

Lumen Travo gallery presents

MESCHAC GABA

TRACE

From september 10th till october 4th

Lumen Travo gallery
Lijnbaansgracht 314
1017 WZ Amsterdam

Tel. 020 627 08 83

Fax 020 627 98 03

email info@lumentravo.nl

www.lumentravo.nl

From wednesday to saturday 13-18

pm, sunday 13-17 pm

Well-known Benin artist Meschac Gaba presents his new solo show called *Trace*, to refer to the cities which have inspired his African wigs from the series *Tresses*. Lumen Travo gallery gathers specially for this exhibition a selection of eight wigs from Cotonou, Johannesburg, New York, Paris, Milano, London and Arnhem. Going back and forth from Africa to the West, Meschac Gaba picks up different social and cultural elements that he confronts then in his work. *Tresses*, like his other exhibited work, the new series called *Couleurs locales*, witness of the stigmata of a manufactured cultural hybridization, which reflects of a global context of postcolonialism and current geopolitical changes.

Couleurs locales offers two different bodies of works, with *Diplomatiques*, a series of vitrines filled with national flags, and *Du mur a la toile*, a series of decorative paintings and frames made of money. Balancing from Decorative art to post-Arte Povera, Meschac Gaba switches as usual original objects into artistic strategies for producing a visual impact, sublayered then by political allusions. *Diplomatiques*, for example, shows a series of vitrines, usually used by African ambulant sellers, turned here into 'diplomatic suitcases'. Like the wigs, these works materialize and extend the pure idea of geographical move to the notion of global flux, and notions of power, change, mutation and negociations it implies. Behind this flux, local life and richness are illustrated by the artwork *Diamants indigenes*, which takes the shape of one of these ambulant vitrines filled with watches made of fake diamonds.

For this new solo show, Meschac Gaba has set up his territory : creolization between Western and African references, underneath, the notions of trade, exchange, alteration, conversion and negociations of goods and human values. They reveal the roots the artist is working on for more than ten years, whose Museum of Contemporary African Art seems the most representative (see the book *Library of the Museum vol. 1*, publ by Artimo Foundation, 2001).

Meschac Gaba has been exhibited throughout international platforms and exhibitions, like at the Tate Gallery in London, the Witte de With in Rotterdam in 2008, the Sao Paulo Biennale in 2006, the Center Pompidou in Paris in 2005, the Venice Biennale in 2003.