

historical piece about Shaka Zulu. Previous successes have included *Oxford Street* by British-Ghanaian Levi David Addai in 2007, which was later commissioned by the London's prestigious Royal Court theatre.

Msamati says Tiata Fadhodzi has survived recent government spending cuts for the arts and culture thanks to donations from its active 'friends group', but he thinks the cultural community could do more. "As much as we come from a culture that is communal in spirit, we don't have a culture of philanthropy in the same way."

Msamati says it comes down to a question of pragmatism and the perceived value of theatre. "There's a disconnect. It's funny, because a lot of people would talk about how they used to go the theatre and it was part of life but all of sudden that value has become lost." ●

Belinda Otas



The Raw Sound of Burkina Faso 1974-1979

Bambara Mystic Soul

These sophisticated sounds from a lost period of Burkinabé music come with lovingly prepared sleeve notes. The tracks mix the best of Mandingo guitar grooves, sultry Cuban rhythms and heartfelt vocals. ●

ART

António Ole Message in a container

The acclaimed Angolan artist uses a variety of media to explore African natural and urban environments, highlighting what links and separates the people who live in them

António Ole likes to recycle objects into ideas. The Angolan artist's recent solo exhibition, outside Portugal's Centro Cultural de Belém, was an installation of a film projection on water inside two shipping containers. Other similar projects have been more controversial. In Berlin last year, Ole turned 16 shipping containers into a wall that took up the entire west wing of a gallery, evoking the shantytowns on the fringes of cities in the developing world.

Ole is known for his photography, documentary and large-scale multimedia installations which have been shown in galleries and institutions including The Museum of Modern Art in New York, Centre Pompidou in Paris and at various international biennales.

"I am interested by the idea of cities and townships – the idea of people in big African countries living on the peripheries," Ole explains. "My work follows an instinct to provoke people who visit museums of contemporary art. The museum in Berlin specifically asked for the whole wall of junk – windows, old doors, steel – like the [similar] work I created in South Africa, and it was very popular. My friend Sokari Douglas Camp [a London-based Nigerian artist], however, was shocked with what I did and thought maybe I was exploiting this theme of poverty. You can call it *arte povera* or whatever you want, but either way, this energy is important to me."

Ole is now preparing to embark on an artistic journey that will take in nine "islands" of Africa in the space of three years. *Insula* will entail a trip to Robben Island, where South Africa's former President Nelson Mandela was held prisoner, as well as to a Cape Verdean community living in

the mouth of a volcano. "I want to know what links these people – where they come from – and come out with an eclectic and multidisciplinary artistic survey, taking in everything from naval construction to pottery. But I do not want to do this as an



António Ole outside his recent installation in Lisbon

the mouth of a volcano. "I do not want to do this as an anthropologist or historian – I want to do it as an artist," Ole says.

"Though I am interested in cities, I am tired of talking about them: urbanity, habitat, social issues and so on. I live in Luanda, a chaotic city which is now apparently the most expensive in the world. Now, I want to talk about other places: nature, trouble, all of which of course is still man-made." ●

Syma Tariq in Lisbon