

Tim Rollins and K.O.S.: Workshop

April 18—June 15, 2019

536 West 22nd Street, New York

@lehmannmaupin / #studiokos

Opening reception: Thursday, April 18, 6 to 8 PM

Pubic Talk: Ian Berry in conversation with K.O.S.; Saturday, May 3, 6 to 8 PM



I see the promised land (after the Rev. Dr. M. L. King, Jr.), 2008, matte acrylic and book pages on canvas, 108 x 72 inches, 274.3 x 182.9 cm. Courtesy the artists and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul.

New York, March 21, 2019—**Lehmann Maupin** is pleased to announce ***Tim Rollins and K.O.S.: Workshop***. The exhibition marks the first solo survey show for the art collective since Rollins' passing in December 2017, presented with the late artist's estate. Curated by Ian Berry, who organized the group's first major traveling retrospective and monograph, *Tim Rollins and K.O.S.: A History*, in 2009 at Skidmore College's Tang Teaching Museum, *Tim Rollins and K.O.S.: Workshop* will feature many of the collective's most significant series that deal with issues of race, identity, history, and politics, spanning from 1987 to 2016. Continuing the legacy of the group, the exhibition also marks the launch of **Studio K.O.S.**, which will host Saturday workshops at the gallery throughout the exhibition (participants will be coordinated with local schools). As the collective's second iteration, Studio K.O.S. will continue arts education and youth mentorship spearheaded by several of the foundational members, including **Angel Abreu, Jorge Abreu, Robert Branch, and Rick Savinon**. The gallery will host an opening reception with many of the group members in attendance on Thursday, April 18,

at 536 West 22nd Street, from 6 to 8 PM., followed by a public talk on Friday, May 3, from 6 to 8 PM, with Ian Berry and members of K.O.S.

Rollins began his career teaching art for special education students in a South Bronx public middle school. In 1984, he launched the Art Knowledge Workshop, which acted as an after-school

program for his most dedicated students who named themselves Kids of Survival (K.O.S.). At the forefront of social practice and intersectional dialogue, together Rollins and K.O.S. developed a unique method of art making that involved painting and drawing on the pages of books or sheet music adhered in a grid to the surface of a canvas. Their influential work builds on diverse source materials, including literary classics by William Shakespeare and Mark Twain, foundational writings by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, as well as musical compositions by Felix Mendelssohn and Richard Strauss, and X-Men comics.

Tim Rollins and K.O.S.: Workshop will include works from the series *Amerika* (1984-2012); *Red Badge* (1985-1995); *By Any Means Necessary* (1985-2008); *The Whiteness of the Whale* (1986-2016); *The Temptation of St. Anthony* (1987-1994); *Pinocchio* (1991); *X-Men* (1991-1997), *I See the Promised Land* (1999-2012), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2005-2017); *Blossom and The Sick Rose* (2009); *On the Origin of Species* (2009-2016); and *Invisible Man* (2002-2017). Each of these series can be viewed through the broad themes of violence and repair that mark both personal and collective histories. This exhibition will highlight the breadth and lasting impact of the oeuvre of Tim Rollins and K.O.S., which encompasses minimal and conceptual modes of representation through language, literature, and history. For Rollins and the K.O.S. members who will now continue his legacy, their practice is concerned with opening a space for the voices of those who have been overlooked or silenced. In a voice that resonates profoundly today, Rollins is quoted saying:

To dare to make history when you are young, when you are a minority, when you are working, or nonworking class, when you are voiceless in society, takes courage. Where we came from, just surviving is 'making history.' So many others, in the same situations, have not survived, physically, psychologically, spiritually, or socially. We were making our own history. We weren't going to accept history as something given to us.

This body of work together with the inauguration of Studio K.O.S. is presented during a time when both the art world and larger society grapple with the unresolved history of slavery and colonialism, its impact on the political and social structures we live with today, and the role of art to give a platform to those marginalized by these systems. Ultimately, the exhibition is not a rebuke or endorsement of any one ideology, but a mirror of society and human folly, while fulfilling Tim Rollins and K.O.S.'s mandate for the true restorative potential of art, achieved by centering diverse points of view on the culture that we inherited, share, and create every day.

About the Artists

Tim Rollins (b. 1955, Pittsfield, ME; d. 2017 New York, NY) was a teacher, artist, and activist. Rollins studied fine art at the University of Maine and earned a BFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York. Solo exhibitions of the group's work have been organized at the Portland Museum of Art, ME (2016); Savannah College of Art and Design Museum, GA (2014); Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel (2012); Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bergamo, Italy (2011);

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The Frye Art Museum, Seattle (2010); Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia (2010); Museum of Contemporary Art, Atlanta (2006); The Contemporary Art Museum of Virginia, Virginia Beach, VA (2005); the Santa Monica Museum of Art, Los Angeles (2002); and the Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, IA (2001). Select group exhibitions featuring the work of Rollins and K.O.S. include *Black and Blue*, Pulitzer Foundation, St. Louis, MO (2017); *Fast Forward: Painting from the 1980s*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2017); *Nightfall*, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva, Switzerland (2016-2017); *Beyond the Veil: Works from the Permanent Collection*, Bronx Museum, New York (2016); *An Inclusive World*, Queens Museum, New York (2015); *Drawing Biennial 2015*, Drawing Room, London (2015); *Body Language*, The Studio Museum, Harlem, New York (2013); *This Will Have Been: Art, Love & Politics in the 1980s*, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2012); *Wide Open School*, Hayward Gallery, London (2012); and the Whitney Biennial, New York (2006). The group's work is held in numerous international public and private collections, including Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Tate Modern, London; Smithsonian Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C.; the Art Institute of Chicago; Aspen Art Museum, CO; Berkeley Art Museum, University of California Berkeley; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York; Brooklyn Museum, New York; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Dia Center for the Arts, New York; The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia; and Dallas Museum of Art, TX.

In 1997, the documentary *Kids of Survival: The Art and Life of Tim Rollins and K.O.S.* was widely received at the London Film Festival; Cinéma du Réel, France; and the Hamptons International Film Festival, New York.

Angel Abreu (b. 1974, Bronx, NY) is an artist, writer, and educator who studied philosophy, art history, and comparative literature at the University of Pennsylvania and New York University. Abreu joined Tim Rollins and K.O.S. in 1986 and has been a steadfast member working on all major works, projects, and exhibitions since joining. In addition to his work with K.O.S., he has developed his own painting practice based on a study of American pragmatism as well as American literature. Abreu is also on faculty in both the BFA Fine Arts and MFA Art Practice departments of the School of Visual Arts in New York.

Jorge Abreu (b.1979, Bronx, NY) studied English at Bard College. He is a writer, poet, and podcast producer who joined Tim Rollins and K.O.S at 12. He is currently working on a poetry collection based on growing up in the golden era of hip hop.

Robert Branch (b. 1977, Bronx, NY) joined Tim Rollins and K.O.S. at 16. He holds a BFA from The Cooper Union and has a masters in education, instructional technology and media from Teachers College, Columbia University. Branch's interests are in education, collaborative art, documentary video production, and experimental video. He also works as a videographer and is the director of video productions for the Office of Public Affairs and Communications at Columbia University. Branch has over 20 years of video production experience and directed the award-winning short

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documentary for Columbia University, *Manhattanville: A New York Nexus Sheffield Farms, The Milk Industry, and The Public Good*.

Nelson Ricardo Savinon (b. 1971, New York, NY) studied fine arts at the School of Visual Arts in New York. He joined Tim Rollins and K.O.S. in 1985. Savinon is an interior designer/art installer for various fashion and private clients such as Levi's, Ferragamo, Zegna, Nike, Bottega Veneta, Serendipity 3, and Stance, among others. He also works as a videographer, painter, and sculptor, and in fine art photography. In addition, Savinon has had several curatorial projects, including the 2018 exhibition *Dialogues: Tim Rollins & K.O.S. and Glenn Ligon*, co-curated with Antonio Sergio and dedicated to Tim Rollins at the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York.

About the Curator

Ian Berry is Dayton Director of The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery and Professor of Liberal Arts at Skidmore College. He has organized over 100 museum exhibitions for the Tang and museums across the United States. Recent projects include the group shows *Rose Ocean: Living with Duchamp* and *3-D Doings: The Imagist Object in Chicago Art*, the solo exhibition *Njideka Akunyili Crosby: Predecessors*, a two-year performance-based residency and installation with Kamau Amu Patton, and the survey *Dona Nelson: Stand Alone Paintings*. During his tenure, the Tang's encyclopedic collection has expanded greatly with significant additions in photography and contemporary art. Berry is a leader in the field of college and university museums, and is a regular speaker on interdisciplinary, inventive curatorial practice and teaching in museums. He is well known for his active publication record, including monographs on artists Terry Adkins, Nancy Grossman, Corita Kent, Nicholas Krushenick, Tim Rollins and K.O.S., Alma Thomas, and Fred Tomaselli. He is a board member of the Museum Association of New York, has chaired the Visual Arts Panel of the New York State Council on the Arts, and serves on several advisory groups for regional and national arts organizations.

About Lehmann Maupin

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996. The gallery represents a diverse range of American artists, as well as artists and estates from across Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, and the Middle East. It has been instrumental in introducing numerous artists from around the world in their first New York exhibitions. Known for championing artists who create groundbreaking and challenging forms of visual expression, the gallery prioritizes personal investigations and individual narratives. Lehmann Maupin prizes the distinct conceptual approaches that its artists offer on the essential matters that shape international culture today, including gender, class, religion, history, politics, and globalism. In 2013, with two locations in New York, significant interest in its artists abroad, and growing opportunities in new markets, Lehmann Maupin opened an additional location in Hong Kong, followed by Seoul in 2017. For more information on the gallery and its artists, visit www.lehmannmaupin.com.

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

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Jennifer Steinkamp, *Impeach*, Through April 13, 536 West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

Angel Otero, *Milagros*, Through April 20, 501 West 24th Street, NEW YORK

Erwin Wurm, March 25—May 11, Pedder Building, HONG KONG

Nicholas Hlobo, March 21—May 18, 74-18, Yulgok-ro 3-gil, SEOUL

Heidi Bucher, April 29—June 15, 501 West 24th Street, NEW YORK

For more information on Tim Rollins and K.O.S. or other Lehmann Maupin artists, please contact Kathryn McKinney at +1 212 255 2923 or kathryn@lehmannmaupin.com.

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