

## Ouagadougou, BURKINA FASO

### SIAO, International Handicrafts Fair of Ouagadougou



The first International Handicrafts Fair of Ouagadougou (SIAO) was held under the aegis of President Thomas Sanakara under the name “Handicraft 84,” then institutionalized in 1988. It has become a real international market for African handicrafts, where craftsmen and buyers from diverse backgrounds meet not only to exchange experiences, but also and above all, to sell their productions. The 16th biennial of African craftsmanship which takes place in even-numbered years was held in 2022.

The SIAO is a specialized fair that puts in direct contact craftsmen, producers, African exporters, visitors and professional buyers from all over the world. It is par excellence the largest international market for African handicrafts. The SIAO has a network of skills, great expertise in advice and training in the field of crafts.



### Mission and Objective

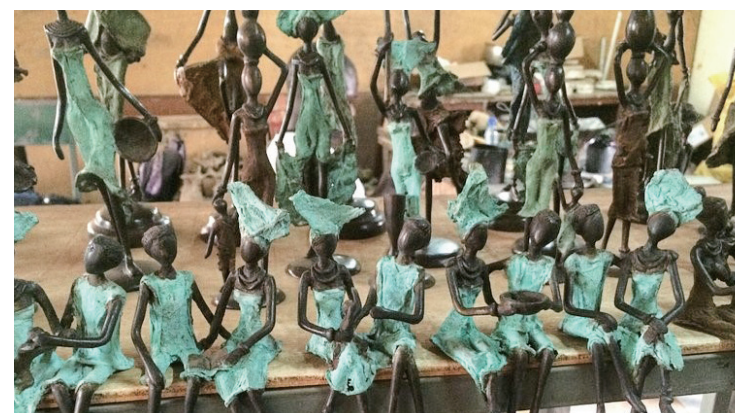
With the essential mission of creating a framework for commercial promotion and exchange for African handicraft products in order to facilitate their access to international markets, the SIAO's main objective is to bring together in one place, for ten days, the best artisans of the African continent in order to provide them with resources on national and international markets and allow them to exchange their experiences.

### Reception Infrastructure

The SIAO is built on an area of seven hectares and currently has 6 pavilions including:

- Three air-conditioned pavilions for sales exhibitions (Soleil Levant, Arc-en-Ciel and Kilimanjaro);
- Two ventilated pavilions for exhibitions and sales (Gorée and Pyramides);
- One exhibition pavilion for creative works in competition (Creativity pavilion).

In addition, the SIAO has the following infrastructure:



- Two bonded warehouses
- A catering area
- A playground for children.

### Products Admitted to the SIAO

The fair only admits artisanal products. Artisan products are to be understood as products made by artisans, either entirely by hand or using manual tools or even mechanical means, provided that the direct manual contribution of the artisan remains the most important component of the finished product. The professions admitted to the SIAO are contained in the registration form available at the SIAO and on the SIAO website at [www.siao.bf](http://www.siao.bf).

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### Les Récréâtrales—20 Years!

Les Récréâtrales—Pan-African residencies for writing, creation and theatrical research—were born in 2002 under the impetus of Burkinabe theater man Etienne Minoungou. Initiated with the aim of creating a meeting place between authors, directors and French-speaking scenographers from the continent, and to offer them the comfort of time to create contemporary theater performances with high artistic standards together, the Récréâtrales

have become, twenty years later, one of the major events of contemporary theater in Africa.

Along the way, they have been enriched by a district—Bougsemtenga—whose inhabitants have welcomed the festival, its artists and the international audience who has come to attend it every two years since 2006. In twenty years, the Récréâtrales project has also changed pace, gradually moving away from events to anchor itself in the daily life of and build itself with and for its residents: inhabitants and artists. Thus, a permanent theater was created, the Théâtre des Récréâtrales, along with a college of scenographers and technicians, the Scéno College; a research, training and creation laboratory, the ELAN Lab; workshops for children, the Young Public Project; and a professionalization program for young people, the Artistic Companionship.

Directed by Aristide Tarnagda since 2016 and interpreted by Odile Sankara since 2019, the two artists have focused more on the links between the artists who come to create at the Récréâtrales and the women and men who welcome them and who have so far participated in the general organization of the festival. Invitation is given to women and young people from the neighborhood to go on stage to create in turn with artists: the





opening show for three editions; a play in 2020, “Le Quartier,” which has since continued to tour the country; and the artistic workshops of the “Terre Ceinte” project which bring together, around art, the youth of the capital as well as those of the provinces and displaced people to deal with the rise of violent extremism in Burkina Faso.

Finally, the Récrcéâtrales have acquired a reference value for issues relating to the public: the positive economic effects that a cultural event can produce in a district and the transformation of a place of life so that beauty occurs.

Today, the Récrcéâtrales are invested more than ever in the task of producing meaning and connection in these times of fractures and individualities and are working to put humanity back at the center of the speeches, shows and programs they produce to provide avenues for confronting the great scourges of our time.

**Ramde Harouna**  
(Focal Point of Ouagadougou City)