

Subject: Re: more information
Date: Friday, December 14, 2001 11:20 PM
From: John Peffer <JPEFFER@email.smith.edu>
To: <director@proje4l.org>

Vasif,

If it would be possible to speak on the 10th or 11th that would be better for me. Either date is fine.

I have a text against torture in South African art that is probably going to be published in African Arts next year. I've included it as an attachment below. It is a bit heavy but a good talk I think and I'd be willing to give it at your space.

But I also like your idea about commenting on the state of "Africa" (and especially "South Africa") and representation in current international shows and texts. So you can either have:

1. the torture talk, an earlier draft of which is enclosed, or
2. a discussion of Johannesburg, Dakar, and Venice Biennales, The Museum for African Art, The Short Century, and Andre Magnin's and Sidney Kasfir's general presentations of Contemporary African art. The second talk option would give a critical overview of how African identities and African objects are currently being positioned in the international art (sales) arena, with a mindful eye to how the international art arena is being positioned in local art scene contexts in Africa.. What can be said to be held in common by these three seemingly contradictory strategies in the politics and mainstreaming of African representations: exotic essentialisms (the always-inscrutable other), strategic essentialisms ("I am other"), and the current tendency to privilege the diaspora as itself an object ("there is no other and the best example of this are international travellers and refugees")?

If that is the kind of talk you'd prefer I'd be pleased to work up an original abstract for you.

Sincerely,
JOHN PEFFER