

**BRING
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A draft vision

for revitalizing the Africa Centre @ 38 King Street by
The Save The Africa Centre Campaign



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The save The Africa Centre Campaign wishes to acknowledge and thank:

Ugo Arinzeh for the financial précis (Africa Centre as a business)

Chipo Chung is the lead author of the artistic and cultural programming in this vision document.

Elizabeth Oritsejolomi Dudley for contributing the Executive Summary

Dele Fatunla for the introduction and summary

Dele Fatunla, Boko Inyundo and **Onyekachi Wambu** for leading on the governance ideas and proposals within this vision document.

Boko Inyundo for leading on the fundraising section

Debbie Simmons and Susana Edjang for editorial and review

The following people have offered advice on various aspects of this vision document in a personal capacity.

Governance Reform
Eric Galvin, Fellow, Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA)

Programming (Think Tank)
Knox Chitiyo, Africa Fellow, Chatham House

Programming (Young people and community Advisor)
Onyekachi Wambu

Programming (Music)
Peter Adjaye and **Wala Danga**, Music Promoters

Programming (Film)
Keith Shire, Festival Juror and Founder of Africa at the Pictures

The Education and Cultural Programme Proposal is actively supported by:

Bonnie Greer OBE, Deputy Chair, British Museum
Knox Chitiyo, Associate Fellow, Chatham House
Peter Adjaye, Artistic Director, Afri-Kokoa
Richard Dowden, Director, Royal Africa Society
Onyekachi Wambu, AFFORD
Keith Shire, Founder, Africa at the Pictures, Film Festival Programmer & Juror
David Lan, Artistic Director, Young Vic Theatre
Anna Coombs, Artistic Director, Tangled Theatre Company
Lucian Msamati, Artistic Director, Tiata Fahodzi Theatre Company
Chuk Mike, Artistic Director, Collective Artists Theatre Company
Brian Chikwava, Novelist, Caine Prize Winner
Wanja Michuki, Arts Entrepreneur
Patrick Neate, Founder, Book Slam
Sandrine Herbert, Founder, Open the Gate
Sokari Douglas-Camp, Artist
Yinka Shonibare MBE, Artist

A special thanks to Lawton Communications Group for design of this document and other marketing support.



My message to the Trustees would be: This place is no ordinary building site, it has wonderful important memories for very many of us. I appeal to you, please listen to the appeal from the very very many who have written to you to say, Have second thoughts, look at other options... You don't think that a building can actually clutch at your heart in the way that has... it in many ways embodies the spirit of those who say, your continent is not just a catalogue of disasters, your continent is a home, and there is a great deal of hope for it... Africa is coming into its own, it's one of the fastest developing parts of the world, and you want to be able to say this place was there when we were down - it must be there when we soar the heights.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu



INTRODUCTION

The Africa Centre, 38 King Street is as much a building as it is a charitable organization for the promotion of African culture and a meeting place for the African Diaspora and its friends, as well as the wider British public.

Since 1962, the building has been at the centre of African experience in the United Kingdom and has contributed immensely to British public life as well as to deeper understanding between the various cultures that meet in this most cosmopolitan city. Even in recent years when it is has faced, as a building and a charity, profound crises, it has retained a powerful pull on the imagination of anyone who has an interest, knowledge or participates in the cultural life of British Africa.

In the present day and age, the challenge of revitalizing the Africa Centre is a clarion call to many in the diaspora to demonstrate not only the capacity of the diaspora but the changing status of Africa in the world. The Africa Centre we envision would be aligned to, and support, the African Union's vision towards an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.

This vision and framework document, and the campaign from which it emerges, is an attempt to place the Africa Centre once again at the heart of African Diaspora life, by acknowledging the incredible history and legacy of 38 King Street, and the original mission of the Africa Centre to be a centre for all Africans and anyone with a care for the continent, and its people, as well as their descendants in the United Kingdom. It envisions an Africa Centre that is at heart an open, transparent and accountable membership body, in a building not weighted by history, but infused with it; housing a charity that delivers vibrant cultural and social programming, inspirational ideas and research, as well as a hub for social change and development.

We envisage a two step refurbishment and redevelopment of the building, first to bring 38 King Street to a suitable standard to increase programming in the building and a long-term plan to deliver David Adjaye's visionary redevelopment plans for the building. This vision is underpinned by a firm commitment to good governance, transparency and accountability. We hope that it creates an Africa Centre that is not only in the centre of London but also, in the immortal words of Jazzy B, feels like the centre of the world.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Africa Centre is an iconic landmark for Africans in Britain, a unique cultural institution with an exceptional heritage in a prime central London location. For 50 years it has been central to the Africa experience in the UK and contributed immensely to British public life.

2. The importance of the Centre and its location to people in the UK should not be underestimated. Britain's global pioneering role - specifically London and Westminster Council - in promoting multiculturalism has provided a rich and supportive environment for this institution to exist. This building has thus provided a unique space for decades where genuinely free speech has been able to take place. It has nurtured insights and aspirations across generations. In 1980, a message from political prisoners on Robben Island, issued in the name of Nelson Mandela and smuggled out of jail, was released at 38 King Street by the ANC. And, as recently as last summer, author Ngugi Wa Thiong'o echoed the voices of many supporters of the Centre, including Glenis Kinnock, Wole Soyinka and London Mayor Boris Johnson, when he said, "in the heart of London has come history...the centre has captured the heartbeat of the continent in the world". London is the global cultural hub, Africa is rising up the international agenda, is the fastest growing region on earth at the moment and investors are engaged with and in African countries as never before.

3. The Africa Centre has no debt and its current rental income provides a break-even income. However, poor governance has created an organization without a clear vision and lacking an affinity with the community; this has led to the current crisis and prospective sale of the building.

4. At a meeting on 26 January 2012 a community vote was taken for a moratorium on the sale whilst governance issues are clarified and a long-term plan with enhanced programming to guarantee the Africa Centre's future well into the 21st Century is agreed.

5. The challenge is to have a thriving, redeveloped Africa Centre that exists for the benefit of its members, underpinned by transparent accountability and good governance, a building infused with its history and heritage that offers vibrant cultural and social programming.

6. This document is a framework for collaboration and offers the Africa Centre a commercial and cultural renaissance, reflecting the renaissance presently benefitting much of the African continent. Through a series of multi-stakeholder meetings with Africa Centre trustees, STAC and other community participants, it is envisaged that the Centre's governance should be based on:

- a wide membership body, constitutionally bound to pay dues;
- democratically elected and accountable trustees, constitutionally limited to a set number of 12, reflecting the regional diversity of the continent and various diaspora, also with at least one member below the age of 25;
- a democratically elected Chair, constitutionally bound to be UK resident.

7. It is also envisaged that the trustees receive their mandate from the membership and that any substantive decision about the life of the charity would constitutionally trigger a consultation process. An efficient and salaried executive, answerable to the trustees, should be recruited, responsible for the day-to-day administration of this vision, based on the principle of divided responsibility, consultation and trust.

8. The Africa Centre of the future should be an inclusive cultural, educational and African Think Tank Centre articulating issues and ideas driven by Africa and Africans, promoting, broadening and strengthening links between African UK diaspora, the UK and other countries. Partnerships should be developed between existing African/Africa diaspora focused organizations. Values will centre on good governance, responsibility, diversity and inclusivity. Objectives focusing on programming the vision - the charity a centre first and foremost for education and culture - underpinned by educational courses, music, art, dance and theatre. The plans envisage a bar and restaurant, as well as a business club.

9. The Africa Centre should be the place that takes the lead on all issues that directly impact on Africa, where diverse talents and skills are recognized, valued and nurtured: the Arts Council England's Black Asian Minority Ethnic sector flagship.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONT.)

10. The vision outlined is dependent on a strong executive team with leadership skills, diverse knowledge in education and culture and the capacity to fundraise. It is essential the Africa Centre operates as a business and the economic realities mean an Africa Centre renaissance must be upheld by a solid business case. Building on architect David Adjaye's visionary redevelopment plans, a two-step refurbishment and redevelopment of the building is envisaged. The aim is, firstly, to get the premises fit for purpose in order to exploit fundraising and awareness opportunities before a second, more expansive redevelopment of the whole building is undertaken.

11. Finance for the re-development of the Africa Centre can be raised from a range of sources including ticketed and sponsored events, venue hire, office space rentals, philanthropic partnerships, art promotion, fundraising and an expanding and due paying membership base (student, basic and associate). STAC also recommend that programming is underpinned by a Match-Fund encouraging philanthropy from the African diaspora alongside support from institutional grants. Conservative calculations assessing income from such sources suggest an income estimate of some £515,000 per annum is not unrealistic. It is estimated that at least £300,000 is required for the immediate cosmetic refurbishment of the building whilst up to £12 million may be required for a full scale redevelopment.

12. Priorities include preparing detailed financial costing for both the Phase One and Phase Two redevelopment, obtaining listed building clarification from Westminster Council and identifying and engaging with potential partners, sponsors, donors and supporters. Developing a marketing plan and media campaign are also key priorities.

13. The vast potential of the Africa Centre at 38 King Street is yet to be fulfilled. The potential of re-invention at 38 King Street, together with reformed governance, vibrant programming and educational activities, in collaboration with the right partners could save the building at 38 King Street and deliver the definitive Africa Centre.

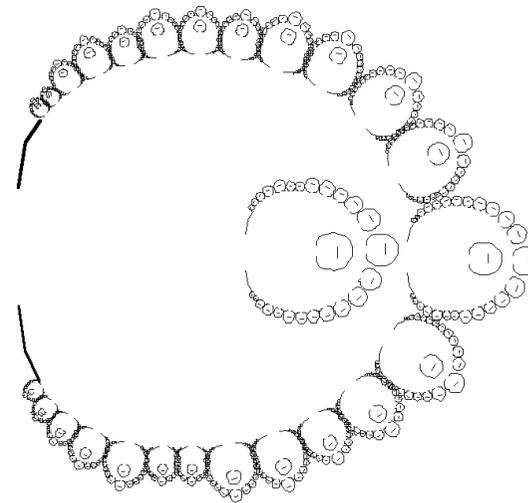
THE VISION: A LIVING HERITAGE

In the 21st Century, the Africa Centre is compelled to redevelop its architecture; to look forward to an Africa that is vibrant, aspiring and resilient. In the 21st Century the Africa Centre is compelled to re-define its philosophy and contribution to this seismic social change.

The Africa Centre was founded through a philanthropic gift. It is only fitting that it should continue as a model of philanthropy at the heart of which sits compassion, social cohesion, and the uplifting of fellow-people. African society in Britain is diverse: asylum seekers and bankers, artists and academics, nurses and billionaires. The Africa Centre needs to speak to the many interests of the arts, politics and commerce, and the diversity of age, nationalities and cultures. Like Africa, the Africa Centre must be many things to many and diverse people.

38 King Street is unique in that it is both a museum and a working building. Anyone who has been in a place of worship will know that architecture is often more than just infrastructure. It's the framework through which we articulate our humanity. Yet its function as a museum and a piece of living heritage is crucial to its identity; a museum is a building set apart for study and the arts, it originates from the Greek term for a 'temple for the muses': history, poetry, literature, drama, music, dance etc. Most museums exhibit artifacts with which we reflect upon our history, our humanity, and our memory. Contemporary museology describes 'the museum as the medium', and in the case of 38 King Street, the building itself is the vessel of memory. Africans from diverse countries are joined in collective memories that have built there over time. But the Africa Centre is more than a museum piece. Its existence is one of social change, of a world being reborn, of new ways of thinking, and the realization of the imagination.

Nations were born out of the work of activists who broke bread at 38 King Street. Ron Eglash has described how some African communities traditionally arrange their villages in a series of fractals, with an infinite repetition of patterns that hold within themselves a repeated existential essence. The spiralling path is a conscious pattern, which speaks to inter-connectivity, a self-organizing egalitarianism, and an order in which everyone has their place in the circle (1). The Ba-ila of southern Zambia design their villages in such a pattern (see below). Even within the Chief's household (the inner spiral) there is a smaller enclosure or village, an altar in which the ancestral spirits are held.



1 http://www.ted.com/talks/ron_eglash_on_african_fractals.html

THE VISION: A LIVING HERITAGE (CONT.)

Reflecting this idea, The Africa Centre, in its next half-century, should be a spiral of philanthropy and social change at the heart of which sits a foundation of memory and history, held between within its original walls.

At the most open level it would house:

- a Restaurant in which society, African and otherwise, meet and exchange.
- a Business Club, in which intimate conversations are had between those who have, while they are encouraged to give to those who have not
- a Thought Centre: a Think Tank on Africa, from an African perspective, and an Education Centre, that delivers research papers on African development to Western decision-makers, and cultural heritage classes to children from across London, the UK and beyond
- a Hub for Social Change and Development, both in Africa and its diaspora, where social entrepreneurs are supported to create projects that directly impact on Africa and a peer-learning group encourages the next generation of African leaders
- a Cultural Centre for artists, musicians, actors, writers, film-makers and other creative that increases the visibility of African culture while generating income for emerging artists
- a Public Space in which the community gathers to celebrate itself, and show the world what Africa has become.

In the programming vision are themes of:

- Community
- Social Change
- Education
- Philanthropy
- Culture

This vision of the Africa Centre is underpinned by a wide membership base, which is inclusive of 'all those who come from Africa or are interested in Africa', (2) as was originally envisioned by its founders. The democracy invested in a membership-based organization will allow the African diaspora to create a model through which to practice the good governance and teach it to the next generation of young African diasporans. And good governance is the key that will see Africa 'soar to its heights' in the 21st Century. The essential vision of Africa is as diverse, cooperative and successful. We believe the original Africa Centre building can maintain and support this vision within its four walls and project it out to the world from its home, the beacon at 38 King Street, Covent Garden.

2 Minutes from the 1958 meeting which founded the Africa Centre

CREATING A JOINT VISION

Through a series of multi-stakeholder meetings with members of the Africa Centre and the Campaign to Save the Africa Centre, and other community participants, this vision will be further developed. The Save the Africa Centre Campaign believes that through the diverse passions, talents and skills of the African diaspora community, a collective and robust vision can be formed for the Africa Centre.

This document is a framework for collaboration. Below are starting points for the potential Values, Outputs and Outcomes of the Centre.

Values

- Diversity
- Inclusivity
- Democracy
- Good governance
- Social responsibility
- Solidarity
- Philanthropy

Output

- Thought Leadership on African Issues by Africans
- Educational Programmes
- Development in Africa
- Heritage and History for Young Diasporans
- Business modelling for Social Entrepreneurs
- Leadership Courses
- Cultural Programmes
- Art Exhibits
- Music Concerts
- Book Readings
- Theatre Performance
- Film Screenings
- Community Events
- Symposiums and Memorials on Conflict
- Special meetings for communities in need
- Conferences on Business and Commerce
- Mentorship and support of emerging artists, activists and entrepreneurs
- A sophisticated model that is income-generating both for emerging artists and for charities that promote social change in Africa

Outcomes

- Financial viability of the Africa Centre
- Greater respect for the African community in Britain
- Stronger synergy, cross-pollination and networks within the African diaspora community
- Cultural exchange and stronger integration within multi-cultural Britain
- Social Cohesion and stronger dialogue between diverse African diaspora communities
- The promotion of a Positive Vision of Africa
- A new generation of leaders who will contribute positively to Africa

PROGRAMMING THE VISION: THE CHALLENGE

The challenge of the Africa Centre is to create programmes that speak at all levels, maintaining interest for the cultured and moneyed, while encouraging aspiring young people who are the next generation of leaders; bringing thinkers together on hard policies which will effect change in Africa while maintaining the soft impact of keeping the community together through cultural gatherings; being the central hub for Africans in central London, while maintaining relations with Afro-centric programming taking place in other venues, and in schools which have a strong interest. The diverse talents of African diasporans is obvious in the wealth of African businesspeople, musicians, arts promoters, and academics making waves in London and globally. But programming must be developed with awareness that many Africans still struggle as asylum seekers and refugees, and must be delivered in humanist solidarity with community activists who support the uplifting of the community, both in Britain and in Africa.

Perhaps especially in turbulent economic and social times we must remember that we have much to learn together. The sharing of experiences between the older and younger generations is of mutual benefit whilst the sharing of knowledge between the different communities within Africa and its Diaspora, or across the arts, can contribute to, and shape, the Africa and the Africa Centre of the future. Furthermore, an Africa Centre that works as a hub for the diapora's diverse talents will positively affect social change in Britain.

Within a three-month time-line, multi-stakeholder consultations can take place through which the African community in Britain will contribute to and mandate this vision

PROGRAMMING THE VISION: DEFINING THE REMIT

The Africa Centre charity needs to clearly define and claim its remit as a Centre for Education and Culture. The diversity of programmes and constituents (marketing to policy-makers as well as to young people) will make its programme vibrant and creative. Resources already exist in the community to act as Advisors and Partners.

The Programming Vision outlined here is dependent on a strong executive team with leadership skills, diverse knowledge in education and culture, particularly with regards to African and its diaspora and the capacity to fundraise.

The vision is underpinned by the following objectives, for the centre to be:

1. A leading centre for thought on Africa by Africans
2. To support young African diasporans to become leaders and contribute to social change in Africa
3. To encourage humanism, social cohesion and social responsibility in the diaspora community
4. To promote and celebrate a vision of Africa as creative, positive, and full of potential through vibrant cultural programming including music

The programming vision will be developed in partnership with already existing African and Africa diaspora focused organizations, and bring them home to 38 King Street. It envisages the following:

1. The establishment of a think-tank within the Africa Centre
2. Placing educational courses at the core of the Africa Centre's activities with an emphasis on young people and community at the core of the Africa Centre's activities
3. Creating a hub for entrepreneurs and social activists within the Africa Centre
4. Establishing a strong activity of cultural programming underpinned by strong partnerships
5. Re-establishing the Africa Centre's role as a place for great African music
6. A physical space/s which is adaptable as a cinema, theatre and public space

PROGRAMMING THE VISION: DEFINING THE REMIT (CONT.)

1. Establishing a Think Tank

The Centre will become a key forum for analysis, discussion and practical policy inputs on Africa and African diaspora development issues. The Research and Education focus of the Centre could be on

1. Peace and Security
2. Social Enterprise and Commerce
3. Poverty, Gender and Development
4. Education, Health and Technology
5. Energy and Climate Change
6. History, Heritage and Culture

Why an African think tank? There are numerous UK think tanks which cover African issues: but often as a subsidiary to European issues. These organisations are British owned and led, with limited participation from Africans. There is gap for a think tank, driven by Africans which places an emphasis on articulating African ideas on African and African diaspora issues.

The relationship between Africa and the wider African diaspora is evolving and will be key to Africa's development. There is a pressing need for a focal point that can contribute to this communal benefit.

The 2011 riots demonstrated the need for broader and deeper links and discussions between the African UK diaspora and the Caribbean and Afro- American diaspora in the UK and elsewhere. Issues regarding gang culture, familial challenges, education etc are not simply "black" issues, but they struck with particular resonance in black communities.

The Centre could be an important crossroad and focal point for multicultural/ ethnic/ faith dynamics and support long over-due discussions between the various African communities.

The Africa Centre could be a major forum for interaction between the UK African diaspora and state and non-state actors in the UK. Currently, decisions are made by the UK government on issues such as immigration, education, aid and development, and security - all issues which impact on African communities in the UK as well as in Africa - without much policy input from the wider African community in the UK.

2. Educational courses focused on young people and community

Educational courses will underpin all aspects of the Centre's programme delivery. This could be designed in partnership with already existing organizations or independently.

Music, Dance and Theatre: classes would be open to community members. Potential grassroots partners include the K Boateng Academy of Performing Arts which provides acting, dancing and African drumming classes for various age-groups from juniors (8 years +) to aspiring young professionals.

All musicians, artists and performers promoted by the Africa Centre would be encouraged to lead master classes for the community.

Heritage and History: a course on the African diaspora in Britain would be developed and delivered for sale to schools during Black History Month. The most encouraging learning site would be the Auction Hall at 38 King Street.

Summer Courses: Week-long courses in Radio, Music, Theatre, and Art will be developed for sale during the school holidays.

The Education Officer will apply for grants for specific projects, with some courses paid for by individuals or schools, and with some partner organizations bringing their own funding (The Africa Centre would contribute to the budget in kind through the provision of space).

3. A hub for business and social change

The Africa Hub/collective work place could provide office support to social entrepreneurs for minimal rent, and would include a peer-led education programme. If work-space is not permitted, group interaction could be maintained by workshops and conferences, and through a social media site.

Participants would be given first offer on leadership and business development courses, and a programme of seminars would be organized through which the various activists/ entrepreneurs share their work, ask key questions, exchange ideas and cross-pollinate. This programme will encourage self-organization and be facilitated by an appropriate Africa Centre Fellow. The Hub would be a forum for Africa Centre Fellows to get practical about how they will make their contribution to the community.

Supported fellows will have opportunity to access the Think Tank, bring issues to the table, and contribute to debates, panels and papers. The objective of the collective work-space is to support young diaspora leaders and encourage stronger networks for the future.

3 See Governance p15

PROGRAMMING THE VISION: DEFINING THE REMIT

4. Cultural Programming

The Africa Centre would deliver a comprehensive programme of cultural events in partnership with already existing organizations. The key areas are Music, Theatre, Fine Art, Film and Literature, with room for development of other areas, such as Dance and Fashion. The Africa Centre has an already existing relationship with the Top Secret Comedy.

The Programming could be designed in partnership with existing organizations, such as, Open the Gate (4), cultural organizations promoting African and Diaspora arts, crafts, music, design and culture. Open the Gate has recently moved out of its site in Dalston after a successful first year. The organization already has capacity to deliver high-quality cultural programming but does not have a space.

The Africa Centre's responsibility would be to oversee fundraising and provide a space for cultural programming, however the partner organizations could bring a percentage of their own funding to the table. The Africa Centre would provide key support to attached artists by acting as an umbrella organization to large funding bodies and providing administrative support to creatives for example, by providing marketing, box office and rehearsal space.

5. Music

The Africa Centre has a proud history as a night-club and music venue. Since the closing of the Limpopo Club in 2003, the African music scene has roamed through London from the Bernie Grant Arts Centre (Tottenham) to Passing Clouds (Dalston) to the Hootananny (Brixton) and Rich Mix (Shoreditch). Promoters such as Dudu Saar already support emerging African musicians through talent agencies such as Motherland Music. At various venues, creative directors, such as DJ AJ Kwame of Afri-Kokoa, are already promoting the best of African contemporary music, ranging from Ghanaian hip-hop, to multi-cultural London jazz, to Gambian electric chora, reaching diverse new markets. Each band brings their own followers and would introduce new audiences to the Africa Centre.

The Limpopo Club started at 38 King Street and music promoter Wala Danga introduced African greats, such as the Bhundu Boys, Angélique Kidjo and Oliver Mtukudzi to the London scene. Jazzie B's Funkin' Pussy and Soul II Soul club nights had lines winding outside Covent Garden. There is a niche, and a clear demand, for a central London venue which prominently features African music and artists; 38 King Street is ideally placed to fulfil this function, competing with venues such as the Jazz Café in Camden and Ronnie Scotts in Soho. Jazzie B's album Soul II Soul at the Africa Centre is a model of how music promotion could become an income generator, not only through ticket sales but through the production of compilation albums.

6. Theatre

The Africa Centre has a rich history of theatre performance: The Trial of Dedan Kimathi by Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o was famously performed in the Auction Hall, Wole Soyinka read extracts from his plays, and a number of young artists, like Bonnie Greer, had their early work read there in the 80s. There is a critical and commercial gap for venues that feature the work of black and African theatre practitioners.

The Sustained Theatre Initiative has been lobbying the Arts Council for many years to provide such a space. The Africa Centre can successfully fill this necessary gap by providing a performance space for African and related theatre. The Africa Centre would provide a small intimate space ideal for chamber performances, and partnerships between the companies could lead to African theatre festivals.

The National Theatre studio recently delivered an African Writing project in partnership with the international ARTERIAL Network (5) promoting emerging African playwrights. The Africa Centre can create partnerships both nationally and internationally, which will create a stronger platform for African stories to be told.

In the past fifteen years, Black British/ African diaspora theatre makers have come in to their own with Oladipo Agboluaje, Bola Agbaje, Kwame Kwei-Amah, and Roy Williams either nominated or winning Olivier awards, and actors such as David Harewood recently awarded an MBE. African Theatre companies such as Tiata Fahodzi are now co-producing at major theatres, such as, the Royal Court, and emerging companies, such as Tangle, are creating spaces in which young talents are nurtured and encouraged. Arts Council grants support companies to tour regionally; a central space in London for short-term theatre programming, would allow their work to be seen by a loyal and consistent base audience.

4 <http://openthegate.org.uk/welcome/>

5 *The vision of Arterial Network is of a vibrant, dynamic and sustainable African creative civil society sector engaged in qualitative practice in the arts in their own right, as well as in a manner that contributes to development, to human rights and democracy, and to the eradication of poverty on the African continent.* <http://www.arterialnetwork.org/about/vision>

PROGRAMMING THE VISION: DEFINING THE REMIT (CONT.)

7. Fine Art

In 1987 sculptor Sokari Douglas-Camp became the first Artist in Residence at the Africa Centre. This launched her internationally acclaimed career. Since then, the Fine Art market has become a major enterprise. Works by major African artists, such as Chris Ofili and Yinka Shonibare, sell for hundreds of thousands of pounds. Philanthropist Robert Devereux (former Virgin partner) has recently founded the African Arts Trust, in recognition of the importance of emerging African artists. A wealth of emerging artists from among the African diaspora are graduating from the major UK arts' schools, such as, Chelsea, Central Saint Martin's and Goldsmiths.

However, finding a platform for young African artists is difficult. Saatchi proved his business acumen in his promotion of Young British Artists (YBAs) in the 1990s. The Africa Centre has the opportunity to support Young African Artists (YAAs) in the 21st Century and bring a return of investment to the charity. A Curator would be appointed to identify emerging African artists, graduating from London arts schools or from abroad, and promote their work through exhibitions and agency. The Curator would also identify collectors and galleries to further support the artists. The Art Gallery will become an important launch pad for young artists.

David Adjaye's redesign of 38 King Street would open with an art exhibit featuring works by Chris Ofili, Sokari Douglas-Camp and Yinka Shonibare, in support of a range of works by as yet unknown emerging artists. Robert Devereux has already offered a loan programme from his collection, which includes important works by African artists.

8. Literature

African writers would be supported with salon sessions in which writers share their work and get feedback in an intimate setting. Book Slam (6) is a potential partner for hosting larger scale book readings/ cabaret nights, and the founders are willing to share their model. Writing Competitions could be launched both for young people and for adults, along with the potential to develop book fairs. Already existing competitions, such as the Caine Prize, would be invited to host their awards nights at the Africa Centre.

9. Film

With the advances in digital film, African film is in a major renaissance and there is a growing middle class African audience that needs to be catered to as well as international and British interest in African film. Although the international film industry is paying attention, African film has always been marginalized in Britain. The Africa Centre can showcase the increased output of African films and become an important meeting place for development, investment and distribution. It can provide a space that is fully committed to consistently programming new African films, alongside special screenings of great African classics. The Africa Centre has the opportunity to become an international hub for the growing number of African film-makers and their audiences.

A small cinema would be ideal for:

- The promotion of the best of new African cinema
- Educational talks on developments in the industry, both in terms of digital and communications technology e.g. how film will move forward in Africa with mobile technology
- Platform discussions and networking sessions with international industry professionals
- Screenings that pitch to the industry or potential investors
- Laboratory screenings in which professionals share work, or tutor and train young filmmakers in the industry
- Partnerships with other international film festivals, or the London Film Festival, which will want to access African audiences and screen at an Africa-appropriate cinema.

6 <http://www.bookslam.com/>

GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

Public support, vision and good governance are the cornerstone of every successful institution; the ability to take effective decisions whilst providing as many people as possible the opportunity to contribute to that process is the benchmark of the most successful institutions. Democracy, diversity and inclusiveness are watchwords of the 21st century, yet they are also rooted firmly in African, as well as British cultures and traditions.

The aspiration for the Africa Centre's governance is one based on a wide membership body, an accountable and democratically elected and appointed body of trustees, and a robust, efficient executive to implement the vision of the charity. The proposed reform of the Africa Centre's governance is based on the principle of divided responsibility and oversight. It envisages the Africa Centre as a membership body from which the trustees and fellows receive their mandate and are empowered to seek an executive body that understands and is able to articulate the vision of the Africa Centre. The trustees will emerge out of the charity's body of members, whose role is to support and, in a sense, be the charity in the eyes of the trustees whose role would be to guide and ensure the vision is effectively delivered by the executive arm of the charity.

In the 21st century, the principle of democracy is increasingly important in Britain and amongst Africans, and this should be reflected in our institutions; dividing the responsibility of maintaining the Africa Centre ensures that all parties have a clear sense of what their role is; more importantly, the existence of equally empowered parties within a membership body like the Africa Centre will ensure that the whole is greater than its parts and particularly for those in authority there is a clear sense of accountability. It will be important to foster a culture of trust and consultation, and to the extent that this is possible it will be built into the governing documents of the charity; most importantly, the governing document would have to be developed in a consultative fashion.

To that effect, we envision the Africa Centre's renewed governing document, having the following characteristics at a minimum to ensure that the charity functions accountably, transparently and in a fashion that maximises engagement and participation of its membership, stakeholders and beneficiaries:

- The Africa Centre functions as and is constitutionally defined as a membership body;
- Members will be constitutionally bound to pay dues to maintain their membership; to ensure inclusiveness and diversity, dues would be set with fair consideration for affordability; and a percentage of membership would be granted for free on the basis of economic need; particular groups would be discounted membership – e.g. students, pensioners, unemployed;
- The Africa Centre is recognized as a charity that exists for the benefit of its members and the wider African Diaspora community. The foundation of the governing document will be to enshrine the strong role of the membership body as the supreme body of the Africa Centre, to whom ultimately the trustees and executive are accountable;
- The trustees will be in the majority, democratically elected from the membership body of the charity, and no person who is an elected trustee may chair the board of trustees; chairs will have to be long standing members of the charity with at least 3-5 years membership;
- The number of trustees on the board would be constitutionally limited to a set number, no greater than 12;

- The effective administration and working of the charity is devolved to an executive, who are responsible for the day to day activities of the charity – as well as maintaining and enlarging the membership and the trustee role is primarily one of oversight and outlining strategic vision and goals in line with the charity's objects, identity, community, membership and best interests.
- The aim will be to have a board that has broad diversity of skills, experience and identity; in a particular, the board will be constitutionally encouraged to aim for a 50-50% gender split – and constitutionally bound to have a 70% - 30% gender split; the board will be constitutionally encouraged to reflect the regional diversity of the continent, as well as the diversity of the various African Diasporas; the board would be constitutionally bound to have at least one member below the age of 25;
- The chair of the board and the majority of trustees would be constitutionally bound to be resident in the United Kingdom;
- The executive will be responsible to trustees and membership for ensuring there is an up-to-date register of members as well as ensuring a growing membership and ensuring that in particular the African and Africa affiliated character of the membership is maintained;
- The Executive of the Charity would be answerable to the board of trustees and the membership, who will have some say on aspects of the (Executives) salary and rewards;
- Any substantive decision about the life of the charity will constitutionally trigger a consultation process; members also would have a right to initiate a grievance process if the consultation process is not followed. There will be a relatively high threshold for this to ensure resources are not expended unnecessarily; members would have a right to elect one of their number to be present at all trustee meetings.

GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP (CONT.)

Fellowship

The constitution will make provision for an honorary category of membership to which people of outstanding or significant achievement can be elected by the membership, and this would be limited to a maximum of 50 fellows a year would be elected each year. The fellows would exist as a sort of wise counsel not only for the charity but for the wider public.

The Executive

The ultimate role and numbers of people that would constitute the executive of the Africa Centre would be dependent on the programming and operational needs of the charity, as well as defined by financial constraints; however, we envisage that recruiting an executive in line with the proposals in this document could include:

Chief Executive, to whom the following would report:

- Research Director – attached to a think-tank
- Membership & Administrative Officer
- Marketing & Communications Executive
- Programmes, Education & Events Executive
- Finance Officer
- Office Manager

It is possible that such roles may be split out as responsibilities grow or wane according to the Africa Centre's strategic priorities.

Governance Reform

The process of reforming the charity's governance will require both collaboration between the various parties concerned with the future of the Africa Centre, as well as concrete commitment to particular objectives by all parties in a time limited process. We envisage that this process would be subject to discussion; however we suggest a commitment by all parties to creating and adopting a reformed governing document over a six week to 3 month process, which would be led by a committee empowered to work on creating a draft governing document following an open and consultative forum. The committee could be made up of:

- A chair
- A Governance expert/s
- Two Africa Centre trustees
- Two Save The Africa Centre Campaign members

This committee would submit a draft governing document for public consultation at a second open forum; following amendments and revisions, carried out within an agreed time limit, we suggest the adoption of the new governing document in an event that is both a legal and celebratory event at 38 King Street.

It will be crucial before the process of governance reform begins to hold a series of preliminary discussions to build trust and identify clearly what we, as a collective group wish to achieve. It will be constructive to establish principles of operation as well as who will formally represent interested parties. It will be crucial to involve and engage as many stakeholders as possible in as constructive a fashion as well.

Outline for Governance Reform Process

1. Establish members of committee empowered to negotiate
2. Preliminary meetings to agree objectives
3. Convene a consultative forum for stakeholders, beneficiaries on governance reform
4. Governance committee empowered to work with governance expert to draft new governing document
5. Convene second consultative forum to discuss, consult and amend draft governing document
6. Adopt new governing document in a formal and celebratory ceremony

THE AFRICA CENTRE AS BUSINESS

We envisage an Africa Centre at 38 King Street that functions as a vibrant space and a vibrant going concern. The aim would be to obtain income from a diversity of sources, including the following: a strong and continuously expanding due paying membership base, ticketed as well as sponsored events, work hubs, art promotion and venue hire. Further down the line, we envisage a functioning bar and restaurant at 38 King Street, as well as strategic efforts to leverage the heritage brand of 38 King Street. Lastly, ongoing and ambitious fundraising activities will be essential to the life of the charity with the view to building up a formidable endowment fund over the long term.

Income streams

Membership
Events
Work Hubs
Art Promotion
Venue Hire
Restaurant and Bar
Leveraging the Brand
Fundraising and Investments

Membership

500 Student Members @ £10 a year
£5,000
500 Basic Members @ £50 a year
£25,000 (£5 a month)
50 Associate Members at £300 a year
£15,000

STAC would encourage their members to become Basic Members of the Africa Centre, and continue marketing for the Africa Centre through the African embassies, diaspora groups, schools and universities. A low estimate of £45,000 a year could be earned if successful Educational and Cultural Programmes were a positive incentive for subscription.

Events

Quality cultural events can be funded through application for grants from institutions such as the Arts Council. A low estimate of 4,000 users (100 users a week over 40 weeks) at £10 a ticket would provide profits of £40,000 a year.

Collective work place/The Africa Hub

One floor of the building could be maintained for this activity. The model would follow that of The Hub in Islington (7), which is an open plan space with diverse options to work, including hot-desking and a meeting room, and office services, such as internet and printing. The Hub supports social entrepreneurs who cannot afford or commit to hiring full-time office space. A model would be designed that encourages African diaspora social entrepreneurs to rent desks and share space with like-minded and diverse colleagues. This would be income-generating but would also provide users with services, such as, networking and social events, access to leadership and business courses etc. A low-estimate of income-generated by this one space is £20,000 a year.

Art Promotion

Fine Art has emerged as a sector with great capacity for commercial return. Works by Chris Ofili and Yinka Shonibare sell for hundreds of thousands of pounds. There is also new interest in art from Africa, as noted by the Tate's new African Acquisitions Committee, and the recent launch of the African Arts Trust by businessman/philanthropist Robert Devereux. African Arts Trust promotes and supports African artists in Africa. Devereux is a supporter of the campaign and has offered a loan programme from his collection, which includes works by the likes of Yinka Shonibare. This is a significant donation in kind. Initial partnerships with organizations such as this would allow The Africa Centre to support

and promote emerging diaspora artists. A low-estimate of initial profits from this programme is £10,000 but with an inspired curator, this programme has the potential to become a major contributor of income through the representation of successful artists.

A Visionary Executive would be able to deliver a minimum of £115,000 a year from the above marketing, office rental and programming model.

Match Fund

STAC's recommendation would be that The Africa Centre's Programming is underpinned by a Match-Fund that encourages philanthropy from the African diaspora, while challenging the charity's administration to fulfil its responsibility to win institutional grants. With quality programmes, The Africa Centre has the potential to be a flagship of the Arts Council's remit to support the BAME (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) Sector. High quality programming will ensure that the footfall is in excess of this figure. A world-class building and restaurant will encourage foot-fall in the community space and vice-versa.

⁷ <http://islington.the-hub.net/public/spaces.html>

THE AFRICA CENTRE AS BUSINESS (CONT.)

Running costs of the Africa Centre

The table below reflects conservative estimates of £515,000 based on the sources identified above (please note that this does not include profits from the restaurant/bar space which would be analyzed separately).

We believe an immediate cosmetic refurbishment of approximately £300,000 to address the most glaring problems (lighting, walls, etc.) would provide immediate benefit by creating an auction hall space that could accommodate more programming.

Membership	
Student (10/yr.)	£5,000
Basic (£50/yr.)	£25,000
Associate (£300/yr.)	£15,000
.....	
<i>Sub-total membership</i>	<i>£45,000</i>
Events (4,000 users - 100 users a week over 40 weeks - @£10/ticket)	£40,000
Restaurant & Bar	TBD
Collective workplace /the Africa Hub	£20,000
Art promotion	£10,000
.....	
<i>Total AC generated income</i>	<i>£115,000</i>
Secured pledges	£200,000
Match Fund	£200,000
.....	
Total annual sources of income	£515,000

S.W.A.T. Analysis

Strengths

- Africa Centre is a unique cultural institution that provides a venue for the promotion African and black arts culture in London and the UK;
- Central London location provides prime access to the community;
- Strong heritage value;
- The asset has no debt and its current rental income provides the building with break-even income.

Weaknesses

- Poor governance has created a poorly run organization without clear vision. With a proper governance structure;
- The current state of the building makes attracting high end events difficult due to poor lighting, heating, etc;
- Without refurbishment, cost of maintenance will continue to increase as equipment and infrastructure reach end of life.

Opportunities

- Central London location gives access to many people across London and allows more people to be reached than a less central alternative;
- The proposed enhanced programming will enable AC to reach members of the African Diaspora who have historically not fully engaged in cultural programmes (particularly youth);
- Strong heritage value creates opportunities to partner with world-renowned artists and cultural icons;
- The widely acknowledged commercial and cultural renaissance of Africa offers tremendous potential for programming and attracting relevant events;
- The growing numbers of people of African descent in the UK and particularly in cosmopolitan London.

Threats

- With modern day technology, people are receiving cultural exposure via sources such as the internet and social media, creating competitive alternatives to live events;
- Other more modern spaces provide competition as exhibitors will opt for a space that has better lighting, power capacity, etc;
- Lack of proper sustainable/recurring funding will make it difficult to provide a consistent calendar of events.

THE AFRICA CENTRE AS BUSINESS (CONT.)

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY: The Save the Africa Centre (STAC) campaign - the Africa Centre

An effective means of delivering the redevelopment of 38 King Street is to plan for it to occur over two phases. The first phase would focus on getting the premises fit-for-purpose for an initial refreshed programming; events such as the London 2012 Olympics represent an excellent opportunity to exploit for fundraising and awareness purposes. It will be necessary to identify similar high-profile events that would be of benefit to fundraising initiatives for the Africa Centre. The second phase would be geared towards achieving the more expansive redevelopment of the building.

Phase One will enable the Africa Centre to:

- Improve its offer to potential promoters, artists and other hirers by essential improvements to public areas (Auction Hall, restaurant, bars and to address any urgent public Health & Safety matters, e.g. toilets, and execute a basic upgrade of equipment, e.g. sound system). This will enable the Africa Centre to open up to a greater number of hirers and enhance the potential earned income that can be used as matched funding for further development.

Phase Two will include:

- Refurbishment of public areas such as the restaurant and bars and major services improvements and replace outdated equipment. This will allow a higher quality offer of facilities for performing and hiring and charges will increase accordingly thus increasing the organization's income. It will also be able to attract higher profile events, exhibitions, fashion shows, concerts, literature launches and big screen events;
- Major renovations of the listed building externally (e.g. roof) as well as refurbishment of non public areas and the creation of new facilities such as a Private Members Club and a Cinema. Improvements to the office areas will also enable higher rental incomes to be negotiated.

The following document lists the actions required to successfully execute the required fundraising campaign. This assumes that STAC and the Africa Centre trustees will work together, to time bound terms of engagement, in order to most effectively deliver on the demands of this fundraising effort.

Schedule of Actions

- Articulate 'Vision', primarily the artistic vision for the Africa Centre;
- With Africa Centre trustees, formally agree first principles and a time bound action plan for progressively and substantively resolving governance issues besetting the charity;
- Secure official alignment within Council of Management and the current membership (of circa 30 persons?) as well as an initial agreed broad group of Africa-interested practitioners, influencers and prospective partner organisations that have already offered support throughout STAC campaign.

THE AFRICA CENTRE AS BUSINESS (CONT.)

Establish leadership team for fundraising campaign

- Establish high profile 'ambassadors' willing to publicly declare support from the beginning for the renaissance of the Africa Centre – i.e. obtain agreement that they can be named as actively supporting fundraising effort. This reinforces credibility of campaign – e.g:

Ambassador	Contact
Jazzie B	Peter Adjaye
David Lan	Chipo Chung
Youssou N'Dour	Boko Inyundo via Dudu Sarr
Ngugi wa Thiongo	Dele Fatunla / Boko Inyundo
Dr. Titilola Banjoko	STAC
Bonnie Greer	Chipo Chung
Ola Shobowale	Elizabeth Dudley
Elsie McCabe Thompson	Elizabeth Dudley
Abdilatif Abdalla	Dele Fatunla
African Premier League footballers	STAC
Yinka Shonibare	Chipo Chung
Sokari	Dele Fatunla
Douglas-Camp	
Wole Soyinka	Chipo Chung
Prof Femi Osofisan	Elizabeth Dudley

- Recruit (incl. advertising for position in open market) and appoint fundraising director – ring fence 2 year salary commitment from the Africa Centre out of the tranche of £654,000 provided in 2009/2010 by Arts Council England, whose endorsement for this spend should be formally obtained;
- Author detailed outline of financial costs for Phase One (interim) and Phase Two (long term) redevelopment plus forecast income & expenditure (to provide prospective funders with estimated fundraising targets, both in total and for specific aspects of redevelopment – n.b. some donors will only see relevance / return in sponsoring specific items);
- Develop and formally agree initial tariff of 'benefits' to be offered to any potential donors – e.g. title sponsor ("The *** Africa Centre", like The Emirates Stadium for Arsenal); room or event sponsor; opportunity to become patron or 'Friend of the Africa Centre' etc
- Re-engage with Westminster City Council to process any building redevelopment pre-application requirements for Phase One (minimal requirements, if any) and Phase Two (relatively exhaustive demands due to listed building status of 38 King Street).
- Send call to action to STAC petitioners as well as Africa Centre database calling for anyone interested in active involvement in fundraising campaign to come forward;
- Form team of 'programming catalysts' - outline interim programming plan (e.g. for Year 1) – this will provide prospective funders with conviction that 'life and dynamism' is returning to 38 King Street and therefore worth support with financial contributions.

Identify and start dialogue with potential funders and partners (i.e. other Africa-interest groups)

- With major donors – lead discussion with Phase Two costs, whilst also communicating Phase One aspirations to 'get the Centre vibrant again now / for London 2012';
- With smaller-scale donors - lead discussion with Phase One costs to highlight urgency behind generating relatively small sums to 'get the Centre vibrant again now / for London 2012', whilst also communicating Phase Two aspirations to showcase enduring intent;
- Form partnerships with promoters and arts organizations as such partners bring their own resources which, through cross subsidy with the Africa Centre's own resources and earned income streams, enables the Africa Centre to maximise the potential upside from a fundraising campaign:

Actions

- Establish contact with prospective donors with whom Africa Centre had dialogue in 2009 / 2010 or already engaged;
- Re-establish contact with prospective partner organizations / endorsers with whom trustees had dialogue in 2009 / 2010;
- Approach Capital & Counties – as good neighbours of the Africa Centre with an interest in Corporate responsibility for the diverse community it serves in Covent Garden;
- STAC to re-establish contact with potential donors with whom it connected with during 2011 / 2012;
- STAC to re-establish contact with prospective partner organizations / endorsers with whom it had dialogue in 2011 / 2012.

THE AFRICA CENTRE AS BUSINESS (CONT.)

Identify potential 'greenfield' (i.e. new) sources of funds and map out time bound plan to engage each of them:

- i.** Individuals (starting with potential major donors such as high net worth individuals)
- ii.** Founding Patrons scheme (annual gifts of £000s – possible source is ex-members of the Africa Centre)
- iii.** Trusts and foundation grants (e.g. those identified by the Africa Centre during 2009/2010 redevelopment plans included: The Allen Foundation; The Anglo American Foundation; The Baring Foundation; Comic Relief; Deutsche Bank Small Grants Scheme; The Kresge Foundation; The Esmee Fairbairn Foundation; Atlantic Philanthropies; Jerwood Trust; Bridge House Trust; The City Worshipful Companies, including those with sizeable property portfolios in Covent Garden such as the Mercers, Goldsmiths, Drapers, Fishmongers)
- iv.** Corporates (either charitable gifts or sponsorship agreements)
- v.** Governments (e.g. African Embassies; DFID; DCMS; ACE; HLF; LDA / Mayor Westminster City Council; Lottery; Comic Relief; DTI; FCO; British Council; EU etc)
- vi.** Membership fees – 'crowd source' funding from expanded membership agreed in refreshed governance agreements
- vii.** Fundraising galas / events at the Africa Centre (e.g. during London 2012 Olympics)

Develop marketing plan and collateral:

- i.** Build digital 'footprint' through PR/digital PR;
- ii.** Above the line media opportunities (TV; press; radio; point of sale/poster etc);
- iii.** PowerPoint presentation;
- iv.** Film of new architectural vision (using CAD drawings) for web distribution;
- v.** Create brochure, flyers, business cards etc;
- vi.** Exploit existing footage from 'This is My Africa' film commissioned by the Africa Centre in 2009 from producer Zina Saro-Wiwa;
- vii.** Execute tactical opportunities to leverage milestone events for purpose of raising profile of the Africa Centre's renaissance e.g. Africa Centre stage with DJ Edu at the Notting Hill Carnival;
- viii.** Attend high profile Africa-focused events as speakers/panelists/delegates in order to evangelize about fundraising efforts and, where appropriate, communicate involvement to a wider audience to raise awareness of this activity in the flow of Africa-UK matters;
- ix.** On an ongoing basis build and cleanse donor lists/identify specific, bespoke funding opportunities that arise during course of campaign.

Develop media campaign to support fundraising

- i.e. specifically targeting influencers in the media industry (Africa and the Arts editors, anchors, personalities etc) that connect the narrative about the Africa Centre's renaissance to different audiences in the UK and globally
- e.g. STAC to reconnect with all media channels that supported campaign as well as approaching other outlets.

SUMMARY

The aim has been to outline within these few pages a vision for the Africa Centre at 38 King Street which establishes it as the premier organization for Africa in Britain and beyond in the 21st Century.

We envision an Africa Centre that is not only a living, breathing building but a vibrant institution that is vital to the public life of the United Kingdom. It's clear that the vast potential of the Africa Centre at 38 King Street is yet to be fulfilled; the rising prospects of the African continent and its people is surely reason enough to acknowledge the necessity of a place that reflects this renaissance vibrantly. Yet, the realities of economics mean this vision must be underpinned by a strong business case. We believe it is made. In the short term, the continued refurbishment of the building and focus on delivering vibrant programming and educational activities in collaboration with various partners will bring life to the Africa Centre again. In the long-term delivering on David Adjaye's re-invention of the building will make it of inestimable value.

With inspiration from the wider community, we have authored this vision of a sustainable future for the Africa Centre. We hope that this promotes the commissioning of a business plan which envisions the Africa Centre as a model social enterprise, with mixed investment from the private and public sector as well as philanthropy. Successfully implementing this vision is an iterative process, and part of this process is the commissioning of a business plan as well as dialogue with the community about that plan thereby inviting valuable participation by the organization's ultimate beneficiaries.

A revitalized Africa Centre at 38 King Street is a tantalizing proposition as both a business and cultural opportunity.

We must not let it go, bring what you love.

THANK YOU

W www.savetheafricacentre.com

F www.facebook.com/savetheafricacentre

T www.twitter.com/SaveAfricaCtr / @SaveAfricaCtr

