

PRESS RELEASE

Archival Assembly #3

Resounding Archives: The Politics of Listening to the Moving Image

Festival: September 17-22, 2024

Exhibition: September 17-29, 2024

Symposium, Found Futures & Listening Sessions: September 18-22, 2024



The "Archival Assembly" festival organised by Arsenal - Institute for Film and Video Art is dedicated to international film archives as a living creative space for the future of cinema. It focuses in particular on transnational and decolonial practices of film work. The third issue examines the role of sound and language in the archiving and presentation of international film history. The programme questions the dominance of the image in dealing with the medium of film, which also characterises the examination of film heritage. At the centre are film narratives, language versions and oral history. What gaps arise when only the sound or only the image of a film survives in the archive?

The film program will show new restorations as well as newly produced film prints, which will also allow the progress of archive projects to be traced over longer periods of time. Films will be shown in various presentation formats, images will be dubbed live on location or a digital restoration will be presented with a sequence contained only in the sound negative. Part of the future Arsenal offices will be transformed into a one-off exhibition space where installations on the theme will be presented. In collaboration with the Goethe University Frankfurt, a symposium with the subtitle "Resounding Archives" will take place in the domed hall of silent green. As part of the "Found Futures" series, participants will present projects, ideas and questions relating to precarious archives and archive finds at SINEMA TRANSTOPIA. Listening sessions in the Listening Bar migas present historical and current audio recordings.

In the following program we have collected information that might be of interest to you, films that addresses these topics: colonialism and trauma (Congo), looted and stolen art (Ghana) and the liberation movement in Guinea-Bissau; as well as panels on: sound archiving (Guinea-Bissau &

Nigeria), and independent, political African Cinema and its legacy; plus: listening sessions, and an installation about Sudanese filmmaker Gadalla Gubara.

The program brochure with all details and the festival calendar of all venues is available [here](#).

Program

Tuesday, September 17

6:30pm, **Opening with a welcome from Stefanie Schulte Strathaus**, at Arsenal cinema

KATASUMBIKA Petna Ndaliko Katondolo DRC/USA 2024 Swahili OV with English Subtitles 37'

Guest: Petna Ndaliko Katondolo

KATASUMBIKA, the newest film by Petna Ndaliko Katondolo, opens the film program, embedded in a short film program with contributions from 1968 to the present day.

Katondolo, who had a retrospective at *Archival Assembly #2*, uses personal memories to reflect on what has been disregarded in East Congo within the context of its colonial project and heritage. Will the sounds of indigenous resistance be heard if we continue to follow the common thread of history – the chain of exploitation of natural resources and the course of violence?

Petna Ndaliko Katondolo was born in Goma, DR Congo, and is a filmmaker, educator, and ancestral ecologist. His multi-genre artistic works are acclaimed for their decolonial Afrofuturist style, which engages historical content to address contemporary sociopolitical and cultural issues. In 2000, he co-founded the educational center Yole!Africa and in 2005, he founded the Ishango Encounter (formerly known as Salaam Kivu International Film Festival). Ndaliko Katondolo teaches and consults regularly for international organizations, addressing social and political inequity among marginalized groups through culture and art.

Wednesday, September 18

12pm, Listening Session at migas – a listening bar, Berlin-Wedding

SOUND WITHOUT VISION – A THIRD CINEMA SONIC IMAGINARY OF NEO-COLONIALISM Didi Cheeka, Vinzenz Hediger 2024 sound 120' Free admission On loop until 6pm

In the spirit of Third Cinema, this is a non-visual exploration of the fundamental contradictions in attempts to construct a new nation in the image of the former colonizer: neo-colonialism. It begins with the extraction of raw materials – coal – and tangentially touches on what is usually missing from global film studies: How cinema is entwined with colonialism. The main thrust of this journey into the sonic past is how archival practices might unlock the political imaginary of an ex-colony. Using sounds (and text) from Nigeria's National Film, Video and Sound Archive, this sonic installation seeks to chronicle sound recordings as a record of what might be called the sonic imaginary of the "post-colonial" nation state: As both a record of state protocols and rituals as well as an archive of possibilities for imagining different pasts and futures of this nation state. Given that Third Cinema arose in the 1960s and 1970s as a clash between Third World filmmakers and the social forms hostile to them – colonialism and neo-colonialism – what line of continuity could be drawn between contemporary Third World (sound) archival practices and the Third Cinema that derived from the anti-colonial struggle for national liberation? What does it mean to think of Third Cinema in relation to the sound archive?

Didi Cheeka is a Nigerian filmmaker and film critic. He is the editor of Lagos Film Review and cofounder and curator of Lagos Film Society, an alternative cinema center dedicated to the founding of Nigeria's first arthouse cinema. He also serves as the artistic director of Decasia Festival, which he founded in collaboration with Arsenal - Institute for Film and Video Art. Cheeka is currently engaged in digitizing Nigeria's rediscovered national audiovisual archives. He is an alumnus of Berlinale Talents and primarily lives and works in Lagos.

12–1:30pm, Symposium “**Resounding Archives: The Politics of Listening to the Moving Image**”, at silent green Kuppelhalle, Berlin-Wedding

Panel 2: **Sonic Maps of Migration: Documentary Sound Archives** with **Petna Ndaliko Katondolo, Britta Lange** Moderation: **Laliv Melamed** Free admission

Mobile sound recorders revolutionized documentary filmmaking in the 1960s, making documentaries a migratory form with an affinity for migratory movements. Increasingly, soundscapes, and sound archives have been reshaping the migratory aesthetics of documentaries.

Petna Ndaliko Katondolo (Goma) will talk about soundscapes and trauma. Britta Lange (Berlin) will discuss the latency of colonial sound archives. Moderation: Laliv Melamed (Frankfurt am Main).

3–5:30pm, Found Futures I Sound Archives, at SİNEMA TRANSTOPIA, Berlin-Wedding

With Filipa César, Marinho de Pina, Didi Cheeka, Vinzenz Hediger Moderation: **Stefanie Schulte Strathaus** Free admission

Both the INCA – Instituto Nacional do Cinema e Audiovisual in Guinea-Bissau and the National Film, Video and Sound Archive in Nigeria, contain documentary footage as well as sound elements. In addition to the Mediateca Onshore, Guinea-Bissau has now also established the sonoteca. Filipa Cesar, Marinho de Pina, Didi Cheeka, and Vinzenz Hediger will present audio examples and discuss the role of sound in cinematic heritage.

Filipa Cesar is an artist, filmmaker, educator, and community organizer. She studied painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto and at the Faculdade de Belas Artes of the University of Lisbon. In 2008, she completed an MA in Art in Context at the University of the Arts Berlin. Since 2011, she has been researching the origins of the cinema of the African Liberation Movement in Guinea Bissau as a laboratory for decolonizing epistemologies. She premiered her first feature-length films SPELL REEL at the Berlinale Forum in 2017 and RESONANCE SPIRAL in 2024, while *Quantum Creole* was exhibited at Forum Expanded in 2020. She lives and works in Berlin.

Marinho de Pina is a filmmaker, transdisciplinary artist, performer, poet, musician, and writer. He is currently a research assistant at the Centre for Studies on Socioeconomic Change and Territory in Lisbon doing his PhD on Sacred Spaces in Bissau. Since 2017, he has been working on Mediateca Abotcha in Guinea-Bissau with Filipa Cesar, Sana na N’Hada, and Suleimane Biai, a program for the cultural creation of dreams and utopias with the local community.

8pm, **with live storytelling by VJ Junior followed by a discussion with Petna Ndaliko Katondolo**, at Arsenal cinema

BLOOD DIAMOND Edward Zwick USA/D 2006 35mm English OV 143’

Set against the backdrop of the Sierra Leone Civil War, BLOOD DIAMOND is the story of a fisherman who discovers a rare pink diamond and forms an unlikely alliance with an arms smuggler to retrieve it while also trying to rescue his kidnapped son from rebel forces. The film exposes the brutal reality of the blood diamond trade and its devastating impact on the people of Africa. The screening will be accompanied by Ugandan film storyteller VJ Junior. Film storytelling is a concept that refers to a media practice characterized by oral artists, also called V-jays, engaged in a scene-by-scene commentary of mainly foreign language films. Their artistic flair and imagination regarding the stories of the films makes this process much more than mere translation, and the practitioners much more than translators. This is a rare occasion to witness this fascinating storytelling style.

Friday, September 20

12pm, Listening Session at migas – a listening bar, Berlin-Wedding

MTRIARCHS FROM MALAFO 2024 four-channel sound 120’ Filipa César, Marinho de Pina Free admission On loop until 6pm

In the rainy season, when rice sprouts still find their way to flooded rice fields, a sonic experiment collapses voices and sounds from now and then. Tales from Malafo are also tales of humanity; they recount dreams, desires, longings, and hopes; they are about people who fight together to heal the wounds circumstances have opened up. Inherited wounds for which one must still take responsibility,

in search of a balance where love thrives in the community and land. The vocal testimonies of matriarchs, the songs and tales of children and their children, adult and elderly men, the speech of rivers and boulders, the stories told by birds and the wind. Living and nonliving, material and immaterial beings are summoned to bend time in the sonoteca – ringing land, seeding sounds, sonoteca – a space recently built with the Malafo community as part of the Mediateca Onshore to store sounds that have passed through and are still to come. MATRIARCHS OF MALAFO is a sound installation dealing with synesthesia to send messages about the reconstruction of entanglements.

Saturday, September 21

6:30pm, **subsequent panel with Nii Kwate Owoo, Arike Oke (BFI) & Judith Opoku-Boateng, moderated by Nikolaus Perneczky**, at Arsenal cinema

YOU HIDE ME Nii Kwate Owoo Ghana 1970 English OV 16'

YOU CAN'T HIDE ME – THE RETURN OF THE LOOTED AND STOLEN ARTEFACTS IN THE BRITISH AND THE FOWLER MUSEUM IN THE US Nii Kwate Owoo Ghana 2024 English OV 20' **World Premiere**

Shot over 50 years ago, **YOU HIDE ME** revealed for the first time hundreds of thousands of previously unseen, rare Asante art treasures stolen by the British after the Sagrenti War and the invasion of Kumasi by Field Marshall Garnet Woseley in the 1870s, as well as other art treasures looted by British Expeditionary Forces. In 1970, Ghanaian filmmaker Nii Kwate Owoo managed to outsmart the directors of the British Museum and its security system to gain access to the museum's secret underground vaults and film valuable African artifacts stowed away there. One day was enough to shoot this short film revealing the extent of the theft of African artifacts, stashed in plastic bags and wooden crates — and to make a case for their restitution. **YOU CAN'T HIDE ME – THE RETURN OF THE LOOTED AND STOLEN ARTEFACTS IN THE BRITISH AND THE FOWLER MUSEUM IN THE US** is Nii Kwate Owoo's newest film and resonates with its predecessor. It will have its world premiere during the festival.

Born and raised in Ghana, **Nii Kwate Owoo** has been producing and directing films since the early 1970s. After graduating from the London Film School, he formed the first independent African film production company (Ifriqiyah Films) in the UK under which he produced and directed his first film, **YOU HIDE ME**, a now widely acclaimed film on the colonization of African art in the British Museum. He was the Editorial Manager of *Écrans d'Afrique*, published by FEPACI, The Pan African Federation of Film Producers. He has been active in the movement for a Pan African Cinema and co-produced and directed the feature documentary film *OUAGA – African Cinema Now* in 1988 and *Ama: An African Voyage of Discovery* (1991) with Dr. Kwesi Owusu. He is currently in the preproduction fundraising stage for his new five-part docu-drama series based on the history of the Asante Empire, *The Asante Kingdom of Gold*.

Arike Oke leads the screen heritage mission at the British Film Institute in the role of Executive Director of Knowledge, Learning, and Collections. Her practice is rooted in social justice and the role of culture in giving strength to, and inspiring, individuals and communities. Formerly she was the Managing Director for Black Cultural Archives, the home of Black British history. Her fiction is published in magazines and anthologies, her critical art writing has been featured in *The Girls Are* and *This is Tomorrow*. Her factual writing has appeared in many different journals. She is a trustee of Iniva, a board member for the Institute of Historical Research Trust, and a fellow of the Arts Council's Museums and Resilient Leadership program.

Sunday, September 22

10am–1:30pm, Symposium “Resounding Archives: The Politics of Listening to the Moving Image”, at silent green Kuppelhalle, Berlin-Wedding

10–11:30am, Panel 9: **Speaking Up With Fiona Berg, Ahmeed Refaat Moderation: Brigitta Kuster**
Free admission

Since the 1960s, the primary task of independent, political, and militant cinema has been to lend a voice to those who would otherwise go unheard. These films were often created by collectives whose

members not only developed new modes of production, but also a new distribution and cinema practice intended to have a transformative effect on socio-political life. In this context, programs and manifestos were created which continue to reverberate today.

Fiona Berg (Berlin) will discuss feminist networks, festivals, and manifestos. Ahmeed Refaat (Cairo) will talk about the 2nd Afro-Asian Film Festival that took place in Cairo in 1960. Moderation: Brigitta Kuster (Berlin/Zurich).

Ahmed Refaat is a film and visual arts researcher, programmer, and curator. With a focus on research-based long-term projects, his work has produced film programs, discursive events, exhibitions, workshops, and publications. In 2019, Refaat co-founded de*sync, an experimental film night followed by a meal and a long discussion. He also reflects on art and cinema critically through writing reviews and research articles published in outlets including *Madamasr*, *Alam El-Kotob*, and *Malafat NAAS*.

12–1:30pm, Panel 10: **Pirate Sounds: Composing Histories From Acoustic Fragments and Debris With Tom Simmert, Aboubakar Sanogo** Moderation: Erica Carter Free admission

After found footage films came found sound music, the creative borrowing of not just styles, rhythms, and rhymes, but entire building blocks of musical compositions. The two most significant cultural movements of the last three decades in a global perspective, hip hop and Afrobeats, provide the outlines of a new cultural order which is also a reordering of a shared archive of images and sounds of emancipation.

Tom Simmert (Mainz) will speak of pirate media and YouTube archives in Nigerian music. Aboubakar Sanogo (Ottawa) will discuss hip hop and how it remediates what we might call the “African Emancipation Library.” Moderation: Erica Carter (London).

Aboubakar Sanogo is an Associate Professor in Film Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. His writings have appeared in *Cinema Journal*, *Moving Image Review & Art Journal*, *Journal of Film Preservation*, *Film Quarterly*, *Sight and Sound* and *Film Comment* and *the Journal of African Cinemas*. As the North American Regional Secretary for the Pan African Federation of Filmmakers (FEPACI), he initiated and oversees the FEPACI Archival Project. He was instrumental in establishing African Film Heritage Project (AFHP), a major film preservation and restoration initiative in partnership with Martin Scorsese’s The Film Foundation and UNESCO in collaboration with the Cineteca di Bologna.

9pm, **Guests: Filipa César, Marinho de Pina**, at Arsenal cinema

RESONANCE SPIRAL Filipa César, Marinho de Pina PRT/Guinea-Bissau/GER 2024 Guinea-Bissanian & Cape Verdean Creole, French, Portuguese OV with English Subtitles 92’

RESONANCE SPIRAL, the new work by filmmakers Filipa César and Marinho de Pina, which premiered at this year’s Berlinale Forum, will be shown again at the end of the film program. “Nothing falls from the sky apart from rain,” says Amílcar Cabral in a tape recording from 1970. The women of the Satna Fai agricultural workers’ collective listen to this historical document stemming from the politician, poet, and theoretician; they rest as Cabral demands equality between the sexes, which he sees as essential for shared progress. The setting is the Abotcha building in Malafo, a traditional Balanta village in Guinea-Bissau, which has housed the Mediateca Onshore since 2023. Old plans for a videotheque are revisited and materialize a mediateca. An informal sewing workshop, an experimental garden, a library, and a preschool takeup space. Adolescents voice a circle and sound selfbuilt instruments. Together with filmmaker Sana na N’Hada and others, since 2011 filmmaker Filipa Cesar has been working on reconstructing the audiovisual memory of the country’s liberation movement and making it accessible to the public; artist Marinho de Pina has been involved since 2017. In RESONANCE SPIRAL, Cesar and de Pina document the construction of the Abotcha and the agro-poetic practices that take place there, showing dialogues between archive, performing arts, and community.

From Tuesday, September 17 until Sunday, September 29

12–6pm, Exhibition at Gerichtstraße 53, Berlin-Wedding

VIVA SARA! Gadalla Gubara, Sara Gubara 1984/2015 video, sound Free admission

The personal archive of Sudanese filmmaker Gadalla Gubara (1920-2008) contains an incomplete featurelength portrait of his daughter Sara, who became a professional swimmer despite having polio. The preserved silent elements of VIVA SARA! were shot on the beaches of Capri in the 1980s. Clearly filmed with delight, Sara Gubara plays herself in these scenes. During a screening at Arsenal for the festival "Visionary Archive" in May 2015, she provided live commentary on the footage. The recordings made then are featured in the exhibition next to the unedited footage.

Archival Assembly #3 is an event organized by Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art in cooperation with the Institute for Theatre, Film and Media Art at Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, silent green, SİNEMA TRANSTOPIA, migas – a listening bar, Goethe Institut Uzbekistan, and Goethe im Exil, with funding provided by the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

For further information:

Christine Sievers | Communication

Arsenal – Institute for Film und Video Art

+49 30 269 55 143 or cs@arsenal-berlin.de | www.arsenal-berlin.de

Kino Arsenal 1 & 2 | Potsdamer Straße 2 | 10785 Berlin

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