

# CLPA NEWS 2019 #03

CENTRES OF **LEARNING**  
FOR **PHOTOGRAPHY**  
IN AFRICA



CENTRES DE **FORMATION**  
EN **PHOTOGRAPHIE**  
EN AFRIQUE

*A network of independent  
and self-sustainable training  
initiatives across Africa.*

*Un réseau des initiatives de  
formation indépendantes et  
viabiles à travers l'Afrique.*



## IN THIS ISSUE

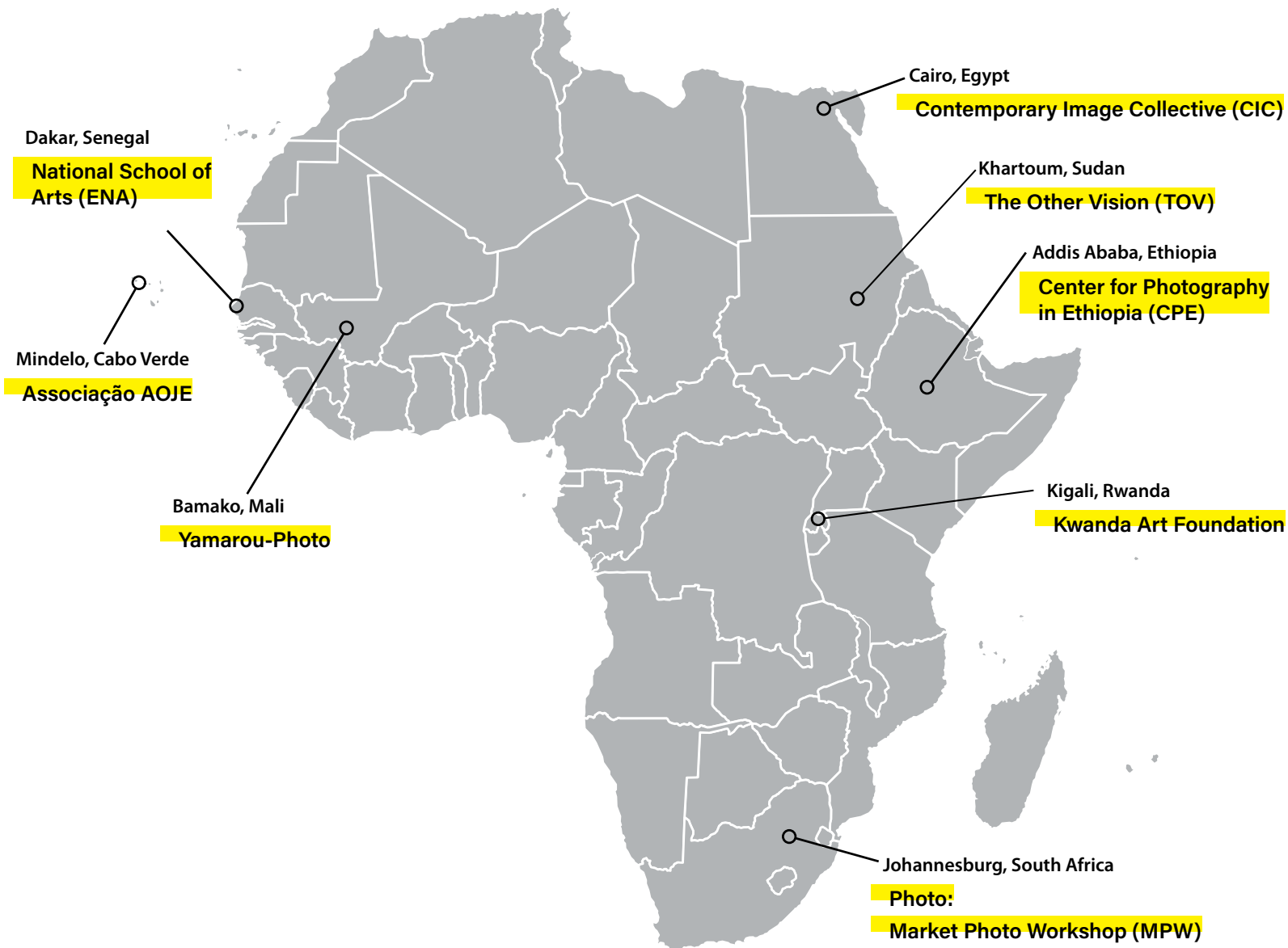
Feature: Uses of photography

Reflections on language

Member interview: John Fleetwood

Camera phones were the main tool for documentation during the recent revolution in Sudan. Here a photographer photographs the national security pick-up roaming the area looking for protesters, through a hole in the curtain. © Alaa Jaafar

## CONTRIBUTORS



DECEMBER 2019

CONTRIBUTORS: CLPA members

EDITORS: John Fleetwood & Amy Daniels,  
Photo: (info@phototool.co.za)



Co-founded and funded by the  
Goethe-Institut South Africa

CLPA News is a newsletter made up from  
contributions of the CLPA members. The  
Editors hold no responsibility or liability for  
the accuracy of the provided content.



▲ GUEST EDITOR:  
Ala Kheir, The Other  
Vision

EXTERNAL  
CONTRIBUTOR:  
Serubiri Moses  
TRANSLATOR:  
Patricia Yumba  
(House of Nzinga)  
PROOF READER:  
Sibongile Shope  
DESIGN: Karien van  
der Westhuizen

# Uses of Photography

By Serubiri Moses

Writer and curator Serubiri Moses engages the question of visual literacy in relation to gender representation and post-slavery for photography students and apprentices.

In 2009, I received my training in photography through mailed books, assignments and exams in correspondence with the New York Institute of Photography where I undertook the diploma in professional photography. I happened to be largely self-taught up until that point and went about the whole business of digital photography through indirect mentorship from the online community of Flickr. Khartoum based photographer Ala Kheir founded the Sudanese Photographers Group (later he founded The Other Vision as well) in a similar way on Facebook. The members of that group such as Dia Khalil all met on the social media site and proceeded to organize meetings in real life where they exchanged techniques and tools in the development of their own photographic practice. Flickr, on the other hand, functioned as a photo-sharing site in which you could join different groups, as a form of social networking and indirect learning. You could be an active member of various photography communities ranging from amateur to professional that existed online. This site, and the networking I did there, fundamentally became a platform to trouble notions of visual literacy, race, and the uses of photography.

One of the ways that I did this was by keenly following portrait photographer Paul Mpagi Sepuya (born to Ugandan parents) on Flickr. In 2008, his images seemed to break many “taboos” such as the open display of nudity, homosexuality, queerness, and sex work. Engaging with Sepuya’s work made sense in a community that asked similar questions about visual education: could images help us connect to others? Could images address and declaim stereotypes of masculinity? Through Sepuya’s photo diary, the comment threads became a space to examine questions of race, the erotic, and the very function of the photo studio as a space for the formation of a queer community. However, were these utopian ideas for the virtual world of the internet, or could they exist in real life in the East African context?

©Jansen van Staden. From the series *Microlight*. ▶



©Jansen van Staden. From the series *Microlight*. (Pa's camera, the crash, and the surviving sensor.)

I was surprised to learn a few years later that such a link between queer communal formation and photography did exist in real life in Kampala, Uganda when I encountered Keith King, a Ugandan visual artist who produced and styled photo shoots with young LGBTI+ colleagues and activated a digital community through publishing his images on Tumblr.

When I recall my own learning as a photography student, the history of photography was not conveyed in my training which was strictly technical and scientific. The moral implications of photographic science were made clear to me outside of these exams and assignments through reading Susan Sontag's book *On Photography*, alongside books on the history of photography, and the famous essay on the topic by Walter Benjamin. When I worked in advertising it became clear that my desire to challenge the scientific rigor of photography was a major problem to the practice. In that business, a photo was either blurry or "in focus", and rarely did it diverge from that principle. Did photographers have any other responsibility to their subject outside of the accuracy of scientific exposure? I later saw many examples in this regard, where the ethical implications of scientific imaging of black women had been the subject, such as in Kenyan artist Wangechi Mutu's collages; namely *Primary Syphilitic Ulcers of the Cervix* (2005).

I was trained to think that photography was science and a business. How to use the gray card for studio photography; how to read light with a light meter, etc. All that was useful to me, but I still needed the perspective of Susan Sontag and Walter Benjamin to show me what photography did to the bodies of women and black subjects, including many non-white and non-heteronormative subjects. The developments in photography with the expansion of zoom lens technology coincided with the growth of sports photography, ethnographic science, biological and forensic photography, revealed the interwoven history of

photography with that of scientific imperialism. It is only recently that the prominent photographic magazine National Geographic admitted its role in this imperialism during the late 19th and 20th centuries.

What are the uses of photography? The uses of photography are numerous but how might we think about these uses in relation to training? This question is interesting for me, considering both feminist and postcolonial critique. The representation of women in places of work, and in politics through their right to vote, and the right to be modern, coincides with the representation of blacks in post-slavery. Postcolonial critique too has strived to understand the black subject as a human being. Photography and its history which follow Eurocentric humanism are yet to fully incorporate these critiques. While photography students are taught about aperture and annotating light readings, can they learn about the representation of ethnicity and women? While students learn tools for Photoshop, can they also learn about the 1929 Women's War in Nigeria? Can these students and apprentices see photographs of the anti-colonial movements around the globe, in order to understand photography's own implication in the system of colonization? 🌐

*Serubiri Moses is an independent writer and curator. His essays are published in Chimurenga (South Africa), Frieze (U.K.), and C& – Contemporary And (Germany). His research and curatorial projects include: 'Life mu City' (2014), a series of public programs with the Goethe Centre Kampala, and the biennial contemporary art festival, KLA ART - UNMAPPED (2014) among others. He has produced essays on African artists and curators for the online magazine C& – Contemporary And. He is currently on the curatorial team for the 10th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, curated by Gabi Ngcobo. He has served as faculty – and is alumnus – of the Asiko International Art School, and was awarded the 2015 Stadtschreiber residency at the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies.*

"While students learn tools for Photoshop in digital photography, can they also learn about, and see images of, the 1929 Women's War in Nigeria?"

# Reflections on language

A lot has been injected in the continent in terms of culture, the new and imposed languages has formed new zones that might differ from pre-colonization, which affected arts and culture as well.

## ASSOCIAÇÃO AOJE

### **How does one's spoken language affect one's perception of the world, photography and gender?**

Different languages emphasize different feelings, operations or concerns through the words in its vocabulary (there are many words without any direct translation into other languages). Much like photography relates closely to poetry (its literary counterpart), the words one incorporates and acknowledges will also influence the visual language, the way we look at things and ultimately on what and where we choose to focus our lens.

### **How do languages and colonial language zones/links (Francophone, Anglophone, Lusophone) within the continent, interlink or un-link photography practice, gender and education on the continent?**

In the case of the Portuguese-speaking African countries (to use

a more technical term, as opposed to the ideological concept of Lusophone), language creates a bond and a comfort zone that really helps in terms of education, but it also acts as a constraint for access to education, the visibility of artists and other opportunities outside of that region.

### **What is the state of local languages? What role do they play in gender and photography education?**

Although Portuguese is the official language in Cape Verde (albeit being in effect a foreign language, used mainly as an administrative tool), the community and daily local language is in fact Creole. Being able to teach photography in both languages allows me to expand many concepts and draw different relations that wouldn't be possible otherwise.

## CENTER FOR PHOTOGRAPHY IN ETHIOPIA (CPE)

### **How does one's spoken language affect one's perception of the world, photography and gender?**

Language carries culture and identity which significantly affects how we relate and communicate within the world. In photography, the photographs and visual language can be a derivation of particular cultures, words and tales. Language plays a vital role especially in gender equality, which is a serious issue in Ethiopia. Assignments of tasks, characters and how a male or a female 'should be' is highly embedded in many languages in Ethiopia.

"Language was and still is a potent vehicle for cultural and political domination."

Ibrahim Franz Fanon, political philosopher

### **How do languages and colonial language zones/links (Francophone, Anglophone, Lusophone) within the continent, interlink or un-link photography practice, gender and education on the continent?**

Languages between different countries of the African continent have the power to create shared/unshared cultures and identities. Sharing these identities can unite photography practice and education in different countries and create easily relatable and practical ways of speaking to a wider range of audiences beyond borders.

### **What is the state of local languages? What role do they play in gender and photography education?**

There are more than 80 languages spoken in Ethiopia, although the predominant ones are only two. Amharic, being the official language and having its own alphabet, has the advantage of being very well grounded in history, literature and any discourse that's happening in the country at the moment. However, with the surface rise of identity politics, it seems to me that other languages are also receiving more attention. Although more work needs to be done as tangible written content of the Amharic language cannot be found abundantly. Language is a powerful tool in discussing the importance of gender equality in Ethiopia as the very tool of inequality can lie in the language itself. In photography, local languages play an important role in giving space for people to understand that it is more than just technique but helps us to understand our own circumstances, tell our stories and provide a wider context of common experiences in our society.



©Georges Senga, from the series Format. (Photograph taken in CLP, Likasi, in the south of DRC. CLP is owned by a large mining company, GECAMINE, that played a complicated role in the area, building libraries, swimming pools and cinemas in DRC.)

### NATIONAL SCHOOL OF ARTS (ENA)

#### **How do languages and colonial language zones/links (Francophone, Anglophone, Lusophone) within the continent, interlink or un-link photography practice, gender and education on the continent?**

This raises the question of codifying the exchanges that take place every day throughout the world between different people from different backgrounds who, despite their different mother tongues, manage to communicate out of necessity, I would say by convention.

Spoken language is a systematic process inherited from a cultural background. Its literature is a literal translation through learning. It is what characterizes illiteracy for some who, even if they speak a spoken language, cannot transcribe it.

We are in a world characterized by many forms of discrimination. The most fundamental of which remains the language barrier because all publications and research, for the most part, are in English and at times translated into French.

Imagine how the behaviour of a spoken language changes in the context of this pre-established discrimination, especially in the face of technological advancement where those who have benefited from it being in their working language.

Photography is a relevant element that reflects this discrimination, despite the fact that many countries that were colonized now speak this inherited language yet remain illiterate in their heritage languages.

When we take the camera measurement system for example, all the incorporated cells have been calibrated to calculate the reflection rate on the white skin... we have all noticed the difference in tonality when photographing "a black and a white" image. This is a way of continuing the difference in codification that I already mentioned above, which despite the inherited languages, still affects some people today.

#### **What is the state of local languages? What role do they play in gender and photography education?**

There should have already been a political system that would develop these local languages and popularize them in order to

achieve real functional literacy in Senegal.

This absence or weakness of research in this direction by local intellectuals and researchers, due to a lack of support from governments, suggests an obscure and pessimistic future for the possibility of developing photography education.

### MARKET PHOTO WORKSHOP (MPW)

#### **How does one's spoken language affect one's perception of the world, photography and gender?**

Language with its attitude attributes, is integral in how one begins to think in a particular manner which is defined by how construction and reading of meaning is associated with terms and phrases that describes these meaning motives and clues. Because language is culturally and ethnically associated, social constructs from within those groupings tend to influence one's perception inevitably.

#### **How do languages and colonial language zones/links (Francophone, Anglophone, Lusophone) within the continent, interlink or un-link photography practice, gender and education on the continent?**

Colonial languages have had a catastrophic impact on local languages as many, if not most, of these languages were rendered insignificant in the colonial defined 'formal' spaces of education and development. Only colonial language has been an instrument of defining production and reading of images, while local languages had no space to evolve with the development of photography on the continent.

#### **What is the state of local languages? What role do they play in gender and photography education?**

Incorporation of dominant local languages in South Africa regarding the engagement and presentation of image making processes are on the increase. Though at a lower than expected rate. It is becoming more apparent that when photographers use their own languages to engage their work processes, there is much more clarity and depth in the thinking and sensitivity around what is included in the frame and how that inclusion is defined.

### THE OTHER VISION (TOV)

#### **How does one's spoken language affect one's perception of the world, photography and gender?**

Languages act like binoculars: they form a medium through which one looks at things. Preconceptions, history and culture are all embedded in these binoculars. For example, in Arabic, pronouns assign gender to objects, the car becomes "she" while a book becomes a "he". This directly adds a gender element to everything, whereas in English it is a simple "it".

Text read/written from right to left, left to right etc.. are all elements which comes from language but they directly affect the way we view things and the way in which we associate with the things arounds us.

#### **How do languages and colonial language zones/links (Francophone, Anglophone, Lusophone) within the continent, interlink or un-link photography practice, gender and education on the continent?**

Pre-colonial Africa had many links within the old civilizations through trade, migration, nomads and even language similarities. However, colonization occurred in a very different way which erased many of these links while creating new large language zones that in turn have become new links within the continent. As a result, these new links now come with a new culture element to it.

From a contemporary perspective, these new colonial language zones are very dominant yet very disconnected. This results in a lack of knowledge about photography practice, gender and education on the continent.

#### **What is the state of local languages? What role do they play in gender and photography education?**

Many local languages on the African continent do not have their own alphabets or characters, which makes it difficult to preserve and pass on to the next generation under the current universal cultural invasion. I believe going back to these local languages will help us understand how our cultures affect our point of view of the world and maybe that will help us create a more related art education context that is more relevant and linked to history. 🌍



NATIONAL SCHOOL OF ARTS (ENA)

RECENT ACTIVITIES

## DAP (Department of Fine Arts) and DFFACR (Training Department of Cultural Animation and Research Trainers)

Over six months (Jan-Jun 2019) DAP and DFFACR offered 100 hours of training in photography and 50 hours of training for the annual refresher course in the Visual Arts Department, respectively. The new academic years kicks off on 14 Nov 2019.



### ◀ Masterclass in documentary photography and graphic design

Sup'Imax, the Higher Institute of Arts and Crafts, hosted a second workshop, from 21-25 Oct 2019, led by Belgian agency MAPS trainers Gaël Turine (Photographer) and Chiqui Garcia (Graphic Designer). This follows the first masterclass in documentary photography held in Jul 2019 with students from ENA. Sup'IMAX and photojournalists, have assisted in developing the capacity of students to create quality content and revenue opportunities.

The two masterclasses aimed to support the emergence and visibility of young Senegalese photographers. The objective of these masterclasses was to strengthen the individual skills with the financial support of the Walloon-Brussels International Delegation.

CENTER FOR PHOTOGRAPHY IN ETHIOPIA (CPE)

RECENT ACTIVITIES

## Baxxe : Home



▲ Workshop participants editing their photos. Gedeo, Ethiopia. Aug 2019 / CPE

CPE conducted a week-long workshop in Gedeo, a zone located in the southern region of Ethiopia in Sep 2019. The workshop included six young men and women working on the theme of "Home" whilst viewing photographs and films from the Frobenius Archive together.

A point and shoot compact camera was provided to each participant to make use of during the workshop to photograph their own expression and ideas of "Home". The theme stemmed from Maheder Haileselassie's research visit to the Frobenius-Institut for research in Cultural Anthropology in Frankfurt, Germany, which has a collection of around 15,000 photographs mainly from the southern part of Ethiopia that were taken by anthropologists who did research in Ethiopia between the 1930's and 1990's.

The photographs produced during the workshop along with the archival materials of Frobenius-Institut will be exhibited at the Goethe-Institut Addis Ababa on 21 Nov 2019.

### MARKET PHOTO WORKSHOP (MPW)

#### RECENT ACTIVITIES

## San, Nama and Khoe Communities Mentorship



From the 19 Aug–10 Oct 2019, MPW hosted a mentorship project with two participants from the San, Nama and Khoe communities of the Kalahari region in the Northern Cape, South Africa. The project aimed to recognise and encourage the visual culture interest within these regions by strategically focusing on issues relating to land and identities.

## Lupane State University Photography Programme

The MPW in partnership with the Lupane State University, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, hosted a Photography Programme 2019 from 4–13 July. The 2 week programme of workshops and masterclasses aimed to support and prepare 14 participants for the creative, conceptual, technical and professional demands of photographic practice.

## Bijlmermeer, Amsterdam Photography Training Workshops

MPW, on invitation by CEC, designed and conducted a workshop with a selection of 15 young students within the Bijlmermeer communities, Amsterdam, 18 – 21 Sep 2019. The workshop took place as part of the 2019 Unseen Amsterdam educational programme with the aim to provide basic photography and visual literacy skills through using mobile phones. The outcome was a curated public screening of works produced by the participants.

## Miss Drag SA Internship

In partnership with OUT–LGBT Well-being and Miss Drag South Africa, MPW organized a month long internship from 1 Sep – 4 Oct 2019. The internship included 2 students from the Advanced Programme in Photography. The students travelled throughout South Africa whilst documenting and engaging with drag queens, gender queer and trans bodies from 5 different provinces participating in the Miss Drag SA competition. The work produced during the internship was showcased at the Miss Drag South Africa 2019 Crowning Gala on 4 Oct 2019. The aim of this annual ‘drag with purpose’ pageant is to “celebrate diversity”.

## Biennale de Lubumbashi 2019 Workshop

As part of the Biennale de Lubumbashi 2019, MPW hosted a 2-week programme of workshops and masterclasses from 20–30 Oct 2019. The programmes aimed to support and prepare 16 participants for the creative, conceptual, technical and professional demands of photographic practice.

#### FUTURE ACTIVITIES

## 2020 Curriculum and Library

Some of the new phased introductions in the 2020 curriculum is the inclusion of Art History and Cinema in the visual culture section of the intermediate and advanced courses. In addition, MPW prioritises an acquisition plan for the in-house photography library collection to include more books and film materials from Global South regions in order to diversify current sources of referencing within the courses curriculum content.

## Photography Incubator

The Photography Incubator programme will take place from Dec 2019 till Mar 2020. The aim of the programme is to provide photographers with practical experience and exposure to relevant and critical aspects of the photography industry in South Africa and to equip them with the knowledge and technical skills to conceptualise and plan a project, exercise personal initiative and self-discipline. The programme intends to create an understanding of the needs of diverse clients and community groups, and the ability to produce work that answers these needs.

## Mollo wa Ditshomo public programme collaboration

MPW in partnership with Mollo wa Ditshomo and Funda Community College will provide photography workshops from 25 Nov to 05 Dec 2019 to high-school learners in Soweto, Johannesburg as part of promoting photography as a career path..

### PHOTO:

#### RECENT ACTIVITIES

## Of Soul and Joy Photo Festival



As part of the Of Soul and Joy Photo Festival, John Fleetwood took part in a panel discussion on reflecting on South African photography on the 26 Oct 2019. The discussion, led by Kabelo Malatsi, included photographer and Of Soul and Joy Project Manager Jabulani Dhlamini, and photographers Andrew Tshabangu and Thembinkosi Hlatshwayo.

The photography festival exhibited work from previous and current Of Soul and Joy students and included live performances and educational talks on the importance and development of photography.

## Joop Swart Masterclass

John Fleetwood joined 4 leading international photography experts as facilitators for the 2019 Joop Swart Masterclass, World Press Photo Foundation's well-known education programme, in Amsterdam 17-21 Sep 2019.

Working closely with the 12 participants selected from 12 different countries, including Algeria, India, Indonesia and Puerto Rico, the week-long masterclass identifies, supports and educates new talent in the field of documentary photography, visual journalism, and visual storytelling.

### CONTEMPORARY IMAGE COLLECTIVE (CIC)

#### RECENT ACTIVITIES

## Film Processing Workshop

On 23 Oct 2019, CIC hosted a Film Processing Workshop with photographer Shady Assaf. This hands-on black & white processing workshop introduced participants to analogue and home film development. The workshop was open to anyone with basic knowledge about analogue photography, people who have black & white analogue 35mm or 120mm films wanting to learn how to develop them, as well as anyone curious to learn how to work with film processing chemicals and the related theoretical knowledge.

## New additions to the CIC Library

Over the past month CIC has added hundreds of educational books to the "photography", "image theory", "critical thinking" and "moving image" categories of the in-house public library. The library is accessible throughout the week and also offers free Wi-Fi and working spaces for anyone eager to learn photography or film.

The index of the library is accessible online through PILOT.org, a shared Arabic-English cataloguing platform for small, specialized collections housed at civil society and cultural organizations or private collections in Egypt and the region.

#### FUTURE ACTIVITIES

## Self-Publishing

From Jan to Feb 2020, this currently untitled two-month programme proposes a context of learning from historical and current practices of self-organisation and collective cultural work in periods of social transformation and political turmoil through research, critical engagement and printmaking/publishing practices. It is also an attempt to reflect and possibly develop other ways of working together around publishing and the related economies in more collaborative ways. As part of the programme, CIC will organize a screen-printing workshop and library tool dedicated to book binding and zine making as well as include a section of the CIC library dedicated to local and regional zines and self-made publications.

## YAMAROU-PHOTO

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

## Photo tour



▲ © Yamrou-Photo, during the exchange in the space step by step.

In this last semester of the year, Yamarou-Photo is still buzzing with activity. On 7 Nov 2019, The Yamarists took part in a photography road trip where they first visited a contemporary dance studio to see how dance and photography inspire one another, after which they travelled out of the city to receive training on landscape photography.

## Photography Workshop and Portfolio Review

On 18 Nov 2019, Yamarou-Photo initiated a 15-day workshop hosted by two South African photographers, Jabulani Dhlamini and Thandile Zwelibanzi for two weeks during the 12th edition of Rencontres de Bamako.

The training will be concluded with a portfolio reading led by renowned South African curator John Fleetwood on the 29 Nov 2019. During the Rencontres, the students will exhibit an Off-exhibition in public areas of Mali.

## Photography talk



▲ ©Yamarou-Photo, Khalid Tamer's visit to Yamarou's class Photo on Jul 27, 2019

On 12 Nov, Yamarou-Photo welcomed two great personalities of African culture; Khalid Tamer (Director of Capitales des cultures Africaines) and Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung (curator of 12th Edition of Rencontres de Bamako), who provided their view on the state of photography in Mali especially for the young Malian photographers and the importance of collectives.

### KWANDA ART FOUNDATION

#### RECENT ACTIVITIES

## Kigali Photo Fest

From 7-16 Jun 2019, Kwanda Art Foundation, Kigali Center for Photography and a number of their partners organized the first Kigali International Photography Festival: Kigali Photo Fest (a bi-annual photography festival which features exhibitions, events and celebrating work from Rwanda and beyond). As part of the festival, the following teaching activities took place:



## Workshop on Human Rights Cultures for Photographers and Writers

How can photography and writing explore rights that are important to Rwandans today? What are the creative ways in which artists can engage with everyday issues relating to human rights through their work? And how can we imagine rights that are specifically Rwandan: that extend and complicate international structures such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

The four-day workshop aimed to address these questions taking place from 12-15 Jun 2019. The workshop brought together 6 photographers and 6 writers to consider what human rights in Rwanda means for Rwandans and how this can be explored through the Arts.

## Panel discussion: 'Women in Photography: Where are We?'

Rwanda has more female members of parliament than any other country worldwide. But when it comes to photography, women are still under-represented. This panel discussion looked at the challenges and opportunities faced by women photographers across the world alongside the specific barriers within Rwanda. The panel included Rwandan founder of Illume Creative Studio - Joan Mazimhaka in conversation with photographers Nadège Imbabazi Karemera (Rwanda), Sarah Waiswa (Uganda), Carol Allen-Storey (USA), Liz Hingley (United Kingdom) and Chrystal Ding (China).

## Sequencing Storytelling Masterclass with Carol Allen-Storey



Carol Allen-Storey, an award-winning photojournalist and UNICEF ambassador for photography specialised in narrating complex humanitarian and social issues, shared her own work and experiences in an intimate setting, discussing how she selects images for stories and presents them in ways that appeal to photo editors worldwide. Carol expressed methods on working with the editors, working on the assignments and how to approach subjects while on assignment.

## Women's Eye

Kigali Center for Photography provides an ongoing free admission 6 week-long course running from Nov 2019 to girls / women interested in photography and visual culture. Each session will consist of theoretical lectures, practical demonstrations with student participation, constructive critique sessions and weekly assignments. The program's focus to enhance skills and provide assistance to female photographers by providing space, skills and mentors.

### KWANDA ART FOUNDATION *CONTINUED*

## Panel Discussion 'Being in Place: Here and Home'

What does it mean to be located in a particular place as an artist? How does your own identity and past connections with different places layer over your positioning at the precise moment when you take a photograph, write a line or stand on stage? When you figure the lives and positioning of the other people you represent? Is there always a sense of home, either of being at home or of longing for displaced home within an artwork?

This panel discussion brought together photographers to consider the ways in which their work speaks in relation to being at or away from home.

### FUTURE ACTIVITIES

## Learning for Change

L4C is a continued program initiated in 2016 that provides free photography training with equipment to the youth of Kigali in their communities. The program has assisted over 70 students, 4 of which have received mentorship training through the Kigali Center for Photography. The program seeks to provide photography training to young people in their communities as a way for these photographers to engage in the development of the country, create discussions in the communities about social issues and provide opportunities to those interested in visual storytelling

## Photography and Film Festival: Searching4opportunities

Kigali Center for Photography in partnership with Global Playground Stockholm are planning to organise a documentary film festival called Searching4opportunities in Kigali, Rwanda in Nov 2019. Aimed at collecting inspirational innovative ideas [inspirational innovative ideas or initiatives?] through photography and film for sustainable development in Rwanda. The collected content will be presented to a wider audience online and as a festival in June 2020. Panel discussions reflecting on the societal problems in Rwanda and possible solutions raised in the collected content will be hosted during the festival.

### THE OTHER VISION (TOV)

#### RECENT ACTIVITIES

## Safety Workshop



▲ Protesters awaiting the first public speech by the leaders of the revolution movement. ©Ala Kheir

TOV selected 20 young photographers who were active in photographing the recent political transition in Sudan to take part in a session to promote personal safety while photographing conflict. The class was led by Reuters photographer Mohamed Nouredin on 13 Mar 2019. The focus of the workshop was to assist photographers to evaluate the risks of operating in such extreme environments.

#### FUTURE ACTIVITIES

## Photography lecture

On 12 Dec 2019, TOV will organize a public photography lecture led by London based visual artist, Ali Eisa. The event will be held at the Goethe-Institut, Khartoum

TOV will host a 4-day workshop from 18-21 Dec 2019. The workshop will focus on photographic narratives, led by Ali Eisa and Ala Kheir, and will include 10-15 participants selected through a prior nomination process.

On 3 Feb 2020, TOV will launch a workshop-based photography project where participants will work on independent bodies of work under a common theme. Duration of the project will be 9 months from Feb to Oct 2020. 🌐

# John Fleetwood

By Ala Kheir

## What is your background into photography?

I grew up in a time of urgent political change and distress because of Apartheid. I became involved in resistance politics at university that helped me develop a more critical response to the world around me, something I think I perhaps already had as a kid. My academic background was in Political Studies, but I think my knowledge of politics was very much formed by growing up as a gay child in South Africa. Growing up on a farm, away from the city, I was very aware of the legal restrictions and perceptions around being gay at the time. It was quite hard, yet I think I started to align my thinking with the politics of others.

I became involved at the Market Photo Workshop (MPW) shortly after I completed my degree in Political Studies. After taking a short course in photography, I decided I was serious about it and went on to pursue it at university. Once I concluded my studies, I worked as an advertising photographer for about seven years. I learnt many technical and conceptual aspects as well as how to run a photography business.

I started teaching at the MPW in 1997. This was at a time I grew apart from advertising because of the lack of critical concern within the industry. It was directly after the democratic transition in 1994 and I felt there was a gap between the real world and what advertising portrayed. So, I started teaching at the workshop to expose myself to more critical interaction with people.

I was involved in the Joubert Park Public Art Project in 1999, which looked at the revival of the struggling Johannesburg Art Gallery at the time. This project introduced me to like-minded people who were serious about art and what it could do in the world, and I think that was very important for me as an introduction to the art world.

My role developed in a very natural way at MPW, which aligned with my own interests and I became the Director in 2002 where I stayed until I started Photo: in 2015.

"I grew distanced from advertising because of the lack of critical concern in the industry. It was directly after the democratic transition in 1994 and I felt there was a gap between the real world and what advertising portrayed."



Image by Doctor Moyo

**You have a long experience in photography curating/training/workshops/masterclasses around different countries in Africa. From this point of view what do you think is going on in terms of photography education on the continent?**

The MPW started a pan-African photography project back in 2004, where we worked closely with photographers and curators in Mozambique. The last few years of my time at the MPW, I started to think more about how photography as a concept operates on the continent. What it means for the photography industry and what it means for the conceptual thinking of being on the continent. From the time I developed Photo: , there was an urgency and freedom to working more with photographers, counterparts and colleagues across the continent, where previously I was bound administratively. The first major project that Photo: initiated was to look at a survey of photography education centres on the continent. The survey was a very important project for me because it gave me insight and a more in-depth overview of formal photography education in Africa.

The short answer to 'how to understand what is the state of photography in Africa?' is: Complicated. I think this is because on one level there are incredible photographers producing incredible work, but at the same time, I think that photography education can develop in a much more dynamic way than its current space. Education in general should be more contextually driven by the understanding of what things mean in particular contexts.

The formats of having workshops around the continent in

different ways, typically with a group of photographers, has been instrumental in my thinking around what is needed. By meeting people and seeing what it is that they are interested in gives you a great sense of how to approach some of these questions and which beneficial direction to head into.

### **Tell us about Photo:**

Photo: is a platform that works in various different spaces, but at its core, we are trying to produce a photography practice that critically looks at what is happening around us by working with educational and curatorial projects.

In terms of our practice, we are interested in photography as a language, much like other languages around the world, and how its role is different in every space. Photography opens up questions around where we are, where we have been and the importance of change. Photo: is also interested in creating visibility for social issues, perhaps those that have not initially received the visibility required to be publicly recognised. We typically work with issues, or themes, or practices that we think are urgent for photography practice.

We mainly work with people who have completed their studies and have already produced a body of work or more, as well as those who have chosen photography as a career and/ or a way of thinking. We are highly interested in linking and networking photographers around the continent too. Our space within education is to create intervention: a platform that can interject, begin to reconsider, develop new dynamics and create possibilities. And I think these elements are what differentiates





Photo: from other ongoing training institutions also operating in South Africa. Our area of expertise is between curating exhibitions, bringing photographers together, and working with them to produce new work. We also run awards that are linked to mentorships and developing new work.

This year we had produced the Five Photographer's Exhibition that has travelled across the continent from South Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique, and now travelling to Mali. We have worked on a project in Kinshasa, DRC, called Connected. We continue with the Survey of Photography Education around the continent along with numerous workshops and masterclasses. I think that we are very much linked to the international world beyond Africa. This year we had many activities with partners such as the World Press Photo, Joop Swart Masterclass and the Pride Photo Awards. For me, these activities reflect the kind of multiplicity of Photo: and that we are always on the lookout to find new projects.

**Not so many photographers on the continent have access to formal photography education. Non-formal education is the main way of learning. How would this affect the practice and the industry?**

I think, (and this is absolutely critical), that sometimes formal structures are set-up in a way that somehow defeat the purpose of learning and knowledge exchange. Therefore, I firmly believe in spaces of non-formal education. Between the rigidness and unstructured learning of an informal institution, non-formal learning options for photographers are often most suitable to their circumstances and lives. The basis of good education is that it is relevant, affordable and driven by passionate educators who

have a great know-how of the photography practice and how it can serve a greater good

**As a curator and educator, what do you think is the way forward to bridge the gap in photography education on the continent?**

We know from the previous 20 years or 40 years that photography has always been absolutely at a verge of a kind of change. The technical aspect of photography has never been stable but shifting. The other part, that of visual culture, is always shifting too and photography is used for different things today than it was 20 years ago.

Photography has an association with the truth, with reality. The issue around the ethics of representation will always make photography dynamic and problematic. Photography is a vibrant language that I think is perhaps currently looking at a post representational era. We need to begin thinking about how people consume photography at the moment and what they learn from that. For a long time, we were thinking much more about a camera and I think the camera has now "disappeared" and what we have now is a cellphone and a variety of so many other ways of image making. As a result, we are dealing and negotiating with images rather than working with a tool that has a technological ability to record something, and I think this space is definitely going to be one of development.

In Africa, we need to be more practical about what this means. It will surpass the idea of who we are, and it will start to talk about the complexities of how we use images to represent what I think goes beyond the images of identity. 🌍

"Photography is a vibrant language that I think is perhaps currently looking at a post-representational era. We need to begin thinking about how people consume photography at the moment and what they've learn from that."