



**PRESS FOLDER  
KËR THIOSSANE**

**FROM 9 TO 15 MAY 2004**

A new space working in the field of arts and multimedia, Ker Thioossane officially opened its doors in September 2003, in a private villa in the Sicap Liberté II neighbourhood, Dakar.

The aim of Ker Thioossane is to dedicate itself to artists through the integration of multimedia in artistic practices (music, dance, theatre, and visual arts) and to all kinds of public in making culture, numeric creation through computer science, and new information and communication technologies available for everyone.

In this way, artists, and in particular young African artists who have difficulties in gaining access to new technologies, find help at Ker Thioossane in realising their projects, receive advice on concepts, training in creative software, initiation in network practices, help with the creation of websites, and can participate in thematic workshops.

A centre for training and initiation in multimedia, Ker Thioossane is also a centre for development of the social link, open to the local community, with priority given to women, young people and children, in a context where inequality continues and where the frontiers between the North and the South persist. Through a large range of activities, new technologies are thus used as tools of expression and creation, and also as tools for access to culture and knowledge.

Ker Thioossane sees itself as a permanent link with the exterior, and in particular with other cultural spaces abroad, and does so by having established a space for exchange in contemporary creation (exchange of artists, information, knowledge).

Moreover, in its capacity as the "African Antenna" of the international resource centre on new spaces for culture Artfactories, Ker Thioossane informs artists and also African project bearers on the cultural centres registered in the data base, about their activities (programming, residencies, seminars, meetings) and in this way can give advice and orientation.

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*Daniel Langlois Foundation for art, science and technology*

*International Fund for promoting culture – Unesco*

*Sonatel Foundation*

***In association with***

*Mains d'Œuvres, Art Factories, AGS, Ars Longa, Toile Métisse, Ars Mathématique*

**From 11 to 13 May – Seminar for the emerging autonomous creative spaces on the African continent.**

In association with ARTFACTORIES, platform of international resources dedicated to art and cultural centres, which are born from citizen artistic initiatives ([www.artfactories.net](http://www.artfactories.net)) - Kër ThioSSane invite about twenty Senegalese project bearers, and spaces/projects coming from Mediterranean (Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt), Cameroun, Kenya, South Africa, Angola, France and Latvia.

*In partnership with Air Sénégal International, Africalia, Roberto Cimetta Fund – Ford Foundation Cairo - Prins Claus Fund*

**On the 8th and 13th of May : Kër ThioSSane's parties dedicated to digital arts.**

On the occasion of these parties especially dedicated to digital arts, Kër ThioSSane will present artists who combine traditional practices with new technologies.

➤ **Philippe Monvaillier**, multimedia artist, will present two interactive installations conceived in Congo Brazzaville where he lives : « **Sanzationnel** » - senza duo with sound and images, with the participation of Saintrick and Janvier, of Saintrick group and the Tchielly (Africa Fête).

« **Cyberfétiche** » - Living totem sculpture - an interactive chattertree, with the participation of a story teller Massamba Gueye.

➤ **Interactive performing dance** – Fatou Cissé – Doudou & Sountou.

➤ **Deep Roots – Sound Mix : world music, reggae (sound-system..).**

**8 May : 7.30 / 10.00 PM – villa n°1695 Sicap Liberté II** (behind Demba Diop stadium, in front of the "sous prefecture") – free entrance.

**13 May : 9.00 PM / 2.00 AM – villa n°1695 Sicap Liberté II** – free entrance.

**From 9 to 15 May : public opening of Kër ThioSSane's space**, all the days from 3.00 to 7.30 PM, **excepted on the 12th May :**

➤ **Exposition gravures Antoine Louisgrand « Back to Harlem »**

➤ **Exposition digital sculptures** – Cheick Diouf, Birame Gueye, M. Lamine Kourouma, the first African cybersculptors, and the works of art of INTERSCULPT- in association with Toile Métisse / Ars Mathématica.

**Présentations extérieures des œuvres numériques « Sanzationnel », « Cyberfétiche » de Philippe Monvaillier :**

- 9 mai – 19h30 à 21h30 – Medina – Rue 35/Angle 30 (côté Centenaire/angle Goumba)

- 10 mai – 10h00 à 15h00 – Dak'Art Lab – Biennale de Dakar - CICES

- 12 mai – 15h00 à 19h00 - Ile de Gorée – Place du Marché

- 14 mai – 19h30 à 21h30 – L'Empire – 17 Av. Malick Sy – Médina (proche Porte 3<sup>ème</sup> Millénaire).

*En partenariat avec la Fondation Sonatel*

## 1- Seminar for emerging autonomous creative spaces on the African continent 11 to 13 may 2004 Artfactories / Kër Thiossane

On the occasion of the 6<sup>th</sup> Biennale of Contemporary Art in Dakar, "Dak'ART", in May 2004, **Kër Thiossane** in collaboration with the **Artfactories** international resource office, is organising a seminar for the emerging autonomous creative places on the African Continent from 11 to 13 May 2004.

Artfactories is a platform of international resources dedicated to autonomous art and cultural centres. Since September 2003, Kër Thiossane, centre for art and multimedia set up in Dakar, has worked as the Artfactories African antenna.

On the website – <http://www.artfactories.net> - the database today presents and promotes more than 180 cultural centres, deriving from citizens' artistic projects throughout the world. Far from being exhaustive, this repertoire is enriched after each meeting, exchange, contact, and link. At present, about fifteen experiences in Africa and in its Mediterranean basin are listed on the Artfactories' website. Nevertheless. The antenna in Dakar is currently in contact with about 30 cultural operators in the African continent.

In a difficult social, economic and political context, citizens' artistic projects never cease developing almost everywhere on the African continent (North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Africa, South Africa, Mediterranean).

Strengthened by their beliefs, artists and artists' co-operatives occupy spaces and build centres so that their works can take on life.

These new spaces of creation, experimentation, dialogue, discussion, meetings and diffusion are dedicated to new artistic, cultural or social practices. They operate as real research and creation's laboratories on the African continent for contemporary artists, facilitate and encourage the emergence of new artistic propositions and a new African creative movement, close to its public, more free and independent. These multidisciplinary centres offer indispensable aid to emerging contemporary creation.

Centres of life, these initiatives are close to local artists, and develop active relationships with communities and participation in the process of artistic creation, in training workshops, in debates. These new artistic approaches also come up against a multitude of questions, linked to urban development, education and co-operation, and participate in sustainable cultural development.

Their specific local environments make these cultural and artistic spaces, emerging from all corners of Africa, very special places.

These centres are often isolated and far from each other. Project bearers in Africa therefore know very little or nothing of the existence of similar experiences beyond their frontiers. They encounter the same difficulties, even if they are in different environments.

This new cultural set-up further encourages meetings between independent art centres springing up everywhere in the world, so that all project initiators can get to know each other and help each other.

This seminar would like to offer to the most of african projects located to date a time of meeting, of exchange of know-how and experiments to help them to perennialize their projects, so that each one can nourish experiments of the ones and others, so that can circulate the artists and their projects...

## Programme

All sessions (besides Thursday afternoon) are accessible only to the participants invited by Kër Thioossane and Artfactories.

Tuesday 11 may 12.30 A.M : Welcome in Kër Thioossane

**Presentation of Kër Thioossane centre**, its staff and its facilities.

From 1.00 to 9.00 P.M : **Guided tour of cultural centres in Dakar and its surroundings**

Wednesday 12 may From 9.30 to 10.30 A.M : **Foreword**: Chantal Lamarre and Fazette Bordage

10.30 A.M - 1.30 P.M : **presentation of each spaces/projects participants**

Each space/project participant introduces itself ( in 10 minutes) by answering both questions below :

- Why did you create this space/project ?
- Which are the major issues for your space today?

From 3.00 to 6.00 P.M : **«Identities of the spaces/projects: to know each other, to dialogue, to exchange »**

Some working groups will be proposed on the different issues that will have emerged in the morning session. Different themes linked to the centres will be approached such as : politics, environment, urban context, architecture, techniques, economy, functioning, organisation, networking, artistic and cultural projects...

Thursday 13 may From 9.30 A.M to 1.30 P.M : **« How to build together? »**

After identifying each space/project and its operational modes, we will look into the possibilities of “building together” in order to define eventual common perspectives: how to be a political force but also a force of reflexion, a potential of development, as to strengthen their legitimacy. The missions of the Artfactories’ African antenna (Kër Thioossane) will be exposed to the participants ; it is meant to act as a resource and information desk offering a basis for further development and structuration of these dynamics. Together participants will be invited to explore the possible actions on the African territory.

From 3.00 to 6.00 P.M : Public open discussion at Kër Thioossane

Presentation of spaces/projects as medium of artistic, cultural, professional, economic and sustainable development.

Dialogue with several representatives of cultural public institutions in Senegal, and with diverse foundations and partners who have supported the seminar (Ford Foundation, Africalia, Prins Claus Fund....)

From 9.00 P.M to 2.00 A.M : Closure dedicated to digital arts at Kër Thioossane

- presentation of the interactive installations of Philippe Monvaillier : “Cyberfetish” and “Sanzationnel”
- interactive dance performance
- digital sculptures

During the working groups, Artfactories, platform of international resources dedicated to creative autonomous spaces, will provide examples of similar practices in others continents.

During the seminar Kër Thioossane will be the resource place in Dakar on independent art and cultural centres in Africa and throughout the world. A documentation space will be accessible to the public from the 11 to 13 may.

## 2 –Philippe Monvaillier - « Sanzationnel » / « Cyberfétiche ».

**Philippe Monvaillier is a French multimedia artist who chose Afrika as the place for his creations** (he lives now in Congo-Brazzaville after three years spent in Johannesburg).

He used to collaborate with local African artists, teachers and social workers for creating interactive street installations, multimedia theater, websites and videos.

Ker Thioossane takes Dakar's Biennale opportunity for inviting him to present two of his recent works (Sanzationnel and Cyberfetish) created in Brazzaville last December and to be exhibited in Dakar with three participating Senegalese artists: Saintrick and Janvier (from the band Saintrick and the Tchielly) and Massamba Gueye.

### **SANZATIONNEL**

is performed by two sanza players (the sanza is a traditional musical instrument from Central Africa). An electronic interface connects the sanzans to a sampler for creating soundscapes and to a virtual videomixer for making interactive images to be displayed on a screen. The sounds played by the sanzans are samples recorded in the street in Brazzaville and the images are a compositions of pictures and movies also coming from the Congolese capital. With the help of very innovative technological tools, playing these sanzans is a way of making a very unusual portrait of an African city and its urban life.

### **CYBERFETISH**

is a living totem sculpture, an interactive chattertree to be installed on a street corner or in any public space. The sculpture itself is a stack of spare materials with, on the top, an old TV set screening the image of a living and always changing African mask. Pedestrians and visitors can question the mask, which becomes alive and answer them like an oracle, a sphinx, a fetish.

### 3 – Digital sculptures – Toile Métisse / Ars Mathématica

It is not acceptable today, that the Black continent which has seen and still sees the emergence of talented sculptors, remains apart from the digital artefacts' revolution, offering incomparable possibilities of creation and promotion.

That is why, Kër Thioissane has wished for giving the opportunity to Senegalese artists to introduce themselves to digital sculpture, particularly with the 3D (three dimensional) software Form Z, during a workshop from 25th august to 12th September, in partnership with the associations Toile Métisse and Ars Mathématica.

Pioneer in digital sculpture, theoretician and practitioner of cyber-culture, Christian Lavigne has started this workshop introducing the computer-assisted sculpture from a technical and artistic point of view.

This presentation has resulted in a practical part, inviting Senegalese artists to carry out their own sculptures.

Finally, three artists, among them Cheikh Diouf, Birame Gueye, Mohamed Lamine Kourouma has fulfilled their work presented on this post.

The aim of this workshop was not only to offer to African sculptors, the possibility to try their hand at an avant-garde discipline but also to engage them to present their work virtually, resulting from this workshop, during the World Biennial of digital sculpture « Intersculpt » which took place in October 2003 at the the Digital Fnac in Paris / France.

The sculpture of Cheikh Diouf has been realized physically thanks to the participation of the Materialise Society (Belgium) ; the Birame Gueye and M. Lamine Kourouma's works has been engraved on crystal block thanks to the participation of Cybersculpture & Co Society (France).

Trainer:

- Christian LAVIGNE, writer and multimedia artist, graduated in mathematical holography and CAO, specialized in internet, pioneer in digital sculpture, co-founder of Ars Mathématica and INTERSCULPT, theoretician and practitioner of cyber-culture.

Participants :

- Mohamed Lamine Kourouma : sculptor, painter, decorator. Trained in the National School of Arts in Dakar, he collects artefacts to create his master-pieces. Kourouma lives and teaches in Rufisque

- Biram Gueye : ceramist- sculptor, teacher since 1980 at the National School of Arts in Dakar. He teaches ceramics at the Elementary School Franco-Senegalese in Dakar Plateau .

- Cheikh Diouf : Trained in the National School of Arts in Dakar, Cheikh has won several prizes, one of which is the price of French cooperation during the Biennial of Arts in 1992. He has participated in various exhibitions in Senegal, Belgium and France.

#### 4 – Antoine Louisgrand – « Back to Harlem »

Graduated at the Fine Art School of Lyon, the French artist Antoine Louisgrand developp classical technics as well engraving, drawing, poetry as new forms like photography or multimedia with the creation of his own website :  
[www.harlemlife.org](http://www.harlemlife.org).

The six years he has spent in New York between 1996 and 2000, in the heart of Harlem, has brought him to center his research on the American society in its extremes, more particularly on the black community and the immigration in the United States and in the world.

Untitled « Back to Harlem » the exhibition at Kër Thioossane presents a set of engravings printed on posters of the new yorkese subway, used every day by millions of passengers, “slaves” of the consumering society.

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