



THE LEADERS —Global

Preface

Giving us hope for the future, our heroes have been selected for their talents and problem-solving skills. During the recession everyone's had to up their game and these people go the extra mile to make the world a better place.

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You'd be forgiven for thinking that we deliberately set out to make this year's list of heroes free of techy, webby, dot-commy types, but we can honestly say that our gallery of individuals who deserve a bigger global stage came together in a natural, organic way. Sure, we've been irritated by how so much of the 2010 news agenda was dominated by digital technology stories and not nearly enough space was given to people implementing policies and building businesses across communities and continents. In 2011 we'd like to see news outlets spend a little less time covering the likes of Android and yet another pad launch, and more time on people such as our negotiators (see page 61), our design students (page 121) and journalists doing it the way *Der Spiegel's* team have been since 1947 (page 211).

We start with 20 people who are doing things differently but making a big (read: meaningful) impact in the process. Some of these personalities offer fresh business ideas, others inspired styles of leadership and all have a delightful disdain for the mediocre. — (M)



01 Heritage hero

Ruan Yisan, *Tongji University, China*
For all the modern marvels that grace China's urban map, centuries of architectural history have been bulldozed. Enter Ruan Yisan, dean of the National Research Centre of Historic Cities at Shanghai's Tongji University. For the past 30 years, he's been at the vanguard of China's preservation movement.

But changing hearts and minds about preservation is a hard task in a country that lacks robust conservation laws and is starry-eyed over office towers and apartment blocks. "I have to work with governments closely. If they go off the track, I'll have to correct them, or use the strength of the media to protect our heritage," says Ruan. — DL

Monocle comment: *Sadly the pace of change in China gives little hope for an urban model that works for residents and business.*



02 Online activist

Ory Okolloh, *Campaigner, Kenya*
When election tampering sparked violence across Kenya in 2007, Okolloh, 33, co-founded a project called Ushahidi ("testimony" in Swahili) that let people report violence on the web. That is just one of the ideas dreamed up by Harvard-educated Okolloh, who believes in using tech to make life better. "I find technology an easy way to mobilise like-minded people," says Okolloh, who was born in Kenya but now lives and works in South Africa. — NW

Monocle comment: *Africa's story is often told through tragedy. Okolloh proves it's more dynamic than that.*

03 Arts shaker

Christine Tohme, *Art activist, Lebanon*

Over the years, Tohme has braved censorship, limited funds and political crises to give artists in Lebanon and the public a platform for dialogue. Many key pieces of contemporary Lebanese art came to light through Ashkal Alwan, the Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts she founded in 1994, and Home Works, her bi-annual forum. Her latest endeavor is the Ashkal Alwan for Contemporary Arts and Home Works Academy, comprising an art school, public library and a space for dance and community programmes — a first in the country. — CC

Monocle comment: *Now cash-strapped governments are turning their backs on arts funding, the world needs more Tohmes.*



04 The perfect diplomat

Arturo Sarukhán, *Mexican ambassador to the US*

During last year's delicate debate on immigration to the US, including an Arizona law that targeted Hispanics, Sarukhán acted as translator, meeting with US officials and calling into Mexican radio stations to offer hope. Sarukhán will next try to push along the debate over reforming the US immigration system. "If we don't recognise that this is a very powerful domestic issue," he says, "we will miss the boat and not understand how this issue can move forward." — SP1

Monocle comment: *A man who is a great addition to the Washington scene and never forgets whom he serves.*

