



Ramón Esono Ebalé, *El sueño CMYK de una prostituta*, 2010

About the Artists

AI WEIWEI

(b. 1957, Beijing, China; lives and works in Beijing)

Ai Weiwei is an artist and a social activist. His work encompasses diverse fields including fine arts, curating, architecture, and social criticism. In collaboration with Herzog & de Meuron, Ai Weiwei designed the 2012 Serpentine Pavilion in London. He won the Václav Havel Prize for Creative Dissent from the Human Rights Foundation in 2012. He has had major solo exhibitions at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; the Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, Taiwan; Tate Modern, London; Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany; and Three Shadows Photography Art Center, Beijing, among others.

RAMÓN ESONO EBALÉ

(b. 1977, Nkoa-Nen Yebekuan (Mikomeseng-Kie Ntem), Equatorial Guinea; lives and works in Asunción, Paraguay)

Ramón Esono Ebalé, alias Jamón y Queso, is a self-taught artist who combines his graphic novels with his work as a graphic designer. He has won international awards from the Angoulême International Comic Festival, France, and the Cocco Bulles International Festival of Cartoons and Comics, Abidjan, Ivory Coast. His work has been shown at the Spanish Cultural Center, Malabo and Bata; International Festival of Comics of Algeria; ARCO Contemporary Art Fair, Madrid; Cervantes Institute, Madrid; The Studio Museum of Harlem, New York; and Galería Planta Alta, Asunción, Paraguay. He is the artist and director of the Spanish/Equatorial Guinea animated documentary *One Day I Saw 10,000 Elephants*, in collaboration with Pere Ortín and Alex Guimerá.

BARBAD GOLSHIRI

(b. 1982, Tehran, Iran; lives and works in Tehran)

Barbad Golshiri's practice is prolific and wide-ranging, extending from photography and sculpture to installation, performance, film and video, translation and critical writing. He studied painting at The School of Art and Architecture, Azad University, Tehran. His art has been shown at the Göteborgs Konstmuseum; Saatchi Gallery, London; Chelsea Art Museum, New York; Jeu de Paume, Paris; Barbican Center, London; Museum für Neue Kunst, Freiburg; Apexart, New York; Thomas Erben Gallery, New York; Aaran Gallery, Tehran; Access Artist Run Center, Vancouver; Azad Art Gallery, Tehran; and in international biennials. Golshiri is also translator and editor of the dramatic works of Samuel Beckett into Persian.

KHALED JARRAR

(b. 1976, Jenin; lives and works in Ramallah, Palestine)

Khaled Jarrar works with photography, video, and performance. He completed his education in Interior Design at the Palestine Polytechnic University, 1996, and the International Academy of Art Palestine, BA, Visual Arts, 2011. His exhibition, *At the Checkpoint*, 2011, was placed in full view of the Israeli soldiers at Howarra & Qalandia checkpoint. Recent solo exhibitions include Galerie Guy Bartschi, Geneva; Galerie Polaris, Paris; Al-Mahatta Gallery, Ramallah; Al-Mahatta Gallery, Ramallah; International Academy of Art Palestine, Ramallah. In addition, Jarrar is an award-winning filmmaker whose recent documentary, *The Infiltrators* (2012), won several accolades at the 9th Dubai International Film Festival.

ZANELE MUHOLI

(b. 1972, Umlazi, South Africa; lives and works in South Africa)

Zanele Muholi won the 2013 Index on Censorship - Freedom of Expression art award in London. Her *Faces and Phases* series is included in the South African Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale and is installed at Galerie Verbeeck Van Dyck, Antwerp as part of the official cultural programme of the World Out Games. Muholi was the 2009 Ida Ely Rubin Artist-in-Residence at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In Africa she was a community relations officer for the Forum for the Empowerment of Women (FEW), a black lesbian organization, and a photographer and reporter for *Behind the Mask*, an online magazine on lesbian and gay issues. Solo exhibitions include those at Michael Stevens and Market Photo Workshop, Johannesburg.

JOSÉ TOIRAC and MEIRA MARRERO

(b. 1966, Guantánamo, Cuba) and (b. 1969, Havana, Cuba)

José Toirac and Meira Marrero have collaborated on joint projects since 1994, conducting intense archival and art historical research in a range of media including painting, drawing, sculpture, installation and photography. Toirac received his degree from Havana's Instituto de Arte Superior in 1990; Meira Marrero, a curator and art critic, was awarded Cuba's National Curator Prize in 1998, 2002 and 2008. Their work has been exhibited at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal; the Arizona State University Art Museum; Art in General, New York; Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh; Factoría Compostela, Santiago de Compostela; and the Cultural Centers Banco do Brasil.

Foreword + Acknowledgements

Margaret Miller, Director, USF Institute for Research in Art

Foreword

In an era characterized by increasing globalization and widespread use of digital media, the USF Contemporary Art Museum is continually examining the role of the visual arts in contemporary society.

The exhibition *SubRosa: The Language of Resistance* was inspired by my travels to Cuba and China, and the realization that many of the artists I met in those places were offering critiques of their social and political realities *sub rosa*, or covertly.

Noel Smith provided curatorial leadership in researching and building this idea into an exhibition that includes artists from China, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Iran, Palestine and South Africa. The exhibition offers viewers an opportunity to assess the efficacy, as well as the diversity, of political art and raises questions about the power of art and artists, in conjunction with their audiences, to transform our sense of the world.

One of the greatest challenges for the artist-activist is choosing a medium as a vehicle for his or her message with the intention of effecting change. Politically inspired artworks often have a first life in the public sphere and a second life in the comparatively elite environment of a museum or gallery.

Ai Weiwei and his collaborators Xu Bing and Zeng Xiaojun designed and published an encyclopedic volume of influential artworks of the 20th century and distributed it among young artists to counter government censorship. Khaled Jarrar creates sculptures by chipping pieces from the West Bank barrier separating Israel from Palestine, and his documentary videos are transmitted through mass media to a broad and diverse audience. Ramón Esono Ebalé uses the graphic novel format to protest conditions in Equatorial Guinea. Barbad Golshiri's machine outputs prints that critique the use of religion to promote political ideologies; audience members can take a print with them in exchange for a contribution to Reporters Without Borders. Zanele Muholi chooses the photographic portrait as a means of revealing the taboo subject of lesbianism in South Africa. José Toirac and Meira Marrero collaborate to create portrait paintings that were censored in Havana because they dared to raise the topic of a post-Castro government.

The objects in this exhibition are critical representations of current political and cultural realities but also symbols of the resilience of the human spirit in the face of oppression and humiliation. It is my hope that *SubRosa* will provoke interdisciplinary dialogue at USF on a range of issues including the dissemination and display of images of political protest, the aesthetics of activist art, and the role of museums in presenting exhibitions of socially engaged art.



Barbad Golshiri, *The Distribution of the Sacred System*, 2010

Acknowledgements

The organization of any exhibition and related educational programs is the product of a talented team of collaborators. I thank Noel Smith for her considered selection of artists. Alexa Favata, Deputy Director, coordinated the entire project; Shannon Annis arranged the loans; Tony Palms designed the exhibition with Noel Smith; and Vincent Kral coordinated the installation. Don Fuller assisted with video installations and designed the invitation, brochure and promotional materials; Megan Voeller edited texts for the brochure; Amy Allison coordinated travel of artists and scholars and organized events associated with the opening; Mitzi Gordon planned the reception; and Randall West managed all fiscal matters. Additional staff of students and interns include: Chris Elmore, Ian Foe, Eric Jonas, Ville Mehtonen and Andrea Tamborello.

Taylor Pilote and Sarah Howard, with Graphicstudio, are recognized and thanked for their efforts to reconstruct Barbad Golshiri's sculpture *Distribution of the Sacred System*.

I thank Bárbara Cruz, Professor in the USF College of Education, and interns Sarah Travis and Valeria González, who worked with Noel Smith to create InsideART: *SubRosa*, the on-line program for secondary students that combines the study of social studies with contemporary art.

I acknowledge and thank the colloquium participants: Tutu Alicante, Executive Director of EG Justice, and Esra Akin-Kivanc, Assistant Professor of Islamic Art, USF School of Art and Art History.

Sussan Babaie, Lecturer in Asian Art at The Courtauld Institute of Art, has provided an insightful essay on activist art in the Middle East. Other scholars consulting on the selection of artists include Corina Matamoros, Curator of Contemporary Cuban Art at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Havana and Chad Elias, Lecturer in the Department of Art History at the University of York, United Kingdom.

The artists and lenders to the exhibition are recognized and thanked for their generosity: the Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Studio of Ai Weiwei; IFC Films; Thomas Erben Gallery, New York; Aaran Gallery, Tehran; Ayyam Gallery, Beirut, Damascus, Dubai, London and Jeddah; Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York; and Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson, 21c Museum, Louisville, Kentucky.



Above: José Toirac and Meira Marrero, *Cuba 1869-2006*, 2006 (detail)

CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM | Institute for Research in Art

University of South Florida
4202 East Fowler Avenue, CAM101
Tampa, FL 33620-7360 USA

(813) 974-2849 | www.ira.usf.edu | caminfo@arts.usf.edu



SubRosa: The Language of Resistance is made possible in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and supported by the USF Institute on Black Life and EG Justice. The Institute for Research in Art is recognized by the State of Florida as a major cultural institution and receives funding through the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts. The USF Contemporary Art Museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.



SubRosa

The Language of Resistance

August 26 – December 7, 2013
USF Contemporary Art Museum

