

David Lewis

Artist Talk: Todd Gray in Conversation with Mabel O. Wilson

May 18th, 2019

2pm

Todd Gray

Cartesian Gris Gris

Through June 16, 2019

Cartesian Gris Gris, Todd Gray's gallery debut, includes a sizable, and unavoidable, architectural intervention: Gray collaborated with architect Peter Tolkin to design a curved wall, which bisects the space, replicating the exterior wall of the artist's studio in Akwidaa, Ghana. Taking this dramatic wall as a jumping-off point, Todd Gray and acclaimed cultural historian/architectural designer Mable O. Wilson will engage in a dialogue about architecture and architectural history in their relationship to post-colonial ideas and theory – examining these ideas in relationship to each of their recent bodies of inquiry.

Todd Gray (b.1954, Los Angeles) received both his BFA and MFA from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts). His work is included in the 2019 Whitney Biennial, curated by Jane Panetta and Rujeko Hockley. Recent solo and group exhibitions include The Studio Museum, Harlem, New York; Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, Chicago; Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco; Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs; National Portrait Gallery, London; and Grand Palais, Paris, among others. Performance works have been presented at institutions such as the Roy and Edna Disney CalArts Theater (REDCAT), Los Angeles; and The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. His work is represented in numerous museum collections including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Minneapolis Museum of Art, MN; and Santa Barbara Museum of Art, CA, among others. Gray was the recipient of a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in 2018 and a Rockefeller Foundation Grant in 2016, among others. He lives and works in Los Angeles, CA and Akwidaa, Ghana.

Mabel O. Wilson has authored *Begin with the Past: Building the National Museum of African American History and Culture* (2016) and *Negro Building: African Americans in the World of Fairs and Museums* (2012). With her practice Studio &, she is a collaborator in the architectural team currently developing designs for the Memorial to Enslaved African American Laborers at the University of Virginia. Her work has been shown at the Venice Architecture Biennale, Architekturmuseum der TU München, Storefront for Art and Architecture, Art Institute of Chicago, Istanbul Design Biennale, Wexner Center for the Arts, SF Camerworks and the Smithsonian's Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum's Triennial. She's a founding member of Who Builds Your Architecture? (WBAYA?) a collective that advocates for fair labor practices on building sites worldwide. She is a professor of Architecture and African American and Africa Diaspora Studies at Columbia University.