

SPORT

## Senegal Setting kids off on the right foot

Footballer Patrick Vieira is setting up a football academy in his home country where the focus is on passing exams before passing the ball

“Education is the best way for Africa to pull itself up,” says Patrick Vieira, the Arsenal legend and current director at Manchester City. The former football star who won a World and European Cup playing for France has set up a football academy in his native Senegal.

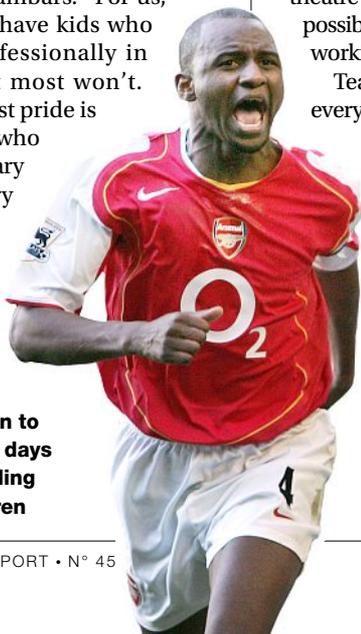
He is now lending his name to the Pass Campaign run by Western Union, which will sponsor a day’s schooling for a child for every successful pass in the UEFA Europa League tournament. The goal is to fund a million days of free education by the end of the campaign in May 2013.

For Vieira, it was a privilege to be taught by Arsenal manager Arsène Wenger because, “he listens, his door is always open, for professional and personal problems, and he will always tell you what you are doing wrong but with the tact and diplomacy so that you don’t reject it.”

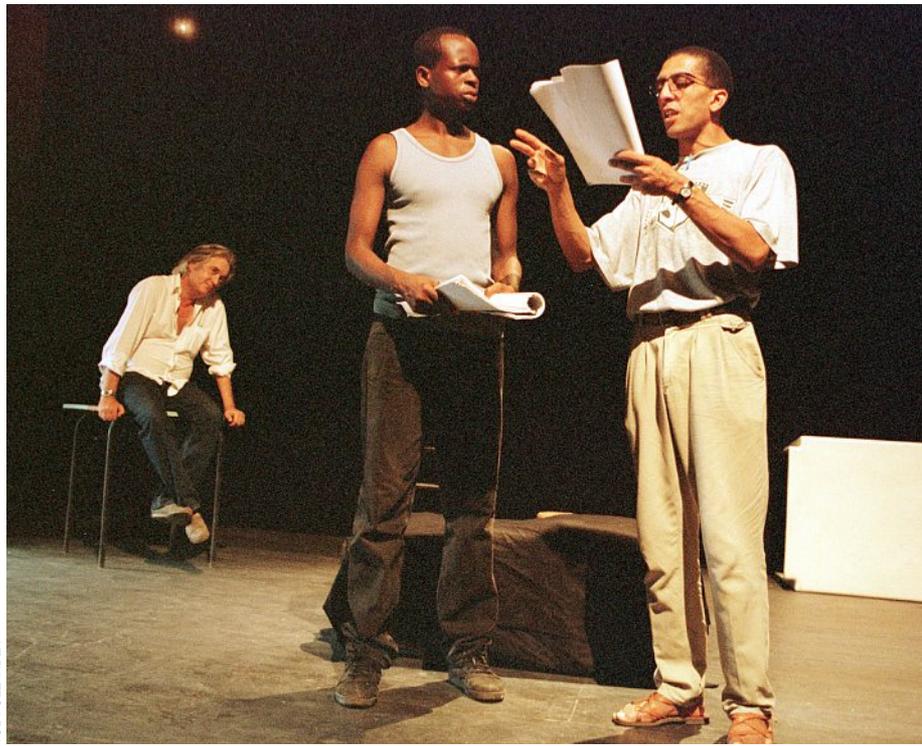
He has carried this reverence for learning through to his football academy, Diambars. “For us, it is great to have kids who succeed professionally in football, but most won’t. So our greatest pride is to have kids who get their primary and secondary school certificates.”

**Nicholas Norbrook**

**Vieira is backing a plan to give a million days of free schooling to poor children**



IAN WALTON/GETTY IMAGES



TOBY SELANDER

THEATRE

## Mozambique Avenidas to success

Famed for the Inspector Wallander novels, Henning Mankell’s other passion is his role as artistic director at Mozambique’s only theatre

Swedish author Henning Mankell, best known for his crime novels featuring the irascible detective Kurt Wallander, started a 25-year relationship with the Teatro Avenida in Maputo because of a hiccup in Angola Airlines’ flight schedule. Having been invited by the founders of the small theatre company in 1986, he was left stranded there by the airline for a week. It was during this time he formed a “profound connection” with the company. The theatre now stages local productions and travels abroad, including to the Ibsen festival in Norway earlier this year.

Teatro Avenida is housed in a purpose-built theatre, erected by the Portuguese to entertain colonial expatriates, but which fell into disrepair once the colonial administration left. “Local culture was prohibited during colonial times,” says Mankell, “but there had been secret theatre groups in the suburbs and in the 1980s some amateurs set up a professional group.” It was one of those groups, led by Manuela Soeiro, that Mankell joined as artistic leader, dealing with direction and adaptation. Many of the theatre’s actors have been there ever since. “There are no available theatre education possibilities [in Mozambique]. One of the strengths of the theatre is the actors. I’ve been working with them for more than twenty years. I guess I am part of their education.”

Teatro Avenida’s repertoire covers “everything a theatre should do, meaning everything”. Not only Ibsen but Greek, African and modern European plays, including many of Mankell’s own. The theatre recently staged Tennessee William’s iconic *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Working with a Mozambican cast is no different to working with a European one, says Mankell. The difference is found beyond the stage. “Many people in the audience are illiterate, so a living theatre is very important for the people. We have to put on things related to people’s day-to-day lives or history. For experimental plays, we will have to wait another 20 years, when there are more theatres here.”

Mankell is something of an immigrant himself, having spent 40 years living between Africa and Sweden.

“As a young writer, I went to Guinea-Bissau with the purpose of finding perspective outside of European egocentricity,” he says. “I consider it the most profound privilege in my life to live half in Africa and half in Sweden because of that perspective.”

**Rose Skelton**