

INTRODUCTION:

Angola, just under the radar right now, is on the verge of becoming very big news around the world. China is positioned to be the economic powerhouse of this century, but the largely untold story of its global ascent is taking place right now in Africa. After decades of devastation wrought by civil wars, China is rebuilding the continent in hopes of an early grab at its potentially immense untapped oil reserves. The epicenter is Angola.



SYNOPSIS:

The Chinese are rebuilding the Benguela Railway that cuts through the belly of Angola. I will follow its tracks from Kuito in the center of the country to the old slave port of Benguela on the Atlantic ocean telling the stories of the people whose lives are rapidly or not so rapidly changing. Once the commercial life-line of Angola stretching 1334 km from the Congo to the Atlantic ocean, the railway was largely destroyed during the 26 year civil war - bombed, peppered with land mines, ravished and laid to waste. Now, as part of an investment deal securing oil rights and construction contracts in return for rebuilding the national infrastructure, Chinese companies have come in and the whole world is being transformed.

Parts of the country that have been cut off for years are starting to reconnect. Trade routes are beginning to reemerge. For the first time in decades there is the possibility of development and renewed life. The route from inland Angola to the coast has been central to the major economic stories of the past 500 years - from the slave trade, to the colonial copper and mineral trade, to the battles of the cold war and now to the ascendancy of China in the age of limited oil supplies.

All along the tracks are people whose lives and fates have been intimately intertwined with these global forces -- from the Chinese construction workers, to the Angolans recovering from the ruinations of war to the HALO de-mining organizations clearing the way. And cutting through all of it are the once opulent trains, abandoned and bullet ridden from the war, finding their way in a remarkable reversal of fortune back onto center stage of world events.

Some of the possible stories along the way:



- Jose Pedrosa - Train inspector. He has worked on the railway since 1959. He has seen all the changes from the heyday of the late Portuguese empire to its decimation during the Civil War to its current rebirth.

Continued...

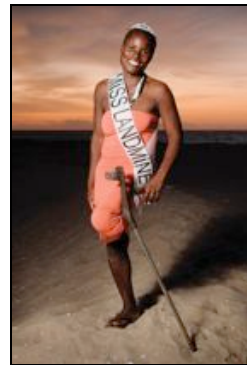
...continued

Tu Oingui - The Chinese Project manager for the Sino Hydro corporation, a Shanghai based company given the contracts to rebuild the railroad as well as many construction projects along the way. The Chinese workers are spending years of their lives sequestered away in construction compounds cut off from the rest of the Angolan populations.



HALO Trust Workers - The de-mining organization has employed large numbers of de-miners to clear land mines along the railway. Their work is incredibly dangerous and seemingly interminable.

The story of the **Miss Landmine beauty pageant** contestants along the Railway from the provinces of Bie, Huambo and Benguela. In May 2007 the Miss Landmine beauty pageant was launched - a Norwegian initiated project to bring attention to the devastating legacy of land mines throughout Angola. The project, featuring beauty contestants who have been disfigured by mines, will make its way to Angola in late 2007.



Returning refugees - since the ceasefire agreement signed in 2002, nearly 4 million displaced persons are returning back to towns and villages that have been ravished by the 27year war.

The trains themselves and all the people who ride them and work on them.



For images and information about the route I will take:
<http://www.cabula6.com/angolaINDEX.htm>

JEREMY XIDO originally from Detroit, graduated cum laude in Painting and Comparative Literature from Columbia University in New York and trained at the Actor's Studio with Barbara Poitier, Arthur Penn and Andre Gregory. He has worked extensively in Europe and the United States as an actor and dancer for stage and film and since 2003 has been the co-director of the performance company Cabula6, which has toured around the world with a number of original pieces. As a director he has shot several short films and documentaries. In 2006 he shot "Crime : Europa", a project funded by the European Union investigating criminal cases in 6 towns across Europe. These films can be seen online under: <http://cabula6.com/crimeINDEX.htm>

CABULA6

Founded in 2000 with its production of "The Love Project," Cabula6 is an international performance company based in Vienna and New York. We have members from around the world, and they come from various performance backgrounds including contemporary dance, theater, fine arts, journalism, music, Olympic gymnastics and film. Our work ranges from stage pieces, to site-specific works, to films, to projects of social intervention.

Cabula6 focuses on the border between reality and fiction and the uneasy dialogue between a person's private sense of identity and its dynamic reception in a broader social context. We often search out non-traditional performance spaces that make it possible to walk the line between what is reality and what is constructed and which can bring audience members face to face with their assumptions and expectations about who they are. We experiment not only with the space but with the nature of public gatherings, often implicating audiences directly into the piece. We search for involved forms of audience collusion that give a sense of renewed agency to us as creators and performers, as well as to the audience as participants.

Since 2003, led by co-directors Claudia Heu and Jeremy Xido, Cabula6 has performed in Austria, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Holland, Spain, Romania, Serbia, Chile and New York at such venues as the Sommerszene Salzburg, Tanzfabrik Berlin, Tanzquartier Wien, Posthof, CCL Linz, The Advanced Performing Arts Festival, Tanztage Wien-Bukarest, Junge Hunde Festival, Buda Arts Center Belgium, The Equilibrium Festival in Tuscany, INFANT festival in Serbia, the Moving Pattern Festival NYC, and the ImPulstanz Festival in Vienna among others. We have been asked to participate in conferences around the world such as the Site Specific Theater Symposium at CUNY in NYC the Performing Rights Days in Vienna and the Transforma Think Tank in Portugal. Our "Crime:Europa" film series is currently showing in festivals in France, Belgium, Germany and Austria. In February 2007 we were in Santiago de Chile developing a new piece called "ON EARTH" funded by the Austrian and Swiss governments, the Tanzquartier in Vienna and UNIACC in Chile. The piece took place in a public bus that crossed the city. In May 2007, On Earth was developed again for Vienna in a co-production with Tanzquartier and the refugee center, Macondo. www.cabula6.com

CONTACT : +1 917 346 0007
admin@cabula6.com