

WE ARE AFRIKA

THE POWER OF WOMEN & YOUTH



WORLD BANK GROUP

This work was originally e-published by The World Bank in English as We Are Afrika: The Power of Women & Youth, as the accompanying Catalog to the homonymous virtual exhibition, May 2020-March 2023. In case of any discrepancies, the original language will govern.

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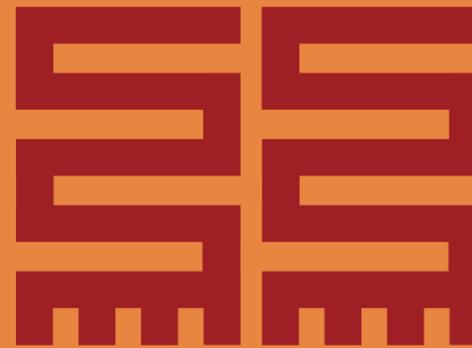
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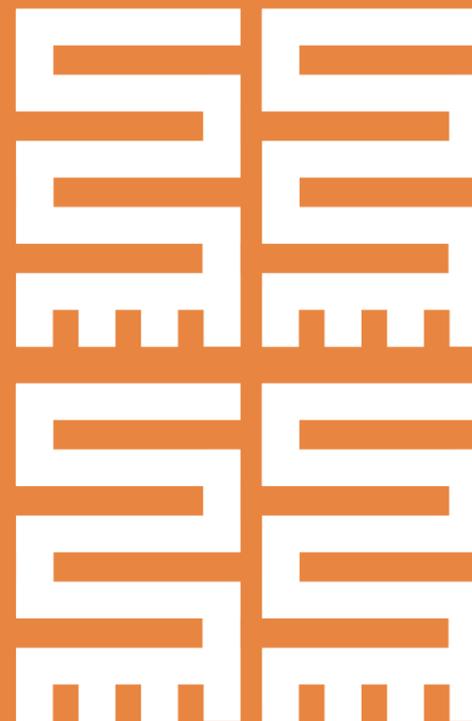
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WE ARE AFRIKA

THE POWER OF WOMEN & YOUTH



The use of 'K' instead of 'C' in the word 'Afrika' refers to reverting to the "K" spelling that empowered people of African descent and created the foundation for a common identity between them (Haki R. Madhubuti, 2020).

The Vice Presidencies for Africa, the World Bank Art Program, and friends are honored to present

WE ARE AFRIKA

THE POWER OF WOMEN & YOUTH

A hybrid, multifaceted art exhibition from **May 2020** through **March 2023**.

Originally planned as on-site displays and a rolling program of artist residencies with the seven winners of the World Bank Art Program residency competition, the exhibition was timed to open during the World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund's 2020 Spring Meetings in Washington, DC. Because of the COVID-19 global crisis, **We Are Afrika** has morphed instead into a virtual exhibition and series of monthly events with the participation of artists, social entrepreneurs, young opinion makers (bloggers), development experts, scholars, and the general public for three years of discovery, questioning and building bridges of mutual understanding. A physical exhibition of selected works runs from September, 2022 to March, 2023

This virtual catalog collects samples of this extraordinary journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For such a complex project, it is hard to fairly acknowledge every person who made this event possible. To all of you who helped, critiqued, praised, and encouraged, our deepest gratitude. You made possible for artists and the young experts to receive their fair share of space so that they could communicate and share their visions of the future of Africa with the world.

For their generous support to the exhibition and guidance, we thank:

Ousmane Diagana (WBG/Vice President, Western and Central Africa)
Hafez M. H. Ghanem (WBG/Vice President, Eastern and Southern Africa)
Diarietou Gaye (WBG/Vice President and Corporate Secretary)
Elizabeth Huybens (WBG/Director, Strategy and Operations, Western and Central Africa)
Humberto Lopez (WBG/Director, Strategy and Operations, Eastern and Southern Africa)

With gratitude to the Country Directors and Managers who supported the planned 2020 Artists' Residencies Program (cancelled because of COVID-19):

Husam Abudagga	Pierre Laporte
Bella Bird	Mark Lundell
Jean-Christophe Carret	Khwima Lawrence Nthara
Adama Coulibaly	Hugh Riddell
Felipe Jaramillo	Greg Toulmin
Veronique Kabongo	Carolyn Turk
Sahr John Kpundeh	Erik von Uexkull

To those World Bank Group colleagues who offered essential contributions, our special thanks:

Carla Lily Aguirre, WBG/Resource Management Analyst
Mamma Alim Ahmed, WBG/Yaoundé Cameroon
Remy BonLouis Bonnaire, WBG/Sr. Economist, Makabo, Equatorial Guinea
Thomas Buckley, WBG/Sr. Operation Officer
Martin Gayle, WBG/AFWDE/Operations Advisor
Andrea Kucey, WBG/Gender
Diaho Kueni, WBG/Advisor to the Executive Director
Darejani Markozashvili, WBG/SAGGL
Raymond Muhula, WBG/Sr. Public Sector Specialist and President WBG+IMF/African Society
Cleto Ndong Asumu Okomo, WBG/Malabo, Equatorial Guinea
Alice R. Ouedraogo, WBG/Resident Representative, Libreville, Gabon
Mayya Revzina, WBG/Publishing Officer
Kun-Ying Yang, WBG/TEAM People

To the *Youth Transforming Africa Network/Art4Dev* and the winners of the *World Bank Blog4Dev Competition*, who are the most vibrant voices of youth in Africa now, and the best possible partners, our deepest gratitude:

Kelvin Adantchede (Agentk) 2019 Blog4Dev Benin
Diarietou Diallo, 2020 Blog4Dev Guinea
Douglas Dubois-Card Sebamala, 2018 Blog4Dev Uganda
Musopa Kalenga, 2019 Blog4Dev Zambia
Dimphe Lekgeu, 2020 Blog4Dev South Africa
Dorah Muhanuuzi, 2021 Blog4Dev Uganda
Matai Muon, 2020 Blog4Dev South Sudan
Mamitiana Naharifelantsoa, 2020 Blog4Dev Madagascar

We owe a special debt to the panelists and moderators of the monthly online artist talks:

Ngozi Helen Agboti, IFC Legal Counsel
Mamma Alim Ahmed, WBG/Sr. Executive Assistant, art promoter and exhibitions organizer at the WB Office in Cameroon
Maria Amelina, Co-founder of East African Museum of Art, Nairobi (EAMAN), Kenya
Diana Jimena Arango, WBG/Sr. Gender Specialist
Fatima Bocoum, curator, Mali and US
Eliot Jolomi Dikoru, WBG/Education Specialist
Markus Goldstein, WBG/Head of the Africa Gender Lab
Naomi Halewood, WBG/Sr. Digital Development Specialist, Digital Economy Initiative for Africa
Alicia Hammond, former WBG/Gender Specialist
Antoine Lema, WBG/Sr. Social Development Specialist
Martin Elias De Simone, WBG/Education Specialist, Africa Region
Lea Rouanet, WBG/Economist/Africa Gender Innovation Lab
Lineo Segoete, Co-director of "Ba re e ne re", Lesotho (<https://barelififest.com/>)
Arame Tall, WBG/Sr. Adaptation and Resilience Specialist, Climate Change Group
Tshegofatso Thulare, WBG/Education Consultant
Julia Vaillant, WBG/Sr. Economist, Africa Gender Innovation Lab, Office of the Chief Economist, Africa
Elizabeth Wathuti, environmental activist, Kenya

We are honored and grateful to the following who have assisted in identifying, promoting, and assisting in the participation of artists in *We Are Afrika*. We apologize for any possible omissions:

Aleta Armstrong, Founder, Yebo! Art Gallery, Ezulwini, Eswatini (<https://yeboartgallery.com/>)
Florian Azzopardi, Founder, and Michaela Hadji-Minaglou, gallery manager, Afikaris, Paris, France (<https://afikaris.com/>)
Karin Barlet, Founder, Angalia Gallery, Chevry-sous-le-Bignon, France, for Gael Maski (<https://galerie-angalia.com/>)

Gerard Batreau, Jacques Py, and Remy MonLouis Bonnaire, artist promoters for Dieudonné Wambeti Sana Jack Bell Gallery, London, UK
Janire Bilbao, Founder, and Ester Gonzalez-Vara, Manager, Movart Contemporary Art Gallery, Lisbon, Portugal (<https://movart.co.ao>)

Delphine Buysse, curator and artist agent
Eva Ben Dhiab, Associate Director, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris, France, and artist agent for Nu' Barreto (<https://www.nathalieobadia.com/>)

Saidou Dicko, photographer (Burkina Faso), Paris, France

Sandra Federici, Director, Associazione Africa e Mediterraneo, Sasso Marconi (Bologna), Italy
Yoni Ghebregzi, Art by Habeshas, Virtual art gallery for Eritrean and Ethiopian art (<https://www.artbyhabeshas.com>)

LouiSimone Guirandou, Co-founder and Director, Gallery LouiSimone Guirandou, Abidjan, Ivory Coast (<https://www.louisimoneguirandou.gallery>)

Océane Harati, Founder and Director OH Gallery, Dakar, Senegal (<https://www.ohgallery.net/>)

Helen Harris, Co-founder StArt Art Gallery, Windhoek, Namibia (<https://www.startartgallery.com/>)

Todd Hoffman, Co-leader, The Gambia Academy USA, for Sona Jobarteh (<https://thegambiaacademy.org>)

Jan Kaps Gallery, Cologne, Germany

Anne-Beatrix Keller-Semadeni, African Art Beats Gallery, Washington D.C., USA (<https://www.africanartbeats.com/>)

Ikeanna Malbert, Programme and Artist Manager, Gallery Addis Fine Art, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and London, UK (<https://addisfineart.com>)

Baatile Mamabolo, Harvest012, artist manager for Puno Selesho

Manuela Nebuloni, independent curator, Italy and Nigeria

N'Golá Biennial of Arts and Culture in São Tomé e Príncipe (<https://www.ngola-biennial.org>)

Álvaro Santos Ortega, Director, Centro Cultural de España en Malabo, Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial (<http://ccemalabo.es>)

Theo Petroni, curator, Partcours/Dak'ART, Dakar, Senegal (<http://www.partcours.art>)

Lisa Pomares, artist agent for Serge Attukwei Clottey
Rebecca Robinson, Steptoe & Johnson LLP, artist promoter for Taki Gold

Jay Rutledge, music producer and promoter, OutHere Records (<http://outhere.de>)

Alejandro Jiménez Santofimio, producer and artist manager for Cedric Mizero, Kigali, Rwanda

James Sekwat, initiative coordinator, Anataban, South Sudan

Ousseynou Wade, advisor to the General Director, Musée des Civilisations Noires, Dakar, Senegal (<http://mcn.sn/>)

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FOREWORD

I am incredibly fortunate to represent at the Board of Directors of the World Bank Group, the Africa Group 1 Constituency of 22 countries with a combined population of approximately 600 million people, as part of a continent of 1.2 billion endowed with a diverse and vibrant cultural tapestry. This rich tapestry of African cultures has informed the foundations and the evolution of its artistic expression, and compelled those who have been drawn to it. The project **We Are Afrika** is more than just a fascination to seek interaction with African art: undoubtedly, to also marvel at the awe-inspiring artistic expressions communicated through innovative and intriguing media. African art is highly regarded and firmly established as being uniquely engaging, and there is a vast collection of artistic illustrations from various cultures that are candidates of this honor. Whether presented through prose, ink or other forms, African art has consistently communicated cultural meaning and significance with strongly unifying characteristics.

My conversation with the Bank's Art Curator began three years ago when we dreamt of revisiting the concept of *Africa Now! Emerging Talents from a Continent on the Move*, the 2008 ground-breaking exhibition organized by the WBG Africa Region Vice Presidency and the Art Program. In celebrating contemporary Sub-Saharan art, *Africa Now!* brought to the Bank, and through it to the wider international attention, a large group of young talent from 32 countries. *Africa Now!* focused on challenging a stereotypical and narrow vision of the African continent.

If in 2008 the goal was to redefine the international image of Africa, the purpose today is to give voice to its women and youth as core custodians and beneficiaries of the Human Capital Agenda of the WBG Africa Region. **We Are Afrika** brings to the forefront young people and women of Africa, whose voices deserve a larger role in the debate and decisions made on development. In its World Development Report of 2015, titled *Mind, Society, and Behavior*, the World Bank considered psychological and social influences to advance development interventions, of which I strongly believe that art is a poignant ingredient and aspect. At its core, the work of the Bank is about developing the full human potential of the citizens of the countries it serves. Art continues to play a critical role in developing human potential along with the function of engaging our cultural consciousness and vision for our continent.

We Are Afrika: The Power of Women and Youth aims to present a renewed vision of Africa. My hope is that this new exhibition will help us to connect in a more direct, emotional way to people living in all the 54 African countries and beyond. As Executive Director for 22 African countries, I am constantly confronted with the uniqueness of the challenges and strengths of my constituency countries. What I have found to be consistent across these countries is the low levels of inclusion, and a dearth of opportunities afforded women and especially the youth. It therefore gives me great pleasure to complement the work of the WBG on policies and procedures on inclusion by celebrating women and youth through this unique art exhibition.

We Are Afrika is an exhibition that offers us a glimpse into life in the Africa Group 1 Constituency through the art created by contemporary professional artists and the participation of young opinion makers (bloggers) from these countries. As the countries are diverse, so are their artists and youth. With their innate creativity and energy, these are powerful social observers and community builders; alchemists of the future. Their language may be obscure, syncretic, symbolic, highly personalistic, but all are permeated by the cultures that have formed them and which they in turn are influencing. While most of the artists and bloggers in this exhibition come from urban settings, some of the voices that they represent indirectly are those of women living in rural settings. Women who form the roots of their communities but whose capacities to express their own individuality are often dwarfed by the limits imposed on them by social norms, and the shackles of poverty and social inequality.

Please enjoy this remarkable selection of voices.



Anne N. Kabagambe

Executive Director, 2018-2020

Africa Group 1 Constituency,
Botswana, Burundi, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi,
Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania,
Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

We Are Afrika: Notes from Western and Central Africa

The Western and Central Africa Region of the World Bank is pleased to co-sponsor **We Are Afrika: The Power of Women and Youth**, an innovative exhibition of art works showcasing women's empowerment, COVID-19 resilience, and climate change prevention. Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our time, and in West Africa it is no longer a distant threat, it is a reality. To date, hundreds of Africans have had to flee the devastating effects of rising sea levels and erosion, leaving behind their livelihoods, aspirations, and opportunities. Up to 32 million people in West Africa may be forced to move by the climate crisis in the near future unless we act today. Despite the region being the lowest contributor to global carbon emissions, the poorest households in West and Central Africa are disproportionately affected by long-term negative impacts of climate change on human capital development. This exhibition helps promote the important message that the time to take bold and swift action to avert the climate crisis is now, and that the cost of inaction is far greater than the cost of immediate investments in prevention.

The World Bank's latest [Africa's Pulse](#) report estimates that Sub-Saharan Africa will require \$30 to \$50 billion each year till 2030 to finance climate adaptation. To address this challenge, the World Bank puts climate at the heart of its work and aims to deliver \$22.5 billion for climate action in Sub-Saharan African countries through the Next Generation Africa Climate Business Plan. The Regional Sahel Pastoralism Support programme helps pastoral herders in their agricultural practices across six West African countries. In addition, more than \$5 billion will be invested over the next five years in building climate-resilient communities across 11 Sahelian countries that are part of the Great Green Wall initiative. This will finance over 60 projects – covering a variety of sectors, including agriculture, energy, and transport – with a focus on promoting livelihoods, restoring degraded landscapes, and improving agricultural productivity.

While this virtual exhibition showcases the talent and aspiration of women and youth, it also calls attention to the alarming consequences of climate change on local communities, especially in rural and remote areas, throughout the region. Art is a force for social change and a powerful tool for highlighting social inequalities. I sincerely hope that through this exhibition each one of us will be inspired to mobilize our governments to develop green energy, protect natural resources, and mitigate climate shocks. We owe it to our children and future generations in West and Central Africa and beyond.

Ousmane Diagana

Vice President,
Western & Central Africa, World Bank Group



Vaccines

With many countries in West and Central Africa facing new waves and new strains of COVID-19, the World Bank has been supporting them with projects that help to save lives, protect the poor, and promote a green, resilient, and inclusive recovery. Faster vaccine deployment in the region is crucial to accelerating growth in 2022-2023. To reach this goal, the World Bank has partnered with the Africa Union/Africa Vaccine Acquisition Trust to provide access to desperately needed vaccines. This initiative will help countries throughout the region purchase and deploy vaccines for up to 400 million people. For Africa's low-income countries, the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) is the biggest source of financing. IDA's support is helping countries cope with the impacts of the crisis, as well as tackle ongoing challenges related to long-term development. Our challenge ahead is to shorten the crisis, resume development, and lay a strong foundation for a more prosperous future and better preparedness for disasters like COVID-19 in African countries. We can't afford to leave Africa behind post-COVID. Our engagement is comprehensive and inclusive, with a commitment to put people FIRST.

Climate Change

The story of West and Central Africa is one of climate migrants. In the Sahel, for instance, the threat of climate change is an everyday reality for the people. Temperatures there are rising 1.5 times faster than the global rate. Droughts, floods, and coastal erosion are having a devastating impact on populations and the economies. Addressing climate change requires bold actions and massive investments across key economic sectors. The cost of inaction is much higher. Through the West Africa Coastal Areas Program or WACA project (covering Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, and Togo) we are helping West African countries protect against coastal erosion, which includes fixing dunes, restoring wetlands and mangroves, replenishing beaches, and building seawalls and dikes. Well-designed programs to preserve coastal ecosystems play a critical role in supporting communities throughout Western and Central Africa to achieve a green, resilient, and inclusive recovery.



Adiara Sanogo prepares lunch for her family at home in Koboila Village, Sikasso Region, Mali, 2013. Photo by Vincent Tremereau for The World Bank Photo Collection

We Are Afrika: Notes from Eastern and Southern Africa

The Eastern and Southern Africa region of the World Bank is delighted to co-sponsor **We Are Afrika: The Power of Women and Youth**. We are particularly glad that the exhibition focuses on women and youth empowerment, migration, climate change and the impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, all key areas of focus for the Africa Human Capital Plan.

Advancing gender equality is smart economics, sound business practice, and an essential development policy. When women and men have equal opportunities to shape their own lives and contribute to their families, communities, and the economy, countries experience enhanced productivity and improved development outcomes.

The COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating existing gender inequalities across Sub-Saharan Africa. Women-owned firms tend to lack capital buffers to protect them from the adverse impacts of crises. Further, women entrepreneurs are primarily concentrated in informal and service sectors and therefore lack basic social protections. Finally, school closure disruptions and confinement measures reduce the time available for work and potentially a permanent exit from the labor market or education for many women. In addition, risks of gender-based violence (GBV) have been heightened during these times of crisis, isolation, and confinement. Women are also more vulnerable to the effects of climate change than men as they constitute the majority of the world's poor and are more dependent on natural resources. Women also constitute a large share of the Africa's farmers, who are greatly dependent on rain-fed agriculture that is being affected by historic drought and pests, particularly in the Horn of Africa and Madagascar. As providers for their families, women are feeling the brunt of failed crops and rising food prices.

Therefore, as part of the Africa Human Capital Plan, we have doubled the commitments in health, education and social protection over the last year, with a particular focus on ensuring safe and equitable access to social services and opportunities for girls and women, and eliminating harmful social norms through policy reforms and community engagement.

This innovative virtual exhibition showcases the talent and aspiration of women and youth. The creative arts industry offers great opportunities for entrepreneurship, jobs and incomes, but it also provides a platform for expression and voice. We hope that this initiative will inspire the viewers to take action to promote gender equality.



Hafez Ghanem
Vice President,
Eastern & Southern Africa, World Bank Group



Esther Michael at the community water point in Songambe village, Katavi, Tanzania, 2017. Photo courtesy OnaStories for The World Bank Photo Collection

Climate Change Strategy

Climate change is having real impacts on the people of Eastern and Southern Africa. Hunger is rising, and water availability and water quality are increasingly at risk. Climate change is also a potent driver of mobility—without concrete action, more than 86 million Africans may migrate within their own countries by 2050, with hotspots emerging as soon as 2030, spreading and intensifying thereafter. To adapt to the changing climate, the region requires about \$30 to \$50 billion each year over the next decade to finance investments that will strengthen food systems and food security, improve water management approaches for better rural and urban water quality, support affordable and reliable energy systems, and prepare for increasingly intense climate shocks.

COVID-19 and Vaccination in Eastern and Southern Africa

The outbreak of COVID-19 (coronavirus) sent shockwaves around the world, overwhelming health systems, upending lives, disrupting globalized systems and supply chains, and undermining development gains in many of the poorest countries. Eastern and Southern Africa was not spared, with many nations imposing restrictive lockdowns and struggling to reinforce health systems that desperately needed supplies to cope with testing, treatment, and vaccination.

With only 12% of the African population fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as of April 2022, vaccination efforts have been confronted with a series of challenges that have prevented the region from reaching a continental target of 70% vaccination coverage. These hurdles include limited access to supply, weak capacity and infrastructure, bottlenecks in logistics, vaccine hesitancy, and indifference. The World Bank has been at the forefront of helping countries in Eastern and Southern Africa to overcome these obstacles, providing \$2.1 billion in approved financing to help 19 countries (an additional \$915 million is currently under preparation for AFE countries – for a total of 20 countries supported under the vaccine portfolio) buy and distribute vaccines, expand storage and cold chains, develop tracking systems, train health workers, engage citizens and communities, and strengthen health systems. In partnership with COVAX and the African Union's Africa Vaccine Acquisition Trust (AVAT), the World Bank is helping to accelerate the procurement of vaccine doses for millions in Eastern and Southern Africa.



Longins Nagila, Kenya. *Concepts*, 2017. Mixed media on canvas. World Bank permanent collection

Kani Sissoko, Mali. *Quand Les Murs Parlent 2*, 2019. Digital photograph

A Time of Opportunity

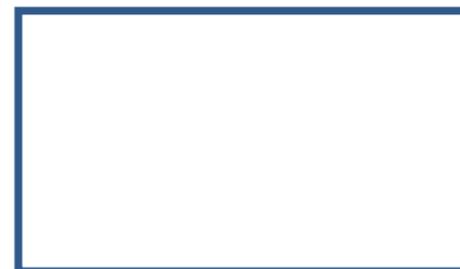
I am delighted to contribute to the **We Are Afrika** catalog, which spotlights the potential for Africa's youth, and the roles that women carry out across the life cycle to support their families, communities, and economies. For young women and men, this can be a time of opportunity and potential, especially with an enabling legal, policy, and normative environment that creates equal opportunities and nurtures that potential. Still, despite progress in Sub-Saharan Africa over the last two decades, just over two thirds of girls complete their primary education, and only 4 in 10 complete lower secondary school. This is in part because of the high prevalence of child marriage and early childbearing, which costs African countries tens of billions of dollars in lost earnings and human capital.

We need to do more to improve educational and earnings opportunities for girls and put an end to the practice of child marriage. To do this, the World Bank is focusing on investments in people: keeping girls in school, making transportation safe and accessible, helping countries remove discriminatory laws, working with men to change biased norms, investing in digital identification and finance, and implementing targeted interventions to improve employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for women. A multi-pronged approach is a win-win for countries, communities, and men and women alike.

Giving women voice and agency from the very early days of life is critical to moving societies and economies forward. And art is a gentle, powerful vehicle for this urgent message to world leaders. I congratulate the artists, organizers and viewers of this exhibit.

Caren Grown

Global Director for Gender
World Bank



Africa Human Capital

Investments in human capital—the knowledge, skills and health that people accumulate over their lives—are key to unlocking a child's potential and improving economic growth in every country around the world. The World Bank's Africa Human Capital Plan, launched in 2019, sets out clear targets and commitments to boost Sub-Saharan Africa's potential through its human capital. The continent's young people are its greatest resource and the key to prosperity in a globalized and digitizing economy. Targets to be achieved in the region by 2023 include a drastic reduction in child mortality to save 4 million lives, averting stunting among 11 million children, increasing learning outcomes for girls and boys in school by 20%, providing social protection to 13 million more people, reducing adolescent fertility rates by empowering women, and improving sanitation practices.

Since the plan launched, the World Bank, countries, and communities have been boosting investments in Africa's people. Highlights include a strong push to empower women and accelerate Africa's demographic transition. The human development project commitments in the region have nearly doubled, and teams across the institution are stepping up to support human capital priorities, such as road safety in transport projects and electrification of all health centers and schools in Africa by 2030. A first generation of operations is also supporting human capital policy reforms, such as stronger legal frameworks to protect women and children.

The COVID-19 crisis underscores the need to protect and bolster human capital in the overarching effort to save lives, promote well-being, and safeguard future productivity. Moving forward, the World Bank is prioritizing five gamechangers: scaling up financing and policy reforms; investing in women's empowerment and demographic change; addressing fragility and conflict; leveraging technology and innovation; and building knowledge and partnerships.

The Africa Communications Team, World Bank

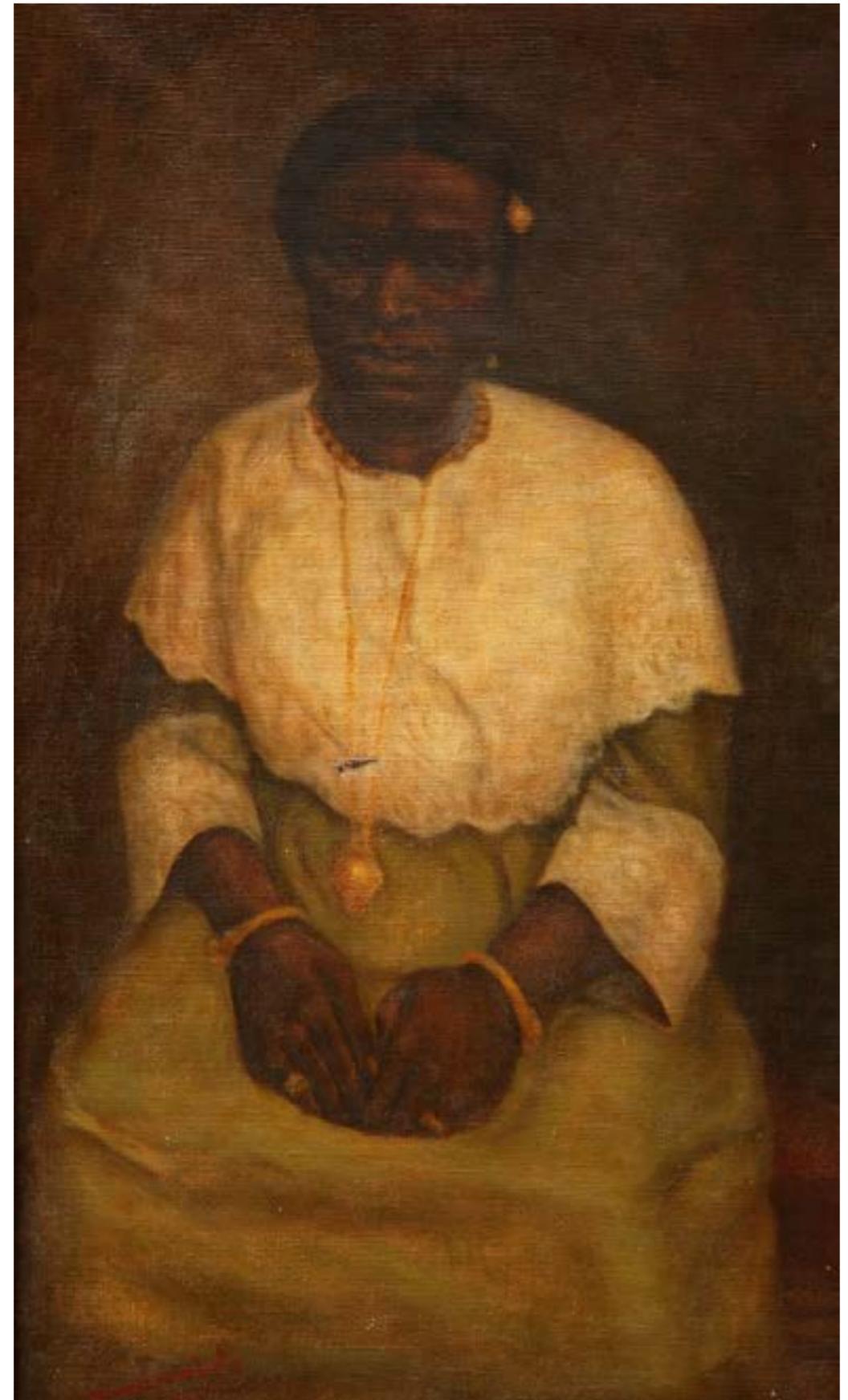
Africa's Women Making Art: Changing Day by Day

What gets considered as modern or contemporary art in Africa is not as recent a phenomenon as some people might think. By 1906 Aina Onabolu (1882-1963, Ijebu Ode, Nigeria) was painting portraits of west African intelligentsia.¹ In 1902, King Lewanika (ca. 1842- 1916, Nyengo, Zambia) artist and ruler of the former kingdom of Barotseland held an exhibition at Taunton Castle in Somerset, UK.² And, one might look back even farther to the unnamed 15th and 16th century ivory carvers from the coastal regions of what is now Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Angola, whose exquisite salt cellars, figurative spoons, horns and intricately worked tusks became the sought-after luxuries of Europe's royal families at the time. Africa's artists have long responded to global currents; but whose work gets recognized, and who has had the opportunities to pursue their talent has not been commensurate with other regions of the world, nor has it been equal between artists who identify as men versus women (and even less so for non-binary artists).

In her influential essay, *Providing a Space of Freedom: Women Artists from Africa*, cultural critic N'Goné Fall addresses feminism — or its absence — in African spaces in the years immediately following independence. She describes the 1960s to the 1980s as an era in which women were encouraged to give birth to and nurture the next generation, which meant that there were no female pioneers recognized alongside Lewanika and Onabolu. This would come later, with ground-breaking artists like Afi Ekong (1930-2009) of Nigeria and the still-thriving Kamala Ishaq (b. 1939)

of Sudan. These women were all the more radical because they overcame the prejudice that if women were to produce art, it was to be as a short-term diversion—and decorative. Beginning in the 1990s, the earlier decades of “invisible struggle” by such women paved the way for a new generation of artists who, like Egypt's Ghada Amer and Kenya's Wangechi Mutu, are redefining the times in which we live.

Despite these changes, discrimination still holds true for women artists in museums, galleries, the marketplace, and publications. In 2004, with her 1985 close-up painting of a trans woman's face, *Jule, die Vrou* (Jule, the Woman), South Africa-born artist Marlene Dumas became the first living woman artist, and third woman artist ever, to have a work of art sell at auction for more than \$1 million.³ Not only are women artists not represented equally in museums and textbooks, their work has not sold on an equal footing with men's. Dumas's compatriot artist Frances Goodman has pointed out that 70 percent of art students in South Africa are women, and yet 70 percent of the artists with gallery representation are men.⁴ Art writer Sarah Thornton has noted, “One might think that the art world was at the vanguard of gender equality, but the disparities in price in an auction room are quite extreme. Although one finds many powerful women dealers and curators, the bulk of the big-spending collectors are male—a fact that no doubt contributes to the complex dynamic of the undervaluation that befalls women's artwork.”⁵ Not only do women not have equal access to creating art; they also do not have equal access to buying it.



Aina Onabolu, Nigeria. *Sisi Nurse*, 1922.
Image courtesy Arthouse Contemporary, Lagos

This discrimination becomes more acute for women of color and non-Western women. Nonetheless, women continue to overcome these challenges. This project, **We Are Afrika**, showcases just some of the extraordinary women who not only produce compelling works of art, but who often redefine the very nature of artistic practice through their activism and educational outreach. Agness Yombwe is one such woman.

Yombwe has been honored with international artist residencies and exhibitions, but her home in Livingstone, Zambia has become a space of transformation. She has renamed it the WayiWayi Art Center. In a space off her dining room, she displays jewelry made from repurposed materials sourced locally. Around the back of her house, she maintains a gallery from which she exhibits and sells the work of local artists. She collects everything. Her back yard is filled with plastic bottles and innumerable materials that in her hands and those of her students are transformed into art — for she has also turned her home into a school. In addition to teaching art, the artist educates youths on the cultural practices of her Bemba heritage (the populations in this area are predominantly Tonga or Lozi). Yombwe also holds lectures for local artists from her home and is working on creating an international artist residency. While maintaining these multi-platform initiatives, Yombwe also creates paintings that actively challenge prejudice, as with her series focused on providing visibility for same-sex love. She has dedicated her career to transforming Zambia’s art scene from within.

Born in Malawi, but now resident in Johannesburg, Billie Zangewa’s activism is global in orientation. The artist has described the act of sewing as a matter of identity for her because sewing is so often categorized as a feminine activity, yet she eschews labeling of her practice as craft. Zangewa acknowledges the domestic quality of her process, but for her it stems from a practical series of events rather

than an affiliation with craft. She learned to sew in school, as a child. As an artist student at the University of Witwatersrand, Zangewa’s professor critiqued her work if he considered it too feminine—a criticism that she thought unfounded as there was neither discussion nor definition of what constituted “female” or “male” art. When, after university, she joined her family in Gaborone, Botswana, Zangewa wanted to make prints but didn’t have access to printmaking equipment. And so, she sewed.

Over time, Zangewa has developed an artistic process that incorporates snapshots from her daily life with quotes from her journal, all rendered in collages assembled of the tiny pieces of silk she has come to love for their sculptural reflection of light. For her, this act is both political and urgent. As she told reporter Jessica Hunkin in 2014, portraying the days and nights of a woman in today’s urban landscape “is ... important . . . It’s a relevant discussion and more importantly, it’s about the female gaze. How a woman sees herself as beautiful through her own eyes. My protagonist (moi!) has evolved from needing the male gaze for affirmation to this perfect, powerful being that does not look for approval outside of herself”.⁶ And now she sends these visions of an empowered woman of color around the world.

Unlike Yombwe and Zangewa whose activism is combined with an artistic practice grounded in their personal or daily experience, Addis Ababa-based photographer Aida Muluneh has wed her social activism to an artistic practice preoccupied with surreal or fantastical realms. Born in Ethiopia, Muluneh moved frequently as a child, living in Yemen, England, Cyprus, and Canada before attending Howard University in Washington, DC. As an adult, she returned to Ethiopia, where she started DESTA (Developing and Educating Societies Through the Arts) and founded, and still directs, the increasingly prominent Addis Foto Fest — demanding tasks that she balances with her own award-winning practice.

The scholar M. Neelika Jawardane has described Muluneh’s work as “somewhere in between nostalgia for the past and a future that has yet to come,” thus constructing “an aesthetic that allows us to step outside of simple objectification [and] resituate what it means to live, work, and produce art in contemporary Ethiopia”.⁷ Muluneh describes her otherworldly photographs of women as “a reflection of conscious and sub-conscious manifestations of time and space.”⁸ Her work is bound neither by the violence of the past nor a pre-determined future. Her iconography is complex, universal, and liberating.

Here, we see women of color seemingly unconstrained by the limits of time, space, or the human imagination. And with these artists, we have women defying the odds to create visions that reimagine our world, and putting in the work, day by day, that makes change possible.

Karen E. Milbourne, PhD

Senior Curator

Smithsonian National Museum of African Art



Aida Muluneh, Ethiopia. *Sai Mado* (The Distant Gaze), 2014. Image courtesy Smithsonian National Museum of African Art

1 See, for instance: Steven Nelson, “The Image of the Black in Modern and Contemporary African Art,” in *The Image of the Black in African and Asian Art*, eds. David Bindman, Suzanne Preston Blier and Henry Louis Gates Jr. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2017), 169 and Chika Okeke-Agulu, *Postcolonial Modernism: Art and Decolonization in Twentieth Century Nigeria* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 46.

2 For more on Lozi King Lewanika, see Karen E. Milbourne, “King Lewanika’s Workshop” in *Rethinking the Workshop in African Art*, eds. Till Foerster and Sidney Kasfir (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012 or Art, 2011) or “Diplomacy in Motion: Art, Pageantry and the Politics of Creativity in Barotseland” (Iowa City: PhD Thesis, University of Iowa, 2003).

3 Articles abound about Dumas’s meteoric price hikes. See, for instance, Carol Kino, “Marlene Dumas’s Number Comes Up,” *New York Times*, March 27, 2005. <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/27/arts/design/marlene-dumas-number-comes-up.html> (accessed July 20, 2018).

4 Alina Cohen, “South African Artist Explores Feminism through Intimate Sculptures,” *Vice*, January 26, 2016. https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/kbnvg3/frances-goodman-rapaciously-yours (accessed July 18, 2017).

5 Sarah Thornton, *Seven Days in the Art World* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 23.

6 Quoted in Jessica Hunkin, “Creative Women: Billie Zangewa,” *Between 10 and 5*, August 1, 2014. <http://10and5.com/2014/08/01/creative-women-billie-zangewa/> (accessed June 8, 2017).

7 M. Neelika Jayawardane, “Between Nostalgia and Future Dreaming: Aida Muluneh’s Ethiopia,” *Transition*, issue 120 (2016), 118.

8 See the artist’s website, Aida Muluneh Studio. <https://www.aidamuluneh.com/the-world-is-9/> (accessed July 18, 2017).



Kresiah Mukwazhi, Zimbabwe. *Kwadinorohwa matumbu ndikokwadinomhanyira* (detail), 2020. Fabrics, paint and dyes on canvas

Women, Art, and Social Impact:

Moving towards diversity and equal representation

Instrumental in understanding history as well as current events, visual art holds both personal meaning and transformative cultural potential. With the power art holds, the diversity of voices within the field matters. Despite creative output from societies around the world, for centuries a singular viewpoint informed the history of art: that of white, cis-gender men. Although women and non-white artists participated in every major art movement, until recently they were consistently and categorically left out of textbooks, exhibitions, and the market. When reincorporated into the canon of art history, these crucial missing perspectives reveal a fuller picture of humanity's past and its evolving present.

It is important to note that, while women the world over have consistently participated in art making, due to the subjective Western slant of history, analysis of gender inequality nearly always focuses on European artistic traditions.

Historically, institutional and social barriers prevented women artists from achieving the same levels of success as their male counterparts. In Europe, life drawing classes and apprenticeship programs - foundational stages of training for aspiring artists - were off limits to women until the end of the 19th century. Further, domestic responsibilities fell unduly on women; even when enabled to professionally pursue art, marriage and family almost always took precedence over career. Denied the training, mentorship, and time required to create "major works of art," women were restricted to the more "minor" fields of genre, landscape, or still life. These factors, and many more, led directly to the unequal representation, regard, and pay that many women artists experience today.

Despite pervasive obstacles, women have persisted in creating impactful work that has influenced peers of their own periods as well as subsequent generations. Revolutionary European women artists of the 16th through 19th centuries, such as Lavinia Fontana (Italian, 1552-1614), Élisabeth Louise Vigée-LeBrun (French, 1775-1842), and Rosa Bonheur (French, 1822-1899) (all of whom had the advantage fathers or spouses who were established artists), broke ground for later generations to advance. In the 20th century, artist-activists like Faith Ringgold (American, b. 1930), Judy Chicago (American, b. 1939),

and the Guerrilla Girls (founded in New York City, 1985) galvanized the American civils rights and women's rights movements with poignant, often sharply critical artwork that brought to light inequalities faced by women and non-white people in the domestic, social, and political spheres. As traditional institutional and societal power structures shifted, women artists' influence increased, making room for more diverse voices and allowing their work to reach broader audiences and effect further change.

With women now occupying most sectors of the arts, there is renewed focus on ethnic and racial diversity in museums, galleries, and the market. Women artists from Africa are receiving long overdue visibility and recognition for their work analyzing issues like identity, gender, and the environment. Artist duo Mwangi Hutter (Ingrid Mwangi, Kenyan-German, b. 1975; Robert Hutter, German, b. 1964) addresses geological concerns with their video and performance pieces. Mwangi alters her body to examine the consequences of colonialism on the African Diaspora. Aiming to offset the stigma and negativity attached to queer identity in parts of Africa, visual activist Zanele Muholi (South African, b. 1972) photographs intimate and tender moments between LGBTQI+ couples in their home country of South Africa. Ghada Amer (Egyptian, b. 1963) creates large-scale needlepoint paintings that investigate femininity, sexuality, and Islamic culture. She redirects the male gaze by using embroidery, traditionally a feminine discipline, to depict nude female bodies. These artists, and many more, add vital perspectives to the increasingly global art world.

While inequality undoubtedly persists, women artists are today in a far better position than they were centuries, or even decades, ago. Many of the barriers women faced in the past have been, if not fully removed, at least lowered. Formal education and training are now available to many, and data compiled from surveys in the United States and the United Kingdom from 2016 to 2019 indicates that more women than men received undergraduate and graduate degrees in fine arts subjects.¹ Further, more women are themselves teachers and mentors, offering support to emerging artists. The definition of "art" now encompasses many more genres and mediums, allowing for wider participation.

With increased access to the resources needed to succeed, more women than ever before are pursuing careers in the arts. In 1970, just 31% of all artists in the United States were women;² today that percentage is 46%.³ While overall, art by women earns less than that by men, an analysis of global auction sales of Modern and contemporary African art between 2016 and 2019 found that the average price for work by female African artists was consistently higher than for male African artists (though it should be noted that the overall number of works by male artists sold outnumbered those by female artists by a sizeable gap – 680 to 131 - and art from Africa makes up just 1% of all art on the global market⁴). Successful auction sales typically lead to greater value for an artist's work, as well as opportunities for exhibition and inclusion in museum collections. This in turn can have a trickle-down effect of higher visibility, and subsequently, increased sales for other women artists from Africa, opening doors for younger generations.



Barbara Wildenboer, South Africa. *Spoils of War*, 2021. Hand-cut paper. Image courtesy of the artist

While full equality and true representation of diversity in the arts is still a long way off, recent years have been met with positive, albeit slow, changes. Enabled with education, patrons, and an ever-increasing presence in exhibitions, galleries, museum collections, and markets, women artists create dynamic and innovative works that often respond to pressing social, environmental, and political issues. The heightened visibility of women in the arts positively impacts individual communities as well as the field overall.

Hannah Shambroom

Exhibition Coordinator
National Museum of Women in the Arts

1 Iyengar, Sunil, et al, *Artists and Other Cultural Workers: A Statistical Portrait (Washington, D.C.: National Endowment for the Arts, 2019)*, 17.

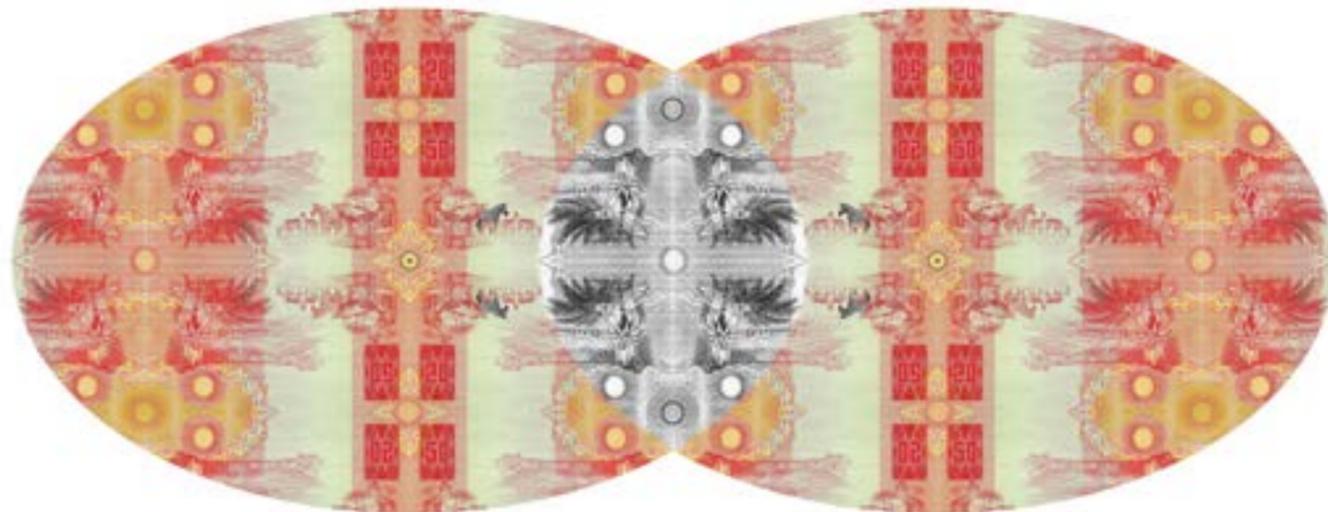
McMillan, Kate, *Representations of Female Artists in Britain During 2018*, (London: Freeland Foundation, 2019), 6.

2 Research Division of the National Endowment for the Arts. *Changing Proportions of Men and Women in the Artist Occupations 1970-1980*, Research Division Note #1, October 8, 1982, Na-

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3 Iyengar, *Artists*, 9.

4 Shaw, Anny, *The Growing Success of Female African Artists Marks an Exciting Shift in the Market*, *The Art Newspaper*, October 3, 2019. www.theartnewspaper.com/feature/why-african-women-artists-are-bucking-the-market-trend (accessed February 15, 2021).



Kim Karabo Makin, Botswana. *Lesatsi, Our Daily Sun* (detail), 2020. Photomontage



Kresiah Mukwazhi, Zimbabwe. *Mambokadzi II*, 2018. Mixed media

Let Creativity Speak

10+ years after *Africa Now!*

We are excited to present ***We Are Afrika: The Power of Women & Youth***, an artistic exploration and celebration of youth and women from Sub-Saharan Africa. A joint project by the World Bank Regional Vice Presidencies for Africa and curated by the World Bank Art Program, ***We Are Afrika*** responds to the priorities of the Region pre-COVID-19, namely the activities connected with the Africa Human Capital Plan.

With more than 1.2 billion people, 43% of whom are below the age of 15, Africa is well endowed with human resources. The Human Capital Plan is a means to support countries as they facilitate a people-driven development plan relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth.

We Are Afrika follows in the footsteps of the Bank's 2008 ground-breaking exhibition *Africa Now! Emerging Talents From a Continent on the Move*. Then, the (at that time single) Regional Vice Presidency for Africa and the Art Program joined forces to challenge the stereotypical image of Africa with a sweeping survey of emerging art from the continent which brought many young artists to international awareness and created multiple ripple effects. One of the most notable of these was the series of annual exhibitions curated by the Cameroon Country Office, which culminated in *Aujourd'hui*, an outstanding excursus into contemporary Cameroonian art. Additionally, recognition of the African artists launched by *Africa Now!* continues to grow, with a corresponding increase in prices for their works. These artists are celebrated by international galleries and

auction houses, some of whom even borrowed the name of our exhibition for their monthly catalog. Cutting-edge artists who were new discoveries at the time are now mid-career and, in many cases, established professionals.

Today, the spirit that animated *Africa Now!* has changed. The richness and variety of contemporary African art, design and creativity are no longer unknown to the rest of the world: Nigeria's fashion industry and cinema are world-known, extraordinary contemporary music from West Africa is a given, galleries on the continent and abroad are brimming with young, emerging, and more established artists. If the subtitle of *Africa Now!* was *A Continent on the Move*, we can say that the movement has taken place and it is time for the region to think about how to compete in the global, digital economy and to alleviate poverty through the development of the human capital of Africa's young people and women.

Tasked by the Bank's Africa Region to revisit *Africa Now!* with a more contemporary spin, we identified two guiding principles for a 2020 exhibition: to feature women artists, and to give voice to young people. For ***We Are Afrika***, we wanted a variety of artists who would reflect the multiplicity of millions of people living in countries of great diversity and cultural richness. From the courageous voice speaking from a country recovering from war, to the international star fêted by international galleries; from the muffled voice, freeing itself from stifling social norms, to the commitment of a social activist; all these artists have a powerful story to tell and share.

No longer did we feel the need to limit our criteria for selection to artists living on the continent, nor to those working in the traditional forms of visual art. We

live in a more interconnected world in which artists from the diaspora, wherever they choose to live, have a strong role to play in engaging with, interpreting and commenting on the cultures they come from, and that have shaped them. Furthermore, contemporary artists work today in an expanded field of media practice beyond the classic painting, sculpture and photography that comprised the 2008 *Africa Now!* exhibition. The artists selected for this exhibition work in a variety of ways, and include women artists working on social projects with youth and women, as well as young artists who use graffiti or installation as a means of expression.



Catalog cover, *Africa Now: Emerging Talents from a Continent on the Move*, 2008, World Bank, Washington, DC. Cover illustration featuring *Blackaneze*, 2003, by Nontsikelo Veleko (Lolo), South Africa.

We also felt that the concentration on the theme of human capital by the Region would be more fully reflected by the direct engagement of the artists with the audience. For this reason, we decided to inaugurate a new model of exhibition: instead of shipping the artworks to Washington, DC, we would invite the artists to spend time here in a mini-residency, working alongside WBG staff and creating artworks that would resonate with the priorities of the Region in terms of empowerment of women and youth.

The selection committee of experts, drawn from the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the World Bank Art Program identified seven strong women artists from Botswana, Liberia, Malawi, Seychelles, Sudan, and Zambia. Thanks to the commitment of the Country Directors based in these countries, we had planned to bring the artists to Washington for the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund's Spring and Annual Meetings of 2020. They would have been the ambassadors, not only of their countries and of their artistic journey, but also of the ideals and hopes of their generation and communities.

Then, the world was hit by COVID-19, an unprecedented crisis with devastating health, economic and social effects felt around the world. Naturally, priorities shifted and "all hands on deck" were called on at the WBG to assist the poorest and most vulnerable countries – and people – who were hit the hardest.

Still, we felt that the artists and youth had a role to play during the challenging months of the pandemic. Both as witnesses to the drama unfolding in their own countries and the impact on the more vulnerable parts of society, but also as reminders that art becomes essential in times of crisis, reminding us of our humanity, of our need to communicate and connect, on our creativity and resilience and on the pleasure and solace that art can bring in the moments of extreme stress.

Therefore, we invited the artists who had won the residency competition to join a new group of young talents, together with the young winners of the Africa Region Bloggers annual competition, to create a platform promoting dialog within and outside Africa. This dialog took the form of monthly artists' talks on YouTube, blogs, videos, virtual visits to artists' studios and public panels disseminated via the Art Program Yammer page and the Africa Region social channels from May 2020 through March 2023. A physical exhibition of selected works from **We Are Afrika** will run from September, 2022 to March, 2023.

We hope you will join the real creators of the future: the women, the artists and the youth of Africa. To connect, to reinforce and to bring hope and light where there is fear and unknown. Enjoy.

Marina Galvani
Curator
The World Bank Art Program



Art4Dev

A Creative Collaboration between the Youth Transforming Africa Network and the World Bank Art Program

Youth Transforming Africa (YTA) is a youth engagement initiative supported by the World Bank in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is a community made up of winners of the World Bank's annual Blog4Dev competition and African youth leaders. Currently, the network includes young people from 38 countries.

The Youth Transforming Africa vision is to give Africa's youth a seat at the table when development topics affecting them are discussed. The goal is to offer young people an opportunity to better understand the challenges facing the continent, and provide a place to voice their concerns, express their thoughts, share ideas and propose solutions. Art4Dev, a blossoming partnership between the World Bank Art Program and YTA is an example of such fruitful exchanges.

By joining forces with the Art Program on the art exhibition **We Are Afrika: The Power of Women and Youth**, we help showcase contemporary African art and tell inspiring stories of African artists to viewers across the globe.

In 2020 and 2021, we have been engaging with a range of young African artists participating in the World Bank's **We Are Afrika** exhibition through online artist talks which our bloggers moderate for the Art Program. Through these lively and passionate exchanges, we have discovered how young artists from different backgrounds have used the power of art to creatively condemn injustices or highlight development challenges within their communities. It is remarkable that some artists are, in fact, able to provide viable recommendations for their governments and international partners. We are tapping into larger development trends in a different way with the same vision – to bring joy and livelihoods to our communities.

Africa's young people are indeed the future of the continent's development success, and art, particularly the art discussed via this partnership and the exhibition, provides another rich avenue for us to innovatively express our dreams and hopes, lift our voices to advocate for the causes that concern us and be part of shaping the future of our continent.

The Youth Transforming Africa Network

THE ARTISTS

Art is one of the ways through which a new generation is probing questions of identity, and questioning old narratives about Africa. Art also provides voice to often marginalized women as a means of expressing issues that affect them, such as the struggles against violence and for gender equality. These voices engage with past and present realities, in particular the increase of fragility and conflict, the hopes and the activism for a green recovery, as well as the overarching impact of the global pandemic. They imagine new futures for themselves, and new, more positive and nuanced narratives about their continent. These voices are also a reminder that art is essential in times of crisis, a reflection of our humanity, our need to communicate and connect, our creativity and resilience, and a source of solace in moments of stress. We are proud to present some of these voices in ***We Are Afrika: The Power of Women and Youth***.

We Are Afrika was initially conceived of as a number of artist residencies and a physical exhibition of artworks from the World Bank's permanent art collection during the 2020 Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Washington, DC. As a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic, however, it morphed into a virtual exhibition accompanied by this digital catalog and a series of online events.

In its first iteration, the exhibition's selection committee of experts, drawn from the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, both in Washington DC and the World Bank Art Program, identified seven women artists from Botswana, Liberia, Malawi, Seychelles, Sudan, and Zambia for residencies at the World Bank in Washington, DC with the opportunity of interacting directly with the economists and the policymakers of the WBG.

The following list includes the names of four artists who won residencies, highlighted in bold. The three artists whose names are marked by an asterisk also won residencies, but did not take part in the exhibition.



Alaa Satir, Sudan, *We Are The Revolution series* (detail) 2018, digital illustration

- Nebay Abraha, Eritrea
- Valerie Amani, Tanzania
- Anataban, South Sudan
- Asmara All Stars, Eritrea
- Tété Azankpo, Togo
- Oumar Ball, Mauritania
- Hawa-Jane Bangura, Sierra Leone
- Nú Barreto, Guinea-Bissau
- Alun Be, Senegal
- Armand Boua, Côte d'Ivoire
- Calema, São Tomé and Príncipe
- Christine Chetty Payet**, Seychelles
- Eva Chikabadwa, Malawi
- Omar Diaw Chimere, Guinea
- Serge Attukwey Clottey, Ghana
- Mia Collis and Cynara Vetch, Kenya
- Aliou Diack, Senegal
- Juan Pablo Ebang Esono, Equatorial Guinea
- modupeola fadugba, Nigeria
- Taki Gold, Liberia
- R. Canon Griffin, Uganda
- Apollinaire Guidimbaye (Doff), Chad
- Nujuum Hashi, Somalia
- Charissa Daniella Iradukunda, Burundi
- Sona Jobarteh, The Gambia
- Lola Keyezua, Angola
- Emmanuelle Laté, Gabon
- Mario Macilau, Mozambique
- Kim Karabo Makin, Botswana
- Phindile Mamba, Eswatini
- Mampuya Mayimona (Massy), Republic of Congo
- Gael Maski, Democratic Republic of Congo
- *Matlali Matabane, Lesotho
- Cedric Mizero, Rwanda
- Fabrice Monteiro, Benin
- Kresiah Mukwazhi, Zimbabwe
- Elisia Nghidishange, Namibia
- Jean David Nkot, Cameroon

- Joseph Obanubi, Nigeria
- Hyacinthe Ouattara, Burkina Faso
- Zé Pereira, Cabo Verde
- Mbolatiana Raoilison (Clipse Teean), Madagascar
- Rijasolo, Madagascar
- Alaa Satir**, Sudan
- Enas Satir**, Sudan
- Collin Sekajugo, Uganda
- Puno Selesho, South Africa
- Kani Sissoko, Mali
- Ngadi Smart, Sierra Leone
- *Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum, Botswana
- Tcharo-Makinz-Socrome, Comoros
- Kavinash Thomoo, Mauritius
- Michael Tsegaye, Ethiopia
- Dieudonné Sana Wambeti, Central African Republic
- *Hawa Ware, Liberia
- Amina Weira, Niger
- Barbara Wildenboer, South Africa
- Agness Buya Yombwe**, Zambia
- *Billie Zangewa, Malawi
- Juliette Zelime (Jadez), Seychelles



The Silence Room, 2019. Collage and acrylic on canvas. Image courtesy of Art By Habeshas



The Silence Room 2, 2019. Collage and acrylic on canvas. Image courtesy of Art By Habeshas

Nebay Abraha

b. 1996, Eritrea

Nebay Abraha is an Eritrean artist currently living in South Sudan. A bold young artist, Nebay creates mixed-media collages and portraits incorporating materials ranging from charcoal to recycled newspaper clippings. His portraits highlight the life of the young generation in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Nebay received his diploma in drawing and painting in 2015 from the Satreb Art Institute in Asmara, Eritrea. In 2018 he moved to Ethiopia, where he taught art and exhibited with other Ethiopian and Eritrean artists. Now based in South Sudan, Nebay continues to exhibit in various locations in Juba, South Sudan, as well as internationally.

Nebay composes quiet portraits of a single person in an abstracted space, highlighting the contemplative internal state of the subject. *The Silence Room 2*, and *Untitled* each

showcase Nebay's collage work with his careful sculpting of the face and hair. Using newspaper and magazine clippings pieced together and layered with color, the geometric facets and tonal ranges are reminiscent of ancient mosaics. This treatment is nicely juxtaposed with larger, looser areas of collage, where familiar phrases or recognizable imagery mingle with expansive areas of flat color, moving the viewer's eye back and forth across the canvas. **AS**

“Through my artwork, I hope to encourage dialogue on many issues that people cannot freely talk about. Sometimes, I also just paint for art's sake.”



Untitled, 2020. Collage and acrylic on canvas. Image courtesy of Art By Habeshas

Valerie Amani

b. 1991, Tanzania

A visual artist, writer, curator and art educator, Valerie Asimwe Amani describes herself as an artistic explorer. With a degree in economics under her belt, in 2011 she founded an ethical fashion brand called Kahvarah. She later went on to do another degree in fashion. In 2021 she obtained a Master of Fine Arts at the Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford.

Amani's multidisciplinary practice encompasses textile, poetry, moving image and digital collage. Her work explores notions of memory, hybrid spirituality and the complexities of body in a post-colonial context. The central concept of her digital collage series *Sisini Tunachokiona // We Are What We See* is that those whose bodies, voices and stories have historically been marginalized as 'other' by the dominant (colonial or patriarchal) power, need to reclaim and reimagine narratives about and for themselves.

As she says, "...we must see ourselves as agents of liberation, as change-makers and leaders. We have been induced to believe propaganda that feeds our sense of inferiority for so long that it is both necessary and vital for us to radically push our own propaganda – propaganda that will manifest itself into change... a regeneration of imagery that aims to correct what history preconditioned us to believe." **NB**

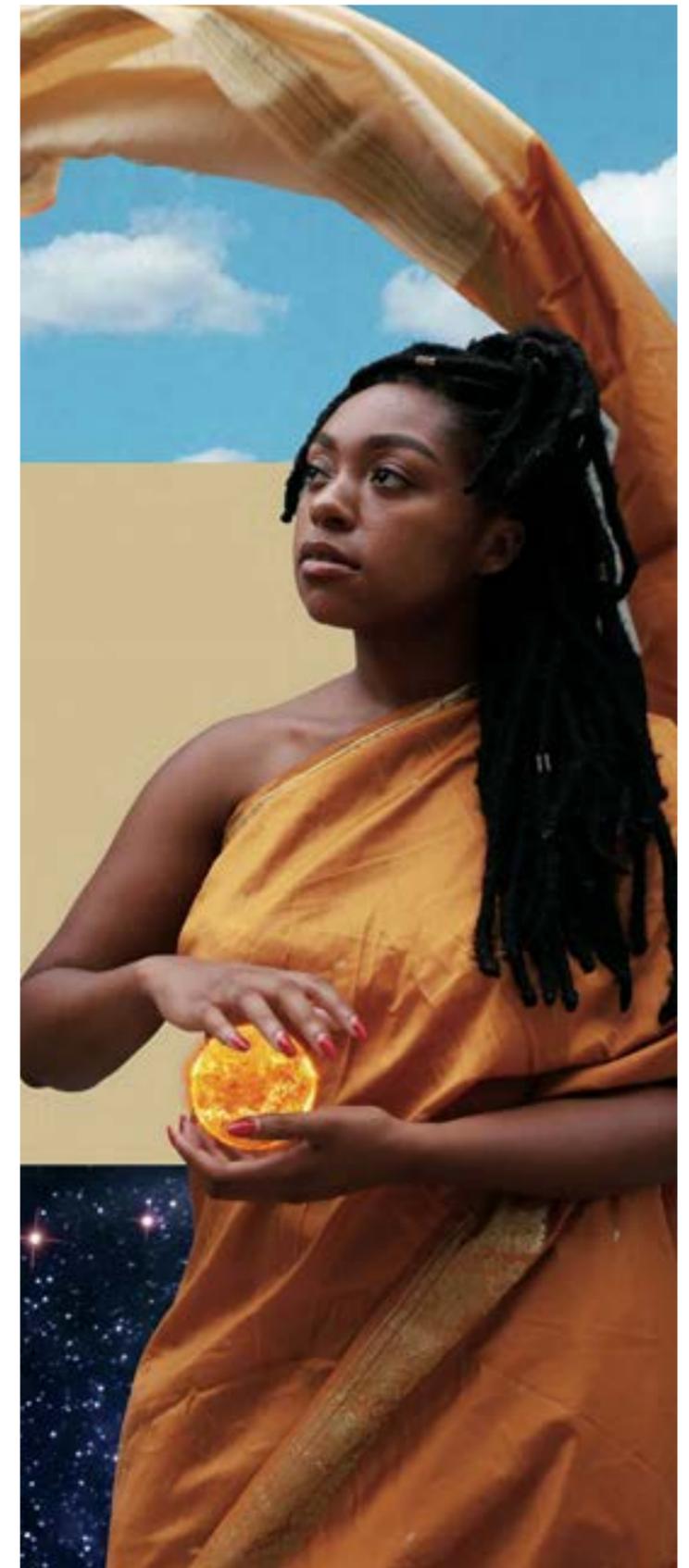
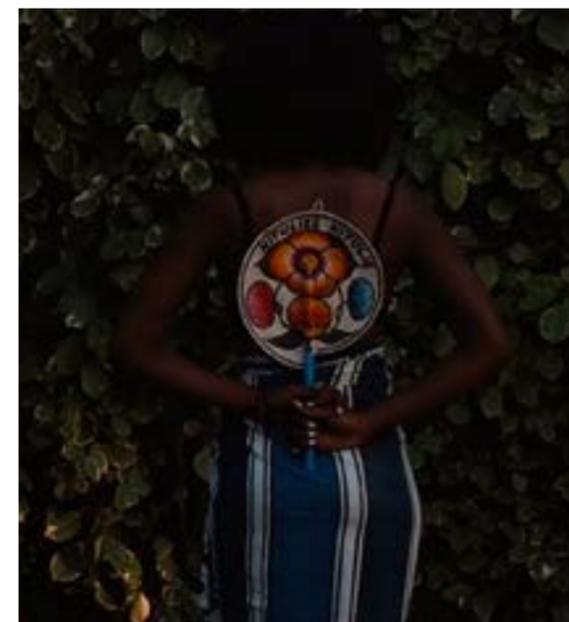


Shukuru the Firebloomer, 2019. Photograph and digital collage



Pumzi the Moonjuggler, 2019. Photograph and digital collage

"The digital unretouched images are part of a spiritual imaginarium - inspired by continental traditions of folklore and storytelling where Black bodies transform into the likes of gods and enlightened ethereal beings. Black women as saints, goddesses and guides. An addition towards the movement of reclaiming narrative, starting with sight – when we see and believe ourselves to be powerful, abundant, and capable of wonder, we start manifesting those beliefs."



Pendo the Sunswallower, 2019. Photograph and digital collage



Anataban Team Photo, 2016. Photo by Jacob Bul Bior

Anataban

Founded in 2016, South Sudan



Anataban is an arts initiative in South Sudan, founded in 2016 by a collective of young visual artists, designers, poets and musicians. Tired of the violence and insecurity, poverty and hunger resulting from the conflict between opposing political factions (Anataban means “I am tired” in Arabic), the group aims to promote greater understanding and solidarity between communities by creating a platform for South Sudanese citizens to speak out about their common economic, social and political problems.

Anataban aims to engage and mobilize young people to be agents of change, to address pressing social and political issues and participate in ensuring a more hopeful future for their young country. The group spreads its message of peace and solidarity through social media and various forms of public art, including murals, street theatre, roadshows, concerts and exhibitions, focussing on refugee camps and areas most affected by the conflict.

In 2018, Anataban joined other civil society groups in launching the #SouthSudanIsWatching campaign that was retweeted by influential political and cultural figures during the Addis Ababa edition of the HLRF (High-level Revitalization Forum). It reminded the politicians representing the warring factions that they were answerable to the citizens of South Sudan. The group has also campaigned against pollution from oil drilling in South Sudan. More recently, Anataban has created informational campaigns around COVID-19 to spread awareness and combat misinformation about the pandemic. **NB**

Anataban Fight Against Corona Initiative, 2020. Oil on corrugated iron sheet. Photo by Akot Deng Agoth



Anataban Street Art in Juba, 2016. Photo by Jacob Bul Bior



Asmara All Stars

Founded in 2008, Eritrea

The Asmara All Stars is a group of Eritrean singers and musicians brought together in 2008 by French music producer Bruno Blum. Comprising of musicians from around the country, the Asmara All Stars are known for their contemporary take on the traditional Eri-jazz sound. Through their live concerts and recorded album, the Asmara All Stars uplift Eritrean music and bring it into dialogue with the rest of the continent.

In 2006 Bruno Blum was invited by the Alliance Française to Asmara to play with local musicians. Soon after, the Eritrean Cultural Affairs Office arranged for Blum to audition singers and musicians, with the goal of recording an album of Eritrean music. When word got out, many of Eritrea's top local and international talent flocked to Admas Studio to join the innovative and exciting music-making collaboration. Following two months of almost daily practicing, the Asmara All Stars started playing live shows and recorded the album *Eritrea's Got Soul*. As highlighted by their record label OutHere Records, "The Asmara All Star project is all about leaving politics behind and focusing on making exciting music."

The group's album principal album *Eritrea's Got Soul*, released in 2010, combines a big band sound with soul, Jamaican reggae, and Eri-jazz. The album's different musical styles and selections range from beloved Tigre songs to local hip hop, with traditional Tigrigna gwaila beats and

Kunama rhythms mixed in. It also includes languages from eight ethnic groups: Kunama, Nara, Bilen, Afar, Saho, Hedaareb, Tigré, and Tigrigna.

The Asmara All Stars is comprised of the following musicians and singers: Adam Faid Amir, Adam Hamid, Ali Hassen, Aron Berhe, Brkti Weldeslassie, Dawit Zeragabir, Doc Reggae, Edwardo Giorgio, Faytinga, Hassan Suleman, Ibrahim Goret, Mahmoud Ahmed Omer, Mohammed Ahmed Shaabi, Noah Hailemeleket, Omar Hola, Sara Teklesenbet, Sedik Omar, Solomon Amanuel, Tekle Negassi, Temasgen Yared, Tesfamichael Tkabo, Tesfaldet Leghese, and Yosef Tsehaye.

AS



Photo by Thomas Dorn

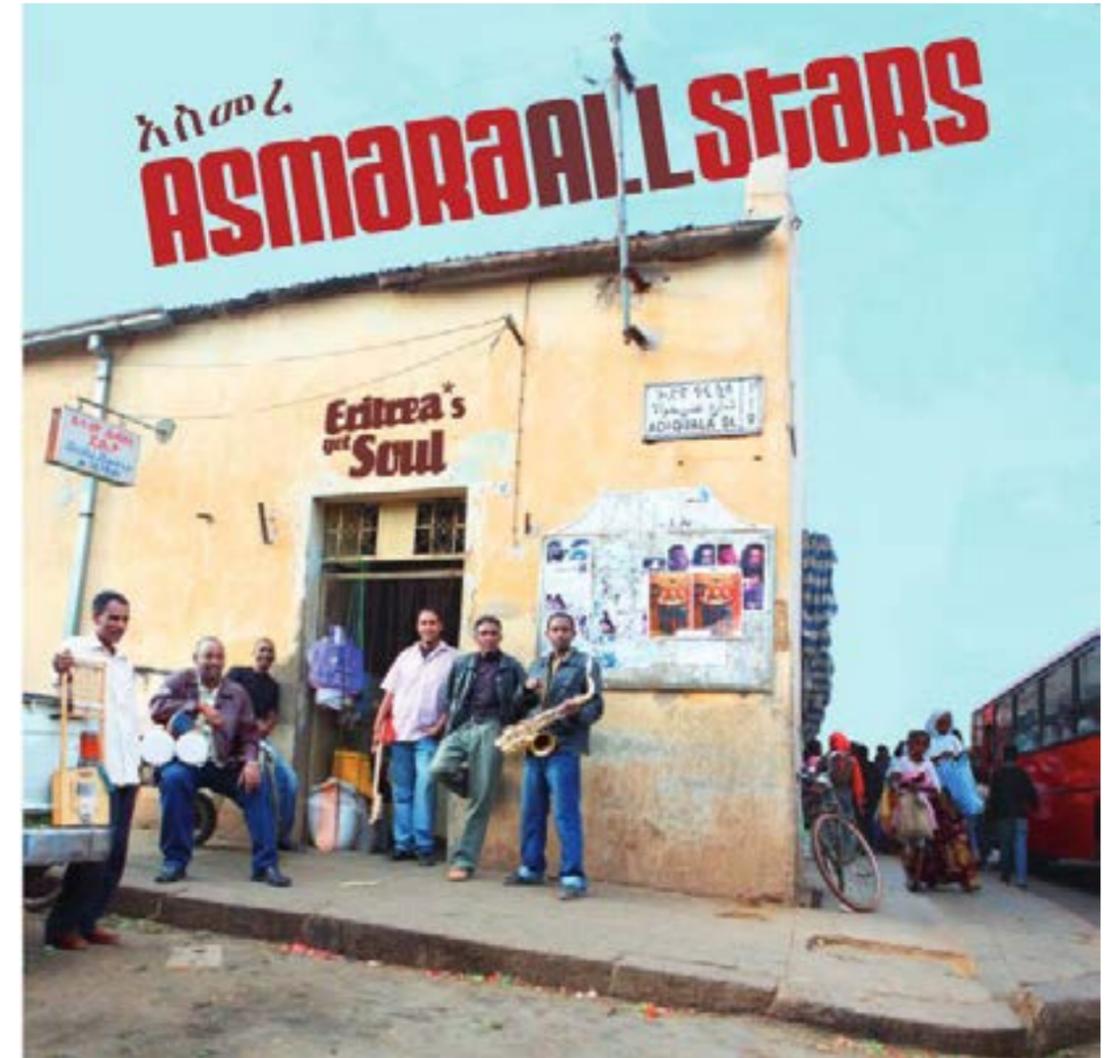


Photo by Thomas Dorn



Photo by Thomas Dorn

Tété Azankpo



b. 1968, Togo

Camille Tété Azankpo is a self-taught artist, born in Lomé, Togo. His engagement with the arts is characterized by his hands-on approach to making a sustainable living. He began as a welder and metal worker, learning about form, construction and stability. He then moved into the real estate sector, learning how to be a successful agent by creating eye-catching and engaging home advertisements. He finally transferred this knowledge of visual language to become a sign painter, and printer of serigraphs.

In 1997, Azankpo created a defining piece, debuting his arts career. He erected life-size sculptures made with wood and recycled materials on more than two and a half acres of rugged terrain north of Lomé. Titled *Les Épouvantails des Champs* (The Fields' Scarecrows), this work was the first of its kind in the subregion, engaging nearby youth communities in its creation and attracting visitors from beyond Togo's borders.

Azankpo soon opened his own art studio, creating works that became immediately recognizable for their sculpture assemblage technique, and use of bright colors and recycled materials. Azankpo seeks to use his artwork to visualize the barriers between people – visible and invisible – that block the path for greater understanding and unity.

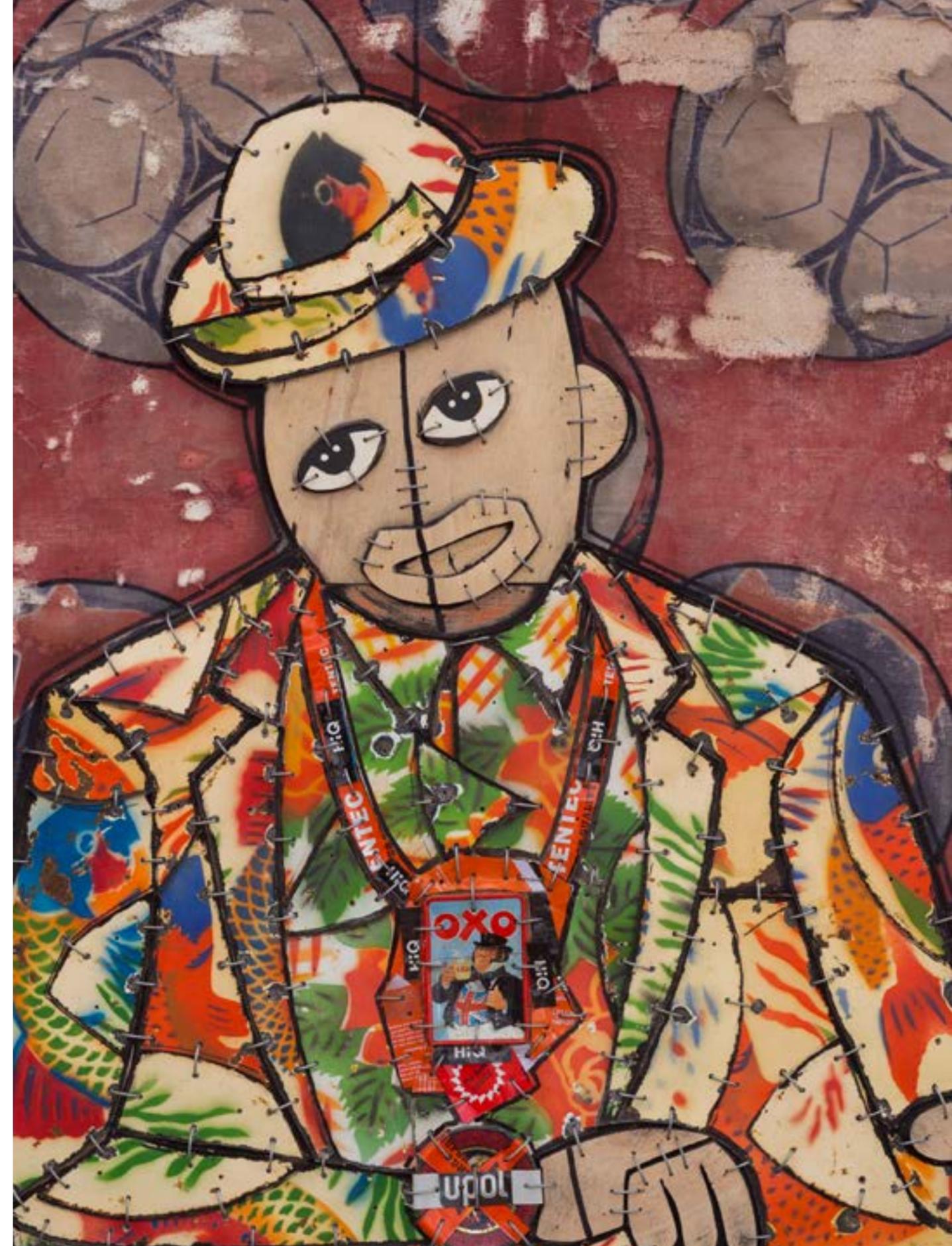
Azankpo is extremely intentional about the materials he uses in his works. The works are constructed with fractured materials cut from enamel basins and metal boxes. They are then sewn with wire onto pieces of wood to recreate a harmony, and to tell a story. There is much symbolism in his choice of materials. Enamel basins, once ubiquitous in West Africa, were cherished objects that accompanied women throughout their lives. Beyond their practical use and aesthetics, they carried personal and political messages. Azankpo sees them as a homage to women, to their

strength, and to their role in society. The metal boxes he uses in his works are containers that hold the things which sustain us - food, medicine, and entertainment. They mirror our choices as consumers, choices which are dictated by our vulnerability to advertising. The basins and metal containers are symbols of globalization and meet in his work to tell a universal human story. **JB**

"The many layers that you see in my work correspond to layers of meanings. They chronicle the past, capture our present and comment on the future, but they also provide room for interpretation as I believe that each viewer will read my work and messages through her own lens."



Rideau (detail), 2017/2018. Mixed media. Image courtesy of African Art Beats Contemporary Art Gallery, Washington DC



Portrait Manager, 2021. Mixed media. Image courtesy of African Art Beats Contemporary Art Gallery, Washington DC



Pelican (Volatile series), 2020. Recycled metal



Oumar Ball

b. 1985, Mauritania

“I come from Bababé, Mauritania, an area by the edge of the Senegal River that marks the border between Mauritania and Senegal, the sandy Fouta Tooro. I spent my childhood in the village of Bababé where my parents and grandparents were born. I grew up with my grandmother.

The riverside is a bustling world: rowboats pass from one bank to the other, women work in houses and courtyards, men go back and forth between houses and fields. Children hang out together, and animals live around and with us.

My father, photographer and painter Issa Ball, has been a silent teacher to me. As a child, I watched him develop black-and-white photographs of our daily life, as well as make cheerful paintings. When I grew up, he taught me drawing and painting. This is how painting became my second specialty in addition to sculpture.

Like all children in the world, I loved to play. The vast territory, as I then imagined my village, was my kingdom where I spotted iron wire bent and flattened into shapes resembling lettering, pieces of scrap metal, colorful cardboard and plastic from all of which I made toys. Goats, horses, birds, people, and carts that populated this miniature world amused me. Other village kids came to see me and asked me to make toys for them too.

It was in this environment that I grew up.

Today, when I look at my work, I understand that my upbringing and milieu not only forged me, but they also became my sources of inspiration.



Marabou (Volatile series), 2020. Recycled metal

Whatever materials I use, I find pleasure in them – wire with which to draw, metal with which to color, and clay with which to water-color. Objects, animals, and humans are the actors of the theater which I set into play in the story of my life.

Birds are my symbol of liberty. Sculpting them is like self-therapy. I hide behind a bird to express my desire for freedom, my dreams of the kind of life I don't have and will probably never have – all the things I cannot say or do. To me, birds are my self-portraits, but once an artwork is created, it lives its own life, so with my sculptures each viewer can interpret them the way they like.”

Oumar Ball, 2021



Cormorant (Volatile series), 2020. Recycled metal



Hawa-Jane Bangura

b. 1988, Sierra Leone

Hawa-Jane Bangura is a visual artist who lives and works in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Holding a degree in law and building a successful career as a lawyer in New York and later the corporate sector in Sierra Leone, Bangura is a multi-faceted creative practitioner. Believing in the power of creative communities, she co-founded an art collective, The Barray, in 2013 comprised of about 15 local visual artists, to whom she provided skills training and tutoring in art history and contemporary art. The group's first exhibition was in 2015 and they have continued to exhibit annually. Describing the collective, and the artists' creative processes, Bangura states, "We sit down and discuss [as a group], come up with themes, and each artist interprets that theme and brings in new ideas through their art."

Through her use of bold color and strong faces Bangura creates images of confidence, power, strength, elegance and beauty. Her work seeks to challenge the way in which African women have been traditionally portrayed in art. Having been educated in the West, she was not exposed to the very rich pre-colonial history of the African continent and its people. Through her art she seeks to explore that hidden history and culture, to depict an alternate African identity, and to explore representation of African women within that context. Hawa-Jane Bangura uses her artwork to start conversations with viewers, to transfer knowledge, raise consciousness and create change. **JB**

African Empires: Bassa, 2019. Acrylic on hardboard

"In school we are usually taught that our history began with our 'discovery' by European explorers, that we had no written traditions or scripts and that we were uncivilized. A deeper investigation into our history as African peoples tells a very different story. Know thyself."



Know Thyself II, 2020. Acrylic on canvas



In Black We Trust, 2020. Acrylic on canvas



Moi autrement, 2021. Collage (cardboard, paper, fabric), ceramic pencil, semi-fat pastel, recycled paper. Image by Bertrand Huet/ tutti image, courtesy of Galerie Nathalie Obadia Paris / Brussels

Nú Barreto



b. 1966, Guinea-Bissau

Nú Barreto is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice encompasses painting, drawing, photography, video, and sculpture. Born in São Domingos, Guinea-Bissau, he learned to draw at an early age inspired, in part, by comic books, then studied photography in France graduating from Gobelins, Paris, eventually settling in Paris and gaining worldwide acclaim for his groundbreaking art pieces, among which is the *Disunited States of Africa* series featuring paintings of imaginary all-Africa flags.

Deeply concerned with social, political, economic situation of his country as well as of the African continent, Barreto's body of work is an ongoing bitterly ironic man-

ifesto on inequalities both between and within nations, races, and classes.

Rather than documenting reality in a straightforward way, Barreto expresses his ideas in a language of symbols. His art pieces feature a recurrent vocabulary of visual metaphors with special meanings behind the choice of shapes, lines, colors (as well as colorlessness), and materials. Barreto often incorporates texts in his works. Sometimes, they explain the images, sometimes, especially if written in mirrored writing or upside down, they puzzle the viewer – invariably contributing to the artist's goal to take the audience out of an emotionally neutral, indifferent state, and make them think and act.

The lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic were for the artist an opportunity for introspection, and for reflecting on the possibility for society to start things all over again in a new way. It is in this environment that Nú Barreto began creating his visual diary. Making one or more drawings each day, he ended up with over a hundred art pieces through which he explored the problem of space in lockdown, and the meaning of liberty while in confinement. Notable among these drawings are images of bottles, each with a familiar ideogram – heart for love, crown for power, chair for comfort, home for protection and so on – locked up inside. They are reminiscent of bottled messages released into the sea without any certainty about who might read them. or when. **EG**

"I live with my two children. My studio is just at the back of my house. I work alone except the times when I make large-scale pieces for which I sometimes call an assistant. Like many artists, I have the habit of locking myself up in the studio. So, with the lockdowns, there wasn't anyone else except the children and the next-door neighbors to speak with. This would make things calm inside if not for the turmoil and cataclysms all over the world. I was influenced by what I heard on the radio, and I began to integrate the words and numbers I heard in my work... as a testimony of what will define our time. I did not do anything of this than draw."



Le jeu (detail), 2021. Collage (cardboard, paper, fabric), ceramic pencil, semi-fat pastel, recycled paper. Image by Bertrand Huet/ tutti image, courtesy of Galerie Nathalie Obadia Paris / Brussels



La Chute, 2021. Collage (cardboard, paper, fabric), ceramic pencil, semi-fat pastel, recycled paper. Image by Bertrand Huet/ tutti image, courtesy of Galerie Nathalie Obadia Paris / Brussels

Alun Be

b. 1981, Senegal

A self-taught photographer with a master's degree in architecture from the San Francisco Academy of Art, Alun Be lives and works between Senegal, France, and the United States. He is part of a new generation of African photographers who are establishing creative new ways of perceiving 'Africa', throwing off the stereotyping colonial gaze and imagining new futures for the continent and its people. His work has explored female empowerment, technology and inter-generationality.

Alun Be's central concern is African modernity. Be's series *Edification*, which features pivotal moments in a young person's life on the way to achieving individual potential, reflects on technology's profound impact on society generally, and on African ways of being in particular. It depicts youth navigating and interpreting the world through virtual reality goggles, and refers to the ways in which culture, tradition and the past are connected with technology and the future. **NB**

"Africa is not striving to be modern anymore, that has already happened. It is modernity that is striving to be African."



Absolution, Edification series (detail), 2017. Archival pigment print on fine art paper



Cultivation, Edification series, 2017. Archival pigment print on fine art paper



Ethos, Edification series (detail), 2017. Archival pigment print on fine art paper



Kpekpekos (Children) VII, 2020. Mixed media



Kpekpekos (Children) III, 2020. Mixed media



Kpekpekos (Children) V, 2020. Mixed media

Armand Boua



b. 1978, Côte d'Ivoire

Armand Boua was born in 1978 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, where he lives and works. He graduated from the École des Beaux-Arts and the Centre Technique des Arts Appliqués in Abidjan (the Technical Center for Applied Arts), the Sainte Marie Training Institute, and the Museum of Civilization. Boua specializes in painting that incorporates non-traditional media, including found objects. His pictorial subjects are inspired by daily encounters in the streets of the rapidly developing and industrializing city of Abidjan. The theme of particular concern to Boua is the myths and realities around the influx of runaway children in the Ivorian capital.

Gangs of young adolescents and children who lost their families or escaped from home and are surviving on their own in abandoned urban quarters have been a growing problem in many megalopolises. Lacking the wisdom, care and love of adults, detached from places of birth, deprived of education, often burdened with crime, and relying on minimal resources, these children create their own world with its special moral norms and secret languages. The street language of Abidjan is known as "Nouchi" and it is in Nouchi that Boua, who works closely with street children, gives titles of his paintings.

To convey unpredictability, anarchy and harshness of this "informal" subculture, Boua paints the children's figures in broad black brushstrokes, partially blending them with the rugged and distressed backgrounds reminiscent of dilapidated walls covered in bits and pieces of torn off posters. Often painted with tar instead of professional artist's paint and on salvaged pieces of cardboard instead of traditional canvas, the scenes of street children's everyday activities arrest the viewers' attention setting them on a hard quest of recognizing humanity in the grisliness of settings, appreciating the ingenuity and bravery of the underprivileged young ones. **EG**

"I wanted to show the street kids' suffering, their way of life, so that people are finally aware of this painful reality they pretend not to see."



Calema in concert

Calema

São Tomé e Príncipe



Calema is a music duo from São Tomé and Príncipe, composed of two brothers Fradique and António Mendes Ferreira, born in 1987 and 1992. As many Santomense people, they are descended from Cape Verdeans, Portuguese, and Angolans, carrying with them a diverse cultural heritage that has inspired their passion for music.

The brothers attended primary school in São João dos Angolares, the capital of the Caué district, where they were part of the choral group of the Church of Santa Cruz dos Angolares. In 2008 they came to Portugal to pursue their studies in the music industry. Fradique obtained a degree in multimedia in Évora, and António, a degree in video production in Lisbon.

In 2009 they formed their group, naming it Calema. *Calema* is a word with African origins, and refers to the large, long waves one finds on the West African shore. The duo found a poetry in that name, as when the waves reach the beach, they always seem to bring something. The brothers wanted their

music to also bring something - smiles, intense emotion, culture, and the Santomense sun. Their motto was “A winner’s secret is to believe in victory and destroy barriers with faith”.

Angolan singer Anselmo Ralph noticed the duo in the early 2000’s and helped them enter the Portuguese music scene. Calema then produced the album *A Nossa Vez*. The song reached the top of the charts, being the most viewed music video on YouTube sung in the Portuguese language in 2017. In February 2019 Calema participated in the prestigious *Festival da Canção* and in 2021, the group was featured in a song by Moroccan superstar Saad Lamjarred.

Alongside the warmth the duo hopes their music will bring, they also seek to make positive social change recognizing the importance of family, and community support. Through their work, they were appointed UNICEF goodwill ambassadors to São Tomé and Príncipe. **JB**



At the Olympia Hall concert, January 2022



Calema in concert



Calema in concert



Eva Chikabadwa



b. 1980, Malawi

Eva Chikabadwa is a sculptor, painter, and ceramist who graduated from the University of Malawi with degrees in sociology and fine arts, and University of Cape Town Michaelis School of Fine Art, where she earned her master's degree exploring the colonial and missionary interpretation and representation of African religious practice, particularly the M'bona beliefs of the Man'ganja from Southern Malawi. She is currently a lecturer in industrial ceramics at the Malawi University of Science and Technology.

Chikabadwa has shown internationally and locally since 2002. Believing that an artist should not feel the need to be limited by any singular medium, she works with a wide array of materials including oils, acrylics, watercolors, clay, metal, wood, cement, soapstone, paper and wire. On her style, she states, "I am generally an expressionist and my work is usually a mixture of figurative, imaginary and abstract characters. I love contrasting colors and textures. My art is mostly interpretative with political and social themes."

In her series about the belief systems of the Mang'anja, Chikabadwa explores the story surrounding M'bona, who since 1400 A.D, had been a famous religious figure amongst the Mang'anja people as a rain maker, prophet, god and a savior. She questions the impact the arrival of Christian missionaries had on our understanding of M'bona through an examination of Father Jan Matthew Schoffeleer's anthropological work into the subject. Father Jan Matthew Schoffeleer was a Catholic missionary in the Lower Shire Valley who believed the M'bona religion to be synonymous to the ministry of Jesus. Her work presents chaotic compositions, intense colors, and emotionally charged figures to invoke confusion and push back on a Christianized reading of M'bona as in fact inauthentic, and a product of a colonial religious conflict. **JB**



The Whites Were More Cunning Than the Blacks, 2016. Oil on canvas



Makewana (mother of children) as Salima, 2018. Clay

Omar Diaw Chimere



b. 1988, Senegal (based in Guinea)

Omar Diaw Chimere is a graffiti artist, illustrator, painter, designer, and teacher. Identifying as a pan-African artist, Omar seeks to use his art to celebrate black culture. Omar's artistic studies began at the age of eight, when he began sketching and drawing, believing that everything which crossed his mind and eye could be translated to canvas or paper. Of his artistic journey Omar states, "all [my] life has been spiritual gymnastics to reach the heights of art through drawing and painting."

As he began to paint more seriously after 2006, he found himself drawn to a mixed technique. He also saw the unique power of the large-scale graffiti work in addition to painting. Chimere soon joined a group of graffiti artists called the RBS crew and participated in many acclaimed graffiti festivals in Senegal including *Festi Graff*, *Art Mur*, and *Graff et Sante*. His techniques are frequently distinguished as "wildstyle", "bloc letter" and "bubble" among graffiti art critics and journalists.

Today, Omar Diaw Chimere lives in Guinea and spends much of his artistic practice teaching young people about the principles of street art. He leads one of the premier groups of graffiti artists in Guinea, *Guinee Ghetto Graff*. He uses his artistic talent to transform the aesthetics of neighborhoods in Conkray, as well as other parts of the country. He was the co-organizer of the premier festival for graffiti art in Guinea, *Lassiry Graffiti*. Combining realism and clear, quick messaging, Chimere recognizes the importance of large-scale murals in positively impacting public thinking. He creates works ranging from the celebration of pan-African heroes to the building of awareness for tropical diseases and COVID-19. **JB**

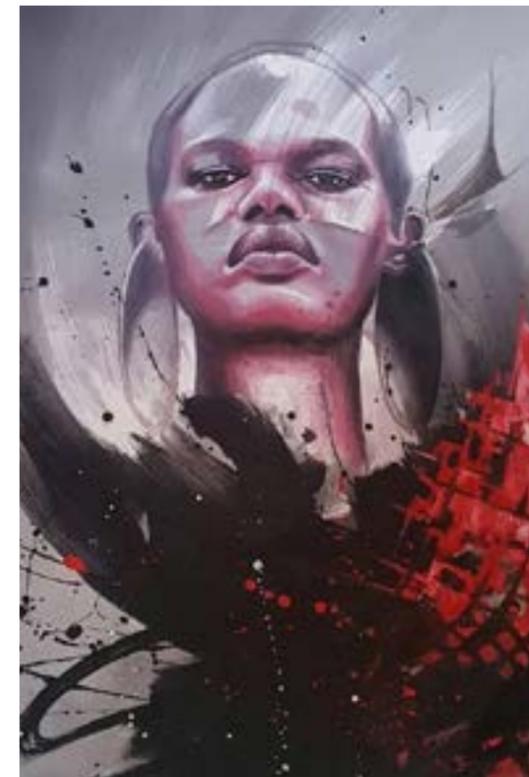
"I generally use oil paint for the creation of canvases. With oil paint you can have more subtle color gradients, and the colors blend more fluidly. Regarding abstract backgrounds, I use acrylic paint because its colors are vivid and dry faster. I like to mix 'abstract' and 'realism' in my works to touch many kinds of viewers. There are people more sensitive to the abstract and others to realism. To give my works more style and particularity, I use this mixed technique."



Omar Diaw Chimere



African Beauty, 2022. Oil and spray paint on canvas



African Spirit (mural, detail), 2020. Acrylic paint



African Smile (mural), 2020. Acrylic paint



Klortei (detail), 2021. Plastics and copper wires

Serge Attukwei Clotey



b. 1985, Ghana

Serge Attukwei Clotey is a multidisciplinary artist from Ghana who works across installation, painting, sculpture, photography and performance. Clotey has coined the term 'Afrogallonism' for his body of work that uses yellow plastic jerrycans (known locally as 'Kufuor gallons') to highlight the socioeconomic, cultural and environmental legacies of colonialism. The jerrycans, first used by Europeans importing cooking oil into Ghana, became associated with President John Kufuor at a time of acute water scarcity when they were used by Ghanaians to carry water for everyday use.

Serge Clotey and his team stitch together pieces of these discarded plastic containers and other waste materials to construct elaborate, tapestry-like installations reminiscent of Ghana's kente cloths. These works express concerns about water scarcity in Ghana, and the environmental implications of the widespread use of plastic in our daily lives. His aim is to raise awareness locally of the large quantities of plastic waste that clog up water systems and endanger wildlife habitats along the coast, and also globally of the need to conserve water.



*His Highness, 2020-2021. Oil and acrylic paint on canvas.
Image courtesy of Simchowitz Gallery, Los Angeles*

In his recent work, Clotey explores ideas about material culture, social media and identity formation in a series of portraits that draw inspiration from 20th century West African studio photography. In these works, his African and African American subjects assert their agency and personhood, using fashion to "tell stories about themselves, their communities and their continent." **NB**



Chairman, 2021. Plastics and copper wires. Image courtesy of Simchowitz Gallery, Los Angeles

"Any time you see yellow, it represents water... and any time you see the gallon, it represents struggle."



Mia Collis

b. 1980, UK (based in Kenya)



Cynara Vetch

b. 1982, UK (based in Kenya)

She Shapes the City is an ongoing multi-media project authored by Kenya-based photographer Mia Collis and journalist Cynara Vetch in 2015. As the title suggests, this campaign and digital platform began with shining a spotlight on impactful women behind the development of the Kenya's capital Nairobi.

Mia Collis photographed women in a fashion studio in original outfits and head-dresses from a local designer. Cynara Vetch carried out in-depth interviews discussing the challenges and victories that made the participating women the change makers that they are today.

The first edition of *She Shapes the City* revealed the powerful force of female intellectuals, creatives, athletes and entrepreneurs behind Nairobi's development. This resonated with people across the city, and in order to widen the scope of the project and democratize the conversation, the founders opened up the nomination process so that City Shapers could be identified by their own communities.

Employing a cross between photography and storytelling, Collis and Vetch are building a continuously growing collection of inspiring stories of achievement, innovation and perseverance, often in nearly impossible circumstances, that bring positive change to the identity of the Kenya's capital and other cities around the world.

EG



Muthoni Ndonga - *The Drummer Queen*, 2015. Digital print

“Muthoni is a woman who wears many hats: drummer, rapper, singer, entrepreneur, but all revolve around a love for music. With her traditional 6-piece set of Ohlanga drums, Muthoni makes a dramatic statement on stage by mixing the Luo instrument with modern patterns and strong rap lyrics. This musician set up her own music event named Blankets & Wine in response to limitations with the club and live music spaces in Nairobi. The event exploded and has become the benchmark for live music in the city.”



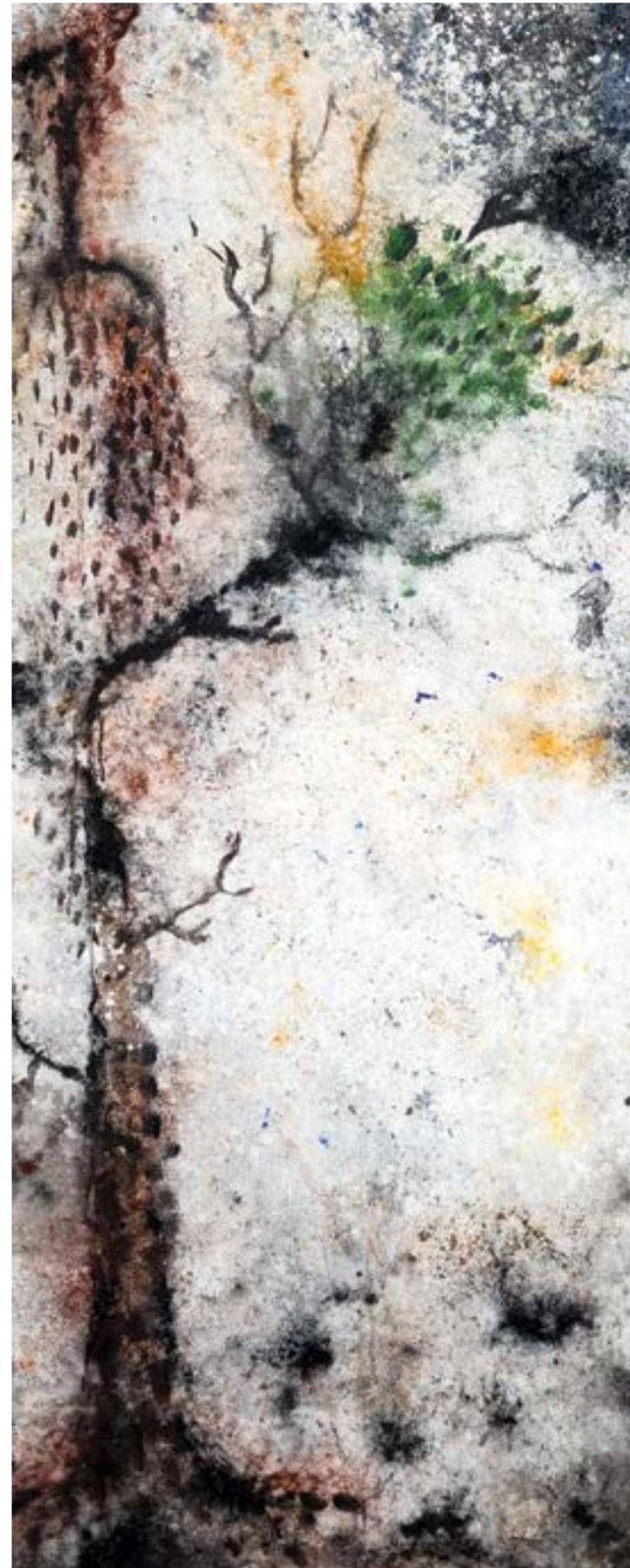
Alberta Wambua - *Executive Director for Gender Violence Recovery Center*, 2015. Digital print

“Alberta joined the Gender Violence Recovery Centre (GVRC) as a volunteer after she went through a traumatic carjacking and attempted rape. Alberta now heads up the Center as its Executive Director. GVRC is the leading institution tackling gender violence in the region. As well as providing free medical and counselling services for tens of thousands of women and men across East and Central Africa, the center is also at the forefront of training professionals, both in the medical profession and police force, to work with survivors of gender-based violence.”



Theresa Njoroge - *Champion for Female Convicts*, 2015. Digital print

“Teresa was pursuing her childhood dream, a career in banking, when she was falsely accused of a fraudulent transaction. Sentenced to imprisonment in the High Security Langata Women's Prison, Teresa was forced to bring her 3-month-old baby with her. What began as a loss of career and social standing led to her purpose in life, advocating for Kenyan women trapped in a cycle of poverty and life behind bars. Teresa is the Founder of Clean Start, which equips formerly incarcerated women with entrepreneurial skills and jobs.”



La Prophétie (detail), 2019. Mixed media on canvas.



Aliou Diack

b. 1987, Senegal

Aliou Diack was born in 1987 in Sidi Bougou, in the Mbour region of Dakar, Senegal. He received his artistic training from the National School of Arts in Dakar. His higher education was distinguished by his exploration into the use of nontraditional mediums, those beyond graphite. This led him to harness his fascination for nature, flora, and fauna incorporating the very material of the natural world into his pieces.

Diack's works maintain a sober quality, representative of a primitive and instinctive universe. As a child, Diack was fond of the outdoors. He would regularly set out to record the proportions, colors, and textures of nature in his drawing books. His works rely on this world: of a forest refreshed by rain in summer, or of a nocturnal insect announcing the evening with its chirp. Textures and materials are an essential part of his paintings. Creating a sandy, earthy and worn surface Diack intends for his images to function as paleolithic frescoes, the primitive motifs emancipated from the contemporary period and becoming timeless. Diack has shown in galleries and exhibitions in London, New York, Lagos, and Paris.

JB

“The whole action of painting is turned upside down: the work begins with the discovery of seeds, leaves and roots. It is born from the verbs “to crush” and “to sift” and exists thanks to what surrounds it, from dust to the sun. Nature is given pride of place, combining time and species. Through a trace, the world stops to admire the poetry of a life, subtly captured, tenderly affirmed.”



La Prophétie, 2019. Mixed media on canvas. Image courtesy of OH gallery, Dakar



Juan Pablo Ebang Esono and his team filming "Milu" on location, 2016



Juan Pablo Ebang Esono and his team filming "Milu" on location, 2016

Juan Pablo Ebang Esono

b. 1981, Equatorial Guinea



Equatoguinean film-maker Juan Pablo Ebang Esono studied at the Nucine Academy of Valencia earning a degree in film direction. He had begun his career in theater, and recalls, "I was going to the Centro Cultural Hispano Guineano... on foot, in broken flip-flops. At that time there were no roads, no light or anything. At the Center, there was an audio-visual specialist who started to record our plays. Watching him work, I decided to study cinema, as it helps to fix one's performance in time... My family was very much against my studying cinema. They thought it was a career for lazy people. It was a difficult journey, but I stuck with it."

In 2001, Esono directed the short film *La Familia*. It received the Grand Prix Africain du Cinema et de la Television at the Golden Crown Awards in Abidjan. Esono directed his second short film, *No Esta Desnuda* in 2007. It won the best short feature award of the 3rd International Film Festival for Integration in Valencia. Three years later Esono directed *Teresa*, the first medium-length film to be produced in Equatorial Guinea. Based on true events and produced by the National Library of Equatorial Guinea, the plot traces the twists and turns of the lives of three teenage friends. *Teresa* was named the best film from Equatorial Guinea by the German film ratings agency Moviepilot. After producing *Teresa*, Esono led film classes in several cities and provinces in his country on behalf of The National Library of Equatorial Guinea. In 2016, Esono directed the 21-minute film *Milu*, based on a script written by Salvador Maquina. In September 2020, he was named General Director of Production, Programming, and Compilation of the Audiovisual Historical Archives of Equatorial Guinea. **CTC**

"I believe that cinema has the power to teach while entertaining people. My movies portray social problems, most of all the gender disparities and gender-based violence. I have seven sisters - my movies are dedicated to them and to all the women, not only in my country, who are treated as objects and are victims of violence at the hands of their husbands. Women and men often don't know that there are laws protecting women, and I want people to be informed. Cinema is a tool that reaches everyone. When I showed my short film Milu, you could hear a pin drop in the audience. Everyone was captivated by the story. Milu received enthusiastic support and applause from the audience. Many women identified with the protagonist, a young woman mistreated by her husband whose attitude changed only when she completed her studies and started a professional career on her own. Many women in the audience felt I told their stories. I hope to raise funds to transform Milu into a feature film, one that can continue to teach women to stand up and believe in themselves."



Juan Pablo Ebang Esono and his team filming *Milu* on location, 2016

modupeola fadugba



b. 1985, Nigeria



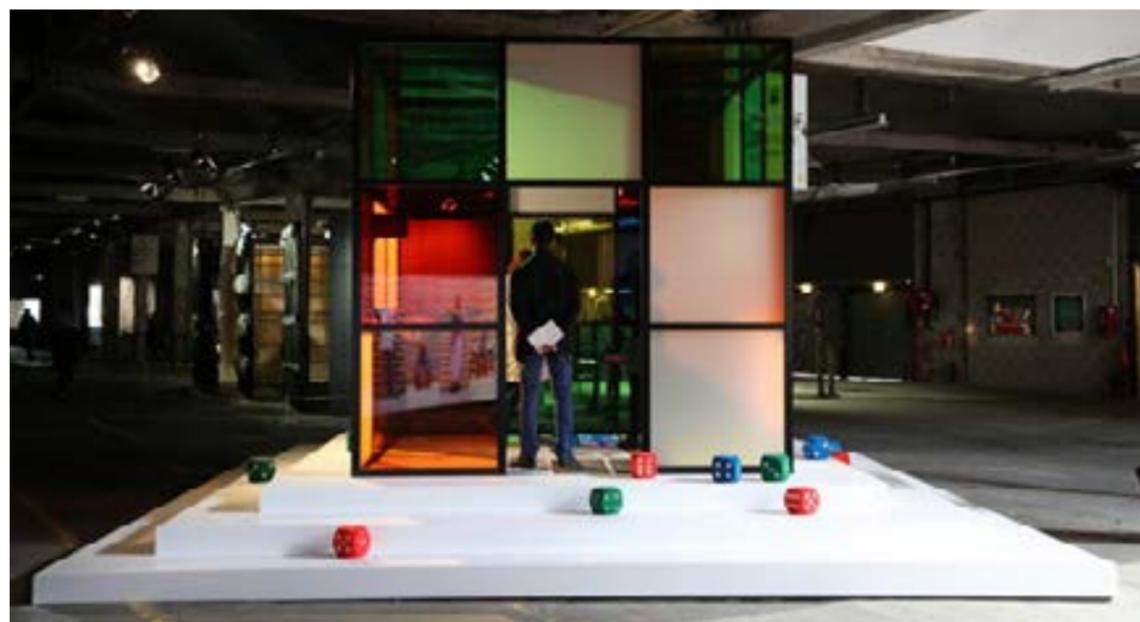
modupeola fadugba is a Nigerian multi-disciplinary artist who lives and works between the US and Nigeria, and holds degrees in chemical engineering, economics, and education. Her art practice spans painting, drawing and socially-engaged installation, and is influenced by the six years she spent working in research, policy and administration within Nigeria's education sector. Her work continues to be informed by statistical, archival, and historical research.

Among her many achievements, in 2016 fadugba won the Grand Prize at the Dakar Biennale in Senegal for her installation *The People's Algorithm*. This interactive work uses a game format to explore the complex structure and challenges of the Nigerian education system through ideas of chance, strategy, and luck. As in board games like Monopoly, players roll the dice to move along the various sections of the installation, learning facts and choosing between possible solutions to real problems in Nigeria's education sector. **NB**

"People's Algorithm creates a dynamic exchange of ideas between the audience, the artist, and the topic, seeking to activate constructive debate about how to change Nigeria's education system for the better."



Game element in *The People's Algorithm*, 2016. Metal, wood, acrylic and print



The People's Algorithm, 2014, interactive game installation, showcased in Paris, France, 2017. Perspex, aluminum, foam, wood, acrylics



The People's Algorithm, 2014, interactive game installation, showcased in Dakar, Senegal, 2016. Wood, acrylic, metal, foam



The People's Algorithm, 2014, interactive game installation, showcased in Dakar, Senegal, 2016. Wood, acrylic, metal, foam



The Boy Who Killed God, 2021. Acrylic on canvas



Whitewash, 2021. Acrylic on canvas



This Will Destroy You, 2021. Acrylic on canvas

Taki Gold



b. 1984, Liberia

Born in Monrovia, Liberia, Taki Gold creates towering painted canvases reflecting his childhood experience during the Liberian Civil War. Revealing the complexities of war, power, femininity, and identity, he brings a raw yet warm sensibility to his canvases.

Gold came to the United States from Africa by way of the Ivory Coast at the age of ten. He earned his BA from the University of Rhode Island in 2008 and is currently based in Santa Barbara, California.

Gold's art is deeply personal. Living through four years of war under the protection of local village women, his understanding of color and form came from an optimistic standpoint. Artistic processes could be used to digest the brutality of war by creating beauty from wreckage. In 1994, he was reunited with his parents and siblings. Today, he continues to use his art to contemplate notions of identity, belonging, and rebirth.

In Gold's piece *The Boy Who Killed God*, black abstracted figures hug the bottom left corner of the canvas. They overlay a background of white letters and shapes. This white text is destabilized by a patchwork of pastel-colored squares. The figures and their stretched forms seem ominous and off-putting, as if they have been deeply disturbed. Yet, the heavy use of text, as if to explain away any negativity coming from the figures, with the bright background colors taking more space on the canvas than anything else, offers a cheerful sentiment. The image feels at once broken and whole, tense yet hopeful.

Taki Gold has exhibited at Rule Gallery in New York, EK Art Gallery in Los Angeles, and at the Boulder Art Week in Colorado. His work is in private collections in Los Angeles, Miami, and Las Vegas. **JB**



All Hands on Deck: Building Better Babel (detail), 2018. Digital collage

R. Canon Griffin



b. 1991, Uganda

A rebellious visionary with bitterly ironic outlook on ambiguities of urban realities in Uganda, R. Canon Griffin's art practice focuses on the creation of tremendously laborious digital photo-collages whose fantastical imagery and multilayered narratives are indicative of the desire to challenge and re-shape existing conventions in the discourse on inequality in post-colonial urban contexts.

Reminiscent of provocative Dadaist photomontages of the early 20th century, Griffin's collages combine his own street photography with commercial and archival images borrowed from a variety of sources. Masterfully pieced together with the help of digital photo editing, they

take viewers to complex, almost dizzying universes composed of disproportionately sized elements, such as distorted dimensions and exaggerated curvatures. People, buildings, monuments, and machinery of both the present and the past occupy these surreal settings, thereby causing an attentive eye to discern the multiple narrative actions, both explicit and underlying, taking place in each collage. Captivating and unsettling at once, the imaginative works invite a critical examination of the outcomes of all the good intentions, optimism, aspirations and hardships that the prior generations experienced through hoping to build a better future for us. **EG**



In Existence: Seeing Ourselves from a Distance, 2020. Digital collage

*"My work is a visual anthem of interconnectivity.
Everyone, everything, every time.
An inevitable concert."*

Apollinaire Guidimbaye (Doff)

b. 1983, Chad

Apollinaire Guidimbaye, alias “Doff,” is a self-taught full-time Chadian artist working in mixed media with special emphasis on non-traditional art materials and found objects. Nicknamed Doff (“the fool” in the Wolof language) for his brave scavenging expeditions to dump sites in search of scrap materials for his bricolages – rusted metals, electronic equipment parts, discarded clothing items – he gained recognition for the ingenious ways in which he puts to creative use almost any material that others simply dispose of. He has been exhibiting his work since the age 20 in Africa and Europe, and **We Are Afrika** is his first exhibition in the United States. The two themes closest to Apollinaire’s heart are environment and humanity.

His visual manifesto in defense of the environment is the positive use, as he describes it, of a broad range of materials and items which the present-day society tosses away with an ease greatly superseding the effort once put in their production. For example, the component parts of his compositions are often held in place with the help of a framework of steel wires recuperated from burnt tires. The most terrifying of the materials he uses, the supply of which, unfortunately, is readily available in Chad, is used bullet shells of different metals and calibers. Collected in battlefields of the 21st century, they often feature in Doff’s 3D sculptural murals as soldered together outlines of human figures.

One of the ways Doff addresses the theme of humanity is by questioning the way society treats children - its least powerful members, and in a way, its own future. Child soldiers, street children, children in slavery and refugee children appear as characters of his art pieces. The adults surrounding these children are not only the criminals and manipulators who lure the young ones into the “informal” sector; but also those who are indifferent, who see what is going on but who do nothing to prevent the these children’s loss of childhood. **EG**



“The anonymous figures in my art symbolize all those who have died in wars across the Sahel – all those who have fallen, friend or enemy, and those who are left behind, crying for them.”



Guerre (L'homme africain series), 2020. Mural sculpture, mixed media



Egoïste 1 (L'homme africain series), 2020. Mural sculpture, mixed media



Alarm! Social Distancing, 2020. Digital artwork



Giving Voice to Voiceless!, 2019. Watercolor on paper

Najma Ahmed (Nujuum) Hashi

b. 1991, Somalia

Nujuum is a registered nurse by training and a self-taught artist. Her creative practice focuses on producing community-centered artworks as well as helping to incubate the careers of other creative practitioners. She has participated in arts development projects hosted by the European Union and has served as an art instructor at Elman Peace, a non-profit organization, founded in 1990 and is dedicated to promoting peace, cultivating leadership, and empowering the marginalized brackets of society to be decision makers in the processes that ensure their wellbeing. **JB**

“From Somalia’s capital city Mogadishu, I always concentrate on new paintings that spring from the depth of my imagination... many people do not know how to read or write, so they need art to understand the message about peace, equality, and development... I will work hard to spread this message to our people. This is the only way for me to preserve history and keep it for future generations. I hope to leave something solid for the coming generations.”



Somali Cultural Girl, 2021. Acrylic on canvas



Let's Fight Corona, 2020. Digital artwork

Charissa Daniella Iradukunda



b. 1988, Burundi

Since her childhood, the photographer Charissa Danielle Iradukunda liked storytelling. Her dreams about sharing with others the stories about Burundi, its culture and people led her to the ITELETIQUE School in Bujumbura, Burundi where she pursued studies in telecommunications and computer science. In 2016, she began taking classes in photography, the discipline which became both her passion and profession despite gender stereotypes and the challenges of being accepted by the professional field. She created her first photo narrative *Ciza: The Joy of Life* in 2019. This photographic series recounts daily life of Ciza Jérôme, a handicapped man whose life is a proof that disability is not an obstacle to happiness, caring, and fortitude. **JB**

“I didn’t know how to tell my stories, but I wanted to tell them in an artistic way. So in my first year of studies, I began taking courses in photography. It proved difficult to become an artist – there are many obstacles. There is no support, neither from family, nor from peers. In the Burundian culture photography is considered a profession for men... Despite that, I didn’t stop because I felt that photography was what I wanted to do. I asked photographers to let me assist them in their sessions, but they refused... There were photographers who told me that I wouldn’t be able to keep going because I was a girl and, in the field, I wouldn’t be able to handle the conditions under which photographers work.”

But although they said all this, they already considered me a photographer. I made my first personal project in 2019. It was a story of a disabled person, Ciza Jérôme. I spent two days in his village. This allowed me to get to know Ciza, get used to his surroundings, and gain confidence of the local people. Meeting Ciza and working in his village was a magnificent experience.

Ciza was born in 1979 in Kinama, Burundi. Although he was born with a disability, Jérôme always has a smile on his face and takes things in the easiest way possible. Jérôme is not Croesus, but his wealth is in that he gives so much. He does it without expecting anything in return. In addition, he is a man who is always happy, kind, and passionate. This is why I chose his story for my first project. This series of photos is an opportunity to have a glimpse of the magnificent world of Jérôme.”



Ciza Jérôme assis sur sa chaise roulante devant sa maison à Kinama en mairie de Bujumbura, Burundi (détail), 2021. Digital photograph



Le neveu de Ciza Jérôme l’aide à se laver le visage dans sa maison à Kinama en Marie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 2021. Digital photograph



Ciza Jérôme et ses amis après la messe du soir à la paroisse de Kinama en Marie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 22021. Digital photograph



Architectural model of the Gambia Academy campus, 2017, photo courtesy of the Gambia Academy



Sona Jobarteh performing at Brave Festival, Poland, 2016



Sona Jobarteh



b. 1983, UK (based in Gambia)

Sona Jobarteh is a musician, composer, singer, social change activist, and educator of international renown. Member of a griot lineage, she was exposed to storytelling accompanied by the music of kora – a stringed instrument native to The Gambia and neighboring parts of West Africa – since an early age. Breaking with tradition that dates back to the 13th century, where kora playing has been exclusively a male activity, she has learned to play the kora at a virtuoso level, mastering several European instruments along the way. Her formal studies began at the Royal College of Music, and the Purcell School of Music in the UK, and culminated with a degree at SOAS, University of London. Yet it is from her brother and father that she learned about truly expressing herself with music; about being real even if not perfect. These experiences gave her confidence to challenge clichés about success, both on and beyond the stage.

Ms. Jobarteh is the Founding Director of The Gambia Academy, a pioneering institution born from her visionary idea of shifting the center of African Studies back to the continent. Established in 2015 and initially funded with proceeds from touring, The Gambia Academy is aimed at providing world-class education in skills required for success in 21st-century Africa, with a curriculum centered on African music, history, and culture.

Sona Jobarteh's single *Gambia* (2015) celebrates the beauty of her ancestral home and speaks of her devotion to it. Its simple lyrics in the Mandinka language and rhythmical music build upon centuries-old harmonies. This unforgettable musical piece has won the hearts of audiences all over the world thanks to the performer's charisma and sincerity. **EG**



Sona Jobarteh, 2021

“Wherever I travel, I shall tell of the wonders of this country. There is nowhere that compares to The Gambia.”



Lola Keyezua

b. 1988, Angola



Fortia 4, 2017. Giclée print

Lola Keyezua is an Angolan-Dutch photographer and performance artist. She graduated in interactive media and design from the Royal Academy of Arts in The Hague in 2014, and has since lived and worked both in Europe and her native Angola moving most recently to the Philippines. Passionate about engaging as an artist in the development processes in economics, culture, and education, she began her creative career with defending the rights of people from underprivileged and discriminated social groups. For her art projects, she bravely enters some of the most precarious locations and situations. “What makes me uncomfortable in our society is what helps me create an artwork,” she said in an interview. The result is a body of work that is always aesthetically accomplished, often provocative, and never timid.

The *Fortia* series features young women in splendid red dresses – a modern take on the 17th-century Dutch costume – whom Keyezua photographed in a desert canyon setting. Each woman’s head is completely covered by a mask. The artist used masks which deprive the women of facial features and ability to speak up as a symbol of handicap imposed by harmful beliefs. Keyezua dedicated this project to the memory of her father who, like the makers of the masks that were specially created for this project, was a disabled man and who was ostracized by the community simply for being different. **EG**

“The women featured in the Fortia series bear no eyes, noses, mouths or ears – giving a sense of what it is like not to have full use of one’s body. The patterns on the masks are based on tribal drawings which are used as a language to reveal my identity as an Angolan. The donning of a red dress presents disability in a poetic light and invites onlookers to visualize how art can help present disability in a way that empowers vulnerable groups and affirms human dignity.”



Fortia 2, 2017. Giclée print



Fortia 1, 2017. Giclée print



Fortia - Sailing Back to Africa as a Dutch Woman 3, 2017. Giclée print

Emmanuelle Laté



b. 1982, Gabon

Emmanuelle Laté was born in 1982 in Libreville, Gabon. She began her graduate studies at the European Academy of Visual and Graphic Arts in Lille, France, eventually obtaining a diploma in architecture from ENSAP Bordeaux in 2012. After several internships in architecture, she set up 2EL Architects, an architecture firm in Libreville. In addition to architecture, Laté pursues a career in fine arts and design, her biggest passion being photography. Her photographs range from tracing vanishing architectural heritage to capturing the natural beauty of the human body.

The *Tournesol* (Sunflower) series was inspired by young women who stand up against the trend in consumer culture that links lighter complexion with social and professional success in order to promote skin-lightening products, even those with harmful health effects. Through the black and white images, the only touches of color in which are those of yellow flowers, Laté accentuates the beauty of the women whose skin has an intense and luminous tone of black, something that is becoming a rarity because of the proliferation of skin bleaching products which discolor skin and efface its natural beauty. The presence of the sunflower is prompted by the nickname “jauna jauna” (yellow yellow) given to women with bleached skin. In *Tournesol*, however, the artist focuses on the sunflower’s resemblance to the sun, under whose omnipotent influence people develop their natural skin colors. Akin to a professional color proofing specification tool used by photographers and printers, the brilliantly yellow flowers tell viewers that the images in front of us are not negatives, their colors are true colors, that what is black is indeed black, that it is beautiful. **EG**



Untitled (Tournesol) I, 2019. Digital photograph



Untitled (Tournesol) III, 2019. Digital photograph



Untitled (Tournesol) V, 2019. Digital photograph



Nelson Mandlate, *Growing in Darkness* series, 2015. Archival print on Hahnemühle photo rag paper

Mário Macilau



b. 1984, Mozambique

With over a decade as full-time photographer, Mário Macilau understands the power of the photograph to speak directly to onlookers' minds. Exposing diverse audiences to scenes from places that outsiders are normally prevented from entering – decayed urban structures, garbage dumps, rural areas affected by natural disasters, or beaches where followers of traditional religions perform their rituals in secret – is his method of calling for a positive change. Year after year, Macilau engages in risky projects to gain access to such places, win the trust of their itinerant owners, and capture on camera members of the communities that sociology describes as 'socially invisible.' Macilau's mission is to bring these people, especially the young people out of obscurity, affirm their presence, their right to be heard and their ability to conquer challenges of the scale that few of us have ever encountered.

More than mere documentary chronicles, Macilau's photographs are distinguished

by austere artistry and aestheticism. In the words of Angolan journalist José Eduardo Agualusa, Macilau's work "combines intelligence, sensitivity, extreme aesthetic detail and a curious vision that simultaneously exposes local realities while restoring the dignity of socially-isolated groups." **EG**

"The Growing in Darkness series was a 3-year project. I spent this time with street children of Maputo to gain a deeper understanding of their reality. I went under bridges and entered abandoned buildings—very dark, damp and dangerous places—in which young children live. Many of their portraits are naturally framed by window openings creating a photograph-within-a-photograph effect. This compositional technique echoes the dream of many street children to obtain the national ID card of Mozambique. Through focusing on the individuality of these children I make viewers consider their conditions not as a lifestyle choice but as one of the consequences of ongoing social changes and transformations of human values."



Two Boys and Fish, *Faith* series, 2018. Archival print on Hahnemühle photo rag paper

"Part of the "Faith" series which looks into the erosion of the principle of a higher power, Two Boys and Fish reflects on the milieu of the practitioners of local religions in the coastal areas of Mozambique. Two young boys are playing on the beach while walking around with fish they caught for sale. The livelihood of the country depends greatly on the fishing sector, which supports a large part of local and expatriate population. Here child labor is common, especially in the informal and small-scale fisheries in Mozambique.

Once items are sold to tourists, the beach is where these children like to come to play and chat with each other about their dreams: whom they want to be and how they want to live. One of the boys has covered his face with sand as if mimicking a ceremony by members of the local Zion Church, where a practitioner's body is covered with white beach sand as a symbol of purity."



A Girl with Firewood, *Burundi*, 2016. Archival print on Hahnemühle photo rag paper

"In most countries in Africa, the base of the economy and most of the infrastructure are centered on the capital city. But infrastructure does not always reach rural areas whose low population density and small-size settlements render them nearly invisible in statistical studies. The majority of households in such areas use charcoal or firewood for cooking, and it is often women and girls who collect and carry home the downed firewood."



Molenza (Shield) detail, 2020. Digital photograph



Kim Karabo Makin

b. 1994, Botswana

Kim Makin's art practice is informed by the complications of her identity. She was born in Botswana to a Tswana mother and a father of mixed South African and English heritage, a fact that made her "stateless" under a 1984 Citizenship Act under which a child born of a marriage between its mother and a non-citizen father is considered an alien in Botswana.

Makin is presently based in South Africa, having done her BA and MA in art at the Michaelis School of Fine Arts at the University of Cape Town. Her practice is influenced by her sense of transnational displacement brought about by the fact of both belonging and not belonging where she lives. It is based on research into her family and other historical archives, and combines sculpture, sound and installation.

In her work, Makin explores ideas of identity as complex, layered and fluid; the tension between collective and individual identity; and how identity is constructed in relation to specific histories, geographies and politics.

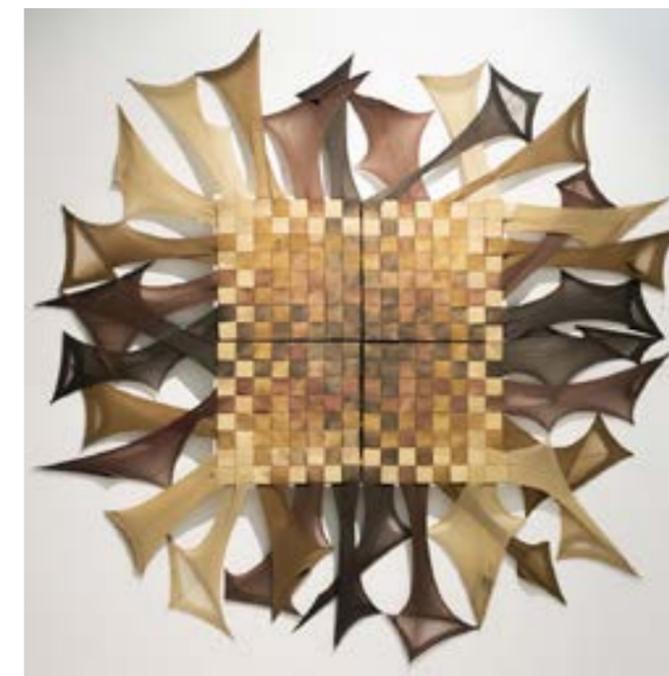
The works *Urine Trail of the Bull*, *Racialism*, *----- bag* and *Molenza* are woven from women's 'nude' pantyhose made for different skin tones. These visually compelling works draw inspiration from techniques and patterns of Botswana's distinctive craft traditions such as basket weaving. But here, they are infused with new meaning as they question ideas of gender, race and national identity. **NB**



----- bag, 2018. Pantyhose, plastic, checkered, woven mesh bag, steel round bar, steel cable



Molenza (Shield), installation view, 2020. Pantyhose, steel wire



Racialism, 2017 - 2019. Wood and pantyhose. Image by Thero Makepe



The husband must shut up and listen!, 2020. Acrylic on canvas. Image courtesy of Yebo Art Gallery, Lobamba



Phindile Mamba



b. 1977, Eswatini

Phindile Mamba is a self-taught artist from Mbabane, Eswatini who has been painting full time since 2014 after participating in the *Livi laBomake* (Women's Voices) empowerment project organized by the Yebo! ArtReach NGO to promote a nation-wide dialogue on women's rights and gender equality through art creation and display.

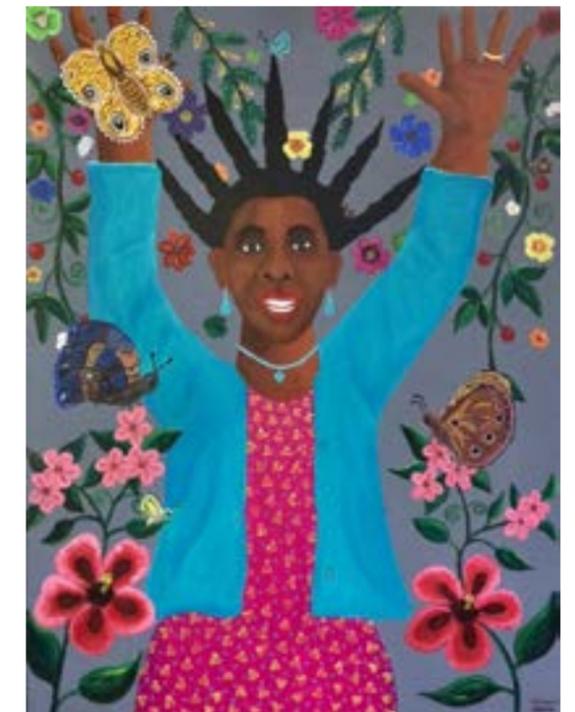
Despite tackling difficult subjects relating to women's oppression, Phindile uses charming and colorful images to illustrate her strong point of view. Animals feature often; good people are symbolized as cats, doves or sheep and dangerous ones as hyenas or snakes. Flowers, butterflies, and nature bring Phindile much joy in her life and are in most paintings. The husband in the painting *The Husband Must Shut Up and Listen!* is featured as a leopard, but not a threatening one, now docile and content being carried around by a strong wife.

In *The Leader*, the woman has her fist raised demanding power, but the cute sheep soften the message. Phindile is softly spoken and humble, but one should not underestimate her power and strength as like many women in Eswatini, she holds the society together.

Phindile lives in a patriarchal culture and the art world is male dominated, she now takes great pleasure in telling men in her community that their opinions that women cannot be artists are old fashioned. As a single mother with three children to raise she is now working as a full-time artist. Like the strong women that feature in her paintings she has created a better life for herself and her children through her hard work as an artist.

Aleta Armstrong, Yebo Art Gallery.

"Most of my paintings are about women, I see them struggling and living a very painful life. Women are abused because they don't have the power to fight and this touches me deeply and shows in many of my paintings. I also explore happier topics as some women do live a happy life with their families. I also explore the ideas that women can do everything a man does and have the power. People in Eswatini must start trusting women and giving them respect and power. But women must also make themselves powerful!"



Happiness, 2020. Acrylic on canvas. Image courtesy of Yebo Art Gallery, Lobamba



Mampuya Mayimona (Massy)

b. 1995, Republic of Congo

Mampuya Mayimona (alias Massy) is a Congolese painter known for imaginative portraits of people whose bodies are made of woven strips of plant fiber, similar to baskets. Massy studied painting on his own as well as under the artists Mukendi Bamwa and Achille Katemo. However, it is thanks to meeting and attending the workshop of Patsheli Kahambo (b. 1990), the contemporary symbolist artist from Kinshasa, DRC, that Massy decided to embark on a career in the visual arts.

Combining elements of modern global culture with traditional Luba people beliefs in a symbolic play, Massy's paintings are an ongoing quest into the exchanges – material and spiritual – between humans and the universe.

In Luba cosmogony, vessels and structures made of woven straw serve not only utilitarian and ceremonial purposes but are also central to the myth of creation. The exterior and decoration of a lidded basket represent the model of the universe, while its interior is seen as a depository of knowledge, a vehicle of communication with the past and the future, and a place of fertility. As the story goes, the First Man had a granary full of seeds on his head. As he moved over the Earth, these seeds spread around and gave birth to different species of plants. Keeping in mind that West African granaries are architectural structures made of woven straw and clay, Massy chooses the basket analogy to speak about the ways in which our choices define the world around us today. By painting people's heads and sometimes entire bodies as baskets, he reminds us that, like the contents of these mystic vessels, the energies, thoughts, words and actions produced by people are a result of the knowledge received, retained and processed by them. **EG**



Génération ya mado, 2019. Oil on canvas, private collection



La perte, 2020. Oil on canvas, private collection



L'égoïsme, 2020. Oil on canvas, private collection

“The basket-head is a symbol of the place that contains knowledge; it is the knowledge that defines the man and makes it possible for him to exist in the way that is described as ‘to know is to be.’”



Gael Maski

b. 1990, Democratic Republic of Congo

Gael Maski is a mixed-media artist who lives and works in Kinshasa. Trained in painting at the Académie des Beaux-Arts, Kinshasa, his practice has evolved to embrace other media. Inspired by the 2017 Lubumbashi Biennale, whose theme *Éblouissements* (dazzlements) explored the ways in which reality can be reimagined through images, Maski decided to base his practice on photography. He uses photcollage as a means of blending the real and the imaginary.

Maski's work focuses on the resilience of marginalized people in his city, whom he calls "the superheroes of everyday life". Believing that in order to survive, these people have to escape reality and take refuge in an imaginary world, he transforms their everyday environments into imaginary landscapes full of visual metaphors.

In Maski's *Psycho Corona* series, hand sanitizer, which became omnipresent during the COVID-19 pandemic, recurs as a symbol of cleansing and purifying. Here, it implies that survival in difficult socio-economic circumstances depends on the ability to cleanse the mind of stress, to wash away harsh realities in order to start again each day. The scuba mask and breathing tubes depicted in these works imply that people are able to survive and breathe despite being submerged in difficulties. In the act of survival lies hope and optimism for the future. **NB**



Last corona love (detail), *Psycho corona* series, 2020. Photocollage and acrylic on canvas. Image courtesy of Angalia gallery, Chevry-sous-le Bignon



Big man (detail), *Psycho corona* series, 2020. Photocollage and acrylic on canvas. Image courtesy of Angalia gallery, Chevry-sous-le Bignon



Masque off, *Psycho corona* series, 2020. Photocollage and acrylic on canvas. Image courtesy of Angalia gallery, Chevry-sous-le Bignon



Breath, *Psycho corona* series, 2020. Photocollage and acrylic on canvas. Image courtesy of Angalia gallery, Chevry-sous-le Bignon



'Matlali Matabane

b. 1991, Lesotho

Born in Maseru, Lesotho, 'Matlali Matabane came to art later in life. She began her professional career in the corporate world, deciding in 2019 to switch full time to the arts. She is currently enrolled in an interdisciplinary arts and cultural studies degree at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, where she had built a digital media creative practice focused on themes of femininity, Bosothe (the peoples native to Lesotho and South Africa) identity, and representation politics.

Her series *Body Politics*, presented in **We Are Afrika**, draws on the storehouse of Bosothe cultural traditions to experiment with narratives of identity. The compositions, layering, and muted color tones of her pieces explore the female Bosothe experience and its rich history, and connects it to the philosophical landscape of Southern Africa. The works also tap into the heritage of decorative pieces in African cultures.

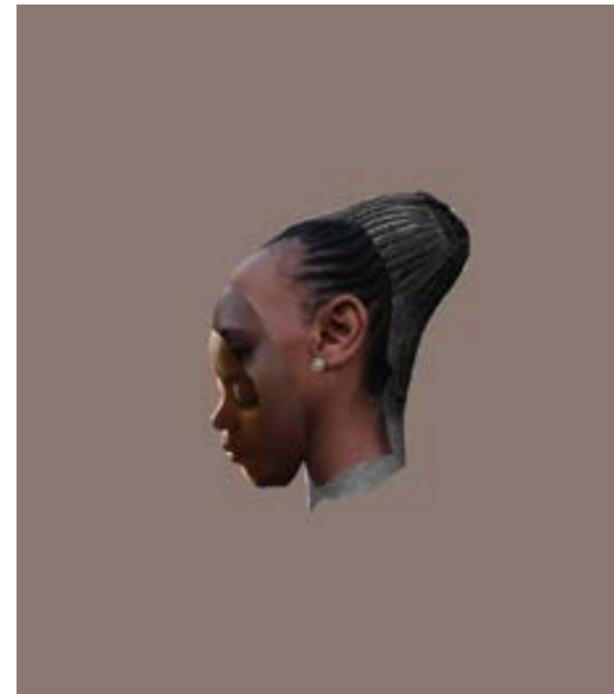
While pursuing a career in the arts, Matabane also seeks to explore the power of the image in educational settings, looking at how visual storytelling can help younger generations build literacy and creative problem-solving skills, and understand their own cultural histories more fully. **JB**



Titled, 2021. Photograph



Ngoale, 2021. Digital collage



Head_Space, 2021. Digital collage



Scarface, 2021, Digital collage

Cedric Mizero



b. 1993, Rwanda

Cedric Mizero's path towards an artistic career began when he was growing up in a small village in western Rwanda. He watched his mother make clothes, combining her passion as well as a means of upgrading the wardrobe of her eight children, which inspired him to invent new kinds of outfits as a game. In his teens, Mizero began tailoring, and in 2012 he moved to Rwanda's capital Kigali to pursue fashion design professionally. He soon made a mark in Rwanda's creative circles and internationally with inventively constructed garments in which he often intermixes traditional artisanal techniques, new materials and repurposed objects.

Living in a big city and working in high fashion, Mizero has encountered a culture that idealizes female beauty, but takes it at face value. Not intimidated by the glamour aspect of the fashion industry, and "never scared to try new things", in the words of John Munyeshuri, founder of the Kigali Fashion Week, in 2017, Mizero decided to challenge this culture and become a voice for common people with his *Fashion for All* project. He launched the project by inviting farm women to model his dresses on the runway during the 2018 Collective Rwanda Fashion Show. Mizero repeated his bold experiment the following year, and subsequently orga-

nized the exhibitions *Strong Women* and *Beauty in the Heart*, featuring photo portraits of his impromptu models in fashionable outfits, equipped with typical attributes of farm life – tools, produce, a village bicycle – that were fully gilded. By liberally employing gold and glitter – symbols of wealth, superiority and excess – Mizero encourages the viewers to recognize the dignity, resourcefulness and strength of rural women, a driving force of local economy whose needs are often overlooked and unappreciated. **EG**



Beauty in the Heart 3 (detail), 2018. Digital print



Beauty in the Heart 1 (detail), 2018. Digital print



Beauty in the Heart 2, 2018. Digital print



Untitled #9, *The Prophecy*, 2015. Pigment inkjet print on Canson Infinity fiber rag paper. Image courtesy of MAGNIN-A, Paris

Fabrice Monteiro



b. 1972, Belgium (raised in Benin)

Fabrice Monteiro is an Agouda, a descendant of Brazilian slaves with Portuguese names. His background is multicultural, being born in Belgium, growing up in Benin, and now living and working in Dakar, Senegal.

In 2007, after a career as a model, Monteiro began to work on the other side of the camera. One of his principal mentors, Alfonse Pagano, an American photographer and friend, granted him access to his studio in New York City, allowing his photographic career to take off. Monteiro's work began firmly rooted in the fashion world, but quickly grew to tackle more complex personal topics including his ancestral history of slavery and lived experiences navigating an Afro-European identity. He considers his work to sit at the intersection between photojournalism and fashion photography.

Monteiro's series *The Prophecy* was born when he returned to Africa after 20 years in Europe, and was shocked by the environmental degradation, pollution, and

excessive consumption in Dakar. Composite characters, inspired by West African masquerades, emerge from oil slicks, garbage dumps and parched landscapes to deliver a message of caution and accountability: "Noting the lack of environmental citizenship around me, I wanted to tell a story, a tale that would combine animism and ecology to speak better to hearts and then try to contribute to the awakening of children's ecological consciences." **JB**

"Relations between Africa and Europe have constantly fluctuated between attraction and rejection, empowerment and denial, recognition and anger. They have never been indifferent. The history of the African-European people over the last centuries, that I have inherited the complexity of, is my main source of inspiration."

"Every scourge, every problem does not only concern the country where it is treated, but all of humanity. Using each other's beliefs and traditions, I seek to build bridges between all for a more global approach to this unprecedented challenge in the history of mankind."



Untitled #6, *The Prophecy*, 2014. Pigment inkjet print on Canson Infinity fiber rag paper. Image courtesy of MAGNIN-A, Paris



Untitled #8, *The Prophecy*, 2013. Pigment inkjet print on Canson Infinity fiber rag paper. Image courtesy of MAGNIN-A, Paris

Kresiah Mukwazhi



b. 1992, Zimbabwe

Kresiah Mukwazhi is a multidisciplinary artist working across photography, painting, sculpture and performance. She studied visual arts and photography at the Zimbabwe National Gallery School of Visual Art and Design in Harare, and the Market Photo Workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa. Mukwazhi had her debut solo exhibition, *Bedroom Interview* with SMAC gallery in Capetown, South Africa in 2018. Her work has been included in numerous group exhibitions, including *Five Bhoobh – Painting at the end of an era* at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA) in Cape Town in 2019, *African Textures* at Osart Gallery in Milan in 2020 and the Zimbabwe pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale, 2022.

Mukwazhi is concerned with issues of gender based violence, exploitation and abuse reinforced by cultural and religious patriarchal norms. Her work expresses the repression and violence against women perpetuated by these norms, such as in the limbless double torso *Mambokadzi II* (p.23), which is constructed out of women's undergarments.

Yet, the alluring colors and textures of her fabric works also serve to celebrate the agency and resilience of the women they refer to. Her intention here is "to transform this experience and materials into symbols of resistance and struggle, as well as begin a conversation about what it means to be a woman today in a world influenced and controlled by technology and patriarchy. Can culture evolve? What holds us back from emancipation? How can we fight for it? What role do men play in Feminism?". **NB**



Choices became chains, 2020. Petticoat material, satin, cotton, mattress fabric, paint, acrylic, lipstick, fabric dyes. Image courtesy of Jan Kaps gallery, Cologne



Please tip your dancers, 2020. HD video



Kudyiswa uchishamirira, 2020. Fabrics, chalk and paint on canvas. Image courtesy of Jan Kaps gallery, Cologne



Longinos Nagila

b. 1986, Kenya

Longinos Nagila is an experimental multimedia artist who lives and works in Nairobi. He studied filmmaking in Bari, Italy after graduating from the Buruburu Institute of Fine Arts in Nairobi.

Nagila is inspired by early black and white photography, and often transfers images from photographs to paper using paint. Nagila's practice evolves constantly, but his work is driven by a critique of the processes and implications of industrialization, mass production, and rapid urbanization. Nagila is interested in the ways in which Western culture and fashion influence Africa. He challenges the viewer to see the radical contrast between concepts of contemporary Western and traditional African beauty and design.

Nagila is also a keen observer of the influence of Western capitalism and material values in Africa. He uses recognizable symbols from religious iconography or fashion industry's brand logos, as well as familiar phrases as titles of his works to comment on the co-existence of religion and materialism in contemporary African society. **NB**



Suited Man 2, 2016. Mixed media on paper. The World Bank permanent collection

“Saints and the City activates the utopian and the dystopian space that is a city. Young people are at the center of rural to urban migration, many of them with the dream of making it in the growing urban spaces, their sweat as laborers is binder used to mix the cement forever development and expansion of the city. With a big part of their heart and spirit left in the village with hope of one day returning to a place called home. The village.”



Suited Man 1, 2016. Mixed media on paper. The World Bank permanent collection



A Saint in Louis Vuitton, 2016. Mixed media on paper. The World Bank permanent collection



Saints and the City, 2018. Mixed media on canvas. The World Bank permanent collection



Hope, 2022. Fabric, round bar and plaster of paris. Image courtesy of StArt Art Gallery, Windhoek



Persistent, 2022. Fabric, round bar and plaster of paris. Image courtesy of StArt Art Gallery, Windhoek



Alms Woman, 2022. Fabric, round bar and plaster of paris. Image courtesy of StArt Art Gallery, Windhoek



Horns of False Power, 2017. Papier maché, wood, soap stone. Image courtesy of StArt Art Gallery, Windhoek

Elisia Nghidishange

b. 1981, Namibia

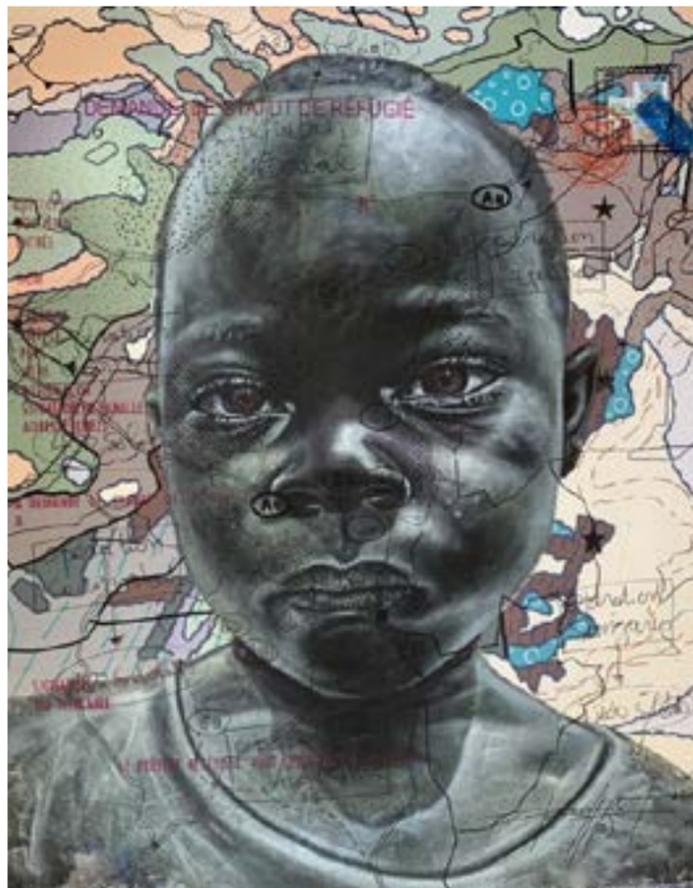
Elisia Nghidishange is a printmaker, sculptor and mixed media artist. Born in northern Namibia, she graduated from the College of the Arts in Windhoek in 2016, and completed her first artist residency in Rapperswil, Switzerland in 2019. In 2017 she held her first solo exhibition *The Cost of Wealth* at the Goethe-Institut, Windhoek and was part of StArt Art Gallery's *Being Here*. She has since exhibited in a number of other group and solo shows, and her work is held in private and public collections including the National Art Gallery of Namibia, Arts Association Heritage Trust, Namibia and Iwalewahaus, Germany. In 2021, Nghidishange was awarded 2nd Prize for Sculpture at the 2020 Bank Windhoek Triennial.

"I try to bring my tradition into this abstract, contemporary society. I try to find the position of women in the presence of men. I try to find my position too."

Inspired by her heritage, Nghidishange uses familiar local materials such as cow horn and beads made from ostrich eggshells to make sculptural works that explore the place of tradition and gender norms in a contemporary and cosmopolitan society, and express resistance to the ways in which women are oppressed and marginalized.

Clad in the iconic black, red and pink of the traditional ondelela fabric of the Oshiwambo people, Nghidishange's striking, spiky female figures *Alms Woman*, *Hope* and *Persistent* occupy space in an assertive manner, persisting in the face of opposition and hardship and demanding respect for their individual autonomy.

Elisia Nghidishange also draws attention to issues of wealth and power in society. *Horns of False Power* is a forceful figure with its repeated, horn-like protrusions. Here, the horns are a symbol of wealth and virility, but the artist undercuts the powerful appearance of this figure through her use of papier-maché rather than stone, clay or real horns. Commenting on the performative nature of power and status, she says, "I used fragile papier-maché horns to portray the behaviour of arrogant people in society." **NB**



#Wum's child#.org, 2020. Acrylic, Indian ink and posca on canvas. Image courtesy of Afikaris gallery, Paris



#Mentalmirage@yahoo.space, 2019. Ink, acrylic and silkscreen printing on canvas. Image courtesy of Afikaris gallery, Paris



Jean David Nkot

b. 1989, Cameroon

Jean David Nkot uses multiple layers in his work to engage with broad themes such as trans-national migration, gender equality and poverty, and also to bring our attention to the lives and stories of individual subjects. The works presented here consist of hyper realistic portraits superimposed on layers of geographical maps and economic data, and they reference the mining and the mismanagement of Africa's natural resources. They are part of a recent body of his work called *Human@condition*, exhibited in 2021 at Afikaris Gallery, Paris.

Inspired by the Swiss artist Thomas Hirschhorn, Nkot uses maps in his work to establish geographical context, while the portraits layered on top tell individual stories. Through the detailed and nuanced depiction of his subjects, Nkot draws attention to their humanity. He sometimes adds a third layer, of text, to convey additional information that helps to drive home the message of the work.

Nkot's work has been included in many prestigious exhibitions, including *Aujourd'hui 2019*, curated by Simon Njami and sponsored by the World Bank Country Office at the Cameroon National Museum in Yaoundé, Cameroon. **NB**

"... rather than highlighting pain and sorrow, I focus on the resilience of the people I represent. I'm interested in the moments of joy, and I capture the smiles behind the suffering. I praise the self-sacrifice and strength of these anonymous individuals."



Po.Box Mille@pourune.fr., 2021. Acrylic, posca and screenprint on canvas. Image courtesy of Afikaris gallery, Paris



www.unmillier@pour_une_poignée_d'or_bleu, 2021. Acrylic, posca and screenprint on canvas. Image courtesy of Afikaris gallery, Paris



Religion BFF III (Techno Head series), 2020, digital composite



A Lopsided Tale III, Water Aid (Techno Head series), 2020, digital composite



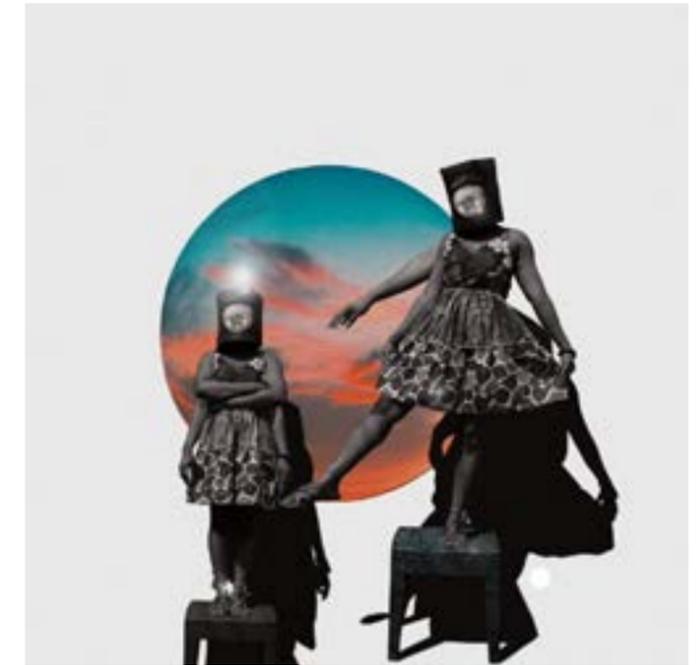
A Lopsided Tale IV, Water Aid (Techno Head series), 2020, digital composite

Joseph Obanubi

b. 1994, Nigeria

Joseph Obanubi is a multimedia artist based in Lagos, Nigeria. Drawing on his background in graphic design and advertising, Obanubi uses a technique he calls “visual bricolage” – constructing images out of diverse photographic and graphic elements. A surrealist mix of reality and delusion, these re/constructions provide the viewer with alternative ways to look at and think about familiar things.

Obanubi’s practice, which synthesizes elements of Nigerian Yoruba culture and the promises of technology, can be placed within the context of Afrofuturism. His *Technoheads* series is suggestive of African metaphysical concepts of magic and altered reality. Merging motorcycle parts with human bodies, it proposes technology as the basis of contemporary human interaction. Within this ongoing series, the images titled *A Lopsided Tale* were created for the charity WaterAid. They focus on the impact a lack of clean water can have on women and girls, who are usually responsible for the collection of water. **NB**



Faux petit Jeté and a stance, (Techno Head series), 2020, digital composite



Self - Portrait III, (Techno Head series), 2018, digital composite

“For many communities, water sources are usually far from their homes, and it typically falls to women and girls to spend much of their time and energy fetching water, a task which often exposes them to attack from men and even wild animals... [The work] dabbles into spirituality, functionality and gender, referencing Nigerian Yoruba sitting sculptures with the poses. It dwells on the healing qualities of water... Yoruba believe water to be a symbol of force and strength.”

Hyacinthe Ouattara

b. 1981, Burkina Faso

Hyacinthe Ouattara is a self-taught multidisciplinary artist who lives and works in Paris, France. His creative process is inspired by bringing to the visible realm the unseen forces uniting all elements in the universe. In his exploration of this omnipresent interdependency, Ouattara organically transitions from one material to another. He experiments with a variety of art forms, from drawing to performance, and compares his process to writing music. Like musical pieces, his creations are born from his emotions and the 'spirit of the place' at the moment of making the work.

Textiles are among the artist's favorite materials. Versatile fabrics bought in the local markets of the places he visits and pieces of used clothing often feature in his paintings, installations and sculptures.

In his series *The Anatomy of Tissues* Ouattara focuses his attention on microcosmic invisible connections. Composed of colorful tows of fabrics ('tissus' in French) tied by threads in contrasting colors and fitted with openings resembling membranous walls, these abstract sculptures are evocative of enlarged medical illustrations of tissues in the body. Yet the ties that interest the artist here are not from cell-to-cell but from soul-to-soul, and his objective is to reveal the key links ensuring social cohesion, and the importance of reciprocal support in challenging times. **EG**

"Fabrics are like the second skin in which the world lives, they both hide and represent us. Each piece carries the memory of its maker and owner, and, collectively, fabrics represent the soul of the community."



L'anatomie Des Tissus #3, 2019. Twisted and knitted fabric and threads



L'anatomie Des Tissus #2, 2019. Twisted and knitted fabric and threads



Figure Assise, 2019, twisted and knitted fabric and threads



L'anatomie Des Tissus #1, 2019. Twisted and knitted fabric and threads

Christine Chetty Payet



b. 1969, Seychelles

Living and working in the hybrid, multi-ethnic milieu of the Seychelles, Christine Chetty Payet's work offers a critical, subjective analysis of cultural and social issues, while exploring ideas of personal and ethnic identity. Her concerns are with marginalization: of women in society, and of the materials and categories of creative making that have traditionally been excluded from consideration as 'art'.

Committed to the cause of women's rights, Chetty Payet fuses materials, tools and techniques associated with female craft creation to create evocative symbolic and metaphorical images of the condition of women. Her textile creations refer to the difficulties faced by women, whether it's gender inequality, disrespect for women's rights, or violent practices such as genital mutilation, within diverse societies and contexts.

A graduate of the University of Sussex, Brighton, UK, Christine Chetty Payet is also a member of the Seychelles National Council of Arts. Since 2010, she has been Director of the Seychelles Institute of art and design. She participated in the Dakar Biennale in 2000, and in group exhibitions in Europe, Asia and North America, including *Africa Now!* at the World Bank in Washington, DC in 2008. She has received several awards including the 3rd prize at the 2nd Mauritius Contemporary Art Triennial in 2005. **NB**

"The diversity of the Seychelles human environment provokes me to work with a range of fabrics as it spans all social classes and links the past to the present. In my work I have employed both traditional and innovative techniques to express women's issues such as artistic inclusion, as well as using elements of my artistic cultural heritage... with the intent of challenging present perceptions which exist in the visual arts and often denies women's work."



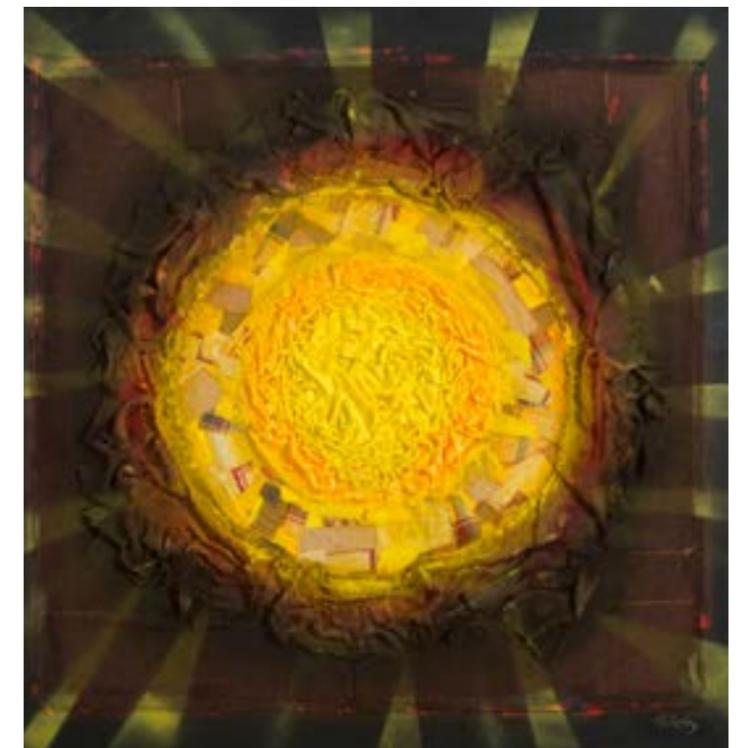
Christine Chetty working at home, 2020



Vannsi Vandan (triptych), 2016. Mixed media on canvas



Untitled (detail), 2004. Mixed media



African Sun, 2015. Mixed media on canvas



Climate Change - Save Future Generations, 2014. Digital photograph

Zé Pereira



b. 1964, Cabo Verde

José Pereira was born in the city of Mindelo in St. Vicente, Cabo Verde. He is a nature photographer who portrays his country in its most diverse socio-cultural aspects. His works are featured in magazines, books by various authors, CD covers, and on various tourist sites; he is also the author of the large-scale scoreboard at the Amílcar Cabral International Airport on the island of Sal. He has a degree in Public Relations from the School of Business and Governance of University of Cape Verde and a certificate in photography. He is also an amateur writer and poet.

Pereira is dedicated to photography as a tool for raising awareness, intervention and criticism, whether in the context of environmental policies that endanger the biodiversity balance or in relation to social injustices. **EG**

“Photography is always a sublime opportunity to give voice to silence because at times it is necessary to make silence scream. Scream for social justice, scream for humanity, scream

for nature and the environment, scream for abused children and women, for abandoned elderly people, scream for respect for cultures and traditions that are different and strange to us, and, deep down, scream for love. I convey all this in silence, through images that mute thousands of words, words lacking sense, lacking soul because of being inconsequential and devoid of humanity, words going after falseness, which only love seizes and deconstructs to reawaken them as pure and genuine.

Photography consists for me in stripping my soul, stripping myself of the pains of this world while confronting them, and revealing the authenticity of my feelings. Photography, in this context, allows us to grow in humanity and aspire to a citizenship free of geographic, ideological, or spiritual boundaries. I feel this as my own way of being, as a

universal connection in which we are, perhaps, only the messengers once charged with the ability to transmit love.

*What I intend to contribute with my images is to take part in the construction of a better world, a world that is socially fair, less unequal, in which love is our compass. I wish **We Are Afrika** to be the voice for the universality of art and being, and an expression of how form and concept can come from a spiritual nucleus encompassing all of us, where there is no room for exclusion. The differences are admirable in highlighting the diversity and creativity of a culturally interdependent and interacting whole, which only contributes to the enrichment of art as a form of universal expression.”*



Ubuntu Soul (detail), 2019. Digital photograph



Fisherman from Tarrafal de S. Nicolau, 2019. Digital photograph



RIP Sean Prince, 2016. Spray paint



Environment graffiti intervention at the Francoise Dolto Boarding School, Majunga, Madagascar, 2016. Spray paint



Mbolatiana Raolison 'Clipse Teean'

b. 1985, Madagascar

Clipse Teean is a graffiti artist, writer, painter, and designer. Her artistic journey began in 2000, and over the last two decades she has become an active voice for females in the street art community. Clipse is a member of The Label Kolotsaina Mainty in Madagascar, as well as of the International Business Music of Chambers in Amsterdam, and Rusted Mic Renegades in Spain.

Having mastered a multitude of techniques ranging from spray-painting, stenciling, and airbrush, to sculpting and welding, Clipse's style is bold and powerful. She works on a large scale, combining saturated colors, with thick linework. As an eclectic artist, she is constantly experimenting with new techniques, though she usually begins her mural designs by designing them on a smaller scale on paper. **JB**

"I seek to show everything: the beauty of life, experience, human and nature, and more. I hope to inform and educate. Creating my murals is a form of adventure for me. It allows me to share messages to society, accessible to all the world. My goal is to showcase Madagascar in all its authenticity – it's social, economic, and cultural aspects – something beyond the way others tend to see Madagascar as a place in eternal poverty. We have so much more, so many opportunities."



Bring Color to Your Life, 2017. Wood, upholstery filler, sofa fiber fabric, spray paint



Notorious Big, 2011. Mixed media, acrylic, spray paint, image courtesy of Teean Clipse and Ginger Coffee Club



Rijasolo

b. 1973, France, based in Madagascar

Rijasolo was born in France and returned to Madagascar, the country of his roots, in 2004. It had been nearly two decades since his time in Madagascar and his return was driven by a desire to create a new portfolio of work titled Miverina which confronted the challenges of reestablishing an intimate relationship with a place of origin after a long period of absence. Throughout the development of this new body of work he also worked with the local council in his area to set up a series of photography workshops for emerging young artists from the town of Antsiranana.

Rijasolo has been internationally recognized for this work, first as a selected artist in 2005 for the Rencontres de la Photographie Africaine in Bamako, and then again in 2019 as the winner of the Paritana Contemporary Art Award. His work is inspired by the humanist documentary photography style, in line with the pure tradition of American photojournalism where the photographer is fully immersed in their subject.

Rijasolo now lives and works in Antananarivo, Madagascar. He has a refined and respected artistic style as a reporter-photographer. He worked for the Wostok Press agency to cover the 2007 presidential campaign in France, and in November of that same year, went on to co-found Riva Press (www.riva-press.com) alongside four other photojournalist colleagues with a goal of bringing an independent, apolitical view to their work. He continues to collaborate with French newspapers and magazines such as *Libération*, *Le Monde*, *Paris Match* and *Jeune Afrique*. **JB**

“Working on the themes of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic was really a necessity for me: in a developing country, like Madagascar, these disasters directly impact the inhabitants of the country much more than in a developed country where infrastructure and health systems are much more efficient. In Madagascar, when climate change destroys the coral reef and therefore the underwater biodiversity on the southwest coast, several thousand fishermen can no longer work. Likewise, when COVID-19 forces the Malagasy state to close its borders, it causes the dismissal of more than 1 million employees working in tourism.”



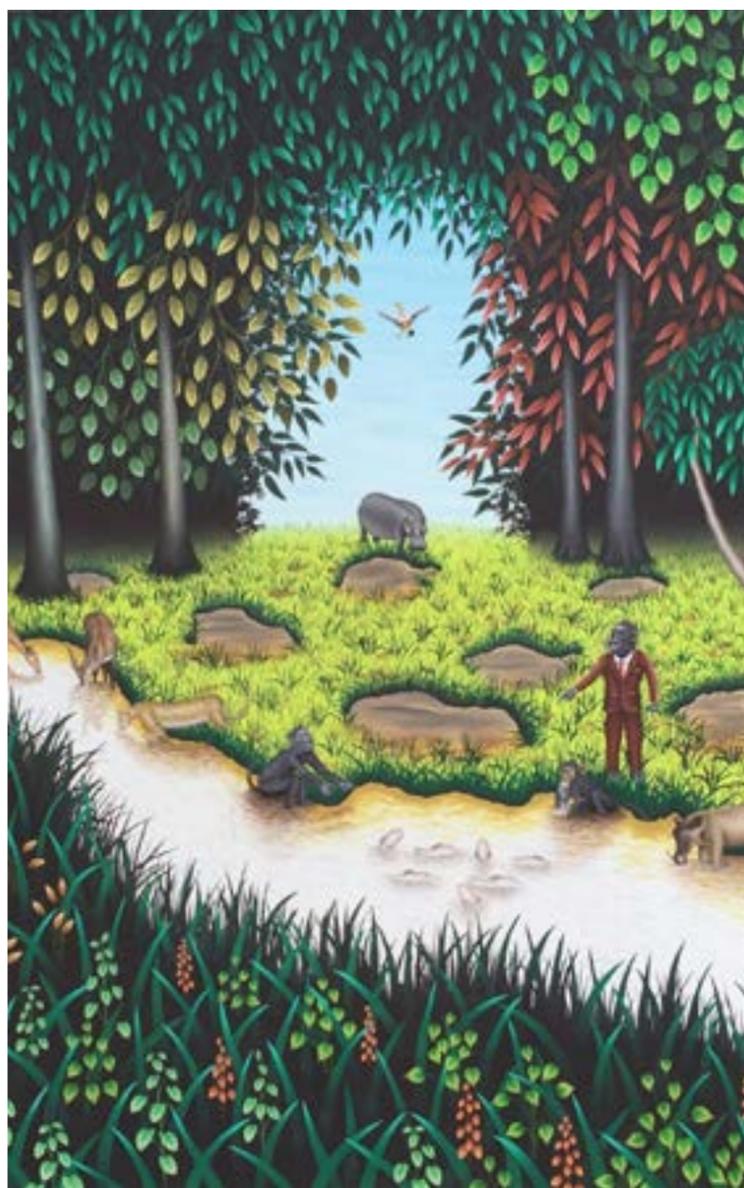
COVID-19 Coronavirus Crisis in Madagascar series, 2020



Madagascar - Terminus of Cyclones series, 2015



Madagascar - Terminus of Cyclones series, 2015



Le Regret (detail), 2015. Oil on canvas. Image courtesy of Collection Gervanne + Matthias Leridon, Paris

Dieudonné Wambeti Sana

b. 1977, Central African Republic

Dieudonné Wambeti Sana was interested in art at a young age. When he was 14, he apprenticed with Michel Ouabanga, an established artist whose naïve realist style and focus on forests and the natural environment remains a major influence on his work. However, Wambeti goes further than his mentor in infusing his interpretation of everyday scenes with traditional myths, folklore and spiritualism, and populating them with realistic portraits of local people.

Wambeti's paintings celebrate the abundant forest and mineral wealth of his native country. The viewer is beguiled by the rich colors and intricate details, but is ultimately unsettled by the visual opposition between the lush foliage and the human-made elements in these works – the roads and houses, the cars and planes that seem to encroach on and threaten this natural wealth, endangering it through deforestation and the plunder of natural resources. **NB**

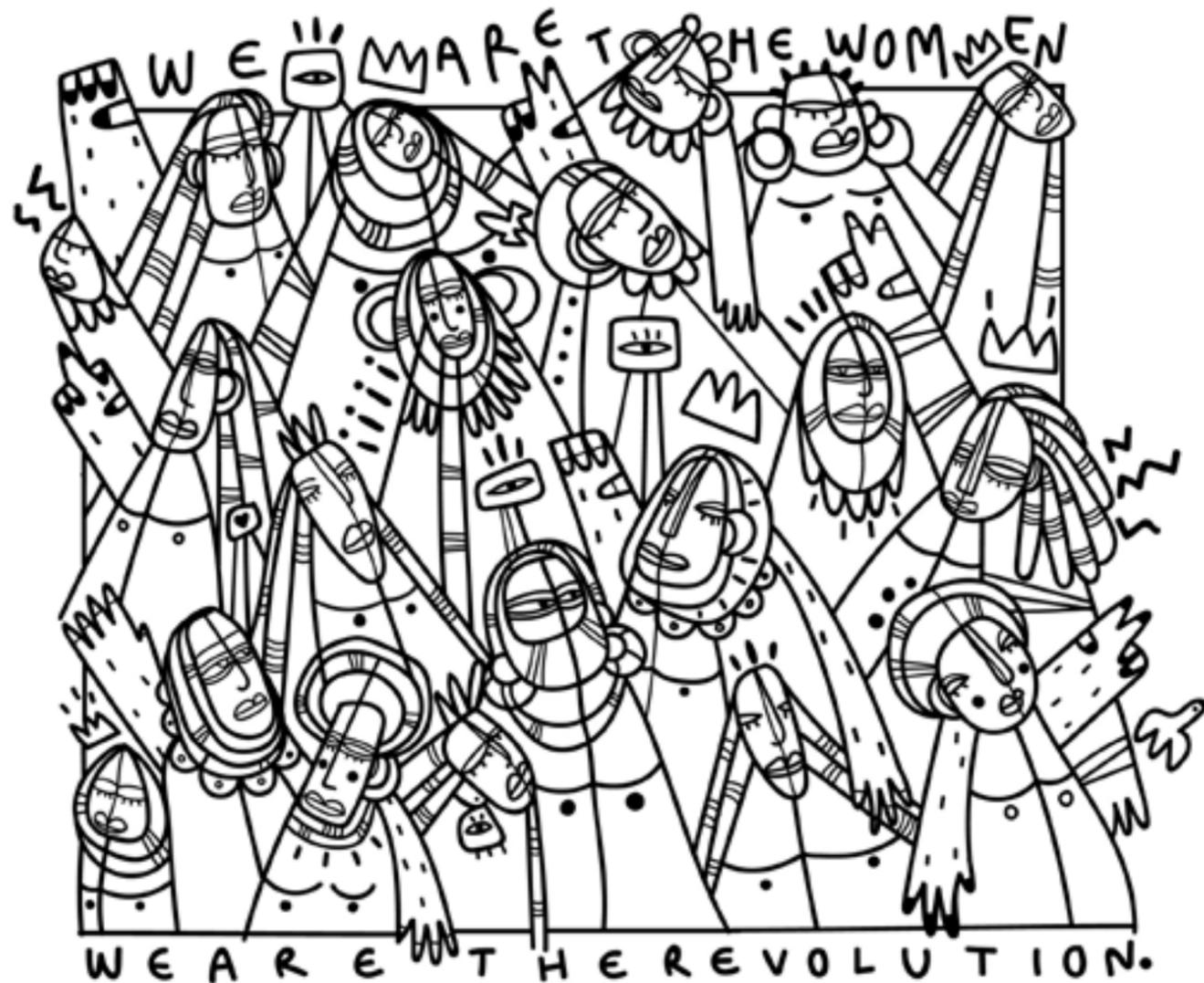
“The society we live in is in danger, and we are the cause... Let’s protect nature, this is essential for all of us and the generations to come because if we do nothing, we will suffer drought and our living conditions will be much harsher.”



L'Homme et la nature 4, 2017. Oil on canvas



Sans défense, 2020. Oil on canvas



We Are the Revolution, 2019. Digital illustration



Freedom, Peace, Justice, 2018. Digital illustration

Alaa Satir

b. 1990, Sudan

For Alaa Satir, an artist, activist and illustrator from Sudan, art is a way of processing what is happening around her, both socially and politically. Her work often draws on her own experience as a Black African woman in a society where hierarchies of color exist. It is both a critical commentary on social issues and an invitation to start a wider conversation around them. She views art in public spaces as a part of this process. She was an active participant in the Sudanese people's revolution that overthrew the military dictatorship in 2019, helping to paint a vast public mural along with other artists as a form of civic protest.

Satir is a graduate in architecture from the University of Khartoum, and is currently pursuing an MA in illustration and visual media at the University of the Arts, London, UK. Her first solo exhibition *Morning Doodles* (2017) explored feminism, social media and politics. In 2018, her work was shown as part of a group exhibition promoting women's rights and challenging gender-based violence. She works as an independent graphic designer, illustrator, and cartoonist. **NB**

"I painted my first mural during the Sudanese revolution and I could see for myself the power that public arts had, especially in a country where experiencing art doesn't come as a natural and conscious decision. Street art is for everyone to enjoy and experience and connect with, and during the revolution it was one of our strongest weapons of civil disobedience. That's why I always try to find new ways to place my art in public spaces and in different countries."



A Woman's Revolution, 2019. Digital illustration



Revolt! (detail), 2018. Acrylic (mural)





Dominance 4 (detail), 2017. Digital image, collaboration with AlFanjariyah art



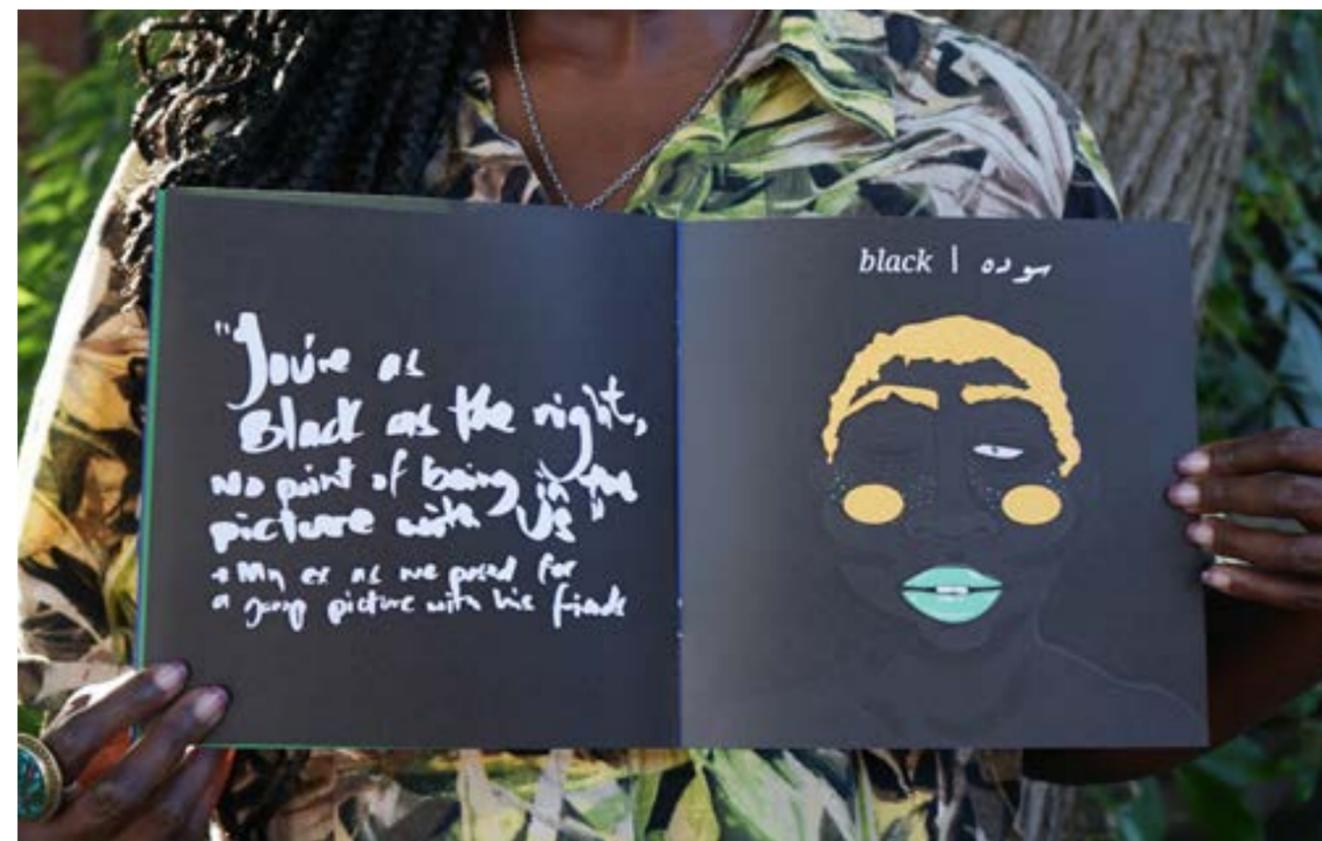
Ceramic work, 2021



Daloka Girls' Songs ceramics series, 2021



Dominance 1 (detail), 2017. Digital image, collaboration with AlFanjariyah art



Shades of Black, 2020. Digital illustration series



Boda Boda Opportunity, 2015. Interactive public performance, Kampala



Girls Threat, 2015. Interactive public performance, Kampala



Emmergence Room (detail), 2019. Photoprint and fabric on canvas

Collin Sekajugo

b. 1980, Uganda



Collin Sekajugo is a self-taught artist and arts activist born in Masaka, Uganda to a Rwandan mother and Ugandan father. Orphaned at the age of 16, art offered Sekajugo a way to both earn a living and make a difference in his community, where he had grown up observing extreme poverty and dependence. His mixed media practice includes painting, photography, sculpture, installation, and performance.

Inspired by his mixed background, Rwanda's history of ethnic conflict, and the consumerism of contemporary culture, Sekajugo explores questions of identity and discrimination, as well as issues such as poverty, education, gender, and environmental change. He sees art as a tool of social transformation through engagement with his audience, raising awareness of socioeconomic issues and sharing knowledge and ideas with the underprivileged and disadvantaged.

In his 2015 interactive performance series *Boda Boda Opportunity*, Sekajugo seeks to canvas public opinion on the burgeoning motorcycle taxi business, which while providing jobs, income, and cheap transport options has also led to an increase in accidents, injuries, and

deaths. *Girls Threat*, another performance series, explores the confluence of consumerism and patriarchy where young girls either seek out or fall prey to older men who satisfy their material wants. **NB**



Knapsack, 2019. Photoprint, fabric and acrylic on canvas

Puno Selesho

b. 1995, South Africa

Puno Selesho is a spoken word artist, born and raised in Pretoria, South Africa. She graduated from the University of Pretoria with a BA law and LLB degree. Her artistic journey began at a young age, and her repertoire includes writing, voice-overs, and live performances. She has performed on both international and local platforms for over 10 years, including TEDx Pretoria, and international conferences, such as Standard Bank Women in Innovation in South Africa and re:publica in Berlin.

Selesho is an active agent of change at the community level, creating many organizations focused on enriching the human capital of the people around her. She is the founder of The Cherry Blossom Project, which provides matric dance dresses (prom dresses) for underprivileged girls, and The Park Exchange, a platform for professionals, students and creatives to engage on crucial social issues.

Selesho is now a freelance spoken word artist, strategist for Spoken Sessions SA and founder of Harvest (Pty) Ltd where she helps clients create and nurture wholesome communities through bespoke communications and curated events. **JB**



“South Africa has an abundance of human potential. Sometimes all it takes is a transformative conversation to start unlocking the possibilities. My aim is to help people see the world through a creative lens, communicate their own values, challenge social norms, share our African narrative and add a bit of hope to society.

Pain, decay and injustice are prevalent in the personal and communal and I choose to be a warrior of light that fights back and paints aspirational pictures with words to give us motivation, clarity and courage to keep striving to create a world that is fit for all to live and delight in. That is why I write.”



How to Wear Africa -Puno Selesho x Chefobear, 2022. Video, duration: 00 hr 01 min 49 sec / Video courtesy of Puno Selesho and Chefobear



Puno Selesho performs ‘How to Wear Africa’ on local TV show SABC1 Mzansi Insider, 2022



Quand Les Murs Parlent 6, 2019, digital photograph



Kani Sissoko

b. 1988, Mali

Photographer Kani Sissoko is a graduate of the National Institute of the Arts of Bamako, Mali. Having first discovered the art of photography during an internship at the National Museum of Mali where she documented the collection, she subsequently worked in documentary photography with several international NGOs focusing on the role of women in society beginning to exhibit her work in 2015. Today, winner of numerous professional awards and educator in photography and journalism, Kani challenges the clichés about women both through her career achievements and the subjects she engages with.

Quand Les Murs Parlent (When the Walls Speak) is a series in which Kani appealed to the symbolism of a wall as a protective yet confining structure to break silence surrounding the cultural norms and practices limiting the freedom, empowerment and integrity of women in today's Malian society. Each photo is dominated by a woman's figure in intensely bright, somewhat intimate domestic clothing against the background of a solid wall. The women either face away from the viewer or are shown in profile, as if in a dialogue with an invisible interlocutor. The sharp contrast between the vivid colors of their clothing and the dull hues of the walls forces the eye to focus on the women – their personalities and emotions transpire in the poses even when the faces are not seen. This series, therefore, is an invitation to a dialogue; it encourages women to break the barriers fencing them in and realize their rich potential. **EG**



Quand Les Murs Parlent 4, 2019 digital photograph

“Photography allows me to speak with the younger generation, to show that woman belongs everywhere and not only in the household... The moment women become aware of the influence they can have on the formation of society; they will be able to influence this society and transform it for the best.”

In Quand Les Murs Parlent, women face the walls, because, quite simply, they trust walls more than people, because that's what society recommends... The walls are the ones that have our true testimonies. Faithful confidants, not threatening to judge, reject, or point fingers, they know more about the problems of women than the humans themselves...”



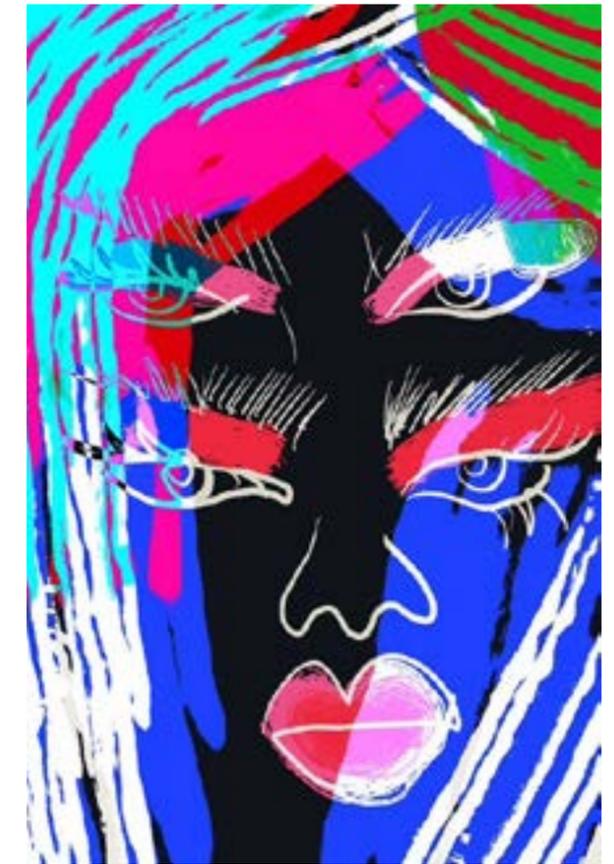
Quand Les Murs Parlent 1, 2019, digital photograph



From the series *Visco & Co Fashion Illustrations*, 2017. Mixed media



Valentines, 2019. Mixed media



Untitled Artwork 8, 2020. Mixed media



Ngadi Smart

b. 1989, Sierra Leone

Ngadi Smart is a Sierra Leonean visual artist based between London, U.K and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. She works in illustration, photography, design and mixed media.

In her illustrations, Smart is motivated by the representation of minorities, highlighting cultural identity, racial discrimination, and feminism. She likes to deconstruct mainstream society's preconceived views of what defines normalcy, beauty and correctness. Her illustrations have appeared in *The Atlantic*, *Time Out London*, *Eastpak*, *The Guardian*, as well as Penguin's *Riverhead Books* and *Faber Children's*.

Smart's photography focuses on documenting cultures, subcultures and intimacy. Her images boldly reveal how people self-identify and make choices to develop their public presentation. Her recent artistic investigations explore the myriad of African representations, and what it means to be African.

Her photographs have been published on *cnn.com*, and in *British Journal of Photography*, *Vogue Italia*, *Atmos*, and *i-D*. **JB**

"I think African culture has made major changes in its idea of what the 'ideal African woman' is, but there is still an underlying expectation of what women (and men) should be. I think female and male characteristics are a lot more intertwined emotionally and physically than people think. For me, the best way to challenge gender roles is through visual imagery... What is undeniably exciting is that we now have all the tools as African creatives to tell our own story, our own way, and to reach an audience."



Renaître des brisures de Lune, 2019, mural (acrylic on concrete), image courtesy of Hakim Idriss (Socrome)



Tcharo, Makinz and Socrome

Comoros

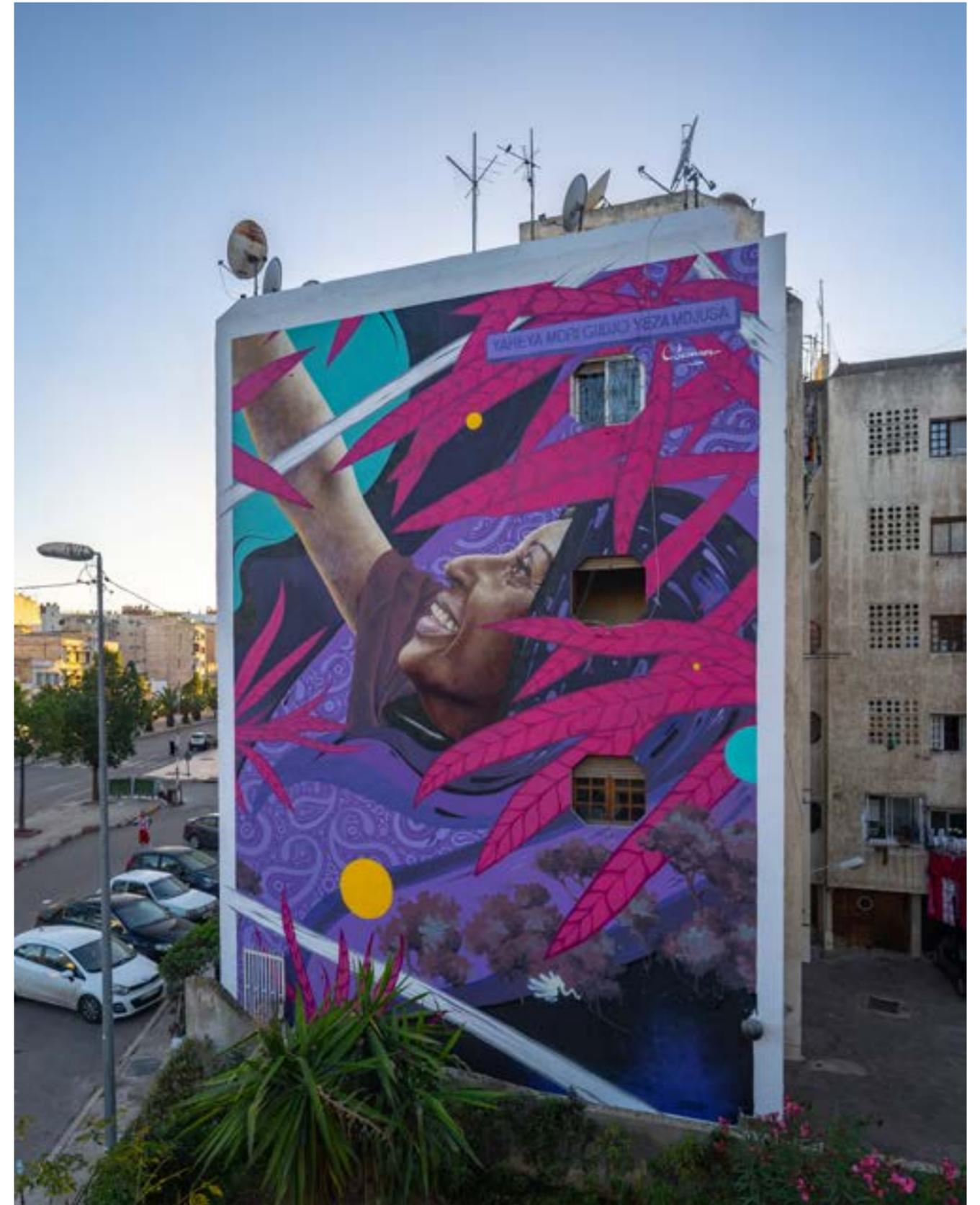
Yasser Ahamed Said (b. 1988) and Abi Amri Said Bacar (b. 1996), known in the urban art scene of Moroni as Tcharo and Makinz are Comoran painters, designers and graffiti artists who have been working together since 2017. Having first encountered street art as fans of Hakim Idriss (b. 1984), alias Socrome, an influential artist responsible for the rapid spread of outdoor murals in Comoros, Tcharo and Makinz learned many of their skills from him. The three young men joined forces and have collaborated on countless street art projects since. They first connected thanks to social media at the Swana Studio, the major Comorian multidisciplinary creative lab engaged in product design and art interventions in public spaces and social events. Today, Socrome is Swana's creative director, Tcharo, the graffiti designer and Makinz, draftsman and illustrator.

Tcharo, Makinz and Socrome leave their marks on walls around the city of Moroni, occasionally ven-

"It makes us happy to intervene where bad things happen and dispel them with the colors of paradise."

turing into the countryside. Some of their pieces are prominently displayed, as in the case of the murals in the basketball court in Moroni's district of Magoudjou or at the Ajao stadium on Corniche Road in the Ambassador zone, while others grace the graffiti spots frequented by youth.

The hallmark of the collective's visual storytelling that builds on Socrome's style is mural pieces combining achromatic and colorful sections. By placing black-and-white images within an entanglement of vibrantly colored abstract forms and calligraphic arabesques, the artists direct our attention to the core concerns of today's Comoran society: climate change, youth empowerment, educational reform, preservation of the country's nature and heritage. The medium of graffiti painting allows this audacious crew of creative first responders to call for action and bring hope. **EG**



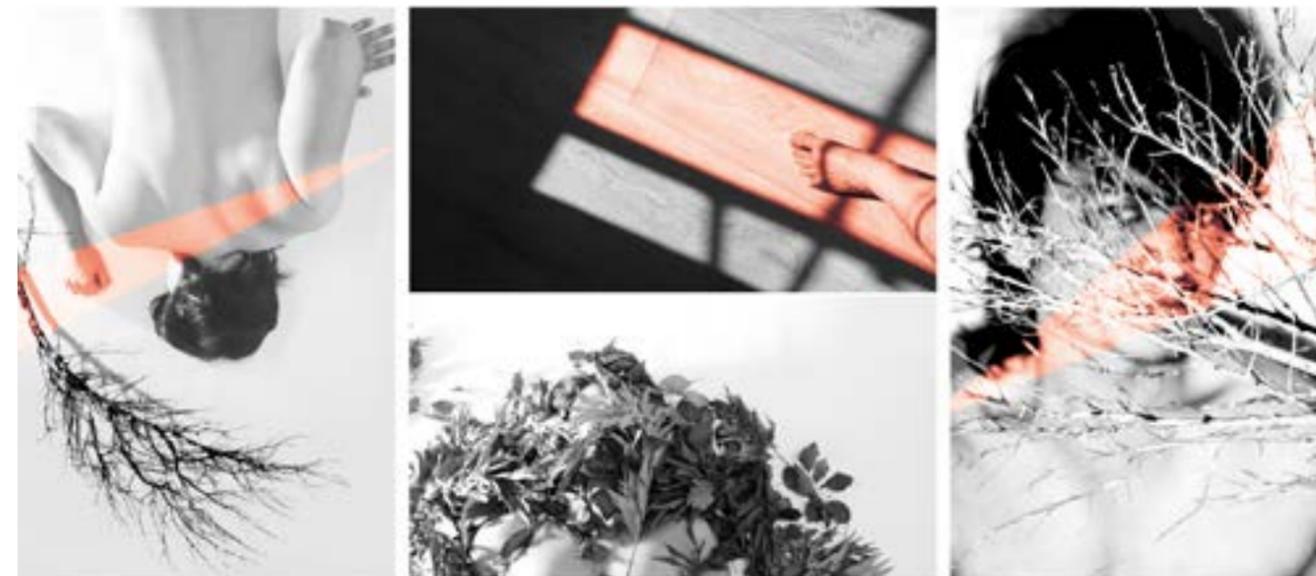
Yaheya Mdri Gudjo Yeza Mdri, mural in Casablanca, Morocco, 2019. Acrylic and spray paint. Image courtesy of Hakim Idriss (Socrome)



Rest in Place, 2020. Laminated print on aluminium board



Sullied, 2020. Laminated print on aluminium board



MaNature Revisits, 2020. Laminated print on aluminium board

Kavinash Thomoo

b. 1983, Mauritius



Kavinash Thomoo is a multidisciplinary artist and art educator who lives and works in Mauritius. Trained in fine arts at the University of Mauritius and at Anglia Ruskin University in the UK, he has participated in many national and international exhibitions including the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015.

Thomoo's practice ranges from traditional media like drawing and painting to new media art (installation, photography, and video). He is deeply concerned with socio-political, psychological and environmental issues. In his recent body of work, he reflects on the social and psychological effects of confinement and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the series *Rest in Place*, a familiar domestic object, the pillow, is placed in empty outdoor spaces where it does not belong. To add to the discomfort, it is covered with alarming media headlines about the pandemic. The images build a sense of the disruption of the everyday, 'normal' world that we have all experienced during the pandemic. The images in *MaNature Revisits* express the importance that the outdoors and

green spaces took on for many people during isolation, and remind us that nature is crucial for our well-being and survival. In this series, the artist portrays himself with leaves, branches and shafts of light in a way that suggests a deep need to reconnect with nature, sky and sunlight, and perhaps also to re-evaluate our ways of life and priorities in the future. **NB**



MaNature Revisits (detail), 2020. Laminated print on aluminium board

Michael Tsegaye



b. 1975, Ethiopia

Michael Tsegaye is one of Ethiopia's most important photographers. His meticulous detailing of the nation's diverse story has allowed him to create a vast photographic oeuvre. The subjects he has illuminated through his lens touch on many aspects of urbanization that affect the present and future of the country's women and youth. They vary from the clandestine lives of sex workers in Addis Ababa, to an ecological

study of the volcanic landscape of the Afar region of Ethiopia, to the ongoing series titled *Future Memories*, presented in this exhibition, which aims to capture the simple, unadorned – and often vanishing as urbanization and technological progress set in – traditional ways of life in Ethiopia's capital city. **EG**



Future Memories VI, 2011. Scan from medium-format negative, digital print on rag paper

“I have lived in Addis Ababa all my life. The city is around 150 years old, and over the past decade I have watched it change before my eyes. The recent upsurge in new ‘developments’ and ‘redevelopments’ has altered—and to some extent damaged—the social fabric of the city... Towering high-rises occupied by banks and insurance firms now inhabit this space. Many older people who once lived off washing clothes and selling injera have lost their livelihoods.”

The neighborhoods of this city used to be a hive of all kinds of social activities. Residents helped one another by sharing everything from the shiro stew to coffee, from kitchens to bathrooms. Everybody knew his or her neighbor. Now, the very differently structured new apartment buildings have transformed old customs and ways of living. For me it is interesting to observe how people develop new customs within a new system forced upon them.”



Future Memories I, 2011. Scan from medium-format negative, digital print on rag paper

Amina Weira



b. 1988, Niger

Native of the city of Arlit, Niger, Amina Weira graduated in video editing from the Institute for Information and Communication Techniques (IF-TIC) in Niger's capital Niamey, followed by a master's degree in creative documentary production from the Gaston Berger University of Saint-Louis, Senegal. The young director completed her first film, titled *Film Music* in 2011. Having directed four short films to date, she gained international renown for her whistle-blowing documentary *Wrath in the Wind*, dedicated to uranium miners, released in 2016.

For Weira, the inspiration comes from being professionally equipped to fight for the improvement of the status of women. **EG**

“For years, women have lived and worked in the shadow of men without having the right to elect their representatives, or to express their opinion in the public sphere. Today, they fight for equal rights with men. Many women through their cultural activism encourage other women to speak up about their concerns. When I take a look at cinematograph, there are more women in this field who are active in expressing themselves, who tell stories based on their experience. But what hinders the emergence of women artists is the lack of confidence and encouragement in bringing their work to life. When you want to make something, you are afraid of failure, especially in an area which has long been dominated by men. Today more than ever, the woman artist needs support in her responsibilities as a woman of culture without any discrimination to allow her to build her career and to forge a better future not only for herself but for her family and her community as a whole.”



Portrait of Amina Weira, 2016. Photo by Hassaane Mezine



La colère dans le vent, 2017. Film poster



Une scolarité confinée, 2020. Frame from film



Amina Weira filming in the desert, 2021. Photo by Ousmane Bianco

Barbara Wildenboer

b. 1973, South Africa



An African Survey 2021. Altered book

Barbara Wildenboer is a visual mixed media artist who lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa. With gallery representation in Cape Town, Johannesburg, London, Lisbon, and Luanda, Barbara is an international artist focused on using her creative practice to dig deeper into the mysterious nature of reality and our beliefs about it.

Wildenboer completed a BA (Ed) with majors in English literature, psychology and pedagogics at the University of Pretoria in 1996, followed by a Bachelor of Visual Arts from UNISA in 2003. In 2007 Barbara obtained her master's in Fine Art with distinction from the Michaelis School of Art at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. From 2009-2016 Barbara worked as the head of the Photography Department at the City Varsity College of Creative Arts where she lectured Theory & Discourse and History of Photography.

The piece *An African Survey* featured in **We Are Afrika** is part of the book project series *Library of the Infinitesimally Small and Unimaginable Large* that Wildenboer began almost a decade ago. This series uses the library as a metaphor for the universe and was inspired by a short story by the Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges titled *The Library of Babel*. Through the act of altering books, she draws our attention to the fact that our understanding of science is mediated through text and language. She sources her collection of books, maps and other found objects from secondhand bookshops and markets. In the selection process she not only considers these objects for their physical characteristics such as typographical layout, size, wear, and paper quality, but also more specifically for their subject matter and history.

Wildenboer has been awarded several international residencies such as the UNESCO

Aschberg residency (Jordan, 2006), the Al Mahatta residency (Palestine, 2009) and the Red De Residencias Artisticas Local (Colombia, 2011), the Rimbun Dahan artist residency (Penang, Malaysia, 2013), L'Atelier Sur Seine (Fontainebleau, France, 2017), and Hannacc (Barcelona, Spain, 2018). **JB**

"The intention of my working process is to tease out hidden meanings, correspondences and signs, exploring the contentious territory between what is seen and what is unseen, known and unknown. Magnetism, gravity and electricity, the celestial orbits and star cycles are all phenomena 'discovered' by science, yet their mysteries have not yet been entirely revealed. It is in this liminal space, between what we know, what think we know and what we do not yet know, that my working process positions me."



The artist with *Spoils of War*, 2021



It is a Taboo to Eat a Snake (detail), 2019. Acrylic on canvas

Agness Buya Yombwe



b. 1966, Zambia

Agness Buya Yombwe is a mixed media artist and co-founder, with her husband the artist Lawrence Yombwe, of the Wayi Wayi Art Studio and Gallery based in Livingstone, Zambia. Her artistic practice explores indigenous knowledge systems of the Bemba people of Zambia, in particular the sacred emblems and artefacts known as *Mbusa* that are used in secret initiation and marriage ceremonies.

Mbusa rites, usually closed to outsiders, are a way of initiating young women and couples into ideas about marriage, the role of women, and appropriate behavior within a communal network of social and moral relationships. They consist of rituals involving particular objects and artifacts, through which knowledge is passed from one generation to the next by a few chosen holders of cultural memory.

Yombwe places this cultural tradition within a contemporary context. She uses the aesthetic, material and symbolic elements of *Mbusa* artefacts in her highly individual expressions of the form, creating works that seek to bring about social, political and cultural change. She often highlights social issues that are

seen as taboo or difficult to talk about, such as early marriage, child abuse and political corruption.

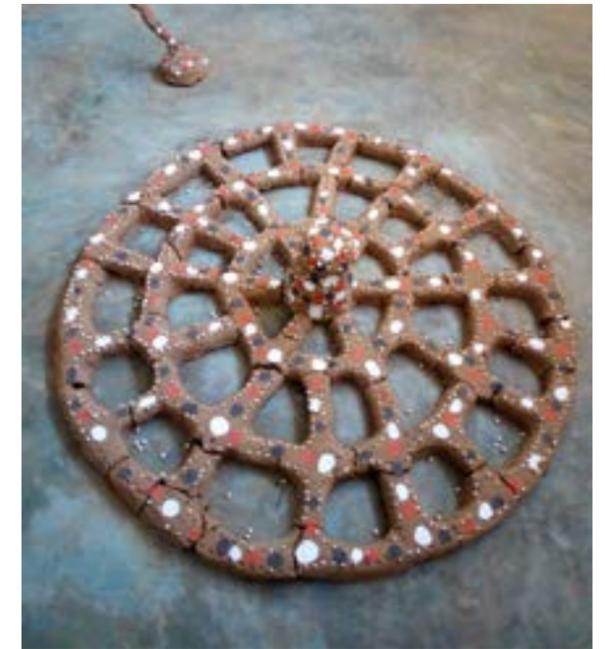
At the Wayi Wayi Art Studio, Yombwe and her family run workshops and mentorship classes for young people, teaching life skills through art and creative expression. She uses the forms and symbols of *Mbusa* to instruct them on the skills and attitudes required to be good citizens, and to face the realities and challenges of adult life in contemporary Zambia.

Yombwe's work has featured in both solo and group exhibitions, and she has undertaken prestigious studio residencies at the Edvard Munch Studio in Oslo, Norway in 1995 and the McColl Centre for Visual Arts in North Carolina, USA in 2002. **NB**

“Through my artwork, I hope to encourage dialogue on many issues that people cannot freely talk about. Sometimes, I also just paint for art’s sake.”



Mother and Child, 2017. Mixed media



*Akakonkwa (To follow), 2013. Clay and paint
Made in collaboration with traditional Mbusa teachers*



Girls Not Brides. 2019. Acrylic on canvas

Juliette Zelime (Jadez)



b. 1984, Seychelles

“My home is on one of the 115 islands that make up the Seychelles archipelago. We are situated in the Indian Ocean, and many know us as one of the best holiday destinations. It is true, we are one of the best. My islands are far from the cyclonic zone. We have been blessed with plenty of clean air, pure water, and our nature is still intact. Well, that’s what the geography teachers told us 25 years ago when I was in primary school. They were right but that is slowly but surely changing.

Lately, you can feel the difference in the weather. It has become very unpredictable, with stronger winds, more plentiful rains, and higher temperatures – higher to the point of being unbearable to us who are used to heat because we are situated near the equator. This is a sign of an unhappy Earth, a changing planet, don’t you think?

During the past few years, our reefs have suffered from coral bleaching. Large parts of our reefs around the islands were affected and turned from beautiful sites to very sad ones. Measures were taken to help regrow the corals. It has been a slow process – while they started to grow back and while we thought it was over, it happened again and again. Will it ever stop?

I’m not a scientist, I’m not even a diver. I’m only an artist expressing my feelings about our beautiful Earth, my islands, and how they are being affected by climate change. As a visual storyteller, I like to play with ideas and concepts that explore nature and science, and many of my artworks are based around the theme the ocean. By carefully choosing the visual elements for my collages – the color tones, the fishes, and the coral objects – I portray a future that we

cannot see and a past that has been here and helped shape the visual elements of our daily life.

My hope is that the next generation will be lucky to witness a healing earth and take part in the healing process. Let’s stay grateful to those trying their best to find ways to help heal our planet.”

Juliette Zelime, 2021.



Last, 2021. Digital photomontage



Progenitor, 2021. Digital photomontage



Virtuous, 2017. Digital photomontage

THE VOICES

Meet the emerging and established artistic voices from around Africa using their creative energy to confront today's social and economic challenges. Starting in June 2020, the World Bank Art Program has been hosting a series of virtual conversations between participating artists and World Bank Group specialists as part of the exhibition's educational program. These live online talks explore themes ranging from human capital to rural experiences, from social norms to breaking social stereotypes. Click on the links to hear artists, activists, social entrepreneurs, and distinguished moderators engaged in dialogue about the power of women and youth in Africa today.



June 25, 2020: Exploring Youth and Gender in African Art

Ruti Lobe Kingue Ejangu, Communications Consultant, AFREC, World Bank Group

Martin Elias De Simone, Education Specialist, World Bank Group

Marina Galvani, Senior Program Manager and Curator, World Bank Art Program



September 24, 2020: Culture, Tourism, and the New Narrative

Musopa Kalenga, winner of the 2019 World Bank Blog4Dev competition from Zambia

Ally Jape, videographer and professional tour guide for Zanzibar and Tanzania.

Kim Karabo Makin, artist from South Africa

Moky Makura, Executive Director, Africa No Filter



October 29, 2020: A Digital Future for the Creative Industries

Dimpho Lekgeu, winner of the 2020 World Bank Blog4Dev competition from South Africa

Ravneesh Hans, multidisciplinary artist and fashion designer from Tanzania

Sandile (NOTHING) Mhlongo, multidisciplinary artist from South Africa

Antoine Lema, Senior Social Development Specialist, World Bank Group

Naomi Halewood, Senior Digital Development Specialist, Digital Economy Initiative for Africa, World Bank Group



July 30, 2020: Exploring the Rural Experience for Women in Africa

Agness Buya Yombwe, multimedia artist and educator from Zambia

Cedric Mizero, designer and cultural changemaker from Rwanda

Markus Goldstein, Lead Economist and head of Africa Gender Innovation Lab, World Bank Group



August 29, 2020: How can art help prevent gender-based violence during COVID-19 and beyond?

Puno Selesho, spoken word artist from South Africa

Dimpho Lekgeu, winner of the 2020 World Bank Blog4Dev competition from South Africa

**Please note that due to technical reasons, this talk is currently not available for online viewing.*



November 23, 2020: Adolescent Empowerment and Child Brides

Mamitiana Naharifelantsoa, winner of the 2020 Blog4Dev competition from Madagascar

Diariatou Diallo, winner of the 2020 Blog4Dev competition from Guinea

Fatima Bocoum, curator

Kani Sissoko, photographer from Mali

Lea Rouanet, Economist in the Africa Gender Innovation Lab, World Bank Group



January 28, 2021: Can Art Fill the Culture Gap? Higher Education and the Future of Work

Matai Muon, winner of the 2020 World Bank Blog4Dev competition from South Sudan

modupeola fadugba, multimedia artist from Nigeria

Eliot Jolomi Dikoru, Education Specialist, World Bank Group

THE VOICES



February 25, 2021: Women as Innovators and Trendsetters

Mia Collis, photographer from Kenya

Cynara Vetch, journalist and She Shapes the City Co-Founder, Kenya

Kresiah Mukwazhi, multimedia artist from Zimbabwe

Alicia Hammond, Gender Specialist and Lead on Innovation and Technology, World Bank Group

Douglas Dubois, founder and Creative Director of Sebmal Arts, Uganda, and winner of the 2018 World Bank Blog4Dev competition from Uganda



March 25, 2021: Art and Change: Green Recovery in Africa

Fabrice Monteiro, photographer from Senegal and Benin

Elizabeth Wathuti, climate activist from Kenya

Douglas Dubois, founder and Creative Director of Sebmal Arts, Uganda, and winner of the 2018 World Bank Blog4Dev competition from Uganda

Arame Tall, Senior Adaptation and Resilience Specialist, Climate Change Group, World Bank Group



January 27, 2022: Exploring the Impacts of Female Empowerment: Creative Arts and International Development

Dorah Muhunuuzi, winner of the 2021 World Bank Blog4Dev competition from Uganda

Taki Gold, artist from Liberia

Ngozi Agboti, Legal Counsel, International Finance Corporation



November 18, 2021: Innovating Education in Lesotho: Creative Storytelling for Mutual Learning

Dimpho Lekgeu, winner of the 2020 World Bank Blog4Dev competition from South Africa

Lineo Segoete, Director of Ba re e ne re, Lesotho

Tsegofatso Thulare, Education Consultant, World Bank Group



December 21, 2021: Insider's Take: Curating Exhibitions and Founding Museums in Africa

Douglas Dubois, founder and Creative Director of Sebmal Arts, Uganda, and winner of the 2018 World Bank Blog4Dev competition from Uganda

Marina Galvani, Senior Program Manager and Curator, World Bank Art Program

Mamma Alim Ahmed, Senior Executive Assistant, Cameroon Country Office World Bank Group

Maria Amelina, co-founder of Eman in Nairobi, Kenya



March 9, 2022: Social Change and Filmmaking in Equatorial Guinea: Juan Pablo Ebang Esono

Juan Pablo Ebang Esono, filmmaker from Equatorial Guinea

Martin Elias De Simone, Education Specialist, World Bank Group

Carlos Luis Troconis Camacho, Art Handler, World Bank Art Program



August 17, 2022: Women in Non-Traditional Sectors: Documentary Filmmaking in Niger

Amina Weira, filmmaker from Niger

Diariatou Diallo, winner of the 2020 Blog4Dev competition from Guinea

Julia Vaillant, Senior Economist, Africa Gender Innovation Lab, World Bank Group

*Please note that due to technical reasons, this talk is currently not available for online viewing.

THE ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurship is an important factor driving forward the economies of African countries today. Non-traditional businesses address local needs in innovative ways, and are making an impact on economic and social development. They are as much tools for shared prosperity and poverty reduction as traditional businesses. **We Are Afrika** features a number of entrepreneurs who have set up enterprises that not only provide them a livelihood, but also help the people in their communities.

Ravneesh Hans

Tanzania

Ravneesh Hans is the founder, CEO and principal designer of Zivansh, an emerging eco-friendly design studio in Zanzibar, Tanzania. Her passion is to build a platform for the community of gifted local artists, artisans, graphic designers and digital solutions specialists to take traditional African art, crafts, prints, and patterns a step further through research, style analysis and hi-tech solutions. **EG**



Ally Jape

Tanzania

Ally Jape is a travel specialist and entrepreneur based in historic Stone Town on Zanzibar, Tanzania. In 2018, he launched an online video channel to introduce the landmarks of Zanzibar to people planning to visit the island with its unique culture born from the centuries of African, Arab and Indian exchanges, and helping them appreciate the customs of the place they are about to visit. Ally created his video *Zanzibar Daily Life Impressions* in 2020-2021 when tourism to the island was shut down due to the pandemic. This two-minute film was part of his initiative to regularly reach out to people in self-isolation with immersive visual experiences of Zanzibar. **EG**



Moky Makura

Nigeria

Moky Makura is a Nigerian author, journalist, TV presenter, actress, producer, and a successful entrepreneur. Born in Lagos, Nigeria, Makura holds a degree in politics, economics, and law from the University of Buckingham. She is currently the Executive Director of Africa No Filter, an organization focused on shifting the African narrative. Through research, grant-making and advocacy, Africa No Filter supports storytellers, invests in media platforms, and drives disruption campaigns to change the narrative to better reflect the progressive and dynamic continent. **AS**



Hem Matsi

Namibia

Hambeleleni 'Hem' Matsi is a fashion designer and entrepreneur from Namibia. Matsi founded the Victims 2 Survivors project, an organization that educates young women and girls on gender-based violence and works to empower young people to be constructive members of the community. Her Fashion Against Women and Girls' Abuse collection was showcased in Ghana after winning the Global Women Awards for Innovative Designs in April 2012. Her work *Young Bride*, a bloodied wedding dress, is highly symbolic of the violence against young girls who are married off without their consent. **NB**



Maggie Otieno

Kenya

Maggie Otieno is a Kenyan sculptor based in Nairobi. As a full-time artist, Otieno has taken part in numerous exhibitions, workshops, and residencies around the world. She has also worked as an administrator in numerous arts and cultural organizations promoting the development of young creatives in Africa. Otieno is also a Copyright X Harvard Law school certified practitioner. Otieno's 2D and 3D works focus on social commentary and the diverse experiences of human forms. **AS**



Nebay Abraha, Eritrea

The Silence Room, 2019, collage and acrylic on canvas, 110 x 100 cm

The Silence Room 2, 2019, collage and acrylic on canvas, 100 x 110 cm

Untitled, 2020, collage and acrylic on canvas, 100 x 90 cm

Valerie Amani, Tanzania

Pendo the Sunswallower, 2019, photograph and digital collage

Pumzi the Moonjuggler, 2019, photograph and digital collage

Anataban collective, South Sudan

Fight Against Corona Initiative, 2020, oil on corrugated iron sheet, photo by Akot Deng Agoth

Anataban Street Art in Juba, 2016, digital photograph, photo by Jacob Bul Bior

Asmara All Stars, Eritrea

Eritrea's Got Soul album cover, 2010, photo by Thomas Dorn

Asmara All Stars group photo, 2020, photo by Thomas Dorn

Faytingha, 2010, photo by Thomas Dorn

Adam Hamid, 2010, photo by Thomas Dorn

Camille Tété Azankpo, Togo
Free men, 2020, mixed media, 120 x 120 cm

Portrait Manager, 2021, mixed media, 120 x 120 cm

Rideau, 2017-2018, mixed media, 180 x 120 cm

Oumar Ball, Mauritania

Cormorant (Volatile series), 2020, recycled metal, 80 x 100 x 50 cm

Marabou (Volatile series), 2020, recycled metal, 75 x 190 x 80 cm

Pelican (Volatile series), 2020, recycled metal, 100 x 80 x 60 cm

Hawa-Jane Bangura, Sierra Leone

African Empires: Bassa, 2019, acrylic on hardboard, 91.4 x 122 cm

In Black We Trust 1, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 61 x 91.4 cm

In Black We Trust V, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 73.7 x 99.1 cm

Know Thyself II, 2020, acrylic on hardboard, 91.4 x 122 cm

Know Thyself III, (WIP), acrylic on canvas, 91.4 x 122 cm

Nú Barreto, Guinea-Bissau

La Chute, 2021, cardboard, paper, fabric, ceramic pencil, pastel, recycled paper, 77 x 118 cm

Le jeu, 2021, cardboard, paper, fabric, ceramic pencil, pastel, recycled paper, 86 x 125.2 x 4 cm

Moi autrement, 2021, cardboard, paper, fabric, ceramic pencil, pastel, recycled paper, 78 x 118 cm

Alun Be, Senegal

Absolution (Edification series), 2017, archival pigments on FineArt paper, 80 x 120 cm

Cultivation (Edification series), 2017, archival pigments on

FineArt paper, 80 x 120 cm

Armand Boua, Côte d'Ivoire
Kpêkpêkos (Children) I, II, III, IV, V, VI, 2020, mixed media, 70 x 70 cm each

Calema, São Tomé and Príncipe

Calema - Kua Buaru ft. Soraia Ramos, Pérola & Manecas Costa, song, duration 00:04:52

Calema's concert at Olympia Music Hall, Paris, January 2022

Christine Chetty Payet, Seychelles

African Sun, 2015, mixed media on canvas, 120 x 120 cm

Emigrant I, 2015, fabric and paint

Untitled, 2004, mixed media

Vannsi Vanndan, 2016, mixed media

Eva Chikabadwa, Malawi

The Mourners (series), 2018, clay

Makewana (mother of children) as Salima, 2018, clay, 91 cm high

The Judeo-Christian Spectacles, 2017, oil on canvas, 300 x 300 cm

The Killing of M'bona, 2016, acrylic on canvas, 200 x 120 cm

The Whites Were More Cunnning Than the Blacks, 2016, oil on canvas, 200 x 200 cm

Omar Diaw Chimere, Guinea

African Beauty, 2022, oil and spray paint on canvas

African Smile, 2020, acrylic paint (mural)

African Spirit, 2020, acrylic paint (mural)

Serge Attukwey Clottey, Ghana

Chairman, 2021, plastics and copper wires, 162.5 x 160 cm

Deidei, 2021, plastics and copper wire, 129.5 x 96.5 cm

His Highness, 2020-2021, oil and acrylic on canvas, 132 x 91.5 cm

James Baldwin, 2020-2021, oil, paper posters, duct tape on cork, 127 x 124.5 cm

Klortei, 2021, plastics and copper wire, 160 x 155 cm

Mia Collis and Cynara Vetch, UK / Kenya

Alberta Wambua – Executive Director for the Gender Violence Recovery Centre, 2015, digital print, 79 x 121 cm

Catherine Wanjohi – Advocate for Sex Workers, 2015, digital print, 87 x 121 cm

Muthoni Ndonga – The Drummer Queen, 2015, digital print, 87 x 121 cm

Theresa Njoroge – Champion for Female Convicts, 2015, digital print, 87 x 121 cm

Aliou Diack, Senegal

La Prophétie, 2019, mixed media on canvas, 270 x 210 cm

Juan Pablo Ebang Esono, Equatorial Guinea

Juan Pablo Ebang Esono and his team filming "Milu" on location, 2016, digital photographs

modupeola fadugba, Nigeria

The People's Algorithm, 2014,

interactive game installation, wood, acrylic, metal, foam

Taki Gold, Liberia

Airplanes on the Ground, 2021, acrylic on metal airplane fairings

Lease, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 173 x 122 x 6.3 cm

The Boy Who Killed God, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 173 x 122 x 6.3 cm

This Will Destroy You, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 305 x 244 cm

Untrained Eye, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 173 x 122 x 6.3 cm

White Wash, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 173 x 122 x 6.3 cm

R. Canon Griffin, Uganda

All Hands on Deck / Building Better Babel, 2018, digital collage

Far Away So Close / You Can't Go Anywhere, 2020, digital collage

In Existence: Seeing Ourselves from a Distance, 2020, digital collage

Learning Spaces / Welcome to the Wider World, 2018, digital collage

Trader Don't Be a Stranger / Gods of Smaller Things, 2018, digital collage

Apollinaire Guidimbaye (Doff), Chad

Egoïste I (Serie: L'homme africain), 2020, mural sculpture, mixed media, 100 x 100 cm

Guerre (Serie: L'homme africain), 2020, mural sculpture, mixed media, 100 x 100 cm

La Famille, quadriptych, 2019, mural sculpture, mixed media, 90 x 120 x 2 cm and 65 x 92

x 2 cm

Violence fait aux femmes, 2020, mural sculpture, mixed media, 100 x 100 cm

Ravneesh Hans, Tanzania

Maa collection, 2021, brass, glass beads, electrical wiring-

Shirt with Stone Town Motifs, 2019, hand-painted cotton and kitenge cloth

Tribal Fusion 1, 2018, digital print and embroidery on cotton

Tribal Fusion 2, 2018, digital print and embroidery on cotton

Nujuum Hashi, Somalia

Alarm! Social Distancing, 2020, digital artwork

Giving Voice to Voiceless!, 2019, watercolor on paper

Let's Fight Corona, 2020, digital artwork

Somali Cultural Girl, 2021, acrylic on canvas

Charissa Daniella Iradukunda, Burundi

Ciza Jérôme assis sur sa chaise roulante devant sa maison a Kinama en mairie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 2019, digital photograph

Le neveu (de Ciza Jérôme) l'aide à se laver le visage dans sa maison a Kinama en Marie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 2019, digital photograph

Un homme aide Ciza Jérôme à quitter le salon vers la chambre le soir dans sa maison à Kinama en Marie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 2019, digital photograph

Ciza Jérôme et ses amis après la messe du soir à la paroisse

de Kinama en Marie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 2019, digital photograph

La communauté aide Ciza Jérôme à monter les escaliers à la paroisse de Kinama, en Marie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 2019, digital photograph

Ciza Jérôme assis sur sa chaise roulante, les enfants du voisinage jouent dans la cour de sa maison à Kinama, en mairie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 2019, digital photograph

de sa maison à Kinama, en mairie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 2019, digital photograph

de sa maison à Kinama, en mairie de Bujumbura, Burundi, 2019, digital photograph

Zanzibar Daily Life Impressions, 2020, video, duration 00:02:03

Sona Jobarteh, The Gambia

Architectural model of the Gambia Academy campus, 2017, digital photograph

Gambia, 2015, song, duration 00:06:09

Miss Jobarteh leading a Physical Education session, 2021, digital photograph

Kora student Mohammed A Suso during music class, 2019, digital photograph

Sona Jobarteh performance at the Brave Festival, Poland, 2016, digital photograph

Sona Jobarteh performing at Hollywood Bowl, 2018, digital photograph

The Gambia Academy Dance students during practice, 2020, digital photograph

Lola Keyezua, Angola

Fortia 1, 2017, giclée print, 90 x 60 cm

Fortia 2, 2017, giclée print, 90

x 60 cm

Fortia 4, 2017, giclée print, 90 x 60 cm

Fortia—Sailing Back to Africa as a Dutch Woman 3, 2017, giclée print, 60 x 90 cm

Emmanuelle Laté, Gabon
Untitled (Tournesol series) I, 2019, digital photograph

Untitled (Tournesol series) III, 2019, digital photograph

Untitled (Tournesol series) V, 2019, digital photograph

Mário Macilau, Mozambique

Two Boys with Fish, 2018, Hahnemühle Photo rag paper

Untitled 1 (Nelson), 2015, Hahnemühle Photo rag paper

Untitled 2, 2015, Hahnemühle Photo rag paper

Kim Karabo Makin, Botswana
_____ bag, 2018, pantyhose plastic, checkered woven mesh bag, steel round bar steel cable, 79 x 22 x 60 cm

Colour Theory, 2020, pantyhose, wood and canvas, variable sizes

Molenza (Shield), 2020, pantyhose and mixed media

Molenza (Shield), 2020, digital photograph

Racialism, 2017 - 2019, wood and pantyhose, 112 x 112 x 8 cm

Phindile Mamba, Eswatini
Don't Point at Me, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 91.4 x 91.4 x 4 cm

Happiness, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 102 x 76 x 4 cm

Mampuya Mayimona (Massy), Republic of Congo
Génération ya mado, 2019, oil on canvas, 80 x 80 cm
La perte, 2020, mixed media, 250 x 140 cm
L'égoïsme, 2020, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm
Si la jeunesse savait, 2020, oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm

Gael Maski, Democratic Republic of Congo
Big Man, 2020, photocollage and acrylic on canvas, 60 x 95 cm
Breath, 2020, photocollage and acrylic on canvas, 75 x 120 cm
Last Corona Love, 2020, photocollage and acrylic on canvas, 100 x 120 cm
Le Désert du Touareg, 2020, photocollage and acrylic on canvas, 75 x 120 cm
Masque off, 2020, photocollage and acrylic on canvas, 75 x 120 cm

'Matlali Matabane, Lesotho
Ngoale, 2021, digital collage
Head__Space, 2021, digital collage
Scarface, 2021, digital collage
Titled, 2021, digital collage

Hem Matsi, Namibia
Young Bride, 2014, cotton satin and paint, 178 x 81 x 81 cm

Cedric Mizero, Rwanda
A New Life in the Village series, 2019, digital print
Beauty in the Heart 1, 2, 3, 2018, digital prints
Strong Women series, 2017, digital prints

Fabrice Monteiro, Belgium / Benin / Senegal
Untitled #6, #8, #9, #11, (The Prophecy series), 2014,

Canson Infinity Platine Fibre Rag 310 g
Untitled #12 / Ngai (The Prophecy series), 2017, Canson Infinity Platine Fibre Rag 310 g

Kresiah Mukwazhi, Zimbabwe
Choices became chains, 2020, fabrics, petticoat, satin, cotton, mattress, paint, acrylic, lipstick, fabric dyes, 207 x 158 cm
Kudyiswa uchishamirira, 2020, petticoat material, canvas, sequin fabric, cotton fabrics, paint, acrylic, puff, chalk, 218 x 194 cm
Kwadinorohwa matumbu nd-ikokwadinomhanyira, 2020, fabrics, petticoat, cotton, sequin, satin, paint, acrylic puff paint, fabric dyes, 218 x 245 cm
Not everything that glitters is gold, 2020, petticoat material, sequin fabric, cotton fabrics, canvas, acrylic, fabric dyes, puff paint, 182 x 151 cm
Zviratidzo zvenguva, 2020, mattress fabric, petticoat material, canvas, acrylic, fabric dyes, puff paint, 257 x 227 cm
Please Tip Your Dancers, 2020, video

Longinos Nagila, Kenya
A Saint in Louis Vuitton, 2016, mixed media on paper, 46 x 34 cm
Concepts, 2017, mixed media on canvas, 93 x 110 cm
Saints and the City, 2016, mixed media on canvas, 94 x 104 cm
Suited Man 2, 2016, mixed media on paper, 52 x 23 cm

Elisia Nghidishange, Namibia
Alms Woman, 2022, fabric, round bar and plaster of paris,

103 x 30 x 23 cm
Hope, 2022, fabric, round bar and plaster of paris, 113 x 30 x 88 cm
Horns of Power, 2017, papier maché and wood, 175 x 60.5 x 55
Persistent, 2022, fabric, round bar and plaster of paris, 99 x 23 x 29 cm
The Ancestors, cardboard print on Fabriano paper, edition 2 of 4, 50.1 x 33.8 cm

Jean David Nkot, Cameroon
#Mentalmirage@yohoo.
space, 2019, ink, acrylic and silkscreen printing on canvas
#Wum's child#.org, 2020, acrylic, Indian ink and posca on canvas
Po.Box Mille@pourune.fr, 2021, acrylic, posca and screenprint on canvas
www.un millier@pour_une poignée d'or bleu, 2021, acrylic, posca and screenprint on canvas

Joseph Obanubi, Nigeria
A Lopsided Tale III, Water Aid (Techno Head Series), 2020, inkjet print
A Lopsided Tale IV, Water Aid (Techno Head Series), 2020, inkjet print

Faux petit Jeté and a stance, (Techno Head Series), 2020, inkjet print
Religion BFF III, (Techno Head Series), 2020, inkjet print
Self-Portrait III, (Techno Head Series), 2018, inkjet print

Hyacinthe Ouattara, Burkina Faso
Figure Assise, 2019, twisted and knitted fabric and thread, 70 x 50 x 41 cm
L'Anatomie des Tissus #1, 2019, twisted and knitted fabric and threads, 35 x 32 x 30 cm

L'Anatomie des Tissus #2, 2019, twisted and knitted fabric and threads, 50 x 40 x 32 cm
L'Anatomie des Tissus #3, 2019, twisted and knitted fabric and threads, 56 x 32 x 32 cm

Zé Pereira, Cabo Verde
Climate Change - Save Future Generations, 2014, digital photograph
Fisherman from Tarrafal de S. Nicolau, 2019, digital photograph
Ubuntu Soul, 2019, digital photograph

Mbolatiana Raolison (Clipse Teean), Madagascar
Bring Color to Your Life, 2017, wood, upholstery filler, sofa fiber fabric, spray paint, 80 x 150 x 90 cm
Environment Graffiti Intervention at the Francoise Dolto Boarding School, Majunga, Madagascar, 2016, spray paint, 350 x 700 cm
Notorious Big, 2011, mixed media, acrylic, spray paint (mural), 600 x 800 cm
RIP Sean Prince, 2016, spray paint (mural), 200 x 200 cm

Rijasolo, Madagascar
COVID-19 Coronavirus Crisis in Madagascar 15, 2020, digital photograph
COVID-19 Coronavirus Crisis in Madagascar 95, A patient severely infected with COVID-19 on life support, 2020, digital photograph
Madagascar - Terminus of Cyclones 4, 2015, digital photograph
Madagascar - Terminus of Cyclones 5, 2015, digital photograph

Dieudonné Wambeti Sana, Central African Republic
Champs des Illusions, 2019, oil on canvas, 139 x 68 cm
Le Regret, 2015, oil on canvas, 138 x 138 cm
L'Homme et la nature 4, 2017, oil on canvas, 97.5 x 130 cm
Sans défense, 2020, oil on canvas, 89 x 140 cm

Alaa Satir, Sudan
A Woman's Revolution, 2019 digital illustration
A Woman's Place is in the Resistance, 2019, acrylic (mural)
Freedom, peace, freedom, 2019, acrylic (mural)
Freedom, Peace, Justice, 2018, digital illustration
Revolt!, 2019 acrylic (mural)
The Revolution Continues, acrylic (mural)
We Are the Revolution, 2019, digital illustration

Enas Satir, Sudan
Dominance 2, 5, 2017, digital photograph
Ceramic mug from *Daloka girls' songs* series
Enas Satir with a work from her *Daloka girls' songs* series
Shades of Black, 2020, digital illustration series

Collin Sekajugo, Rwanda / Uganda
Boda Boda Oppoprtunity, 2015, interactive performance
Caretaker, photo print polypropylene and acrylic on canvas, 150 x 100 cm
Emmergence Room, 2019, photo print, polypropylene and acrylic on canvas, 89 x 130 cm
Girl's Threat, 2015, interactive performance, 173 x 125 cm
Knapsack, 2019, photo print polypropylene and acrylic on canvas, 173 x 125 cm

Puno Selesho, South Africa
How to Wear Africa, 2022, video, 1'45"

Kani Sissoko, Mali
Quand Les Murs Parlent 1, 2, 4, 6, 10, 2019, digital photographs

Ngadi Smart, Sierra Leone
Abidjan 3, from the series *Vlisco&Co Fashion Illustrations*, 2017, digital image
Untitled 8, 2020, digital image
Valentines, 2019, digital image
Waiting, 2018, digital image

Tcharo-Makinz-Socrome collective, Comoros
Renaître des brisures de Lune (concept by Dr. Mohamed Anssoufouddine), 2019, acrylic paint (mural)
Yaheya Mdri Gudjo Yeza Mdri (Swana Studio commission in Casablanca, Morocco), 2019, acrylic and spray paint (mural)

Kavinash Thomoo, Mauritius
maNature Revisits, 2020, laminated print on aluminium board, 29 cm - 42 cm each, edition of 3
Rest in Place, 2020, laminated print on aluminium board, 229 cm - 42 cm each, edition of 3
Sullied, 2020, laminated print on aluminium board, 29 cm - 42 cm each, edition of 3

Michael Tsegaye, Ethiopia
Future Memories I, II, III, IV, VI, XII, XIV, 2011, scan from medium-format negative digital print on rag paper

Amina Weira, Niger
La colère dans le vent (Anger in the Wind) film poster, 2017, photolithograph
Une scolarité confinée (Confined Education), 2020, video,

duration 00:04:56
Barbara Wildenboer, South Africa
An African Survey, 2021, Altered book, 600 x 700 cm
Cosmos, 2020, Hand-cut paper sculpture with clock mechanism, 166 x 166 cm
Moksha Patam, 2020, hand-cut analogue collage, 82 x 126 cm
Spoils of War, 2021, paper-cut collage, 38 x 220 x 6 cm (each of 6 pillars)

Agness Buya Yombwe, Zambia
Akakonkwa (To follow), 2013, clay and paint, made in collaboration with traditional Mbusa teachers
Girls Not Brides, 2019, acrylic on canvas
Mother and Child, 2017, mixed media
It Is a Taboo to Eat a Snake, 2019, acrylic on canvas

Elephant Totem - It Is a Taboo to Eat an Elephant If it Is Your Totem, 2018, charcoal powder, tea leaves and acrylic on hardboard
Increase in Gender-Based Violence Cases during Covid 19 Pandemic - Call for Help 1, 2020, acrylic on canvas
It Is a Taboo for a Pregnant Woman to Eat Chicken Crawls, 2017, chitenge and acrylic on canvas

It Is a Taboo to Use Same Toilet with Opposite Sex, 2018, paper, bark and acrylic on canvas
Kenyan Woman Removed from Parliament for Bringing Baby, 2019, acrylic on canvas
Snake Taboo - It Is a Taboo for a Pregnant Woman to Kill a Snake, 2019, acrylic on canvas
Taboo to Discuss What Has

Been Taught at Mukanda, 2017, chitenge and acrylic on canvas
Taboo to Eat a Banana in the Presence of In-Laws, 2017, chitenge and acrylic on canvas

Juliette Zelime (Jadez), Seychelles
Free Birds Also Cry, 2017, digital photomontage
Last, 2021, digital photomontage
Progenitor, 2021, digital photomontage
Sound of Silence, 2018, digital photomontage
Virtuous, 2017, digital photomontage



For further information, to be included in the Art Program's mailing list, or to inquire about its activities, please contact artprogram@worldbank.org

View the virtual exhibition *We Are Afrika: The Power of Women and Youth* at <https://wbgvr.org/WeAreAfrika>



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