



Kevin Sampson, *Saint John*, Mixed Media, 34" x 18" x 9", 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ARTIFICIAL AFRIKA

Curated by Vernon Reid and C. Daniel Dawson
Curatorial Advisors: Brooke Davis Anderson and Danny Simmons

January 27 – March 17, 2006

Please Join Us for the Opening Reception on Friday, January 27, 6-9PM

Gigantic ArtSpace [GAS] proudly presents ***Artificial Afrika***, an exhibition that considers contemporary artistic appropriations of African visual culture through mythology, religious traditions, musical forms, and other culturally-specific practices. The exhibition's scholarly and artistic contributions deconstruct myths and inventions to challenge the validity of images that continue to define the idea of Africa, an idea often rife with thoughts of disease, poverty, and corruption. It is through this lens that the exhibition will consider a variety of cultural and artistic forms that not only represent ideas of the past, but more importantly, contribute to the evolving social transformation of the present.

Two of the main techniques used by the artists in the exhibit are irony and humor. For me this irony is the technique of using the tools and materials of the "Western World" to tell the story of the "African World," two supposedly separate technologies, even universes, that have, in the telling of an accurate history, really cross-fertilized and enriched each other for centuries. The humor that is used is borne out of the international African experience. It is a humor that can be quietly reflective, subtly revealing and ravagingly accusatory.
– C. Daniel Dawson

Participating artists include: Richard Admiral, Willie Birch, Guillermo Brown, Sonya Clark, Renee Cox, Stephanie Dinkins, Ze Frank, Victor Gama, Michael Harris, Satch Hoyt, Jack Kirby, William Parker, Patricia Payne, Vernon Reid, Alison Saar, Kevin Sampson, Eneida Sanches, Dread Scott, Accra Shepp, Yinka Shonibare, Xaviera Simmons, and Charles Stone.

A full-color, 32-page catalog with contributions by C. Daniel Dawson, Vernon Reid, Robert Farris Thompson, and Greg Tate will also be available.

Panel discussion: *Art-Official Africa*. Thursday, February 9, 7pm at the **American Folk Art Museum**. Moderated by C. Daniel Dawson, with panelists Brooke Davis Anderson, Sonya Clark and Dread Scott. \$10, \$5 museum members, seniors and students. Tickets are available through the American Folk Art Museum: (212) 265-1040, ext. 160.

