

Press Release about the Exhibition

‘À l’école de Ernest Barlach, le sculpteur’
GEORGES ADÉAGBO
80th-birthday homage
30 October 2022 – 19 February 2023



Georges Adéagbo at the LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, Münster, in 2021
Photo: LWL-MKuK / Hanna Neander

To mark his 80th birthday, the Ernst Barlach Haus in Hamburg devotes an extensive solo exhibition to the Benin-born installation artist Georges Adéagbo. Born in 1942, Adéagbo has travelled for decades between Cotonou (Benin), Hamburg and exhibition venues throughout the world. The European art world began to take notice of him in the 1990s, and today he ranks among the most significant of African artists.

He participated in Documenta11 (2002) and the biennials in Dakar (1996), Johannesburg (1997), Sidney (1998), São Paulo (1998), Venice (1999 and 2009), Lyon (2000) and Shanghai (2016). Numerous solo and group exhibitions in important institutions during the past three decades have brought his name to the forefront in Europe, the US, Africa, Australia and Japan. Works by Adéagbo have entered the collections of the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, the Bundeskunst-sammlung, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Moderna Museet Stockholm and the Toyota Municipal Museum of Art.

Georges Adéagbo’s works are spatial assemblages that extend over walls and floors. They juxtapose craft objects with everyday items from different cultures, objets trouvés, flea-market finds, rugs, clothing, records, posters, newspapers books and the artist’s own philosophical texts. Forgoing Western systems of order and hierarchies of value, Adéagbo weaves a complex web of relationships between things, images and ideas. Their non-linear, ramifying co-existence prompts an associative viewing that can bring about numerous interconnections.

These arrangements are both personal and political. Always related to their respective exhibition venue, they locate the artist’s own history within socio-political issues and events of global relevance.



Georges Adéagbo: *Les religions et l'histoire des religions avec la fête des religions*, 2021, exhibition *Insatiable? Imagining Society without Growth*, LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, Münster © Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022, photo: LWL-MKuk/Hanna Neander

Adéagbo counters a knowledge of worldwide conflicts with a utopia of global fellowship reflected in his own boundary-breaking life and work. His intercultural transfer enables the transformation of values, meaning and ideas.

In recent years the work of the expressionist Ernst Barlach (1870–1938) has left diverse traces in Adéagbo's work – in the form of picture books, postcards or painted and sculptural 'translations' commissioned from artisans in Benin. To mark his 80th birthday we have invited Georges Adéagbo to deepen this dialogue and to actively incorporate the collection of the Ernst Barlach Haus into an installation. And so Adéagbo's exhibition trail will include some of Barlach's major sculptural works, such as the *Blind Beggar*, *Russian Lovers*, *Astrologer*, *Moses* or *The Reunion*, along with around thirty selected drawings. Adéagbo takes up Barlach's existential themes of war and violence, power and powerlessness, compassion and spirituality under the heading 'In the School of Ernest Barlach, the Sculptor', weaving them into his own perspectives and breaking new ground for the museum.

The exhibition has been organised in cooperation with Stephan Köhler, Kulturforum Süd-Nord e.V., Hamburg–Cotonou.



Preparations for the Hamburg exhibition in Cotonou

Left: Commissioned by Georges Adéagbo, the sign painter Benoit Adanhomè transfers Ernst Barlach's *Russian Lovers* onto canvas, 27 July 2022

Right: Installation by Georges Adéagbo, 29 July 2022

© Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022, photos: Stephan Köhler



Banner for the exhibition *Georges Adéagbo. 'À l'école de Ernest Barlach, le sculpteur'* at the Ernst Barlach Haus Hamburg
 © Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022, photo: Marc Autenrieth

PRESS CONFERENCE

Friday 28 October 2022, 11 a.m.

Press material and printable image files available at
www.barlach-haus.de/presse

CATALOGUE

Edited by Karsten Müller, with photographs by Andreas Weiss and texts by Petra Lange-Berndt, Stephan Köhler and Karsten Müller.

80 pages with 40 colour plates, large format 36 x 27 cm, trilingual (German / English / French), softcover, Verlag Kettler, Dortmund

Publication date / catalogue presentation: 13.12.2022

EVENTS

An Evening with Georges Adéagbo 1.11.2022, 6 p.m.

Torchlight Tours for children 2.12.2022 / 20.1.2023, 6 p.m.

Family Day 11.12. 2022, 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Catalogue Presentation 13.12.2022, 6 p.m.

The Story of Ern(e)st Barlach 31.1.2023, 6 p.m.



Left: Georges Adéagbo: *La révolution et les révolutions*, 2016, 11th Shanghai Biennial, photo: Alessandro Wang

Right: Georges Adéagbo: *La naissance de Stockholm ...!*, 2014, Moderna Museet Stockholm, photo: Albin Dahlström
 © Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022



Georges Adéagbo: *La lumière qui fait le bonheur ...*, 2021, KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin
 © Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022, photo: Jens Ziehe

GENERAL INFORMATION

Opened in 1962, the Ernst Barlach Haus is the oldest private museum in northern Germany. It stands in the Jenischpark, Hamburg's finest landscape garden. Charmingly embedded in these extensive grounds on the bank of the River Elbe, the modern, light-filled museum architecture houses a unique collection. Numerous major works by the expressionist sculptor, draughtsman and writer Ernst Barlach (1870–1938) can be seen here, including thirty of Barlach's splendid wooden sculptures. Along with varying presentations of the collection and unusual exhibitions of classical modernist and contemporary art, the Ernst Barlach Haus offers a stimulating programme of events: guided tours, readings, artist talks, summer festivals and the popular concert series Klang & form, which celebrates its 25th anniversary in the 2022/23 season.

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday to Sunday (Monday if holiday) 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

ADMISSION

€7, concessions €5, children and young people under 18 free

GUIDED TOURS

Free public tours, Sunday noon. For private tours, please call +49 (0)40-82 24 21 16 or lott@barlach-haus.de

CONTACT

Annette Nino, +49 (0)40-82 60 85, nino@barlach-haus.de



Left: The Ernst Barlach Haus in Hamburg's Jenischpark
 Photo: Andreas Weiss

Right: Interior view with the wooden sculptures *The Avenger* (1922) and *The Flame* (1934), by Ernst Barlach



ERNST BARLACH HAUS

PRESS IMAGES

»À l'école de Ernest Barlach, le sculpteur«

GEORGES ADÉAGBO

80th-birthday homage

October 30, 2022 – February 19, 2023



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Georges Adéagbo in the exhibition »Exhibition Nimmersatt? Imagining Society without Growth«, LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, Münster 2021

© Georg Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2021

Photo: LWL-MKuK / Hanna Neander



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Georges Adéagbo: Les religions et l'histoire des religions avec la fête des religions, 2021, Exhibition view »Exhibition Nimmersatt? Imagining Society without Growth«, LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, Münster

© Georg Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2021

Photo: LWL-MKuK / Hanna Neander



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Preparation of the Hamburg exhibition in Cotonou: Commissioned by Georges Adéagbo, the sign painter Benoît Adanhomè transfers Ernst Barlach's "Russian Lovers" onto canvas, 27. Juli 2022

© Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Stephan Köhler



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Preparation of the Hamburg exhibition in Cotonou:: Installation of Georges Adéagbo, 29. Juli 2022

© Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Stephan Köhler



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Banner commissioned by Georges Adéagbo for his exhibition at the Ernst Barlach Haus, Hamburg 2022

© Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Marc Autenrieth



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Georges Adéagbo: »La révolution et les révolutions«, 2016

Exhibition view 11. Shanghai Biennale

© Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Alessandro Wang



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Georges Adéagbo: »La naissance de Stockholm ...!«, 2014

Moderna Museet Stockholm

© Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Albin Dahlström / Moderna Museet



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Georges Adéagbo: »La lumière qui fait le bonheur ...«, 2021

KINDL – Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Berlin

© Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Jens Ziehe



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Georges Adéagbo: Inverted Space, 2015, Altona balcony, Hamburg, Courtesy Gallery Barbara Wien, Berlin

© Georges Adéagbo / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Paula Markert

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