

PRESS INFORMATION

New lecture series in honour of late Okwui Enwezor premieres at Cluster Conference

*In recognition of his outstanding achievements in the field of African and Global Arts, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence and the Iwalewahaus at the University of Bayreuth decided to honour the late Nigerian art curator, historian and writer Okwui Enwezor by establishing an annual lecture carrying his name. The inaugural lecture of the series will be held on 15.07.2021 by Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu, within the framework of the International Cluster Conference "Africa*n Relations: Modalities Reflected".*

Bayreuth, 30.06.2021. For almost three decades, Okwui Enwezor was one of the most influential figures in the field of contemporary art and culture with globally recognized achievements as a curator, critic, publisher, writer, poet, historian, activist, and public speaker. Awarded with numerous prizes, Enwezor gained public recognition as the artistic director of a number of global exhibitions. His curatorial practice and academic work challenged, transformed, and significantly shaped the global contemporary art landscape and continues to do so after his passing in 2019.

In order to celebrate his achievements and work for free thought and action, the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence has teamed up with Iwalewahaus at the University of Bayreuth to establish a new lecture series. The Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture will be held annually to honour the late Nigerian art curator. The first event will take place on 15 July 2021 during the International Cluster Conference Africa*n Relations: Modalities Reflected. The lecture titled The Postcolonial Museum will be delivered by Chika Okeke-Agulu, Director of Graduate Studies and professor of art history at the Department of Art & Archaeology at Princeton University (Princeton, NJ, USA).

New lecture format

The annual Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture entails a new event concept. Dr. Ulf Vierke, director of Iwalewahaus, explains: "It is crucial that the format of lecture is not conceived in a traditional sense, but rather as an invitation to think together". Each year, an artist or scholar, either an individual or a collective, will be invited to present fresh thoughts on matters of art, curation and politics in a lecture hosted by the Africa Multiple Cluster at one of its five locations (Bayreuth; Lagos, Nigeria; Eldoret, Kenya; Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso; Makhanda, South Africa). This year, the lecture will be part of the International Cluster Conference and held in a virtual format.

Okwui Enwezor (1963-2019): a life in the service of African and Global Arts
Born in Calabar in Nigeria in 1963, Okwui Enwezor earned a bachelor of arts degree in political science at New Jersey City University (USA). He gained visibility in the wider public as artistic director of the second edition of the Johannesburg Biennale in 1997 and went on to shape the field of African and Global Arts working in Seville, Spain and as adjunct curator at the International Center for Photography, New York. Further positions included Dean of Academic Affairs at the San Francisco Art Institute and visiting professorships in art history at University of Pittsburgh, Columbia University in New York, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the University of Umea, Sweden. He was one

Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence

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of only two personalities to curate both the Venice Biennale (2005) and the Documenta in Kassel (2002). In 2011, he was appointed director of the Haus der Kunst in Munich, where he passed away on 15 March 2019.

In February 2019, a few weeks before his premature demise, the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies had decided to confer an honorary doctorate to Okwui Enwezor. The envisioned date of the conferral, 24 May 2019, turned out to be the day of his funeral in his Nigerian hometown in Anambra State in south-eastern Nigeria. "Since the honorary doctorate did not come to pass, it is only befitting for the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence to honour this trailblazer for African Arts by dedicating a lecture series to his memory," Prof. Dr. Rüdiger Seesemann, Dean of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, points out.



Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture, 15.07.2021, 6-7.30 pm (CEST):

"The Postcolonial Museum"

Welcome: Prof. Dr. Rüdiger Seesemann, Dean, Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence
Introduction: Dr. Ulf Vierke, Director Iwalewahaus
Lecture: Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu, Princeton University

Picture Credit: Okwui Enwezor (1963-2019) - Photo: © Chika O. Okeke-Agulu

For further questions or contact to the interview partners please contact

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