

TRACEY ROSE

Shooting
Down
Babylon

Press kit

23.02.—
11.08.2024

KUNST
MUSEUM
BERN

With the support of:



Stiftung Gegenwart
Dr. h.c. Hansjörg Wyss



Tracey Rose, The Prelude, La Marche de la Femme, 2013, Pigment on cotton rag paper, 73 x 49 cm, Edition 1/8, Courtesy of the Artist



The Kunstmuseum Bern is presenting the most extensive retrospective so far of the work of Tracey Rose. The South African artist has been a radical voice in international art since the mid-1990s. Her works are centred on the power of performance and the body as a place of resistance, healing and discourse.

With about a hundred works, the Kunstmuseum Bern is showing the most extensive retrospective so far of the work of the South African performance and multimedia artist Tracey Rose (b. 1974). In her works she engages with themes such as post-colonialism, gender, sexuality, racism and Apartheid. At their centre are the power of performance art and the body, which Tracey Rose sees as a place of protest, rage, resistance and discourse, but also of healing. The artist realises her sensational performative practice in various media such as video, sculpture, photography, installation and drawing, in particular casting light and critically commenting on central experiences in the transition to a post-colonial world.

Her thematic focus, however, extends far beyond the reality of South Africa, and refers generally to experiences of racist, political or sexist discrimination. Her most recent works centre on the question of the healing of traumatic experiences, whether personal or communal in nature.

The exhibition in the Kunstmuseum Bern follows Rose's artistic development from her early interest in questions of identity to the aesthetics of violence and an interest in healing processes and rituals. It shows works from the years between 1990 and 2021, including the work *T.K.O. (Technical Knock-Out)* (2000) from the collection of the Kunstmuseum Bern, in which the artist has been represented since 2001.

'The exhibition avoids a chronological or thematic reading in favour of an arrangement as an open landscape, in which the individual elements communicate with one another synchronically and diagonally. At the same time, the fundamental themes in Tracey Rose's work, such as protest, satire, anti-monuments, utopia and a preoccupation with spirituality, recur.' Kathleen Bühler, curator of the exhibition

Rethinking the world

Tracey Rose laments, denounces, distorts and attacks. She reinterprets accepted patterns of thought and traditions, she questions repeatedly asserted cultural, sexual or ethical identities and thus opens up a space for discussions. Her works produce cracks in the surface, and the artist goes so far as to rethink even mythical and religious origin narratives in an absurd, anarchic and carnivalesque way.

One example of this is the group of works *Lucie's Fur*, in which the artist sketches a different version of the Creation history. She shows us Adam and Eve as a queer couple, or the expulsion from Paradise as a slightly disoriented ride by a hybrid figure through a Canary-Island Garden of Eden. With this daring and amusing new emphasis, Rose opens the Pandora's box of questions: what would happen if things had happened according to her form of representation, and we had developed our cultural theories and histories of civilisation on that basis?

Mandela Balls

Ten new works have been commissioned for the present exhibition; they are part of the continuing *Mandela Balls* series. In 1994, Nelson Mandela, freed after years of imprisonment, was the first South African President to be democratically elected. Rose's work accompanies the political and social systemic change to a 'Rainbow Nation' and proves to be revolutionary even today in the sense of an analytic vision, an attitude of resistance and a voice of protest. Basing her work on the poem *A Dream Deferred* by Langston Hughes, the artist builds a total of 95 monuments to the freedom fighter – one for each year of his life. With these fragile and sometimes comical objects she explores the legacy left by his hopeful beginning.

Shooting Down Babylon

The title of the exhibition, *Shooting Down Babylon*, is taken from the installation of the same name, made in 2016 as a reaction to Donald Trump's election victory. For this work, Rose subjected herself to cleansing rituals which she filmed and reproduced in a physically insistent video sculpture. As a prelude to the exhibition, this work clearly demonstrates the extent to which Tracey Rose's work is rooted in the physical, in rage and in the search for spirituality.

café révolution

Beyond the exhibition, the Kunstmuseum Bern seeks to reflect on issues of discrimination and to learn more about it along with its visitors. The Bern collective café révolution will introduce new ways of looking and background experiences in the context of different events in the accompanying programme.

Opening

The opening of the exhibition will take place on

Thursday, 22 February 2024, from 6 pm.

Admission to the exhibition is free on this evening.

Curators

Koyo Kouoh, Tandazani Dhlakama, in collaboration with Kathleen Bühler

Assistant Curator

Nina Liechti

With the support of

Kanton Bern, Burgergemeinde Bern, Stiftung GegenwART. Dr. h.c. Hansjörg Wyss

Cooperation

The exhibition has been organised by Zeitz MOCAA (Cape Town, South Africa).

Media preview

We cordially invite you to the media preview with curators Kathleen Bühler and Koyo Kouoh as well as the artist Tracey Rose on **Wednesday, 21 February 2024 at 10 am at the Kunstmuseum Bern.**

Please register via press@kunstmuseumbern.ch.

Contact

Martina Witschi, Communication & Media Relations

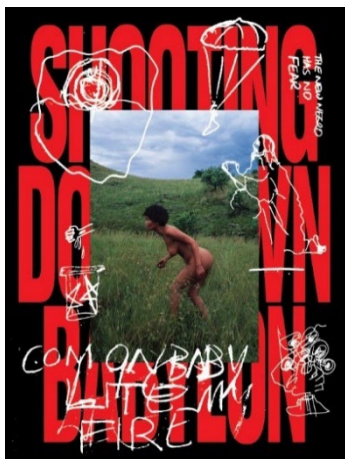
press@kunstmuseumbern.ch, +41 31 328 09 93

Individual visit of the exhibition

We are looking forward to your individual visit to the exhibition. Admission to all exhibitions at the Kunstmuseum Bern is free for media representatives with a valid press card. Please fill in the digital accreditation form which you can either access via kunstmuseumbern.ch/media or by screening the QR-Code before your visit.

Digital Guide

There is a freely accessible digital guide to the exhibition. It can be accessed from Wednesday, 21 February 2024 via the QR code below.



Catalogue

Tracey Rose. Shooting Down Babylon

Published by Koyo Kouoh and The Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA)

468 pages, 28,5 x 3,5 x 21,5 cm

Publication in English

ISBN 978-0-6397-0732-7, CHF 56

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01

Tracey Rose
Lovemefuckme, 2001
Lambda print
119 x 119 cm
Courtesy of the artist



02

Tracey Rose
The Prelude: La Marcha de la Aparición, 2003
Pigment inks on cotton rag paper
73 x 49 cm
Courtesy of the artist



03

Tracey Rose
Die Wit Man, 2015
Video, colour, sound
42:40
Courtesy of the artist



04

Tracey Rose
San Pedro V "The Hope I hope" The Wall, 2005
Giclée print
84,91 x 63,46 cm
Courtesy of the artist

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05
Tracey Rose
*Lucie's Fur Version 1:1:1 –
The Messenger, 2003*
Lambda print
80 x 60 cm
Courtesy of the artist



06
Tracey Rose
The Kiss, 2001
Black & White Lambda print
124,5 x 127 cm
Courtesy of the artist



07
Tracey Rose
Lala, 2013
Mixed mediums on paper
228 x 150 cm
Courtesy of the artist



08
Tracey Rose, in collaboration
with L1
*Portrait for a Young Black
Man, 2013*
Mixed mediums on paper
240 x 210 cm (whole work),
59 x 42cm (single pages)
Courtesy of the artist

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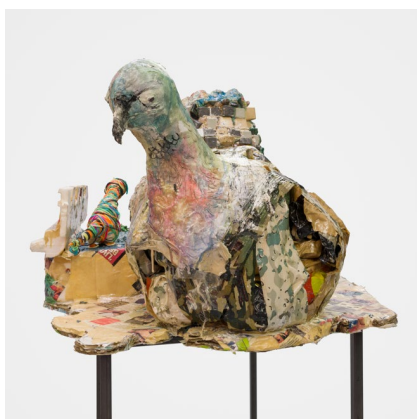
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09
Tracey Rose
A Dream Deferred (Mandela Balls), 13/95 IMBOKODO: Kathy's Rainbow, 2021
Mixed media
85 x 90 x 120 cm
Courtesy of the artist



10
Tracey Rose
A Dream Deferred (Mandela Balls), 14/95 EXCALIBUR: Seven 7CROWN Audie's\$ Bootitjie Bootitjie Tomorrow, 2021
Mixed media
126 x 73 x 80 cm
Courtesy of the artist



11
Tracey Rose
A Dream Deferred (Mandela Balls), 16/95 MATTHEW 9:14 For the Boys of Bird Island, 2021
Mixed media
75 x 115,5 x 55cm
Courtesy of the artist



12
Tracey Rose
Courtesy Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa

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13
Tracey Rose
Courtesy Zeitz Museum of
Contemporary Art Africa

Social Media Assets

Text proposal:

Tracey Rose (*1974) has been a radical voice in international art since the mid-1990s. The @kunstmuseumbern is showing the most comprehensive retrospective to date of the South African performance and media artist, who engages in her works with themes such as post-colonialism, gender and racism, and whose artistic practice is centered on the power of performance and the body as a place of resistance and discourse.

Tracey Rose. Shooting Down Babylon

23.2.–11.8.2024

More info via kunstmuseumbern.ch/TraceyRoseEN

Curators: Koyo Kouoh and Tandazani Dhlakama in collaboration with Kathleen Bühler

The exhibition was organised by Zeitz MOCAA (Cape Town, South Africa)

#KunstmuseumBern #TraceyRose @TraceyRoseStudio @zeitzmocaa
@kathleenbuhler @madamekoyo @tandazani

Please refer to the Kunstmuseum Bern's social media channels in your posts and stories by tagging us in the text:

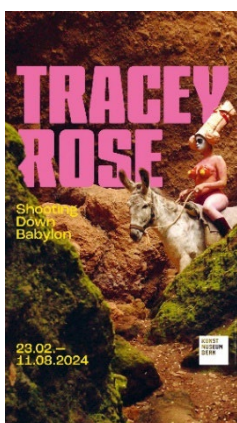
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14
[Post, 1080 x 1080 px]



15
[Instagram & Facebook Story, 1080
x 1920 px]



16
Tracey Rose
Lovemefuckme, 2001
Lambda print
119 x 119 cm
Courtesy of the artist



17
Tracey Rose
The Kiss, 2001
Black & White Lambda print
124,5 x 127 cm
Courtesy of the artist

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18
Tracey Rose, in collaboration with
L1
Portrait for a Young Black Man,
2013
Mixed mediums on paper
240 x 210 cm (whole work), 59 x
42cm (einzelne Seiten)
Courtesy of the artist



19
Tracey Rose
A Dream Deferred (Mandela Balls),
*13/95 IMBOKODO: Kathy's
Rainbow*, 2021
Mixed media
85 x 90 x 120 cm
Courtesy of the artist