

AFRICANOW

Contemporary Art from Africa 2008 - 2009

L'ANNONCE FAITE A MIMIRAM



ANGE KUMBA
2007

AFRICA/NOW

Contemporary Art from Africa 2008 - 2009

Tine Thorup
Cuong Sam

thorupART, Copenhagen, Denmark
Kunstkvarteret Lofoten, Norway
Tampere Art Museum, Finland

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thorupART
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Hanne Thorup

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Tine Thorup
Graphic design
Cuong Sam
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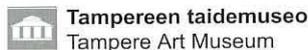
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AFRICANOW

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Foreword

Over the last decade, there has been a growing interest in African contemporary art in a number of European countries, as witnessed by the numerous international exhibitions and art biennales showcasing contemporary African art. In Denmark, Norway and Finland, the public as well as the art community have yet to experience and recognise contemporary art from Africa.

AFRICA/NOW shows the works of more than 35 contemporary artists from 10 countries in East, West and Southern Africa. The purpose of the exhibition has been to showcase the (in a Scandinavian context) relatively unknown African artist identity. It brings together a very wide range of contemporary art from the African continent to present a picture of Africa with self-insight and works of international standards. These contemporary African artists demonstrate that Africa is much more than poverty, HIV/AIDS, starvation, corruption or bad governance.

The driving force behind the exhibition is a desire to draw a different, more complex and nuanced picture of Africa than that portrayed by the media in general. To reflect the diversity and the multitude of expressions, the selection criteria have been kept inclusive. The works are by both self-taught and trained artists, young and old, established as well as unknown. The styles range from popular, through documentary to painterly, political and social. The works are primarily from artists living and working in Africa; however, a few artists from the African Diaspora have been included where it was deemed appropriate and necessary. The predominant view of African art as being mainly traditional and craft oriented has meant that the exhibition has focused purely on contemporary art and practice, excluding art works that appear traditional. This has been a conscious choice, in order to help draw African art out of the craft sphere where it has tended to be stigmatised.

AFRICA/NOW takes its starting point in The East Africa Biennale, EASTAFAB, which is based in Tanzania, but exhibits art from the entire continent. The exhibition has been planned and implemented through a partnership between thorupART in Denmark, Kunstkvarteret Lofoten in Norway and Tampere Art Museum in Finland and through a close relationship with a number of cooperating partners.

However, it is the close relationship with the participating artists that has really made the exhibition possible, along with the vision and energy of the curators, Tine Thorup in Denmark and Tapani Pennanen in Finland. Our gratitude goes to the many people who have contributed to make this exhibition a reality.

Hanne Thorup Director, thorupART, Copenhagen, Denmark
Taina Myllyharju Director, Tampere Art Museum, Finland
Vebjørn Hagene Thoe Managing Director, Kunstkvarteret Lofoten, Norway

Acknowledgements

The exhibition is a partnership between thorupART in Denmark, Kunstkvartret Lofoten and Nordland Fylkeskommune in Norway and Tampere Art Museum in Finland. Without this partnership AFRICA/NOW Contemporary Art from Africa would never have materialised. We would like to thank our dedicated public and private sponsors, cooperating partners and friends, who have shared with us the vision that the time has come to showcase new, exciting art from Africa.

It is always a wonder how many people it takes to make an exhibition a reality, and AFRICA/NOW is no exception. The amount of good will and the dedication of good people that have contributed to the making of this exhibition are exceptional.

Heartfelt thanks to all the fundraisers and the private individuals who have provided moral as well as financial support for the exhibition. Without this support, the exhibition would not have taken place.

Likewise our thanks go to cooperating partners and friends. Amongst these are The Round Tower, Copenhagen, its Director Jesper Vang Hansen and the staff who have been forthcoming and helpful, the East Africa Art Biennale (EASTAFAB) in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania; Prof. Elias Jengo, Department of Fine and Performing Arts, University of Dar es Salaam, and Executive Director and Curator of the East Africa Art Biennale Association, Yves Gosciny, La Petite Galerie, Dar es Salaam, where the seed to AFRICA/NOW was planted.

A number of galleries, venues and individuals have contributed with artworks, space, time and effort. Here we owe thanks to Rachel Kessi of Mawazo Gallery in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Obert Contemporary Gallery in Johannesburg, Dorthe Friis Petersen, photographer living in Dar es Salaam, musician Moussa Diallo, Jesper Egevang of Timia Gallery & Showroom in Copenhagen, Svend Erik & Karen Mohr Sokkelund, Sokkelunds Afrikanske Samling in Copenhagen, the Group of African Ambassadors to Denmark, and the Global World Music and Cultural Festival in Grenaa in Denmark, more specifically Jesper Jul at Kulturhuset Pavillonen, Chair-person Birgit Skov Jensen and board member Lisa Harrestrup of Mølle-

lauget at Baunehøj Mølle. A special thank you to Gitte Astrup for assistance with this publication.

For support, ideas and hard work the AFRICA/NOW reference group deserves a special mention and thanks: Ambassador Birgit Storgaard Madsen, Journalist Knud Vilby, Journalist Barbara Gram, Ambassador Ole Blicher-Olsen and Business Consultant Jørgen Carlsen.

For translation and other invaluable assistance our thanks go to Lise Kaalund Jørgensen, Anne Tørslev-Thomsen Petit and Chitra Sundaram in Denmark and Else Trærup of Kologh Naba in Burkina Faso.

Of course the exhibition could not have happened without the talented and inspirational artists in Burkina Faso, Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Mali, Mozambique, Uganda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. A special thanks to Sira Sissoko and Christophe Sawadogo, who helped coordinate the artists and send works from Mali and Burkina Faso, respectively. Thank you to all the artists who have entrusted their works to us to make the exhibition possible.

Introduction

Is it possible to talk of an African artist identity or African art as a single entity? African artists face a number of challenges when competing on the international art scene. They must work under the conditions set by a long history of Western art, identifying what constitutes contemporary art, yet at the same time they must exhibit an artistic identity independent of Western art, which above all must show originality.

At stake is a continent's right to a place on the international art scene. African artists are asked to find a way to work within the ideology of contemporary art and its concepts, and a way to overcome the stigma of African art as primitive art, which has tied it to ethnography rather than fine art. All this they must do without losing their authenticity. African artists who have the chance of a formal art education risk being deemed 'westernised' and are consequently deemed at risk of losing their African originality. Artists who practise without formal training face the risk of being deemed primitive or amateur, yet conversely have their originality intact. It is a question of identity and it has saturated much of the African art debate.

In his article on Contemporary African Art and the Fiction of Authenticity, Elias Jengo examines some of the views at the heart of this debate, in which some argue that Africa and African art is locked in a perpetual state of anthropological primitivism by the Western art world's desire for and belief in 'uncontaminated' originality and authenticity. If we look at contemporary art through the lens of avant-garde Western art history, it is no surprise to find originality upheld as an ultimate value. Although aesthetics, techniques and artistic competency play a role in determining the significance of a contemporary artwork, the predominant criterion is the degree of originality it is perceived to encompass. The West has set itself up to praise originality, and the notion of African art contaminating its own potential originality and authenticity by becoming westernised is perceived as a crime against the ideals of contemporary art and ultimately against originality itself. This is the predicament that African artists have to work within, and as Maila-Katriina Tuominen points out, it is a consequence of the continued defining of Africa by the outside.

Although the African continent is far too diverse for a single style or artistic identity to be talked about meaningfully, many African artists express a deep-rooted social awareness, which means a concern for their surroundings and the structures that identify the responsibilities of the individual to their surroundings. This responsibility extends from the family and the immediate community, to the country and its political or social wellbeing, to women and the poor, to the connection of past and present, and to humanity and nature on a broader scale. This awareness is very often present in the artists' work. It can be seen either in the motifs, in the constant amalgamations of tradition and modernity, in the wish to create debate through political works, or more

abstractly by donations to community projects from sales of their works, or by simply working together sharing ideas and profit. This social responsibility seems to be distinctly different from the philosophies of Western artists and stands apart from the privatised space of modernism, where works tend to be created out of introspection and where an artist works alone as the sublimely inspired creator.

The Tingatinga painting style was started by a single artist in Tanzania in the 1960s as described in the article by Yves Goscinnny. It has since grown into a collective of artists who paint in the Tingatinga style and it no longer belongs to just one person. It is common for the artists to copy successful motifs from each other and in this way perpetuate or share the originality of one person. At the Tingatinga artists cooperative you will find hundreds of paintings that look alike, some bad, some good. In a Western art world they are dismissed as tourist art, regardless of their quality, because the criterion of the artistic originator is not met. Across the African continent artists work together in a variety of forms. The Tingatinga cooperative is just one example of one of them.

Today, more than ever, artists in the West are starting to work together. Artists form collectives and groups, erasing the authorship of a work and the significance of the individual creator. They work with social issues through Relational Art, highlighting ethical issues and the role of art by making human relations and their social context their artistic medium. Could it be that African artists have preceded the West in their understanding of this interconnection between people? African artists have long worked together in much the same way that contemporary Western groups are now doing, sharing authorship and ideas. Likewise they have used their art in social contexts by donations and involvement in social change in a parallel to artists working with Relational Art. Is it time to look beyond the canvas and the known realm of modernist originality to find new ways of viewing the world and art? Perhaps the divergence of African artists has been too original for the contemporary art world to understand.

The debate on the African artistic identity and its struggle to claim a place on the international art scene is not about the creation of an artistic identity but rather an assertion of it. The articles on the following pages, and not least the artists in AFRICA/NOW, contribute to this debate. In the artists' works in the exhibition we witness awareness and insight and the philosophy of interrelation, be it in the form of the depiction of the predicaments of society or in the beauty of a continent. The viewer who feels alienated by much contemporary art will find that these works have a visual immediacy that will bring them closer to the contemporary artists of Africa than to those of the West.

Tine Thorup

Contemporary African Art and the Fiction of Authenticity

Elias Jengo

Writing about the commodification of African carvings in West Africa, Steiner (1994: 100) remarked that the concept of authenticity is among the most problematic and most difficult issues in the study of African art. He goes further to lament that "the subject of authenticity has received surprisingly little attention by scholars in the field of anthropology or art history". Some of us who are involved with the practice and theory of the visual arts agree that not enough has been said about authenticity in contemporary African art, let alone traditional art which Steiner had in mind. But what is authenticity in art? What is its relevance in the study and collection of artworks? What criteria are employed in confirming authenticity of an art object from Africa? This paper will attempt to answer these questions by first reviewing the criteria used to designate authenticity on contemporary African art from various sources and then the author will provide comments.

Traditional Functions

In an international art exhibition of this nature where there are artworks from Africa, some members of the audience may need to know about the nature and scope of the exhibited artworks from Africa. Those who have never been to Africa, for example, may wish to know about the many local as well as global influences that have shaped what we now call contemporary African art. This is necessary because contemporary African art has for a long time been stigmatized as either imitation of Western art or as an art created without serving traditional social functions. For example, during an exhibition of modern Makonde sculpture at Oxford, England, in the late 1980s, Chambers (1989:19), a British scholar and artist, wrongly rejected the notion that the modern Makonde sculpture that was being exhibited deserved to be called African art. To this scholar, real or genuine African art ought to be smeared with blood and decorated with bird feathers. Here was a scholar who was living in the past, looking at African sculptors as unchanging and clinging to traditions forever. Modern Makonde sculpture is not a form of traditional Makonde sculpture. It is modern in the sense that it is not produced to satisfy some traditional functions such as in rituals and spiritual ceremonies. It is produced in the attitude of art for arts sake. Its form and content may be influenced by Makonde myths and legends just like in any other art, but this cannot be a sufficient reason to regard it as traditional art.

We therefore find that one criterion which is employed by some art collectors and scholars in defining authenticity in contemporary African art is the traditional function of the art object. Some Western collectors of African art wrongly reject any art from Africa that does not seem to serve a traditional function. Their obsession with traditional African art has often conditioned them to think that there is no secular art produced in Africa.

Indigenous Art Materials

The appreciation of exotic ethnic art forms by foreign collectors has often been extended to include even materials used in creating contemporary artworks in Africa. This has been one major source of irritation among contemporary African painters. Agthe (1990:87) quoted the late Kiure Msangi, art professor at Kenyatta University in Kenya, revealing his frustration on the attitude of some Western collectors toward the use of modern media to create contemporary African art. Msangi charged:

If you look at Western art today, the so called 20th century modern art movement, there is so much influence from African masks and African sculpture that Western art of the 20th century is much closer to African art than Western art of the Renaissance period. African art was a catalyst, which caused that movement to take the direction it took. Therefore, there is no conflict.

The only conflict comes when people decide to look at African art through the media used. "You use acrylics? Oh no, that is not African". This I have seen as a commentary in the Washington Post.

It is clear, therefore, that another criterion used in defining authentic African art by some Western art enthusiasts is the use of indigenous or traditional art materials in creating contemporary African art. In fact, in some African countries such as Ethiopia, artists have made use of goat skin as canvas for painting, probably as a measure to counter Western criticism on the use of modern media, such as canvas, to create African art. The use of goat skin may also symbolize the Ethiopian urge for cultural identity through their art.

Authenticity in African art cannot be explained on the basis of using indigenous materials in creating contemporary artworks. In contemporary society, artistic forms and purposes are no longer given by tradition and they cannot be taken

for granted. As Gablick (1986:15) has observed, “the momentum of social change in the modern world has altered not only the nature of art, but also the psychological drives and motivations of those who shape it, to the point where we now find ourselves without rule or compass in evaluating all these changes.” Africa is changing like most continents. Disease, ignorance and poverty co-exist with artistic innovations in most African countries. Contemporary African art has globalized, breaking barriers on language and ideologies. It is no longer being produced for local consumption but for the international art community.

Authenticity Through Informal Education

The lack of formal art education among some African folk and urban artists has often been taken as a criterion for defining authentic contemporary African art. According to Magnin (2004:11), some Western art collectors such as Pigozzi strongly believe that it is the lack of formal education among the African artists, whose works of art he has collected, that makes them authentic. Pigozzi has little respect for works produced by academically trained African artists, as he believes that their works are derivative, that is, they are influenced by Western art. This attitude is not new. The European mentors who worked in Africa in the 1950s such as Beier, McEwan, Lods and Trowell to mention only a few, cherished encouraging the creation of naive art among their African trainees by encouraging them to resist influences from abroad. To them, the cheap naive art that was created was supposed to represent the way all Africans perceived their world. The naive art is still being collected worldwide by Western collectors who think that they have at last found authentic, contemporary African art. According to Kasfir (1999:78), the founder of the Gallery Watatu in Nairobi, Kenya, the late Ruth Schaffner, believed that “academic instruction spoiled the innate creativity of African artists”. The implication here is that only non-Africans deserve to have academic art instruction.

Viewed from this perspective, the designation of the art of Africans with informal art education as “authentic” can be a result of their social disempowerment, as Metcalf (1994:218) has observed:

Modern people came to believe that the naturalness and authenticity existed only in other places, periods, or cultures, and the discovery and preservation of these places

and people became a desperate, modern preoccupation... this concern for lost authenticity and nostalgic search for real experience is at the center of modern consciousness. The deep structure of modernity is a totalizing idea, a modern mentality that sets modern society in opposition both to its own past and to those societies of the present that are premodern or underdeveloped.

This may help us to explain the attitude held by some Western art collectors towards contemporary African art. The attitude is rooted in Western ideologies and has been created by and for one culture about another culture. The generation of African artists in this exhibition have created works that aim to dismantle the colonialist mindset that formulated the original fictions of authentic culture. Their works are rooted in their home countries and show specific local traditions and experiences as their subject matter. These forms of cultural expressions are likely to be received widely nowadays in that the arts have globalized, striving to break barriers between individual countries as well as languages. Even the language of contemporary art has become international. Africa cannot be an island reserved for the creation of artworks that rupture academic standards through neo-primitivism that offers the spectacle of a laughing Africa.

The Quest for Authentic Contemporary Art

We must conclude this discussion by showing the steps taken by the Africans themselves in defining authenticity in their art. In the early 1960s a group of young art students in Zaria, Nigeria formed the famous Zaria Art Society in order to create what they considered to be a true Nigerian art and by extension, an authentic African contemporary art. They coined the term ‘Natural Synthesis’ as a guiding principle that would allow them to move beyond the Western-centred art curriculum. They wanted to synthesize the old and the new of functional art and art for arts sake. Their aims were not different from those propounded by the Negritude movement in Dakar, Senegal.

The Senegal President, Leopold Senghor, was the force behind the negritude idea. It was not surprising, therefore, that the movement came to an end after his tenure of office ended. Its guiding principles were based on the symbiosis between indigenous African art forms and those from outside. Meaning, local artists could make use of traditional art forms such as decorations, sculptural forms and symbols in

their compositions by using foreign techniques. Artists who championed this idea were known as the School of Dakar. We find, therefore, that to some Africans, especially those with nationalistic feelings, authenticity in art is seen as being brought about by the application of indigenous artistic forms and genre in compositions. The use of imported colour and other materials is seen as a very secondary affair caused by technological developments.

In the Sudan, the idea of authenticity has stimulated the growth of movements that have been viewed as having the power to create national identity and hence, authentic Sudanese art. The School of the Desert and the Jungle, for example, had members who believed that the compositions in their paintings should reflect the true colours of the Sudanese landscape. The Khartoum School, made up mostly of elite artists, synthesized the old and the new in their compositions while the School of the One bases its art on calligraphic designs that quote Quran verses. The Crystalist School, on the other hand, was based on the idea of the transparency of life. These commendable efforts reveal the powerful role played by Sudanese academic artists in the cultural politics of their nation. To them art is not a sporadic activity that helps to perpetuate the dogma held by some collectors like Pigozzi that authentic art is only produced by semi-illiterate Africans or those with little formal art education.

To conclude this discussion, it should be remembered that the notion of authenticity is still a dominant criterion and remains topical in all discussions on art history. The present fictional criteria that have been applied to contemporary African art in the global context, need constant and serious re-examination.

Elias Jengo is a practising artist and the chairman of the East Africa Biennale in Tanzania. He is the co-founder of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts at the University of Dar es Salaam where he became the first head of the department.

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Makonde sculpture
Kenya

Contemporary African Art Tells Its Own Tale

Maila-Katriina Tuominen

Let no one define you or your country. Some will want to deify you, to treat you like a princess, while others will want to dismiss you as a peasant... We have to define ourselves and write our own history... We are still standing on the ground of our ancestors, we are rooted where others were scattered.

In these words a mother gives advice to her daughter in Zenzele: A Letter for My Daughter, the 1996 debut novel of the Zimbabwean author J. Nozipo Maraire. Maraire studies the Zimbabwean community and family relations in describing the nature of identity. Her novel is primarily about the shaping of the identity of African people and above all that of a young woman. Operating on a small scale, this work engages the mind because it subtly asks what African identity is.

When speaking of Africa we generally speak of a single undivided entity, as if all 56 countries were alike and share one single, common culture. It is important to ask who speaks in this manner.

Africa has been and is continually defined with outside, often Western, eyes, as if there were no such thing as African self-awareness. Africa cannot be wrapped in a package or evaluated through generalizations. This is something that is done by Western media on a daily basis.

Though it is not easy to define identity, the Chilean sociologist and social philosopher Jorge Larraín summarizes it in understandable terms, noting that identity is the story that we tell of ourselves to others, or the story told by a group of people to another group. Identity means belonging to something.

Taking Larraín's observation as a guideline, discussion on African culture and art in relation to Western art gains comprehensible dimensions. It is simply about the encounter of different communities and groups of people.

Stuart Hall, professor emeritus of sociology at the University of Birmingham, points out that globalization has made the idea of culture as a set of autonomous and self-contained systems of meaning and practices appear outmoded.

Many major international exhibitions of contemporary art in

recent years confirm the views of both scholars. The Venice biennials of the 2000s and Documenta 11 and 12 at Kassel alike have displayed contemporary African art and opened their perspective on the world as a whole. Although this has not been done to any sufficient degree, the direction that has been taken is the right one. In particular, the Johannesburg Biennial, the exhibition *Magiciens de la Terre* at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the East Africa Biennial in Dar Es Salaam, the Dakar Biennial, the Africa exhibition of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, and Africa Remix displayed in different parts of the world, including Moderna Museet in Stockholm, have opened up doors towards the south, and the power and variety of its visual expression.

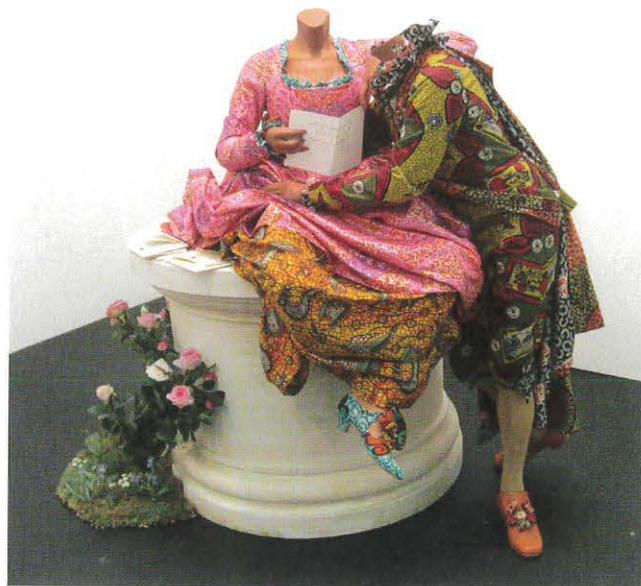
The present exhibition in Copenhagen, which is scheduled to later go to Norway and Finland, continues this line of development, introducing new artists and works to viewers in the Nordic countries. It is important to underline that the artists now included live and work mainly on African soil.

In exhibitions of African art seen in the United States and Europe many of the participants are artists living in diaspora. In other words, they are professional artists trained in Europe or the United States and also living and working outside their own continent. They are the bridge-builders and pioneers of encounter to whom Jorge Larraín referred in his definition of identity. Stuart Hall takes up the concept of diaspora, following Mary Louise Pratt's definition whereby diasporas are classic zones of encounter, where various transculturation processes take place.

According to Hall, a characteristic feature of the cultures of encounter zones and diasporas is that they never remain "pure". The new conditions under which these cultures must cope impact the ways in which "original" culture changes and adapts over time. Cultures developing in diasporas are thus the result of a complex and unending process of combining elements from different cultures. A good example is the work of Yinka Shonibare, a Nigerian-born artist living in Britain, which has also been on display in Finland, at the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki. The brain drain is as active in the arts as it is in science and scholarship.

Discussions of African art have taken up the concepts of authenticity and genuineness in trying to delve into the depths

Sculpture by Yinka Shonibare
Image by commonorgarden
© (i) © creative commons



of “genuinely African” identity. As a result, so-called authentic art is regarded as defined by the historical strata of African art. This applies above all to contemporary art and its various manifestations.

When a form and external appearance were sought for the national identity of Finland in the 19th century, the visual arts played a central role in shaping the national self-image. It became, however, a set formula to which later artists were sought to be restricted. It is still asked in Finland whether we have national art, or whether we have lost our identity to international currents in the arts. The issue is ultimately that art never emerges from a void, but instead from everything of which the world of people is constructed, including history.

Interest in contemporary African art continues to grow. Private collectors of art in particular have “discovered” Sub-Saharan art. The Italian businessman and investor Jean Pigozzi wants to build a museum for his collection of African art, either in Europe or the United States. Why not in Africa, the continent from where he obtained the works through his agents?

Pigozzi’s “team” included the photographer Malick Sidibé of Mali, who was awarded the Golden Lion for his life’s work at Venice Biennial. Pigozzi’s collection also contains work by Romuald Hazumé of Benin, who participated in Documenta 12 at Kassel, and by Bodys Isek Kingelez of the Congo.

But there are also museums and art centres operating in the opposite direction. Villa Karo in Benin is a Finnish-African cultural centre, which its director, the Finnish author Juha Vakkuri, founded in the Grand-Popo area. On Vakkuri’s initiative, the organizers of the centre want to see African works of art returned there from different parts of the world. In other words, relocation in reverse.

The globalization of art follows the same pattern as the corporate world. Until recently, the direction has been from west to east, to China and other Asian countries, and from there to Africa. Though art crosses borders in different ways than the economy, their mutual entwinement cannot be avoided. In this process, the power of art will always lead further, past generations and millennia. The familiar slogan, *Ars longa, vita brevis*, still remains true.

Maila-Katriina Tuominen is an art critic and a cultural and human rights journalist who is also a lecturer in art history, visual culture, journalism and human rights. She specialises in Islamic culture, African art and culture, and has travelled extensively in Africa. She lives and works in Finland.

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Tingatinga: the Popular Paintings from Tanzania

Yves Gosciny

Tingatinga, what a strange name! It sounds like a nickname but it is in fact the real name of a person, the name of the painter who started a naive painting style in Tanzania, way back in 1968.

Eduwardi Saidi Tingatinga, that is his full name, was born in 1932 to poor peasant parents in a rural area in the South of Tanzania.

Due to poverty, he could not even complete primary school. As the eldest child with a sick father, he leaves home when his mother dies (1957) and migrates to the Tanga Region in Tanzania, to seek work as a farm labourer on a sisal plantation and be able to support his siblings.

In 1960, Eduwardi, as he is normally called (Saidi was his father's name and Tingatinga his grandfather's name), has the chance to come and settle in Dar-es-Salaam to work in a private home with one of his cousins.

Up to now, however, nothing indicates that he would ever become an artist, apart from the fact that he is a very good traditional dancer and musician and takes every opportunity to perform with a group of Makonde friends in his neighbourhood.

When a few years later he secures a steady night shift job as a warden in a hospital, the industrious Eduwardi looks for something else to do in the daytime; he goes around Dar-es-Salaam's tourist shops and sees some Congolese "souvenir" paintings, but no paintings from Tanzania.

One day in 1968, his natural artistic inclination and ingenuity take him straight to a hardware store. He buys a sheet of ceiling board (8 x 4 ft., which he later cuts it into eight squares of 2 x 2 ft), a couple of ordinary brushes, a few pots of enamel paint and goes home to start painting.

What he paints comes straight from his memory as a youngster, particularly the wildlife he has seen around his home village: zebras, lions, buffaloes, leopards, birds...

At that time the much lower population density in Tanzania meant that wild animals could be seen around villages and other rural settlements, and even in the near vicinity of the growing city of Dar-es-Salaam.

Of course nothing to compare with the herds in the Serengeti plains, but they still represent impressive close encounters for any young man; remember your first visit to a zoo, but this time you are also inside the cage!

The animals that Eduwardi depicts are singled out, one at a time, walking (from right to left) across the viewer's pathway while staring at him. The background is a uniform colour, or two different plain colours divided by the horizon line. No trees, no vegetation. The animals' glances are not ferocious at all, rather showing indifference to us human beings penetrating their territory.

In other paintings, Eduwardi depicts simple scenes of village life, or a traditional doctor preparing his secret potions, or a village event he has witnessed or been told about.

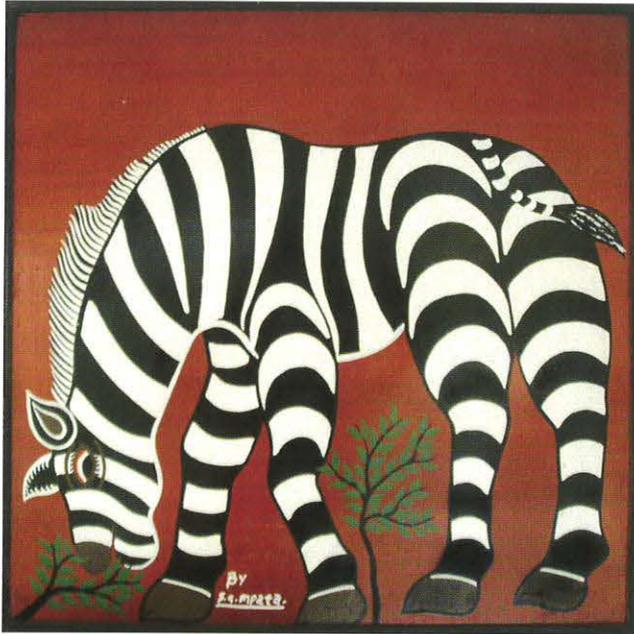
Eduwardi signed his paintings in the Western mode of signing, with the initials of the first name(s) and the family name in full, although his own single name was Eduwardi. When he signed his paintings as E.S. Tingatinga, the artist could not have imagined that he would become famous under his grandfather's name, Tingatinga.

Tingatinga, as he is known to posterity, stubbornly continued to paint, to the incredulous amusement of his relatives (including his wife) and friends. When his paintings started to fetch reasonably good prices for that time (representing, in a given month, 5-10 times what he was getting as a salary) the artist decided to quit his secure public service job to dedicate himself full-time to painting.

The first Tanzanian painter of popular origin was born, and with him started the so-called naive painting style in Tanzania.

This story could have ended here as Tingatinga would have continued his artist's life on his own, but with his growing financial success in a land of few opportunities, a couple of his relatives and a few of his close friends started to show interest in learning how to paint from him.

Soon, Tingatinga found himself at the head of five student painters: Mpata, Tedo, Ajaba, Linda and Adeusi. What started as a single career now became the story of a group; Tingatinga, the leader, and his five students.



Zebra by Mpata, 1977
Enamel paint on board, 60 x 60 cm



A painter at the Tingatinga Cooperative
Morogoro Stores, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 2007

Tingatinga willingly inducted his five followers into the world of popular painting, but he vehemently refused to take any other trainees. Until he died prematurely in 1972 when he was killed by a stray bullet during a traffic police incident, these five were the only practitioners of the Tingatinga style of painting.

Eduwardi Saidi Tingatinga had painted for only four years from 1968 to 1972, when his life abruptly came to an end at the age of forty!

Consternation was great in the Makua community over the death of the artist, but after the appropriate time of mourning, the five students decided to continue to paint as they had been taught, and soon after, a few youngsters timidly approached them, begging to be accepted as new apprentices.

From the one Eduwardi Saidi Tingatinga to the five followers, to the first wave of youngsters, who in turn became teachers to the next wave, and so on, the Tingatinga style of painting has been widening its pyramid of popular painters.

In fact, the short lived experience of one genuine artist has now evolved and is being perpetuated in the Tingatinga popular school of painters, where generation after generation, the skills and techniques are transmitted from masters to students. They, in turn, will develop their own personal style within the Tingatinga framework.

This constitutes, to our knowledge, a unique case of the establishment of a lively, popular school of art in Africa and is possibly one of very few such cases in the world, as each school has its own and differently motivated history and practice.

Yves Gosciny is the founder and director of La Petite Galerie in Dar es Salaam and the Executive Director of the East Africa Art Biennale, Tanzania. Originally from Belgium he has lived and worked in Tanzania for more than 10 years.



b.1966, Sudan
Lives and works in
Kampala, Uganda

Ahmed Abushariaa was born in 1966 in Sudan. Abushariaa studied for his BA in Fine Arts at Khartoum College of Fine and Applied Arts, Sudan University from 1986 to 1990.

After working for three years as a designer he was among those who left Sudan after the 1989 military coup, the aftermath of which saw artistic expression stifled by the new, fanatical regime. Artists, who drew attention to the twenty-year civil war or the Nuba Mountain genocide, were consequently prohibited to exhibit their controversial works. As a result, Abushariaa opted to relocate to Nairobi, Kenya and worked as Artist in Residence at the Paa Ya Paa Art Centre for more than two years.

Abushariaa has his foundations in the Khartoum Modern Group, which originated in the sixties with pioneers of contemporary art like Ibrahim Salahi and Professor Mohammed Omar Shibrain. Abushariaa's art is distinctly rich in colours and symbols and the semi-abstract style presents an abundance of imagery, idioms, calligraphy and imagination. His paintings are primarily influenced by traditional and modern Sudan and his creativity has flourished harmoniously within the context of the Nubian culture and his Muslim faith. In the works presented in recent years, Abushariaa shows, in his own characteristic style, his concern about the

human tragedy in Darfur and the terrible situation of the refugees it has created.

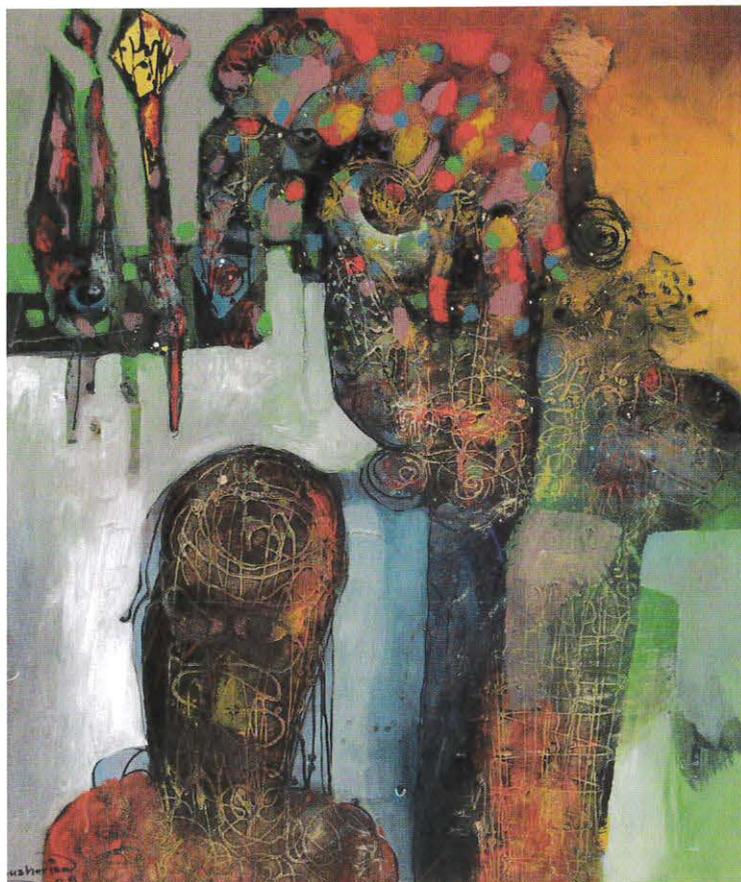
Unlike many contemporary African artists living in Europe and America, Abushariaa is happy to be based in Africa, in spite of the material difficulties. He has faith in Africa as a potentially dynamic and creative place for contemporary art, and news of his artistic success has brought hope to many Sudanese artists in Khartoum. Interest in his work has steadfastly grown and his work has been acclaimed both in Africa and overseas as being simple yet inspirational. In 2006 The World Bank bought four of Abushariaa's paintings. Abushariaa now lives in Uganda with his Rwandan wife and children, and is the main force behind a tightly knit group of Sudanese artists working in countries neighbouring Sudan, called 'Sudanese Artists for Peace'.

"The paintings in the Missing Home series reflect my feeling of homesickness, because I am discussing the forest and the desert in Sudan. It is a very interesting mix. If you go through Sudan, you will find different climates, different cultures, different peoples, and different, vivid colours. It is significant, and during the last two months I have been thinking a lot of those issues while working."





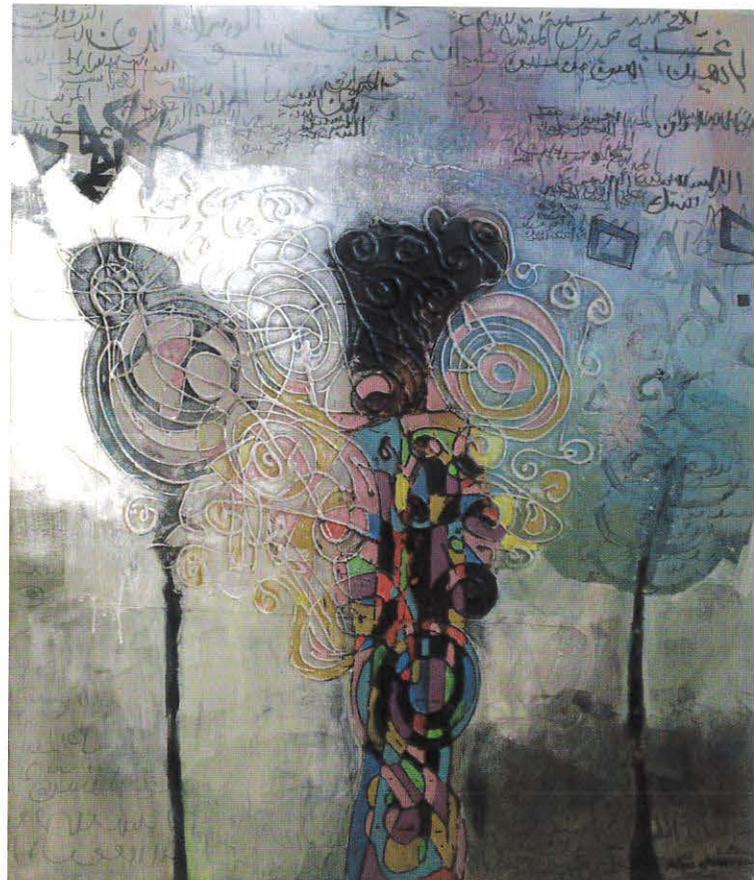
Child Soldier series, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
100 x 85 cm



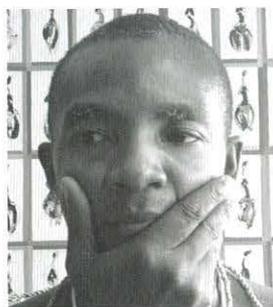
Child Soldier series, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
100 x 85 cm



Untitled, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
100 x 85 cm



Darfur series, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
100 x 85 cm



b.1970, Ghana
Lives and works in
Accra, Ghana

Kofi Agorsor has been described as one of Ghana's most lyrical and inventive young painters, in addition to being a talented musician and dancer. Agorsor started studying architecture but two years into the course he discovered his true passion lay in painting and subsequently enrolled in art college. He worked as a sign writer painting advertisements on houses, kiosks and cars, before becoming a full-time artist. According to Agorsor, the essential difference between sign writing and painting is that a sign writer is not involved with concepts and the underlying ideas, whereas a painter has to create something and translate his or her feelings in a painting. With it comes also responsibility, as Agorsor believes that being an artist does not just mean painting, playing music, sculpting or acting, but rather, preserving one's spiritual and cultural heritage.

Agorsor's art is inspired by music, both traditional and jazz, as well as by women and their position in Ghanaian society. His paintings have an abstract, cubist element, where flat compositions of dynamic shapes, colours and movement make up a singular style.

"My work is about love and affection, about simple everyday situations like relationships, music, religion. Some people say I paint as a European or American interpreting African life. Some say my work is universal. I feel very universal."

When he needs to renew his inspiration he retreats to work on his pineapple plantation where village life provides a break from meetings, noise and the bustle of the city.

Agorsor has participated in group exhibitions in Ghana as well as in Togo, Ivory Coast, Italy, South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe and has held several solo exhibitions in Accra.



Water Melon
Acrylic on canvas
101 x 101 cm

Arms into Art

The 1992 Peace Agreement marked the end of 16 years of civil war in Mozambique. To secure and reinforce peace, the Mozambican Christian Council started a project transforming arms into tools. The aim was to collect and destroy as many arms as possible, preventing them from doing further damage amongst the population and also stopping the arms travelling into neighbouring countries to be sold at knock-down prices. People handing in their weapons received agricultural tools in exchange.

Inspired by the success of the project, the Mozambican Christian Council launched another project to convert the arms into art. The oldest artists' collective in Mozambique, Nucleo de Arte, got involved, and artists from the collective started making works of art out of AK 47 machine guns, hand weapons and landmines. Robust or fragile, the sculptures are eloquent in their expression of optimism and confidence.



Exhibition view
Rundetaarn, 2008
(The Round Tower)
Copenhagen, Denmark



Mathe
Adelino Serafim Mate

Arms into Art
Mozambique



b.1973, Mozambique
Lives and works in
Maputo, Mozambique



Maestro
Metal & disused arms
83 x 25 x 53 cm

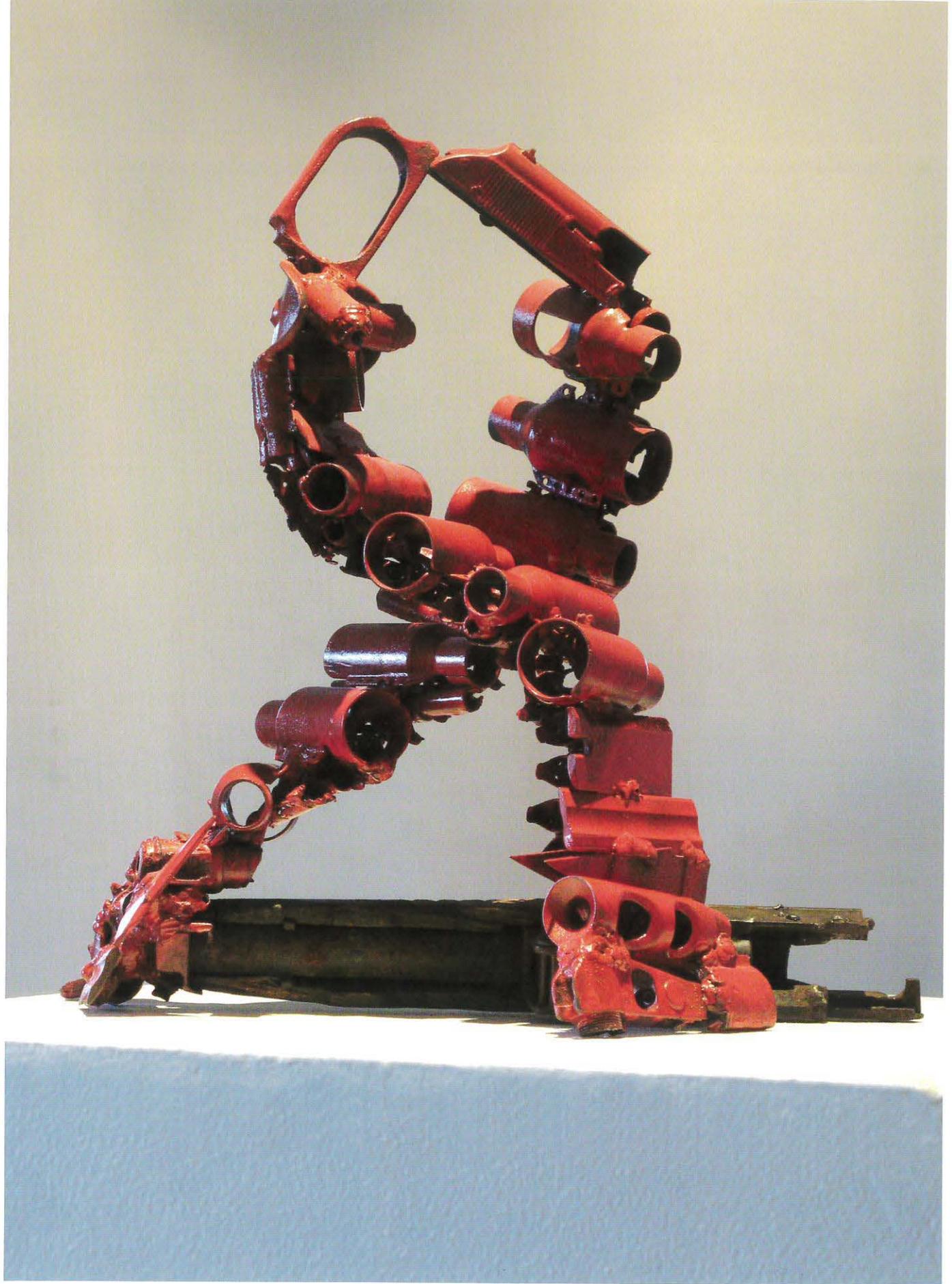
At an early age Mathe showed a creative talent by making toys for his younger brother. In 1990 he started to receive training in woodcarving at the workshop of Alberto Chissano in Matola. Today Mathe works in wood, bronze and metal, including old arms.

He has since 1994 participated in a large number of collective exhibitions in Mozambique, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Holland, Belgium, USA, Italy and Japan and frequently appears as a guest teacher in schools and universities in Mozambique. In 2005 he was one of four artists to create The Tree of Life for the British Museum in London. The sculpture takes the form of a tree made entirely of disused arms and took three months to complete.

“Being born in a country with a long history of war, poverty and in recent years also the scourge of the HIV/AIDS epidemic has certainly influenced my life and work. I am strongly committed to peace and social harmony and use my art to convey a sense of hope for the future.

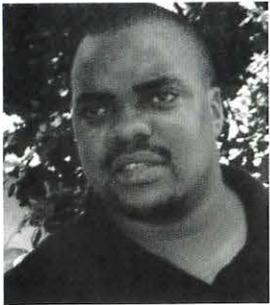
This is the driving force behind my ‘Ribbon of Hope’, which builds on the shape of the classic HIV/AIDS ribbon, but transformed into a message also of love and hope for the future – instead of the sinister “Aids Kills” message I have often seen in other places. This need for providing hope in difficult times is also the key reason for my affiliation to the Transforming Arms into Art project organized by the Christian Council. One of my favourite themes when making sculptures of scrapped weapons is music. By transforming the weapons into musicians I convey the hope of transforming the bad songs of war into positive songs of a better future.”

Opposite page
Ribbon of Hope
Disused arms
33 x 33 x 23 cm



Humberto Delgado Pateguana

Arms into Art
Mozambique



b.1974, Mozambique
Lives and works in
Mozambique

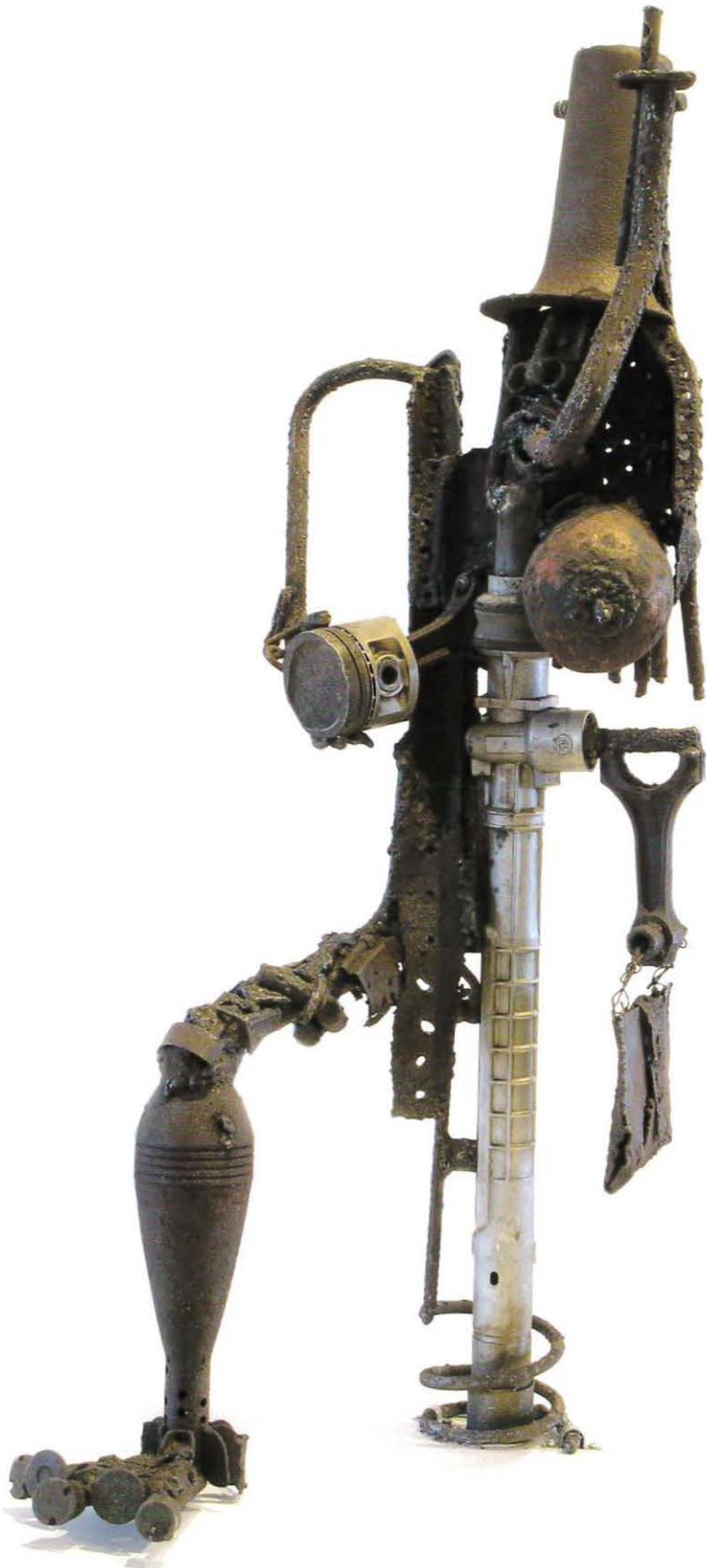
Humberto Delgado Pateguana started his studies in Maputo in 1980 and graduated with an intermediate level from Josina Machel. In 1997 he joined the artists' association Nucleo de Arte and started his career as an artist that same year, working full-time as a sculptor.

The association Nucleo de Arte is situated in the centre of Maputo in an old villa. It is the oldest artists' collective in Mozambique and has over a hundred members working in various media. It has become a prominent institution, which holds exhibitions and acts as a meeting place for artists and art lovers.

Humberto Pateguana has participated in group exhibitions in Africa, Europe and Canada.

Hockey tradicional
(Hockey Player)
Disused arms
100 x 55 x 90 cm





50% mulher moderna
(50% Modern Woman)
Disused arms
108 x 44 x 59 cm



Sonho que tive ontem
(The Dream I Had Yesterday)
Disused arms
78 x 38 x 33 cm



b.1971, Uganda
Lives and works
in Uganda

Herbert Bakka obtained a diploma in environmental science before fully dedicating himself to art after attending a Creations Art Workshop in 1997. Bakka mainly works as a sculptor, though he also worked with oil on canvas and in ceramics. He progressed from ceramics to ceramic sculpture, sculpture in wood, stone carving, and has also cast sculptures in metal. He says he enjoys working in sculpture because he is most comfortable when working with three dimensions. An introvert by nature, Bakka's art is about daily life, nature and wildlife, and he is fascinated by mother and childcare themes. He has had several exhibitions in Kampala, Uganda.



Blue Lady (front view)
Wood, plastic & metal
66 x 33 x 30 cm



Blue Lady (side view)
Wood, plastic & metal
66 x 33 x 30 cm

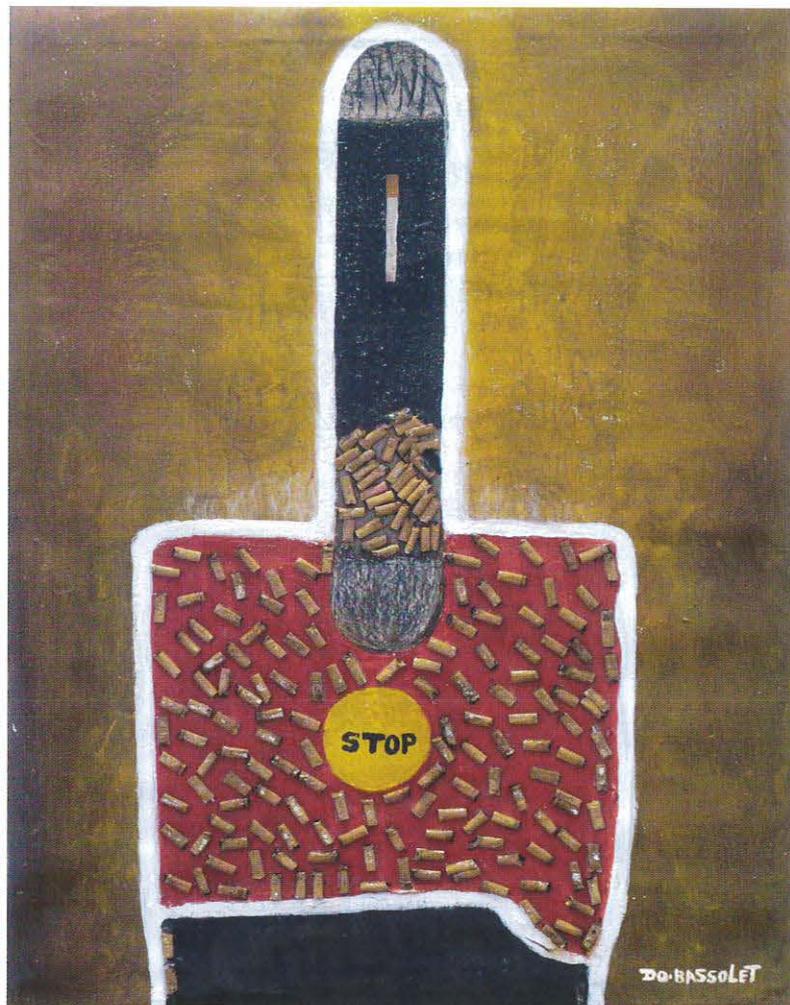


b.1971, Burkina Faso
Lives and works
in Ouagadougou,
Burkina Faso

Dominique Bassolet received his artistic training in meetings with Ouag'Art in 1995, and through the tuition of several African painters such as Claude-Marie Kabré, Sokey Edoh from Togo and As M'Benguè from Senegal. Through a series of workshops, initiated by the new director of the French Cultural Centre, Ouag'Art brought artists together who were mainly self-taught and who had till then worked separately and without much contact with each other. In the workshops African artists received tutoring from, and exchanged ideas with western artists. The new communication led the artists to form two artists' organisations for respectively painters and sculptors.

The memory of his time in the Burkinabe army during the revolution in 1983-1987 is evident in Bassolet's paintings. His canvases are often composed of pieces of army clothing, jarring colours of force and injustice, feeble and glaring faces that speak of a painter who may never have wanted to witness those times. In other paintings the violence gives way to dreamlike landscapes,

and canvases that centre around the present everyday. These paintings can be light-hearted and stubbornly focused on the problems of daily life, like the difficulties of quitting smoking, as a way for the painter to ignore the past. Bassolet's paintings are a search for peace. Both peace of mind and peace in a world often ravaged by conflicts.



Stop Smoking
Mixed media & oil on canvas
88 x 70 cm



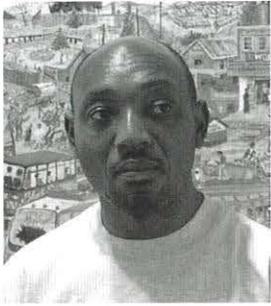
La peur du monde
(The Fear of the World)
Mixed media & acrylic on canvas
88 x 68 cm

Bertiers

Joseph Mbatia Njoroge

Kenya

Bus Terminal
Acrylic on canvas
110 x 155cm



b.1963, Kenya
Lives and works in
Nairobi, Kenya

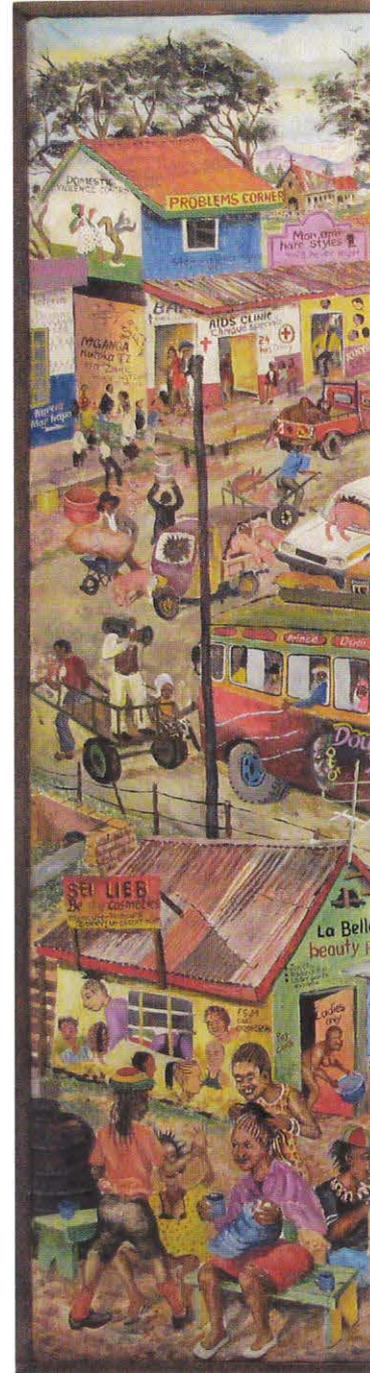
Joseph Mbatia Njoroge “Bertiers” began drawing and painting from a very young age, although art was not a subject taught in the schools that he attended in Nairobi. He received a diploma in commercial arts and design from YMCA Crafts Training Centre in 1982, and then spent the next couple of years using his innate talents and the skills acquired from his art training to freelance for commercial enterprises including beauty parlours, bars, hotels and butcheries.

In 1985, Bertiers joined a brewery in Nairobi’s industrial area where he was employed to brand the company’s products, delivery vans, clients’ bars, etc. Frustrated with the limitations of creative expression offered by his commercial work and exercising his signature humour, he launched a series of paintings entitled ‘Painting a Cat - I Really Hate It’, suggesting that only brushing paint on live cats could be worse than sign painting. (Dateline Kenya: The Media Paintings of Joseph Bertiers, Smart Art Press, 1998)

Bertiers identified himself as a painter with his first exhibition at the Goethe Institute, Nairobi in 1992. Since then he has been exhibiting his signature witty sculptures and paintings. The free-

dom from the constraints of commercial painting and his development of a new technique for making metal sculptures was instrumental in pushing his artistic expression forward. Bertiers’ perceptive paintings have earned him, amongst others, a 3-month residency in Marseille, France at the 2006 Dak’Art Biennale and a place in several European and American collections.

Bertiers is very concerned about social, political and economic issues in Kenya and abroad, and his paintings of celebrities, national and global events are characterised by his sharp wit and humour. His penchant for news and international events has been a source of inspiration for his painting and even before he had travelled outside Kenya national and international events from newspapers, TV and radio were dealt with by his witty brush. The fools, charlatans, lovers, and politicians that make up Bertiers’ work all speak of his witty perception and portray a social commentary that can be recognised by all.







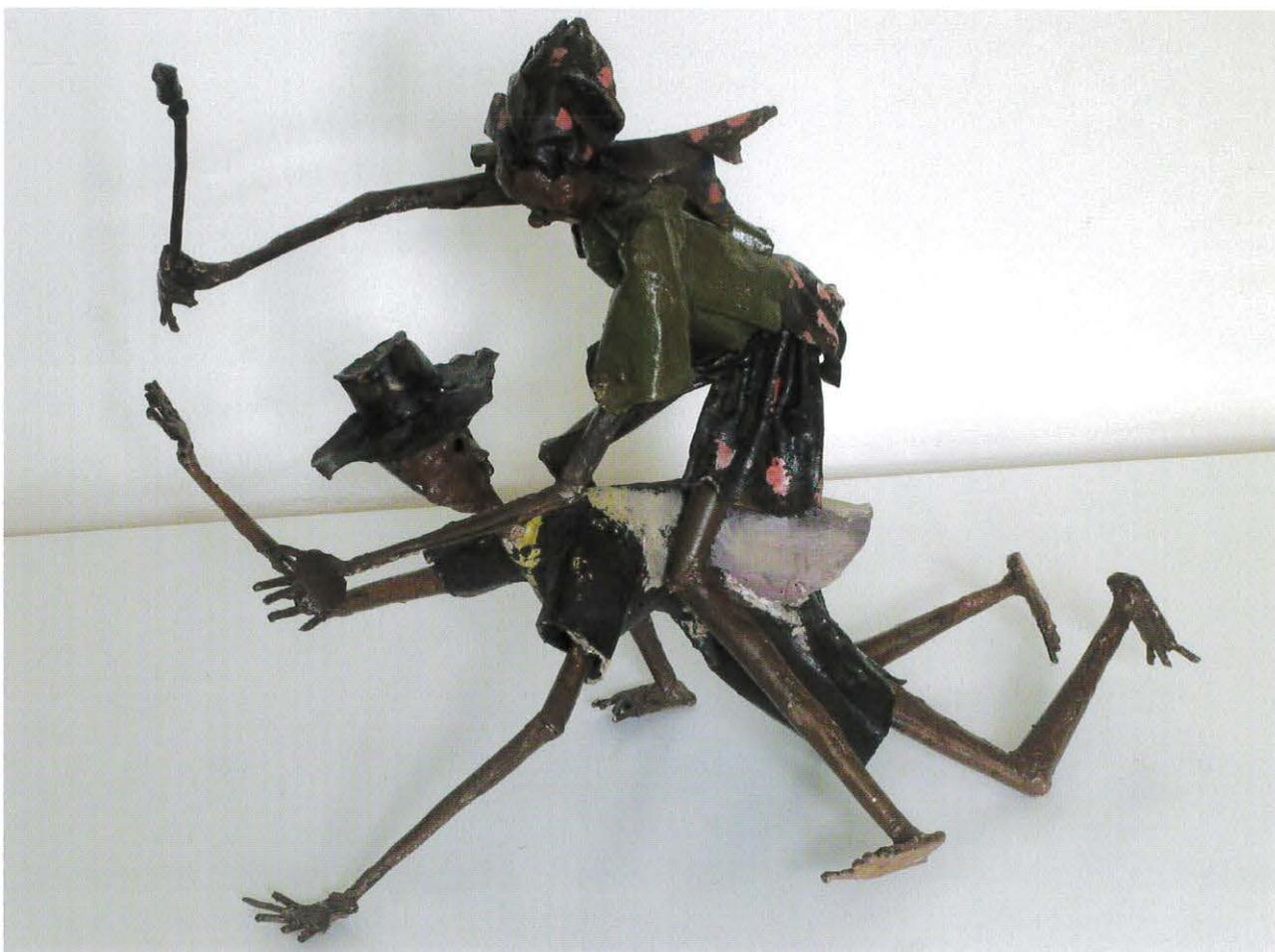
Stupidity Never Runs Out of Style (front view)
Metal, enamel paint
53 x 52 x 32 cm

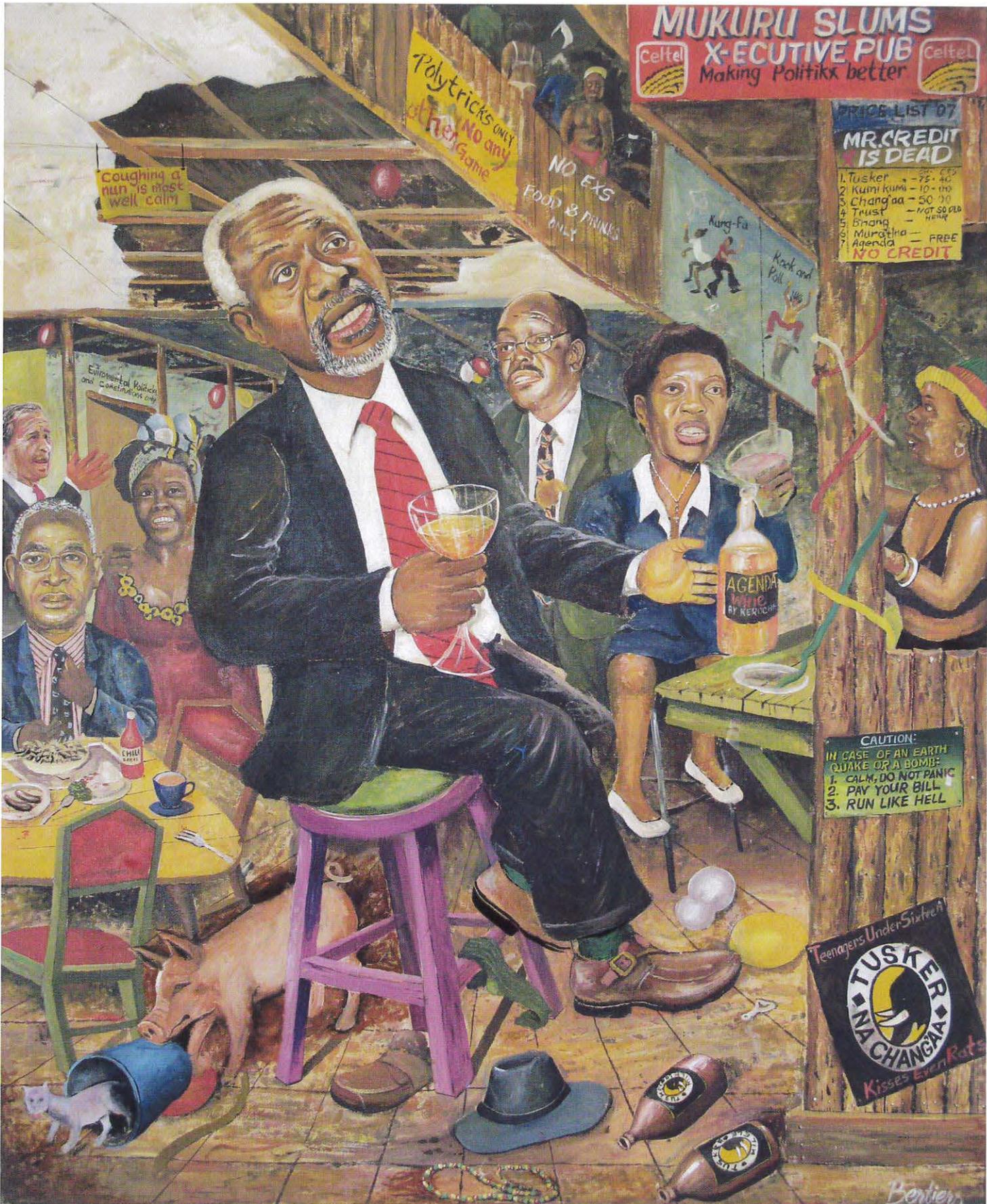


Stupidity Never Runs Out of Style (back view)
Metal, enamel paint
53 x 52 x 32 cm

Opposite page top
Rural Transport
Metal, enamel paint
36 x 57 x 27 cm

Opposite page bottom
Domestic Violence
Metal, enamel paint
42 x 50 x 29 cm





Sambo Boly

Burkina Faso

The Library
Textiles & acrylics
154 x 198 cm



b.1960, Burkina Faso
Lives and works
in Ouagadougou,
Burkina Faso

Sambo Boly is a self-taught artist who started drawing whilst a student at Koran school, and later developed at the Centre National d'Artisanat d'Art de Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso.

Over the years Boly has developed a special technique for constructing his paintings, which is uniquely his own. He stretches long bands of cloth on large wooden frames interweaving them to create a textured, rough surface on which he then paints. His paintings are often populated by crooked figures, simple, childlike faces, ancestral and Islamic spirits and totems in a style, which ranges from naive, narrative figures to symbolic abstraction. In the work *Library*, Boly has humourously sewn together sleeve cuffs from men's shirts creating a tapestry of repetition and abstraction out of the everyday. Boly's work often has an underlying story of morality or philosophy. Although his works are often childlike and cheerful, his works hide a wisdom and a wealth of proverbs and a perception of society, which is far from naive.

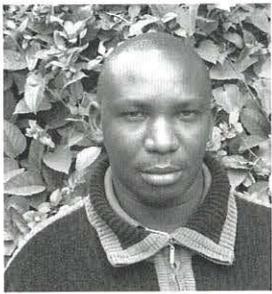
Boly has exhibited in Burkina Faso, in Geneva, Paris and Grenoble.





Joseph Cartoon
Joseph Njuguna Kamau

Kenya



b.1976, Kenya
Lives and works
in Kenya

An autodidact artist from Kenya, Joseph Cartoon started drawing at an early age and was inducted into the Ngecha art movement and introduced to Gallery Watatu by Sane Wadu. Starting with charcoal and paper, which was affordable, he later moved on to acrylics and oil on canvas, which is his preferred medium today. His paintings are highly decorative, with dots, squares and circles that resemble the dreamscapes of Aborigine paintings. The women of Cartoon's paintings emerge as Madonna-like figures creating a modern iconography of pure and vibrant colours.

Cartoon has participated in over 50 group exhibitions and 8 solo exhibitions in Kenya and abroad.



Our World
Acrylic on canvas
92 x 65 cm



My Dream Becoming a Reality -You and I Forever
Acrylic on canvas
101 x 61 cm



Mother and Child
Acrylic on canvas
72 x 41 cm

CFP Bamako

Cadre de promotion pour la Formation en Photographie

Mali



Exhibition view
Rundetaarn, 2008
(The Round Tower)
Copenhagen, Denmark

CFP: photographic training centre

Malian photography has gained an international reputation through the works of two self-taught photographers, Seydou Kéïta and Malick Sidibé. In 1994 Bamako was chosen as the venue for the African Photography symposium, a biennale where photographers from the continent meet. It was to support the biennale and strengthen the already dynamic sector of photography in Mali that the Swiss Helvetas established the CFP photographic training centre in 1998. It has operated as an independent association since 2004.

The centre offers photographic schooling to young Malians as well as foreigners who wish to acquire a sound, practical knowledge on photography in order to work professionally within the field. The centre also offers courses for professional photographers wanting to diversify or learn new techniques. It is the goal of the CFP to further creativity within photography by organising exhibitions, conferences and displays in the world of photography. Its main objectives are to promote and provide quality training in photography, promote the professionalisation of the sector and facilitate meetings and exchanges between professionals.

'Sangue Mon' - traditional fishing celebration

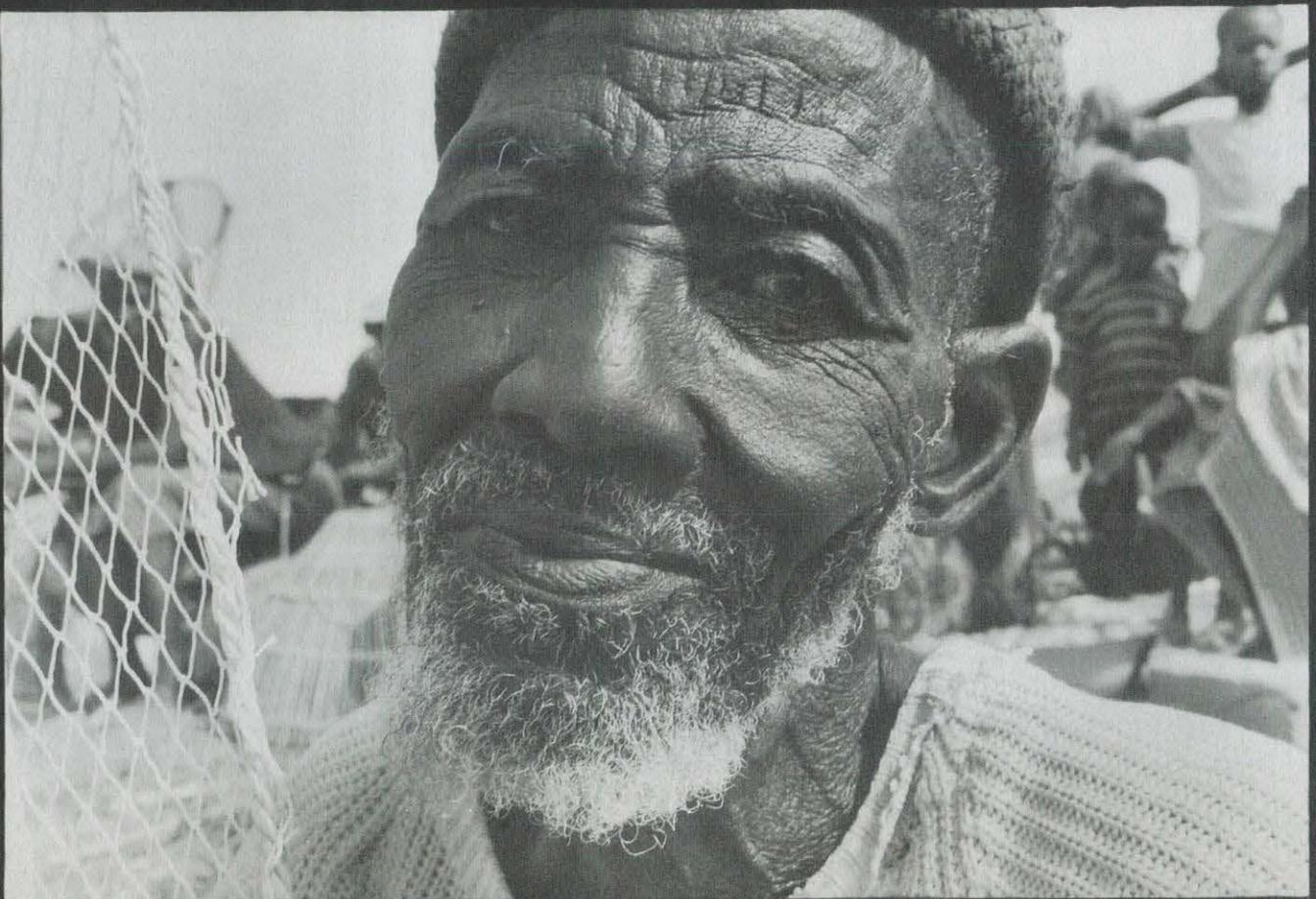
In June 2004, 13 students from the CFP (Cadre de promotion pour la Formation en Photographie) set off from Bamako to cover the traditional fishing celebration of San, 240km east of the capital. Every year during the first two weeks of June the population of San organises and takes part in the fishing celebration, an ancient celebration, which according to some, dates back as far as the beginning of the 14th century. The reportage aims to give a modern view on a 600 year-old tradition and its value as documentary is strengthened by the aesthetic perception of the young photographers.

Students participating in the exhibition

Fatoumata Diabaté
Harandane Dicko
Batoma (Fatoumata Kanté)
Aminata Koné
Garba Maïga
Kadiatou Sangaré
Aminata Sissoko
Fatoumata Sissako
Mamadou Sissoko
Mariétou Sissoko
Mahamadoun Touré
Diop (Alimata Traoré)
Siaka Traoré



Sangue Mon festival photo reportage, 2004
Photograph by Garba Maiga
Silver gelatine print 39 x 49.5 cm



Sangue Mon festival photo reportage, 2004
Photograph by Harandane Dicko
Silver gelatine print 39 x 49.5 cm



Sangue Mon festival photo reportage, 2004
Photograph by (Ms) Kadiatou Sangare
Silver gelatine print 39x 49.5 cm

Youssouf Sogodogo

CFP Director

Mali



b.1955, Mali
Lives and works in
Bamako, Mali

Youssouf Sogodogo is the director of the CFP photographic training centre (Cadre de promotion pour la Formation en Photographie) in Bamako. He began studying fine arts at the National Institute of Arts in Bamako in 1975 and devoted himself to photography in the 80s when he was an official in Gao in northern Mali. Here he photographed his first photo reportages of sporting and cultural events.

Youssouf Sogodogo is, however, best known today for his comprehensive photographs on the hair braids of women in Mali, which have been widely exhibited and appeared in Vogue magazine in 1997. Sogodogo's approach has been almost documentary, yet brings his artistic eye to each frame, magnifying the traditional and sophisticated hairstyles with great precision, delicacy and sensitivity.

Before joining the National Museum of Mali in Bamako in textile conservation and restoration, Sogodogo ran the Museum of the Sahel in Gao. At the 3rd symposium of African Photography in Mali in 1999 Sogodogo received the first prize of the Ministry of Culture of Mali. He has also been awarded the Seydou Keita Photography Prize and has exhibited in France, Morocco, Switzerland, Mali and Japan.

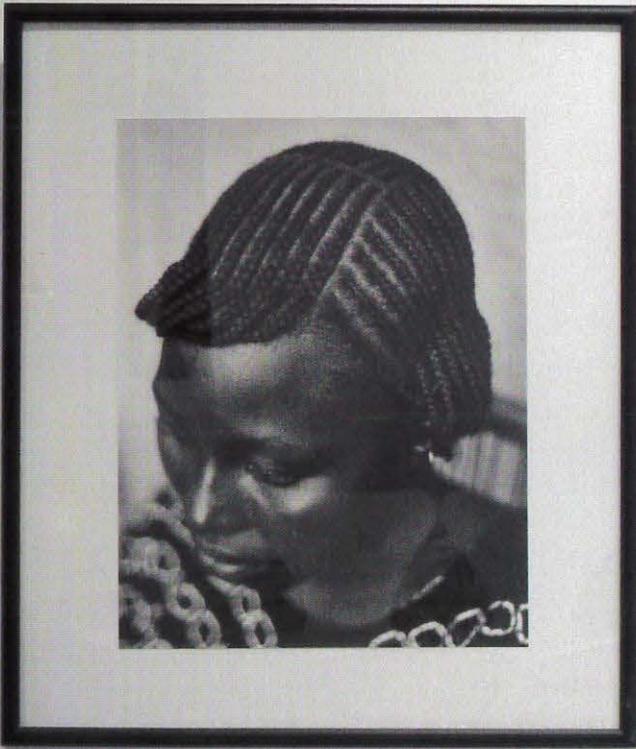
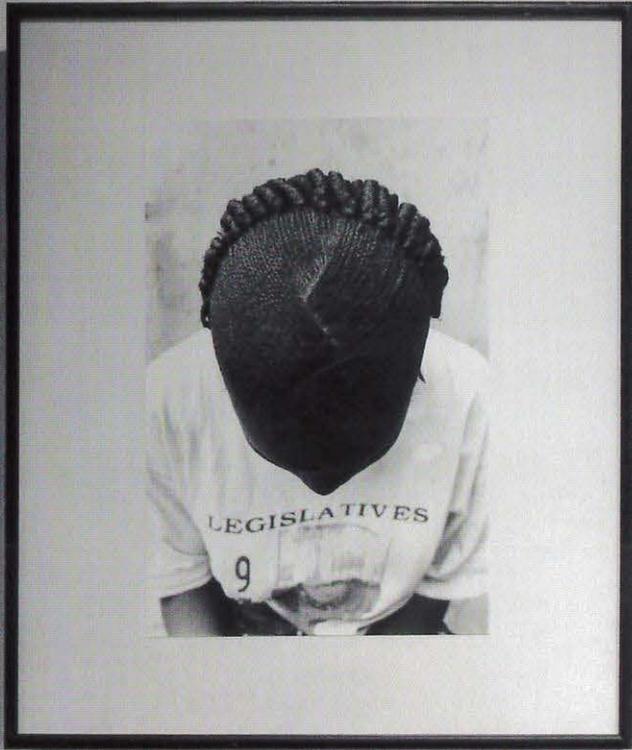
Clockwise from top left

Tresses du Mali (Braids of Mali)
Zigzagni, Bamako, 1997
Silver gelatine print 34 x 50 cm

Tresses du Mali (Braids of Mali)
Katanga, Bamako, 2001
Silver gelatine print 40.5 x 52 cm

Tresses du Mali (Braids of Mali)
Djôdjô, Bamako, 1997
Silver gelatine print 34 x 50 cm

Tresses du Mali (Braids of Mali)
Untitled, Gao, 1983
Silver gelatine print 40.5 x 52 cm



Evariste Chikawe

Tanzania

Opposite page
Children Playing
Acrylic on canvas
83 x 62 cm

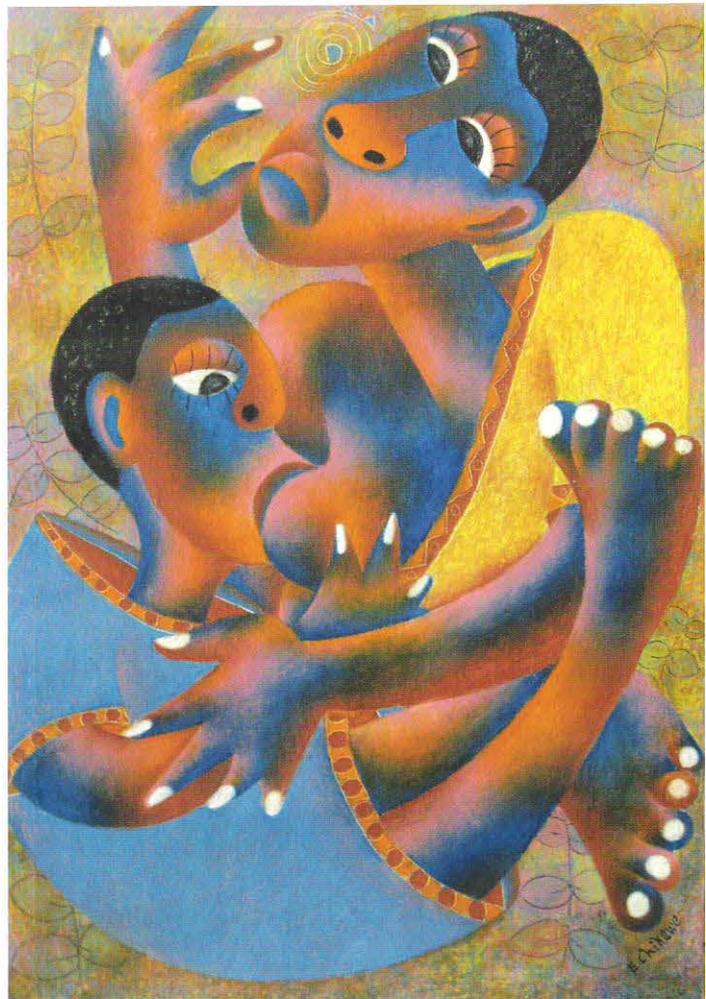
Breast Feeding
Acrylic on canvas
86.5 x 57.5 cm



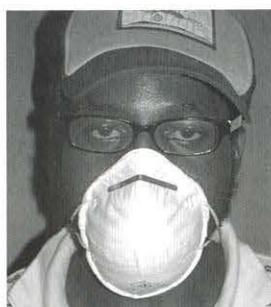
b.1974, Tanzania
Lives and works
in Tanzania

Evariste Chikawe views art as an effective medium to preserve culture and traditions, educate, promote peace and bring people together. The strong colours of Tanzanian clothing, especially those of women, inspire him and his focus is on figurative painting. Chikawe says: "I engage myself in figurative drawings, because my life is about people. Working figuratively helps people understand my subject easily. Although day after day my style changes, the idea of figurative drawing remains constant." Chikawe paints for his own sake and the satisfaction of seeing a painting complete. He sells his work because he believes that art is for sharing and he likes to make people feel happy through his paintings.

Like so many other artists from Africa, Chikawe is a self-taught artist who has benefited from participation in workshops as well as his membership of the recognised artist group Nyumba ya Sanaa. His first exhibition was in 1997 in Kenya, and since then he has exhibited both in Tanzania and abroad.







b.1981, Zimbabwe
Lives and works in
South Africa

Kudzanai Chiurai is an internationally acclaimed young artist now living and working in South Africa. He was the first black student to graduate with a BA in Fine Art from the University of Pretoria. Regarded as part of the “born free” generation in Zimbabwe because he was born one year after the country’s independence from Rhodesia, Chiurai’s early work focused on the political, economic and social strife in his homeland. Seminal works like *Presidential Wallpaper* depicted Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe as a sell-out and led to Chiurai’s exile from Zimbabwe.

Chiurai’s large mixed media works now tackle some of the most pertinent issues facing southern Africa such as xenophobia, displacement and black empowerment. His paintings confront viewers with the psychological and physical experience of inner-city Johannesburg, the continent’s most cosmopolitan melting pot where thousands of exiles, refugees and asylum-seekers battle for survival alongside the never-ending swell of newly urbanised South Africans. The actuality of these environs is reinforced by Chiurai’s use of photographic transfer. Boldly stencilled figures and anonymous text provide running commentary, leading viewers on a journey through his intricately painted turn-of-the century buildings, bustling streets and congested transit systems.

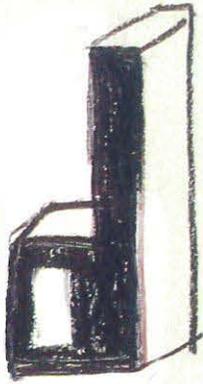
His sell-out exhibition ‘Graceland’ offered striking commentary on issues related to black economic empowerment and inner city rejuvenation in South Africa. From his home and studio located in one of Johannesburg’s most notorious crime hot-spots (now earmarked as a rejuvenation zone), Chiurai produced a body of work that featured buildings, residents and signage seen from his own balcony. While stereotypical benchmarks of urban development, such as the new BMW-driving suburban black elite, were challenged and often ridiculed, a subtle yet powerful ray of hope and progress also emerged. Works like ‘Since 1900’ and ‘Fela’ heralded the perseverance and longevity of mom and pop neighbourhood businesses and indigenous African icons. Chiurai offered a deeply personal glimpse of his version of ‘Graceland’.

Edited from text by Michael Obert, Obert Contemporary, Johannesburg, South Africa

“This work [Black Diamond] plays on the animal farm analogy with pigs in charge. The text is taken from a “belly buster” slimming belt and Chiurai has replaced the product name every time it is used with “black diamond” (the term depicting South Africa’s new black elite) poking fun at the idea that the black elite will solve all of South Africa’s problems.” Michael Obert

Esquire

Black Diamond



Now—thanks to a tiny "computerized" mineral called Black Diamond, you can now hope to achieve the kind of active, vigorous body other men will envy..... with their wives' women stare at.

and you begin" stepping into this perfect body, not after hours, months or years of agonizing exercise, but in the incredible short programmed interval

Black diamond is a virtually new invention. But in the moment by short. A revolutionary principle. It has been adopted for athletes, boxers, swimmers, judo, hockey and soccer. It has also been used for jumping on the sand dunes.

The moment you program your... into Black diamond you will see it by...
Faster and more

4999

you will also read our out standing guarantee. We say to you most exactly

SEE the difference - actually

Be able to verify the results with a measuring tape or a mirror or with a racket on the tennis court or with gloves in the ring

IN JUST TWO WEEKS OR YOU PAY A

PENNY

Why not astonish your wife by trying - pay the balance in 11 weeks or no deposit.....

That's why professional athletes are so excited about the computerized Black diamond. For even as it conditions bodies it also conditions and duplicates and reinforces the beneficial aspects of the sport that is their livelihood. They get a double advantage and so you will. A Birth in thermal eye



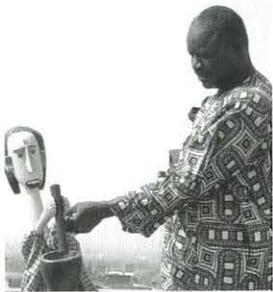
ANIMAL FARM



Sleep Walk, 2006
Mixed media on board
125 x 200 cm
Obert Contemporary,
Johannesburg, South Africa



The Revolution Will Be Televised
Acrylic on canvas
120 x 180 cm
Obert Contemporary,
Johannesburg, South Africa



Lives and works
in Bamako, Mali



Yaya Coulibaly belongs to an ancient family of puppeteers with roots in the Bamana kingdom of Segou in Mali. He was initiated into the world of puppets and masks at the age of ten, when he began to work as his father's apprentice. He then went on to study sculpture and performance at the Bamako National Institute of the Arts, and puppet theatre at the Institute International de la Marionette in France.

Coulibaly formed his own company, Sogolon Puppet Troupe, in 1980 and has since become the leading custodian of the Bambara puppetry tradition, the oldest and richest of Africa's surviving puppetry traditions. The company's core mission is "to contribute to develop and promote the Bamanan-Somono-Bozo puppet show." Coulibaly's dynamic puppet theatre draws from the ancient traditions of puppetry in West Africa, wherein puppets are regarded as privileged mediators between men and their gods or ances-

tors. His performances range from traditional folk tales, legends and episodes from Mali's great epics through colonial history to commentary on contemporary life in Mali.

Heir to a vast and ancient collection of puppets which have come down to him through his family, Coulibaly has been adding to the collection with new creations of marionettes, rod puppets, body puppets or fool's baubles.

The Sogolon troupe is made up of 8 permanent artists, each performing several functions such as comedian, musician, singer, puppeteer or director. The troupe gives performances all over the world.

Edited from text by the Sogolon Puppet Troupe.

Exhibition view
Rundetaarn, 2008
(The Round Tower)
Copenhagen, Denmark



Marionnette Oiseau
(Bird Puppet)
Mixed media
Height approx. 98 cm

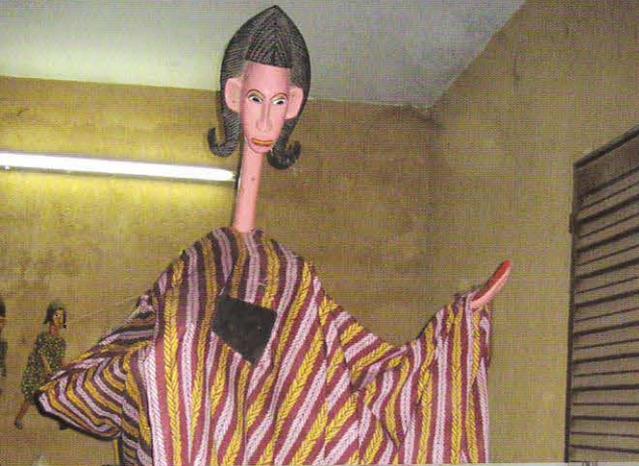
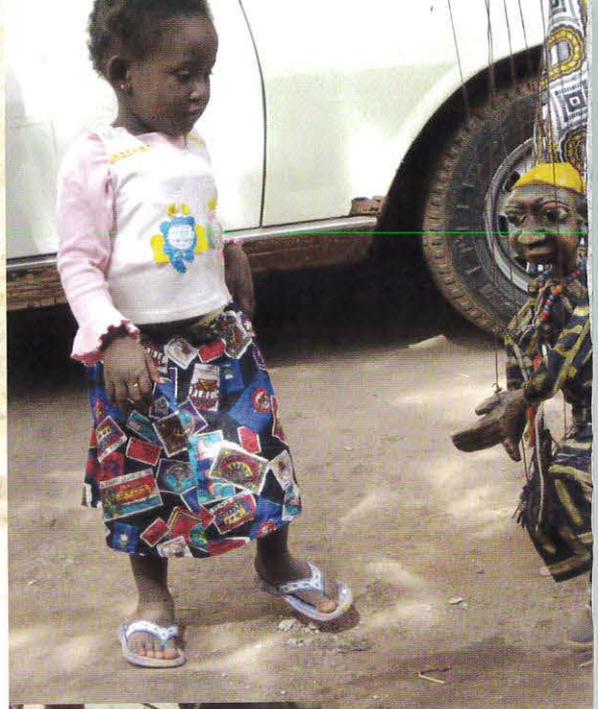


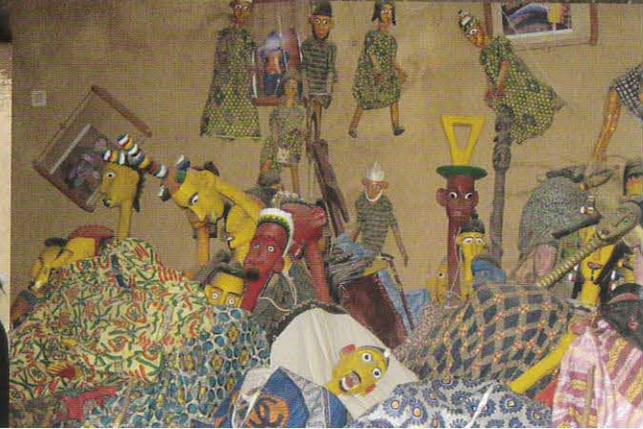
Marionnette Hyene
(Hyena Puppet)
Mixed media
Height approx. 79 cm



Marionnette Lievre
(Hare Puppet)
Mixed media
Height approx. 91 cm

Overleaf
Images from the Sogolon
puppet collection
Bamako, Mali, 2007







b.1968, Mali
Lives and works
in Bamako, Mali

Thierno Diallo is a painter and sculptor who continuously experiments with new techniques derived from and inspired by nature and his immediate surroundings. Diallo has through many years experimented with the use of things from his surroundings; carving sculptures out of found wood and extracting natural dyes and pigments from plants for use in his paintings.

During the last couple of years he has developed a technique called Worolan. The technique is based on the soaking of Kola nuts in order to obtain a juice whose colour and brightness is similar to pigments used in the West.

“By diluting the juice to a greater or lesser extent, it enables me to exploit ranges of ochre and deep browns, colours that I particularly like. As an artist, I must seek, experiment. So I use all that I find in nature around me. Sometimes I feel like I am a cook who measures out the ingredients in order to reach a required flavour.”

The environment is a dominant topic in Diallo's work, such as in *The Cry of Nature* where one sees the open mouths of trees expressing their suffering due to the ills of man. Similarly, Diallo has created sculptures from discarded plastics in order to sensitise the public and the govern-

ment to the problems of the enormous amounts of plastic waste, which litter the streets and is often burned in heaps, giving off toxic fumes.

Equally important to the use of natural dyes are the symbols and messages of his paintings. Dogon or Bambara ideograms are often at the centre of a painting and define its topic. Dogon and Bambara mythology is evident in Thierno's paintings and the concepts of their cosmology animate his work. Thierno Diallo is the grandson of Thierno Bokar, the celebrated Bandiagara marabout (spiritual leader) and a spirituality and a unity with nature is evident in Thierno Diallo's paintings as is a more fundamental inspiration and philosophy of life.

Kola nuts are a chestnut sized nut used in many West African countries. They are often chewed for their caffeine content (it was originally used in Coca-Cola), but the Kola nut is essentially used ceremonially, presented to guests or hosts as a welcome gift as the Kola nut symbolises the hearth or fireplace, which in turn symbolises the base of the home.



Symboles de l'être, 2006
(Weave of Life)
Bogolan & paper
97 x 83 cm

Gabriel Eklou

Ghana



b.1966, Ghana
Lives and works
in Accra, Ghana



Eklou started drawing at the age of 5, but trained first as an accountant and later as a travel agent, before he decided to pursue a career as a full-time painter in 1996. Eklou is a self-taught artist who sees painting as an integral part of his life and understanding of life. "My painting brings me close to nature, my culture and the people in particular. It reveals the secrets of my own heart," Eklou says of his painting.

"What I enjoy most is the ability to create and also bring back the forgotten." It is this telling of stories that is unique and recognisable in Eklou's paintings. Eklou's trademark elongated figures combined with symbolic landscapes and ancient cultural symbols invite the viewer to escape everyday reality to share the story. Many paintings are a series of vignettes, paintings within paintings, and whether it is the farmer cultivating his land, the busy market or majestic baobab trees in the moonlight, a story is unfolding.

Eklou's compositions remain unaffected by the art establishment and remain strong in their individuality and uniqueness. He is one of the most prolific artists practising in Ghana today. Eklou has an uncanny ability to convey a contemporary Africa well grounded in the past. The symbol

Adinkrahene, the symbol of greatness, charisma and leadership, is present in many paintings, and represents Eklou's belief that life is one of inspiration and leadership.

Eklou has a string of exhibitions to his name in West Africa and abroad and has amongst others, exhibited in Denmark, Belgium, UK, Canada, USA and Japan.

In the Beginning, 2004
Acrylic on canvas
182 x 145 cm

Opposite page
Protection, 2008
Mixed media & acrylic
on canvas
156 x 137 cm

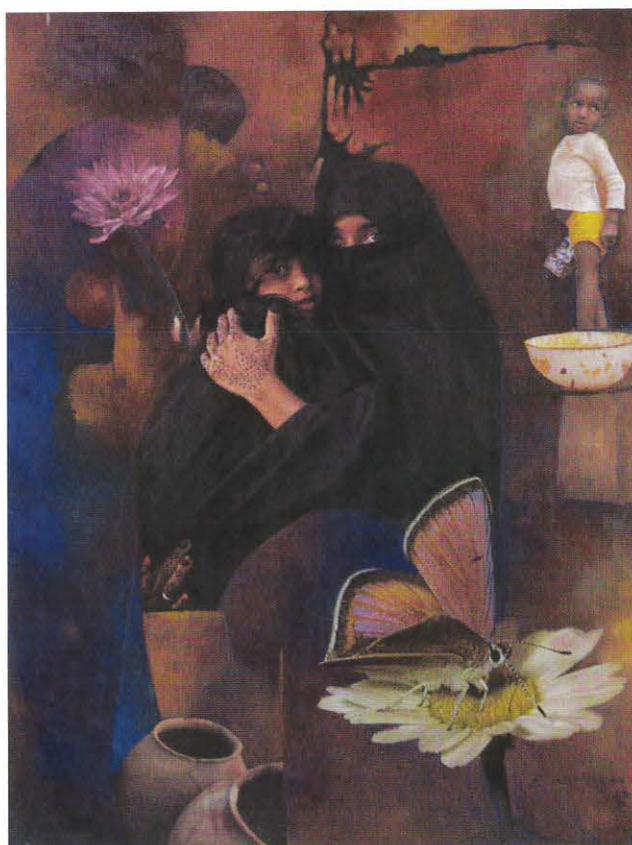


b.1936, Tanzania
Lives and works
in Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania

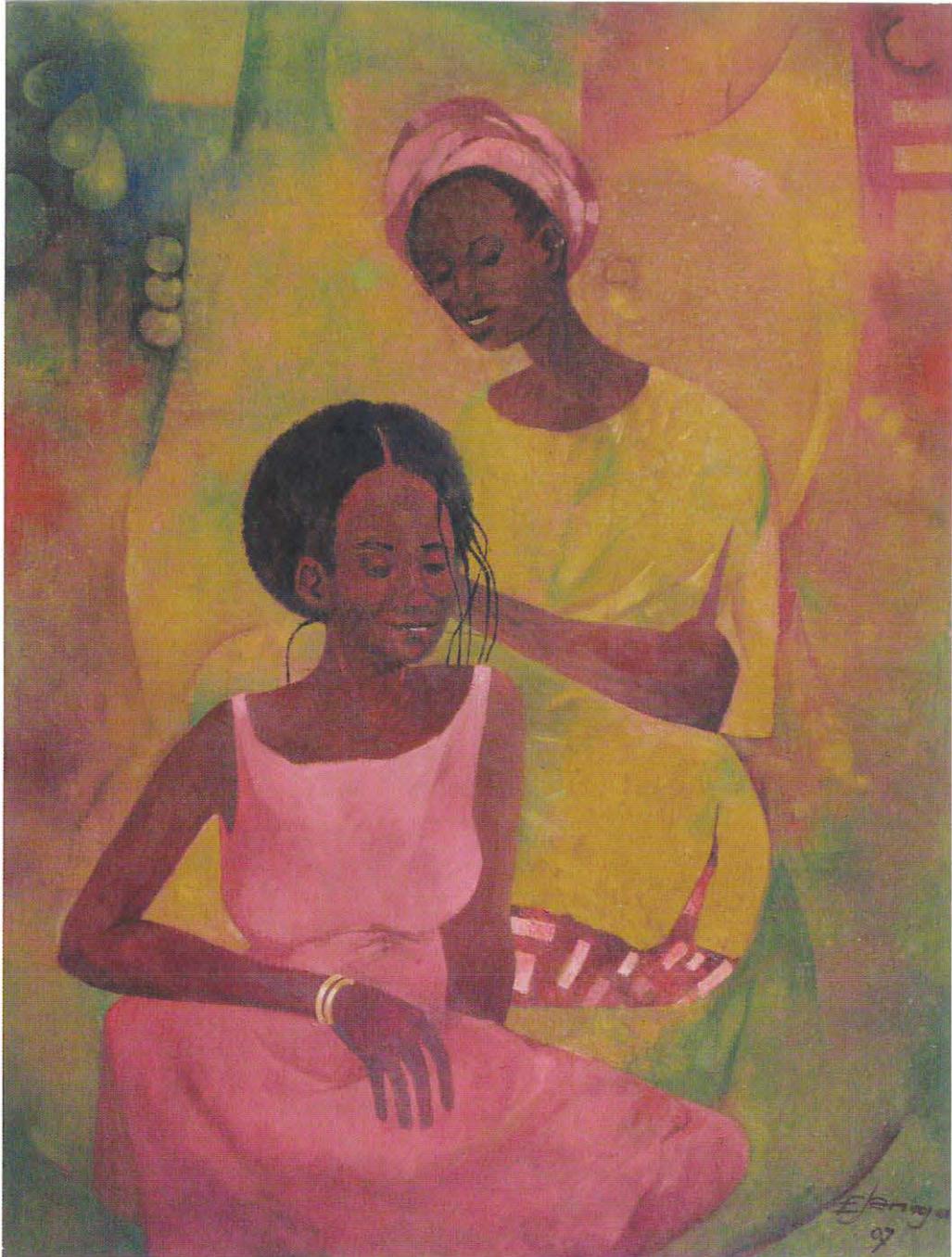
Professor Elias Jengo is a renowned fine artist who has contributed significantly in teaching art and sculpture for over 30 years. He is the co-founder of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts at the University of Dar es Salaam that started in 1975 where he became the first head of the department. His students are among Tanzania's famous artists.

Jengo depicts the everyday in his paintings. Images of market sellers, wedding scenes and gossiping women are easily recognizable, but Jengo is also a politically minded artist whose paintings on women's liberation and mankind's destruction of nature speak of the responsibility we have towards our society and its future. He stresses that it is the responsibility of artists to contribute to the further development of society, be it through visual arts, music, dance, theatre or writing.

Jengo has exhibited in, amongst others, Denmark, Germany, Soviet Union, USA and Canada. His murals and paintings adorn the walls of the Bank of Tanzania, Air Tanzania, and Tanzania Culture Trust Fund. Some of his most famous paintings have been acquired by fine art enthusiasts in Berlin and Dortmund in Germany who in turn loan them to international exhibitions for display.



Untitled, 2007
Mixed media & acrylic on canvas
61 x 46 cm



Hair Plaiting, 2007
Acrylic on canvas
61 x 46 cm

Ange Kumbi Ndongala Makumbi

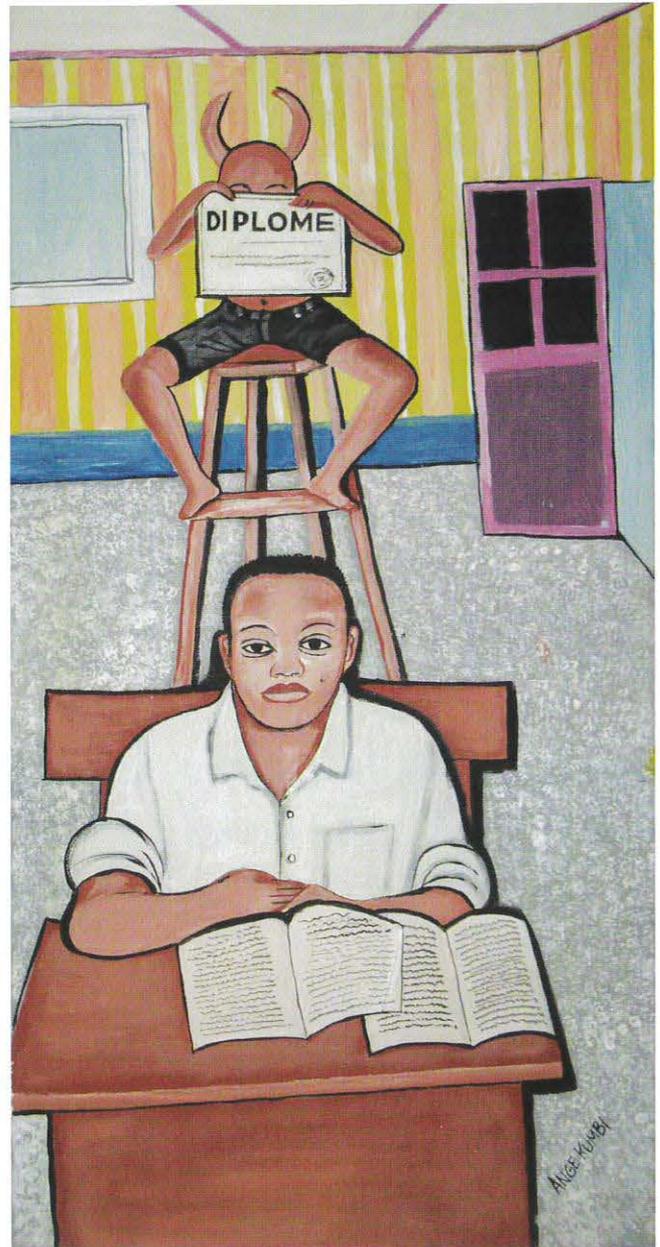
Democratic Republic
of Congo



b.1954, Democratic
Republic of Congo
Lives and works in
Germany

Ange Kumbi is a significant representative of Congolese Popular Art. He has the same narrative style as Cheri Samba, with whom he worked in the mid 70s in Kinshasa when they were both students in the workshop of the well-known publicist Mbuta Masunda. His paintings have centred round the everyday life of the Congolese living out their lives in the African cultural metropolis that is Kinshasa; scenes of street life, of lovers, of shady transactions, corruption, fraud, and crimes of politicians and their foreign accomplices. In its hey-day the city was known as Kin La Belle - Kinshasa the Beautiful. Decades of turmoil in the country, brought on by dictatorships, civil wars and corruption, have given the Congolese painters reason to paint with force. Ange Kumbi's work is humorous, satirical and moving. Lately his paintings have incorporated a dreamlike surreal quality - the paintings are the essence of the collective memory of the people.

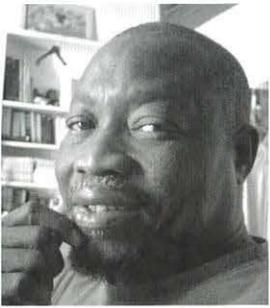
Ange Kumbi has been exhibiting since 1987 and has exhibited, amongst others, in Berlin, Paris, Brussels, Vienna and the USA. He lived and worked in Kinshasa till 2003. Ange Kumbi now lives in exile in Erlangen in Germany.



Hard Way to Education
Acrylic on canvas
80 x 40 cm



L'annonce faite a Mimiram, 2007
(Mimiram's Annunciation)
Acrylic on canvas
80 x 120 cm



b.1953, Ivory Coast
Lives and works
in Ouagadougou,
Burkina Faso

Siriki Ky is the first Burkinabe artist who has put his country on the international artistic map. He studied fine arts at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Ivory Coast and since perfected his technique at the Academy of Fine Arts in Pietra Santa, the Italian Mecca for sculptors, before settling in Burkina Faso. He is one of the main organisers behind the International Symposium on Granite Sculpture, which has taken place biannually in Laongo, approximately 35 km outside Ouagadougou, since 1988. Artists come to the symposium from all over the world to carve sculptures out of the Laongo granite. The result is an ever-growing sculpture park featuring some truly monumental sculptures.

Siriki Ky started working in stone and has since expanded into other media such as wood and bronze. Siriki Ky is part of the first generation of Burkinabe visual artists who have been trained at art school. He has worked extensively with the ancient lost wax technique and teaches sculpture techniques to a number of apprentices. Siriki Ky works from a foundry by the Laongo sculpture park where big piles of plumbing fixtures, door handles and other objects are melted and recast into his characteristic tubular bronze figures, which exude a tenderness and humour. Siriki Ky has succeeded in moving contemporary African

art out of the craft and artefact classification. In combining tradition and modernity, he is particularly representative of a generation of contemporary artists who are African at heart, but who have universal outreach.

Siriki Ky has exhibited in Mali, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Dak'Art in Senegal and in France, Belgium, Germany and Italy. He has taken part in sculpture symposiums in Canada, France, Asia and Africa.

“These past few years I have worked on scarification, which has been the identity card of some African peoples. They made marks with a razor blade on the face and parts of the body. The scarification were marks of beauty. So in my work, I try to magnify these scarifications, which were fashionable for a very long time among tribes of south Saharan Africa. I have stripped my sculptures making them very minimalist as a simplified representation of the baobab, this mythical tree of west Africa. So my characters are inspired by the baobab on which are scars as signs of these African tribes.”



Malangatana

Malangatana Valente Ngwenya

Mozambique



b.1936, Mozambique
Lives and works in Mozambique

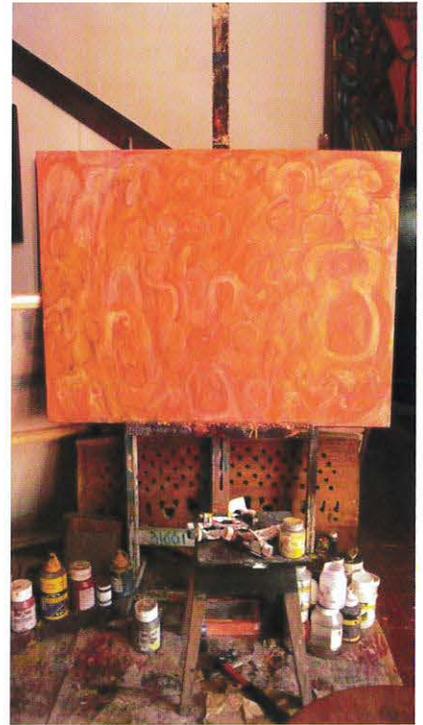
Malangatana is an internationally recognised artist whose works range from paintings, drawings, murals, sculpture and ceramics to music and poetry. He has received the Nachingwea Medal for Contribution to Mozambican Culture, and has been made a Grande Oficial da Ordem do Infante D. Henrique. In 1997 he was named a UNESCO Artist for Peace, and he has used his art to advocate for social issues and change.

At the age of 12 Malangatana moved from his village in Southern Mozambique to Maputo, where he worked as a ball boy at a tennis club. This income enabled him to take evening classes where he developed his interest for art. With the help of Augusto Cabral, a member of the tennis club, and the architect Miranda Guedes (Pancho), he was able to obtain materials and sell his art. He participated in a group exhibition in 1959 and held his first solo exhibition in 1961.

His dramatic works often comment on the political situation of his country. When the armed struggle started in Mozambique, Malangatana joined the clandestine network FRELIMO. He was detained twice by the PIDE, the Portuguese secret police, and spent 18 months in prison on the grounds that his work served as political propaganda antagonistic to the Portuguese administration.

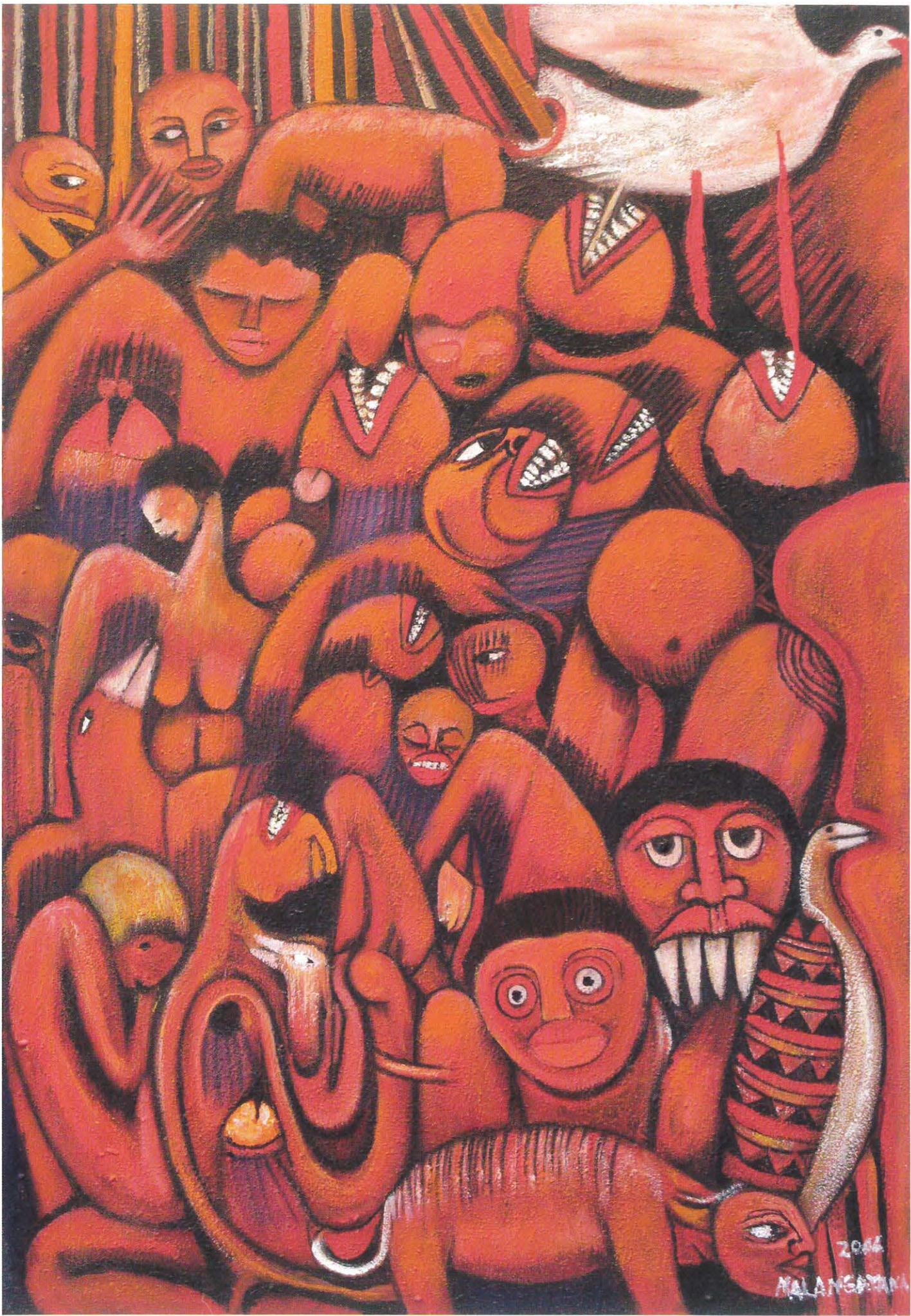
Thus until 1993, his works reflected the political turmoil in Mozambique, commenting on Portuguese colonialism and Mozambique's struggle against it, the civil war and independence. The themes are violence and resistance to violence. After the peace treaty of 1992 and the holding of elections two years later, his works reflect the changed, more optimistic situation of his country. He became involved politically in community support and literacy projects. He continues to participate actively in his community as well as internationally in activities and programmes for children and refugees.

Malangatana was a founding member of the Mozambique peace movement. He helped to establish a number of cultural institutions in Mozambique, including its National Museum of Art, the Centre for Cultural Studies and the Centre for the Arts and his life and works have been the inspiration for films and documentaries. Malangatana's works have reached across the oceans to all continents and been widely exhibited in all of Europe, Africa, Asia and the USA and is represented in museums and private collections across the globe.



Malangatana's studio, 2008.
The painting in progress is
Poema à Mulher em
Jeito Homenagem
(A Tribute Poem to Women)

Opposite page
Ao Alto: A Pomba Ferida
em Bagdade
(High Up: The Wounded
Dove in Bagdad)
Acrylic on canvas
130 x 190 cm

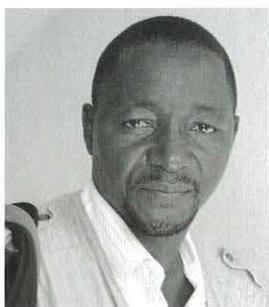


2016

MALANGAYANA

Mohamed Mambo

Tanzania



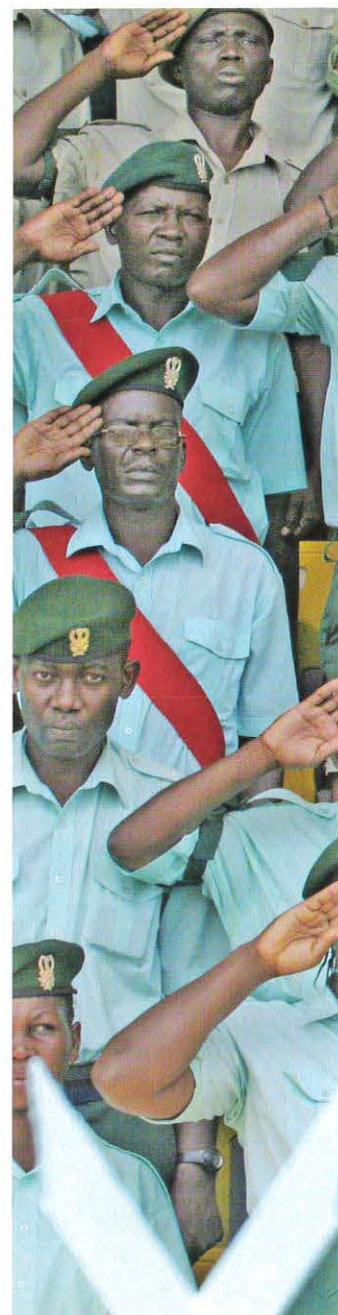
b.1964, Tanzania
Lives and works
in Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania

Mohamed Mambo is a Tanzanian freelance photographer whose love of photography goes back to his days as a teenager at secondary school, when he started photographing his fellow students.

After leaving school, Mambo became involved in commercial photography, covering wedding parties and working part-time for the local press. Mambo has been working with many different clients at local as well as at international level including two international lifestyle magazines, *Beobachter* of Switzerland and *Kodin* published in Finland.

Today, Mambo is working with *This Day* and *Kulikoni* newspapers in Dar es Salaam as a Special Photojournalist Correspondent. Recently, he has also started working part-time with the Flame Tree Media Trust Fund, a non-profit organisation based in Dar es Salaam. It was founded, among other things, to train and develop the skills of young, upcoming, as well as established, Tanzanian photographers, provide facilities and support to both professionals and amateurs. Among the bottlenecks facing photojournalism in Tanzania is an inadequacy of proper training on photography, shortage of photography instructors as well as high taxes on photography equipment.

In 2000 and again in 2002 Mambo won the Tanzanian photojournalist competition sponsored by respectively Kodak and World Press Photo, and was also chosen to represent Tanzania as one of the 53 African photographers at an international conference in 2001 in Bamako, Mali. In 2006 he was among 20 photographers from African countries who participated in the Regional Photography Seminar held in Gaborone, Botswana. In the same year he participated in a documentary photography seminar on climate change sponsored by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Addis Ababa.





Not all that glitters is gold: Soldiers saluting the President of the United Republic of Tanzania at the 44th Anniversary of Independence at the old National Stadium in Dar es Salaam in 2005. In a cross section two soldiers were captured not responding to the tune.

Digital print © 2005 Mohamed Mambo



Local underground miner wearing a safety helmet at Bulyanhulu in Central-Western Tanzania.

Bulyanhulu is one of the largest gold mines in the world owned and operated by Kahama Mining Corporation, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Barrick Gold Corporation based in Canada.

The miners are demanding more pay, better health care and increased risk allowances from the mining companies on account of the difficult and perilous mining environment.

Digital print © 2006 Mohamed Mambo



A boy waits for calmer waves before continuing his swim at Kigamboni Creek on the beaches of Southern Dar es Salaam by the Indian Ocean.

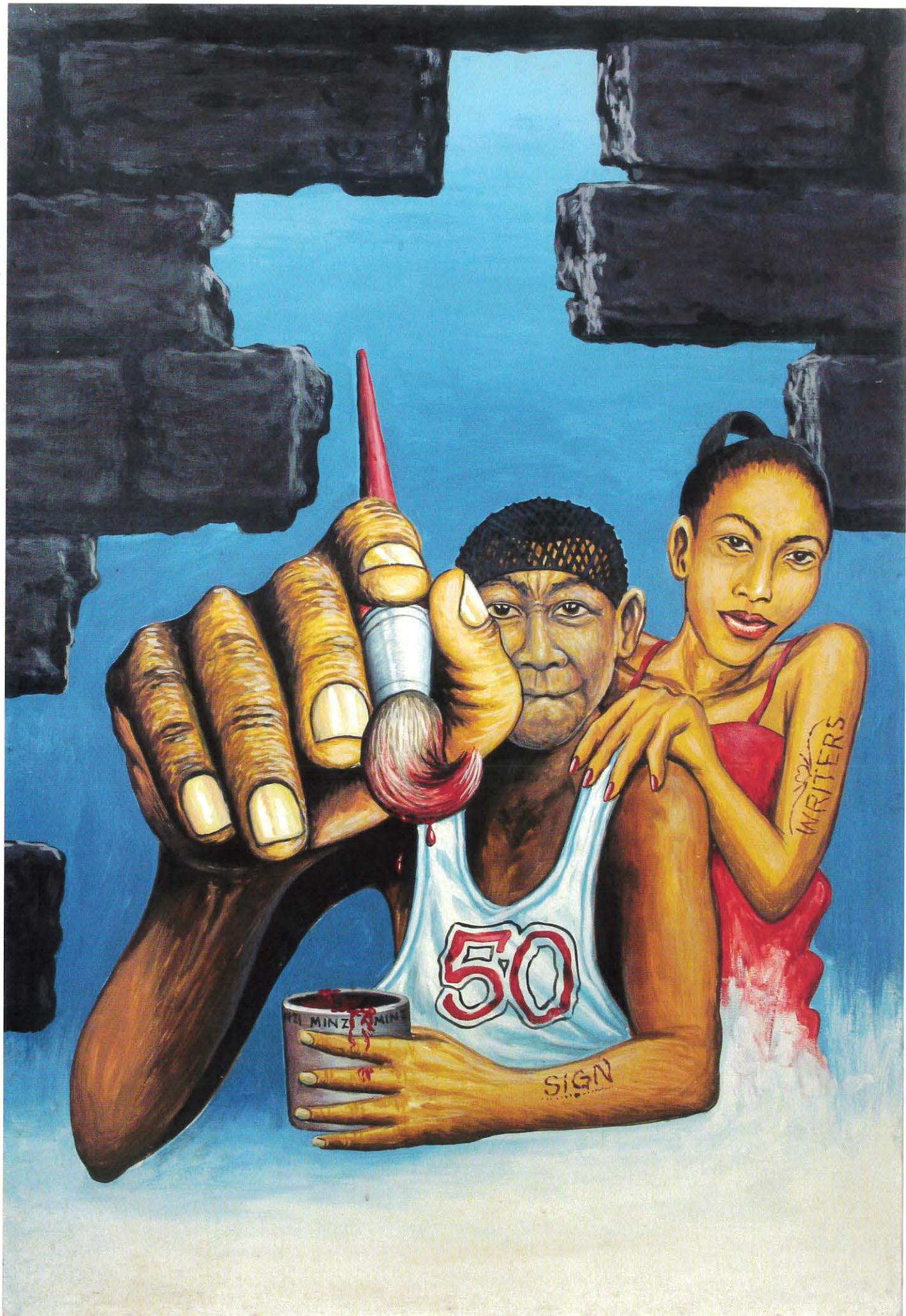
Digital print © Mohamed Mambo



b.1984, Tanzania
Lives and works
in Tanzania

Thobias Minzi initially worked as a sign writer painting signs and banners for small shops such as barbershops, beauty salons, butchers and for events like music concerts. He worked in Dar es Salaam under the Zanzibar born artist Ibrahim Pandu, who paints in the neo-impressionist style. Their studio was disbanded around 2005 when the new government decided to eradicate all the small, wooden makeshift stands where the sign writers carried out their business without legal papers. A special exhibition showing the works of 50 different sign writers in Dar es Salaam and its vicinity was being organised by Yves Gosciny at the time, but the crackdown drove the sign writers underground and the exhibition did not take place. The painting Sign Writers by Minzi was to have been the poster for that exhibition. It has instead become the poster for this exhibition.

Edited from text by Yves Gosciny, La Petit Galerie, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.



Stephen Mubiita

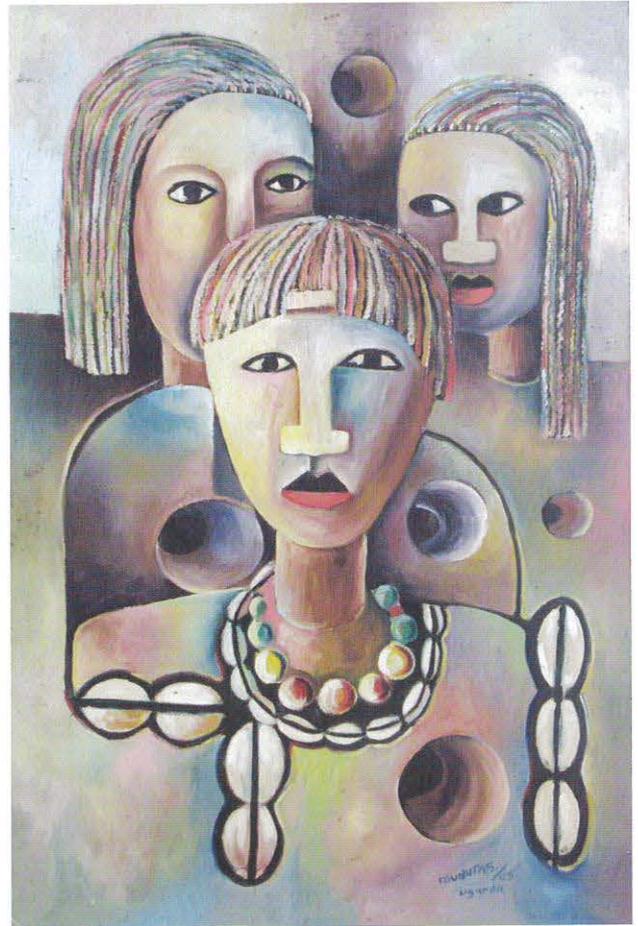
Uganda



b.1968, Uganda
Lives and works in
Kampala, Uganda

Stephen Mubiita is a painter and art historian who graduated with a BA in Fine Art in 1993 and then took up a post-graduate diploma in education and an MA in Fine Art and Art History from Makerere University in Kampala. He is now a lecturer at Margareth Trowel School of Industrial and Fine Art at Makerere University. He says:

"Painting is one avenue through which I can make statements about a host of events, especially those encountered in the long journey of life since childhood. I recollect a series of life experiences as a typical African child coming from a poor, polygamous family. I am also fascinated by the ongoing debates about life in the current globalised world. I find the effects of globalisation on our traditional norms and values in Uganda very challenging and our future very difficult to predict."



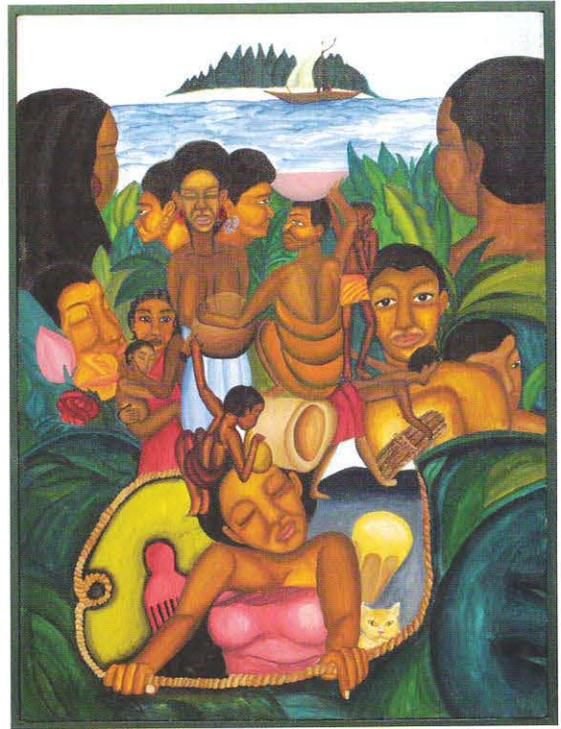
Beauty, 2005
Acrylic on canvas
91 x 31 cm



Polygamy, 2005
Acrylic on canvas
45 x 80 cm



b.1985, Tanzania
Currently studying
in the USA



Victoria Ntomola participated in The East Africa Art Biennale in 2003, while still at College. She left Tanzania in 2005 to undergo further training in the USA.

About the painting *Sister, Sister* Ntomola says:

The painting is about a girl, mainly the big sister who keeps everything in order in her family. The rope stands for the family, the big sister is holding it together, it's very hard work and that's why it is connected to the boy picking firewood. The comb on the girl's right side represents the girl's fuss over her appearance. The drum on the left side represents her love for music, and the little cat independence, as cats tend to be very independent and carefree. The child holding the calabash is drinking alcohol. These are the things that have happened within her family, during the course of time. The girl holding a child is one of the sisters, who is very protective; when anything bad happens, she has to be there and act as a shield.

Next to the protective girl is one of the family members who never sees anything wrong; they just close their eyes and let things be. The lady weaving the black scarf is the mother, and on the far right is the father. Next to the mother is a three-faced lady; she has three sides to her

character, sometimes mean, sometimes nice, and the face with the eyes closed is the one with no emotion; she acts as a pillar. Next to the three-faced lady is the hard worker; she takes care of everyone's needs and is more or less connected to other family members. Behind her is a boy who is playing a trick on his sister; he is the joker and the joy of the family; he is standing on the boy with the firewood. The boy behind the firewood picker is the watcher, the kindest of all; while behind him is the shy one. The big sister has all these qualities and so without her there's no family. The green leaves are there to show collaboration between humans and plants, to a certain point. The island at the back stands for goals; the boat is a way to those goals/dreams. The mother and the father are waiting for the goals to be reached, for their own good and for their children's.

Text from the East Africa Art Biennale (EASTAFAB) catalogue 2003. Edited by Yves Gosciny, La Petite Galerie, Dar es Salaam.

Sister, Sister
Oil on board
82.5 x 63 cm

Opposite page
Pact
Oil on board
60 x 74.5 cm



About the painting Pact Ntomola says:

The painting is about the spirit and what I like to believe; that once you die you are still around, no matter what form. The skull stands for the dead and she holds on to what is dear to her, in this case the children since they are pure and innocent. Next to them is their mother, who has the same feelings as the skull, protectiveness and love.

The darkness does not represent anything bad, only calm; at night everyone is asleep and forgets there is danger; the best of all is to sleep; during this time there is a lot of psychic energy, that's where the candles come in (red for strength, white for purity and femininity). The plants stand for unity (that's why they are wound) and also for life; the old woman and

the child are in the farm, showing hard work. The "dead" have a pact with the living and so whatever we do they are always around; you are not necessarily "dying" when you die, but taking another form.

Text from the East Africa Art Biennale (EASTAFAB) catalogue 2003. Edited by Yves Gosciny, La Petite Galerie, Dar es Salaam.



**b.1982, Uganda
Lives and works
in Uganda**

Felix Oburu is an autodidactic artist who comes from a family of artisans. His works are in mixed media such as oils, acrylic, watercolours on canvas, paper or on bark cloth, which is a traditional cloth made from the bark of the Mutuba tree, commonly found in central Uganda. He often incorporates pieces of cloth, papers, tins, copper wires or anything that attracts his attention, which he pastes onto the surface of the work, forming collages. Oburu has a distinct style where compartmentalised areas are connected by swerving lines or bands. Each area portrays a section of his surroundings and together they tell a story.

Oburu started Magima Foundations in 2006, a project with the aim of sharing his passion for art with the less privileged.

“I basically train them as we work together, giving them a priority to dig deeper into themselves thus coming up with newer ideas. The project helps to raise funds for our day to day activities i.e. mobilising funds from our art sales, thus enabling them to get an education, since most of them are underprivileged.”

The project is currently working with six students and Oburu’s aim is to help give as many persons as possible a chance to lead a meaningful life.

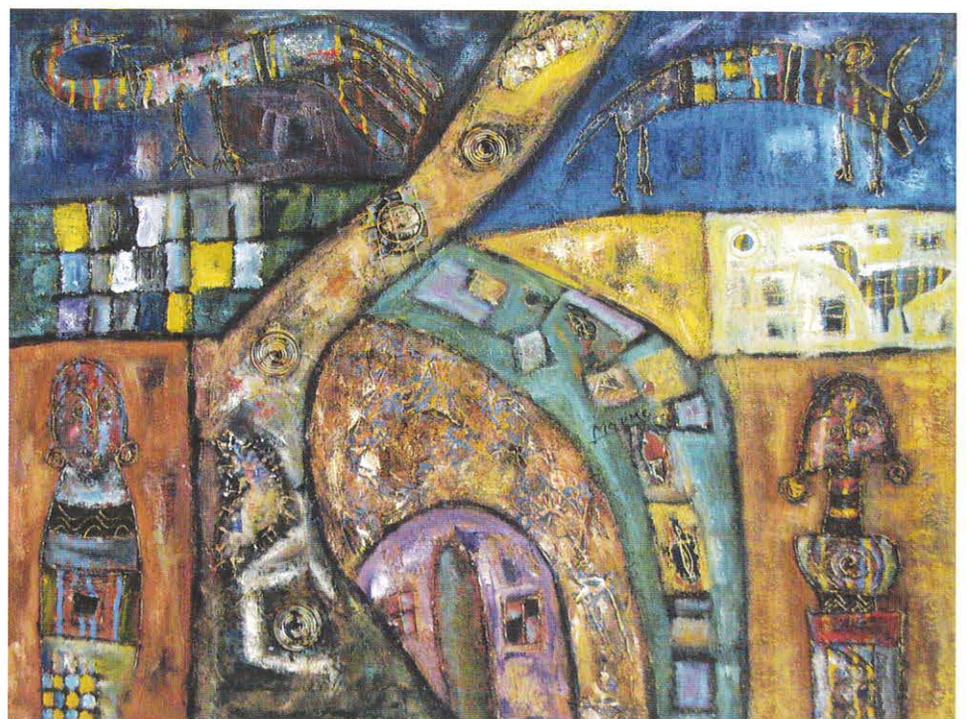
Oburu has also been involved in fund raising with other organisations i.e. Aid Child, which aims at helping orphans in Uganda. He gives 40% of his earnings on his works to the organisation. “This makes me happy because from my works the organisation is able to raise more than 300 US dollars every month.” Oburu has also joined hands with the church to help raise funds every month for the underprivileged church members, enabling them to acquire schooling and school-books without paying for them.

Oburu has studied business administration as a means to understand the art market and he is currently involved professionally in fashion design and music.



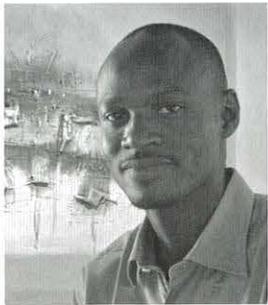
Food Crisis - and Too Many
Mouths to Feed, 2008
Mixed media & acrylic on canvas
75 x 105 cm

Untitled, 2007
Mixed media & acrylic on canvas
75 x 105 cm

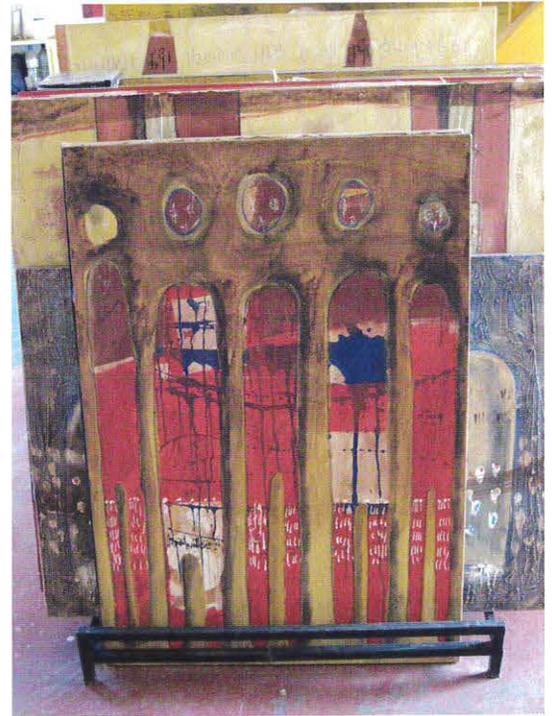


Hamed Ouattara

Burkina Faso



b.1971, Burkina Faso
Lives and Works
in Ouagadougou,
Burkina Faso



Born in 1971 in Ouagadougou, Hamed Ouattara first studied book keeping and sewing before, making a name for himself in art as a self-taught artist. He was trained at Fondation Olorun, a collective of young artists without formal art education in Ouagadougou, has participated in several workshops, amongst others, Ouag'Art in 1996 and has also attended training in design at l'ENSCI in Paris in 2003.

Ouattara's large canvasses generally combine vivid colours with raw materials such as dust and earth. They mix African subjects, like fetishes and masks, with finished products from the modern world and the consumer society which is gradually conquering Africa, in the forms of jeans, bags of rice, plastic cans, etc. Ouattara is at the crossroads of two cultures: one African, warm, colourful, welcoming, deeply grounded, often animist, and the other colder, more sterile, a culture that organises, that is profitable and that he worries eats itself up in consumption. His main concern is with the attempt of modern man to do away with past traditions. Though very internationally oriented and with an interest in the newest technology, it is Ouattara's firm belief that one cannot operate in a modern society without retaining a strong hold on one's roots and culture.

Ouattara has a mother from Mali and, as a visual representation of the retention of culture that Ouattara advocates, he often uses ancient Malian writing in his paintings. He believes that no matter how hard we might try to keep traditions and symbols out of our lives, they will reappear or new ones will inevitably creep in. In his latest paintings Ouattara has been incorporating bar codes as a symbol of this.

Ouattara has exhibited in Grenoble, Brussels and Turin, as well as in Ouagadougou and has been awarded prizes in both design and art. He has a studio at the Village Artisanal in Ouagadougou.

Works by Ouattara in his studio at Village Artisanal, Ouagadougou.

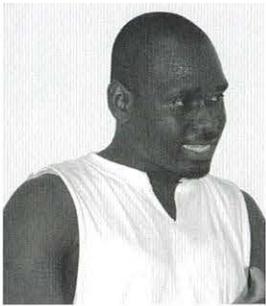
Opposite page
Premonition, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
110 x 90 cm
Timia Gallery &
Showroom, Denmark



Hamed
Ovaka
06

Salifoura
Salifou Oura

Burkina Faso



b.1976, Burkina Faso
Lives and works in
Burkina Faso



Les missionnaires du culte, 2008
Acrylic on canvas
Timia Gallery &
Showroom, Denmark

Salifoura has trained in calligraphy and serigraphy at the Johnson Atelier in the Ivory Coast and has been schooled by the artist Hamed Ouattara for whom he worked for a number of years before he created his own studio and gallery. Salifoura's art took shape under Ouattara, and he quickly developed his own artistic expression, but like Ouattara he combines tradition and modernity by using the African soil, 'la terre', as an ingredient in his paintings.

In his work Salifoura deals with concepts such as selfishness, ignorance, the survival of nature as well as that of the individual. His paintings centre on a quest for harmony and the sustainable symbiosis between heaven and earth, and man and nature. Salifoura's artistic and philosophical challenge rests at the intersection of the attractions of modern day society and its shortsighted misuse of the earth's resources. Salifoura has an ability to create harmony and coherence in his paintings, where portals and doorways often figure as a symbol of the hope inherent in the unknown and undetermined on the other side.

Salifoura, with his relatively few years as a practicing artist, has already achieved recognition outside his home country. In 2004 he was selected for participation in La Tournée de Cercle Pan-

africain des Artistes with exhibitions in Mali and Ghana. This subsequently led to an exhibition at the Galerie de la Maison Africain in Brussels, Belgium, and then at the U.S. embassy in Mali. He has since exhibited in Bilbao and Cameroon and his paintings are carried permanently by galleries in Denmark and in Brussels.

At the end of 2006 Salifoura opened his own studio in Ouagadougou, where he works today.

Adapted from text by Jesper Egevang, Timia Gallery & Showroom



Optimum III, 2008
Acrylic on canvas
100 x 100 cm
Timia Gallery & Showroom, Denmark

Christophe Sawadogo

Burkina Faso



b.1972, Burkina Faso
Lives and works
in Ouagadougou,
Burkina Faso

Christophe Sawadogo was born in 1972 in Tikare, Burkina Faso. At the age of 22, he began his studies in art and communication at the National Art Centre in Ouagadougou. He received his Diploma in 1996 and now works with drawing, calligraphy, painting and music.

Sawadogo's paintings are filled with phantoms and translucent, blurred figures, which float in the air as a heat shimmer. His paintings portray a warm haze and dryness through a conscious use of colours like ochre, umbra and sienna and his intricate watercolours speak of people, culture and refinement. He paints with inks, acrylics and natural pigments, bought from local women who make a living by selling earth and stones to contractors and builders. Buying his pigments from these women is one way in which the painter feels he can contribute to the fight against poverty at the local level.

Sawadogo has an uncanny ability to portray the beauty of Africa without making it trivial. Through his unique style he presents viewers with a richness and grace that is often overlooked in the

stories told about Africa.

In addition to his artistic goal, Sawadogo also has a second purpose in his exhibitions:

"Through exhibiting, it is my desire to bring awareness to emotional and material poverty by pointing out the inequitable distribution of resources, the obligation to help our neighbour, the importance of dialogue and development of fellowship. In my view, poverty is primarily a question of maldistribution of resources. I therefore believe that the rich should give to those who have nothing. Poverty of spirit and heart is the worst form of poverty. As an artist, it is my desire, through the sale of my paintings, to contribute to the building of schools, wells and clinics. This is my commitment."

Since 1999 Christophe Sawadogo has exhibited in Belgium, Denmark, Holland and France and been critically acclaimed in all places.



L'attente, 2006
(Expectations)
Natural pigments
& ink on paper
43.5 x 33 cm



L'aubergiste, 2006
(The Inn Keeper)
Natural pigments & acrylic on canvas
80 x 98 cm



b.1972, Segou, Mali
Lives and works in
Bamako, Mali



Sira Sissoko is a painter and paper maker who teaches art history at 'Institut National des Arts' in Bamako. Sissoko is the director of the workshop 'Papier Mali' in Sabalibougou, which runs a programme for the benefit of young out-of-school girls.

When she was a growing up, Sissoko says, she already had a taste for all that is beautiful, she loved nature and its beautiful colours. While her father wanted her to take up computer studies after high school, she one day saw a female artist on a television programme and immediately realised that this was what she wanted to do. Her father then helped her enrol in art school.

The subjects of Sissoko's works are African women in their diversity as well as subjects such as the Dogon traditions, which are a significant part of Malian society. Her compositions are subtle, aesthetic ideograms, which when deciphered reveal stories of a strong culture. Sissoko has become known for her use of recycled materials such as office paper, which she uses in both her work with the 'Papier Mali' organisation and in her own art work.

"During my internship, Canadians came to show us how to work with recycling, but after

I did my research on paper I came up with a more resistant version. Now the Canadian and French pupils come to do internships at my workshop in Sabalibougou."

Sissoko has also researched natural fibres for use in her work. In her compositions she uses a mix of recycled paper and natural materials such as cotton fibre and plant fibre such as maize, bananas and Palmyra, which she dyes with natural, local colours.

"I am a fortunate woman, because I had a father who understood me and a kind mother. My husband also helps me in my artwork, because he knows that it means a lot to me. I show that I can combine art with motherhood, through my work at school and my whole lifestyle. For this, people respect me and admire me."

Danseur kanaga en milieu dogon
(Kanaga Danser in Dogon Country)
Recycled paper & natural inks
27 x 22 cm



Mariage en milieu bamanan
(Bamanan Wedding)
Recycled paper & natural inks
24 x 18 cm

Taofic

Taofic Adeyinka

Nigeria



b.1966, Nigeria
Lives and works
in Nigeria

The Nigerian painter Taofic Adeyinka, known simply as Taofic, trained at Osogbo art school in Nigeria in 1986.

The works of Taofic are characterised by an omnipresent force, a creative and rapturous energy. It is a very African way to be a part of the world. A myriad of life, colour and bold lines fill his canvases to an almost obsessive extent. In accordance with this energy he is known to be a prolific painter. The colours in Taofic's work are rich and nuanced, strong, and often discordant. The subjects are symbolic and Taofic describes himself as a traditionalist and a promoter of lost African culture, who likes to paint the mythology of the Yoruba tribe. Together with his wife Idowu Adeyinka, who is also a full time artist, he has established a Cultural Centre in Osogbo to teach people about their lost culture.

Taofic has exhibited his works in a number of African countries such as Nigeria, Cameroun, Chad, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Niger, and in Europe in Avignon, Mainz and Bilbao as well as in Atlanta, USA.

“Osun is the goddess of the river and she is in control of all water. In Osogbo in Nigeria we used to celebrate the Osun Festival and make sacrifices to the river goddess every year on the last Friday of August. It is a well-known festival in Osogbo as well as among black American people and is celebrated in Brazil and Cuba. The gifts to the goddess are supposed to be carried by a virgin, and everybody follows behind her to the shrine of Osun. Osun is believed to be able to give children to those looking for fertility and wealth. Osun was the former wife of Shange, the god of thunder and lightning. Osun was a very powerful goddess in all Yuraba land.”



Osun Festival, 2008
Acrylic on canvas
119 x 121 cm



b.1984, Burkina Faso
Lives and works
in Ouagadougou,
Burkina Faso

Vivien Deogracias Tapsoba is an autodidactic artist who attended art-training workshops at Fondation Olorun and at Centre National d'Artisanat d'Art in Ouagadougou.

Tapsoba has managed to find a balance in his painting, which is evident in his perceptiveness and his humility when asked about his work. As a painter he is conscious of the need to continuously develop in order to reach a maturity as an artist and he constantly scrutinises his work for new directions.

Tapsoba's canvases are not at first sight recognisable as typically African. Their visual energy is grounded in an aesthetic investigation of painterly techniques, bold strokes and a conscious choice of colour pallet. Yet behind the modernist exterior lies an exploration of both universal beliefs as well as quintessentially African philosophies and perceptions of the world, some of which are hinted at in the occasional title of a work.

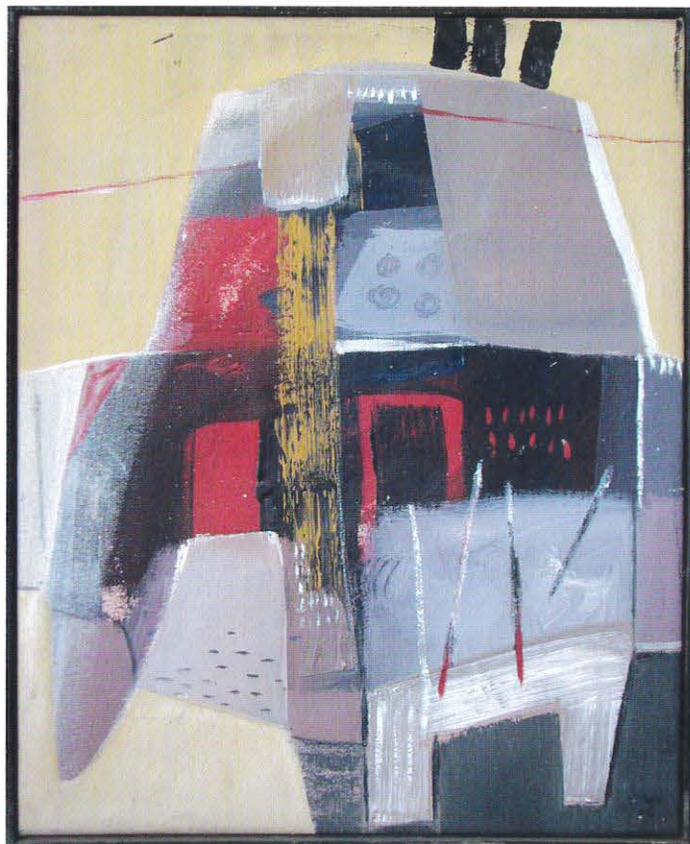
He has exhibited at the Fondation Olorun, at the French Cultural Centre and at Rencontres Internationales de Peinture in Ouagadougou. Outside Burkina Faso, he has exhibited at the French Cultural Centre in Niger, in Dak'Arts in Senegal and in Africa-Lyon in Lyon, France.



Untitled, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
70 x 60 cm

Bottom left
Untitled, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
70 x 60 cm

Bottom right
L' aubaine, 2006
(Good Fortune)
Acrylic on canvas
70 x 60 cm



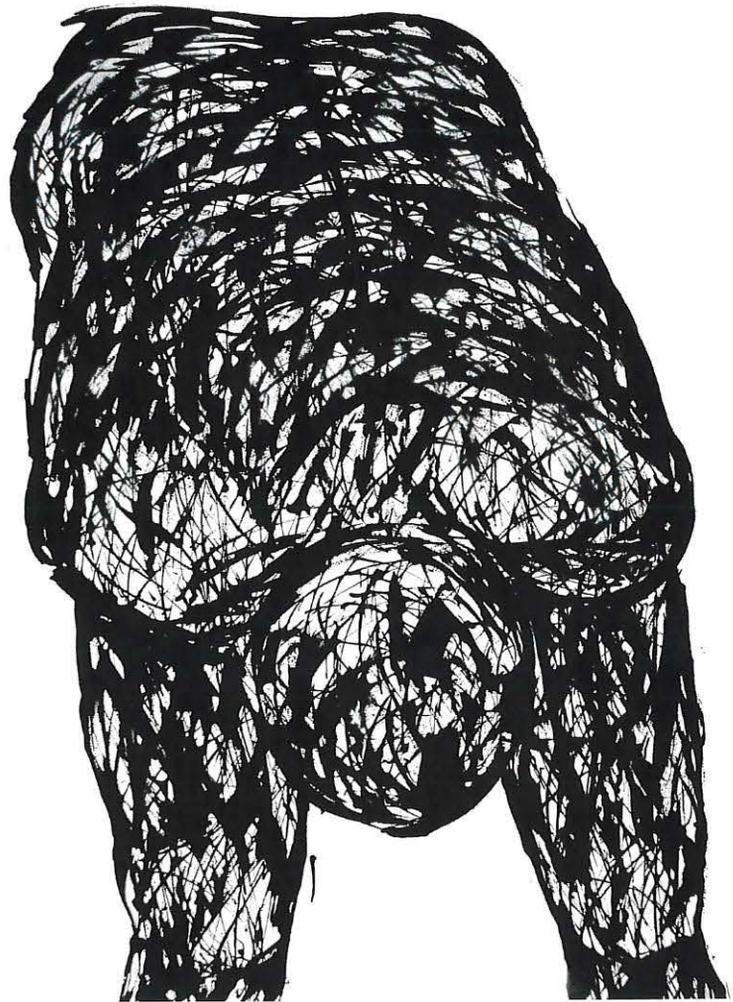


b.1952, Tanzania
Lives and works
in Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania

Nadir Tharani is a practising architect. His drawings from the series 'Positions of Power: article 9', are series of 14 drawings on the arbitrary detention, harassment, beating, lashing, torture and imprisonment of those who are seen as not conforming to the strictures of power - from fruit hawkers, children at school, voters, passengers, dreamers, strollers, to those who seek a more equitable life for all.

These Positions of Power, this alignment of the human body imposed by those who exert power, are postures that embody power relations in their raw form.

Article 9 refers to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Tharani

Positions of Power: article 9: 9.8.5
Ink on Arches paper
56 x 76 cm

Opposite page
Positions of Power: article 9: 9.10.4
Ink on Arches paper
56 x 76 cm



Tingatinga

Tingatinga is the name of a painting style that was started in Tanzania by the artist Eduwardi Tingatinga in the late 1960s.

Eduwardi Tingatinga noticed that tourists visiting Dar es Salaam were buying souvenir paintings made in Mozambique in the absence of paintings from Tanzania. He started painting simple renditions of animals in strong, vibrant colours on square sections of hardboard using enamel paints, and this became the start of the Tingatinga style.

Tingatinga was killed by a stray bullet at the age of forty, but his apprentices carried on his style of painting and it has since grown into a cooperative of painters based in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania who produce vast amounts of painting, some banal and some exquisite. These painters belong to a new generation of Tingatinga artists who carry on their inheritance from the famous Eduwardi Tingatinga, adding their own motifs, subjects and techniques. The style has evolved greatly since Tingatinga first started painting and new themes are constantly incorporated. From Tingatinga's single animals on monochrome background the style has exploded into a myriad of animals, birds, people and cartoons that often fill every corner of the canvas.

Hardboard has given way to canvas, but the strong colours, glossy surface and stylised renditions of animals and people still characterise Tingatinga paintings today.



The Tingatinga Cooperative
at the Morogoro Stores
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 2007



Lewis
Lewis Stephen Mseza

Tingatinga
Tanzania

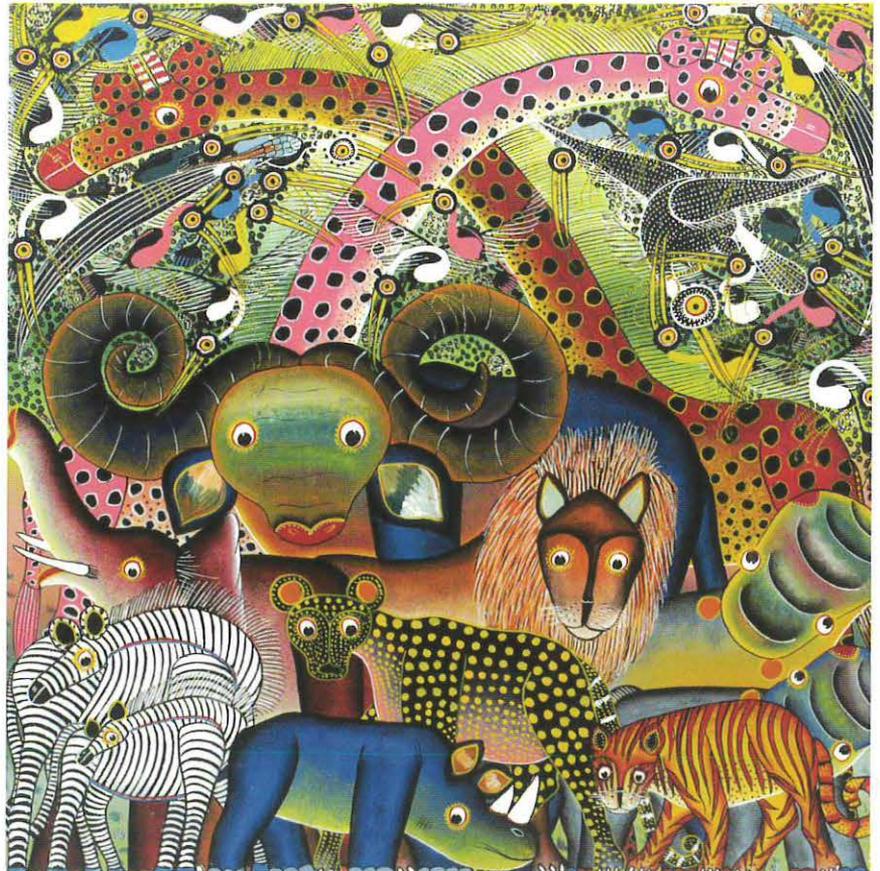
Opposite page
Peacocks
Enamel paint on canvas
180 x 120 cm

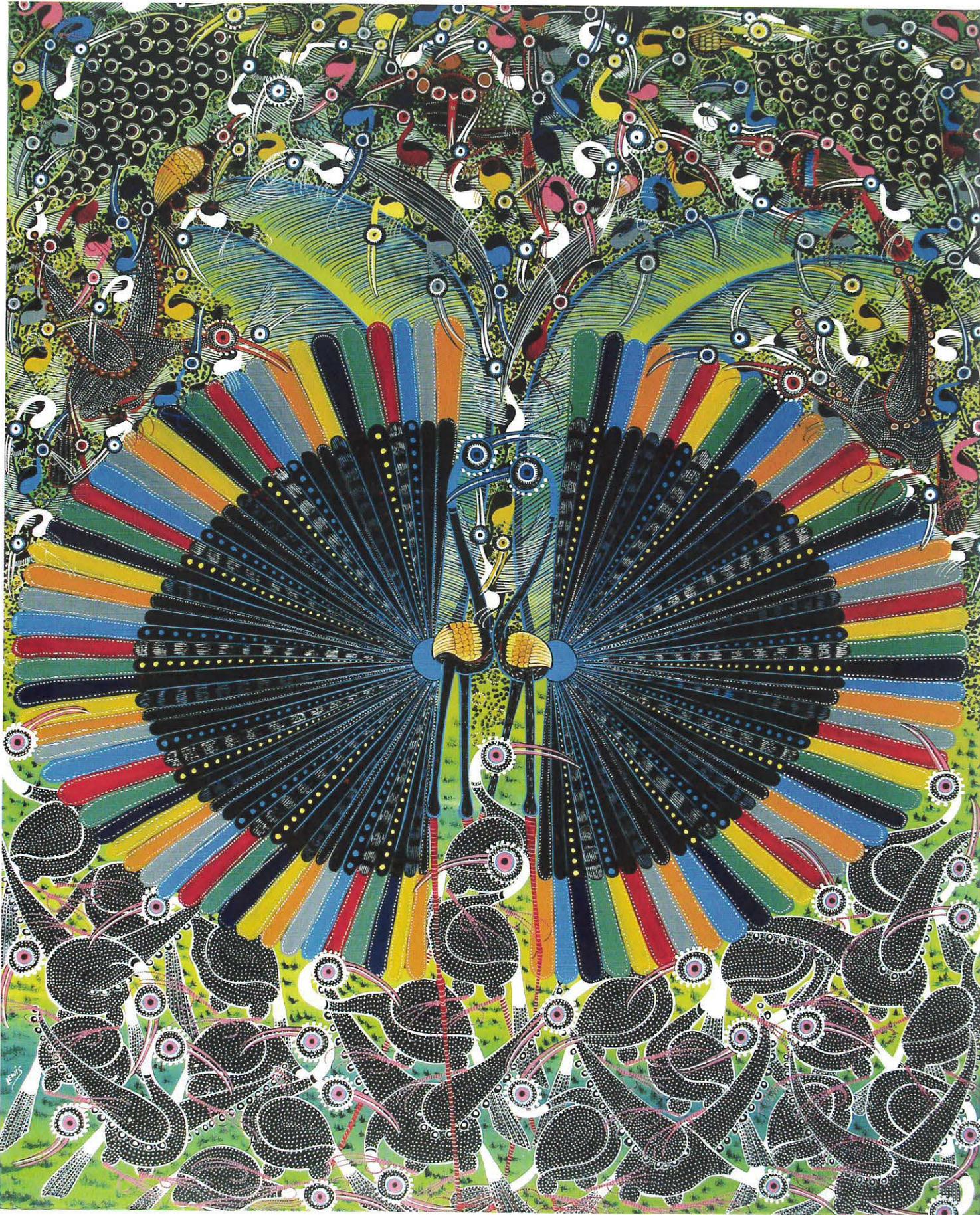
Wild Life
Enamel paint on canvas
60 x 60 cm



b.1964 Tanzania
Lives and works
in Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania

Lewis was born in 1964 in Tanga Region. He attended primary school, and since worked in different odd jobs until 1996. He became an apprentice of the Tingatinga artist Miraji also known as Milo, who since moved to the island of Zanzibar. Lewis works at home or at the workshop at the Morogoro stores, which he shares with several other painters, among them Omary Ally. He is a member of The Craft and Tingatinga Arts promotion Society at the Morogoro Stores and has become known for his intricate, detailed paintings where birds, animals and dotted guinea fowl colonise every inch of the canvas. He is part of the new Tingatinga generation, which has moved the Tingatinga style into a new era and his paintings are coveted by customers and have been exhibited in Europe and Japan.





David Mzuguno

Tingatinga
Tanzania

Opposite page
Jungle, 2008
Enamel paint on canvas
110 x 140 cm

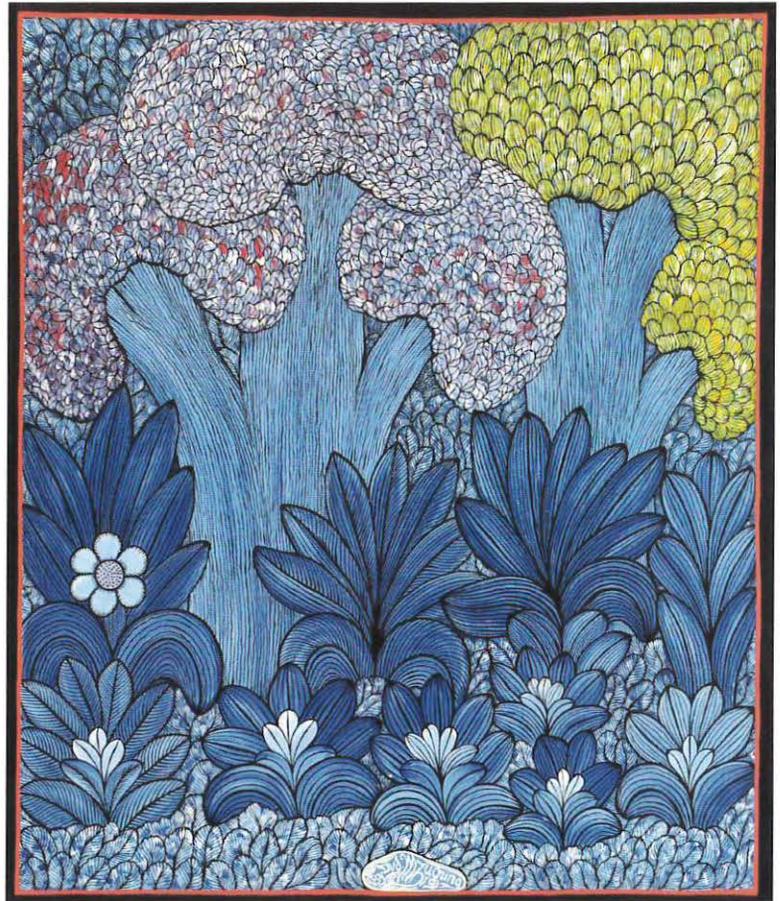
Jungle Night, 2008
Enamel paint on canvas
110 x 140 cm



b.1951, Tanzania
Lives and works
in Tanzania

David Mzuguno is an autodidactic artist who started to paint as a teenager when he moved to Dar es Salaam where he attended secondary school. In Dar es Salaam he lived near the Morogoro Stores, the home of the Tingatinga painters, and this was to shape him as an artist. After working as a mining prospector for seven years, he joined the Tingatinga Partnership and became a full-time artist. Ten years later, in 1989, he started his solo career.

Mzuguno's works demonstrate great originality in depicting scenes of lush vegetation with almost eccentric imagination. The richness of nature evident in his paintings speaks of his roots in the Kilimanjaro region, and though he is known to be restless and journey though Tanzania's very different and often dry regions it is always the sumptuous flora that makes it into his paintings. With his swirling landscape style Mzuguno has taken the Tingatinga style in a new direction. The Tingatinga style has evolved greatly since Eduardo Tingatinga started it, and has moved into a '2nd generation'. Some say that Mzuguno has developed a 3rd generation Tingatinga style, because it is even further removed and is uniquely his own. Unlike many other Tingatinga painters who borrow from each other's motifs or styles, Mzuguno's style is uniquely his own and generally not copied by others. Two young family members now work with him in his workshop and assist in the creation of his paintings.





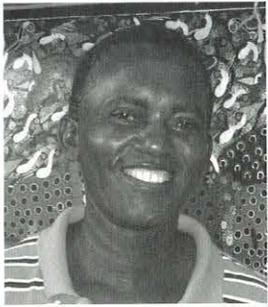
www.mylittlepage.com

Omary
Omary Adam Ally

Tingatinga
Tanzania

Opposite page
Bird Bonanza, 2008
Enamel paint on canvas
147 x 120 cm

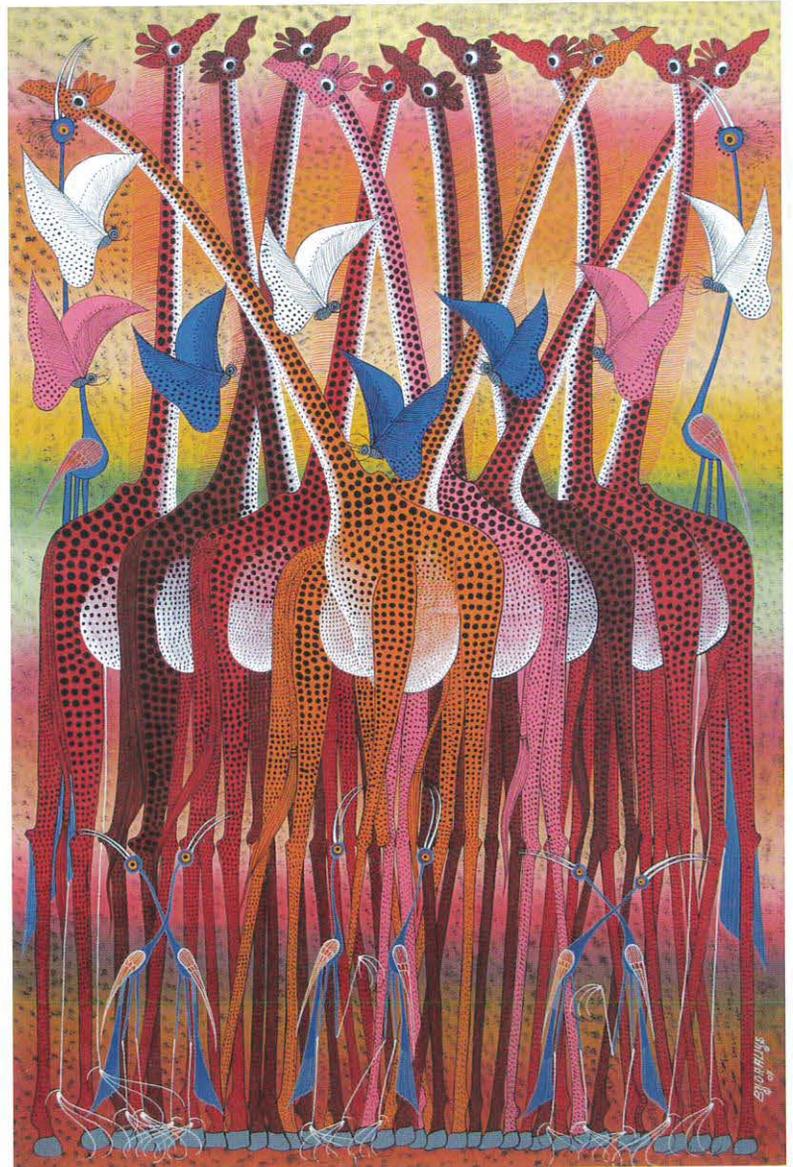
Spotting Giraffes, 2007
Enamel paint on canvas
120 x 80 cm



b.1956, Tanzania
Lives and works in
Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania

Omary Adam Ally started to paint as an apprentice to the Tingatinga artist Rashidi Milanzi in 1973 when he was seventeen.

Omary has a very personal style, which combines great technical quality with a vivid creativity. He is a member of the CTAPS, The Craft and Tingatinga Arts Promotion Society in Dar es Salaam, and paints at his studio at the Morogoro Stores, which he shares with a few other Tingatinga artists.





Sayuki
Anastase Matindiko

Tingatinga
Tanzania

Mashetanis, 2005
(Devils)
Enamel paint on canvas
134.5 x 110.5 cm



b.1963, Tanzania
Lives and works
in Tanzania

Sayuki started painting self-portraits when he was in his late teens. He was still living in his birth town of Ndanda in southern Tanzania, but moved to Dar es Salaam in his early twenties where he, like many others artists, found work as a sign writer. Dar es Salaam was by this time the established centre of Tingatinga painters, a native painting style started in the 1960s by the artist Eduwardi Tingatinga, who sold his paintings to tourists looking for a memento to take back home. After four years in Dar es Salaam, Sayuki returned to his hometown of Ndanda and started painting in the Tingatinga style. Since the days of Eduwardi Tingatinga the style has changed and evolved while retaining its characteristic use of bright colours and motifs such as animals, everyday life and mashetanis (spirits). Sayuki has made the mashetani style his trademark and has developed his own characteristic style, which is reminiscent of the late George Lilanga's sculptures of crazy, good-natured spirits.



Malick Touré

Mali



b.1976, Mali
Lives and works in
Bamako, Mali

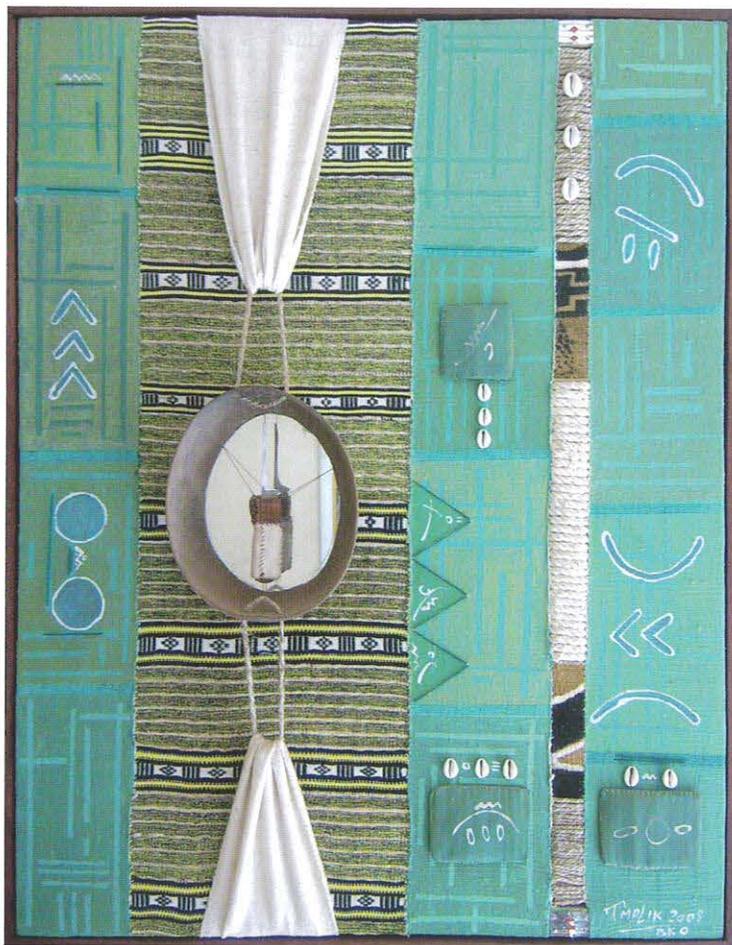
Malick Touré is a self-taught artist from Mali, whose talent as an artist was first nurtured in the creative atmosphere at Ismail Diabaté's studio in 1996. He has developed his own personal style using a mix of techniques where he paints with natural pigments on cotton bands sewn together and stretched on frames. On these he stitches and stretches shells, calabashes, metal and every day objects that he has used since his childhood. He often adorns his work with an invented calligraphy inspired by Arab handwriting. Malick Touré says

“My works with ochre and light are an invitation to take part in the meeting of the soil of Africa and the feeling of sometimes being at the heart of the world.”

Malick Touré has been participating in exhibitions since 1996, both in Mali and in France, Luxembourg, USA and Amsterdam.



Malick Touré's studio
Bamako Mali, 2007



Excision, 2008
Mixed media
90 x 70 cm



La ceinture, 2008
(The Belt)
Mixed media
90 x 70 cm

Achille Zougrana

Burkina Faso



b.1984, Burkina Faso
Lives and works
in Ouagadougou,
Burkina Faso

Achille Zougrana started painting under the guidance of the successful artist Sama, and has since participated in a number of courses.

Zougrana's canvases have a forceful simplicity and balance of colours. White is predominant in his canvases and denotes innocence and purity. In the red dust of Burkina their pristine and unblemished surfaces seems magical. Zougrana is not afraid of the void or of space; he seeks equilibrium, harmony and poetry in his works.

He has exhibited several times in Burkina Faso and his works have been well received.

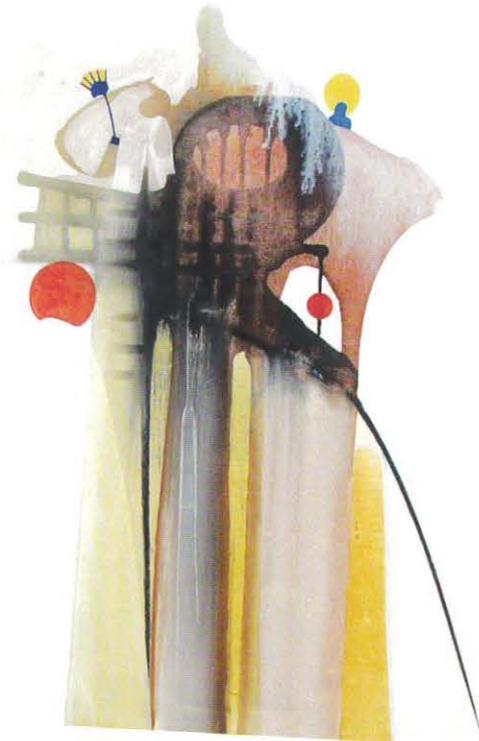


Untitled, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
100 x 100 cm



Untitled, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
60 x 60 cm

Untitled, 2006
Acrylic on canvas
60 x 60 cm





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