

Framing the Ephemeral

Author(s): Allyson Purpura

Source: *African Arts*, Autumn, 2009, Vol. 42, No. 3, Ephemeral Arts 1 (Autumn, 2009), pp. 11-15

Published by: UCLA James S. Coleman African Studies Center

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20627005>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>

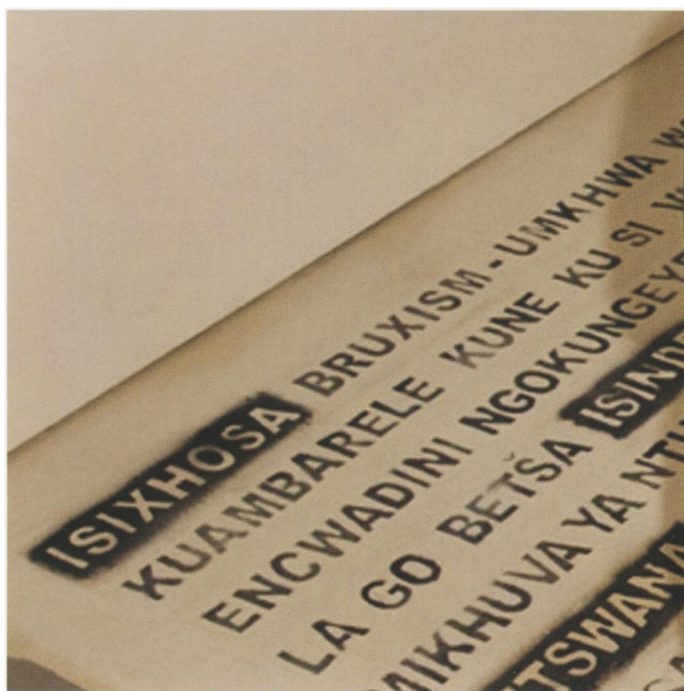


JSTOR

UCLA James S. Coleman African Studies Center is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *African Arts*

Framing the Ephemeral

Allyson Purpura



1 Detail, William Boshoff, *Writing in the Sand* (2005). Installation photograph, National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution.
PHOTO: MICHAEL BRIGGS

The articles assembled here and in a forthcoming issue of *African Arts* (vol. 43, no. 1, Spring 2010) explore the theme of ephemeral art, and are based on two panels co-organized by Christine Mullen Kreamer and myself for the Triennial meeting of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association in March 2007. Applying equally to studio and tradition-based practices, ephemeral art refers to works whose materials are chosen by the artist or maker for their inherently unstable characteristics, or which are created with the intention of having a finite “life.” As such, they cannot be collected as objects per se, and their configurations may change or degrade while on view—or in view, as the case may be. Indeed, their impermanence is a constitutive part of their aesthetic, and of the ways in which they come to act on the world. Ephemerality defies conventional expectations around the preservation, display, and commodification of art and confounds the museum’s mission to preserve works in perpetuity. Even the language conservators use to describe unstable materials—“inherent vice”—imputes a kind of immoral agency to ephemeral things.

Our fascination with the topic was initially inspired by South African artist Willem Boshoff at the National Museum of African Art in 2005, while assisting him with his installation *Writing in the Sand*.¹ Made entirely of fine, dry, black and white sand, the work comprised words stenciled directly onto the gallery floor (Fig. 1). The inherent instability of the sand—and of the installation itself—was a constitutive part of the work’s commentary on the vulnerability and disenfranchisement of “unscripted” languages in southern Africa. However, the installation was scheduled to be on view for eight months; while its gradual degradation was, for the artist, unproblematic, even desirable, museum staff was challenged with preserving the piece’s visual integrity for the duration of the exhibition (see Hornbeck this issue). In the end, the installation’s life history raised a whole range of provocative issues that concerned not only the museological challenges of exhibiting and preserving such work, but, more broadly, the idea of the ephemeral as paradigm and praxis.²

Amplly evident in the pages that follow, the authors who responded to our call for papers engage the ephemeral to explore vastly different circumstances, featuring objects, artists, and artworks that resist easy categorization. Slippage between the everyday and the esoteric, portraiture and performance, and between



2 Ephemeral painting by Tunisian artist Tahar Mguedmini, Tunis, 2005. This work was part of the exhibition "*l'art éphémère*," curated by Leila Souissi, which was installed in the fifteenth century Palais al-Abdalliyya in Marsa, Tunis, in 2005. Painted directly onto the wall of the palace, the work was whitewashed after the show closed. I am grateful to the artist for granting me permission to publish, and thus create, an enduring image of his ephemeral work.

PHOTO: ALLYSON PURPURA

the inert and the active, points to the power of the ephemeral to elude capture. Together, these articles reveal that ephemeral art is "good to think with," in that its meanings and consequences take us well beyond the object itself. Not only do ephemeral works resist the needs of the art world; the ambiguous ontological status of the ephemeral also makes it a powerful metaphor for expressing nuances of memory, time, knowledge, and other realms of the intangible—or the unspeakable. As Carol Diehl wrote in her study of the perishable pollen, milk, and beeswax works of German artist Wolfgang Laib, "much of art derives its potency from the merging of opposites ..." (2001:92).³ Indeed, the artists and experts featured in these studies make creative use of the tensions that inhere in the ephemeral—between presence and absence, stasis and flow, the concrete and the conceptual—all to diverse cultural and political ends.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EPHEMERAL

Fleeting, liminal, evanescent—the idea of the ephemeral is inherently poetic. Whether with longing, relief, or anxious attention to the moment, its implication of impermanence makes us pause and take note. But such ambivalence towards transience is also a cultural response, one shaped within a Western regime of value that, from the late eighteenth century onwards, extolled permanence as a virtue and preservation a right of sovereignty. Implicated in the democratic ideals and extractive needs of empire and industry, collections were assembled to valorize new nations and their colonial exploits abroad. It was a period in which objects became "art" for all time, and public museums their custodians (among the many who have written on this topic, see especially Fisher 1991, Barringer and Flynn 1998, Sheehan 2000, Black 2000, and Weschler 1996). It is no wonder that Baudelaire's clarion call to embrace the transient beauty and flux of the modern city—"the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal, the immutable"—was silenced inside the museums of his day (Baudelaire 1986:13).⁴ Indeed, nineteenth century modernity turned on a tension between the bustling optimism

and immediacy of "Progress" and nostalgia for those "remote" traditions and handicrafts it threatened to consume. Thus the metonymic work of objects—not to mention their durability and portability⁵—became vitally important, standing in, as they did, for both "the fleeting and the far away."⁶

In broad strokes, these circumstances helped define the parameters of canonical, collectible art, as well as the museological practices that developed to support it.⁷ They also stand in stark contrast to historically non-Western cosmologies and aesthetic practices that accept transience not only as a fact of life, but also as a path to ensure wellbeing in this world, as well as the next. As Stephen Huyler writes of Hindu women's rice flour paintings in India, such traditions are "a means for coping with the present, not a way to canonize the past" (1996:10). As is well known to most *African Arts* readers, the intended lives of many masks, figures, and other performative objects are themselves ephemeral, as they are often left to degrade naturally or, to dissipate potentially harmful powers, even destroyed after use.⁸ Made mostly from vulnerable organic materials, many objects survive the test of time only when, as Hornbeck addresses below, their ephemerality is "stabilized," granting them an ongoing, aesthetic "afterlife" in the museum.⁹

Thus it was largely in terms of this ideological "inheritance"—with its investment in permanence and drive to preserve—that the ephemeral came to be viewed as a subversive or, at best, recalcitrant art form. Throughout the twentieth century, artists in many parts of the world turned to unstable, "fugitive" materials, as well as to performance, as forms of institutional and societal critique. Leading the way, the Dadaist interventions during World War I were emphatically ephemeral in nature, ridiculing, as they did, the official "script" of history and its tyranny of preservation; instead, Dada sound and visual artists hailed the immediacy of the senses and embraced transience as a way to amplify a present that was being ravaged, in their view, by the nonsensical violence and conceit of nations at war (see Dickerman 2005, Shipe 1987).¹⁰

While Dada influenced the uses of ephemerality in later art trends (particularly movements with broader social agendas, most notably the Fluxus group of the 1960s–70s; see Higgins 2002), numerous other artists have drawn in their own ways on the signifying power of the ephemeral, particularly as it allows them to visualize time and memory as active, if not political, dimensions of the work (in distinction to the “time-based media” of film, video, and audio recordings, in which the work unfolds and is experienced over time). In *Project for a Memorial* (2005), for example, Columbian artist Oscar Muñoz “speaks to the difficulty of remembering” (Reuter 2006:104). In this work, the artist paints a face with water on a smooth, hot cement sidewalk, only to have the brushstrokes evaporate before the entire face is ever completed. “Endlessly the artist draws the faces of the dead, and endlessly they disappear” (ibid.)—an apt metaphor for the numerous individuals who have been mysteriously disappeared under repressive regimes in South America (Zellen 2005.) Or, as James Young recounts in his study of the “counter-monument” movement in Germany—with its opposition to the inert and passive commemoration of the Holocaust—artists Jochen and Esther Gerz created a monolith designed to sink slowly, but perceptibly, into the ground. Young writes, “How better to remember forever a vanished people than by a perpetually unfinished, ever-vanishing monument?” (1992:277). And though Cuban-American artist Ana Mendieta brought closure to her ephemeral works by documenting them on film, she did so in an ironic way. In her *Silueta* series (1973–1980), the artist laid her body down in flowerbeds, mud, sand, and snow and photographed the temporary impressions it left behind; but in these images, now the collectable dimension of her work, it is her very absence that endures (Nardella 2007; see also Viso 2004).

For visual artist and writer Mary O’Neill, making ephemeral art is not a political act, but an act of mourning—a way to work through of the pain of bereavement, disenfranchised grief, and ambiguous loss (2008:95). Drawing on psychoanalytical literature and inspired by her own personal loss, O’Neill explores the ephemeral work of three artists—Felix Gonzalez Torres, Dadang Christanto, and Zoe Leonard—all of whom experienced the untimely death of a loved one. For O’Neill, their works “embrace Freud’s challenge to live with transience” ... They are displayed on the floor, suggesting material brought to its knees ... What is significant about these works is that they are active ... Ephemeral works begin with death, and are alive” (2008:97). For instance, Zoe Leonard’s work *Strange Fruit (for David)* (1992–1997) is made from hundreds of rinds of fruit she had saved after eating. When they dried out, “she ‘repaired’ and adorned them, sewing up the seams with colored thread, shiny wires and buttons” (Temkin 1998). “It was sort of a way to sew myself back up,” says Leonard. “I didn’t even realize I was making art when I started doing them” (Temkin 1999:46). Ann Temkin, then curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, which collected the work, writes of its provocative presence in the gallery:

It sends a message that reverberates throughout our building. Maybe this is not the only thing in the museum that is not forever. Maybe this is not a universe without wounds ... Sometimes it is more of a help to know that everything is changing, in some way dying, that we do what we can, and that we go on creating (ibid., p. 50).

Though such brief mention of all these works does the art little justice, it points to the power of ephemeral art as potentially transformative practice, both in and outside the gallery.

SHAPE-SHIFTING, SWEEPING, DECAY, AND THE FUGITIVE

Indeed, O’Neill’s poignant observation—that ephemeral works are active—cuts to the heart of the matter, both in art, and in life: A ritually prepared object releases power as it decays; a simple household broom unravels into a formidable metaphor warning transgressors of their imminent fate; a face in a photograph drips with foam, at once disappearing and transforming its identity; and a “fugitive” that refers to materials on the run, and which leave in their wake the undesirable marks of time. In all of these scenarios, the ephemeral aesthetic sets something in motion, and in doing so, comes to act on the world.

In Aimee Bessire’s study of Sukuma power objects and healers in Tanzania, ephemerality is understood as part of a broader cultural logic in which expertise, intentionality, and belief all “participate” in the efficacy of the healers’ practices. Within this logic, medicinal substances perform through key tensions between the visible and the concealed, and between permanence and decay. Made of degradable materials, ephemeral containers are enablers of occult powers, allowing them to “move into the world to do their work.” While the use of power objects is widespread in Africa and other parts of the world and have been studied extensively, what is especially intriguing in Bessire’s contribution is her attention to temporality, materiality, and (in) visibility as intersecting and equally critical components in the healers’ discourse about power objects and the epistemological conditions that inform their expertise.

In her ongoing work with Cameroonian artist Hervé Yamguen, Dominique Malaquais explores the many ways in which the ephemeral informs not only his practice as an artist, but his very subjectivity as an African man. Both a product and critique of the postcolonial experience, Yamguen’s protean, shape-shifting self-portraits implicate us not only in what we see—man, mask, victim, devotee?—but also how we see—through tropes of the primitive, the cosmopolitan, the black. Though these photographic portraits are the focus of her study, Malaquais also explores the ways in which the ephemeral extends to the very conditions of their production—to the flux and rhythm of make-shift neighborhoods at the margins of urban Cameroon, and to the humanity that, ironically, gives it enduring life. While Yamguen’s photos exploit the ephemeral effects of foam as it drips down and transforms his face, another artist with whom Malaquais has worked extensively, Malam, draws on the ephemeral medium of fire to broadcast a relentless critique of the Cameroonian paramilitary state and the horror it perpetrated against its people in 2000–2001 (Malaquais 2009). Creating facsimiles of human bodies, which he set ablaze, the ephemerality of Malam’s art, as Malaquais narrates it, is not only in the fire that momentarily rages but in the stiff and charred figures it leaves behind. Making reference to real human bodies that had gone missing, only to turn up lifeless on the side of a road, Malam’s work epitomized both the psychological and physical trauma of living with arbitrary violence and sudden and profound loss. Indeed, besides its resonance with the work of Muñoz and Mendieta

described above, Malaquais also sees Malam's art in O'Neill's terms, as a form of "griefwork," in that it "affords an appreciation of ephemeral but traumatic life experiences ..., forces a confrontation with the transient ..., and evokes the presence of the dead ..." (Malaquais 2007:5). Such work testifies to the power of the ephemeral to bring together political, emotional, even spiritual dimensions of human experience.

David Doris's exploration of brooms as ordinary, ubiquitous, useful things and as cautionary *àlè* assemblages provokes a mix of anxiety and anticipation. It is not only the object that is of interest here, but how, through its dense, metaphoric and metonymic power, it extends into the Yoruba world at large. Though brooms are "hard working," as Doris describes, they easily fall apart. Thus in the language of *àlè*—"things we look at and remember"—a simple bundle of loose broom fronds becomes a *vanitas* of the present, reminding prospective thieves and trespassers that in the end, a greater moral good will prevail, and they will suffer its consequences.¹² But when deployed as political trope in Nigeria's anti-corruption campaigns, the image of a sweeping broom becomes ambiguous, almost absurd—are we cleaning up, or falling apart? Either way, Doris observes, "no condition is permanent." In this ubiquitous adage uttered and inscribed in public spaces throughout Nigeria—as well as Ghana and other parts of West Africa—the ephemeral is reiterated as an ontological given; at once secular and transcendent in reference, it remains wide open to interpretation.

In Hornbeck's discussion of the museological challenges posed by ephemeral objects, both tradition-based and contemporary, we learn that ephemerality can be intended, accidental (that is, when confronted with the needs of collection), or even imposed on an artwork by a museum, as when an artist is commissioned to create a work directly on a gallery wall that is painted over after the run of a show. In each of these situations, conservators move between the needs of the artwork, the museum, and the artist, a process that often takes them far beyond the science of fugitive materials. Indeed, Hornbeck's discussion about determining the appropriate treatment for ephemeral works opens us up to the fascinating tensions between legal discourse—which in the United States tends to privilege the rights of ownership¹³—and ethical practice, in which conservators act on behalf of artists as the creators of the artwork.¹⁴ With works that are erased through over-painting or that are disassembled forever, one has to ask, how does ownership manifest itself except in the rights of dispensation? Does the artist's labor become the "durable"—or enduring—good in such an exchange? Hornbeck's case studies

raise questions about the broader politics of value in which questions about authority, "authenticity," and aesthetic integrity have extended beyond museums and into global debates about cultural heritage, intangible property, and the rights of "art source" communities themselves (see Brown 2003, Coombe 1998).

In all of these studies, as different as they are, the ephemeral amplifies the present by giving it a temporal frame. From stabilizing objects for display, to protecting a homestead against malevolent forces or thieves, to resisting the fragmentation of postcolonial subjectivity—all of these reflect an engagement with the present, not nostalgia for the past or even an "unease" with the transience of life. They show that the ephemeral does not only imply degradation or disappearance, but that it is also productive, transformative, and full of anticipation. Indeed, the instability that inheres in the ephemeral evinces change by forcing us to confront what once was and to imagine what lies ahead. As We Hung writes in his discussion about experimental Chinese art in the post-Maoist era, instability is a "necessary condition for self-examinations devoid of the confidence and optimism attached to a self-imposed collective ideology" (1999:128)—be it Communist or, as described at the beginning of this essay, an ideology based on the democratic visions of the Museum Age.

The work illustrated in Fig. 2 by Tunisian artist Tahar Mguedmini was part of the exhibition "*l'art éphémère*," installed in the fifteenth century Palais al-Abdalliya in Marsa, Tunis, in 2005. Painted directly onto the wall of the palace, it was whitewashed soon after the show closed. Curator Leila Souissi writes of the seven artists who participated in the exhibition,

[they] have accepted the unthinkable, to dare to add to these walls their own histories and, by respect for the majesty of the palace, they have also accepted that their works will be forever erased, leaving the palace to its memories ... There is in this art a fragility, a vulnerability, and above all an irreverence toward the work of art itself" (Souissi 2005).

For Mguedmini, this was a matter of fact: "Wandering figures, silhouettes on their way, I try to direct them ... [but] the ephemeral will be what it wants (Mguedmini in Souissi 2005).

ALLYSON PURPURA is curator at the Krannert Art Museum at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has been research specialist and guest curator at the National Museum of African Art, the Mexican Heritage Plaza and the University of Michigan Museum of Art, and has collaborated with contemporary artists on a number of exhibition and writing projects. purpura@illinois.edu

Notes

In February 2007 I organized the panel "Ephemeral Art and the Tyranny of Preservation" for the College Art Association in New York City, which included presentations by Ellen Moody, Beth Nardella, Linda Lui, and Michele Brody. I want to thank them for their participation and creative insights into the ephemeral. Many thanks are due especially to co-editor Christine Mullen Kreamer for her collaboration and suggesting we co-organize "Ephemeral Art: Impermanent by Design" for the ACASA Triennial. I also want to thank all of the authors for their exceptional contributions, the editorial board of African Arts for agreeing to devote two issues to

the topic, and Leslie Jones for her assistance and patience throughout the entire editorial process.

1 This installation was part of the exhibition "Textures: Word and Symbol in Contemporary African Art," curated by Elizabeth Harney, associate professor of art history at the University of Toronto and former curator of contemporary art at the National Museum of African Art.

2 The challenges posed by ephemeral art have been a subject of interest over the last decade, as seen in the following conferences: "Should a Moment Last Forever?" at the annual conference of the Art Libraries Society of North America in 1997; "Mortality/Immortality? The Legacy of 20th Century Art" organized by the

Getty Conservation Institute in 1998, and published in 1999 as an edited volume; "Permanence/Impermanence: Cultures in and Out of Time" organized by the Carnegie-Mellon's Center for the Arts in Society in 2005, published in 2008 as an edited volume; and "Not for Sale: Curating, Conserving and Collecting Ephemeral Art," a one-day symposium organized by the New York based arts organization PERFORMA in conjunction with New York University's Department of Art and Art Professions in 2007.

3 The opposition to which Diehl refers in Laib's work is "the collision of geometry with the natural substances that one never expects to see in the forms he has

chosen for them..." (2001:92).

4 See also Berman 1988 for his discussion of nineteenth and mid twentieth century thinkers through whom he comes to define the constitutive feature of "modernity" as instability—as always on the verge of becoming something else.

5 See Errington's study on the invention of "primitive art" at the turn of the twentieth century, where she writes (following Thompson 1979) that portability and durability were defining attributes allowing for art's collection and display (1998:58–63, 79–83).

6 This symbolic conflation of time and distance in collected objects is one of the key operations performed by the notion of the "primitive"; see Moody 2007, Fox 1992, Phillips and Steiner 1999, MacGaffey 1998.

7 Elisabeth Cameron (2007) explores the ephemeral with respect to this museological history and its impact on perceptions of Lega and Kuba arts.

8 In addition to objects, it is also important to note the ephemeral nature of other visual art forms in Africa, such as the wide range of body and mural paintings created predominantly by women in many parts of the continent—see for instance Sarah Adams' work on *uli* practices in Igbo-speaking regions of southeastern Nigeria (2007). These and related issues regarding the role of ephemerality in various tradition-based arts will be explored in closer detail by Christine Mullen Kreamer in the second *African Arts* issue devoted to the ephemeral.

9 Such an "afterlife" is often far from desirable for the object's makers. For instance, grave posts (*vigango*) of the Giriama in coastal Kenya are meant to decay naturally in the forest, and "cannot be moved without upsetting the spirit" (Linda Giles, personal communication, 2009). In her work researching and, in one case, repatriating Mijikenda grave posts to their families of origin, Giles points out that their intended ephemerality makes their collection all the more egregious, since "the ancestor spirit associated with the stolen *kigango* will be unhappy and punish (its) descendants severely." See also Udvardy, Giles, and Mitsanze 2003.

10 Though Dada objects are of course in museum collections and their performances documented on film, these collecting impulses ran contrary, in theory at least, to the ephemerality of Dada practices. See Foster 1996 for a discussion on how art institutions appropriate artist critiques of their practices by inviting them to do so—an act that, in effect tames or softens the consequences of those critiques.

11 See Freud 1915. In this intimate, anecdotal essay, Freud puzzles over a companion's inability to take joy in the verdant beauty of a summer day, since it was "doomed to transience" and would only fade into winter. Though mourning over loss may seem obvious, Freud argued that if anything, beauty—or, the things that we love and value—is enhanced by the very knowledge of its passing. But of special interest is how Freud ends his essay. Writing these words during World War I, he states, the war "made our country small again and made the rest of the world far remote [note his figurative use of size and distance]. It robbed us of very much that we had loved, and showed us how ephemeral were many things that we had regarded as changeless ... When once the mourning is over, it will be found that our high opinion of the riches of civilization has lost nothing from our discovery of their fragility. We shall build up again all that war has destroyed, and perhaps on firmer ground and more lastingly than before." So in the end, it seems, Freud is writing not of transience, but of hope—a notable contrast to the Dadaist contempt for the "riches of civilization," or their recovery. Many thanks to David Doris for sharing this essay with me.

12 In her discussion of Zoe Leonard's *Strange Fruit* (for David), Ann Temkin (1999) suggests that

contemporary ephemeral art functions something like the Dutch *vanitas* paintings of the seventeenth century; with their dripping candles and decaying fruit, such Calvinist-inspired works spoke to the God-fearing, reminding them of their mortality, and that their time on earth is short.

13 For an important study of how the idea of "authenticity" comes to be linked to identity and place through the possession of objects, see Handler 1986.

14 For an interesting comparison, see Buskirk 2003, where she argues that the authorship of minimalist and ephemeral works of the mid to late twentieth century are "contingent" because their physical boundaries "have to be reconceived each time [they are] exhibited." Thus the artist's "ongoing presence and decision-making" are especially important (2003:15–16).

References cited

- Adams, Sarah. 2007. "You Can't Hide the Moon With Your Hands: Uli Artists, Artistic Identity, and Stuff." In *Inscribing Meaning: Writing and Graphic Systems in African Art*, eds., Christine Mullen Kreamer et al., pp. 176–85. Washington DC: National Museum of African Art, with 5 Continents Press.
- Barringer, Tim, and Tom Flynn, eds. 1998. *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture, and the Museum*. New York: Routledge.
- Baudelaire, Charles. 1986. "The Painter of Modern Life." In *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, ed. and trans. Jonathan Mayne. New York: Da Capo Press. Work originally published 1863.
- Berman, Marshall. 1988. *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. New York: Viking Press.
- Black, Barbara. 2000. *On Exhibit: Victorians and Their Museums*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.
- Brown, Michael F. 2003. *Who Owns Native Culture?* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Buskirk, Martha. 2003. *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Cameron, Elisabeth. 2007. "Sometimes It's Backwards: Kuba, Lega, and a Brief History of the Senses." Paper presented at the ACASA Triennial Conference, Gainesville, FL, March.
- Coombe, Rosemary. 1998. *The Cultural Life of Intellectual Properties: Authorship, Appropriation and the Law*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Dickerman, Leah. 2005. *Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, Paris*. Washington DC: National Gallery of Art.
- Diehl, Carol. 2001. "Wolfgang Laib: Transcendent Offerings." *Art in America* (March):88–95.
- Errington, Shelly. 1998. *The Death of Authentic Primitive Art and Other Tales of Progress*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fisher, Philip. 1991. *Making and Effacing Art: Modern American Art in a Culture of Museums*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Foster, Hal. 1996. "The Artist as Ethnographer." In *The Return of the Real*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Fox, Paul. 1992. "Memory, the Museum and the Postcolonial World." *Meanjin* 51 (2):308–18.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1915. "On Transience." Trans. James Strachey. <http://www.freuds-requiem.com/transience.html>
- Handler, Richard. 1986. "Authenticity." *Anthropology Today* 2 (1):2–4.

Higgins, Hannah. 2002. *Fluxus Experience*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hung, Wu, ed. 1999. *Transience: Chinese Experimental Art at the End of the Twentieth Century*. Chicago: The David and Alfred Smart Museum of the University of Chicago.

Huyler, Stephen P. 1996. "A Moment of Grace." *UNESCO Courier* 49 (12):10.

MacGaffey, Wyatt. 1998. "Magic, or as We Usually Say, Art: A Framework for Comparing European and African Art." In *The Scramble for Art in Central Africa*, ed. Enid Schildkrout and Curtis A. Keim, pp. 236–51. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Malaquais, Dominique. 2009. "The Lady in the Swamp: Art as Political Ephemera." *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* 24 (forthcoming).

Moody, Ellen. 2007. From Ruin to Rise: The Contradictions of Gordon Matta-Clark's Building Fragments. Paper presented at the College Art Association conference, New York, February.

Nardella, Beth. 2007. Performance and Documentation:(Re)Presenting Ana Mendieta. Paper presented at the College Art Association conference, New York, February.

O'Neill, Mary. 2008. "Ephemeral Art: Mourning and Loss." In *(Im)Permanence: Cultures In and Out of Time*, eds. Judith Schachter and Stephen Brockmann, pp. 88–97. Pittsburgh: Center for the Arts and Society, Carnegie Mellon University.

Phillips, Ruth, and Christopher, Steiner, 1999, "Art, Authenticity, and the Baggage of Cultural Encounter." In *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*, pp. 3–19. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Rueter, Laurel. 2006. "Oscar Muñoz." *Los Desaparecidos/The Disappeared*, pp. 102–105. Grand Forks: North Dakota Museum of Art.

Sheehan, James J. 2000. *Museums in the German Art Word from the End of the Old Regime to the Rise of Modernism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Shipe, Timothy. 1987. "The Dada Periodicals at Iowa." *Books at Iowa* 46:37–58.

Souissi, Leila. 2005. *L'art éphémère*. Tunis: Palais Al-Abdalliya la Marsa, Tunisie.

Temkin, Ann. 1999. "Strange Fruit." In *Mortality/Immortality*, ed. Miguel Angel Corzo, pp. 45–50. Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute.

Thompson, Michael. 1979. *Rubbish Theory: The Creation and Destruction of Value*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Udvardy, Monica, Linda Giles, and John B. Mitsanze. 2003. "The Transatlantic Trade in African Ancestors: Mijikenda Memorial Statues and the Ethics of Collecting and Curating Non-Western Cultural Property as Global Commodities." *American Anthropologist* 105 (3):566–80.

Viso, Olga M. 2004. *Ana Mendieta: Earth Body*. Washington DC: Hirshhorn Museum.

Weschler, Stephen. 1996. *Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder*. New York: Vintage.

Young, James. 1992. "The Counter-Monument: Memory Against Itself in Germany Today." *Critical Inquiry* 18 (Winter):267–97.

Zellen, Jodi. 2005. "Oscar Muñoz." Iturralde Gaallery, West Hollywood. <http://artscenecal.com/ArticlesFile/Archive/Articles2005/Articles1105/OMunozA.html>