

LUANDA ONDE ESTÁ? CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART AND THE RENTIER STATE

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WHERE IS LUANDA?

Once called the “Paris of Africa,” on account of its flourishing harbor trade and splendid architecture, Angola’s capital Luanda is today more often likened to Dubai, the quintessential oil-fed megalopolis. This is a comparison its elite encourages.¹ The city has erupted in a rash of metal, glass and concrete structures, magazines report stories of Manhattan-like offices and luxury apartments, and the iconic waterfront, the Marginal, received a makeover that reportedly involved the importation of 3000 palm trees from Miami.² After Saudi Arabia, Angola is China’s biggest oil provider and the extensive deals between the two countries, notably the much-discussed “oil for infrastructure” arrangements, are in evidence far beyond the offshore platforms that dot the oil-rich basins of the south Atlantic.³ In 2005, one visitor to Luanda noted that the Ministry of Finance building, erected by Chinese contractors, was built with elevators labeled only with Chinese characters (Ghazvinian, 2007). In recent years, Luanda has consistently been placed amongst the world’s most expensive cities, with apartments costing many thousands of dollars to rent per month (Baobab Blog, 2011). Meanwhile the majority of the city’s population, including many people displaced by the near-30-year civil war that ended in 2002, live in poverty in the haphazard, unregulated streets and structures of the *musseques*, the informal shanty towns of the urban poor.⁴ Indeed, Luanda is a hot spot for both rapid

growth and massive wealth disparities. It is also, increasingly, one for contemporary art.

In 1957 José Luandino Vieira composed his “Canção para Luanda” (“Song for Luanda”). He wrote it amidst demographic and topographic tumult in his city, the end of the Second World War spurring a large influx of Portuguese settlers and a dramatic expansion of the “cement city” in which they lived.⁵ Today, amidst the city’s latest phase of cacophonous construction and its enduring rich–poor dichotomy, the question that Vieira posed in that poem seems more relevant than ever; “Luanda, onde está?” (Luanda, where is it?).⁶ If, amidst the swinging cranes in air and careening traffic on the ground it is hard to see the city, on the global map of contemporary art, Luanda has never been more visible. In 2006 the Luanda Triennial was established, featuring homegrown talent alongside circuit regulars such as Alfredo Jaar and musicians such as New York’s DJ Spooky. Jumping off from the Triennial, the first Africa Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2007 consisted of the collection of Luanda-based businessman Sindika Dokolo, whose eponymous foundation is run by the Angolan artist and cultural impresario, Fernando Alvim. In 2009, Alvim claimed that amidst future construction plans was a white-cubesque building to house the Núcleo Africano de Arte e Cultura Contemporânea, a major cultural hub that would be closely connected to the Sindika Dokolo Foundation (Redvers, 2008a). This, Alvim proposed, would be a more permanent base for the effervescent art

scene, and a space in which to exhibit and experience the Dokolo collection, as well as other global contemporary art, including art from across Africa and the Diaspora. In 2010, the second incarnation of the Triennial was staged under the title “Emotional Geographies: Art and Affection.”

Connections between Luanda’s rapidly developing cultural scene and the burgeoning oil industry are, unsurprisingly, manifold; Sonangol — Angola’s parastatal oil company — was a major sponsor of the 2007 Africa Pavilion in Venice (Soares de Oliveira, 2007). Of course, times of economic prosperity typically breed new markets for art and new appetites for corporate sponsorship of the cultural. Yet these are not prosperous times for the estimated 43.4% of the population living below the poverty line, for whom life expectancy remains at just over 50 years (UNICEF, 2013). Further, as Ricardo Soares de Oliveira has argued, the reach of Sonangol into both government coffers and cultural life is far beyond the usual remit of “Corporate Social Responsibility.” The enmeshing of art and corporate finance with a whiff of kleptocracy is certainly nothing new, but the nexus of art and oil in Angola deserves specific attention. What is blossoming in Luanda is not simply a new marketplace for the buying and selling of art; it is an oil-funded forum upon which a (re)making of national creative culture is performed whilst art is used to position Luanda for global consumption.

The explosion of new media and digital works, in evidence at the 2006 Luanda Triennial and at the 2007 Venice Biennale, inspired debate as to what defines “Angolan” art (Kasfir, Collier, Okeke-Agulu, Nelson, & David Bunn, 2008). That debate about nationalist expressions, certainly relevant during postconflict reconstruction, crystallized around questions of medium. Here I propose that we think, too, about how

works embrace recurrent themes with specific resonances in urban Angola, such as post-civil war fragmentation and memory, urban poverty and informal economies, all framed by a oil-buoyed city that is modeling itself on one of the Middle East’s most postmodern, postnational megacities. Just as Sonangol sees no conflict in being proudly “national” yet global in reach, art appears to serve as both a re- and a de-territorialization of contemporary Angolan culture. “Luanda, where are you?” is answered with “here and everywhere.”

The burgeoning of contemporary Angolan art is here located in relation to the “rentier state” and its antinomies. In his account of the former Shah of Iran, Ryszard Kapuściński aptly summed these up, stating that “oil creates the illusion of a completely changed life, life without work, life for free.” “The concept of oil,” he continued, “expresses perfectly the eternal human dream of wealth created through lucky accident . . . oil is a fairy tale and, like every fairy tale, a bit of a lie” (Ryszard Kapuściński, 1985). The “rentier state” is, typically, a state whose principal revenue is derived from the renting of access to its natural resources, a state whose productive economy subsequently shrinks because it is unable to compete with oil rent revenue and whose wealth benefits only the small minority involved in the extractive industry. Autocratic governance typically ensues; political leaders are unanswerable to an untaxed population. The rentier state is one in which the liberal ethos of “hard work” is corrupted and economic gain is seen as windfall rather than reward. Angola’s oil is largely offshore, enabling the industry to develop as “enclaved” from the population; its employees are closeted in secure compounds and its profits are spent elsewhere.⁷ A critical distance exists between the industry and the population; this physical gap between offshore production and onshore reality is a distance

that helps to obscure any causal relationship between oil and inequality.

This paper considers how art is discussed, how it is framed and how its production is impacted in the context of Angolan rentierism. Focusing attention on Luanda, I consider how creative culture has been instrumentalized by Sonangol as a means of performing the cultural renaissance of postconflict Angola, open for international business. Furthermore, I examine how Luanda has emerged as a major launching pad for a particular notion of contemporary African art as generalized socio-political critique. I locate the evacuation of specificity in the latter and its familiar characterization as signifying the continent's generic structural problems at the heart of discourse around art in the rentier state. Indeed, if in the rentier state the cause of inequality has been obscured, in the art galleries of the rentier state is the local resonance of works that purport to critique social circumstances also concealed?

I am not interested in exposing a corporation's attempt to "greenwash" itself, rather I raise the larger issue of how art's potential for social critique is concealed or manipulated in the midst of rentierism; thornier questions lurk, regarding who, within the art world, could be complicit in such practices and what options remain for artists to resist.⁸ I begin by unpacking the notion of the "rentier state" as it has been defined within social science, before considering its relevance to art and culture. Another, more urgent, question looms large with regard to the global and local sustainability of an art scene suckling on the spoils of a finite resource. Whilst the question of ecological sustainability is more broadly relevant to the network of global art extravaganzas and their reliance on disposable architectures and extensive air travel, it is particularly pertinent to Angola, whose oil production,

based on existing discoveries, could peak as early as 2016.⁹ Whilst the imagery of abundance still trumps the specter of resource depletion, what role is contemporary art playing in the making of a new national fairy tale in Angola?

CONFLICT, RESOURCES AND THE RENTIER STATE

Hossein Mahdavy coined the phrase "rentier" states in 1970 (Mahdavy, 1970). Having observed the economies of oil production and exportation in Iran, Mahdavy identified them as those nations "that receive on a regular basis substantial amounts of external economic rent" from foreign clients in return for access to their natural resources.¹⁰ Following Mahdavy, political scientists and economists in the 1980s began to consider the broader social and political implications of developing a national economy dependent upon exogenous sources, of which resource rents are likely the most lucrative. In the late 1980s Giacomo Luciani and Hazem Beblawi parsed the notion of the "rentier state" and unpacked the unique conditions of the externally dependent rentier *economy*, the wealth generation by the minority who inhabit the rentier *state* and the rentier *government* as principal beneficiary (Beblawi & Luciani, 1987). As a "subset of a rentier economy," Luciani and Belawi argue that the "rentier state" must always be examined as relative to such an economy. It is, thus, to be characterized by a dependence on external rents generated by a small minority and received by the government. Rent ensures that the state is not dependent either on the domestic economy or taxation (Yates, 1996, p. 18). It follows that rentier governments are typically "allocative" ones, in which they are responsible for *giving* to the population (rather than inciting productivity). Citizenship, thus, is less a relationship between

“man and his homeland, it is . . . primarily a pecuniary one” (Beblawi, 1990, p. 88).

Beblawi suggested that a “rentier mentality” follows in which the connection between work and reward has been severed; economic gain is an “isolated” fact, contrary to the conventional notion that “reward is integrated in a *process* as the end result of a long, systematic and organized production circuit” (Beblawi, 1990; Yates, 1996, p. 18). This has major implications for civil service, which soon appears far more lucrative than private business. The creation of an enclave industry characterizes a rentier economy, in which oil extraction, production and exportation are isolated from the wider domestic economy; in Angola the reality of offshore extraction lends a physicality to an “enclaving” that is typically economic.¹¹ The subsequent decline in domestic manufacturing and production leads to a dependence on imported goods, whilst the massive sums reaped from price booms increase the rentier government’s capacity to “allocate” (Luciani, 1990). In his case study of rentier Gabon, Douglas Yates highlights the fallacy of “allocation *as* development,” or, in other words, of spending large sums of state money on prestige projects (which could remain unfinished if oil prices drop) without planning the more extensive infrastructure needed for sustainable modernization.¹² “Rentierism,” thus, has the potential to permeate all aspects of a state — economic, political, social and psychological — and it lies at the heart of the “natural resource curse.”¹³

Images are central to the rentier state, bound up as it is in the visualization of dreams coming true. Even Kapuscinski invokes the popular mythology of discovering oil via its familiar representation: “Many photographs preserve the moment when the first oil spurts from the well: people jumping for joy, falling into each other’s arms, weeping” (Kapuściński, 1985). Conveying

this sense of dreams coming true is important to rentier states, hence the proliferation of highly visible prestige projects. In Ahmed Kanna’s study of Dubai, he highlights the Middle East’s particular appetite for “starchitects” and for commissioning “iconic” structures. In order to erect these icons, Kanna notes that the architects begin with a vision of the city as a “clean slate,” an open terrain. This, Kanna interprets, as “a space evacuated of history . . . and culture.” In the void, the building as spectacle/statement is constructed.¹⁴ Typical of rentier states is the erection of such without public consultation or relevant broader infrastructure; as Antonio Andrade Tomas argues, “this makes the structure appear to be even more sensuous and sublime” (Tomas, 2012, p. 101). At the heart of seeing and of being seen in the rentier state is both a blindness to and a blinding of lived and living realities.

Andrew Apter’s important study of Nigerian oil money in relation to the Second World Festival of Black Arts (FESTAC) in 1977 portrays the latter as exemplary of the kind of excessive, allocative “squandermania” that “windfall” petrodollars invite. Tracing the program of FESTAC, from its constitution as a pan-African, international “black” cultural spectacle through its reclamation of such local “invented traditions” as the Delta regatta (complete with its war canoe) and the grand durbar ceremony of honoring guests, Apter argues that the festival epitomized the extravagances and unpredictable nature of a rentier, or what he calls more specifically, an “occult,” economy based on “magic” oil money.¹⁵ He sees FESTAC’s simulacrum of cultural production, regeneration and “authenticity” as entirely entwined in and emblematic of an economy built upon the dangerously illusory value of oil. If in the 1970s, the heyday of OPEC and of postcolonial nation-building, oil was imagined as a fabulous, if unstable means for a

young nation-state to get-rich- and get-cultured-quick, in the twenty-first century oil represents the bigger promise of global economic participation, and in Angola as in other rentier states, it can be used to buy the image of such.¹⁶ Art, when rendered as generic signifier of cool urbanity (regardless, perhaps, of content), is a conspicuously consumable rentier commodity for those with money to spend.

In 2008 Angola overtook Nigeria, becoming Africa's biggest oil producer with capacity to pump over 2 million barrels of high-quality crude each day. Angola has since scaled back production to meet OPEC reduction directives aimed at regulating price, and in 2010 was producing around 1.85 million barrels a day; hence the nation has slipped behind Nigeria once again. Nonetheless, it is impossible to deny that the former Portuguese colony is a leader in sub-Saharan oil production, its principle customer being the world's biggest consumer of energy: China (Gentile, 2009). With much of its extraction taking place deep in the Atlantic, south of the Gulf of Guinea, Angola is attractive to foreign interests, its largely offshore infrastructure circumventing the "dirty" conflict that characterizes the more socially and ecologically intrusive onshore industry in the Niger Delta.

Whether or not Angola is a classic "rentier" state is the source of considerable debate. There is no denying that the country displays many of the characteristics of rentierism — an enclaved oil industry, a dependence upon resource exports, an elite minority, unaccounted government financial practices and a lack of civil society. However, its lengthy civil war complicated the classic relationship between government enrichment, dependency and resources. Lasting with varying intensity from 1975 to 2002, the Angolan civil war was essentially fought between the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA),

which assumed power upon independence from Portugal in 1975, and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). In the quintessential proxy conflict of the Cold War, the Soviet and Cuban-backed MPLA, led first by Agostinho Neto then, from 1979, by Jose Eduardos dos Santos, faced Jonas Savimbi's anti-communist UNITA with its support from the USA and apartheid South Africa. After the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of Cold War funding arrangements, both sides of the civil war turned decisively to the country's natural resources to maintain a supply of weapons. The MPLA (government forces) subsequently generated income from the national oil industry through direct exportation and the acquisition of loans based on projected oil production. Throughout the 1990s, UNITA, on the other hand, infamously mined and smuggled Angola's other major resource: diamonds.¹⁷

Certainly, the vagaries of the "war economy" expedited particular rentier characteristics with regard to resource dependency. Unsurprisingly, given the country's conflict-bred economic instability, the onset of rentierism in Angola was not without its anomalies: the decline in national industry and manufacturing, for example, predated the rise of oil in the Angolan economy (DiJohn, 2002, p. 8). The fact remains that Angola's economy since independence has been dominated by oil; 2011 International Monetary Fund statistics stated that oil accounted for 76 percent of government revenues.¹⁸ Oil revenues do not just pour into state coffers, but also conspicuously run through the corridors of power. In the 2012 elections, the running mate of President Dos Santos was Manuel Vicente. Now Angolan Vice President, Vicente formerly spent over a decade at the head of the principal recipient and handler of Angola's oil rent, the national oil company Sonangol.¹⁹

SONANGOL AND CULTURAL RENTIERISM

Even as the MPLA restructured the rest of the Angolan political economy along Marxist–Leninist lines in 1976, oil was spared (Soares de Oliveira, 2007, p. 600). Whilst MPLA rhetoric blustered about chasing away foreign oil interests, Sonangol executives quickly lured them back and, throughout 40 years of conflict and turmoil, the company has remained a national (and increasingly global) constant (Soares de Oliveira, 2007, pp. 598–599). Soares de Oliveira has traced the “rise and rise” of Sonangol and the savviness that the company has displayed not simply in business practices through personnel acquisition, joint ventures and the creation of subsidiaries, but also in political terms in its courting of the USA across Cold War lines, its wooing of the World Bank, who once praised its competence, and the nurturing of an elite “presidential clique” (Soares de Oliveira, 2007, p. 607). The latter, made up of civil servants, family and confidantes of those at the apex of power, is known as the “Futungo de Belas” after the name of the palace in which the president resides. The “Futungo” are sometimes implicated as the third point, alongside Banco Nacional de Angola and Sonangol, in a so-called “Bermuda Triangle,” sardonically named because it is between these three that considerable amounts of extractive industry finance are believed to disappear (Hodges, 2001). As a company, an investor, a negotiator and source of “parallel finance” for the government, Sonangol is both instrumental and indispensable to the development of the Angolan political economy.²⁰

It is unsurprising, therefore, that Sonangol is considered central to Angola’s postwar recovery and that it promotes this notion in its public relations material, particularly its glossy magazine, *Universo*.²¹ *Universo*, the most recent issues of

which can be downloaded in PDF form from Sonangol’s website, typically features articles about developments in the oil (and, increasingly, gas) industry alongside stories about young Angolan scholars sponsored to study abroad, and aspiring musicians and patriotic sportsmen who have benefited from the company’s munificence. The Spring 2006 issue celebrated the company’s 30-year anniversary, repeatedly emphasizing its “birth” only a year after that of the independent Angolan state. “Growing up together” reads the advertisement adjacent to the contents page, emphasizing the natal conjoining of state and company. However, whilst the elder public sibling endured 30 years of destructive civil conflict, the younger private sibling has enjoyed consistent growth.

Many of articles in *Universo* focus on Angolan cultural life, from sport to drama to architecture and, of course, contemporary art. The football team helps to evidence a new spirit of togetherness and a new occasion to furiously fly the national flag. Community theater, a recent addition to Angolan cultural life, connects with “old traditions” of oral histories, masked ceremonies and ritual dances, and communicates educational messages about health and society. Whilst these articles purport to report on the resurgence of creative life in postwar Angola, they are less transparent on how directly instrumental the oil company is in providing funding and support for certain projects. Sonangol, for example, sponsors a major literary prize and, in 2001, compiled a music CD of noted Angolan artists. Entitled “Cantagolando” (Singing Angola), it sought to “[exalt] the cultural affirmation of the Sonangol Group.”²² On the verge of the 2002 ceasefire, the project’s coordinator João Rosa Santos encouraged Angolans to “Sing Angola, Sing Ngol” because “in the end, Angolan petroleum goes far.”

As the glossy photos of Fernando Alvim's office in the Winter 2008 edition or the shots of slick gallery spaces in the December 2010 issue demonstrate, art is used to invoke a certain urban sophistication that departs from the folksy togetherness of community theater or football. In Louise Redvers's article "Art of the Nation" in winter 2008 she presents Angolan contemporary art as socially incisive, helping to heal the wounds of the civil war and expose injustice. She quotes Alvim stating that he wishes to present Angolan art on its own terms, to escape the notion of it (and African contemporary art more broadly) being continuously "ghettoized" and dismissed as derivative of Western forms (Redvers, 2008a, p. 25). Alvim made no direct references to Sonangol, although the alliance of state and private interests is nodded to in the mention of the sponsorship of an art conference by ENSA, the state-owned insurance company (Redvers, 2008a, p. 25). A resurgent collective nationalism amongst young artists is referenced in the highlighting of "Os Nacionalistas," a group of artists founded in the late 1990s to encourage solidarity and autonomy of artistic production. In Redvers's article, emphasis is put on the desire to lay the infrastructure for a national art scene, from building gallery spaces to establishing domestic sponsorship for artist training.

A subsequent piece by Anthony Downey of Sotheby's in London reflects a highbrow commercial outlet's role in placing Angola in broader African and a global contemporary context (Downey, 2008). Downey names a number of Angola's leading lights, including Alvim, António Ole, Frank K. Lundangi and N'Dilo Mutima. His article's title, "Angola Remix," consciously references Simon Njami's major exhibition *Africa Remix: Contemporary Art of a Continent*, which toured internationally in 2004–2007. In various

ways Downey praises the Angolan artists for their social engagement, their presentation of both Angola's grisly past and its shaky present, complete with enduring poverty. The message conveyed is mixed. Angolan contemporary art is socially committed and provocative; yet its creators are itching to sell and the capital city is emerging as a vibrant market place with a white cube vibe. Perhaps most telling is Downey's discussion of the work of António Ole, notably his *Margem Da Zona Limite*, which was first shown in Teatro Elinga in Luanda in 1994 (contrary to Downey's assertion that its first showing was in Brooklyn; Siegert, 2010; Downey, 2008, p. 29). This work, and subsequent related works, such as *Township Wall*, Downey asserts, have an "urban feel" to them, referring to their employment of old bricks, corrugated iron and other city detritus, and their invocation of the informal architecture of shantytown settlements.

Downey's observations about Ole's work would seem entirely relevant for a piece introducing art in a city where ramshackle *musseques* constitute the housing of the majority. Indeed, as Nadine Siegert has argued, Ole, who grew up in Angola's capital, has demonstrated both an "artistic and ethnographic" interest in documenting *musseques* life since the 1970s, when he first photographed some of their inhabitants (Siegert, 2010, p. 44). Yet Downey asserts that Ole's work is best understood as referring to "the international aspect of poverty," (inaccurately) emphasizing *Margem Da Zona Limite*'s first use of materials found on a Brooklyn dump to thoroughly deterritorialize the work's original content (Downey, 2008, p. 29). Since Ole would go on to make and remake works such as *Township Wall* in a variety of international galleries, from Venice to Washington, DC, global resonances must not, of course, be entirely denied. However, in step with the obscurantist tendencies of the



Figure 1. Township Wall installation, Venice Biennial 2003. Corrugated iron, doors, windows and other found objects.

Photo by and courtesy of António Ole. Image and permissions via Nadine Siegert.

rentier state, Downey avoids seeking more local answers to the issue he himself raises: how (and why) is it that structures such as shantytowns come into being? The immediate context of Ole's creation, the *musseques*, is conspicuously denied. Downey's article exposes how commentators can repackage socially engaged Angolan contemporary artists as earnest *global* critics who do not specifically address (or threaten) local realities. Thus, their work remains palatable to the wealthy

oil executives who read *Universe*, and are important new art market patrons.

Downey's brief discussion of Ole's work provides an insight into how contemporary art market brokers explain, and even further mystify, poverty in the context of a rentier state. Since the connection between work and wealth has been severed, the local poor cannot be characterized as plain lazy. Instead, to the extent possible, they are presented as a part of the curious, global

unfortunate masses. Artists like Ole are unable to pose questions as to national or local contexts of poverty; instead attention is turned toward international complexes — historical neglect, colonial legacies, developing world exploitation and, importantly for Angola, conflict. Here in an oil-industry publication, poverty is glibly characterized as the fall-out of lengthy, geopolitically complex conflict, deflecting criticism from an oil industry whose profits have been enjoyed by an elite. Whilst oil wealth, sublimely visible in Luanda's growing skyline, has become socially and spatially enclaved, the fate of Angola's poor is spatially unbound, determined by factors beyond national borders. Art intended to reference these questions, although recognized as empathizing gestures, can be dismissed as reflections of the global dimensions of poverty. A perverse situation emerges, wherein an oil company promoting the riches that it has brought to Angola publicizes and promotes art works that had potential to ignite discussion of the darker dimensions of the oil-based fairy tale. The cover of the issue of *Universo* in which Ole's work is discussed bears a digital rendering of a glowing skyscraper, a reference to the lead story entitled "City of Dreams" (Redvers, 2008b).

A desire to invite criticism of its practices or its enduring monopoly is unlikely to motivate Sonangol's publicity of such works. Rather, the international cultural cache that artists such as Ole and Alvim can bring to Angola with their engaged, conceptual practices more probably underpins their promotion.²³ Indeed if supporting drama and football amounts to encouraging a nationalist appetite for (partially invented) home-spun traditions, promoting and supporting contemporary art enables Sonangol to present Luanda as a sophisticated "Global City."²⁴ Unlike in West Africa, where a messier (and bloodier) oil industry has prompted artists, from

Benin's Romuald Hazoumé to Nigeria's George Osodi and Sokari Douglas Camp, to use the materials or capture the imagery of a extractive economy to comment on its social, political and economic violence, Angola's artists appear less likely to directly equate oil with the country's structural problems. Although many artists choose to address the lingering wounds of conflict and poverty, a notably "rentierist" causal gap appears to lag; oil as content gets off very lightly.

Rather than see this as a failing on the part of Angolan artists to be "political" or as merely a response to the new networks of patronage for art in Luanda, this void could be more directly related to Angola's "clean" physical enclaving of oil, as discussed above. Indeed, unlike in Nigeria, the problems that oil presents are not so palpably *seen*. In the Delta oil is a visible environmental and social pollutant. The indices of oil-as-scurge abound, witnessed in Osodi's photographed billowing black smoke and riverine oozes, and rendered in Douglas-Kamp's AK-47s and bullet-punctured Kalabari bodies. In Angola oil is less viscerally present; its index — hazy offshore platforms — is detached and ominous. The absence of oil as content in Angolan art mirrors a more pervasive social absence of oil, characteristic of the "extractive enclaving" outlined by Ferguson.²⁵ Alongside a spatial and economic gap between platform and shore, there is a visual gap between cause and effect. Without an engaged discursive framework to explicate and suture the gap between the imagery of urban decay in Luanda, in Ole's work for example, and the riches reaped from offshore extraction, the former is too easily characterized — and promoted in Sonangol's publication — as globally diluted, rather than locally distilled, conscious production.

In 2008, Pamela Lee noted the irony that, despite the lack of substantial oppositional works

at the time of the Iraq War, the world of global exhibitions seemed have established that “’tis the season for ‘political’ art.” Such art was appreciated as “political” on the level of content, but often considerably diluted (or deluded) in terms of actual critique.²⁶ Yet such “political” fare remains enormously popular and continues to facilitate a conceit in the art world that, simply by exhibiting a picture of deprivation, one can engender (or, perhaps, perform) criticism, empathy or understanding. Thus, there remains a considerable appetite for works by artists such as Ole and Alvim that utilize the “representational media” common to such “political” art, from fractured photographs and video installations to the reclaimed detritus of urban decay. Indeed, regardless of their potential for social and political engagement within a Luandan context, Ole’s works are of greater value to Sonangol (and, by extension, Luanda-as-new-Dubai) when they are recognized as part of the global genre, “political” art. This is not to imply superficiality on the part of the artist, but rather to suggest that any attempt at specific social commentary on their part risks splintering when repackaged in this way for global consumption. The retort may be that such splintering also enables a work take on greater resonances – surely drawing attention to “global” poverty is a much grander and nobler achievement than restricting one’s vision to local problems? In the context of Luanda, however, this splintering facilitates the shut-down of localized critical commentary that, whether by accident or design, mirrors the opacity of the Angolan rentier state.

THE LUANDA TRIENNIAL, (UN)SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND NATIONAL STRATEGIES

Given the professed desire to be the next Dubai, it is unsurprising that, rather than first

plan and build a permanent museum or art academy, Angola would seek to host a global art extravaganza. As Lee, invoking Karen Fiss, asserts the “biennial has . . . come to stand as a country’s cultural point of entry into [the] global economy” (Lee, 2012, p. 13). The original impetus for what became the Luanda Triennial is murky. *Universo* asserts that the Sindika Dokolo Foundation, under the creative directorship of Fernando Alvim, conceived and led the Luanda Triennial project (Redvers, 2008a, p. 22). However in an interview with Christian Hannussek for the online magazine *Africaneando*, Alvim stated that the “government and minister of culture invited [him] to conceptualize a Triennial for Luanda” (Hannussek, 2004). This blurry relationship between public and private in the Luanda art scene again suggests a lack of transparency in keeping with operations in the country.

During the civil war, under the governance of the MPLA, painting and graphic art had been expected to support the cause of Angolan Marxist Leninism. The state-run National Union of Plastic Arts was founded in 1977 and provided the government with a stream of socialist realist works and propagandist poster art (Mixinge, 2002; see also Siegert, this volume). Since the war’s end in 2002 and the demise of the socialist agenda, state funding for art projects has been retracted and the Luandan art scene has diversified. However, Nadine Siegert insists that there is a new “warlike spirit” in Luanda, where artists are forced to “stake positions, take sides or fight opponents” over prize money, exhibition space and project funding (Siegert, 2010). Within such an environment, the Luanda Triennial was presented as a forum for rigorous debate and lively exhibition at a “sensitive and fragile moment for Angola” (Hannussek, 2004).

The professed desire for lasting change, however, jars with the triennial format. As Elena

Filipovic has argued, the mega exhibition that is the bi- or triennial is often organized precisely because there are “nonexistent or weak local institutions unwilling or unable to support” contemporary art. Such “perennial exhibitions” become “temporary punctual infrastructure[s] that remain forever contemporary and unburdened by collecting an[d] preserving” (Filipovic, 2005). In other words, the fleeting triennial is more likely to be a convenient stand-in for more permanent institutions than a foundation for them. Carlos Basualdo characterized such global art extravaganzas as deliberately “unstable institutions.” The exhibition size as well as the heterogeneity of its contents frustrates any ability to determine a meaningful frame of reference. He writes poetically of biennials as “Titan’s mountains [blending] into the mist that conceals and disguises them,” a description that strikingly resonates with the dual mechanisms of sublime visibility and veiling that characterize the rentier state (Basuldo, 2005).

The official theme for Luanda 2006 was “Contemporary Art: History, Culture and Politics.” Whilst the title was a generic catchall epithet, the Triennial agenda engaged notions of social reconstruction, confronting memories of conflict still so raw in Angola. To Hannussek, Alvim expressed a long-term commitment to the efficacy of art and creative culture in encouraging dialogue and confronting troubled histories. He cited his project “Cuito Carnavale” from the mid-1990s, a series of films shot around the bloodiest grounds of the civil war. Working with Cuban artist Carola Garaicoa and South African Gavin Younge, the project sought to excavate the population, the memory and even the earth of Cuito Carnavale, and each night after filming, the inhabitants of the town were to be shown the footage. For Alvim, the Triennial could foster platforms for the encouragement and exhibition of similarly conscious creation.

Whilst it has created new opportunities for young, ambitious Angolan artists, the Triennial also produced new dilemmas. In an interview with Agence France-Presse at the opening of the second Triennial in 2010, Miguel Yonamine asserted that, whilst participating in the exhibition had enabled he and other Angolan artists to gain “universal ... not just local” status, he believed that Luanda was too expensive for artists to live in (de Comarmond, 2010). He preferred, instead, to reside in Lisbon. Alvim countered Yonamine, arguing that the Angolan art prices were very high in Luanda as a result of public recognition of their value; the Sindika Dokolo Foundation had recently bought a Yonamine work for US\$50,000. Considering Yonamine began exhibiting a year or two before the first Triennial, this is an impressive price to have commanded. Yet his claim that he could no longer afford to live “locally,” on account of the rapid inflation of goods and services resulting from the economy’s transformation, is striking (if familiar to many artists).²⁷ Yonamine’s situation laid bare Alvim’s attitude regarding the Triennial’s benefit to Angolan artists’ economic statuses, as well as his pretense that the art market could possibly reflect the Angolan public’s valuation of Yonamine’s work.

Just as Sonangol presented itself simultaneously as a slick multinational and as national patron, so too the Triennial, from the outset, sought to negotiate a position between the global art event and a national cultural forum. As Delinda Collier has extensively explored, a key way in which global and national were enmeshed was through a project in the first Triennial entitled *Lunda Tchokwe*, which sought to reclaim Chokwe art recorded in José Redinha’s 1953 publication, *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda (Painted Walls of Lunda)*, an ethnographic work recording Chokwe mural painting (Kasfir et al., 2008;

Collier, 2012). Redinha, head of the Dundo Museum, a cultural institution set up by European-funded diamond mining corporation, Companhia de Diamantes de Angola (Diamang), was commissioned to record “life” in Lunda provinces. As Collier explains, the *Paredes* was a “colonialist object *par excellence*,” undertaken to record the culture of a province under the control of Diamang (Collier, 2012, p. 123).

Seeking to unravel the work’s colonialist underpinning, Alvim, along with artist Cláudia Veiga, set out to reclaim its contents, digitizing and disseminating it via the Internet. The project, with heavy irony, received significant sponsorship from International Trading and Mining, Ltd, one of the diamond mining enterprises that, partnered with the state mining company, Endiama (heir to Diamang), constitutes Angola’s other extractive industry. For the Triennial the project *Lunda Tchokwe* claimed to liberate the imagery that Redinha had captured by making it universally, digitally available, but, as Collier demonstrates, the performance of democratization was undermined by the inherently uneven nature of the information economy, something which the “glowing monitor,” of course, obscured. Here, she argued, a purportedly “overtly nationalist” project was thrown up onto the global stage of the Luanda Triennial as a performance of anticolonial retribution. The act, however, only did a greater disservice to the complexity of the Chokwe works that Redinha had so failed to understand.²⁸ Indeed, there was unjustified conceit in the nationalist-liberatory claims of the gesture.

In 2008, Collier first highlighted the tension between Alvim’s professed nationalist aspirations and the globalized financial realities and dominant media of the Triennial. She cited Adriano Mingue’s belief that the Triennial, as well as the Sindika Dokolo Foundation, belonged to the

“non-space” of the global art arena, and that their reliance on artworks that employ “global media” (eg. digital formats) did so at the expense of an “Angolanity” in the country’s contemporary art. Her proposition that the medium of an artwork often affected whether it was classed as global or local (new media = global, painting = local) generated some controversy. In her reply to her critics Collier insisted that, rather than argue that new media was inherently at odds with a particular “nationalist” Angolan art, her objective was to raise questions about the ways in which the country’s various creative outputs have been repackaged and received through new media in relation to a remaking of “national” culture, heavily funded by Angola’s oil and diamond industries (Collier, 2008). Indeed, what Collier wished to highlight was the manner in which the Triennial, buoyed by extractive industries, (re)mediated national cultural traditions for a global audience. She quoted a candid conversation with Alvim in Luanda, in which he admitted that nationalism was a tactic (Collier, 2008, p. 8).

With nationalism as a tactic and globalism as an aspiration, contemporary Angolan art as packaged by the Luanda Triennial is in step with city’s rentierist aspirations to be both “Angolan” and in sync with “Dubai, New York or London” (Mingue, 2008). If, in Andrew Apter’s analysis, FES-TAC amounted to an oil-funded, spectacular national “return to origins” showcased internationally via a variety of television and print media, the Luanda Triennial (re)formatted Angolan art traditions, such as Chokwe forms, as a cultural anchor whilst seeking to launch Angolan “political” art into the global art stratosphere. We should be wary about declaring, as Simon Njami did in 2005, that the Luanda Triennial, as an African-directed contemporary art initiative, “could enable Africans to speak for themselves and to stop being spectators on their own history”

(Njami, 2005). As Collier rightly highlighted, one of the major problems of art's private funding from extractive industries was that it precluded or nullified any real critique of the challenges facing contemporary Angola. In the context of Luanda, where the causal gap between minority wealth and majority poverty is exacerbated by the physical gap between sea and shore, I suggest that the need for art that *critically* questions and challenges, and for accompanying critical discourse that makes visible that which is not immediately so, has never been greater. In the hall of mirrors that is the rentier state, all is rarely what it seems.

POP GOES LUANDA

Testament to the Triennial's success as global launchpad, the first Africa Pavilion at the Venice biennale, showcased in 2007, was drawn from the Sindika Dokolo Foundation. *Check-List Luanda Pop*, as the show was titled, featured works from the Dokolo collection, as well as others from the Triennial, and was selected to head the pavilion by a panel in response to an open competition.²⁹ Njami and Alvim provided the curatorial direction, whilst Sindika Dokolo wrote in the extensive press release of his desire to spearhead a "cultural policy for Angola" in which the individual is the focus of development. Whilst MoMA had originally offered to provide the funding for the exhibition, the selection of a privately owned collection negated this arrangement.³⁰ Instead, the first major showcase of contemporary African art at the Venice Biennale received financial support from 11 major Angolan "institutions" including, of course, Sonangol. Alongside the parastatal oil company were corporate "institutions" in which Sonangol either has or has had a financial stake, or in whose boardrooms Sonangol representatives sit, from Banco

BIC and Banco Privado Atlantico to Grupo Americo Amorim, among whose subsidiaries is Amorim Energia, in which Sonangol has a 45 percent share.

The pavilion was riddled with controversy from the outset, from confusion over the withdrawal of MoMA funds to the selection process of the collection, and a general disappointment at the efforts to represent the entire continent of Africa within a single pavilion. There was also a storm over the financial dealings of Dokolo's family and the origins of the money used to assemble the collection that formed the backbone of *Check-List*. It began with an article published online in *artnet Magazine* by Ben Davis entitled "Art and corruption in Venice" that accused Dokolo of enjoying the spoils of money laundering organized by his father Sanu Dokolo through the bank he had founded in 1969, Bank of Kinshasa. Davis went on to highlight Sindika's marriage to Isabel dos Santos, daughter of the Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, a major business force in her own right and recently declared Africa's first female billionaire (Davis, 2007). Whilst Davis mentions the disreputable behavior of diamond companies with whom Dokolo and Dos Santos are associated and notes the extreme poverty experienced by most of Angola's population, his big exposé fails to mention the word oil. This is despite the fact that Sindika Dokolo sat on the board at Amorim Energia and has since been nominated by Sonangol to the board of a holding company with a 33 percent share in the Portuguese oil firm GALP Energia (of which Amorim Energia in turn owns a third; the Lusophone petro-matrix is, indeed, complex).³¹ Dokolo strongly denied Davis's claims about the corruption of his father, passionately stating that he had always been a champion of Congolese development. The allegations about Sanu Dokolo remained unproven, but Davis's

assertions cast a shadow over the pavilion with critics unwilling to engage with the questions raised by, as Anthony Downey (he of the *Universe* article) wrote, “that old racist slander” of African corruption (Downey, 2008). Angolan oil seeped into Venice without comment.

With co-direction from Njami and Alvim, it was unsurprising that the contents of *Check-List* appeared like an amalgamation of Njami’s 2004–2007 blockbuster *Africa Remix* and the newly established Luanda Triennial. Several reviews of the exhibition noted that the remit seemed unclear; was the exhibition about all of Africa, artists of African descent or specifically Luanda? (Katchka, 2008). Amongst the participants were familiar faces such as Yinka Shonibare and El Anatsui, Luanda Triennial exhibitors including DJ Spooky and Alfredo Jaar. There was a slew of video art and new media pieces, including a four-screen piece, *Urban Sax* (2007) by Angolan artist Ihosvanny, which juxtaposed images of the urban poor with those of Luanda’s intellectual elite (depicted as bookish, spectacle-wearing types).³² Again, questions about why such poverty prevails in a nation so resource rich splintered on the biennial stage where the geopolitical specificities of the Angolan case were lost. Ihosvanny’s video became “political” art biennial fare and whatever specific provocation the artist desired dissipated, the work transformed in a generic comment on the pervasive gap between (clever) rich and (cheated) poor in the developing world.

Certainly Njami and Alvim faced the impossible task of curating a pavilion that could speak for, or somehow represent, the whole continent. Njami acknowledged this challenge in his introduction, “The Shock of Being Seen,” which was published in the press release. Here he claimed that the pavilion was about much more than displaying contemporary African art. It was not

“simply an exhibition,” *Check-List* was a seminal moment in which African art did not become part of the establishment, but the establishment finally “saw” Africa. It was a moment of “intellectual emancipation” (Njami, n.d.). He went on to put the Luanda Triennial on a par with the long-running pan-African Dakar Biennial and publications such as *Revue Noire* and *Nka* as providing important grounds for “endogenous” debate. The catchall category of “African contemporary art” that had been born with *Magiciens de la Terre* in 1989 had, according to Njami, reached a “high point” with *Africa Remix*. Venice was the “foundation stone for world art” and the Africa Pavilion was an opportunity for all to take stock. Njami’s invocation of empowered “seeing” and “being seen” was, of course, troubling in the context of the rentier economy that supported it; indeed, African contemporary art was here made visible thanks to the munificence of “institutions” who thrived in an economic and political environment in which so much is invisible.

Following Njami, Dokolo’s text switched the emphasis to the structural significance of *Check List*. The importance of his collection, at the heart of the Africa Pavillion, was, he argued, that it was an “African collection of contemporary art rather than a collection of contemporary African art” (Njami, n.d.). Angolan sources of funding, listed in the press release, were presented as a source of pride, allowing the pavilion to truly call itself “African.” As the introduction had made clear, *Check List* was “a reflection on how to collect, while also presenting the most significant panorama of today’s African creation” (Njami, n.d., p. 4). For a man so enmeshed in the “Futungo” clique, it was curious to see Dokolo conspicuously extolling a “virtuous circle” forming around the “public, artists and private collectors” in Angola. More troublingly was his

insistence that *Check List* and the collection more broadly was an important step to tackling what he dubbed Africa's "underdevelopment complex" (Njami, n.d., p. 10). Here, remarkably, was a man of immense wealth and privilege telling his continent that it was time to get over its insecurities.

Most perturbing in Dokolo's text was the emphasis on the socio-political good of his collection and the Triennial as a "political act." Writing of (generic) governments "that are confronted every day with the challenge of fighting poverty" and of art as an "equally fundamental and legitimate aspiration as access to education, drinking water and health," he demonstrated a rentierist naivety (or, perhaps, disingenuous benevolence) (Njami, n.d., p. 12). Indeed, poverty was again referenced as a generic, continental challenge, and images and aesthetics were awarded equivalence with basic services. Looking at Iran, Kapuściński observed how oil obscured any sense of civic priority, wryly noting that one of the biggest beneficiaries of the wealth it generated were the mosques. Although the word oil was never uttered, *Check List Luanda Pop* made it clear that it was believed that petro-finance could do for art in Angola, and by extension Africa, what it did for Islam in Iran: facilitate "a period of accelerated expansion and [attract] new crowds of the faithful" (Kapuściński, 1985, p. 28).

After the Dokolo scandal broke, Cameroonian artist Barthélémy Toguo withdrew from participating in *Check List*, publishing a blog stating that he did not want to be associated with the Collection.³³ Toguo's withdrawal, although admirable, was a missed opportunity since he had, in the previous year, been working on a performance piece entitled "Afrika Oil." For this piece, which debuted in Hong Kong in 2006, he encased himself in an oil drum and fixed a disposable water bottle of opaque liquid to his mouth.

It was a disquietingly simple work, which simultaneously recalled torture, a child suckling and an insatiable appetite. Whether it could have avoided becoming neutered "political" fare is a matter of conjecture, yet the work's sheer lack of subtlety would certainly have made for provocative photo opportunities with any Sonangol executives at pavilion's opening.

Admittedly, the question of artist efficacy (or complicity) in the rentier state remains unanswered. Whether or not Angolan artists *should* be making works that expose and critique the oil industry in relation to the structural problems they more often appear concerned with will surely prompt debate. Consciousness, however, of the less salubrious financial networks that buoy the scene in which art is blossoming is essential. That Luanda has not yet produced art as explicitly critical of the extractive industries in the manner of Osodi's *Oil Rich Niger Delta* (2003–2007) should not be cause to criticize Angolan artists as lacking in political engagement. Indeed, ambiguous, fragmented imagery of urban deprivation is both symptomatic of, and entirely appropriate to, the veiled operations and enclaved nature of Angola's oil industry; it is a cleaner rentier state than Nigeria. Yet since the gap between social ill and systemic cause is wider, the necessity of seeing and scrutinizing is all the more acute. Here socially engaged artists and those who produce discourse around their work should share the burden of exposing the insidious rentierism underpinning Angola's globalist scenography. Work infused with Luandan realities may thus meaningfully participate in wider political debates about Africa, and avoid the all-too-common fate of becoming diluted, generic signifiers of the continent's perceived problems.

In Luanda, art is engaged in a re-marketing of the city as global hot spot. Despite artists such as Ole making work sensitive to deprivation,

within present-day Luanda works capable of prompting important debate risk relegation to commodity status. What impact does participation in such an economy have on an artist's work? Is a rentier aesthetic inherent in contemporary Angolan art? Or is the latter imposed from without? The way in which Yonamine's work at the Sharjah's Biennial was framed is telling; his commissioned *Katchokwe Style* (2009) referenced the sand semiotics of the Chokwe people and depicted, amongst other things, women who work in Angola's informal economy. The Sharjah Foundation blandly noted that the work "recalls African and international events that have shaped African society." Specificity was evacuated, the extractive economy that breeds the informal one was obscured.³⁴

The elephant in the room remains the ecological and economic sustainability of Luanda. To paraphrase the Sonangol CD, Angolan petroleum now goes further than ever yet it is a finite resource. When the wells have been milked and an economy bloated by rentier indulgences begins to deflate, what will sustain the domestic structures of this "global" contemporary Angolan art? It is hoped that *Luanda Pop* was not more literally prophetic than it intended to be.

NOTES

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This work was supported by a 2010 Graduate Fellowship from the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for

Visual Arts, Stanford University and was supervised by Dr. Barbara Thompson. I thank Dr. Thompson and Prof. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz for their comments on earlier drafts.

- ¹ "Future City: Why Luanda is the new Dubai," *Universo*, Sonangol, Winter 2008, Cover Story.
- ² The importation is highlighted with a sense of pride in the corporate magazine of Angola's parastatal oil company, Sonangol. "Miami on the Marginal," *Universo*, Sonangol, Winter 2008, p. 13.
- ³ "Oil for infrastructure" first emerged in the early 2000s with China's proposals to Angola: see Weimer and Vines (2012), pp. 87–88.
- ⁴ NGOs, including Homeless International and the Development Workshop, run by Allan Cain, claim that the percentage of the urban population living in the *musseques* is around 75 percent.
- ⁵ Luanda has long been characterized by spatial stratification. On its development as a "white" (concrete) and black (*musseques*) city, see Rodrigues (2009). On Vieira's work, see "Counter mapping Luanda" in Peres (1997), pp. 16–46.
- ⁶ Luandino Vieira, "Cancao Para Luanda," see Peres (2004), p. 86.
- ⁷ Land-based conflict is noted in Angola's break-away region of Cabinda, where much of the onshore infrastructure is based. However, as James Ferguson argues, Angolan oil has been socially "very *thin*" in terms of both its employment opportunities for Angolans and its visible presence during some of Angola's most traumatic moments (Ferguson, 2006).
- ⁸ In summer 2010 there were protests against BP "greenwash" sponsorship of British art institutions as a result of the Deepwater Horizon spill. Given the extent of poverty and the failure of oil money to "trickle down," the stakes in Angola are much higher. Retrieved January 30, 2013 from <http://www.artnotoil.org.uk/>
- ⁹ Maja and Reuben Fowkes force awareness of global art's ecological impact. See "The ecological impact of contemporary art", retrieved

January 30, 2013 from <http://www.translocal.org/footprint/index.htm>

Mahdavy, quoted in Yates (1996), p. 11.

The notion of “extractive enclaving” and Angola’s specific version of it was unpacked by Ferguson (2005).

Omar Bongo’s deeply impractical plans for the Transgabonaise Railroad and his belief that modernization could be purchased, no matter the price, is a classic “rentier prestige project.” See “The Transgabonaise Railroad and the modern sector,” in Yates (1996), pp. 173–201.

The “natural resource curse” refers to the belief that having major natural resources can negatively impact political and economic development. Terry Karl remains a leading theorist. See Karl (1997, 2007). Debate is rife; Stephen Haber and Victor Menaldo made the case in 2011 that oil does not necessarily lead to authoritarian governance.

“Open slate” was Frank Gehry’s term, see Kanna (2011), p. 90.

Apter (2005, pp. 280–281) is drawing from Comaroff and Comaroff’s (1999) observations of countries’ ongoing rapid neoliberal reform in which wealth is seen to be “conjured and accumulated.”

Tomas, quoting Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall’s discussion of South cities and the “archeology of the future,” says that Luanda is “already a global city” (Tomas, 2012, p. 102).

Oil and diamonds were implicated in disparate exchange for weapons. See Custers (2001), pp. 1594–1599.

International Monetary Fund statistics are listed on the Michigan State University, Broad College of Business profile of Angola: <http://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/angola/economy>. The Angolan economic profile can be found at the CIA Factbook page: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ao.html> (accessed January 30, 2013). See also Sharife (2009).

“The vice president position was introduced in . . . 2010 to replace the function of Prime Minister. The VP is . . . the head of the government under the President’s direct watch.” Retrieved January 30, 2012 from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/angola/overview>

Soares de Oliveira asserts that Sonangol seeks to keep Angola as a failed state, in which the government is entirely dependent upon it as wealth generator. Angola as failed state is one in which the majority of the population are disempowered and isolated from oil wealth. Sonangol’s “enclave” monopoly is, thus, not isolated from the chaos of Angolan society but dependently tied to it (Soares de Oliveira, 2007, p. 606).

Universo is named after the network of global business interests of the Sonangol group. The magazine was thus founded to report on the “complex business world” of the company. Retrieved January 30, 2013 from <http://www.mstelcom.co.ao/wps/portal/ep/sonangol/publications/universo> Retrieved January 30, 2013 from http://www.sonangol.co.ao/corp/music_en.shtml

On the shift to “contemporaneity” in African art and the “legitimation circuits” in which it appears see Mixinge (2009).

Saskia Sassen characterizes the “Global City” as a major nodal point in the global economy, which has a financial or business center that has more culturally and aesthetically in common with fellow Global Cities than it other national urban centers. See Sassen (1991).

Ferguson (2005). See also Ferguson (2006).

Lee (2008, pp. 98–101): “In what ways have artists, academics, and cultural institutions responded to the U.S.-led invasion and occupation of Iraq?” On the tokenistic “aesthetics” of biennial art, see Verwoert (2010).

On inflated commodity prices and life in Luanda, see Ahrens (2012).

“In *Lunda Tchokwe*, the removal of Redinha’s signature did not erase authorship, neither Redinha’s nor its own, but profoundly dispersed it” (Collier, 2012, p. 138).

- 29 There was controversy about the selection process when Okwui Enwezor and Salah Hassan wrote to Robert Storr to criticize the “open submission” format of the competition, believing that more specialized selection should have been undertaken. Olu Oguibe waded into the debate, defending Storr’s decision. The debate was originally accessible online, on the African South Art Initiative at <http://www.asai.co.za/forum.php?id=40>, but (since 2010) this link appears to no longer be working. Kodwo Eshun’s (2007) review of the Africa Pavilion provides a summary of the debates in its preamble.
- 30 There is also some suggestion that MoMA pulled out following the publication of Ben Davis’s article accusing Dokolo of corruption (see below).
- 31 Global Witness raised questions about the transparency of oil deals and the state given the familial ties of Sindika Dokolo to the Dos Santos family. Retrieved January 30, 2013 from http://www.globalwitness.org/media_library_detail.php/941/en/link_between_angolan_presidents_son_in_law_and_sta
- 32 Ihosvanny is discussed in Eyene (2008).
- 33 The blog has been removed but the action is documented in artnet.com’s coverage of the unfolding controversy. Retrieved January 30, 2013 from <http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/news/artnetnews/artnetnews5-18-07.asp>
- 34 Retrieved January 30, 2012 from <http://www.sharjahart.org/projects/projects-by-date/2009/katchokwe-style-yonamine>

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