

Press release / 6 June 2024

A new work for the Hamburger Kunsthalle by Georges Adéagbo

31 May to 29 September 2024

The Hamburger Kunsthalle is presenting for the first time a work by the important African artist Georges Adéagbo (b. 1942), one that has been created especially for the museum. In the installation, postcards, newspaper clippings, posters, books, clothing, handwritten material, sculptures and paintings from Benin are tied in with stories from Adéagbo's home country. At the same time, his work, entitled *»L'œuvre d'art d'Aby Warburg et les œuvres d'art des artistes«...!* (*»The Art of Aby Warburg and the Art of the Artists«...!*) (2024) pays tribute to the art historian Aby Warburg. The artist thus sends his ideas off on a cross-cultural journey, spinning a narrative thread that links the history of the Hamburger Kunsthalle with portraits painted in Benin of former Kunsthalle directors including Alfred Lichtwark and Uwe M. Schneede. Johann Heinrich Füssli's painting *The Avenged* (1806/07) from the museum's collection takes on an entirely new dimension in a copy by the artist Benoît Adanoumè, who did illustrations for Adéagbo in Benin, demonstrating that the process of decolonisation and the fight against racism are far from over.

In his assemblages – whether in his studio in Benin, in hotel rooms or in art exhibitions – Georges Adéagbo links diverse systems of signs in a manner reminiscent of Aby Warburg. The result is a *»poetry of analogies«* (Paul Valéry).

Georges Adéagbo (b. 1942 in Cotonou, Benin) lives in Hamburg and Cotonou and has exhibited works all over the world. He participated in documenta 11 (2002) as well as the biennials in Dakar (1996), Johannesburg (1997), Sydney (1998), São Paulo (1998), Venice (1999 and 2009), Lyon (2000) and Shanghai (2016). On the occasion of his 80th birthday in 2022, the Ernst Barlach Haus in Hamburg dedicated an extensive solo exhibition to his work.

Made possible by the Stiftung Hamburger Kunstsammlungen, which acquired the installation on behalf of the Hamburger Kunsthalle.

The artist was invited by Dr. Corinne Diserens and Dr. Brigitte Kölle.
Research Assistant: Dr. Stephan Köhler

Cultural partner:

NDRkultur

Media partner:

Hamburger Abendblatt



Georges Adéagbo (b. 1942)
Preparation of the work in Benin,
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Photo: Stephan Köhler

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