

### Critical comment Group 41

In our project we were excited to meet and learn about artists and art collectives in Goma (democratic republic of Congo) who are socially engaged and renew and mobilize their respective cultural heritage. By doing so they intend to get rid of western domination and have a great impact on their social environment. So this topic is already very controversial and we discussed a lot how to present and expose a different culture without it feeling like neocolonialism all over again. We learned about how for example western NGO's often do more harm than good with initiated art projects. They focus too much on making the artist fit their agenda rather than letting them express themselves the way they want and need to. The western people coming to help in African countries who are often shaken by civil war and other big crisis don't realize the importance of the artwork and what it means to the people there. We had the amazing opportunity to meet and have a talk with Petna Ndaliko Katondolo, a Congolese artist, filmmaker and dancer who founded the art collective *Yole! Africa* as an response to the war in Rwanda and all the refugees who didn't know where to belong. Petna told us that he did so in order for young people to come together and be creative together. Other than the NGO's he thinks the collective art and processing art is not only about the outcome, but the process too. It is equally important to use the creating process to doubt and think. *Yole!Africa* is inspiring to us because it united all these different people of different countries who sometimes even fled from the same war but different sides. And through art they could come together and forget about the conflicts and all that was going on and just create. Petna also empathized that it is important to create art that may be inspired by tradition and to look at the history of Africa in order to move forward and tell the reality about their culture. There were many things done by the European colonialists that still influence the view on African culture today. So we wanted to create a good video but also be very aware. Our turning point was the realization that we can't live up to the expectation of the leuphana opening week by presenting Goma's art collectives ourselves and stealing their voice but just let them speak themselves. We are not in the position to imprint our agenda on them.