

ARISE

AFRICA'S GLOBAL
STYLE & CULTURE
MAGAZINE FROM
THIS DAY

ISSUE 10
£2.95 • US\$9.99 • N1,000
LAUNCH OF THE YEAR

AFRICA UNITED

ALEK WEK
AND
FRIENDS
KICK OFF
OUR
WORLD
CUP
SPECIAL



**PRESIDENT
GOODLUCK**
NIGERIA'S
NEW MAN
AT THE TOP



MORGAN TSVANGIRAI
TONI BRAXTON
2FACE
NWANKWO KANU



RLEY

FASHION MUSIC CULTURE POLITY

II I document cities as they are. I find a local taxi driver and say, 'Show me your city. The rich, poor, formal, informal, dodgy, show me everything' II

that reschedules debt deadlines to stave off insolvency proceedings. He had to reduce his team – “which I hated” – and the British broadsheets covered the situation with unsympathetic zeal; one feature headline was ‘Downfall of the showman’. For someone used to an almost unparalleled career trajectory, it was a humbling, character-testing time. “It was horrible, really horrible,” he says. “It was my first downturn in the cycle and I wasn’t as prepared as I should have been. However, it was a really good business lesson.”

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

A career-defining commission in the form of the National Museum of African-American History and Culture in Washington DC eventually convinced Adjaye’s bank that his practice could make it through the financial rough patch. “Thank God it didn’t collapse on me,” he says, eyes bulging at the prospect. “I’m sure there were people enjoying my struggle – the whippersnapper that came from nowhere getting his comeuppance. But I didn’t go down and I know how I need to do business in the future. And I got my staff levels back.” In less than a year? “Yes. And I’ve negotiated an end to the CVA terms. We’re back on track.”

It’s 7.30pm on a Friday night and Adjaye can only spare 20 minutes to have his portrait taken for ARISE. After that, he’s got to dash home to his Westminster apartment to pack for an early morning flight to New York, a journey he makes every two weeks.

As he poses, slightly self-consciously, a Manchester accent booms through the sliding doors. “I’m getting off mate.” It’s Chris Ofili. “OK. Hey, sorry about Nigeria, man,” shouts Adjaye laughing. He’s referring to the 1-0 win to Ghana in the Africa Cup Of Nations. Ofili’s family is Nigerian. “It’s all right mate, Egypt will sort you out,” Ofili hollers prophetically. “His wife’s Egyptian so he would say that,” Adjaye muses. “But he’s probably right, Egypt are a strong team.” He was right. Egypt beat Ghana 1-0. But with Adjaye’s “transnational” outlook, I doubt he lost much sleep over it. ●

□ David Adjaye’s *Urban Africa* is at the Design Museum, London, until September 5.

BUILDS FOR THE FUTURE



David Adjaye’s picks his top five contemporary African architects

FRANCIS KERE

Trained in Germany, this award-winning architect creates “climatically advantageous” buildings. He’s worked on projects in India, Spain, Mali and Yemen but his heart lies in assisting his countrymen’s development through innovative structures. In 2004, he won the Aga Khan Award for Architecture on the merits of a primary school he designed for his childhood village of Gando.



JOE ADDO

Addo’s five principles for design are: layering, urban planning, outdoor space, materiality and transparency. Addo has practices in LA and Accra, but has a passion for working in his homeland, Ghana, on social buildings and private residences. He’s created the conceptual housing scheme Akwaaba Village that aims to “reinforce the positive aspects of village culture” while also reflecting the new ambitions of Ghanaian culture and lifestyles.



MPHETHI MOROJELE

Morojele is the founding partner of MMA architects in South Africa. He was born in Lesotho and went on to study in Cape Town and London. His practice is behind a number of iconic structures, including the South African embassy in Addis Ababa, a remembrance garden and a museum at Freedom Park in Pretoria, and a museum and hotel complex within the Cradle Of Humankind World Heritage Site in Gauteng.



ISSA DIABATÉ

Based in Abidjan, Diabaté works alongside business partner and fellow architect, Guillaume Koffi, in one of the city’s most exclusive practices, Koffi-Diabaté. The duo have worked on residential and business projects in Abidjan, Dakar and Bamako, and do a sublime line in luxury villas, replete with chic terraces of teak wood that make the perfect setting for the private swimming pools of Africa’s elite.



DANIELLE DIWOUTA KOTTO

Based in Douala, Cameroon, Kotto is known for producing low-carbon-impact structures that are both striking and multifunctional. As part of Doual-art, a public art project that saw Douala gain a host of new statues, structures and street furniture, Kotto created a public water pump station that doubles up as a shop and shaded resting place perfect for conversation and other community interaction.



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PHOTO: ERIC JAN OLWENKIRK