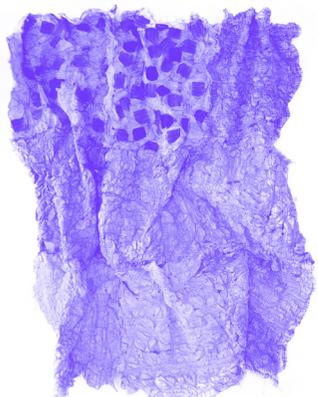


SURPLUS

22.09-17.12

2022

Flensborggade 57, 1669 Copenhagen V (DK)



Collega's inaugural exhibition *Surplus* is a collaboration with Ghanaian art community **blaxTARLINES Kumasi**. Curated with **blaxTARLINES** member **Mavis Tetteh-Ocloo**, *Surplus* explores found objects in relation to consumption and global circulation in a contemporary context. In a world where goods and services are constantly moving within and across geopolitical boundaries, yet with an imbalanced distribution of production against consumption, systemic economic failures have resulted in excess production, leading to a mass global wastage. The invited artists **Theresah Ankomah**, **Ibrahim Mahama**, and **Elolo Bosoka** explore together with local artists **Madga Buczek** and **Benedikte Bjerre**, questions around material history, geopolitics and economic exchange. Following a long tradition of using industrially produced objects in art, the invited artists look at our present time and reflect upon a world of commodities and how to intervene creatively in their circulation.

The exhibition title is taken from **Magda Buczek's** *SURPLUS* series, a humorous and critical engagement with overproduction. The main tools of *SURPLUS* are language and waste seen as an effect of late capitalism's excesses, hoarding and cyclical circulating of goods. Slogan inspired texts are placed on the surfaces of old garments, leftover textiles and waste banners. For this exhibition **Buczek** revisits her textile work *OBJECTS CONTINUE TO EXIST WHEN OUT OF OUR HANDS (2019)*, presenting it as window text in the exhibition space, while showing the textile work in public space at Eliaskirken from *22 September to 6 October*. The work deals with object permanence from developmental psychology: Things continue to exist even when not perceived by the one who looks. The textile is composed of waste pieces collected in garbage dumps, households and from a hospice put in the context of the sustainability and longevity of everyday objects.

Through strips of intricately woven colourful palm leaves, **Theresah Ankomah** mimics kente weaving traditions of Ghana, commenting on the decline of the local textile industry with her work *Ruins of Time (2020)*. Originally produced for the public space, the work presents woven rolls used in traditional making of straw hats and mats. The strips come in different zigzag patterns from the knitting of single palm leaves carefully dyed, twisted and woven together. Exposed to the weather and other organisms for a period, **Ankomah** stops the strips from deteriorating further with a preservative. *Ruins of time* comments on the decline of the local textile and handcrafts industry in Ghana due to the proliferation of cheaper imported textile prints, particularly from China.

Ibrahim Mahama's video work *Nkrumah Voli. Letters from the void (1966-2020)* provides a glimmer of hope amidst systems of structural failure faced in Ghana as he repurposes an old post-independence era silo into an institution of art. The silo in Tamale is one out of many built by Ghana's first president after its independence from Britain in 1957, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, to serve as food storage, as part of the government's national industrialization agenda. Since the overthrow of the Nkrumah government, the silos and many other projects have remained abandoned. Similar to **Mahama's** other works, the silo is seen as a container of memories, one that has lived through various experiences engaging humans and other organisms alike and a symbol of hope and failure of a post-independent nation. **Mahama** acquired the silo, transforming it into a space where the local community can engage with art and archeological findings from Northern Ghana among other things.

Using industrially produced objects and replicas of these, **Benedikte Bjerre** addresses notions of acceleration or the speed of things in a globalized world. In the exhibition, **Bjerre** is presenting one shelving system from a total installation of five from the installation *Inventory I-V (2020)*. The shelf resembles a storage or display unit, consisting of a modified industrial storage shelf, a woven plastic bag, plastic fruits and boxes made of advertisement banners with recycled chopped foam representing packaged commodities. The piece questions authenticity within artistic production while pointing towards unsustainable lifestyles of over-consumption.

Taking inspiration from mundane objects embedded with life; **Elolo Bosoka** repurposes commodities to question consumerism within Ghana's informal economy with implications in the global sphere. **Bosoka's** installation *We Mi You Wò Me Nye (2022)* is part of a larger series consisting of plastic sacks and sleeping mats where the material goes through processes of burning and stitching into a large patchwork, creating both visual and tactile textures. **Bosoka** relies on his relationships with local street vendors, who he exchanges with and buys his materials from. The sacks in this work has been used to carry products to be sold in markets and the mat has been used for sleep. **Bosoka** is interested in highlighting the fundamental pillars in capitalist economy such as physical labour, production, consumption and rest.

The artworks presented in *Surplus* give new life to discarded weaving traditions, fabrics, ready-mades, and even buildings, while pointing to the nuanced mechanisms of capitalism in our daily experiences. They become information carriers and with the rise of immaterial society, the artworks remind us of the physical labour, waste and absurdities surrounding late capitalist consumerism.

The exhibition is curated by **Mavis Tetteh-Ocloo** from **blaxTARLINES Kumasi** and **Lotte Løvholm** from **Collega**.

blaxTARLINES KUMASI, based in the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Kumasi, Ghana. It is an artist and curator community with a fluid membership that organizes exhibitions as well as discursive events in Kumasi and in public spaces within Ghana and abroad. The community's engagements spring from an interest in the democratisation of art and its accessibility to a wide range of the public, based on the notion of an equality of intellect.

Collega presents exhibitions developed in collaboration with international artists and curators. The foundation of the space is co-curation as practice. **Collega** emphasises the collective process in exhibition-making as a patient gathering of works – on loan, in care, as nourishment.

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