

## AfricaBD: Lai-momo and Africa e Mediterraneo at the International Comics Festival Angoulême, 25th-28th January 2018

The **Africa e Mediterraneo** association and the **Lai-momo social cooperative** are relaunching the research and promotion work of comics authors from African countries begun in 1999, by organising **AfricaBD** together with some of the best authors from different generations, on the occasion of the **45th International Festival of the Bande Dessinée** at Angoulême.

Every year, this small French town hosts one of the biggest festivals of comics in the world: four days of exhibitions, debates, exhibiting stands and conferences, characterised by the notable participation of the press, key figures from the sector, associations and ordinary visitors.

Alongside Simon Mbumbo, Cameroon author operating in France and founder of the youth editions ToomComics, as well as other dynamic editors and cultural promoters in diaspora and those who are not, Africa e Mediterraneo and Lai-momo will have a stand (Stand **Africa BD n° H4, Para BD, Place des Halles**) throughout the durations of the Festival and will hold two meetings at the Espace Nouveau Monde on the **26th January**.

The round table session, chaired by Sandra Federici (director of the Africa e Mediterraneo journal), will see the participation, among others, of Barly Baruti and Al'Mata, Congolese comics authors of considerable success, who together with some of their most promising colleagues, will discuss various aspects relating to the field of comics produced in Africa: diffusion, distribution, author's rights, adaptation rights, censorship and self-censorship, asking what the outlook is for African comics authors.

The following session will bring together editors and associations operating in the field: for Lai-momo and Africa e Mediterraneo it will be the chance to present to the public the **Africa Comics** archive, stored in Sasso Marconi (Bo). The archive is a collection of more than 2500 comic strips and publications by African comic authors, collected over the course of several projects starting in 1999. An extensive research and archive endeavour which has finally been made available online, accessible for free for those interested in or responsible for the works.

And finally, Africa and the Mediterranean and Lai-momo, in the presence of the public and authors present at the Festival, will relaunch the petition (<http://freenseramon.ejustice.org/>) requesting the release of the artist, cartoonist and human rights activist Ramón Esono Ebalé, aka Jamón y Queso, from 16 September 2017, who is locked up in Black Beach prison in Equatorial Guinea, his country of origin. Winner of the Africa Comics 2005-2006 First Prize, Ramón is accused of defamation and slander against President Teodoro Obiang Nguema, in power since 1979.

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