

Kilamba Kiaksi

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STEVENSON



COVER:
Google Earth view of the Kilamba Kiaxi city, October 2013.

THIS PAGE:
Developer's (CITIC) proposed rendering of the completed Kilamba Kiaxi city, 2008.

Writing about music is about as useful as dancing about architecture.

- Martin Mull



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1. Kilamba Kiaxi

Kilamba Kiaxi is a newly built city outside Luanda, Angola. The city was built by Chinese construction company CITIC and financed by Hong Kong-based China International Fund. Angola repaid the capital expenditure of the massive project in crude oil through national petrochemical operator Sonangol. The project cost US\$ 3.53 billion and represents the largest amount a Chinese company has spent on a single infrastructure development project in Africa to date. The new city is to be home to more than 210 000 people, but as entry-level, two-bedroom apartments start at US\$ 98 000.00 – in a country where 68 percent of the population live on below US\$ 1.70 per day – the city remains almost wholly uninhabited.

The private real estate company hired to sell the apartments and funded by the state – Delta Imobiliária – was created on 27 December 2007. Its shareholders are the chairman and CEO of the National Oil Company Sonangol, Manuel Vicente; the Minister of State and head of the military bureau (Casa Militar) in the presidency, General Manuel Hélder Vieira Dias 'Kopelipa', and his top advisor General Leopoldino Fragoso do Nascimento. The company is fronted by officers from the military bureau of the presidency – Colonels José Manuel Domingos 'Tunecas', João Manuel Inglês and Belchior Inocêncio Chilembo – as well as General Kopelipa's private assistant Domingos Manuel Inglês, 'Avô Inglês'.



2.The Project



The project will take the form of a hard-cover book of original photography focused on representations of the architectonic, social space of the Kilamba Kiaxi development coupled with contemporary portraiture. The book will also include long form fictional prose.

A short film is the second component of the project; that will use a green screen process to insert performers of particular Kuduro dance steps into the context of Kilamba Kiaxi. Dancers will be filmed against a green-screen and digitally grafted onto matte photography of street-level scenes from the Kilamba Kiaxi development. Musical score and voice-over narration will accompany the visual narrative.

Components –

Publication

Hardcover book
Edition 390 copies
10 copies (special edition)
Published by STEVENSON

Short Film

Edition 5
Approximately 5 minutes, stereo, colour.

Exhibition

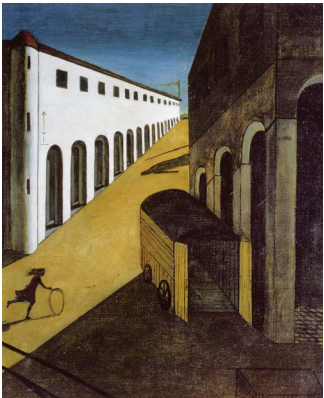
Featuring an exploded view on the project consisting of installation, sculpture, film screening and photography.

3.Aspect

Kilamba Kiayi is an urban design model imported from China, built by Chinese labour and paid for with Angolan crude oil. The design is itself a hybrid amalgam of utopian, Modernist-era urban design concepts that aimed to standardise human social and economic activity and privileged the automobile as the savior of the then future city. It is a city designed for cars, not humans. And it is wildly out of date. I see Kilamba Kiayi as a very expensive, actual-size museum diorama exhibiting a by-gone logic sold the world over in the previous century by middle-aged white men.

It is Modernism - the theme park.

The intention of the project – both photographic and cinematic – is to manufacture an uncanny space within the staging of the architectonic environment of Kilamba Kiayi. To construct a third, fictional, psychic space within the tangible reality of the physical environment. This is not documentary, nor is it objective – rather, the intention is to use the poetics and license of photography and cinema to render the real as manufactured stage and theatrical set.



The Melancholy and Mystery of a Street
Giorgio de Chirico
1914
oil on canvas



LEFT:
Brasilia
Oscar Niemeyer
1960 -



BELOW:
Pruitt-Igoe
Minoru Yamasaki
St. Louis
1954-1972

RIGHT, BELOW LEFT:
Alfred E. Smith Houses
New York
1950-1953

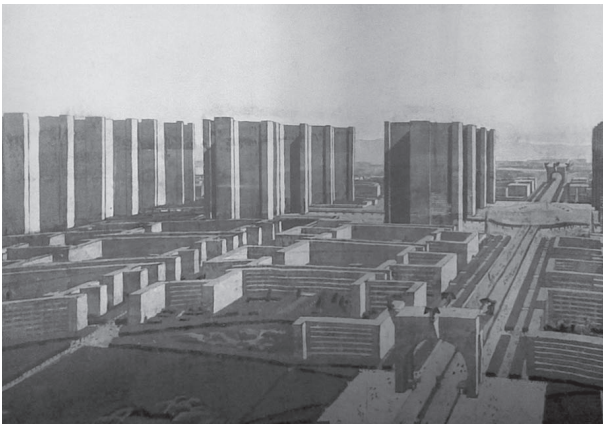
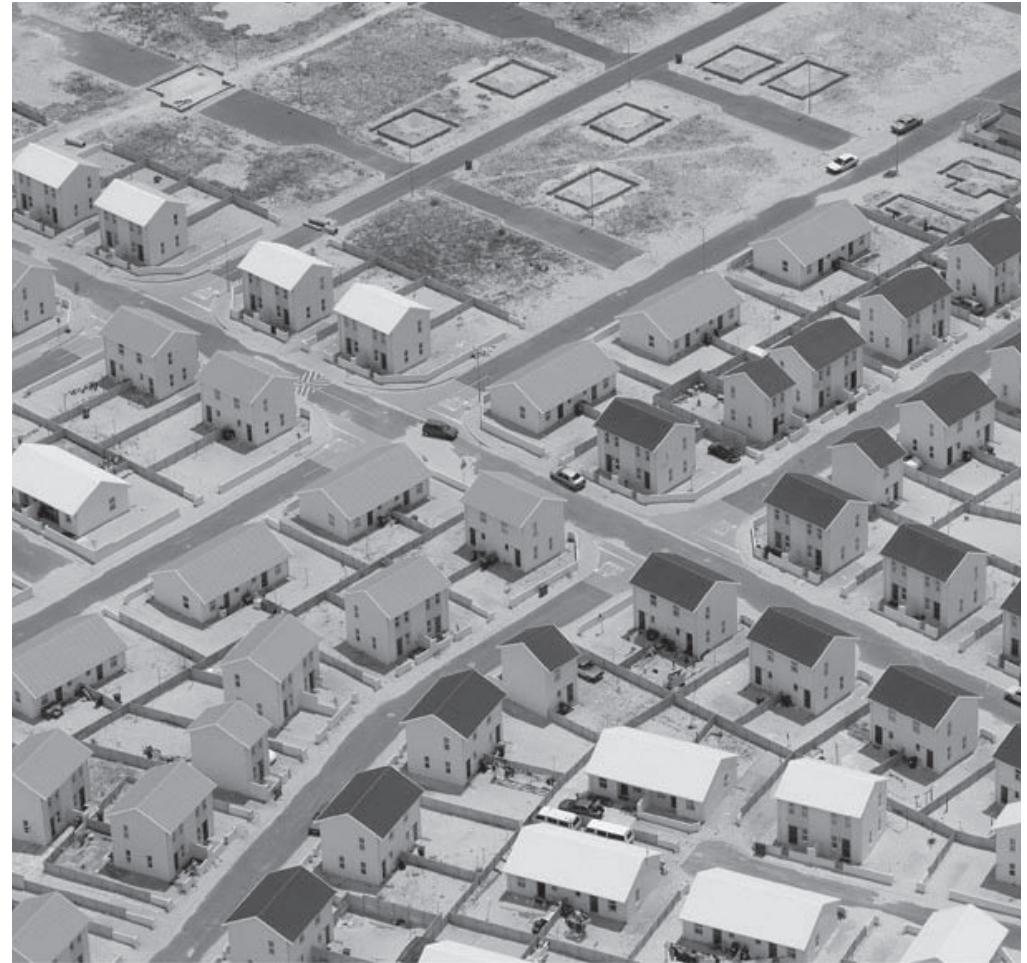
BELOW RIGHT:
Housing development, Scotland.



TOP RIGHT:
Housing development in Mexico

BOTTOM LEFT:
La Ville Radieuse
Le Corbusier
1935

BOTTOM RIGHT:
Multiple housing developments
outside Chongqing, China, 2013





TOP:
Commercial real estate development
outside Chongqing, China, 2013

FAR LEFT:
Public housing in Warsaw
1959

LEFT:
Public housing in Sheffield, U.K.
1964



4.Contact

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