



THE AFRO LITT WEBSERIES



A photograph of two Black women standing in front of a vibrant, colorful mural with geometric patterns. The woman on the left is wearing a headwrap and a patterned top, while the woman on the right is wearing glasses and a green top. They are both smiling and looking towards the camera.

The Afrolitt' Webseries

The Afrolitt' Webseries (TAW) hosts **thought-provoking** conversations on important social issues from selected novels authored by contemporary **Black writers**. The conversations are centred on works of literature previously suggested for reading by the **creator**, producer, and host of the web series, **Pamela Ohene-Nyako**. The guests are people of African descent, from different professional and creative backgrounds, who reside and work in **Ghana West Africa**.

Genesis

When conceptualising the Afrolitt' Webseries, Pamela Ohene-Nyako drew her inspiration from the critical approaches and work of Afro-British director, **Cecile Emeke** Afro-French director **Amandine Gay** and the illustrious Senegalese author and filmmaker, **Ousmane Sembène**.

Cecile Emeke's Strolling Series was Pamela's first encounter with a documentary series she could fully identify with, which remarkably (and with a certain ease) combined critical thought and noticeably beautiful photography. At the same time, in reflecting on how to broaden access for literature to her audience, and to resist the devaluing of its educational currency, she could only but acknowledge Ousmane Sembène as an author who decided to make use of cinema to reach and educate the many. Her idea was to create a show where free and uninhibited opinions would be voiced, irrespective of prior exposure, class, education or even cultural taboo and stigma. Thus listening to Amandine Gay speak about her own politics and directing process gave Pamela even more ideas for TAW.

In the summer of 2016, while in Accra, Ghana (one of her countries of origin), she met artists from the **Accra[dot]alt network** the art scene at large, and attended the afrofuturistic & immensely creative Chale Wote Street Art Festival under the theme « Spirit Robot ». There, she liaised with professionals, some of whom later became members of her working team. She also met some of the creatives, activists and entrepreneurs who became guests in the first season.



▶ The concept

The concept of TAW is: **1 book, 1 guest, 1 location** for each episode. The conversations are between the creator of the show, Pamela Ohe-Nyako and one guest and centre on a (previously selected and read) work of fiction. The conversation is staged in a specific location, either related to the novel, or known as a cultural landmark. Through the narratives devised by authors of African descent, both Pamela and her guest actively discuss societal issues, in so doing eliciting critical thinking and behavioural change, be it on gender, community, race, sexuality, health, religion, love, or even what our future may very well hold. The format of the web series allows for a paced and attractive platform for a boldly utilitarian approach on literature.

With its 12-15-minute-long episodes, the series offers an opportunity for guests and viewers alike to focus on select characters and/or depicted situations from the novels. This, in turn, ensures that viewers can decide to read (and re-read) the book of their choosing, in their own time and on their own terms, while on break or commuting from or to work, school, etc. The episodes can also serve as visual aids for discussions spurred in a public forum. For those who may not be avid readers, the content and format remain intelligible and therefore easily retained. **The guests voice their opinions and share their viewpoints in a way that is relatable and experiential**, therefore deconstructing the diluted and mainstream 'single story' warned off by Nigerian author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Whether on a personal level or a collective scale, the conversations shall lead to more conversations, more questions, more debates and ultimately... **actionable change**.





Needless to say that Ghanaian daily life, remarkable entrepreneurial and artistic creativity, as well as cultural abundance are also at the very core of the web series. TAW is resolutely Ghanaian in context – filmed in Ghana and hosting Ghanaian nationals, residents or long-standing visitors – yet, it strives to transcend imposed frontiers to become **transnational and pan-African in purpose**, thus seeking to bridge boundaries and counter divisions.

As for the crew from pre-to post-production, it reflects the inherent philosophy and mission statement of Afrolitt' that allows for the coming together of people of African descent, and their wealth of experiences and localities.

TAW is to be considered as a **contribution to the literary movement**, a novel initiative yet furthering existing and upcoming local and transnational initiatives. It does not claim sole authority, but actively seeks to participate in the Ghanaian literary and, at large, cultural arena.

Just as Afrolitt' is guided by **intersectional feminist thinking and practice**, seeking to combat racist heteropatriarchy, within and beyond its organisation through non-sexist and inclusive working practices and collaborations, TAW pushes gender analysis and woman-driven content and authorship to the forefront of a global cultural agenda. Keen on highlighting the importance of **Afrofuturism** as a radical cultural philosophy, the series makes an equal attempt at providing ideological and action-driven alternatives to existing contexts.

Season 1 –WO KPE

Season 1 of The Afrolitt' Webseries is titled Wo Kpe , « we meet » in Ga. By choosing a Ga expression, Pamela Ohene-Nyako wanted to pay homage to her paternal grandmother, and to her Fathers. It comprises of **5 episodes shot in greater Accra**, and released online every month from Nov. 20th, 2017 to the end of March 2018.

The team



Rwandan filmmaker and video producer **Cynthia Butare** directed and edited Season1. A young yet seasoned visual storyteller, Cynthia delivered excellent video content whilst providing ongoing council in pre- and post-production, content creation, strategy and distribution.



Ghanaian-Dutch music and video producer **Alex O. Wondergem**, gave TAW its one- of-a-kind and eclectic sonic imprint. He is the second videographer of the project, and has provided quality and ongoing technical support throughout the pre-and post-production phases.



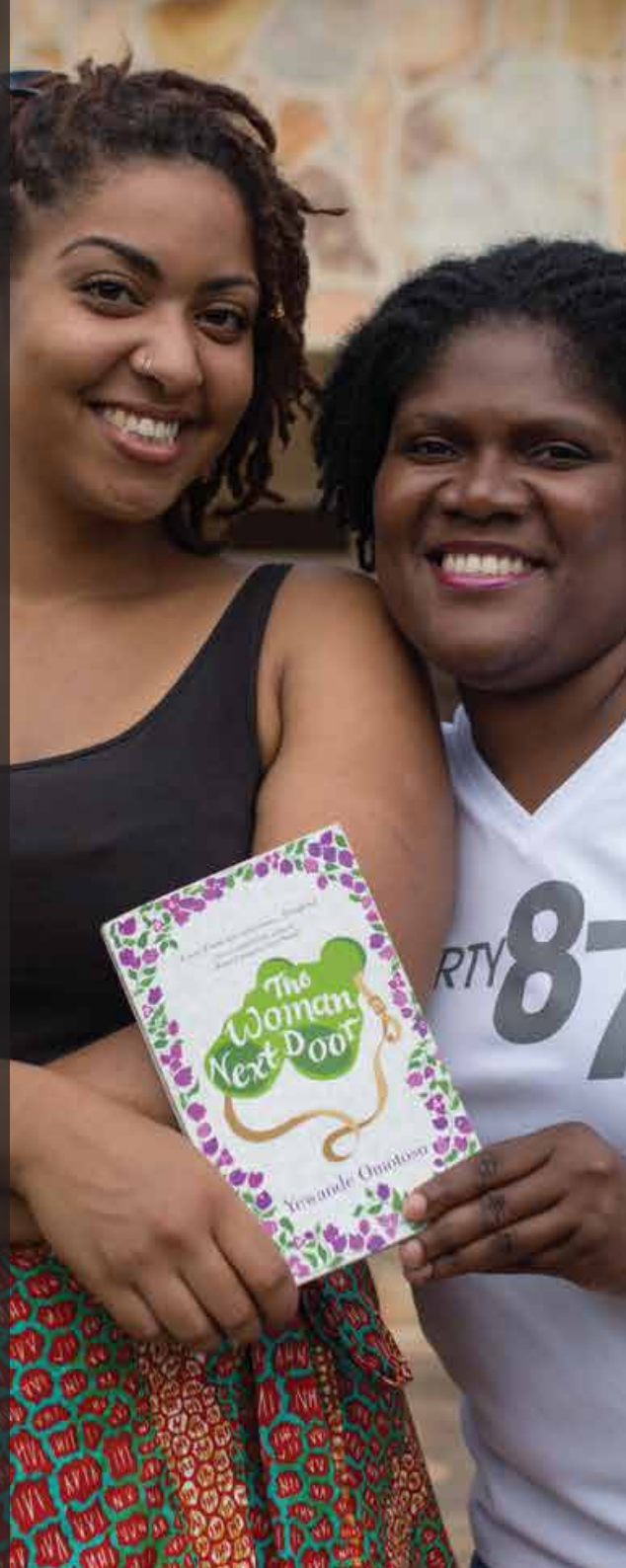
Ghanaian freelance photographer **Nii Odzenma** visually documented the 'cast' (Pamela and guests) and crew during the shoot. His photographic captures of The Afrolitt' Webseries have been widely relayed on popular social media platforms, as well as featured in online journal Afropunk.



Afro-Caribbean founder of **AYA Consulting**, Muna Lobé joined the production team in the last quarter of 2017. Muna has been providing insightful creative and strategic consulting to Afrolitt' as a whole and TAW more specifically.

► About the Books

Books featured in season 1 are from internationally acclaimed women authors from both the diaspora and Continent: Toni Morrison, Zadie Smith, Yaa Gyasi, Yewande Omotoso, and last but not least, Ama Darko. Their distinctive writing seeped in critical thought made the conversations with the show's guests even more intellectually and culturally stirring.



► Episode Breakdown

Each episode amplifies the voice of a specific guest, providing her/his take on the novel, as well as insights on her/his relation to the Ghanaian (and African at large) context and/or circumstances.

Episode 1: Using **Morrison's** Tar Baby, spoken-word artist and feminist **Poetra Asantewa** discusses how certain (cis-hetero) romantic relationships can be toxic, and how this possibly stems from a variety of sociocultural factors such as gender, class, or ageism.

Episode 2: **Josephine Kuuire**, one of Accra's leading women photographers, also known for her speaking out on women's herstories of abuse as well as gender inequities, talks body politics and alternative notions of masculinity using **Zadie Smith's** *On Beauty*.

Episode 3: **Evans Offori**, a literature graduate and arts entrepreneur, shares his view on processes of collective healing but also the damaging and lasting impact of colonisation from **Gyasi's Homegoing**. He also revisits what had sparked controversy in Ghana namely around the author's choice of names and language.

Episode 4: Stemming from **Omotoso's** *The Woman Next Door*, **Sheila Asimenu**, a project manager and relative of the creator, delves into family, caretaking, and women's professional choices today.

Episode 5: Ugandan feminist activist, writer and women's rights advocate, **Jessica Horn** analyses **Darko's** *The Housemaid* and in so doing, tackles issues of sexuality, religion, and makes an incisive case for radical change in our societies.

► Future Perspectives

Upon the completion of the first season, decision was made to take TAW further by proposing two additional seasons, forming a web series trilogy. **Pamela Ohene-Nyako** is currently in the process of assembling an expert creative team to assist in making this ambitious move a reality whilst raising additional funds.

► Season 2 – BAAKOYE

Season 2 will feature **7 episodes, three being shot outside of greater Accra**. The objective is to start decentring the project from the economic and political power centre of the country, and to expand its reach to Kumasi , Cape Coast, and Larteh.

Inspired by a conversation with artist, writer, and musician, Kwame Write, season 2 is titled “Baakoye”, a twi expression meaning “unity”. The aim is to extend the project content- and photography wise, by including collaborators of African descent from West Africa, the Caribbean, and Western Europe. Content wise, the goal is not only to expand the literary genres discussed but also to include male authors and Francophone writers, as well as more authors living on the Continent. Local and self-published authors will also be highlighted.

TAW’s **creative direction** will also **change as a new director and photographer join the crew**. This new visual direction is an attempt to explore broader possibilities, and highlight the environment in which each episode is shot more extensively.

To support this, a sound operator, a third camera operator, as well as a production advisor and a visual advisor will complete the team.

To further the impact of the web series locally, **new partnerships with Ghana-based professionals** as well as sustained interaction with local literary actors will strongly be encouraged.

► Season 3: KEKE DE EDZI

Building on the impact and growth brought by season 2, season 3 will further **push boundaries**, geographically, visually, and in content, hence the ewe expression “**Keke de edzi**” kindly suggested by scholar Edzordzi Agbozo.

It will comprise **9 episodes**, five of which shall be shot respectively in Tamale, Cape Three Point, Takoradi, on the Togo- border, and in the Volta Region.

Content-wise, the path chosen during season 2 will continue to evolve, and reach an even more diversified literary selection. In terms of language, season 3 will also include **at least one episode in French, subtitled in English.**

The visual direction and photography of the series will once more be entrusted to a new director and a new photographer. Upon completing the trilogy, a **comprehensive educational kit** will be produced, aimed at providing insightful pedagogical tips and tools to secondary schools and tertiary institutions.

Technical list

Books

Toni Morrison, Tar Baby © 1981
Zadie Smith, On Beauty © 2005
Yaa Gyasi, Homegoing © 2016
Yewande Omotoso, The Woman Next Door © 2016
Amma Darko, The Housemaid © 1998

Guest

Jessica Horn
Evans Kafui Offori
Sheila Asimenu
Josephine Kuurie
Poetra Asantewa

In collaboration with

Nubuke Foundation
Accra[dot]alt
Twists & Locs Salon
Tea Baa

Crew

Produced by Afrolitt'
Creator: Pamela Ohene-Nyako
Host: Pamela Ohene-Nyako
Filming director : Cynthia Butare
Camera operator : Alex Wondergem
Photographer : Nii Odzenma
Music : Alex Wondergem
Editing : Cynthia Butare & Pamela Ohene-Nyako
French subtitles : Pamela Ohene-Nyako
Creative consulting: AYA Consulting

With the financial support of

Marc Anderegg
Elisabeth Badan
Charles Ohene-Nyako

Format

HD 1920 x 1080 // colours // English //
French subtitles // Switzerland – Ghana //
2017

Distribution

Afrolitt' YouTube Channel – free access
Facebook – imbedded videos – free access

Contact

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Presentation kit

Content: Afrolitt' and AYA Consulting
Creative consulting: AYA Consulting
Creative and graphic design: Nafuore Qaa
Photography: Nii Odzenma
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