

REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL

Une Peuple – Un But – Une Foi

MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON AFRICAN ART CRITIQUE

Maison de la Culture Douta Seck

Dakar 25 – 29 June, 2003

Opening Speech

of

M. Abdou Fall

Minister of Culture and Communication

Wednesday 25 June, 2003

The cultural program of the first year's semester could not find a better end, before the rainy season pause, than the three meetings organized as part of the activities of the Biennale's 'off' season. Indeed, the implementation of the Coalition on Cultural Diversity was a special moment to reaffirm our will to work closely with the civil society, particularly, with the different cultural workers, in the spirit of co-administration and responsibility sharing in the cultural arena. The National Visual Arts Salon gave us the opportunity to resume with great national art encounters. Finally, as you must certainly be aware of it, we have just concluded the first meeting of the Cultural Ministers of the Africa Caribbean Pacific (ACP) countries with resolutions, which augur quite a few promising perspectives.

The seminar on art critique in Africa, which opens today, is the result of the will to develop an intellectual environment propitious to fostered and sustained creativity, and to contribute information and educate audiences on African creation. If Dakar became, thanks to the Biennale of Contemporary African Art, a privileged area for African contemporary creation, it has, thus, the responsibility to create the propitious conditions in order to clarify the esthetic processes, to validate propositions and productions, to formulate the contributions to the visual arts' debate.

The idea to prepare, out of this workshop, other meetings such as the conception of the DAK'ART 2004 catalogue or the content elaboration of the Biennale newsletter, with those who are participating in this current meeting, and others, seems to me a pertinent idea, that has to be fostered.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your presence in Dakar is a testimony of the interest Visual Arts professionals have for our country and its Biennale. It allows us to believe that DAK'ART represents for Africa and its art creators, an event, which responsibility to preserve and expand its credibility, falls upon us. Our goal is to make it a concrete proposition of mobilization, reflection, and choices, in a double spirit of cultural diversity preservation and the realization of the African Union, so dear to the president of the Republic of Senegal, M. Abdoulaye Wade.

It is from this point of view that I salute the presence of the Association française d'action artistique (AFAA), which has shown constant support for the expression and promotion of African creation, and fostered the development of remarkable initiatives in Senegal. The participation of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA) in this seminar needs to also be acknowledged.

I want to reiterate my support for your plenary sessions, which are of the utmost importance.

Dear Participants, I am expecting that, at this stage, you will commit yourself to regularly express your opinions on the African production, that from your analyses and productions, the artists will find the reasons and the means to constantly question themselves, to feed a creativity enriched by the diversity of its inspiration sources.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I declare open the Seminar on Art Critique in Africa.

I thank you for your attention.