



Sokari Douglas Camp  
Remember Ken Saro Wiwa

# Sokari Douglas Camp

## Remember Saro-Wiwa

### Proposal

#### **Battle Bus**

A bus of hope.

A bus carrying information.

A bus carrying some of the humour and terror of the people of the Niger Delta. Since Ken Saro Wiwa's death, things have not got better in the Delta. The unrest over oil wealth has spread through the oil producing states and now threatens to divide the country.

I was afraid to tackle this project, my family is in the Rivers State at the heart of some of the recent problems. In the River's state it is not a common practice to speak freely or to criticise the government. So how could I take part in this project without putting my family in Danger.

Re-reading the background information on Ken Saro Wiwa made me aware that we in the Delta are not invisible. The oil companies are being watched and the world is now aware of what is going on. This companionship/ support has taken a few months to sink in. What a help it would be to people in the Delta to know that others in the world care.

Ken Saro Wiwa laid the foundations for this power and I am proud to be part of this team. I thought of making something positive for this project because Nigeria's shame of Ken Saro Wiwa's death has to be turned into something constructive.

I thought of the information services I had seen in Port Harcourt, billboards with stiff characters and the boards for native doctors that can heal anything from boils to infertility. Then I thought of the medicine buses that would arrive with people cured by the product being sold. Energetic dancing and talking to convince the viewer that this is the tonic that everyone has been waiting for. Ken Saro Wiwa's legacy is what we in the Delta need a chance; we need people to know how our land and wealth is being taken away from us.

How can one convey this in England so far from the Delta? The best story is Ken's; in his last interview describing the state and treatment of the Delta is so shocking. Everyone should see this film; to remind us what the oil companies are doing in our name, we are responsible.

I constructed a bus because I wanted a mighty vehicle to tour the streets of London and to be noticed, rather like a campaigning "Battle Bus" in an election (Major.Prescott style). It is ironic that it is a fuel-guzzling object, coming from a country without MOT for vehicles; it is good to see how these vehicles are adapted. It is fascinating to see how a bus looks in Nigeria.

I wanted something familiar but interpreted in a third world way. Can we have a lorry commemorating a campaigner against oil exploitation? Things are never black and white and intuitively I think Ken would like the irony of this because oil brought about his death but it is also playing a part in educating the world about the Ogoni peoples plight and the other people's of the Niger Delta. My bus/ Lorry carries all these thoughts.

Looking at images of the Delta encouraged me to place oil barrels on the top of the sculpture with the names of the eight activists that died with Saro Wiwa. There are no figures on the structures but one can imagine the

oil barrels as figures. The oil barrels are held in place with charred sticks that could be the burnt trees in the pictures of where there has been a fire from an oil disaster.

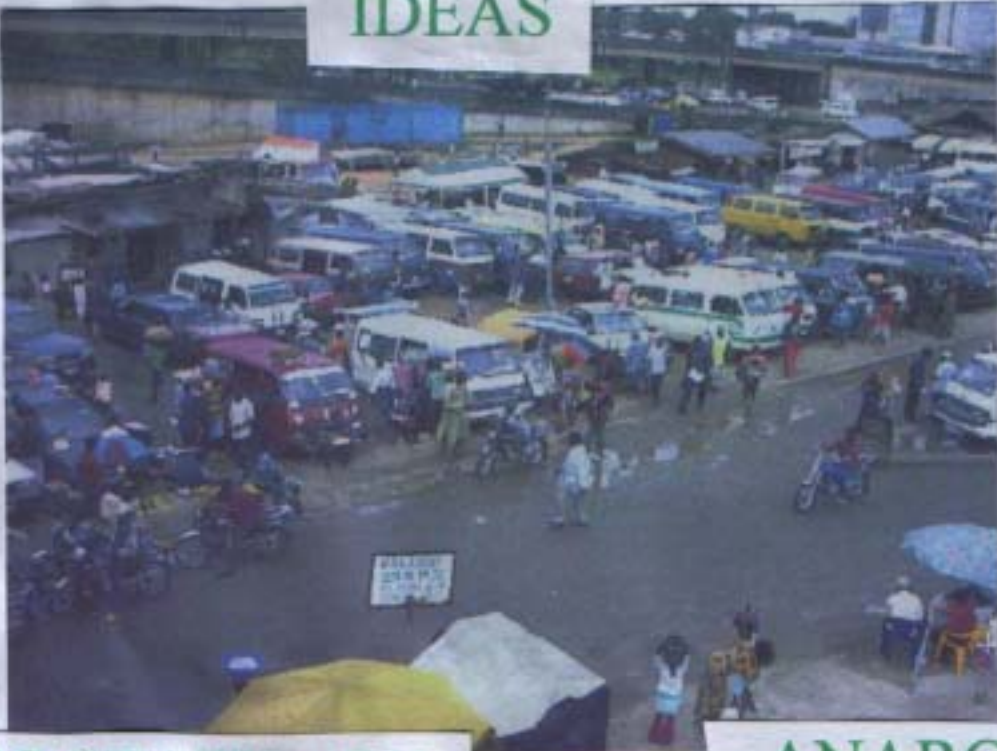
The transport in the Delta is not as colourful as the transport in other African states; our state colour is blue with a white band going round the middle of the vehicle. There is a band on my sculpture I felt it should have some of Ken's words in it, the words I was struck by in 'the without walls' interview, "I accuse the oil companies of practicing genocide against the Ogoni..." I would like these words to be cut into the structure and for the stainless steel to be patinated to look as if it is on fire. The name of 'Ken Saro Wiwa' is at the front of the bus.

Ken Saro Wiwa's name does mean something in the world and I could not think of anything else that would start discussions about this programme that will educate people worldwide. I am relying that my memorial will have pamphlets that are handed to people that will approach the memorial. Also it would be wonderful if Ken's speech from the 'Without walls' interview could be played to people at the set locations where the memorial is sited.

The structure would be constructed onto a chassis with wheels within the main frame, so the sculpture could easily be moved. The bus could be parked where Coaches Park. I would like it to be as accessible as an ice cream van or mobile library. So I do not imagine this structure only being near Libraries, I would like it at fairs and park celebrations, a practical sculpture.

There is the potential for people to be able to enter the structure because there is a lot of useful space that the sculpture envelops, it could be used as an educational facility. Exhibitions and lectures could be held in the structure, the white banner could be used for projections but it would cost a little more than this budget to kit the interior of the bus out with a floor, desk and power to show films and keep its occupants warm.

IDEAS



RIVER'S STATE OIL

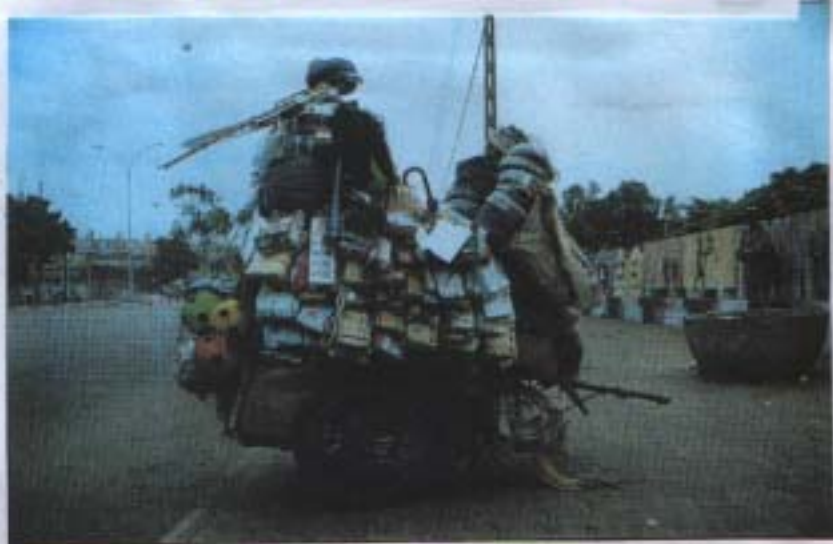
ANARCHY



CORRUPTION

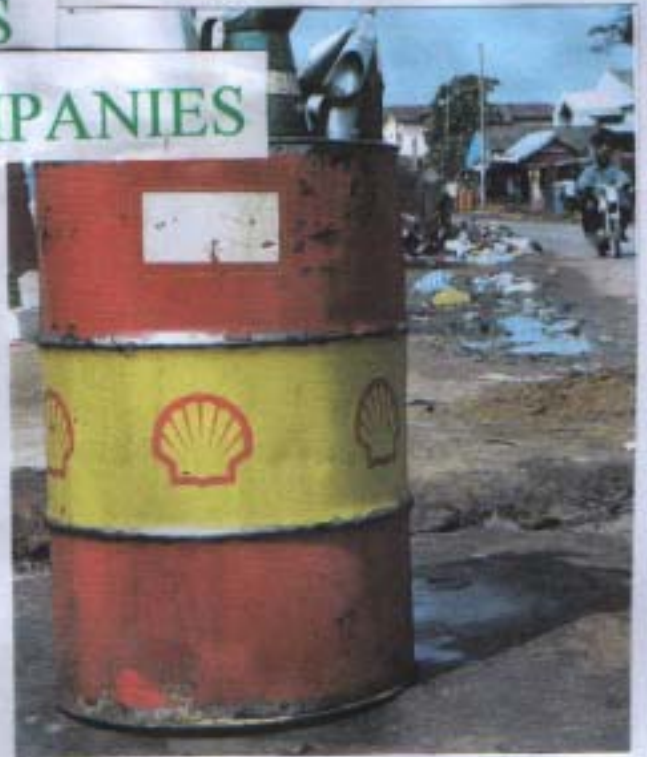
ENTERPRISE

PRIDE



IDEAS

"I ACCUSE THE OIL COMPANIES



OF PRACTICING GENOCIDE



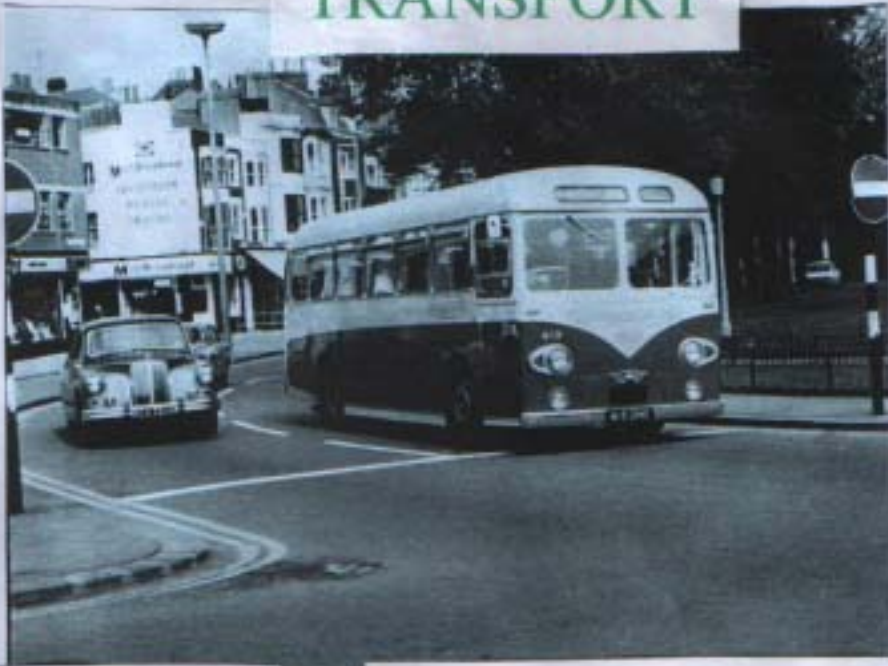
AGAINST THE OGONI PEOPLE"



IDEAS



TRANSPORT



OVERLOADED

BUS FOR TRANSPORT

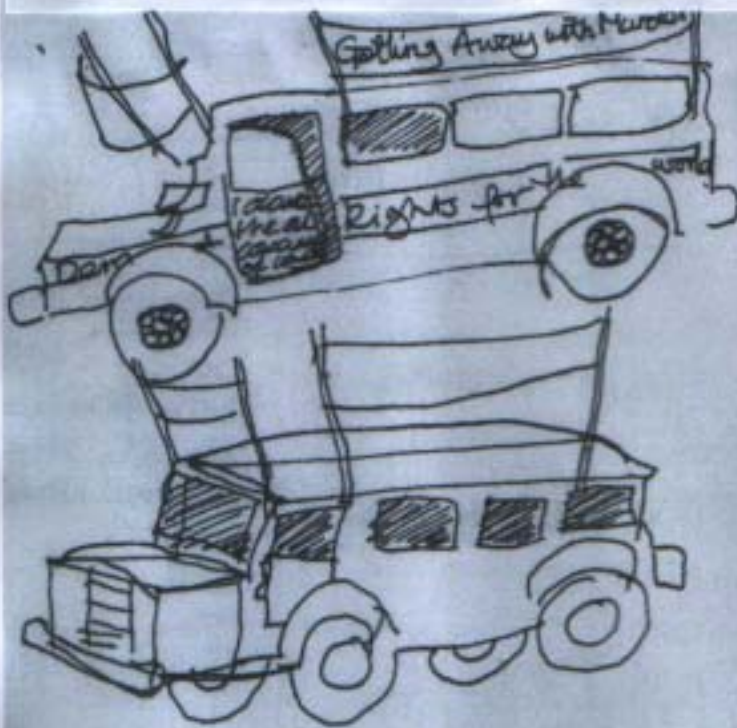


NIGERIA'S SHAME

# IDEAS



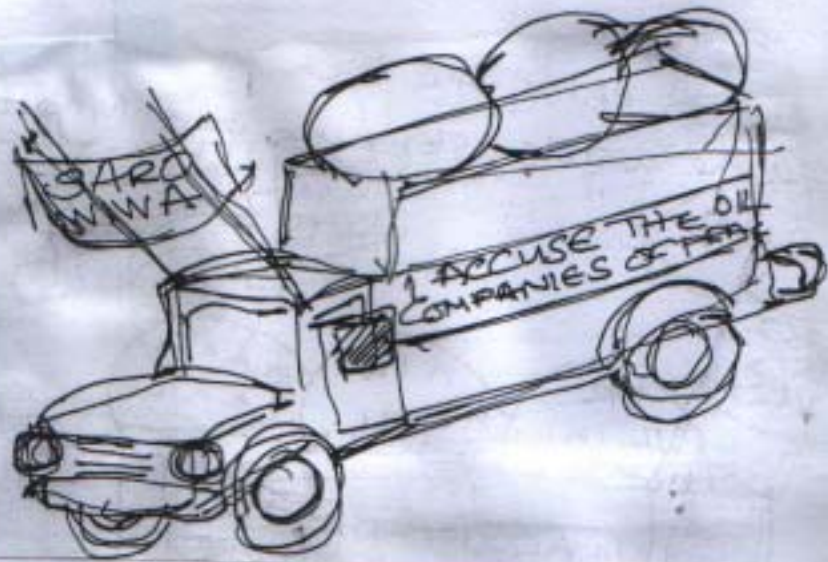
## TRANSPORT MESSAGE



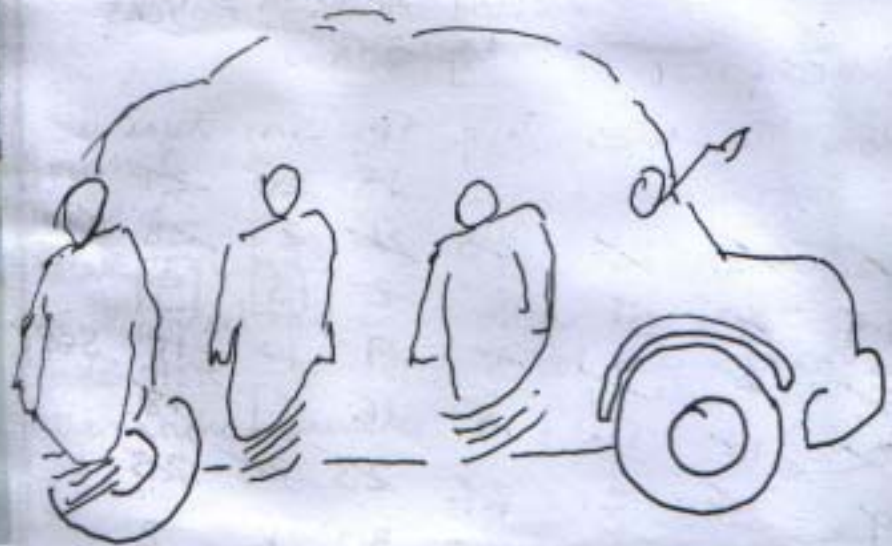
Recycled vehicle coming back to people of Georgia.  
A chance to enter the bus.  
to read the words stepping into Nigeria



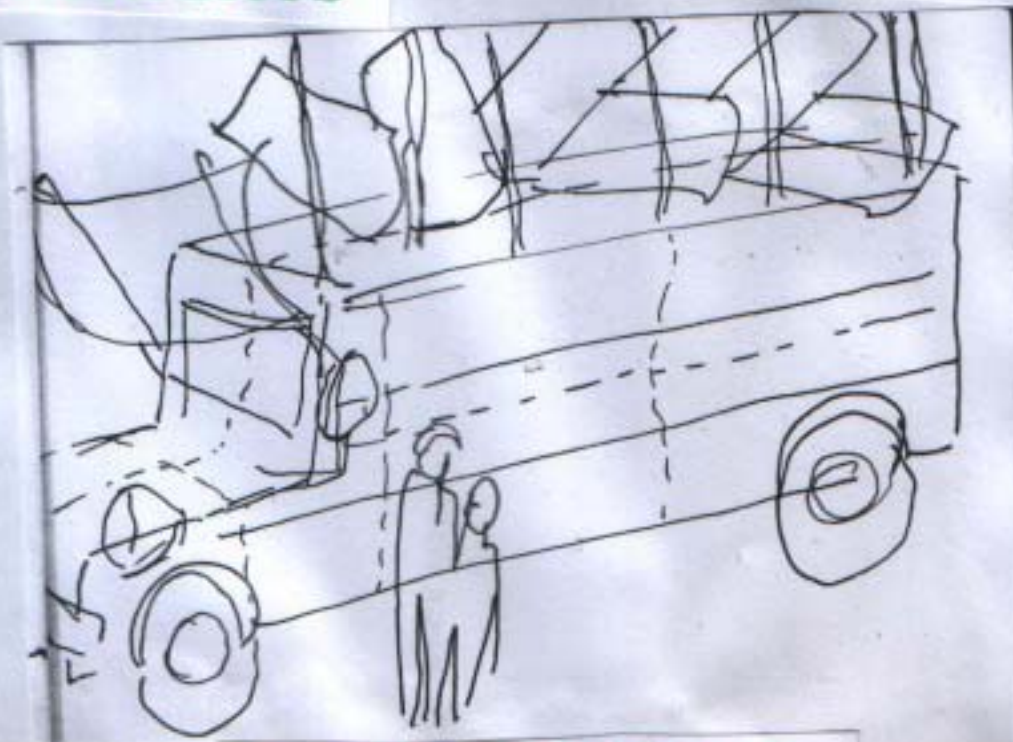
# IDEAS



# HUMAN RIGHTS



# OGONI RIGHTS



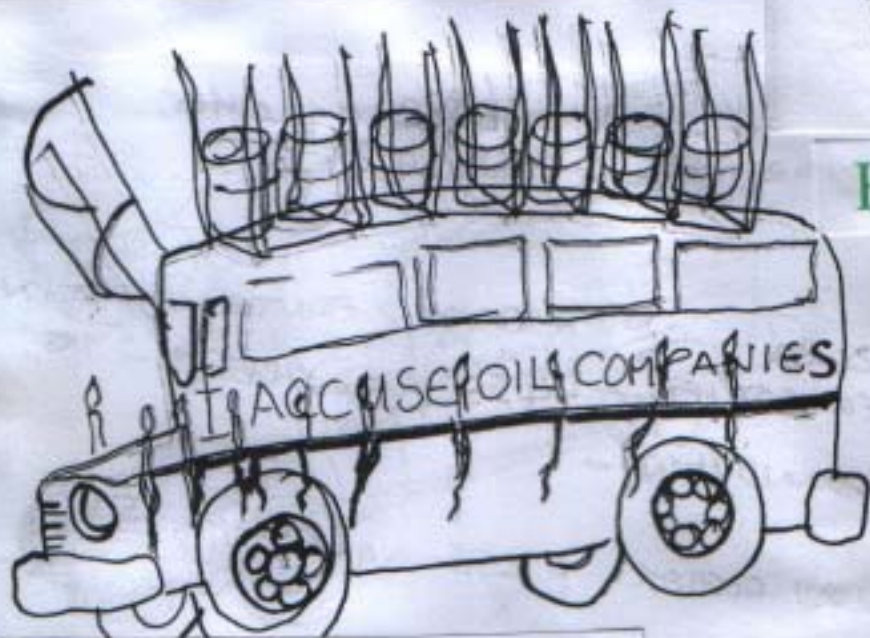
# NIGERIA'S HOPE

# IDEAS



# INFORMATION

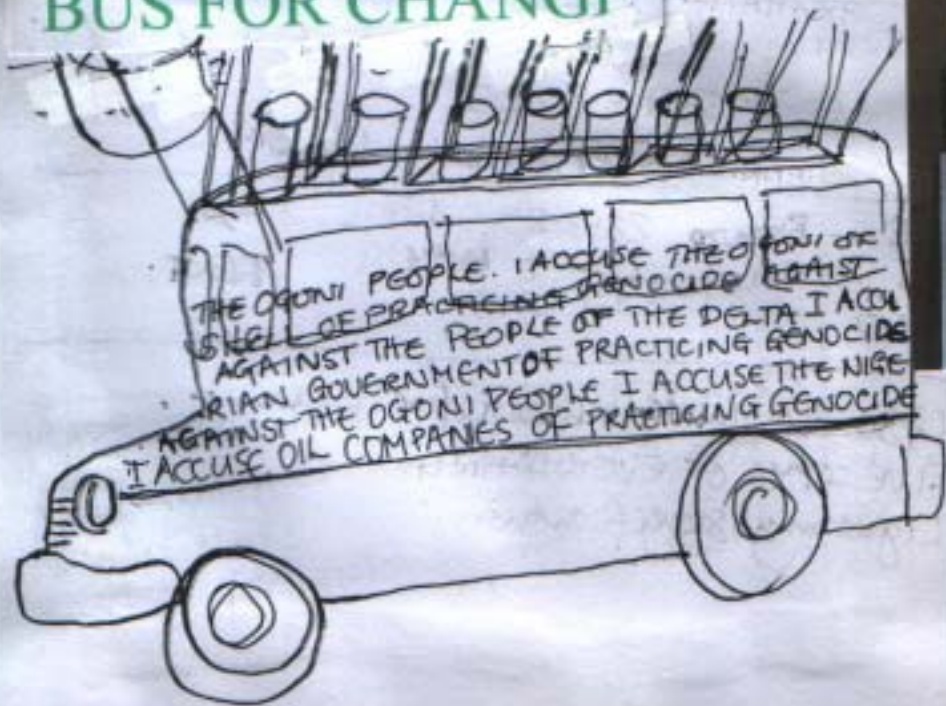
Puerstale  
 corruption  
 oil gas  
 in  
 terror



# HANGED MAN



# BUS FOR CHANGE



# IDEAS



## BUS FOR INFORMATION



## BUS FOR HOPE

IMAGES PROJECTED ON TO BANNER

