

Nolan Oswald Dennis



Biography

Nolan Oswald Dennis (b. 1988, Zambia) is a para-disciplinary artist from Johannesburg, South Africa. Their practice explores what they call 'a black consciousness of space': the material and metaphysical conditions of decolonization.

Dennis' work questions the politics of space (and time) through a system-specific, rather than site-specific approach. They are concerned with the hidden structures that pre-determine the limits of our social and political imagination. Through a language of diagrams, drawings and models they explore a hidden landscape of systematic and structural conditions that organise our political sub-terrain. This sub-space is framed by systems which transverse multiple realms (technical, spiritual economic, psychological, etc) and therefore Dennis' work can be seen as an attempt to stitch these, sometime opposed, sometimes complimentary, systems together. To read technological systems alongside spiritual systems, to combine political fictions with science fiction.

Dennis' is the 2016 winner of the FNB Arts Prize, and has exhibited in various solo and group shows, including the 9th Berlin Biennale (2016), the Young Congo Biennale (2019), Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), Architekturmuseum der TU München, Palais de Tokyo (Paris) and ARoS Aarhus (Denmark). They were the 2020 artist in residence at NTUCCA (Singapore) and the 2021 artist in residence at the Delfina Foundation (London).

Dennis' work featured at the Liverpool Biennale with their installation, 'no conciliation is possible (working diagram)' in 2023, as well as Kunsthalle Bern and Van Abbe Museum. Dennis also participated in the 12th edition of the Seoul Mediacity Biennale as well as the 'back wall project' at the Kunsthalle Basel.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2022** *no conciliation is possible (working diagram)*, CCA Berlin, Germany
- 2021** *Conditions*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2019** *Options*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2016** *Furthermore*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

Group Exhibitions

- 2023** *Biennial SescVideobrasil, a recurse for three oceans*, Brasil
- 2023** *_THIS TOO IS A MAP*, Seoul Mediacity Biennale, Korea
- 2023** *_From the void came gifts of the cosmos*, 35th Ljubljana Biennale of Graphic Arts, Slovenia
- 2023** *_uMoya: The Sacred Return of Lost Things*, Liverpool Biennale, UK
- 2023** *Umhlaba uyalingana*, *Kunsthalle Bern*, Switzerland
- 2023** *Positions #7: Everything worthwhile is done with other people*, Van Abbe Museum, Netherlands
- 2022** *Living with Ghosts*, *Pace Gallery*, London, UK
- 2022** *Magical Hackerism*, *SAVVY Contemporary*, Berlin, Germany
- 2022** *_LIAF (Loftoten International Art Festival)*, Norway
- 2022** *_Matter of Art Biennale*, Prague
- 2022** *20 Artists: Global Positioning*, New York, USA
- 2021** *Ubuntu, A Lucid Dream*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
- 2021** *Silence calling from one continent to another*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town
- 2021** *Deeping Listening for Longing*, Boras Art Biennale, Sweden
- 2021** *University of African Futures*, Institut Francois, Lieu Unique, Nantes, France
- 2021** *This is Not Africa, Unlearn What You Have Learned*, ARoS Aarhus, Denmark
- 2019** *_Young Congo Biennale*
- 2019** *I've grown roses in this garden of mine*, Goodman Gallery London, UK
- 2018** *A Better Version of You*, Goethe Institute, Beijing, China
- 2018** *African Mobilities*, TUM, Munich, Germany
- 2018** *In the Open or in Stealth*, MACBA, Barcelona, Spain
- 2018** *Tell Freedom. 15 South African artists*, Kunsthalle kAde, Amersfoort, Netherlands
- 2017** *Deep Memory*, Kalmar Konsthall, Kalmar, Sweden
- 2017** *In No Time*, MIT, Cambridge, USA
- 2017** *89plus: Americans 2017*, LUMA Westbau, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2017** *the silences between*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2016** *NTUSAVE*, Berlin Biennale

2016 *In Context: Where We Are*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2016 *New Revolutions: Goodman Gallery at 50*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2016 *New Revolutions: Goodman Gallery at 50*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2015 *Young, Gifted and Black*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2015 *Edge of Silence*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2015 *Post African Futures*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2015 *Other Peoples Memories*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2015 *Poetics of Relation*, LIYH, Geneva, Switzerland
2015 *Lumieres d'Afrique*, Group Show, Theatre National de Chaillot, Paris, France
2015 *Activate/Captivate*, museum show, Wits Art Museum, Johannesburg
2014 *Working Title*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2014 *The Brother Burns the Bullion*, site intervention, Johannesburg
2013 *Ussher Fort*., *Chale Wote*, Art Festival, Ga-Mashie, Accra, Ghana
2013 *Transitions*, mural installation, Market Photo Workshop Gallery, Johannesburg, SA and Rencontres d'Arles, Arles, France
2013 *Memory + Speculation*, Chale Wote community art festival, Accra, Ghana
2013 *LAND*, Mural installation, Cape Town City Hall, GIPCA
2012 *SOCIAL LANDSCAPE PROJECT: Transition and Show Us Our Land*., Market Photo Workshop, Johannesburg, South Africa
2012 *SOCIAL LANDSCAPE PROJECT: Transition and Show Us Our Land*, Les Rencontres d'Arles, France
2011 *Golden Eggs*, Cape Town Spier Public Art Festival

Teaching, Lectureships and Workshop

2017 Presentation Paper – Under Super Vision, symposium, University of British Columbia,
2017 Presentation Paper – Environments and the Ecological self, conference, University of Rochester
2017 Published Paper – Solomon Mahlangu House' – Centre des Laboratoires Associés pour la Recherche en Architecture (CLARA) No. 4
2017 Published Paper -'Anxious South' – University of Rochester Journal for Visual Culture (InVisible Culture)
2016 Lecturer, Architecture department, University of Witwatersrand
2015 Artist talk – 'Space and Transformation' lecture series, School of Architecture, University of Cape Town
2015 NTU artist talk, Swaartnet, Post African Futures

Professional Appointments and Consultation

Awards and Merits

2023 *The Judy Prize at Biennial SescVideobrasil*
2016 _FNB Art prize, Johannesburg
2011 _Gauteng Institute of Architects Award, Johannesburg

Academic Record and Residencies

2020 NTUCCA, Singapore
2017 MeetFactory, Studio Residency, Prague, Czech Republic
2016 Atelier Mondial, Studio Residency Basel, Switzerland
2016 Berlin Biennale (with NTU)
2016 MIT Department of Architecture Graduate Fellowship
2015 Research Artist, Wits Art Museum collection, Johannesburg
2014 VANSa open office residency, Johannesburg

Commissions

*2023*_Kunsthalle Basel_backwall project