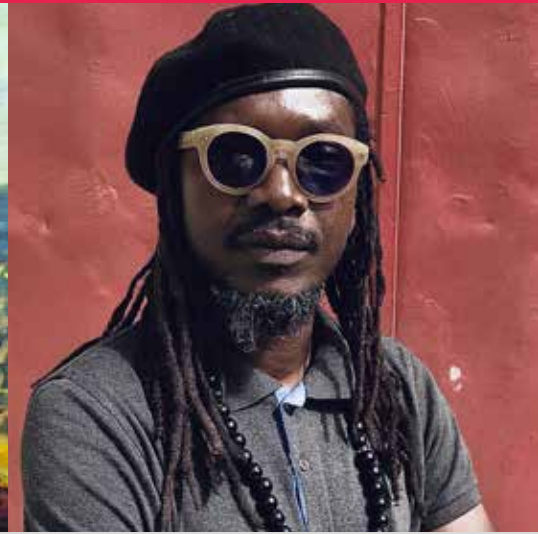


DAK'ART



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A Round Table on the financing of cultural and creative industries in West Africa

A round table was held on 23 May at the emblematic African Renaissance Monument overlooking Dakar, bringing together numerous cultural actors from the West African sub-region. This event, entitled «What innovative and creative mechanisms for the resilience and financing of cultural and creative industries in West Africa», was organised by the African Fund for Culture and the AWA project of the ACP-UE Culture Programme, in partnership with the Biennale of Contemporary African Art - Dak'Art.



Mr Abdou Aziz Dieng, technical adviser and one of the pillars of the Senegalese Ministry of Culture, opened the debate by insisting on the fact that beyond aesthetic concerns, there is still too little talk of the economy of culture. However, the creative industries sector is a productive sector that generates both profits and sustainable employment. Indeed, as one of the participants from France rightly pointed out, the return on investment can sometimes reach a ratio of 1 to 7 when the creative sector is well structured and optimally organised.

The new decentralised approach to the management of funds under the ACP-EU Culture Programme allows for action to be taken as close as possible to the actors, by region. For West Africa, a consortium made up of the Kôrè Cultural Centre in Ségou (Mali) and the Institut français de Paris is implementing the AWA programme, the selection process and the management of funds.



Monument of the African Renaissance

“In less than two years, the AWA programme has already launched three calls for projects 77 projects for a financial commitment of EUR 3 800 000”.

Aimed at supporting actors on the local, regional and international market, AWA focuses on capacity building as each beneficiary also receives specific management training. «In less than two years, the AWA programme has already launched three calls for projects 77 projects for a financial commitment of commitment of EUR 3 800 000».



Panelistes

The first call concerned the structuring fund, which financed 15 projects, each with a grant of EUR 150,000 over three years. The following two calls for projects relate to the West African Cultural Enhancement Fund, which has selected a total of 62 projects.

Each selected project will receive a grant of EUR 25,000 for one year.

The focal point for culture at the European Union Delegation in Senegal Christoph Pelzer, praised the regularity of the AWA mechanism's calls for proposals and the size of the grants awarded, which correspond perfectly to the needs of the sectors concerned. The vital question of mobilising and sustaining funds dedicated to the growth of cultural and creative industries was at the heart of the debates.

The example of Burkina Faso, which has a cultural and tourism development fund (FDCT), is a big step in the right direction. As its Director General, Alphonse Tougouma, pointed out with great verve, the FDCT has three main components: financing, capacity building and the establishment of an effective information system on cultural industries that will attract resources from other sectors of the economy.

The AWA programme also assists governments to develop a more voluntary and better articulated cultural policy in order to generate endogenous and sustainable sources of funding. Several local financing mechanisms are currently being studied, including tax exemptions for creative actors as a means of consolidating this promising economic sector.

Dean Abdoulaye Konaté, a highly talented artist and administrator of the African Cultural Fund, has called for donations of works by established artists to diversify the sources of funding. Didier Awadi (Studio Sankara) and Amadou Fall Ba (Senegal Talent Campus), two major cultural entrepreneurs in the field of music and training, are now being approached with this type of innovative peer funding mechanism. These experienced creators are also often involved in training the younger generation. Mr Konaté also encouraged countries to develop strategies to mobilise private sector

investment and create the conditions for cultural patronage at the national level.

For Ndèye Khoudia Diagne, Director of Arts at the Ministry of Culture and Communication of Senegal, it is also a question of rationalising and optimising investments in order to face the relative scarcity of national resources invested in the creative industries. Ndèye Diagne also advocates a diversification of funding mechanisms so as not to be limited to subsidies, which can sometimes create more dependence than the autonomy sought so that creators can now make a living from their art.



Didier Awadi (Studio Sankara) and Amadou Fall Ba (Senegal Talent Campus), two major cultural entrepreneurs in the field of music and training

DAK'ART : world capital of contemporary art

Created in 1992 from a dream shared by a few artists and art lovers, the DAK'ART Biennial of Contemporary African Art has become, over the years, an essential continental artistic event. And this 14th edition of DAK'ART is, in many ways, historic, as Sylvain Sankalé, one of its most ardent supporters, confirms (see interview in the box).

Dakar, creative city...

The Covid-19 pandemic has passed through and the creators of Africa and the diaspora were in the starting blocks to show the best of their creative genius. Four long years have passed since the last Biennale. Several international art galleries have recently set up shop in the Senegalese capital, and an embryonic local art market is gradually emerging. Artists' collectives have been established or confirmed, such as the emblematic *Atelier Médina* around the stylist Cheikha and the visual artist Douts Ndoye, or Kénu, the *Lab'Oratoire des Imaginaires* in Ouakam, run by the musician Alibeta. Both practice collective intelligence and invest in local social value-added.



The Keur Gaïndé complex of Amadou-Yacine Thiam in Hann

In addition to art galleries, many places of conviviality are multiplying in the Senegalese capital, following in the footsteps of the famous Keur Gaïndé complex of the pioneer Amadou Yacine Thiam, a building in the shape of a giant lion's head that deploys an art gallery, a hotel, a restaurant and a discotheque that has marked the Dakar nights...

In 2008, Koyo Kouoh, a Cameroonian-born curator and current director of the *Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa* in Cape Town, created the *Raw Material Company*, a centre for art, knowledge and society that hosts residencies, an academy and a resource centre. At Dak'Art 2022, Raw Material will present «The Ancestors in the Making», a memory work about a forgotten Vietnamese-Senegalese community by artist Tuan Andrew Nguyen who lives and works in Saigon, Vietnam.

Today, *Lulu Home Interior & Café* combines interior design, local creations, a bookshop, a co-working space, small restaurants, and cultural events. The *Loman ArtHouse*, an imposing villa located a short distance from the African Renaissance Monument, is both a meeting place and an exhibition, creation and reception area run by Loman Pawlitschek, an Australian artist born in Cape Town and based in Dakar since 2007. And art galleries are beginning to abound in the Plateau, formerly known as «downtown».



Queen and King Ashanti by Abdoulaye Konaté (628 cm x 230 cm)

Dak'Art 2022, a historic vintage!

It is in this context of creative emulation that Dak'Art 2022 is being held, an art biennial entitled *I Ndaffa* - forger, in Serer language. A theme inviting the reinvention of models that has inspired many artists. This 14th edition, which welcomed more than 300,000 visitors, was dedicated to opening up to new audiences while confirming the international scope of this unique event in Francophone Africa. It was characterised by a confrontation between different generations of creators that was as unprecedented as it was fusional, and by the discovery of new forms of art outside the walls.

The special project of this biennial is a fine illustration that delighted the audience: *Les Restes Suprêmes* by the playwright and director Dorcy Rugamba, is a theatrical, scenographic and visual performance in which masks speak of the past, if revisited.

Dak'Art «In» has become a giant exhibition in more than ten major venues in the city. In the large international exhibition, which brought together more than 50

artists from all over the world - from Cuba to Kenya, including France, the United States, Nigeria, South Africa and the Maghreb - the organisers paid a special tribute to the so-called «Master» Abdoulaye Konaté.

Fally Sène Sow is one of the great revelations of Dak'Art 2022. His installation «Rusty World» is unique in its kind. He confirms his immense talent for building works as monumental as they are detailed by presenting *Chaos Colobane*, at the Vema space on the pier leading to the Island of Gorée. In it, the artist reproduces the daily life of the inhabitants of a working-class district

of Dakar with meticulous detail and striking realism. «This is years of work and if I had to do it again, I would do it again,» says the artist, driven by a transcendental passion.

At the new *Musée des civilisations noires*, where a major exhibition dedicated to Picasso is also being held, the Senegal Pavilion made a strong impression with the paintings of Ibrahima Dièye, the hellish sculptures of Djibril André Diop, the installation *Cent et poussière, incursion* into the Sine Saloum by Mbaye Babacar Diouf and Arebénor Bassene, and the ethnographic photographs of Matar Ndour.



Installation «Rusty World» by Fally Sène Sow

In the village of Ouakam, the private entrepreneur Khaly Sy has just inaugurated his brand-new space *Esprit Boulangerie*. He is hosting an extension of the Senegal Pavilion, presenting works by Kiné Aw, ElHadj Sy, Moussa Ndiaye and Daouda Ndiaye... And at the National Art Gallery, adjacent to the Biennial's headquarters, Soly Cissé, one of the most prominent contemporary Senegalese artists on the international scene, has been given carte blanche to occupy the entire space and take us into his colourful imaginary world.

Côte d'Ivoire was the guest country at Dak'Art 2022. The «made in Abidjan» pavilion presented leading



Think Tea by Ngozi Ezema. Clay, plastic & metal.



Naaw Naan by Diadji Diop - Resin sculpture. Between earthly attraction and desire to fly, rootedness and impulse towards elsewhere, the figure stretches itself in a gesture of hope and strength.

artists such as Jems Kokobi, Valérie Oka, Ernest Dükü, N'Guessan Essoh and Pascal Konan. The Doxantu - a walk in Wolof - is a route lined with monumental works on the western coast of Dakar where 17 major artists from the continent present open-air installations. It is a Among them are Freddy Tsimba (DRC), Ki Siriky (Burkina Faso), Thiemoko Diarra (Mali/Belgium), Barthélémy Togu (Cameroon) and

Diadji Diop (Senegal), who caused a sensation with his bright red bust of a swimmer catching his breath and taking flight.

They include designers Freddy Tsimba (DRC), Ki Siriky (Burkina Faso), Thiemoko Diarra (Mali/Belgium), Barthélémy Togu (Cameroon) and Diadji Diop (Senegal), who caused a sensation with his vivid red buster of a swimmer taking off.

An amazing "Off"!

A flurry of events took hold of Dakar and its surroundings. It was like a firework display of works of art of all kinds, from the four corners of Africa and the diaspora of the entire world. A profusion of more than 400 «off» exhibitions, surprises and... dazzlement! It's impossible to see everything... You have to catch up on... Instagram and other platforms to make sure you don't miss anything!

In Senegal, we can say that the succession is assured when, opposite a major artist on the Dakar scene since President Léopold Sédar Senghor, El Hadj Sy, who is entitled to a masterly exhibition at the Selebe Yoon Gallery, there is a young, powerful, rising generation, detached from the dross of the past and overflowing with creative energy, thus showing a new path.

Pascal Nampemanla Traoré stood out with his artistic proposal *Le Fil d'Ariane*, which invites the visitor into



The Tribute to Pierre Rabhi by Pascal Nampémanla Traoré

a labyrinth installed on the first floor of the *Mémoires Africaines* gallery in Saly, on the small Senegalese coast, 70 kilometres from Dakar. Pascal has created a space for an installation that sums up his 25 years of creative work, questioning consumer society with a remarkable tribute to Pierre Rabhi (see interview-portrait below).

Dakar confirms its international vocation by hosting the the Black Rock residency, initiated by the Afro-American artist Kehinde Wiley, made famous by his portrait of Barack Obama. The exhibition presented the works of the 32 Black Rock residents, carefully displayed in the in the *Maison de la Culture Douta Seck*. This time, there were no American stars were not invited, but the but the show was also in the the colourful audience, half Afro-punk, half Cannes festival!

Diasporas from all over the world with a powerful energy, such as Precy Numbi from Brussels, a Congolese genius of recuperation whose performances were very

seductive; Laura Nsengiyumva, an activist who returned to Dakar 10 years after winning her very first prize there; Rokia Bamba, an energetic DJ made in Brussels and member of the *Troubles Archives* collective, and Teddy Mazina, a visual artist from Burundi who revisits history with Muzungu Tribes as part of the Matter Art Project. Reyana Sow, a young entrepreneur under the Noir



Mohamed Ali by Mucyo

Concept label, presented, among others, the unclassifiable creator of Rwandan origin, Mucyo. He creates giant portraits of legendary figures from the black world on fabric using bleach and a toothbrush as instruments! When night falls, Mucyo also plays and juggling with fire, giving lively Dakar evenings evenings in Dakar with a fairy-tale touch.

When Dakar celebrates art, it is also dance, live shows, cinema and music with memorable Nyege Nyege evenings in Yoff and the inevitable Thursday night rendezvous on the terrace of the Trames agency, with a view of the Place de l'Indépendance to the sound of the trendy DJs who make Dakar move. But art is also a market. A nascent art economy is emerging in West Africa around the Dakar hub, which is attracting more and more creators and connoisseurs.

A panel discussion on the financing and structuring of cultural industries organised by the ACP-EU Culture programme highlighted the need for more voluntary national cultural policies and the mobilisation of resources at local level to anchor cultural and creative industries in a sustainable process that is less dependent on external resources.

Three questions to Maître Sylvain Sankale

In what context was the Dakar Biennale born?

The Dakar Biennale was created in the midst of a structural adjustment crisis during which the Senegalese state could no longer afford the cultural policy it had previously pursued. It was no longer possible to organise exhibitions or to buy works. The artists complained and suggested that an event be organised in Senegal that would allow them to exhibit their work internationally. This is how the Ministry of Culture decided to organise the first Dak'Art Biennale in 1992, dedicated to all the arts. It was in 1996 that the first real biennial of contemporary African art was held. It was then equipped with a General Secretariat and a Scientific Council that I myself chaired for Dak'Art 2000. Dakar has progressively imposed itself as a major capital for visual arts on the international level although we still do not have a museum dedicated to contemporary art in Senegal...

What are the major innovations of this Dak'Art 2022 Biennale?

The major evolution comes from the artistic director, Mr. Malick Ndiaye, who created the Doxantu (walk in Wolof) to spread a series of installations and works of art by artists of excellent level all along the western coast of Dakar. This promenade offers a particular renewal to creation and its visibility. In addition, the "off" has grown from edition to edition. It now includes just over 400 different exhibitions, not only in Dakar – the biennial's flagship city – but also in the regions of Senegal and abroad. This combination of events gives the biennial a unique character, especially since artists and the public have been waiting for this event since 2020. Moreover, the level is very high this year and I even think that it is the best vintage we have had since the creation of Dak'Art.



How is the art market in Senegal and Africa today?

For a long time, contemporary art in Africa appeared to be an essentially Western phenomenon that did not interest the local populations. Both because they had not been trained in it and because the concerns of immediate survival put art issues in the background. At the beginning, there was no such sensitivity, enthusiasm, and education for art. Little by little, things have evolved: more and more schools are organising exhibition visits and a growing number of cultural mediators are accompanying this process of opening up to art and culture. When parents take their children to see exhibitions, this leaves its mark. A growing number of young people are interested in art and we are witnessing the birth of a new generation of creators integrated into a general movement that goes beyond contemporary art and leads the public to take an interest in everything that is created locally. But it is obvious that it is still in Europe that the market value of artists is set. I remain convinced that when Africans buy contemporary African art, this market will increase in value.

A very special project: «Les Restes Suprêmes» by Dorcy Rugamba

Presented in its world premiere at the *Musée des civilisations noires* in Dakar, *Les Restes Suprêmes* is a plastic and performative work that testifies to the role played by African art in the construction of a Eurocentric view of the world. The playwright Dorcy Rugamba questions the use of masks in the various rituals with which they have been associated throughout history. Beyond the mask that speaks and guides the African visitor in his quest for truth, the author questions racial theories and stereotypes, and fills in the memory gaps in official narratives.

It also questions the institution of the museum as such. This masterpiece, *Les Restes Suprêmes*, seeks to deconstruct the very fabric of museums by exposing the ideological charge of walled objects to the viewer. The

set design and staging features four tableaux in various spaces designed by Dorcy Rugamba and modelled by set designer Matt Deely. Over sixty craftsmen, technicians and artists from all disciplines worked for a month and a half to build this installation, which covers over 300m².

For this journey into the land of restored memory, the audience, in groups of about one hundred people, follows the actors throughout the story, and finds itself at the heart of the spaces. The spectator looks through interstices, as one looks through a keyhole at a family secret. The actors are exceptional, inhabited by their characters, like the dazzling actress Nathalie Vairac.

Follow [Les Restes Suprêmes sur Facebook](#)



Actress Nathalie Vairac in «Les Restes Suprêmes» by Dorcy Rugamba

Meeting with Pascal Nampémanla Traoré: «I am not looking for a script. I have things to say!»

Who are you Pascal Nampémanla Traoré?

I have to go back to my childhood, to my origins, to my birthplace. I come from the village of Kpéfélé, near Katiola, in the north of Côte d'Ivoire. I come from the Tagbana people who are from the Senufo family, known for their tradition of masks and a very strong culture with initiation cycles. I left this cradle of tradition very early on to go to the south of the Ivory Coast, to Rubino, where my uncle was a teacher.

As early as the second grade, I started to draw. And at the request of my teachers, I would go round the classrooms to illustrate what I was learning the following week. It was my Sunday chore but also my first exercises. And then I had an elder who was in an art school in Bingerville who showed me how to make shadows, lights, volumes with the pencil. At the request of my parents, I waited to obtain at least the brevet to join the Lycée artistique d'Abidjan and then the Ecole des Beaux-Arts d'Abidjan.

Your artistic background is rich, can you tell us more about it?

Initially, I wanted to be a sculptor. But during my training I discovered communication and graphic arts which allowed me to practice photography and video. After my studies, I started to work in a printing company, then in an advertising agency. One day, I answered an ad in the national daily *Fraternité Matin* for an agency that was recruiting an art director in Dakar. I had already read about what was happening in Dakar in *Revue Noire*, the work of Bouna Médoune Sèye, the film scene, Joe Ouakam, I had the feeling that there was a creative bubbling in Senegal. A few months later I found myself in Senegal with the idea of working there for a few years and returning... But I'm still there.

It was during the 2004 Dak'Art Biennial that I had my first exhibition, *"Yeux dans Yeux"*. I met the fascinating Joe Ouakam, who meant a lot to me, and Bouna Médoune Sèye, with whom we worked for two years on creative residencies, performance painting and exhibitions. There was also a group of friends with whom we managed a



Ma Joconde by Pascal Nampémanla Traoré

reggae band. I was in the midst of a cultural and research boom. From then on, despite the workload, every two years I had an exhibition because I had a lot to say! And often, my questions and my work questioned the consumer society... which I saw up close in the advertising world. I often remember my youth when certain everyday objects were made of wood or clay. Objects made to last over time. Today, the Western world has obscured all this as if it were no longer true or had never existed. In the madness of this consumer society, we have gone from the unalterable to the "disposable" because it makes money. This is a bit of a common thread in my work. For each project, I take a theme and I find the medium that best expresses this idea. I work on different media, from kraft wrapping paper to newspaper, via photos and video, to create a universe and tell a little about our humanity. Each exhibition is a new proposal. I'm not looking for a script but I have something to say!

At what point did you decide to give up advertising to devote yourself fully to your creation?

In 2011, I decided to stop working in advertising because I was missing out on artist residency opportunities due to my full-time agency work. I felt that my whole being was being sucked into this need to create.

The life of an artist is not easy every day because financially it is always unstable, but it is worthwhile to live fully what we are passionate about, what is inside us. And then, there are always some communication projects that I am entrusted with but more in the context of these big companies that run advertising which is the engine of this consumer society.

Since 2017, I have been very involved in the AGIT'ART laboratory around Joe Ouakam with projects with a strong social value, particularly in schools in disadvantaged areas to raise awareness of environmental problems and also to reintegrate artistic activity into the school environment.

How did you come up with the idea for this personal exhibition, "Le Fil d'Ariane", which you are presenting on a whole floor under construction above the "Mémoires Africaines" gallery in Saly?

This year, within the framework of the Dakar Biennial, I wanted to sum up my work. It is a biographical work. I wanted to bring together the different parts of this body, the different proposals I have made since 2004, and put them together in one place. And I started with the idea of "Ariadne's Thread" in the spirit of a labyrinth, in the image of my journey which is not linear. There is painting, sculpture, installation, photography and video. The themes have often changed and the experimentation of many materials appears...

I believe that encounters are essential in a person's career. When Richard Cousinard suggested that I exhibit in this place, I immediately accepted. And with friends and some people who already collect my work, we crowdfunded to put on the exhibition.

After "Fil d'Ariane", what's next for Pascal Nampémanla?

I will continue to work on these issues that beset me in relation to the environment, the destruction of the achievements of humanity through our African cities. We have forgotten that the oldest buildings in the world are made of earth and stones.

The next step is to create a forest somewhere far from the big city. A forest with residences where other artists, writers, filmmakers, choreographers, musicians... can find the time to reconnect with nature and create away from the hustle and bustle of the big cities. Today, we are crammed into concrete, reconstituted materials that are not adapted to our climate and our way of life. And we are living more and more uncomfortably in this consumer society. There are fewer and fewer trees in a big city like Dakar, which is suffocating. A simple Google search shows you how this city has been deforested in three or four decades. If we continue like this, what kind of world are we leaving to our children? There is a problem. Something has changed in the minds of humans. We are becoming another human race. Which one?



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