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Prins Claus Fonds voor
Cultuur en Ontwikkeling

Prince Claus Fund for
Culture and Development



Prince Claus Awards

2009

Foreword

by HRH Prince Friso and HRH Prince Constantijn
Honorary Chairmen of the Prince Claus Fund

Culture and nature are the two main forces that have driven the evolution of mankind and they are fundamental for human development. During recent centuries the dynamic balance between these drivers has been disrupted, resulting in a situation where mankind increasingly damages nature, resulting in detrimental consequences for humanity itself, and all else that makes our planet such a unique place in the universe.

As we write this foreword, man and nature are heading for an important moment, as important decisions are to be taken at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen to achieve stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level low enough to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. The Fund's choice for this year's theme could not have been more timely and relevant.

Our intention in selecting Culture and Nature as this year's theme was to highlight the urgent need for reciprocity between these two basic forces of human existence. The 2009 Prince Claus Laureates are outstanding cultural practitioners whose innovative work seeks to re-orient and alter our attitudes to the natural environments in which we live.

The Principal Prince Claus Laureate for 2009 is Colombian architect Simón Vélez. Over many years of research, technical experiments and practical implementation, Vélez has achieved an ecologically sound construction system that has profound implications for culture, the environment and development, particularly in those areas of the world where the majority of the human population lives. His solution demonstrates an ideal partnership between culture and nature. Both practical and beautiful, it combines the use of bamboo – a material that allows for sustainable cultivation – with scientific innovation and aesthetic principles, resulting in social, economic and environmental benefits. His work highlights the potential of local solutions and the importance of respect for local diversity – both botanical and cultural – in global human development.

The link between climate, natural materials and the form and content of cultural productions is clearly demonstrated in the domestic art of cooking. 2009 Laureate Gastón Acurio is a master chef whose renewal and promotion of traditional Peruvian cuisine shows us the profound impact of nature both on personal identity and on a country's social, economic and ecological development. In contrast, the appalling degradation that results from irresponsible exploitation of natural resources is revealed in the powerful photographic

collages of Congolese Laureate Sammy Baloji. An alternative vision is offered in the striking paintings of Indian Laureate Jivya Soma Mashe, evoking the more harmonious relationship between man and nature practised in at least some pre-industrial farming systems around the globe. His work calls our attention to vernacular philosophies – often considered 'out of date' – as a potent source of ecological solutions.

The 'waste sculptures' and educational practice of Nigerian Laureate El Anatsui, and the meditative installations of Chinese Laureate Liang Shaoji, reinterpret and re-present diverse natural metaphors. They give fresh insight and understandings of the commonalities human beings share with all nature's elements.

In their distinct and innovative ways, the 2009 Prince Claus Laureates highlight our close ties to the environment. They work with natural resources to stimulate sustainable forms of development and help to build societies that nurture positive relations with nature. The Prince Claus Fund is proud to present the 2009 Prince Claus Laureates, and we support their calls for the sustainable development of mankind and our beautiful, but vulnerable planet.



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Introduction

by Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang You, Chair of the Prince Claus Fund
and Els van der Plas, Director of the Prince Claus Fund

This year's Prince Claus Awards celebrate outstanding individuals and organisations that foster culture and development in many ways, with a special focus on the intimate relationship of nature and culture. This subject has run within the Fund for some time now and has become more actual and important every day. The Fund tries to make its programmes and projects relevant and consequential, and to define its foci for the future by in-depth analysis of world developments. In February 2009, the Prince Claus Fund invited cultural partners, advisors and experts from around the world to consider the current major global changes and to provide critical guidance on the Fund's role and priorities. Among the participants were this year's Laureate Kanak Dixit from Nepal, 2000 Laureate Arif Hasan from Pakistan, Ly Daravuth, Director of 2003 Laureate Reyum Institute of Arts and Culture in Cambodia, and Samuel Sidibé, Director of 2006 Laureate the National Museum of Mali. The outcome of these inspiring discussions is a strategic vision for the coming five years, centred on two thematic foci: Zones of Silence and Beauty in Context. Other major features will be a cross-cutting programme on Culture and Conflict, improved communications based on new technologies, and the consolidation and implementation of a Knowledge Centre. The Fund intends to expand on its communication and presentation policy in order to share its knowledge and expertise.

At its new premises in Amsterdam the Fund is creating this centre for knowledge and intercultural exchange. The main focus will be on sharing and disseminating information and expertise from different places in the world, providing insight into the work of the Fund's partners, and debating topics that are actual and relevant to contemporary culture and development. The Fund opened the doors to its documentation centre and new public space in December last year with an exhibition of work by 2008 Laureate and photographer Uchechukwu James Iroha.

This year, the work of 2009 Laureate Liang Shaoji is shown in the Fund's gallery. His work directly links to this year's focus of the Prince Claus Fund and its Awards, the reciprocity of Culture and Nature. Liang represents the reasoning behind the Fund choosing this theme, to contribute to a better understanding of people and nature, and to a better and more balanced relationship between the two. It is clear that culture and nature cannot be separated. The Fund's diverse activities celebrate the ingenious use of natural resources almost by default. Nature is the source of knowledge, content,

materials, inspiration and metaphor in cultural production, and culture inevitably impacts on the natural environment. Mankind's psychological relationship with the environment – the spirit of place – is one of many subjects explored in the nuanced work of South African photographer Santu Mofokeng, one of this year's laureates. Not all interactions between nature and culture are positive. Since 2003, the Fund's Cultural Emergency Response (CER) has provided support for recuperation and restoration of cultural treasures following earthquake, hurricane, fire or flood damage to, among others, the Nias Heritage Museum in Indonesia, the ancient Iranian city of Bam, archaeological sites in Mozambique, and the National Gallery of Jamaica.

The Prince Claus Awards are not limited to the year's theme. They draw attention to remarkable achievements in all types of cultural endeavour and in an ever-widening geographical arena. Cuban Laureate Desiderio Navarro is awarded for his role in expanding public knowledge and transcending political and cultural boundaries through publication and debate. Three of this year's laureates live and work in countries that have not previously received a Prince Claus Award: in Cameroon, Doual'art is honoured for its work with urban communities in the reinvention and regeneration of public spaces; in Nicaragua, the contribution of the Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica to local and regional development through literacy, research and its many cultural projects, is awarded; and in Nepal, Kanak Mani Dixit's role in publishing and stimulating local and regional debate is celebrated.

The 2009 Principal Prince Claus Award is presented to Colombian architect Simón Vélez by the Fund's Honorary Chairman HRH Prince Constantijn on 16 December at Amsterdam's Muziekgebouw aan't IJ. The other ten awards are presented to the laureates by the Dutch Ambassadors in their respective countries. The Fund is indebted to the Ambassadors and their staff for their assistance and ongoing support to culture and development activities. Among the many people involved in the Awards Programme, the Fund would like to express special thanks to all those who nominated candidates for the 2009 Prince Claus Awards, to the international colleagues and advisors who provided information and advice during the selection process, to the authors of the laudations published in this book, and to the esteemed members of the 2009 Awards Committee.

The exemplary work of the 2009 Prince Claus Laureates calls our attention to the many ways individuals and organisations around the world are rising to the challenges we face. It is our hope that their ideas and achievements will stimulate ever-greater efforts to create sustainable development and environmentally sensitive cultures. The Fund will share these innovative ideas and ideals with the world through activities and policies defined by its new course into the future.



Prince Claus Laureates 2009

Simón Vélez *Colombia*
Gaston Acurio *Peru*
El Anatsui *Nigeria / Ghana*
Sammy Baloji *DR Congo*
Kanak Mani Dixit *Nepal*
Doual'art *Cameroon*
Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica *Nicaragua*
Liang Shaoji *China*
Jivya Soma Mashe *India*
Santu Mofokeng *South Africa*
Desiderio Navarro *Cuba*



Simón Vélez an ingenious architect from Colombia, whose work has shown the world bamboo's unique qualities as a sustainable construction material. His buildings and methodology demonstrate bamboo's exemplary 'green' credentials and its aesthetic potential, and his innovative jointing system gives bamboo a load-bearing capacity equal to steel.



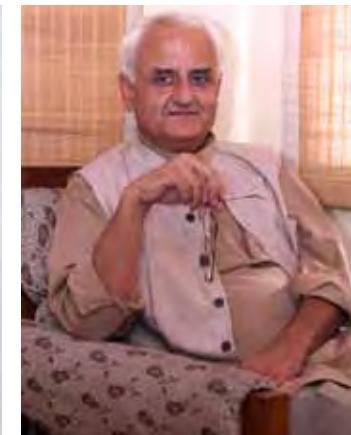
Gastón Acurio a master chef and pioneering restaurateur, who has rejuvenated Peruvian cuisine. He has reclaimed the rich legacy of traditional recipes and promotes the use of local resources, creating renewed pride in local culture and sharing Peru's delicious dishes with the world.



El Anatsui an outstanding Nigerian sculptor and a beacon of contemporary artistic development in Africa. He takes an eclectic approach to cultural forms and values in his challenging artworks and has an inspirational influence on young artists through his role as professor of sculpture.



Sammy Baloji a young photographer, whose striking work gives us new insight into the realities of the DR Congo. Bringing elements of the past and the present together, his powerful images explore the legacy of history and industrialisation on society and the environment.



Kanak Mani Dixit editor of *Himal Southasian*, founder of a documentary film festival and multi-disciplinary cultural activist in Nepal and South Asia. His work through diverse socially engaged platforms transcends national boundaries to stimulate freedom of expression and critical analysis of regional issues.



Doual'art an independent arts space and urban laboratory, whose directors Marilyn Douala Bell and Didier Schaub are reshaping the culture and environment of Cameroon's capital city. Doual'art works closely with local residents and artists to integrate culture with practical development in citizens' everyday lives.



Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica a memory bank and research centre for the diverse cultures of Central America, under the dedicated directorship of Margarita Vannini. Its irreplaceable collections, scholarship and diverse popular activities are a unique fountainhead for community and cultural development.



Liang Shaoji a highly original installation and video artist, who works with silkworms to create unusual awareness of the relation between culture and nature. He combines an experimental approach to processes with reinterpretation of natural metaphors from Chinese philosophy and literature.



Jivya Soma Mashe a remarkable visual artist and convention breaker, whose work gives voice to a culture that was disappearing. His transformation of a traditional form of Indian folk art into contemporary, popular expression has stimulated artistic production, economic sustainability and cultural renewal.



Santu Mofokeng luminary South African photographer and compassionate chronicler of our times. His subtle images offer nuanced interpretations of the layers of meaning in contexts and environments, a rethinking of people and places, and a better understanding of the human condition.



Desiderio Navarro critical writer, editor of *Criterios*, and Cuban public intellectual. His energetic dedication to gathering analytical knowledge on a wide range of subjects and making it accessible through translation, publication and debate is an outstanding contribution to freedom of information and development.

The relationship of Culture and Nature is a subject of powerful contemporary relevance and of special interest to the Prince Claus Fund. Through its 2009 Awards Programme, the Fund seeks to highlight and celebrate artists, cultural groups and organisations that demonstrate significant interactions between Culture and Nature, introduce new ideas and approaches to environmental issues, work with natural resources to stimulate sustainable forms of development, and reveal the impact of culture on the environment in innovative ways that help to build societies that nurture positive relations between Culture and Nature.

Prince Claus Theme 2009

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From the Ground Up: On Site Earth Art Expands and Evolves to Cultivate the World

by John Grande

The notion of an avant-garde which is inimically attached to a presumption of economic progress is one that more traditional Asiatic societies such as China and Japan have, until recently, found difficult to grasp. The dominance of machines over humanity and over nature has altered environments and landscapes on a scale that is staggering. Photographers such as Edward Burtynsky and David Maisel have captured these changes, while more socially engaged photographers like Paul-Antoine Pichard have documented the people who live amid the Third World's trash landscapes whether it be in Mexico, Thailand, India, Egypt, Senegal, Cambodia or Madagascar. That scale would have shocked the Romantics who witnessed early industrialism's emergence. The poet Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote in 1821:

"The cultivation of those sciences which have enlarged the limits of the empire of man over the external world has, for want of the poetic faculty, proportionally circumscribed those of the internal world; and man having enslaved the elements, remains himself a slave."*

The future of art may represent an integration of eastern and western influences on what art is or could potentially be. All cultural activity that engages art and its interactions with our ecosystems involves a certain volatility of the elements and bio-regional specificities. Our relation to nature is a key to the creative process. It exists in the holistic energy of life, which is as much ethereal as physical.

Art can play a more intuitive role in the future and guide us towards a regenerative view where values of material accumulation and historic notions of economic progress are set aside. Understanding sustainability as a principle for art can truly propel us and the physical energies that are part of our universal experience to build new visual and material forms of expression less tied up in originality and that link us to archaic, even ancient, ties to nature. The artist need not be compromised to find expression in the unwholesome values of a profit-oriented economy. This deceptive situation must change if our planet is to survive. It will depend on each individual's commitment to move towards a re-souling of art, where integral values are based on an identification of human achievement with this planet's ecosystem.

Ephemeral sculpture has grown over the past decades to become an artform that has moved towards a more site-sensitive and entropic relation to nature. The history of land art in the 1960s and 70s is usually interpreted within a quite narrow rangefinder as a primarily concept-driven artform dealing with nature on site, but artists such as Richard Long, Nils-Udo and others were already engaging in a more intimate dialogue with nature.

Ephemeral earth art was often linked to performance, as was the case for Ana Mendieta, Robert Morris, Alan Sonfist and Allan Kaprow, and has now attracted a growing range of semi-permanent and permanent sites worldwide, whether with sculpture gardens, sculpture symposia, formal parks or private commissions. Ephemeral sculpture is an artform that seeks to reunite the language of art with ecology, ecosystems and permacultural values. By permaculture, one can speak of a culture that embraces all the values of our evolving era.

The great gap between nature and humanity is the result of a process of historicisation. Nature is a life-giving force we deny because it defies the production/consumption model. History is and was always about a model built on progression, evolution. But the history of our era can as readily be about devolution. Nature produces effortlessly, and chaotically. Nature also establishes an order out of and in chaos.

In developing a nature-specific dialogue that is interactive, rooted in actual experience in a given place and time, with nature the essential material and ingredient of the process, artists are ultimately developing a new language of expression. The emphasis is holistic, bio-regional and mutualist. Above all, it displays a respect for our integral connectedness to the environment. The earth is a living, breathing organism whose elements – climate, geography, geology and other life forms – are an inviolable part of the human creative process. Increasingly, ephemeral earth art attracts a truly global and inter-cultural participation, as witnessed by the gardens, foundations and groups of artists in Asia, South America, Europe, Russia, India, New Zealand and Australia.

In Asia, there were early forays into art's engagement with the earth, notably Japan's Mono-Ha in the 1950s. The Korean Yatoo Art Nature group at Gong Ju, north of Seoul, evolved out of the Four Seasons group who were as much into nature performance art as sculpture at the beginning. As Yatoo has evolved over the past 25 years, its realisations echo throughout the world and challenge our presumptions about what fine art is or can be in today's society. Nature is a theatre of life with cadence, rhythms and principles of birth, life, growth, entropy and dissolution. Haesim Kim is one of the Yatoo group's more adventurous sculptors. Her innovative works are related to performance in the theatre of nature, whether on a remote island or a mountain scene. This unusual blending of performance, interactivity and of sculpture as an element that adds a social dimension to nature is exemplified by two carved tree sculptures she made at



the Geumgang Nature Art Biennale in 2006. Literally carved out of tree trunks and still sited where the trees grew, the sculptures give one a place to rest in nature, to look up and sense what is around in the context of nature, and to experience one's bodily presence in this place.

In Taiwan, the 3rd Guandu International Outdoor Sculpture Festival at Guandu Nature Park in Taipei (2008) continues a process that is not only reassuring but equally visionary, for it brings together artists from Taiwan and around the world to create new works that challenge our assumptions about our relation to nature. With global warming as the theme for 2008, artists used the waterway and ecosystem at Guandu Nature Park, in collaboration with the Wild Bird Society of Taipei, a wetlands preserve. Roger Tibon's structural sculpture *The Shield* is an actual built form whose lower openings one can enter into and exit through. Within that structure one has the sense of a security and an accompanying fragility due to the ephemeral, frail nature of the materials used to build it. The surface of *The Shield* has light passing through it, a metaphor that parallels the way UV radiation passes through the earth's protective ozone layer. It is the volume of human activity – notably, but not exclusively, carbon emissions – that have caused the opening up of holes in the earth's ozone layer, and this has affected the changes in the earth's overall temperature. Tibon's built metaphor

– a hut-like structure with openings on its exterior skin – contrasts the invisible character of this deterioration of the earth's protective cover with fragile, living elements. This makes Tibon's earth statement all the more poignant. Tibon's *Shield* offers only a partial protection from the sun's heat. The message is we cannot ultimately escape the damage we are now enacting on the earth. Aihua Hsia has created a garden out of tree branches whose title is *To the flowing time and weather that changes human desire*. The colours of the branches evoke something of the vivid mangrove and tropical plant ecology of Guandu. Each branch has been painted with nature-based earth and mineral pigments, and these branches look somewhat unnatural, while being found elements from the natural surroundings. Rain, a climactic effect, and a constant in any environmental artist's considerations when working in an outdoor venue, causes Hsia's installation to change colour like an environmental icon that has process and entropy built into it. Hsia's piece is likewise a warning of what we do to those places. Generated by nature, the branches will turn to white like the undersea corals being reduced as global warming causes them to die, a reminder of the bleached white coral reefs in the earth's oceans that are dying from the effects of global warming.

Firman Djamil's *Zero Chimney* rises up vertically recalling the factory smokestacks from the era of early industrialisation. Firman's is a bio-sensitive chimney that includes corn seeds at its base, a food source that is a growing part of his artwork. *Zero Chimney* likewise addresses the issue of alternative energy sources, notably the corn-based fuel known as ethanol. Produced from maize or corn using an agrifuel process, the production of ethanol is being contested for various reasons, notably that food sources for the world's poor and disenfranchised are being converted into fuel, but also because water used to cultivate maize/corn for ethanol on huge farms is not being directed towards our sustainable projects and for basic resource use. The production of one gallon or 3.7 litres of ethanol requires 6.345 litres of fresh water during the maize/corn growth and fermentation process, and there is also irrigation waste and corresponding environmental damage. *Zero Chimney* is a nature stack whose corn can be eaten by humans and songbirds in a wholesome, universal and environmental way.

Mexico too, has seized on the ecological art theme. Yolanda Gutiérrez, a young Aztec Mexican artist, is a free spirit who prefers to work outside the normal limitations of a studio space to produce in situ ecological interventions in the great outdoors. She uses materials direct from nature that include animal bones, shells, sea sponges, thorns, feathers and tree branches. Nature's precarious ecological balance and the need for wildlife reserves are themes she addresses. In *Santuário*, Gutiérrez realised nesting structures as sculptures that drew the birds back to their native shores in Mexico's Xochimilco Ecological Zone (1994).

And in 1995, a wildlife reservation on the island of Cozumel, off the coast of the Yucatan peninsula, became the site for another important habitat project. Gutiérrez had already been working with a team of biologists she had hired when a hurricane struck, devastating the area and alarming biologists who feared native birds might not return to the area if nesting materials were not available. In 2008, at the Royal Botanical Garden's Earth Art show in Canada, Gutiérrez made an on-site installation titled *Abuelo Arbol* (*Grandfather Tree*). As she states, 'I want to help people remember what the tree means for ancient cultures.' For the First Nations Aztec in Mexico and the Iroquois in Ontario the tree is the connection between earth and sky. Imagine the tree as a conduit through which energy spirals up from earth and down from sky. The Iroquois would carve a mask or a face in the tree and perform rituals and dances around it to bring it energy and a spiritual presence. In this installation, the spiral patterns of the movement of energy in the ground involve complementary opposites, always in movement. The earth rows follow the outer lines of the spiral designs with healing plants – sweet grass, tobacco and sage – planted in them. The white painted sticks rise in height to suggest the spirals, while spiralling white flowers appear on the tree trunk itself.

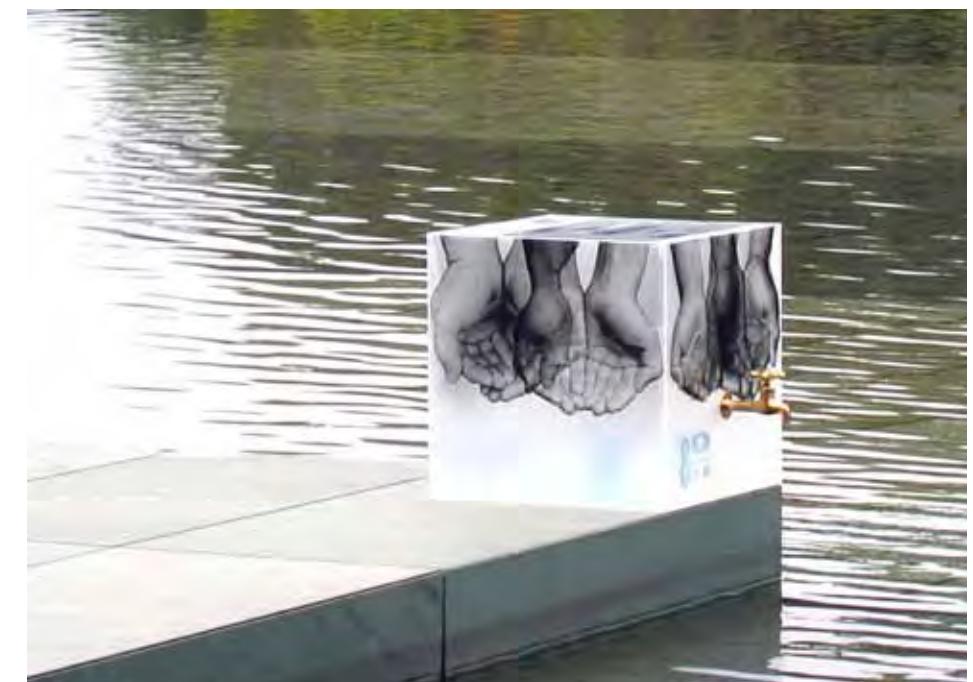
In South America likewise, there has been a generational shift towards a more earth-oriented form of sculpture. Already Chile was known for its organic formal sculpture in the 1960s and 70s. The sculptor who works with physical space in the 21st century is something of an anomaly, and yet the physical world remains as important to our future as it ever was. While digital imagery and new technologies have become a dogma of sorts, that offers a world of potential freedoms, they remain less complex than the real world, and the human eye remains more intricate and capable of retaining experience as it is, than a digital memory and screen technology. Pilar Ovalle's sculptures are a reflection of our place within the cycle of life. There is nothing of the shock and awe of so much contemporary image-based art (with apologies to Naomi Klein!). María José Riveros Valle has referred to these sculptures as 'portraits of nature' but Ovalle's art is of a nature anthropomorphised, and given a human face, for these sculptural allusions do not simply build structures for and of themselves, whether it be *Tree 8* (2005) where a tree shape emerges from within the carved and hollowed trunk of a tree, or *Cabeza 6* (2004). The raw edge of nature merges seamlessly with smooth designed surfaces. It is a syntax, a language of materials that, like the spoken word, has its vernacular particular to its cultural place in the world. Like the Innu stone sculptor Lucy Tasseor Tutsweetok from the Arctic, who leaves her stone partially natural and only partially intervening in the material, Pilar Ovalle lets the wood have its own voice, including that which exceeds the art, as nature's forms speak for themselves.

Japanese sculptor and performance artist Ichi Ikeda uses water as his main

medium, a choice strongly connected to global environmental problems. Recognising that water is one of the Earth's most precious resources, Ikeda is dedicated to raising global awareness of water conservation through international conferences, community activism, public performances and interactive installations. He encourages viewers to consider the larger context in which they live and to see how their actions can affect the Earth's future through the large- and small-scale artworks he calls *Ikeda Water*, among which are *Water Piano*, *Water Mirror*, *Earth-Up-Mark*, *United Waters* and *80 Litre Water Box*. This summer he will create a *Sustainability Compass for the Future* at the Royal Botanical Garden near Hamilton, Ontario in Canada, with water and trees as the main media.

The expansion continues, from India where the 48c Public, Art. Ecology Festival integrated some 24 art projects themed on ecology and had them installed in some eight public spaces in the city, to Iran in October 2008 where sculptor Nadalian and others organised the 19th Environmental Art Festival involving more than 60 artists. There are emergent art and nature phenomena being made around the world. The dialogue is now inter-cultural, universal.

* Percy Bysshe Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry* (London; Porcupine Press, 1948, pp. 44-45)



Principal Prince Claus Award 2009

Simón Vélez Colombia

Simón Vélez (b. 1949, Manizales) is an outstanding architect whose aesthetic and technical innovations have enhanced the construction potential of bamboo and challenged mainstream architectural trends. Completing his studies at Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Vélez moved away from the predominant international modernist stream to focus on indigenous architectural practices. Commissioned to build a stable using bamboo – a material with strong roots in vernacular Colombian architecture – he researched the structural possibilities of the local species, Guadua. With his partner Marcelo Villegas, Vélez invented a revolutionising joinery method, a new system of structural support, and more appropriate methods for foundations and roofing. These innovations transform one of the world's oldest building materials – considered substandard and suitable only for the marginalised – into a modern resource that meets the strictest international construction regulations and often outperforms steel. Bamboo's elasticity also proves highly suitable for earthquake-prone regions.

Furthermore, Vélez has evolved an elegant aesthetic that responds to bamboo's natural qualities and collaborates with nature to create beauty in form, space and surroundings. His deceptively simple designs appeal to a wide public and his roofs are inspirational. Working with hand-drawn sketches and low-tech processes, Vélez demonstrates bamboo's attractive versatility in the complete range of building types, from his own house in Bogotá and the Nomadic Museum in Mexico City, to an ecotourism lodge in China and a prototype energy-efficient retail store in Giradot.

Vélez has successfully synthesised indigenous design, avant-garde technology and ecological processes. His architectural practice, seminars and workshops demonstrate that bamboo is an efficient and aesthetic building material, with profound implications for social development and the environment. Because it flourishes in diverse climates, particularly in less developed countries, bamboo has the potential to revolutionise developing economies through low-cost construction and reduced imports. Its cultivation and processing are ecologically sound and sustainable, and it is one of the best plants for absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Simón Vélez is honoured for his aesthetic use of natural materials for contemporary design, for transforming local traditional indigenous knowledge through innovation that renews and extends its relevance as a source of solutions for global problems, and most importantly he is honoured for highlighting the essential rapport between sustainable design practices and social development, and between culture and nature.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Jury Report









Architecture as an Inspired Synthesis of Culture and Nature

by Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos

Describing the Colombian Simón Vélez as the “bamboo architect” is mere shorthand for a far broader spectrum of meanings and appreciations of his work. The precise gist of Vélez’ work is complex and richly layered. His highly individual oeuvre, methodology and choice of materials relate to architecture and contemporary culture in the broadest sense, to the complicated and historically charged relations between European and non-European cultures, and to a global approach and vision concerning the use of natural resources. It is particularly appropriate that Vélez should be the Principal Prince Claus Laureate in a year when the awards’ theme is Culture and Nature.

Vélez, the son and grandson of architects, completed his architectural training in Bogotá at a time when architecture schools throughout the world were dominated by Bauhaus doctrines. Yet this was also the moment when a new generation was casting doubt on modernism’s aesthetics and ideology, and developing an interest in the vernacular architecture of the diverse cultures around the world. A new approach of “critical regionalism” was developing, based on a critical assessment of the local context in order to use it as a starting point for a type of architecture that resonates with its surroundings, not only formally, but also in its deeper, cultural aspects. In Colombia, this led to architecture that, while influenced by several strains of modernist movements, achieved significant local form and content. But few Colombian architects actually worked with local materials and techniques. In this sense, Simón Vélez has truly been a pioneer.

Whereas his father and grandfather had travelled to the west for their training, Vélez undertook an expedition in the opposite direction. He concentrated on investigating his own South American environment. For Vélez, opposing the modernist tradition was also a conscious choice to opt for a formal language that is more in tune with the tropical context and regional building conventions. In fact, this Colombian architect did not travel outside his own country until a few years before the construction of his famous ZERI pavilion for Expo 2000 in Hanover.

Vélez describes himself not as a “bamboo architect” but as an “architect of roofs” because of the classical gable roofs with large eaves that characterise the appearance of his architecture. The archetypical roof profiles and their arched, load-bearing constructions are functional in a tropical climate. The fact that

these roofs are supported by bamboo constructions, and are covered by the irregular ridges of connected bamboo roofing tiles, is highly significant. At the same time, they can be viewed, from the theoretical perspective, as anti-modernist emblems.

According to Vélez, his opting for bamboo, the “fantastic grass”, occurred more or less coincidentally in the mid-1980s. In Colombia, as in many other countries particularly in tropical zones, it is a cheap and plentiful material, seen as a poor man’s wood. However, applying it to, for example, expensive villas and prestigious structures at prominent events such as Expo has entailed seeing bamboo in a different light.

Since Simón Vélez opened the world’s eyes to bamboo, we have come to realise what a fascinating and promising material it really is. Vélez’ book, *Grow Your Own House*, illustrates this in countless ways. For instance, it teaches us that bamboo is the fastest growing plant species in the world – within a year a bamboo stalk can reach a length of fifteen metres. After four years, it has matured and is at its strongest. This rapid replacement time means that the material is exceptionally sustainable and feasible. In fact, it is estimated that each year eight million kilometres of bamboo stalks are harvested globally, which is enough bamboo to encircle the earth some two hundred times. This rhizomatic crop, in numerous species and variations, can be found in Africa, Asia and Latin America where its benefits as a construction material have far-reaching economic and environmental implications.

After four to six years bamboo can be deployed in different building methods. The stalks can be used not only for building housing, retail outlets, commercial offices, bridges and similar structures, but also as a covering, where the stalk can be either used in its entirety or processed into matting or laminate. What sets bamboo apart from other materials, such as wood and concrete, is its lightness, flexibility and elasticity; the hollow tubes are automatically suited to domed constructions. Furthering this potential through research and experiment, Vélez has invented a method to increase bamboo’s natural versatility by reinforcing the stalks with concrete containing metal joints. His system enables the creation of larger and stronger constructions, and has contributed to the fact that prejudices concerning bamboo’s limitations are now rapidly evaporating. When permission to build his design for the ZERI pavilion was denied – because there were no German building codes for bamboo – Vélez decided to construct a double of the building in Manizales as a testing structure and to subject it to all the resistance tests used in Europe for concrete or steel structures. The pavilion not only withstood the tests but supported double the weight it was supposed to resist if done in steel, incontrovertibly demonstrating the suitability of bamboo as a modern construction material. A renewable source with a low carbon footprint, bamboo is not only infinitely cheaper than concrete or steel

but also employs an important number of workers for its execution, thus being socially as well as environmentally sustainable.

Apart from a number of prominent projects that have drawn the world’s attention to bamboo’s aesthetic and ethical potential, Vélez has completed hundreds of constructions that have rarely if ever been documented. He seldom uses formal architectural plans, preferring rather to make simple sketches on graph paper and let his highly trained workers, with whom he has collaborated for more than 25 years, interpret them into building forms. In this sense, Vélez is closer to popular (that is, self-built) architecture and a great deal of his work remains virtually anonymous. Simón Vélez has dedicated his profession and life to socio-economic, climatic and cultural contexts in such a unique way that it is tremendous news that this award should now recognise and pay tribute to him. His work is an inspirational model for sustainable and culturally rooted architecture.

Translation from Dutch by Annie Wright

Ten Prince Claus Awards 2009

Gastón Acurio

Peru

Gastón Acurio (b. 1967, Lima) is a master chef whose passion and innovation have elevated Peruvian cuisine, making it an exciting expression of the rich local culture. Abandoning legal studies, Acurio graduated in European cookery and returned to Lima where, in partnership with his wife, he opened the first Astrid y Gastón restaurant. He experimented with the local cuisine, which has 12 distinct regional variations and numerous immigrant influences, researched local foods and encouraged farmers to reintroduce varieties that had begun to disappear. Reinventing and adapting traditions, he creates delicious food that celebrates the history of Peru's cultural development and the nutritional diversity of its natural resources.

Acurio has set up a range of eating places based on different Peruvian specialities including fish restaurants, informal snack bars, popular market-style delis and tropical juice bars. Ensuring high quality food and service, he has successfully established restaurants across Peru, in major Latin American cities, Europe and the USA. Acurio spreads his ideas through a popular television series and books such as *Peru: A Culinary Adventure*, which highlights the wide range of natural ingredients and styles. His Instituto de Cocina Pachacutec combines cooking classes with lessons on democracy and provides opportunities for disadvantaged students. He is now a role model for Peru's young generations, with positive influence and direct impact on social and economic development.

Gastón Acurio is honoured for his significant contribution to culinary arts, for raising the profile of Peruvian cuisine and introducing its unique delights to the world, for fostering local development through creating pride in Peruvian culture and identity, and for highlighting the essential relationship between nature's biodiversity and cultural diversity.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Jury Report





The Chef's Dream

by Mario Vargas Llosa

In a Lima home, in the early 1970s, a young boy used to go into the kitchen to escape his four older sisters and their suitors. The cook was fond of him, so she let him look on, and lend a hand, as she prepared the stews. When his mother discovered that her only son – the young Gastón, named after his father – had learnt to cook and was spending his allowance on foods to experiment with, she encouraged him, and the boy continued to spend time in the kitchen while he completed school and began law studies at the Catholic University. Both hid this precocious passion from his father, an engineer and politician, lest the pater familias found it strange and unmanly.

In 1987, Gastón Acurio left for Spain to continue his law studies. He achieved high marks but forgot about the law immediately after the exams. He devotedly read not legal treatises but cookery books. One day, he realised he could no longer pretend and told his father that not only did he not enjoy law, but that he dreamt of becoming a cook! Gastón Acurio, the elder, was astonished. In those days in Peru, cooking could be a hobby, but certainly not a profession for a young man of the upper classes. Nevertheless, he accepted his son's vocation and enabled him to complete his training at Le Cordon Bleu in Paris. There Gastón met and married Astrid, who had also abandoned her university studies to dedicate herself to cooking. After they completed their studies and trained for a time in European restaurants, they settled in Peru and opened their first restaurant, *Astrid y Gastón*, in 1994. Fifteen years later, *Astrid y Gastón* restaurants showcase exquisite versions of Peruvian cuisine, not only in Lima, but also in Buenos Aires, Santiago, Quito, Bogotá, Caracas, Panama City, Mexico City and Madrid.

At these restaurants, traditional Peruvian cuisine is the starting point but not the finish line: it has been refined and enriched with personal touches that make it more subtle and better suited to the demands of modern life, to current circumstances and opportunities, without betraying its origins but also without relinquishing invention and renewal. Another variant of Acurio's gastronomic genius is *La Mar*, a less sophisticated, more informal restaurant, closer to the genuine flavours of day-to-day cooking, which, after triumphing in Peru, now exists in seven foreign countries. And other chains have emerged in recent years, each with its own personality, each of which develops a branch or speciality of the bountiful collection of Peruvian dishes: *Tanta*, *Panchita*, *Pasquale Hermanos*, the Peruvian juice bar *La Pepa* and *Chicha*, in cities of the country's interior endowed with their own regional cuisine, which these restaurants strive to dignify and disseminate.

Gastón Acurio's talent as a businessman and promoter matches that he displays in front of pots and pits. His achievement is both social and cultural. He has done more than anyone else to allow the world to begin to discover that Peru – a country with so many needs and limitations – enjoys one of the most varied, inventive and refined cuisines in the world, which can confidently compete with the most renowned gastronomic traditions, such as that of the Chinese and the French. (How did this phenomenon occur? I believe it resulted from the long authoritarian tradition in Peru: cooking was one of the few everyday activities in which Peruvians could express their creativity and freedom without risk.)

Today, largely because of Acurio, young Peruvians of both sexes dream about becoming chefs. To be a chef has become prestigious, an accepted profession, and despite the crisis, new restaurants and culinary schools and institutes proliferate. Gastronomic tours of Peru are organised nowadays, and I suspect that the shrimp chowder, pachamancas, ají de gallina, picarones and suspiro a la limeña attract as many tourists as the pre-Hispanic palaces of Cusco and the stones of Machu Picchu. Chefs and food critics from all over visit Acurio's home-laboratory in Barranco, where he explores, researches, fantasises and discusses new projects with his collaborators.

Thanks to Acurio, Peruvians have learnt to fully appreciate the gastronomic wealth of their homeland. For five years now, his television programme "Aventura Culinaria" ("Culinary Adventure"), during which he visits different restaurants to highlight the original and the diverse on the menus, has been divulging the incredible recipes, variations and creations of Peruvian cuisine. The programme has served, among other things, to demonstrate that Peru has other chefs as inspired as Acurio. That generosity and open-mindedness is not often found among business people, in Peru or anywhere else.

Acurio is modest, pragmatic, immune to pessimism and, since he so enjoys what he does, it is stimulating to listen to him talk about his projects and dreams. His feverish enthusiasm is contagious. If there were a hundred business people and creators like Gastón Acurio, Peru would have left underdevelopment behind a long time ago. He is indeed a worthy recipient of an award from the Prince Claus Fund for culture and development.

* Pachamanca: an Andean dish of different meats and vegetables made in a pit lined with hot stones and fragrant leaves

Ají de gallina: a spicy chicken dish made with chilies and nuts

Picarones: sweet potato doughnuts in a treacle syrup

Suspiro a la limeña: the name of this caramel meringue parfait literally means 'sigh of a Lima woman'

Edited from an article published in *El País* (Spain) on 22 March 2009

Translated from Spanish by Kristin Cueto

El Anatsui Nigeria / Ghana

Highly original sculptor, El Anatsui (b. 1944, Anyako, Ghana) is a beacon in contemporary African art. Graduating from Kumasi University of Science and Technology with art and art education degrees that focused on European traditions, he turned his attention to African aesthetics. Researching and experimenting with local symbolic vocabularies, forms, artisanal processes and materials, he has developed an open eclectic approach. Using an unusual range of natural materials and processed items, Anatsui's artworks interrogate issues through the layers of meaning embodied in their substance and form. *Erosion* (1992), a 3-metre column of indigenous wood attacked by chainsaw cuts and handmade markings stands in a pile of wood chips and shavings. *Fresh and Fading Memories* transforms discarded liquor-bottle tops into a 9-by-6-metre cascade of shimmering fluidity. Designed to drape over a palace façade at the 2007 Venice Biennale, it refers to classical African textiles and Venetian culture, and raises issues of slavery, colonisation, wealth, waste, decay, spiritual libation and healing. Subverting notions about metal, the artwork is contingent and can be hung or folded in multiple ways. Anatsui's work challenges many established notions and celebrates the spirit of renewal and reinvention in African cultures.

Professor of Sculpture and Head of Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Anatsui is a staunch defender of artistic freedom and promoter of art's role in local development. A generous mentor and an inspiring teacher, his lifelong dedication to intellectual exploration of political and environmental issues has influenced local social and cultural development not only through his artwork but also through his influence on generations of young artists.

El Anatsui is honoured for the outstanding aesthetic and intellectual qualities of his creations, for his innovative use of materials to highlight the dialogue between culture and nature, and for his dedicated and inspirational role in the development of the visual arts in Africa.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee Report





Master Sculptor

by Chika Okeke-Agulu

El Anatsui has in the past few years become one of the most critically acclaimed sculptors working in the global contemporary art scene. And the Prince Claus Award acknowledges not just his recent successes but also the sustained, crucial work he has done as an artist, mentor and teacher for the past 40 years. The Award is an important honour to an artist who has contributed immensely to the recognition of contemporary African artists in the global arena. It is also a worthy recognition of the originality of Anatsui's artistic vision, his long-term commitment to formal innovation, and his assertion through his work of the place of Africa's artistic and cultural traditions in international contemporary art.

A graduate of the sculpture programme of the acclaimed Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Anatsui's career direction was determined not so much by the still neo-colonial 1960s curriculum of the art school as by his identification with the progressive cultural politics championed by Ghanaian and African cultural nationalists of the independence era.

Specifically, during the presidency of Kwame Nkrumah, the foremost advocate of African self-determination and proponent of Pan-Africanism and African Personality, *Sankofa* (an Akan term for 'go back and pick') became the paradigm of post-colonial Ghanaian cultural nationalism. *Sankofa*, illustrated by the *adinkra* symbol depicting a bird swallowing its own egg, suggested the relevance of African cultural traditions for the continent's present and future, and thus became the ideological ground on which Anatsui built his artistic career.

Anatsui's earliest post-*Sankofa* work consisted of round wood reliefs inspired by trays used by Kumasi traders for displaying their wares. On these trays he carved *adinkra* motifs and other designs and in the process was attracted to the dynamic relationship between the rich symbolism and graphic power of *adinkra* signs. Once aware of this possibility of simultaneous evocation of significant form and idea in *adinkra*, Anatsui, who in 1975 joined the faculty of the Fine and Applied Arts Department at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, expanded his field of artistic resources to other West African design and sign systems and syllabaries, including Igbo *uli*, Efik *nsibidi*, and Bamun and Vai scripts. In time, he became a leading member of the famed Nsukka School presented at the important art exhibition at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art in 1997. Today, Anatsui remains committed to the development of new artistic forms from African sources as well as from materials available in his local environment.

A survey of Anatsui's oeuvre clearly shows a systematic determination to use readily available material to develop work that is as formally sophisticated as it

is conceptual multi-layered. For instance, in the late 1970s, at the end of Africa's post-colonial utopia, he produced a series of terracotta sculptures which he called *Broken Pots*. Although inspired by pottery traditions of the Ewe peoples of Ghana and Togo, the 'pots' were presented as entropic forms rather than as utilitarian vessels and derived their conceptual charge from the recyclability of pottery clay. The fact that broken pots could serve as grog for new vessels extended the ideological essence of the *Sankofa* movement of post-independence Ghana. But also the broken pot symbolised post-colonial Africa, which despite its contemporary dire circumstances, had internal potential for rejuvenation.

This highly original and rigorous approach to image making is evident in Anatsui's compound wood panels carved with power tools and oxyacetylene torch, and in a series of recent monumental structures constructed, respectively, from locally manufactured liquor bottle tops, aluminum plates used for printing obituary announcements, and rusted steel graters used for processing *garri*, a West African staple food. In addition to their astonishing visual splendour, these metal works simultaneously evoke Africa's rich artistic traditions, the ravages of slavery and colonialism, the trials of the post-colonial condition, and the complicated modalities of political and cultural globalisation. Anatsui's works have won the Bronze Prize, Osaka Triennial (1998), Kansai Telecasting Prize, Osaka Triennial (1995) and Honourable Mention at the 44th Venice Biennale (1990), and are in the permanent collections of many major museums including the British Museum (London), the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art (Washington DC), Centre Pompidou (Paris), De Young Museum (San Francisco), Museum Kunst Palast (Dusseldorf), Setagaya Musuem (Tokyo), National Gallery of Contemporary Art (Lagos), the Asele Institute (Nimo, Nigeria) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York).

It is impossible to overstate the significance of Anatsui's work as a teacher and artist. He was instrumental to the founding in 1986 of the Aka Circle of Exhibiting Artists, which arguably was the most important artists' group in late 20th-century Nigeria. In the difficult years of military dictatorship and structural adjustment, the group sustained a high profile and critically acclaimed programme of annual exhibitions of its members' work in Lagos and Enugu. Also noteworthy is Anatsui's mentorship of young graduates of Nsukka, many of whom have since become successful international artists and scholars. In an era when many African artists and intellectuals were forced to emigrate to the west in the face of tremendous political and socio-economic circumstances, Anatsui's decision to remain at Nsukka testifies to his commitment to the sustenance of Nsukka's celebrated art programme despite the odds; it also affirms the deep connection between his creative enterprise and the African environment.

In El Anatsui, the Prince Claus Award has found a most deserving recipient.

Sammy Baloji DR Congo

Sammy Baloji (b. 1978, Lubumbashi) is a prodigiously talented young photographer whose work shines a powerful spotlight on contemporary Congolese reality. Having studied literature and human sciences at Lubumbashi University, he was drawn to photography and video as expressive mediums for representing the environment of Katanga, a locus for colonial and post-colonial exploitation of its wealth of minerals essential for Western technologies. Baloji's remarkable series entitled *Memory* (2006) is a sequence of collaged images combining subtle coloured panoramas of today's landscape – a wasteland of industrial ruins and vast slag heaps – with black-and-white archival images of the Congolese workers whose labour produced such great wealth for the colonial powers. These moving depictions of environmental destruction and human suffering – the first major photographic works to emerge from Katanga Province – won an award at the 2007 Bamako Photographic Biennale and are being exhibited internationally. Infused with provocative attention to detail and a depth of intellectual content, Baloji's work interrogates abuse of power and its legacy, revealing the devastating impact that exploitative cultures have on both society and the environment. It calls for greater awareness of the local consequences of 'development' and highlights the rights of local people. In collaboration with Africa's young choreographers, Baloji creates videos that investigate the body, and, despite restrictions on photographing public sites, he produces images of the Congo's urban architecture. His work is raising social consciousness and stimulating artistic development in the Katanga region.

Sammy Baloji is awarded for his highly original inscription of the painful history of human and environmental exploitation into the present-day landscape, for bringing Congo's current realities to an international platform, for his important contribution to the memory of the Congo providing a new reading of the present, and for his challenging demonstration that development can only be realised after duly taking into account the traumas of the past.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee Report





History, Art and Re-Interpretations

by Robert Pledge

Looking today at Sammy Baloji's works I vividly recall two lessons I learned long ago in Dakar: in Africa nothing is ever bi-dimensional and flat, nor devoid of deeper meaning, and individual artists have an immense impact on our comprehension of the world.

On that day in April 1966 in Dakar, I was part of the small group of journalists attending the inaugural exhibition at the newly built Musée Dynamique devoted to African art. The event was an important moment within an even more historic occasion – the First International Festival of Negro Arts – that brought to Senegal's capital leading figures in the fields of art, literature, music, theatre and dance from throughout the continent and Africa's worldwide diaspora.

In the presence of Leopold Sédar Senghor, the poet-philosopher President of the host country, and an array of distinguished scholars, intellectuals and artists, André Malraux, the author of *The Human Condition* and the French Minister of Culture of the time, explained with halting passion the deep significance of African art for Pablo Picasso and his revolutionary *Demoiselles d'Avignon*.

The Spanish painter and sculptor's mind had been turned inside out, both aesthetically and intellectually, by the angular bulging structures of the African masks that his fellow artist and friend Maurice de Vlaminck had acquired and shown him in Paris. Picasso's encounters with the masks allowed him to solve the nagging issue of expressing tri-dimensionality on a bi-dimensional surface: hence the subsequent portrayal of his subjects at once in profile and frontally. Gone was the prevailing sacrosanct western concept of perspective and the vanishing point. It was a turning point in the history of modern art, a radical breakthrough, the 'destruction' of the western art we had known over many centuries. This thunderous revelation opened the way to cubism and constructivism and numerous other aesthetic and related cultural developments.

At the time I was fully taken by Malraux's thoughtful remarks on the tremendous importance of African art and its profound spirituality. I suddenly understood that not only could a single masterwork – in this case, the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* – generate a groundbreaking departure from the past, but also that the essential contributions of extraordinary African artists that had fundamentally reshaped the world of art would remain, unjustly, forever anonymous. As a result, in part, of the dedication of institutions such as the Prince Claus Fund, the world is gradually becoming more aware of the infinite

richness of non-western cultures but their influence on contemporary developments is still too often unacknowledged.

Multi-dimensional in form as well as content, Baloji's work brings much to the table. This talented artist, born in Katanga in 1978 – the year of the bloody confrontation in Kolwezi when the French Foreign Legion intervened with massive force – graduated from the University of Lubumbashi in literature and human sciences. Yet it is to photography and film that Baloji is drawn. The weight of recorded fact in photographic images, whether taken in the past or in the present, enable him to better develop his acute and profound sense of the daunting history of his native province and the shameful legacy of colonisation and exploitation of the Congo that began in the late 19th century under the auspices of King Leopold II of Belgium. The initial so-called Congo Free State, that would much later become Zaire under the rule of the despot Mobutu Sésé Seko, was ruthlessly carved out of the heart of Africa by the European powers for the sole purpose of exploiting its rubber, its copper and its wealth of other minerals.

Memory, completed in 2006, is a sequence of powerfully evocative colour panoramic diptychs and triptychs of decaying and rusting mining landscapes over which Baloji has imposed cut-out figures from old black-and-white photographs taken from the archives of the colonial mining companies. His seamlessly stitched collages produce haunting depictions of environmental destruction and endless human pain reminiscent of slavery, hard-labour camps for prisoners or the extermination camps of the Nazis during World War II. The carefully and remarkably thought-out form given to each piece carries layers of historical and cultural references that reinforce the multi-faceted dimensionality of the work. Baloji is reclaiming history and, through artful storytelling, raising social consciousness. Although his moving images are about power and its legacy in Katanga Province, they also concern Africa at large, and indeed many other societies and environments that are threatened by reckless exploitation.

Art and history. Art at the service of history for a better reading and understanding of today's realities in Africa. Sammy Baloji's achievements in this regard are now highly acclaimed and recognised on the continent, as indicated by the two major awards he received at the 2007 Photography Biennale in Bamako, Mali, where his work was on display. More recently, with his still cameras he has been observing, in black-and-white, the ever-changing landscapes of his country's schizophrenic urban architecture, influenced perhaps by the work of Santu Mofokeng, the great South African photographer. Simultaneously, with video, Baloji investigates the body, in colour, also working closely in a collaborative way with young choreographers from around the continent.

With the spectrum of his visual explorations reflecting a wide and diverse range of artistic abilities and talents, Sammy Baloji holds the promise of becoming one of the most accomplished visual griots of our times.

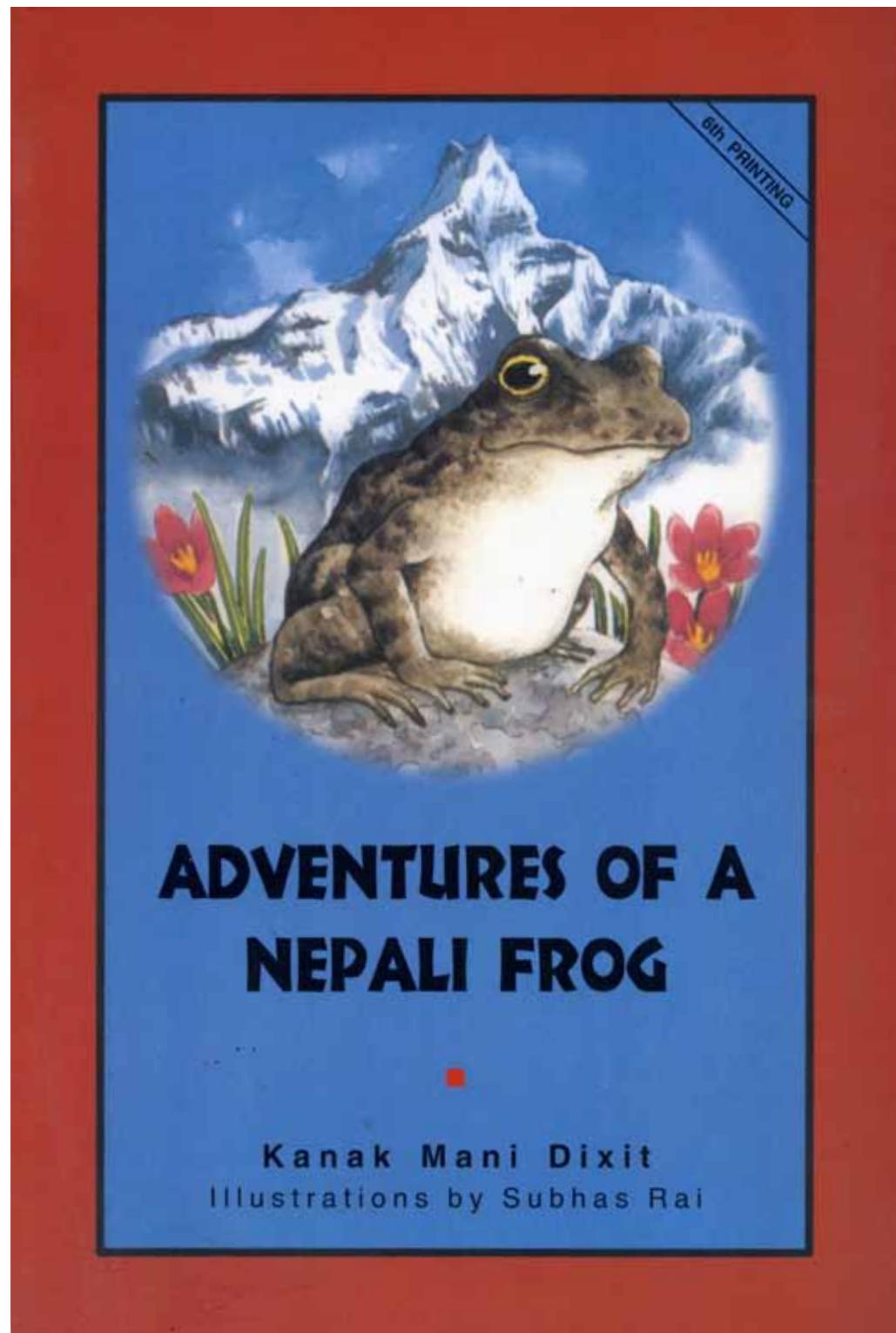
Kanak Mani Dixit Nepal

Writer and activist, Kanak Mani Dixit (b. 1956, Lalitpur) is a catalyst for cultural development that transcends national boundaries in South Asia. Educated in Nepal, India and the USA, he is the founding editor (1987 to the present) of *Himal Southasian*, a high quality, independent, monthly journal that offers informed critical commentary on social and cultural issues. With contributors, editorial board and subscribers – intellectuals, activists, lay readers and artists – drawn from Afghanistan, India and Burma to Tibet, Pakistan and the Maldives, it is a unique regional forum for the promotion of open, analytical thought and discussion.

Alongside the journal, Dixit plays an influential role in a wide variety of cultural disciplines. He founded the Film South Asia (FSA), a documentary festival, which has become an important platform for local creativity, stimulating innovative local filmmaking on topics such as gender, child labour and water scarcity. FSA is a major cultural event in Kathmandu, travels to other places in the country and has introduced Nepalese filmmakers to the regional and international circuits. Dixit also organises public lecture series and conferences involving regional and international speakers – most recently a Cartoon Congress incorporating a South Asian cartoon competition. He promotes research, writes children's books and co-owns a publishing house that disseminates books and translations of great value to Nepali society. He was one of the co-founders of the post-2005 Civil Society Platform, plays a key role in the pro-democracy campaign, challenges repression and promotes freedom of expression.

This first Prince Claus Award to Nepal honours Kanak Mani Dixit for his outstanding contributions to public debate, for creating platforms that enable South Asians to connect, interact and network transcending national and cultural boundaries, and for his socially engaged, multi-disciplinary approach to creativity and development.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee Report

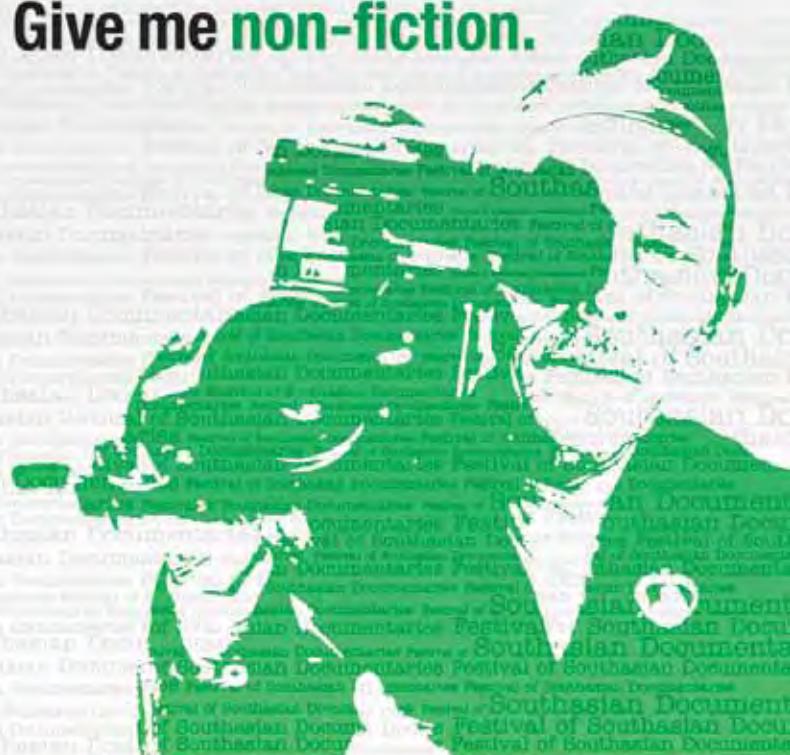


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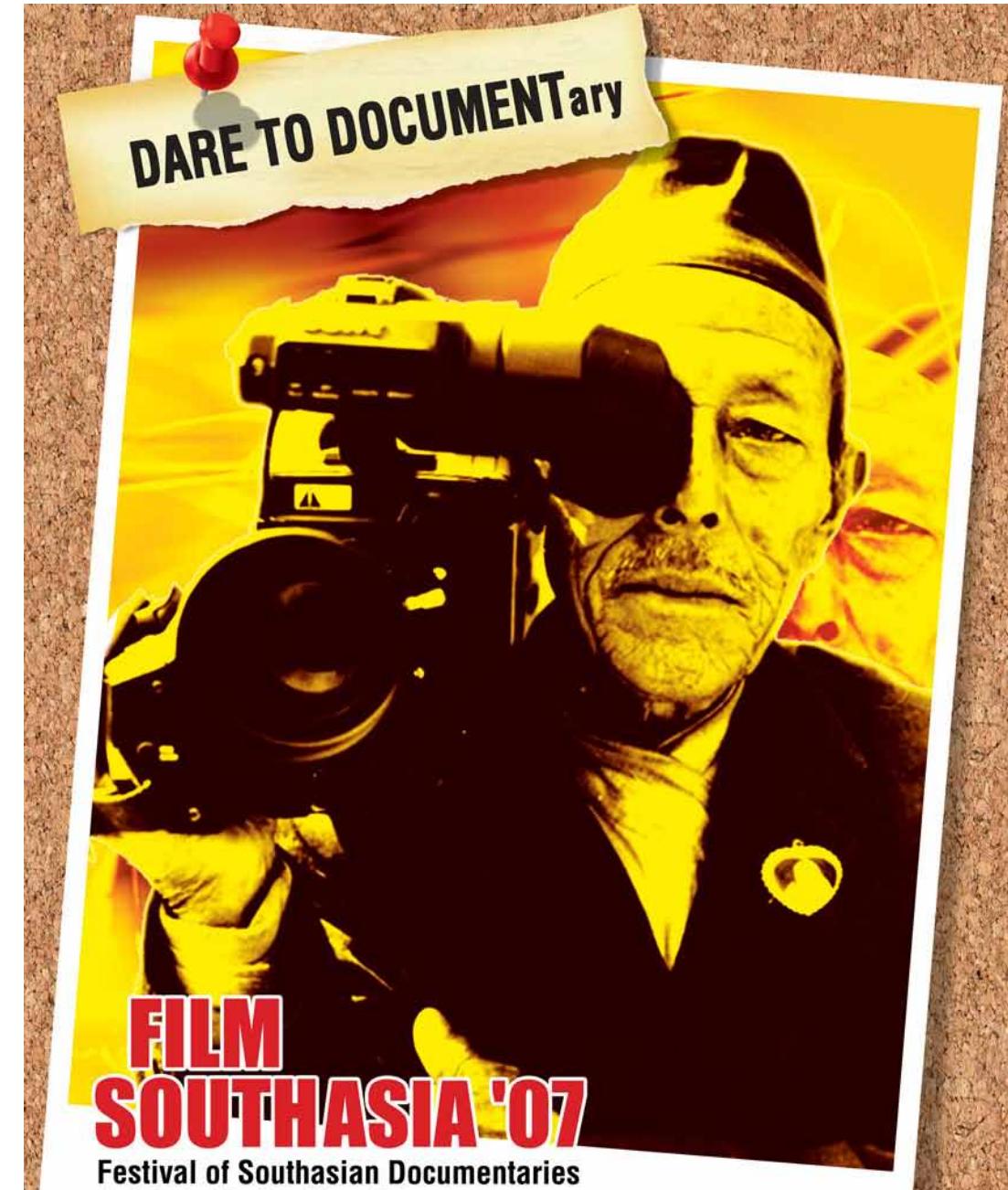
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DARE TO DOCUMENTARY

FILM SOUTHASIA '07

Festival of Southasian Documentaries

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Activist for a Brave New Region

by Afsan Chowdhury

There are many people who dream but few can turn dreams into action. Kanak Mani Dixit is one of those very few whose dreams are endless and whose actualisations are many – a man whose actions have impacted far beyond his own native land and influenced the way many think about South Asia, its people and their historical purpose.

Kanak's core background is journalism, and his success in this chosen field is above question. Steering the *Himal* publications, he has set editing and publishing standards for entire South Asia, in content planning, editing perspectives, and magazine design and graphics as well. Kanak has demonstrated that South Asian focal points don't have to be located in the big countries of the region but can be anywhere that an idea is alive and can be nurtured. In doing so, he has also showcased what Nepal can do and made it look shinier than ever before.

In Nepal Kanak Dixit is known for the many activities that he pursues that express his multiplicity of interests and spirit of excellence. It's this track record of success in so many diverse fields that makes him so special. He manages a string of media outfits with the same interest and love that he runs his restaurant. His Film South Asia is now an international event. It has given South Asia a global profile and has made people from all over not only enjoy but celebrate documentaries as an evolving form of information art. And Kanak Dixit gave birth to this institution with almost no resources save his energy, imagination and organising skill.

People often speak about his zest for living – he seems to be having fun in an unthrown but never ending party called life. That is true, but he has also taken the stones on his back and has the lumps to prove it. For decades he has been one of the leading human rights activists of Nepal and, during the uprising against the Nepalese monarchy, his non-violent protest landed him in jail several times, while his criticism of extremist violence made him a target of the Maoists as well. Kanak Dixit brings to the socio-political space the objective of supporting civil liberty and justice against all odds and in all conditions. His willingness to follow the unpopular path often draws criticism but ultimately vindicates the legitimacy of legality, constitutionality and rule of law in public life in any society. In a region where it's almost taken for granted that such values are 'politically unaffordable', he has battled for them ceaselessly.

His interest in increasing the horizons of civil society activities has gone on and on. Kanak has invested time and resources to revive ancient forms of painting, resurrected horse stables to turn them into lecture halls, preserved

archival documents, organised international seminars and events, and introduced Nepal to the rest of the world like few have before him. And there are so many more actions and achievements in that list. Kanak Dixit has even fallen off the mountain but instead of killing him, it motivated him to devote his energy to setting up the spinal treatment centre in Kathmandu that serves hundreds who suffer from injuries like he once did.

All these parts can't sum up the total person that Kanak Dixit is or will be as he walks into his future. He is a sum of many entrepreneurs and individuals, visionaries and activists, organisers and connoisseurs, ensuring that the past and present of Nepal is accessible to all and cherished by all.

But Kanak Dixit's outstanding achievement may be in his just and humane vision of a regional identity that doesn't ignore the political states that make up South Asia. It focuses on the socio-cultural identity that holds more than a billion people together. This has been asserted most actively in his writings, lectures, media products and events promoting South Asia. By creating a space where writers and intellectuals from the region and elsewhere can meet on the common pages of a common vision, he has shown everyone a glimpse of a brave new region, where every citizen enjoys the respect of others and a sense of dignity. That is his greatest triumph.

Kanak Dixit's most famous literary creation is a frog called Bhaktaprasad Bhyaguto, who traveled all over Nepal and learnt about his homeland in an enchanting and entertaining manner. In a way Kanak Dixit is the wise frog of Nepal, who has set out to bring not just Nepal to the Nepalese but South Asia to the South Asians. There can be no nobler venture than this and few can carry out this difficult but wonderful task better than the person honoured today with this Prince Claus Award.

Doual'art Cameroon

Founded in 1991, Doual'art is an independent, non-profit organisation that has revolutionised the art scene in Cameroon. Under the leadership of Marilyn Douala Bell and Didier Schaub, *Espace Doual'art* presents high quality exhibitions, artists' talks, debates and conferences. Its workshops and residency programmes attract artists from across the region and abroad, providing opportunity to research, experiment and develop, as well as introductions to international curators. It is a key locus for regional diversity and an information hub for contemporary art in Central Africa.

Doual'art organises inspirational urban interventions, which make art an active part of daily life and directly enhance social development. These include: a pedestrian bridge designed by a local artist to symbolise community solidarity, connecting an isolated poor area to a larger district; the installation of Joseph Sumogné's monumental sculpture *La Nouvelle Liberté* at a major crossroads, stimulating heated public debate about what is now the much-loved, unofficial symbol of the city; an architect-designed fountain with a covered seating area, now a popular gathering place and source of community pride; installing 'arches of memory' that explain little-known or hidden aspects of local history at specific sites, which have become a living 'textbook' for citizens. Doual'art works closely with each relevant community as well as architects, planners, engineers and other urban actors to draw up a project based on local resources and community needs. The organisation's ongoing research on art and urban development is collected in an invaluable database and made accessible to the public.

This first Prince Claus Award to Cameroon honours Doual'art for its clearly articulated vision encompassing aesthetic quality and social engagement, for its innovative efforts to raise awareness of citizens' role in imagining and constructing their city, and for its inspirational impact on the visual arts and on social and cultural development in Central Africa.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee Report





Multipliers of Creative Urban Engagement

by AbdouMaliq Simone

Over the past decades there has been much commentary on the need for institutions whose ways of operating are consonant with the aspirations and practices of the people they engage. This has been particularly the case for African cities where the residual infrastructures of colonial rule combined with the exigencies of demonstrating nationhood to largely circumvent the heterogeneity of ways of living in cities that had emerged from residents themselves. The institutions that were to represent their social aspirations and service their livelihoods demonstrated little rapport with the mechanisms of everyday collaboration and reciprocity that had sustained African urban populations. Detached from real accountability to the people, such institutions – their authority, resources and reach – acted arbitrarily on behalf of the powerful, further extending impediments for which residents had to compensate.

The endurance of Doual'art through many adverse conditions over the years demonstrates that urban institutions that take to heart the commitment of residents to do more than survive in cities – to make viable individual and collective lives – can create the conditions that enable them to grow with their constituents. This is a matter not only of pursuing original missions and tending to the survival of organisations, but of facilitating the capacities of an institution to address the difficult ups and downs, ambitions and resistances, hopes and fears, openings and closings through which urban localities materialise transformation. Such institutions know how to work with varying degrees of visibility, when to push and when to lie low, when to call attention to themselves and when to deflect attention, when to take the lead and when to let things happen as if without anyone's control. They know when professed agendas need to be retracted; they know how to use their vulnerabilities and how to opportunistically identify and manipulate the vulnerabilities of others; they know when to stick to the things they know and do well and when to venture out, take risks, so as to acquire new abilities.

Doual'art exudes such institutional intelligence. Full of ambitions, creativity and daring, it nevertheless put in years of painstaking work to build connections with some of Douala's most complicated neighbourhoods. What on the surface looked to be a series of simple tasks to reorganise the built environment entailed years of arduous negotiations and re-alignment. By immersing itself in the specificities of local relational power and using the plasticity of the arts as a

means of multiplying the forms of possible engagement, Doual'art has acquired knowledge of urban change that few institutions have in Africa. Douala is in many ways a rambunctious and economically dynamic city, full of entrepreneurial initiative. But it is also a city marked by a paucity of civic organisations and replete with social possibility. Doual'art has had to straddle these divergent tendencies.

In the district of Bessengué Akwa, Doual'art facilitated a community radio project, a community arts and murals programme, the development of a youth cultural centre, and a settlement upgrading project. While such projects have been implemented in many neighbourhoods in the world, this district had the reputation of being unapproachable – a place replete with criminality and precarious social relations. No institutions in Douala wanted to engage it, let alone acknowledge its presence. Doual'art used this intensively visible invisibility as a framework for almost a decade of work. It assembled youth from three districts of markedly divergent histories and social compositions, and facilitated collaborations that enabled participants to acquire detailed knowledge about each other's districts and thus a greater sense of municipal identity.

La Nouvelle Liberté by Joseph Francis Sumagné – a sculpture of assembled materials gathered from across the city – is an ongoing testament to resourcefulness and courage. Doual'art took enormous risks to bring this project to fruition in the face of many blockages and threats posed by the urban elite. Situated at one of the city's major junctions, it is a constant reminder of how the city embodies heterogeneous aspirations and abilities, and how the city persists as a resilient reworking of relations between different life practices and imaginaries.

Institutions have to build on their work, take it into new areas, in order to sustain the proficiencies they have already demonstrated. These transitions are not easy, and too often institutions smooth over these periods through more widely publicising what has been accomplished, as a way of solidifying their positions in international networks of affiliation and support. When this takes place, actors from the outside make their own demands, and institutions have to delicately balance the need to accommodate the expectations of external actors and the need to diversify and build on their local work. After years of operating with little international recognition, Doual'art is now widely known and valued. The Prince Claus Award is evidence of this, and Doual'art deserves this recognition. The creativity of Doual'art remains in the particular ways it has embodied the heterogeneous aspirations and practices of many different kinds of residents and neighbourhoods in Douala. It is my hope that this award may provide the supplement of security that will enable Doual'art to reinforce its commitment to Douala's residents and to extend its work into new domains.

Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica Nicaragua

The Institute for the History of Nicaragua and Central America (IHNCA) is renowned for its rigorous research and activities dedicated to providing communities with access to their own patrimony. Its resources include more than 50,000 books, extensive holdings of newspapers, maps, films, paintings, photographs, oral recordings, news-agency videos and collections of artefacts such as masks. Central to its activities is a long-term programme to recover the memory of Nicaragua's diverse indigenous groups, affirming their past and providing insight into current issues. Led by dedicated Director Margarita Vannini, a team of professional staff carry out field research, make oral recordings, and rescue and conserve fragile documents. One example of the impact of their work on local development is the recent restoration and publication of royal land titles that enabled the indigenous communities of Subtiava and Jinotega to legally establish ownership of their land.

IHNCA contributes to regional development through many diverse activities. Staff members teach at the Universidad Centroamericana and publish popular textbooks, scholarly monographs, CD-ROMs and highly respected journals. IHNCA's photographic exhibitions include *Processes of Peace and Disarmament* and *Portraits of the Nicaraguan Caribbean*. The latter, reflecting the rich diversity of costeño identity, travelled to Guatemala, the Dominican Republic and Spain. Another successful project was the public countrywide screening of 60 Nicaraguan videos and movies from the 1980s, an initiative proposed by a group of film producers of various nationalities. IHNCA's Cultural Train, a mobile museum housed in three large trucks fitted with interactive technology, stimulates youth participation through debates and highlights the importance of literacy for individual and national development.

This first Prince Claus Award to Nicaragua honours IHNCA for its committed recuperation of local memory and history, for its engaged research that draws on the past to find solutions to present issues, and for strengthening links between Nicaraguans' cultural identity and development.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee Report



EXTRA
NICARAGUENSE

PRESIDENT WALKER

DECRES SLAVERY

Nicaraguans Rejoice!



A Miracle to be Remembered

by Sergio Ramírez

When the National Literacy Crusade began in 1980, over 70,000 young people spent several months in rural Nicaragua. Many of them were sent to the country's most isolated and cut-off districts and lived in the very homes of the peasants whom they would teach to read and write. A revolution had triumphed, and this initiative – to create minimum equal opportunity conditions in a country where over 60% of the population did not know how to read or write – revealed its humanistic side.

Apart from their highly successful literacy work, the young men and women had other work to carry out. One of their tasks was to collect oral accounts from the peasants about their ways of life, cultural traditions, the histories of their communities, folklore legends and local archaeological wealth. This was the task of the Germán Pomares Rescue Brigade, named after one of the guerrilla leaders in the fight for freedom that led to the toppling of the Somoza dictatorship in 1979. The Brigade was divided into different groups, each armed with a tape recorder, and they collected a priceless treasure contained on the hundreds of cassettes that represent their work.

In a country such as Nicaragua, which does not have the appropriate infrastructure to preserve such materials, the most natural thing would have been for this carefully collected testimony to have been lost. It would not have been the first cultural initiative to fail due to lack of facilities. But that was not the case here. The cassettes are duly preserved and classified in the archives of the Institute of History of Nicaragua and Central America (IHNCA), where they can be consulted by researchers. A type of miracle.

A poor and developing country is generally a country without memory because the organisation and support of institutions dedicated to preserving historical documents is seen as an unnecessary luxury, or is a matter outside the interests of the government in power, which usually focuses on immediate issues. Looking after the long-term memory needs to be the result of a State policy, but health, education and culture plans, and even those in the field of social and economic development, are always subject to difficulties over time in our countries. There is no long-term vision, and they are also subject to the conflicts between the different political groups. If such little importance is given to the future, who is going to be concerned about the past? The archives tend to languish in poorly equipped buildings, where they rot, or are eaten by moths, or are not even classified, which is the same as if they had never existed.

Therefore, an entity such as the Institute of History of Nicaragua and Central

America (IHNCA) is exceptionally important for Nicaragua. The IHNCA is the outcome of the merger of two institutions: the Library of the Central-American Historical Institute (BIHCA), founded by the Jesuits in Granada in 1934, and the Institute of Nicaraguan History (IHN), founded by the State in 1987, and moved to the Central American University (UCA) in 1990, at the end of the Revolution.

Not only does it hold the most important archives that document the history of Nicaragua from colonial times to the Sandinista Revolutions, and others that are related to the history of Central America, which in many ways has been a shared history, but it also has an outstanding team of researchers, with outstanding academic qualifications. The Institute also holds seminars and congresses, and offers academic courses, as well as organising history exhibitions and publishing a series of monographs.

Its collection consists of thousands of documents, many of which are digitalised. It keeps complete collections of newspapers and journals, which are also digitalised, and preserves the personal libraries of some of the country's key cultural and political figures. It also has large photographic archives, along with the recordings and scores of national musicians, and film and video collections about Nicaragua's most recent history, donated by foreign television correspondents. Others come from the State archives and cover the revolutionary period (1979–1990).

Apart from its work to preserve the historical heritage and its research, the IHNCA organises many community-orientated communication programmes. These activities are held outside its own installations, and one good example is the travelling photo exhibitions that it organises. The most important of them is the Cultural Literacy Train, an interactive, travelling museum that criss-crosses the country to teach young students and the general public about the role of the National Literacy Crusade in the history of Nicaragua and its educational significance. The museum features graphs, videos, photos and documents, along with original articles, which the literacy instructors used for their work. The Cultural Train, which is operated with the help of the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the Organisation of Ibero-American States (OEI), consists of three goods wagons, which are cleverly coupled together to be used as the museum exhibition area. It has, so far, been visited by over one hundred thousand visitors.

A miracle made possible thanks to ongoing hard work and despite few resources, and with the dedication of its team of researchers, headed for many years by Margarita Vannini. Yet, it is a miracle when all is said and done, and further proof that a poor country can also save its memory, without which the new generations cannot look towards the future. It is an institution that, with the necessary support, will continue to grow and consolidate its role as a magnificent example in the culture of Central America.

Translation from Spanish by Concorde Group

Liang Shaoji China

Conceptual artist Liang Shaoji (b. 1945, Shanghai) creates unique meditations on nature and human existence. Graduating in textile studies at the Zhejiang Art Academy, Liang felt limited by the grid of warp and weft. Drawn to raw silk, he began to breed silkworms – symbols of generosity and endurance in Chinese culture – and incorporates them in artworks by setting them to spin their thread around objects. In *Helmets* (*Nature Series no. 102*), a group of miners' hats, recalling labourers killed in accidents, are covered with a fine silk web which subdues the sense of pain and fear they contain. The video *Nature Series No. 25* records Liang sharing the silkworms' experience when they spin on metal shavings: his bare feet, moving slowly and only able to carry on to the end regardless of the pain. In *Candles* (*Nature Series no. 87*), silk threads surround pieces of bamboo filled with wax and placed in a line that evokes funerals and Buddhist practices. A complex meditation on giving, *Candles* refers to a 9th-century Chinese poem that likens the candle's last drop of wax to the silkworm's last bit of thread. Here, the generosity of the wax is supported by the bamboo, which symbolises integrity, in turn surrounded by a protective silk cloud. A video entitled *Cloud* contemplates time through reflections, similarities and contrasts of floating clouds and soft masses of raw silk.

Resisting the rampant commercialisation of modern Chinese art, Liang explores aspects of life and human qualities that influence social and cultural development. His works have been exhibited at the Venice (1999), Istanbul (1999) and Shanghai (2000, 2006) biennales.

Liang Shaoji is awarded for his evocative artworks that offer a meditative approach in which art becomes nature and nature becomes art, for his artistic integrity in working outside the mainstream, and for his insightful investigation of the ethics of the human condition and relationship with nature.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee Report





Towards a New Interface Between Art and Science

by Hou Hanru

Liang Shaoji is certainly one of the most unique, singular and even eccentric figures in the contemporary art scene in China. For the last three decades, he has been working with passion and obsession, and quasi-exclusively, with unusual partners – silkworms.

As we all know, China has seen its contemporary art scene boom in the most spectacular way, both nationally and internationally, becoming a major force in transforming the global art world since the turn of the millennium. The process has been extremely dynamic and even explosive, with many spotlights and noises. However, as a veteran of the scene, who started his career in the mid-1980s, Liang Shaoji has stayed in a remote town far from major urban centres like Shanghai and Hangzhou where the art worlds have been highly globalised and constantly agitating. He has preferred to focus on his deep relationship with his silkworms and, by extension, on the inseparable affinity between art and nature. He has chosen to plough his own private field – greened with bamboos, refreshed by morning dews, blued by clear skies, mystified by the game between lights and shadows on full-moon nights, and ultimately vivified by the slow and beautifully rhythmed movements of the small creatures that produce one of nature's most amazing materials – silk. Truly believing in the spiritual and material power of an intimate merging and exchange between the work of nature and the human imagination – in Liang's case, an imagination profoundly rooted in Chinese culture and view of the cosmos – and turning this into contemporary forms of creation and presentation, Liang Shaoji has endowed such a world with harmony, often considered as registered in the realm of the eternal, and rendered it freshly alive and firmly contemporary. In other words, his work is an enlightening reminder of something crucially significant in our lives, our relation with nature, something that has been too often overlooked and excluded in the dominant system's cult of a one-dimensional modernity.

At one of the most experimental art laboratories in China in the late 1980s, the Maryn Varbanov Studio for contemporary tapestry (Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts, now renamed China Academy of Fine Arts, Hangzhou), Liang Shaoji embraced highly experimental forms such as installation and performance as well as traditional materials like bamboo and wool in attempts to converge modernity and tradition. His work of this period referred to classical Chinese literature and philosophy such as Sun Tzu's *The Art of Wars* and the *Ijing (I-Ching)*. Soon, his focus began to shift to direct contacts between man and nature without the textual and metaphoric inter-media or cultural filters, and since the early 1990s, he has been continuously developing his unique "Nature Series". On the one hand, the "Nature Series" consistently and exhaustively explores the expressiveness of carefully selected 'primitive' elements of natural production – bamboo, silk and silkworms, water and cloud – and on the other hand, expands his artistic forms including sculpture, installation, performance and multimedia, and resorts to both Chinese and western philosophies, such as Zen Buddhism and Heideggerian existentialism. Pursuing an eventual harmony of co-existence in the

relationship between man and nature, Liang Shaoji has never limited his reflection or artistic practice to the realm of the traditional. He actively embraces modernity and contemporaneity – especially their emphases on change, ephemeral-ness and unpredictability as the essential qualities of nature – as a rupture with any static mode of existence. In his introduction to "Nature Series", Liang states that his exploration of "primitive elements" of nature allows him to take his work into a new space beyond the conventional sites of art production, where it functions as an interface between art and science, between biology and bio-sociology, between various forms of art expression and the cosmos itself.

For the last 20 years, far from being seduced by the spectacular urbanisation across China, Liang Shaoji has insisted on remaining as close as possible to nature. However, he has also refused to become a self-exiled, hermetic outsider of the technically and culturally mutating world. Instead, he embraces advanced technology to realise his artistic visions: he has been collaborating with scientists to produce silk fibres apt to generate all kinds of imaginative surfaces and structures. Different from conventional scientific experiments, Liang's work, through various forms of artistic process driven by imagination and poetry, has been turned into the very embodiment of the ontological significance of life. It is about the true meaning of living in the world: constant negotiations and struggles between life and death, between endurance and fate, between pleasure and pain... By extending the exploration of natural elements through merging them with human bodies, an important part of his performances and installations, Liang Shaoji has succeeded in providing us with the most radical experiences of the conditions of our existence in the contemporary world which is full of contradictions – the hegemony of the powerful, whether natural, human or social, always being challenged and defeated by the weaker and more fragile but ever-changing forces, just like life itself. And this is indeed what ecology really means.

Liang Shaoji claims his art, ultimately, aims to create a new form of ecological aesthetics, or eco-aesthetics. He says: "My art is based on the concerns with the eco-environment, concerns with life. It derives from reflections on contemporary eco-aesthetics. It emphasises the interaction between nature and man, the spatial-timely changes in the process of art production as well as biological mediation..." (the artist's notes on art). Today, we are deeply concerned with the ecological crisis of our planet. Liang Shaoji's work reminds us that taking up the challenge to solve the crisis does not only mean resorting to science. Instead, we should start reflecting on the very relationship between our senses and nature itself, namely our aesthetics. The realm of beauty is the very starting point for looking at nature and treating our environment in a more relevant way.

Jivya Soma Mashe

India

Jivya Soma Mashe (b. 1934, Dhamangaon, Maharashtra) has transformed the ritual art of the Warli people into a relevant contemporary expression that elaborates their original vision on the rapport between nature and culture. His work has significantly impacted both on the social and cultural development of the Warli people and on the perceptions of Indian society. Traditionally, it was only women who painted a limited range of fertility images on internal mud walls during harvest and marriage ceremonies. Mashe was the first Warli man to paint images. As a child, he temporarily lost the power of speech, taught himself to communicate by drawing in the dust and was allowed to paint during ceremonies. When a government programme promoting tribal arts supplied materials, Mashe quickly adapted, applying mud to the paper before painting with the traditional reed brush and rice paste. Working intensely, he moved beyond traditions to new dynamic composition and lively detail in depictions of social life, folk tales and cultural beliefs. The Warli philosophy embodied in Mashe's paintings emphasises the interconnectedness of human beings and nature. His vision shows the balance and reciprocity of natural elements in universal rhythmic cycles of movement and change. Like many local forms of knowledge, the Warlis' acute social and environmental observations match scientific findings about human psychology and sustainable ecology, and provide support to their development as a contemporary society.

Mashe's work has been exhibited in Mumbai and around the country, and in 1976 he won India's National Award for Tribal Art. Major exhibitions include *Magiciens de la Terre* (1989) and *Other Masters* (1998), gaining acclaim and international recognition for this tribal art form. Inspired by Mashe's example, a strong movement of Warli art has been established, making it one of the few pre-Aryan forms of art that continues to flourish in India.

Jivya Soma Mashe is honoured for his creative reinvention of an art vocabulary that was disappearing, for his vivid representation of the Warli vision of nature and culture in equilibrium, for highlighting the contemporary relevance of local forms of knowledge, and for his significant contribution to the culture and development of the tribal peoples.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee Report





Transforming Tradition into Contemporary

by Jyotindra Jain

One of the most innovative and individualistic artists to emerge from the genre of collectively inherited traditions of tribal and folk arts of India is Jivya Soma Mashe, who belongs to the Warli tribe, mainly concentrated in the Thane district of Maharashtra. Until the late 1960s, the only form of painting the Warlis practiced was that of adorning the mud-and-cowdung plastered inner central wall of their home for the installation of the marriage goddess, inside a sacred enclosure filled with small-scale images of everyday life and defined by ornate borders. This had always been a women's art form.

Jivya entered this domain of women's art at an early age of three or four. He remembers the pleasures of the wedding season, when he would get plenty of festive food to eat in return for assistance to the women engaged in the ritual wall painting. While grinding raw rice for the white pigment, bringing water, washing the grinding stone and holding the cup of rice paste for the women, Jivya entered the enchanted world of Warli painting. He was initiated into its vocabulary and mastered its technique, not knowing that these would become the means of his expanded and individualistic expression, or that he would transform and spread the genre to the male domain.

Jivya's emergence as a pioneering artist with powerful expressive force is connected with a scheme, in the late 60s and 70s, for development of Warli painting for urban markets to enhance their meagre income. The scheme introduced paper as surface for painting, liberating the genre from the constraints of ritual iconography painted only on ritual occasions on a consecrated wall by a specific group, i.e. unmarried women. The new portable format provided avenues for wider social engagement, for individuals to visually articulate their culture and experience – including their contemporary predicament arising out of interaction with the modern world – and enabled the genre to enter the formal space of art – the museum, the gallery and the market.

Jivya Soma Mashe became the fountainhead of the new Warli painting, opening a path for others. The single most significant feature of his work is the clear shift from the static traditional iconographic diagrams to fluid, narrative painting. In the late 60s, he began to paint narrative scenes of the Warlis' everyday experience – hunting, fishing, farming, forest and domestic life – which clearly convey Warli conceptions of relations between man and nature. In the 70s he was commissioned to illustrate Warli legends, creating nearly 30 paintings

around the tales he had heard in the villages. Faced with the problem of forging the time of the narrative into the space of painting, something he had not confronted in the iconographic wall-painting, he began to construct the pictorial space unconventionally, dividing it diagonally, horizontally or vertically in the middle, or creating enclosures within landscapes demarcated by piles of stones, islands of sand, amidst fields or water bodies. Each image – be it of an ant, a tiger, a human, tree, river or snake-hole – finds its own space without overlap. All space is two-dimensional. Distance in time is indicated by distance in space. Characters, whether in open space or underground, behind a cloud, in a cave or a house, are equally visible and have their own individual space to act out their roles in the larger narrative scheme. Jivya understood well that narrative painting requires performative gestures and movements embodying characters in dialogue or action with each other. In the linear, highly stylised and almost prehistoric idiom of the Warli art, there is little scope for facial expression, and therefore the bodies in action have to be highly animated and communicative.

In the early 80s, Jivya created a great iconic work entitled *Fisherman* in which the canvas is filled by a towering fishing net, painstakingly constructed knot by knot, and placed on top is a minuscule fisherman winding up the net with its rich catch of fish and other creatures. The diminutive figure atop the gigantic net, magnificently floating in a vast ocean, speaks of Jivya's ability to imaginatively construct a visual image.

My Life, an epic work produced in 1998, pertains to memory of fragmentation and fear. It comprises two large paintings on board. One depicts how ruthlessly a railway line cuts across a village, separating it into two halves – dividing fields, families and community. The second depicts the memory of Jivya's first visit to Mumbai, arriving at the central railway station filled with an ocean of people. Despite the limited vocabulary of thin, linear humans of the Warli idiom, Jivya powerfully characterises each figure – a coolie carrying luggage, old and young people walking, beggars, a policeman chasing a thief, gun toting cops, a monkey jumping on to a roof – and Jivya's childhood fears of policemen come to the fore.

Besides finding his own path for individual self-expression within the inherited collective tradition and bringing about the pioneering shift of a ritual visual form into the space of art, Jivya's work has resulted in a colossal change in the cultural and economic life of the Warli tribe. For centuries the Warlis had depended on hunting and gathering, then over the last hundred years practised a rudimentary form of cultivation, and they have frequently suffered starvation due to droughts and unskilled agricultural practices. Through the Jivya-led creative outburst of Warli art, the community has acquired substantial financial gains and, above all, a degree of self-respect and 'gratification'. Jivya Soma Mashe's life and work has become a model for his brethren, and the collective body of their work has put Warli painting as an important genre on the map of contemporary Indian art.

Santu Mofokeng South Africa

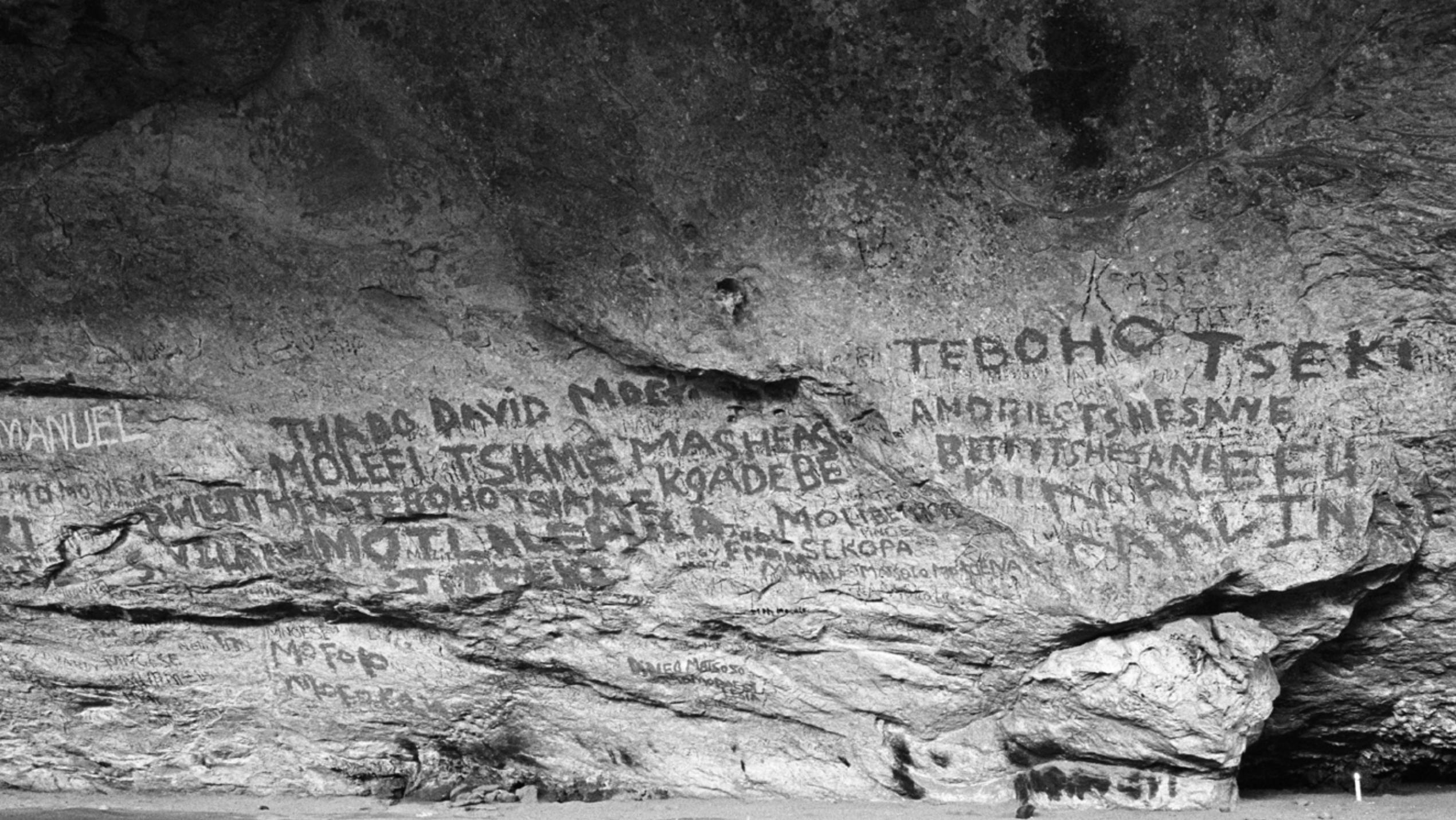
Santu Mofokeng (b. 1956, Johannesburg) is a highly perceptive and significant photographer. From a brief stint as a teenage street photographer, jobs as darkroom assistant and newspaper photographer, to work with the Afrapix Collective documenting the anti-apartheid struggle, Mofokeng's trajectory offered vital lessons about the power of representation. Increasingly frustrated with overt political photojournalism, he took a job with the African Studies Institute's Oral History Project and began to photograph home life, street soccer and shebeens. Critical response to his first solo exhibition in 1990 made him question his responsibility to his subjects and led to closer engagement with individuals and communities. Issues of representation are a continuing focus of Mofokeng's work: *Distorting Mirror/Townships Imagined* exposes the contrast between media images and private work; *Black Photo Album/Look At Me 1890-1950* considers identity and personal projection in portraits; and an exhibition Mofokeng curated with Thierry Secretan, *Compound to Kraal*, analyses historical representations of mineworkers and bosses.

Other major themes are cultural memory and the spirit of place – the exploration of people's psychological relationship with an environment, and the influence of environment on individual lives and identities. Many images probe the weight of meaning in, for example, night vigils, torture cells, urban areas and industrial landscapes. *Bloemhof Portfolio* shows the oppressive landscape of tenant farming. *Chasing Shadows* captures the atmosphere of religious gatherings in caves, fields and under motorways. *Rethinking Landscapes* informs the debate around monuments and memory of sites of massacre and concentration camps, taking it beyond Africa to Auschwitz, Hanoi and Nagasaki. Mofokeng's work is a significant contribution to understanding and research on human development in the South African context.

Santu Mofokeng is honoured for the outstanding quality and content of his work, for his refiguration of the powers of photographic representation, for his acute insight into the cultural meanings in landscapes and the reciprocal relations of environment and development, and for his significant contribution to photography in Africa.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee Report





Chasing Shadows

by Guy Tillim

Santu Mofokeng was born in 1956 in Johannesburg. His father was a migrant worker, classified a resident alien under old apartheid legislation, and his mother was a domestic servant. He was his father's tenth child and his mother's sixth. He writes: "My father had been married twice before he met my mother. He had little more than three years to live when I was born, in which time he managed to squeeze in two more children."

Mofokeng has written occasionally of his years growing up in the badlands of Soweto. When he became a photographer, a career that began as a darkroom assistant, he returned, so to speak, to photograph those years. The images convey the context and character of a South African experience so common and so arduous it is often simply misunderstood, or ignored. The conventional meanings that were the currency, and defined the reportage from South Africa in the 1980s, are largely absent in Mofokeng's work, which is a mark of the originality of his approach. His road was a lonely one that placed him outside the remunerative possibilities of media of the time, but offers us today one of the most insightful interpretations of South Africa's history.

Mofokeng's range in photographic practice is broad: he has worked as a researcher for the African Studies Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand, and he has curated exhibitions in places as diverse as Bamako, Johannesburg and Nantes. Duke University's Centre for Documentary Studies awarded him a scholarship to study in the United States, during which time he wrote the biographical text 'Lampposts', a passage of which is quoted from above. 'Lampposts' poignant and humorous evocation of his life mirrors the nuanced and subtle way that he portrays others lives.

He is well aware he is chasing shadows, the title of one of his exhibitions in 1997, and that he is looking for something that is reluctant to be photographed. In his unusual project, *Black Photo Album/Look at me 1890-1950*, of colonial-era portraits of black South African families, he conveys an alternative reading of history. His questioning of the meaning of photographs, and his practice, have led Mofokeng into an area where his representation of life carries an inherent truth, one that is personal. The rigour with which he has examined those personal confines enables him to hint at a wider truth in his work, which is conveyed with an unselfconscious beauty, mitigating the photographs' certitude. The absence of exactitude and judgment in his work, suggesting a context that lies necessarily outside the frame, is an extraordinary contribution to our understanding and tolerance of each other. Texture and character resist being evoked within the

confines of the photographic frame. If prosaically described, though proficient technically, photographic vocabulary may tend toward caricature. But the richness of its code, perhaps musical, is mastered by Mofokeng and we celebrate through his eyes an empathy with and compassion for his subjects and the world.

Mofokeng writes in the introduction to his exhibition *Invoice*: "Many South Africans believed in apartheid as in inyanga, as in the sjambok, as they believed in everything which makes it unnecessary for them to forge their own destiny; they loved their fear, it reconciled them with themselves, it suspended the faculties of the spirit like a sneeze. Apartheid was a roof. And under this roof life was difficult, many aspects of life were concealed, proscribed. People tried to live their lives in dignity but their joy was tainted with guilt and defiance."

Mofokeng has defied a proscribed existence and the proscribed manner of expressing it. His images, moving effortlessly between personal reflection and political observation, ensure that he is a true chronicler of our times.

Desiderio Navarro Cuba

Cultural activist *extraordinaire*, Desiderio Navarro (b. 1948, Camagüey) is esteemed as a thinker, writer, editor, translator and cultural organiser who has dedicated a lifetime to the stimulation and development of intellectual thought and analysis. For 37 years he has edited and produced one of the world's outstanding journals, *Criterios*, which collects important critical essays on aesthetics and the theories of literature, arts and culture. Navarro translates from 15 languages to make their content accessible to Cuban and other Spanish-speaking populations. Unique in its pluralist approach and broad scope, *Criterios* has published more than 300 texts by 197 distinguished authors from 30 countries. Navarro writes sharp, timely and erudite essays that influence leaders in the arts. He is the editor of 18 anthologies and multi-author volumes, and recently produced a CD of "1001 texts" for students, distributed free to 100 institutions in Cuba.

He single-handedly runs the *Criterios* Centre for the study of theory and culture, its substantial library and its popular seminars and debates that feature international speakers. An outspoken defender of freedom of expression, in 2007 Navarro provoked a heated online debate on censorship and organised a series of lectures on the repercussions of 1970s repression on contemporary Cuban society. He has recently extended the centre's activities beyond Havana, giving lectures and launching publications in other Cuban cities. Navarro participates in international cultural conferences and was the organiser of the groundbreaking 1st National Meeting on the Theory of the Visual Arts held in Caracas in 1992.

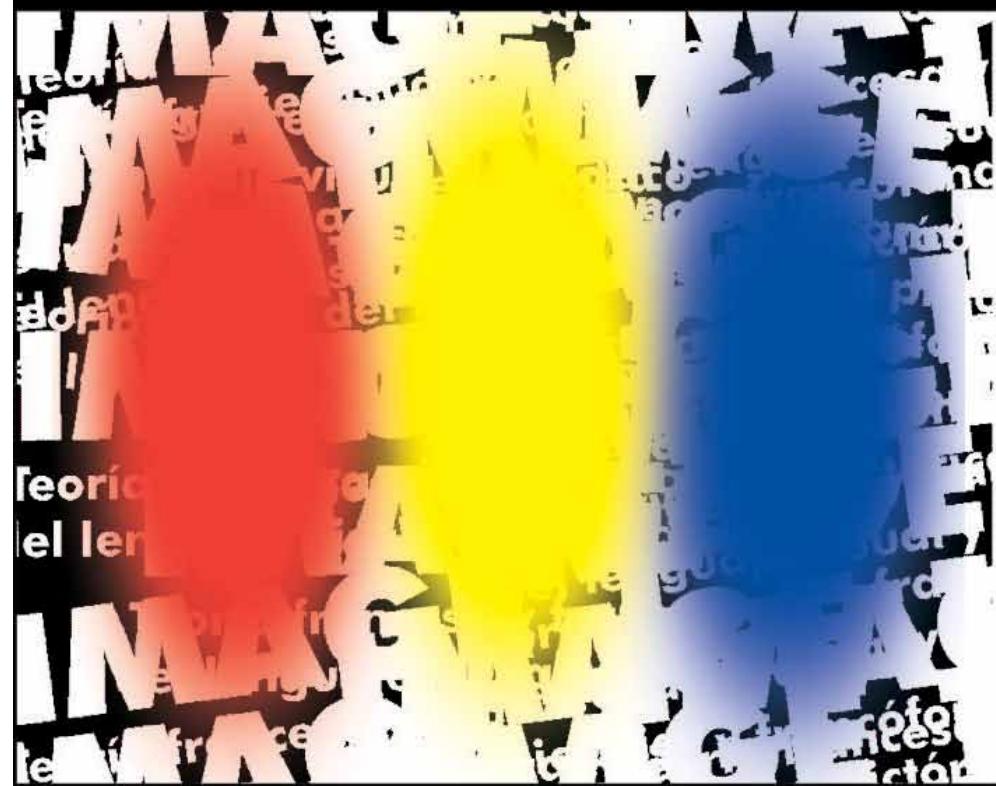
Desiderio Navarro is honoured for his passionate dedication to the diffusion of critical intellectual knowledge on cultural theories, for his insightful writing and analysis, and for his outstanding contributions to freedom of expression and cultural development in Cuba.

From the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee Report

IMAGE 1

TEORÍA FRANCESA Y FRANCÓFONA
DEL LENGUAJE VISUAL Y PICTÓRICO

Selección y traducción
Desiderio Navarro

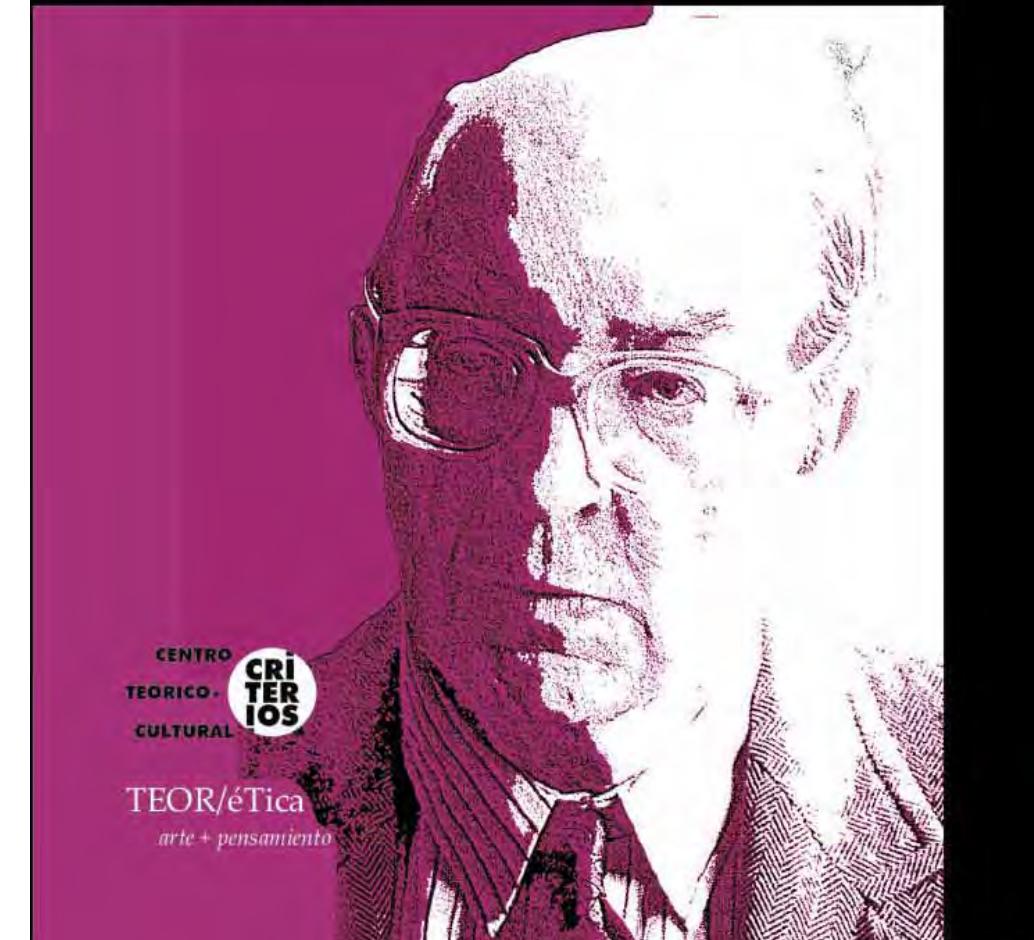


CASA DE LAS AMÉRICAS
UNEAC
EMBAJADA DE FRANCIA EN CUBA

De la estética a la filosofía de la cultura

Stefan Morawski

Selección y traducción del polaco
Desiderio Navarro



The Criteria Man

by Gerardo Mosquera

Everything about Desiderio Navarro is exceptional and astonishing. He is really *extraordinaire*, as the Prince Claus Awards Committee has very precisely stated. To begin with, Navarro learned 12 languages, which included Hungarian, Polish, Serbian-Croatian..., early in his life in an almost self-taught way. Now he has added three more languages to that list. However remarkable this is, the most important thing is that this amazing expertise has not remained as pure erudition but has been set in motion by him as an instrument for generosity that has provided otherwise inaccessible knowledge to Spanish-speaking readers.

Many years ago I wrote that he was a cultural non-profit institution himself. It was a way to express how extended and important his outreach as thinker, *Criterios* editor, translator and cultural activist and organiser has been, and how strongly the impact of this work has resonated in Cuba, the Spanish-speaking world and other contexts. Now, and for a few years, Navarro has been running an institution in Havana, the *Criterios* Center. This *real* institution with neither facilities nor staff is, again, just himself! It exists and keeps an active and fruitful programme due to Navarro's energy and dedication, both intellectual and practical – and even financial. Indeed, most of his work has gone ahead thanks to his persistent efforts and stubbornness in weathering complex and adverse circumstances in Cuba.

Criterios, the journal that he has been editing for 37 years, is the best example of his one-person endeavours. Navarro alone edits the publication, which presents essays on aesthetics and the theories of culture, literature and the arts, gathered through painstaking research and by virtue of a broad international network of theoreticians that he has built up, challenging the difficulties of obtaining information in a country like Cuba. Navarro chooses the essays and meticulously translates them from 15 languages into Spanish. Thus, nearly 400 texts from 200 authors from 30 countries (ranging from Benin to Finland, Israel to Croatia, India to Poland) have been rendered in excellent Spanish from the original languages, receiving notable attention in Latin America and playing a significant role in Cuba's university training. The journal's impact is a result not only of the unique span of its sources, but of its curation. Navarro's exceptional scholarship goes together with his knowledge of and concern with contemporary problems, thus inclining his selections to respond to current issues and expectations. His editorial criteria – initially focused on literary poetics and aesthetics – have been widening to include texts on cultural anthropology, queer and race studies and other radical subjects as censorship,

REVISTA
INTERNACIONAL
DE TEORÍA
DE LA LITERATURA,
LAS ARTES,
Y LA CULTURA

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CONSUMISMO, CAZA DE BRUJAS
HOMOFOBIAS
LIBIDO Y RAZA, TERCERA CULTURA
CIENCIA Y RELIGIÓN
McDISNEYIZACIÓN Y POST-TURISMO
IDENTIDAD URBANA
LA COMIDA, IMAGEN DEL DISIDENTE

BAUMAN • LOTMAN • YOUNG-BRUEHL
NEDERVEEN PIETERSE • ŽIŽEK • BRICMONT
RITZER & LISKA • HAAPALA • ĐORĐEVIĆ • ALI

REVERSIBILIDAD DEL SOCIALISMO:
POSTMODERNISMO
CORRUPCIÓN, NEOHABLA
ARTE POSTCOMUNISTA

ERJAVEC • HANKISS
GŁOWIŃSKI • GROYS



witch hunting and corruption.

Criterios is unique: there is no other journal of its kind in the world with such a broad, truly international content and scope. The publication was quite non-mainstream and global before economic and cultural globalisation inclined towards a more inclusive international approach in culture. *Criterios* is a rare privilege for readers in Spanish, and an exception now that ‘peripheral’ languages have lost currency as a result of the expansion of English as a global *lingua franca*. The inclusion of numerous Central and Eastern European authors – quite unreachable for so many of us due to language barriers – is a particularly remarkable contribution. Moreover, *Criterios* is even more exceptional now that publications in Latin America have gone down while powerful Spanish publishers take over the field.

Navarro’s restless action as a cultural activist and organiser has been especially useful in Cuba’s authoritarian, centralised and bureaucratic context, where individual initiatives prove to be so necessary. With tireless energy he has organised dozens of much needed panels, conferences and symposia over 30 years, the highlights being two *Criterios* International Meetings, which congregated top intellectual figures from several countries in 1987 and 1989 in Havana, and the 1st International Meeting on the Theory of the Visual Arts, in 1992 in Caracas. *Criterios* website, www.criterios.es, provides free access to a treasure of theoretical texts. However, the publication of *Criterios* as a journal remains a basic asset in Cuba, where the libraries and bookstores’ offerings in these fields is insignificant, obsolete or null, and where there is no free internet access (the country is the third least connected in the world, after North Korea and Bhutan). For this reason Navarro has conceived a new line of work consisting in producing CDs with more than 1,000 texts on literature, art and culture theory by authors from several continents, distributing them for free to the public and to 100 institutions throughout Cuba.

In January 2007 Navarro, through a public letter sent by email, reacted very strongly to the reappearance in the Cuban media of three ex-official figures who had presided over cultural repression in the country during the 1970s, an appearance that was seen as a worrying sign. His letter triggered a storm of protest by means of email. While the use of this medium is also severely restricted in Cuba, writers, artists, musicians, filmmakers and other intellectuals do enjoy access through the official Cuban Union of Writers and Artists. The response quickly snowballed, and as the number of emails in circulation and the length of their mailing lists grew, so did the acrimony of the discussion, which progressed from denouncing the official repression of the past to criticising the continued interference of the authorities today. More importantly still, the participants launched into a bare-knuckled critique of the state of the Cuban economy, administration and society. This phenomenon had no precedent, and

Navarro participated actively in it. In this framework, he organised an on-going series of lectures by different intellectuals to discuss cultural repression in the 1970s and its implications today. In 2008 he edited and published a volume on the first conferences.

Navarro is also the editor of 18 anthologies on theory, published in Cuba and abroad, whose texts have been translated by him in most cases. A leading example is Iuri Lotman’s collected essays in three volumes, published in Madrid. These anthologies prove Navarro’s vast scope as editor and scholar, given the diversity of fields that he is able to properly tackle. But the matchlessness of his achievements as editor and translator should not eclipse his role as an author. His critical and theoretical essays have been always sharp, timely and erudite, and their language clear, precise, elegant, keen to attain communication. He has productively dealt with a range of interesting issues and fields, going from semiotics, detective novels, poetry and kitsch to critical discussion of figures like painter Wifredo Lam and poet Wicky Nogueras. A group of his essays, collected and published in two volumes, had an important impact for my own ideas and positioning. Especially, his writing on Eurocentrism was fundamental for my theoretical and curatorial approach to ‘Third World’ contemporary art.

A post-Marxist, Navarro’s rigorous and at the same time anti-dogmatic and independent personality has experienced a stormy relationship with Cuban institutions. The result of a context signed by utopia and repression, his oeuvre has been a munificent *mater nutritia* of food for thought.

Contributing Authors

Ben van Berkel studied architecture at the Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam, and the Architectural Association, London. The Van Berkel & Bos Architectuurbureau (1988-1998) realised, amongst others, the Karbouw office building, the Erasmus bridge (Rotterdam) and the NMR facilities for the University of Utrecht. Co-founder and director since 1998 of UNStudio (United Net), a network of specialists in architecture, urban development and infrastructure, he has realised, amongst others, the Mercedes-Benz Museum (Stuttgart), a façade and interior renovation for Galleria Department store (Seoul) and a private villa in up-state New York. Other UNStudio projects include the mixed-use Raffles City in Hangzhou, a masterplan for Basauri and the design and restructuring of the Harbor Ponte Parodi in Genoa. Author and co-author of numerous publications, he has lectured at architectural schools around the world and is currently Professor Conceptual Design at the Staedelschule in Frankfurt am Main.

Caroline Bos studied history of art at Birkbeck College, University of London, and urban and regional planning at the University of Utrecht. In 1988 she co-founded Van Berkel & Bos Architectuurbureau, which realised projects such as the Erasmus bridge in Rotterdam, museum Het Valkhof in Nijmegen and the Moebius house. She is co-founder and director since 1998 of UNStudio (United Net), a network of specialists in architecture, urban development and infrastructure with projects that include the restructuring of the station area of Arnhem, a shopping mall renovation in Kaohsiung and a music theatre for Graz. A participant in the Modern Diaspora study group, South America (2008), the Expert Group Tolhuisuin (2007) and chairperson of the Sikkens Foundation (2005-2008), she has lectured at architectural schools around the world and is author and co-author of numerous publications including *Buy me a Mercedes-Benz* (2006) and *Delinquent Visionaries* (1993).

Afsan Chowdhury is a journalist, development professional and human rights activist. Graduating in history, he joined a national research project that generated 15 volumes on the Bangladesh nationalist movement and war. A journalist since 1973, he has worked for the BBC and *Himal Southasian*, among others. He has served as Director of Advocacy and Human Rights with BRAC in Bangladesh, Regional Director for South Asia Panos Institute in Kathmandu, and communications specialist for UNICEF, UNDP and OXFAM-UK, among others. He has been Ashoka Fellow on sex education, Visiting Fellow at Oxford University (UK) on migrant rights, and the 2008 Oak Fellow on human rights at Colby College Maine (USA). Producer of videos, radio documentaries and a dozen books, including *Media in Times of Crisis* (2003), a book of poems *Conversations with Suleman* (2007) and most recently a 4-volume history of Bangladesh nationalism, he is currently a research associate at York University (Canada).

John Grande is a writer, curator and art critic. He is the author of *Balance: Art and Nature* (1994, 2004), *Intertwining: Landscape, Technology, Issues, Artists* (1998), and *Art Nature Dialogues: Interviews with Environmental Artists* (2004). Other publications include: *Dialogues in Diversity: Art from Marginal to Mainstream* (2007) and *Art Allsorts: Writings on Art & Artists* (2008). He is contributing editor of *Sculpture* (USA) and *Art Papers* (Atlanta) and English section editor for *Vie des Arts*. His articles have been published extensively in *Artforum*, *Vice Versa*, *British Journal of Photography*, *La Revue Espace*, *Public Art Review*, *Landscape Architecture*, *ECOARTNET*, *Ceramics Monthly*, *Fiberarts* and *Art On Paper*, among others. His poetry book *Stonehenge & Avebury* (2008) was recently awarded a prize from the Alcuin Society. He convened the international Culture Sculpture symposium

(New Brunswick, international culture capital of Canada, 2008) and was curator emeritus of Earth Art at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Ontario (Canada, 2008).

Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang You is Chair of the Board of the Prince Claus Fund since 2004. Born in Suriname, she studied law at the University of Leiden and worked in Suriname before moving to the Netherlands (1984). She was Chair of the National Bureau against Racial Discrimination, Vice-President of the Equal Treatment Commission, Vice-President of the Board of OPTA and Chair of the International Board of Amnesty International. She is Chair of the Foundation for Legal Cooperation between the Netherlands and Suriname, and a member of the Supervisory Board of the Mauritshuis (The Hague) and of the Concertgebouw (Amsterdam). She is also a member of the Advisory Council of International Affairs, member of the Board of the Radboud University (Nijmegen) and member of the Advisory Board of the Institute of Social Studies (The Hague). Since February 2009 she is a State Councillor at The Council of State in The Hague.

Hou Hanru is Director of Exhibitions and Public Programs, and Chair of Exhibition and Museum Studies at San Francisco Art Institute. Among many others, he has curated: *The Spectacle of the Everyday*, Biennale de Lyon (2009); *Not Only Possible, But Also Necessary – Optimism in The Age of Global Wars*, Istanbul Biennial (2007); *Everyday Miracle*, Chinese Pavilion, Venice Biennale (2007); *Laboratory for an Uncertain Future*, Paris (2006); *Beyond*, Guangzhou Triennale (2004-06); *Go Inside*, Tirana Biennale (2005); *Zone of Urgency*, Venice Biennale (2003), *Gwangju Biennale* (2002); *Shanghai Spirit*, Shanghai Biennale (2000); *Biennale of Photography*, Mexico (1999); *French Pavilion*, Venice Biennale, (1999); *Cities On The Move* (1997-2000), China/Avant-Garde, Beijing (1989). Jury member, lecturer and/or consultant for numerous institutions including the Rijksakademie (Netherlands), the Asian Art Council, Solomon Guggenheim Museum (New York) and Walker Arts Center (Minneapolis), he is author of *On The Mid-Ground* (2002) and *Chevalier des Arts et des Letters* (France, 2008).

Jyotindra Jain studied cultural anthropology, Indian studies and ancient Indian history in Mumbai and Vienna. He was Director of the Crafts Museum (Delhi), Dean and Professor at the School of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University (Delhi) and has been an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow, a Homi Bhabha Fellow and a Visiting Professor at the Center for the Study for World Religions, Harvard University (USA). His publications include: *Ganga Devi: Tradition and Expression in Mithila Painting* (1996), *Other Masters: Five Contemporary Folk and Tribal Artists of India* (1998), *Picture Showmen: Insights into the Narrative Tradition in Indian Art* (1998); *Kalighat Painting: Images from a Changing World* (1999), *Indian Popular Culture: The Conquest of the World as Picture* (2004) and *India's Popular Culture: Iconic spaces and fluid images* (2007). Jain received a Prince Claus Award in 1998. Director of the Centre for Indian Visual Culture, he is engaged in creating a digital archive of Indian popular visual culture.

Gerardo Mosquera is a freelance curator and art critic based in Havana, advisor at the Rijksakademie van Beeldenden Kunsten (Amsterdam) and member of the advisory board of several international art journals. He was a founder of the Havana Biennial, a curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art (New York) and has curated many exhibitions including *States of Exchange: Artists from Cuba* (London, 2008), *Border Jam* (Montevideo, 2007), Liverpool Biennial International (2006, with Manray Hsu), *Panorama of Brazilian Art* (São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Recife, Vigo, 2003), *MultipleCity* (Panama, 2003, with Adrienne Samos), *Perverting Minimalism* (Madrid, 2000) and *Cildo Meireles* (New York, 1999, with Dan Cameron). He has lectured extensively and received the Guggenheim Fellowship in 1990. Author of numerous books and

permanent contributor to diverse journals, he edited *Copying Eden: Recent Art in Chile* (2006), *Over Here: International Perspectives on Art and Culture* (2004), and *Beyond the Fantastic: Contemporary Art Criticism from Latin America* (1995).

Chika Okeke-Agulu is Assistant Professor of art history in the Department of Art and Archaeology and Center for African American Studies, Princeton University (USA). He earned his PhD from Emory University (Atlanta), was a Fellow of the Clark Institute, the Robert Sterling Clark Visiting Professor at Williams College, and has previously taught at Penn State University, Emory University and the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He has (co-) organised and written catalogue essays for exhibitions including the 5th Gwangju Biennale (South Korea, 2004), *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945-1994* (Munich, 2001), *Seven Stories About Modern Art in Africa* (London, 1995) and the Nigerian Pavilion, 1st Johannesburg Biennale (1995). His writings have appeared in *Glendora Review*, *African Arts*, *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*, *Art South Africa* and in several edited volumes. He is editor of *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*, and co-author (with Okwui Enwezor) of *Contemporary African Art Since 1980* (2009).

Els van der Plas, art historian and curator, is Director of the Prince Claus Fund since 1997. She was founding director of the Gate Foundation (1987-97), which stimulates intercultural exchange of contemporary art. She is Visiting Scholar at Cornell University where she researches the functioning of aesthetics in difficult circumstances. She has curated several international exhibitions, most recently, *Don't Mention the War* (Kunsthal Rotterdam, February 2010) and was advisor for *Africa Remix* (Centre Pompidou, Paris; Hayward Gallery, London; and Kunstpalast, Dusseldorf, 2005-2006). She has lectured at various institutions including the Goethe Institute (Germany), Kingston University (UK), Cornell University (USA), University of Leiden and on the curators' course at De Appel in Amsterdam. Her writings are published worldwide and she is co-editor of *The Future is Handmade* (Prince Claus Fund Journal #10, 2003), *Creating Spaces of Freedom* (Saqi Books, 2000), *The Art of African Fashion* (Africa World Press, 1998) and *Indonesian Modern Art* (Gate Foundation/Cementi Art Foundation 1993).

Robert Pledge studied West African languages and anthropology and entered journalism as a specialist in African affairs writing for *Jeune Afrique* and *Le Monde Diplomatique*. Discovering photography, he joined *Zoom* in Paris in 1970 and in 1976 co-founded *Contact Press Images* (New York and Paris), of which he is president. His publications include *Strange Friends* (1999), *11 (Eleven): Witnessing the World Trade Center, 1974-2001* (2002), *44 Days: Iran and the Remaking of the World* (with David Burnett, 2009), *After War* (with Lori Grinker, 2005) and *Don McCullin* (with Dominique Deschavanne, 2008). In 2004, *Red-Color News Soldier* (with Li Zhensheng, 2003) received the Overseas Press Club's Olivier Rebbot Award. He has curated exhibitions throughout the world, conducted master classes in Bangladesh, China, India, Mali, Turkey and Switzerland, and sat on many juries, including the W. Eugene Smith Fund (USA), CNA Mosaique (Luxembourg) and World Press Photo (the Netherlands), which he chaired in 2001.

Sergio Ramírez graduated in law at the University of Nicaragua in 1964. He published his first book in 1963 and was resident artist in Berlin on a DAAD scholarship (1973-75). In 1977, he headed the Group of Twelve against the Somoza regime, and after the triumph of the Sandinista Revolution became Vice-president of Nicaragua (1979). His books include: *Castigo Divino* (1988, Dashiell Hammett Award); *Un baile de máscaras* (1995, Laure Batallon Award); *Margarita está linda la mar* (1998, Alfaguara International Novel Award and José María Arguedas Latin American Award); *Mil y una muertes* (2005); and *El cielo llora por mí* (2008). His honours include the

International Prize for Human Rights (1998, Bruno Kreisky Foundation); *Doctor honoris causa* (Blaise Pascal University, Clermont-Ferrand); Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres (France); Order of Merit (Federal Republic of Germany) and Guggenheim Fellowship for creative writing (2008). He holds the Robert Kennedy Professorship in Latin American Studies at Harvard University for 2009.

AbdouMaliq Simone is an urbanist with particular interest in emerging forms of social and economic intersection across diverse trajectories of change for cities in the global south. He is Professor of Sociology at Goldsmiths College, University of London and Honorary Professor of Urban Studies at the University of Cape Town. His work attempts to generate new theoretical understandings based on a wide range of urban practices generated by cities in Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, as well as efforts to integrate these understandings in concrete policy and governance frameworks. His key publications include *In Whose Image? Political Islam and Urban Practices in Sudan* (1994), *For the City Yet to Come: Urban Change in Four African Cities* (2004), and *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar: Movements at the Crossroads* (forthcoming 2009). His writings have been published in numerous volumes and journals including *Geoforum*, *Traverses*, *ZG, Cultural Anthropology*, *African Insight*, *Space and Culture* and *Third Text*.

Guy Tillim was born in Johannesburg in 1962 and graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Cape Town in 1985. He started photographing professionally in 1986 and joined Afrapix, a collective of South African photographers with whom he worked closely until 1990. His work has been included Documenta 12 (2007) and the São Paulo Biennial (2006). Awards for his work including the Prix SCAM Roger Pic (2002), Higashikawa Overseas Photographer Award (2003), DaimlerChrysler Award for South African Photography (2004) and Leica Oskar Barnack Award (2005). He was the first recipient of the Robert Gardner Fellowship in Photography from the Peabody Museum at Harvard University in 2006, which resulted in the book, *Avenue Patrice Lumumba* (Prestel, 2008). Other publications include *Petros Village* (Punctum, 2006), *Jo'burg* (Filigranes Editions and STE, 2005), *Leopold and Mobutu* (Filigranes Editions, 2004) and *Roma, citta di mezzo* (Punctum, 2009). He lives in Cape Town.

Mario Vargas Llosa, novelist, journalist and essayist, studied law and literature in Peru and Spain. Since his first novel in 1963, *La ciudad y los perros* (*The Time of the Hero*), he has written more than 16 novels, including *The Feast of the Goat* (2000), 9 non-fiction works and published three volumes of essays. Among numerous awards, his second novel *The Green House* won the first Rómulo Gallegos International Novel Prize (1967), *Death in the Andes* was awarded the Premio Planeta (1993), and in 1994 he won Spain's Miguel de Cervantes Prize. He was President of the International PEN (1975). His memoir *A Fish in the Water* (*El pez en el agua*, 1993) includes an account of running for the presidency of Peru in 1990. He writes regularly for Spain's *El País*, will lecture at Princeton University (USA) in 2010, and has a forthcoming novel based on the colonial history of the Congo.

The Awards Policy and Procedures

The Prince Claus Awards

The Prince Claus Awards are given annually to individuals, groups, organisations or institutions that have made outstanding contributions to culture and development within the Prince Claus Fund's area of interest. Each year in December, the Principal Prince Claus Award of EUR 100,000 is presented to the Principal Laureate at a prestigious venue in Amsterdam in the presence of members of the Royal family and an audience of 600 international guests. Netherlands Ambassadors present the Prince Claus Awards of EUR 25,000 to the recipients in their respective countries.

Procedures

Each year the Prince Claus Fund invites an expanding network of colleagues, partners and experts in fields relevant to the Fund's mission to nominate candidates, offer insights and give second opinions on the proposed candidates.

A total of 73 nominations were received for the 2009 Prince Claus Awards.

Documentation and research on these nominations was considered at a first meeting of the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee on 4 December 2008.

A short list was established and the staff of the Fund's Bureau then carried out further research and gathered extensive second opinions from advisors in the Fund's network. On 27–28 May 2009, the Awards Committee met again for in-depth assessment of the short-listed candidates and the jury selected eleven recommended recipients for the 2009 Prince Claus Awards.

Criteria and considerations

The Prince Claus Awards are presented to artists, intellectuals and cultural operators who have made outstanding contributions in the field of culture and development. The awards are given to individuals, groups and organisations around the globe, but primarily in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Quality is a *sine qua non* for a Prince Claus Award. The quality of a laureate's work is assessed in professional and personal contexts and for its positive impact on wider cultural and social fields. The creation of interactions and links between different cultures, the fostering of commonalities and the initiation of shared cultural currents are highly valued. The Prince Claus Awards recognise artistic and intellectual qualities that are relevant in the contemporary context. They legitimise experimentation and innovation, recognise audacity and tenacity, support inspirational developments and seek to enhance their beneficial impact.

Policy

The Prince Claus Fund maintains a broad view of culture that accommodates all types of artistic and intellectual disciplines. This open approach encompasses the transmission of culture and achievements in education, media and the applied arts, as well as including fields such as science and technology that interact with and impact on the domain of culture. The Fund seeks originality and experimentation in cultural initiatives, and welcomes proposals from every cultural field and area of potential. Mutual exchange, interculturality and the transcending of borders are high on the Fund's agenda, and it has a keen interest in vocabularies and vernaculars that develop into universal languages linking people in different cultures. The Prince Claus Fund aims to provide protection to culture in places where it is threatened and to explore 'zones of silence'. The Fund continues its interest in previous themes, such as Creating Spaces of Freedom, Urban Heroes, Culture and Conflict, and the Survival and Innovation of Crafts.

The complete Report of the 2009 Prince Claus Awards Committee is available in Spanish, French and English on the Fund's website: www.princeclausfund.org.

The Awards Committee

Peter Geschiere (*Chairman*) was born in the Netherlands, studied history and anthropology in Amsterdam, and has worked in various parts of Africa. Until 2002 he was Professor of African Anthropology at the University of Leiden and he is currently attached to the University of Amsterdam as research professor. His publications include works on state formation in West Africa, the dynamics of local cultures in politico-economic changes, conservation and exploitation of tropical rain forests, autochthony, citizenship and exclusion. A member of the Netherlands Royal Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Sciences of Cameroon, board member of the International African Institute (London) and chair of the ABV (Dutch Anthropological Association), in 2002 Geschiere was nominated Distinguished Africanist of the Year by the African Studies Association (USA). He is a member of the Board of the Prince Claus Fund.

Manthia Diawara is a filmmaker and author. Born in Mali, he studied comparative literature at Indiana University and is currently Professor of Comparative Literature and Film, and Director of the Institute of African American Affairs, at New York University. Diawara's documentary films include *Bamako Sigi Kan* (2002), *Conakry Kas* (2004), *Who's Afraid of Ngugi?* (2006) and *Maison Tropicale* (2008). He has written more than 50 articles and short stories, translated the writings of African filmmakers and published books entitled *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* (1992), *Black American Cinema: Aesthetics and Spectatorship* (1993), *In Search of Africa* (1998) and *We Won't Budge* (2003). Diawara is founder and editor-in-chief of *Black Renaissance/Renaissance Noire*, and has a forthcoming collection of analytical essays entitled *Black Aesthetics*.

N'Goné Fall was born in Senegal and graduated from the Ecole Spéciale d'Architecture in Paris, France. Editorial director of the contemporary African art magazine *Revue Noire* from 1994 to 2001, she edited books including *Anthology of African and Indian Ocean Photography* (1998), *Anthology of African Art: The Twentieth Century* (2000) and *Photographers from Kinshasa* (2001). As an independent curator, her major projects include biennales of Dakar (1996, 2002) and Bamako (2001), *Africa by Africans* (South Africa, Italy and USA, 1998-2000) and *Contact Zone* (Mali, 2007). Consultant in cultural engineering, she is the author of strategic plans and reports on cultural events for national and international institutions. Founding member of the Dakar-based collective Gaw, she is also a board member of ResArtis, a worldwide network of artistic residency programmes.

Rahul Mehrotra studied at Ahmedabad's School of Architecture and Harvard's Graduate School of Design. Recent architectural projects include a campus for a street-children's NGO, restoration of Chowmahalla Palace and a conservation master plan for the Taj Mahal. Mehrotra founded the Bombay Collaborative, has been advisor to Bombay's Municipal Commissioner, on the Board of Governors of Bombay's Heritage Society, consultant to citizens' groups, the Bombay Environmental Action Group and numerous international organisations, and on the jury of the Aga Khan Awards, Berkley Prize, James Stirling Prize and Urban Age Awards. A trustee and former executive director of the Urban Design Research Institute, Mehrotra's publications include *Bombay - The Cities Within* and *Bombay to Mumbai - Changing Perspectives*. He is a Professor at MIT's School of Architecture and Urban Planning.



Pablo Ortiz Monasterio was born in Mexico, studied economics in Mexico and photography in England, and taught at Mexico's Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (1978-85). His work has been exhibited in Europe and the Americas, and his photographic books include *The People of the Wind* (1982), *Corazon de Venado* (1992) and *La última ciudad/The Last City* (1995), the latter was awarded L'Oeil d'Or in 1997 and Primavera's Best Photographic Book 1997-98. Jury member of World Press Photo Exhibition on three occasions, he organised the 150th Anniversary of Photography in Mexico exhibition and founded the Centro de la Imagen exhibition space in Mexico City. He edited and designed *Mexico y Indígena* (seven titles) and the prize-winning 20-volume *Río de luz* on Latin American photographers, and edited the first 15 titles of *Luna Córnea* (1993-98). He is currently involved in developing Mexico's National Museum of Cinema.

Laksmi Pamuntjak, writer and poet, was born in Jakarta, Indonesia. Author of two collections of poetry, *Ellipsis* (2005, one of *The Herald* (UK) Books of the Year) and *The Anagram* (2007), a treatise on violence and the *Iliad* entitled *Perang, Langit dan Dua Perempuan* (*War, Heaven and Two Women*) (2006), short stories in *The Diary of R.S.: Musings on Art* (2006) and four editions of the *Jakarta Good Food Guide*, she translated and edited Goenawan Mohamad's *Selected Poems* and *On God and Other Unfinished Things*. She publishes articles on politics, film, food, classical music and literature, and has participated in numerous international literary festivals including National Poetry Festival (Australia), Wordfest (Canada) and Winternachten Festival (The Netherlands). Co-founder of Aksara bookstore, she owns Pena Klasik publishing house and produces art performances for Komunitas Utan Kayu. Her first novel, *The Blue Widow*, will be published next year.

Patricia Tappatá de Valdez is the executive director of 2004 Prince Claus Laureate Memoria Abierta, a human-rights alliance that promotes action to preserve the memory of state terrorism in Argentina. Valdez is a founding member of the International Coalition for Museums of Conscience at Historic Sites and has been a visiting professor at, among others, Buenos Aires and Georgetown universities. Executive director of El Salvador's truth commission (1992), Valdez co-ordinates the Programme for Leadership in Philanthropy in the Americas, which aims to generate a critical mass of philanthropic leaders, and she is the secretary of the Board of the Centre of Legal and Social Studies (CELS) in Buenos Aires, which works to secure the relevance of human rights in democracies.



Ceremonies

The 2009 Principal Prince Claus Award is presented by HRH Prince Constantijn of the Netherlands on 16 December 2009 at the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

The ten 2009 Prince Claus Awards are presented in the laureates' countries by:

Mrs S.N. Bakker, Netherlands Ambassador to Cameroon

Mr R. Bekink, Netherlands Ambassador to China

Mr R. Muyzert, Netherlands Ambassador to Cuba

Mrs E. Berends-Vergunst, Netherlands Ambassador to DR Congo

Mr B. Hiensch, Netherlands Ambassador to India

Mr L. Grijns, Chef de Poste, Netherlands Embassy in Nicaragua

Mr A. van der Wiel, Netherlands Ambassador to Nigeria

Mr B. van der Heijden, Netherlands Ambassador to Peru

Mr R.G. de Vos, Netherlands Ambassador to South Africa

The Prince Claus Fund is grateful for their co-operation and advice.





Laureates of the Prince Claus Fund 2009 – 1997

The 2009 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 2009 Prince Claus Award for 'Culture and Nature'
Simón Vélez Colombia

Further 2009 Prince Claus Awards
Gastón Acuña Peru
El Anatsui Nigeria / Ghana
Sammy Baloji DR Congo
Kanak Mani Dixit Nepal
Doual'art Cameroon
Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamerica (IHNCA) Nicaragua
Liang Shaoji China
Jiyva Soma Masha India
Santu Mofokeng South Africa
Desiderio Navarro Cuba

The 2008 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 2008 Prince Claus Award for 'Culture and the Human Body'
Indira Goswami India

Further 2008 Prince Claus Awards
Tania Bruguera Cuba
Carlos Henríquez Consalvi El Salvador
Uchechukwu James Iroha Nigeria
Li Xianting China
Ma Ke China
Venerable Purevbat Mongolia
Jeanguy Saintus Haiti
Dayanita Singh India
Ousmane Sow Senegal
Elia Suleiman Palestine

The 2008 Prince Claus Awards performance was given by *Ma Ke* and by *Ayikodans*

The 2007 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 2007 Prince Claus Award for 'Culture and Conflict'
Faustin Linyekula DR Congo

Further 2007 Prince Claus Awards
Patricia Ariza Colombia
Ars Avni Bosnia and Herzegovina
Augusto Boal Brazil

Oscar Hagerman Mexico
Emily Jacir Palestine
Harutyun Khachatryan Armenia
Hollis Liverpool alias Chalkdust Trinidad and Tobago
Godfrey Mwampembwa alias Gado Kenya
Radio Isanganiro Burundi
The Sudanese Writers Union Sudan

The 2007 Prince Claus Awards performance was given by *Hollis Liverpool alias Chalkdust* and by *Faustin Linyekula* and *Serge Kakudji*

The 2006 Prince Claus Awards
Marking the 10-year anniversary of the Prince Claus Fund, the Principal 2006 Prince Claus Award
Reza Abedini Iran

Further 2006 Prince Claus Awards
Lida Abdul Afghanistan
Erna Brodber Jamaica
Henry Chakava Kenya
Committee for Relevant Art Nigeria
Frankétienne Haiti
Madeeha Gauhar Pakistan
Al Kamandjâti Association Palestine
Michael Mel Papua New Guinea
National Museum of Mali Mali
Christine Tohme Lebanon

The 2006 Prince Claus Awards performance was given by the Stars of the Sahel Opera.

The 2005 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 2005 Prince Claus Award for 'Humour and Satire'
Jonathan Shapiro alias Zapiro South Africa

Further 2005 Prince Claus Awards
Niède Guidon Brazil
Slamet Gundono Indonesia
Edgar Langeveldt Zimbabwe
Joaquin Salvador Lavado alias Quino Argentina
Ebrahim Nabavi Iran
Opiyo Okach Kenya
Michael Poghosian Armenia
Lenin El Ramly Egypt
Chéri Samba DR Congo
Abdul Sheriff Zanzibar, Tanzania

The 2005 performance 'Viewing the Summits' (*Regards aux Sommets*) was given by *Jant-Bi*, with choreography by *Germaine and Patrick Acogny*

The 2004 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 2004 Prince Claus Award for 'The Positive Results of Asylum and Migration'
Mahmoud Darwish Palestine

Further 2004 Prince Claus Awards
Jawad Al Assadi Iraq
Ivaldo Bertazzo Brazil
Bhutan Archery Federation Bhutan
Halet Çambel Turkey
Omara Khan Massoudi Afghanistan
Memoria Abierta Argentina
Tin Moe Myanmar
Farroukh Qasim Tajikistan
Aminata Traoré Mali

The 2004 Prince Claus Awards performance was given by *Carlinhos Brown*.

The 2003 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 2003 Prince Claus Award for 'The Survival and Innovation of Crafts'
Wang Shixiang PR China

Further 2003 Prince Claus Awards
Arab Human Development Report 2002
Biboki Weavers and Yovita Meta Indonesia
Carlinhos Brown Brazil
G.N. Devy India
District Six Museum South Africa
Mathare Youth Sports Association Kenya
New Argentinian Cinema: Lita Stantic Argentina
Mick Pearce Zimbabwe
Reyun Institute of Arts and Culture Cambodia
Hasan Saltik Turkey

The 2003 Prince Claus Awards performance was given by *Heri Dono*

The 2002 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 2002 Prince Claus Award for 'Languages and Transcultural Forms of Expression'
Mohammed Chafik Morocco

Further 2002 Prince Claus Awards
Ali Ferzat Syria
Ferreira Gullar Brazil
Amira Hass Israel
Marcelo Araúz Lavadenz Bolivia
Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial Indonesia
Youssou N'Dour Senegal
Virginia Pérez-Ratton Costa Rica
Walter Tournier Uruguay
Wu Liangyong PR China

The 2002 Prince Claus Awards performance was given by *Youssou N'Dour* with Senegalese rappers and Moroccan rappers

The 2001 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 2001 Prince Claus Award for 'Carnival'
Peter Minshall Port of Spain, Trinidad
Stichting Zomercarnaval Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Further 2001 Prince Claus Awards
Chris Abani Nigeria / USA
Duong Thu Huong Vietnam
Samuel Fosso Central African Republic
Jahan-e Ketab Iran
Mehri Maftun Afghanistan
Antoun Maqdesi Syria
Elena Rivera Mirano Philippines
Ibrahim Salahi Sudan / UK
Talingo Panama
Iván Thays Peru

The 2001 Prince Claus Awards speech was delivered by *Rex Nettleford*

The 2001 Prince Claus Awards performance was 'Leonardo's Man' by *Peter Minshall* and the Callaloo Company

The 2000 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 2000 Prince Claus Award for 'Urban Heroes'
Jaime Lerner Brazil
Francisco Toledo Mexico
Viva Rio Brazil

Further 2000 Prince Claus Awards
Bush Radio South Africa
Communalism Combat India
Cui Jian PR China
Film Resource Unit South Africa
Arif Hasan Pakistan
Bhupen Khakhar India
Komal Kothari India
Werewere Liking Ivory Coast
Ayu Utami Indonesia
Van Leo Egypt

The 2000 Prince Claus Awards speech was delivered by *Ismail Serageldin*.

The 2000 Prince Claus Awards performance was a film and performance by *Wu Wenguang*.

The 1999 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 1999 Prince Claus Award
for 'Creating Spaces of Freedom'
Fellag France / Algeria
AlJazeera Qatar
Vitral Cuba

Further 1999 Prince Claus Awards
Patrick Chamoiseau Martinique
Paulin J. Hountondji Benin
Cildo Meireles Brazil
Pepetela Angola
Dessalegn Rahmato Ethiopia
Juana Marta Rodas and
Julia Isídez Paraguay
Claudia Roden UK / Egypt
Cheick Oumar Sissoko Mali
Tsai Chih Chung Taiwan
Ken Yeang Malaysia

The 1999 Prince Claus Awards speech
was delivered by *Albie Sachs*.

The 1999 Prince Claus Awards performance
was 'Overloed' by *William Kentridge*.

The 1998 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 1998 Prince Claus Award
for 'The Art of African Fashion'
Tetteh Adzedu Ghana
Alphadi Niger
Oumou Sy Senegal

Further 1998 Prince Claus Awards
Rakhshan Bani-Etemad Iran
Heri Dono Indonesia
Ticio Escobar Paraguay
Jyotindra Jain India
Jean-Baptiste Kiéthéga Burkina Faso
David Koloane South Africa
Baaba Maal Senegal
Carlos Monsiváis Mexico
Redza Piyadasa Malaysia
Nazek Saba-Yared Lebanon
Rogelio Salmana Colombia
Kumar Shahani India
Tian Zhuang Zhuang PR China

The 1998 Prince Claus Awards speech
was delivered by *Carlos Fuentes*.

The 1998 Prince Claus Awards performance
was an African Fashion Show.

The 1997 Prince Claus Awards
The Principal 1997 Prince Claus Award
Zimbabwe International Book Fair

Further 1997 Prince Claus Awards
Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa Senegal
Index on Censorship UK
Sardono W. Kusumo Indonesia
Malangatana Valente Ngwenya Mozambique
Joseph Hanson Kwabena Nketia Ghana
Bruno Stagno Costa Rica
Jim Supangkat Indonesia
Adeljelil Temimi Tunisia
Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba Tanzania

The 1997 Prince Claus Awards speeches
were delivered by *Kwasi Wiredu* and *Yvonne Vera*.

Augusto Boal 1931–2009

The Prince Claus Fund honours the memory of 2007 Prince Claus Laureate Augusto Boal, founder of the revolutionary methodology known as the Theatre of the Oppressed. An innovative Brazilian theatre practitioner and playwright, Boal believed that theatre was a way to counteract social injustice and transform society: "Theatre can help us build our future, rather than just waiting for it." He experimented with interactive drama and expanded the concept of role-playing, encouraging members of the audience – in theatres, factories, farms and on the streets – to participate. By enacting their real concerns and personal experiences on a public platform, people could become self-directing actors with the power to form their own narrative of their lives rather than just be spectators. He spread his ideas through workshops, lectures and books, including *The Theatre of the Oppressed* (1973), which is now translated into more than 25 languages, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (1992) and *The Rainbow of Desire* (1995). He established Centres for the Theatre of the Oppressed, organised international festivals of the Theatre of the Oppressed, formed more than a dozen drama groups for community performance, and continuously developed new formats for interactive drama within specific contexts, such as Forum Theatre, Image Theatre and Legislative Theatre.

Theatre of the Oppressed methodology is now practiced in more than 70 countries. Augusto Boal initiated and achieved a profound revolution in the theory and practice of theatre arts worldwide. He was a truly inspirational leader and outstanding activist for culture, social justice and development.

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