

Sokari Douglas Camp, artist

29 March 2017

Sokari Douglas Camp discussed her work as a sculptor whose primary material is steel, producing public artworks in the context of her Nigerian roots and international issues. She talked of her work as a London-based sculptor whose primary material is steel, in the context of her Nigerian roots and international issues. Her public artworks have found their own path through touring and display in rich environments and palaces, staging humanity that is so often forgotten.

Battle Bus: Living Memorial for Ken Saro-Wiwa 2006 is a full-scale replica of a Nigerian steel bus, a monument to the late Niger Delta activist and writer. As an emblem for a campaign to clean up the Niger Delta, it travelled to Nigeria in 2015 as part of Action Saro-Wiwa but was incarcerated by Lagos Customs, and it is not known when the sculpture will be released as it is seen as 'a threat to the country'.

All the World is Now Richer celebrates the strength of people with 'Slave heritage', inviting viewers to salute the survivors who have contributed to the lives we lead today, inspired by the words of liberated ex-slave William Prescott: 'They will remember that we were sold but they won't remember that we were strong; they will remember that we were bought but not that we were brave'. It was exhibited in The House of Commons, touring to Bristol Cathedral, Norwich Cathedral, St George's Hall, Liverpool, St Paul's Cathedral, London 2014 and the Doge's Prigioni, Venice 2016. Created to be a permanent memorial to the abolition of slavery in London, the sculptures will be part of an opera in Palazzo Pisani, Venice as part of the Diaspora Platform project, coinciding with the Venice Biennale 2017.

Sokari Douglas Camp was born in Nigeria, studied in London, and has represented Britain and Nigeria in national and international exhibitions with over 40 solo shows in venues including National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute 1988-89 and Museum of Mankind, London 1994/5. In 2003 Sokari was shortlisted for the Trafalgar Square Fourth Plinth. Her work is in permanent collections including at the Smithsonian Museum, Washington, D.C., Setagaya Museum, Tokyo and the British Museum, London. In 2005 she was awarded a CBE in recognition of her services to art, and is an honorary Fellow of the University of the Arts London and the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.