



**New management team to head the
"Bamako Encounters, African Photography Biennial"
7 November-7 December 2009**

For the 8th edition of this African photography biennial, the **Bamako Encounters, African Photography Biennial**, formerly known as the "African Photography Encounters", have acquired a new management team, nominated by the Malian Ministry of Culture and Culturesfrance:

- **Samuel Sidibé** has been appointed Delegate General of the event
- **Michket Krifa** and **Laura Serani** are to be its artistic directors.

This year's event, the theme will be "Borders" and the trade days will be from 7 to 13 November 2009.

« From natural barriers to artificial lines traced across the earth, in Africa more than elsewhere, borders and their complex realities represent current problematics and the crystallizations of processes which are political, economic, sociocultural, and at this time particularly tied up with ethnic, cultural, religious and other sorts of personal and group identifications.

While the effects of globalization and economic liberalization have made for the porosity of some sorts of borders, economic and political exigencies continue to provide a framework for a migratory flow encountering other sorts of borders that are increasingly impermeable. Humanity ceaselessly seeks sites of refuge and reference points for values in territories offering possibilities for identifications and putting down roots. Material or symbolic borders imply a notion of delimited territory beyond which the elsewhere, the otherwise and the foreign take shape. Borders simultaneously mark limits and define space, while being meeting places of the in-between, aptly called no man's land. Borders are also sites of symbolic passage and represent the space allowing for transgression and openings toward the elsewhere and the unknown. The relation to the other, to the foreign—a corollary to borders—can be seen in different ways, from perspectives of integration, segregation, and exchange.

Perceived as territories of demarcation, enclosure or transit, they can just as well be places for transformation and exchange, territories—whether real or imaginary—of opening, opportunity or expansion. »

The 8th edition of the **Bamako Encounters, African Photography Biennial** has set out to get the population of Bamako more involved in the event, explore the cross-cutting nature of disciplines and languages, and reinforce the event's influence and notoriety on the international scene so that Bamako will in time be seen as the African capital of image. Alongside the programme of exhibitions, there will be a symposium, screenings and learning trails.

The call for proposals by photographers to participate in the international show has been announcing since January 30, 2009 on the Culturesfrance (www.culturesfrance.com) and Maison Africaine de la photographie (www.fotoafrica.org) websites.

All application materials must be received by April 20, 2009.

Biographical notes for the members of the new management team can be found in the appendix.

Visuals available on request.

The **Bamako Encounters, African Photography Biennial** are a production of the Ministry of Culture in Mali and Culturesfrance, with the support of the Delegation of the European Union for Mali.

Samuel Sidibé, Delegate General

Sophie Renaud, General Manager for cultural exchanges and cooperation Department

In partenariat with the National Museum of Mali, the Museum of the District of Bamako, the Maison Africaine de la photographie, the French Development Agency (AFD), the Intergovernmental Agency for the French-speaking community (OIF), the CCF of Bamako, the Service of Cooperation and Cultural Action in Mali.

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Appendix: biographical notes

- **Samuel Sidibé, Delegate General of the Bamako Encounters**

Director of the National Museum of Mali since 1987.

Curator of numerous exhibitions and major African events presented across Africa. He is conducting an awareness-raising campaign aimed at organisations such as ICOM and UNESCO, and campaigns against archaeological looting and the illicit trafficking of artefacts from Mali's heritage. He has helped alert national and international opinion to the need to protect Africa's cultural heritage. Founding member of AFRICOM. From 2001 to 2003, he directed work on rehabilitating and expanding the National Museum of Mali, considered one of the most important museums in Africa, which regularly hosts contemporary art exhibitions. Associate curator of the last African Photography Encounters in 2007, Samuel Sidibé was also a laureate of the Prince Claus Fund Award in 2006 and has received the title of "*Officier dans l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres*" in France.

- **Michket Krifta and Laura Sérani, Directors of the Bamako Encounters**

Michket Krifta

Born in Tunis, lives in Tunis and Paris.

Independent curator in the visual arts and cinema. She regularly collaborates with the Rencontres d'Arles, the Institut du Monde Arabe, Culturesfrance, the City of Paris, the Bamako Encounters and institutions in Europe and abroad. Curator of the Printemps Palestinien en France, she has also organised several exhibitions on Iran (including *Regards persans* at the Espace Electra), on Algeria (*Algérie, les faits et les effets*) and on women (including *Le corps comme territoire, Women by women* and *Femmes d'images*). Also curator of monographic exhibitions. Author of publications and essays in magazines and books under her direction.

Her latest exhibitions include *Femmes d'images, Espace privé* (at the City of Tunis Museum), *Palestine, la vie tout simplement* (commissioned by the City of Paris and presented on the Pont des Arts, June 2008) and *Réorientations*, presented at the European Parliament in Brussels as part of Arab Week, November 2008.

Laura Serani

Born in Italy, lives in Paris.

Curator and artistic director of photographic and video projects. Has been active on the international cultural scene since the 1980s. Was recently artistic delegate of the *Mois de la Photo* in Paris 2008 and director of the *Si Fest, Savignano Immagini Festival* in Italy. Laura Serani collaborates with various publishing houses and with the main festivals and institutions in Europe and elsewhere. From 1985 to 2006, she was director of the photography and audiovisual departments at Fnac for France and the international market, and director of Fnac's photography collection.

Her career includes numerous exhibitions, events and publications, and major partnerships with a variety of institutions and festivals, such as the Mois de la Photo in Paris, Les Rencontres d'Arles, Photoespana, the Bamako Encounters, the Moscow Biennale, Fotografia Europea Reggio Emilia, and FotoGrafia, Rome's International Festival of Photography.