

**UCLA**

**Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies**

**Title**

Émergence, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 2013–2020

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2th8302h>

**Journal**

Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies, 42(2)

**ISSN**

0041-5715

**Author**

Gbré, François-Xavier

**Publication Date**

2021

**DOI**

10.5070/F742253958

**Copyright Information**

Copyright 2021 by the author(s). All rights reserved unless otherwise indicated. Contact the author(s) for any necessary permissions. Learn more at <https://escholarship.org/terms>

Peer reviewed

## Émergence, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 2013–2020

François-Xavier Gbré

François-Xavier Gbré (born in 1978 in Lille, France) lives and works in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

Gbré graduated with a degree in photography from École Supérieure de Montpellier in France.

In touch with time and geography, his work summons the language of architecture as a witness of memory and social change. From colonial vestiges to landscapes redefined by current events, he explores territories and revisits history and its making.

Recent exhibitions of Gbré's include *Ton pied, mon pied* (Jimei X Rencontres d'Arles Photography Festival, 2020), *China-Africa: crossing the color line* (Centre Pompidou, 2020), *Sogno d'Oltremare* (Museo MAN, Italy, 2019), *Afriques Capitales* (La Villette, Paris, 2018), *Landscape Photography Today* (Denver Art Museum, USA, 2018), *Recent Histories* (The Walther Collection, Neu-Ulm, Germany, 2017), *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery, Haverford College, USA, 2015), *Fragments* (Galerie Cécile Fakhoury, Ivory Coast, 2015), *Abroad* (Art Twenty One, Nigeria, 2015).

His work is part of the international collections at Centre Pompidou (Paris, France), the Smithsonian Institution (Washington, D.C., USA), Tate Modern (London, UK), Queensland Gallery of Modern Art (Brisbane, Australia), the Walther Collection (Neu-Ulm, Germany – New York, USA), Philadelphia Museum of Art (Philadelphia, USA), Chazen Museum of Art (Madison, Wisc., USA), and Centre National des Arts Plastiques (Paris, France), among others.

### Émergence, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 2013-2020

*Émergence, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 2013-2020* is a series of 57 small-format photographs taken in Abidjan, the economic capital of the Côte d'Ivoire. Gbré documents the evolution of the city in a deep and detailed investigation of its urban territory. Filtered through the prisms of time, nature, and architecture, he

recomposes a landscape and horizon that outline an experience of moving through Abidjan. Since 2011 and the end of the post-electoral crisis, Abidjan has been rebuilding itself with spectacular infrastructure and a redefinition of the individual and collective landscape. It is a page in the social history of the city that the artist captures by following the destruction of informal settlements and the construction of real estate projects intended for a so-called growing middle class. The city becomes the showcase of a country where development is not, however, homogeneous.

In addition to his field research, Gbré draws on photographic and documentary archives that he collects and presents in relation to his own work. For the *Rencontres d'Arles* photography festival in 2020, the installation of *Emergence, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 2013-2020* is put into perspective through the inclusion of an aerial photograph of Abidjan taken during a period known as the “Ivorian miracle,” a period of prosperity and construction during the years 1960-1970 that constituted an urbanistic, architectural, historical, and social framework on which the constructions from the decade of the 2010s are superimposed.







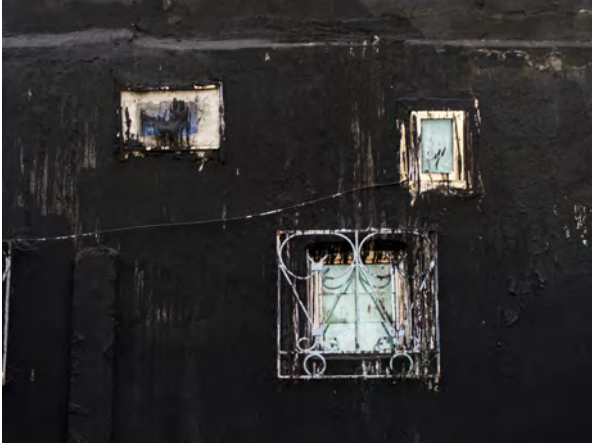




























Page 151:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Cité Espérance #2, Route de Bingerville, 2013*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

François-Xavier Gbré, *Pont HKB #2, #3 and #4, Rivera, Cocody, Abidjan, 2014*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 152:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Echangeur Miterrand #1, Riviera 2, Cocody, Abidjan, 2013*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 153:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Terrasse, Orphelinat de garçons, Bingerville, 2013*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

François-Xavier Gbré, *Cité universitaire Jean Mermoz #1, Cocody, Abidjan, 2014*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 154:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Installation, Emergence, Group H, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 2013-2020*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 155:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Piscine #1, Université Félix-Houphouët-Boigny, Cocody, Abidjan, 2014*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

François-Xavier Gbré, *Cité Sinacaci #1, Akouédo, Cocody, Abidjan, 2013*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 156:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Réserve Foncière de la Zone Industrielle PK 24 / Akoupé Zeudji, Yopougon, Abidjan, 2019*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

François-Xavier Gbré, *Cité Ado #1, Yopougon, Abidjan, 2015*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 157:

François-Xavier Gbré, *modelization for an exhibition at les Rencontres d'Arles, 2020*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 158:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Installation, Emergence, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 2013-2020, Groupe N*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 159:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Église, Azito, Yopougon, Abidjan, 2018*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

François-Xavier Gbré, *Chantier #2, Riviera, Cocody, Abidjan, 2014*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 160:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Synatresor, Bingerville, Abidjan, 2014*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

François-Xavier Gbré, *Propriété privée #1 et #2, Route de Bassam, 2014-2015*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 161:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Aerial view of Cote d'Ivoire, date unknown*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 162:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Boulevard de France #1, Cocody, Abidjan, 2015*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

François-Xavier Gbré, *Cité Ado #3, Yopougon, Abidjan, 2018*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 163:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Pont HKB Section courante zone Sud, Marcory, Abidjan, 2014*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 164:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Boulevard de France #2, Cocody, Abidjan, 2015*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

François-Xavier Gbré, *Poubelles, Université Félix Houphouët Boigny, Cocody, Abidjan, 2015*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

Page 165:

François-Xavier Gbré, *Vierge aux gravats, Adjouffou, Côte d'Ivoire, 2014*. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan, Dakar, Paris).

