

The Gallery Club presents Iwan Baan
Momentum of Light

Unseen Amsterdam
15-19 September 2022

Iwan Baan (1975, NL)

Photographer Iwan Baan is primarily known for images that narrate the life and interactions that occur within architecture. With no formal training in architecture, he mirrors the questions and perspectives of the everyday individuals who give meaning and context to the architecture and spaces that surround us. This artistic approach has given matters of architecture an approachable and accessible voice. Before Baan's emergence into photographing architecture, there was historically an absence of human presence in architecture and design photography. Early on, Baan posed a simple question: Where are the people who actually use these structures?

From that point on, Baan acquired a host of clients (OMA, Herzog & de Meuron, Zaha Hadid Architects, Sou Fujimoto, SANAA, Toyo Ito, Diller Scofidio & Renfro, SO-IL to name a few) who wanted to ask the same question, and document the answer in the photographs of their buildings. A level of honesty and integrity became important to the documentation of architecture and the built environment. For Baan, a cloudy day, a clunky garbage can or the common street lamp are important pieces of evidence that everyday people are (or should be) the center of the built environment.

So while Baan's photographs are commonly known under the umbrella of Architectural Photography, his work, much like a documentarian, tells a human story, and how we as a society interact with the places and spaces that make up our built environment. And because people are a constant factor in his photos it allows the viewer to connect to the photo more and make it feel more natural. Subsequent to his commissions, Baan develops his own research and art projects centered on informal cities and communities. This work hones in on the subject of 'Architecture without Architects'. And for Baan, this work serves as a sort of meditation on the great potential of human creativity and ingenuity.

Momentum of Light

Across the African continent, but especially in the sub-Saharan region, the light provided by the sun has particularly stark quality. This becomes most apparent in relation to age-old building practices and the way the light shapes daily routines. Without relying on artificial

light, architecture in the region has to make use of the sun as a light source within buildings, while also protecting those living in them from its intensity. This has resulted in vernacular architecture with very few or small openings, which renders the inside of a building nearly pitch black while the outside is illuminated by direct sunshine that beats down mercilessly. One is either blinded by the light or can hardly see in the dark. When moving from one into the other, an adjustment of the eyes is always needed, making the relationship with light a particular one. One that requires patience and an acceptance that power lies not with a light switch, but with the source of the light itself.

Intrigued by this interplay of nature and the built environment, photographer Iwan Baan and architect Francis Kéré set out to capture how the natural cycle of light provided by the sun shapes vernacular architecture in Burkina Faso. Baan has long been drawn to capturing traditional ways of building across the African continent. Of particular interest to him are buildings and places of worship hewn from natural material, which seem to spring from the landscape as if an extension of it, rather than being erected like a foreign entity at odds with its location. Mud used for walls is harvested from the ground nearby, rooms and space are carved directly into rocky landscapes, and roofs are renewed with the seasons. It is architecture that works with nature, not against it. And it is fast disappearing.

In *Momentum of Light* Baan documented a particular aspect of this architecture – how its relationship with natural light is integral to its design, in the absence of an artificial source of it. In photographing people whose daily routines are tightly wound with the light sources available to them and the buildings they have constructed in response to this rhythm, a particular relationship and appreciation of light is made apparent.

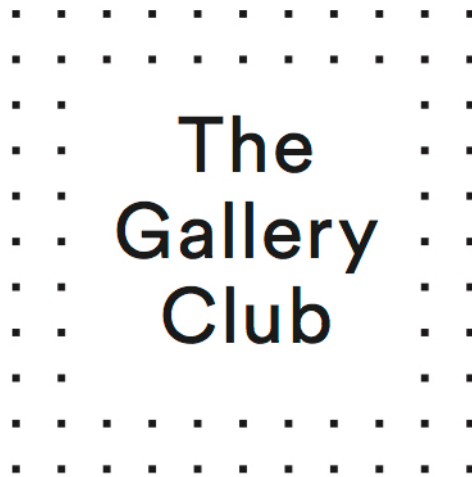
Aware that a meaningful documentation of the momentum of light in West Africa could only be achieved in collaboration with the keen eye of someone who had grown up with it, Baan teamed up with Kéré to travel together to three exemplary locations in Burkina Faso featuring some of the most striking and also most mundane examples of architecture shaped by natural light conditions. Two of them are featured in this presentation: the Grand Mosque of Bobo-Dioulasso and the intricately painted house of Tiébélé. The result is a thoughtful homage to a practice of building and an understanding of natural conditions that is being lost. It is a celebration of the ultimate source of light and a reminder to take note of it and not forget about it when flicking a light switch.

About The Gallery Club

The Gallery Club is a nomadic platform for photography based in Amsterdam, organized around exhibitions, curated dinners and events. Every edition of The Gallery Club explores the work of a wide range of Dutch and international photographers through a different theme. The Gallery Club has organized exhibitions in Amsterdam, Antwerp, Miami, Los Angeles and Chicago.

www.thegalleryclub.com

PRICE LIST



The Gallery Club presents Iwan Baan

Momentum of Light

15 – 18 September 2022
Unseen Amsterdam

All prices are including 9% VAT, but excluding frame and shipping

IWAN BAAN, BOBO-DIOULASSO, 2021
Hahnemühle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth 305 g/m2
Fine Art Giclée Print

Available in 2 sizes:

46,6 x 70 cm	edition of 10 + 2AP's	€ 5.000
66,6 x 100 cm	edition of 6 + 2AP's	€ 12.500

Prices are including 9% VAT, but excluding frame and shipping



Aerial view of Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso's second largest city, overlooking the Grand Mosque and the old city.

IWAN BAAN, BOBO-DIOULASSO, 2021
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Fine Art Giclée Print

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70 x 46,6 cm	edition of 10 + 2AP's	€ 5.000
100 x 66,6 cm	edition of 6 + 2AP's	€ 12.500

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A woman walking up to the building's flat rooftop.

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Exterior view of the Grand Mosque in the blistering midday heat and intense sunlight. The protruding wooden poles provide permanent scaffolding for maintenance work.

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A shelf built into a thick interior wall made from clay and earth is used to store copies of the Koran.

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The Grand Mosque's mihrab fitted with electric fans and illuminated by the sunlight falling through openings in the ceiling.

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The ancient natural wooden construction typical of Sudan-Saharan architecture, of which Bobo-Dioulasso's Grand Mosque is one of the few remaining examples.

IWAN BAAN, TIÉBÉLÉ, 2021

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Tiébélé at night, with a resident driving towards the main village tree on his moped, its light piercing through the darkness.

IWAN BAAN, TIÉBÉLÉ, 2021

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Aerial view across Tiébélé's extended royal compound, with the ancestral burial mound at the right in between the main road and the main communal tree.

IWAN BAAN, TIÉBÉLÉ, 2021

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An area dedicated to storing kitchen supplies, illuminated by a stream of sunlight falling through a small opening in the ceiling.

IWAN BAAN, TIÉBÉLÉ, 2021

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Fine Art Giclée Print

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A storage area containing an entire household's goods lit up by daylight streaming through two skylights.

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A Tiébélé royal family member sitting on the roots of a young baobab inside the royal compound. The walls incorporate the tree.

SPECIAL EDITION

IWAN BAAN, TIÉBÉLÉ, 2021

Hahnemühle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth 305 g/m2

Fine Art Giclée Print

20 x 20 cm

Edition of 20

€ 650

Prices are including 9% VAT, but excluding frame and shipping



Men gathering under a sacred tree in Tiébélé.