

RED AFRICA PRESS RELEASE

April 20 – June 4, 2017

THINGS FALL APART

VERNISSAGE: April 20, 2017, 6:00 p.m.

Opening Remarks by

András Mink, Senior Research Fellow,

Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives

Mark Nash, curator, film historian and filmmaker

Dr. Nadine Siegert, Deputy Director, Iwalewahaus,
University of Bayreuth

Mozambique and Angola, as well as providing educational scholarships as a means of wielding soft power.

The historic ties between these nations find expression across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries: from early-Soviet utopian visions of interracial collaboration; through the height of the Cold War when soft power was used to influence independence struggles; to the ongoing stories of African independence and liberation.

The exhibition "Things Fall Apart" features artists, filmmakers and groups from across Africa, Asia, Europe and North America. Drawing on film, photography, propaganda, and public art, the exhibition presents interdisciplinary reflections on African connections to the Soviet Union and related countries.

The title of the exhibition is borrowed from Chinua Achebe's 1958 classic of post-colonial fiction, seen by many as the archetypal modern African novel in English, which reflects on the devastating impact of colonialism in Africa. Our exhibition uses this association to focus on a similar loss of utopian perspective following the end of the cold war and collapse of the Soviet Union and eastern bloc.

The exhibition presents historical and contemporary responses to the geopolitical and cultural connections of African nations to the Soviet Union and related countries. Links were forged particularly during the second half of the twentieth century, as post-colonial power struggles drew support from the East and the West. The Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Cuba and East Germany all offered aid to national governments such as those of

The exhibition reaches back to the beginning of the Soviet era through the work of Russian-American artist Yevgeniy Fiks. Fiks explores representations of black people in Soviet press and propaganda as early as 1920, which he presents through The Wayland Rudd Archive. The exhibition also re-examines relationships built during the height of the Cold War, including Tito's 1961 visit to Africa.

Contemporary traces of communist street art and propaganda are captured by Jo Ractliffe and Kiluanji Kia Henda, revealing the lasting legacy of liberation struggles on the continent. In addition, the work of Onejoon Che critically examines the legacy of North Korea's Mansudae Art Studio which produced socialist realist artworks such as The African Renaissance.

Galeria Centralis, Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives

1051 Budapest, Arany János utca 32.

Full program www.osaarchivum.org

Participating Artists

Burt Caesar, Filipa César, Onejoon Che, Ângela Ferreira, Yevgeniy Fiks, Isaac Julien, Alexander Markov, Jo Ractliffe, Kiluanji Kia Henda, Tshibumba Kanda-Matulu, Paulo Kapela, Milica Tomić, Tonel, Travelling Communiqué

Curated by **Mark Nash**

Research and Curatorial Assistant **Nadine Siegert**

Project Manager **Will Strong** (London), **Nadine Siegert** (Bayreuth), **Paula Nascimento** and **João G. Rapazote** (Lisbon), **Székely Katalin** (Budapest)

Things Fall Apart is a cooperation between Calvert 22, London; Iwalewahaus – Universität Bayreuth;

EGEAC – Galerias Municipais and Africa.Cont, Lisbon; and the Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives, Budapest.

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