

El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You About Africa

March 30 – June 26, 2011



Caption: El Anatsui, *Three Continents*, 2009 | Aluminum and copper wire, 98 x 191 in. | Photo courtesy: Jack Shainman Gallery

El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You About Africa, the Ghanaian artist's first career retrospective, makes its US debut at the Davis. Widely lauded for magnificent large-scale wall hangings made from thousands of discarded liquor-bottle tops "sewn" together with copper wire, and for installation pieces similarly crafted from refuse, Anatsui draws on traditional idioms and contemporary art practices to create work that resonates materially and symbolically with the cultural and historical conditions of West Africa.

The exhibition, which features sixty-five works from the artist's four-decade career, encompassing sculptures in wood, ceramic and metal as well as rarely seen paintings and drawings, will span the uppermost Tanner and Jobson Galleries and the lower level Chandler and Bronfman Galleries. A richly illustrated catalogue, with entries by Kwame Anthony Appiah, Laurance S. Rockefeller University professor of philosophy at Princeton University; Lisa Binder, assistant curator at the Museum for African Art, New York; Olu Oguibe, professor of art and art history at the University of Connecticut; Chika Okeke-Agulu, assistant professor of art and archaeology at Princeton University; and Robert Storr, dean of the Yale School of Art, accompanies the exhibition and will be available at the Davis.

El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You about Africa is organized by the Museum for African Art, New York, and has been supported, in part, by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. The presentation at the Davis is supported by the Wellesley College Friends of Art and the Kathryn Wasserman Davis '28 Fund for World Cultures and Leadership

Teacher Workshop in conjunction with El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You about Africa

Tuesday, March 29 | 4-6 pm | Davis Museum

Join guest curator Lisa Binder of the Museum for African Art, New York, to explore the stunning work of Ghanaian artist El Anatsui and his subtle commentary on the colonial and postcolonial relationships between Africa and the West.

Open to K-12 teachers of all subjects and grade levels.

Opening Celebration!

Wednesday, March 30 | 6-8 pm | Davis Museum Lobby and Galleries

Please join us for the opening reception for El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You about Africa.

Annual Ruth Morris Bakwin Annual Lecture

Thursday, March 31 | 6 pm | Jewett Auditorium

Internationally renowned Ghanaian artist El Anatsui in conversation with Lisa Binder (Assistant Curator, Museum for African Art, New York) and Chika Okeke-Agulu (Assistant Professor, Princeton University). On the occasion of the opening of his retrospective exhibition at the Davis Museum, El Anatsui discusses his work with exhibition curator, Lisa Binder, and one of the authors of the exhibition catalogue, Chika Okeke-Agulu. Co-sponsored by the Art Department and the Davis Museum.

All events are free and open to the public.