

IHA

Over the last centuries, plantations have funded the building of many European and American museums, where art provided an opportunity for shareholders to distance themselves from the violence of the plantation system. Still today, rain forests are cut down and turned into plantations.

The value extracted from these plantations is partially invested in museums in New York, Dakar and Paris, generating wealth in the economy around them (gentrification), yet leaving depleted landscapes and impoverished people.

Vision and mission IHA

IHA wants to prove that art can redress economic inequality, not symbolically, but in material terms. Art provides the inspiration and the capital to buy back land and start inclusive, ecological postplantations.

"This was the most challenging show of the year, and proudly "problematic", but that was the point: You need to be fearless and run right into the swamp of possible misunderstanding to have any hope of making a difference."

Jason Farago, The New York Times, 6 December 2017

The next step is to turn this proof of concept into a replicable model: an inclusive, ecological and worker-owned Post Plantation, inspired and (partly) financed by art. It will provide an alternative to investors, who no longer have ground to support the destructive plantation system and will instead finance this new model.

IHA's business model is based on two legs. Profits from artworks and art production budgets provide the seed capital and the proof of concept. To scale up and bring more capital to the plantation, we fundraise in the field of landscape restoration, food security, poverty reduction, democratization and socio-economic innovation – all with art as starting point and inspiration.



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How I lost my hope for Afghanistan

Farahnaz Forotan

OPINION

As men continue to bicker over the future and control of Afghanistan, I have already lost my home and my country. I worked in Kabul as a television journalist for 12 years, and finally left in November after threats to my life.

I know how the Taliban plan to shape the future of my country, and their vision of my country has no space for me.

For what turned out to be one of my last assignments, I traveled from Kabul to Doha, Qatar, in October to report on the negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban. Like many Afghans, I was somewhat hopeful that the talks might help end the long, pitiless war in our country.

In Doha, I had the opportunity to interview members of the Taliban negotiating team at the conference hall where the talks were being held. The experience reinforced my sense that postwar Afghanistan, dominated by the Taliban, was bound to be a bleak place for Afghan women.

The incident that crystallized that dreadful feeling was my interview with Sohail Shaheen, the spokesman for the Taliban. I approached Mr. Shaheen for an interview in a room full of people. Like many young women in Kabul, I do not wear a headscarf. He couldn't hide his disdain at my presence and set about to ignore me. I didn't budge. I refused to be invisible and continued pointing my phone camera at him while asking my questions.

Afghan women live with a sense of being invisible. In our workplaces or in meetings like this one, our voices go unheard, our existence barely registered. Our presence in any public space is celebrated as gender equality in and outside Afghanistan, but all we experience in daily life is inequality and discrimination. It filled me with rage.

My encounter with Mr. Shaheen filled me with terror. When he finally answered one of my questions, his eyes moved in every direction but mine: He examined the walls, the carpet on the floor, the chairs, the door. He couldn't look at me, even while I stood in front of him. It was as if he saw me as an embodiment of sin and evil. I felt unsafe, even in a room full of people, thousands of miles away from Afghanistan.

The Taliban's notions of religion, politics and governance are based on a FORTAN, PAGE 13

The New York Times publishes opinion from a wide range of perspectives in hopes of promoting constructive debate about consequential questions.



Protesters in Minneapolis celebrated the news that Derek Chauvin, the police officer who killed George Floyd, had been convicted of two counts of murder, as well as manslaughter.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VICTOR BILE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

What now for racial justice?

Nearly a year after George Floyd's death ignited a movement, a rare verdict against police violence brings some solace to activists

BY AUDRA D. S. BURCH, AMY HARMON, SABRINA TAVERNIERE AND EMILY BADGER

George Floyd had been dead only hours before the movement began. Driven by a terrifying video and by word of mouth, people flooded the South Minneapolis intersection shortly after Memorial Day, demanding an end to police violence against Black Americans.

The moment of collective grief and anger swiftly gave way to a yearlong, nationwide deliberation on what it means to be Black in America. First came protests, growing every day, until they turned into the largest mass protest movement in U.S. history. Nearly 170 Confederate symbols were renamed or removed from public spaces. The Black Lives Matter slogan was claimed by a nation grappling with Mr. Floyd's death.

Over the next 11 months, calls for racial justice would touch seemingly every aspect of American life on a scale that historians say had not happened since the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

On Tuesday, nearly a year later, Derek



The police dispersed protesters in Minneapolis last May. Mr. Floyd's killing inspired what would become the largest mass protest movement in U.S. history.

Chauvin, the white police officer who knelt on Mr. Floyd, was convicted of two counts of murder, as well as manslaughter. The verdict brought some solace to activists for racial justice who had been riveted to the courtroom drama for the

past several weeks. But for many Black Americans, real change feels elusive, particularly given how relentlessly the killing of Black men by the police has continued, most recently with the shooting death of Daunte

Wright just over a week ago.

There are also signs of backlash: Legislation that would reduce voting access, protect the police and effectively criminalize public protests have sprung up in Republican-controlled state legislatures.

Otis Moss III, pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, said that to call what had transpired over the past year a racial reckoning was not right. "Reckoning suggests that we are truly struggling with how to reimagine everything from criminal justice to food deserts to health disparities — we are not doing that," he said. This week's guilty verdict, he said, "is addressing a symptom, but we have not yet dealt with the disease."

Moments before the verdict was announced, Derrick Johnson, president of the N.A.A.C.P., called Mr. Floyd's death "a Selma, Ala., moment for America."

What happened in Selma in 1965 with the world watching, demonstrated the

CRACKING DOWN ON PROTESTERS IN U.S. Republican-led states are introducing punitive new measures governing demonstrations. PAGE 7

Iran rattled by Israeli strikes on key targets

BEIRUT, LEBANON

Growing paranoid, Tehran seems powerless to break a secret network of spies

BY BEN HUBBARD, FARNAZ FASSHIH AND RONEN BERGMAN

In less than nine months, an assassin on a motorbike fatally shot an Al Qaeda commander given refuge in Tehran, Iran's chief nuclear scientist was machine-gunned on a country road and two separate, mysterious explosions rocked a key Iranian nuclear facility in the desert, striking the heart of the country's efforts to enrich uranium.

The steady drumbeat of attacks, which intelligence officials said had been carried out by Israel, highlighted the seeming ease with which Israeli intelligence was able to reach deep inside Iran's borders and repeatedly strike its most heavily guarded targets, often with the help of turncoat Iranians.

The attacks, the latest wave in more than two decades of sabotage and assassinations, have exposed embarrassing security lapses and left Iran's leaders looking over their shoulders as they pursue negotiations with the Biden administration aimed at restoring the 2015 nuclear agreement.

The recriminations have been caustic. The head of Parliament's strategic center said Iran had turned into a "haven for spies." The former commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps called for an overhaul of the country's security and intelligence apparatus. Lawmakers have demanded the resignation of top security and intelligence officials.

Most alarming for Iran, Iranian officials and analysts said, was that the attacks revealed that Israel had an effective network of collaborators inside Iran and that Iran's intelligence services had failed to find them.

"That the Israelis are effectively able to hit Iran inside in such a brazen way is hugely embarrassing and demonstrates a weakness that I think plays poorly inside Iran," said Sanam Vakil, deputy director of the Middle East and North Africa Program at Chatham House.

The attacks have also cast a cloud of paranoia over a country that now sees foreign plots in every mishap. "Over the weekend, Iranian state television flashed a photograph of a man said to be Reza Karimi, 43, and accused him of being the 'perpetrator of sabotage' in an explosion at the Natanz nuclear enrichment plant last week. But it was unclear who he was, whether he had acted alone and whether that was even his real name. In any case, he had fled the country before the blast, Iran's Intelligence Ministry said.

On Monday, after the Iranian state IRAN, PAGE 5

Museum puts African art in its rightful place

AMSTERDAM

Dutch artist helping effort to display stolen works returned from Europe

BY NINA SIEGAL

When the Dutch artist Renzo Martens presented his film "Episode III: Enjoy Poverty" at Tate Modern in London in 2010, he couldn't help but notice the many Unilever logos painted across the museum's white walls.

Unilever, an Anglo-Dutch company that owns Axe, Dove, Vaseline and other household brands, sponsors the Unilever Series, in which an artist is commissioned to make a site-specific work for the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern.

"Unilever, Unilever, the Unilever series," Martens says in new documentary, "White Cube," recalling that moment. "The greatest, most famous artists of the world, financed by Unilever."



A scene from "White Cube," a documentary by the Dutch artist Renzo Martens about the former workers of Unilever-owned plantations in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Unilever was once nearly ubiquitous, too, in the region of the Democratic Republic of Congo where Martens has worked since 2004. "Episode III: Enjoy Poverty," from 2008, documented dire

conditions on the country's palm oil plantations, where workers earned less than \$1 a day. In "White Cube," he follows up by visiting former Unilever-owned plantations in the villages of

Boteka and Lusanga. (Unilever sold the last of its plantations in Congo in 2009.) To Martens, Unilever represents a system of global exploitation, in which Western companies extract resources from poorer countries, generate income and then use some of that wealth to finance high culture elsewhere. Some of the artists they support, he added, also make works focused on inequality, but the benefits of those works rarely go to those in need.

"People on plantations are desperately poor, and they work for the global community," Martens said in a recent interview in Amsterdam. "They even work, indirectly, for exhibitions in the Tate Modern. Art is sterile if it proclaims to be about inequality but doesn't bring benefits to those people."

"I wanted to make sure that a critique of inequality would, at least partially, and materially, redress that inequality," he added.

Martens's art career took off after "Episode III: Enjoy Poverty," and he said that he had decided at that time to

The New York Times

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Vandaag

KUNST Congolees collectief hoopt met NFT roofof kunst digitaal terug te krijgen

Het Amerikaanse museum waar het beeld nu is, wil het niet uitlenen.

Kan cryptokunst dekolonisatie bevorderen? Kan geroofd cultureel erfgoed weer bij de rechtmatige eigenaars terecht komen als virtueel kunstwerk, een NFT? Ja, zegt een kunstenaarscollectief uit Congo. Het eist een sculptuur terug dat belangrijk is voor de Lusanga-gemeenschap in hun land.

Het gaat om een beeld van de Belgische militair Maximilien Balot. Hij werd in 1911 vermoord tijdens de Pende-opstand in Lusanga, dat toen nog Leveville heette. Het verzet richtte zich tegen een plantage van Lever Brothers (het huidige Unilever), waar sprake was van seksueel geweld, opsluiting en gedwongen arbeid onder erbarmelijke omstandigheden.

De sculptuur zou Balots kwade grest belichamen en bedwingen. Daarom wil het Congolese kunstenaarscollectief CAPIC het beeld in Congo en elders tentoonstellen. Ondanks herhaalde verzoeken wil de eigenaar, het Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMA) in het Amerikaanse Richmond, het kunstwerk niet uitlenen.

Daarom hebben de Congolezen er een digitaal evenbeeld van gemaakt. Een dergelijk *non-fungible token* (NFT) is een 'niet inwisselbaar bewijs' dat de originaliteit van een digitaal voorwerp verzekert. Een NFT hoeft geen kunst te zijn, maar kan ook een tweet of plaatje zijn. Vorig jaar werd wereldwijd voor tientallen miljarden euro's aan dergelijke digitale cryptokunst verhandeld.

Door de sculptuur van de Belgische militair als NFT te lanceren, is er sprake van een soort digitale restitutie. Het digitale eigendomsbewijs is vrijdag online gerant, in het museum White Cube in Lusanga en in kunstgalerie KOW Berlin.

Mathieu Kaslama en Céd'art Tamasala deden als leden van kunstenaarscollectief CAPIC onderzoek naar de sculptuur van Balot. De documentaire *De plantage, de opstand* en het museum volgt hun missie om het beeld terug naar Congo te halen. Ze reizen af naar het gebied waar de Pende-opstand plaatsvond, spreken academici over de banden van musea met plantages en bezoeken het kunstmuseum in Virginia om bij de directeur toestemming te vragen voor een bruikleen.

Tamasala: 'Het museum wil hem wel aan andere musea uitlenen, maar niet



De sculptuur van Maximilien Balot.



Mathieu Kaslama van kunstcollectief CAPIC.

Foto's Human Activities

aan ons, terwijl we daar recht op hebben. We hebben mogelijk geen eigendomsrecht, maar wel recht op gebruik. Deze sculptuur behoort ons volk toe, is onderdeel van de revolutie tegen de uitbuiting van mensen en

natuur binnen het plantagesysteem in Congo. Met de NFT kunnen we toegang tot onze geschiedenis en de kracht van het beeld terugwinnen.'

Binnenkort wordt de NFT in driehonderd kleinere NFT's opgedeeld, die te koop worden aangeboden. Met de opbrengst kan het kunstenaarscollectief de aankoop van land, de herbouw van de natuur op de uitgeputte plantages en voedselzekerheid financieren.

Het NFT-project is een samenwerking met de Nederlandse filmmaker en kunstenaar Renzo Martens. Hij onderzoekt de banden tussen kunst, kapitaal en kolonialisme. Zo ontstond kunstenaarscollectief CAIPC en het museum White Cube in Lusanga. Martens en zijn stichting Human Activities waren op de achtergrond bij het Balot project betrokken. 'Ik probeer mijn taak als witte man zo goed mogelijk te vervullen. Mensen op plantages hebben vaak niet dezelfde technologische middelen als mensen in bijvoorbeeld Amsterdam, en dan wordt het moeilijk aan conferenties over roofof kunst deel te nemen.'

Maar met het munten van de NFT is de roep om teruggave nog niet compleet. 'Ook als we binnenkort driehonderd NFT's munten, zal de sokkel leeg blijven', aldus Tamasala. 'De bedoeling van het beeld was om controle te krijgen over de boze grest van Balot, om te voorkomen dat hij na zijn dood, en het Unilever-plantagesysteem met hem, nog veel ergere problemen zou veroorzaken. Die problemen zijn er uiteindelijk gekomen - arbeiders verdienen minder dan 20 dollar per maand als ze voor Unilever werken - maar via deze technologische omweg kunnen we de boze grest al meer in bedwang krijgen en de plantage vooruithelpen.'

Aangezien de kunstenaars nog op de plantage wonen, speelt het beeld nog steeds een grote rol in hun leven. 'Die past hier dus beter dan in een steriele ruimte in Virginia', aldus Tamasala. 'Het kan niet zo zijn dat kunst alleen maar in het Noorden mag staan, omdat ze daar toevallig goede airconditioning hebben. We willen de sculptuur ook niet gevangennemen, niet eeuwig in Lusanga houden, maar juist laten reizen. En hopelijk kunnen andere gemeenschappen, ook buiten Congo, ons voorbeeld volgen en eveneens via NFT's hun geschiedenis terugreizen.'

Maxine van Veen

15 FEBRUARI