

Ivorypress presents

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Wangechi Mutu

A Promise to Communicate



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Ivorypress is pleased to present *A Promise to Communicate*, the latest book in the LiberArs series made in collaboration with the Kenyan artist Wangechi Mutu.

A Promise to Communicate is an artist's book that springs from Mutu's eponymous installation at the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston in 2018; an intervention spanning one of the walls in the museum that brought together sticks, stones, pencils and a cartographic reconfiguration of the world using refugee blankets. Throughout the twelve months it was exhibited, visitors were invited to participate in the work by leaving messages on the wall. Originally conceived of as an interactive piece, Mutu developed a space for free speech, although not exempt from the political and demographic connotations implicit in the map which triggered distinct levels of interaction: between the work and the public, the conversational links between participants and the map itself with routes traced out by the messages.

This book brings together a selection of the visual codes—sometimes graphic and other times textual—that were incorporated into the piece throughout its evolution and adapts them to the LiberArs format. Different aspects of the installation, such as the democratisation of communication, the convergence of anonymous stories from a community and the weaving of a dense tapestry of text stemming from the various layers of writing, are translated to this publication by use of transparent paper that emulates this layering of messages. The artist, in collaboration with the Ivorypress team, selected messages from the thousands left by visitors throughout the installation's run, picking some of the most notable ones at a political, social or humoristic level. The book also includes a conversation between the artist and Ruth Erickson, exhibition curator, reflecting on the nature of the communicative act in a museum space. Given its vertical binding, the book allows readers to approach it as a flip-book, where messages are gradually superimposed on each other, while also calling to mind a block of notes.



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The LiberArs series is a collection of small-format artists books published by Ivorypress and designed by the artists themselves. Since the publication of the first series edition in 2009, Ivorypress has collaborated with artists including Gerhard Richter, Anselm Kiefer, Richard Long, Santiago Sierra and Jenny Holzer, among others.

Internationally recognised for her paintings, collages and hybrid compositions, **Wangechi Mutu** (Nairobi, Kenya, 1972) uses her work to explore concepts such as violence, displacement, marginality and representations of women in the world today. She has exhibited her work in various museums and institutions across the globe including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, the Tate Modern in London, the Studio Museum in Harlem in New York, the KunstPalast in Düsseldorf, the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University in North Carolina.

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