorously across a variety of media, **Simon Gush** (b. 1981, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa; lives and works in Johannesburg) is a conceptual artist whose photographs, writing, videos, and sculptural installations center on a critique of the notion and ethics of labor. Distinguished by an understated, minimalist aesthetic, his sensitively recorded urban scenes and ambient sounds, framed by incisive texts, query ideologies that pervade our everyday lives.

Délio Jasse (b. 1980, Luanda, Angola; lives and works in Lisbon and Milan) uses found images along with his own photographs to create textured works that explore the relationship between memory and photography. Experimenting with alternative photographic printing processes, he deconstructs and rebuilds images to reveal the latent content within. His work examines the experience, reiteration, and reconstitution of colonial and postcolonial relationships, particularly those between Angola and Portugal.

An alumna of the Market Photo Workshop, **Lebohang Kganye** (b. 1990, Katlehong, South Africa; lives and works in Johannesburg) makes pictures, both still and animated, that incorporate her interest in sculpture and performance. Confronting her family album, she creates illusory histories by digitally commingling enacted figures with actual ones. Kganye reaches back in time through her practice to form a connection with her maternal ancestry, South Africa's political history, and the heritage of a black population in South Africa that comprises one/many narratives.

Dawit L. Petros (b. 1972, Asmara, Eritrea; lives and works in New York City) is a visual artist whose photographic projects investigate the relationship between African histories and European modernism. Drawing on extensive research and travels, his ongoing body of work "The Stranger's Notebook" conveys a metaphorically rich articulation of contemporary migration while exploring attendant issues of displacement, place-making, and cultural negotiation.

The video installations, documentaries, photographs, and experimental films of **Zina Saro-Wiwa** (b. 1976, Port Harcourt, Nigeria; lives and works between New York City and the Niger Delta, Nigeria) map emotional landscapes, including those in the Niger Delta region where she was born. She distills highly personal experiences, carefully recording their choreography, bringing cross-cultural, political, and environmental/geographic considerations to bear on them.

In conjunction with *Recent Histories*, The Walther Collection has co-organized a symposium entitled *Beyond the Frame: Contemporary Photography from Africa and the Diaspora*, which will be held the afternoon of October 21, 2016 at Schermerhorn Hall 501, Columbia

University. Bringing together a variety of artists, scholars, curators, critics, and cultural producers, the symposium will provide a unique opportunity to discuss current developments in photographic and video practices in Africa and the African Diaspora, as well as the platforms and networks supporting these practices. Featured presenters include John Fleetwood, former head of the Market Photo Workshop; Kerry Greenberg, Curator (International Art) at Tate Modern, London; and Chika Okeke-Agulu, Associate Professor of African and African Diaspora Art, Princeton University. This event is co-sponsored by The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery and the Department of Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University, and is also being held in conjunction with *The Expanded Subject: New Perspectives in Photographic Portraiture from Africa*, a concurrent exhibition at the Wallach.

The Walther Collection is dedicated to researching, collecting, exhibiting, and publishing modern and contemporary photography and video art across historical periods and geographic regions. The collection comprises a four-gallery museum campus in Neu-Ulm, Germany, and a project space in New York City. Initially centered on the practices of early twentieth-century German photographers, the collection has expanded to become one of the most important private holdings of contemporary African and Asian photography and video art. The collection's extensive publishing program includes *African Photography from The Walther Collection*, a three-volume set dedicated to portraiture, landscape, and the archive; *The Order of Things*, investigating serial and typological images across geographical regions and time periods; and the monographs *Santu Mofokeng: The Black Photo Album*, *Martina Bacigalupo: Gulu Real Art Studio*, *Zanele Muholi: Faces and Phases*, *Mikhael Subotzky and Patrick Waterhouse: Ponte City*, and *Guy Tillim: O Futuro Certo*.