

PILGRIMAGES

In 2010 the Chinua Achebe Center for African Writers and Artists at Bard College in New York City and *Chimurenga* Magazine joined forces to initiate the Pilgrimages project. This highly ambitious publishing venture sent 14 African writers to 13 African cities (and one city in Brazil) for two weeks to explore the complexities of disparate urban landscapes. From this experience the writers will create 14 non-fiction books about their trips, capturing each city against the backdrop of Africa's first World Cup.

The books are intended to prompt a shift in the focus of African reportage and will comprise the Pilgrimages series, to be published simultaneously in Lagos, Nairobi and Cape Town during the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. The collection will be the most significant single addition to the continent's archive of literary knowledge since the Heinemann African Writer's Series was introduced in the 1960s.

The writers taking part in the Pilgrimages project are: **Chris Abani** (Johannesburg, South Africa); **Doreen Baingana** (Hargeisa, Somaliland); **Uzodinma Iweala** (Timbuktu, Mali); **Funmi Iyanda** (Durban, South Africa); **Billy Kahora** (Luanda, Angola); **Kojo Laing** (Cape Town, South Africa); **Victor LaValle** (Kampala, Uganda); **Alain Mabanckou** (Lagos, Nigeria); **Nimco Mahamud Hassan** (Khartoum, Sudan); **Akenji Ndumu** (Abidjan, Ivory Coast); **Yvonne Owuor** (Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo); **Nicole Turner** (Nairobi, Kenya); **Abdourahman A. Waberi** (Salvador, Brazil); and **Binyavanga Wainaina** (Touba, Senegal).

The following pages provide a glimpse into three divergent journeys to Kampala, Hargeisa, and Kinshasa respectively. These narrative essays both examine and re-imagine change and stagnation in the African city.