



THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE



JMCCCP
PUBLIC LECTURE

19 February 2019

6 for 6:30-8:00 pm

G04 Napier Building,
University of Adelaide

THE WASP AND THE ORCHID: TALES OF METAMORPHIC SUBLIMITY

A public lecture by world-renowned anthropologist **Professor Michael Taussig**, chaired by acclaimed **Professor Stephen Muecke**

In this lecture, Professor Michael Taussig will attempt to figure out the mastery of non-mastery. He will pause on Marcel Proust's alignment of the mimesis between wasp and orchid as consonant with that of the sexual encounter between a baron and a tailor—prelude to his thoughts on inter-species sex, shamanism, and paramilitary massacres as copies chasing copies. Through these pauses, Michael will speculate on the fate of the mimetic faculty in relation to global meltdown and metamorphic sublimity.

Michael Taussig is a Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University and at The European Graduate School / EGS in Switzerland. Known for his provocative ethnographic studies, he earned a PhD in anthropology at the London School of Economics. He is widely published in anthropology, especially medical anthropology, but he remains most acclaimed for his commentaries on Karl Marx and Walter Benjamin, especially in relation to commodity fetishism. He is the author of several books including: *Palma Africana* (2018), *What Color is the Sacred?* (2009), *Walter Benjamin's Grave* (2006), *My Cocaine Museum* (2004), *Law in a Lawless Land: Diary of a Limpieza in a Colombian Town* (2003), *Defacement* (1999), *Magic of the State* (1997), *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (1993), and *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America* (1980).

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