

## "Art Criticism in Africa" Seminar & Workshop Dakar, June 25-29, 2003

### **I**ntroduction

DAK'ART Biennial of African Contemporary Art is willing to be also an encounter for artists and experts in the field of art. It aims are to contribute to a better structuration of a necessary intellectual environment for the recognition of a creativity based on technical excellency and mind openness, allowing constant questioning and challenges.

### **A**ims and purposes

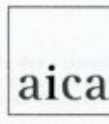
This workshop / seminar aims to feed an articulate thinking on what establishes the aesthetic value of an artistic practice or artwork and to emphasize the art critical process itself as a reflection, for the artist and its public, of the feelings aroused by its production and its reception. The seminar plans to produce a corpus of essays on visual creativity in Africa, as a stimulation, a validation and a discussion around the most relevant experiences existing today. Its purpose is also to sustain our common professional efforts towards skills improvements and dissemination of information, around the relevance of African contemporary art.

### **C**ontents

The "Art Criticism in Africa" workshop will gather a dozen of participants in Dakar from June 25 to June 29, 2003. On one hand, it strive after an articulated debate based on critical contributions submitted by each participants about a selected artist or identified trends, on the other hand, it targets the elaboration of a common contribution to the "Encounters & Exchanges" sessions and the "DAK'ART News" publication, during DAK'ART 2004.



programmeafrique créations



Association Internationale des Critiques d'Art  
International Association of Art Critics  
Asociación Internacional de Críticos de Arte

The Seminar "Art Criticism in Africa" is a co-production DAK'ART, AFAA/programme Afrique en créations and AICA.

**Day 1 : Wednesday June 25th**

**CONTEXTS OF ART CRITICISM IN AFRICA**

**INTRODUCTION BY Jacques Leenhardt**

**Yacouba Konaté**

*Artistic traditions as contexts of conflict in the practice of african criticism.*

**Iba Ndiaye Diadji**

*How can be understood the idea of art criticism in relation with the african context and the art creation today ?*

**Haydee Venegas**

*Presence of african traditions in the discourses about caribbean and latin american art today.*

**Abdou Sylla**

*How african criticism renders the traditions and their breaking downs within its relation about contemporary african art.*

**Day 2 : Thursday June 26th**

**THE RESULTS OF THE COLONIAL SYSTEMS, THEN OF THE GLOBALIZATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART AND ITS CONSIDERATIONS IN AFRICA.**

**Ola Olodi**

*Analyse of the situation in the English-speaking countries of Africa.*

**Alioune Badiane**

*Analyse of the situation in the French-speaking countries of Africa.*

The afternoon will be dedicated to the lecture and the discussion of some published texts that will be presented and commented by Henry Meyric Hughes and Jacques Leenhardt.

**Day 3 : Friday June 27th**

**INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF ART CRITICISM IN AFRICA**

**Barbara Murray**

*Creation, life and survival of specialized art magazines in Africa.*

**Salah Hassan**

*Politics, cultural policies and statutes of art criticism in african media press supports.*

The afternoon will be dedicated to the lecture and the discussion of some published texts that will be presented and commented by Jean-Marc Poinot and Ramon Tio Bellido.

**Day 4 : Saturday June 28th**

**TALKING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES OF MEDIA DISTRIBUTION AND OF EVALUATION DUTIES IN ART CRITICISM.**

**Emma Bedford**

*In media Res, in media involvements.*

**Rasheed Araeen**

*On the construction of a discursive space about art in Africa.*

The afternoon will be dedicated to the lecture and the discussion of some published texts that will be presented and commented by Christophe Domino and Jacques Leenhardt.

**STUDIO VISITS, BALANCE AND END OF THE SEMINAR.**



## AICA Symposium "Art, Minorities, Majorities" Dakar, July 2nd & 3rd 2003

The modernity of art has appeared unimaginable without the demands of new contents that pretended to obliterate the existing forms by disqualifying them as academic decay.

The history of art and criticism reveals, however, that more than once these changes have consisted in returning some styles to a favour that was formerly denied, a phenomenon that is accelerating since the post-modern break.

One of the strongest and most recent consequences of this linear change is verified by the necessity felt by the Occident to redistribute the centers of artistic and cultural productions - so, more undoubtedly, than the centers of decision-making - at a worldwide level.

- In face of this indisputed current reality, one must however retroactively pose some analyses and statements that generate a dialectic evaluation of the situation. How do these shifts from a deciding majority to a producing minority, take place, and in the reverse, how and why are such swings regulated ? According to what strategies and therefore what processes, do forms and styles seem to become obsolete there and gain in recognition here ?
- Which speculative directions do such an operational dialectic point to, between the "art of the others" and the "other art" ? What kind of accompanying commentaries does criticism make about the esthetic minorities, and how does it redistribute them relative to the already defined majorities ?
- How is it possible to escape from such a relational game, and how to deconstruct it, how to demonstrate it in order to make clear the conditionings of a before and after of these shifts. Shouldn't one therefore interrogate oneself about the cultural currents, contexts, and realities that aspire and pretend to express themselves outside of such procedures ?



The Getty Grant Program



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**WEDNESDAY JULY 2nd**

**9.30 a.m. INTRODUCTION**

Henry Meyric Hughes (President of AICA)  
Abdou Sylla (President of AICA-Senegal)

**10.30 a.m. – 1.30 p.m. ART CRITICISM VS ARTISTIC MINORITIES AND MAJORITIES**

Iba Ndiaye Diadji (Senegal): "Who is able to criticize contemporary African Art?"  
Rasheed Araeen (United Kingdom): "Modernity, Modernism and the future of Art in Africa"  
Salah Hassan (Sudan/United States): "NKA and contemporary African Art Criticism"  
Barbara Murray (Zimbabwe): "Writing about Art: the Rule of an Art Magazine in promoting contemporary African Art"  
Moderated by Jacques Leenhardt (France)

**3 p.m. – 6.30 p.m. ART OF THE OTHERS AND OTHERS ART (first part)**

Emma Bedford (South Africa): "Fresh from South Africa: supporting Young Artists"  
Haydee Venegas (Puerto Rico): "In Search of Identity-Alterity-Travestism"  
Tanella Boni (Ivory Coast): "On the Image of the Woman in the Work of some contemporary African Artists"  
Heie Treier (Estonia): "Ethnofuturism – grass-roots level politics"  
Moderated by Ramon Tio Bellido (France)

**THURSDAY JULY 3rd**

**9.30 a.m. – 1 p.m. ART OF THE OTHERS AND OTHERS ART (second part)**

Christophe Domino & Dominique Abensour (France): "Black Strategies: about the Works of some Artists in Europe since 15 Years"  
Assegued Meskerem (Ethiopia): "Artistic Panorama in Ethiopia: majoritarian and minoritarian Commitments"  
Ola Oloidi (Nigeria): "An History of Art Movements in Nigeria"  
Nadira Laggoune (Algeria): "Specificity and Reality of Algerian Art today"  
Célestin Badibanga ne Nwine (Democratic Congo): "On the apparition of a new contextualized creation in Congo"  
Moderated by Christian Chambert (Sweden)

**3 p.m. – 6.30 p.m. WHICH ALTERNATIVES FOR WHICH RELATIONAL PROCEDURES ?**

Kunle Filani (Nigeria): "Museology in Nigeria"  
Yacouba Konaté (Ivory Coast): "Africa and the big European events"  
Elona Lubyte (Lithuania): "About Parallels"  
Ousseynou Wade (Senegal): "Dak'Art, an African Biennial"  
Moderated by Krydz Ikwuemesi (Nigeria)

**BALANCE AND CONCLUSION**

Henry Meyric Hughes (United Kingdom)