



Theatre of the World,

a collaborative exhibition between the Museum of Old and New Art and the
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

curator : Jean-Hubert Martin

assistant curators : Nicole Durling, Olivier Varenne and Tijs Visser

at la maison rouge from October 19th to January 12th 2014

press preview Friday October 18th 2013 9.30am – 11am

preview Friday October 18th 2013 6pm – 9pm



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For its tenth showing of a private collection, la maison rouge invites David Walsh, founder of the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Tasmania and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG). Curator Jean-Hubert Martin has delved into David Walsh's own collection, as well as that of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG), to show together apparently "heterogeneous" objects and question museal conventions.

Titled *Theatre of the World* in reference to Giulio Camillo's Theatre of Memory for François I, the exhibition sets out to suggest alternatives to the prevailing historical discourse. It transforms the viewer into an instrument for actively investigating and understanding the world.

Theatre of the World shows non-Western works (with a gallery reserved for an outstanding collection of Pacific barkcloths) cabinet of curiosities pieces, antiquities, ancient art and works by contemporary artists including Marina Abramovic, Berlinde de Bruyckere, Jake & Dinos Chapman, Wim Delvoye, Emily, Damien Hirst, Zilvinas Kempinas, Iannis Kounellis, Juul Kraijer, Sidney Nolan, Claude Rutault, Markus Schinwald, Jason Shulman, Felice Varini, Sandra Vásquez de la Horra, Erwin Wurm and Ah Xian.

The exhibition strikes relations, whether corresponding or contrasting, between the form or meaning of these works of different origins. Unexpected resemblances are brought to light through themes such as eyes, body, double or war. An entire gallery is given over to an outstanding collection of Polynesian and Melanesian tapa cloths from the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery collection.

Scenography by Tijs Visser, Adrian Spinks (MONA)

Lighting Design, MEGS Lighting, Adam Meredith

Conversation between Jean-Hubert Martin and David Walsh (Extract)

(L'officiel de l'Art, Sept-Oct. 2012)

Jean-Hubert Martin : From what I gathered you had three phases in your collection activity: Greek numismatic, archeology and primitivism, contemporary art. Is that right? Did you start collecting stamps when you were a kid? Can you imagine switching to another field of collection in the future? Given your strong darwinistic point of view, do you consider that some cultures/civilizations are stronger and more valuable than others? I mean dissociating the political, economical and military power that can generate cultural achievements from the culture and art that can emanate from non-imperialist and non-conqueror societies, i.e. for instance cultural minorities.

David Walsh : I'm a collector and always have been. As a kid I collected stamps, books, Australian coins but not friends. They avoided me, perhaps because of my boring hobbies. On a trip to South Africa I saw a lovely Nigerian Palace door from the beginning of the nineteenth century which I acquired with a bit of cash that I couldn't export. I became a tribal art collector mainly because South Africa lets you export art but not money. Greek coins and other Greek artefacts, and Egyptian came soon after, but I would have collected anything I came across that I found interesting. Contemporary art came a few years later, though I had been exposed a bit as a kid. My sister did an arts degree. It maybe that I started collecting contemporary art to decorate an industrial apartment, and then the art started generating art spaces because I had so much art.(...)

Getting back to your initial question I didn't deal with my collecting direction. My motive for collecting is no more clear to me than the motive of Rutault or the Egyptian for making art, but collecting, in general, at least for me, has a compulsive component. A few years ago you took me to the art fair in Maastricht, and I was rather besotted with some of the lesser old masters for sale there. And on a recent trip to Vienna I fell in love with medieval altarpieces.

Not only do I think I might switch fields, but I can't contemplate not switching fields. I guess I learn by collecting. A major theme that has run throughout my life is science, I don't think I'll last much longer without collecting scientific instruments. (...)

JHM : (...) As for the question of what drives me as a curator, the answer is actually very close to yours as a collector. I make exhibitions mainly to learn about the items I gather, and I learn by manipulating them and also by associating them in non conventional ways. This is valid as well for monographic exhibitions (artists I don't understand, but whose work is troubling or teasing me) as for group shows. I have a well known colleague who is a specialist of Max Ernst and he has spent his life organizing exhibitions of his works in all major museums of the world. I could not do that. As a young curator I had the chance to make an exhibition of Malevitch in 1977. It was thrilling, at that time when his work had not been totally rediscovered yet. I got taken aback, because many journalists asked me to speak instead of the artist. I promised myself never to become a specialist. A french artist Robert Filliou (this sort of conceptual philosopher artist), a close friend of mine, wrote a book whose title I love: *Teaching and Learning as performing Arts*.

DW : Something similar to the New Agers and their enlightened "The Art of Life". Pity the contents are not do enlightening. I feel that academic reality, at least in the last half of the twentieth century, has been burdened by a view of reality as narrative: post-modernism in literature and art, and instrumentalism in science. While individual objects: works or conceptualizations can be visually wonderful we are failing to add to the body of accrued knowledge while we engage with a philosophy that denies that what we see (experience) is real. So, as another of the many virtues of *Theatre of the World*, I see an exhibition that asks the viewer to "look and learn" rather than wade through a molasses of mediocre pseudo-academic self-indulgence as a way finder in the search for a useful personal philosophy. When we are trying to understand the world as individuals we should make tentative, unlikely guesses and change our mind on slight evidence or whim. When we are investigating the body of received wisdom, scientific and moral law for example, we should apply much more stringent criteria, because what is known has been tested and retested. *Theatre of the World* engages personally, it puts us in a position to consider what we see as individuals. Academic exhibitions, from your Max Ernst colleague's domain, lose themselves because something new has to be propounded by the curator and correctly interpreted by the viewer. They have thrived in a philosophical environment that presented no knowledge as real, all ideas as subject to modification. So as post-modernism, and it's narrative based analogues in other intellectual endeavours, collapses "expertise" that thrives on re-weaving narratives will also collapse, or at least so I hope.

David Walsh

David Walsh is an Australian art collector. In 1999 he opened the Moorilla Museum of Antiquities on a peninsula near Hobart in Tasmania. The museum closed for renovation in 2006, reopening in 2011 as the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA).

Australia's largest privately funded museum with 6,000 square metres of exhibition space, MONA extends over three subterranean levels, built into the cliff. It shows David Walsh's heteroclite collection, including Greek coins, archaeological artefacts, primitivism and contemporary art. Works from different cultures, eras and origins come together in an anachronistic hanging. The collection forms a modern cabinet of curiosities that defies any habitual methodology.

<http://www.mona.net.au/>

Jean-Hubert Martin

An internationally respected curator and former director of the MNAM in Paris and of the Kunst Palace in Düsseldorf, Jean-Hubert Martin is the curator of *Theatre of the World* which shows part of the David Walsh collection.

An expert on European and American artistic circles and a connoisseur of contemporary art on all five continents, Jean-Hubert Martin has repeatedly demonstrated his role in spearheading new international art, and his interest for as yet little-known artists. He was, for example, an early proponent of the work of artists such as Boltanski, Buren, Delvoye, Messager, Sarkis and Schutte. Jean-Hubert Martin was one of the first curators to show art from around the world in *Magiciens de la Terre* in 1989. In doing so he sparked a passionate - and ongoing - debate on the meaning and value afforded to non-Western art. As the curator of the Lyons Biennale in 2000, he introduced anthropological elements which extended the term "exoticism" to the Western world: no longer the sole reference, the Western point of view is balanced by the vision which the rest of the world has of the West. For Hubert, globalisation is not synonymous with uniformisation but an acknowledgement of cultural diversity.

With *Artempo* at the Palazzo Fortuny in Venice, in 2007, Jean-Hubert Martin sidestepped technical constraints and chronological conventions to create associations and interplay between the works on view.

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG)

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery is one of the most diverse and unusual museums in Australia, showcasing treasures of art, history and science. TMAG has its origins in Australia's oldest scientific society, the Royal Society of Tasmania which was established in 1843. Located on Hobart's historic waterfront, close to the city's centre, TMAG's site includes the most significant collection of heritage buildings anywhere in Australia. Following a spectacular redevelopment in 2012, TMAG's new permanent collection galleries provoke wonder, curiosity and inspiration. Exhibitions explore Tasmania's rich and complex history, its proud Indigenous culture, rich artistic heritage, unique wilderness, unusual animals, and centuries of Antarctic and Pacific exploration.

Selected artists :

Vernon Ah Kee, Dieter Appelt, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Samuel Beckett, Hans Bellmer, Arthur Boyd, Daniel Boyd, Berlinda De Bruyckere, Polly Borland, Pat Brassington, Günter Brus, Luis Buñuel, Tom Chamberlain, John Coplans, Salvador Dali, Wim Delvoye, Julia de Ville, Lee Dongwook, Robert Dowling, Max Ernst, Erró, Jan Fabre, Sam Francis, Ruth Frost, Tony Garifalakis, Alberto Giacometti, Robert Gober, Gregory Green, Patrick Guns, Neil Haddon, Patrick Hall, Brent Harris, Ivor Hele, Ricardo Hernández, Thomas Hirschhorn, Damien Hirst, Paa Joe, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, John Kelly, Zilvinas Kempinas, Killoffer, Taiyo Kimura, Juul Kraijer, Oleg Kulik, Allan Mansell, Gordon Matta-Clark, Alasdair McLuckie, Boris Mikhailov, Manolo Millares, Nell, Hermann Nitsch, David Noonan, Sidney Nolan, Peter Peri, Stieg Persson, Francis Picabia, Adam Putnam, Julie Rrap, Claude Rutault, Andres Serrano, Petroc Sesti, Markus Schinwald, Jason Shulman, Roman Signer, Ingrid Smolle, George Tjapaltjari, Albert Tucker, Felice Varini, Sandra Vasquez de la Horra, Ruth Waller, Andy Warhol, Judy Watson, William Wegman, Brett Whiteley, Sue Williams, Erwin Wurm, Ah Xian...

Exhibition catalogue :

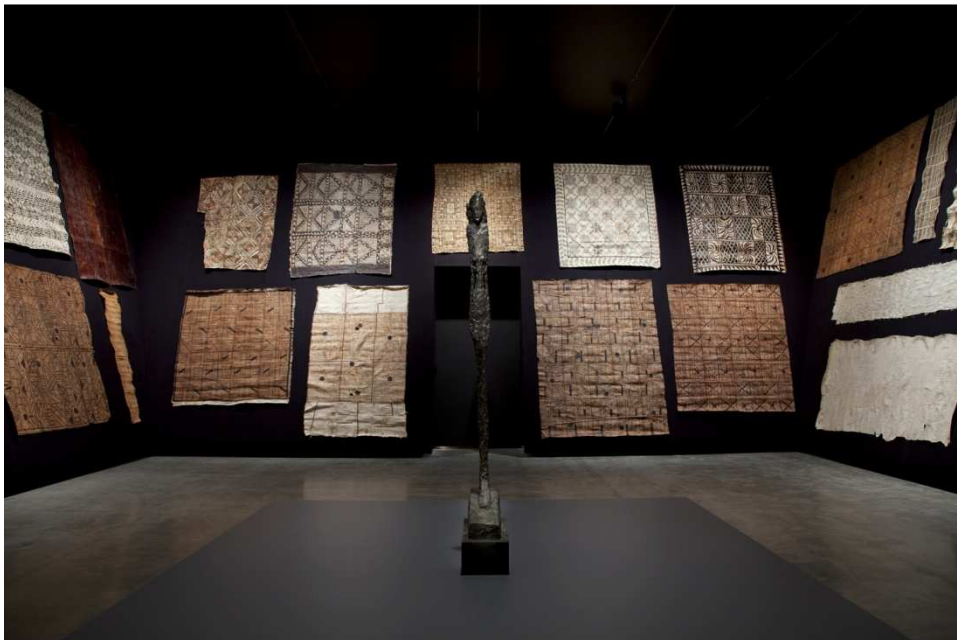
In French and English with colour illustrations, this is the tenth catalogue in the *Privées* collection, jointly published by la maison rouge and Fage Éditions.

With contributions from Jean-Hubert Martin, Thierry Dufrene, Tijs Visser and Kirsten Brett. p., 24 €

selected works



Left: Andres Serrano, *The Morgue (Blood Transfusion Resulting In AIDS)*, 1992, top right: various artworks and artefacts from the MONA and TMAG collections, foreground: Jannis Kounellis, *'Untitled'*, 2012
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Alberto Giacometti, *Grande figure (Femme Leoni)*, 1947
© Succession Alberto Giacometti (Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti, Paris ADAGP, Paris) 2013
TMAG / MONA, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, photo : Rémi Chauvin



Left: Oleg Kulik, *Family of the Future*, 9, 1997, centre: Berlinde De Bruyckere, *P XIII*, 2008, right: Sidney Nolan, *Centaur and Angel*, 1952 © MONA/Rémi Chauvin Image Courtesy MONA Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia



Left: Sidney Nolan, *Colonial Head—Kelly Gang*, 1943–46, centre: Afghan war rug, right: Wim Delvoye, *Untitled* (Osama), 2002–3, wallpaper: Robert Gober, *Hanging Man/Sleeping Man*, 1989 © MONA/Rémi Chauvin Image Courtesy MONA Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

Front cover:

Zilvinas Kempinas, *O (Between Fans)*, 2006, television: William Wegman, *Dog Duet*, 1970–78 from William Wegman: Selected Works 1970–78, on the television: Hahapo or Fafapo (headrest), Fiji or Tonga, 19th century – early 20th century. Back wall: Albert Tucker, *Gamblers*, 1965, left wall: Dama dama (fallow deer) antlers, right wall: Cervus elaphus (red deer) antlers © MONA/Rémi Chauvin Image Courtesy MONA Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia © TMAG

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