



## Press dossier

### Art and Architecture at Work

#### On the occasion of the 24<sup>th</sup> UN Habitat Governing Council Meeting NAIROBI, April 15-19, 2013

The European Commission and the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels (BOZAR) organize a **side event presentation, exhibit, publication and workshop 'Art & Architecture at Work'** on the occasion of the 24<sup>th</sup> UN Habitat Governing Council Meeting. Through a **showcase of recent best practices in Africa**, the aim is to highlight the key role of art and architecture in the inclusive and sustainable development of African cities.

#### **Art and architecture influence urban space planning to positively impact inclusiveness, sustainability and stability in urban capitals:**

- **Inclusiveness:** Civil participation, space appropriation, shared vision, masterplan definition, etc.
- **Sustainability:** Environmental awareness, local building practices & materials, renewable energy, etc.
- **Stability:** Safety, reduction of urban violence.

Bottom-up initiatives, participatory approaches and community involvement are increasingly valued in urban planning. Alongside state-driven initiatives, art centres and architects together bring significant value to the process. Through their interventions in public spaces, they engage civil society towards cultural ownership of the city and steer urban growth towards sustainable and inclusive patterns.

#### PROGRAMME

**April 15-19:** **EXHIBIT BOOTH - at the 24<sup>th</sup> UN Habitat Governing Council Meeting**  
***Art and Architecture in inclusive and sustainable urban development in Africa***

- **Publication (free):** *Art & Architecture at Work*, developed by the European Commission, the Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels, and African Architecture Matters, Amsterdam.
- **Videos:** *Art at Work* project, *Stars of Dar*, *Interview of the former Mayor of Accra*.

**April 16, 10:00-14:00: WORKSHOP - at The GoDown Arts Centre, Nairobi\***

Stakeholders of the 'Nai Ni Who? (Who is Nairobi?) initiative meet to discuss the project's next phase. Initiated in 2010 by the GoDown Arts Centre and White Architects (Sweden), the project aims to rethink GoDown's neighborhood (Nairobi railway and adjacent industrial area) with active participation from all local stakeholders. Presented by Joy M'Boya, GoDown's director, with contributions by architects Heinrich Wolff (South Africa), Joe Osae Addo, (Ghana) and Berend van der Lans (Netherlands).

**April 16, 16:30: PRESS POINT - at The GoDown Arts Centre, Nairobi see interviews availability below**

**April 17, 13:30 – 14:30: SIDE EVENT PRESENTATION - at 24<sup>th</sup> UN Habitat Governing Council Meeting\***

**Keynote presentations on Art and Architecture in inclusive and sustainable urban development in Africa**

- **Mrs Joy M'Boya**, Director, The GoDown Arts Centre Nairobi: **The 'Nai Ni Who? (Who is Nairobi?) initiative**, on the process of developing stakeholders' visions of Nairobi as a 'world-class African metropolis'.
- **Mr Heinrich Wolff**, Principal, Wolff Architects, Cape Town: **The 'Expansion of Freedom' principle**, on a socially-conscious architecture that creates job opportunities, facilitates physical protection, and develops infrastructure for education and health.
- Moderator: **Mr Joe Osae Addo**, ArchiAfrika

**\*Members of the press are invited to attend these events and interview key representatives.**

## ORGANIZED BY

The **European Commission** with the **Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR)**, Brussels, in partnership with the **African Union Commission**.



## WITH THE CONTRIBUTION OF

The GoDown Arts Centre (Nairobi), African Architecture Matters (Amsterdam), ArchiAfrika (Accra) and Wolff Architects (Cape Town).



## CONTACT

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## CONTEXT

**Art & Architecture at Work** is the latest development of the EU-financed project 'Visionary Africa - Art at Work'. Conceived as a series of travelling exhibitions in public spaces of African capitals, the first phase sought to prompt reflection in Africa on public spaces, the role of the audiences in art, and the role of art in urban development. It began in 2010 during the 'Visionary Africa' festival, which took place at BOZAR. The itinerant extension of the project revolved around an adaptable pavilion designed by Ghanaian architect David Adjaye which hosted the exhibition 'A Useful Dream', curated by Simon Njami. This exhibition celebrated 50 years of African photography and was complimented by a showcase of local contemporary artists in response to the project's themes. An artist residency and artists' workshop accompanied each city stop. **Art at Work** was a **laboratory on the role of artistic practices in the African urban context**. It has led the way for an increased focus on the role of art and architecture in public spaces and how they can contribute to a higher degree of social cohesion, quality urban development and address environmental issues.

## PAST ITINERANCE of Visionary Africa - Art at Work

**Ouagadougou**, February 19-March 13, 2011 (during FESPACO), Place de la Nation.

**Addis Ababa**, January 25-February 15, 2012 (during AU Summit), African Union.

**Cairo**, February 15-March 7, 2012, Al Azhar Park (Aga Khan Development Network).

**Harare**, May 24-July 2, 2012, gardens of National Gallery of Zimbabwe.

**Bujumbura**, July 12-30, 2012, Palais des Arts et de la Culture de Bujumbura.

**Kampala**, September 18-October 14, 2012, Railway Station Gardens.

## INTERVIEWS AVAILABILITY, APRIL 17 16:30

**Joe Osae Addo (Ghana)** trained at the Architectural Association in London. He worked in Finland, the UK and the USA, setting up his practice in Los Angeles in 1991. His work has been influenced by 'genus-loci', and how architecture responds to this by creating pieces which are both site-specific and meet the needs of the people who will interact with them. He is a founding partner in the A + D Museum, Los Angeles, whose mission is to advance knowledge and to enable people to appreciate and understand architecture and design. He moved back to his native country, Ghana, in 2004 and is currently the CEO of Constructs LLC, an innovative design firm based in Accra and Tamale in Ghana. **Addo is on the Board of ArchiAfrika, a network for African architecture based in Accra. He and the ArchiAfrika network are valuable resources for those advocating for locally-inspired solutions in urban planning processes.**

**Gilles Hubens (Belgium)** is Cooperation officer at the Education, Health, Research and Culture Unit of the EuropeAid Development and Cooperation DG, European Commission, Brussels, Belgium. He comes from the Ministry of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels (FWB), where he is Director and Advisor to the General Delegation of the FWB with the European Union. At the Cabinet of the Minister of Culture, Audiovisual, Health and Equal Opportunities, he was expert in charge of the coordination in culture and audiovisual matters during the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. He participated in government negotiations on the definition and implementation of cultural policies. He served as adviser and International expert on strengthening institutional capacity and operational bodies' active in the field of regulation of the media during elections (2003), and as adviser in the Higher Audiovisual Council of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels (1997 to 2004).

**Kathleen Louw (Belgium)** is project manager, Africa, at the Centre of Fine Arts (BOZAR), in Brussels. She holds an Economics degree, and a Master of Arts in African Studies from UCLA. She worked for the General Bank (Fortis) in Moscow, and for the J. Paul Getty Trust in Los Angeles where she was In charge of coordinating international field conservation projects and conferences on cultural heritage. She organized the Terra 2008 conference in Mali, with the Malian Ministry of Culture and in collaboration with ICOMOS and UNESCO. At BOZAR since 2011, Kathleen proposes new Africa-related programs such as 'For a sustainable world', the 9th edition of the Bamako

Encounters in 2012. She also manages BOZAR's long-term collaboration with Belgium's Royal Museum for Central Africa, and the traveling exhibit program *Art at Work* with the European Commission.

**Thomas Melin (Sweden)** is Head of External Relations of UN-Habitat. An architect and planner by profession, he has been working in the field of international urban development for more than 25 years. His long-term posts have been for Swedish Save the Children in Ethiopia, and the Port Elizabeth Low-income Housing Programme in South Africa. He held a variety of progressive positions at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, where he served as Head of the Urban Development Division from 2005-2009 when he joined UN-Habitat. Mr. Melin is author of several articles and publications, among them, "Fighting Poverty in Historical Cities".

**Joy M'Boya (Kenya)** is the Executive Director of The Performing & Visual Arts Centre Ltd, popularly called The GoDown Arts Centre - a nonprofit facility providing subsidized space and residency opportunities for Kenyan artists and presenting artistic public programmes for local audiences. She is a Trustee of Gaara Dance Foundation (Kenya) whose aim is to develop contemporary African dance. She is also a Trustee of the Kalasha Film Awards (Kenya). She has served on the Board of Trustees of Action for Music. In 2004, she received the National Women's Council of Kenya Merit Award for her contribution to the development of the performing arts in Kenya. Through appointment by the Minister of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services, she has served on the Governing Council of the Kenya Cultural Centre, which includes the Kenya National Theatre. Joy worked for 7 years as an architectural designer with a practice in Nairobi. At the same time, she joined the Kenyan pop band Musikly Speaking as lead singer. In the late '90s, she initiated a training programme in Nairobi on performance-making for young people aged 15 to 22. This organization, Fame Trust, was among the 'founder' groups of a communal arts space concept, which was finally realized as The GoDown Arts Centre.

**Berend Van der Lans (Netherlands)** is an architect who trained at the Eindhoven University of Technology. Since 1992, he has been working in various architectural practices in Europe and Africa. In 2000, shortly after his return from 3 years work experience in Tanzania, he started the ArchiAfrika foundation together with 4 other Dutch architects with similar experience. The organization was set up with the aim to put African architecture and urbanism on the world map, by spreading knowledge on the subject and enhancing the architectural debate on the continent. In 2010, Berend started **African Architecture Matters** together with Antoni Folkers, aiming to contribute to projects and research related to African architecture and urbanism, as well as supporting the ArchiAfrika network. As an architect, Berend van der Lans has been involved in a wide range of projects - from rural hospitals in Africa to complicated inner city designs and their execution, in Europe. In 2007, he started *Architectureplus*, offering architecture, project coordination and research services. He has produced articles and given lectures on various topics concerning architecture in Africa.

**Heinrich Wolff (South Africa)** together with his wife Ize he created Wolff Architects design studio. His work has been exhibited internationally, the most significant exhibitions being the Venice Biennale (2006 & 2010), the Sao Paulo Biennale (2005 & 2007) and the South American Architecture Biennale in Ecuador (2008). In 2011, Heinrich was selected as the *Designer of the Future* by the Wouter Mikmak Foundation (the Netherlands). In 2007, he won the prestigious DaimlerChrysler Award for South African Architecture. Together with Jo Noero, in 2006, Heinrich received the Lubetkin Award from the RIBA for the best building in the world (outside the EU) – in this case, the Red Location Museum of Struggle in Port Elizabeth. He has won several other international and South African awards for excellence in design, most notably for public buildings such as schools and hospitals. Heinrich has taught at universities in South Africa and in the USA and currently holds an adjunct Associate Professorship at the University of Cape Town. He is also a founding member of Docomomo South Africa, an organization dedicated to the documentation and conservation of Modern Architecture. Some of his projects include: the Inkwenkwezi Secondary School (2006), The Red Location Museum of Struggle (2005), the Usasazo Secondary School (2003) and the Vredenburg Hospital (in progress). **Heinrich Wolff is considered an important voice for inclusive urban planning process in Africa, thanks to his experience and close involvement with a range of public cultural and educational projects.**