

Tate Modern

Performer & Participant

Blavatnik Building (South) Level 3

12:30-13:00

Laurence Shafe

Performer & Participant (Blavatnik Building, Level 3)

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- This is based on the new hang in Blavatnik Building Level 2.
- Works marked with ‘*’ are key works not to be missed and the others are optional.
- The talk is 30 minutes and each work takes about typically 3 to 5 minutes so 6 to 10 works can be covered. The ‘Background Notes’ are designed to answer any questions and the section ‘Visual Aids’ at the end contains additional images that may be used to illustrate related works or ideas.
- Optional sections are shown in square brackets. All quotations are in bold and names are underlined.
- In general, start with the title and the artist followed by a description of the work and end with a link to either the theme or the next work. Avoid dates, movements and ‘isms’ unless directly relevant. Only refer to other works or historic events if they help explain the work being presented.
- Tate web pages for the selected works: [Crystal Quilt](#), [Tropicalia](#), [160-cm Line Tattooed](#), [Rhythm 0](#), [Time](#), [The Solemn Process](#), [Finger Gloves](#), [Unicorn](#), [Museum of Contemporary African Art](#), [Joints 4tet Ensemble](#).

Introduction

1. Welcome to Tate Modern. My name is Laurence and I am your guide for the next thirty minutes.
2. I have a hearing loop for anyone that requires it and if you need a seat there are folding stools over there.
3. We are in the new Blavatnik Building extension of Tate Modern. The Tate is named after Henry Tate, a wealthy nineteenth-century entrepreneur who made his fortune selling sugar cubes. In later life, he gave a lot to charity including what became Tate Britain and, about 100 years later, this building was opened to hold the ever-expanding collection. This building is a converted power station, called Bankside, and we are in the part known as the Boiler House. Down the centre is the Turbine Hall and over the bridge is the Blavatnik Building which opened in June 2016 and increased the display area by 60%. On this side of the building, the Boiler House, there are four permanent galleries, two on this floor and two on floor two.
4. Tate Modern is one of the most popular international modern art gallery in the world and we have managed to keep our permanent collection free by charging for temporary exhibitions, some Government funding and the use of volunteers like me. Please help us remain free by having lunch here, buying a book or giving a small donation.
5. I will be showing you a wide variety of work illustrating how artists used different materials and objects.
6. This gallery is called 'Performer & Participant' and is about individual and collective action and participation. We will see how artists working between the 1960s and the 1990s opened new spaces and ideas for participation and interaction.
7. We will be looking at about seven works that I have selected as representative and important and we will finish in the final room where I will leave you to continue looking round the gallery. I am happy to take questions as we go around, so let's get started in the first room.

Notes

- **The Founder.** Henry Tate (1819-1899) was the son of a clergyman and set up his own grocery shop when he was 20. He expanded this to a chain of six shops which he sold and became the owner of a sugar refinery in 1859. This was 26 years after slavery had been abolished in the British Empire (1833) and 52 years after Britain had abolished the slave trade (1807). In 1872, Tate bought a German patent for making sugar cubes from Eugen Langen and it was this that made his fortune. The same year he opened a refinery in Liverpool. Towards the end of his life he gave money to many colleges, hospitals and founded Streatham, Balham, South Lambeth and Brixton libraries. In 1897, he spent £150,000 (some say £80,000) on building the National Gallery of British Art ('Tate Gallery' in 1932), endowed it with his personal art collection of 65 contemporary paintings and gave it all to the nation. The famous portico was designed by the architect Sidney Smith. It was separated from the National Gallery in 1954. Tate Britain was extended twice by Joseph Duveen, an art dealer who also paid for an extension at the British Museum, and in 1987 Charles Clore funded the Turner wing.
- **Bankside power station** was designed by Giles Gilbert Scott (1880-1960) who designed Liverpool Cathedral and many of the red telephone boxes. He was the grandson of the prolific Victorian architect George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) who designed the Midland Hotel at St. Pancras and the Albert Memorial. The façade of the building is made from 4.2 million bricks. The chimney is 325 feet (99m) and was designed to be lower than St. Paul's Cathedral opposite (365 feet, 111m). At its peak, the power station generated 300 megawatts but it became uneconomic and too polluting and was closed in 1981. The turbine hall is 509 feet (155 m) long, 115 feet (35 m) wide and 85 feet (26 m) high. The conversion was carried out by Herzog & de Meuron at a cost of £134 million of which £50 million was from the Millennium Commission. Tate Modern opened in 2000 and had become one of the most visited museums of modern and contemporary art in the world.
- **Attendance.** According to Wikipedia and the Tate Annual Report 2014-15 the four Tate galleries received 7.9 million visitors and Tate Modern 5.7 million. The Louvre was number one with 9.7 million, number two was the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art with 6.1 million, the British Museum was number three with 5.6 million and Tate Modern was number four.
- **Extension.** Within four years of opening our success meant we started planning to expand the gallery. This new extension, again designed by Herzog & de Meuron, cost £260 million and opened on 17 June 2016. This ten-storey extension, now called the Blavatnik Building, increases the display space by 60%. Len Blavatnik is the UK's richest person and has been a UK citizen since 2010.
- **Gender balance.** Nearly 40% (38%) of the artists on display at Tate Modern are women and 50% of the monographic rooms are by women.
- **Management.** The Director of the Tate is Maria Balshaw who was previously Director of the Whitworth (University of Manchester) and Manchester City Galleries, and Director of Culture for Manchester City Council. The previous Director, since 1988, was Sir Nicholas Serota (b. 1946). The Director of Tate Modern is Frances Morris and of Tate Britain Alex Farquharson.

All Artworks in Sequence

Room – Suzanne Lacy

- *Suzanne Lacy, *The Crystal Quilt*, 1985–7, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lacy-the-crystal-quilt-l03198>

Room - Hélio Oiticica

- Hélio Oiticica, *Tropicália, Penetrables PN 2 'Purity is a myth' and PN 3 'Imagetical'*, 1966–7, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/oiticica-tropicalia-penetrables-pn-2-purity-is-a-myth-and-pn-3-imagetical-t12414>

Room – Act of Participation

- *Santiago Sierra, *160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People El Gallo Arte Contemporáneo. Salamanca, Spain. December 2000*, 2000, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/sierra-160-cm-line-tattooed-on-4-people-el-gallo-arte-contemporaneo-salamanca-spain-t11852>
- *Marina Abramovic, *Rhythm 0*, 1974, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/abramovic-rhythm-0-l03651>
- *David Lamelas, *Time*, 1970, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lamelas-time-p79205>
- Collective Actions, Sabine Haengen, *RUSSIAN WORLD*, 1985, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/collective-actions-haengen-russian-world-t14345>

Room – Women and Work

- *Margaret Harrison, Kay Hunt, Mary Kelly, *Women and Work: A Document on the Division of Labour in Industry 1973-75*, 1973–5, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/harrison-hunt-kelly-women-and-work-a-document-on-the-division-of-labour-in-industry-1973-t07797> Between 1973 and 1975 Margaret Harrison, Kay Hunt and Mary Kelly conducted a detailed study of women who worked in the Metal Box Company factory in Bermondsey, south London. Their investigation was timed to coincide with the implementation of the Equal Pay Act, which had been passed in 1970. The artists collected a vast amount of data through interviews, archival research and observation, which served as a base for the installation *Women and Work 1973–5*, presented in this room.

Room – Song Dong

- Song Dong, *A Pot of Boiling Water*, 1995, printed 2008, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/dong-a-pot-of-boiling-water-p80531>

Room – Daria Martin

- Daria Martin, *Birds*, 2001, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/martin-birds-t12743>

Room – Ana Lupas

- *Ana Lupas, *The Solemn Process*, 1964–2008 (1964–74/76; 1980–5; 1985–2008), <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lupas-the-solemn-process-t14526>

Room – Explore Performance

- In *Bloomberg Connects: Explore Performance* the room is 'aware' of your presence through a network of sensors. You can use your body to trigger multi-screen films in which artists and curators illuminate key themes including choreography, moving image and the body.

Room – Rebecca Horn

- *Rebecca Horn, *Unicorn*, 1970–2, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-unicorn-t07842>

- Rebecca Horn, *Head Extension*, 1972, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-head-extension-t07861>
- Rebecca Horn, *Moveable Shoulder Extensions*, 1971, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-moveable-shoulder-extensions-t07860>
- Rebecca Horn, *Keeping Those Legs from Touching Each Other*, 1974–5, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-keeping-those-legs-from-touching-each-other-t07853>
- Rebecca Horn, *Berlin Exercises: Dreaming under Water*, 1974–5, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-berlin-exercises-dreaming-under-water-t07625>
- Rebecca Horn, *Arm Extensions*, 1968, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-arm-extensions-t07857>
- *Rebecca Horn, *Finger Gloves*, 1972, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-finger-gloves-t07845>
- Rebecca Horn, *Cockfeather Mask*, 1973, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-cockfeather-mask-t07849>
- Rebecca Horn, *Mechanical Body Fan*, 1973–4, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-mechanical-body-fan-t07851>
- Rebecca Horn, *White Body Fan*, 1972, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-white-body-fan-t07844>
- Rebecca Horn, *Performances II*, 1973, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-performances-ii-t07623>
- Rebecca Horn, *In the Triangle*, 1973–4, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-in-the-triangle-t07856>
- Rebecca Horn, *Performances I*, 1972, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-performances-i-t07622>
- Rebecca Horn, *Feather Instrument*, 1972, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-feather-instrument-t07848>
- Rebecca Horn, *Trunk*, c.1967–9, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-trunk-t07855>
- Rebecca Horn, *Cockatoo Mask*, 1973, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/horn-cockatoo-mask-t07850>

Room – Meschac Gaba

- Meschac Gaba, *Architecture Room From Museum of Contemporary African Art*, 1997–2002, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/gaba-architecture-room-from-museum-of-contemporary-african-art-t14005>
- Meschac Gaba, *Draft Room From Museum of Contemporary African Art*, 1997–2002
- Meschac Gaba, *Swiss Bank*, 1997, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/gaba-swiss-bank-x45789>
- Meschac Gaba, *Museum of Contemporary African Art in London*, 2013, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/gaba-museum-of-contemporary-african-art-in-london-t13934>
- Meschac Gaba, *Ceramic Chicken Feet*, 1997, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/gaba-ceramic-chicken-feet-x45790>

Room – Charles Atlas and Shunk Kender Archive

- *Charles Atlas, *Joints 4tet Ensemble*, 1971–2010, <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/atlas-joints-4tet-ensemble-t13849>

* Works that have been selected for the tour. There are more works selected than the time available so that works can be omitted if surrounded by crowds or are temporarily closed.

Suzanne Lacy, *The Crystal Quilt*, 1985–7



Suzanne Lacy, *The Crystal Quilt*, 1985–7

- This room documents a project called *The Crystal Quilt* which is concerned with empowering older women. In 1987, the artist Suzanne Lacy organised an event during which 430 women who were all over 60 met in Minneapolis to share their views on getting older.
- The project took three-year to organise and took place on Mother's Day [May 10] in a shopping complex with a crystal glass ceiling which gave rise to the works name. The collaborators first unfolded tablecloths which started black and when unfolded showed red and yellow creating an overall quilt-like pattern. Every 10-15 minutes a sound signalled them to change the positions of the hands which from above looked like stitches on a quilt changing. The format of a quilt was used as it symbolises the traditional sharing of female experience by North American women.
- The group at each table discussed social, racial and cultural issues concerning the future. The objective was that older women would be politically active and not be seen just as repositories of the past. The meeting was attended by an audience of 3,000 people and broadcast on live television. The audience could not hear the individual conversations at each table but listened to a pre-recorded conversation. At the end of the event the audience flooded the stage with hand-painted scarves creating a crazy quilt of colour.
- In February 2013, an event called *Silver Action* was held at Tate Modern and 400 women aged over 60 who were or had been political activists, such as members of the 1968 Ford sewing machinists' strike and protestors at Greenham Common, were invited to take part in unscripted conversation about their experiences. They discussed what motivated them to become politically active and what still drives them. The audience moved around the tables and could listen to the discussions or see the transcripts projected on the walls and blogged and tweeted as they spoke. The aim is to show that older women are an amazing resource that can be used by society.
- The artist is Suzanne Lacy and she was pleased by the success of the meeting but doubted whether one or two meetings could bring about change. She also wondered, if the event grew, at what point it changed from art into a social movement. The art work now exists in the form of a video documentary, a quilt, photographs and a sound piece. Lacy said, "**An artwork is not as effective as a treaty or a law or a budget change. I don't think a single artwork transforms society. But what an artwork does is create a cultural milieu within which things will be understood differently.**"
- This is one of several works by Lacy that explore the experience of aging, and in this case how aging women are represented in media and public opinion.

Background Notes on Suzanne Lacy, *The Crystal Quilt*, 1985–7

- Suzanne Lacy (b. 1945) is an American artist, educator, and writer. She has worked in a variety of media, including installation, video, performance, public art, photography, and art books, in which she focuses on "social themes and urban issues." She has worked collaboratively with other artists since the 1970s. She edited a book, *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* in 1995, which predated current writing on politically relevant performance art. She was Dean of Fine Arts in California, founded the Visual and Public Arts Institute and the Center for Art and Public Life. Not all her art is political but when it is her aim is to understand the issues and choreograph them positively. She has created several performance pieces tackling subjects such as rape, poverty and ageing.
- 1968 Ford sewing machinists' strike was a trigger cause of the Equal Pay Act of 1970. The strike was a result of the women, who made car seat covers, being regraded to a category associated with less skilled work than the men who performed the same work. Once the UK joined the European Union in 1973, it also became subject to Article 119 of the 1957 Treaty of Rome, which specified that men and women should receive equal pay for equal work
- Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp was established to protest at nuclear weapons being sited at RAF Greenham Common in Berkshire. The camp began in September 1981 after a Welsh group arrived at Greenham to protest the decision to allow cruise missiles to be based there. The camp was active for 19 years and disbanded in 2000.

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lacy-the-crystal-quilt-l03198>
- <http://www.suzannelacy.com/the-crystal-quilt/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suzanne_Lacy
- <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/jan/29/tate-modern-womens-liberation-army>

Hélio Oiticica, *Tropicália, Penetrables PN 2 and PN 3, 1966–7*



Hélio Oiticica, *Tropicália*, *Penetrables PN 2 'Purity is a myth' and PN 3 'Imagetical'*, 1966–7

- This is *Tropicália* by Hélio Oiticica and it is currently closed. The macaws (New World parrots) have been removed because the large number of visitors disturbed them. When open the installation allowed up to eight visitors at a time to walk on the sand.
- Oiticica uses sand, macaws and tropical plants to draw attention to and destroy the simplified, typical view of Brazil. This area also includes two works from his *Penetrables* (pronounced 'pen-E-trable') series, *PN 2 'Purity is a myth'* and *PN 3 'Imagetical'*. 'Purity is a myth' is a reference to the Dutch artist Piet Mondrian, an important influence on Oiticica, and their hope of understanding reality through pure colour and geometric forms. It is also an attempt to free art from the oppression of hundreds of years of 'good taste'.
- *Tropicália* gave rise to *Tropicálismo*, a cultural movement that emerged from the liberal period in Brazil's history, a period that was abruptly cut short by the military coup in 1964. Oiticica was 27 and became part of the artistic, utopian counterculture. His work engages the viewer by combining art and lived experience to achieve political change but without going so far that he became a victim of the dictatorship like many others. He worked with the poor in the favelas, or slums, of Rio and his aim was to remove the distinction between high and low art by rethinking the art object. During his lifetime, limited resources meant that most of his work existed only in the form of maquettes or models.
- One of his series of works was called *Parangolés* (1964-79, pronounced 'par-an-go-lay') which was shown at the Tate in 2007. The word means 'habitable paintings' and it consisted of coloured materials that were worn by visitors in the Turbine Hall who danced to the rhythm of the samba (see Visual Aids).
- All these brightly coloured works show the wide variety of his art and the way he broke away from the conventional art object. He had become involved with a famous samba school [called Mangureira] in a favela, a shanty town, in Rio and he combined colour, form and dance in a way that involved the viewer in the action. His intention was to use his art to bring people together in a collective, playful event that had a mystical element. His interest in dance was a way to liberate our capacity to play.
- Let's go round the corner to see the work of another artist who worked with the poor but with a very different result.

Background Notes on Hélio Oiticica, *Tropicália*, *Penetrables PN 2 'Purity is a myth' and PN 3 'Imagetical'*, 1966–7

- Hélio Oiticica (1937–1980, pronounced 'Ellio Oi-chi-see-ka') was a Brazilian visual artist, best known for his participation in the Neo-Concrete Movement, for his innovative use of colour, and for what he later termed 'environmental art'. Oiticica was one of the most important exponents of contemporary art in South America. He created multimedia room installations which intertwined social themes, experimental elements, and appropriations from popular culture, film, and music. His first retrospective was not until 1992 but he has now become a global figure.
- Throughout his life Oiticica pushed the limits of art. He was born in Rio de Janeiro and spent most of his life there until he died of a stroke caused by hypertension when he was only 43. His father was an entomologist and painter and his grandfather an anarchist. From the age of 18 he was a member of the Neo-Concretist group, Grupo Frente (pronounced 'Frenchy'), that sought to reject realistic and representational art and, in particular, he was influenced by Piet Mondrian. Grupo Frente was founded in 1954 by Ivan Serpa in Rio de Janeiro. There was a military dictatorship in Brazil from 1964 to 1985 and there was censorship and the torture of dissidents. An unknown amount of Oiticica's work and his correspondence, notes and sketches were lost in a fire in his brother's flat in 2009. The fire was investigated by the Government but its cause is still unknown.
- There was no single style only a rejection of contemporary Brazilian art. Some of the artists in the group, such as Lygia Clark (whose first name is pronounced the way Americans say 'leisure'), went on to form the influential neo-concrete movement in 1958, which Oiticica joined in 1960. The neo-concrete artists were a splinter group of the concrete art movement and called for greater sensuality, colour and poetic feeling. It was inspired by the new Brazilian capital, by cybernetics, gestalt psychology and the work of Bridget Riley. Oiticica produced his ground-breaking series of red and yellow painted hanging wood constructions.
- Concrete is art that is entirely free from any basis in observed reality and has no symbolic meaning. The term was first used by Theo van Doesburg in his *Manifesto of Concrete Art* (1930). He stated that there was nothing more concrete or more real than a line, a colour, or a plane (a flat area of colour). Concrete art is very close to constructivism, an art movement founded by Vladimir Tatlin and Alexander Rodchenko in Russia in 1913-15. They believed art should be completely abstract but made from industrial materials. It was the technical mastery and organisation of materials. It was suppressed in Russia in the 1920s but brought to the West by Naum Gabo (pronounced 'now-m garbo', he changed his name from Pevsner to avoid confusion with his brother). Gabo knew Wassily Kandinsky, Kazimir Malevich, the de Stijl group and the Bauhaus.
- Oiticica was frustrated with painting and wanted to take colour off the walls of the gallery. In 2007, Tate held a major exhibition *Helio Oiticica: The Body of Colour*. In the Turbine Hall, Oiticica's *Parangolés* (habitable paintings, pronounced 'par-an-go-lay') was performed. Visitors dressed in brightly coloured drapes and danced to the rhythm of the samba. This work came out of his involvement with the famous samba school in the Mangueira Hill favela in Rio de Janeiro.

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/oiticica-tropicalia-penetrables-pn-2-purity-is-a-myth-and-pn-3-imagetical-t12414>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/feb/21/brazil>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/jun/20/tate-modern-removes-macaws-tropicalia-installation-record-visitor-numbers>

Santiago Sierra, *160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People El Gallo Arte Contemporáneo*, 2000



Santiago Sierra, *160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People* El Gallo Arte Contemporáneo. Salamanca, Spain. December 2000, 2000

- This room contains three works of Performance Art and the two I will look at raise serious ethical concerns.
- This first work is a video documenting four prostitutes who have been paid by the artist, Santiago Sierra, to have a line permanently tattooed across their backs. It is called *160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People* and the prostitutes were heroin addicts who were paid the price of one shot of heroin to buy their consent. The artist said, **“Normally they charge 2,000 or 3,000 pesetas [12-18 euros] ... for fellatio [performing a sex act], while the price of a shot of heroin is around 12,000 pesetas [72 euros].”**
- The video shows the process of the women being tattooed. They sit astride cane chairs naked from the waist up and chat and laugh during the tattooing. The tattooist is a woman wearing a bright red top and during the process two men pass in and out. At the beginning of the video, the men hold a tape measure and mark their backs and they take photographs during the process.
- The women’s poverty and their heroin addiction drove them to participate, raising a range of ethical questions. Sierra was funding their addiction and exploiting their vulnerability and by turning the event into a spectacle he made money from the work. It also means that Tate and other galleries have collaborated in this ethically questionable process.
- So, what was he trying to achieve? Much of his work challenges our capitalist society particularly the division between the rich and the poor. He highlights the exploitation of human labour and the way it reduces all human interaction to economic exchanges. To do this he focuses on the most exploited and least visible such as illegal immigrants, asylum seekers, prostitutes, drug addicts and the unemployed and homeless. He often employs them to perform pointless or repetitive tasks that are absurd or degrading. For example, he has paid people to sit in a cardboard box, lie inside the trunk of a car or in a wooden box being used as a bench at an art party, to clean people’s shoes without their consent, to form a crowd, to block a museum’s entrance, to masturbate on video and to support large weights as long as physically possible. He turns exploitation into a spectacle that is then viewed publicly in a gallery or museum. This involves the institution in the exploitation, highlighting its role in the process and the inevitability of such exploitation in our society.
- Another example of Performance Art which raised serious moral issues is associated with the table behind us.

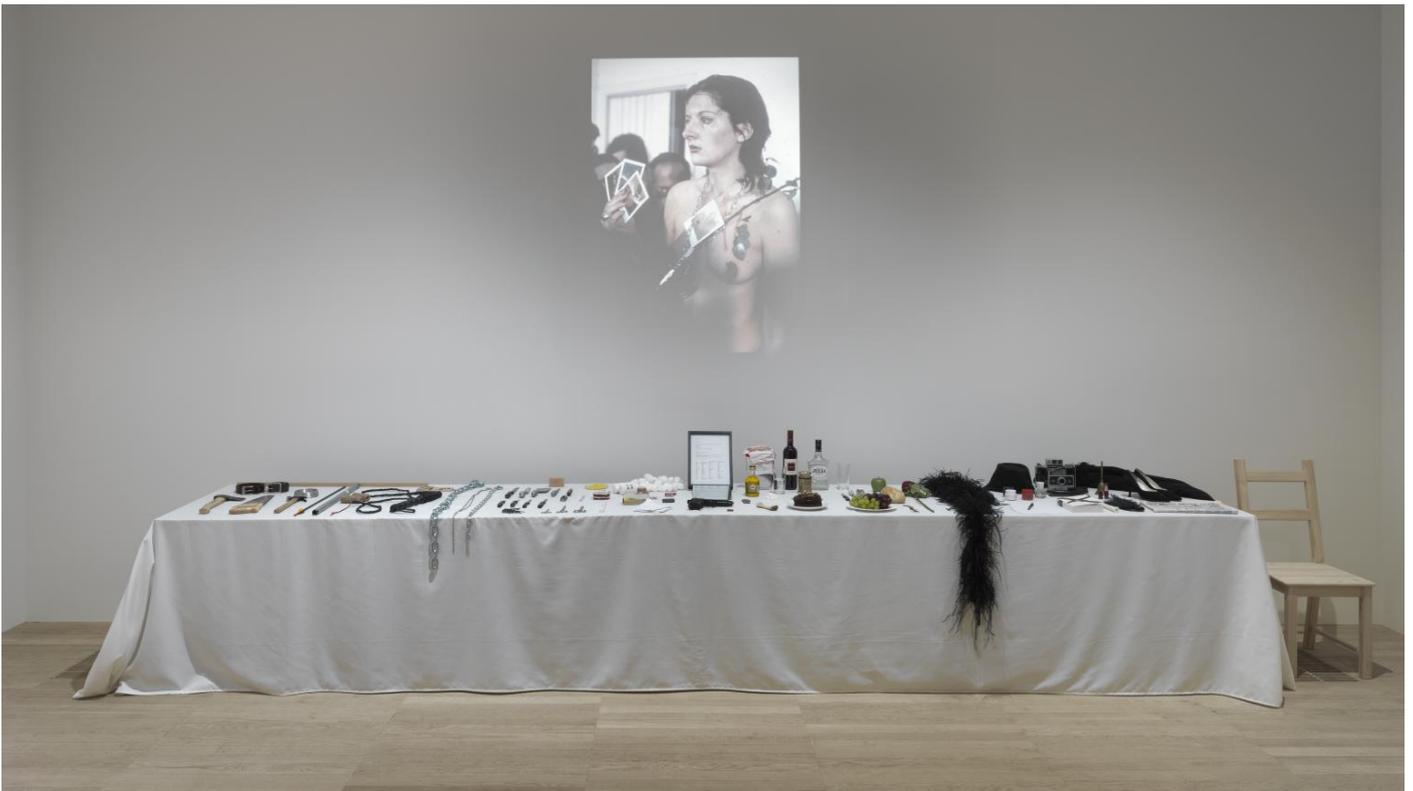
Background Notes on Santiago Sierra, *160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People El Gallo Arte Contemporáneo*. Salamanca, Spain. December 2000, 2000

- Santiago Sierra (b. 1966) was born in Madrid and studied in Madrid, Hamburg and Mexico City and he has been based in Mexico City since 1995. His early work involved industrial-scale interventions, such as placing large containers inside buildings and sections of road, walls and floors cut out and placed elsewhere. From the mid-1990s he began staging events involving obstruction in urban environments.
- By enabling heroin addicts to have more heroin, as in *160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People* and a work made a few months previously *10-inch line shaved on the heads of two junkies who received a shot of heroin as payment*, 2000, Sierra enters an ethically ambiguous situation and the artworld participates by purchasing his art product. Focusing on the extremely poor and disadvantaged, Sierra's works emphasise the tension between the choice of the participants to undertake the tasks for a wage, and their lack of choice owing to their economic situation and neglected medical conditions. The actions he instigates are metaphors – or poetic equivalents – for all the poorly paid jobs backing the structure of the global market economy.
- This is the third of his work involving tattooing. In the first, *Line of 30 cm Tattooed on a Remunerated Person 51 Regina Street. México City, Mexico. May 1998*, the artist 'looked for a person who did not have any tattoos or intentions of having one, but due to a need for money, would agree to have a mark on his skin for life'. The participant received \$50. The second tattooing work was *250 cm Line Tattooed on 6 Paid People, Espacio Aglutinador. Havana, Cuba. December 1999*, in which six unemployed young men from Old Havana were hired for \$30 in exchange for being tattooed.
- The video *160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People* was produced in an edition of three plus one artist's proof and one exhibition copy; Tate's copy is the third in the edition. The peseta was replaced by the euro in Spain in 2002.

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/sierra-160-cm-line-tattooed-on-4-people-el-gallo-arte-contemporaneo-salamanca-spain-t11852>

Marina Abramović, *Rhythm 0*, 1974



Marina Abramović, *Rhythm 0*, 1974

- This is *Rhythm 0* by Marina Abramović who has been described as the 'grandmother of all performance art'. The table contains the same items that were present at her six-hour performance in Naples in 1974. The photographs projected onto the wall above showed what happened.
- Before she began Abramović told the audience of mostly men that they could do to her whatever they wished, using any of the objects she had placed on a table. She took full responsibility for the outcome. The table can be divided into the right side which contains a rose, a feather, perfume, honey, bread, grapes and wine and the left, or sinister side, which contains an axe, a saw, hammer, chain and knives and, in the centre, a gun loaded with one bullet. The purpose of the piece, she said afterwards, was to find out, "**What is the public about and what are they going to do in this kind of situation?**".
- Visitors were gentle to begin with, offering her a rose or a kiss. An art critic [Thomas McEvilley], who was present, wrote: "It began tamely. Someone turned her around. Someone thrust her arms into the air. Someone touched her somewhat intimately. The Neapolitan night began to heat up. In the third hour, all her clothes were cut from her with razor blades. In the fourth hour, the same blades began to explore her skin. Her throat was slashed so someone could suck her blood. Various minor sexual assaults were carried out on her body. She was so committed to the piece that she would not have resisted rape or murder. Faced with her abdication of will, with its implied collapse of human psychology, a protective group began to define itself in the audience. When a loaded gun was thrust to Marina's head and her own finger was being worked around the trigger, a fight broke out between the audience factions."
- As Abramović described it later: "**What I learned was that... if you leave it up to the audience, they can kill you.**" ... "**I felt really violated: they cut up my clothes, stuck rose thorns in my stomach, one person aimed the gun at my head, and another took it away. It created an aggressive atmosphere. After exactly 6 hours, as planned, I stood up and started walking toward the audience. Everyone ran away, to escape an actual confrontation.**" When she returned to her hotel room she found some of her hair had turned white.
- As a child, Abramović's mother beat her. In an interview published in 1998, Abramović described how her "**mother took complete military-style control of me and my brother. I was not allowed to leave the house after 10 o'clock at night till I was 29 years old. ... [A]ll the performances in Yugoslavia I did before 10 o'clock in the evening because I had to be home then. It's completely insane, but all of my cutting myself, whipping myself, burning myself, almost losing my life in the firestar, everything was done before 10 in the evening.**"

Background Notes on Marina Abramović, *Rhythm 0*, 1974

- Marina Abramović (b. 1946) is a Yugoslavia-born performance artist. She explores the limits of the body and the mind. She has been described as the 'grandmother of performance art'. Until she was six years old, Abramović was raised by her grandparents. Her grandmother was deeply religious and Abramović "spent my childhood in a church following my grandmother's rituals – candles in the morning, the priest coming for different occasions. "At age six, when Abramović's brother was born, she began living with her parents and took piano, French, and English lessons. In an interview published in 2013, Abramović said, "My mother and father had a terrible marriage." Describing an incident when her father smashed 12 champagne glasses and left the house, she said, "It was the most horrible moment of my childhood." She was a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade from 1965 to 1970 and completed her post-graduate studies in Zagreb in 1972. From 1973 to 1975, she taught at the Academy of Fine Arts at Novi Sad, while implementing her first solo performances. From 1971 to 1976, she was married and in 1976, she went to Amsterdam to perform a piece and decided to move there permanently. 1990–1991 Abramović was a visiting professor at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris and at the Berlin University of the Arts. 1992–1996 she was a visiting professor in Hamburg and 1997–2004 she was a professor for performance-art in Braunschweig, Germany.
- She nearly died during one performance of a work called *Rhythm 5* (1974). There was a 'fire star' which she stood in the centre of and the lack of oxygen caused her to lose consciousness. Thankfully, her life was saved when the audience realised what was happening.

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David Lamelas, *Time*, 1970



David Lamelas, *Time*, 1970

- This black and white photograph is called *Time* and it records a performance organised by David Lamelas in 1970. Eighteen people stood in a line in a snowy landscape. The performance involved the person at one end of the line telling the next person the time. That person then waited 60 seconds before telling the next person in line and so on until it reached the last person who then announced the time in a language of their choice.
- This photograph records the first performance of *Time* at Les Arcs in the French Alps. During the performance, Lamelas took a photograph each time someone passed on the time. It is not clear if this is one of those photographs or was taken at the beginning or end of the performance. The work emphasizes the durational nature of performance art and of viewing art in general. Here he is emphasizing the difference between the live event and a static record. This difference is further exaggerated by the ambiguity surrounding when this photograph was taken thus questioning the reliability of all records of performance art.
- Lamelas was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and in the 1960s became an outspoken avant-garde conceptual artist. In 1968, he was arrested and jailed four times by the right-wing government and he moved to London to study at St. Martin's School of Art. During the 1960s and early 70s he became one of the pioneers of Conceptual Art. Conceptual Art is art in which the idea takes precedence over its appearance, materials or even existence. For example, Performance Art, which is a form of Conceptual Art, only exists during its performance and the only record is a video or some photographs. One benefit for Lamelas was that he often travelled around the world and physical works of art are difficult to transport.
- *Time* was performed in Tate Modern's turbine Hall in 2008. He asked 25 volunteers to line up along a piece of tape and to accept the time from the person next to them, hold onto it for sixty seconds and then pass it on to the next person in line. Some of the volunteers counted to sixty, some used watches and some used their phone before speaking the time to the next person. Lamelas was there and was the first person in the line to speak the time and he ran to the other end to be the last person to receive the time. He set out to capture the essence of time by making it observable and by making it a subjective, social construct that could be manipulated and transformed by the individuals who perceived it. He wanted to 'get rid of the object' in art and succeeded when the Tate purchased *Time* as a set of instructions about how it should be performed. It is also about mortality and the life of an object. His piece could be performed three thousand years from now and it would take the same form.

Background Notes on David Lamelas, *Time*, 1970

- David Lamelas (b. 1946) was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and is one of the pioneers of conceptual art. He graduated from the Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes in 1963 and was involved in Argentina's avant-garde scene in the 1960s. He is well known for his sculptures and films and currently lives and works between Los Angeles, Buenos Aires, and Europe
- Lamelas's work *Time* (1970) similarly emphasises the collective experience of performance, foregrounding the idea that participants and audience members all share one single time in the present moment.

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Margaret Harrison (b. 1940), Kay Hunt (1933–2001) and Mary Kelly (b. 1941), *Women at Work*, 1973-75



Margaret Harrison (b. 1940), Kay Hunt (1933–2001) and Mary Kelly (b. 1941), *Women at Work: A Document on the Division of Labour in Industry 1973-75, 1973-75*

- This installation documents the investigation of women at work following the passing of the Equal Pay Act in 1970. The investigation was carried out by three artists, Margaret Harrison, Kay Hunt and Mary Kelly, and they worked in a metal box factory in Bermondsey.
- It tells the story of the work carried out by 150 women in the factory and how their relationship to the workplace changed following the Equal Pay Act.
- Harrison, Hunt and Kelly interviewed the women, researched the company's archives and observed them at work. The work consists of videos, audio, photographs, prints and written work on paper. Punch cards and rates of pay document the gap in pay between the men and women and show how women were confined to repetitive, stationary and low-skilled tasks while men perform more physical and supervisory roles. There are portraits and the names of the women displayed to give a personal view of the findings.
- One finding was, as Kelly later observed: '**We interviewed the men and they told us everything that happened on the job, but the women wouldn't even talk about what they did at work. They just said, 'went to work, came back', and then they talked about what they did in the home.'**
- The work highlights the general inter-mingling of art, politics, union activism and feminism that took place in Britain in the early 1970s.
- It is difficult to appreciate how radical this work was at the time. It was a time when artists were exploring the ideas behind art, what became known as Conceptual Art and another work by Michael Craig-Martin also produced in 1973 was a glass of water on a shelf that he described as being an oak tree. This work was one of the earliest projects to tackle political and industrial issues from an overtly political and feminist perspective. The significance of the artists' work is best demonstrated by the fact that they were banned from the site.

Notes on Women at Work, 1973-75

- Women and Work developed from Harrison, Hunt and Kelly's involvement in the Women's Workshop of the Artist's Union, a group formed in 1972 with the aims of advancing women's causes within the union and of ending racial and sexual discrimination in the arts.
- Margaret Harrison (born 1940 in Wakefield, Yorkshire) is an English feminist and artist whose work uses a variety of media and subject matter. Harrison studied at the Carlisle College of Art from 1957 to 1961; the Royal Academy Schools, London, England, from 1961 to 1964; and graduated from the Perugia Fine Arts Academy, Italy, in 1965. She founded the London Women's Liberation Art Group in 1970. A 1971 exhibition of her work that was closed by the police included a piece depicting Hugh Hefner as a naked Bunny girl.
- Mary Kelly (born 1941) is an American conceptual artist, feminist, educator, and writer. Mary Kelly has contributed extensively to the discourse of feminism and postmodernism through her large-scale narrative installations and theoretical writings. Kelly's work mediates between conceptual art and the more intimate interests of artists of the 1980s. Her work has been exhibited internationally and she is considered among the most influential contemporary artists working today. She is Professor of Art at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Song Dong (b. 1966), A Pot of Boiling Water, 1995



Song Dong (b. 1966), *A Pot of Boiling Water*, 1995

- There are twelve black and white photographs that show the artist, Song Dong, walking down an alleyway pouring boiling water from a kettle. The photographs were taken in 1995 to document a performance and printed in 2008 in an edition of 12 of which this is number eight.
- Song Dong was born in Beijing to a once prosperous family but the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) resulted in his father being sent to a re-education camp far from home. He was brought up by his mother and was an enthusiastic painter from an early age. He graduated in Fine Art in Beijing in 1989 but abruptly stopped painting after the suppression of the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989. Since then his work has been experimental and includes performance and video elements.
- His work is concerned with the impermanence of change and shows how although a single person might bring about change it will only have a fleeting impact. In 1995, he began writing a daily diary on a flat piece of stone using clear water instead of ink. He visited Tiananmen Square in Beijing on a freezing New Year's Eve to create the piece *Breathing*, showing himself lying face-down on the ground for 40 minutes until his breath had created a temporary sheet of ice on the pavement.
- Song's work concerns the impermanent nature of one's presence and actions by showing the insignificant events of everyday life but he does not see this as negative but as natural and inherent to the kind of daily rituals that he captures in his performances.

Notes on Song Dong, *A Pot of Boiling Water*, 1995

- Song Dong (Chinese: 宋冬, born 1966) is a Chinese contemporary artist, active in sculpture, installations, performance, photography and video. He has been involved in many solo and group exhibitions around the world, covering a range of themes and topics including his relationship with his family and their experience of living in modern China. In 1992 he married a fellow artist, Yin Xiuzhen and much of their work concerns Beijing. One of his major works is *Eating the City*, which consists of an model of Beijing made of biscuits that has been installed in Barcelona, Beijing, Hong Kong, London, Oxford and Shanghai between 2003-06. More recently, he created the installation *Waste Not* displaying over 10,000 household items from the home of his late mother, whose extreme thriftiness led her to obsessively hoard anything that could possibly be re-used. As of 2012, it has so far been displayed in eight cities around the world.

Ana Lupas, *The Solemn Process*, 1964–2008



Ana Lupas, *The Solemn Process*, 1964–2008

- This is *The Solemn Process*, by the Romanian artist Ana Lupas. The creation of the work extended from 1964 to 2008 and it took place in three phases corresponding to the changing social and political situation in Romania. There are 21 unique metal sculptures and two panels each with 40 sepia-toned images.
- During the first phase from 1964 to 1974-76 Lupas worked with villagers in rural Transylvania to produce cylindrical and circular shaped wreaths using traditional straw and clay. She enlisted the help of villagers who used weaving techniques traditionally employed to make wreaths for harvest festivals. Lupas originally saw the artwork as the communal act of making and displaying these objects in the local area. They have no practical function and some are large, one is eight metres high. The villagers were encouraged to display them at home and in the countryside and Lupas took photographs.
- In the mid-1970s the political situation deteriorated and the villagers could not continue to help her. The object started to decay and during the second phase from 1980 to 1985 Lupas tried to restore them. The restoration was unsatisfactory as Lupas felt it did not recreate the spirit of the original installations. She then started to draw them and made over 200 drawings.
- In the final phase from 1985 to 2008 she decided to preserve the ephemeral objects by encasing them in metal forms. The metal cases were made by Hungarian craftsmen and mirrored the original shape. They act as a bridge between the old agricultural practices and the modern, industrial Romania.
- *The Solemn Process* refers at one level to a traditional Romanian harvest but more broadly for Lupas the 'process' could be extended indefinitely both in space and time leading to a progression of the development. The work demonstrates Lupas's interest in folklore, ritual and agricultural labour and her exploration of land art

Background Notes on Ana Lupas, *The Solemn Process*, 1964–2008

- Ana Lupas (b. 1940) was born in Cluj-Napoca (pronounced 'clooj'), Romania, and her father was a well-known historian who had been persecuted by the communists. In 1962 Lupas graduated from the Fine Arts Institute in Cluj. She works at the intersection of tapestry, sculpture and architecture.
- *The Solemn Process* is 21 metal sculptures and two wall vinyls each containing 40 sepia-toned images created over 50 years by Romanian artist Ana Lupas. It was first exhibited in 2008 in Innsbruck and can be seen in relation to *Humid* (1966). *Humid* takes the form of hundreds of white sheets hung over washing lines across a hill Transylvania. Both works demonstrate Lupas's interest in folklore, ritual and agricultural labour and her exploration of land art.

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Rebecca Horn, *Finger Gloves*, 1972 (not on display)



Rebecca Horn, *Finger Gloves*, 1972

- This is *Finger Gloves*, which consists of two black prosthetic fingers a metre long. They are made from fabric and wood and are designed to be worn on the hands of the performer (see Visual Aids). They are very light and so the person wearing them can move their fingers without effort and use them to feel and grasp objects. Their length intensifies the sense of touch and their length creates a certain distance between the person and the object. It is one of a series of body extensions created by the German artist Rebecca Horn.
- Horn rebelled against her parents by studying art rather than economics. She attended the Hamburg Academy of Fine Art but the following year, when working in her studio in Barcelona, she contracted lung poisoning after working with glass fibre without a mask. She had to spend a year in hospital (1968-69) during which time her parents died. In hospital, she became isolated and decided to make these body extensions while she was lying in bed. After she left hospital she was still weak had to live in seclusion for two years and during this period she created further body extensions to modify the ways in which she could interact with the environment and other people. Many of her pieces were inspired by hospital materials, such as bandages, blankets, body trusses and prostheses. Horn was one of a generation of artists who, in the late 1960s, focused on the human body and rejected the commodification of art objects. She also filmed staged performances carried out by herself and actors. This was a time of a surge in women's rights movements and Horn's choice to use fabric and sewing reclaimed a stereotypical 'female' activity and elevated it to fine art.
- Her body extensions, despite their medical associations, are deliberately clumsy and functionless and many of her works blur the distinction between male and female and draw parallels between humans, animals and machines. She was also drawing attention to the human need for interaction, which she lacked for many years, and control although she recognised the futility of trying to overcome our natural limitations.

Background Notes on Rebecca Horn, *Finger Gloves*, 1972

- Rebecca Horn was born on 24 March 1944 in Michelstadt, Germany. She was taught to draw by her Romanian governess and became obsessed with drawing with expression because it was not as confining as oral language. Living in Germany after the end of World War II greatly affected the liking she took to drawing. **"We could not speak German. Germans were hated. We had to learn French and English. We were always traveling somewhere else, speaking something else. But I had a Romanian governess who taught me how to draw. I did not have to draw in German or French or English. I could just draw."** Horn spent most of her late childhood in boarding schools and at nineteen rebelled against her parents' plan of studying economics and decided to instead study art. In 1963, she attended the Hamburg Academy of Fine Arts. A year later she had to pull out of art school because she had contracted severe lung poisoning. **"In 1964 I was 20 years old and living in Barcelona, in one of those hotels where you rent rooms by the hour. I was working with glass fibre, without a mask, because nobody said it was dangerous, and I got very sick. For a year, I was in a sanatorium. My parents died. I was totally isolated."**

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Rebecca Horn, *Unicorn*, 1970–72 (not on display)



- *Unicorn* was her first piece Rebecca Horn made after she left the sanatorium and is perhaps her best-known work. She was still very weak and could not see friends and family and while recuperating a woman called Miss Parker caught her eye because of her tall, stately, stiff way of walking. Horn wrote, “... **nothing could stop her trance-like journey: in competition with every tree and cloud in sight**”. She described the woman she had in mind when designing the piece as “**very bourgeois ... 21 years-old and ready to marry. She is spending her money on new bedroom furniture**”. The woman walks through a field and forest on a summer morning wearing only a white horn protruding directly from the front of the top of her head, held there by straps. These straps are almost identical to the ones in Frida Kahlo's painting *Broken Column*. The image, with wheat floating around the woman's hips, is simultaneously mythic and modern. This encouraged Horn to make this piece for Parker and she made a video of her walking through wheat (see Visual Aids).
- The long white horn extends down the neck and torso and the straps are intended to bind the wearer and limit movement while creating a feeling of sophistication through maintaining the straight-back posture and regal headdress. The work reflects the bandages and prosthetics she saw in the sanatorium and is designed for a woman and is intended to expose the breasts and lower body while the white straps connect them together.
- The name *Unicorn* is a play on Horn's name and the unicorn's mythological associations with purity and gracefulness. Horn elevates the woman's body into a symbolic representation of stereotypical womanly virtues and for the video performance she placed her in idyllic scenery where the tall wheat mirrors the woman's upright body but her white skin, the long white horn and straps separate her from the environment and invoke the fabled creature of legend.

Background Notes on Rebecca Horn, *Unicorn*, 1970–2

- Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) was a Mexican artist who mostly painted self-portraits in a naïve folk art style. She was left disabled by polio as a child, and at the age of eighteen was seriously injured in a traffic accident, which caused her pain and medical problems for the rest of her life. Prior to the accident, she had been a promising student headed for medical school, but in the aftermath had to abandon higher education. Although art had been her hobby throughout her childhood, Kahlo began to entertain the idea of becoming an artist during her long recovery. She was also interested in politics and in 1927 joined the Mexican Communist Party. Through the Party, she met the celebrated muralist Diego Rivera. They were married in 1928, and remained a couple until Kahlo's death. The relationship was volatile due to both having extramarital affairs; they divorced in 1940, but remarried the following year. Kahlo's always fragile health began to increasingly decline in the same decade. She had her first solo exhibition in Mexico in 1953, shortly before her death the following year at the age of 47. *The Broken Column* was painted in 1944 shortly after she had spinal surgery. Her doctors had recommended a steel corset instead of the plaster casts she had previously worn.

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Meschac Gaba, *African Art*, 1997-2002 (not on display)



Meschac Gaba, *African Art, 1997-2002*

- This is two sections of a twelve-room installation created by the African artist Meschac Gaba. It is called *The Museum of Contemporary African Art 1997–2002*. He created the museum as a place to display his work as there was no suitable place in Africa. He included all the places that can be found in a conventional museum, a café, a library but also a games room, a wedding room and a religion room.
- He blurs the distinction between everyday life and art and between participation and observation. This first section for example, on the blue carpet, is the *Architecture Room* where visitors are encouraged to build their own structures to house Gaba's *Museum*. The models are constantly changing, being redesigned and rebuilt.
- The *Museum* has occupied many institutions and galleries around the world and on the right is a ladder of names which was empty when this room was first exhibited. Each sign has been added when an organisation hosted the project from Milwaukee to Accra and São Paulo to Paris. In 2002 the *Museum of Contemporary African Art* was officially completed and the ladder was full.
- Next to it is a potted plant called *Money Tree* with banknotes on its branches featuring the faces of artists influenced by African art, such as Pablo Picasso and Constantin Brancusi. Behind us is Gaba's *Artist's Bank*, a wooden desk with a glass top filled with banknotes with the symbols of art and architecture, is also included in the space.
- The *Draft Room* at the back of this room was the first of twelve rooms he created over five years. It introduces many of the conceptual concerns of the project. It contains a refrigerator, ceramic chickens, breads, fruit and vegetables with gilded pebbles and piles of banknotes weighed down with small pebbles. For Gaba, food embodies the imbalances between production and consumption in the world today and ceramic food-stuff is spread out on a cloth on the floor as goods would be in a West African market. Money is another prominent element, including dots cut from decommissioned banknotes and cylinders of compressed shredded currency. In this context, money symbolises the underlying structures that mediate our relationships with each other and with the environment in which we live.
- By titling this work *Museum of Contemporary African Art* Gaba draws attention to the fact that such a museum does not yet exist in Africa. Instead ethnographic museums in Europe and America often define African art by excluding contemporary artists, particularly those whose works break with tradition. Gaba challenges ideas of an 'authentic' African expression and asserts his right as a Beninese living in the Netherlands to draw on both European and African influences. His museum is not a shrine to the object, but rather a space for social and cultural interaction.
- Gaba said, **"My museum doesn't exist. It's only a question ... What I do is react to an African situation which is linked to a Eurocentric problem."** He added, **"I don't come from traditional Africa but from modern Africa."**

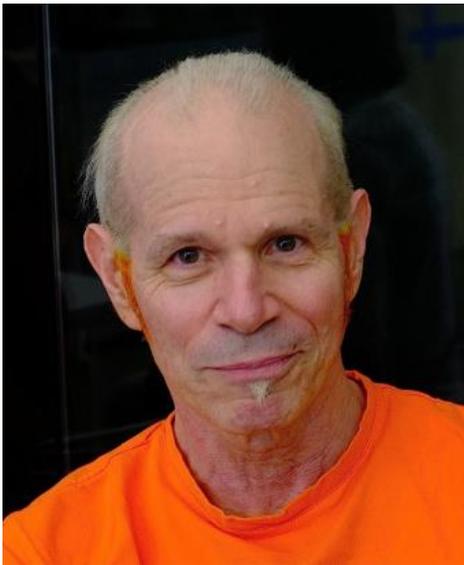
Background Notes on Meschac Gaba, *African Art*, 1997-2002

- Meschac Gaba (b. 1961) was born in Benin, a French-speaking country to the west of Nigeria.
- The twelve installations are *Draft Room*, *Architecture Room*, *Museum Shop*, *Summer Collection*, *Game Room* (six tables and a large chess set), *Art and Religion* (shelves containing religious objects, two chairs and a table), *Museum Restaurant* (a counter, trestle table and benches), *Music Room*, *Marriage Room* (photographs of Gaba's wedding and four pallets containing wedding paraphernalia), *Library* (shelves containing books, stools, table, pallet with books), *Salon* (two sofas, table, chairs, a bar, television and piano) and *Humanist Space* (seven bicycles). Each represents what Gaba believes is a core part of a museum's function and one or more can be displayed. All twelve took five years to complete. He began work on it in 1997 when living in Amsterdam.
- Gaba said, "My museum doesn't exist. It's only a question ... What I do is react to an African situation which is linked to a Eurocentric problem." He added, **"I don't come from traditional Africa but from modern Africa: that's why I ask questions about the education I had. If I create a museum of contemporary African art, it's because I say that people who gave me that education didn't give us everything. They shut me up inside tradition."**

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Charles Atlas, *Joints 4tet Ensemble*, 1971–2010 (not on display)



Charles Atlas, *Joints 4tet Ensemble*, 1971–2010

- This is *Joints 4tet Ensemble*, 1971–2010. It is the result of a collaboration between three radical and experimental North American artists, crossing the fields of film (Charles Atlas), dance (Merce Cunningham) and music (John Cage). Close-ups of choreographer Cunningham's joints – ankles, knees, elbows and wrists – shot in 1971 are shown across ten screens, accompanied by an ambient soundtrack by Cage.
- The ten different monitors are arranged to look like a group of people in a crowd. It was collected as a sketch for a work in 1971 and constructed as a finished work in 2010.
- It is called *Joints 4tet Ensemble* referring to the elements from which it is composed. It is a four-channel quartet played, out of sync, on multiple monitors as a visual equivalent of a classical music ensemble. The sound track is re-working of recordings of ambient sound made by John Cage while he travelled the world collaborating with Merce Cunningham. The idea of using ambient sound was brought to fruition in Cage's seminal work 4'33" in 1952 when the performer is instructed to remain silent for four minutes thirty-three seconds in front of a musical instrument forcing the audience to listen to the sounds of the environment around them.
- Atlas first filmed Cunningham's work in the 1960s, beginning a lifelong relationship that resulted in a body of work that captured Cunningham's choreography and his unique persona on film.

Background Notes on Charles Atlas, *Joints 4tet Ensemble*, 1971–2010

- Charles Atlas (b. 1949) was born in St. Louis, Missouri and is now based in New York. Merce Philip "Merce" Cunningham (1919–2009) was an American dancer and choreographer who was at the forefront of the American modern dance for more than 50 years. He collaborated with artists of other disciplines, including musician John Cage and artists Robert Rauschenberg and Bruce Nauman. John Milton Cage Jr. (1912–1992) was an American composer, music theorist, writer, philosopher, and artist. Cage was one of the leading figures of the post-war avant-garde and he has been described as one of the most influential American composers of the 20th century. He was also instrumental in the development of modern dance, mostly through his association with choreographer Merce Cunningham, who was also Cage's romantic partner for most of their lives.
- The televisions show the movement of Merce Cunningham. Images of Merce's hands, arms, knees, and feet are portrayed on the various screens, video footage taken by Charles Atlas during the time that he worked as an assistant stage manager for Merce's dance company.
- "As I sat on the bench facing the screens, alone in the gallery, I felt as if I were in a sacred space paying my respect to one of the most influential dancers and choreographers who ever lived."

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Visual Aids

- Hélio Oiticica, *Parangolés*, 1964-79
- Santiago Sierra, *160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People El Gallo Arte Contemporáneo. Salamanca, Spain. December 2000*. Still photograph from the video.
- Marina Abramović, *Rhythm 0*
- Rebecca Horn, *Finger Gloves*, photograph.
- Rebecca Horn, *Unicorn*, photograph.
- Frida Karlo (1907-1954), *The Broken Column*, 1944, Mexico City





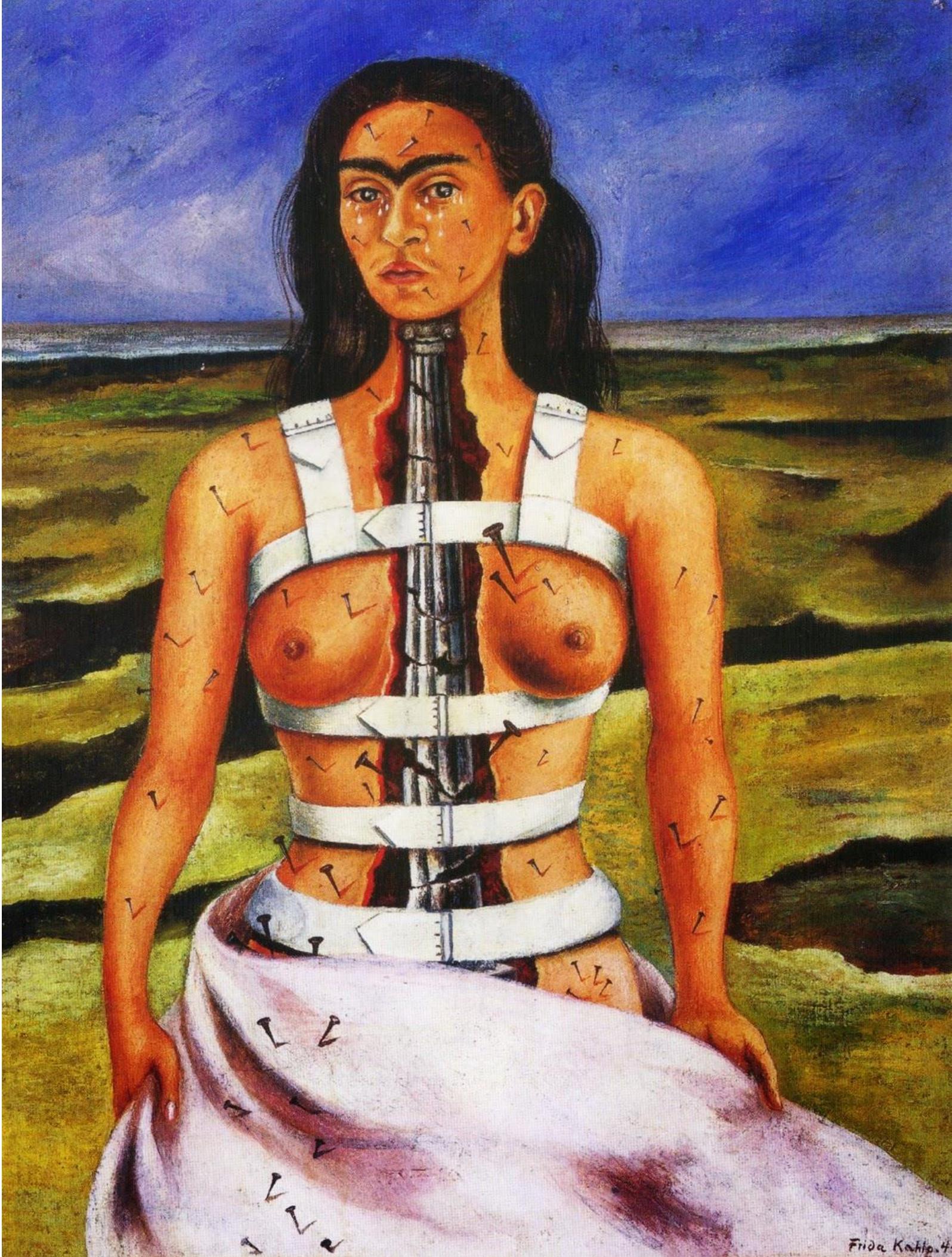




Rebecca Horn, *Finger Gloves*, 1972



Rebecca Horn, *Unicorn*



Summary of 'Performer & Participant' (12:30-13:00)

Suzanne Lacy (b. 1945), *The Crystal Quilt*, 1985–87. Minneapolis, 1987, Mother's Day, 430 women over 60. In 2013, 400 women participated in *Silver Action* in Tate Modern. Activists from, e.g. 1968 Ford sewing machinists' strike and Greenham Common. Lacy said, "**An artwork is not as effective as a treaty or a law or a budget change. I don't think a single artwork transforms society. But what an artwork does is create a cultural milieu within which things will be understood differently.**"

Hélio Oiticica (1937–1980), *Tropicália, Penetrables (pen-E-trables) PN 2 'Purity is a myth' and PN 3 'Imagetical'*, 1966–7. 'Purity is a myth' is a reference to Piet Mondrian and their hope of understanding reality through pure colour and geometric forms. Tropicália gave rise to Tropicálismo, a cultural movement that emerged from the liberal period in Brazil's history cut short by the military coup and dictatorship (1964-1985). Oiticica worked with the poor in the favelas, or slums. He worked with a samba school in the Mangueira favela and produced *Parangolés* (1964-79, pronounced 'par-an-go-lay') shown at the Tate in 2007. The word means 'habitable paintings' and it consisted of coloured materials that were worn by visitors in the Turbine Hall who danced to the rhythm of the samba.

Santiago Sierra (b. 1966), *160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People El Gallo Arte Contemporáneo. Salamanca, Spain. December 2000, 2000.* "Normally they charge 2,000 or 3,000 pesetas [12-18 euros] ... **for fellatio** [performing a sex act] **while the price of a shot of heroin is around 12,000 pesetas** [72 euros]." Sierra was funding their addiction and exploiting their vulnerability and by turning the event into a spectacle he made money from the work. It means that Tate and other galleries have collaborated in this ethically questionable process.

Marina Abramović (b. 1946), *Rhythm 0*, 1974. "What is the public about and what are they going to do in this kind of situation?" "What I learned was that... if you leave it up to the audience, they can kill you." ... "I felt really violated: they cut up my clothes, stuck rose thorns in my stomach, one person aimed the gun at my head, and another took it away. It created an aggressive atmosphere. After exactly 6 hours, as planned, I stood up and started walking toward the audience. Everyone ran away, to escape an actual confrontation." Her mother beat her as a child and insisted she was home before 10:00pm until she was 29 (1975). Abramović described how her "**mother took complete military-style control of me and my brother. I was not allowed to leave the house after 10 o'clock at night till I was 29 years old. ... It's completely insane, but all of my cutting myself, whipping myself, burning myself, almost losing my life in the firestar, everything was done before 10 in the evening.**"

David Lamelas (b. 1946), *Time*, 1970. A photograph of the first performance of *Time* in Les Arcs in the French Alps. Each person passes on the time to their neighbour. Lamelas was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and became an outspoken conceptual artist. In 1968, he was arrested four times by the right-wing government. He moved to London and studied at St. Martin's School of Art.

Margaret Harrison (b. 1940), Kay Hunt (1933–2001) and Mary Kelly (b. 1941), *Women at Work*, 1973-75. The installation was produced to investigate the impact of the Equal Pay Act of 1970. Kelly observed, '**We interviewed the men and they told us everything that happened on the job, but the women wouldn't even talk about what they did at work. They just said, 'went to work, came back', and then they talked about what they did in the home.**' This work was one of the earliest projects to tackle political and industrial issues from an overtly political and feminist perspective. The significance of the artists' work is best demonstrated by the fact that they were banned from the site.

Song Dong (b. 1966), A Pot of Boiling Water, 1995. 12 black-and-white photographs taken in 1995 and printed as an edition of 12 in 2008. Song Dong was born in Beijing to a once prosperous family but the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) resulted in his father being sent to a re-education camp. He grew up painting and graduated in Fine Art in Beijing in 1989 but abruptly stopped painting after the suppression of the Tiananmen Square protests the same year. His theme is the impermanence of change and shows how a single person can only bring about a fleeting change. In 1995, he started writing a diary in water on stone. He visited Tiananmen Square on a freezing New Year's Eve and lay on the ground for 40 minutes until his breath had formed a sheet of ice. Song's work concerns the impermanent nature of one's presence and actions by showing the insignificant events of everyday life but he does not see this as negative but as natural and inherent to the kind of daily rituals that he captures in his performances.

Ana Lupas (b. 1940), The Solemn Process, 1964–2008. Three phases corresponding to the communist regime in Romania. From 1964 to 1974-76 she worked with villagers making wreaths using straw and clay. They were not functional and some were eight metres high. In the mid-1970s the political situation deteriorated and from 1980 to 85 she tried to restore the decaying work but she was not satisfied with the result. From 1985 to 2008 she decided to preserve the ephemeral objects by encasing them in metal made by Hungarian craftsmen. The work celebrates the traditional Romanian harvest.

Rebecca Horn (b. 1944), *Finger Gloves*, 1972.

Prosthetic fingers that allow feeling and grasping. Horn is a German artist obsessed with drawing when young as it avoided speaking at a time when Germans were hated in Europe. She rejected the commodification of art in the late 1960s and focused on the human body. She attended Hamburg's Academy of the Arts but spent much of her early twenties confined to hospitals and sanatoria after suffering from severe lung poisoning after working unprotected with fibreglass as a 20-year-old artist in Barcelona. While she was in hospital both her parents died and she became totally isolated when she started to produce these body prosthetics.

Rebecca Horn (b. 1944), *Unicorn*, 1970–72 was the first piece she made after she left the sanatorium. After she left she was still very weak and could not see friends and family. This work was made for Miss Parker whose stately, upright way of walking caught her eye. "... **nothing could stop her trance-like journey: in competition with every tree and cloud in sight**". Horn described her as "**very bourgeois ... 21 years-old and ready to marry. She is spending her money on new bedroom furniture.**" The work reflects bandages and prosthetics she saw in the sanatorium and is designed to leave the breasts exposed. It is reminiscent of the costume in Frida Karlo's *Broken Column*. The name *Unicorn* is a play on Horn's name and the unicorn's mythological associations with purity and gracefulness. Horn elevates the woman's body into a symbolic representation of stereotypical womanly virtues.

Meschac Gaba (b. 1961), *The Museum of Contemporary African Art 1997–2002*. Gaba was born in Benin, a French speaking country to the west of Nigeria. There are two installations shown here of the twelve available. The first nearest us is *Architecture Room* and the one at the back is *Draft Room*. Gaba said, "**My museum doesn't exist. It's only a question ... What I do is react to an African situation which is linked to a Eurocentric problem.**" He added, "**I don't come from traditional Africa but from modern Africa.**" For Gaba, food embodies the imbalances between production and consumption in the world. The second theme is money and its role in the art world. Finally, Gaba does not want to be constrained in this way and combines traditional African art with European art. The "... **people who gave me that education didn't give us everything. They shut me up inside tradition.**"

Charles Atlas (b. 1949), *Joints 4tet Ensemble*, 1971–2010. collaboration between three radically experimental North American artists, crossing the fields of film (Charles Atlas), dance (Merce Cunningham) and music (John Cage). Close-ups of choreographer Cunningham's joints – ankles, knees, elbows and wrists – shot in 1971 are shown across ten screens, accompanied by an ambient soundtrack by Cage. Cage's ambient sound track found fruition in his 4'33".