

### **Intercultural, global and indigenous performances as outdated categories?**

Preparing the exhibition of African Art for the Venice Biennale in 1999, Salah Hassan Sudanese professor of Visual Arts in Cornell, describes contemporary African Art as a conceptual art with its clear characteristics of self reflexivity, denying cultural unity and the desire for coherence and narrative consistency. Comparing this conceptualism with a crucial moment in European Modernism, he points specifically to the Historical Avantgarde and Dada in its preference for enactments, a preeminence of framing and an integration of real objects / what we now would call performative.

In the same way there is a growing discussion in a group of scholars in the Arabic Theatre Working group of the FIRT, claiming that Arabic theatre is developing a post-dramatic dramaturgy described as a “non hierarchical praxis, simultaneity, play with a density of signs, visuality, physicality, interruption of the real, situation and event”. It seems that what happened in the western arts movements in time, is now taking place in spaces (global spaces, ethnoscaapes etc) where different local histories reflect themselves in globalized artistic forms.

#### About the Author

Mieke Kolk was a theatre-critic and the editor of the Dutch Theatre Journal. She founded Theatre Persona, a feminist theatre group between 1983-1989. Kolk taught at the Royal Academy of the Arts, the School for Journalists, the Amsterdam Theatre Academy and since 1984 at the Institute of Theatre Studies of the University of Amsterdam. Topics: Modern and Postmodern Theatre, New Music Theatre, Women Studies and since 2001 Intercultural Theatre Studies. Since 2003 she (co) organized Conferences: "East meets West" in Europe and Arabic/Africa and edited the proceedings of these conferences in 4 books concentrating on aspects of the tragic in both cultures, the use of the comic and censorship, cultural heritage and the theatre in Sudan and gender-performance in Arabic/African theatre. See [www.ArtsAfrica.org/archive](http://www.ArtsAfrica.org/archive) . Books available for free, to download from the website.