



ORIGIN & MISSION

Pokuasi is a venture built out of an interest in international development and the realization of many of the problems related to it – a reliance on fundraising in the West is just one of them. Pokuasi is also a reaction to mainstream fashion in which the producer is entirely divorced from the consumer, and where there is little to no overlap between the two roles.

We are aligned with “trade not aid” while still questioning the effectiveness of the invisible hand. We support the fundamental mentality behind fair-trade, although we believe that fair-trade products should be purchased based on high quality materials and design and not based on pity or solely “doing good.”

We definitely do not believe that customers deserve a dopamine dose of good feelings when simply making a purchase, a phenomenon that is growing with the “Buy One, Give One” business model. We believe in questioning every action and embracing, documenting, and discussing the complexities of living in a world in which there are no clear “best practices” towards development or optimum way of consumption.

Our mission is two-fold:

The first half relates to manufacturing and alternative production – Producing, designing, and purchasing will always exist, and therefore we believe that there must be more options for the production of higher quality, longer lasting products, made by workers who are treated as equals to the customers who purchase their work.

The second half relates to creating a platform for discussion – Instead of simplifying what we do and what we support into taglines, we would like to embrace the complexity of labor and production in a globalized world, and open up the conversation.

POKUASI BLOG

Soon we will be launching both our main website and our external, Tumblr-based blog, which are both equally important to our mission.

The blog for Pokuasi will have two types of content. One type will be articles or photo essays written by people within the alternative fashion and development spheres.

The other format will include one prompt with four responses from different people, modeled after The Columnists in *WSJ Magazine*. The purpose of these posts is to curate diverse opinions on a specific question that will spur discussions beyond the post.

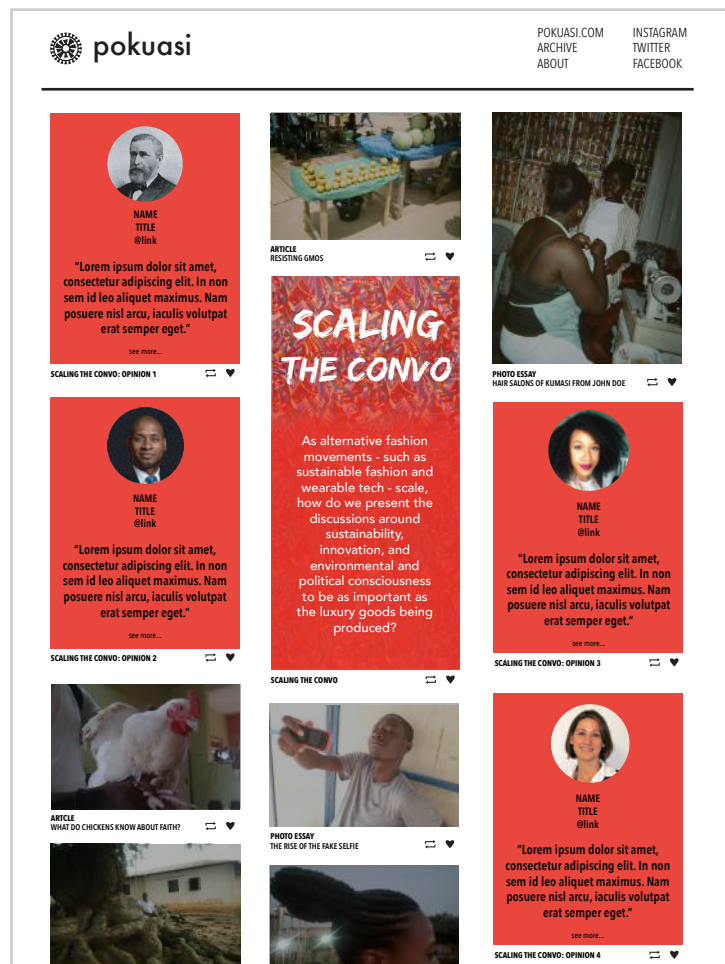
A key feature of the blog prompts is that the content is not directly related to Pokuasi as a brand of jewelry. We understand the predicaments of publishing critical content alongside a luxury product, but we will maintain the blog separately from the main website and continue to question the industries of which we are a part.

Below are a few sample prompts, although on the site, visitors will be able to submit their own questions that they would like to see answered.

The most influential donors and actors in development in Africa are foreign governments and large multi-lateral NGOs based in Europe or the United States. These agencies plan development programs, giving money, materials, advice, and oftentimes strict guidelines as to the use of these donations. Why are they, as "outsiders," assumed to know what is best for a country? What would development look like if in the hands of local agencies and governments?

What do you think are the most useful forms of donations? Is it better to give financial donations or material donations, and how does each affect the long-term survival of the recipient?

How can we begin to consider (eco)fashion as not simply a citadel of bourgeois "personal choice," luxury, and even decadence, but as a process of radical self-making, which people across geographic and socioeconomic borders can participate actively in?



We are currently reaching out to leaders, activists, strong writers, and well-spoken tastemakers to launch our blog with strong, engaging content. If you (or someone you know) would like to join us and voice your opinions on complex global issues, please email us for the current prompts and become a part of the initial group of writers who will inspire others to also engage.

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subject line: Blog Prompts

Mockup of the Pokuasi blog. "Scaling the Convo" is an example of one blog prompt that features the responses surrounding the post. The other post on the blog are photo essays and longer articles submitted by writers and photographers around the world.