



**From: European Commission
Directorate General Development and Cooperation
(EuropeAid) Unit B4**

**To: UN Habitat Nairobi, GC Secretariat
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Re: Proposal for exhibit and side event:

Art & Architecture at Work in Urban Africa

At the 24th UN Habitat Governing Council Meeting,
Nairobi, Kenya,
April 15-19, 2013

Proposal for exhibit and side event

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Art & Architecture at Work in Urban Africa

The objective of *Art & Architecture at Work* at the 24th UN Habitat Governing Council Meeting is to promote the role of art and architecture at the service of inclusive and sustainable urban development in African cities.

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

Art & Architecture at Work presents recent best practices in Africa, as models to be encouraged as part of the urban planning processes.

1. Side event, Wednesday April 17, 2013, 13h30-14h30

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

1. **Joy M'Boya**, Director, GoDown Arts Center, Nairobi: **The Nairobi 2013 initiative.**
On developing stakeholders' visions of Nairobi as a 'world-class African metropolis'. For the last year, GoDown has engaged the various stakeholders of its neighborhood including youth and women, in creating new visions for their environment, which have now been interpreted by local architects and students. The presentation of these visions to all stakeholders will take place during the week of the Council Meeting, and the proposed side event will present the results of the project and feedback from international architects.
2. **Heinrich Wolff**, Architect, Capetown: **The 'Expansion of Freedom' principle.**
On an architecture that creates job opportunities, facilitates physical protection, and develops infrastructure for education and health. Heinrich Wolff will present his vision of a socio-cultural based architecture in the African context.
3. **Joe Addo**, ArchiAfrika: **Socio-cultural design inspired development.**
On broadening the discourse on Africa's built environment to encompass the role of socio-cultural design inspired development. Addo will inform audiences of upcoming platforms in Africa addressing this goal.

2. Exhibit *Art and Architecture in inclusive and sustainable urban development in Africa*.

Publication: *Art & Architecture at Work: Best practices in inclusive and sustainable urban development*, developed by the European Commission, the Center for Fine Arts in Brussels, and African Architecture Matters. *Free distribution.*

Short videos: *Art at Work* project summary,
Stars of Dar, an initiative linking Dar es Salaam monuments and artists
Nat Nuno-Amarteifio, interview of former mayor of Accra, much involved in urban development

Photography: *Urban Africa*, photographic survey by architect David Adjaye
Artists' responses to the *Art at Work* project.

Magazine: ArchiAfrika Accra, January 2013 (first) issue.

Relevance with UN Habitat's mandate

Art & Architecture at Work and its approach, by focusing on the human being and culture within the city, offer a complement to UN Habitat's broad mission of tackling housing and urban growth on a grand scale. It advocates the inclusion of artists' and architects' visions in long-term urban planning processes.

Relevance with the theme of the 24th Governing Council meeting

The best practices presented in our publication and exhibit, as well as Heinrich Wolff's and Joy M'boya's keynote presentations at our side event, advocate art and architecture initiatives that engage youth and young professionals of all sectors towards sustainable visions of their city, in alignment with the theme of the 24th Governing Council Meeting: Sustainable urban development : *'the role of cities in creating improved economic opportunities for all, with special reference to youth and gender'*.

Side Event Key Contributors

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 can/ should respond to this in creating pieces which are both site specific and meet the needs of people who will interact with it. 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 inno-native design firm based in Accra and Tamale in Ghana, West Africa. **Ado is on the Board of ArchiAfrika, the network for African architecture, and directs the network base recently moved to Accra. He and his network are valuable resources for those advocating local inspirations and solutions in urban planning processes.**

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 programs 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 2004 Merit Award for her contribution to the development of the performing arts. Through appointment by the Minister of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services, she has served on the Governing Council of the Kenya Cultural Centre, under which falls 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 1993, she re-located temporarily to Sydney, Australia where she pursued post-graduate studies in Voice at NIDA. She returned to Nairobi, Kenya in the late '90s and initiated a training program in performance-making for young people aged 15 to 22 years. This organization, Fame Trust, was among the 'founder' groups of a communal arts space concept, which was finally realized as The Godown Arts Centre. **In the last year, GoDown Centre for the Arts has been engaging the various stakeholders of its neighborhood, including artists, into a discussion on visions for Nairobi in 2013. Architects are currently interpreting these visions, for presentation to the city starting May 2013. In recognition of this inclusive, multidisciplinary approach, the GoDown Arts centre has recently been considered for UN Habitat partner status.**

Berend Van der Lans (Netherlands) is an architect, trained as at the Eindhoven University of Technology. Since 1992 he has been working in various architectural practices in Europe and Africa. In 2000, shortly after the return from 3 years of working experience in Tanzania, he started the ArchiAfrika foundation together with 4 other Dutch architects with similar experience. The organisation was set up with the aim, to put African architecture and urbanism on the world map, by spreading knowledge on the subject and enhance the architectural debate on the continent. Berend has been core member of ArchiAfrika from the start. Since 2005 he was responsible for the secretariat and editor of website and newsletter, while also coordinating various projects and conferences. Since 2010 he is appointed Secretary of the Board of ArchiAfrika. In 2010 Berend started **African Architecture Matters** together with Antoni Folkers, aiming at contributing 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 European inner city designs and execution. Since

2007 he started *Architectureplus*, offering architecture, project coordination and research services. He produced articles and lectures on various topics on architecture in Africa. **Berend Van der Lans is responsible for the main content of our publication *Art & Architecture at Work*.**

Heinrich Wolff (South Africa) Heinrich Wolff forms Wolff Architects with his wife Ilze. The recently formed design studio is concerned with developing an architectural practice of consequence through the mediums of design, advocacy, research and documentation. Heinrich's 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 – Ecuador (2008). In 2011 Heinrich was selected as the Designer of the Future by the Wouter Mikmak Foundation (Netherlands). In 2007, he won the prestigious DaimlerChrysler Award for South African Architecture. With Jo Noero, Heinrich received the Lubetkin Award in 2006 from the RIBA for the best building in the world (outside the EU) for 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 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 (current). **Heinrich Wolff is deemed an important voice for inclusive urban planning process in Africa, thanks to his experience and close involvement with a range of public, cultural, educational, and health architectural projects in South Africa.**

Technical requests to UN Habitat GC organizers:

Side event:

- Wednesday April 17, 2013, 13h30-14h30
- **Large capacity room (100 +), as we think architect Heinrich Wolff will attract a large audience.**
- Not too distant from Council Meeting location
- Possibility of light buffet catering
- Interpretation booths if possible

Exhibit:

- Booth type 1
- 2 tables
- 3 chairs
- a DVD player and monitor (to be rented).
(Installation would be done Sunday April 14)

Accreditation:

Side Event participants:

- Berend Van der Lans (Holland)
- Joe Osae Addo (Ghana)
- Heinrich Wolff (South Africa)
- Joy M'Boya (Kenya)
- Kathleen Louw (Belgium)
- Dominique Thiange (Belgium)
- David Vliegen (Belgium)
- Gilles Hubens (Belgium) (European Commission)
- Other EU participants (TBC)

Origin of the project

This side event emanates from the urban focus of the *Art at Work* project, initiated by the European Commission and the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels (BOZAR).



Following the 'Brussels Declaration' of 2009, which affirms the role of culture in development, the *Art at Work project* proposes a reflection in Africa on the topic of spaces and audiences for art, and the role of art and architecture in urban development. It travelled in public spaces of African capitals and revolved around an adaptable pavilion designed by Ghanaian architect David Adjaye, exhibits curated by Simon Njami, 'A Useful Dream', a celebration of African photography since independences of the African continent, and showcase of local contemporary artists.

In the words of **Jean Ping, African Union Chairman**, in his opening speech for *Art at Work* inauguration in Addis Ababa, May 25, 2012: « **Art at Work exprime un engagement et une conception de la culture qui lui reconnaissent une portée politique et sociale** »... « **L'originalité du concept de cette exposition itinérante réside dans sa vocation à s'adresser aux masses, au peuple** ».

Art at Work was a one-of-a-kind initiative, a **laboratory on the role of artistic practices in urban development in Africa**. Its itinerancy and reception has proved successful, triggering new ideas along its path on the potential of culture in public spaces to achieve social cohesion and quality urban development, and on the role of architects to incorporate this element in urban planning. And so, **during the Kampala edition of the project in September 2012, a regional conference gathered 70 professionals in the field of architecture, city management, academics, and arts to discuss how art & architecture can make city development inclusive and sustainable. This conference caught the attention of UN Habitat.**

Art at Work Itinerancy

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.

Art at Work Press Feedback

'Not every show merits a standing ovation, but the display of historic photographs of Africa at the precise moment in the 1950s and 1960s when African spirits were high and aspirations where on the ascendant'. 'African artists are called upon to play their roll to the full'. Gamal Nkrumah, Al Ahram Weekly, Cairo, March 2012.