

## PRESS RELEASE

### *Crossing Bodies – Postcolonial Visions*

curated by Routes Agency, Cura of Contemporary Arts

**December 1st – 15th, 2012**

Opening: Saturday, December 1st, 4:00 pm

**Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico “Luigi Pigorini”**

Piazza Guglielmo Marconi, n°14 Roma

Free Admission

*Crossing Bodies – Postcolonial Visions* is an event curated by Routes Agency, which speaks of contemporary migration and identity from a post-colonial point of view, with a critical approach to the stereotyped and rhetorical visions that many times characterize the study and representation of these subjects.

*Crossing Bodies – Postcolonial Visions* is one of the selected projects of the call for proposals *Idee Migranti (Migrant Ideas)*, in the occasion of the ethnographic exhibition *[S]oggetti migranti* held at the *Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico “Luigi Pigorini”* of Rome.

The exhibition *[S]oggetti migranti* is the closing event of the project *READ-ME, Réseau européen des Associations de Diasporas & Musées d’Ethnographie* created as a collaboration between the *Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico “Luigi Pigorini”*, the *Musée royal de l’Afrique Centrale* in Brussels, the *Musée du Quai Branly* in Paris, and the *Museum für Völkerkunde* in Vienna.

*[S]oggetti migranti* focuses on the migration undergone by the objects preserved in ethnographic museums today, concentrating particularly on the various stories these carry, with the intent of bringing the objects of the museum back to life. The call for projects *Idee Migranti (Migrant Ideas)* was created in order to promote the dialogue between the museum and the public, to allow a confrontation with those who work on projects inherent to the themes of migration on the national territory.

The foundations of *Crossing Bodies – Postcolonial visions* lie in the consciousness that all identities (including our own, Italian) are radically migrant, due to History and the representations that it has created. Being migrant means living in a boundary between here and everywhere else, before and after, inside and outside, between stories and memories.

*Crossing Bodies – Postcolonial visions* intends to "re-open" narrations of the past, of History and of memory, in order to let other points of view emerge, points of view that are many times obscured; to bring

back, face and become responsible of a past that has been repressed and *removed*, a past that is the foundation of our culture today.

The project schedule is composed of a variety of artistic participations: a photographic exhibition by artist **Mauricio Lupini** titled *Observing Ethnography*; a contemporary dance performance by the independent dance company **MK**; a relational artwork by artist and curator **Massimiliano Di Franca** that involves the artist **Jimmie Durham** and the anthropologist **Tarek Elhaik**; a video screening of works of both Italian and international artists such as: **Zineb Sedira**, **Isaac Julien**, **Marco Baroncelli** and **Enzo Orlandi**, **Adelita Husni-Bey**, **Laurent Grasso**, **Lidia Abdul**; a talk with the artist and anthropologist **Fiamma Montezemolo**, and scholars **Iain Chambers** and **Lidia Curti**, during which Fiamma Montezemolo's video *Traces* will be screened for the first time in Italy.

**The project is done in partnership with MeLa – European Museums in an Age of Migrations.**

## **EVENT SCHEDULE**

### **Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup> – 4:00 pm – Opening**

#### **Talk and Italian Preview of the video *Traces* (2012) by Fiamma Montezemolo**

The speakers that will intervene during the talk are Fiamma Montezemolo, Italian artist and anthropologist, who lives and teaches in San Francisco, currently lecturing at UC Berkeley (Art Practice); Iain Chambers, anthropologist and sociologist, founder of the *Center of Postcolonial Studies* of the “L’Orientale” University of Naples; Lidia Curti, honorary professor of the “L’Orientale” University of Naples; Viviana Gravano, historian and curator of contemporary art, and Giulia Grechi, visual anthropologist and communication sociologist of Routes Agency.

In the video *Traces*, made in 2012, Fiamma Montezemolo returns to a recurrent theme in her works: the frontier between Mexico and the United States.

#### **Opening of the Exhibition *Observing Ethnography* by Mauricio Lupini**

Mauricio Lupini is a Venezuelan artist whose work questions the modernist visions regarding themes such as identity, colonial visions, and ethnography in the museum space. *Observing Ethnography* is composed of a series of photographs taken between 1996 and 1997 at the Pigorini Museum, which dissect the museum's display and show an exoticized vision that was still linked to a fixed idea of the western ethnographic museum, not yet influenced by new post-colonial theories.

The exhibition *Observing Ethnography* by Mauricio Lupini can be visited at the Pigorini Museum from the 1<sup>st</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> of December, 2012.

#### ***Spazi vocali (Vocal Spaces)*, a relational art work by Massimiliano Di Franca**

Massimiliano Di Franca is a curator and artist who focuses on projects related to public art and relational aesthetics. *Spazi vocali (Vocal Spaces)*, created specifically for the Pigorini Museum, foresees the participation of three people of worldwide fame: the artist **Jimmie Durham**, the researcher **Susanne Franco**, and the anthropologist **Tarek Elhaik**. Their contribution consists of an audio track and an image linked to their thoughts on the concepts of migration and diaspora. The public, after having heard the three contributions, can record their own comments on the subject. The scholar's reflections and the public's feedback will *carve* a new text and *write* a new audio track.

It will be possible to participate in the work *Spazi vocali (Vocal Spaces)* during the following dates: December 1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup> – 5:00 pm**

**Contemporary dance performance by the autonomous group MK**

The group MK will create a site-specific performance inside the Pigorini Museum, understood both as a physical space and a museographic and conceptual container. The performance will be linked to their production *Colonial Dances*, choreographic narrations that speak of the present position of the western tourist who confirms colonial models, from an ironic and critical point of view. *Colonial Dances* works on the construction of a realistic space that potentially creates episodes that investigate the concepts of encounter and distance between bodies, based on the assumption that what is distant “is always near to something else”.

During the event, it will be possible to visit the photographic exhibition *Observing Ethnography* by Mauricio Lupini and to participate in the relational artwork *Spazi vocali (Vocal Spaces)* by Massimiliano Di Franca.

**Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup> – 4:30 pm**

**Video Screening of Italian and international artists.**

The video screening will be introduced by Paola Bommarito, Rossana Macaluso and Laura Estrada Prada of Routes Agency.

The videos that will be screened are the following:

***Zineb Sedira, MiddleSea, 2008, 16'***

*MiddleSea* is a sort of dreamlike almost mythical crossing of the ship that connects the coasts of northern Africa and France. This crossing is seen through the eyes of a traveler, it is not clear where he is going or where he is returning. The video's soundtrack is composed by Mikhail Karikis, based on the radio sounds and interference during navigation.

***Isaac Julien, Western Union: Small Boats, 2007, 18'***

*Western Union: Small Boats* tells the stories of the “illegals” who cross that portion of the sea that connects the north of Africa and Sicily and its islands, amongst which Lampedusa. A story of bodies that constantly brush against each other, that mix and become contaminated by both shores of a sea which has become a border.

***Marco Baroncelli and Enzo Orlandi, Parole crociate (Cross-Words), 2001, 15'***

In *Parole crociate (Cross-Words)* the artists have drawn images from several Italian archives that show Italians that migrated abroad during the beginning of the XX Century and until the 60's and later in the 80's. These images are associated to sentences resulting from interviews and encounters with foreign immigrants in Italy today, that could have easily been said by the same people portrayed in the images from the archives.

***Adelita Husni-Bey, Gestures of Labour, 2009, 5'39''***

*Gestures of Labour* is soundless video created in 2009 in the “Kamping” of Jakarta showing large urban areas occupied by new migrants that make part of small informal cooperatives, which face primary needs such as labor, housing and education.

***Laurent Grasso, The Baterías Project, The Silent Movie, 2010, 25'***

*The Silent Movie*, produced for Manifesta 9 held in Southern Spain, was shot in Cartagena, a city that overlooks the Mediterranean as if it were a great fortress. Such fortress represents the European fear of invasions from the sea. The video evokes the silence of illegality, creating henceforth a sense of suspension and waiting.

**Lida Abdul, *What We Have Overlooked*, 2011, 3'44''**

The video, produced for dOCUMENTA13, examines the relationship between the individual and the abstract symbolisms of a nationalist ideology enclosed in it. A man holds a flag while he moves in a lake, until he is completely submerged in the water. Through a play of proximity and distance, it creates a metaphor of the feelings of pride and worry that burden the Afghani people.

**The screening schedule may be subject to change.**

During the event, it will be possible to visit the photographic exhibition *Observing Ethnography* by Mauricio Lupini and to participate in the relational artwork *Spazi vocali (Vocal Spaces)* by Massimiliano Di Franca.

#### **Information**

Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini"  
Piazza G. Marconi, 14 - 00144 Roma EUR  
tel. 0654952269 - fax 0654952310  
[www.pigorini.beniculturali.it](http://www.pigorini.beniculturali.it)

#### **Routes Agency Contacts**

[www.routesagency.com](http://www.routesagency.com)  
[info@routesagency.com](mailto:info@routesagency.com)

Head of Communication

Paola Bommarito  
[paola.bommarito@routesagency.com](mailto:paola.bommarito@routesagency.com)  
+39 3289486485