

# ACROSS THE BOARD



Sponsored by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc.

**TATE**  
MODERN

# Across the board

Sponsored by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc.

*Across the board* is a two-year project that provides an organic and experimental platform for emerging artists and explores recent artistic practices in Africa and its Diaspora.

The first event in this series took place in London in The Tanks at Tate Modern on 24 November 2012 and invited artists Otobong Nkanga and Nástio Mosquito to respond to the question of the *Politics of Representation*. In a durational performance piece Nkanga presented a new work that considered the transience of states, of objects and intangible things, such as identity, memory and perception in *Contained Measures of Shifting States* 2012. Mosquito collaborated with Vic Pereiro in a multi-projection live performance, re-enacting a number of his provocative videos in *Flourishing Seeds* 2012.

In Accra, Ghana from 21–23 February 2013 participants were brought together from across the African continent and its Diaspora for talks and screenings reflecting on the impact of different institutional models, from independent artist led initiatives to national museums, on the artistic production in Africa, in the event *Institution Building*. The programme was organised in collaboration with Nubuke Foundation, the Dei Centre for the Study of Contemporary African Art and Art in Social Structures (AiSS). Participants included, among others: Ato Annan, Bernard Akoi-Jackson, Mantse Aryeequaye, Kader Attia, Kwaku 'Castro' Kissiedu, Godfried Donkor, Marion Louisgrand, Aida Muluneh, Nat Nunu Amarteifio, Gabi Ngobo, Emeka Ogboh, Jimmy Ogonga, Senam Okudzeto, Kojo Setordji and Rikki Wemega-Kwawu.

The series continued in Douala, Cameroon, in a unique collaboration with Doual'art for the third edition of the Salon Urbain de Doula, SUD 2013 in which *Across the board* responded to the theme of *Public Space / Public Sphere*. South African artist collective The Trinity Session, formed by Marcus Neustteter and Stephen Hobbs, created a collaborative performance, involving the residents of the borough of Bessengue – Akwa. The newly commissioned work, *Bessengue B' Etoukoa* 2013, explored recent urban transformations in the borough through the perspectives of the residents and their personal experiences, using fashion design and styling as a symbolic metaphor for change. The presentations of Nelisiwe Xaba and Faustin Linyekula were also deeply affecting. Xaba's contemporary dance and video works *Plasticization* 2007 and *Uncles & Angels* 2013 engaged the public in a reflection on the role of individuals in the constitution of a civic society. Whilst Linyekula's solo performance *Le Cargo* 2011 symbolised a vivid example of that individual engagement, particularly in relation to tradition, local production of knowledge and personal and collective narratives.

For this final phase of the project hosted in Lagos, Nigeria on 18 April 2014 *Across the board* has invited Chrimurenga to excavate the invaluable history of interdisciplinary practices in Africa with a focus on FESTAC '77 – The Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture. This ongoing research has developed into an online resource and a symposium in Lagos featuring key protagonists from the festival.

*Across the board* has enabled new modes of cultural partnership that complement Tate's collecting activities, developing further the conceptual framework proposed by Tate's approach to Africa, looking at theoretical narratives, cultural objects and traditionally 'non-collectable' material.

*Across the board* is curated by  
Elvira Dyangani Ose, Curator International Art  
Supported by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc.,  
Tate Modern with Loren Hansi Momodu,  
Assistant Curator, Tate Modern.



Guaranty Trust Bank



The Trinity Session, documentation of the live performance *Bessengue B' Etoukoa* 2013  
Photo: Yvon Ngassam for Tate Photography © Tate, London 2013



Head of Queen Idia  
Photo © Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilisation (CBAAC)

## Interdisciplinary Practices

Lagos, Nigeria hosts the final phase of *Across the board*. In June 2013, Tate supported Chimurenga's ongoing research into the Second World Black and African Festival, FESTAC '77 with a dedicated research trip to Lagos to meet with the influential figures associated with the event and to visit the Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC), home to all the materials collected and produced during FESTAC '77. Chimurenga's research sought out the personal testimonies of artists, critics, writers and filmmakers who have produced subjective accounts of the festival, exploring both the official narrative of FESTAC '77 and the emergence of a counter-culture. A tangible outcome of this enquiry and exploration has already manifested on the Chimurenga website with a devoted *Chimurenga Library* page presenting an extraordinary visual narrative of the event and making it readily available to a broad audience.

FESTAC '77 took place between January and February of 1977. Delegates from sixty countries and communities belonging to the so-called 'Black and African World' gathered together to express through music, literature, arts and politics, the quintessential aspects of their culture. The festival extended the boundaries and definitions of Blackness and Africanness in an attempt to challenge notions of Negritude and Pan-Africanism explored in previous festivals; the First World Festival of Black Arts held in Dakar, Senegal, in 1966 and First Pan African Cultural Festival/PANAF held in Algiers, Algeria, in 1969. FESTAC '77 aimed to accommodate and appeal to both local and international audiences. In the context of Nigeria, the event fostered national culture, creating an appreciation of the artistic production of the country's various

ethnic groups, and promoting the sense of a multi-ethnic society with the inclusion of a broad range of cultural initiatives. The government's agenda at the international level was for the festival to champion the image and spirit of the country abroad. It was to prove to the world the existence and meaning of modernity on Nigerian terms, which was by means of a black internationalist and Pan-Africanist approach.

The Nigerian government positioned itself far from the conceptualisations of modernity provided by Senghor's Negritude or Kwame Nkrumah's *African Personality*. At FESTAC '77 Nigeria celebrated the emergence of a distinctive black and African modernity from the collective wellspring of traditional culture – a culture that it would recuperate and strengthen as the foundation of its industrial development. Above all, the Nigerian government viewed modernity as dependant on prosperity through the languages of modernisation and capitalism, or in other words, in terms of industrialisation and consumerism. As a modernising nation, Nigeria's successes were made visible by initiatives like FESTAC '77, but, what was the response of local intellectuals to this national dramaturgy of appearances and representations that beckoned toward modernity and brought it into being?

In pure artistic terms, FESTAC '77 assisted in enhancing an existent and ongoing connection between all kinds of black and African artists from around the world. As historian Andrew Apter indicates, FESTAC '77 was an opportunity to explore 'cultural representations produced by Africans in a postcolonial context of exceptional prosperity, bringing visions of cosmopolitan Lagos and its upbeat modernity into critical dialogue with its colonial past<sup>1</sup> and its Pan-African future. *Across the board: Interdisciplinary Practices*

*Across the board: Interdisciplinary Practices*  
Sponsored by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc.

Organised by Tate Modern in collaboration with Chimurenga, Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos and Terra Kulture.

takes Chimurenga's research as the focus of a one-day event inviting scholars, poets, writers and artists to reflect on the ideologies behind the international gathering and the economic, cultural and socio-political context in which that venture took place.

The project explores notions of Pan-Africanism and Afro-futurism, implicit in the work of artist collective The Otolith Group and artist Kapwani Kiwanga, respectively.

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Apter *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p3

## Programme

**Across the board  
Interdisciplinary Practices: FESTAC '77  
Lagos, Nigeria**

**Friday 18 April 2014**

Terra Kulture,  
Plot 1376, Tiamiyu Savage,  
Off Ahmadu Bello Way,  
Victoria Island, Lagos

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 10.30–11.00  | Coffee and registration  |
| 11.00–11.15  | Welcome remarks  |
| 11.15–12.00  | Introduction <i>Across the board</i><br>Elvira Dyangani Ose<br>Q&A   |
| 12.00–13.00  | <i>FESTAC '77</i><br>Professor Gabriel Olatunde<br>Babawale introduced<br>by Ntone Edjabe<br>Q&A   |
| Lunch Break  |  |
| 14.00–15.30  | Conversation between<br>Akin Adesokan and<br>Professor Denis Ekpo<br>Q&A   |
| 15.30–17.00  | Round table chaired<br>by Bisi Silva:<br>Modern practitioners<br>Bruce Onobrakpeya,<br>Jimi Solanke and Odia Ofeimun<br>Q&A              |
| Coffee break |  |
| 17.00–19.00  | Artists' presentations<br>The Otolith Group <i>In The Year<br/>of The Quiet Sun</i> 2013<br>Kapwani Kiwanga<br><i>Afrogalactica</i> 2011 |

Reception

## Biographies

### Akin Adesokan

Akin Adesokan's books include *Roots in the Sky* a novel, and *Postcolonial Artists and Global Aesthetics*. His essays and stories have appeared in *AGNI*, *Screen*, *Social Dynamics*, *African Affairs*, *Black Camera*, *Research in African Literatures*, and *Textual Practice*, as well as in numerous edited volumes. He is an Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Indiana University, Bloomington; a columnist for *Premium Times*; and a Contributing Editor of *The Chimurenga Chronic*, the Cape Town-based journal of politics and ideas.

### Prof. Gabriel Olatunde Babawale

Professor of Political Economy in the Department of Political Science, University of Lagos, Nigeria and currently the Director General of Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC). A distinguished academic, he is the founder and first Managing Editor of the UNILAG Journal of Politics. A member of Historical Society of Nigeria, he was the convenor and host of seven international conferences for experts on Students and Scholars of Africa, and the African Diaspora History and Studies. He has made over one hundred and twenty contributions on history, culture, politics, governance and development in the form of monographs, authored books, edited and co-edited books, chapter contributions to books, articles in learned local and international journals, presentations at local and international conferences, and public lectures. He has two Festschriften and one bio-critical publication in his honour, the latest being a 2013 publication on *Alternative Development Strategies for Africa*.

### Ntone Edjabe

Ntone Edjabe is the founder and editor of *Chimurenga*, a journal and platform for editorial and curatorial activities. He is also co-editor of *African Cities Reader*, a bi-annual publication in collaboration with the University of Cape Town. He is the founder of the Pan African Space Station (PASS), an internet based music project. As a journalist, he has collaborated with numerous radio stations and publications, including *Bush Radio 89.5*, *Politique Africaine*, *L'Autre Afrique*, *BBC Focus on Africa* and more. He also performs as a musician and selector, and is a founder of the Fong Kong Bantu Soundsystem, a DJ collective based in Cape Town.

### Prof. Denis Ekpo

Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Port Harcourt. Denis Ekpo is a writer on art and culture, member of the advisory board of *Third Text* from 2004 to 2012; Guest editor *Third Text's* special issue titled 'Beyond Negritude'; has published in various journals including *Third Text*, *Africultures*, *Textual Practice*, *Social Semiotics*, *Neohelicon*, *Literary Griot*. Contributed to the Afropolis project, 2010; author of two books, namely, *Neither Anti-imperialism nor The White man's Tears*, 2004; *Philosophie et la Literature africaine* 2005. He developed the concept of Post-Africanism; was keynote speaker on Post-Africanism, art and iks at the TUT conference on iks and art in a modernizing Africa, South Africa in September, 2013.

### **Odia Ofeimun**

Odia Ofeimun is a poet and journalist. He studied Political Science at the University of Ibadan, was the Private (Political) Secretary to Chief Obafemi Awolowo, leader of the Unity Party of Nigeria, and has worked as a member of the editorial board of *The Guardian Newspapers* in Lagos. He attended Oxford University on a Commonwealth fellowship and has written for *The Guardian On Sunday*, *The Nigerian Tribune* as well as contributing to many other newspapers. Chairman of the editorial board of the defunct daily, *A.M. News* as well as *The News* and *Tempo magazines* and a proud exponent of guerrilla journalism. Ofeimun's published collections of poetry include *The Poet Lied* 1980, *A Handle For The Flutist* 1986, *Dreams At Work* and *London Letter And Other Poems* 2000. His poems for dancedrama, *Under African Skies* 1990 and *Siye Goli (A Feast Of Return)* 1992, both of which engage themes across African and South African history, were commissioned and performed across Britain and Western Europe. He wrote the primary text for, *Lagos, A City At Work* and has edited two themed anthologies of poetry, *Lagos Of The Poets*, and *Salute To The Master Builder*.

### **Bruce Onobrakpeya**

Bruce Onobrakpeya is a world-renowned master print-maker, painter, sculptor, poet and pioneer in modern African art whose long and distinguished career spans over five decades with notable exhibitions at Tate Modern, London, and the National Museum of African Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Onobrakpeya trained at the Nigerian College of Technology, now Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria. He participated in numerous artist workshops including the Mbari Artists' and Writers' Club printmaking workshops at Ibadan directed by the Dutch printmaker Ru Van Rossen. In 1964 he became a founding member of the Society of Nigerian Artists. Onobrakpeya

participated in the 44th Venice Biennale, 1990 where he received an honourable mention. Awards include honorary D. Litt. from the University of Ibadan in 1989; The Living Human Treasure Award, 2006, UNESCO; winner of Nigeria's prestigious Nigerian Creativity Award given by the Federal Government of Nigeria 2010.

### **Elvira Dyangani Ose**

Curator, International Art. Supported by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc., at Tate Modern. She is an art and architecture historian, currently completing a PhD in History of Art and Visual Studies at Cornell University, New York. Elvira Dyangani Ose joined Tate in 2011, taking a leading role in developing Tate's holdings of art from Africa and working closely with the Africa Acquisitions Committee. She is co-responsible for formulating Tate's strategy in this region. She is also responsible for *Across the Board*, a two-year project supported by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc. Elvira has curated various interdisciplinary projects involving African artists and artist collectives, prior to joining Tate, including *Carrie Mae Weems: Social Studies* 2010, *Arte Invisible* 2009 and 2010, and *Attempt to Exhaust an African Place* 2007–8. Elvira Dyangani Ose has recently co-curated *Ibrahim El-Salahi: A Visionary Modernist* at Tate Modern from 3 July – 22 September 2013.

### **Bisi Silva**

Bisi Silva is an independent curator, founder and Director of Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos (CCA, Lagos). In 2006 Silva was one of the curators for the Dakar Biennale in Senegal and she has also co-curated a number of exhibitions including the 2nd Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art, Greece, 'Praxis: Art in Times of Uncertainty', 2009; *J.D. 'Okhai Ojeikere: Moments of Beauty*, Kiasma, Helsinki 2011 and *The Progress of Love*, October 2012 – January 2013 a transcontinental collaboration across three venues in Nigeria and America. Silva has participated in several

international conferences and symposia and was a member of the international jury for the 55th Venice Biennale, 2013. She has written essays for many publications, international art magazines and journals such as *Artforum*, *Third Text*, *The Exhibitionist*; is on the editorial board of *Art South Africa* and *N.Paradoxa* and is guest editor for *Manifesta Journal: Around Curatorial Practices* No17, 2013. Silva is also the recipient of several prestigious international fellowships and residencies.

### **Jimi Solanke**

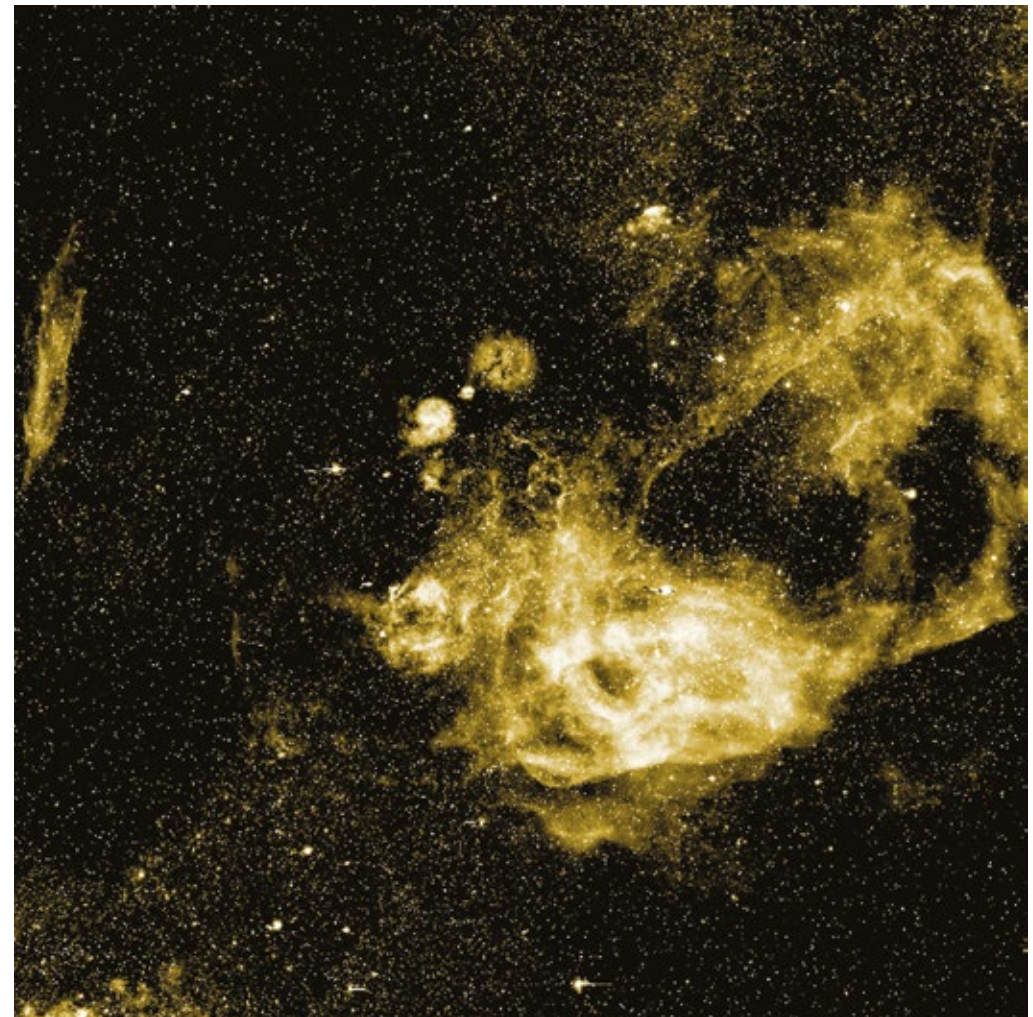
Jimi Solanke is a musician, playwright and broadcaster. He studied at the first School of Drama at the University of Ibadan between 1960–9 and also attended the Mbari Artists' and Writers' Club Ibadan. *Storyland*, a Television programme for children, is among his most acclaimed of many contributions to television and radio in Nigeria. He was a main character actor in the play *Langbodo*, Nigeria's play entry at FESTAC '77. He was Assistant Choreographer in the dance section at FESTAC '77 and a folk Singer in the music section. Solanke has released over twenty popular music albums including *The Path* released in 1978, a collaboration with Ralph McDonald featuring Gilbert Washington, Eric Gale, Mariam Makeba, Mikky Marero, David Sambourn, Valerie Simpson and many others. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including a Lifetime Achievement Award from Obafemi Awolowo University Alumni association. He is an Associate fellow at the Institute of cultural studies, OAU Ile Ife.



The Otolith Group, *In the Year of the Quiet Sun* 2013 (film still) © Courtesy the artists

### The Otolith Group

The Otolith Group is an award winning artist led collective founded by Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun in 2002. The Group's work explores the legacies and potentials of liberation struggles, tricontinentalism, speculative futures and science-fictions. Recent solo exhibitions include *In the Year of the Quiet Sun* at Bergen Kunsthall, *Medium Earth* at RedCat, Los Angeles and *AuVico* 2109–2110 at Project 88, Mumbai. Group exhibitions include *The Whole Earth: California and the Disappearance of the Outside*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, 2013; *ECM: A Cultural Archaeology*, Haus der Kunst, Munich 2012; *Death of Life and Fiction: Taipei Biennial*, Taipei 2012 and *dOCUMENTA (13)*, Kassel (2012). In 2010, The Otolith Group was nominated for The Turner Prize.



The image shows a wide field view of the Vela Supernova Remnant & Pulsar. This image comes from the Southern H-Alpha Sky Survey Atlas (SHASSA) of the CERRO TOLOLO INTER-AMERICAN OBSERVAT. Photo: Public domain

### Kapwani Kiwanga

Kiwanga is a visual artist who uses research methods to intentionally confuse truth and fiction in her work in order to unsettle hegemonic narratives and create spaces in which marginal and fantastical discourse can flourish. Kiwanga's fondness for oral traditions drives a continual exploration of the formal possibilities of orality in her performance, sound, and video work. Kiwanga's work has

been shown at Centre Pompidou 2006, 2013; Foundation Ricard 2013, 2014; Glasgow Centre of Contemporary Art, 2008; Paris Photo 2011, Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo, Almería, 2006; Art Catalyst, 2013. Forthcoming shows at Jeu de Paume 2014.



Festac '77 General Programme (front and back), material from the Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilisation (CBAAC)  
 Photo © courtesy Chimurenga

## FESTAC '77 – a research, exhibition and publishing project by Chimurenga (2013–2015)

From 15 January to 12 February 1977, thousands of artists, writers, and musicians from Africa and its Diaspora descended on Lagos, Nigeria for the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC '77). Held eleven years after the First World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar, Senegal and eight years after First Pan African Cultural Festival (PANAF) in Algiers, Algeria FESTAC '77 was part of a larger body of transatlantic cultural exchange that dated back to the Pan-African Congress in Paris 1919.

These festivals form part of several intersecting and contradictory histories. As a showcase for the organising states and participating artists these events functioned as antechambers of diplomacy, focusing attention through the prism of cultural creation on the issues at stake internationally on a number of levels; these included relations between young African nations; between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa; between independent states and liberation movements in countries that were still colonised; between Africa and the Americas; between European states and their former colonies; between international organisations and bilateral cooperation arrangements.

Like its predecessors, FESTAC '77 was built on the ideals of the Harlem Renaissance, the Negritude movement and Pan-Africanism, but where Dakar 1966 manifested as a Franco-Senegalese platform for Negritude's ideals of black culture and the OAU-mandated Algiers 1969 looked to culture as tool of liberation

and nation-building, the organisers of FESTAC '77 sought a middle-ground between those positions.

Funded largely by the Nigerian military government's newfound oil wealth, FESTAC '77 was part of an ambitious national agenda that saw the country embarking on a course of modernisation that reflected its prominence as black Africa's political and economic powerhouse. Nigeria spent several billion dollars to organize the festival, a spectacle that would at once bind the nation (still traumatized by the Civil War, 1966–70) and establish Nigeria as the centre of the black world.

With delegates from sixty countries in attendance, FESTAC '77 was also a microcosm for the geopolitics of the era. It reflected both the ongoing cold war and its role in liberation movements on the continent, as well as the emerging global power of the oil producing nations and the birth of the modern African state. The tensions between between Lt-General Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigeria's Head of State and Grand Patron of FESTAC '77, and Senegal's Poet-President Leopold Senghor who abdicated his position as FESTAC's co-patron and virtually boycotted the festival, highlighted the complex interplay between colonial and national power, transnational trade groups such as OPEC (of which Nigeria became a member in 1971) and neo-colonial networks such as Francafrique.

At the same time FESTAC '77 provided an opportunity for a myriad of personal and artist encounters that allow for an understanding of Diaspora less as a historical condition than a set of practices: that is, the claims, correspondences and collaborations through which black intellectuals pursue a variety of international alliances. FESTAC '77 thus points to both Africa's role in defining its Diaspora and inversely, the Diaspora's role in





H.E. LEOPOLD SEDAR SENGHOR, President of Senegal



H.E. GENERAL YAKUBU GOWON, Head of State of Nigeria

### THE PATRONS

DR. Leopold Sedar Senghor, President of the Republic of Senegal and General Yakubu Gowon, Nigeria's Head of State are the two patrons of the 2nd World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture.

Dr. Senghor, a poet of world fame, was the patron of the first world festival of Negro Arts held in Dakar in 1966. Nigeria was the star country at that Festival.

### Gowon

General Gowon, who believes that the Black man has a lot to offer the world has thrown the weight of support behind the cultural renaissance now sweeping through Nigeria and Africa as a whole. Born in 1934 in Pankshin Division of Benue Plateau State of Nigeria, General Gowon had his early education at St. Bartholomew's C.M.S. School, Wusasa, and the Government Secondary School, Zaria. When he left Zaria, he went straight into the army in 1954. He moved rapidly through the ranks and various training programmes the climax of which was the course at the Royal Military Academy, in England. Continued on Page 3

### Senghor

Dr. Senghor was born at Joal in Senegal on October 9th, 1906. He was educated in Dakar and later at higher institutions in Paris where he studied Philosophy. He went into politics after the Second World War. He identified himself with the Bloc African. As one of the two deputies for Senegal in the French Constituent Assemblies, Dr. Senghor played an important part in the framing of the new constitution which gave to each territory in French West Africa its own Assembly and increased number of deputies in the French Parliament. Dr. Senghor was President of the Federal Assembly of the Mali Federation (1959-1960). During the same period he was President of Senegal. Continued on Page 3

# 1ST. ENTRIES FOR EVENTS POUR IN

THE first official entries for events at the 2nd World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture have been received at the International Secretariat in Lagos. They are from the Republic of Cuba, the largest of the Caribbean Islands and the Commonwealth countries of Trinidad and Tobago.

Cuba is sending among its large contingent two of its most renowned dance Companies — the Conjunto Folklorico Nacional and the Danza Nacional de Cuba. She is also sending several orchestras to take part in the music event. The orchestras are the Orquesta del Grupo Nacional de Cuba, Los Paicos, Los Baro

and Los Ven Van and the Orquesta Tipica. Trinidad and Tobago contingent to the Lagos Festival will include one of that country's leading steel bands as well as some instrumental and vocal music typical of that part of the world — the calypso. She is already sending a dance company performing traditional Caribbean dances as well as some contemporary dance theatre works. For the drama event Trinidad and Tobago have entered three plays all by the famous playwright and actor Derek Walcott. The plays are "The sea at Dauphin", "Matochich", and "Dream on Monkey Mountain". Both Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago have indicated that they will also participate in the literary events. Mr. Nicholas Guillen, the outstanding Black poet from the Caribbean has indicated that he would be attending the Lagos Festival personally. Mr. Aljo Carpenter, the essayist, has also been named as a participant from Cuba. In Nigeria, the host country, arrangements have been completed to camp the Artists who will represent the country at the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture. The artists will be camped in four centres in the country — Lagos, Kaduna, Ife-Ife and Enugu. They will number thousands. The Artists dancers and various other entertainers were selected after a two-week National Festival of Arts held in Kaduna and Lagos, late in 1974. Reports from London show that the U.K. and Ireland Festival Committee after a successful three-week mini Festival late in 1974, is now engaged in putting together a strong and viable team for the Lagos Festival. In West Africa the Francophone Zone recently decided to enter for certain events as a regional group.



CHIEF ANTHONY ENAHORO

We hope to bring to you news on the preparations for the 2nd Festival. We hope to publish news items, information and photographs on preparations in all participating countries and communities. "Festival News" should also become a link between our artists and a platform for the exchange of information and opinion on developments on Art and Culture throughout the Black World. Not that alone. We also welcome meaningful discussions and dialogues based on mutual respect for each other's views. Finally, "Festival News" will examine and review the major sections of all the Festival Events. I hope you enjoy reading "Festival News". I assure you that we in the International Secretariat will do our very best to make the publication live up to expectation.



- NEWS FROM THE ZONES - Page 2
- FESTAC '75 AT WORLD FAIRS - Page 3
- FESTIVAL THEATRE RIGHT ON TARGET - Page 6
- INGREDIENTS OF UNITY - Page 8

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

AS President of the International Festival Committee and Head of the International Secretariat charged with the responsibility of organising the 2nd World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture, I welcome readers to the first issue of our publication, "Festival News". The Festival in Nigeria is the second in this international communion of all Black communities all over the globe. As I mentioned sometime ago, there are, unfortunately, not many precedents to guide us. The traditions of these Festivals are yet to be created. By the publication of "Festival News", we hope that we are helping to create one of these traditions. One of the subjects to be examined

by the Colloquium during the festival seminar deals with "Black Civilisation and Mass Media". Mass Media can become a vital and dependable instrument for communication on Black civilisation. The printed word and the publishing business constitute dynamic assets in this endeavour. "Festival News" is one of these assets. Although our publication is at present programmed to coincide with the Festival in Nigeria, it is my fervent hope and sincere wish that it might, in the future, be a permanent organ and continuing publication not just for one particular Festival but even between Festivals. In the next few months as we publish every month, "Festival News",

the invention of Africa, as much a reality as it is a construct whose boundaries are redefined according to the prevailing configurations of global racial identities and power.

FESTAC '77 was all these ideas, ideals and ideologies performed live on the world stage. As such it provides an alternative narration to history that could help us both understand the inherent role of art in politics and reactivate our political relation to the practice of art in the realm of global politics.

Nearly forty years later, the memory of the event has all but faded. Today the National Theatre established before FESTAC '77 as the "exemplary centre" not only of festival activities, but also of new Nigeria, stands as a reminder of a failed political and cultural project.

But the real failure regarding FESTAC '77 is not its turbulent history but rather our failure to acknowledge the meaning of that history and its relationship to the contemporary.

The question we ask is: can a past that the present has not yet caught up with be summoned to haunt the present as an alternative? What is important here is not the reiteration of the actual past, but the persistence of what never actually happened, but might have.

We therefore propose a research, exhibition and publishing project, which will investigate the legacy of FESTAC '77, as well as present an opportunity for contemporary African creators to engage with its history.

For more information: [www.chimurengalibrary/festcac-77](http://www.chimurengalibrary/festcac-77)

**Curator**

Elvira Dyangani Ose, Curator International Art Supported by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc.,  
Tate Modern

**Assistant Curator**

Loren Hansi Momodu, Assistant Curator, Tate Modern

*Across the board: Interdisciplinary Practices* Sponsored by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc.  
Organised by Tate Modern in collaboration with Chimurenga,  
Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos and Terra Kulture.

**Chimurenga**

[www.chimurenga.co.za](http://www.chimurenga.co.za)

**Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos**

[www.ccalagos.org](http://www.ccalagos.org)

**Terra Kulture**

[www.terrakulture.com](http://www.terrakulture.com)

**With thanks**

Terry Ayugi, Neil Casey, Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC),  
Goethe Institute Lagos, Rachel Kent, Helen O'Malley, Helen Sainsbury, Bisi Silva

**Special thanks**

Guaranty Trust Bank Plc. for sponsoring *Across the board*

For more information on Guaranty Trust Bank Plc.

Visit [www.gtbank.com](http://www.gtbank.com)

Email [corpaff@gtbank.com](mailto:corpaff@gtbank.com)

Phone +234 1 2715227

  [gtbank](https://www.gtbank.com)

**Programme design**

Tate Design Studio

