

# BUILDING REALITY WORKSHOP 2018

30 december 2017 \_\_\_\_\_ 03 february 2018

MOZAMBIQUE # AFRICA



© Photography by Luca Peruzzi

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<b>Where:</b>	MOZAMBIQUE [MAPUTO – BEIRA – TETE]
<b>How long:</b>	5 WEEKS
<b>When:</b>	FROM 30 DECEMBER 2017 TO 03 FEBRUARY 2018
<b>Credits:</b>	7.5 ECTS
<b>Who:</b>	MAX 25 STUDENTS
<b>Staff:</b>	prof. arch. DIÉBÉDO FRANCIS KÉRÉ ass. arch. ALBERTO POTTENGI

**Mozambique:**



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**Abstract:**

In the recent past Africa has experienced a move away from traditional building methods and people have begun to copy architectural styles from developed countries. These are however inappropriate for the climate and economy in countries where, for example, people cannot afford hi-tech air conditioning systems. In a reversal of this attitude, as climatic and economic crises are affecting the entire globe, the basic characteristics of traditional African architecture are becoming more desirable in the West: sustainable, passive, low maintenance buildings.

This workshop will seek to combine the aspirational aesthetic qualities of Western construction with the practical, culturally relevant qualities of traditional methods and materials. Students will be part of an exchange of knowledge, by living and working in a community very different from their own. The students will develop their skills in handcrafting and discover new techniques that improve the architectural and experiential quality of their buildings.

The workshop will bring students to investigate an area completely different from the European situation, Tete province. A place rich of natural resources that attract the interest of big corporations/company, clashing with the most primal needs of living of rural communities. Reflections on the city, formal and informal, on infrastructure and public places, on society and culture will lead to the development of an intervention strategy. Several meetings with the government, with representatives of multinational companies, with the rural population, will lead us to identify the strengths, the weaknesses, the opportunities and threats within this ecosystem.

Over 700 families from the villages of Chipanga, Mitete, Malabue-Gombe and Bagamoyo were resettled to Cateme village, a Vale resettlement compound. The unemployed were resettled to Cateme, 40 km from the original town. While the most immediate problem of the community is the enormous distance to Moatize, their old habitat, they also suffer from unproductive farmland which can only be reached via a two hour walk, no access to markets and infrastructure and poorly constructed houses not fitted to the people's needs with temperatures inside reaching as high as 65°C

Investigating and try to understanding the problems and weaknesses of this area will be our first step. Then we will work, based in Tete, on a new planning strategy, and study how to make habitable dwellings of new villages, through the use of local materials and passive technologies.

The workshop will be based on the principle of starting at a small scale, but using a replicable model of development that can grow and expand over time. Our goal is to promote an exchange of knowledge and ideas between students from the industrialized West and the developing world. The students will build a prototype of house for villagers and pass on the knowledge and skills that they have gained, especially when they will be back to Europe. This spread of knowledge is our principal aim!

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**Transportation:**

Flight  
MILAN - MAPUTO

Bus  
MAPUTO – BEIRA – TETE (return)  
4 DAYS TRIP

**Accommodation:**

MAPUTO	Hotel
BEIRA	Hotel
TETE	House prototype by Francis Kéré

**Facilities:**

TETE	Place with hospital and supermarket
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**Costs:**

fee including flight, internal buses and hotels	2500	CHF
students needs in Maputo/Beira (estimate)	20	CHF/day
students needs in Tete (estimate)	5/10	CHF/day

VISA and VACCINATIONS costs are NOT included

All meals and hotels as per description covered unless shown

**Payment:**

acceptance entails an immediate payment of CHF 900.-, the difference must be paid by ..... (bulletin will be given).

Students receiving financial aid will be asked to pay the difference at acceptance.

**Equipment:**

students will be asked to bring normal clothes to visit the city and to work at the construction site, as also required during the installation during this semester at the Accademia. Tools and machine will be provided at no cost directly on site.

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**Vaccines:**

information taken from the Federal Office of the Swiss Confederation.  
([www.safetravel.ch](http://www.safetravel.ch))

#### Paludisme (malaria)

Malaria risk exists throughout the year in areas at risk. It is recommended to protect against mosquito bites.

It is necessary to take medication (chemoprophylaxis) before, during and after the trip.

Risk of malaria: high risk the whole country including the cities.

#### Vaccination

The following vaccinations are recommended for: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Poliomyelitis, Measles, and Hepatitis A

In special circumstances, the following vaccinations are recommended: Hepatitis B, Typhoid Fever, Rabies.

Notes for vaccination against yellow fever: vaccination (not for airport transit passengers) if within 6 days from an endemic area (unless Airport transit in this area) For prescription drugs and vaccinations, consult a doctor or a vaccination center.

#### Other diseases

There is a risk of infection with HIV / AIDS virus worldwide through unprotected sex.

Protect yourself!

**Responsability:**

you will be asked to sign a form that confirms (as per school rules) that you are insured for illness and injury and that furthermore you have a valid travel insurance for Africa, and will provide for the necessary vaccinations and visa formalities.

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**Safety and health:**

The workshop organization is constantly checking all the news and the real risk that could affect the country.

Currently the situation in Mozambique is under control and stable.

The workshop will take place ONLY in complete safety and in case one of the following subjects is not recommended to enter the country:

Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

<http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/it/home/travad/travel.html>

The authorities immediately advise if it is not considered safe to travel. Please consult this page and look up Mozambique to understand the situation. Please also look up Afghanistan and Liberia, as to understand some of the fundamental differences.

World Federal Organization

<http://www.who.int>

Diébédo Francis Kéré

Professor

Will be giving us updated and detailed information about the destination areas.

**Schedule:**

30/12	flight from Milan to Maputo (via Adis Abeba) (landing in Maputo the 31st)
31-01-02/01	visit Maputo and modernist buildings
03/01	bus from Maputo to Beira
05/01	visiting Beira
06/01	bus from Beira to Tete
08/01_28/01	workshop in Tete ("multiuse PAVILION")
29/01_31/01	from Tete to Maputo
01-02/02	Maputo
03/02	flight from Maputo to Milan

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
<b>25 DEC</b>	<b>26 DEC</b>	<b>27 DEC</b>	<b>28 DEC</b>	<b>29 DEC</b>	<b>30 DEC</b> Milan-Maputo	<b>31 DEC</b> Maputo
<b>01 JAN</b> Maputo	<b>02 JAN</b> Maputo	<b>03 JAN</b> Maputo-Beira	<b>04 JAN</b> Maputo-Beira	<b>05 JAN</b> Beira	<b>06 JAN</b> Beira-Tete	<b>07 JAN</b> Tete
<b>08 JAN</b> Tete	<b>09 JAN</b> Tete	<b>10 JAN</b> Tete	<b>11 JAN</b> Tete	<b>12 JAN</b> Tete	<b>13 JAN</b> Tete	<b>14 JAN</b> Tete
<b>15 JAN</b> Tete	<b>16 JAN</b> Tete	<b>17 JAN</b> Tete	<b>18 JAN</b> Tete	<b>19 JAN</b> Tete	<b>20 JAN</b> Tete	<b>21 JAN</b> Tete
<b>22 JAN</b> Tete	<b>23 JAN</b> Tete	<b>24 JAN</b> Tete	<b>25 JAN</b> Tete	<b>26 JAN</b> Tete	<b>27 JAN</b> Tete	<b>28 JAN</b> Tete
<b>29 JAN</b> Tete-Maputo	<b>30 JAN</b> Tete-Maputo	<b>31 JAN</b> Tete-Maputo	<b>01 FEB</b> Maputo	<b>02 FEB</b> Maputo	<b>03 FEB</b> Maputo-Milan	<b>04 FEB</b>

PLEASE NOTE: This schedule may be subject to change but we will endeavor to keep the final schedule as close as possible to what appears here.

Evaluation and credit assignment:

Credits will be assigned for the participation of the whole period of the project and the active participation in tasks assigned. The organizers will be assigning also individual tasks on site and/or preparatory tasks. Students not following instructions or not participating for the whole period will be subject to a no-pass evaluation in accordance with school evaluation rules.

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**Insight:**

Building Reality 2013, A school of Reciprocity

text by Roberto Mancini for the exhibition *EXPERIMENTA 01*

This exhibition narrates the experience of the workshop in Burkina Faso, conducted under the guidance of Diébédo Francis Kéré. The narrative invites us to think differently because it disrupts the continuity of our most firmly established mental habits.

It is about recognising an unpredictable reciprocity. But in order to recognise its meaning, one has to eradicate two complementary prejudices.

The first is Europeans' superiority complex, the instinctive tendency to suppose that the teachers and students of a European Academy of Architecture make a gift of their knowledge to the inhabitants of Burkina Faso. In reality, the logic of aid and giving hardens the roles of those who give and those who receive; it humiliates those to whom one believes one is doing good and denies the "benefactors" the precious opportunity to learn from those who are different from them.

Then there is the inverted version of the neo-colonial ideology of aid and giving: the idealization of the other, imagined as the source of an ancient wisdom and primordial contact with nature. This leads to a mimetic openness towards Africa: everything that comes to us is considered purifying and enlightening compared to the alienation peculiar to Western society.

Such enthusiasm is merely the other side of the presumption of superiority. In either case reciprocity is lacking. It is the twofold error epitomised involuntarily by Alberto Moravia. In 1962 he summed up his difference of attitude, while travelling in India and Africa, to Pier Paolo Pasolini. "My position is to accept but not identify myself, Pasolini's is to identify but not really accept." But, despite Moravia's assertion, acceptance is not possible without identification.

Reciprocity is an alternative both to help and idealization. It entails accepting each other, and in it each becomes able, to some extent, to identify with the other, to see with his eyes and look at the world from where the other looks at it. In so doing he does not lose his bearings. He even learns to feel better about himself. In this sense Building Reality 2013 is a story of reciprocity, in which Diébédo Francis Kéré, the teachers and students from Mendrisio and the people of Burkina Faso have created a relationship of all-round learning, in which all can receive and give, albeit in their different roles.

This encounter is characterized as an immersive experience by attraction. Immersion in the natural, social and human reality of the place.

All the participants are received into a common reality. Attraction in the sense that the potential for communion – with the land, the light, among the people – gradually discovered in this experience has attracted the builders to translate that potential by building.

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From this has grown an architecture experienced as dialogue and construction, capable of creating a building that does not run the risk of establishing itself as a foreign body. And if ethics, in its root meaning, is living together in the world with respect for every living being, then the experience of Reality Building 2013 is the trace of an ethical architecture.

Here "building reality" does not amount to making something artificial. If anything, "building" means responding creatively to the invitation that comes from the possibility of silent communion inherent in a territory and the communities that live there. The participants in the workshop have listened to that silence and sought to answer it together. In this way they showed that architecture should not be a work of conquest of space, nor can it be reduced to an effort to "be competitive on the market", since it is rather a work of caring for the common life.

The building constructed in the workshop was fuelled by relations of giving. And while giving without an authentic relationship is an act of domination towards the recipient, gift relations give rise to interactive meanings and dynamics that improve civility. I refer to the meanings and dynamics of birth, care and encounter.

Birth means generation of new life and unprecedented forms of relationship with reality.

Care means welcome and a concern for the value of living that came into the world through birth, whether of a daughter or son, a work of art or interpersonal relationship, an institution or building.

Encounter means sense and fulfilment: it is the encounter between living beings that gives rise to communion, the condition that is the very essence of every experience of happiness.

You will find these three dynamics in the exhibition, which should be observed without wasting the opportunity to welcome the first thing that collaboration between people of different cultures can offer: the discovery of the uniqueness of each in their common humanity.

When architecture is expressed as art, it brings to light uniqueness and universality, creating the paradox of fragments of beauty that are intact and speak to us like a promise.