"These Girls' Fashion is Sick!":
An African City and the Geography
of Sartorial Worldliness

Grace Adeniyi Ogunyankin

They are the noble savages, staring out from coffee table books. *Africa Adorned. The Last Nomads.* Backdrops and extras for *Vogue* fashion shoots. Stock ingredients for tourist brochures ... They are the myth of tribal splendour. Everything about them is foreign ... Their "timeless culture" is the stuff of children's books, of Western fantasies. They are everyone's dream of people untouched by modernity. (Patel, 2010: 45; emphasis in original)

What happens when black womanhood, black femininity, black women's spaces, places and poetics are "*Not* on the margins"? .... if these conceptual and political differences are not simply cast as marginal, they do not have to replicate marginality. (McKittrick, 2006: 134-135; emphasis in original)

Introduction

As an urban feminist geographer with a research interest in African cities, I was initially pleased when the web series, *An African City*, debuted in 2014. The series was released on YouTube and also available online at www.anafricancity.tv. Within the first few weeks of its release, *An African City* had over one million views. Created by Nicole Amarteifio, a Ghanaian who grew up in London and the United States, *An African City* is offered as the African answer to *Sex and the City*, and as a counter-narrative to popular depictions of African women as poor, unfashionable, unsuccessful and uneducated. The show centers around the lives of five upper-middle-class repatriated women: Nana Yaa, Makena, Zainab, Ngozi and Sade. The characters are in their mid-to-late twenties and have decided to settle in Accra, Ghana, after having spent

the larger part of their lives living abroad in Europe and North America. The show is mainly about how the women navigate their lives as single women and 'returnees' in Accra. The episodes in the first season depict their returnee lives as luxurious, from high-end clothing labels to the leisure and pleasures of cosmopolitan Accra. *An African City* is not novel in its representation of upper-middle-class African lifestyles, and may be read differently by viewers who live on the continent and/or those familiar with other, similar shows aired on African broadcasting networks such as the Nigerian and South African soap operas, *Tinsel* and *Scandal*. However, unlike such shows, *An African City,* dubbed the first African web series, has received much media attention in the West. Interviews with Amarteifio have featured on National Public Radio in the United States and on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and there have been articles on the show and its fashion on CNN, BBC, vogue. com, US-based Spanish online magazine, *Complot,* and *Refinery29,* a website on fashion and style with over 175 million users. Amarteifio was cited in *The Financial Times 2015* as one of the "Top 25 Africans to Watch," and recently won the Creative Artist of the Year at the African Diasporan Awards in New York.

True to Amarteifio's goals, the first season of *An African City* challenged and sought to redefine dominant Western narratives about Africanness and African women, illustrated the worldliness of African cities, and troubled the notion that "there can be no authentic description of Africa that does not touch on witchcraft, kinship, poverty, or chieftaincy" (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2004: 350). I was intrigued by the possibilities of analysing the sartorial elegance and creativity embodied by the five main characters in the web series as a geographic performance/site for resistance and counter-narratives. More specifically, in this article I am interested in the depiction of the characters as 'Afropolitan,' and in what I posit as their ability to use fashion to signify African women's worldliness. The terms Afropolitan and Afropolitanism are both popular and contentious. Writer Taiye Selasi (2005) was one of the first to use the term Afropolitan to describe a 21st-century African who is modern, cosmopolitan and transnational. According to Selasie, Afropolitans are the newest generation of African emigrants for whom there at least one place on the African continent to which they tie their sense of self, and then "the G8 city or two (or three) that [they] know like the backs of [their] hands" (Selasi, 2005: n.p.). Achille Mbembe (2007) later defined Afropolitanism as

the domestication of the unfamiliar, an interweaving of worlds, and a way of being in the world, refusing on principle and form the identity of victim. Yet such portrayals of Afropolitans have been challenged. Brian Bwesigye (2013) argues that they reify the West as centre (read: the world) and promote Afropolitanism as Africa's new single story. In a similar vein, Emma Dabiri contends that, with the concept of Afropolitanism, "it seems again that African progress is measured by the extent to which [we] can reproduce a Western lifestyle, now without having physically to be in the West" (2016: 106). Echoing Binyavanga Wainaina's 2012 lecture, 'I am a Pan-Africanist, not an Afropolitan,' given at the bi-annual African Studies Association UK conference (see Santana, 2016), Dabiri notes that Afropolitans are not only consumerist in their reproduction of Western lifestyles but that Afropolitanism also comprises the commodification of African culture. Similarly, Stephanie Santana posits that, in Afropolitanism, "style and 'worldview' [become] conflated" and "people and identities [are] commoditized" (2016: 121).

Although Afropolitanism challenges negative portrayals of Africans as peripheral to modernity and cosmopolitanism, the concept is also unproductively divisive in that it demarcates some Africans as Afropolitan and others as not, in terms of their relative class positions and spatial mobility. Similarly, the concept seems to insinuate that some Africans have not progressed. At the same time, the name 'Afropolitan' is appealing because it breaks away from the colonial imposition of 'African,' with its associated, negative stereotypes. However, if Afropolitan and Afropolitanism are to remain in our critical lexicon, I would suggest that we need to move away from classist conceptualisations of them, such as those promulgated by Selasi (2005), and instead come to understand Afropolitans as Africans of any social class who respect, value and embrace their 'Africanness' – which can have various meanings for different people – and are at the same time aware that, at the level of their everyday realities, embodiment and social political thought, they are very much connected to, and influenced by, the global. This expanded definition is less divisive and also less dependent on spatial mobility, thereby providing flexibility in determining how the global and local intersect in the production of identities and lifestyles. In response to the critiques of Santana (2016) and Dabiri (2016), this new understanding of Afropolitanism accepts that, in an increasingly neoliberal and globalised world, Africans (and non-Africans) are inevitably exposed to and likely to

desire to consume multiple cultures. Therefore, what we must work towards are anti-colonial and anti-racist forms of consumption, rather than decrying the mere fact of consumption and commodification. It is also important to not reduce Afropolitanism on the continent to mimicry, as Dabiri (2015) does. This reduction ignores agency, leaves little room for nuance and creates a binary between the 'West' and 'Africa.'

Thus, in terms of *An African City*, rather than reading the embodied urban geographies of the characters and their agency in relation to urban consumption and spaces of pleasure and leisure (Peake, 2009) as a transfer from the global north, we can view them as sites of humanisation within the "paradoxical space" (McKittrick, 2006) of Accra. This humanisation transcends the discursive othering of Africa and entails the re-narration of African women's bodies as a public space that has been historically, and contemporarily, dehumanised and rendered a spectacle for the Western gaze; while the "paradoxical space" refers to the rapidly changing urban landscape informed by the 'Africa rising' narrative, which projects that unprecedented economic growth is taking place on the continent and that several African economies will become integral to the global economy. The 'Africa rising' narrative fuels the aspirations of African cities to be recognised as 'world-class,' which entails redrawing their "geographies of inclusion and exclusion in radical ways" (de Boeck, 2011: 277). It is precisely because of these aspirations that the characters in *An African City* opt to return to the continent. Their embodied sartorial identity blurs the binary between Western and African fashion, and also signifies their aspiration "to be global even as they register a sense of national belonging that is also compatible with other ways of being in the world" (Farber, 2010: 132). The characters insert and assert themselves into the global fashion world, declaring their refusal to be dispossessed and rendered ungeographic in the cosmopolitan cartography of sartorial worldliness.

Thus, in this paper, I contend that, through the use of fashion, *An African City* makes a geographic intervention that challenges the Western imagination of African women as the undifferentiated 'other' who is also at the periphery of global/world-class fashion. By making this assertion, I answer Mbembe and Nuttall's call to "identify sites within the continent, entry and exit points not usually dwelt upon in research and public discourse, that defamiliarise commonsense readings of Africa. Such sites would throw people off their

routine readings and deciphering of African spaces" (2004: 352). Mbembe and Nuttall (2004) propose the city as a good site for undertaking this project of defamiliarisation. I extend their argument by positing that fashion in the African city is a more specific site because "clothing is part of the aesthetic of everyday urban life" (Hansen, 2010: 233). However, while fashion serves as a site for challenging hegemonic Eurocentric discourses on *An African City*, I show that, through the depiction of low-income class women and those deemed non-Afropolitan as unfashionable, the show simultaneously reproduces similar discourses to those that it serves to critique. It is through narrow depictions of Afropolitanism as the sole purview of the upper-middle-class returnees on the show that stereotypes about further-othered 'local' African women are reproduced.

World–Class City, World–Class Fashion

"Fashion plays a MAJOR role in the series and I like to say that fashion [is] the 6th main character!" – Millie Monyo, executive producer of *An African City*

"[*An African City* is] putting Ghana on the map – in a different way and in a way that's so needed to be out there." – Marie Humbert, actress, *An African City*

In 2000, *The Economist* called Africa the "hopeless continent". Many African cities were perceived as unproductive, inefficient, and non-functional. Within the world/global conceptual framework for understanding cities that are integral to the world economy (see, for example, Friedmann, 1986; Sassen, 1991), many African cities were at the bottom of the hierarchy. They were not considered "world city quality" but rather unsophisticated and needing to catch up with "primary world-class cities" (O'Shaughnessy, 2008: 3). But now, Africa is seen to be rising. The Afropessimism discourse has been tempered by the widespread belief, and growing evidence, that an urban revolution is taking place in Africa. Africa has been dubbed the 'final frontier,' on the brink of an economic take off; with a growing middle class and rapid urbanisation, African cities present opportunities for multiple commercial interests (Watson, 2014). Part of this revolution entails the revisioning of urban Africa in "the image of cities such as Dubai, Shanghai and Singapore" (Watson, 2014: 215), particularly through the development of new cities such as Eko Atlantic in

Lagos, Nigeria, the 'Silicon Savannah' in Konza, Kenya, Hope City in Ghana and La Cité du Fleuve in Kinshasha, Democratic Republic of Congo. Several existing cities on the continent are undergoing urban renewal planning, and striving to become symbols of modernity in the re-creation of cities that are more globally recognisable and that offer possibilities for transcending negative narratives about Africa.

An African City is very much framed within the 'Africa rising' rhetoric. After spending years in Europe and North America, the five characters on the show return to the continent because of the economic opportunities available, and to find love. The show spends little time on the women's careers, and instead depicts them engaged in leisure in "modernized upscale establishments" (The KSM Show, 2014) within Accra, thus putting the city on the map of world-class cities. Fashion, make-up, hair and sex are among the major themes of the show, a far cry from Gwendolyn Mikell's (1997) essentialised claim that African women are largely pronatal and concerned about survival. The African women we see in the web series do not match the usual Western portrayal of, say, the woman with a child on her back and a load on her head, who appears to care little about fashion. Nor are they the barely clothed women on a World Vision commercial, whose breasts are hanging out, and who hold on to emaciated children while flies buzz around. The consumption of high-end Afrocentric fashion on the web series also challenges stereotypical portrayals of African women as always-poor actors who consume second-hand clothing from the West. Although Karen Hansen has produced important work on Zambia to counter the notion that second-hand clothing consumption is a passive imitation of the West, but rather allows for "the expression of variety, individuality, and uniqueness in clothing practice" (1999: 345), An African city unequivocally illuminates that not all Africans partake in the second-hand clothing market in any case, and that there is a growing market for ready-made Afrocentric clothing. Afrocentric fashion is a predominant feature of the webseries, and signifies that being fashionable and cosmopolitan in the African context is not about mimicking or desiring Western styles. The haute couture by African designers also showcases Accra as an urban space of innovation and asserts that African women are very much part of the world-class urban spectacular in their own way.

During the colonial encounter, African women's bodies served as a key site for locating putative African backwardness. Those who were unclothed,

or barely clothed, were considered uncivilised, while the attire of those who were clothed was deemed inferior to that of European women. Even after independence, when African women's items of dress such as boubous and caftans became a brief fascination for the Western fashion world, they were not considered "fashion in their own right" (Rovine, 2004: 191). Rather, they were "described by terms such as 'costume', 'dress', and 'garb,' words often modified by the overarching adjectives 'traditional,' 'native,' 'indigenous,' and 'authentic'" (Rovine, 2004: 191). *An African City* challenges the notion of African attire as timeless and ungeographic in the fashion world and emphasises that cosmopolitan African fashion is "constitutive of global culture"[1] (Farber, 2010: 132). For example, Danielle Kwateng (2014) notes of the show in *Styleblazer*, an online lifestyle magazine, that "all along the way, the fashion is the most striking element. If there was any doubt about African designers or how fashion trends translate in the colorful continent, the show will eradicate it". Thus, the embodied garments on the show close the spatial "distancing of fashion from non-Western culture" (Rovine, 2004: 191), whereby:

> the term fashion is rarely used in reference to non-western cultures. The two are defined in opposition to each other: western dress is fashion because it changes regularly, is superficial and mundane, and projects individual identity; non-western dress is costume because it is unchanging, encodes deep meanings, and projects group identity and membership (Craig, 1994: 18, cited by Rovine, 2004: 191).

An African City also deconstructs notions of African women as undifferentiated geographic subjects by focusing on various styles unique to each character, as well as their changes. In the show, the characters change outfits multiple times a day: for example, an outfit worn to work may not be the same as that worn out to dinner, on a date, to hang out while eating ice cream on the street, or to go shopping at a local boutique. Contrary to Eurocentric perceptions of African women's clothing choice as serving the mere purposes of covering, or as symbolic of culture, *An African City* demonstrates that African women are agentic as their fashion is very much about self-expression and a conscious decision to connect clothing with time and place. Also, as there is often little focus on the subjectivities of African women in popular Western media representation, fashion plays an important role in delineating the characters on the show as subjects and as individuals, with different

identities. The characters are not just dressed, but have their own styles. *An African City* forces the viewer to defamiliarise the familiar and wait in anticipation for what the women will wear next, knowing that one character's dress is not simply substitutable for another. As a case in point, the show's executive producer, Millie Monyo, states that:

> everything the girls wear tells a story. In season 1, you will notice Nana Yaa's evolution from when she first returns and slowly see how her fashion choices change with the more comfortable she becomes with being back home. If you pay close attention you will see that the fashion in the series is telling a story all [on] its own.[2]

Moreover, the show demonstrates that African fashion is indeed geographic by using designers who have retail locations across the globe. Finally, by putting the show on YouTube, the fashion trends gain a broader reach and contribute to the production of a cosmopolitan sartorial mapping of African women. In sum, through the conscious use of fashion and upscale spaces as a counter narrative in *An African City,* the show's creator promotes a postcolonial approach that dislocates the hierarchical divisions that "continue to ascribe innovation and dynamism – modernity – to cities in rich countries" (Robinson, 2006: 2). By inserting fashion as the sixth character on the show, the narrative that African women are "the people without fashion" (Allman, 2004: 3) is displaced.

The Afropolitan Answer or the Afropolitan Question?

> We're showing a different view of Africa that, for some people, they say they didn't even know existed. They didn't realize that there's people in Africa spending money, who have money …. And fabulous clothes! People have no idea that this actually exists on the continent and that's what we really want to show.
> – Millie Monyo, Executive Producer, *An African City*

While I have commended the ways in which *An African City* dislocates the hegemonic geographical practice of locating the cosmopolitan aesthetic of fashion in the West, it is also important to question the ways in which this dislocation is able to take place. It happens, I contend, by locating Africa's progress on the bodies of upper-middle-class women who are also portrayed as Afropolitan. Afropolitan, here, refers to bourgeois, transnational feminine subjects whose classed positions and mobility enable them to challenge

Eurocentric temporal and spatial paradigms about Africa. More specifically, the Afropolitan has an accent-free English (or similarly speaks another dominant European language), has cosmopolitan values and embraces creative aesthetics (Abebe, 2015). The characters' Afropolitan identities increase the probability that Western viewers and/or other individuals who are transnational can identify with them, and feel that the show could take place in any world-class city. As noted by one of the hosts of the African culture and entertainment show, AriseEnterainment360, when interviewing the producers and the lead character of *An African City,* the women are glamourous and "could be living anywhere, Paris, Luxembourg, etc." (AriseEnterainment360, 2014). More importantly, the type of Afropolitanism depicted on the show espouses the idea that there is a 'traditional Africa,' and that the characters' Afropolitan identities bridge the gap between this Africa and the modern global. This logic is embodied by the type of outfits the women wear, for instance, which combine European tailoring and Afrocentric patterns (Farber, 2010). Christie Brown, a Ghanaian brand promoted on the show, elucidates this hybridisation on its website as follows:

> Christie Brown is a Ghanaian based luxury women's fashion brand that aims to satisfy the stylish urge of "that modern woman who seeks *a true taste of Africa*". At Christie Brown, our aim is to *infuse modernism* into carefully selected traditional African aesthetic that transcends international borders. It's really about allowing women to experience the culturally rich and opulent side of Africa *without having to compromise their personal contemporary style* ("Christie Brown," n.d., emphases added).

I argue that this description on the Christie Brown website very much frames the depiction of fashion in the episodes of *An African City.* The modern African woman is portrayed as the 'empowered' returnee, hence Afropolitan. These Afropolitans are stylish, rich and well-educated, and by virtue of their African roots and re-location to the continent, are able to project a new image of African women as glamourous and cosmopolitan, but thereby contrasting and positioning the poor women who have pervaded Western imaginations for years as having no style.

Other female characters depicted on the show are not as stylish as the five main characters. Viewers are left to assume that these women, who are often hired help, service providers, or simply walking around town – while

the main characters are riding in private cars – are incapable of being trendy because they are not Afropolitan and have yet to become modern. The lower-class women on the show are often seen wearing ill-fitting clothes, or simple outfits that are not as fashionable as those of the main characters. Thus, sophisticated fashion is depicted as the sole purview of the wealthy Afropolitan. For example, in episode four, *A Customs Emergency*, the lead character, Nana Yaa, encounters her ex-boyfriend when she accompanies her friend, Sade (another main character), to retrieve her belongings from Ghana Customs. The ex-boyfriend, Segun, is with his new girlfriend, Kukua, who proceeds to speak Twi when introduced to Nana Yaa. After Kukua and Segun leave, Nana Yaa, who is not fluent in Twi, becomes upset because she has been "out-Twi'd." She claims that it is obvious that Segun wants a 'traditional' African woman. Kukua, who is bigger in size than Nana Yaa, and who also happens to speak in a slightly accented English, is wearing a non-stylish dress in a bold print – most likely not from a Christie Brown collection or another high end label. When Segun and Kukua are out of earshot, Nana Yaa starts to lament. Sade comforts her by retorting: "That's his girlfriend?... Ah please you're fabulous... you are, I mean honestly. She probably did some *juju* on him. Please. How could he choose her over all your fabulousness?" Sade's words, alongside Kukua's outfit and other forms of embodiment, position Kukua outside the class of African women capable of speaking back to Western narratives and participating in the global. The African women who are shown to do so are the upper-middle-class Afropolitans.

Sade's words also construct Kukua as non-modern via the inference that she uses *juju,* that is black magic, to get her man. This is underscored by Nana Yaa's sarcastic retort: "I am a Westernised African and I'm lost; she's Ghana, she's Africa." In the season finale, *The Big Decision,* Segun visits Nana Yaa and they have a conversation about his relationship with Kukua. Nana Yaa asks "why her?" to which Segun answers, "Because she makes me feel like a man." The stylish, cosmopolitan upper-middle class Afropolitan woman is perceived, in this case by an African man, to be emasculating. She is a far cry from the Victorian-influenced construction of the 'good' African woman (for example, see Allman, 1996; Oyewumi, 1997). However, Nana Yaa unapologetically distances herself from this notion of the ideal traditional African woman, and further belittles Kukua by responding to Segun:

what you have right now is some chick who is infatuated with the fact
that you are some Nigerian with a British accent who lived in the States.
Now you're in Africa, you're in Ghana, her home country. Romantic.
Whatever. That is just surface level. With me you had a woman who loved
you for you, Segun. Just you. If that doesn't make you a man, if that
doesn't make you feel like a man, I don't know what does.

Kukua is not only framed as someone who is not fashionable and fabulous,
she is also cast as a gold-digging, *juju*-practicing woman who can never be
truly like Nana-Yaa, a transnational and cosmopolitan African woman who
has been freed from tradition.

Another example in which putatively modern and traditional African
women are starkly counterposed can be found in episode nine, *#TeamSade,
#TeamNgozi*. While Sade, Ngozi and Zainab are on dates with members of
parliament (MPs), the men argue that there is no need to wear condoms with
women who "look clean." The three women are quite shocked and upset by this
statement and proceed to refute the men's argument. One of the MPs points
to a woman who is sitting by the bar as an example of someone who does
not look clean and who could therefore have HIV. The camera briefly focuses
on a woman in a short gold dress that looks 'cheap.' The dress has hiked up
on her thighs and is showing the shorts/spanx that she is wearing underneath.
The woman later gets up from the barstool on which she had been seated, and
is shown pulling down her dress to cover the exposed underwear. While it is
crucial that Sade, Ngozi and Zainab disagree with the theory that women who
look clean could not have HIV/AIDS, the camera tells another story, in which
a seemingly 'local' woman is depicted as a 'slutty' person with little class. This
kind of woman is incapable of pulling off sexy without appearing sloppy or
cheap. By contrast, when the main characters themselves dress in revealing
clothing, it is shown as 'classy' rather than distasteful, for instance with no
undergarments on inadvertent display. Further, the characters do not challenge
or deconstruct the ways in which 'looking clean' is a classed construct.

Thus in *An African City*, women's dressed bodies do not only serve
to depict an embodiment of cosmopolitan worldliness. They also mark a
difference between transnational Diasporan returnees and those who are
simply 'national.' This distinction illustrates the spatial distancing of seemingly
'non-Afropolitan' women's bodies from the world-class spaces of fashion.
The notion that only certain African bodies can be part of the modern spaces

of global fashion is problematic. I would argue that this notion is partly informed by the understanding of Afropolitanism on the show. It is important to consider that "one does not need to be an elite or even to live in one of the big cities of Africa or the West to be an Afropolitan" (Eze, 2014: 240); an African subject informed by the local and global. Through circulating stories/rumours and the increasing availability and use of technology, the global is very much part of the local and vice versa in Africa. Moreover, low-income subjects also participate in, and desire, aesthetic consumption and production, and it would be erroneous to assume that they do not contribute to creating fashion and/or are unaware of the latest trends. Although Nicole Amarteifio has explicitly stated that she wants her show to be about "modern, beautiful, educated African women" (Karimi, 2014), and I believe that it is important to produce such counter-narratives of African femininity, other African women do not have to be rendered ungeographic, that is, unmappable in the cosmopolitan cartography of sartorial worldliness, to achieve this aim. Viewers, especially those unfamiliar with the fashion scenery in Accra, should not be left with the impression that non-educated/local African women are not modern, beautiful and fashionable. This is clearly an issue that needs to be addressed to fully complete the intervention that is being made by situating fashion as a geographic and political site in *An African City*.

Conclusion

Since the first season of *An African City* aired, my friends and I always seem to engage in debates about the show. These debates reveal a lot about our complex identities as postcolonial scholars, women, Africans, Canadians and feminists. Some of my friends are annoyed by how classist the series is, while others are happy that there is a show that reflects something of their reality, and that does not seem to be driven by an obvious international development agenda such as HIV/AIDS awareness. While it is certainly true that there are numerous African-based television shows and films that are also classist and do not emphasise the need for Africa's progress, *An African City* is the only African show that we have all watched, and that our non-African friends and colleagues are also more likely to see because of its mode of distribution and the fact that it has been actively promoted in Western media.

I remain ambivalent about *An African City*. On the one hand, as a Nigerian-Canadian who has been told, "I like your 'costume'" one too many

times, and asked if I lived in the jungle when I was in Africa, it is refreshing to see a show that announces to the West, via the world wide web, that Africa has cities where fashion is a key aspect of visual culture. Most delightfully, but not unproblematically, *An African City* emplaces African women in the geography of *haute couture* and fashion trends, and defamiliarises the conventional portrayals of, and discourses about, us. On the other hand, I am troubled by the 'Africa rising' narrative that seems to insist that there is a dawn of a new Africa, one that seems to necessitate the rise of the African woman, a new (modern) African woman. *An African City* posits that the new African woman is an "Afropolitan," meaning fashionable, well-traveled, rich and educated. This narrow understanding of Afropolitanism suggests that the Africa of the future is only for certain bodies, which serves, among others, as justification for the increased spatial inequality and displacing of the urban poor that is underway in many cities on the continent. Moreover, by asserting that there is a new African woman, the suggestion is that there is an 'old' or 'traditional' one. Positioning this 'old African woman' as antithetical to the new has classist and neo-colonial undertones, thereby calling into question whether the new African woman can truly constitute a progressive counter-narrative. Thus, while I do applaud the intervention that *An African City* has made, subsequent seasons need to be more critical about the underlying assumptions and stereotypes that create an exceptionalist narrative about fashionable African women.

Endnotes

1   I am aware that African fashion designers have been on the world stage and their designs part of numerous fashion shows much prior to the airing of *An African City*. However, I would argue that fashion shows are less relatable and because *An African City* depicts the everyday through narrative, it has the potential to reach a broader audience.

2   http://www.africanprintinfashion.com/2014/04/an-african-city-changing-narrative.html

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