

Àsìkò 2016 Addis Ababa
6th International Art Programme
June 27th – July 30th, 2016

Project conceived and developed by
Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos

Curator: Bisi Silva

About the Programme

In 2010 the Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos began an innovative programme with the aims of filling a gap in the educational system in Nigeria and many African countries, which tend to ignore the critical methodologies and histories that underpin artistic practice. The programme comes out of the need to build local, regional and continental support structures for art production, critical thinking, and curatorial practice to provide a conducive framework that encourages and advances the individual research and production of participants.

Using the format of part art laboratory, part residency and part informal art academy, over the course of 35 intensive days Àsikò 2016 will focus partially on technique and primarily on methodology, critical thinking, and the implementation of conceptual ideas. The programme will be of benefit to art and cultural producers interested in thinking through the conception and execution of their practice, who are curious and interested in experimenting with modes of practice and thought outside of the traditional modes of working but not to its total exclusion. It will focus principally on artistic and cultural production from Africa and the African Diaspora.

Curatorial Segment of the Programme

The programme will include the 5th curatorial segment begun in 2012 responding to an urgent and continuing need for more curators on the continent. Over the past four years 10 participants have taken advantage of this course to develop their skills and their knowledge. During the 35 day course, curatorial participants will be encouraged to develop their research methodologies, hone their proposal development as well as their critical writing skills, engage closely with artists from across the continent as well as with experienced professionals from around the world. The curators will be challenged to develop and engage new curatorial formats and strategies for the final programme under experienced curatorial supervision.

2016 Programme in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

After two very successful programmes in Lagos, On Independence and The Ambivalence of Promise (2010) and History/Materiality in 2012, the initiative took on an itinerant format to engage Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone Africa. Our west African neighbours Accra, Ghana in 2013, followed by Dakar, Senegal in 2014 were our host before moving southward to Maputo, Mozambique in 2015. In 2016, the programme continues its itinerancy by moving north east to the horn of Africa. This marks the first time the programme will engage with the history and culture of Ethiopia, the only country in Africa that has not been colonised. The capital city Addis Ababa, which serves as the seat of the African Union, seems an appropriate setting to continue our deliberations for the 6th and final edition of Àsikò in its current format.

At the end of the programme held in Accra in 2013, the participants provocatively titled their final presentation, "A History of Contemporary Art in Ghana in the Last Five Weeks." Was this gesture an attempt to indicate that the complex history of contemporary art practice in Ghana could be broached within the temporal period allotted—five weeks? Certainly such an elaborate history condensed and absorbed in the space of 35 days, or 840 hours, is subject to questioning. Despite its inevitable sentiments of reductiveness, the title nonetheless provided a space of examination and reflexivity, a space in which to dwell on the effects of time and its potential in tune with the central theme of "The Archive." This examination continued in 2014 in Dakar, challenging received ideas and opening the parameters for alternative as well as individual perspectives.

In Maputo in 2015 the 5th edition of **Àsikò**, moved away from a definitive theme towards a more open discursive model that allows for 'play and chance' where individual perspectives and research interests of both the participants and the faculty can be highlighted. We will continue to focus on and explore the themes and issues that have been addressed over the past 5 years; colonial history and postcolonial reality, decolonial theory, identity, 'Africanness' and pan-Africanism, materiality, the archival, locality vs. globalism, the body and sexuality amongst others. Our point of departure will continue to be African and African Diaspora cultural production and thought, as well as examining its shifts and developments in recent years and its place within a global context. Addis Ababa is one of the fastest developing cities on the continent and issues around the changing urban landscape form an important, local discussion point at the moment.

Within the curatorial segment we continue a discussion begun in Dakar on the need to excavate exhibition histories in Africa in order to complete what Art History exists today. This was continued in Maputo. African exhibition histories and art history continues to be an urgent necessity in view of the many elder artists and practitioners that we continue to lose while their work goes undocumented. The two segments of **Àsikò** – the artistic and the curatorial - attempt to take into consideration the various aesthetic and contextual strategies deployed by artists working across a multiplicity of forms and to engage with curators and writers on the strategies and formats as well as the critical discourse that emanate from the local in its presentation.

During **Àsikò** 2016 we will launch the **Asiko** Publication, which is a culmination of 5 years of the programme, featuring commissioned essays, images, drawings, reflections etc. The **Àsikò** Publication will be designed by **Àsikò** lead facilitator Maputo 2015, Zimbabwean visual and graphic artist and educator Nontsikelelo Mutiti.

Workshop Rationale

The visual art sector in most countries in Africa is predominantly conservative with many artists working in the traditional media of painting and sculpture —with little or no knowledge of or interest in artistic practices that use new media or digital technology or that are experimental in nature or even research based. With an eye

toward encouraging and supporting artists interested in exploring different conceptual and material possibilities, especially in the area of lens-based media and other experimental modes of working, the structure of Àsìkò is rooted in the convergence of different artistic processes—be it painting, sculpture, performance, installation, photography, video, internet, etc.—while striving to provide an alternative to the traditional residency format.

Workshop Benefits Include:

- Access to experienced local and international artists and curators.
- One-to-one individual portfolio reviews and feedback about your work.
- Extended critique session by each participant.
- Developing writing skills for artists and curators and writers
- Encouraging and developing new contemporary practices on the African continent.
- Sharing knowledge through curatorial lectures, artists' presentations and critical debate.
- Developing new ways of creative thinking by integrating new elements such as performance, installation and sound projects into your work.
- Networking opportunities.

Structure of the Àsìkò programme

Àsìkò is a very intensive programme that takes place from Monday to Saturday 9am – 6pm. The workshop is loosely divided into 3 segments, each lasting approximately 10 days. There will be one or two lead artist/curator instructors facilitating each segment, each with his/her own style, working methods, and opinions. Each segment will be complemented by 1-3 visiting guest speakers (4-5 days); curators, artists and writers. This gives participants a broad range of processes and opinions to consider for their own development, offering stimulating opportunities for discussion, thought, and reflection. Each segment introduces various non-traditional art-making approaches as well as curatorial strategies with the goal of helping participants realise and achieve their unique visions.

Participating artists and curators are required to present their work each week to their colleagues and the facilitators through seminars, talks, presentations and one to one portfolio reviews held over the course of the programme.

In Addis Ababa our principal partner will be Asni Gallery. We will present a rich and content laden programme in collaboration with Alle School of Fine Art and Design, Addis Ababa University, as well as by engaging other local institutions and cultural practitioners.

In addition visits will be made to important institutions and historical sites within Addis Ababa and its environs providing an important immersive experience over an extended period.

Who Can Apply?

Àsikò is principally targeted at African artists working on the continent who may not have had access to the education or professional opportunities that this programme offers. They will be prioritised. However we welcome all applications from artists and curators from Africa and from the African diaspora

- Visual Artists can be working in any media - painting, sculpture, textile, ceramics, photography, video, film and performance art,
- Applications are open to all artists (including self taught artists) who have been professionally active for at least 3 years.
- Emerging curators and writers from across Africa with at least 18 months experienced and who would benefit from the close interaction with artists as well as other professionals.
- Artists and curators who have participated **more** than once are not eligible to apply.

Women artists and as well as emerging curators are strongly encouraged to apply.

Conditions of acceptance:

All Participants **must** be available for the full 35 days. Please **do not** apply if you can not attend the entire programme.

■ **Àsikò** will be conducted principally in English. All Participants **must** have at least a conversational level of English language. A Skype interview will be held where necessary.

**For additional information please contact Erin Rice:
office.ccalagos@gmail.com**

Workshop Timeline: 27th June – 30th July 2016

- The workshop will be an intensive 35-day (5 week) programme facilitated by experienced local and international artists, critics, and curators.
- Workshop sessions will commence daily at 9.00am and end at 6.00pm Monday to Saturday.

- The group (artists+curators) will work towards the production and presentation of a collaborative art project to be shown publicly in the final week of the programme

Programme Costs

Participation fee is USD750.

Excursion Fee USD 200

All participants **MUST** pay the participation fee which goes towards running the programme, a modest production budget and a final presentation of the results.

Àsikò is a self-funded art school programme and participants are expected to bear their travel costs to and from Ethiopia as well as their daily expenses and living costs (feeding, moving across the city etc) for the duration of the programme.

Where possible CCA, Lagos will endeavour to subsidise all of the double-occupancy accommodation costs. A single room can be requested but comes at an additional cost to the participant. Participants who do not pay their participation fee before or on arrival will not receive subsidies towards accommodation or daily expenses. **All fees must be fully paid by 20th June 2016 in order to be accepted on the programme.**

*Excursion supplementary fee Information

Ethiopia is a country with important historical/religious sites Axum (over 1000 km) and Lalibela (over 700km). We would like to visit at least one (maybe two) important site which can only be accessed by local flight. This is a group trip for everybody which will form an important part of the group discussions during the Àsikò and everyone must make a contribution towards the total cost.

Participants are **encouraged to apply for funding** from their home countries or other sources to support their fees, travel and living costs. Several possible resources for funding for African applicants are as follows:

- Art Moves Africa (AMA): www.artmovesafrica.org
- The African Arts Trust (TAAT), based in Kenya, eligible to artists from East Africa:<http://www.theafricanartstrust.org/>
- ProHelvetia in Johannesburg and Cairo:
<http://www.prohelvetia.ch/Johannesburg.3011.0.html?&L=4> ;
<http://www.prohelvetia.ch/Cairo.3016.0.html?&L=4>
- Prince Claus Fund: www.princeclausfund.org

- Goethe Institutes in your respective countries
- British Council in your respective countries

NOTE: We advise you to apply for travel funding whether or not your participation in the programme has been confirmed so as to not miss the application deadlines. CCA, Lagos will also work with you to identify and apply for funding.

How Do I Apply?

Application Deadline: Midnight GMT, Sunday 13th March, 2016

Selection Notification: Monday 21st March 2016

1. Complete and sign the information form
2. Current resume/CV: 3 pages maximum.
3. A short **possible** project proposal that takes a book, a quote, a film, a musical score, showing how you use it as a starting point for a possible work, or curatorial project in a minimum of 300 and maximum 500 words. **This is compulsory. Your application will not be considered without this part.**
4. Documentation of your work. You can either submit images OR video documentation, NOT both. We review video documentation ONLY for artists whose work is time-based, interactive, web-based, kinetic, film, video and performance. If you work with installation, site-specific, painting, sculpture and/or drawing, you MUST submit images.
6. IMAGES: Ten (10) jpeg images, at 180 DPI resolution minimum, maximum total file size 200kb. **Heavy files will be deleted immediately.** Images must be titled with your last name, first name, number with no spacing: e.g.: jonesmary1.jpg, jonesmary2.jpg.
7. **IMPORTANT:** we only accept images in jpegs or pdfs. Do not submit: Powerpoint presentations, TIFF, Gif or PSD files.
8. For additional information, or to submit your application, contact: Erin Rice at office.ccalagos@gmail.com

About Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos

Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos is an independent Visual Art organisation founded in 2007, to provide a platform for the development, presentation and discussion of Nigerian contemporary visual art and culture. It seeks to create a new audience, and prioritise media such as photography, animation, film, video,

performance and installation art, which have been under-presented in Nigeria. It supports the intellectual and critical development of different art and culture practitioners through talks, workshops, seminars and exhibitions. In addition, they promote the professionalization of production and curatorship in Nigeria and West Africa collaborating with artists, curators, writers, theorists and national and international organizations.

CCA,Lagos has set up one of the fastest growing independent libraries in West Africa specialising in the visual arts and the creative sector in general. The library contains over 5000 books, catalogues, brochures, journals and art videos with a strong focus on Nigeria and the African continent. The centre is being developed as an important resource and artists archive and specialised educational facility.

www.ccalagos.org

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