

apexart - thiaroye (dakar)

Guis Sou Me Le Mbao (I Do Not See You at Mbao)

Organized by:
Claude Gomis and Saskia Köbschall

On view: **November 12 - December 10, 2016**
Camp Thiaroye (Dakar), Senegal
Tuesday-Friday 3-7pm, Saturday 2-7pm

Opening reception:
Saturday, November 12, 5pm

Featuring work by:
Nathalie Mba Bikoro
Mansour Ciss Kanakassy
Pierre Marie Ciss
Jean Marie Claude Bruce

Djime Diakite
Claude Gomis
Tita Mbaye
Cool Diabang Mory
Hassan Sar



Claude Gomis, *I Do Not See You at Mbao*, 2016

The exhibition *Guis Sou Me Le Mbao (I Do Not See You at Mbao)* invites contemporary African artists to commemorate the 1944 massacre of *Tirailleurs Sénégalais* (African soldiers conscripted for the French army) in the Thiaroye military camp.

The title of the exhibition draws on the Wolof language saying "*Guis sou me le mbao*" ("I do not see you at Mbao") that was coined in the aftermath of the massacre. The soldiers' families rushed to the nearby village of Mbao where the survivors had found refuge, hoping to see their loved ones. The expression now serves to warn someone that he or she is in great danger. It is one of the traces that reveals the deep trauma caused by the massacre and its brutality that sent shock waves throughout French West Africa. The massacre was a wake-up call to many, that despite the sacrifices West Africans had made for France in both World Wars and countless military interventions on three continents, they had come home to the same colonial brutality, racial injustice, and discrimination.

Guis Sou Me Le Mbao issues a literal warning of the dangers of non-remembrance of the colonial past and the invisibility but severeness of its repercussions in our present through the persistence of colonial epistemologies, social, and economic structures. The project will invite the artists to engage with the community of Thiaroye in order to create site-specific works that will reflect on modes of resistance and means of challenging postcolonial politics of memory.

A 2016-17 apexart Franchise Exhibition

Claude Gomis is a Dakar-born artist and musician living and working in Brooklyn. He grew up traveling and performing as a dancer and percussionist with his father, Rudy Gomis, from Orchestra Baobab. In his teens, Gomis started creating videos and stadium-sized concert backdrops for musicians like Youssou N'dour, Peter Gabriel, and Positive Black Soul. After completing his studies at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts de Dakar, Gomis moved to New York to pursue his career, recording and touring with bands like Midnite and Sadao Watanabe. He released two solo albums that blend Senegalese musical traditions with jazz, reggae, Afrobeat, and blues. His paintings and sculptures have been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in Dakar, New York, and Berlin.

Saskia Köbschall is a Berlin-born cultural manager, curator, and anthropologist. She completed her graduate studies at the New School for Social Research in New York with a Fulbright scholarship. She is the manager of the non-profit art space SAVVY Contemporary in Berlin. She has been the project coordinator and curator of numerous exhibitions, educational projects, and discursive programs.

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