

## PHOTOGRAPHY

## CREATIVITY KNOWS

*Ivorian photographic artist Paul Sika has burst onto the scene with his colourful tableaux depicting ordinary and not-so-ordinary lives, including these from the 'Africa Series', photographed in the Paillet suburb of Abidjan*

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BELINDA OTAS

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Paul Sika describes himself as a “creative entrepreneur” who realises his vision through films and photography, but “is aware that creativity does not stop there”. The confidence that exudes from this free-thinking photographer, as well as his mature understanding of photography and the moving image, belie his 24 years. A self-taught photographer and cinéaste, Sika says his love of photo-making stems from his passion for storytelling.

Sika's journey into the world of photography is nothing short of unusual. It started with a cathartic moment in London after he saw an advert for the movie *The Matrix Reloaded*. “When I saw the famous highway car chase in the film, the scene shocked me and I was intrigued by what I saw and thought to myself, if this is the kind of imagination that's required to make a movie, then I can do it too.”

Sika has quickly become an artistic force to be reckoned with, and his services are now sought after by leading African brands.

His childhood in Côte d'Ivoire played a big role in his artistic

development before he moved to London to study. He loved video games and became a master storyteller based on plots he made up with his friends. “I started to think that there was a talent inside me that I wasn't using. And being in a country that has movies, cinemas and a lot of games and different technical equipment, this new opportunity started to come out.”

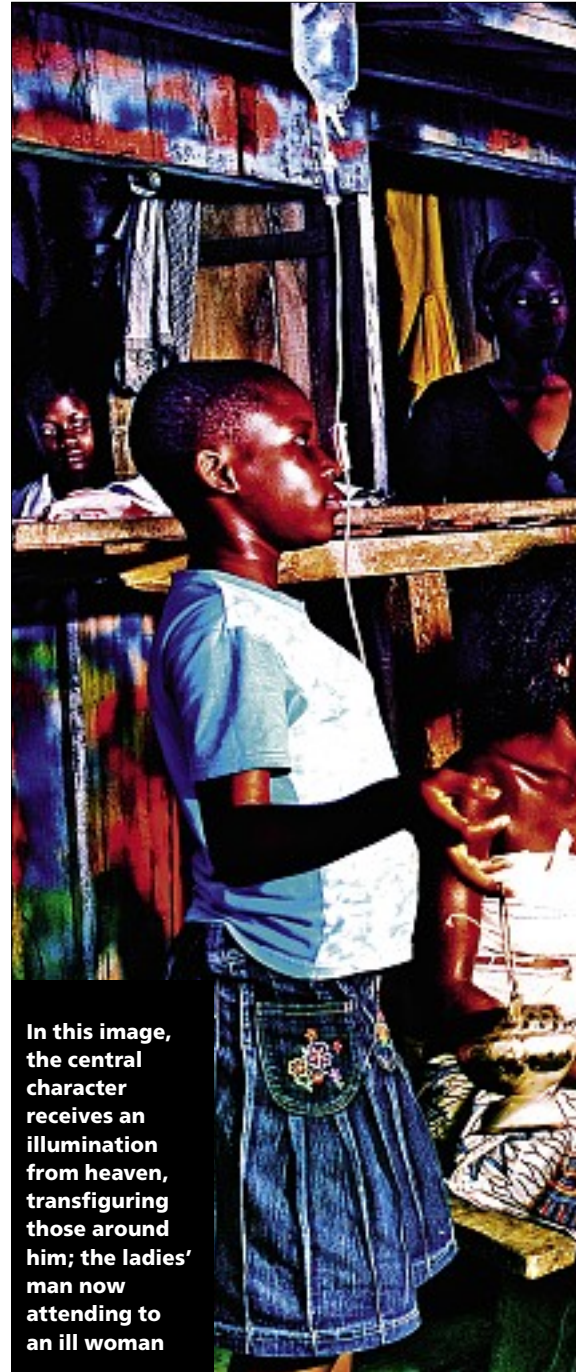
## ARTISTIC LICENCE

Sika enjoys “bending and distorting reality; that's what attracts me. The fact that I can see it and put it on a screen by being able to distort reality and turn it into something that is beautiful, this is what inspires me the most.”

Sika was studying software engineering at the University of Westminster in London when he was inspired to put his ideas into action.

The thought of seeing his ideas come to life made him decide: “This is for me. I can do it and see the physical result of my imagination instantaneously.

“That was why I decided to delve into this path and see what I could do. For me, the ability to use my imagination is the most important thing. ▶▶▶



**In this image, the central character receives an illumination from heaven, transfiguring those around him; the ladies' man now attending to an ill woman**