

DESIGN MUSEUM

DESIGN MUSEUM, SHAD THAMES, LONDON SE1 2YD
TICKETS: Adults £8.50; Concessions £6.50;
Students £5.00; Under 12s free
OPENING: 10.00 -17.45 daily. Last admission: 17.15
PUBLIC INFORMATION T: 020 7940 8790
W: designmuseum.org
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Media Announcement

Urban Africa

– David Adjaye’s photographic journey

31 March – 5 September 2010

One of the leading architects of his generation, David Adjaye has stepped out of his regular line of work to photograph and document key cities in Africa as part of an ongoing project to study new patterns of urbanism. This collection of photographs is a personal quest through the eyes of an architect to address the scant knowledge of the built environment of the African continent.

David Adjaye has photographed the salient features of Africa’s cities including suburban settlements, unofficial developments and townscapes. Brought together for the first time, these photographs reveal the cities themselves and examine the buildings and places which have a special resonance with Adjaye’s preoccupations as an architect. The photographs will be presented as a series of vivid large-scale projections, set against a backdrop of African beats specially composed for the exhibition by Peter Adjaye. The images and music will flood the gallery creating a rich diversity of architecture, culture and urban landscape.

Often regarded as a continent defined by underdevelopment, poverty, war and tourism, through this exhibition Adjaye presents Africa in a different light. This detailed survey will reveal a unique snapshot of life in Africa today, documenting the nature of urban life in a developing country, a unique geo-cultural survey profiling the African city in a global context.

Adjaye has captured the urban development of cities including Kigali, the capital city of Rwanda showing traces of its Colonial past, Tripoli in Libya, very much invaded by the energy of the present, the informal settlements on the edges of new cities like Abuja, Nigeria and the traces of apartheid still inscribed on Pretoria, South Africa.

Born in Dar-Es-Salam, Tanzania, David Adjaye moved to London in 1979. Graduating from the Royal College of Art in 1993 Adjaye trained with David Chipperfield Architects and Eduardo Souto de Moura in Oporto. Winning the RIBA First Prize Bronze Medal in 1993 Adjaye set up his own practice, Adjaye Associates in 2000 and was nominated for a Stirling Prize in 2006 for his Whitechapel Idea Store. With a rich body of built work he has recently won the prestigious commission to design the new National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington DC which will open in 2015.

Ends



Image credits:

All photography by David Adjaye.
David Adjaye portrait by Ed Reeve

Notes to Editors:

- 1. Media View 30 March 10am – 12pm.** David Adjaye will be available for interview at the Media View. Interview slots should be requested in advance.
- 2.** The Design Museum Shop will stock a selection of exclusive exhibition merchandise
- 3.** Exhibition design by David Adjaye Associates.

4. Biography

David Adjaye is now recognised as one of the leading architects of his generation in the UK. He formed a partnership in 1994 and quickly developed a reputation as an architect with an artist's sensibility and vision. His ingenious use of materials, bespoke design and ability to sculpt and showcase light have engendered high regard from both the architectural community and the wider public.

He reformed his studio in June 2000 as Adjaye Associates and has since gone on to win a number of prestigious commissions. Projects have been diverse in scale, audience and geography; collaborations with artists including Chris Ofili and Olafur Eliasson, exhibition design, temporary pavilions and private homes both in the UK and U.S. More recently, major arts centres and important public buildings across London, Oslo and Denver have demonstrated David's considered approach to understanding the needs of the constituency served by each building and a respect for integration with their existing locale.

David understands his status as a role model for young people and lectures frequently. He was the Kenzo Tange Professor in Architecture at Harvard's Graduate School of Design in 2007 and taught at Princeton University in 2008. Previously a unit tutor at the Architectural Association, David was also a lecturer at the Royal College of Art where he received his MA in architecture in 1993. That same year he was awarded the RIBA First Prize Bronze Medal. Following this, he trained at David Chipperfield Architects and then Eduardo Souto de Moura Architects in Oporto.

In May 2005, Thames & Hudson published David's first book, *David Adjaye Houses: Recycling, Reconfiguring, Rebuilding* which was distributed worldwide. In January 2006, the Whitechapel Gallery in London hosted the studio's first exhibition 'David Adjaye: Making Public Buildings', which was accompanied by a book of the same name. The exhibition then toured to the Netherlands Architecture Institute, Maastricht, the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, SCAD Savannah and the Museum of Contemporary Art/Denver.

David has co-presented two television series of *Dreamspaces* for the BBC, a six-part series on contemporary architecture, and hosted two BBC radio programmes; the first featured an interview with Oscar Niemeyer and the second with Charles Correa. In June 2005 he presented the TV programme "Building Africa: Architecture of a Continent". Following on from this he pursued a personal project to document each of Africa's capital cities, culminating in the 2010 exhibition 'Urban Africa' – A photographic journey by David Adjaye at the Design Museum, London. The book will follow in late 2010.

In June 2007, David was awarded an OBE for services to architecture. He received an honorary doctorate of the arts from the University of East London in November 2007.

Press enquires, image and interview requests:

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