COLLOQUIUM:
CELEBRATING
ARCHITECTURE
IN AFRICA

29 September 2017
THE AFRICA ARCHITECTURE AWARDS

The Africa Architecture Awards aim to recognise and reward worthy projects from around the continent and to create broader awareness (via exhibitions, publications, films, documentaries, festivals) of the issues and opportunities inherent in the built environment through dialogue, analysis and critique. As an internationally recognised, world-class award for African architecture, its objectives are to promote design excellence across a range of built environment disciplines, provide a platform for emerging voices, and facilitate conversations, connections and collaborative possibilities for architects across the continent. While helping to shape a new view of African architecture globally, the AAA programme also recognises and celebrates the particular conditions, challenges and opportunities of pan-African practice and education.
The Africa Architecture Awards have an ambitious aim to ‘celebrate design excellence and promote an increased awareness of the role and importance of architecture across Africa’. What appeals to me is the inclusion of a ‘critical dialogue’ category alongside the ‘built’, ‘speculative’ and ‘emerging voices’ categories. The addition of this category outlines a clear mission to think more expansively and include a range of professions that intersect with architecture. It also demonstrates that the Awards go beyond backslapping exercises and look deeper into the development of the architectural craft as part of the making of something more substantial and context responsive. Ultimately, this should serve to open up architectural discourse and highlight the accountability of the profession in the pursuit of making better buildings, spaces and places in our urbanising, globalised world. It also honours the important work undertaken by entities and individuals that engage with built environment discourses and the changing realities of development.

There is a general understanding that governments make cities. Since working with David Adjaye on his book, *Adjaye Africa Architecture* and the accompanying exhibition, *Urban Africa*, I have been preoccupied with the role of architecture in making cities. Our dialogues have informed my thinking in relation to place making. What if this idea were located at the core of making spaces, places and cities? What would be the architect’s role? Who would write the brief?

A new force of ideas exchange is gathering. Rapid technological development, increased global travel and fast and wide-reaching communication through immediate media access are all contributing to expanding connectivity in the world. This means that the frameworks underpinning how we engage have changed. Ideas formulate within the context of an evolving local-global paradigm and the power of ideas is moving rapidly beyond borders. Ideas move as people move; they invigorate places through an infusion of new perspectives. It is ultimately these ideas that make inclusive spaces, places and cities.

Intensive analysis of our histories, traditions and cultures needs to be undertaken. Projects that are developed in this research-based mode tend to be inclusive and constructive. Only when we engage, and only when understanding takes place at the intersection of geography, culture, old and nascent identities, forged out of equally represented histories will the emergent ideas be sustainable.
Everyone engages with architecture in some way – by using or moving through places. What if architects were to move beyond the ‘request for proposal’ and tender-based systems currently available; to move beyond the role of facilitator, conveyor and promoter of received ideas (which in public projects may sometimes be damaging or politically misguided)? I dream of a world in which more architects write their own briefs, reimagining spaces, places and cities that facilitate the movement of ideas and the development of the idea, paving a way for all people to move freely. I mean this both literally and figuratively in the sense that fluid movement through spaces can allow for unexpected transitions, conjunctions and the formation of different identities.

Architects are in a unique position to widen the platform for exchange to include people from differing backgrounds who share common interests and to instigate a flow of ideas between formal and informal sectors, vulnerable groups, artists and curators – in addition to government, corporate entities and other powerful decision makers. Groups of little opportunity, and access, or even exposure to, architectural theory and knowledge need to be included in conceptualisation processes so that their role in the making of places and shaping of societies is actively enhanced. We should not be limited by present opportunities; rather, we should focus on future possibilities. Rather than creating places that highlight difference and contribute to marginalisation, how many architects grasp the latent opportunity to work collaboratively with others to create new places, new social possibilities?

Architects are not simply the dutiful conveyers of pre-formulated plans, the translators of concepts to concrete. Ideas hold the potential to bring people together. The opportunities are manifold to form wider more inclusive groups drawing on multi-nodal contexts so as to build more just, equitable and innovative social spaces. As innate constructivists and multi-disciplinarians, architects are ideally poised to play more of a leading role as instigators, educators, researchers, lobbyists, facilitators in the field of place making.

To make space to explore these possibilities in greater depth, I have curated a programme that welcomes a range of other makers into our discourse and celebrates the vitality of context-sensitive approaches. By foregrounding inter-disciplinary discussion and opening up the terrain, the Africa Architecture Awards are making an active contribution to bringing the work of the architect to the core of contemporary place-making practices on the continent.

Zahira Asmal  
Founder & Director, The City  
Advisor, Africa Architecture Awards 2017
Welcome
Zahira Asmal: Advisor, Africa Architecture Awards

Introduction
Professor Lesley Lokko, Chair of Steering Panel, Africa Architecture Awards

Session 1: Making the Awards
9am–10:30am
Africa Architecture Awards 2017 Steering Panel with Evan Lockhart-Barker, MD of Saint-Gobain Retail founding sponsor of the Africa Architecture Awards

Professor Lesley Lokko – Chair (Ghana)
Issa Diabaté (Côte d’Ivoire)
Doreen Adengo (Uganda)
Luís Urbano (Portugal)
Mphethi Morojele (South Africa)
Urko Sánchez (Kenya)

Moderator: Sean O’Toole

This opening session will focus on the vision and framework for the inaugural Africa Architecture Awards. Panelists will share their thoughts on the need to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of architects across the continent. Panelists will share the lessons and insights they gained constructing a platform to award excellence in the architectural field. What does it involve to practically implement the first pan-African architecture award? Although focused on the making of a viable award, this panel will also consider larger contextual issues. How can a pan-African award contribute towards the narrative of African growth? How does a pan-African award respond to the local?

Tea
Session 2: Judging the Awards  
11am–12:30pm

Africa Architecture Awards 2017 Master Jury

Doctor Mark Olweny - Chair (Uganda)  
Anna Abengowe (Nigeria)  
Professor Edgar Pieterse (South Africa)  
Guillaume Koffi (Côte d’Ivoire)  
Patti Anahory (Cape Verde)  
Phill Mashabane (South Africa)  
Tanzeem Razak (South Africa)  

Moderator: Sean O’Toole

Consolidating ideas introduced in the first panel, this discussion will focus on the practicalities of judging the first Africa Architecture Awards. Participants will elaborate on the structure of the awards and comment on the award categories and entries. Some questions to be grappled with in this session: How important is form and context in judging an individual entry? How does one judge diversity and difference within the context of a pan-African award? Are there noticeable regional trends? What cities stood out as centres of architectural excellence?

Lunch

Session 3: Bringing African context/s into the conversation

2pm–3:30pm

Zahira Asmal (publisher)  
Khanyisile Mbongwa (curator, artist)  
Max Mutanda (architect)  
Neo Muyanga (musician)  
Lethabo Motswaledi (tech entrepreneur)  
(Winner of the Africa Architecture Awards 2017)

Moderator: Joe Addo

What are the processes and meanings of architecture in the African context? How should the practice of architecture be taught to produce a new generation of thinkers who are skillful in redefining our condition? Too often Africa is presented as a series of statistics, but we know better. Foregrounding the role of creativity in African cities and spaces, Joe Addo will moderate an hour and a half discussion with some friends – both old and new, architects and non-architects – touching on contemporary African issues through individual perspectives. Ultimately, often in spite of government interventions, it is the human dimension of courage, ingenuity and innovation that drives change and invention in our communities. How can these attributes be integrated into modes of practice and ultimately into the modes, flows and structures that constitute places?

Close of colloquium
ANNA ABENGOWE
Anna Abengowe is the founder of Worldwide Architecture, presently pursuing projects in Morocco, New York and Nigeria. Born in the UK, raised in Nigeria, and educated in the United States, where she received her Architecture degree at Princeton University, Abengowe is currently a consultant with the Build It Back Hurricane Sandy restoration project in New York City and resides in Harlem.

DOREEN ADENGO
Doreen Adengo leads Adengo Architects, an architecture and urbanism practice grounded in research and multidisciplinary collaborations. Recent projects have focused on developing affordable housing solutions in Kampala, Uganda. She has taught at The New School, Pratt Institute and Makerere University, and is currently a visiting critic at the University of Johannesburg's Graduate School of Architecture.

EDGAR PIETERSE
Professor Edgar Pieterse holds the South African Research Chair in Urban Policy and is director of the African Centre for Cities, both at the University of Cape Town. Formerly a special policy advisor to the premier of the Western Cape, he is the author of *New Urban Worlds: Inhabiting Dissonant Times* (2014). Pieterse is also a consulting editor of *Cityscapes*.

EVAN LOCKHART-BARKER
Evan Lockhart-Barker is Managing Director of Retail for Saint-Gobain. He has a history as a disruptor and a maverick, influenced by leaders who have reinvented not just the companies they’re in, but entire industries. One of his most prominent projects is the revolutionary case study house, Stand 47, built using Saint-Gobain products, which has won local and global awards for design and sustainability.

GUILLAUME KOFFI
Guillaume Koffi is co-founder and President of the Board of Administrators of Koffi & Diabaté Group. He holds a Diplôme de l’Ecole Spéciale d’Architecture. Koffi was President of Côte d'Ivoire’s National Order of Architects from 2006 to 2014. He is the founder of ARCHIBAT, the country’s bi-annual architecture and construction exhibition, and a member of the Arts, Sciences, Cultures Association of Africa and the Diaspora.

ISSA DIABATÉ
A graduate of Yale University, Issa Diabaté is Managing Director of Koffi & Diabaté Architects and co-founder of the Koffi & Diabaté Group. He has worked with the architecture firms Goly Kouassi, Dureaux and Purell, and Jean Nouvel et Catani. As a Member of Côte d’Ivoire’s Order of Architects, Diabaté’s design work was recognised at Dakar’s 1998 Contemporary Art Biennale.

JOE ADDO
Born in Ghana, Joe Addo describes himself as a ‘design socio-economist’. He trained at the Architectural Association in London and worked in Finland, the UK and the US before setting up his own practice in Los Angeles, where he was a founding partner of the A+D Architecture and Design Museum. He moved back to Ghana in 2004 and is currently the CEO of Constructs R+D and Chairman of ArchiAfrika Foundation.
KHANYISILE MBONGWA
Khanyisile Mbongwa is a curator based in Cape Town. In 2006, she was among the founding members of Guggulective and her work has since allowed her to travel to Berlin, Spain, Pakistan, Scotland, Hamburg, New York, Switzerland, Belgium and Sri Lanka. She is currently doing her Masters in interdisciplinary art, public art and the public sphere at the Institute of Creative Art at the University of Cape Town. Mbongwa is the project and exhibition curator of Puncture Points.

LESLEY LOKKO
Having taught in the US and the UK, Professor Lesley Lokko is currently Head of the Graduate School of Architecture, University of Johannesburg. She is the editor of White Papers, Black Marks: Race, Culture, Architecture (University of Minnesota Press, 2000) and has been an on-going contributor to discourses around identity, race, African urbanism and the speculative nature of African architectural space and practice. She is the author of ten best-selling novels.

LETHABO MOTSWALEDI
Lethabo Motswaledi is CEO and co-founder of 3D Power, a design and consulting start-up that uses design thinking and additive manufacturing to translate ideas into commercial products using various industry 4.0 techniques. She is most proud of the two products that 3D Power has successfully taken to market; Hello Baby 3D Prints and The Hourglass Project.

LUÍS URBANO
Luís Urbano is an architect, researcher and filmmaker, who currently teaches at the Faculty of Architecture, Porto University where he completed his PhD in 2015. He has written many texts on the intersections between architecture and cinema. Urbano is the editor of JACK (Journal of Architecture and Cinema) and director of the short films Suziji (2012), The house next door (2012) and How to draw a house (2014).

MARK OLWENY
Doctor Mark Olweny is Associate Dean and Senior Lecturer of the Built Environment at Uganda Martyrs University. He holds a PhD from the Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff University. He has worked in architectural practice in Canada, Ireland and Uganda, and was Visiting Researcher at the Technische Universität in Darmstadt, Germany. His teaching and research relate to three areas: the colonial and postcolonial history of East Africa, thermal performance and energy-use in buildings, and architectural education.

MAX MUTANDA
Zimbabwe-born Maxwell Mutanda makes up one half of the design firm Studio [D] Tale, based out of London, Harare and Cape Town. The firm experiments across disciplines with a portfolio that includes architecture, urban exploration, production innovation, critical design and communications. Studio [D] Tale have showcased work internationally including at the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2014 and 2016.

MPHETHI MOROJELE
Mphethi Morojele is an award-winning architect and urbanist based in Johannesburg. He holds a Master of Science in Architecture from the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College, London. As the founder of MMA Architects, he has curated numerous architecture exhibitions in contexts including the Venice Biennale in Italy, the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and the 2010 Shanghai Expo.
NEO MUYANGA
Neo Muyanga is a composer and musician based mainly in Cape Town. His work straddles the genres of popular music, opera and site-specific music theatre and has received critical acclaim globally. He is currently staging performances of his ‘revolting mass’ inside one of Berlin’s oldest modernist department stores (Karstadt) and as a procession on Kreuzberg’s infamous Oranienplatz.

PATTI ANAHORY
Patti Anahory holds a Masters in Architecture degree from Princeton University. In 2011, she co-founded xcollective, an art collective proposing critical understandings of urban dynamics, architecture, environmental and inter-media studies. Anahory is currently co-developing a multi-disciplinary analysis and documentation project addressing the dynamics, production and construction of space in contemporary Cabo Verde. The project is based on participatory mapping, documentary filmmaking and community engagement.

PHILL MASHABANE
Phill Mashabane completed his studies in Paris where he obtained his degree in Architecture, and three years later, his LLB. In 1995, he co-founded Mashabane Rose Associates, and has since then contributed to a broad variety of projects in the residential, commercial, retail, mining, medical and education sectors throughout South Africa and Africa. In 2015, he completed his MSc in Knowledge and Project Management (University of Salford). Last year, Mashabane received a lifetime achievement award for excellence in the field of Architecture.

TANZEEM RAZAK
Tanzeeem Razak is the director and founding partner of Lemon Pebble Architects in Johannesburg. After obtaining a BArch from the University of Witwatersrand, she graduated with a MArch (Cum Laude) in Human Settlements from the Katholieke Universiteit in Belgium (2004). Razak’s focus is on design in areas of limited resources and she heads a creative team working on creating public buildings and housing in the post-apartheid urban context.

SEAN O’TOOLE
Sean O’Toole is an author, critic, journalist and editor based in Cape Town. His essays, cultural journalism and reviews have appeared in numerous books, newspapers and magazines. He is the founding editor with Tau Tavengwa of CityScapes, a magazine project of the African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town.

URKO SÁNCHEZ
As part of his architectural studies, Urko Sánchez began participating in different architectural endeavors with NGOs in Spain and Nicaragua, starting work even before finishing his degree. He continued to offer his expertise in different conflict zones, including Bosnia, El Salvador and Angola where his participation always revolved around the field of architecture, building camps, schools and clinics.

ZAHIRA ASMAL
Zahira Asmal is the director of The City, a research, publishing and placemaking agency. She has worked with architect Sir David Adjaye on his book and exhibition on African metropolitan architecture. Asmal recently published a series of books on South Africa’s big cities titled Movement. She is currently working on a project titled See that explores contested urban histories and the construction of resilient postcolonial urban identities.
SAINT-GOBAIN

As founding sponsor of the Africa Architecture Awards, Saint-Gobain is proud to be supporting a programme with criteria that are in line with the Group’s focus on innovation aimed at creating better living spaces. For 350 years, Saint-Gobain has consistently pushed the boundaries of technology and solutions in the construction markets. Saint-Gobain supports the awards with the intention of identifying and promoting innovative projects within the African context, projects that will lead global thought and inspire architectural practitioners across the globe. Innovation is part of Saint-Gobain’s DNA. Progressive thought and new ideas are encouraged – in particular, by emerging voices. Saint-Gobain believes that better living spaces result in the improved wellbeing of people while addressing the challenges of sustainable construction, resource efficiency and climate change.