

URBAN TALK

July 5, 2018 | 6.00 pm | A053, IfA

Chinafrika. under construction

Africa is referred to as the last major growth region in the world. By 2050, the current population of nearly one billion people could almost double, and more and more people are moving to the cities. The gap between the village and the metropolis paradoxically unites China and Africa. As in China, migration pressure from the country to the African metropolises is massive and unbroken. In the fast-growing urban centers of the African continent, however, little is invested in housing or public infrastructure, so that the often informal conditions of everyday life will in all probability persist and become more common. In Africa, per capita cement consumption is less than 50 kilos, in China 1,737 kilos and in Europe 230 kilos.

Chinafrika. under construction

2018

Urban Talks

Jochen Becker

The research and art project *Chinafrika. under construction* traces cultural relations between China and Africa, portraying a global process that also fundamentally changes the imaginary of Europe. As the "recolonization of Europe" (Dietrich Chisholm) is in full swing, the project breaks away from biased notions along old colonial routes (north / south). It shows alternatives (south / south), mutual reflections (south / south) and contrasting, multiple perspectives: African, Chinese and European artists, curators, researchers and activists have been invited to test how to account for current developments in the fields of artistic practice and visual cultures, everyday life, architecture and urbanism. Working groups in Guangzhou, Johannesburg, Lagos and Luxembourg developed questions, reflections and works of art in order to generate research, the very production and artistic work as well as to consolidate local debates. As a traveling construction site of multiple public formats – among them workshops, and conferences, exhibitions at the Leipzig Gallery for Zeitgenössische Kunst and Shenzhen Bi-City Biennial of Urbanism / Architecture 2017/18, performances and film screenings, the project unfolds a terrain that spans three continents. www.chinafrika.org

Jochen Becker (Berlin) works as author, curator and lecturer and is co-founder of *metrozones* | Center for Urban Affairs and the Initiative *Urban Kulturen*. Most recently, he curated *China Afrika. under construction* at *rischer herbst*, Graz, 2015-2016, *Museum für Contemporary Art Leipzig*, *Chinafrika*, mobile Kunstfest Weimar 2017, *Chinafrika. blackout* Shenzhen Bi-City Biennial of Urbanism / Architecture 2017/18.

05/07
6 pm
A053

Habitat Unit
Stadler des 17. Juni 152
10253 Berlin

Habitat Unit | um URBAN MANAGEMENT | TU

The Leipzig exhibition *Chinafrika. under construction* looked at various interwoven areas of the economic and cultural dynamics of the phenomenon of 'Chinafrika' – organized along the thematic sections of Explosion / Exposure, Resourcing, Shipping, Factory, Shopping, Urban, Transit, Exchange, Future and Trailer. *Chinafrika. blackout* at Shenzhen Bi-City Biennial of Urbanism / Architecture 2017/18 reflected on the future of a 'chinafrican' industry and its contrasting outcomes: dirty, individualized mining in the Congolese copper belt, by people digging with a shovel at high personal risk underground, and future robotic industrial parks. Both are plunged into deep darkness: only scant underground lights for the craft

miners, and no light at all for the work of robots, data processing, or the bellies of cargo vessels and other logistical spaces.

The research and art project **Chinafrika**, under construction traces cultural relations between China and Africa, portraying a global process that also fundamentally changes the imaginary of Europe. As the “provincialization of Europe” (Dipesh Chakrabarty) is in full swing, the project breaks away from biased fixations along old colonial routes (north / south). It shows alternatives (south / south), mutual reflections (south / north / south) and contrasting, multiple perspectives: African, Chinese and European artists, curators, theoreticians and activists have been invited to test how to account for current developments in the fields of artistic practice and visual cultures, everyday life, architecture and urbanism. Working groups in Guangzhou, Johannesburg, Lagos and Lubumbashi developed questions, reflections and works of art in order to generate research, theory production and artistic work as well as to consolidate local debates. As a traveling construction site of multiple public formats – among them workshops, and conferences, exhibitions at the Leipzig Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst and Shenzhen Bi-City Biennial of Urbanism / Architecture 2017/18, performances and film screenings, the project unfolds a terrain that spans three continents.

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