

Challenges when working in a Collective

When we first started working on our topic, we began in the most conventional way one can imagine when talking about any work in Africa. Which was of course bringing it to a political and especially critical level.

But who are we to judge? Who are we to always criticize anything we hear about a country like the Democratic Republic of Congo in a political way?

Our project was about an art collective in which we should only see true beauty. True beauty in art, true beauty in collective work.

Since this does not mean that there are no difficulties within working collectively, we tried to concentrate on real and authentic messages by local artists living in a city called Goma.

Although working in a collective has an effective and positive impact on the people in Goma and its mentality, there are some challenges one faces when working together with other people.

For one, the question of finance is always difficult, but especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo there is a strong opposition towards the field of art. There is little to no funding by the government and the society does not see any relevance concerning the artistic sector. Furthermore, war and the weather play a crucial role, as it affects the work in the collective arduously since there is no retreat for the participants. Besides the external difficulties, there are also internal problems. Rivalry among the members of the collective is an omnipresent phenomena. When someone is progressing way faster than others, it can be very frustrating and challenging.

Despite these discouragements, competition within the collective sparks motivation in the members and helps them to learn from one another. More than encouraging each other, working in a collective creates a deep bond, much like family. And even if problems or conflicts arise they deal with it through communication and respect. Moreover, young people are free to let their creativity and thoughts run wild, while exploring the reality of their society.

All in all, it can be said that the work in collectives does have its problems and challenges, even those that cannot be influenced by us. But putting that aside, the positive impacts on the mentality outweigh the difficulties by a long shot. Working in a collective demands communication and establishes a strong community that can overcome even language barriers. It generates hope and helps create a safe space and an outlet for young people to express themselves in any possible way.

Concerning an idea for change, it can be said that the concept of working in a collective helps the individual deal with their personal problems and provides a message of peace and hope. However, we should not forget that it is no solution for Congos fundamental challenges and problems and that they demand their own measures.

Group 40: "Collective Social Art Practices in African Metropolises: Visionary Futures?"

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