

PRESS RELEASE

Sand !Hū Sand

Garth Erasmus, Ruth May, Nesindano Xhoes Namise, Peter Thiessen and guests
Kunsthau Hamburg
20 August – 2 October 2022

Opening

19 August 2022, 7 pm

Speakers: Katja Schroeder (Director, Kunsthau Hamburg),

Carsten Brosda (Senator for Culture and Media of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg)

8:30 pm – Performance by Nesindano Xhoes Namise

Press preview

19 August 2022, 11 am

Registration: Elena Weickmann | presse@kunsthauhamburg.de | 040/335803

We are of the soil and to the soil we must return and we must return to the soil what is the soil's. This is our connection that is more than metaphor and so the soil forms our ecology and meaning in the world. In this sense we are captured as a footprint in a common landscape. Landscape itself is a footprint of collective histories, shared histories. Landscape becomes an intimate part of our psyche and contains all the paradox of human experience. There is conflict and peace. There is tension and ease. There is expansion and decay. There is growth and erosion. There is construction and destruction. There is constancy and flow. The rough and the smooth. There is foreboding shadow and brilliant light.

- Garth Erasmus, *The Decolonial Imperatives of the Landscape*

Sand is the framework of the world, the foundation of modern technologies, the seemingly inexhaustible, invisible yet fundamental material of built habitats and digital communication devices. In order to extract it, beaches are transported away, seabeds sucked out, gigantic pits are excavated, mountains piled up. Wars are fought on and over sand, villages sink into the ground, islands are inundated by the sea. In concrete, asphalt, glass, telescopes, fibre optic cables, chips, mobile phones and satellites, sand is below and above us, is an extension of our bodies. At the same time, however, sand manifests countless stories of dispossession, forced resettlement, persistent colonial power relations, oppression and exploitation; sand also holds manifold spiritual meaning as the resting place of bones and as the setting for "ethnological studies" of looted bones.

!Hū means *sand, earth, land* in the Khoekhoegowab language spoken in Namibia and South Africa. If "ai" is added (*!Hūai*) it means *The Face of the Earth*.

The exhibition ***Sand !Hū Sand*** at Kunsthau Hamburg spans music and the visual and performing arts. The presentation has its origins in the music and theatre project "Das Haus der Herabfallenden Knochen/The House of Falling Bones" about Namibian folktales in which colonial history has left its traces (Kampnagel / Kammerspiele München / Theaterspektakel Zürich, 2018). It builds on the experiences of and encounters between the artist, musician and activist Garth Erasmus (Cape Town), the artist and musician Ruth May (Hamburg), the performance/spoken word artist Nesindano Xhoes Namise (Windhoek) and the musician and lyricist Peter Thiessen (Hamburg).

In the jointly designed space in the exhibition hall at Kunsthaus Hamburg, the four actors explore stories with and around sand. In the process, they examine their relationship to the landscape, earth, planet and people as well as the colonial history of Germany, Namibia and South Africa. Numerous conversations and discussions on joint journeys have informed their artistic work. The material sand as the starting point for these discussions has led the artists to the different regions of Namibia, to the sandy stretches of the Cape Flats in Cape Town, to the sand pits of northern Germany and to Alpine quarries. Together, yet each with their different background of experience, they went on a search for traces there.

Performances, workshops, talks and concerts will be held within the setting of an expansive installation, but during the exhibition this is also the setting where rehearsals, productions or improvisations are to take place. The artistic works, for the most part created for the exhibition, consist of ephemeral materials such as fabric and sand, the sounds of dry ice and conversations on journeys. They revolve around different approaches to the world; fragile borderlines between man / nature / culture / technology; the transitions between the animate / inanimate / present / ghostly. Starting from the material sand, visual, acoustic and performative means intertwine to tell stories from different perspectives and in hybrid formats.

The exhibition will be accompanied by several events in which, in addition to the main initiators, other international guests (including the Gardening Projects, Aio Da Go and Sisters of the Soil, members of the bands Khoi Khonnexion, Kreidler and Kante) are invited and will participate, allowing the audience to experience the exhibition space at the Kunsthaus Hamburg selectively and collectively.

Curator: Katja Schroeder

EVENTS

Sand Stories

Saturday, 10/09/22, 3 pm

Performance & Talk:

What sand has to say (Garth Erasmus, Ruth May, Nesindano Xhoes Namise, Peter Thiessen)

Sisters of the Soil (Oppieyaart)

Aio Da Go (We are grateful) (Community Gardening Projects in Cape Town and Ovitoto)

Music & Talk

Monday, 12/09/22, 6 pm

Garth Erasmus (Khoi Khonnexion), Stefan Schneider (Mapstation), Peter Thiessen (Kante)

Mineral Performances

Thursday, 15/09/22, 6 pm

Tsarab mâs (Dust's Standing) by Nesindano Xhoes Namise

Null (Mars & Moon) Dry ice performance by Peter Thiessen,

with Glen Arendse, Garth Erasmus, Ruth May

Digging Deeper by Nik Duric

The Cosmology of the Bow

Saturday, 17/09/22, 2 pm

Bow-making Workshop (Garth Erasmus)

Lecture: Musical bow of the Khoisan (Glen Arendse)

Bow Ensemble Improvisation

Sand Concert

Saturday, 24/09/22, 8 pm

Khoi Khonnexion (Cape Town)

Kuru (Windhoek/Berlin/Hamburg) – Special Guest: Renu Hossain

Kreidler (Dusseldorf/Berlin)

Songs from The House of Falling Bones (Members of Khoi Khonnexion & Kante, Nik Duric, Ruth May, Nesindano Xhoes Namise)

Guided tours

Sunday, 21/08/22, 3 pm

Thursday, 01/09/22 + 22/09/22, 6 pm

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