

Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa

The Observatory is a Pan African international NGO created in 2002 with the support of African Union, the Ford Foundation, and UNESCO. Its aim is to monitor cultural trends and national cultural policies in the region and to enhance their integration in human development strategies through advocacy, information, research, capacity building, networking, co-ordination, and co-operation at the regional and international levels.



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OCPA News aims to promote interactive information exchange within Africa and between Africa and the other regions. Please send us information for dissemination about new initiatives, meetings, research projects and publications of interest for cultural policies for development in Africa. Thank you for your co-operation.

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CBAAC



Le Mont des Arts, Kinshasa



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Editorial

During this Christmas time of 2023, an unusual and unexpected event occurred in the sky of the Vatican, in Rome, causing shock waves throughout the entire Catholic world and beyond. The publication and global dissemination of the Fiducia Supplicans Decree, an initiative of the Dicastery (meaning Ministry) of the doctrine of the Faith, of the government of a Church which has more than 2 billion faithful.

At the end of this instruction, the Holy See authorized and even recommended the blessing of homosexual couples and divorced and remarried people.

Which meant the approval of acts judged here as the right to exercise human freedom and there as cover for unnatural unions which are severely repressed and expose their perpetrators to capital punishment.

Here, a feeling of relief, elsewhere, an unacceptable scandal!

This is a major question in an essential area of life which brings to light the relevance of the 2005 UNESCO Convention relating to the promotion of cultural diversity.

The OCPA, for its part, had already taken up the issue in the publication of its collective work in 2015 on intercultural and interreligious dialogue: the African experience.

We can hope that the very next UNESCO world conference scheduled for the beginning of 2024 in Abu Dhabi precisely on Culture and art in education can, at the very least, shed light on opinions on approach mechanisms of intercultural education.

Maputo, January 21, 2024

Lupwishi Mbuyamba

A. News from OCPA

Activities of the Executive Director and members of the OCPA Secretariat

A.1 Preparation of the annual report for 2023 and the program of activities for 2024

Like every year, after the closure caused by the grouped annual leave of the staff for a period of 1 calendar month, the Secretariat which re-opened its Headquarters in Maputo since January 23, devoted itself to the preparation of the report the past year and the projection of the activities included in the program for the new year, the third of its five-year plan V.

A.2 Interviews with OCPA partners

Already during this time, the Executive Director of OCPA has had several meetings with partners or members of the different cooperation networks with the Observatory such as

- African Capitals of Culture (Morocco) to prepare the establishment of governing bodies
- Coordination of the project relating to the development of cultural and creative industries in the Indian Ocean countries to examine the modalities of OCPA's contribution in 2024 on Advocacy
- The UNESCO Participation Program Unit for associated NGOs, on the definition of an agenda for implementing the revision activity of the Guide to the design and evaluation of cultural policies in Africa

- The General Secretariat of the Foundation on Niger on the subject of Mr. Mbuyamba's intervention at the Seminar of the 20th edition of the Festival dedicated to Music Streaming on February 1, 2023.

A.3 Contacts with members of the RICADIA network

Contacts took place during the month of January in the sense of mutual information on the state of the respective situations, on the projects envisaged in the short term or on the interventions to be made in the direction of facilitation.

These activities included contacts with

- the Festival on the Niger the scale of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the structure
- SILANG, Abidjan language and culture fair, on determining the reception of the next edition
- the ISArC of Maputo on the meeting planned for 2024 in the province Inhambane.

A.4 Contacts with other partners

In addition to the members of the RICADIA Network, other partners have had to develop their activities in association with OCPA, in particular with

- The UCLG, Cities and Local Governments UNITED, which has its permanent office for culture in Barcelona, Spain, announces the 6th edition of the Prize awarded to the most deserving City or Local Government in the field of creativity and culture in the world in 2024 which expects OCPA to contribute to the dissemination of the Call for applications and technical indications on potential candidates.
- OSISA (Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa), a partner which, in its first approach, worked for development in all sectors, including culture, in particular for Southern Africa. Already at that time he had registered a research project concerning artistic education in the Democratic Republic of Congo based and operating since its beginnings in the premises of Mont des Arts, member of RICADIA.
- Thanks to the UNESCO world conference on artistic education, she was among the initiators of the ancillary activities of the UNESCO Conference scheduled for mid-February in Abu Dhabi and the OCPA I supported in this process.

For previous news and OCPA activities click on

<http://www.ocpanet.org/activities/news/index-en.html>



B. News, events and projects in Africa

B.1 Morocco/Senegal: Memorandum of understanding for strengthening cultural cooperation

The Minister of Youth, Culture and Communication, Mohamed Mehdi Bensaid and the Senegalese Minister of Culture and Historical Heritage, Aliou Sow, signed a memorandum of understanding for the strengthening of cultural cooperation.

Through this agreement, the two parties undertake in the field of the promotion of arts and culture to encourage cooperation and cultural exchanges between Morocco and Senegal,

particularly in the area of promotion of arts and culture, preservation and enhancement of heritage and capacity building.

Under the terms of this memorandum, the two parties agree to support reciprocal participation in international cultural events (festivals, book fairs, artistic and heritage exhibitions) organized in the two countries, to encourage the organization of cultural activities alternatively in Senegal and Morocco, to promote the exchange of artistic troupes, as well as the exchange of visits from Culture officials, book and arts professionals, intellectuals, artists, managers of book fairs, festivals, and cultural establishments.

Read the article <https://www.mapnews.ma/fr/actualites/culture/maroc-s%C3%A9n%C3%A9gal-signature-%C3%A0-dakar-dun-m%C3%A9morandum-d%E2%80%99accordement-pour-le-renforcement-de>

B.2 Tanzania: Government to Improve Library Infrastructure Countrywide

The government has embarked on a programme aimed at improving all libraries in the country in order to provide opportunities for students, teachers and other people to have access to additional knowledge.

Minister for Education, Science and Technology Professor Adolf Mkenda revealed this during the inauguration of Martha Onesmo Public Library (Msangeni, Mwanza District, in Kilimanjaro Region).

"The government is planning to set aside approximately 2bn shillings for purchasing additional books and improving infrastructure of the existing library buildings across the country."

Prof Mkenda said that the improvements of the 22 libraries in different parts of the country will enable students to gain additional knowledge after getting regular education provided in schools.

Read the original article at <https://dailynews.co.tz/govt-to-improve-library-infrastructure-countrywide/>

B.3 Nigeria: How Nollywood Practitioners Have Made Impact on Nigeria's Economy

The entertainment industry in the last decade has grown in leaps and bounds and has accounted for more than 2% to the country's GDP. According to a research firm Nigeria's film industry in 2021 contributed 2.3% (\$660 million (239 billion naira)) to GDP.

PwC projects that the industry will increase its export revenue to over \$1 billion.

President of the Association of Movie Producers (AMP), Ambassador Queen Blessing Ebighieson mentioned that "Looking at the present gives me joy and relief that our visions and dreams are coming to pass. Therefore it behoves on us and regulators to think deep, reflect on what worked and how can we sustain this building systems all across the value chain of movie production, marketing and distribution as we can bring more money into the country and add more revenue to the GDP," she concluded.

Read more at <https://leadership.ng/how-nollywood-practitioners-others-have-made-impact-on-nigerias-economy/>

B.4 Algeria: Opening of the National Center for the Preservation of Manuscripts and Religious Books

The Minister of Religious Affairs and Wakfs, Youcef Belmehdi announced the opening of a National Center for the Preservation of Manuscripts, Heritage and Religious Books.

During his supervision of the inauguration of a library at the “Sidi Adda” zaouïa in the center of Tiaret, Mr. Belmehdi stressed that “Algeria will see the creation and opening of a National Center for the Preservation of Manuscripts, heritage and religious books and the decree for its creation will soon be promulgated.

“This center will provide a plus to our country, because it will allow us to reach out to families who have manuscripts with a view to making copies and using them in African academic studies, also allowing African students to study them. ”.

“The countries of the Sahel in Africa, which hold manuscripts, including from the city of Timbuktu in Mali, will also benefit from our religious heritage, namely the manuscript.”

Read the article at <https://www.aps.dz/societe/164572-ouverture-prochaine-du-centre-national-de-preservation-du-manuscrit-du-patrimoine-et-du-livre-religieux>

B.5 Africa: Conference on cultural Pan-Africanism - Culture to unite African people

After the series of listening sessions of the musical production of twelve titles called “Brisons les frontières” and which brought together more than eighty artists from different African countries for the promotion of African unity, the structure KNAL4 Production organized on December 29, at the Maison des Cultures Urbaines Ouakam, an international conference on the theme “Cultural Pan-Africanism”.

Created in 2011 by the Senegalese rapper Ibrahima Keita, KNAL4 Production is a structure which, specialized in the promotion of Rap, urban cultures and audiovisual productions, has set up a committed artistic platform called “Hip-Hop Self Defense Africa” (HHSDA).

“HHSD Africa has the general objective of promoting African Unity through Hip-Hop, a universal artistic and cultural movement, known for its inclusive approach, bringing together artists of the world without distinction of color, race or religion, ethnic or political affiliation.”

Read the article at <https://www.sudquotidien.sn/conference-sur-le-panafricatisme-culturel-la-culture-pour-federer-les-peuples-africains/>

B.6 CBAAC seeks Valorize African culture for economic growth

Jan 13, 2024 - The Director-General, of Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilisation (CBAAC), Chief Oluwabunmi Amao, has called on Africans to be deliberate in the exploration of the continent’s arts and cultural potential for improved economic growth.

The CBAAC’s Boss made this call during the centre’s annual international conference, with theme, “Arts, Culture and the Development of African Creative Economy”, held on in Lagos.

Amao said that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Document recognises arts, culture and creative economy as one of the major areas that can foster rapid economic development for any nation desirous of eradicating poverty.

She said that with the consciousness that Africa had large arrays of unexplored rich cultural resources which were under-utilised, the continent must make conscious efforts to further explore the potential in the sector.

Also, Duro Oni, a Professor of Creative Arts, said that The Millennium Development Goals could be achieved with proper exploration of the economic potential in African arts and culture.

More at <https://von.gov.ng/cbaac-seeks-more-exploration-of-african-culture-for-economic-growth/>



C. News about cultural policies, institutions and resources in Africa

C.1 Chad: Abakar Rozzi Teguil reappointed Minister of Cultural Affairs

After the appointment of the new prime minister, Doctor Success, on January 1, 2024, the country's government was reshuffled. In the new cabinet, Mr. Abakar Rozzi Teguil was reappointed to the position of Minister of Cultural Affairs, Historical Heritage, Tourism and Crafts, which he has held since October 2022.

A graduate of the University of the Sahel (UNIS, Bachelor of Science in Economics and Management, Management Economics 2004 – 2007) and CESAG (international public establishment, specializing in training, research and consultation, in Dakar), he held various positions in the diplomatic services, and management and coordination functions at the National Office for the Promotion of Tourism, Crafts and the Arts (ONPTA) and at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/MACPHTATchad/>

C.2 Senegal: An academic analyzes cultural policies from Senghor to Macky Sall

Fimela (Fatick), January 11 (APS) - The cultural policies of the four heads of state who have succeeded each other at the head of Senegal can be read differently "depending on the issues, the realities and the context", said, the researcher Ibrahima Wane.

“At each period, there has been a policy tailored to the issues, realities and context. We can compare the four heads of state but by carefully reading the contexts where there have been achievements and shortcomings ”.

Under the leadership of Léopold Sédar Senghor, the country's first president, Senegal stood out for the place given to culture in national development policy, he underlined in an interview with APS, on the sidelines of the National Festival of Arts and Cultures (FESNAC).

He believes that the benefits of this initial option are still visible with the establishment of important infrastructures including the Daniel Sorano National Theater inaugurated in 1966 and major flagship events with the first World Festival of Negro Arts. Mr. Wane recalls in this regard that Senegal had at that time one of the first Ministries of Culture in the world. Then there was the Dynamic Museum which today houses the headquarters of the Supreme Court, and the Senegalese Decorative Arts Manufactures of Thiès.

"With Senghor, there was a vision, an ambition and a real desire to place culture forward", according to the coordinator of the conference of the 12th edition of the FESNAC, whose theme is "The cultural policies in Senegal: achievements and challenges".

Then President Abdou Diouf arrived, he says, in a different context in the 1980s with the structural adjustment programs imposed by donors.

There has been a setback in certain achievements, but the crisis has the virtue of giving rise to new initiatives. It was in this period that the Dakar Biennial of Contemporary African Art ("Dak'art") was born, as did the President of the Republic's Grand Prize for arts and letters, the national gallery, the house of Doua Seck culture and the network of regional cultural centers.

"It was a period of crisis compared to the 1960s and 1970s, but it was also a period where important initiatives were taken by the State on the one hand and on the other hand by the actors who were in the obligation to take care of oneself," he explains.

This context saw the emergence of "captains of industries", such as Youssou Ndour, the vocal lead of Super Star, El Hadj Ndiaye, the boss of Studio 2000 and founder of 2Stv television, underlined Ibrahima Wane.

"This was unimaginable before artists started creating companies, opening studios and this was also valid in the visual arts. They replaced the State, artists' associations were born.

The arrival of President Abdoulaye Wade coincides with the upheavals introduced by new information and communication technologies which have amplified piracy.

"During this period, there was a new vision of culture as an economic instrument and even the World Bank integrated it into its programs as an element in the fight against poverty and as a source of job creation," explained Professor Wane, deploring institutional instability with eleven Ministers of Culture during the regime of Abdoulaye Wade (2000-2012).

From 2012, with the advent of President Macky Sall, there was the law on the status of the artist and the numerous funds set up to finance culture: the Fund for the Promotion of the Cinematographic and Audiovisual Industry (Fopica), the Urban Cultures Development Fund (Fdcu), now the Urban Cultures and Creative Industries Development Fund (FDCUIC).

"At each period, there was a context and a policy tailored according to the issues, the realities. We can make a comparison of the four heads of state but by carefully reading the contexts where there were achievements and inadequacies" concluded Mr. Wane.

More at <https://aps.sn/un-universitaire-analyse-les-politiques-culturelles-de-senghor-a-macky-sall/>

C.3 Tanzania: Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports

The Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports is a government ministry of Tanzania. The ministry was founded in 2006 by presidential notice, merging merging extant sections of sports, information, and culture into one functional ministry.

The Ministry ensures Tanzania is internationally competitive in sports with high-quality artist works and culturally oriented for National Development. It is expected to foster, facilitate, and promote national identity, good cultural values and norms, art games, and sports for National Socio-economic development.

Department is responsible for the implementation of the following tasks:

- collect, write and disseminate government statements; to collect and disseminate news and news material; to organize government news conferences and news briefings; to monitor and coordinate news bureaus, radio news and television news, and other information-related duties.
- preserve and develop traditions and culture; arts, music, cinema, languages and the Bagamoyo College of Art.
- develop sports including registration of leagues and associations; planning and construction of stadiums and sports facilities; stadium management; sports infrastructure development; deal with the issues related to the Tanzania Football Federation.

The Ministry is in charge of policy and planning as well and administration in these fields.

Since 1st September 2023 the ministry is headed by the Minister Damas Ndumbaro MP (category Government ministers of Tanzania).

Web site: <https://www.michezo.go.tz/contactus>

C.4 Morocco: 'Researcher's guide to cultural heritage' by Mohamed Lemlouki

Rabat — “Researcher’s Guide to Cultural Heritage” is the title of a new book by university professor and researcher in history and civilization, Mohamed Lemlouki, recently published by the Research Laboratory “Morocco in Africa: history, memory and international environment”, belonging to the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences of the Ibn Zohr University of Agadir.

Composed of 112 medium-sized pages, the book is divided into four axes dealing respectively with "Tangible cultural heritage", "Intangible cultural heritage", "Cultural heritage: preservation and restoration work" and "Cultural heritage: organizations and international conventions. It also offers annexes in the form of two search forms on tangible and intangible cultural heritage, a functional dictionary and an image index.

This guide attempts to answer questions worthy of attention related to efforts of documentation, protection and preservation, international reference and joint humanitarian action in the preservation of heritage assets (...) in a way that connects heritage issues to cognitive action and puts the student in contact with his university environment to make him active and involved in approaching and understanding the concerns of the State and the issues of society and contribute to the consolidation of awareness around the important role of cultural heritage in achieving economic and social development.

Read the article at <https://www.mapnews.ma/fr/actualites/culture/guide-du-chercheur-en-patrimoine-culturel-nouvelle-publication-du-chercheur>

C.5 Gabon: the 100 days of Minister André Jacques Augand for Culture and the Arts

As soon as he took office, Dr. André Jacques Augand, Minister of Culture, Youth, Sports and the Arts, immediately began by taking stock of the situation, which revealed a certain number of dysfunctions noted within the department. with which he charges her. Among these dysfunctions we noted the need to revisit certain legislative and regulatory texts which govern the functioning of the department.

To this end, he decided to set up a commission whose mission is to review the legislative and regulatory texts of the Department. These include, among others, the following texts:

Text relating to the organization and operation of the Ministry of Culture;

- The Law on copyright and related rights;
- The Decree reorganizing the Gabonese Copyright Office – BUGADA;
- The Draft Decree on the Law reserving a share of contracts on public buildings and public use for decoration by local visual artists and craftsmen;
- The Draft Decree on Patronage and Cultural Sponsorship;
- The Law establishing the status of the artist and cultural actor.

Gabon, through its Minister, intends to sign an agreement with the company COMILOG for the opening of a museum on the site of the Bay of Kings. Infrastructure in the Culture and Arts sector is not left out. Two weeks after taking office, Dr. André Jacques Augand has undertaken to restart work on the multipurpose room of the Ministry of Culture.

This place will allow cultural actors to have a space dedicated to their performances. He decided to restart of work on the administrative annex of the Ministry and the rehabilitation of ENAM.

The minister participated in the 12th ICESCO Conference in Qatar. Gabon has been designated a permanent member of the Islamic World Heritage Committee. An agreement between Gabon and ICESCO was also signed for the construction of a museum and a performance hall.

The minister also went to France for the Return of the NGIL Mask. Gabon has launched legal proceedings for this purpose, but the court's decision is still awaited. Furthermore, Gabon participated in the 42nd Session of the UNESCO General Conference. Gabon was elected Vice-President of the said conference, and member of the Executive Board of UNESCO. This victory is the fruit of the diplomatic work initiated by the President of the Transition, President of the Republic, Head of State, Brigadier General Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, since he took power.

On the issue of Gabonese cultural heritage, Dr. André Jacques Augand provided financial support to two cultural players in the fashion sector to represent our country at the “BOUKE Fashion Show” fashion festival which took place in Abidjan in Ivory Coast.

The Minister of Culture financially supported a delegation of Artists who participated in the SiCA Festival in Cameroon who received awards. But also the Gabonese Delegation led by Madame Angèle Epouta at the SITA festival (fabric festival) in Guinea Conakry during which the Gabonese stand was awarded an award. Dr. André Jacques Augand supported in obtaining visas, the African legend group which recently flew for artistic performances in France as part of cultural exchanges and visited the circus of the Equator for which several initiatives have been taken by active support through donations and concrete proposals to better promote the equator circus in Gabon and abroad.

Web site: <https://www.focusgroupemedia.com/gabon-les-100-jours-de-dr-andre-jacques-augand-a-la-culture-et-aux-arts/>

C.6 South Africa: The Ministry of Sports, Arts and Culture

The mission of the Ministry is to provide an enabling environment for the sport, arts and culture (SAC) sector to foster an active, creative, winning and socially cohesive nation.

The Ministry strives to implement this mission by acting among others with the mandate to

- Provide leadership to the sport, arts and culture sector to accelerate its transformation;
- Oversee the development and management of sport, arts and culture in South Africa;
- Legislate on sports participation, sports infrastructure and safety;
- Preserve, protect and promote the cultural, heritage, linguistic diversity and legacy;
- Enhance archives and records management structures and systems.

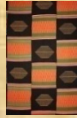
In the field of culture of the Ministry acts along the lines of two main programmes to

- A) promote and develop arts, culture, languages and implement the social cohesion strategy
- B) preserve South African heritage, including archival heritage; oversee funds to libraries.

The Ministry is headed by Ncediso Goodenough "Zizi" Kodwa (born 19 January 1970) is a South African politician and communications strategist who was appointed Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture since March 2023. Before that, he was the Deputy Minister of State Security from 2019 to 2023. He was formerly the national spokesperson of the African National Congress (ANC) from 2014 to 2018.

He was active in the Congress of South African Students. Later, as a student at the University of the Western Cape, he joined the South African Students Congress and also served as president of the student representative council. He graduated from the university in development studies.

Web site: <https://www.dsac.gov.za/qt-about-dsac>



D. News, Institutions, Resources and Events in Other Regions

D.1 COP28: New report quantifies the impact of climate disruption on 15 UNESCO designated sites

UNESCO's report highlights how climate disruption is affecting communities and ecosystems in Latin America and the Caribbean, by focusing on factors like temperature changes or weather patterns across UNESCO Global Geoparks and Biosphere Reserves. The study covers an area that is home to 110 million people and spans 1 million km² across Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Uruguay.

All 15 UNESCO sites showed increasing temperatures and changes in rain patterns, which are projected to lead to loss of vegetation cover, more forest fires, loss of habitat, loss of life, interruption of water supply and/or lower agricultural productivity. If current trends continue, they are projected to experience average temperature increases of between 2 and 7°C by the year 2100, compared to already observed temperature rises of around 1°C since 1900. All 15 sites are also projected to experience increasing climate impacts.

The report also shows that climate threats are currently being underestimated. Across almost every risk category, the number of sites identified as having medium/high risk surpasses the expectations of site managers. Notably, only 6 of 15 sites had forest fires as a major threat, yet the report reveals that risk of wildfire is projected for 13 sites in the coming decades. The study analyzed 350,000 km² of forest cover, finding a loss of 4% within just 6 years.

Source: <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/cop28-new-report-quantifies-impact-climate-disruption-15-unesco-designated-sites>

D.2 Call for Grants for the Safeguard Documentary Heritage at Risk

To address the imminent threats posed by environmental issues, wars and conflicts, UNESCO, through its Memory of the World Programme, is initiating a funding scheme. The Organization is allocating grants ranging from USD 15,000 to USD 70,000 for projects aiming to tackle specific challenges on the ground to safeguard vulnerable documentary heritage.

Memory institutions, including archives, libraries, museums and research centres, are invited to apply for funding to enhance the protection of documentary heritage holdings (ancient books and manuscripts, government records, audiovisual materials and digital documents) at risk of deterioration or loss. The initiative "UNESCO Memory of the World Initiative to Safeguard Documentary Heritage at Risk extends its support not only to public or private holding institutions but also to professional associations, NGOs and other established entities.

Submit the form to mowjfit@unesco.org no later than 16 February 2023 at 23:59 CET.

More information at <https://www.unesco.org/en/memory-world/jfit>

Contact mowjfit@unesco.org.

D.3 UNESCO: World Conference on Culture and Arts Education (Abu Dhabi, 13 -15 February)

This pivotal Conference will bring together Culture and Education Ministers from around the world in view of adopting a Framework for Culture and Arts Education (Abu Dhabi Framework for Culture and Arts Education). The World Conference will also unite relevant UN agencies, intergovernmental-organizations and UNESCO networks and partners in the field of culture and education to share practices and innovative ideas, as well as strengthen a global alliance for culture and arts education.

Building on the Road Map for Arts Education and the Seoul Agenda: Goals for Arts Education, the **elaboration of the Abu Dhabi Framework for Culture and Arts Education** has stemmed from a participatory and inclusive preparatory process, which has brought onboard the contributions of UNESCO Member States and a wide range of stakeholders. Once adopted, the Framework will be a critical tool for Member States to shape integrated strategies and policies that anchor the cultural dimension in educational systems, and support them to invest in nurturing skills and competencies, notably through culture and arts, that respond to contemporary needs and opportunities.

The text of the draft Abu Dhabi Framework for Culture and Arts Education can be read at https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2024/01/Draft%201_UNESCO%20Framework%20for%20Culture%20and%20Arts%20Education_EN_0.pdf

More information about the conference at <https://www.unesco.org/en/wccea2024>

D.4 Belgian Presidency of the EU: Promoting digital culture and media in the EU

Since 1 January 2024, Belgium has held the Presidency of the Council of the EU for the thirteenth time. Over the next six months, the Belgian Presidency will focus on three main objectives: guaranteeing better protection for European citizens, strengthening cooperation and preparing a common future.

In the cultural field, the Belgian Presidency will play an active role in promoting the digital transformation of cultural sectors and supporting media freedom and pluralism. Particular emphasis will be placed on the growing role of online influencers and content creators in media and society. The Belgian Presidency intends to adopt the Council's conclusions on support for online influencers and content creators.

In addition, the Presidency will highlight the importance of European heritage, culture and identity, while emphasising the working conditions of artists and creative professionals.

At the same time, preserving and improving media freedom and pluralism in the European media market remain essential priorities for the public interest and democracy. With this in mind, the Belgian Presidency is committed to finalising work in progress on European legislation on media freedom, in particular the EMFA (European Media Freedom Act), while promoting digital transformation and innovation in the media sector through the MAAP (Media and Audiovisual Action Plan).

Source: <https://www.acp-ue-culture.eu/en/blog/belgian-presidency-of-the-eu-promoting-digital-culture-and-media-in-the-eu/>

D.5 AFD: The Metis Fund launches an art prize! - Call for applications

Are you an artist living on the African continent and leading artistic projects that are committed to addressing topics related to development? Do you work in contact with local communities and want to develop your project?

Send your application before February 15, 2024 and try to win the Metis Prize! The Metis Prize will be awarded during the Dakar Biennale in May 2024.

More information at <https://www.afd.fr/.../Appel%20%C3%A0%20candidature-FR>. Submit applications on line at: <https://forms.gle/iXXsdcwJeMVbHcCK9> before 02/15/2024.

Metis Fund – Arts and Development: <https://metis.afd.fr/>
Contact: afdmteis@afd.fr



E. Cultural Agenda in the African Press

E.1 Links to portals

<https://allafrica.com/arts/>

<http://www.africaonline.com/site/africa/arts.jsp>

<http://www.apanews.net/news/fr/rubrique.php?id=65>

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2003/646/culture.htm>

<http://english.alarabonline.org/display.asp?code=zculturez>

<http://abidjantv.net/category/art-et-culture/>

E.2 Selected information from AllAfrica

Senegal Celebrates Pioneer of African History Cheikh Anta Diop

This 29 December marks the 100th birthday of one of the most influential African scholars of the 20th century: Cheikh Anta Diop, who pioneered a new understanding of the continent's place in history and left an enduring legacy in his native Senegal and beyond. As an Egyptologist, he studied the African roots of ancient Egypt, defending and proving Africa's fundamental place in the history of humanity, and its contribution to other great civilisations. A politician in later life, he was a fervent advocate of Pan-Africanism and a decided opponent of Léopold Sédar Senghor, Senegal's first president after independence and another influential cultural theorist. Diop's works have influenced generations, and continue to inspire the development of African-centred scholarship and the Pan-African movement. As a polymath pioneer of a new type thinking on African history he addressed in particular he issues of "precolonial black Africa" and the "cultural unity of black Africa". Source: <https://allafrica.com/stories/202312290154.html>

Angola: Huambo Hosts First African Book Biennial

The province of Huambo hosts the first African Book Biennial from the 4th to the 16th of April this year, as a multifaceted cultural space, which aims to bring together writers from 54 countries on the continent. The information was made public on Wednesday by the Angolan writer Nituecheni Africano, pseudonym of Eugénio Afonso Gaspar, The writer said that the event, an initiative of the Federal University of Brazil, which will feature the presentation of literary works by African authors, handicrafts and the exhibition of performing arts. For her part, the governor of Huambo province, Lotti Nolika, said it was a pleasure to receive an Angolan writer, who was the winner of the international 'Literary Reference' award, and also for bringing

the first African Book Biennial to this region, as the country needs young people who, despite working in silence, present public results that magnify everyone. Read more at

<https://www.angop.ao/en/noticias/lazer-cultura/huambo-acolhe-primeira-bienal-do-livro-fricano/>

Ethiopia: Artists called upon to play their role in the success of the national consultation

Addis Ababa - This national consultation aims to strengthen capacities to safeguard intangible cultural heritage for sustainable development in Ethiopia. For its success, artists were called upon to play their role by raising awareness in the community and actively participating. To this end, the commission organizes discussions with artists and other stakeholders. This discussion takes place with the guiding idea of "The role of institutions and professionals in art, publicity and event management for national consultation and national understanding". The commissioner of the national dialogue commission, Professor Mesfin Araya, urged that the national consultation requires the cooperation of all citizens and institutions to achieve its objective. The artists notably asked citizens to actively participate in the national consultation and experts to play their role. The commissioner noted that the national consultation is important to achieve lasting peace in Ethiopia urging artists to play their role in the success of the event by creating works close to the public through the media. The discussion forum focuses on the nature and importance of the national consultation and the main activities carried out by the commission to date. He also revealed that there would be extensive consultations to allow artists, institutions and stakeholders to contribute. Read the article at https://www.ena.et/web/fre/w/fre_3796906



F. Info from newsletters and information services

F.1 News from the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA – ACORNS)

An overview of salient events and actions in the field of heritage protection

The **UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation programme** were recently announced with 12 projects that recognise the efforts of private individuals and organisations in restoring, conserving, and transforming structures and buildings of heritage value in the region. In Europe, **initial reports** on the Basic Income for the Arts (BIA) pilot scheme in Ireland reveal positive impacts: recipients invest more time in their arts practice, experience reduced depression and anxiety, and work fewer hours in other sectors. In Scotland, the government's **14-week public consultation**, gathering opinions on an International Culture Strategy, revealed the importance of diverse international activities across sectors for respondents, with motivations including networking, knowledge sharing, and financial support.

UNESCO has been reinforcing a **transatlantic network of cultural heritage protection** connecting Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa. UNESCO recently conducted a capacity-building workshop in Rio de Janeiro for law enforcement, judiciary, and museum professionals from 14 Latin American, Caribbean, and African countries to enhance expertise in protecting movable cultural heritage, emphasising cooperation to combat looting and illicit trade. Participants highlighted the need to update national legislation.

Meanwhile, significant developments at COP28, the 28th United Nations Climate Change conference, held from 30 November to 12 December in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, centre on cultural heritage and climate change, acknowledging cultural heritage within the Global Goal on Adaptation and fostering the Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action, which has led

to the adoption of the Emirates Declaration on Culture-Based Climate Action. The **Emirates Declaration** recognises cultural heritage's vulnerability to climate change, emphasising the need for adaptive strategies, although criticisms remain over inadequate finance for adaptation.

Web site: <https://ifacca.org/>

Contact: info@ifacca.org

F.2 Africultures

Call for membership from Africultures

Africultures has been documenting, analyzing and criticizing contemporary African cultural expressions since 1997. More than a media, it is a place of reflection, of sharing, which considers each artistic discipline as a vast field of study to understand what pulses, screams and is created in our societies. Thanks to a wide variety of pens and perspectives present on three continents, Africultures connects worlds. You are part of our loyal readership and we hope to count on your commitment so that these expressions continue to be valued. Also, if you would like to join the Africultures association, we would be grateful if you would renew/pay for your membership for the year 2024. This annual membership, for individuals, amounts to €40 (or €3.33 per month). If you would like to become a volunteer and actively participate in the projects carried out by the association in 2024, please express your interest by email to communication@africultures.com

F.3 Agenda21culture

UCLG International Prize – Mexico City – CULTURE 21 – 6th edition 2024

The objective of the prize, launched in 2014, is to recognize cities and personalities who have distinguished themselves by their contribution to culture as a key dimension of sustainable cities. United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), as the largest international organization of local and regional governments, promotes cultural rights in sustainable development on a local, national and international scale. This prize highlights the leadership of cities in the promotion of cultural rights as a transversal driver of local sustainable development, highlighting the diversity and excellence of the policies and actions of local governments around the world. Concretely, the 6th edition of the Prize will recognize:

A) in the Category “City / Local or regional government”

- One (or two) winning city(ies) of the Prize.
- Several cities, with the “special mention of the Jury”.
- Recognition of initiatives that the Jury recognizes as “good practices.

B) in the “Personality” Category

- One or two personalities who have distinguished themselves globally for their contribution to cultural rights and the relationship culture/sustainable development.

Deadline for submission of applications: February 16, 2024.

More at [https://agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/fra - rules award uclg - cdmx - c21 2024.pdf](https://agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/fra_-_rules_award_uclg_-_cdmx_-_c21_2024.pdf)

Web site: <http://www.agenda21culture.net>

Contact: info@agenda21culture.net

F.4 News from Africalia

DRC: Cultural and creative entrepreneurship programme: Call for applications

MAZOLISI-KIN is an entrepreneurship programme run by Africalia in partnership with the incubator Ingenious City. Its aim is to consolidate Kinshasa's companies operating in the

cultural and creative industries (CCI), whose main areas of activity are the creation, development, production, reproduction, promotion and marketing of goods, services and activities with a cultural, artistic and/or heritage content. Through a 12-month incubation programme designed specifically to meet the needs of entrepreneurs in the creative and cultural sector, MAZOLISI-KIN is aimed at entrepreneurs in the sector who want to consolidate their business in order to meet the challenges facing young companies and ensure their long-term success. The programme is based on the conviction that successful businesses play an essential economic role in structuring and developing the ecosystem. They do this by supporting a network of partners and suppliers, creating decent jobs for young people, and driving economic and social innovation. **Programme duration:** 12 months - from March 2024 to February 2025
<https://africalia.be/en/cultural-and-creative-entrepreneurship-programme-in-the-drc-call-for-applications-mozalisi-kin/>

Web site: <https://africalia.be/>

F.5 Cyberkaris Interarts Foundation

Publication: “How to promote climate change through art: An Artist’s Handbook”

In the framework of the “ project, the e-book “How to promote climate change through art: An Artist’s Handbook” has been drafted as one of the main and most recent outcomes of the project. The objective of this resource is to offer practical advice for the day-to-day life of a young artist, whose work can be inspiring for many others interested in promoting eco-friendly habits, but also challenging in these times. Through a variety of examples, stories and real cases, the text provides readers an orientation on green arts and entrepreneurship, and on how individual artists, regardless of their discipline or particular interest, can use their art to create innovative artworks with a lower environmental impact, while contributing to raising awareness on the commitment and responsibility that we must all have to build a more sustainable future. The document is free and available in digital format. A(RT)CTION is funded by the EU’s Erasmus+ Programme and is implemented a groupe of culturel organisations. Source:

<https://www.interarts.net/resources/ia-ch-artction-ebook/>

F.6 Artmailer Art Go News (South Africa)

Investec Cape Town Art Fair 2024

The eleventh edition of Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Africa’s largest art fair, takes place from 16 – 18 February 2024 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre. The curatorial theme for the 2024 edition is Unbound focusing on emerging and ‘unbound’ voices. Art becomes a compelling catalyst amid global challenges. It offers individuals a platform for expression, a space where diverse voices can be heard. Unbound serves as a conduit for exploring alternative possibilities and breaking free from constrictive narratives. This edition of Investec Cape Town Art Fair sees the city of Cape Town play a far more significant role in foregrounding the Art Fair’s activities and artists for its local and international audience of collectors and institutions. As Fair director Laura Vincenti puts it, “The city’s geography is an integral part of Investec Cape Town Art Fair’s success. Cape Town is a vibrant cultural hub, with a supportive community. It is very attractive to international collectors, with the great combination of diverse, cutting-edge. Source: <https://www.investeccapetownartfair.co.za/>



**Please send addresses, information, and documents for the OCPA list serve,
database, documentation centre and web site!**

Thank you for your interest and co-operation
