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Emeka Ogboh
Texts / Press

NANA OCRAN

THE POWER OF SOUND

EMEKA OGBOH'S AUDIO WORKS

LE POUVOIR DU SON
LES ŒUVRES AUDIO D'EMEKA OGBOH

Driven by the emotive power of electro-audio rhythms, sound artist Emeka Ogboh speaks with Nana Ocran about his creative processes in the lead up to his ART X Lagos showcase.

Are there any specific musical sounds that tend to correlate with your aural and visual artworks? If so, do you create specific playlists from existing tracks – or do you prefer to compose your own music and sounds?

Electronic music is the closest sound or music genre that I would connect to my artworks, especially the audio works I create about Lagos. They're influenced by the multi-layered buzz of the city soundscapes – the car horns, the high-pitched cries of hawkers, the power generators, the vehicular sounds – which all have a synth-like sound and rhythm to my ears. These days, I compose my own music, and the first album I put out, 'Beyond the Yellow Haze' (2018), was heavily influenced and laced with electronic music fused with Lagos soundscapes.

Il puise son inspiration dans la puissance émotionnelle des rythmes electro. Dans cet entretien l'artiste sonore Emeka Ogboh évoque son processus créatif à quelques semaines de la présentation de l'une de ses œuvres à ART X Lagos.

Certains styles de musique entrent-ils davantage en résonance avec vos œuvres sonores et visuelles? Si oui, créez-vous des playlists spécifiques à partir de morceaux existants, ou préférez-vous composer votre propre musique et vos propres sons?

La musique électronique est le son ou le genre musical le plus proche de mes œuvres, en particulier des œuvres audio que je crée sur Lagos. Celles-ci sont inspirées par l'effervescence du paysage sonore multiforme de la ville – les klaxons des voitures, les cris aigus des marchands ambulants, le bourdonnement des groupes électrogènes, les bruits de circulation, qui pour moi ont un son et un rythme de synthétiseur. Aujourd'hui je compose ma propre musique et le premier album que j'ai sorti, 'Beyond the Yellow Haze' (2018), a été fortement influencé par la fusion de la musique électronique et du paysage sonore de Lagos.



"Sound is... the most emotive medium I have ever worked with. It has an ability to penetrate every nook and cranny of our being."

Do you feel that working as a sound artist touches on your emotions in a way that perhaps being a photographer, writer, or graphic designer doesn't?

Sound touches me more than the other genres you mentioned. It is probably the most emotive medium I have ever worked with. It has an ability to penetrate every nook and cranny of our being. Imagine how certain music affects our moods in general; how some music can switch us from sad to happy, and vice versa. A picture we see or a text we read could also do that, but to me sound is more powerful.

Est-ce que travailler en tant qu'artiste sonore touche à vos émotions d'une manière que peut-être être photographe, écrivain ou graphiste?

I proposed a multi-zone sound installation that would be transmitted across the art fair's grounds and experienced through wireless headphones – just like the concept of the silent disco. Listeners will have to put on headphones to experience these 3D sounds, which combine Lagos soundscapes and electroacoustic music I composed. The installation will provide a different way to experience the fair, putting Lagos in people's earbuds while they navigate the spaces: like a soundtrack to the event.

Are there any upcoming projects (in or beyond Nigeria) that you're producing that you'd like to mention?

I am currently working on presenting the Sufferhead Paris edition in October, during FIAC international art fair in Paris. This is an ongoing project that explores the position of Africans living in Europe, stereotypes, politics of difference and integration associated with their expatriate fate through the brewing and branding of the Sufferhead beer.



Pensez-vous que le travail d'artiste sonore touche à vos émotions d'une manière que vous ne connaissez peut-être pas si vous êtes photographe, écrivain ou graphiste?

Le son me touche plus que toutes les autres formes d'art que vous évoquez. C'est probablement le médium le plus chargé en émotions qu'il m'a été donné d'expérimenter. Le son a la capacité de pénétrer chaque recoin de notre être. Il suffit de songer à la façon dont certaines musiques agissent sur notre humeur d'une manière générale; comment elles peuvent nous faire passer de la tristesse à la joie, et vice versa. Une image ou un texte peuvent aussi avoir cet effet, mais pour moi le son est plus puissant.

Prévoyez-vous ne pas en être un peu plus sûr l'œuvre sonore que vous préparez pour ART X Lagos 2019?

J'ai proposé une installation sonore qui sera diffusée sur le site de la foire au moyen de casques sans fil – tout comme dans le concept de silent disco. Les auditeurs devront mettre un casque pour écouter ces sons en 3D, qui combinent les paysages sonores de Lagos et la musique électroacoustique que j'ai composée. L'installation offrira une expérience différente de la foire, en plongeant les visiteurs dans l'univers sonore de Lagos pendant qu'ils circuleront dans les espaces; un peu comme une bande son de l'événement.

Y a-t-il d'autres projets à venir (au Nigeria ou ailleurs) sur lesquels vous travaillerez dont vous aimeriez nous parler?

Je travaille actuellement à la préparation de l'édition Sufferhead Paris, qui se tiendra en octobre au moment de la FIAC, la foire internationale d'art contemporain. Ce projet en cours s'intéresse à la situation de la diaspora africaine vivant en Europe. Il explore certains des stéréotypes et certaines des politiques de diversité et d'intégration associés à leur destin d'expatriés, à travers le brassage et l'image de marque de la bière Sufferhead.

→ 14thmay.com

→ EMEKA OGBOH | THE GATHERING PLACE 2019
INSTALLATION VIEW | VUE DE L'INSTALLATION
IMAGE COURTESY THE ARTIST

→ EMEKA OGBOH | PHOTO CREDIT JEAN PICON 2019

Art World

Experts Anticipate Paris's Art Market to Benefit From a Brexit Bump, but the City Is Also in the Midst of a Cultural Renaissance All on Its Own

FIAC's director says it is "not constructive" to think of one city benefiting at the expense of another.

Naomi Rea, October 15, 2019



Grand Palais 2019. Photo by Marc Damage.

The art market is rife with speculation as Brexit hangs in the balance ahead of FIAC in Paris, which opens to the public on Thursday. But regardless of any tailwind to be had from the UK's messy divorce from the European Union, the French capital is charting its own course to becoming revitalized as a major art market hub.

Inside the vast glass and iron exhibition hall that is the Grand Palais, exhibitors are seeking to satisfy the expectation of museum-quality presentations at the French fair. Some promised highlights will be a large sculptural work by [Yayoi Kusama](#), on view at Victoria Miro's booth, which will be echoed outside the fair as the Japanese artist takes over the Place de la Vendôme with a giant inflatable polkadot pumpkin.

Muscular works by blue-chip artists are a mainstay for art week in Paris, a city that is steeped in institutions and deep-pocketed collectors. After the successful presentation of a work by [Louise Bourgeois](#) at [Hauser & Wirth](#) last year, which went for a whopping \$2.5 million, the Swiss-owned gallery returns with a presentation of gallery artists including another sculpture by the French artist.



Louise Bourgeois, *High Heels* (1998). ©The Easton Foundation/ DACS 2019. Courtesy The Easton Foundation and Hauser & Wirth.

“Paris is a hotspot right now, but it has always had an enduring appeal,” Hauser & Wirth president Iwan Wirth tells *artnet News*. “The profile of the fair has become more international because discerning collectors are drawn to the city by the outstanding institutional exhibitions.”

Wirth says that the gallery is anticipating conversations with foundations and museums again this year. “They respond so well to the refined atmosphere and singular focus of FIAC,” he adds.

May You Live in Turbulent Times

For those passing by the impressive façade of the Grand Palais this week, a statement billboard by the [Nigerian artist Emekah Ogboh](#) will take pride of place. It reads “Quand il y a un, ça va...” (“when there is one, it’s fine...”). The saying, (the second half of which continues, “...It’s when there are many that there are problems”) calls out the racist rhetoric that has taken hold in Paris and elsewhere in Europe in recent years. The public piece will be in dialogue with another work by Sylvie Fleury, a neon that, as if responding to Ogboh’s quoted provocation, reads “YES TO ALL.”

For many, Fleury’s work might also conjure up the looming specter of Brexit. Uncertainty has been haunting collectors and dealers who are trying to predict whether the UK’s imminent exit from the European Union might destabilize London’s stronghold over the European art market in favor of the French capital. A Eurostar train ride away in Brussels, Brexit negotiations are pushing ahead, and many in Paris are voicing the opinion that the city might be an incidental winner if new tax hurdles and delays at the border end up shifting European trade there instead of London.



FIAC at the Grand Palais. Photo by Marc Damage.

“It has been clear for a while that Paris is a big winner of Brexit,” Maya Mikelstone, a Paris-based curator and art advisor, tells artnet News. “It is becoming more international. Just to mention that [David Zwirner](#), White Cube, and Pace are opening new spaces in Paris. I guess they are not doing this without a reason.” While the Pace space is not yet confirmed, [ARTnews](#) reported recently that the mega-gallery was looking for a building in the French capital. A spokesman for Pace declined to comment on the matter when reached by artnet News.

However, Belgian art collector Alain Servais is not convinced by the idea that London’s turbulent politics will teeter the market towards the French capital. “The art market is global and is very handy at going around ‘local’ constraints like customs and exchange rates,” Servais tells artnet News. “Therefore, I don’t see there being much fuss to be had with Brexit before we know the exact consequences.” He adds that the art market will probably find a way around the new limitations that Brexit might pose.

Give Paris a Chance

The Belgian collector also underscored the fallacy of pitting Frieze London and FIAC against each other. “It is more and more a mistake to want to create competition or comparison between both,” he says, explaining that London and Frieze are much more business-oriented, contemporary art-focused, with more branding clout and higher price ranges than their French counterparts.

On the flip side, Paris and FIAC have more prestige, which is appealing to international visitors, and especially US collectors. “The atmosphere is much easier-going in Paris: less business, more culture, good food, and drinks. Frieze and FIAC are two *different fairs in different cities for a different public*,” he adds.



Jennifer Flay. Portrait by Max Tetard.

FIAC’s director Jennifer Flay is of the same mind. The two fairs are different beasts, and there’s no reason they can’t stand side-by-side. “It is possible that Paris may benefit from a Brexit, but at this point, no one is certain of the conditions in which Brexit will occur, and therefore even less of its potential impact on France and other European countries,” Flay says. While many of the French feel a “deep sadness” about the situation, she says it is “disheartening” and “not constructive” to think of one city benefiting at the expense of another.

“If there is what is perceived as a cultural renaissance in France and in Paris — I believe this is the case—it has nothing to do with the as yet undetermined effects of Brexit,” Flay says.

Indeed, Parisian galleries are experimenting with new formats, for which we cannot credit Brexit. In an expansive site in the borough of Romainville, five Parisian contemporary art galleries are opening exhibition spaces as part of a new initiative called "[Komunuma](#)." Galleries Air de Paris, Galerie Sator, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, and In Situ's Fabienne Leclerc will be part of the complex. Elsewhere, fashion and art's continuous overlap in the stylish capital can be found at the Centre Pompidou, where Rick Owens has created a series of monolithic beds on which living statues will take part in an evening of performance.

So, whatever storms are brewing across the channel, Paris is making headway on its own. "[Paris's renaissance] is the result of a gradual transformation that has been underway for the past 15 to 20 years, which results more from a renewed self-confidence rather than an unfortunate external event," Flay says. "It is inherent to the dynamics of the French cultural world as they have developed over the last three decades."

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 J'aime 358

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Naomi Rea

Associate Editor, London



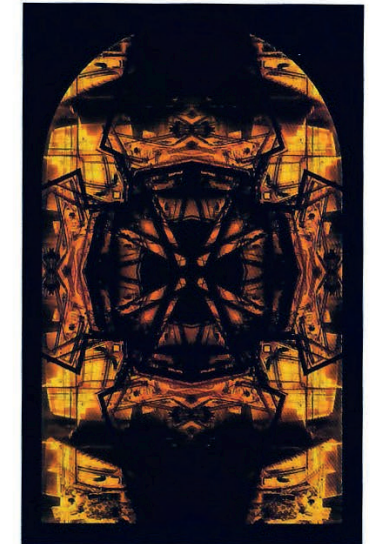


Chaotiquement virtuose

Emeka Ogboh

Galerie Imane Farès, Paris.

Son installation à la Documenta d'Athènes, en 2017, avait marqué les esprits. Dans un amphithéâtre quasi abandonné du conservatoire de musique, il avait fait sourdre du béton une envoûtante chorale. Emeka Ogboh, né en 1977 au Nigeria, a fait du son sa matière première : pour lui, plus qu'un médium, le son participe de la texture d'une ville comme d'une société ; il détermine son rythme, sculpte son identité. Un chaos brutiste qu'il met parfois en scène dans des images kaléidoscopiques de scènes de rue. Klaxons, harangueurs, pleurs, moteurs, speakers... Ogboh compose avec ce paysage, réinventant les bruits de Lagos, où il vit, comme des pays qu'il traverse au gré des expositions. Invité en Allemagne, en 2015, il répond à la montée de l'extrême droite de Pegida par un collage de chants, traduction dans une dizaine de langues africaines de l'hymne national germanique, entonnés par un chœur de gospel berlinois. À Athènes, avec *The Way Earthly Things Are Going*, c'était la polyphonie de la crise qu'il faisait entendre. À partir de documents d'archives, de 1929 à nos jours, il faisait monter en crescendo un chœur de pleureuses, qui réinterprétait des chants folkloriques d'Épire. Quand la beauté antique rencontre le tragique contemporain... E. L.



CI DESSUS
Emekah Ogboh
Spirit and Matter
[détail]

2017-2018, photographie
sur vitrail monte
sur caisson lumineux,
152 x 252 cm.

Surréalistiquement révolutionnaire

Ardeshir Mohasses

Dastan Gallery, Téhéran.

Être caricaturiste en Iran ? Mission impossible. C'est pourquoi Ardeshir Mohasses a dû fuir son pays natal dès 1977, harcelé par les services secrets du shah qui n'appréciaient guère ses dessins séditieux, dénonçant la torture sous des airs de parabole de la dynastie Qajar. Dès son arrivée à Manhattan, cet enfant de Daumier et Picasso est repéré par le *New York Times*, le *Wall Street Journal* et *Playboy*. Plus que caricaturiste, il se définit alors comme reporter et ne se gêne pas pour dénoncer l'Iran nouveau que construit l'imam Khomeiny à partir de 1979. On a souvent comparé son art du sarcasme à celui de Saul Steinberg. Mais il y avait dans son surréalisme quelque chose de profondément farsi. Plus de dix ans après sa mort, le voilà de retour à Paris, où, disait-il, il découvrit la couleur. Mais ce sont essentiellement des dessins noir et blanc que dévoile à la Fiac la galerie Dastan de Téhéran, qui s'impose ainsi dès sa première participation. E. L.

À GAUCHE
Ardeshir Mohasses
The Stormy Weather
1972, encre sur papier,
45 x 27 cm.

**Collecting****Hors les Murs in Paris: public art for the age of Instagram**

Every year Fiac installs artwork around the city. This year, there's a Yayoi Kusama pumpkin and a pre-fab house by Jean Prouvé

Jean Prouvé's 'Maison Démontable 8x8, 1945' © Galerie Patrick Seguin/Nicolas Bergerot

Hili Perlson OCTOBER 11 2019

In Paris, public space is understood as belonging to the people. With a legacy that goes back to the French Revolution and continues today with the Yellow Vest demonstrations, French citizens readily exercise their right to take to the streets. And this extends to protesting against public art — of which a four-year row over the location of Jeff Koons's giant “Bouquet of Tulips” is only the latest example.

The 33-tonne memorial to the victims of the 2015 Paris terror attacks — a gift from Koons, albeit with a €3.5m installation cost — was finally unveiled last week at a permanent location behind the Petit Palais, off the Champs-Élysées. This is the same area where Fiac, the city's leading contemporary art fair, installs temporary artworks. The stakes are high. “The public space is a political space — absolutely!” says Jennifer Flay, the fair's director. “Art has a role to play in that. We take that very seriously.”

Fiac launched its programme of outdoor sculpture and installation art, known as Hors les Murs, in 2006, bringing works to sites around Paris for the duration of the fair. Since its 2016 edition, as a response to the terror attacks of the previous year, Fiac sectioned off part of the Avenue Winston Churchill, reclaiming the space for pedestrians, and for a programme of installations and performances, known as Projects.

This year's Projects include Laure Prouvost, Kiki Smith and Elsa Sahal, as well as a street party by Berlin-based Nigerian artist Emeka Ogboh on October 15. Ogboh's multi-part project centres on the launch of a craft beer, “Sufferhead Original” (2019), commissioned by Fiac. The beer is “inspired by the food tastes and experiences of Africans living in Europe”, says a representative of Galerie Imane Farès, which has a booth of Ogboh's work at the fair.

The lager is accompanied by a billboard campaign shot at sites around Paris linked to France's colonial past. The billboard on the façade of the Grand Palais reads “Quand y'en a un, ça va ...” (“When there's just one, it's fine . . .”). What could be read as a message about drinking responsibly is, in fact, part of a racial slur which the politician Brice Hortefeux made

in 2009, when he was interior minister, unaware his microphone was on. (Hortefeux was fined by a French court for the comment, which continued, “It’s when there are lots of them that there are problems.”)

Jeff Koons's 'Bouquet of Tulips' (2019) © Ian Langsdon/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock

Opposite Ogboh’s billboard, on the Petit Palais, is a neon work by Sylvie Fleury from 2005. As if responding to Hortefeux, it reads: “YES TO ALL”. “It’s very much about encounters,” says Flay. “I’m one of those romantic people who thinks an encounter with an artwork can be life-changing.”

But artworks must strike a balance between subtlety and grand gesture when making political statements in sites as iconic as the Place de la Concorde, where temporary structures are put up for the week of the fair. This year, there’s an entire pre-fab house by Jean Prouvé, “Maison Démontable 8x8” (1945). Emblematic of the postwar era’s need for fast housing solutions, it gains new relevance when considering the makeshift migrant camps outside Paris.

“

The public space is a political space — absolutely! Art has a role to play in that. We take that seriously

Jennifer Flay

Other pop-up structures positioned around the Place de la Concorde’s Luxor Obelisk show their makers’ fascination with temporary habitats. The award-winning architect Odile Decq’s “Le Pavillon Noir!” (2019) is a structure made of one-sided mirror; visitors are rendered invisible from the outside.

Along the Jardin de Tuileries, 20 temporary sculptures create a meandering path, responding to the garden’s features. Noël Dolla’s colourful installation consists of umbrellas submerged just under the water in a basin by the Musée de l’Orangerie. It’s not necessary to know that the museum houses Monet’s “Water Lilies” to appreciate Dolla’s piece, but the moment of recognition sparks joy.

Less subtle, perhaps, is Yayoi Kusama’s inflatable dotted pumpkin, her largest to date, which will be installed at the Place Vendôme for the duration of the fair. Kusama is the first woman in Fiac’s Hors les Murs programme to show a work in the historic square. With Koons’s giant bouquet just around the corner, the battle of the art giants will surely play out on Instagram.

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Balade africaine à la FIAC

L'art africain n'est pas oublié à la Foire Internationale d'art contemporain (FIAC) qui expose jusqu'à dimanche soir à Paris quelques grands noms du continent et quelques nouveaux venus aussi.

Par Maryline Baumard · Publié le 19 octobre 2019 à 20h39

Bienvenue à... Lagos sur FIAC. L'Afrique qui imagine, invente et crée, s'est non seulement fait une place au cœur de ce rendez-vous incontournable et statutaire de l'art Contemporain à Paris, qu'est la Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain, mais en prime, c'est elle qui accueille le visiteur au Grand Palais.



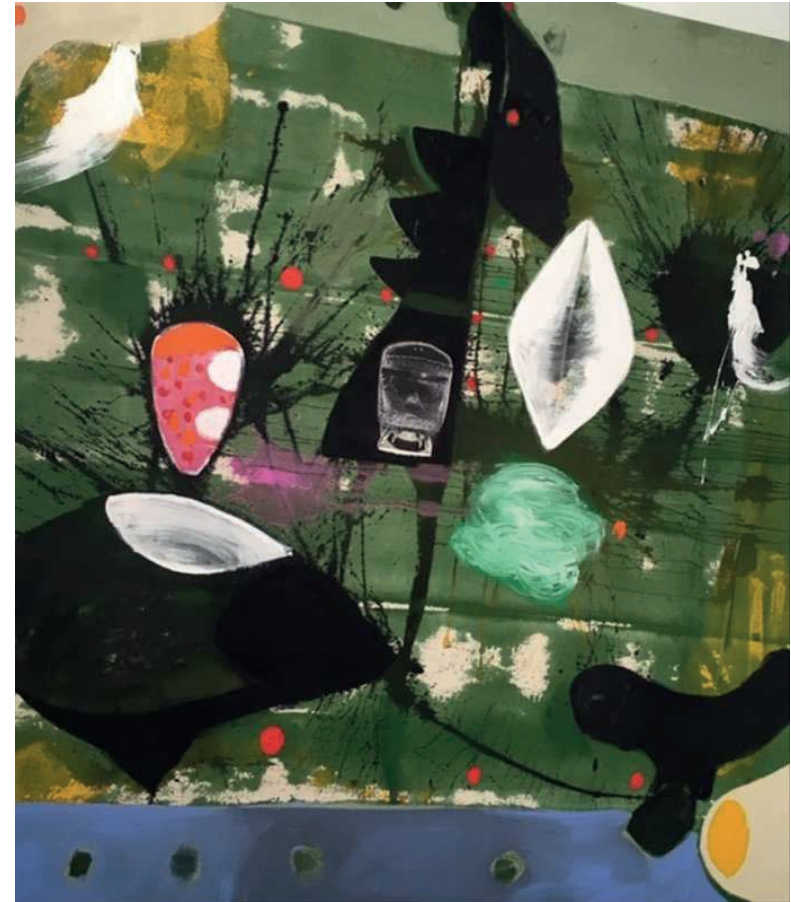
Emeka Ogboh, FIAC 2019 Maryline Baumard

Trois pas vers la nef centrale et l'amateur de pièces lumineuses et inclusives se trouve face à un intrigant vitrail de la cathédrale de Lagos. La pièce originale ? Vous n'y êtes vraiment pas ! Emeka Ogboh est passé par là et a métamorphosé le verre en un triptyque fait de photos, de lumière, de transparence et de chaleur. Une autre façon pour le Nigérian de raconter un peu sa tentaculaire Lagos, sa ville muse. L'artiste accueille le spectateur pour l'embarquer dans son univers sonore et coloré où, comme un autre l'avait dit avant lui « *les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent* ».



Bières d'Emeka Ogboh, FIAC 2019 Maryline Baumard

Pour ceux qui auraient oublié le travail d'Emeka Ogboh, c'est lui qui a inventé une bière où l'immigré déraciné retrouve les odeurs et les saveurs de sa terre natale, qui recrée des univers sonores aussi. Au Grand palais, il a apporté ses bouteilles, bien rangées sur une sombre étagère face à des clichés aux couleurs de Lagos, pour une parodie photo des standards et des codes de la publicité. Un show en clair-obscur qu'a voulu lui consacrer Imane Farès, la galeriste aussi parisienne que sénégalaise qui le présente au public du Grand Palais. Au second jour de la FIAC cette dernière s'avouait d'ailleurs ravie de l'intérêt pour cet artiste puissant, aussi hors normes que son Nigeria natal, qu'elle expose depuis 2 ans.



Ouattara Watts, FIAC 2019 Maryline Baumard

Si Emeka Ogboh accueille l'amateur d'art, Ouattara Watts, lui, ne se révèle qu'à celui qui s'aventure jusqu'aux salles du premier étage. Là, l'Ivoirien a pris ses quartiers sur le stand de Cécile Fakhoury, en solo et en majesté. Elle qui, implantée à Abidjan et Dakar, a juste ouvert un espace à Paris, « pour donner une plus grande visibilité ici aux œuvres d'artistes du continent » est aussi pour la première fois à la FIAC. Inspirées des profondeurs des cultures ancestrales, les toiles géantes de Ouattara Watts baladent sans fin le spectateur d'un niveau de lecture à un autre, le balançant entre le détail d'un masque et l'unité du monde ; dans des recompositions aux saveurs très urbaines.



Romuald Hazoumè, FIAC 2019 Maryline Baumard

Les masques ne sont pas oubliés, même s'ils sont largement revisités et recomposés ; car on n'est pas au Quai Branly ! C'est eux que le public vient voir sur le stand de la galerie Magnin A qui expose le Béninois de Porto Novo, Romuald Hazoumè aux côtés du devenu classique Chéri Samba. Le dialogue entre ces deux voix du continent, un Béninois et un Congolais, raconte un petit morceau de ces deux pays qu'on rassemble dans le concept d'Afrique en dépit des années-lumière qui les séparent.



Totem 2019, Pascale Marthine Tayou Maryline Baumard

Ce récit des Afriques, Galleria Continua le joue aussi, présentant sur son stand, l'insaisissable Pascale Marthine Tayou. Installé en majesté avec son bosquet de totems de cristal translucides, baptisé *Totem 2019*, l'artiste camerounais, désormais présent dans de nombreuses grandes collections, montrait là qu'il n'a pas fini de raconter l'essence de son Continent de naissance. Comme l'Afrique, elle-même qui prouve avec cette FIAC son immense force créatrice. Mouvante, fascinante et de plus en plus omniprésente.

Maryline Baumard

Impressions d'Afrique/ Impressions of Africa

Le continent est présent comme jamais à la FIAC, avec des galeries du cru ou avec des enseignes parisiennes.

The continent is in the spotlight at the FIAC as never before, represented by local galleries as well as Parisian dealers.

Par/By Armelle Malvoisin

Lorsqu'une foire vante l'élargissement de la scène artistique internationale qu'elle représente en citant l'Afrique, on s'attend généralement à trouver des galeries sud-africaines bien établies, telles Stevenson et Goodman, qui ont affiché une présence remarquable cette année à Art Basel et à Frieze London. On ne les verra cependant pas à la FIAC, qui a misé sur le retour de la galerie tunisienne Selma Feriani et surtout sur une première participation de la galerie Cécile Fakhoury, fondée en 2012 à Abidjan et aussi basée à Dakar depuis un an. Cette dernière expose un *solo show* de peintures récentes de Ouattara Watts, artiste ivoirien de 62 ans, formé aux Beaux-Arts de Paris et parti faire carrière aux États-Unis après sa rencontre avec Jean-Michel Basquiat à Paris en 1988. « *L'exposition que nous lui avons consacrée l'an dernier à Abidjan (la première dans son pays d'origine) lui a donné un rayonnement local et à l'étranger, d'où l'idée de le montrer à la FIAC* », souligne la galeriste.

Emeka Ogboh,
*Sufferhead Original
(Paris Edition) #7 - Au
Planteur*, 2019, tirage
pigmentaire sur
Hahnemühle Photo Rag,
150 x 100 cm.
Édition de 5 + 1 EA.
Galerie Imane Farès, Paris.

When a fair promotes the expansion of the international art scene it represents by citing Africa, one generally expects to find well-established South African galleries, such as Stevenson or Goodman, which made strong impacts this year at Art Basel and Frieze London. However, the latter will not feature at the FIAC, which has chosen instead to invite back the Tunisian gallery Selma Feriani and, most interestingly, to have the Cécile Fakhoury gallery participate for the first time. Founded in 2012 in Abidjan and having also inaugurated a space in Dakar last year, the gallery is presenting a solo show of recent paintings by Ouattara Watts, a 62-year-old Ivorian artist who trained at the Beaux-Arts in Paris and subsequently left for the United States to pursue his career after meeting Jean-Michel Basquiat in 1988. "The exhibition we devoted to him last year in Abidjan (the first in his native country) boosted his reputation locally and beyond, hence the idea of showcasing him at the FIAC" explained the gallery owner.

An up-and-coming Malawian artist

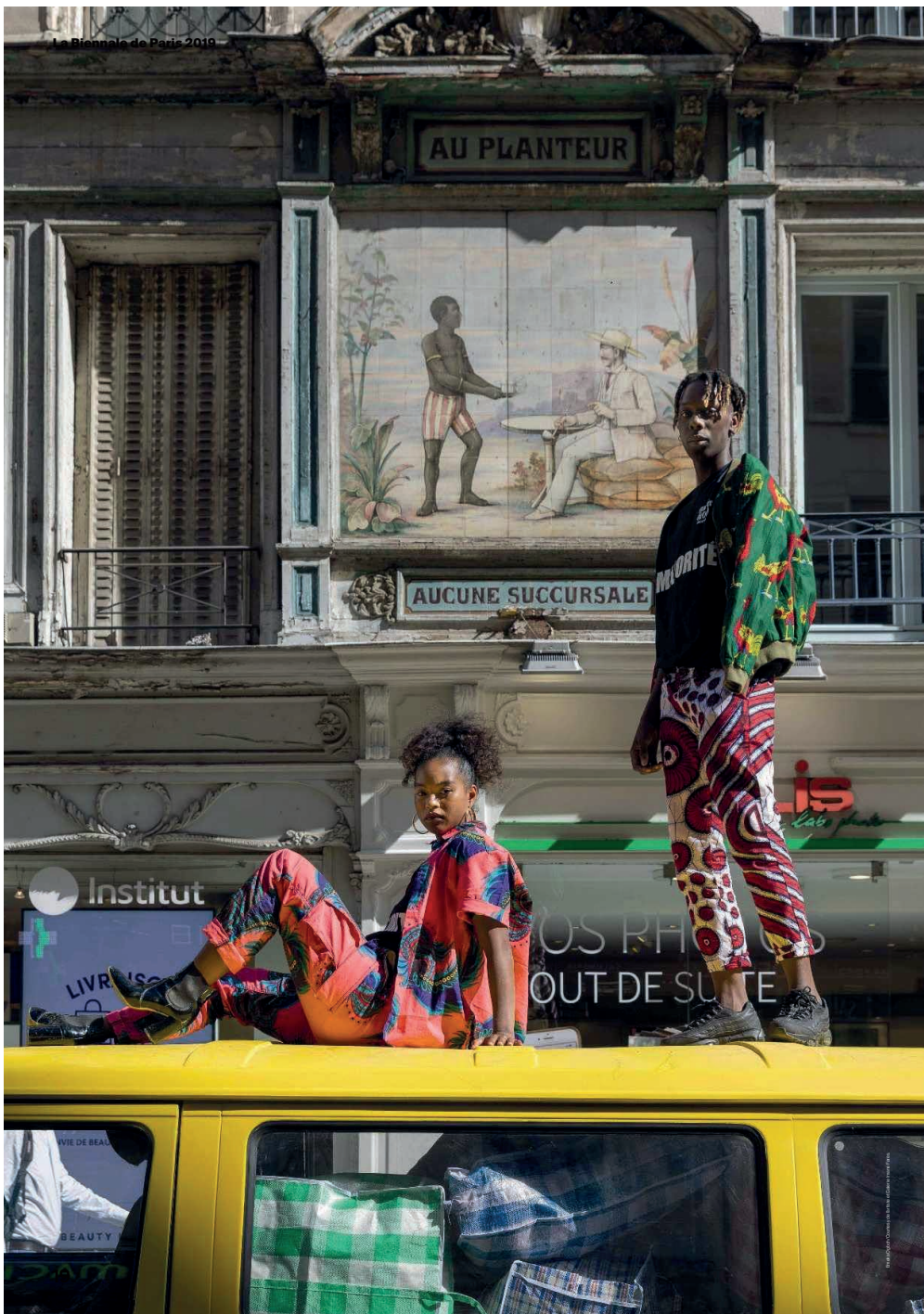
African art will also be more prominent in the aisles of the Grand Palais, under the Parisian banner of André Magnin (former director of the Pigozzi collection of contemporary African art) whose exhibition space was inaugurated in 2018, which encouraged him to apply to the FIAC for the first time with Romuald Hazoumè, known for his masks made with cans. The Magnin-A gallery is also presenting paintings, photographs and an installation by the Beninese artist. And since solo shows heighten artists' exposure, we should also mention Nigerian artist Emeka Ogboh at the Paris-based Imane



Ouattara Watts,
To A Rimbaud,
2019, technique mixte sur
toile et tissus, 203 x 157 cm.
Galerie Cécile Fakhoury -
Abidjan, Dakar, Paris.

Lorsqu'une foire vante l'élargissement de la scène artistique internationale en citant l'Afrique, on s'attend généralement à trouver des galeries sud-africaines bien établies.

When a fair promotes the expansion of the international art scene it represents by citing Africa, one generally expects to find well-established South African galleries.



Une artiste malawienne qui monte

La création africaine sera également plus visible dans les allées du Grand Palais, sous l'enseigne parisienne d'André Magnin (ancien directeur de la collection d'art contemporain africain Pigozzi) dont l'espace d'exposition a été inauguré en 2018, ce qui l'a encouragé à postuler pour la première fois à la FIAC avec Romuald Hazoumé, connu pour ses masques réalisés avec des bidons. La galerie Magnin-A présente aussi des peintures, photographies et une installation de l'artiste béninois. Et puisque les *solos shows* donnent une belle visibilité aux artistes, signalons encore celui du Nigérian Emeka Ogboh chez la Parisienne Imane Farès, qui dévoile la nouvelle série de photographies « Sufferhead Original » (Paris Edition), prises à Paris dans différents lieux liés à l'histoire coloniale de la France. Les modèles portent des T-shirts ornés de textes assez édifiants issus de propos tenus par des personnalités politiques françaises sur le thème de l'immigration. Venue de Chicago, Mariane Ibrahim montre des portraits du peintre ghanéen Amoako Bofofo, donnant une noblesse à la figure noire. Notons aussi le retour du Camerounais Barthélémy Togo chez Lelong & Co., du Camerounais Pascale Marthine Tayou à la galerie Continua ainsi que du Béninois Meschac Gaba à la



Romuald Hazoumé, **Zo Cooter**, 2019, verre et métal, 110 x 180 x 80 cm. Galerie Magnin-A.

Farès gallery who is unveiling the new series of photographs, «Sufferhead Original» (Paris Edition), taken in Paris in different locations related to France's colonial history. The models wear T-shirts decorated with quite edifying texts drawn from statements made by French political figures on the theme of immigration. The Temple gallery (Paris, Brussels), which has had an interest in foreign scenes (Chinese, Indian, etc.) for a long time, /...

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Avec le soutien du ministère de la culture

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ifac! AGENDA FIAC PROGRAMMES

Accès libre dans la limite des places disponibles sauf mention contraire dans l'agenda / Free access subject to availability unless stated otherwise in the agenda

MERCREDI 16 OCT. WEDNESDAY 16th OCT.

Midi - 19h / noon - 7pm

CINEPIEMERE
Programme de films d'artistes en coproduction avec Fondation d'entreprise Ricard**

14h - 21h / 2pm - 9pm

FILMS
Cécile B. Evans

A Screen Test for an Adaptation of Gwendie - 7'
Œuvre produite avec le soutien de la Maison Balmain Paris
Cinema m2, Grand Palais, 75008 Paris

19h / 7pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Oliver Beer
Shrap Issues, 2019
En coproduction avec Universcience - Palais de la découverte
Palais de la découverte, avenue Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 75008 Paris***

JEUDI 17 OCT. THURSDAY 17th OCT.

Midi - 19h / noon - 7pm

CINEPIEMERE
Programme de films d'artistes en coproduction avec Fondation d'entreprise Ricard**

13h - 15h / 1pm - 3pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Gisela Petras
Horsale chair, 1971-2019
En collaboration avec Salle Principale, Paris
Départ 13h de la Galerie Salle Principale, 29 rue de Thionville, 75019, vers Avenue Winston Churchill, 75008 Paris à 14h15

14h - 20h / 2pm - 8pm

FILMS
Cécile B. Evans

A Screen Test for an Adaptation of Gwendie - 7'
Œuvre produite avec le soutien de la Maison Balmain Paris
Cinema m2, Grand Palais, 75008 Paris

19h / 7pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Emanuelle Hynh & Automat
ARCHÉOLOGIE, 2019
Production Plateforme Misa
Coproduction Les spectacles vivants - Centre Pompidou
Accès sur présentation d'un badge FIC, ou d'un billet d'entrée aux expositions du Centre Pompidou
Centre Pompidou, 4^e étage, 75001 Paris

19h / 7pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Mawa Arsanias
Learning to Dance, 2015
En collaboration avec mor choparier, Paris
Palais de la découverte, avenue Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 75008 Paris***

20h / 8pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

All Cherr
Water Blues, 2018
En collaboration avec Inaoue Fuchs, Paris
Coproduit avec le Onassis Cultural Center, Athens
Palais de la découverte, avenue Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 75008 Paris***

VENREDI 18 OCT. FRIDAY 18th OCT.

Midi - 19h / noon - 7pm

CINEPIEMERE
Programme de films d'artistes en coproduction avec Fondation d'entreprise Ricard**

13h / 1pm

CONVERSATION ROOM

Time for the Ocean / Quand l'art et la Science se mobilisent contre la pollution plastique des océans
l'urgence est à Terre.
Modérée par Thierry Hérault
Avec Maïa Baigères, Fabrice Hyber, Marion Semblat, Romain Troublé, Laurence Gormont***

14h - 20h / 2pm - 8pm

FILMS
Cécile B. Evans

A Screen Test for an Adaptation of Gwendie - 7'
Œuvre produite avec le soutien de la Maison Balmain Paris
Cinema m2, Grand Palais, 75008 Paris

15h / 3pm

CONVERSATION ROOM

Digital Vibes
Modérée par Charles Trépoiss et Tierno-Alexandre Malon, Aves (LA)
HORDE (Marine Butti, Jonathan Debrun, Arthur Harlot), Caroline Hoeg & Jonathan Virel

17h / 5pm

CONVERSATION ROOM

Ran Han East and West
Collectors and Creators
Cooperating
Modérée par Chris Moore
Avec Heidi Ballet, Lu Xia, Alan Lo

18h / 6pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Emanuelle Hynh & Automat
ARCHÉOLOGIE, 2019
Production Plateforme Misa
Coproduction Les spectacles vivants - Centre Pompidou
Petit Palais, hall d'entrée, 75008 Paris*

19h / 7pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Hanne Lippard
What Works Works, 2019
Une proposition de Workshop Music
En collaboration avec Lambdallambdallambd, Prishtina
En anglais
Palais de la découverte, avenue Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 75008 Paris****

19h30 / 7.30pm

FILMS
Cy Twombly

Cy Twombly
Cj Durr, 2019
Réalisé par Andrea Bettinetti
Produit par Good Day Films & Sky Arts
Musée du Louvre, Auditorium, 75001 Paris

SAMEDI 19 OCT. SATURDAY 19th OCT.

Midi - 15h / noon - 3pm

CINEPIEMERE
Programme de films d'artistes en coproduction avec Fondation d'entreprise Ricard**

Midi / noon

FILMS
Kusama Infinity

in film de Beatrix Lenz,
Production Eurozoom
Cinema m2 Grand Palais, 75008 Paris

13h / 1pm

CONVERSATION ROOM

Fondation d'entreprise Ricard / La médecine comme soufre, Sensibilités et sensibilisations artistiques et scéniques aux crises environnementales
Avec Thomas Bauman, Maya Schweitzer***

13h - 15h / 1pm - 3pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Gisela Petras
Horsale chair, 1971-2019
En collaboration avec Salle Principale, Paris
Départ 13h de la Galerie Salle Principale, 29 rue de Thionville, 75019, vers Avenue Winston Churchill, 75008 Paris à 14h15

14h - 19h / 2pm - 7pm

FILMS
Cécile B. Evans

A Screen Test for an Adaptation of Gwendie - 7'
Œuvre produite avec le soutien de la Maison Balmain Paris
Cinema m2, Grand Palais, 75008 Paris

15h / 3pm

CONVERSATION ROOM

Fondation Cartier / L'Entreten
Inuit
Avec / With Laure Adler, Fabrice Hyber, Hans Ulrich Christ***

16h / 4pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Christiánito Panayiotou
Dying on stage (Chapiteau 1), 2019
Avec la participation de Jean Capelle
Production Bureau New Media
Coproduction Festival d'Automne à Paris / Musée d'Orsay et de l'Orangerie (Paris)
Réservation : www.festival-automne.com/reserver

17h / 5pm

CONVERSATION ROOM

Centre Pompidou / Le bilan carbone de la culture #2 : vers des artistes et des œuvres éco-responsables ?

Modérée par Jean-Max Colard, Avc Nicolas Bourrand, Nicolas Flach, Marguerite Humana***

18h / 6pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Fanny Adèle & Valérie Madane
Périckor, Avenir, 2018
En collaboration avec d.c.a. / Association française de développement des centres d'art contemporains
Petit Palais, Auditorium, 75008 Paris

19h / 7pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Luigia Riba & Clay Apenouon
BYRANSTO, 2019
Palais de la découverte, avenue Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 75008 Paris***

19h / 7pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Kim Gordon & Dimitri Chamblas
Kim Gordon and Dimitri Chamblas
En coproduction avec le musée du Louvre
En collaboration avec le American Center for Art and Culture
Musée du Louvre, Salle 800, Entrée Richelieu, 75001 Paris

20h / 8pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

François Chaignaud & Cecilia Bengalia
En coproduction avec le musée du Louvre
Musée du Louvre, Salle Khorsabad, Entrée Richelieu, 75001 Paris

DIMANCHE 20 OCT. SUNDAY 20th OCT.

Midi - 19h / noon - 7pm

CINEPIEMERE
Programme de films d'artistes en coproduction avec Fondation d'entreprise Ricard**

13h / 1pm

CONVERSATION ROOM

Le Consulat / Activisme esthétique ou art engagé***
Programme de films d'artistes en coproduction avec

Midi / noon

PARADES FOR FIAC

Rachid Ouramdane
A côté du réel, 2019
Danseuse : Lara Jindoukelle
Musiciens : Jean-Baptiste Julien
En coproduction avec le musée du Louvre
Musée du Louvre, cour Marly, Entrée Richelieu, 75001 Paris

15h / 3pm

CONVERSATION ROOM

Musée national de l'histoire de l'immigration / D'ici-est (encre) décoloniser les arts ?
Modérée par Petrus Maris
Avec Sébastien Gokaly, Anne Lafont, Françoise Vergès, Fuyal Jagdish***

16h / 4pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Alessandro Sotgiu
Don't be frightened of turning the page, 2017
RSVP : information@mause-orange.fr
Musée de l'Orangerie, Salle des Nymphéas, 75001 Paris

16h30 / 4.30pm

FILMS
Sofy Portrait in 23 Bownds, A

Chapter in David Wojnarowicz's Life, 1989-1991
Un film de Marlon Schoonama, coproduit avec Françoise Flam
Petit Palais, Auditorium, 75008 Paris

17h / 5pm

PARADES FOR FIAC

Kim Gordon & Dimitri Chamblas
Kim Gordon and Dimitri Chamblas
En collaboration avec le American Center for Art and Culture
51 avenue de New York, 75016 Paris

17h / 5pm

CONVERSATION ROOM

ARTAGON / Le site dans les galeries : jeunes artistes et désir d'Europe
Modérée par Anna Labouze & Keimig Henni,
Avec Bénédicte Allot, Christine Casot, Théo-Marie Coppola, Thomas Delamarre, Nathalie Guilot, Gusto Zaga***

galerie In Situ - Fabienne Leclerc qui présente aussi des œuvres de la Nigérienne Otobong Nkanga, primée cette année d'une mention spéciale à la Biennale de Venise. Ouverte depuis longtemps sur les scènes étrangères (chinoise, indienne, etc.), la galerie Templon montre au sein d'un group show des peintures du Sénégalais Omar Ba, et des œuvres textiles de Billie Zangewa, tout juste arrivée dans son écurie. Les tissus brodés de l'artiste malawienne qui se vendait 12 000 euros en 2012 en galerie, sont montés à 25 000 euros en 2015. Aujourd'hui, il faut compter près de 50 000 euros pour une pièce. Une preuve entre d'autres que pour l'art africain, le marché est de plus en plus international et inclusif.



Emeka Ogbob, *Sufferhead Original (Paris Edition) #5 - Jardin d'agronomie tropicale*, 2019, tirage jet d'encre numérique sur papier hortic, 150 x 110 cm. Édition de 5 + 1 EA. Galerie Imane Farès, Paris.

is doing a group show exhibiting paintings by the Senegalese artist Omar Ba and textile works by Billie Zangewa, who has just joined the gallery. The Malawian artist's embroidered fabrics, which the gallery was selling for €12,000 in 2012, rose in price to €25,000 in 2015. Today their value has risen to nearly €50,000 a piece. One sign, among others, that the market is increasingly international and inclusive for African art.

* Sur présentation d'un titre d'entrée
** Programme disponible sur / Programme available on www.fiac.com - Avenue Winston Churchill, 75008 Paris
*** Grand Palais, premier étage en haut à droite de l'Escalier d'Honneur, 75008 Paris
**** Grand Palais, premier étage en haut à droite de l'Escalier d'Honneur, 75008 Paris





Toutes les images /
 All images:
 Emeka Ogboh
 Danfo Bus Series (2018)
 Courtesy de l'artiste /
 of the artist

Depuis 2008, l'artiste nigérian Emeka Ogboh explore Lagos dans son essence de mégapole africaine dynamique au moyen de captations sonores. Ces enregistrements composent un ensemble d'œuvres, *Lagos Soundscapes*. Ce projet se base sur une activité de collecte des variétés infinies des sons vivants de la ville, qui font la particularité de son caractère et de son dynamisme. Ainsi faisant, il dessine le contour des relations entre la population de Lagos et les paysages sonores qu'elle produit. L'urbanisation, le développement des transports et même les habitudes de vie influencent les environnements sonores de la ville, qui changent sans arrêt, et mettent constamment à jour un catalogue de ses atmosphères transitoires.

Danfo

—
 par Emeka Ogboh

Il est impossible d'imaginer Lagos, au Nigeria, sans l'un de ses principaux avatars, le « danfo » : un minibus, van, ou vieux combi Volkswagen à seize ou dix-huit sièges, de taille compacte, converti et peint en jaune cadmium avec deux bandes noires. Les danfos relient les points sur la carte d'une mégapole qui semble se déplacer en masse. Apparus sur la scène de Lagos dans les années 1970, ils sont l'archétype du moyen de transport collectif qui permet d'acheminer d'un point à l'autre l'essaim microcosmique de la ville.

La popularité constante des danfos à Lagos est due à leur bas prix et à l'agilité avec laquelle ils pénètrent tous les recoins de la ville, doublant virtuellement toutes les lignes de bus de Lagos. En yoruba, la langue prédominante à Lagos, danfo est un mot d'argot qui signifie « faire bande à part ».

Les danfos sont connus pour être constamment pressés, chercher des routes alternatives et tenter toutes les ruses possibles pour arriver au plus vite à destination, décharger leurs passagers, en embarquer d'autres et revenir au point de départ. À Lagos, on se démène. Le temps, c'est de l'argent ; plus de voyages sont effectués, plus d'argent est gagné par le chauffeur, le contrôleur et le propriétaire du danfo.

Le danfo transporte l'esprit et l'âme de Lagos, la mégapole ; son effervescence, son élasticité et son esprit indomptable, sa culture multilingue et ses ethnicités, son côté « jamais dire jamais ». Le bus danfo incarne et exprime tout ce qui « fait » Lagos, en entraînant la population de la ville dans son dédale de routes. Une fois dans le danfo, il sera inévitable de faire l'expérience des perspectives multiples de Lagos, avec tout ce que l'on associe à ce mode de transport.

Extrait de son contexte, un danfo ne sera qu'un bus jaune avec deux bandes noires, jusqu'au moment où l'on goûtera à sa composition inégalable de sons : des klaxons qui retentissent, des contrôleurs qui annoncent leurs itinéraires en criant, des mix proposés en roulant par des chauffeurs-DJs, des vendeurs et vendeuses vantant leurs produits miracle à tue-tête, des passagers qui échangent

les derniers ragots, les colporteurs et leur petit mercantilisme à gogo, les railleries tribales, les dialogues, les monologues au téléphone portable, tout aussi bien que les colères religieuses – tout cela enfermé dans cet espace grouillant de vie. Pour le prix d'un ticket de bus, on vous mettra au fait d'analyses financières, sportives et politiques, là où tout un chacun est expert en tout. Les vibrations de la ville inondent ce théâtre mobile entre drame et divertissement, presque 24 heures sur 24.

Les gares routières

Le voyage du danfo commence et se termine dans les gares routières.

Celles-ci sont des nœuds essentiels pour le transport public à Lagos, reliant les différents points de la ville grâce aux danfos jaunes, et plus récemment avec le BRT (Bus Rapid Transit). Dans les gares routières, une multitude de contrôleurs travaillent simultanément. Elles sont les dépositaires des « itinéraires vocaux », ces annonces faites par les contrôleurs pour indiquer le parcours de leur bus. C'est dans ces gares routières que la plupart des Lagosiens qui utilisent les transports publics se retrouvent et se dispersent vers leurs différentes destinations; le flux et le mouvement constant des gens, qui ne cessent d'entrer et sortir, sont des éléments distinctifs de ces espaces. C'est là mon terrain d'enregistrement favori, avec son écoulement presque ininterrompu de sons humains et mécaniques; tout ce que Lagos agrège et disperse dans ces gares routières en fait un des lieux les plus intéressants de la ville à écouter et enregistrer.

La superposition des interactions humaines est largement amplifiée dans les gares routières, ce qui canalise et influence le commerce et les échanges de biens. Selon la taille de la station, vous pourrez trouver des douzaines de contrôleurs de bus qui annoncent leurs parcours, rivalisant pour être entendus. Parfois des annonces sonores sont utilisées pour indiquer les départs imminents. Elles s'ajoutent aux « itinéraires vocaux » ou aux annonces des parcours faites par les agents de la gare et créent des publicités originales pour les différents itinéraires. Les agents interrompent la musique diffusée dans les haut-parleurs pour déclamer leurs propositions, comme un disc-jockey à la radio ponctueraient un mix musical avec des publicités et les infos.

Des haut-parleurs sont aussi installés dans la gare routière par les vendeurs de CD de contrefaçon, qui font une publicité bruyante des dernières sorties musicales, en rivalisant pour attirer l'attention. Fuji, juju, highlife, makossa, afro hip-hop, rap, RnB, gospel: ici on peut tout écouter en fonction de la popularité des différents courants musicaux. La musique diffusée change selon les saisons et reflète les humeurs festives du moment. Par exemple, on passe des chansons de Noël en décembre aux chants musulmans pendant le ramadan. C'est aussi là que les chauffeurs se procurent la musique qu'ils vont jouer dans leur bus; les passagers en transit y prennent le temps d'écouter et de fouiller dans les sélections en attendant que leur bus se remplit.

Le flux constant de gens qui se déplacent dans les gares routières rappelle la dynamique des festivals de musique; l'espace est transformé en une *mixtape* sans queue ni tête de musiques, de voix et de bruits de voitures. La gare est une brouhaha de sons dont la résonance varie en fonction du mouvement des gens qui convergent vers les danfos et les autres moyens de transport publics. Les gares routières sont des mines d'or sonores, et plus elles sont grandes, plus on y puise d'enregistrements.

Le chauffeur du danfo

Le chauffeur est roi dans la hiérarchie du danfo. Il est probablement le propriétaire du bus ou un de ses proches. Il prend les décisions importantes pour la gestion du bus au quotidien.

Son rôle premier est de soumettre chaque aspect physique du bus à son goût personnel, en décorant et créant sa propre version du fourgon jaune. Une collection d'autocollants met en avant son équipe de foot favorite (il s'agit souvent d'une équipe de première ligue anglaise), son chanteur préféré, sa religion, son appartenance tribale, ses affiliations, et, pendant les élections, son candidat et le parti politique qu'il défend. Parfois, on trouvera la photo d'un vieux dictateur militaire, considéré encore comme un héros pour certains. Ces stickers sont comme des tatouages qui s'accumulent pour former une couche unique. Les singularités esthétiques des danfos, ce sont aussi des jantes chromées, des rétroviseurs voyants, des garde-boue et des gros pare-chocs. Les chauffeurs rivalisent en *tuning* pour attirer les voyageurs. Tous les danfos ne sont pas bien entretenus – la plupart sont en piteux état; mais on peut vite reconnaître un danfo dont le chauffeur prend vraiment soin.

En ce qui concerne le son, le chauffeur du danfo a converti son bus en jukebox mobile, investissant parfois des milliers de nairas pour un système audio qui sert à la fois à annoncer le bus et son chauffeur, et à garantir l'ambiance musicale du bus. Fuji et highlife sont typiquement les genres de musique qu'on peut y entendre, mais pour les plus jeunes passagers le chauffeur jouera aussi le dernier tube hip-hop nigérian. Les chauffeurs s'y connaissent bien en musique populaire et suivent l'actualité; à bord du danfo on retrouvera sans doute les dernières sorties musicales. Véritable DJ en résidence dans son bus, il jouera pour son public, ou bien seulement pour lui-même: sa « playlist Lagos » l'aide à tenir dans le vacarme quotidien. La musique aide le chauffeur, mais aussi les voyageurs à supporter les longues heures passées dans les embouteillages. La musique distrait et repose les passagers, en évitant ainsi d'éventuelles disputes avec le contrôleur.

Le danfo n'est pas seulement un endroit où l'on diffuse de la musique: c'est aussi un instrument en lui-même. L'accélérateur à fond, les vrombissements des moteurs qui s'emballent enveloppent les gares et contribuent à leur bande-son. Afin d'annoncer son approche, quand le chauffeur ne veut ou ne peut pas utiliser le Klaxon – parfois hors service –, il fait tourner l'accélérateur. L'accélération à vide peut être aussi utilisée pour mettre en avant la puissance du moteur du danfo, mais, plus important encore, elle souligne le bruit de fond tout autour du terminal des bus: tous ces vrombissements de moteur envahissent l'espace comme des essaims d'abeilles. Les Klaxons se déclinent en plusieurs intensités de décibels et tonalités, des plus standards à ceux customisés avec des mélodies, différenciant ainsi les danfos. Le chauffeur essaie constamment de rendre son bus unique, en manipulant le son afin d'attirer les passagers, en proposant un *medley* distinctif qui capture leur attention. De plus, pour gérer les opérations de manière synchronisée et fluide, au sein de ce chaos apparent, les chauffeurs utilisent les Klaxons pour communiquer entre eux, en développant un système de signaux sonores entre collègues.

Le chauffeur de danfo est un fin connaisseur de Lagos, et quand son humeur est bonne, si vous avez la chance d'être installé à l'avant du bus, il pourra vous éclairer sur la ville pendant le trajet, sur son histoire passée et contemporaine. Il pourrait même vous laisser choisir une chanson ou porter la conversation sur des sujets socioculturels et politiques.



Le contrôleur du danfo

Le contrôleur du danfo est une figure importante au sein de mon projet sur les paysages sonores de Lagos, et dans la plupart de mes installations sonores ce personnage est mis en lumière: je le considère comme une marque sonore prééminente dans la mégapole. Il est une icône de la carte sonore de Lagos, un jongleur de mots lyrique qui balance les itinéraires des bus de Lagos comme un rappeur. Les contrôleurs des danfos sont les innovateurs et les défenseurs de la méthode des « itinéraires vocaux » pour naviguer dans Lagos; ils vocalisent mélodiquement les parcours des bus pour attirer l'attention de passagers potentiels, et les prévenir à l'approche d'un arrêt.

L'émergence des « itinéraires vocaux » est peut-être le résultat d'un manque d'informations visuelles (comme par exemple des panneaux affichant les arrêts des bus et leurs parcours) dans les gares routières. Les contrôleurs de bus improvisent, en annonçant chaque arrêt et itinéraire. Cette méthode de communication orale possède une cadence singulière – les routes et les stations annoncées par les contrôleurs sont uniques à cette ville – que l'on capture dans le répertoire des paysages sonores de Lagos. Sans ces « surnoms », Lagos aurait la même résonance que n'importe quelle autre métropole du Nigeria ou de l'Afrique de l'Ouest; mais quand on entend ces « itinéraires vocaux » dans un enregistrement, on est à peu près certains que le son vient de Lagos.

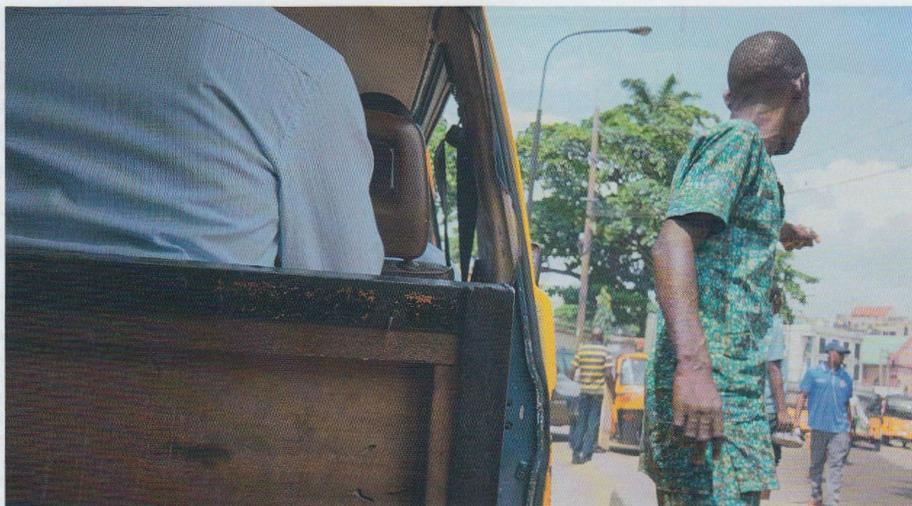
Obalende / Oshodi / Sabo Yaba / Ojuelegba / Ikeja / Orile-Ikorodu / Costain / Ikate / Okokomaiko / Mushin / Lawanson / Isale Eko / Awolowo Road / Iyanakpaja / Oworonsoki / Falomo / Ajah / Race Course - CMS / Ojodu - Berger / Masha - Kilo / Mile 12*

L'« itinéraire vocal » est un objet artistique composé par des tirades successives de rap improvisées, rodées par des heures de déclamation incessante. Le langage du contrôleur du danfo est hybride, et ses paroles convertissent spontanément en vers

poétiques courts et remixés les événements qu'ils observent en temps réel. Quand ils se déploient dans les gares routières, les chants individuels sont orchestrés dans un contexte collectif, où chaque annonce résonne parmi d'autres, composant une carte sonore temporaire qui organise la distribution des danfos dans l'espace de la gare, et qui oriente les passagers dans leur choix d'itinéraire et de véhicule. Le contrôleur de bus vous sollicitera, en essayant d'attirer votre attention pendant que vous cherchez le bon danfo parmi la marée de bus jaunes. Il faut bien prêter attention à l'énumération des routes mitraillées par la voix du contrôleur, sous peine de s'égarer dans la gare. Il faut trouver du sens dans le non-sens apparent; les noms des routes et des arrêts de bus sont abrégés, inversés, détournés et retournés. Les contrôleurs de bus modulent ces élocutions afin de dominer la cacophonie de la gare et d'attirer l'attention de potentiels passagers. Le contrôleur doit être entendu parmi le brouhaha continu de la gare routière de Lagos, sa voix surpassant la clameur des moteurs, des haut-parleurs, des colporteurs, des Klaxons, des bavardages et des « itinéraires vocaux » des autres conducteurs. Même si chacun possède sa propre cadence spécifique, il arrive parfois aux contrôleurs de se copier; on peut alors reconnaître les intensités gutturales qu'ils partagent.

Le contrôleur du danfo parcourt les routes de Lagos à longueur de journée avec son acolyte le chauffeur, modulant ses chants sur les différents chemins qu'il emprunte. Il est à la fois le bruiteur hystérique et le symbole de l'ordre sur les routes et dans les gares chaotiques de Lagos. Il vous tient constamment informé pendant que vous voyagez en sa compagnie, vous servant sur un plateau la cartographie de la ville pour que vous sachiez où et quand il faudra descendre.

Avec l'expérience, il cultive une aisance vocale efficace dans les gares, aux côtés du chauffeur; les nouvelles recrues suivent parfois en apprentissage les contrôleurs plus âgés, pour hériter des trucs du métier et apprendre les arrêts de bus et les raccourcis.



Cependant, en tant qu'auditeur, pour trouver du sens dans ce flux constant d'informations, il vous faudra filtrer les myriades de sons qui façonnent le paysage d'une ville aussi chaotique que Lagos. Cela devient rapidement et systématiquement nécessaire pour s'orienter dans la ville. Les perceptions de bribes de sons, imprégnées de lyrisme, encodent automatiquement l'esprit de celui qui écoute, comme des codes de conduite et des connexions préenregistrées, pour révéler la cohésion organique du paysage de la ville. Et comme dans un tour mnémotechnique, un seul son isolé peut être représentatif de toute l'activité à un instant et dans un lieu donné. L'action involontaire de filtrage immersif génère un réseau de signes synthétiques et d'interprétations, de directions et mouvements qui permettent de différencier entre zones de sons rassemblés et d'absorber les divers systèmes de communication qui expriment la multitude d'activités individuelles se déployant dans les paysages sonores de la ville.

Les passagers

Pour les passagers du danfo, le bus est un théâtre mobile et temporaire, où les Lagosiens montent et descendent en traversant la métropole.

En tant que passager du danfo, coincé parmi les autres passagers, vous êtes obligé de participer, que vous le vouliez ou non. Il n'y a pas d'intimité, vous ne pouvez pas rester dans votre bulle, vous devez vous impliquer, passivement ou activement. Le danfo est le lieu où l'on discute des affaires courantes, en particulier celles du pays. C'est là qu'on remet en question la politique, c'est un espace où on peut s'attaquer au gouvernement et dénigrer ses stratégies. Les passagers du danfo sont eux-mêmes des *amebos* [des colporteurs de ragots], des dictionnaires mobiles, des répertoires et des guides de la ville. Ils dispensent et distribuent les dernières histoires et derniers potins qui circulent en ville. Ils sont le *Daily Mirror*, le *Daily Sun*, le *Daily Times*, le *Financial Times*, tous les journaux existants rassemblés. Ils sont analystes politiques, historiens et conféren-

ciers à la fois. Ils sont commentateurs sportifs. Si vous voulez des nouvelles des clubs de foot, en particulier ceux de la première ligue anglaise, vous pourrez tout entendre sur les derniers classements et les derniers buts marqués. Quoi de neuf à Lagos? Quels sont les derniers scandales des politiques et des stars? C'est dans un danfo que vous les aurez sans doute entendus pour la première fois.

À bord du danfo, on peut ressentir tout ce qui se passe à Lagos; c'est un espace qui permet de comprendre le tempérament de la ville et de ses habitants. Les passagers offrent comme un aperçu de la ville; ils sont les témoins, le jury et les juges de tout ce qui concerne Lagos et le Nigeria en général. Ils délibèrent à propos de tout sujet qui fait surface lors du trajet; chacun donne son opinion sur l'état des choses selon son point de vue, prodiguant ses conseils, de la santé à l'immobilier en passant par la mode, et surtout où acheter tout ce dont vous avez besoin. Vous n'aurez qu'à demander à une personne, et tout le bus s'invitera dans la conversation, en offrant suggestions et avis. Il n'y a rien ici qui reste personnel, cela ne peut pas arriver lorsque votre voix est audible, et que vous avez seize paires d'oreilles à votre écoute. Les conversations sont destinées au public. Le bus danfo n'est pas un espace privé. Le prix de la course vous accorde le droit de participer à ce théâtre mobile. Même le chauffeur et le contrôleur comprennent qu'il s'agit d'une *vox populi*, et ils essayeront au maximum de ne pas interférer ou de ne pas tomber du mauvais côté de la conversation publique.

Rassemblés, les fragments de micro-information et les données qui émanent du danfo en disent beaucoup sur la ville. Des parcours réguliers à son bord révéleront graduellement Lagos, en la dévoilant petit à petit, couche après couche.

Traduit par Antonia Carrara

¹ Voir <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/as-la-bos-danfo-headc-for-laast-huis-stop.html>
² Quelques arrêts de bus et routes de Lagos.

La version anglaise de ce texte est un extrait d'un texte d'Emeka Ogboh à paraître dans *The Oxford Handbook of Sound Art* sous la direction de Jane Grant. John Matthias et David Prior aux éditions Oxford University Press (Oxford) en 2020.

Since 2008, most of Nigerian artist Emeka Ogboh's field recordings have been exploring Lagos as a vibrant African megacity. These recordings have produced a body of work entitled *Lagos Soundscapes*. The project at its foundation involves actively recording and collecting the endless sound varieties alive in the city that distinguish its character and vibrancy. In doing so, it maps the contour of the relationship between Lagos's population and its produced soundscapes. Urbanization, transport developments and even everyday lifestyles all affect the city's continuously changing soundscapes and perpetuate an updated catalogue of this transient ambience.

Danfo

by Emeka Ogboh

Lagos, Nigeria is impossible to imagine without one of its main avatars, the "Danfo": old sixteen to eighteen-seater Volkswagen transporters, kombis or vanagon mini-buses, compact in size, repurposed and painted cadmium yellow with two black stripes. Danfos connect the dots across the map of a megacity that seems to move *en masse*. First appearing on the scene in Lagos in the 70s, they are the archetypal means of mass transportation to convey the microcosmic spread of the city from one point to the other.

The Danfos' continuing popularity in Lagos results from their affordability and agility when penetrating every nook and cranny of the city, virtually plying all existing bus routes in Lagos. Yoruba being the predominant language of the megacity of Lagos, the word Danfo is slang in this language meaning "to stand alone."¹

Danfo buses are well known to be in a "hurry," seeking different avenues and resorting to every trick in the book to get to their destination quickly, discharging their passengers, picking up new ones and embarking on the return trip to their origin. It is all about the hustle in Lagos. Time is money and the more daily trips the Danfo bus makes translates to more money for its owner and operators.

The Danfo bus drives the spirit and soul of the megacity of Lagos; its hustle and bustle, the city's resilience and indomitable spirit, its multi-lingual, cultures and ethnicity—the city's never-say-never attitude. The Danfo bus embodies and expresses "Everything Lagos" as it ferries the city's populace through its network of roads. It is inevitable that once inside a Danfo you will experience multiple perspectives of Lagos through everything associated with this mode of transport.

A Danfo bus extracted from its context is another yellow bus with two black stripes until you experience its peculiar composition of sounds: vehicle horns, conductors calling out bus routes, mobile deejaying courtesy of the driver, salesmen and women advertising the latest cure-all, passengers trading up-to-the-minute city gossip, hawkers and mini-mercantilism on the move, tribal jibes, dialogues, mobile phone monologues, as well as religious tantrums, all temporarily trapped in this teeming space. For nothing more than your bus fare, you are privy to financial, sports and political analysis, where

everybody is an informed genius on every issue. This mobile theatre of drama and entertainment is awash with the overall vibes of a city for nearly the entire 24 hours of the day.

The bus stations

The journey of the Danfo bus begins and ends in bus stations.

The bus stations are key public transport nodes in Lagos, connecting different points in the city with the yellow Danfo buses, and in recent times the BRT (bus rapid transit). The bus stations have a multitude of bus conductors operating simultaneously in these spaces, and are the main depository of the "verbal maps," the bus routes calls made by bus conductors. These bus stations are where most Lagosians who use public transportation congregate and disperse to their various destinations and are known for the constant stream and movement of people in and out of the space. They are my favorite sound recording turfs, with an almost non-stop flow of their human and vehicular generated sounds, everything Lagos congregates and disperses in these bus stations, creating one of the most interesting spaces in Lagos to listen and record.

The overlay of human interaction is acutely amplified at the bus stations in order to direct and influence commerce and the exchange of goods. Depending on the size of the bus station, you will find dozens of bus conductors calling out different bus routes and competing to be heard. Public address systems are sometimes adopted to announce the next bus in line for departure. This is combined with the announcer's "verbal mapping" or calling out bus routes to create unique ways to advertise the routes. The announcers interrupt the music transmission to announce bus routes, just like a radio station disc jockey, who punctuates streamed music with news and commercials on-air.

Loudspeakers are also deployed around the bus station by bootleg CD dealers, who boisterously advertise the latest music in town, vying with each other to be patronized. Fuji, Juju, Highlife, Makossa, Afro hip hop, Rap, RnB, Gospel, all types of music can be heard here, depending on their popularity. The music played here is likewise seasonal to reflect the festive mood of the moment. For example, the musical flavor of these bus stations shifts to Christmas-themed songs in December, or Islamic-themed songs during Ramadan. This is also where the bus drivers source the music they play in the Danfo bus, and for the passengers transiting in these spaces, they have time to listen and browse through selections while waiting for their bus to fill up.

The constant flow of people through the bus stations transforms the space into a dynamic concert zone, a mix-tape of uncoordinated music, voices and vehicular sounds. The bus station is a hubbub of sound, and its resonance is contingent upon the convergence of people relying upon the Danfo and other public transport systems. The bus stations are sound gold mines, and the bigger the size, the bigger the payload of audio recordings.

The Danfo driver

The Danfo driver is the king of the Danfo bus-hierarchy of things. He is probably the owner or a relation to the owner of the bus, and takes the important decisions with regard to the bus and its daily operations.

His role starts with subjecting every physical aspect of the bus to his individual tastes, branding and decorating his version of the yellow-painted bus. A collection of bumper stickers advertises his favorite football team (in most cases an English Premier League club), favorite musician, faith, tribe and life affiliation, and during elections

his political party and candidate. Sometimes, a picture of an old military dictator who is still considered a hero to some. These bumper stickers are akin to body tattoos, accumulated into a unique overlay. Physical differences also proceed with alloy rims, fancy side mirrors, mud guards and big bumpers. The driver “soups” the bus up and in doing so rivals other buses to attract passengers. Not all Danfo buses are well taken care of, in fact most look derelict, but you can tell which driver is concerned about the looks of his bus.

Sound-wise, the Danfo driver converts the bus into a mobile jukebox, sometimes dishing out thousands of naira on a sound system for the dual purpose of announcing the driver and his bus, and the entertainment within. Fuji and highlife are some of the popular genres of music being played, and for the sake of the younger passengers he may play the latest Afro hip-hop Nigerian music. Drivers are well versed and up-to-date on popular music and the Danfo bus is one of the places where you will hear the latest music releases. As with an in-house DJ, he plays to the audience, or strictly focuses on the type of music he likes: a “Lagos playlist” that helps him get through the daily hustle and bustle. The music makes the long stay in traffic jams bearable. Not just for the driver but also the passengers. Music entertains and relaxes the passengers and distracts them from arguing with the driver.

The Danfo bus is not only about music, but an instrument unto itself. Pedal to the metal or sounds of revving engines envelop the bus stations contributing to the station’s soundtrack. Revving is used to warn of a bus’s approach in situations when the driver does not want to use his horn or perhaps the horn is not functional. The repetitive revving is also used to show off the potency of the Danfo’s engines, but more importantly adds to the chatter around the bus terminal: different engines revving, like swarms of bees invading a space. Horns ranging in different tones and decibels, from being factory-fitted to custom ones with musical tones, also differentiate Danfo buses. The bus driver constantly seeks to individuate his bus, manipulating sound to draw passengers towards his way by presenting a distinctive melody that will catch the passengers’ attention. Additionally, to maintain a fluid and synchronized operation within this seemingly chaotic atmosphere, bus drivers use horns to communicate with each other, developing a system of signals for their colleagues while at work.

The Danfo driver is well versed in a knowledge of Lagos, and when the mood is right and if you are chance to sit in the front of the bus, he will educate you about the city, its past and contemporary history, as you drive along. He may also let you decide what music to play or engage you in socio-political-cultural discussions.

The Danfo bus conductor

The Danfo bus conductor is a favorite feature on the Lagos soundscapes project, and most of my Lagos soundscapes installations have highlighted this character who I consider a preminent sound-mark of the megacity. He is an icon of the Lagos sonic map, a lyrical wordsmith dishing out the Lagos bus routes like a rapper. The Danfo bus conductors are the innovators and proponents of using verbal mapping to navigate Lagos, melodically vocalizing the bus routes to draw the attention of potential passengers and, conversely, notify them of upcoming bus stops to disembark.

The advent of verbal mapping may have resulted from the lack of associative visual materials (i.e. displays of bus stops and routes) at the bus stations. Bus conductors improvise by calling out each bus stop and route. This method of oral communication has a sin-

gular cadence—the bus stations and routes the conductors call out are unique to the city—captured within the Lagos soundscape repertoire. Without these monikers, Lagos would invariably sound like any other Nigerian or West African metropolis, but when you hear these verbal maps in a recording, it is almost certain the sounds originate in Lagos.

Obalende / Oshodi / Sabo Yaba / Ojuelegba / Ikeja / Orile-Ikorodu / Costain / Ikate / Okokomaiko / Mushin / Lawanson / Isale Eko / Awolowo Road / Iyanakpaja / Oworonsoki / Falomo / Ajah / Race Course - CMS / Ojodu - Berger / Masha - Kilo / Mile 12.²

Verbal mapping is an art form of successive freestyle-rap deliveries honed by many hours of non-stop ranting. The Danfo bus conductor’s language is hybrid and his lyrics are spontaneous, converting real-time occurrences into short and remixed poetic verses. When deployed at bus stations, individuated chants are orchestrated within a collective context where a single annunciation reverberates among many to compose a temporary audio map that diagrams the distribution of Danfos within the bus station and orientates passengers to seek out their preferred route and ride. The bus conductor will hustle you, drawing your attention as you navigate the sea of yellow Danfo buses searching out the right bus to board. The bus conductor must be listened to intently as he rattles out these routes in a machine-gun-styled verbal assault, or else you will be lost in this space. You must make sense of what may appear to be his nonsense; names of bus stops and routes are abbreviated, verbally flipped, re-flipped and flipped again. The bus conductors modulate these vocal deliveries to stand out within the cacophony of the bus station and draw the attention of potential passengers. The conductor must be heard amidst the non-stop Lagos bus station din, his voice surpassing the clamor of engines, loudspeakers, hawkers, horns, chatter and the verbal maps of other conductors. While vocal patterns are specific to a conductor, they do copy each other sometimes, and are thus loosely associated by the harsh guttural pitches they share.

The Danfo bus conductor is the one who navigates the routes of Lagos, riding all day with his co-conspirator, the Danfo bus driver, morphing his lyrics to the different routes they ply. He is the nagging noisemaker and at the same time a symbol of order in the chaotic Lagos bus stations and routes. He is always informing you, as you ride along with him *en route* to your destination, dishing out the cartographic layout of the city so you know when and where to get off.

With experience, he cultivates an efficacious sonic fluency at bus stations and alongside the driver; new conductors sometimes shadow, as apprentices, old ones to inherit such tricks of the trade and learn the various bus stops and short cuts.

However, to make sense of this influx of constant information, you, the listener must filter the myriad sounds that substantively map the landscape of a chaotic city like Lagos. This soon becomes a systemic requirement for navigating the city. The lyrically imbued perceptions of sound bites systemically encrypt the mind of the listener like pre-recorded codes of regulation and linkages to reveal the organic cohesion of the cityscape. And like mnemonics, the isolation of a single sound can stand-in for the cumulative activity present in a space. The involuntary action of immersive filtering creates a network of synthetic signs and interpretations, directions and movements to differentiate between environments of aggregated sound and absorb the nuanced systems of communication that express the multitude of individual activities taking place in the city’s soundscapes.



The passengers

For the Danfo bus passengers, the bus is a temporary mobile theater, where Lagosians hop on and hop off as they journey through Lagos and its metropolis.

As a Danfo bus passenger, packed tight with other passengers, you are compelled to participate, willingly or unwillingly. There is no privacy, you cannot be in your bubble, you have to engage passively or actively. The Danfo bus is the space to discuss current affairs, especially the state of the nation. It is a place to discuss politics, a space to bash the government and its policies. The Danfo bus passengers are *amevos* [gossipers], mobile dictionaries, directories and city guides. The Danfo bus passengers are the disbursers and dispensers of the latest gist and gossip flying around the city. They are the *Daily Mirror*, the *Sun*, the *Times*, the *Financial Times*, and all print news institutions put together. They are political analysts, historians and lecturers all combined. They are football pundits; if you want to know the update on football clubs, especially the English premier league, you will hear the latest table ranking and scores in the Danfo bus. The latest political and celebrity scandals, what is new in Lagos? You probably heard it first in a Danfo bus.

The Danfo bus is a space to get a feel of what is going on in Lagos, a place to gauge the temperament of the city and its people. The passengers offer an insight into the city; they are the witnesses, the jury and the judges of all things in Lagos, and Nigeria in general. They deliberate on any topic that comes up during the ride, each person offering an opinion on the state of things from their personal point of view, offering tips ranging from healthcare, to real estate, fashion, or where to buy whatever you need. All you have to do is ask one person and the whole bus joins into the conversation, offering sug-

gestions and advice. Nothing is personal here, not when your voice is audible and you have over sixteen pairs of ears that can hear you. The conversations are publicly geared. A Danfo bus is not a private space. The bus fare grants you the right to participate in this mobile theater. Even the bus driver and conductor understand that, it is a *vox populi*, and will try as much as possible not to interfere or fall on the wrong side of the public discourse.

The titbits of micro information and data that emanate from the Danfo bus, put together, can basically tell you a lot about the city. Regular rides on the Danfo bus will gradually reveal Lagos, peeling its layers away strip by strip.

¹ See <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/as-lagos-danfo-heads-for-last-bus-stop.html>
² Some Lagos bus stops and routes.

This text is an excerpt of a text by Eneka Ogboh to be published in Jane Grant, John Matthias and David Prior (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Sound Art* (Oxford University Press, 2020).

SUFFERHEADS

Ayodeji Rotinwa on Emeka Ogboh



Emeka Ogboh, *Àlâ*, 2014, two-channel video, color, sound, 4 minutes.

ONE EVENING THIS PAST FEBRUARY, within the walls of DaDa, an exhibition space on the edge of Jemaa el-Fna, Marrakech's historic market square, I heard a nostalgic cacophony.

Nostalgic to me, at least.

The noise instantly returned me to Lagos, home to twenty-one million people (myself included) who are always on the move, negotiating, thriving, and suffering in a city the size of which seems insufficient to contain all the life there. I could hear the familiar sounds of chart-topping music blasting from mobile speakers; the radio jingles for wonder drugs that cure cancer and AIDS; the voice of a vendor soliciting customers to buy her dried fish. Most of all, I heard the distinct growls of the city's famous yellow-and-black buses—the *danfos*—and their conductors shouting out destinations.

This experience was part of *Àlâ*, 2014, a video installation by the artist Emeka Ogboh in which the same sets of images are split across a wide screen, cascading into and reflecting one another. For Ogboh, Lagos is an orchestra and he its conductor. The core elements of *Àlâ*'s audio track are taken from his ongoing *Lagos Soundscapes*, 2008–, for which he records what he identifies as aural landmarks of the living, shifting history of the city, distilling its sonic architecture into something that can be experienced intimately through headphones in installations or listening booths at galleries, or at some distance through loudspeakers. No matter the method of presentation, the result is the same: immersion.

Ogboh is now based in Berlin, but Lagos is his adopted home. Born in 1977, he moved to the capital after attending the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in the state of Enugu, located in the country's southeastern

region. There, he studied fine and applied arts, graduating in 2001. Seven years later, after a media class at the 2008 Winter Academy at the Fayoum Art Center in Tunis, Egypt, with Austrian multimedia artist Harald Scherz, he became interested in sound art, a novel medium at the time (and largely today) in Nigeria. After returning to Lagos, he began to record and curate the city's sounds.

His career took off around the same time that Lagos's art scene was starting to build institutional muscle and shape its identity abroad. Two not-for-profit art spaces, where he showed his work early on, were established: the Centre for Contemporary Art, run by the late, great Bisi Silva, and African Artists' Foundation, founded and helmed by Azu Nwagbogu, who continues to serve as its director. Both institutions, which grew to become pillars of the art world, encouraged artists to create outside the firmly set traditions of sculpture and painting.

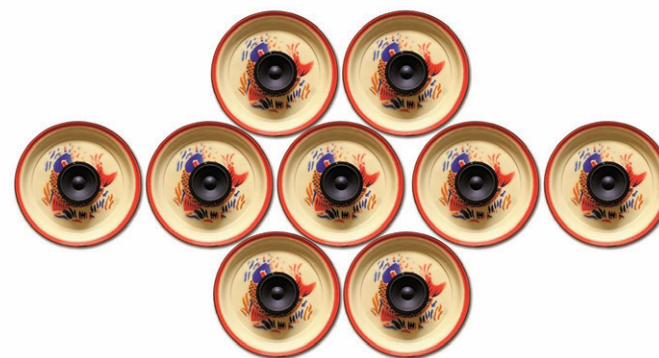
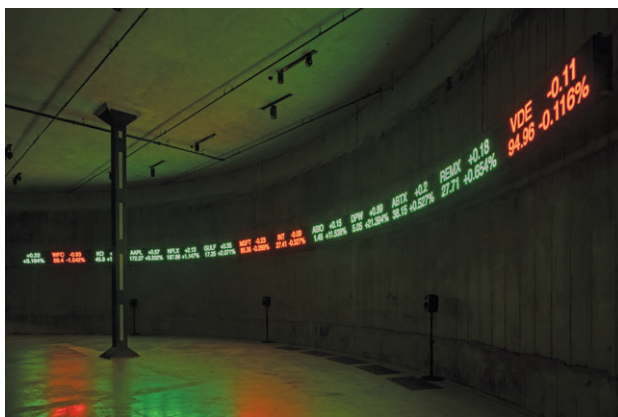
In 2014, Ogboh exhibited at Dak'Art in Dakar, Senegal; at the 2015 Venice Biennale, his work was featured as part of "All the World's Futures," curated by the late Okwui Enwezor. Thereafter, he had solo exhibitions at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art in Washington, DC, and at Tate Modern in London. He also exhibited at Documenta 14, Athens, and was short-listed for the Hugo Boss Prize. What is striking about his achievements is that he accomplished most of them without gallery representation, though he now works with Galerie Imane Farès in Paris.

As critic Massa Lemu has pointed out in his essay "*Danfo, Molue* and the Afropolitan Experience in Emeka Ogboh's *Soundscapes*," the artist's *Lagos Soundscapes* is significant to the history of art by African artists, expanding the legacies of, for example, South Africa's James

Webb, who manipulates and incorporates sound—the beating of hands on doors, birdsong, heartbeats—into installations that explore the dynamics of communication; and Egypt's Magdi Mostafa, who probes the relationships among sound, space, and technology, often using "instruments" such as washing machines or industrial bread mixers to create acoustic experiences in site-specific installations that evoke what Mostafa calls the "phenomenological experience of the individual in the city."

But Ogboh's work goes further, participating in current debates about sustainable cities and archiving urban space in a time of painful, breakneck flux. For instance, the markets Ogboh has recorded—sounds from which he included in *Market Symphony*, 2015, exhibited in 2016 at the Smithsonian—may soon be no more. They could easily be reduced to rubble by a government hungry to build a megacity and replaced by shiny shopping complexes catering to a privileged few rather than to the masses who depend on the traditional tomato traders, shoe shiners, and fabric sellers. To underscore this point, Ogboh installed the work's speakers inside the enamel trays used to store food at home, and on which goods are sold in the markets or streets.

Ogboh does little to manipulate the sounds he records, preserving them as they are in the field. This is key to the power of his pieces. In "Afropolis: City, Media, Art," an exhibition hosted by Cologne's Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum in 2010–11, he presented another ongoing series "Lagos by Bus," 2010–, for which he recorded the sounds passengers might hear as they're being ferried to their destinations. He makes the experience clear, palpable: One might hear conversations between candy sellers and cigarette sellers, and advertisements for bus



Left: Emeka Ogboh, *The Way Earthly Things Are Going*, 2017, LED display feed of live world stock indexes, sound. Installation view, Tate Modern, London. Photo: Andrew Dunkley. Above: Emeka Ogboh, *Market Symphony* (detail), 2015, speakers, enamelware trays, sound, dimensions variable.

routes booming through bullhorns. In *Verbal Mapping II*, shown in Africa Centre's Infecting the City Public Arts Festival in Cape Town in 2013, we hear a bus driver calling for passengers on one of Lagos's most famous routes. Lemu also notes that the artist recognizes that even urban sounds—"rumbling production machines," "supermarket muzak"—are not neutral but are products of capitalism, and compares Ogboh to the Beninian artist Romuald Hazoumè and the Ghanaian artist El Anatsui, arguing that what Ogboh does to sound is like what the other two do to the "found products of African modernity such as jelly cans and bottle tops."

Ogboh creates installations from other sounds as well. For *The Song of the Germans*, 2015, which he exhibited at the Venice Biennale, he recorded a choir of African immigrants singing the German national anthem in their own languages, including Bamoun, Duala, Ewondo, Igbo, Kikongo, Lingala, More, Sango, Twi, and Yoruba. With that piece, the Berlin resident asks questions about globalization, belonging, and migration. His 2017 installation at Tate Modern, *The Way Earthly Things Are Going*, featured a Greek lamentation song played over an LED display of stock-market indexes, evoking the precariousness of the global economy. Ultimately—and most especially in his plotless, wayward *Soundscape*s—there is no clear composition to comfort a listener, no audible progression, no narrative arc. To a Lagosian, Ogboh's work is charged with familiarity. To an outsider, it's an aural adventure. In "The Progress of Love," 2012–13, a three-venue exhibition that took place concurrently at the Menil Collection in Houston, the Centre for Contemporary Art in Lagos, and the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts in Saint Louis, he installed an actual danfo at the Menil. "It shifted viewers' experience from the sonic to a more physical interaction with Lagos through its most iconic symbol," he said in an interview with Ugochukwu-Smooth C. Nzewi, a longtime Ogboh collaborator and incoming curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture at New York's Museum of Modern Art. "I

think it created a more realistic experience of the city."

Although he has not shied away from being overtly political, with the *Soundscape*s, he passes up the opportunity for critique, directly perpetuating the empty, touristic appeal of the danfos as a signifier of Lagos without addressing the dysfunction they represent as a symbol of the government's failure to provide its teeming population with safe and dignified public transportation. Danfos are usually unkempt and barely regulated; they tend to arrive at their destinations only with the assistance of prayer and German efficiency, which helps the buses perform even when they're not particularly well maintained. Furthermore, this informal transit system feeds a violent, state-approved tax system, run by an organized syndicate of Lagosians that collects money from danfo drivers. Surprisingly, it was recently announced that Ogboh had collaborated with Horizn Studios, a premium-travel-luggage-and-accessories company, to create a "limited edition series of luggage and travel essentials inspired by Lagos and its yellow danfo bus." The collection includes suitcases, shirts, and stickers in the bus's signature yellow-and-black: another instance of Ogboh engaging with his subject matter on a merely aesthetic level rather than seizing the moment to say something more.

But in 2017, for Documenta 14 in Kassel, he collaborated with craftBee, a German brewery, to create a special beer, "Sufferhead," inspired by the experiences of migrants in Germany. *Sufferhead* is Nigerian slang and pidgin English for someone who endures negative experiences. Lagosians, by virtue of living in such a crowded city, are natural sufferheads; so are migrants who are made to jump through endless hoops to live and be integrated into a new country. Ogboh subverted the meaning of the word in this work, focusing on the strength and resilience of African migrants: By drinking the beer, a Lagosian would get a taste of home.

In "The City and the Artist's Archival Impulse: A Conversation," Nzewi suggested that even "gifted" painters or photographers might find their work inferior

to Ogboh's: "In all these attempts to capture Lagos, however, none of the artists are really able to evoke the city's intensity or mirror its fluctuations. Lagos's dynamism cannot be captured in one frozen camera shot or in a single painting." Ogboh agrees with Nzewi. He also criticizes painting for being too limiting, for presenting "a singular view of Lagos, shorn of the city's legendary complexity." Arguably, however, representing the city exclusively through its danfos and open-air markets isn't terribly different; in fact, it is the easiest way to describe the place from the outside looking in, as it appears in Western media. Ogboh's chosen medium is certainly more evocative of its people and energies, but the city does have other markers—concerns that might be more complicated to capture. For example, Lagos is a sinking metropolis, alarmingly edging below sea level, facing a very present danger. This subject isn't as splashy as a market, but it raises the question of how an artist like Ogboh might represent it.

Beginning in August, Ogboh will show *Àmà: The Gathering Place*, an immersive installation that weaves together sound, textiles, and sculpture, at the Cleveland Museum of Art. The work will explore the social role of the museum's atrium in relation to the village squares in the Igbo region of southeast Nigeria, where people gather to listen to music and important news or to tell one another stories. Ogboh's *Soundscape*s carry cities to new environments—and audiences to a place that may or may not be familiar. I imagine visitors to the Cleveland Museum are in for an experience that will transport them, as it did me when I stood in that dusty building in Marrakech with my eyes closed—hearing the conversations, honks, and pitter-patter of feet—and quite suddenly found myself at home, though I was thousands of miles away. □

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Biennale



Alia Farid, *At the Time of the Ebb*, vidéo, production XIV^e Biennale de Sharjah, « Look for Me All Around You », 2019. Courtesy de l'artiste

SHARJAH, CAISSE DE RÉSONANCE D'UN SUD GLOBALISÉ

Otobong Nkanga et Emeka Ogboh, *Aging Ruins Dreaming Only to Recall*

Aux Émirats arabes unis, la Biennale de Sharjah offre la vision d'un monde complexe à travers les regards de trois commissaires.

SHARJAH. Des danseurs sur une plage, leurs visages grimés de blanc avec de hautes coiffes de paille, manipulent des palmes avec des mouvements gracieux; un enfant enturbanné guide un chameau doté de jambes humaines; un homme-oiseau tournoie devant les vagues. Le *Nouvel An des pêcheurs* de l'île de Qeshm, en Iran, est rapproché d'un intérieur traditionnel du Golfe pour évoquer des rites éternels liés au cycle des saisons. Il s'agit d'une vidéo d'Alia Farid, artiste koweïto-portoricaine née en 1985, l'une des œuvres les plus réussies de cette nouvelle édition de la Biennale de Sharjah, une manifestation où l'on découvre toujours des artistes peu vus ailleurs.

La nuit dense du désert occupe cette année une place particulière dans la Biennale, plusieurs œuvres n'étant visibles qu'au coucher du soleil.

Comme dans beaucoup de biennales aujourd'hui, il n'y a pas un mais plusieurs commissaires, pas un collectif, mais trois personnalités que Hoor al-Qasimi, fille de l'émir de Sharjah et initiatrice très engagée de cet événement depuis

une dizaine d'années, a réunies pour l'occasion. Ils ont ensemble défini un thème qui résonne avec cette pluralité: «*Leaving the Echo Chamber*». Puis ils ont chacun apporté leurs réponses distinctes à ce sujet, en résonance les unes avec les autres, à travers trois plateformes lisibles – on reconnaît facilement leurs goûts respectifs.

Le thème est à la fois assez précis pour suggérer différentes approches curatoriales et assez large pour offrir une vision d'un monde contemporain ouvert et multiple. Dans un bel accrochage au musée des beaux-arts, Omar Kholeif, commissaire international ayant occupé de nombreux postes, notamment à la Whitechapel Gallery de Londres et au Museum of Contemporary Art de Chicago, s'est d'abord penché sur les histoires enfouies d'un passé récent. Il montre dans une enfilade de salles des œuvres abstraites du peintre indien Anwar Jalal Shemza datant des années 1960, une série de tableaux de la même époque de l'artiste turque Semiha Berksoy, des toiles du Syrien Marwan et une microrétrospective de la Libanaise Huguette Caland – dont on voudrait beaucoup voir, en France aussi, le travail plein de liberté et d'humour. Entre abstraction et figuration, la peinture du Portugais Bruno Pacheco est comme un juste contrepoint contemporain à cet ensemble.



UNE IMAGE DU MONDE D'AUJOURD'HUI

Après ce socle historique, dans l'autre volet de son projet «*Making New Time*», Omar Kholeif donne une vision du monde contemporain un peu plus attendue, avec une installation du Syrien Hrair Sarkissian

sur des oiseaux menacés d'extinction, un hommage du Chilien Alfredo Jaar à trente-trois femmes exceptionnelles, et encore une chanson de la pluie composée en plein air par les artistes nigériens Otobong Nkanga et Emeka Ogboh dans l'une des cours intérieures de la vieille

ville reconstruite – Otobong Nkanga est d'ailleurs la lauréate du prix de la Biennale. Ce paysage sonore, où des bassins d'eau salée dessinent comme des cratères dans le sable, est un peu écrasé par la lumière du midi, et prend toute son ampleur dans celle du soir.

Aging Ruins Dreaming Only to Recall the Hard Chisel from the Past, 2019, installation lumineuse multi-écrans, sculpture, vue de l'installation, XIV^e Biennale de Sharjah, production Sharjah Art Foundation. Courtesy Sharjah Art Foundation

3 plasticiens à écouter

Soyez tout ouïe : ces trois-là ont fait du son leur médium de prédilection. Qu'ils vous transportent au cœur de la garrigue, dans les rues de Lagos ou aux limites du monde sonore connu, suivez-les de près.



Mungo Thomson

Arrangeur pour grillons

Artiste californien touche-à-tout, Mungo Thomson investit régulièrement le monde de la musique. Son œuvre sonore la plus marquante est une partition pour orchestre écrite en collaboration avec le compositeur Michael Webster, qui est une transcription d'une compilation de chants de grillons enregistrés un peu partout sur la planète (Bornéo, Cameroun, France, Sénégal, Thaïlande, Venezuela...). La musique imite les stridulations des insectes. L'artiste a même enregistré des solistes : chaque iPod dans une cage à grillons interprète le son d'un insecte isolé, pour une installation musicale plus vraie que nature. **A. M.**

> Mungo Thomson est représenté par la galerie Frank Elbaz (Paris-Dallas).

À partir de 20 000 € pour une œuvre audio.

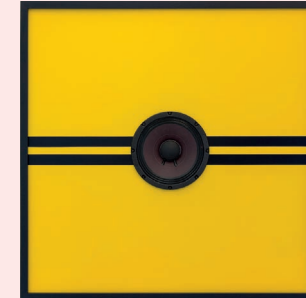
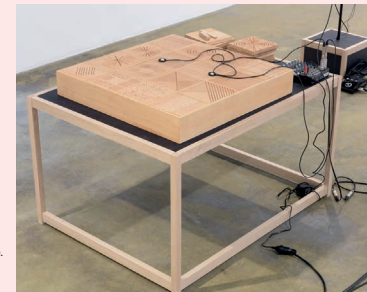


Cricket Quintet for Clarinet, Violin, Two Flutes and Percussion [détail]

2013, iPod, mini-haut-parleurs, cages à grillons, diam. 8,8 cm.

Iteration on Drums #1

2016, table en bois, 24 panneaux de bois, 4 micros contact, table de mixage, baguettes en bois, manuel d'exercices, partitions, instructions d'activation et pièce sonore de 15 min, 12 x 80 x 80 cm (instrument), 70 x 127 x 97 cm (table).



Conductors / Oshodi de la série «Sound Portraits»

2018, installation composée de deux boîtes sonores et haut-parleurs, 80 x 80 cm chacune.

Emeka Ogboh

Portraitiste de ville

L'artiste nigérian installé à Berlin explore depuis dix ans les sons imprégnant l'espace public de Lagos, mégapole africaine de plus de 20 millions d'habitants. Son travail est une expérience immersive qui donne à entendre la vie urbaine de manière quasi symphonique. Pour son installation *Conductors / Oshodi*, deux boîtes peintes en jaune avec deux bandes noires (en référence à la couleur des bus Danfo) crachent en boucle les annonces que fait un chauffeur de bus tout au long de son trajet. Emeka Ogboh a notamment participé à la biennale de Venise (2015) et à Documenta (2017). **A. M.**

> Emeka Ogboh est représenté par la galerie Imane Farès (Paris).
De 20 000 à 90 000 € pour une installation sonore.



Tarek Atoui

Social clubber

Pour ses performances, l'artiste et compositeur électroacoustique de 38 ans a développé des instruments de toute beauté, complexes et surprenants, engageant le corps et l'esprit. Après plusieurs années de recherche, Tarek Atoui a ainsi conçu un «instrumentarium» avec la complicité de fabricants d'instruments, de designers de haut-parleurs, de programmeurs informatiques, de sourds et malentendants... Ses performances collaboratives, réalisées avec des musiciens professionnels ou amateurs, font résonner aux quatre coins du monde une musique à forte teneur politique et sociale. **A. M.**

> Tarek Atoui est représenté par la galerie Chantal Crousel (Paris).

Entre 15 000 et 60 000 € pour une performance sonore.



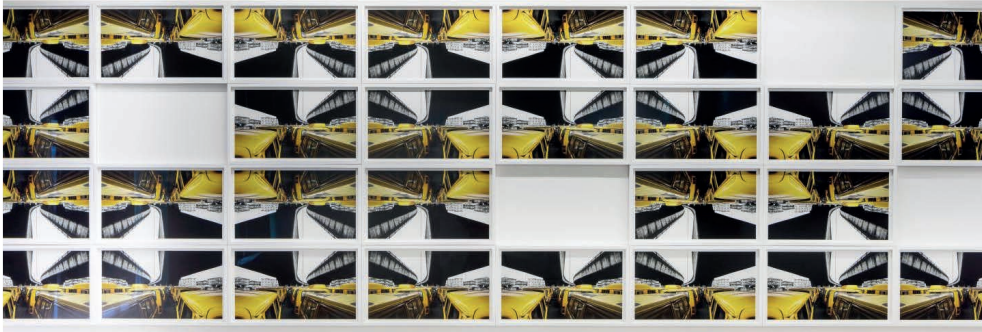
Reviews /



BY DANIEL BERNDT
20 NOV 2018

Emeka Ogboh's Kaleidoscopic Fragments of Lagos

The artist's first solo show at Galerie Imane Farès, Paris, uses mirroring and multiplication to explore perspectives of his hometown



'No Condition is Permanent' is a familiar bumper sticker on the Nigerian 'Danfo' buses, the yellow Volkswagen vans that are the most popular means of public transport in Lagos. It is also the title of Emeka Ogboh's first solo show in Paris. The artist's obsession with Lagos – Nigeria's economic and cultural hub and the biggest city in Africa – has been a focus of his work for about a decade, notably through the exploration of the megacity's acoustic fabric. This show marks, however, a shift from Ogboh's previous preoccupation with sound to photography and video, which the artist began exploring around 2014, when he relocated to Berlin, Germany.



Emeka Ogboh, *No Condition is Permanent*, 2018, installation view. Courtesy: the artist and Galerie Imane Farès, Paris

A central motif in the exhibition is the kaleidoscope, both literally and metaphorically. Invented in 1816, it sparked a craze in Victorian England and then took off around the world. It became also emblematic in literary and philosophical discourses of visual, social and metaphysical change. Charles Baudelaire likened 'the perfect flaneur' to 'a mirror as vast as the crowd itself; or to a kaleidoscope gifted with consciousness, responding to each one of its movements and reproducing the multiplicity of life and the flickering grace of all the elements of life'. In the 20th century, the kaleidoscope had a significant influence on the development of abstract and op art; it's a back-story Ogboh's more recent visual practice is informed by.



Emeka Ogboh, *Spirit of Matter*,
2017-18, installation view.
Courtesies: the artist and Galerie
Imane Farès, Paris

The element that binds the disparate strands of the show together, however, is sound. *Conductors/Oshodi* from the series 'Sound Portraits' (2018) – an installation consisting of two speakers framed in cadmium yellow painted boxes with two black stripes (a reference to the colour of the Danfo buses) – generates a sonic imaginary of the city via the looped driver's announcements of a bus stop on a major Danfo route. His words echo like a mantra in the low timbre of his voice that merges with *Beyond the Yellow Haze* (2018), a composition of electronic music and field recordings played from the ceiling of the gallery space.

'No Condition is Permanent' is a reflection of the ever-changing nature of cities. Simultaneously Ogboh preserves an image of Lagos: fragmented, idealized and – like the grid of *Syntax Error* – filled with the blind spots of a distant memory.

Emeka Ogboh, 'No Condition is Permanent' runs at Galerie Imane Farès, Paris, until 24 November 2018.

Main image: Emeka Ogboh, Syntax Error, 2018, installation composed of 28 photographs, each: 15 x 26 cm. Courtesies: the artist and Galerie Imane Farès, Paris

DANIEL BERNDT

Daniel Berndt is currently a research associate in the Politics of the Image project at the German Literature Archive, Marbach.

People

How Artist Emekah Ogboh Became One of Europe's Fastest-Rising Stars—Without a Gallery or PR

We spoke to the elusive artist ahead of a rare performance at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin.

Kate Brown, November 2, 2018



Emeka Ogboh. Photo by Michael Danner.

Emeka Ogboh is tired. It's understandable, really. The pioneering sound artist is still finding his preferred pace after participating in two of Europe's largest art events last year, [documenta 14](#) and [Skulptur Projekte Münster](#) (and receiving [notable acclaim](#) for his presentations at both). He's also the only artist who pulled them off in tandem without a gallery backing him—and not for lack of offers.

Since then, his profile has only risen. In late 2017, he secured a [coveted Tate Modern commission](#). Soon afterward, he found himself [on the shortlist](#) for the [prestigious Hugo Boss Prize](#).

In a conversation with artnet News a few days before his live performance at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (House of World Cultures, commonly known as HKW) on November 2, Ogboh blames his fatigue on a hectic travel schedule. He's just gotten off a plane from Paris, where he is completing a nine-month fellowship at the Columbia Institute for Ideas and Imagination. The Nigerian-born, Berlin-based artist has also recently joined a gallery there, [Galerie Imane Farès](#). His first exhibition, "No Condition is Permanent," is on view through November 24.

"It was good to be free," he says of his prolonged stretch as a willingly unrepresented artist. Now, representation by a smaller gallery that specializes in artists from the Middle East and Africa feels like the right fit, especially over some of the bigger fish that were approaching him. Ogboh is wary of what big galleries can do to artists' practices, and was equally as wary, it seems, of taking on any gallery too early (though he acknowledges that decision created other challenges for him).

"I have seen artists who have to make works because the pressure to sell was there," he says. His own relentless focus, meanwhile, has led him to elude most interviews, art fairs, and other PR opportunities. And the day that he has to have an assistant checking his emails for him? "That's the day I quit," he says. "It's not about spending 20 percent on the work and 80 percent on PR for the work." (artnet News seemed to luck into this rare interview; Ogboh agreed to speak on a day's notice before a rehearsal for his upcoming performance.)



Spirit and Matter (2017-2018). Courtesy the artist and Galerie Imane Farès.

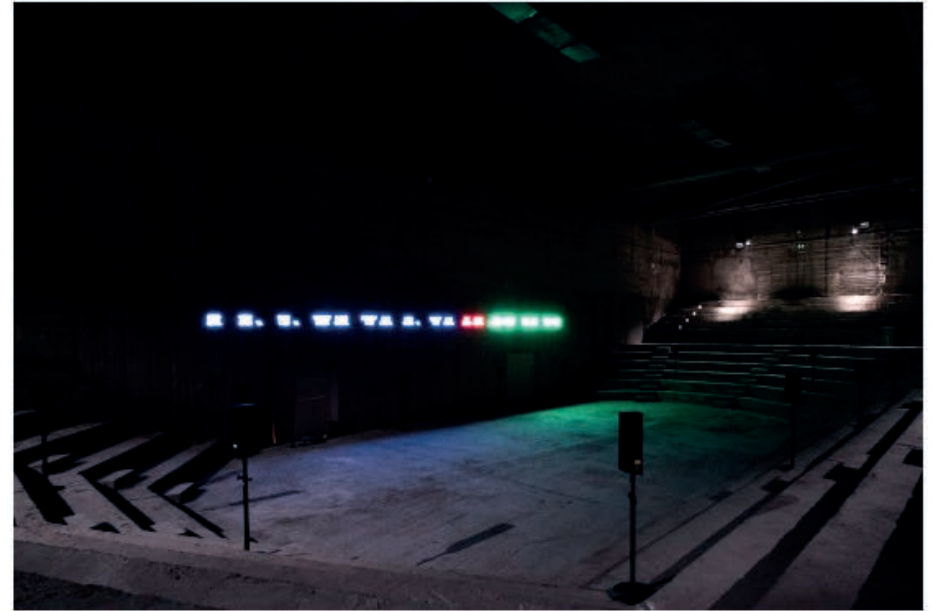
A Rare Performance

Considering his preference to remain out of the spotlight, the performance at HKW is a relatively unusual event. The piece, *I Sneak Into Lagos in a Yam Truck*, combines soundscapes of Lagos, the capital of his native country, and Berlin, his new home.

It's part of the program tied to HKW's exhibition "Radiophonic Spaces" (on view until December 10), which explores 200 sound pieces culled from 100 years of art made with or broadcast over the radio. With his highly anticipated performance, Ogboh continues his nuanced, sound-based exploration of migration and post-colonialism, two hot-button issues around the world, but particularly in Europe.

"It's 2018 and humankind still hasn't sorted out this issue," says Ogboh of the ongoing migration crisis. Notably, Ogboh calls himself a migrant, consciously staying away from terms more commonly associated with the peripatetic cultural class, like immigrant or expat.

And although he commends the widespread demonstrations taking place across Germany to protest the right-wing resurgence, he is measured about the future. "This whole idea of migration and the issue of being an African or a black person in Europe will never end," he says. "Or, at least, not anytime soon."



The Way Earthly Things Are Going (2017). Photo: Mathias Voelzke.

For documenta 14, Ogboh also confronted Germany's nationalism and increasingly prominent xenophobia. He branded his own beer, *Sufferhead*, blending Nigerian flavors with traditional Germany brewing methods—a move that effectively broke the German "purity laws" that govern beer production. Next, he's bringing the project to Paris, France, a country he says is still, in some ways, a neo-colonialist state.

Ogboh emphasizes that, at least in his case, Germany has been good to him. But that hasn't been the case for two other prominent Nigerian art-world figures. Artist Olu Oguibe's pro-refugee obelisk, *I was a stranger and you took me in*, a public work from documenta 14, was relocated last month under pressure from right-wing politicians. For Ogboh, the outcome wasn't surprising. "They are the masses, but then there are the policymakers, too," he points out.

Meanwhile, another acclaimed Nigerian in the German art world, curator Okwui Enwezor, with whom Ogboh worked on the 56th Venice Biennale, stepped down from his role as director of Munich's Haus der Kunst in June. In an interview with *Der Spiegel* (a translated version of which is available on e-flux), he spoke frankly about the treatment he received "as an African in a predominantly monocultural city." The same people who dismissed him for not speaking German, he recalled, would pronounce his name incorrectly.

That point resonated with Ogboh. "This is what migration is all about, it's not one-sided," he says. "You give and you take. If someone has to speak German, good—but also make an attempt to understand where they're from."



Syntax Error (2018). Courtesy the artist and Galerie Imane Farès.

He then starts laughing as he realizes, for the first time, that the three men—Oguibe, Enwezor, and himself—are actually from the same tribe in Nigeria, the Igbo.

"People are now looking at African art, so I am now selling more works than before," he says of the so-called "African art market," a term he hesitates to use for fear of oversimplifying such a broad category. "If you want to break it down, then break it down to my tribe. I am an Igbo artist."

Looking Ahead

Ultimately, however, Ogboh welcomes the recent explosion of interest in African art. He will be showing a sound piece at the upcoming Morocco edition of the 1:54 art fair. But as always, he is pacing himself. "I am not going to be one of those artists that thinks, 'Let's make the best of this now while it lasts. And will this be a bubble?' I am more curious about what happens afterwards."



Conductors / Oshodi from the series "Sound Portraits" (2018). Courtesy the artist and Galerie Imane Farès.

For Ogboh, little is more important than maintaining control of his own work. Despite his self-imposed late-blooming relationship with a gallery, he is already booked solid with projects until at least 2020. A major commission with an undisclosed North American museum will also be announced next year.

“The art world wouldn’t exist without the artists—that’s what every artist needs to know,” he says. “You have the power and the power belongs to you. Do not flip it around.”

“Radiophonic Spaces,” a walk-in radio archive, is on view at Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin until December 10. Emeka Ogboh performs this evening as part of the exhibition’s listening platform “Der Ohrenmensch.”

“No Condition Is Permanent” is on view at [Galerie Imane Farès](#) in Paris until November 24.



Vue de l'installation *Market Symphony*, d'Emeka Ogboh, en 2016, au Smithsonian, Musée national d'art africain, à Washington.



Jeune pousse. **Voyageur de sons.** Par Roxana Azimi

Taillé comme un rugbyman, Emeka Ogboh, 41 ans, a une sacrée présence avec son 1,90 m déplié. Pourtant, l'artiste nigérian, qui expose à la galerie Imane Farès, à Paris, a choisi le médium le plus immatériel pour s'exprimer : le son. Diplômé en design graphique, il ne jurait d'abord que par le visuel. Mais, à l'occasion d'une université d'hiver en Égypte, en 2008, il se découvre une sensibilité pour l'ouïe. « *Quand vous vivez à Lagos* [la capitale du Nigeria et la plus grande ville d'Afrique], *vous ne pouvez ignorer les bruits. Ils sont intenses et vous submergent*, dit-il. *Si le niveau sonore en Europe se situe à 100 décibels, il atteint 1000 décibels là-bas.* » La mégapole, dont il a enregistré des heures de vibrations, offre un incroyable charivari, où s'entrechoquent l'appel du muezzin et les cloches des églises, les cris des marchands de rue et les klaxons impatientes, sans oublier le barouf interminable des fêtes. À Berlin, où Emeka Ogboh vit à mi-temps depuis 2014, le tempo est tout autre. « *Les sons les plus forts qu'on entend sont les sirènes de voitures, et encore, ce n'est jamais gratuit. En Allemagne, rien ne se passe par hasard.* » Au début, le jeune homme habitué au vacarme de

Lagos peinait à trouver le sommeil à Berlin. Mais c'est là qu'il apprend à travailler la matière brute sonore pour en tirer des compositions qui séduisent les plus grands musées, de la Tate, à Londres, au Smithsonian, à Washington. Ogboh est de tous les raouts qui rythment le milieu de l'art : Biennale de Venise en 2015, Documenta de Cassel en 2017, Biennale de Dakar en 2018. Téléporté en Occident, le son de Lagos renvoie aux questions brûlantes de la migration. « *Les Occidentaux n'arrivent pas à imaginer que je suis là par choix, pas pour échapper à des fléaux* », soupire-t-il. Dans la ville de Cassel en Allemagne, il s'est inspiré d'une chanson de Fela Kuti pour produire une bière brune, baptisée Sufferhead, vendue avec ce slogan : « *Who is afraid of black?* » Ce breuvage, il l'a voulu piquant : « *Quand vous demandez aux Africains ce qui leur manque le plus, ils répondent : le piment.* » Et d'ajouter : « *L'histoire de la migration est aussi une histoire de nourriture. Comment retrouver les goûts qu'on laisse derrière soi ? Comment les remplacer ? À quoi est-on prêt à renoncer ?* » « No condition is permanent », par Emeka Ogboh, galerie Imane Farès, 41, rue Mazarine, Paris 6^e. Du 13 septembre au 24 novembre. www.imanefares.com

Jürgen Schukki. Courtesy of Emeka Ogboh

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festival-automne.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: MATHIAS DEBI. COURTESY OF FÉLIX-HENRI HENRI-COMPTON/AFRICA, NUMERIQUE ET GALLERY/ARTIST



Michèle Pearson Clarke
Suck Teeth Compositions
 (After Rashaad Newsome) featuring
 Simone (left) & featuring Greg (above),
 video stills, 2017.
 Photos : courtesy of the artist

Emeka Ogboh
 → *The Song of the Germans*, installation
 view, The Power Plant, Toronto, 2018.
 Photo : Toni Hafkenscheid, courtesy of the artist

Emeka Ogboh *The Song of the Germans*

Here We Are Here: Black Canadian Contemporary Art

Biennials and large-scale festivals often sprawl across multiple sites, temporarily shifting the geography of a city. This spring, a similar transformation occurred in Toronto by coincidence, as the programming cycles at major institutions aligned. An exhibition of Berlin-based, Nigerian artist Emeka Ogboh's ten-channel sound installation, *The Song of the Germans*, opened at The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery¹ on the same day the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) launched the landmark group show *Here We Are Here: Black Canadian Contemporary Art*, which featured the work of Sandra Brewster, Michèle Pearson Clarke, Chantal Gibson, Sylvia D. Hamilton, Bushra Junaid, Charmaine Lurch, Esmaa Mohamoud, Dawit L. Petros, and Gordon Shadrach. Both exhibitions confronted viewers with Blackness as a political position that troubles claims to nationhood or common national culture and employed sound as a medium with space-defining properties that oscillate between local, national, and global geographic registers. The context for each exhibition was, however, strikingly different. One venue is a bright star in the constellation of the global art world of biennials and festivals, the other is a nationally oriented culture and natural history museum—one that fairly recently issued a public apology for a legacy of racist exhibition practices.

At The Power Plant, *The Song of the Germans* reads as minimalist abstraction. First exhibited at the 56th Venice Biennale, which was curated by Okwui Enwezor, it consists of ten, individually mounted speakers sitting in a half-circle in an intimately lit room. For the piece, Ogboh worked with ten members of the Berlin-based Afro-gospel choir Bona Deus to record a rendition of the German national anthem, which Joseph Haydn originally composed in the nineteenth century as a longer piece. The singers translated the third stanza (part of a revised anthem for a reunified nation created in 1990) into their mother tongues: Igbo, Yoruba, Bamoun, More, Twi,

Ewondo, Sango, Douala, Kikongo, and Lingala. The names of each language are printed on the floor, and the speakers have been adjusted to correspond to the respective heights of the singers. This is a powerful sonic intervention because, in liberal democracies, anthems sung in official languages play a symbolic role in state governance, as the repeat performance of a common cultural and linguistic reference subsumes the identity of individuals. This call to a common culture is predicated upon the legal categorization—and exclusion—of groups of people from citizenship status. Ogboh uses an algorithm to generate unique arrangements each time the languages begin a new cycle of anthems. Commonality thus takes place in the act of translation, recording, and broadcasting, which aggregates multiple languages and individual voices within a field of sonic difference.

Here We Are Here, on the other hand, draws upon personal lyricism and conventions of portraiture to challenge concepts of nationhood in Canada, where intersections between language and racialized identities exist alongside national myths of ethnic harmony and multicultural diversity. Robyn Maynard has described this process of mythification in visual terms as a “widespread anti-Blackness that continues to hide in plain sight.” For this reason, it is hard not to view the show in terms of the local significance of Black cultural activism in Toronto, for which the colonial attitudes and stereotypes perpetuated in the exhibition *Into the Heart of Africa* (1989–1990) at the ROM acted as a flashpoint. The current exhibition emerges from the multi-year and multi-platform *Of Africa* project, proposed to the ROM by Dr. Julie Crooks and independent curator Dominique Fontaine, as a counter-measure to this past exhibition history.

Among the many engaging works included in the exhibition is Sylvia D. Hamilton's installation *Here We Are Here* (2013–2017), which includes objects selected from the ROM

The Future Now: 10 African Artists to Watch

BY *Alex Greenberger* POSTED 07/18/18 9:05 AM



Emeka Ogboh, *Sufferhead Original (Kassel Edition)*, 2017.

COURTESY THE ARTIST

Emeka Ogboh

Born in 1977, Enugu, Nigeria; based in Lagos, Nigeria, and Berlin, Germany

In Emeka Ogboh's sound art, the aural remnants of crowded streets and bustling marketplaces summon the city he calls home. "My foray into sound art was facilitated by Lagos," he said. "The megacity taught me how to listen, record, and analyze sound—the city made me a sound artist." Ogboh's work has been nominated for the Guggenheim Museum's prestigious Hugo Boss Prize, and he participated last summer in Documenta 14 and Skulptur Projekte Münster. For the latter, he placed speakers inside a pedestrian tunnel and had a musician play the triamba, a percussion instrument, in tribute to the late New York street performer Moondog.

While there, Ogboh also brewed Quiet Storm, a beer that, its label claimed, was "fermented with the sounds of Lagos" and was made with "honey collected in the city of Münster." As the artist explained, "I have an interest in how collective memories and histories are translated, transformed, and encoded into sound and food."

(Ogboh helped ARTnews compile a [three-hour playlist of music](#) to accompany the Summer 2018 issue titled "Africa Now.")

The Guardian, Interview

Nigeria: the distinctive sounds of Lagos

By Ugochukwu-Smooth Nzewi for Africa is a Country, part of the Guardian Africa Network

Artist Emeka Ogboh captures the city at full volume, with all its cries, colours and constant motion.

Put the sound up. 14 August 2013

Armed with microphones, a digital recording device, and a video camera, Nigerian artist Emeka Ogboh captures the maddening hyper-visibility of Lagos: vivid colours, the syncopated cries of street and highway hawkers, yelling bus conductors, the impatient bleats of car and bus horns, and hoards of people in constant motion. In collaboration with the Goethe Institut Lagos, Ogboh recently launched an online live sound streaming of Lagos Soundscapes, coinciding with World Listening Day on July 18, 2013.

Lagos is the subject and object of your visual interest. What makes the city so attractive?

Emeka Ogboh: I live and work in Lagos. I am deeply embedded in the city, just like everyone else living there. There is no way you can ignore the pervasive influence of Lagos. From the moment you wake up until you go to bed, you are affected by the city. As an artist, it's normal that one's place of domicile becomes the starting point of one's work. Lagos is a very dynamic city and nothing is predictable. Things keep evolving at a fast and constant pace, which make for an interesting narrative. It is a city of many faces and parallels. It is the unpredictability of Lagos which informs my work.

An artist can approach Lagos as an erratic muse that needs to be disciplined and cuddled at the same time. It can also function as the artist's ultimate Neverland. I am curious as to why sound became your main form of intervention, although I know you have since begun to work with video and photography as well, which we will get to in a moment. But let's talk sound first.

If you have ever been to Lagos you will understand why sound is my preferred medium. One of the first impressions of the city is the intensity of its soundscapes. For a first-timer in Lagos, especially if you are from the global north, it can be a shocking experience to have the city's soundscapes invading your eardrums. But my forage into sound art actually began after I attended the media class on the audible spectrum taught by the Austrian multimedia artist Harald Scherz at the Winter Academy in Fayoum, Egypt in 2008. Upon returning to Lagos, I began experimenting with sound. I remember receiving a phone call from a friend around that time. This friend, who lives in Abuja, Nigeria's political capital, was visiting Lagos. After 15 seconds into our conversation I asked him if he was in Lagos because I could pick up the distinctive Lagos soundscapes in the background. He was startled that I knew that he was in Lagos. He had wanted to pay me a surprise visit. In a sense that phone call opened my ears to the uniqueness of the sounds of my city. So I started to listen, record, and experiment with these sounds. The more I recorded and listened, the more I appreciated their power to immerse and transport the listener. I find sound more engaging than any other medium.

At what point did the process move from the personal to become a work of translation for public consumption?

I think it was from the moment I made a conscious decision to present Lagos Soundscapes to the public. Before then, I was mainly recording and listening in the quiet privacy of my studio, completely taken by my new discovery. As an artist, I thought about what I could do creatively with the sounds. When the opportunity came to show the project in a public context, the question of how to present it came up. How do you put together sounds that you have recorded around the city over a period of time into short clips for an installation? What sounds should be included or not included in a representation of Lagos? In short, what sounds would best sum up Lagos as a place? These were the questions I had to answer for myself.

So how was the initial public reception? If I am right, your first sound exhibition was at the African Artists' Foundation in Lagos?

No, it was at the Winter Academy in Fayoum, Egypt in 2008. I installed an audio-visual work in the academy's bathroom. My first Lagos Soundscapes exhibition was at the AAF in 2009. I remember setting up the installation and not being sure what to expect from the public. But I think the idea of relocating familiar sounds to an unusual context gave the public an opportunity to listen to and appreciate Lagos differently. At the same time, many were just content with the idea of my work being a new thing in the art scene.

How have the sounds of Lagos changed since you first started?

Lagos is largely a work in progress and throughout this period the city sounds of course have been in constant flux. New structures are being established, while old ones are being dismantled. This process has had a noticeable effect. Hawking, for example, has been banned on most of the newly renovated roads, but hawkers are a major part of Lagos Soundscapes. With plans for the government BRT buses to expand to all the bus routes, it is only a matter of time before danfo buses disappear completely. Imagine how Lagos will look without its iconic yellow buses. This means that the verbal mapping (the bus route calls of the conductors) will gradually disappear. Bus conductors are a very important element in Lagos Soundscapes. Their verbal mappings – by this I mean their solicitation of passengers – add authenticity to the Soundscapes.

This implies that your previous recordings are now historical documents or belong to an archive of memory. It will be interesting to see how the old recordings and what you do in the future will come together to present a more complex Lagos.

True. When I first began to record, I did not envisage this development. I was only looking at things from a creative perspective and did not realise that I was slowly building an archive. It was only when Oshodi was restructured and renovated between 2009 and 2010 that it occurred to me that there had been a transformation in the sounds there. It was at this point that it became apparent to me that Lagos soundscapes were changing in relation to infrastructural developments going on in the city.

My goal is to create a narrative of the transformation of Lagos with the recordings I've already completed and those I have yet to make. I am not looking to work with only my own recordings but will seek out older recordings of Lagos from the past, such as archival video footage and other audio material.

To take our conversation in a different direction, I am particularly fascinated by how Lagos has become transportable or transposable in your work. You have been able to plant Lagos elsewhere and in several locations. In that way, you have made an interaction with Lagos "auratically" phenomenological and imagined rather than physically experienced.

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My ability to create the interaction you just described lies chiefly in the medium I am working with. I have worked with other media in exploring Lagos (video and photography), but I have found sound to be the most powerful in conveying a sense of the place. Lagos Soundscapes have a strong impact on the imagination. They cannot be ignored. I intervene by carefully choosing the sounds that completely embody or signify Lagos in a new environment.

Tell us about the audience reaction to your soundscapes outside Nigeria.

The reactions have been a mixed bag. They have ranged from positive to negative, as well as somewhere in between. Lagos Soundscapes have annoyed the hell out of some people, and at the same time stoked the curiosity of others. The work has been described as noisy and obtrusive, especially in some quiet European cities where it has been installed. In Cologne, someone broke one of the loudspeakers of the installation and the police were called in because the sounds were felt to be a nuisance. But for some people, Lagos Soundscapes was an intriguing intervention that added colour to the atmosphere.

I think the most interesting reactions to my work have come from Nigerians living abroad. The soundscapes stirred up their emotions and brought a whiff of home within earshot. One particular reaction was from a Nigerian student in Helsinki who thought he was having a mental breakdown when he came across the Lagos Soundscapes in a completely foreign environment. The experience inspired him to visit Nigeria that same year after being away for three years. In Cape Town, I remember some Nigerians heading out of their shops when they heard the danfo bus conductor screaming his lungs out on Adderley Street. So too, in Manchester, you could easily spot the Nigerians in the crowd based on their reactions to the installations.

Your most recent museum exhibition was *The Progress of Love* at the Menil Collection in Houston. You successfully installed a danfo bus. This was a shift from your more schematic representation of the danfo bus in previous exhibitions, with the yellow surface and two black stripes on the museum wall. What did the physicality of the actual bus add to the experiential context of your work.

In my aesthetic universe, the danfo bus is a stable visual sign around which I assemble acoustic references to Lagos. It is further conceptualised as a spontaneous "agora," in transit, shifting Lagos or its people from

one stop to another. As you rightly observed, the danfo bus has been represented in my previous works as yellow paint with two black stripes on a wall surface. That concept was strictly a visual one. It evolved from the painted walls to constructed and painted booths in other exhibitions, and finally to the corporeal presentation of the danfo bus in *The Progress of Love* exhibition. Having a danfo bus as part of my installation was transformational. It shifted viewers' experience from the sonic to a more physical interaction with Lagos through its most iconic symbol. I think it created a more realistic experience of the city.

You have also begun to engage Lagos with other media, such as video and photography. Your *Fractal Scapes* (embedded above) are recent video experiments that treat Lagos in a radically different way than your work with sound. Can you talk a little bit about these new experiments and how they relate to your Soundscapes?

My experimental videos are abstract "time-based" paintings of Lagos. The city has been documented mainly through paintings, such as of market scenes, street scenes, skylines, bus parks, as well as of the inner city. Lagos has also been variously documented through photography. The paintings are either impressionistic or realistic interpretations. But they always present a singular view of Lagos, shorn of the city's legendary complexity. They are static, and hang on walls in art galleries or in people's homes. As an artist working with digital media, I love these paintings but cannot connect to their static quality. Nonetheless, they have provided a point of departure for me to use video to explore Lagos differently.

The *Fractal Scapes* are "mirror effect" experimental videos. When exported frame to frame, the still images are reminiscent of the impressionist paintings of Lagos. I then introduce sound to create an audio-visual narration of the city. The video experiments are elemental but possess an abstract quality that I think points to the chaotic nature of Lagos. The *Fractal Scapes* address the complex nature of Lagos, a city that is navigable via multiple points of entry and departure. My video experiments are time-based paintings as opposed to the traditional two-dimensional paintings or photographs of Lagos. In an exhibition setting, the videos can be installed alongside Lagos Soundscapes to create a more immersive or embodied experience. I produce the videos with this idea in mind, although the videos and soundscapes can also be installed separately.

Lagos Soundscapes live sound streaming was launched on World Listening Day, 18 July 2013. This interview was first published on *Contemporary And*, a platform for international art from African perspectives.

Ugochukwu-Smooth Nzewi is an artist, curator, and art historian. He is a Smithsonian Institution Fellow and was recently appointed as the curator of African Art at the Hood Museum Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, USA. Nzewi was also recently appointed as one of the curators of the *Dak'Art 2014*

„Boňango bo be kwasam“

Die Klanginstallationen von Emeka Ogboh

„Brüderlich mit Herz und Hand“, die deutsche Hymne mal anders: Warum die Soundinstallation des Nigerianers Emeka Ogboh, derzeit auf der Biennale in Venedig, ins Humboldt-Forum gehört. MARIE LUISE KNOTT. 21.08.2015

Klang sei das stärkste Medium, sagt der nigerianische Künstler Emeka Ogboh, der zur Zeit in Berlin lebt. Klang könne Gefühle bündeln, in Klangräumen sei man immer mittendrin. Und es stimmt: Wegsehen kann man, weghören nicht. Und kein Klang stellt eine engere Bindung her als die menschliche Stimme.

Emeka Ogboh, Jahrgang 1977, ist mit einer Arbeit auf der diesjährigen KunstBiennale in Venedig vertreten. Schon von Weitem schallt dem Besucher aus einem Wachturm am Ende des Arsenalen die Deutschlandhymne entgegen. GermanBashing?, fragt man sich. Noch bevor man den mit Holz ausgekleideten Raum mit den zehn schwarzen Lautsprechern betritt, ist man befremdet. Ogbohs Installation „The Song of the Germans“ mag harmonisch klingen, aber der Text ist unverständlich. Ein Begleitbuch gibt Auskunft: Mitglieder eines Berliner Gospel-Chors, der aus afrikanischen Migranten besteht, haben die Hymne übersetzt und singen sie auf Douala, Igbo, Ewondo, Bamun, Kikongo, Sango, More, Twi, Yoruba und Lingála. Alles indigene afrikanische Sprachen. Jeder Lautsprecher eine Sprache, eine Stimme. Einer hebt an, die anderen folgen, jedes Mal gibt ein anderes Idiom den Impuls zum Chorgesang.

Es ist ein symbolische Ort: Hier im Arsenalen nahm Venedigs Weltherrschaft ihren Ausgang, hier erlebte sie später ihren Niedergang. Hier stach einst Marco Polo in See, exportierte westliches Wissen und kehrte Jahre später zurück – reich an Eindrücken und Beuteschätzen. Von hier brach man zum Kreuzzug nach Jerusalem auf; hier wurden die Heereschiffe gebaut, mit welchen die Venezianer Byzanz zerstörten.

Im Wachturm singt jeder Sänger „Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit“ in der eigenen Muttersprache. Die Besucher können das Begleitbuch aufschlagen, „boňango bo be kwasam“ auf Douala mitsingen und dabei die deutsche Übersetzung „brüderlich mit Herz und Hand“ mitdenken.

Trotz C-Dur kommt melancholische Stimmung auf

Der anfänglich schwungvolle Eindruck verflüchtigt sich bald. Das mag auch an der Instrumentalbegleitung liegen: Ogboh hat sich nicht für die übliche, symphonische Tschingderassa-Fußball-Hymne entschieden, sondern für das Original, für Haydns fragiles Streichquartett. So kommt trotz C-Dur melancholische Stimmung auf und man gerät ins Nachdenken über die heutige Gemengelage. Warum halten wir unsere Eingewanderten seit Gastarbeiterzeiten auf staatsbürgerliche Distanz? Wie weit ist Deutschland (noch) davon entfernt, ein Einwanderungsland zu sein? Und: Fühlen „sie“ sich unserer Hymne verbunden?

So minimal die Installation, sie hat es in sich, zumal in Deutschland gerade unentwegt über die Flüchtlingsströme debattiert wird, auch über die aus Afrika. Jahrelang ist Emeka Ogboh mit Aufnahmegegeräten

durch Lagos gestreift und hat immer neue Hörbilder und Klangporträts der Megacity geschaffen. So trägt er den Sound von Lagos in die Welt. Im letzten Winter hat er vor der Berliner St. Elisabeth-Kirche Lautsprecher aufgestellt. Generatoren brummen, DanfoBusse hupen, dazwischen Gemurmel, Kirchenglocken, die Rufe der Schaffner – all das drang ins Ohr der Passanten. Demnächst bringt er die Stimmen von Straßenverkäufern, die Früchte, Hühnchen und Reisgerichte anpreisen, in ein Museum in Washington.

In Streifzügen erkundet Emeka Ogboh den Sound von Berlin

Emeka Ogboh lebt zurzeit auf Einladung des DAAD-Künstlerprogramms in Berlin. In Europa sei es zu leise, sagt der international arbeitende Soundinstallateur mit Basis in Lagos und jetzt auch in der deutschen Hauptstadt. „Hier halten die Menschen Geräusche für Umweltverschmutzung.“ Anfangs konnte er nicht schlafen. Welchen Sound hat Berlin? Inzwischen erkundet er auf seinen Streifzügen, wie es den Migranten gelingt, hier anzukommen, und was sie aus der Heimat mitbringen. Neben den Auseinandersetzungen um das Flüchtlingscamp am Oranienplatz beschäftigen ihn eingewanderte Esskulturen – vietnamesische Märkte, nigerianische Restaurants. Und er erforscht inzwischen andere Klangarchive.

2014 gewann Ogboh den Kunstwettbewerb für das im Bau befindliche Gebäude für Frieden und Sicherheit der Afrikanischen Union in Addis Abeba. Künftig wird nicht ein Bild, sondern ein Klang Politiker und Wirtschaftsleute aus aller Welt ins Gebäude geleiten: die panafrikanische Nationalhymne, gesungen in den indigenen Sprachen des Kontinents. Dazwischen ertönen Ausschnitte aus den OAU-Eröffnungsreden von 1963.

Ab 2019 soll das Humboldt-Forum im rekonstruierten Schloss die außereuropäischen Sammlungen aus Dahlem präsentieren. Dazu gehört auch das 16 000 Wachsylinder umfassende Tonarchiv mit Aufnahmen von teils ausgestorbenen Sprachen und Gesängen der unterschiedlichsten Volksstämme. Das Humboldt-Forum hat sich vorgenommen, die schönste aller Neugierden zu wecken: jenes Interesse an der Fremde, den Anderen, das Marco Polo und Alexander von Humboldt in die Welt hinaus trieb. Die traditionelle Museumspräsentation hält diese Fremde bequem auf Distanz. Wir schauen uns an, wie „sie“ gelebt, was „sie“ besessen haben – früher, anderswo. Dabei sind die Menschen den Kulturschätzen längst hinterhergereist, und beide kamen nicht nur auf legalem Wege, wenn auch auf denkbar unterschiedliche Weise.

Das Humboldt-Forum, auch das ein Versprechen seiner Macher, will die Schätze anders, lebendiger präsentieren; auch gibt es wie bei allen öffentlichen Neubauten einen Etat für zeitgenössische Kunst. Was gibt es Besseres, als „Songs of the Germans“ anzukaufen? Dann kann die „boňango bo be kwasam“-Hymne die Besucher auf ihrem Gang durch die „Halle des Weltgedächtnisses“ zu den Schaukästen und Tonwalzen begleiten.

Im Forums-Prospekt liest man: „Im Idealfall ist ein Museum ein Ort, an dem im Besucher eine Verwandlung stattfindet.“ Eben das leistet Ogbohs Klangkunstwerk. Es entmusealisiert die Neugier, holt die Stimmen der Migranten ins Land hinein, fragt nach dem Zusammenhang zwischen den historischen Schätzen und den heutigen Lebensumständen der Menschen außerhalb Europas. Der Gesang der Deutschen als Gesang für

die Deutschen, er gehört ins Humboldt-Forum.

Ab 18. September zeigt die Galerie Wedding (Müllerstr. 146/147) Ogbohs EssensAusstellung „No Food For Lazy Man“ (bis 31. 10.). Bei der Eröffnung am 17. 9. zapft der Künstler selbst gebrautes Bier, nach einem aus Geschmacksumfragen unter afrikanischen Migranten entwickelten Rezept.

Galerie Imane Farès