



# Collective Memory

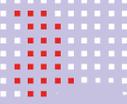
Visual perspectives from Cameroon,  
Germany, Ghana, Kenya & South Africa

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**Augsburg**



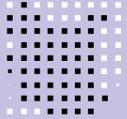
**Winneba**



**Yaoundé  
& Douala**



**Nairobi**



**Johannesburg  
& Pretoria**



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Bavarian State Chancellery



Collective Memory.  
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Germany, Ghana, Kenya & South Africa

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**(Eds.)**

# Preface

by Avi Sooful

The Exploring Visual Cultures (EVC) Collective Memory exhibition was a collaborative project between partners in five countries, Cameroon, Germany, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa, initiated by a student exhibition hosted by Paul Henri Assako Assako's students in Cameroon. Collective Memory however, was envisaged as an online exhibition hosted on the EVC website and will have a second online screening as part of the EVC Summer School. Collective Memory however, was envisaged as an online exhibition hosted on the EVC website and will have a second online screening as part of the EVC Summer School. The framework for the exhibition based on the principle that memories contribute toward the creation of multiple

forms of identity, a registering of people's histories and perceptions of who we are as people. The significance of this exhibition is far-reaching as it promotes the creative interest of both emerging artists and young professionals either enrolled or teaching at eight different universities: Augsburg University (Germany), University of Johannesburg, University of Pretoria & Tshwane University of Technology (South Africa), Technical University of Kenya & Kenyatta University (Kenya), University of Education (Winneba), University of Yaoundé (Cameroon). This exhibition serves as an educational bridge that allows for social cohesion and a tracing of histories and experiences through memories that become a reservoir for visual exploration.

Given that memory of past events and experiences shape and reshape perceptions, the focus of such an extensive exhibition as the Collective Memory exhibition, was to share these young artists' experiences and ideas of what collective memory means to them within contemporary contexts, as society responds differently over generations. Platforms must be made available for younger generations to participate in visualizing their collective memory of both past and present histories in the making.

The exhibition of works from each country was curated by an Exploring Visual Culture panel member from that specific country which allowed for diversity in vision and selection of works within the collective exhibition proposal. Further, the exhibition explored visual culture as a vehicle for either expressing current student experiences or promoting historically stored collective memory within a contemporary space. The exhibition of artworks themselves are indications of issues that specifically affect the social dynamics within societies in Africa and Europe. Matters of colonial residue, national identity, gender violence, protests, spirituality, Covid or the influence of comic strips and animation referencing the day-to-day lives are ideas that are vested in these works. These matters visualised, speak to social concerns that extend beyond the framework of Africa and Europe as continents, and this exhibition realises the importance of visual culture as a global language that responds to complex histories and surveillance of social responsibilities.

Accompanying the visuals in this catalogue, are writings that respond to the importance of collective memory, its impact on education and how we experience written history about ourselves that prompt responses on decolonisation.

# Collective Memory Virtual Exhibition – An Introduction

by Patrique deGraft-Yankson

Over the years, the relevance of art exhibitions has progressed from being just the space for the meeting of art objects and audience, to a platform for learning and understanding human feelings and emotions from multidimensional perspectives. Besides its traditional reputation as an avenue for artists to showcase their unique creative capabilities, art exhibitions present a very reliable fora for people from diverse artistic backgrounds and cultures to make their voices heard, their feelings felt, and their opinions known on a wide range of issues. It is against this background that exhibitions have been given a major consideration in the workings of the Exploring Visual Cultures (EVC) project.

With the aim of contributing to global cohesion and the education of the global citizen, EVC has engaged image gathering and interpretation as a narratological stance. To a very large extent, the choice of this approach is justified by EVC's multicultural membership, and has over the past few years put together a rich repertoire of images that seek to communicate and to engage history. Aggressive as they may sound in their thinking about the educational significance of images, it is not hard to observe that the fundamentals for forging inter-ethnic and intercultural cohesion through images have already been established in the current ocular-centric societies. In the contemporary world, the assertion that we are visual creatures comes to everyone almost as a cliché, because we all find ourselves in a world where visual images inundate our lives on daily bases, and effective communication thrives on the dictates of visual rhetoric.

The Collective Memory Virtual Exhibition therefore was initiated upon thoughtful considerations of how visual rhetoric allows viewers to accurately identify how images communicate information. Collective memory, which refers to how communities of people remember their past, also shares through social experiences how memories of a group of people have been contributed to and changed over generations. Ideas of memory emanating from either national or community identity revolve around the ability to retrieve some idea of past experiences, events, objects etcetera that determine people's history. Memory, like a living thing is fragile but helps to define and binds people, a group, or nation. It is the memory of the past that

shapes the present and reshaped again by present perception.

The exhibition focuses on how young people envision their identities in their respective countries: what mental images do they collectively have about their life experiences. Thus, this project seeks to present collective memories from different parts of the world in an exhibition that will promote visual culture. It explores the way in which parts of the world presents themselves within a contemporary space.

This exhibition therefore aims at giving the younger generation an edge in the visualization and narration of their understanding of the past through various means of artistic expressions. The expectation is that, these students' works, created and exhibited from a wide and divergent cultural experience would provide some sort of emotional templates and indicators for the understanding of other cultures. This would go a long way to affect cultural perceptions through knowledge enhancement on the converging and diverging possibilities of different cultures.

# Collective memory in contemporary art

by Bernadette Van Haute & Ernst Wagner

The Collective Memory Exhibition aims to highlight the role of visual culture in recording narratives shared by social communities. Its significance resides mainly in the effort to bring together artworks from five different countries, each presenting visual self-concepts shaped by collective memory. The communities of people are represented here by young people of different nationalities who study art or art education at university or are recent graduates from universities (young professionals). Hence it can be assumed that they share a cultural identity as members of a social group defined, for example, by nation, generation, milieu and occupation (art students). Such groups are characterised by historical narratives constituted by shared memories of events, otherwise known as collective memories (Heersmink, 2021). Those events are not necessarily directly experienced by the group members who interpret them through collective memory.

## In search of definition

It was the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs who first investigated the role of collective memories in his books published in 1925 (*Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*) and in 1950 (*La mémoire collective*). He claims that every person has not only her/his own memories, but also shares group memories. As Grundlingh & Huigen (2011, p. 2) explain: “The environment in which one grew up and in which one lives forms a framework which determines the shape and content of memories and helps to codetermine identities. Groups can even produce memories in individuals which they never ‘experienced’ in a direct sense.”

According to Halbwachs, the identities and memories of individuals are formed by social groupings. Furthermore, it is in the nature of collective memories to change as time passes by. What is remembered depends on the interests and pre-occupations of the present (Grundlingh & Huigen, 2011, p. 2). Cultural identity is multi-faceted because individuals form part of various social groups based on nationality, geographical location, gender, race, class, political orientation, religion, profession, hobbies, generation, family, etc (Heersmink, 2021). Belonging to the field of cultural history, the study of collective memory has become enormously po-

pular during the last decades, even though it has been plagued by methodological problems and conceptual shortcomings. For the purposes of this essay, we prefer to quote Wulf Kansteiner (2002, p. 180) who describes the conceptualisation of collective memory “as the result of the interaction among three types of historical factors: the intellectual and cultural traditions that frame all our representations of the past, the memory makers who selectively adopt and manipulate these traditions, and the memory consumers who use, ignore, or transform such artifacts according to their own interests.”

Clearly the cultural traditions of the past play an important role in the process of collective memory construction. These cultural traditions may also be referred to as cultural memory which consists of “objectified culture, that is, the texts, rites, images, buildings, and monuments which are designed to recall fateful events in the history of the collective” (Kansteiner, 2002, p. 182). What precisely was recorded and preserved of those cultural traditions was decided by what he calls the “memory makers” – distinct from individuals who are relatively powerless in the process of collective memory formation (Kansteiner, 2010, p. 3). The “memory makers” are the agents – social, political, institutional, etc – responsible for writing/narrating/visualising the events and for sharing communications about the meaning of the past (Kansteiner, 2002, p. 188).

When looking at the individual artworks in the exhibition, it becomes clear that the artists express in the first place their personal memories, but these

have already been shaped by social and political forces and events surrounding them. Depending on the social group with which the artist identifies most intimately, the artworks will reflect the collective memories of that particular group – be it her/his family, gender, generation, ethnic group, church, nation, etc. The events or narratives that characterise the particular group form the subject matter of the artwork which the artist can manipulate to present a new interpretation. For example, artists who feel strongly about their cultural legacy can engage with ritual objects, oral tradition, customs and indigenous knowledge of the past to enforce their allegiance to that group/nation/continent.

What is remembered from the past is determined by interests of the present. For example, incidents that took place a long time ago and are remembered by means of monuments can be reimagined and subverted in an effort to bring along transformation. Art becomes a means to deal with trauma and envisage a better future. Art can also be used to express feelings of exclusion from a dominant cultural group. Considering themselves as ‘others’ by birth and upbringing, artists wrestling with a sense of not belonging can use their art to shift the parameters of identity. In this way, artists of the present can in turn become ‘memory makers’ while the viewers of the exhibition are the ‘memory consumers’ who can choose to use, ignore or re-interpret the artworks according to their own interests.

<sup>1</sup> These examples have been selected solely on the basis of their suitability for the exploration of theory. It is very important for us to emphasise that the selection does not imply any judgement of their artistic value.

<sup>2</sup> This means that we attempt a scientific approach, but we also take a curatorial approach across all country contributions. We will create ‘stories’ to organise the material like each curator does.

## Collective memory in the works of the exhibition – a few observations

In the following, we will try to examine the concept of collective memory more closely – starting with a few examples from the exhibition<sup>1</sup>. We understand these as „artefacts“ in Kansteiner’s sense, i.e. as objects that on the one hand tie in with a cultural tradition, but also actively formulate it. With this understanding, the artists presented here are first of all „consumers who transform traditions“ but also „makers“, even if they are not (yet) very powerful „makers“ (Kansteiner, 2002, p. 180).

Walking through the exhibition of 67 works, a critical visitor is left wondering what connects these works – so different are the ways in which all the artists deal with the subject of collective memory. Thus, it might be helpful to map the field of different artistic approaches in order to better recognise the individual approaches. This will also help to concretise – at the same time as a side effect – the general concept of collective memory as it presents itself in the medium of art.<sup>2</sup>

## Our mapping follows three guiding questions in two categories:

1. The first category covers the topic of collective memory in two subcategories:  
What is ‘collective’ and what is ‘memory’?
  - a. **Collective:** Each artist necessarily first ties in with his or her own individual memory. This becomes part of collective memory when one’s own experience is shared as a common experience with a group (family, community, ethnic group, nation, a postulated cultural identity like ‚African‘, i.e. related to a continent, or a religion). It does not matter whether the group is real or constructed, actual or imagined. We reduce this complexity to two aspects: existing groups that are socially formalised (like family or nation) and ‘conceptualised groups’ that are culturally constructed (like Global South). These understandings of groups address the collective of collective memory.
  - b. **Memory:** This refers to what kind of memory ‘collective memory’ is related to. The subject matter may vary from facts or events (in time) to narratives (which are often linked to specific geographical spaces, such as ‘national identity’). They can be fictional (e.g. the Great Nation of Russia), they can be condensed experience that belongs to the past but is still vivid (like slavery), they can be transformed or faked interpretations of what happens or happened. What matters is that the experience and its interpretation are shared and communicated.

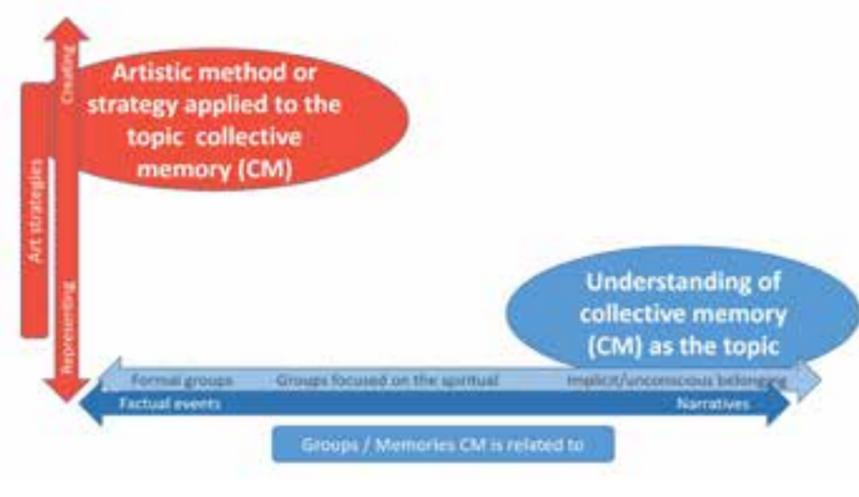


Chart 1: Visualisation of the proposed categories

2. The second category addresses the broad variety of artistic strategies deployed by the artists to deal with the topic of collective memory or how to interpret it. Apart from the written commentaries by the artists, works of art are non-linguistic. But what we can describe is the respective procedures or methods of the artists. Whatever is experienced as collective memory, an artist can express it, spread it, circulate, look for, connect to other meanings, reflect, bring to life, playfully explore, research, try out, experiment, criticise, transform, create, invent, master, overcome and so on. Each work in this exhibition takes another course.

The different understandings and approaches that can be perceived in both categories are mapped above in a first chart. The first category (in blue) concerning the understanding of collective memory

is visualised as ranging from factual events to narratives. The types of memory are essentially determined by the nature of the group which created the memories. For the second category (in red), we suggest using two polarities that cover the artistic strategy in respect of the question of what is dominant: do the artists represent collective memory or do they transform or shape it to create something new?

In the following, we will illustrate our understanding of collective memory with specific reference to artworks from the exhibition. The selected works will be discussed exclusively from this point of view. The fact that the works themselves are, of course, much more complex is self-evident. In order not to make things too complicated, we will (artificially) separate the two aspects, Collective and Memory (see Chart 2).



Chart 2: Placement of the works selected for the section on collectives

## A. Collectives

### Formal groups, large or small

**Cow Mash, *Lerotse III*:** In *Lerotse III*, Cow Mash from Pretoria, South Africa, refers exclusively to her own family which, in the artist's commentary,



is described as matrilineal and traced back to her great-great-grandmother. In this commentary, however, Cow Mash not only tells her story of the family, but she mirrors and merges this narrative with the story of the production process over the years - via the

metaphor of „chewing the cud“. Since it is cows that ruminate, the product also takes on the visible form of a cow. And this process of mirroring and merging then also leads to her adopted stage name „Cow Mash“. All distinctions thus dissolve in an interweaving of all layers, which are always charged with the same meaning.

Here, the working process and the final work (with their associated wishes and desires) obviously steer and shape, perhaps even create the memory. The collective (familial) memory would then be the product of artistic engagement. Cow Mash's comment that she is „reflecting on the thoughts and memories that create that artwork“ could then be modified to: „reflecting on the collective memory thoughts and memories that the artwork creates“. Art plays an active role in the formulation of collective memory through interventions that might be fiction or that might have a base in reality, at least in micro-areas. The work invites us as viewers to think of ourselves in larger contexts, as part of a collective and at the same time as (re)formulators of these very memories.

**Esther Kute, *A Kenyan Savannah*:** Esther Kute from Nairobi, Kenya, refers in her work to her country, her nation. The colours of the Kenyan national flag lie beneath a zebra pattern which in turn refers to the „magic of Kenyan national parks“ (Esther Kute in her comment). Symbolic compression with strong reduction, like a logo, woven as a tapestry. She wants to „capture the essence of a country in an art piece“(Esther Kute in her comment) and at

<sup>3</sup> This demonstrates that young artists do not readily relate their thoughts on collective memory to religion as a reference point.



the same time express her love for her country. The reference that constitutes the collective here is the nation into which one (she) was born and into which the conception of self is woven. The difference from the example above is obvious in respect of the leading question what collective can mean. It can be small or large, private or public, a family or a nation. But in both cases, we have clearly defined groups with unambiguous affiliation and high stability of members. However, their cohesion and integrative power can always be at risk, as they do not necessarily offer identities that are accepted by all (Tajfel 1978). Esther Kute's work (like Cow Mash's work), however, condenses what is common. But beyond that – as a tapestry – the work is hung and becomes part of the social space (whether in the family or in a more public place). In this space, it is a patriotic statement that is, in comparison with a hung flag, softened by the decorative design and the material. A good example of the communicative, sometimes even appellative function of art works in the context of collective memory.

### Groups focused on the spiritual

**Shenaz Mahomed, *The Quran and Jihad approx. 164 and The Quran and Peace approx. 291 (detail)*:** The work by Shenaz Mahomed from Pretoria is the only example (out of a total of 67 works<sup>3</sup>) that deals with religion (here Islam) in an explicit way. In her work the two big steel pieces follow



the design of traditional Quran book covers. For the patterns the artist counted the number of verses in the Quran that mention jihad (war) and peace respectively.

She found that peace is mentioned almost twice as often as war. This numerical ratio is used to decide on the numbers of the patterns on the two steel sculptures, one for jihad, one for peace.

As in the example of Esther Kute above, Shenaz Mahomed situates her work into the social space. Yet she does it more massively and conspicuously by directly intervening in the public space with a clear message. This message corrects or subverts the existing, dominant narratives about violence and Islam – through an artwork. In this case art plays an active role not only in the continuation of collective memory but has also a specific power to visually shape counter-designs and thus to develop new or alternative collective memories. This becomes clear when she states in her comment that her piece is “cheekily” introducing the viewer to a “specific content”.

Even though the work takes such an independent creative position, it is still and ultimately about belonging, about the commitment to a community – as in the next example.

**William Bakaimo, *Reconnexion aux ancêtres (Reconnection to the ancestors – detail)*:** The Cameroonian artist William Bakaimo paints with liquid material (acrylic and ink) on canvas. In the flowing act of painting on a very large canvas, a world



starts to grow. It grows as if by itself, in which human bodies, plants, sky and earth organically merge and grow apart, connect and separate. In his comment he calls this “nature” and talks about

symbolisation of “the ancestors who speak to us through the elements that make up the universe”. And he stresses that we have this knowledge from African societies of the past. In this context, William Bakaimo’s way of making art could be understood as a “recalling [of] certain ancient practices” (William Bakaimo in his comment), not only to reconnect to precolonial knowledge but also to the ancestors, as the title of his work states.

William Bakaimo’s work is a good example of a reference to a collective that is not formalised nor clearly defined and demarcated, namely African societies of the past. The ancestors of African societies can be said to form a collective based on the knowledge systems passed down by them and which are remembered by Africans today. Collective memory, knowledge systems and nature merge in the art William Bakaimo is practicing. His artistic practice is not only a form of reviving, re-enacting, evoking but also of unfolding this collective memory.

There are more interesting examples in the exhibition that fit into this category, for example, by focusing on gender or race as the core aspect and criterion of belonging. This cannot be unpacked here due to lack of space. However, we encourage the reader to embark on a journey of discovery through the exhibition. The above example has

already moved us along on the track, further and further away from clearly defined groups by locating the collective more in groupings or milieus that belong to common systems of thought or beliefs. Our two last examples follow this path two steps further to finally reach a realm where people belong to groups without becoming aware of being members of the respective groups (which would probably be a problem for sociologists - Tajfel, Fraser & Jaspars 1984). We call these groupings unconscious or hidden collectives and the relation to them is a kind of implicit belonging.

#### Implicit / unconscious belonging

**Josué Mimshe, *Le royaume africain (African Kingdom)*:** In an example from Cameroon, Josué Mimshe from Douala presents a very contemporary concept of African identity, compared with the painting by William Bakaimo we just discussed: the narrative of



global capitalism with its consumer culture, communicated through household items such as aluminium ladders, plastic strainers, extension cords, etc., overlaps with historical, perhaps even mythological narratives from Africa, as in William Bakaimo’s work. Not only the title (*African Kingdom*) but also

the majestic staging of the characters and the composition of the photo address the latter. In the work, both narratives overlap and complement one another without negating the contradiction. In-

deed, the artist even emphasises it. Through this the work becomes a hybrid, a bricolage, a form rooted in the creolisations of everyday life and pop cultural aesthetics as well as in venerable historical patterns. In this case, collective memory in art becomes an instrument to comment on the impact of modernity by combining old narratives with new forms, new ways of thinking, and thus continues to write collective memory. The publication of Josué Mimshe’s photo on the cover of an American (!) journal is testimony to this.

**Regine Schurig, *Arts and Crafts*:** For her Arts and Crafts series, Regine Schurig from Augsburg/Germany has selected photos that show traditional handicraft tools, hands of older people working with the tools, and the products. Her choice



of artistic technique is fitting: black-and-white photographs produced by using a salt printing process with borders that themselves tell of their handicraft production. This picture out of

the series shows the processing of an upholstered and spring seat. The hands remind me [Ernst Wagner] of my grandfather, I recognise him, although of course he is not. I feel at home, in Central Europe, being sure that a similar artistic approach from e.g. Central Africa would look differently.

The title *Arts and Crafts*, however, conceals this and thus raises the activity to the level of an archetype of human activity (even if the metal springs shown are of industrial origin): what we use every day has been made by hands and maintained over



Chart 3: Placement of the works selected for the section on memory

generations through repairing. The counter-model would be the plastic strainers, presented by Josué Mimshe. This product is standardised, industrially fabricated, mass-produced worldwide and impossible to repair.

Regine Schurig’s work conjures up a world that seems to be disappearing and may soon only be found in collective memory: a world of handicrafts, of the production of individually different items in an aesthetic with visible regional and social roots – and this is important in our context of looking for the respective collectives addressed. The experience of a world of differences is expressed in the photo. The artistic representation ennobles the

memory of the immediately familiar in a specific, but nearly invisible context (for me as a European it is just familiar) through an appreciative aesthetic. A continent-related memory culture can be observed in both examples in this section. In both cases, the context, the relation to a collective is implicit, suspended in the body languages, in the materials represented, in the respective aesthetics.

## B. Memory

In the following, we have selected new artworks for the category of memory, but – for purposes of comparability – mainly artworks that are related to memories of historical, political events as well as daily life. In this way, the different forms of memories become clearer: memories not only refer to specific events encountered directly as a participant. Rather, collective memory also articulates what we call experiences (rather than events). These experiences are either based on perceptions, interpretations, reflections of events or they are ‘grand narratives’ (narrations, tales, myths). The works in the exhibition can thus be placed in Chart 3 on a sliding scale from factual to fictional.

#### Factual events

**Dieudonné Assiga, *L'unité*:** In his painting, Dieudonné Assiga from Douala, Cameroon, shows us his interpretation of a historical event in his country. The conflicts between the Francophone and Anglophone zones in Cameroon had led to violent



clashes in 2017. In a ‘National Dialogue’ in 2019, the parties involved tried to save the unity of the country through reconciliation negotiations. In his painting Dieudonné Assiga has recreated, in a symbolic way, the political gathering based on this historical event.

**David Ochieng, *Soko Adventures*:** In contrast, David Ochieng's animation tells of an everyday experience of a market in Nairobi. The artist is from Nairobi, and he obviously shows a chase in the digital animation. Perhaps a trader chasing a thief?



When we hear the word market, it immediately conjures an image in our minds of mobile stalls, piles of goods, people crowded together, colourful movement. These images are obviously deeply imprinted on our minds, and thus a typical example of (visual) collective memory, which refers to concrete, social experiences in everyday life.

### Perceptions, interpretations and reflections

**Tlotlo Sereisho, *Rhodes Must Fall, a Mengelmoes*:** Tlotlo Sereisho, on the other hand, refers in his painting to the historical movement to topple the Rhodes Monument(s) in South Africa in 2015. In this respect, his work resembles that of Dieudonné Assiga which commemorates a political event in Cameroon. And again, it is not the concrete event, in this case the toppling of the monument, that is shown, but a complex montage of an egg, a pedestal and a wrapped monument (which could also be unwrapped again) against an unreal, flickering background. In this way, Tlotlo Sereisho detaches



himself from the event (which, however, remains present) and articulates his perception and interpretation of the situation in South Africa. He asks about the „prevalent practices around commemoration and nation building“ (Tlotlo Sereisho in his comment) and understands his painting as „an exhortation to continue the (still pending) overcoming of apartheid“.

**Gonca Sağlam, *Polittalk*:** The work by Gonca Sağlam from the German section of the exhibition shows a similar appellative character. In her work *Polittalk* she depicts the faces that are currently engraved in the global collective memory of



our time. We see Putin, Assad, Kim Jong-un, Erdogan, Trump. The circle speaks of conspiratorial meetings. This takes on a special relevance since the invasion of the Russian army under Putin into the Ukraine. Such talks, such meetings, such agreements do indeed exist, with massive repercussions for humanity. It is about power. But this specific meeting did not and will not take place. The theme is no longer a concrete experience, but an interpretation of world events as a narrative of the banality of power, secured in understandings between politicians of questionable reputation.

<sup>4</sup> By the way, a similar fusion of levels takes place in the work of Cow Mash: „My paintings slave me but battle with brush and painting on canvas liberates me to be an artist, not a slave.“

### 'Grand narratives': slavery, resistance, freedom

Already the previous section on 'interpretations' made clear that facts, events, incidents in history are always interpreted against specific narrations. In this exhibition we can even find examples that mainly address those narratives. This means that the respective memories are shaped as such. The last two examples that show this in a complex way are from Ghana. They still reference a historical tradition (historical reports and artefacts), but from there something of their own develops, a general narrative, the first one through a penetration of the private (Daniel Adofo), the other one (Nyameba Prince Anim), with regard to society as a whole, through an extreme form of abstraction. Here, the focus is on the major themes of humanity: enslavement and freedom.

**Daniel Adofo, *Shackles of a Freeman*:** The slave castles stood and still stand on the coast of Ghana, shaping the perception of Ghana's history, for Ghanaians and for visitors. Daniel Adofo from Winneba, Ghana, starts with his experience in his work *Shackles of a Freeman*. But in the commentary, the artist then fuses the collective memory with his own reflections regarding society but also with his self-perception (against the narrative). First, he is using the history of slavery as a mirror for the current situation of many African countries. But then and above all - and this is central - he mirrors

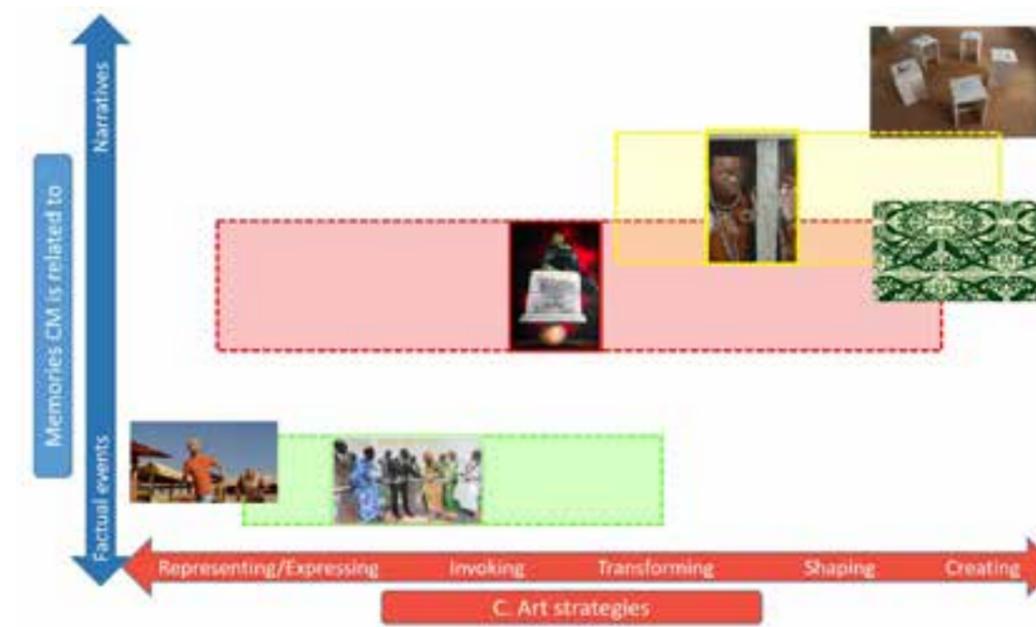


Chart 4: Placement of the works selected for the memory section, mapping them against the category of art strategies

his own experience in the historical experience of slavery. He sees his own life journey as an artist in the tension between freedom and enslavement. This entanglement determines his current mood and self-appraisal.

**Nyameba Prince Anim, *Yaa Asantewaa*:** In his digital prints on fabrics, Nyameba Prince Anim, also from Winneba, refers to heroes who contributed to the development of Ghana. In *Yaa Asantewaa* he thematises the story of the queen mother Yaa Asantewaa who led a rebellion against the British colonisers in the late 19th century: “a strong and courageous woman who stood up and fought for the peace

and freedom of Ghana” (Nyameba Prince Anim in his comment). For his pattern design he used “gun and sword ... as representational portrait of Yaa Asantewaa” (Nyameba Prince Anim in his comment). But the guns and swords are not easy to distinguish. They almost disappear in the abstract pattern, which initially speaks of ornamental, abstract decoration. Nevertheless, under this decorative appearance there lies a highly complex meaning. The decorative surface collapses. In these contradictions and fractures, a story comes to the fore that is perhaps also contradictory and fractured in itself.



### C. Art strategies

All examples we discussed above show that collective memory always has a very high interpretative component, is always constructed – of course in various gradations. We have to reflect on this observation in the context of philosophical epistemology which postulates that a recognised object is always constructed by the observer himself through the process of recognition (Watzlawik, 1981). In the case of collective memory, we must then speak of a social construction. As visitors of the virtual exhibition, we can only perceive the perspective of the artists exhibiting here. This makes this aspect of constructed-ness particularly clear once again.

This understanding draws our attention to the producers of the interpretations and narratives, to the artists. They created the works. But what are they actually doing in their art? What strategies do they choose when it comes to such a challenging subject as collective memory? What is their approach? This will be briefly discussed in the last section, using the same examples as before (see Chart 4).

**David Ochieng, *Soko Adventures*:** David Ochieng locates his idea of collective memory in an African market, focusing on a specific event (a chase) that can be perceived by anybody, perhaps any time. In dramatising the market event in digital animation, he concentrates entirely on the idea of expressing his understanding of everyday life in a condensed form. The artist thus selected a purely illustrative, almost mimetic strategy to visualise the subject

and represent or express his interpretation of his own experience.

**Dieudonné Assiga, *L'unité*:** It is interesting to compare Dieudonné Assiga's painting with images of the concrete event he is thematising, namely the 'National Dialogue' in Cameroon 2019, on the internet. Those images always show hundreds of people crowded together. The comparison makes Assiga's pictorial strategy clear: concentration on a few (ten) figures (in traditional and modern clothes), representing the different regions of Cameroon. Inventing a ritual (holding a ribbon together - something which did not take place) condenses the artist's attempt to invoke his political ideals. This is emphasised through the bright yellow word UNITÉ at the top, slanted in perspective towards a distant point – the future. To bring his message across, he transforms the material (the photographs he found) into a pictorial language that allows him to add his viewpoint. In this way, the image becomes not just a representation of what happened but an evocation at the same time.

**Tlotlo Sereisho, *Rhodes Must Fall, a Mengelmoes*:** Tlotlo Sereisho chose an unexpected combination for the title of his painting. The part „Rhodes Must Fall“ fits well within an exhibition about collective memory, as it refers to a historical event. But „a mengelmoes“ (an Afrikaans word meaning hodgepodge) is rather uneasy. Through this word, the artist first of all names the surreal montage character of his work (balancing a monument on an egg), but he also introduces a linguistic mixture of English and Afrikaans. The consequence of his

artistic strategy reveals itself in his own comment. He explains that he is using / appropriating the historical event to symbolically condense his daily experience of „still pending ... apartheid“ and at the same time to agitate in the society („exhortation“) (Tlotlo Sereisho in his comment). To be consistent, he thus has to mix a broad range of different artistic strategies, more so than his colleagues discussed here in this chapter. From representation to creation: mengelmoes.

**Gonca Sağlam, *Polittalk*:** In her commentary on Polittalk, Gonca Sağlam speaks about „resistant rebellion against anti-democratic, autocratic to dictatorial governments“. But, what might this rebellion be in her work? If we take her suggestion (in her own comment) of „subversive strategies in an ironic and even cynical manner“ seriously, it means putting our backsides on the faces of those in power. This 'performative turn' is an interesting artistic strategy chosen by the artist that is quite unique in the exhibition. It focuses on the co-creation of the viewer, at least in their imagination, offering a space in which the viewers can create their own collective memory.

**Daniel Adofo, *Shackles of a Freeman*:** In this painting, the depicted (historical) slave and the depicting (contemporary) artist merge – an exciting example of the highly complex ways in which the relationship of the individual to the collective memory can be shaped. This does not happen in the painting itself, but in the tension between the artwork and the commentary. In this way, the artist transforms the historical experience of slavery and

shapes it into a narrative denoting something else, something new. He uses the easily recognisable collective memory to create a self-portrait, collapsing both the public and private spheres into one image

**Nyameba Prince Anim, *Yaa Asantewaa*:** Interesting to note is the contrast between the photorealism in the previous example and the quite opposite, ornamental-abstract solution here. The pattern in Nyameba Prince Anim's design does not tell a story as the title suggests (the story of Yaa Asantewaa), although it refers to it. Guns and swords are symbolic of the ideas of rebellion against oppression and of longed-for freedom. But these symbols are braided in and interwoven into a decorative pattern, just as concrete historical events are woven into the collective memories, into what we call 'grand narratives'. These narratives are created / constructed, as mentioned in the introduction to this section. They detach themselves from the single occasion, seeking their roots in the memories of the collectives themselves.

## Conclusion

Our analysis of the works selected for this essay demonstrates that the artists draw on memories from a variety of collectives that transcend the boundaries of conventional social groupings (see section A). Apart from the formal groups, we identified groupings focused on the spiritual as well as unconscious or hidden collectives, the relation to which is a kind of implicit belonging. These dis-

tinctions refine the general understanding of the 'collective' in collective memory.

It has also been shown that a broad range of different kinds of 'memory' (from a single event, a historical fact and an interpreted experience to general narratives – see section B) shapes the works. Coming back to Kansteiner's theory, this means that we have to differentiate his concept, especially when it comes to artworks that are understood as agents in the perception and creation (consuming and making – see section C) of collective memory. What we can deduce from the section on artistic strategies is that the transition between simple representation or expression on the one hand and active creation on the other is fluent and flexible. We can even find examples that use more than one strategy simultaneously.

This means that we have to understand the artists as "memory makers" (Kansteiner, 2002). They are presenting their interpretations, their positions. The viewers then become the "memory consumers" who can identify with, subvert or reject the positions proposed in the artists' works. Their decision how to posit themselves in relation to the artworks depends on their own memories of the subject depicted. The artworks, as artefacts of cultural tradition and as carriers of meaning, serve as conduits to trigger and to sharpen collective memories within the viewer.

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# The past has a lot to share: The Collective Memory Exhibition as a resource for education

by Patrique deGraft-Yankson

In his book, *Ideas and Opinions*, Albert Einstein, citing a definition of education deduced from an existing ‘paradox’, wrote, “Education is that which remains, if one has forgotten everything he learned in school” (Einstein, 1954, p. 63; CMU, 2022; Quotepark, 2022). This definition, which attributes the manifestation of quality education to an aggregation of exhibitable gains which an individual shows after going through ‘education’, rather than knowledge of facts which results from esoteric command over any discipline, gives a lot of credence to the spirit of collective memory.

Though expressible in numerous forms (APA, 2022), collective memory becomes more impactful when shared through tangible forms like works of art. This is partly because the memories so presented are cultural. Therefore, how they are shared by individuals who remember ought to ensure the coordination of personal memories that harmonize with the rest of the group members. In other

words, it is the responsibility of the social group that controls specific memories to ensure a mode of expression that allows them to stay true to their memories and be expressive in ways that provide conformity and connectivity with societal expectations. On this premise, this Collective Memory exhibition has been contrived and considered an important avenue for sharing our collective memories.

From this perspective, the significance of the Exploring Visual Cultures (EVC) *Collective Memory exhibition* in education is obvious in so many domains.

In the first place, the images displayed by these young artists and professionals present mimesis of culturally relevant memories gained through personal knowledge about their society. Others are representations of knowledge instilled by rich cultural histories and oral traditions. Knowledge gained

through lived experiences is of great importance to young people’s personal development and general perception of their world. Therefore, any opportunity afforded students to express their knowledge is greatly appreciated as this provides them with an avenue for the exhibition of natural attitudes. As essential members of society, conscious societal recognition of the standpoints of the youth increases their confidence and sense of belonging, and this, in no small way is a crucial educational target. The *Collective Memory* exhibition (like many other art exhibitions) also practicalizes the competitive component of studies in the arts. It contributes to the outstanding recognition of education in the arts as a discipline that supports learning improvements in other academic disciplines. The thought-provoking images exhibited are transdisciplinary, transcending subject and language barriers, thereby speaking to diverse audiences in diverse ways. Therefore, images presented in this exhibition tend to generate healthy competition among the direct participants and even among teachers and students of participating countries. As students learn from the works of other students from other parts of the world, they educe satisfaction from their positive achievements, while identifying critical areas of improvement and the need for collaboration. In this regard, teachers stand to benefit from the positive teaching and learning attitude which emanate from observations and analysis of competitive works of art. This provides a rich source of motivation for pedagogic transformation and effective instructional delivery that aims at meeting the needs of every student.

One should not be far from right, to summarize the educational impacts of the *EVC Collective Memory Exhibition* in the wisdom encapsulated in the *Sankofa Adinkra symbol*. This symbol re-echoes a popular axiom of the Akan people (of Ghana), *Tete wo bi ka, Tete wo bi kyere*, which means, “*The Past has a lot to say, The Past has a lot to share*”.

In our attempt at encouraging students to look back on the significant societal shared pool of memories, knowledge and information through image creation, we are ushering them into the esteemed academic inquiry that challenges their attitudes and ways of seeing, feeling and thinking. This leads students to the understanding of their society and their world. It renders them more rounded personalities who are inspired to make effective use of their time, strengths and capabilities, identify their shortcomings and contribute to present and future developments of their society.

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# Fashion: A Decolonisation Conversation

by Osuanyi Quaicoo Essel

The practices of slavery and colonisation in Africa, amongst others, contributed significantly to disorienting people's indigenous identity by eroding religious practices, forms of education, governance structure, artistic and social cultures. However, in as much as these practices scarred indigenous lifestyles, cross-cultural adaptation is not totally negative since cultural shoulder-rubbing contributes to hybrid personalities, social-cultural and global development. Many cultures of the world recognise the enormous benefit of multicultural interactions and in Africa, for example, the Akan of Ghana say *Ekyinekyin ye sen enyinenyin*, which literally translates as “*Travelling widely is better than longevity with no travels.*” The underlying philosophy in this proverb is that welcoming and interacting with different cultures come with enormous benefits including fostering intercultural learning and understanding, peace building and respect for one another. For this and other important reasons, the peoples of Africa are generally embodied with a high sense of hospitality, opening up to people of different cultural backgrounds in and outside the continent.

Contrary to the African hospitality, the colonialists who experienced African cultures nurtured and har-

boured negative perceptions which featured in their writings about Africa in precolonial, colonial, post-colonial, contemporary, and even present times. Consequently, their idea remained to superimpose their ideas, and aesthetic ideals and beauty culture standards on Africa. Their writings documented African art, religion, social, cultural and aesthetic ideals as “to reinforce the picture of African society as something grotesque, as a curious, mysterious human backwater, which helped to retard social progress in Africa and to prolong colonial domination over its peoples” (Nkrumah, 1963, p. 2). For example, African art was relegated to craft and labelled as ethnic, primitive, fetishist, idolatrous and mundane and presented as such in European museums. In addition, the diverse fashion found in Africa was referred to as costumes, a term perpetuated in current scholarship. Fashion has been rigidly compartmentalised into West versus non-West, tradition versus modern, and fashion versus dress (Jansen & Craik, 2016; Rabine, 2002). Fashion from Europe and North America is Western fashion perceived by the colonialists as modern and proper while the Non-Western fashion refers to fashion beyond Europe and North America (Jansen, 2021; Welters & Lillethun, 2018). Africa includes the non-West fashion. The neo-colonialists' self-aggran-

dising assumption asserts fashion as a Western phenomenon and that fashion outside Europe and North America is recent and a result of globalisation. This position does not acknowledge different fashion systems that were in existence before colonialists' invasion and evolving fashion systems in Africa and other parts of the world. Again, assigning binary descriptors such as tradition, dress, and costume to African fashion means that it is unchanging, and symbolic and not disconnected from its cultural context in terms of significance and uses. Due to these political binary and apperceptions, the concept of decolonisation is necessary by rewriting these forms of 'intellectual' dishonesty of social and mental domination on the peoples of Africa. “It is impossible to respect an intellectual unless he [ / she] shows ... kind of honesty. After all Academic Freedom must serve all legitimate ends, and not a particular end” (Nkrumah, 1963, p. 4). To Nkrumah (1963, p. 4), academic freedom should not be used to “cover up academic deficiencies and indiscipline.”

The decolonisation conversation and agendas remain constant as conscious efforts by civil societies and academics to deepen the decolonisation discourse effects felt also on people's identity and

ideology. In the past two decades, there have been more compelling decolonial efforts in the field of fashion and textiles. The following: India Collective, Centre for Research of Fashion and Clothing, Fashion Liberation Collective of North Africa, African Fashion Research Institute, and Research Collective for Decoloniality and Fashion feature prominently in fashion decolonial discourses through research.

Against this background, fashion decolonisation efforts reposition the non-West fashion including African fashion art and history into its proper context, detailing its creative contributions to the fashion world. These research collectives address the sensitivity of rewriting the wrongs, fabrications and misassumptions of African fashion contribute to fashion inclusivity on many levels.

One glaring example is the issue of the term classic in the context of fashion. The term classic refers to a relatively long-established and popular form or style of dress. The suit, usually a three-piece ensemble consisting of a jacket, trouser and shirt, is a classic in Western dress code and has been in existence for centuries. Occasional changes in structure of the suit manifest in the lapel size, notch



Figure 1: Dum Emmanuel, *Our Women Our Culture*, digital image (Adobe Photoshop).



Figure 2: Betty Yaa Addo, *The Linguist*, 2021 digital image (Adobe Photoshop).

position, cuff, button placement, length, cut, fit, fabric type and texture, colour and decorative stitch and other enhancements registered on it, yet, it is not perceived as a costume, but as a fashionable dress. In the case of Africa and West Africa, to be specific, there are several classic wraparound fashions such as the breast and waist covers (Figure 1), toga (Figure 2), *kaba* and *slit* (Figure 3), smock fashion and tunics. These African classics keep

changing in design, fabric use and texture, cut, fit and colour just as in the case of the suit. Wearing of breast and waist covers (Figure 1) flatter the skin with young feelings as it exposes the upper limbs, back the body, and the lower limbs as well as the navel regions. It is usually worn by young females and has influenced many body grabbing designs that are usually bare-chested. The weather conditions in Ghana makes this classic comfortable to wear. In figure 2, the artist depicts a tapestry of colourful triangular shapes wrapped around a seemingly human figure holding what appears to be a linguist staff. The wraparound colourful triangular designs give an impression of toga style of wearing fabrics. Toga remains a major masculine classic in contemporary Ghana. However, Western academics and scholars continue to refer to these African classics as costumes or tradition dress. The consequence is that in the academic fashion world, these terms denote an unchanging dress and something that is anti-fashion. These types of bias against African fashion continue to be contested by academics who persevere with African decolonisation conversations.

*Kaba* and *slit* (Figure 3), a three-piece ensemble and feminine wear consisting of a blouse-like top,

usually long skirt and large cover cloth, had undergone varied stylisations, cut, fabric texture and colour changes. New designs of this classic trickle onto the market from time to time as it is a formal wear for females in many parts of West Africa and is considered a classic in Africa. In this artwork (Figure 3), the centrally placed human figure in a kneeling position as well as the figure in the top left wear *kaba* and *slit* as they dramatise storytelling moments that characterised precolonial and post-colonial Ghana. Perhaps, the artist's presentation is a recast of past times in terms of storytelling and way of life. The presentation of the garments of the figures reflects her cultural mores.

In this exhibition three of the artists' (Dum Emmanuel, Betty Yaa Addo and Adzato Miriam Mawunyo) works indirectly reflect the prevalent fashion in their respective communities that give them a sense of collective memory. Though, their intention might not be showcasing their classics, but their way of clothing their human figures reveal what pertains in the Ghanaian fashion culture. Attempts to gather images and interpret them for their inherent collective memory based on their educational relevance, reignite the discourse of decolonisation. That is to say that, collecting images



Figure 3: Adzato Miriam Mawunyo, *Storytelling*, 2021, digital image (Adobe Photoshop).

into a transnational portal for the purpose of fleshing out their collective memory for teaching and learning is one way of challenging and disrupting the misassumptions and apperception about non-West fashion for global good. The attempts of collecting images from different countries for the sole purpose of finding their educational relevancies

has the tendency of helping decolonise curricula of nations who have genuine interest in learning from other nations. The process informs multinational and continental engagements that gradually water down, if not erase, the hegemonic posturing thereby resulting in producing academically honest intellectuals and global citizens.

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# Nostalgia and the Art of Collective Memory Making

by Danièle Knoetze

Collective experience contributes to collective memory making which in turn shapes our present perceptions in visual terms. Collective memory making helps us define ourselves in terms of identity and shared experience. Johannes Hofer, a medical student from Sweden, introduced the modern notion of nostalgia in his dissertation *Medica de Nostalgia* (1688). Greek in origin, nostos refers to a “return to the native land”, and algos signifies “suffering or grief” (Illbruck 2012, 5). Hofer wrote in the early years of the European Enlightenment (Illbruck, 2012), when concepts like the universality of reason, concerned with collective truth and experience, were introduced. Romantics of the time found solace in nostalgia. It provided them with a means to explore the individual experience of sentiment (Boym, 2001).

For Svetlana Boym nostalgia has to do with the changing conception of time as well as a sense of dislocation in space. She sees it as a romanticised worldview, a desire for a place that is simultaneously spiritual and physical. Nostalgia strives to turn history into private or collective mythology. It

is important to see nostalgia for what it is: an emotional response to a rapidly changing world that could easily be utilised as a political tool.

Boym (2001) differentiates between restorative and reflective nostalgia. Restorative nostalgia constantly attempts to recreate something that is perceived of as lost. Restorative nostalgia thinks about itself as ‘truth’ and ‘convention’ and rarely as nostalgia. It is selective and attempts, with zealous determination, to reconstruct one, universal homeland. Reflective nostalgia, on the other hand, is often more about the longing than the actual thing itself. Cherishing “the shattered fragments of memory”, reflective nostalgia is often critically self-aware and fears the reconstruction of the homeland with the same fervour that restorative nostalgia tries to attain it.

Diego Muro (2005) suggests that nostalgia is spread over two different time periods: the now, which is unsatisfactory – the very reason why nostalgia manifests in the first place – and an idealised past, a time that is retrospectively referred to as some sort of ‘Golden Age’. For Victorians, an imaginary version of a pre-industrialised ‘Merrie England’; for colonised Africans, the precolonial era before European imperialist disruption. It is evident why nostalgia is such a powerful tool in the pursuit

of nationalist identity –people can be called to collective action by reminding them of an idealised, utopian past and by kindling a desire to return to it. Muro adds that modern society’s need for innovation resonates with nostalgia in humanity’s desperate attempt to control and manipulate the ever-increasing speed of social change (Muro, 2005).

Following Lacan’s ideas about nostalgia as the sustenance of individual and/or collective identity, Derick Hook (2012) concludes that it should evidently be viewed as an emotion, one which seems rather narcissistic and defensive in nature: Nostalgia aims to protect the ego by resisting any change that might be a danger to self-understanding. This can, in turn, lead to repressed histories (Hook, 2012). Nostalgia as fetishised memory – the cultivation of a rather affectionate bond with the past – preserves an existing belief-structure and more importantly maintains a communal identity to provide a sense of control and order in an ever-changing world. This nostalgia can be used to maintain selective versions of the past and block out any rival memories as a shield against political angst. And thus the “romance with one’s own fantasy” (Boym 2001, xiii) results in a sort of controlled or structured forgetting. Nostalgia is not merely about content; it has both a political and a psychical purpose (Hook, 2012).

Nostalgia thrives on the distortion of memory. It favours pleasant memories and forgets unpleasant experiences. It serves as a rose-coloured glass through which the past is viewed. It is evident that nostalgia is very seldom truthful, and it

usually involves some sort of self-deception. This is not a negative thing in itself: there is no harm in remembering and relishing the happy moments of one’s past, but as a societal experience it might be detrimental as it could cause people to become disconnected from their current situations (Coontz, 2013).

Nostalgia, sentiment, and memory are some of the most effective tools of an artist. Art draws from sensations and emotions. Artists’ subjective interventions allow them to reframe the past in ways that open it up to discourse and interpretation. The past is not fixed, it has never been, but rather it is in a process of negotiation that draws from a vast array of different opinions and experiences. Whether taking a playful, mournful, participatory, or iconoclastic stance on nostalgia, the researcher-artist has the capacity for a hugely responsible contextualising role in this never-ending process of memory-making.

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# Cameroon

Curated by  
Yves Xavier Ndounda Ndongo  
and Paul-Henri Souvenir Assako Assako

The artistic experience, being nourished by the poetry of life, gives shape to identity supports and memory capable of immersing man into a fluctuating continuity between the past, present and dream state. Art is thus a language of introspection of social dynamics, in which the experience of great sensitivity of human adventure crystallizes and become elements of memory (individual and collective). The artist being the medium and his works the tangible universe of our differences, our convergence or better still the essence of our humanity. Through the power of suggestion of works of art and the inexhaustible points of view of the interpretation, art is considered a real terrain of challenges for memory. A collective memory is apprehended from multiple perspectives of questioning, resilience, contradictions, differences, discussions, dialogues and different cultural references. All the works do not explicitly deal with memory, but they are built on the psychocultural universe of societies, which makes them true sources of memory.

Works in this exhibition takes the form of exploration interfaces of our relationships to the world, based on trajectories suggested by artistic experience. These universes as different as they are

complementary, works in which we feel transported are those who mark in though, through their forms, the gestures, actions and our relationship with time, to space, to otherness and ourselves. Our collective memory relates to our identification which marks these interconnected universes.

The challenges of building a collective and artistic memory in Cameroon are numerous. In this country of great cultural, socio-political, geographical and historical diversity, one of the problems is to, define the elements of recognition and consensual belonging. The construction of the base of this belonging calls on, the entire Cameroonian society in a process that takes into account traditional and current values, equity, balance, dialogue, inclusion, environmental issues etc.

Works presented during this exhibition are interstices of memory done by 10 young Cameroonians, who decided to explore this milieu through paintings, sculptures, installation artworks and photography.

**Paul-Henri Souvenir Assako Assako**

Cameroon  
**Yaoundé  
& Douala**  
Curators:  
Yves Xavier Ndounda Ndongo  
Paul-Henri Souvenir Assako Assako

# Josué Mimshe

*Le royaume africain, 2021*

Concept: Josué Mimshe; Modèles: BE Hope & Bong Yves; Makeup: Grace Ngako;

Hair: Sharonne Mandjoula; Fashion: Murielle Tsague; Accessoires: Stéphanie Demonako;

Set Design: Thierry Avah; Photographe: Joshua Slitter; Assistante photographe: Julie Yonke

**Josué Mimshé** is a student of graphic design and multimedia at the Libre Académie des Beaux-Arts (LABA) in Douala where he lives and works. He also holds a bachelor's degree in computer science and mathematics from the bilingual high school of Logpom. He became interested in photography at a very young age and began his initiation with the photographers of his church. Among them are Steve MVONDO, Vivian ANOGO and Consola KABANGU. At LABA, his photography teachers such as Mrs Dioné, Alain NGANN and Xavier MESSINA helped him to perfect his technique. Two of his pictures were selected by TOP POSTER magazine in the FINE ART MAY ISSUE 330 in May 2021 and he proudly represents his country Cameroon alongside Ermelding JING in the WPE AWARDS NTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY.



**This photograph was chosen as the cover photo for the American magazine Top Posters in May 2021. It shows two figures, a man and a woman. The man is standing shirtless with a bandaged belt around his face hiding one eye, a fruit and vegetable rapper around his neck, a loincloth around his back and an extension cord as a belt. He holds a shovel in his hands. The woman is dressed in white with soup spoons as a necklace and is sitting on a metal ladder.**

**This photograph opens up several perspectives for reflection. On the one hand, for the artist, it is a question of functional decontextualisation inspired by Ready Made. For him, it is a question of taking certain everyday objects and turning them into clothing and fashion accessories. On the other hand, in another register, this photograph questions the roles held by men and women in a society where women rightly aspire to the same rights as men. It also questions the involvement of men in household tasks.**



# Afran

*Mondolfière, 2021*

technique mixte (acrylique et spray) sur toile, 150 x130 cm

**This work was inspired by Greta Thunberg's protest in October 2021 that called COP26 a „Celebration of ‚business as usual‘ and blah blah blah“. The work is divided into two planes. The first presents the three parts of the world, namely the circular envelope representing the globe, the black capsule from which people are in control of the world. The third part is the set of wires that take off from the world in free fall. This coloured aerostat deals with the ecological question, which for the artist is today the greatest social, cultural, political and economic issue. The second shot shows us a desert, a symbol of decay towards which humanity is heading. Afran also denounces all the façade speeches that ‚decorate‘ the big meetings on ecology. This work is a collective invitation to consciousness that includes the whole of humanity. For the artist, talking about collective memory only makes sense if the preservation of the planet is given priority.**



**Francis Nathan Abiamba**, known as Afran, was born in 1987 in Bidjap, Cameroon. He lives and works in Italy. He graduated in ceramics at the Institut de Formation Artistique (IFA) in Mbalmayo. AFRAN is also a virtuoso in painting, sculpture and other media. He has perfected his skills with important Cameroonian and Congolese artists. In 2006, he was introduced to contemporary art by Salvatore Falci, professor of visual arts at the Academy of Carrara, Bergamo in Italy. His affection for blue jeans and the sex appeal of this fabric led him to create a series of sublime and majestic works with jeans. He reflects on modern society's superficiality and its focus on appearance. In 2022, he is one of the Cameroonian artists invited to the Venice Biennale. He exhibited at the Milan Art & Event Center and at the Milan Triennial in 2018.



# Lokol Kye

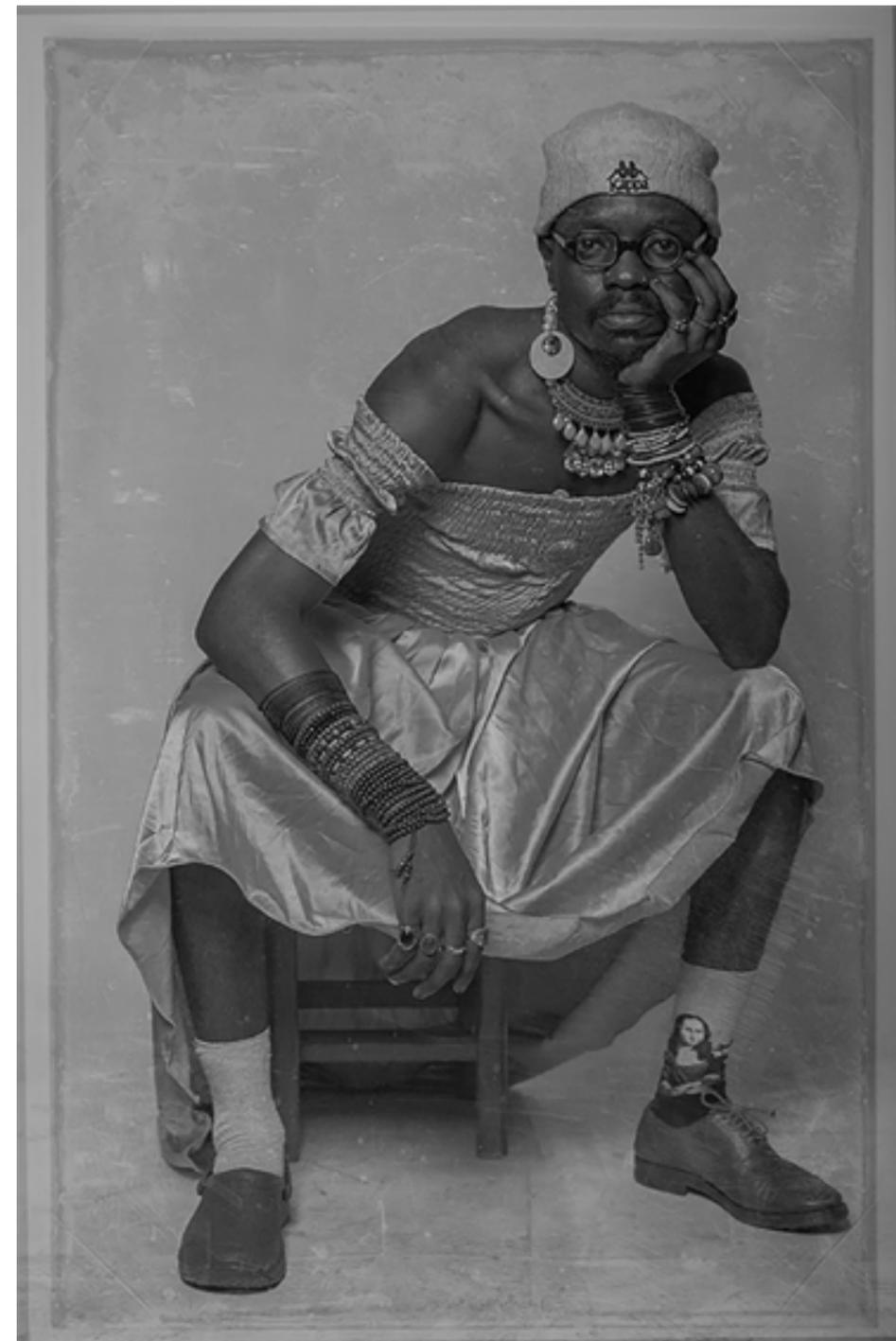
*Co-esistenze*, 2021  
tirage baryta, 65,9 x 43,9

**Co-esistenze is a series of five black and white photographs that deal with stereotypes. For this exhibition, we have chosen only one because of its connection to the highly publicised arrest of Patricia and Shakiro, two transgender Cameroonians who were convicted in May 2021 of „attempted homosexual behaviour“.**

**This photograph shows a man wearing a dress, feminine jewellery and men's shoes sitting on a stool. On his left knee his hand, on it his head. The asymmetry of the composition and the dominance of oblique lines break the apparent stability suggested by the stool. The clothing symbolises the difference from social and gender conformity. In Cameroon, in a society still dominated by heterosexuality as a norm, these issues are still taboo. This picture is ultimately about gender equality in the face of the law. It invites us to appreciate each individual in his or her singularity but also to question social norms for a good cohabitation.**



The artist **Lokol Kye**, whose real name is Léon Marcel Landry OWO-NA Kye, was born in 1995 in Yaoundé, Cameroon. He graduated in photography and audiovisual media at the Libre Académie des Beaux-Art in Douala where he lives and works. He describes himself as a „feeling photographer“ and emotions are at the heart of his artistic approach. His sources of inspiration are multiple like photographs of Henri CARTIER-BRESSON, Richard AVEDON and Malik SIDIBE. They had a strong influence on his creative process.



# Aurélie Djiena

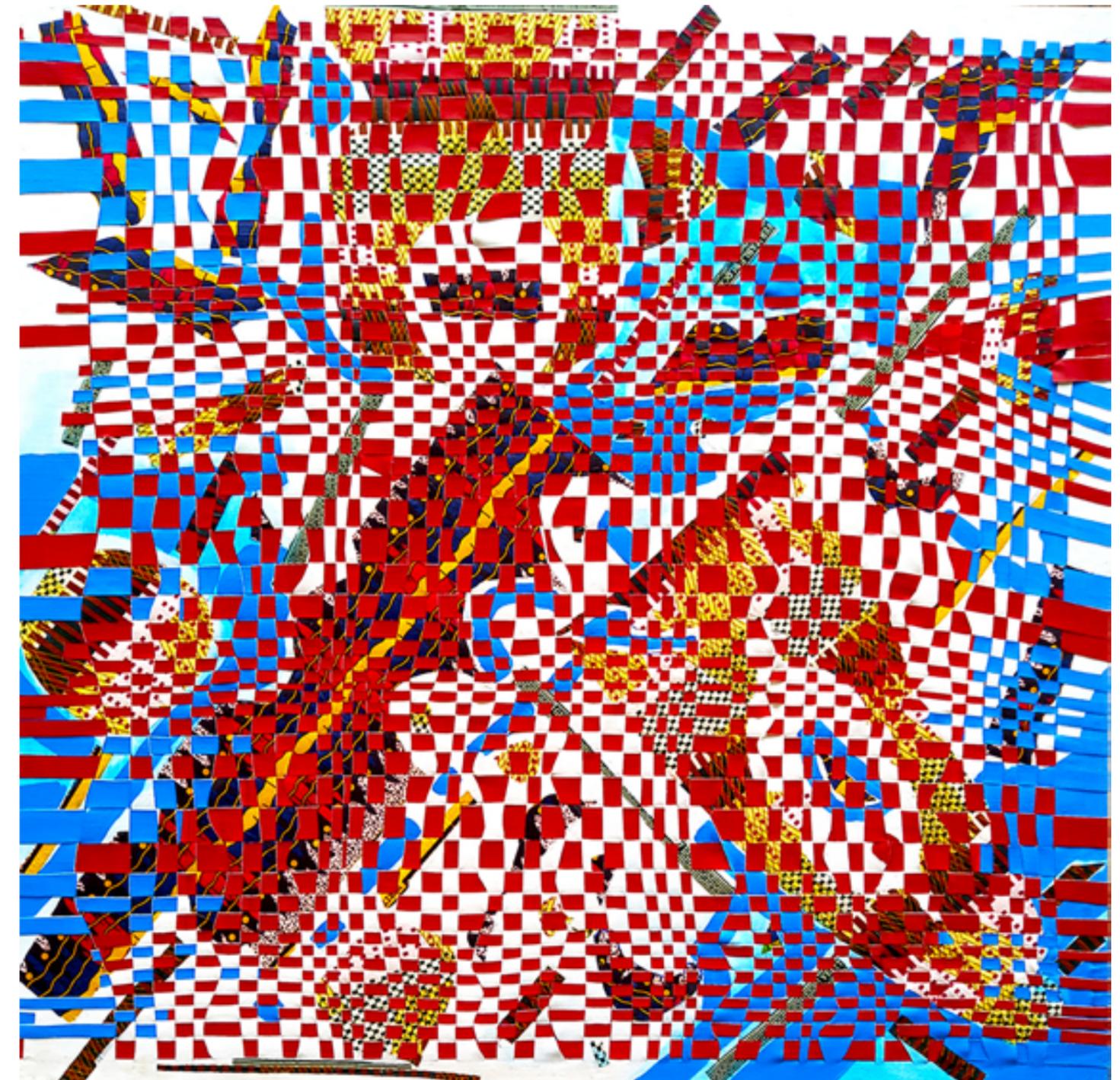
*Les retrouvailles, 2022*

tissage et acrylique sur toile, 100 × 100 cm

**This work is part of a series in which the link is at the heart of the problem. It is a work that contains several strong points. In the first analysis, it is about the link between geometric abstraction, which refers to local weaving techniques, and lyrical abstraction, to states of mind but also to emotions. The second is about the artist creating a link between the public and herself around a creative collaboration. First, she invites people to express themselves on a canvas in which she will return to intervene with her weaving technique. It is in the result of this process that the artist finds the essence of a collective memory as the fruit of a construction. It is an asset that participates in creating a narrative that offers a great perspective of vision. For the artist it is a question of writing our history through more perspectives, since history alone cannot always encompass everything.**



Born in West Cameroon in 1993, **Aurélie Djiena** lives and works in Douala. She holds a master's degree from the Institute of Fine Arts (IBA) of the University of Douala in Nkongsamba, and attended the workshops of Hervé Youmbi, Jean Jacques Kanté and Kristine Tsala. Inspired by Vasarely and Yaacov Agam, her pictorial work mixes weaving and acrylic on canvas. Her creations are characterised by the repetition of square or rectangular geometric shapes reminiscent of the checkerboard. She also uses the basketry and weaving techniques passed on to her by her parents, who are also basket makers, to create optical illusions. „Toile de vie“ is a polyptych of 10 pieces created in 2019 which won the „Prix Découverte“ of the Goethe Institute in Cameroon. She is one of the 30 artists in the „Today“ exhibition organised by the World Bank in 2019. She won a SCB Cameroon Special Woman Prize at the 4th edition of the Douala Urban Salon Festival (SUD) in 2017 with her work „Daily Symphony“.



# Charles Ongolo

*The Family, 2021*

collage de tissu Jeans et bois sur toile, Ø 80 cm

**Charles Ongolo** was born in the 90s in Yaoundé where he lives and works. Holder of a Certificate of Professional Aptitude in decoration from the Institute of Artistic Training (IFA) of Mbamayo, he builds his artistic approach around various techniques such as painting, sculpture, ceramics, collage, weaving, fashion accessories, recycling and many others. The symbolism, the softness of circular and concentric forms often cross perpendicular lines in a universe of abstraction. The contrasts of temperature in his work often reflect human complexity. In 2021, he is one of the artists selected to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Goethe Institute in Cameroon. He presented his work at Doual'Art in a collective exhibition in 2020. He exhibited at the IFA in 2018 and 2019. His space SPIRIT-ARTS has been organising numerous exhibitions since 2017.



**This work depicts stylised figures of a father, a braided mother and a child, arranged on the lower right-hand level of the surface. The child's face is made from a circular wooden tablet. Wood for him means the place where information and values of the community will be inscribed. Here, Charles Ongolo talks about the importance of the family unit in social cohesion. He is not referring to the family, which is reduced to kinship, but to the entire community. The African family in which the education of children was the daily responsibility of the whole community. For the artist, this is a reality that no longer exists today because of capitalism, which encourages a certain individualism. For him, the denim fabric has a lot of meaning in that it is one of the elements that shows that one is fashionable. It is the perpetual race to this fashion that has become commonplace. It is the tragedy of our cultures. It is this race that destroys our values and establishes feudal North-South relations. It is in this plague that the very meaning of the family is lost.**



# Dieudonné Assiga

*L'unité*, 2017

stylo sur papier, 87,6 × 61,6 cm

In 2017, a conflict is tending to divide Cameroon between the Francophone and Anglophone zones. This arose from the fact that the Anglophone part of the country, which includes the North West and South West Regions (NOSO), was neglected and marginalised in development strategies. That year, certain trades in these areas went on strike to make their demands heard. These demands led to violence and the emergence of secessionists called 'Ambazonians' who wanted self-determination for this part of Cameroon. As a result of this situation, the President of the Republic of Cameroon convened a National Dialogue in 2019 with the aim of finding solutions to this crisis. One of the recommendations is national reconciliation. It is this reconciliation that the artist has represented in this work.

It represents the ten regions of Cameroon by a group of individuals holding a white ribbon, a symbol of connection, living together and peace. These individuals wear different traditional and modern clothes to symbolise the cultural diversity of the country.



Born in Bélabo in the eastern region of Cameroon in 1986, **Dieudonné Assiga Ndono** lives and works in Mfou, not far from Yaoundé. In 2007, he attended a film training course at the CRTV's Centre de Formation Professionnelle de l'Audiovisuel (CFPA/CRTV) in Yaoundé, where he discovered the technique of shadow puppetry, which has had a major influence on his work. In addition to shadow puppetry, his work is characterised by portraits or scenes in which he excels in the use of three types of lines: the subject line which he uses for his characters, the complementary line which allows him to interpret his environment and the accessory line, inspired by the fingerprint which he uses to highlight certain particular elements. Between 2015 and 2017, he participated several times in the Salon International de l'Artisanat du Cameroun (SIAC) where he was awarded in many editions. On the occasion of the official visit of the President of the Italian Republic Sergio MATTARELLA to Cameroon in March 2016, he was one of the artists selected for the exhibition in his honour at the IFA in Mbalmayo.



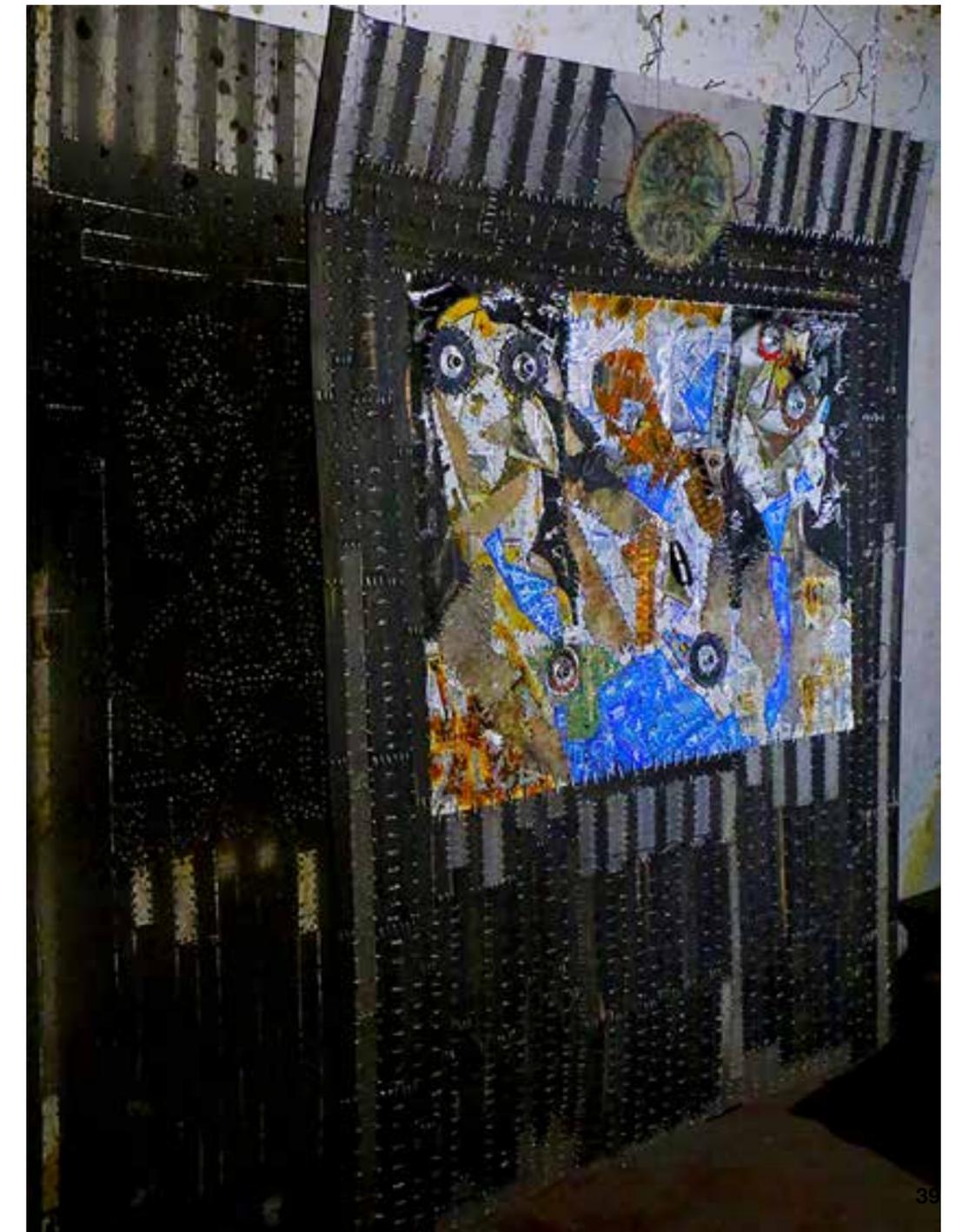
# Jean Michel Dissaké

*Miango*, 2018 - Février 2022  
assemblage (bois, aluminium, plastique, cuivre, verre), 184 x 137 cm

Born on July 19, 1983 in Yaoundé, **Jean Michel Dissaké** is originally from the Littoral region of Cameroon. He is a painter, sculptor and engraver who lives and works in Yaoundé. He is attracted by nature and says he often enters into communion with it. He finds in it a source of formal inspiration and expresses his sensitivity through the representation of abstract two-dimensional works whose forms are similar to those of plants, masks and micro-organisms. His current work uses recycled materials, vines and paint and employs several technical modalities that place his works in a sustainable development context. Today he has numerous national and international exhibitions. In 2022, he will present his work in a group exhibition at the National Museum in Yaoundé. In 2019, he exhibited at the French Institute of Cameroon in Yaoundé and at Doual'Art. Dissake has also been selected for numerous residencies in Cameroon and abroad.



**In reference to the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, Miango means news or current affairs in the Douala language. This work is an installation in two parts. The first part is a picto-sculpture about a people who have been divided by two languages, French and English. This division is at the centre of a great crisis that has troubled the country since 2017. The artist tries to remind the Cameroonian people of the deep ties that unite them in the past, present and future. This link is so strong that it transcends linguistic issues and is at the forefront of world affairs. This concerns ecology, capitalism, Covid-19, the war between Russia and Ukraine in which everyone is involved, which forces us to refocus on humanity. It is a question of rediscovering love, curing these various ills and reconnecting with the divine apparatus that is nature. Once this has been achieved, humanity will be able to leave a positive and hopeful trace for future generations. It is this trace produced by the shadow of the work on the wall and it is this trace that acts as the present collective memory.**



# William Bakaimo

*Reconnexion aux ancêtres, 2022*  
Acrylique et encre sur toile, 180 x 160 cm



**William Bakaimo** lives and works in Douala. He graduated from the University of Maroua in 2017 with a degree in Fine Arts. In 2018, he did a residency at the „In and Off Art Center“ with the artist Hako Hankson. He has participated in numerous exhibitions. Among them we can mention the one at the Claire Corcia Gallery in Paris in 2020, at Doual'Art in the same year, the one at the Contemporary Art Day of Carthage in Tunisia in 2019, at the Galerie La Cryde in France in 2018 and many others. He is represented by ‚5 Mondes Gallery‘. Today, William BAKAIMO strives to create a world where anthropomorphic and zoomorphic beings cohabit in harmony. In this universe the figure of the lizard is predominant and embodies - in a totemic way - the artist himself who tries to create a new man with each new proposal.

**In this painting, we see a lizard on branches and busts of people emerging from the ground. According to the artist, these characters symbolise the ancestors who speak to us through the elements that make up the universe: wind, fire, water, the stars and the planets. We just need to develop our senses to be able to intercept the messages told. In the past, initiates in African societies easily decoded such messages. Today, as a result of slavery, colonisation and modernity, we are cut off from this essence. This is symbolised by the soil which seems arid and desert-like, but also by the greyish tone of the skies. For the artist it is necessary to recover this knowledge, because it would take us out of what he calls the 00.08 spirit that leads us down the wrong path. It is therefore a question for the artist of questioning once again our essence, which is rooted in our relationship with nature. It is a question of recalling certain ancient practices for a better construction of modern society.**



# Grâce Dorothee Tong

*Ntu*, 2021

métal et aluminium, 300 × 200 cm

**Ntu is a sculpture in the shape of an old cast aluminium pot, inspired by the artist's many visits to adoptive families and orphanages. It is made up of 250 aluminium dishes, 50 of which were collected from orphanages in Douala. These dishes are welded together and placed on top of each other on horizontal iron bands and the whole is supported by three legs.**

**On the one hand, this sculpture represents the memory of the artist's life in the orphanages, the reinforcement of links between the borders and it reminds the importance of the aluminium dish, still called stainless steel dish in this environment. In a way, they are coats of arms that show to which social class one belongs through kitchen utensils. On the other hand, through its curved shape, the macocotte offers a cooking adapted to rudimentary stoves, as well as a mechanical resistance with excellent thermal conditions for a fast cooking. This work commemorates a know-how and the taste of certain traditional flavours that are becoming increasingly rare.**



**Tong Grace Dorothee** is an artist who lives and works in Douala. She holds a degree in fine arts and art history from the Institute of Fine Arts of Nkongssamba at the University of Douala. In her recent work, she focuses on the construction of an idea that flourishes in the multiplicity of interpersonal links. She had her first solo exhibition at the French Institute of Cameroon in 2022, and participated in the Rencontres d'Arts Visuels de Yaoundé (RAVY) in 2021. She also participated in several group exhibitions between 2019 and 2021. In 2019, she was among the artists selected for the exhibition at the National Museum in Yaoundé organised by the World Bank.



# Prod'or

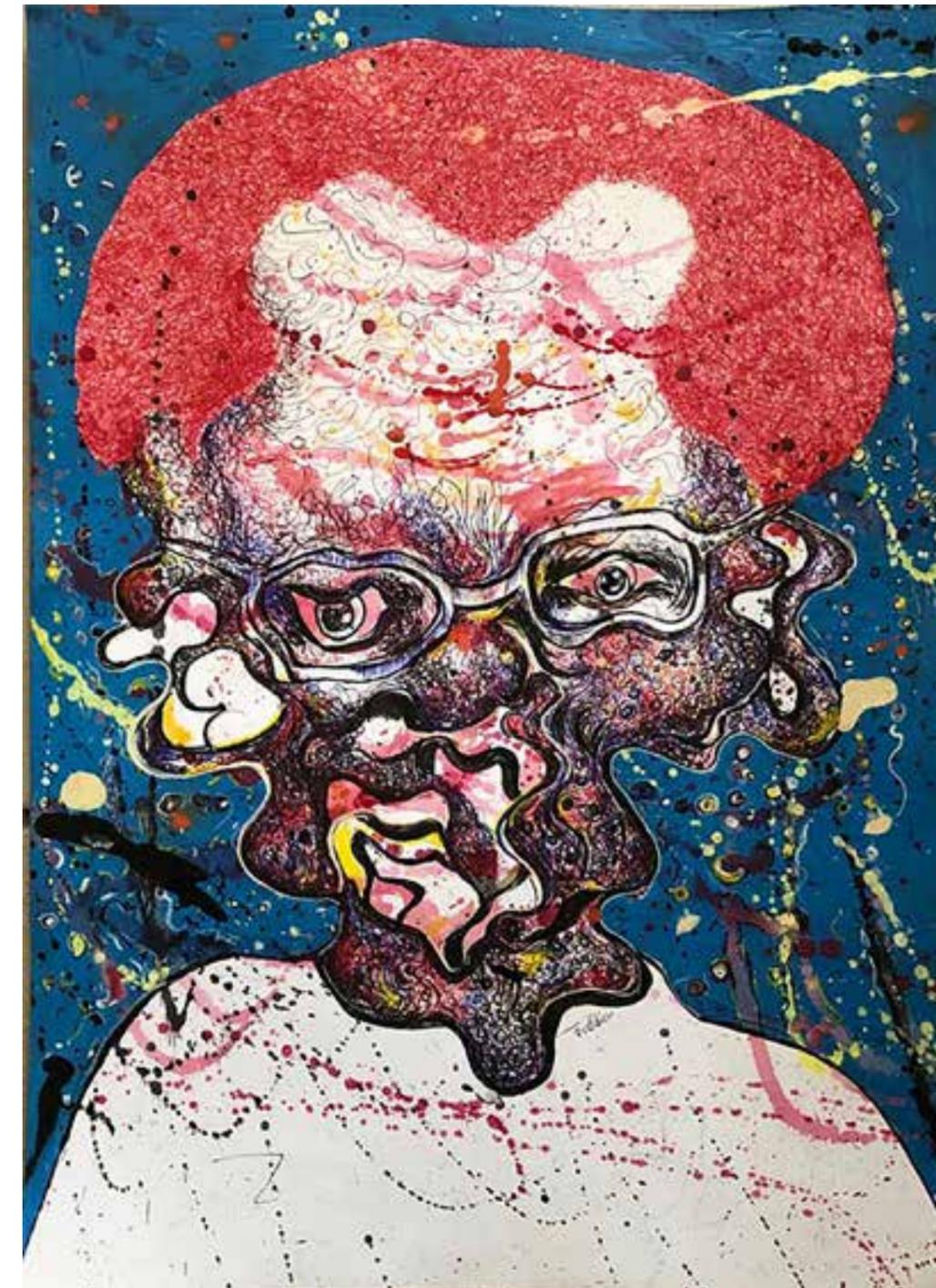
*Vide*, 2021

technique mixte (stylo et acrylique) sur papier, 42 x 27,9 cm

In this work, we see a kind of portrait with irregularly shaped facial elements that nevertheless reveal an expressive gaze. His red hair contrasts with the blue background. The glasses he wears frame his piercing gaze and he is dressed in a white suit. The effects of paint on the background and the body of this individual are like external variables that erode the elements of identity, distorting the face of his humanity. In a society where the cult of personality, accentuated by marketing, rules, the series „Voyage“, this painting is part of, deals with the issues and challenges that must be overcome in order to maintain a common identity for all humanity. Through anonymous, deformed, frightening and distressing faces, the artist confronts humanity with the degeneration of this identity which would constitute a part of its memory.



Prochore Nguenjang Tchuidjang, alias Prod'or, a painter and space decorator, was born in 1986 in Mbalmayo. He holds a Master's degree in Fine Arts and Art History from the Institute of Fine Arts of Foumban (IBAF) and is a teacher at this institute. He lives and works in Foumban. His artistic approach revolves around painting and space decoration. He has had numerous exhibitions such as the group exhibition at the French Institute of Yaoundé in 2014 or the group exhibition at the Fine Arts Institute of Foumban on the theme „From the village to the city“ in 2012. He is currently interested in social and cultural issues through the distressing and grotesque alterations of the body, especially the face.



Germany  
**Augsburg**  
Curators:  
Constanze Kirchner  
Johannes Kirschenmann  
Nicola Pauli

# Germany

Curated by Constanze Kirchner,  
Johannes Kirschenmann and Nicola Pauli

This collection of artworks combines ten contributions for the virtual Collective Memory Exhibition of art education students of Augsburg University. Thereby, each piece relates to the topic by combining form and content aspects in its own way.

The works especially raise questions of an assumed reciprocal interrelation between the personal and the collective spheres such as:

- \_ How are changes in one's own memories connected to collective memories?*
- \_ How is one's own identity shaped by the collective memories of groups such as one's family or a political party?*
- \_ Does the individual at the same time shape collective memories in the context of communicative processes?*

At the same time the artworks also reflect on the culture of commemoration and cultural discontinuities. For example, by depicting nearly forgotten crafting techniques or the fragility of the earth's ecosystem, the artists aim at counteracting collective oblivion. In doing so the collection itself becomes part of commemoration processes and might even add to the perpetuation of collective memories and identities.

These content-related perspectives are also inherent in formal aspects of the artworks such as the materials used, artistic techniques and the overall compositions. For example, the special design and material of a teapot is connected to both, the artist's individual and the collectively shared memories. This is just one example of how students developed their individual means of transporting their ideas and questions using artistic expressions. Against this background, this virtual exhibition is to find out about these individual artistic expressions.

All the shown works can initiate a dialogue and interactions to re-consider personal and collective identities.

**Nicola Pauli**

# Viktoria Dragula

*By a thread*, 2020  
textile, polyester

The novel geological age, the Anthropocene, is shaped by humankind. Climate change undoubtedly exemplifies the grave impact of the individual on its environment, manifesting in both progressive and regressive manners. Furthermore, the growing threat of climate change leaves a strong impression on the collective memory of society, thereby determining our presence and future. As a corporeal means of memories, the earth alters the human way of thinking of and acting towards the world. The textile wall piece reveals the conflict between the horror and the fascination of the appearances and impacts of human activity on earth. "By a Thread" exposes the crucial dichotomy between aesthetics and destruction.

The treatment and modification of material transfers human influence in general into material itself, transpiring from injury, destruction and manipulation. Ultimately, the aesthetic display of material is what establishes emotional access for the observer.



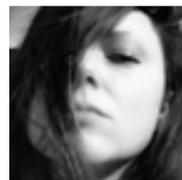
**Viktoria Dragula** is an art educator from Munich. Apart from acquiring a bachelor's degree in art education, Viktoria has recently obtained a Master of Education with emphasis on art education at Augsburg University. Her artwork is marked by process-oriented confrontation with material, such as paper and textile, and explores the relationship between the human being, the body, and environment.



# Alexandra Frotschnig

*Alternation*, 2020,  
six analog black and white photographs

**This analog black and white photo series examines processes of evanescence and change. The photographic technique of multiple exposure represents this processuality in a symbolical way. Run-down, older buildings serve as motifs. Purely by the outward appearance, hypotheses can be made, conclusions can be drawn, and yet the houses remain steadily on their sites. The subtle, perhaps invisible, changes are illustrated in this series. The depicted reality thus becomes unreal.**



**Alexandra Frotschnig**, M.Ed., was born in 1984 in Austria. Through relevant training and experience in the textile field, the artist tries to face new techniques and challenges in her current works. In her artworks she focusses on themes of change and transformation, which can be perceived symbolically as a kind of allegory. Currently she is working as an art teacher at a private secondary school..



# Mira Hörter

*The flag of my ego,*  
series of five digital photographs

**Which collective memories are part of one's memory? The artist deals with this question to better understand and get to know herself. Each group she belongs or belonged to imprints her memory. It doesn't matter if they are hedonistic party people, political critics, who question everything, or the own family. What do these shared memories look like? How would they represent themselves? The work represents an exploration of individual and collectively shared memories that constitute an ego.**



**Mira Hörter** is a photographer from Augsburg.  
She is currently studying art education at the Augsburg University.



# Judith Kukla

*Beetle*  
wood, metal

**Transcultural understanding requires both sides to engage mutually and may show the extend of the one's own ethnocentrism. An open, reflected mind and respect for other cultures are a prerequisite for de-taching one's own point of view. It is more than a mere addition of both cultures - there is a growing relationship with each other, a transformation of one's own relationship to the world.**

**This results in questioning oneself. What do I know about myself and „my“ culture? How much of myself am I and how much is this culture?**

**Judith Kukla** (born 1990) is a South German craftswoman and artist. She completed a traditional apprenticeship as a goldsmith and after several years of working as a craftswoman, she decided to expand her path by studying art education, for which she was supported with the SBB scholarship. She combines craft with fine art, as well as space with surface, and tries to fathom the complexity of interdisciplinary entanglements. During her studies, she completed a study visit to the Shandong University School of Fine Arts in Jinan, China, where she gained insight into traditional artistic techniques as well as access to various cultural intersections. Following her bachelor's degree in art education, she is currently supported by the scholarship program „Young Art and New Ways“.



# Gonca Sağlam

*Polittalk*

Wood, screen print

This work focusses on the interlocking of the artistic activity with the political positions of the artist. A main aspect is the dialogue with the stools and emancipation as (oppositional) actors. Resistant rebellion against anti-democratic, autocratic to dictatorial governments now characterize the everyday and collective understanding of political empowerment. Within the framework of a privileged, open society and an institutional context, any political statement or action is relativized with this work. The artist therefore does not use any direct, oppositional language, but tries to operate against a traditional system of norms with subversive strategies in an ironic and even cynical manner. The installation „Polittalk“ does not want to evaluate political slogans, but aims at showing the touching topicality of criticism, political attitudes, aesthetic perception and personal elaboration.



**Gonca Sağlam** uses a wide variety of means to react to current world events in their diverse dimensions. She uses art as a tool to intervene, to position herself critically and to critically address current tendencies in socio-political issues. Themes in which she has been operating for some time are feminism and migration movements, postcolonialism and gender relations. She currently works and lives in Berlin.



# Regine Schurig

*Arts and craft, 2020*  
gold toned salt print on cotton paper

The series, which comprises a total of ten motifs, shows traditional handcraft skills that have managed to survive into the present day in a society that is otherwise so highly mechanized and automated. The photographs subtly explore the question of what the special aesthetic of handcrafted products is by tracing the aesthetics of the underlying craft process. Gold toned, the salt prints become archival and thus part of a cultural-historical memory.



**Regine Schurig** has been studying art education (BA) at Augsburg University since 2017. She has focused on print graphics, ceramics and alternative photographic processes. Since 2019, she has been working in organic agriculture, which influences her artistic works by topics such as traditional cultural techniques and ecological contexts.



# Dalia Parisi Stix

*Metamorphosis*

wood, concrete, steel

**When people's memories change, their collective identity changes. The installation symbolizes development, adaptation and change during life. The sections that can be passed through embody the change. As in everyday life, this process, the passing through stages of life, changes and thresholds, often happens passively or unconsciously – detached from the foundation to a new beginning.**



Dalia Parisi Stix's art is characterized by the fusion of multi-layered perspectives, humanistic-feminine core elements and the themes of identity, homeland, gender, veiling and body images. In works such as „Metamorphosis“, Dalia processes self-experienced alienation and addresses re-search and change through growth.

[www.daliaparisistix.com](http://www.daliaparisistix.com);  
[www.instagram.com/p.s.dalia/](https://www.instagram.com/p.s.dalia/)



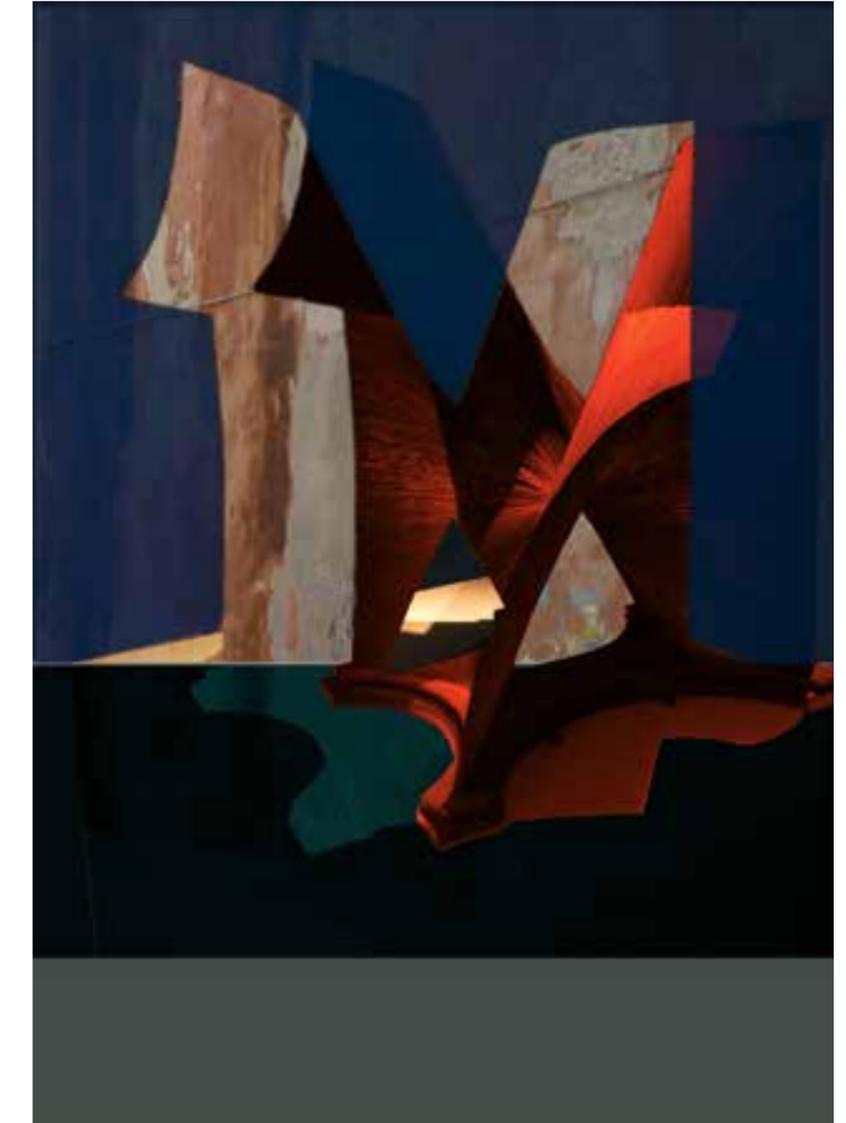
# Chava Uszkurat

Venice collages, 2020  
digital collages

The digital collages are the result of an excursion to the Venice Biennial in 2019. They represent an artistic handling and a creative examination of impressions gained during this trip. The composition of various photographic elements from different contexts of the trip produces a new entity that visualizes completely different contexts. Therefore, the collages can be understood as an artistic way of dealing with the sensory overload of the many impressions while viewing art and a creatively designed travelogue that "recycles" the flood of photos into something new.



**Chava Uszkurat** graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Art Education from the University of Augsburg in 2021. She works primarily graphically, analogue and digital. The fusion of images from different contexts and realities of life into a new, artistic reality is the core of many of her works.



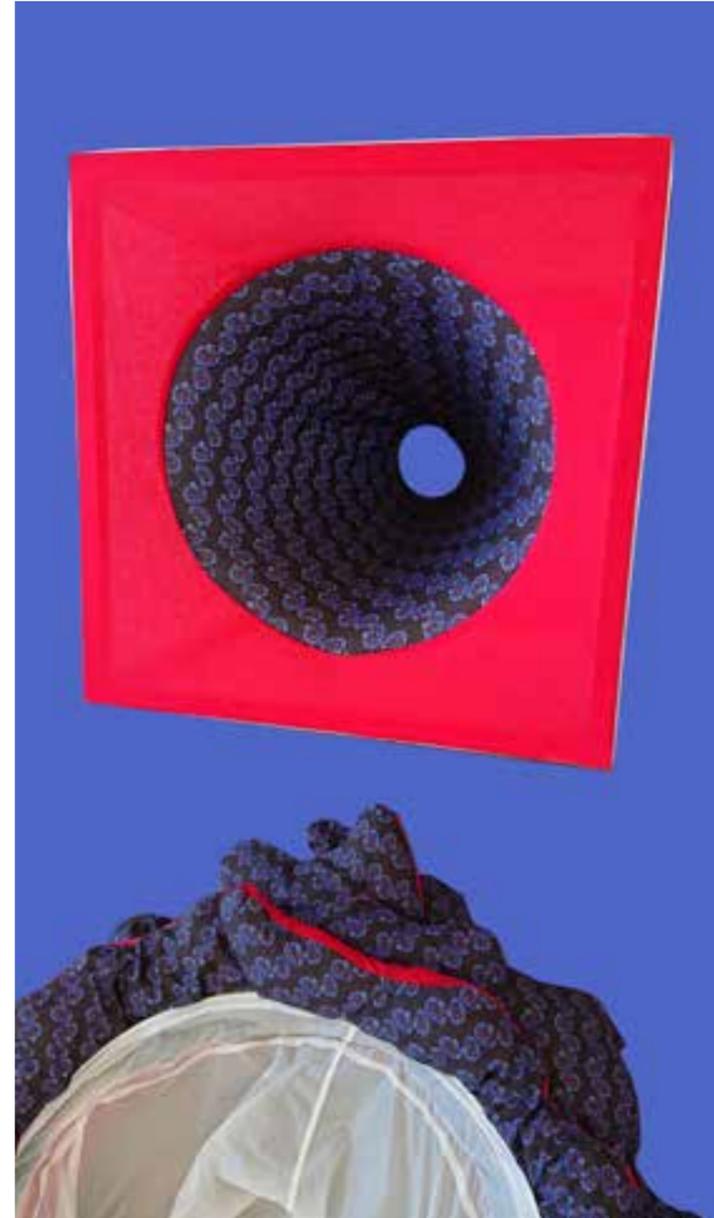
# Teresa Erol

*Untitled, 2020*  
mixed media

In the artist's opinion every memory is distinctly individual. If social and biographical contexts are similar, memories can become collective. In her works, she often explores and uses the special haptic qualities of textile materials. The malleability of fabric becomes a symbol of the malleability of social processes. Narrowness and expansiveness. Transparency, opening and concealment, enclosure. Masculinity and femininity. These are artistic themes and fields of tension she is curious about.



Already in her school days **Teresa Erol** noticed her great passion for art. In the small town where she grew up, the possibilities for a professional training in the arts were limited. She wanted to know more about art, but above all wanted to become active herself. Therefore, she decided to study art education at Augsburg University. During her studies, she specialized in textile art and especially in large-scale works in space. Working with textiles has an emotional value for her that makes her remember her childhood. The themes of feminism and femininity are appealing to her and always flow back into her work.



# Mina Ton

*Salamander, 2020*  
pottery

The inspiration and idea to create a teapot came from a trip to Vietnam, where the artist's roots lie. The country has an ancient tea culture that endures to this day. Tea is affordable, served at all times of the day and on a lot of occasions. A vibrant cultural memory is conditioned by active participation in the festivals, customs and meals. The intention of crafting a teapot is less based in its later use, but rather in its function as a symbol for a cultural practice. The teapot is inspired by the colors of the landscapes but also by Vietnamese architecture, for example the tapered roofs of pagodas.



**Mina Ton** is the child of a Vietnamese couple which came to Germany in the 1980s because of work. She was born in Memmingen in 1997 and grew up between the German and Vietnamese cultures. She is now studying primary school education with a major in art education at Augsburg University and is expected to graduate in 2022. Her ceramic works have a functional focus.



# Ghana

Curated by Ebenezer Acquah  
and Osuanyi Quaicoo Essel

The cultural landscape in Ghana reveals a host of ethnic groups and languages spoken and in different dialects, thus emphasizing the diverse sub-cultural groups in Ghana. The people currently living in Ghana consist of many indigenous ethnic groups, including Europeans, Americans, Asians, and some Australians.

However, since independence, contemporary stratification has focused on education, wealth, and royalty. Education and wealth have resulted in significant social mobility and cultural capital since independence and, as a result of globalization, many Ghanaians have the opportunity to receive education outside Ghana and transact business with the international community.

Also, since the latter part of the 20th Century, there has been a significant change in women's role

in the Ghanaian society. For example, the establishment of a federation of women lawyers; formal education, and democratic governance in Ghana has made it possible for women to assume high political positions in government and in the legal, educational, and health sectors. Women provided support for the family budget and work in offices though some also work in the informal sector of the economy.

Visual culture also plays significant role in education in Ghana and the essence of arts education cannot be downplayed. For instance, visual art helps individuals to form their own environment and experiences and apply aesthetic ideas to their own situation. In Ghana, the cultural policy advocates for significant opportunities for students to experience the Visual arts and use them to create expressions that make life worth living. It also

emphasizes equipping pre-service teachers with the required knowledge in and about the arts to be able to deliver the expected goals in schools. Therefore, the visual art educator needs to acquire relevant training that will prepare them adequately to teach/guide students.

There are several methods, approaches and techniques in the teaching of art education in Ghanaian schools. However, the techniques employed in the teaching and learning of art education depends on the content of the course, resources and situation under which the teaching is being done. A few of the works of art education and graphic design students from the University of Education, Winneba – Ghana have been presented in a virtual exhibition in this website.

**Ebenezer Acquah**

**Ghana**  
**Winneba**  
Curators:  
**Ebenezer Acquah,**  
**Osuanyi Quaicoo Essel**

# Daniel Adofo

*Shackles of a Free Man*

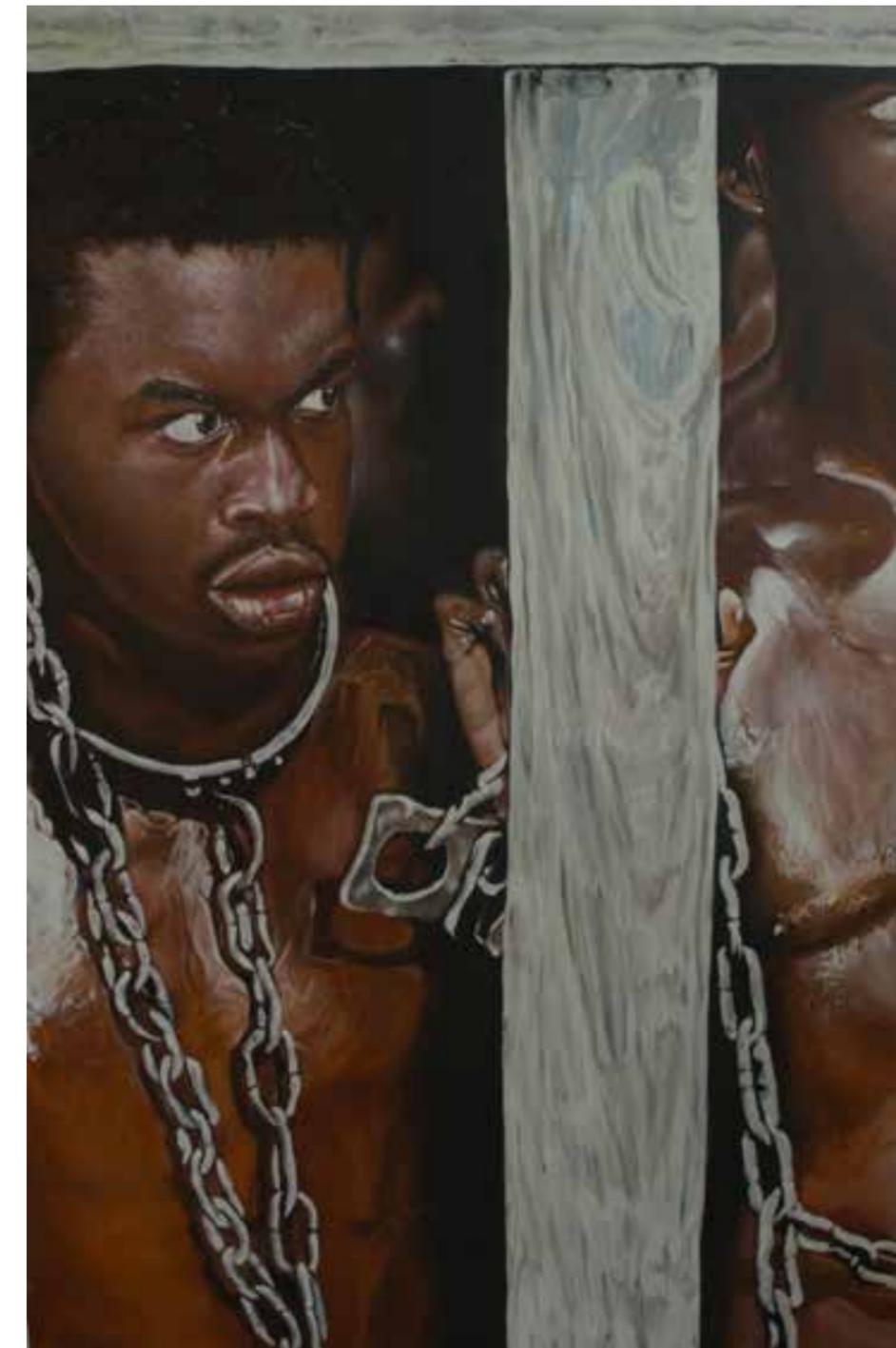
For the sake of colonialization, “GOLD COASTERS“ (Ghanaians) were transported like packed sardines in a can to a white-washed land to toil for another man’s success. We are still living in its effects, where so-called leaders of Africa cannot uphold their own country’s independence but the battle for aids and loans.

Oh, African, be conscious of the behemoth from within and flee from being a puppet to foreign powers. My work tries to merge poem with painting, the past that colonized me and the present me demanding freedom from my painting. My paintings slave me but battle with brush and painting on canvas liberates me to be an artist, not a slave.

Education, Winneba.



**Daniel Adofo** is my name. Born on November 11th 1999, I am a native of Abetifi Kwahu in the Eastern part of Ghana. I am the twin son of Mrs Janet Asuamah and Mr Peter Ofosu. I had my basic education in Abetifi District Assembly Basic School and Senior High level at Abetifi Presbyterian Senior High. I am an Art Education student at the University of Education, Winneba.



# Mortagah Eric Tettey

left: *I have it*  
right: *Let's share*



**I am Eric Tettey Mortagah.** Born on the 28th of July, 2001 to Mr. Samuel Mortagah and Mrs. Theresa Mortagah. I hail from Agortime Afegame in the Volta Region of Ghana. I had my lower primary education in Accra and upper primary education to senior high school in Winneba. Currently in level 100, I am pursuing painting and sculpture at the University of Education, Winneba.

What faces do we idolize to the extent of identifying ourselves with? Are these what we want and seek to be associated with? Faces of conquests and imaginations? What relationship does these have with our cultural and social development? Exhibited in acrylic on canvas, exploration of techniques have led to a rendered representation of portraits of varied sizes. These paintings are in manifestation of my strife to look beyond the scenes of individualistic „colour“.

“Let’s share” is the title of my first work which depicts three boys gathered around a blue lollipop. It sheds light on the selflessness and brotherhood of the Ghanaian, that is, the African. Painted in a fuzzy feel, the complete identity of the brothers are shrouded in mystery. In a traditional Ghanaian setting, the oldest in a group is to take charge sharing a given item. The earthly background is muted and distanced away from the boys. The composition generally creates an atmosphere where man lives in harmony with nature and its surroundings.

“I have it” is based on the Aboakyir (animal capture) festival celebrated by the Effutu people of Winneba in the Central Region of Ghana. The animal is seen as calm as it has lost majority of its energy in the chase by the hunters. There is that tension where the animal feels it’s doomed but has no way out because it is to be presented to the chiefs and people alive. The capturer appears worn out but he is comforted with his prized victory. The man’s bare chest shows the need for rejuvenating fresh air over his muddy and sweaty body in the obviously sunny weather. The firm grip of the animal’s legs over the shoulder of its capturer shows dominance in the victory won. The lower abdomen is slightly elongated to show his strength and agility. Representing the ups and downs of life is the shorts of the man with stiff and steep folds. The wavy scattered pattern of the grasses tends to signal a goodbye wave from its natural habitat to the unknown. “With proper planning, we can indeed conquer all our fears”.



# Justice Baidoo

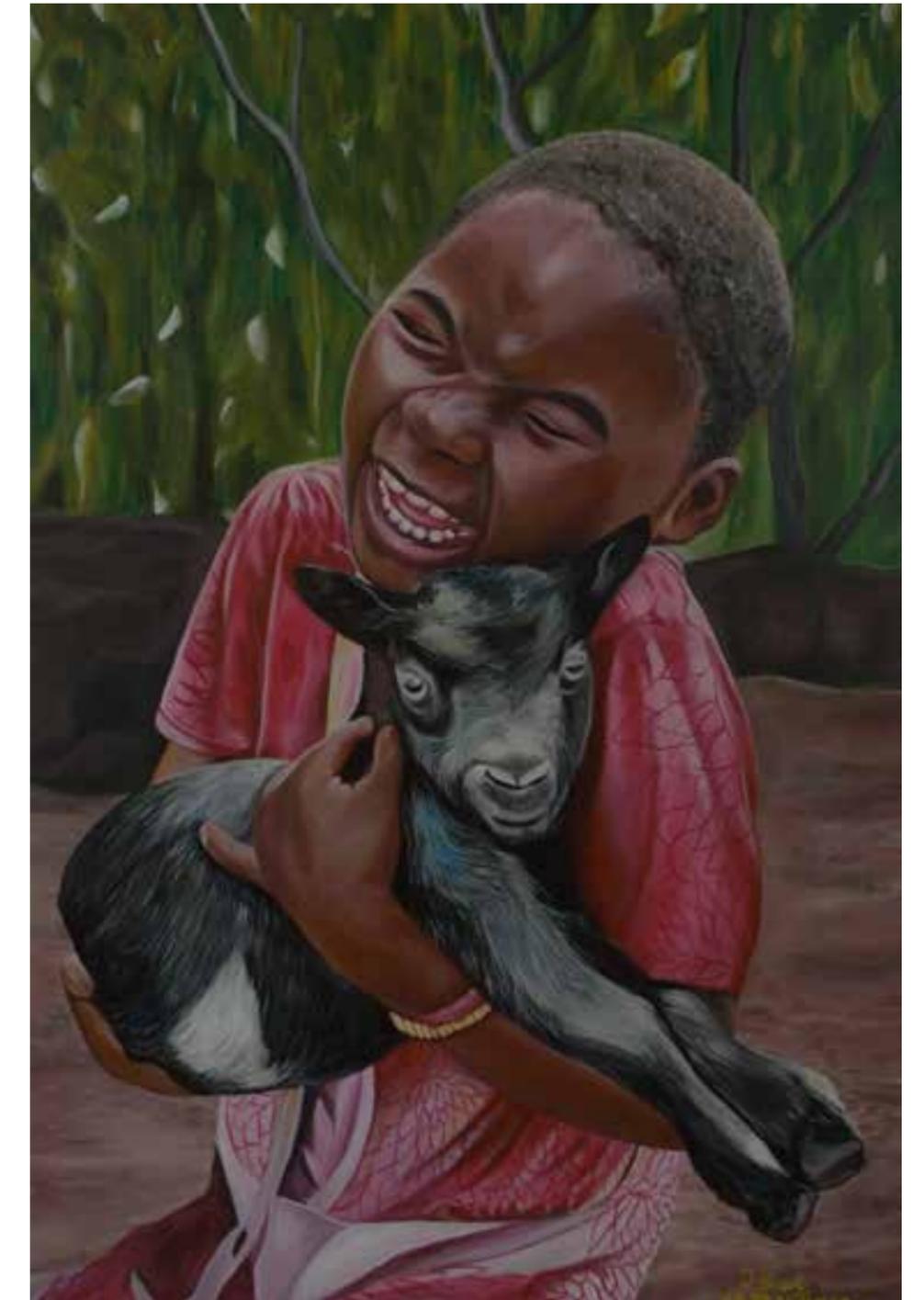
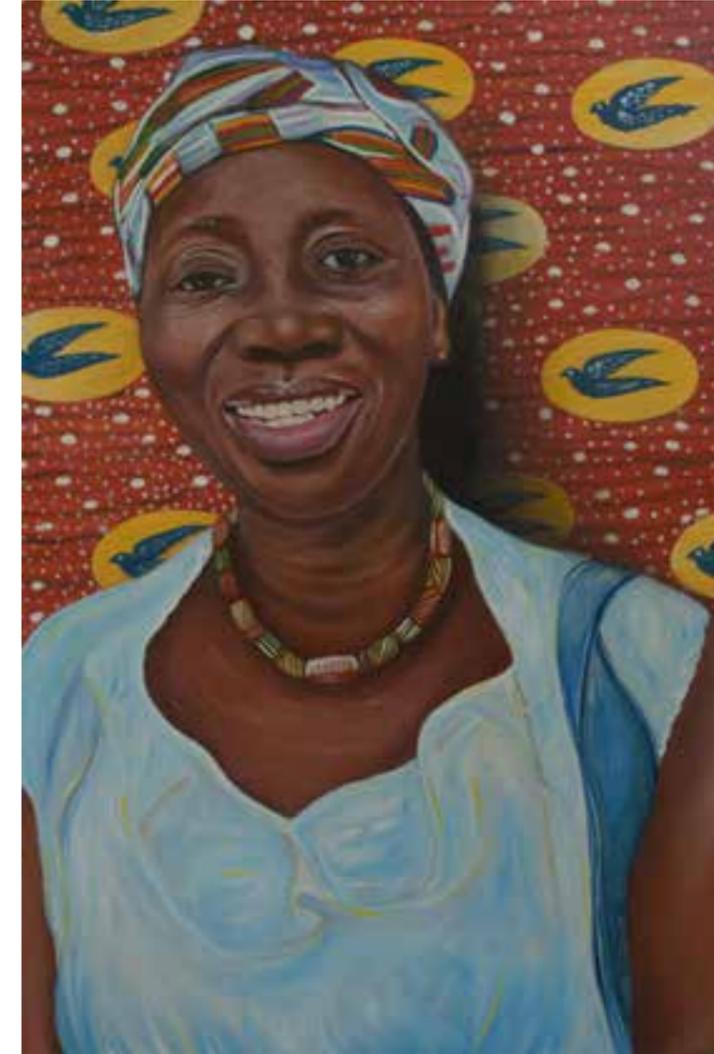
right: *Dimensions to Life*

left: *Mama's Africa*

Heritage is something that is handed down from the past as a tradition. Therefore “Maintaining one’s culture, values and traditions are beyond price”, said Getano Lui, jnr. So, in my work, I portrayed an African woman who has braided herself with jewelry with an old and ordinary African cloth as the background. This cloth depicts our parents’ old fabrics and how they still look beautiful and had a good marriage and life. Also, my other work shows the love that existed between man and domestic animals. In my work, the tools and materials I used were canvas and acrylic paint.



My name is **Justice Baidoo**. I was born on 9th May, 1995. I'm a Ghanaian based in Takoradi in the Western Region. I have been doing art since childhood and worked as full-time artist for 7 years now. I'm an oil, acrylic and pencil artist as well. I am studying painting and leather works in University of Education, Winneba.



# Ishmael Boadi

right: *Fattened in Greed*  
left: *Lacking in Abundance*

As artist, my works speak not only for me but other people suffering from hunger in other part of the world. A quote from Professor Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba inspired me more to elaborate on my theme HUNGER. I quote: “The reason why Africans are suffering is because those who have the knowledge don’t have the Power and those who have the power don’t have the idea to implement it and so Africans are suffering.” I can see it and I tried to elaborate on it so we will know how hunger is affecting us. I followed my dream and created works on canvases in Polychrome and monochrome. My works are to emphasize the effects of hunger on children in Africa. Hunger leads to mental, emotional and physical development delays and disorders and it is a cause of high infant mortality rate in Africa. Hungry children are more prone to illnesses and infections.

The first painting is a monochromatic painting of the size 4x3 feet. It depicts a child holding a bowl of small food with hungry face. On the second painting, a child is sitting on the floor holding a calabash with roasted plantains in it. And the last painting is a self-portrait in Polychrome. It shows how I am looking forward for a better Africa.



**Boadi Ishmael** is my name. I am 28 years of age and a citizen of Ghana. I was born and raised in Kumasi – Ashanti region. I am a student offering Art Education at the University Of Education, Winneba and willing to solve problems with my art works.



# Gbedebu Cynthia Delali

left: *Transitions in Tradition*  
center: *Nature is Tradition*  
right: *Colours of Tradition*

**Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes and our ancestors. It is the democracy of the living and the dead. Therefore, to reignite the fire of our tradition, I decided to do all my paintings to portray the beauty of our tradition. My paintings were both in landscape and portrait and the technique used for my paintings was impasto.**



I'm **Gbedebu Cynthia Delali**. Thirty-two years of age, and comes from Logba Tota in the Volta Region but live in Obuasi. I'm a student in the University of Education, Winneba offering my first degree in Art Education. The courses I am offering are Picture Making and Sculpture. I am a trained teacher. I love singing.



# Emmanuel Asamoah Dapaah

*Love visual culture*

Photography and digital painting

This illustration depicts, in part, the history of Ghana. The hair twists on the lady's head is an African braid, commonly worn in Ghana. The artwork also features an African cloth worn by the lady, which Ghanaians call *Akyekyede Akyi* which means 'a tortoise shell or carapace'. The robustness and gracefulness of Ghanaian culture cannot be downplayed. Also, the artwork features African geometric symbols as the background, a popular visual culture among the Sirigu women artists in Ghana. The hand-symbol done by the lady, if looked closely, is a love symbol showing the shape of a heart. This signifies the love she has for history. This is a remembrance of how people use to dress, paint their faces and more.

Memory is the faculty by which the mind stores and remembers information. This artwork illustrates a silhouette or an outline of a person's head and a series of historical images of visual culture that are composed in the head. The collective memory in this artwork comprises of local games people play in Ghana, the proclamation of Ghana's independence, local dance, great leaders Ghana had and two popular monuments that project the history of Ghana. The central part of the composition is the portrait of Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah.

Moreover, the watery or smoky effect that runs from the silhouette head to the skies simply blurred scenario with past events. The colour scheme in the artwork is red that blends into yellow which in turn blends into green - on the left part of the background of the silhouette image. These are Ghanaian colours. In the composition, the head is illustrated replacing a black star as compared to the colour in the Ghana flag. The blend of rich colours from the left side of the artwork to a dull gray colour with a feel of watery fade, smoke or ashes talks much about the artwork - transitions in life.



Emmanuel Asamoah Dapaah is a third year Graphic Design student specializing in Multimedia at the University of Education, Winneba - Ghana



# Emmanuel Boakye Yeboah

*Childhood Memories*

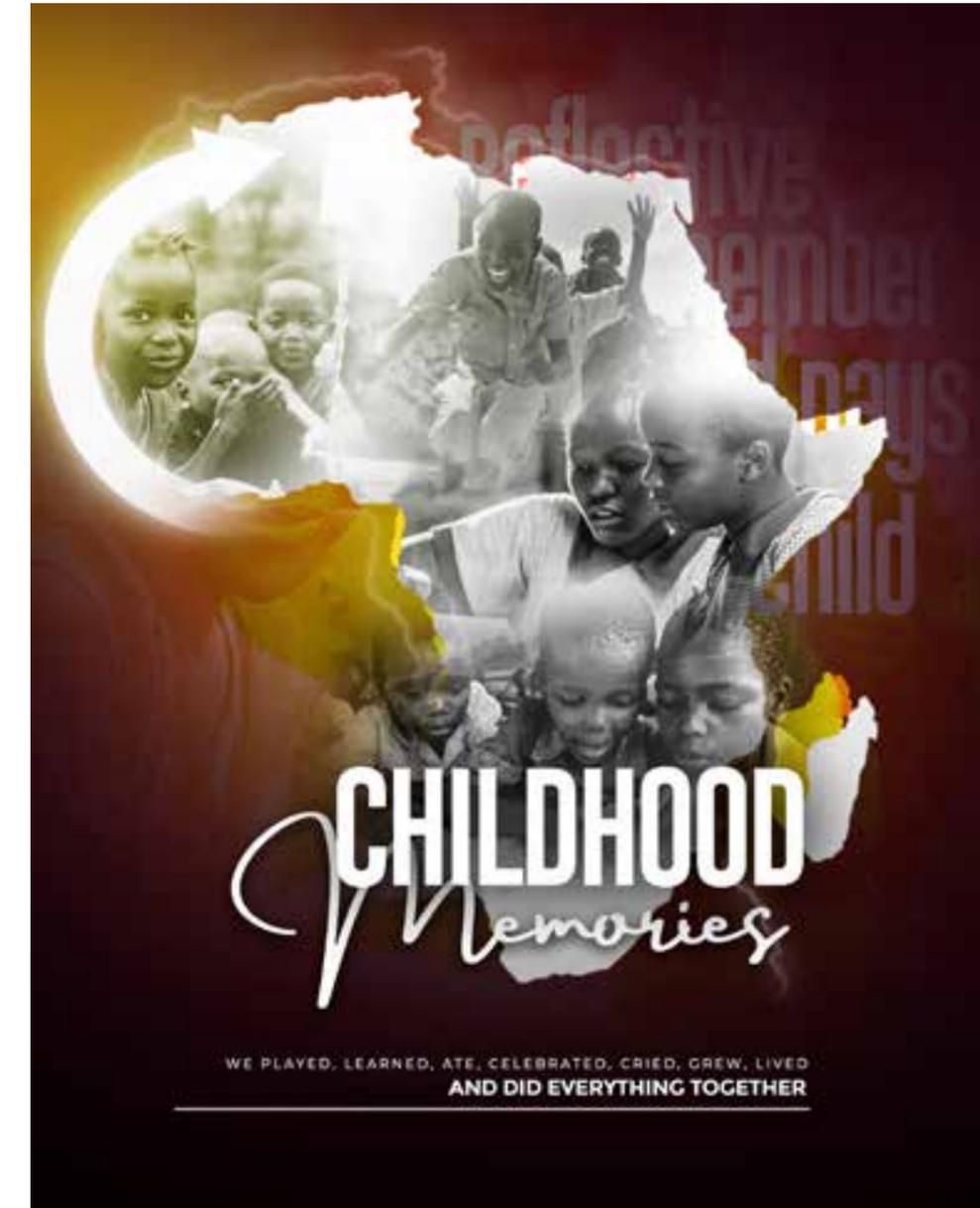
2000px/2500px, digital – Adobe Photoshop

The work focuses on visual elements such as a large map of Africa, images of African Children, glowing round arrow and texts. The choice of colour scheme involved a range of colours from yellow to red-orange to gray and black, that may be a reminiscent of Africa.

With an inspiration from African origin the project is linked to Childhood Memories, hence the use of images of African kids engaging in different various activities; from learning, playing, eating, and fun time. These images I creatively gave them a Black and White touch and blended them uniformly, and kept within the borders of the large African map that gives form and solidity to the entire work. The circular glowing arrow was placed strategically at the top left end of the African map to symbolize growth process and reflecting on old memories.



Emmanuel Boakye Yeboah is a third year Graphic Design student specializing in Multimedia at the University of Education, Winneba – Ghana.



# Dum Emmanuel Tettey

*Our Women Our Culture*

2000px/2500px, Digital – Adobe Photoshop

People play distinct roles in society and in Ghana women are no exception. In this write-up the artist seeks to project a past experience that seem to be waning among the people of Ghana. The concept was based on a time in the past when ladies/women walked to the stream at dawn or during sunset to fetch water with a clay pot for domestic use. The ladies dressing at that time portrayed Ghanaian clothing identity. With the development of technology and contact with European traders, there has been changes in clothing and other aspects of visual culture among women.

Walking to the streams in those days was part of an exercise since the ladies/women had to walk distances to the stream to start the day's activities. For some of them, it tended to be fun, walking to the stream since they meet friends on the way and chat, gossip, tease each other just to have fun.



**Dum Emmanuel Tettey** is a third year Graphic Design student specializing in Multimedia at the University of Education, Winneba – Ghana.



# Dansoa Beatia

center: *Glorious Beauty*  
left: *In the Name of the African Dream*  
right: *Never Back Down*

Through the eyes of an African, lies culture, beauty, courage, anger, love and power. As an African child who has a love for all, so does an African lady have the courage to stand before anything seen. This makes Africa a beautiful one. The power of an African to hold on to anything they have, makes Africa powerful. The way birds move around each other in the skies with love, is seen in African societies. Africans have a love for each other. Beauty lies in the eyes of an African. This inspires me to work on African beauty. In my work, I portray African beauty, African kids and the courage of an African. I used canvas as my medium and acrylic paints in portraying my works.



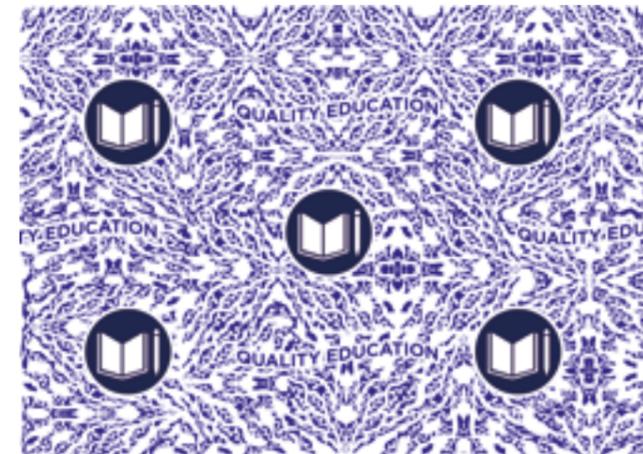
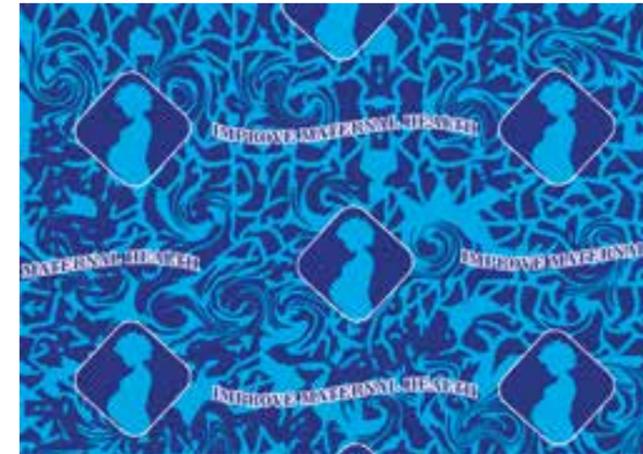
I go by the name **Dansoa Beatia**. I'm 21 years of age. I started to draw at the age of 6 with just lines and shapes to create images. I was caught with so much passion at the age of 12, my images looked quite interesting though but it was so unfortunate I couldn't get my preferred course [Visual Art] when I was enrolled in senior high school.

# Draphor Peter Kwame

top: *Maternal*, bottom: *Education*, opposite page: *Sustainability*

## Healing and Restoring the World

The world is retrogressing in diverse ways making life a living hell for the innocents. We have the power to turn the table around but we keep procrastinating. Issues such as poor maternal health care, the global educational system and the poor ways of handling our environment is nothing to write home about. We have what it takes to curb the situation but we are not trying enough. These fabrics are designed to revive, restore and awake us once again. It is also to crave the indulgence of the world that, we need to heal the world to become a better place for our generation and the generation to be born. In relation to healing the world, my first fabric is about, improving on Maternal Health Care. Maternal Health Care because it is the key to saving the lives of millions of women who die as a result of complications during child birth each year. Pregnant women must be free from heavy workloads combined with poor diets. My second fabrics suggest that, to heal the world there is a need to achieve a universal primary education. This inspiration is traced from the second goal in the United Nation Sustainable Development Goal. This is to ensure that boys and girls complete a full course of primary education which is vital to meeting all other millennium goals. Finally, my last design is about the need for Ensuring Environmental Sustainability. To have good communities, we need clean air, natural resources and a nontoxic environment. Sustainability improves the quality of our lives, protects our ecosystem and preserve natural resources for future generations. The greedy nature of human today is a threat to the environment and we must put a stop to it. With these we can heal and restore the world to become a better place for us and the generation to come.



My name is **Draphor Peter Kwame**, a level 200 students in the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) reading B.A Art Education. Textiles is my 2D and Jewelry is my 3D course. I am a Ghanaian from Blekusu, a small village located in the Ketu South Municipal Assembly of the Volta Region.



# Samuel Asamoah

top: *Quality Education*

bottom: *Partnership*

opposite page: *Ensuring Environment Sustainability*

**My first fabric design is about partnership or oneness. Racism and political bigotry is setting the world ablaze for innocent soul. Good people are trying their best to curb the situation but their effort has not been enough. My fabric design is therefore serving as a reminder that it is through unity that we can revive the world.**

## Quality Education

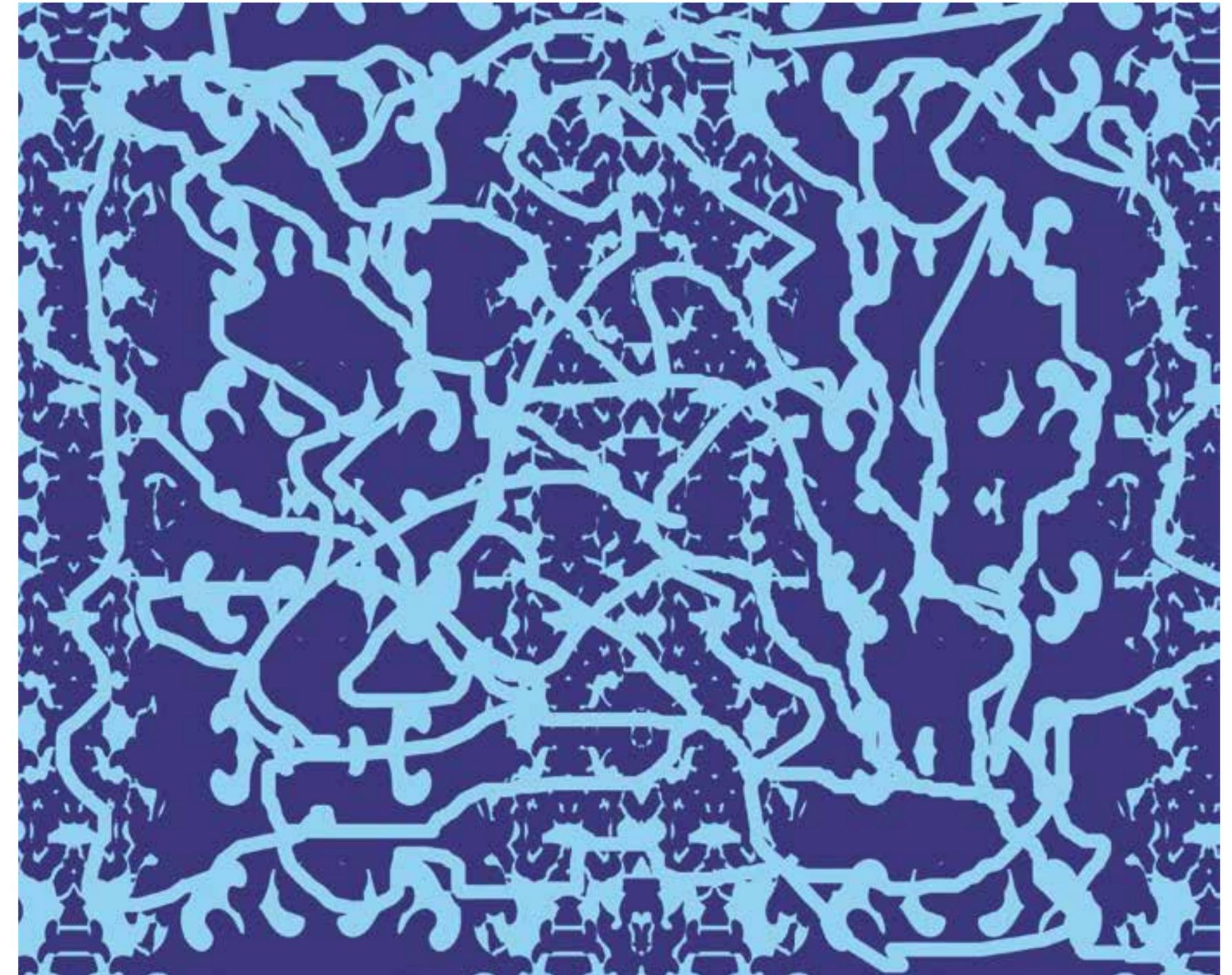
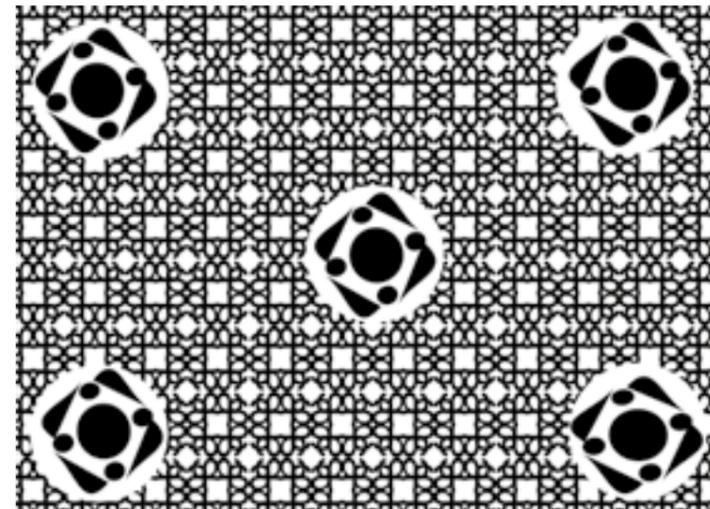
The second fabric which speaks about quality education focuses on children - the social, emotional, mental, physical and cognitive development of each person regardless of gender which help to enable people to develop all of their attributes and skills to achieve their potential as productive human beings. My fabric design signifies the knowledge and skills to be impact into the world for the purpose of quality education.

## Ensuring Environment Sustainability

Ensuring environmental sustainability is the concept of my third fabric design. It is the responsibility of all to conserve natural resources and protect global ecosystem to support health and wellbeing living organisms. Polluted land, air and water will severely affect our quality of life and the ability of the world. My fabric design is portraying environmental sustainability, fundamental to the survival of our water bodies.



I am **Asamoah Samuel**, a 200 student of University of Education, Winneba (UEW), reading B.A Art Education in the Department of Art Education. Ceramics is my 3D and Textiles as my 2D. I am Ghanaian from Akosombo located in the Eastern Region of Ghana.



# Adzato Miriam Mawunyo

*Storytelling, 2021*  
Digital image (Adobe Photoshop)

Storytelling is a favorite pastime in most Ghanaian families and communities. More than amusement, it is a highly developed art form that provides a traditional way to sow and share principles, ideas, opinions or concrete information about society. For centuries, proud forebears have handed down history, customs, beliefs and a code of social and moral conducts to their lineage through storytelling.

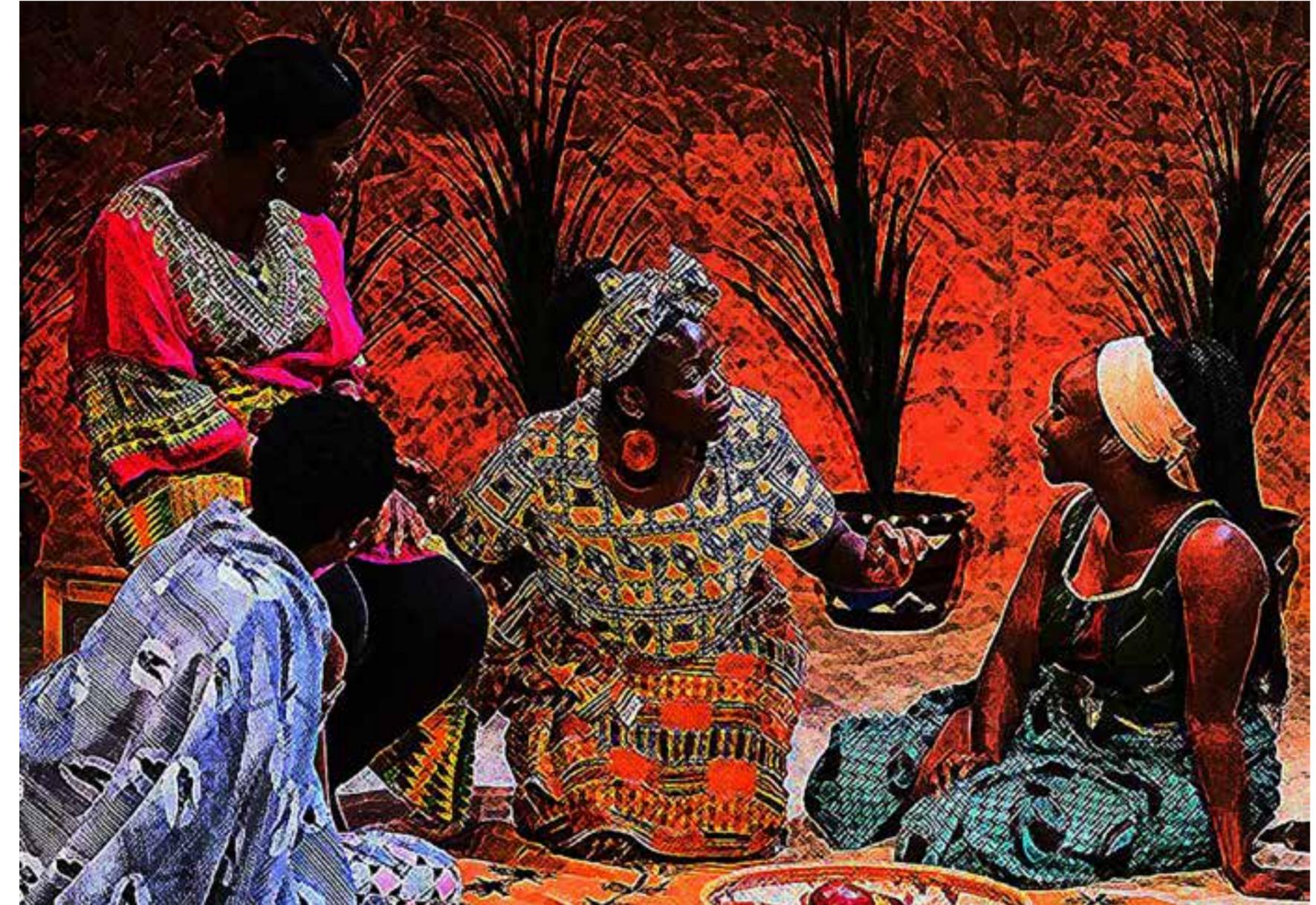
Knowledge is imparted through stories that may be historical, religious, and factual. They teach Ghanaian values like hospitality, honour, respect, communality, sacredness, gratitude, and morality.

The art work comprises of four young females adorned in African wears, trying to educate themselves by telling stories to each other at their usual hung out. The art work is displayed in a two-dimensional form. The background is made up of young palm trees that show that the atmosphere create was cool (though reds may be seen) and the time was (evening) conducive for storytelling.

The artwork can serve the purpose of interior design and exterior design. It is to communicate and educate people that story telling was and is one of the best means to learn about culture and values and the oldest form to teach and learn.



Adzato Miriam Mawunyo is a third year Graphic Design student specializing at the University of Education, Winneba - Ghana.



# Nyameba Prince Anim

top: *Yaa Asantewaa*

bottom left: *Quarshie Cocoa II*

bottom right: *Quarshie Cocoa I*



I am **Nyameba Prince Anim**, a second year Art Education student of the University of Education, Winneba. I hail from Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. I study textiles really love designing fabrics inspired by Ghana's historical past.

## The Ghanaian Hero/Heroine

There are a lot of personalities who really contributed to the development of the nation but I chose Tetteh Quarshie and Obaapanin Yaa Asantewaa. A hero / heroine is a person or main character who in the face of danger, combats adversity through feats of ingenuity, courage or strength. Heroes / heroines cause change and willing to risk their own life to save others. In Ghanaian history, Tetteh Quarshie and Yaa Asantewaa exhibited a true hero/heroine character. Historically, the war Yaa Asantewaa was involved, started 1900s. The Sarganti war in 1874 had led to the defeat and collapse of the Asante kingdom. From that time, the British started controlling the Asantes. The Asante kingdom, though defeated, did not like the way British were treating them. The Asante were therefore waiting for the right time to engage the British in another war. The Asante army was led by a woman called Yaa Asantewaa who was the queen mother of Ejisu. This war lasted a month.

## Tetteh Quarshie Cocoa I

Also, in 1879, Tetteh Quarshie planted the seeds of cocoa he has brought from Fernando Po at Mampong in the Ashanti Region with some success. Friends and relatives also undertook the planting of cocoa when pods were distributed to them. Soon, other farmers followed suit. Tetteh Quarshie, Ghanaian agriculturalist known for introducing cocoa crop to Ghana, was born in the year of 1842 and died 25 December, 1892., Cocoa constitutes one of the major export crops of the Gha-

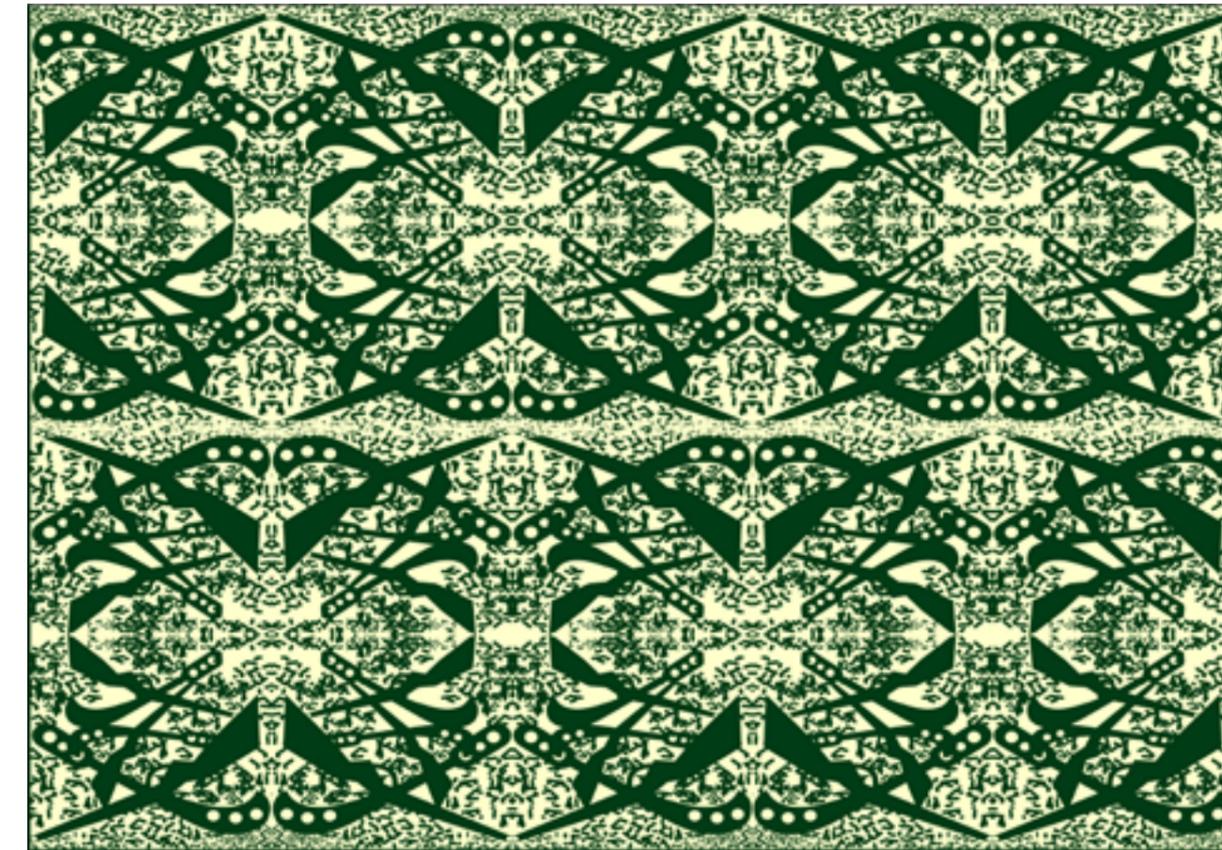
naian economy. According to history, Quarshie travelled to the island of Fernando Po (now Bioko in Equatorial Guinea) in 1876 and brought some cocoa seeds to Ghana. Choosing Tetteh Quarshie and Yaa Asantewaa is important to me because of their heroic deeds which is still remembered. These personalities genuinely dedicated themselves to help the nation. As a textile student, I artistically designed fabrics to commemorate and reawake the heroic deeds of these personalities. Moreover, these designs will be used to celebrate and honour them.

## Tetteh Quarshie Cocoa II

My designs reveal the use of representational object of these two personalities. I used cocoa as a symbolic reference to Tetteh Quarshie who brought cocoa to Ghana. The cocoa fruits and its leaves run through all over the work as the motifs and patterns (Tetteh Quarshie Cocoa I & Tetteh Quarshie Cocoa II). With the use of colour, brown was used as the symbolism of nature, how cocoa crop is durable and 'selling' Ghana to other countries. Gun and sword were used to create a representational portrait of Yaa Asantewaa, a strong and courageous woman who stood up and fought for the peace and freedom of Ghana. Gun and sword were strong weapon used to fight in eighteenth centuries. In addition, green colour was used as a symbol of life of the people, harmony and abundance, and love for the people (Yaa Asantewa Design I). With Coral Draw software and laptop as my tool, I was able to produce these textile designs.

## Teenage Pregnancy

My project also explores textile design of teenage pregnancy has resulted in increase of high young mothers in my society. The idea that came into my mind was that teenage pregnancy has become common in my society and this influenced me to make designs that will help to create awareness and minimize teenage pregnancy in the Ghanaian society. The design shows an abstract depiction of a child inside the womb of a mother, and this motif has patterned itself all over the composition. In addition, blue colour was used as the symbolism of purity. Also, yellow motif was created to symbolize patience and reputation. If our young children will stay in chastity until they find themselves husbands, it will reduce the prevalence of street children and its attendant effect of armed robbery.



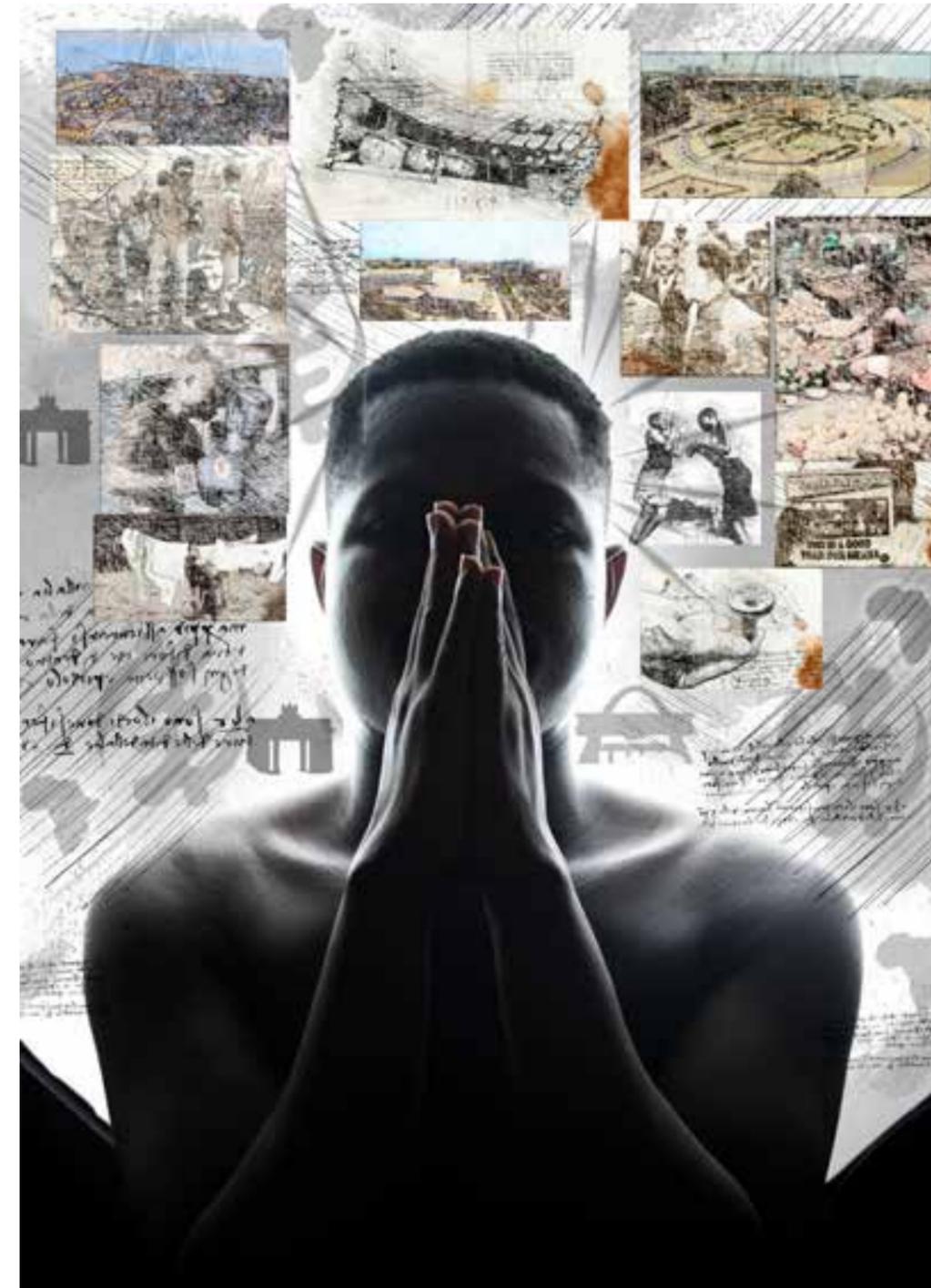
# Samuel Obiri

*The Mind, Library and Culture*

I titled my work the library and culture because in my work I tried to bring some memories I could reflect into my design: a collection of events, place, moment and some national architecture elements. In the picture produced the images used were converted to give a touch old time to the design depicting old memories and the focal image which is the picture in the middle shows a person. It expresses how spiritual people could be or are, and I can't go down the line of memories without bringing the independence of my country. Somewhere in the design I placed the image of Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah and some memories displayed regarding political events, children at play, market, boxing, music, mothers' love and community.



**Samuel Obiri** is a Graphic Design student majoring in Multimedia at the University of Education, Winneba in Ghana. As an artist, I am essentially interested in creating works that call for the participation of the audience to the same extent as my involvement in it.



# Kenya

Curated by Jane Otieno, Winnie Oyuko,  
Roy Kisielo and Mary Clare Kidenda

Kenya is a diverse country full of vibrant cultures from forty-three different tribes. It is known for its rich tradition of arts and crafts, record-breaking world athletes, its rich biodiversity, and great safari destinations. The works of art reflect religious beliefs and cultural values; fundamentally functional, utilitarian purposes and aesthetics. Our cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes groups or societies inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Our diverse, enduring, creative and cultural heritage includes tangible culture, intangible culture, and natural heritage and designs in many forms, as seen in our exhibition. In Kenya, art is a reflection and expression of political and social changes now underway worldwide. Visual art in Kenya has allowed for a high level of creativity and resourcefulness and continues to flourish. Kenyan art is used to reflect and express political and social changes.

The work from Kenya is from two universities The Technical University of Kenya, Department of Design and Creative Media and Kenyatta University, Department of Fine Art and Design. The exhibition reveals the importance of some of Kenya's most beautiful art and culture.

Traditionally, the most crucial aspect of a Kenyan piece of art has been its function: connecting to a higher spiritual world, commemorating a political or social event, crafting, embellishing and enhancing a utilitarian object. Music and dance help express religious feelings and make complex tasks more manageable. They also play an essential role in community activities.

The exhibition integrates aesthetics and human interaction with technology. It captures diverse students work from Fine Art, Communication Design, Product Design, Interactive Media Design and Interior Design. It shows how creative engineered activities provide an experience for end-users to live, learn, work and play. Design is becoming more electric. Design increasingly reflects the cultural diversity. The exhibition captures local scenes in Kenya through various medias ranging from animations, Video Games Characters; to drawings, paintings; weaving and mosaic. As seen in the exhibition, design increasingly reflects cultural diversity and how a new generation of designers is emerging. The students are defining their approaches to intervene in gaps and to influence their peers.

Mary Clare Kidenda

## Kenya Nairobi

Curators  
Jane Otieno, Winnie Oyuko,  
Roy Kisielo and Mary Clare  
Kidenda

# Patrick Esenerwa

*Money is the writing*, 2021, mosaic (HDPE & PP), 4 x 4ft  
*Makanjo* 2021, froissage - mixed media, 4ft by 3ft



Patrick Esenerwa is a fine artist consultant, trainer, a youthful entrepreneur who owns and runs a registered Art business Wukenii Creations which is in its tenth year of operations that designs and produces functional ceramic artworks, jewelry, paintings, printing and offers graphic services. Self driven as well as a team player, I have been instrumental in the Department of Art and Design Maseno University and Kenyatta University in guiding and transforming Fine Art students into professional artists. Using my professional qualifications as a Fine artist, complemented with a high level of computer literacy, together with outstanding interpersonal skills, a niche in Fine Art knowledge is being created.



## Money is the writing

The Kenyan currency has some beautiful art, colour, & texture. Coloured plastic was able to capture the details of one of the currency series, a 500 Ksh (Kenyan shilling) note. Kenyan currency series which have some beautiful art, colour and texture, though it's illegal to create an artwork out of the legal tenders without authorization. This was done for academic purposes. Coloured plastic was able to capture the details of one Ksh 500 note. The artist was inspired by a figurative and social change theme. The use of mixed media and mosaic was applied to achieve the final piece.

## Makanjo

You could be shopping in the streets then all over a sudden the vendors take off in fear of the council security enforcers. Composition depicts a scene in the city streets with hawkers running. The artwork uses a broad range of dark/highlights as well contrasting and complimentary colours capturing the moment. The researcher had an imagination of integration of foreign culture into Kenya's shopping culture thus depicted in the composition. The mood and expression of the collage seems to be a hasty and confusing state.



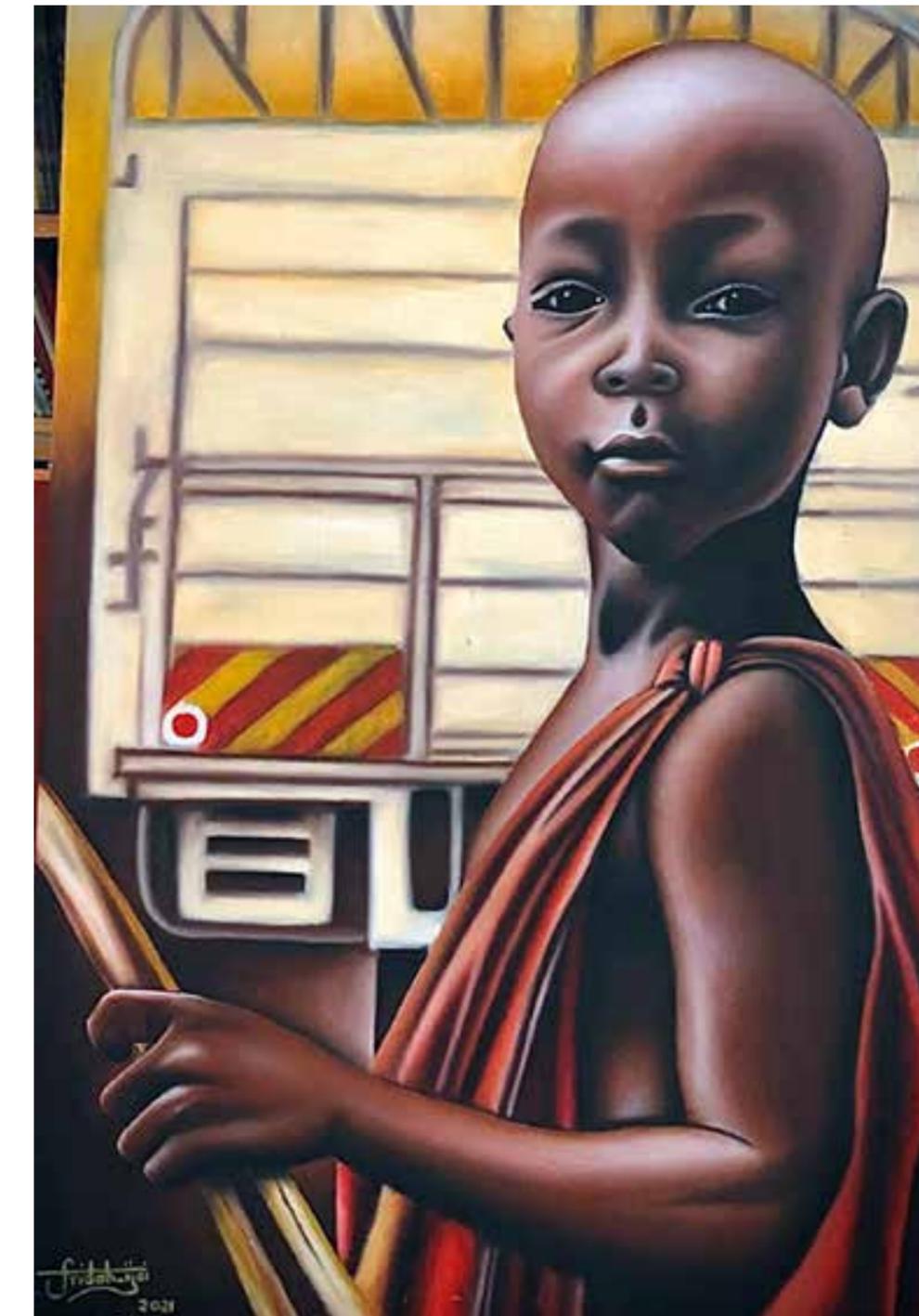
# Fridah Ijai

right: *I'M THE FUTURE - Maasai boy*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 75 by 45cm

left: *I'M THE FUTURE - The African Child*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 75 by 45cm

**Part of a series that seeks to show that the African child is the future of Africa. Therefore they should be valued, taken care of, attended to, educated since they hold a major role in the African society. The first piece is a Maasai boy in his immediate environment, holding a stick probably looking after cattle.**

**Fridah Ijai** is a Kenyan realist painter, weaver and an interior designer. Born and raised in Kakamega county and currently lives in Nairobi, Kenya. She is one of the most promising creative artists of her generation. She gained her interest in art way back in primary school and since then she has never looked back, and that allowed her to create her own powerful style, that became her identity and provided her with an outlet for a social narrative to many stories told and untold from various parts of the world. Currently she is pursuing her Bachelor's degree in Fine Art at Kenyatta University. She has created works in public spaces countrywide, and has managed to work with big companies such as Jesuits Conference of Africa and Madagascar (JCAM) among others. She is inspired by nature and the activities around her natural environment. Her work aims to improve the living standards of ordinary people and make them feel comfortable and cozy in their immediate environment. Her main aim is to take Art in Kenya to a whole new level and enable people especially Kenyans to appreciate Art and be an icon to the coming generation



# Anne Mwiti

right: *My Scream*, 2017 Mixed Media, 100x100cm

left: *Finding My Silence*, 2017 Mixed Media, 100x100cm

The modern woman finds herself in a space of self-doubt as she does the balancing act with life's "Adulthood" challenges. Whether she is a young adult or a mother, the troubles seem never to end. It is at such a moment that she needs, "TO SCREAM" at the world and let go the pressure. The heart of a woman is forever in search of self-identity. She is a daughter, a mother, a sister, a giver, a provider and in all these titles she must FIND HER SILENCE to know her true self.



Anne Mwiti is an established artist from Africa, Kenya and a lecturer at the Department of Fine Art and Design, KU. She won the World Citizen Artists award in 2014 with her artwork titled, "A STITCH IN TIME" and has exhibited her art locally and internationally.



## Alex Kinyanjui

*Affection*, 2021  
Oil on Canvas, 55 by 70 cm

I personally believe that the human body is the purest form of art. I love portraits as well because they're full of emotion even with a blank face you can read so much, especially in their eyes. I also enjoy working on artworks that entail nature. African art is beautiful!

I have lovingly worked into this piece, adding color, light and shadow using my brushes. This artwork is special to me because it was whilst painting this piece that I understand my reason to be here. The realization came that I'm here to give color to the world. I wanted to create a big bright colorful painting full of happiness and vibrant energy.

This painting comprises of a mother and her child. A mother's reassuring love to her child.



# Ango Makau

right: *Tukiendanga*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 50 x 70 cm

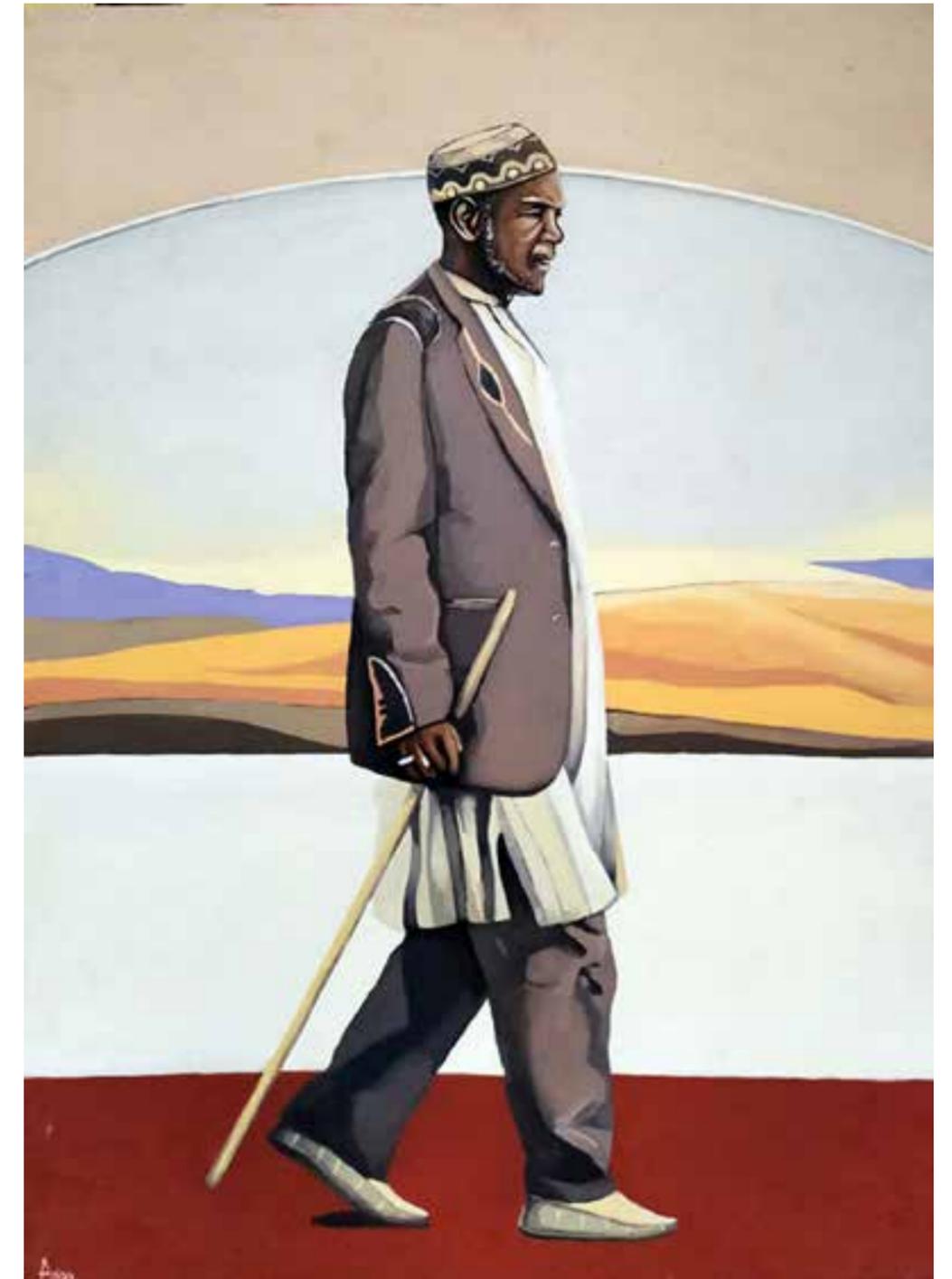
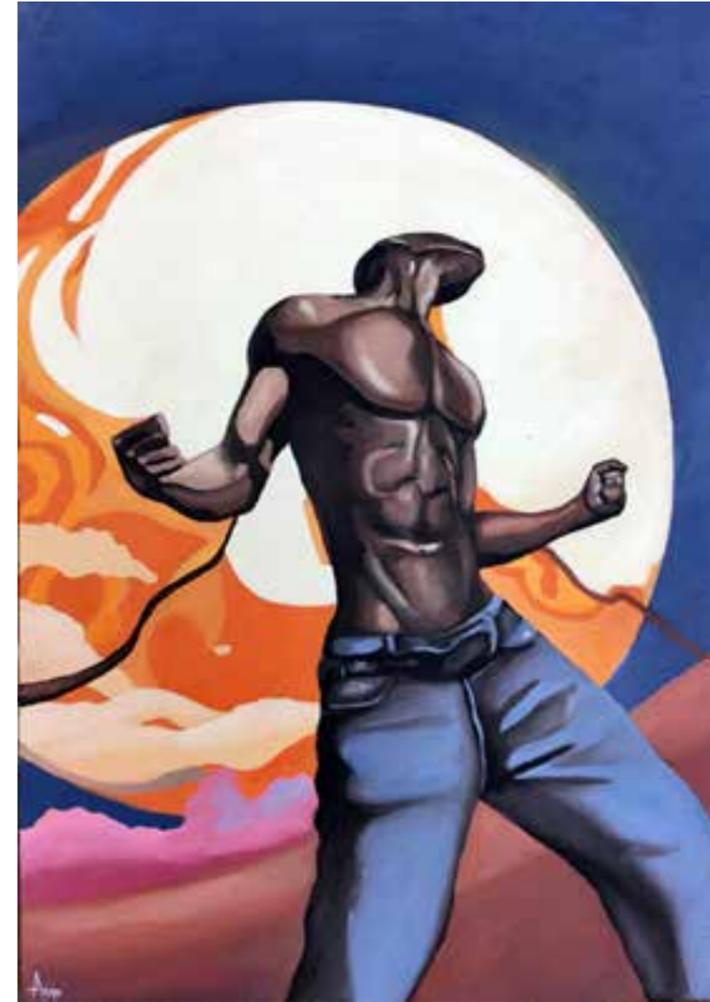
left: *Uhuru*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 50 x 70 cm



**Makau Joseph Musungu**, famously known as 'Ango', is a contemporary artist from Kenya. He focuses on the poetic and surreal nature of art, aiming to depict the different experiences of life through a fusion of color, symbolism, surrealism and texture. Ango's artworks are influenced by African masks, people, love, hate, deceit, landscapes, humor and human expressions.

'Tukiendanga' is a Swahili slang word that translates to 'As we go'. This painting is about an old man from the coastal Kenyan community taking a morning walk. As he strolls around his home area he feels like he's entered into another world. It's like the sweet sound of the sea flowing through your ears, water flowing through your legs and the wind blowing past you in a gentle motion. Something so surreal like oblivion. They say that in the morning a man walks with his whole body; in the evening, only with his legs. Well, that must be true because there is an awkward yet emotionally and physically satisfying factor in it. There is beauty in landscapes that captures your body, soul and mind. The dress code of the people in Mombasa and the people's attitude towards you is just pure harmony. Day to Day people take walks around their locality so as to feel connected to the society. It is agreeable that we should love the life we live and live the life we love.

Uhuru is a Swahili word which means freedom. Freedom is a choice and it should be used by everyone to express themselves. Freedom of expression covers freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and gives individuals and communities the right to articulate their opinions without fear of retaliation, censorship or punishment. As days go by, the society has started accepting things that were previously considered as taboos and this has led to the diversification of the community. In today's world various people and organisations are dedicating time, energy and skill to finding out what's going on around us because the society is more dynamic than it was before therefore freedom to information is able to bring important issues out into the public arena thus forming shared values and influencing policies at local, national and international levels. For us to be able to voice out our differences we should be able to speak out our minds so as to be heard and seen. There are some other people that are here, and things that are here which are unseen. But you first have to set yourself free and believe in what you cannot see, believe that there is something more out there.



# Lilian Atieno Oloo

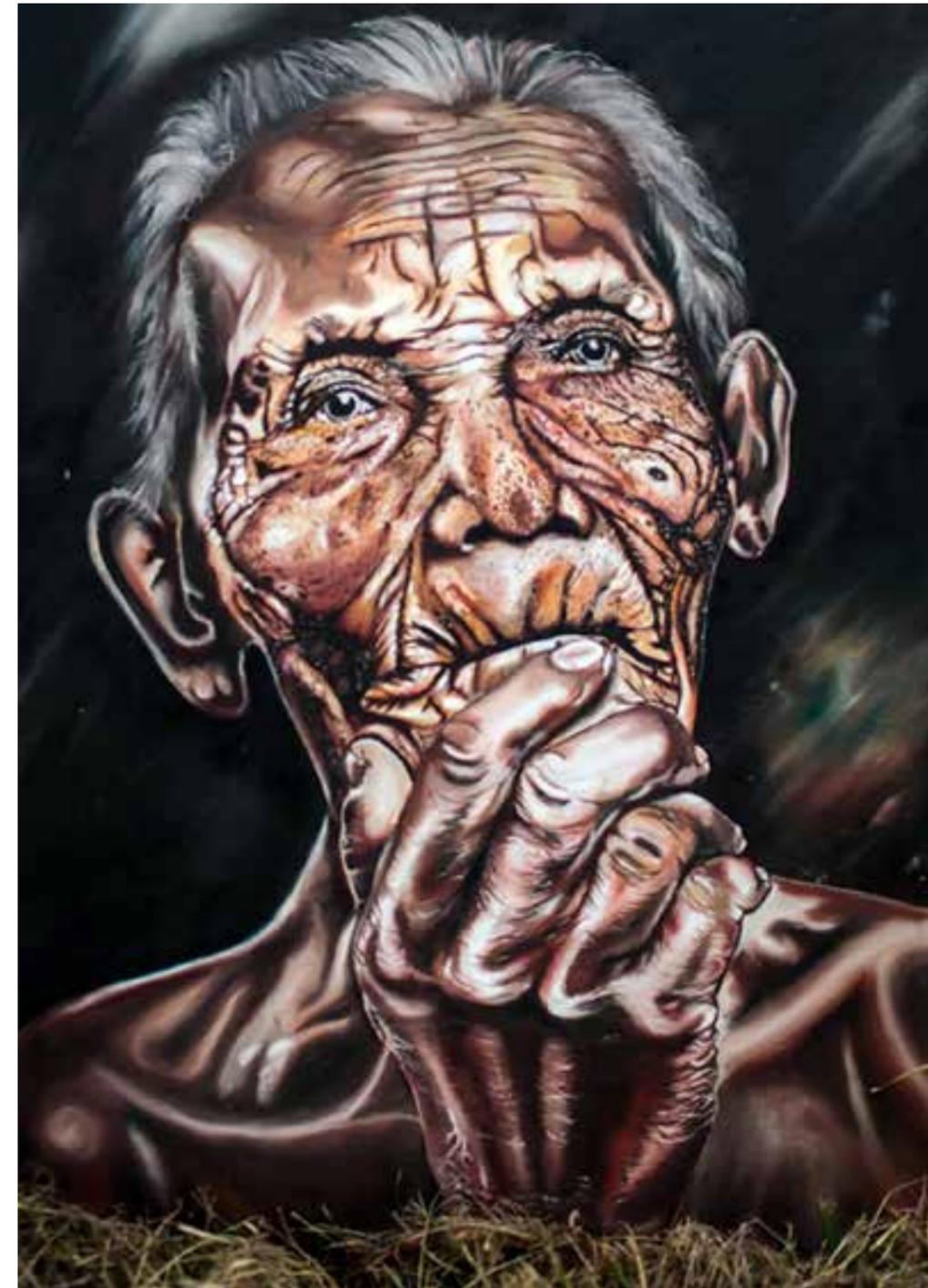
*Like It or Not, 2021*

Oil on Canvas, 60 x 80 cm

**It is blessed and gracious of THE LORD for one to live to see these lines that demarcate the end of an era (Psalms 90:10). Dr. K. Wango of KU's Fine Art and Design Department would say, "Aging is a nice thing, but aged people don't quite look good", but this fellow would react to his statement, saying, "I am here all the same".**

**Lily Oloo** is a final year student at Kenyatta University, pursuing her undergraduate degree in Fine Art and Design. Her areas of specialization are painting and pencil drawing, and is more interested in Human Figure and Portraiture art, as well as Seascapes and Landscapes.

With a track record of having produced outstanding, detailed artworks when working both on conventional and non-conventional surfaces (like animal hides), I must say that she's good and passionate at what she does best. She has had few chances to showcase her works at locally organized exhibitions within Kenya's Capital, Nairobi, where she's based. Aside from the aforementioned two areas, Miss Oloo is also trained as a historian in Fine Art, a Fabric Designer and Ceramist, all areas in which she does equally competently.



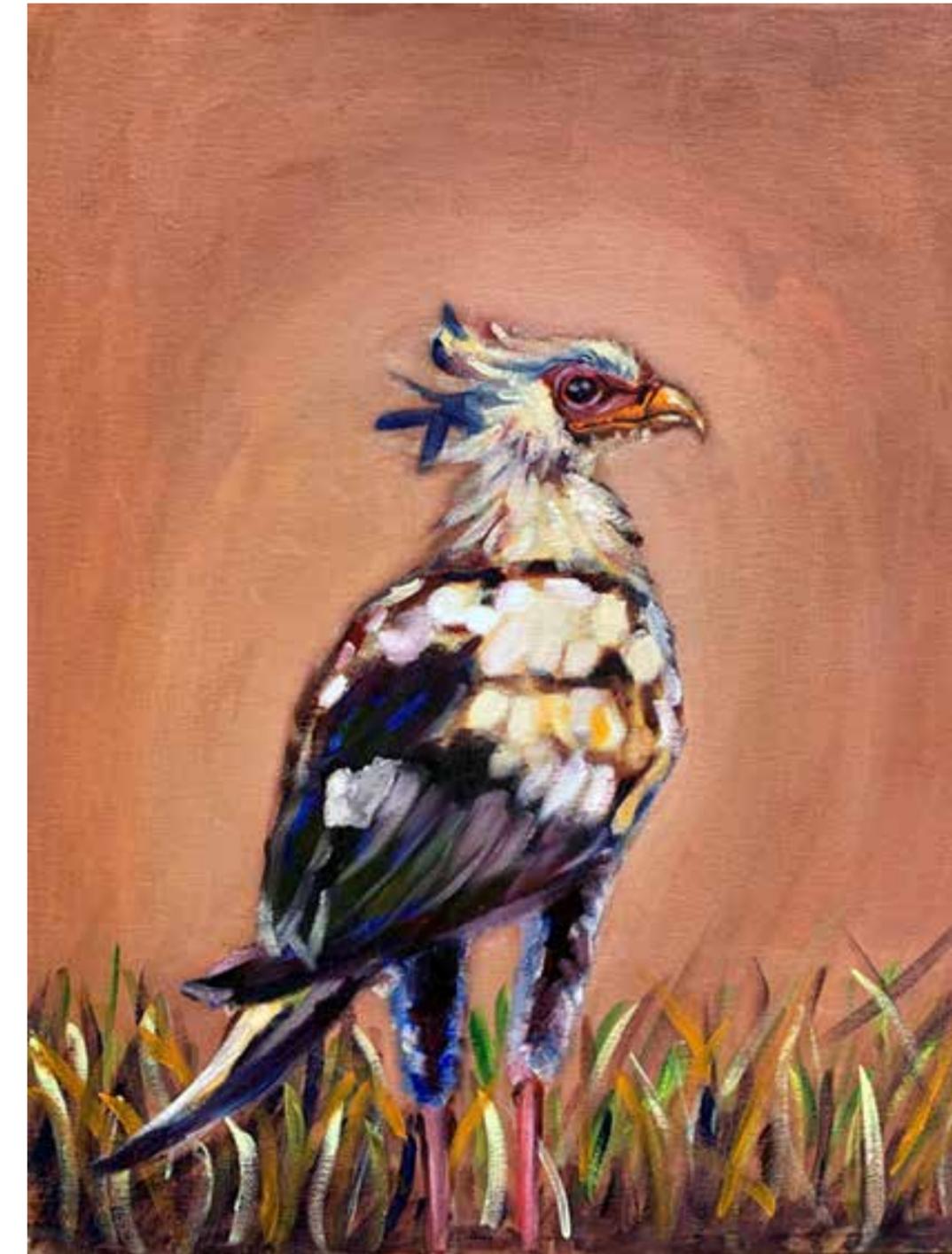
# Mvoi Kigonde

*NDEGE WA SEKRETARI, 2021, oil on canvas, 70 x 60 cm*

**Endemic to Africa, the secretary bird to me is a symbol of African beauty and tenacity. Standing majestically with its long legs, distinct plumage on the back of its head, and long lashes on its eyes, it is a sight to behold. One might easily forget it is a bird of prey. Such is how I view my beloved continent- a beautiful volcano bubbling with immense potential just waiting to erupt. Eventually it will.**



I am a multidisciplinary artist on a mission to promote the African narrative. My hope is that one day my small impressions on earth will help make people see the glory, beauty and great potential of my beautiful continent the way I do.



# Melisa Achoko Allela

*Sigana Tales of Lawino*

“Digital Lawino” examined how the highly performative and participatory works of African orature can be recreated using new and emerging technologies such as Virtual beings and Virtual Reality. The research explored numerous approaches for the digital mediation of African Orature to address this problem. The example (prototype) entails a 3D animated character who interacts with an audience via the three semiotic channels present in live storytelling session: the visual, verbal, and non-verbal which together facilitate the multimodal exchange between the audience and the storyteller. > <https://youtu.be/o6lgrelfLyc>

“Sigana: Tales of Lawino” explores the digital mediation of works of African Orature. It is a VR experience simulates immersion in a live and interactive storytelling session. The first storytelling session contains three short tales, interspersed with proverbs and riddles. As these example stories are drawn from the Luo community of Kenya, they are situated in and around an authentic re-creation of a traditional Luo homestead. Lawino, our storyteller, along with a small supporting cast acknowledge your presence and dynamically interact with you in the storytelling session. Furthermore, as you watch the unfolding story, you are able to participate as an audience member and interact with your immediate environment in a manner similar to a live storytelling session. > <https://youtu.be/N-FPhLRqsfw>

“Zamani Yajayo” from the Swahili words zamani (the past) and yajayo (that which is to come); is a series of animated interviews that explores Kenyans’ imagination of their country fifty years from now. It is an attempt to stir thoughtful speculation on an array of ideas, cultural trends, societal norms, political perspectives, social commentary, and individual philosophies from the perspective of everyday Kenyans with the intent of retrospection in years to come. Each story is derived from an interview and visualized in its own distinct style with the hope that aesthetics can further an audience’s understanding of the issues raised in the narrative. > <https://youtu.be/qeQEb54EaUA>



Melisa Achoko Allela is an Interactive Media Lecturer at the Technical University of Kenya, Department of Design and Creative Media where is she is also enrolled as a PhD student. She also dabbles as an illustrator, animator, researcher and eLearning specialist. Her creative work explores the convergence of experimental animation and emerging technologies in storytelling. Her current focus is on how such technologies can be used to digitize works of African Orature and therefore contribute to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.



# Felix Attari

bottom left: *Herbal Ndauo*

bottom right: *Remembrance*

opposite page: *Mad Ndauo*

## Mad Ndauo

**My Ndauo (Maasai) Series** involved me imagining the Maasai differently. Commonly depicted as village people covered with shukas herding livestock, I opted to imagine them otherwise i.e as an Afrofuturist. **Mad Ndauo** shows the beauty of raw emotion: whether positive or negative. Emotion is beautiful. Some believe that love and hate are the same emotion, claiming that in order to hate someone, you must first love them. Emotion, much like pain, reminds us of our 'aliveness'. We feel elated and light when happy or excited, heavy and depressed when unhappy, disturbed inside when frustrated and hot when angry. **Mad Ndauo's** beauty (despite him being in a negative mood) lies in his authenticity. It is easy to fool one with a well-practised smile or phrase, but near impossible to hide your true emotions. Even if one smiles when angry, something will be amiss. A depressed smile is not the same as an excited one. Pure, unfiltered emotion is what brings us closer, or drives us farther, as people. Bonds in relationships are much stronger after a rough patch. Families tighten their bonds after going through a hard time together (e.g. the loss of a loved one) among many other instances when hard times cultivate positive aftermaths. Being sensitive is being extra alive.



**My name is Felix Attari.** I am a student of Product and Industrial Design at The Technical University of Kenya. My philosophy is 'create your own reality'. Reality is relative. It all depends on the lens the viewer uses to see it through. Day by day, I am slowly and carefully crafting out my reality.

## Herbal Ndauo

**Another Ndauo from the Ndauo Series.** He represents being in touch with Mother Nature i.e. the good health, calm and peace of mind that is resultant of nature. His relaxed eyes show that he is at ease whilst listening to birdsong, the sound of water running over rocks, the sound of waterfalls and that he feels great in health from eating all the green, healthy foods that nature has offer. Nature serves as a source of inspiration, health, beauty and life. It gives food (fruits, vegetables, nuts, animal products), heals (it is said that the green colours found in nature relax the eyes, slowly healing short and long sightedness) and calms the nerves (birdsong).



**We can make a conscious choice to either destroy or preserve nature: which is really a choice to either preserve or do away with ourselves. Man's biggest mistake is that he thinks himself different from nature and its ecosystem. Due to the risk of extinction of lions, the Maasai shifted their rite of passage from having to kill a lion to having to saving one. Now one can come across images of Maasai walking alongside the big cats on the internet. Instead of thinking ourselves superior due to our advanced technology and whatnot, Ndauo Herbal is here to remind us of the bond that every living being has with nature.**

## Remembrance

There are different ways to tell stories in African cultures: orally, via song (through griots) and even masks. Inspired by how masks tell stories, I created my own. The illustration depicts the face of a young African man with black hair and a beard. His eyes are closed and his lips are in a slight smile. His name is Oyami. Much like any young person, he had big dreams to fulfil. However, he was very shy. His father often teased him saying that he wouldn't be able to get a wife, making him even shyer. To him, his shyness was a big impediment to his individual progress. He wished to express himself, but was finding it extremely difficult. One day his grandmother's words stirred his soul, "Great people in reality only accomplish one thing; they become the best versions of themselves." With a troubled mind seeking answers, Oyami set out into the forest to contemplate, meditate and commune with his ancestors. How was he to become the best version of himself? Who was he in the first place? After nine days, it dawned on him: to move forward, you first have to go back.

**In order to find the answers he sought, he first had to go back to his ancestors for guidance and wisdom. He wasn't just Oyami. He was part of a lineage of men and women who had already accomplished great things. He was already great by default.**



# Reiny Elego

*An Afrikan Mother, 2021*  
Adobe Photoshop image, 57.9 cm x 44.4 cm

This is a digital painting I created in Adobe Photosop. The main subject of the painting is a mother of two. They are strolling across the market, heading back home after a day's work. I see my mother as a well rounded individual who basically excels at everything she does. In this painting, I try to show some of the attributes and responsibilities of an Afrikan Mother.

**The mother as a care giver:** The little child on her back is clearly receiving the care she needs. Mother could have left her home under the care of a sibling but she chose not to. She knows what's best for her little baby and will go out of her way to give her that, even if it means carrying her all day. **The mother as a provider:** On her head, she has food they are going to eat. **An Afrikan Mother would never let her kids go hungry.** **The sacrifices a mother makes:** In the painting, the mother walks bare foot while the walking child has his shoes on. **A display of all the sacrifices a mother can make to ensure her children are comfortable.** **The mother as a guide:** The walking child is distracted, staring at something on the ground. The mother guides the child's walk. Even though he is distracted, he will not fall, as long as mother has his hand.



I am **Reiny Elego**, a Product and Industrial Design student at The Technical University of Kenya. Here, we are all kinds of useful skills in relation to the field of design. I aspire to be among the top designers in Afrika.



# Roy Kisielo

„Deathmist: Spirit Invaders“, game, collaborative project with Joshua Ajayi (Nigeria).  
Winner of the award „Most Diverse Team 2020 (AfricaComcade)“.

It is believed that the Utatu (meaning “trio” or “thrice”) was first inhabited by the spirit “Mrithi” and its surrounding walls often said to be an extension of her protective powers. Presently, humans have found life to be habitable on the Utatu and now live in three districts namely: Hodari, Kiroho and Ujanja.

**Hodari District (Red):** Set at the northern end of the watatu, the Hodaris have an affinity for fire and are known for their enormous manpower and their love for physical and mental development. They possess the greatest number of warriors and child fighters. It is said that the hodaris make their little children drink from the waters flowing out of the root of the Mrithi tree that grew towards them, as it is believed to be the reason why they grow tall and strong.

I developed this character for an ongoing game project. The depiction here is an early render that has since evolved with the growth of the game story. Liro is one of three characters, who embark on an adventure/mission to cure their districts and find resolve in unity.



**Roy Kisielo** is a Graphic Technician at the Technical University of Kenya, in the School of Creative Arts & Media, where he is also enrolled as a Degree student. Skilled in Graphic Design, 2D Animation and Game Development. Founding member of Enter Africa; a creative African network represented in 15 African countries, initiated by 15 Goethe-Instituts in Sub-Saharan Africa. Highly passionate about the growth of the Creative Economy in and about Africa.



# Esther Kute

*A Kenyan Savannah, 2007*

Hand loom tapestry, 74.5cm x 49cm

How does an artist capture the essence of a country in an art piece? **A Kenyan Savannah** is the result of 4 months of (never healed) back breaking hand loom weaving using wool to capture my interpretation of Kenya; the enchantment of spotting wildlife on a game drive safari right at the centre of Nairobi, the city with a national park. The colors of Kenya's national flag inspire pride in every Kenyan when our flag is flown high by athletes like record breaking Eliud Kipchoge. While miles away from home, seeing Kenya's flag on the tails of our national carrier Kenya Airways planes brings fond memories of the comfort of home. Several pieces have been sold and gifted to dear ones while the original piece will forever remain with the artist to become a heirloom.



**Esther Kute** is a keynote speaker and award winning Design, Manufacturing and Education professional with 14 years' experience in fashion, textile, footwear, accessories, product and industrial Design. In 2017, just eight years after graduating undergrad (Hons) and six years after joining Bata Kenya; the largest footwear manufacturer and retailer, Esther became the first female, Kenyan, Black Designer to be appointed Product Development Manager overseeing Design, making her the youngest senior manager in the company. Esther is a Teaching Assistant at TUK, founder of Bata Designers Apprentice competition 2017-2018 and mentor in Bata Young Designers Challenge 2019. Her designs have featured in New York Fashion Week, Vogue magazine amongst others, are earning millions of dollars in turnover and change lives. Esther is pursuing her PhD in Design.

# Morris Wanjau Mwingi

*Ceramic Wall Tiles*

Mosaics are designs and images made of small regular or irregular pieces of stones, ceramics or glass called tesserae, held in place by an adhesive to create a decoration on a wall, floor, ceilings and precious objects. Mosaics started in Mesopotamia in the 3rd millennium BC where they used painted pebbles, shells and ivory to create images and patterns.

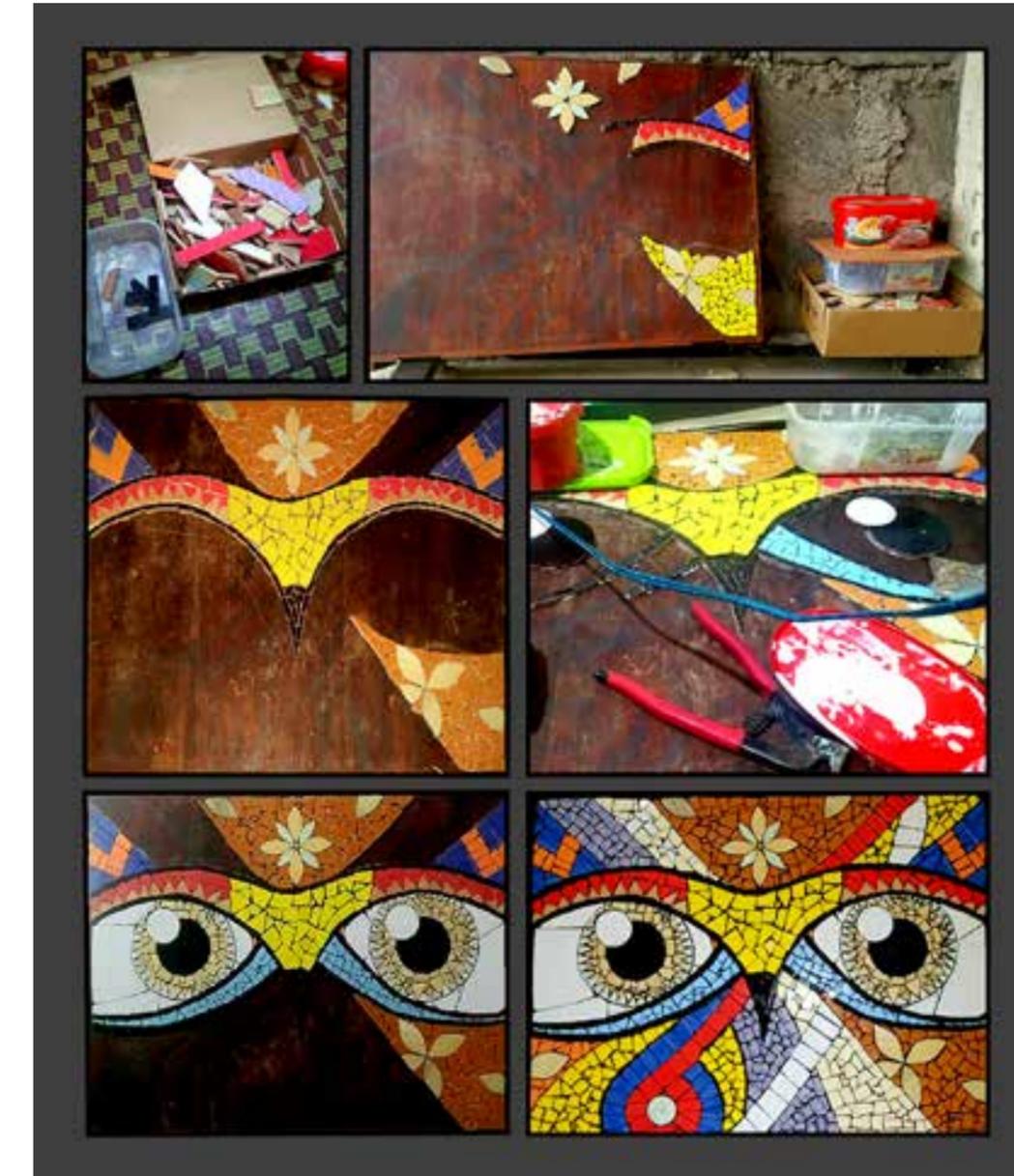
I came up with this idea after researching online. I started by collecting the materials which were; different shades of ceramic wall tiles of the same thickness, an MDF board, tile adhesive glue and white cement. The mosaic is done on a 40 by 60 cm MDF board which I sanded down to remove the factory water resistant coating. This is to make the glue stick and hold the tesserae strongly on the board. I then cleaned the board to free it from dust then carefully made my sketch on it maintain the correct proportions.

I then prepared the tesserae from the ceramic wall tiles and by using tile adhesive glue, I stuck them on the board following the sketch I created maintain small interstices in between the tesserae. After sticking completion, I left the mosaic piece to dry then brushed it to remove dirt from broken tiles. After cleaning, I made a paste from white cement mixed with black oxide. the use of black oxide is to give the white cement a matte black finish. I applied the paste on the mosaic piece to fill in the interstices using a brush then polished it using a dry cotton cloth and leaving it to dry.

After drying, I did a final polishing where I brought back the glass shiny finish of the ceramic wall tiles leaving the mosaic piece clean and shiny.



**Morris Wanjau Mwingi.** Am a friendly self-driven abstract nature mosaic artist based in Nairobi Kenya pursuing a Diploma in Technology in Design at the Technical University of Kenya. I am passionate in my line of work and one focus on my clients needs to meet their different desires. I love challenging myself into doing complex arts and trying new techniques. Am very careful in my work and perfection is what I love bringing out. I work from home or on site i.e. where the art work is being installed.



# David Ochieng

„Soko Adventures“

technique: 3D animations, software: Blender



Our Kenyan market places (Soko) capture some significant portion of our cultures as Africans. I have always been attracted by exotic market scenes, colorful vendors, piles of spices and the background noises of the busy marketplace. These scenes motivated me to do an animation in a similar scene. > <https://youtu.be/-0JqrIYbfOU>



**David Ochieng** is an animation student at The Technical University of Kenya currently in his final year. Besides school work he is a freelancer artist in 2d and 3d animations, modelling and texturing. Not only is he a team player but also a self-driven individual when it comes to work delivery.



# Sunday Ochieng

*Tears Under the Sun*

This is a story of a 15yr old girl Mumbi, a Kikuyu who had been captured by Lord Burrow, to work in his maize farm in the white highlands of Kenya. The story is based in the colonial era, 1950 in Kirinyaga, Kenya in the in the foot hills of Mt Kenya. Mumbi has to stand up against her oppressors and escape with the help of Mukami, a farm house worker, since the British have instituted forms of oppression, humiliation, subduction, colonization the Kenyan communities their by infringing their human rights, she has to instigate an escape the quickest way possible to avoid being suppressed in her motherland country.

**Logline.**

After a terrific occurrence, a lonely young Kenyan girl must a way of escape from a hostile Lord

**Aim.**

To generate an interactive, educative and fun 2D animation for the general audience.

**Objective.**

To achieve a more fantastic animation for the audience.  
To achieve an understandable communication platform.  
To develop a better image for the animation productions.



# Paulette Wambui Odongo

*Nyambura aka Wakiuru the kind one*

This is the first drawing I made of one of the daughters of Gikuyu and Mumbi(Nyambura aka Waikuru, the kind one). The two were the first people created by God in the Kikuyu community. Together, they had 9 daughters who brought forth the community.

It came to my attention that every time the 9 girls are mentioned, they are always clumped together. From this, I got the idea to differentiate them (not separate them).

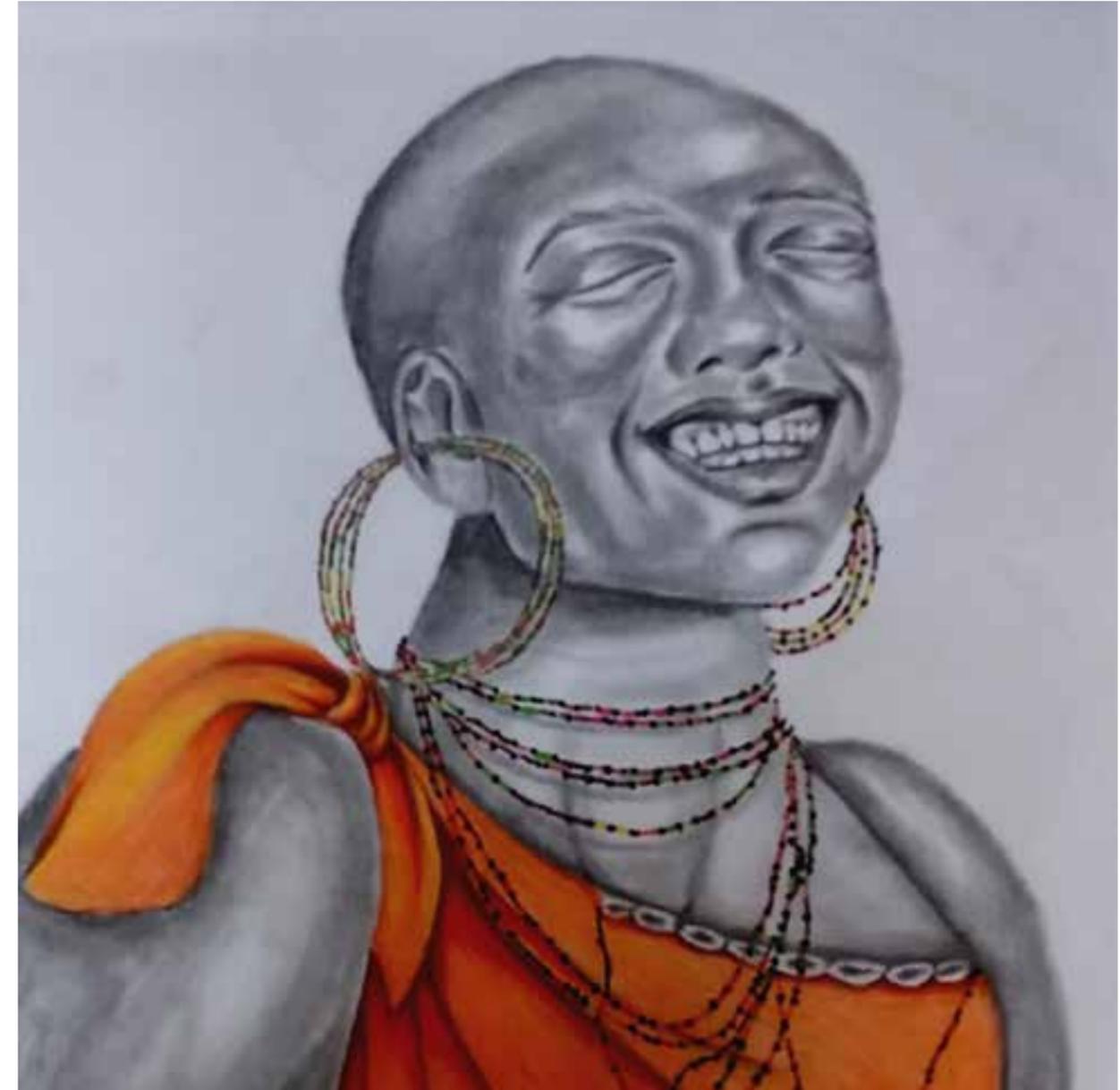
For each, I started with an outline of the face. I then added the facial features and guidelines for where I wanted the shadows to be(all in graphite). I later blended everything in with a blending stump then added colour with coloured pencils and felt pens for the jewellery.

This specific one is my favourite of the ones I did as it portrays her happy and easy going nature all in the bright smile she has on.

From the whole experience, I got to learn a lot more about the Kikuyu community. An example is how the number of beaded necklaces one has on varies with age. I also got to learn how to work with graphite, coloured pencils and felt pens together.



My name is **Paulette Wambui Odongo**. I am a visual artist, graphic designer and animator. I am currently studying Interactive Media Design at The Technical University of Kenya, situated in Nairobi, Kenya. Drawing is my main hobby but I see it as the one things that best represent who I am.



# South Africa

## South Africa Johannesburg & Pretoria

Curators:  
Avi Sooful, Carol Kühn,  
Gordon Froud

Curated by  
Avi Sooful, Carol Kühn and Gordon Froud

The South African submission for this exhibition is supported by three universities based in the Gauteng Province, namely, University of Pretoria, Tshwane University of Technology, and the University of Johannesburg.

The works from all three institutions are diverse yet the binding thread that holds this submission together is a searching for a South African identity post-apartheid. Equally important in this submission are issues on gender, religion, colonial legacies, and the impact of the pandemic on individuals and society at large. Many of the works echo notions of displacement that are expressed in the distortions, collaging or use of materials. There is also a strong voice that visualizes the violence that women experience.

These are the realities that feed an awareness of legitimizing where we are as South Africans as we contest the residue of an apartheid era and negotiate experiences of the present.

Avi Sooful

# Bridget Modema

*I am love, 2021*

sonic-sculptural art installation, glass, steel, light, and sound

**My artwork explores the relationship between frequency vibrations and subtle emotional memories. With influences as diverse as Masaru Emoto's experiment of spoken affirmations onto water and sonic-installation artist La Mount Young, new variations are crafted from both constructed and discovered layers. Ever since I was a child I have been fascinated with the unseen realm of interpersonal communication and bodily awareness. Before falling asleep strings of coloured spots and shapes would circulate the room as I drifted off into a dream. The memory of my father often brings tension and disillusion with his background in the South African military system, he often resorted to violent behaviours and a complete denial and shame for emotions. My father passed away when I was thirteen years old where his memory remained, but the journey of exploring emotions realised. The biggest lesson I have learned from emotions is that all of us are dealing with something that we do not always know how to express. Sometimes we don't realise we use violence to protect others from the horrors of the world. The secret is discovering the awareness of our own actions.**

**What starts out as contemplation soon becomes a vision into a new reality of energy transference. As spatial derivatives become transformed through material communication between glass, steel, light, and sonic binaural beats and affirmations embodied within the experience of the installation. Binaural beats are two pure tones of different frequencies which may activate different brainwave activity which promote a meditative state. The affirmations "I am love, I am loved, I beam out love, I radiant love" are repeated in a voice recording played through speakers that causes vibrations within the steel and glass structure. The viewer is left with an insight into the world of feeling and "being".**



**Bridget Modema** works in multiple forms including sculpture, sound, and installation art. Modema is currently finishing her MFA at the University of Pretoria as well as completing her online Metaphysics degree, through University of Metaphysics, Arizona. She apprenticed from 2013 to 2018 with South African artist's Lothar Böttcher (glass), Johann Nortje (sculptor) and Guy de Toit (bronze casting). She has participated in various exhibitions nationally and internationally



# Teboho Lebakeng

*Untitled, mixed media*

To the artist this work serves as an important form of documentation and record of his experience with a way of life that he has a tenuous and fading relationship with. A way of life that is vanishing more and more from the artist's everyday as he undergoes a personal cultural change due to his active identity formation and by extension his way of art making.

The work is an investigation of masculinity within a contemporary and intercultural context.

Visually, the work is a synthesis of portrait abstraction with a visual vocabulary that draws its inspiration from ritual objects and the language used around them. By doing this, the artist is able to utilise oral tradition and notions of multigenerational indigenous knowledge to ultimately reflect on his place in the world and share this reflection with future versions of himself.



**Teboho Lebakeng** is an interdisciplinary multimedia artist and curator based in Pretoria. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts in New York City and his Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Pretoria. He is in process of a PhD study registration.



# Georgina Glass

395 kilometres, 2020

knitted cotton, beads, fabric, and mylar

The intention of this work is to document an aspect of life during the global Covid 19 pandemic. The work is located during the initial level 5 lockdown in South Africa, leading to students around the country returning home to live with their parents if they were able to. And the closing of provincial borders. This time of self isolation catalyzed a move to the internet as a space to meet and maintain connections. This work seeks to express the frustration of trying to connect virtually with poor signal, of trying to have any sort of meaningful interaction when you cannot make yourself heard. Text messages or email became the relied upon method of communicating with lecturers and loved ones, but text presents a difficulty. Language is fallible, and easily falls prey to misinterpretation. It soon became clear that nuance of tone and physical touch are important when communicating.

The sculpture takes the form of a tin can telephone, with knit receivers and a 40 metre cable making it impossible to make taut. This renders the telephone unusable, but if it is picked up the embroidered text inside the receiver mimics circling, one-sided small talk. Each receiver is lined with mylar and will crackle when held to the ear, mimicking bad signal.



**Georgina Glass** (b.1996) works with textile predominantly in her works. She is based in Pretoria, South Africa. She uses needlework to create tactile surfaces that are intended to be interacted with. Her work draws from archives of collective memory and personal experience to document in traditionally feminine mediums. Her work explores themes of isolation, feminism, language, and memory. She is currently studying for a master's degree at the University of Pretoria.



# Shenaz Mahomed

*The Quran and Jihad – Approx. 164*

*The Quran and Peace – Approx. 291*

laser cut mild steel



My practice involves a reflective reading of traditional Islamic visuals forms of art and written text as a means to communicate present-day encounters. I aim to interrogate my daily practice of religion and ritual by mapping relations and traces of my actions into art objects.

The works, 'The Quran and Jihad – Approx. 164', and 'The Quran and Peace – Approx. 291' are laser cut mild steel sculptures that were created in the style of traditional Quran book covers / sleeves. Book sleeves do not usually possess extensive content and is mainly used as a protective covering. The laser cut patterns on the two works cover the surfaces with an estimate of the number of verses in the Quran that mention Jihad (war - 164 verses) and Peace (compassionate living – 291 verses) respectively. This was further converted according to the sculpture scale with the „sleeve“ covered in pattern according to the approximate percentages. A vast difference becomes clear as the pattern coverage for Peace is almost doubled.

The idea of leaving out the pages (book contents) and direct text relating to these topics aims to depict and highlight a lack of knowledge and understanding regarding such sensitive subject matter. The works intentionally play on the idiom 'Don't judge a book by its cover' by cheekily introducing the viewer to specific content on the cover itself.



**Shenaz Mahomed** (b. 1992) obtained both her BA (2014) and MA (2019) degree in Fine Arts at the University of Pretoria. Mahomed is currently registered for her PhD in Digital Culture and Media Studies. Her research project entails exploring online platforms as sites for exhibition and implementation of alternative hybrid curatorial strategies, in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. Mahomed has participated in a number of prestigious art competitions in South Africa and was the winner of the David Koloane Mentorship Award with the Bag Factory Artist Studios in 2016.



# Cow Mash

*Lerotse III*, 2019 - 2021

faux leather, synthetic fibres, epoxy resin, 175cm (height) x 140cm (width) x 120cm (depth)

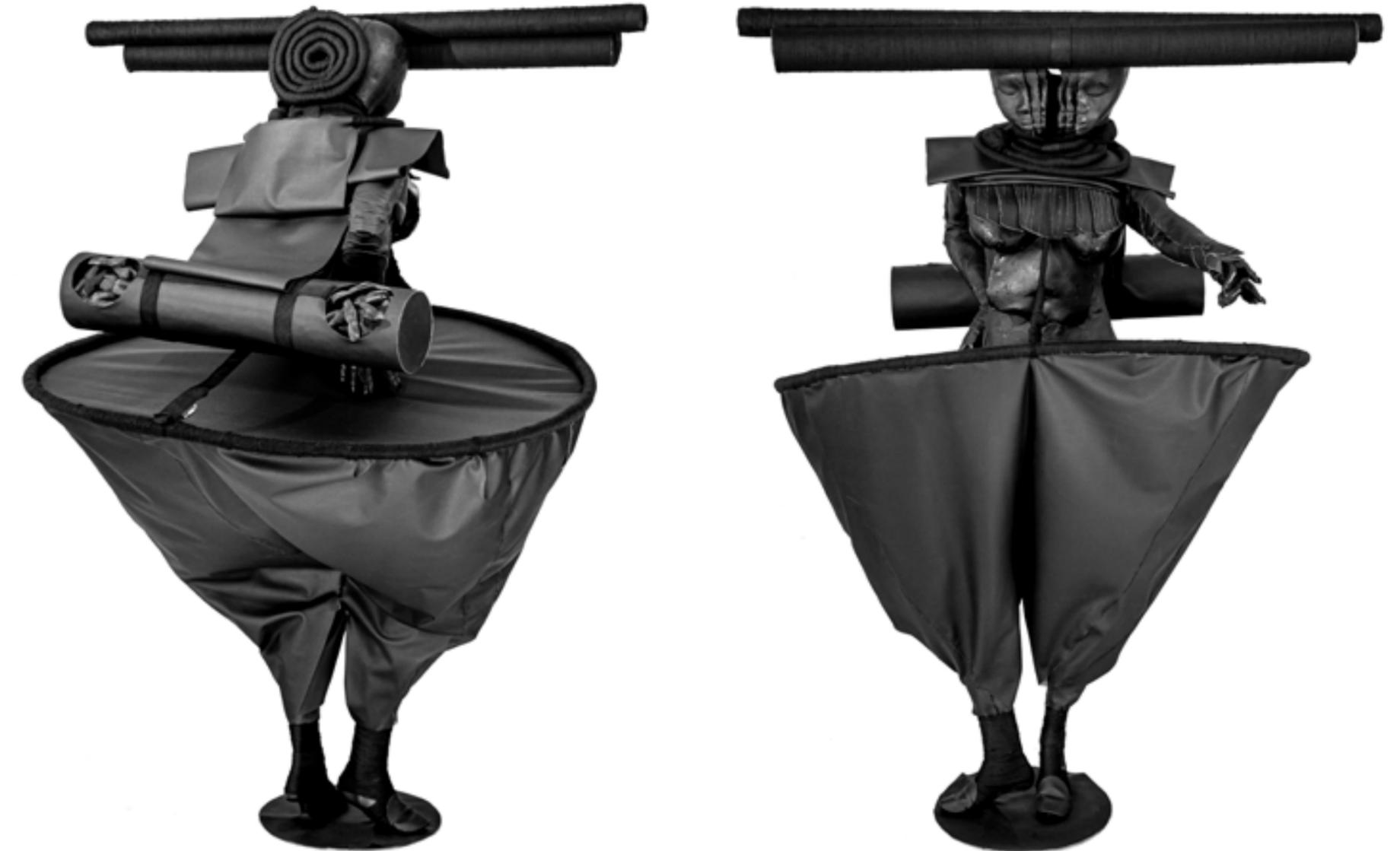


**Cow Mash** is a South African contemporary artist. Cow was born Kgaogelo Mothepa Mashilo on 30 October 1994 in Limpopo Province. She currently works and resides in Pretoria, South Africa. She graduated in 2017 from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) with a Bachelor of Technology (BTech) in Fine Arts (cum laude), majoring in sculpture. Cow has participated in various group exhibitions and has recently completed her Master of Technology (MTech) in Fine Arts (cum laude). Her practice and research centres on cow metaphors, gender studies, and generational transformation.

I am in a space/time where I know much more than the times that flash in my memory. So if the saying goes, 'ignorance is bliss', then I can only pinpoint knowledge as the constant change that takes the bliss away. Because of the things I know now, I analyse and question the memories that I believe construct my identity. I equate the process of involuntarily remembering and analysing memory to the regurgitation of grass when a cow eats. If we can think of memory as something that goes through a four-stomach digestive process, then bits of memory are regurgitated and need to be rechewed. This analogy serves my creative process by allowing me to re-chew/rework an already 'completed' artwork, reflecting on the thoughts and memories that create that artwork and allowing the artwork to evolve.

**Lerotse** is an artwork started in 2019. Over the years, she has been slowly transforming, growing, and evolving from her initial form to the form she has today. The name **Lerotse** (melon) comes from the praise poems of my middle inherited name **Mothepa** (girl). The praise poem speaks of the girl (my great-great-grandmother **Mothepa**) who harvested special black melons. The artwork reflects the names, the act of naming, the identity in names, and the act of identifying myself in a name. The artwork is layered in multiple memories and imaginings of my identity, recognising the transformations of culture and tradition in my matrilineal succession.

**In 2021, Lerotse III** has fully evolved into a goddess who is moving a perfect selection of harvested wisdom to a new realm. This new realm will be a cultivation of new ground made with the rich harvests from a succession of experiences that create magical ground on which the future will produce anew.



# Caitlin Greenberg

*Unspoken thoughts* – installation, 2021

Cristalica glass and burnt sand, 230cm (height) x 150cm (width) x 150cm (depth)

## Unspoken Thoughts

I explore my collective memory as a white South African English-speaking female through the medium of molten glass. My sculptural forms emerge through the glass blowing process. As I expel the breath from my lungs through the pipe into the molten glass, the glass becomes swollen around itself, producing a swollen sphere filled with memories and thoughts. The more I blow air into the sphere of molten glass, the more pressurised the fragile surface becomes. The tension created through the surface pressure symbolises my unspoken thoughts, my fragile voice, an expression of my filtered thoughts—my restricted voice. As a white English-speaking female growing up in a predominantly Afrikaans-speaking environment dominated by the patriarchal figure, my ability to have a voice has been inhibited. I have no voice within the culture into which I am born. Does my English-speaking upbringing qualify me to make statements about the culture in which I live? As an English-speaking white South African, I am seen as ‘other’ because I should be an immigrant.

**Where are you from?... you English?... Where are you from?... you European?... you African?... you white?... Where are you from?**

**My video and installation works, questions my culture showing the tension between the external object that inhibits and contains and the internal thought processes.**



**Caitlin Greenberg** is a South African contemporary glass artist who completed her Baccalaureus Technologiae and Master's degree (cum laude) at Tshwane University of Technology specialising in glass blowing and glass sculpture. Her practice is conceptualised around allowing molten glass to become an extension of the human body, the metamorphosing fluid medium intuitively directs her creative process.



# Paballo Majela

*Ha Wetsi*, 2021

170 cm length x 55 cm height x 60 cm width, acrylic resin (M1), wire, nails



**Paballo Majela** is a South African artist. Born in 1990, in Qwa Qwa, Freestate Province; he currently works and resides in Pretoria, South Africa. In 2016, he created a life size public sculpture, representing freedom fighter Duma Nokwe, which forms part of the National Heritage Monument. In 2017, became one of three artists to create a 2.5-meter sculpture of Political leader Oliver Tambo, which currently stands at the Johannesburg O.R Tambo international airport. He graduated in 2018 from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) with a Btech in Fine Arts, majoring in sculpture. Majela also works for sculpture department. His art practice specializes in sculpture and painting.



## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

**My current body of work is based on my upbringing in the mountainous setting of Qwa Qwa, my Sotho heritage, and the folklore that existed in my youth. I create sculptures and paintings reimagining the Sesotho culture into a fantasy that is inspired by tales that were once told. In visually narrating the fictional realm of The Thaba- Bosiu Guardians, I aim to archive the rich folklore history of the Basotho people within my artworks, while interrogating and documenting the contemporary existence of the black male as a subject.**

### Ha Wetsi

**The landscape of the Qwaqwa Mountains inspires this artwork and speaks of the tribe of my forefathers—the Makhlokwe clan. The clan are descendants of the Ba-Kgatla family and trace their ancestral roots back to central Congo. They were forced to move towards the south of Africa due to shortages of food and water. However, their arrival in the south of Africa wasn't made easy because sometimes other tribes would challenge them to fight. The Makhlokwe clan used a cave as their hiding place to keep them safe from their attackers. The cave was at the top of a difficult mountainous slope, making it impossible for invaders to access.**

**The clever nature of the Makhlokwe intimidated the members of the other tribes. The tribe members blamed the Makhlokwe for the disappearance of cattle and reported the issue to the white Afrikaner landlords of the Free State. The Makhlokwe people were attacked by the Afrikaners, having been sold out by the king of Lesotho, Moshoeshe, who had a relationship with white supremacy. King Moshoeshe gave away the location of the Makhlokwe and how to access the cave where the clan hid. More than 2000 Makhlokwe died when the cave was bombed. King Wetsi fled to the neighbouring country of Lesotho. The rest of Makhlokwe were absorbed into other tribes.**

**The artwork I created honours the memory of the inhumane killing of the Makhlokwe clan. I recreated the cave to remember a sacred place of my ancestors.**



# Mellaney Roberts

*Somewhere in between and not represented form #1, 2021*

earthenware, bronze glaze, steel wool & nails, 50cm (height) x 37cm (width) 37cm (depth)

right: frontside

left: backside



**Mellaney Roberts** is a contemporary ceramist who graduated with an MTech (Cum Laude) in Fine Art at Nelson Mandela University in 2017. Roberts is currently reading towards her PhD in Fine and Studio Arts at the Tshwane University of Technology. She participates in numerous public art projects as well as local and national art exhibitions. Mellaney received numerous awards, including the Nina Hole Memorial Residency Award at Guldagergaard, (International Ceramic Research Center in Skælskør, Denmark), the New Signatures Award at The Ep-sac Community Art Centre NMMU Exhibition and the Best Student Award at the Regional Ceramic exhibition of Ceramic South Africa. She has been selected as one of the top 100 South African Artists for the Sasol New Signatures and the Absa L'Atelier national art awards.

## Somewhere in between and not represented

In South Africa, the term 'Coloured' defines a community as racially mixed and describes a hybrid community. The ambiguous nature of the Coloured identity, coupled with the absence of recorded histories and unambiguous identification with collective cultural codes, results in the representation of identity becoming challenged and borderline. This hybrid identity makes it difficult to reflect on a specific culture and social circumstances. When trying to imagine yourself differently, perceptions of identity and community become more difficult to pin down. This process can become painful.

As a Coloured, in the collective memory of my story, I always felt like an invisible individual trapped between Black and White classifications. Therein lies an untold story of being somewhere between and not represented, creating the feeling of 'not-belonging'. Through constructing narratives of lived experience, hybrid communities can challenge dominant stereotypes and subvert discourses of otherness and difference.

**My body of work focuses on presenting ceramic sculptures depicting the fluid shift of borders. I use borders as a metaphor for the way that our identity transforms as we experience various spaces. My ceramic sculptural forms are often cut, pierced, or demarcated showing the divisions in cultural differences. The divisions emphasise how the parameters of identity are often blurred and how an object's placement in space can reference things other than itself, acting as a memory trigger.**

**My intuitive response to clay enlists the rich and multileveled reference that ceramics has as a medium, evoking the permanence and impermanence associated with time.**



# Athenkosi Kwinana

*Amotion*, 2021. Drypoint on Hahnemuhle paper. 80 x 130 cm  
Number four – Constitutional Hill: Johannesburg



My name is **Athenkosi Kwinana**, a South African printmaker and sketch artist. I am currently studying my Masters in Fine Art at the University of Johannesburg. As an individual living with Albinism, my academic text and artworks challenge and examine the imagery around Albinism in South African visual culture. My list of goals is quite lengthy, but if I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way.

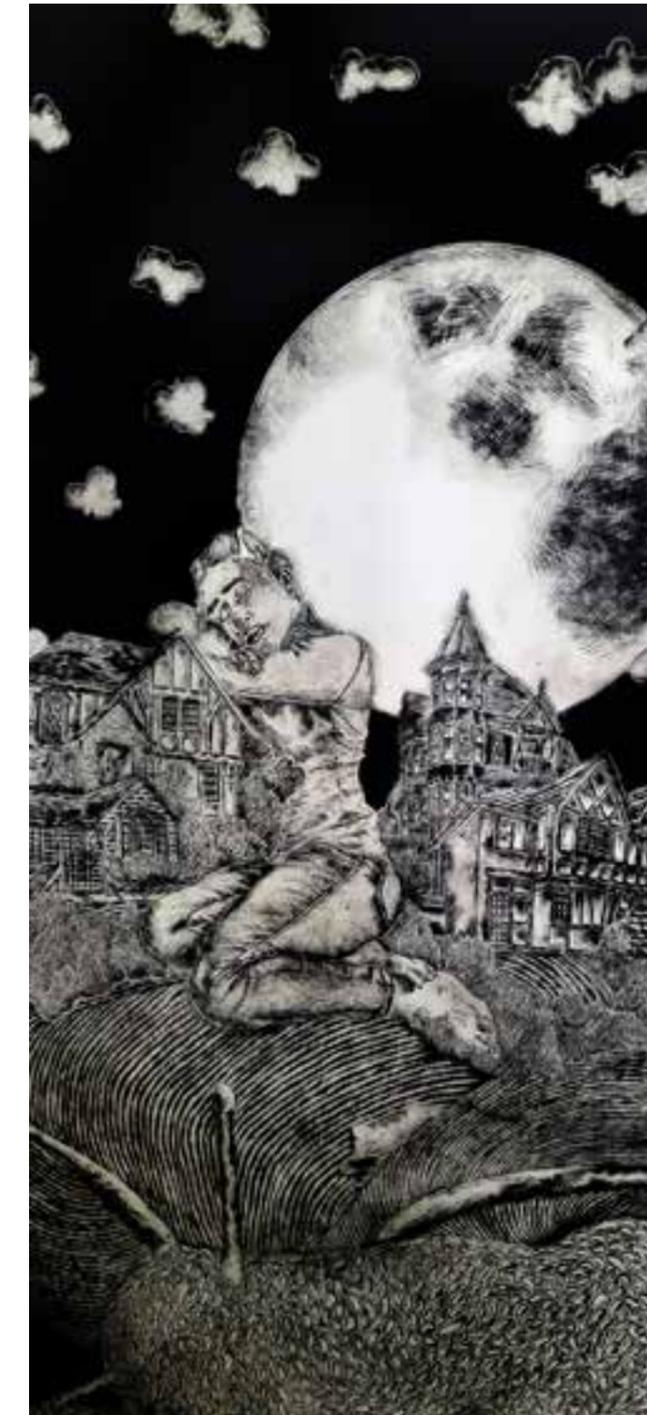
Persons living with Albinism (PLWA) have been experiencing discrimination and/or sexual violence daily in South Africa. Some examples of discrimination that manifests against PLWA include the following: In KwaZulu Natal a medicine-man<sup>[1]</sup> by the name of Gumede was arrested on charges of conspiracy to murder a female PLWA. Kaveel Singh (2017) states that "...prior to the murder, Gumede told his co-accused that he needed the body of a woman with Albinism arguing that >muthi<,<sup>[2]</sup> mixed with the body parts of a person with albinism, would make them rich".

This particular artwork, extracted from a larger body of work, surrealistically depicts the displacement encountered by PLWAs within black communities and the whole of South Africa. In this instance, the term displacement refers to child abandonment, rejection from communities, and formal places of work. As a PLWA, such imagery highlights how my albinotic body's existence is slight in South African contemporary society. Wistfully even in this day and age, often our identities, civil rights and contribution to society as PLWA forgotten, challenges and undermined.

As a result, constructive representation plays an important role as it influences the way we perceive and interact with people, environments, and other forms of entities surrounding us. As a visual artist in this instance, I explore and challenge the visual representation of PLWA and Albinism in South African visual culture, with the aim of dispensing positive representation as it is valuable in it influences the perception and understanding of PLWA and Albinism.

<sup>[1]</sup> "A member of an indigenous society who is knowledgeable about the magical and chemical potions of various substances (medicines) and skilled in the rituals through which they are administered" (Pauls 2019).

<sup>[2]</sup> Muthi, is a term that refers to traditional medicine.



# Boipelo Rethabile Cheka

*KwaNobuhle*, 2021

Charcoal, chalk and oil pastel on shweshwe fabric

The artwork *KwaNobuhle* is part of a series titled *Negotiating Existence*. It is a collaged mixed media drawing on shweshwe fabric and comments on various methods of negotiation, through the use of different printed fabrics, different mediums, alteration of figures and the use of a colour palette in coherence with a monochrome palette. The composition is deliberately impractical with enlarged facial features to exaggerate the distortions. *Negotiating these particular distortions - be it how the image will look or where certain features will be placed - forms a part of driving the narrative of how we as individuals negotiate our own identities and our own existence; as a result these figures are a representative of that. The fragility of the veil forms a contrast against the feel of the shweshwe and works hand in hand with the idea of existing methods to discuss distinctiveness.*

*The artwork explores visual cultures through working on shweshwe fabric as a surface, which artistically speaks on the identity of the Basotho culture and its customs, and personally reflects on my identity as a South African Mosotho woman. With that, I am able to extract information from both my past and present to create artworks that visually communicate identity issues concerning the black body and womanhood; and retell reinterpreted personal experiences.*



**Boipelo Rethabile Cheka**, (1999 Johannesburg South Africa), is a painter of South African descent whose creative practices and processes focus on producing mixed media, drawings and paintings. Her art draws inspiration from black body issues; themes surrounding womanhood, identity, photography and text. Cheka's practice is primarily centred on negotiating ones existence and identity in order to live. She is drawn to the concept of prevailing identity issues concerning the black body and womanhood. The relatively large-scaled drawings and paintings are her source of communication, to reinterpret personal experiences based of these themes.



# Michael Vickers

*Black Horizon*

ink on Fabriano, 56 x 76cm each

## Memories and Landscape Metaphors

Whenever I go out into the spectacular South African Wilderness to enjoy the stillness of the uncultivated expanse before me, I form organic memories that add to my identity and overall human experience. While walking through the Highveld Sanctuaries, I constantly imagine how biblical metaphors can be applied to the landscape around me, and in essence, to my world. Metaphors like the water of life, or the light of the world always include the landscape. Ancient Hebrew Literature in the Bible often speaks about nature in terms of energy and vigour, heavenly realities and visions, revelations and songs of praise. These actions form who I am.

On a cultural level, I believe that art has the power to shift our perceptions, in line with William Blake's quote on the doors of our perceptions, this artwork looks through a lens that is disrupted. Instead of having a cleansed perception that I always strive to share with the viewer, I now shift the narrative to a world with blurred realities, a world that believes there is no universal truth. I depict a dampened wilderness, with a sky that comes crashing down against a black horizon. There are glimpses of beautiful revelations in the sky, but overall the tone is elusive and dark. The natural world that we live in now will change as we know it, and so the placid peace of the natural world that has shaped my identity is now burning of depravity.



Michael Vickers is a contemporary landscape Artist based in Johannesburg, South Africa. His work focuses on the natural world as an integral part of human life that has the potential to empower our thoughts and perceptions through gentle encounters with the sublime. He calls this ,perceptive devotion'. Practicing in paint, printmaking and drawing with gestural marks, he creates glimpses of the uncultivated wilderness that lies beyond us, sharing a sacred voice in the secular urban space of Johannesburg.



# Shalom Mushwana

*Lossy Body I*

69 cm x80 cm, mixed media on 160g/sm Fabriano

This drawing is a response to the inter-determinacy of identity. Focused around the varying loci that inform contemporary South African identities, this amorphous body aims to evoke the isolationist paradigm we live through, where isolated curatorial environments allow individuals to pick and choose, to stitch and in some sense retrofit ones self to the social realms that one chooses to reside within. These algorithmic shifts, that present an organized disorder, inspire the mechanical line work, that in one sense gives shape to traditionally flat spaces, but also intersects, divides and disrupts the order of the body and the way it can be fashioned to ones will.



**Born in Makhanda** (1994) South Africa, Shalom Mushwana is a multi-disciplinary artist using digital imagery as key source in documenting and reimagining visual narratives and histories within contemporary South Africa. Studying towards a bachelor's degree in Visual Art at the University of Johannesburg, Shalom is in the process of amalgamating traditional mediums such as painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and photography with contemporary thoughts and around information, communication and the technologies there-of.



# Tlotlo Sereisho

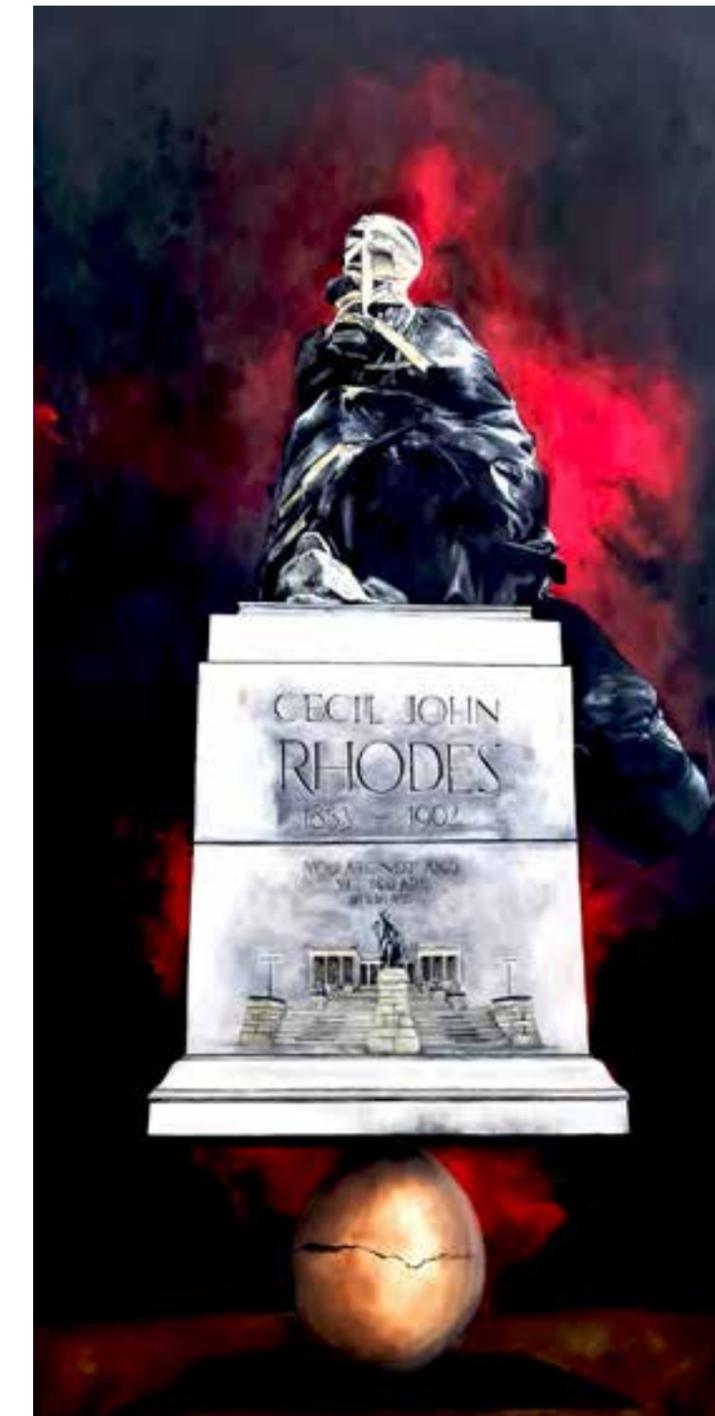
*Rhodes Must Fall, a Mengelmoes, 2021*  
Oil on canvas (unstretched). 250 cm x 120 cm

When the grim system of apartheid finally came to an end with the first democratic elections in 1994, one would have thought that also meant doing away with everything that seeks to symbolise and/or commemorate its colonial values. *Rhodes Must Fall, a Mengelmoes* came about as a response to the 2015 #RhodesMustFall movement. The said movement started when the youth of South Africa took to the streets in protest of prevalent practices around commemoration and nation building. Specifically, this composition is about colonial monuments/statues that seek to and commemorate colonial heroes and/or benefactors.

The heavy object (a Cecil John Rhodes statue) that is (somehow) resting on the egg represents how the public presence of such objects is contradictory to the South African dream of integration and/or equal representation. The unchallenged presence of these objects (imperial/colonial and apartheid monuments) is indexical to the South African tradition of avoiding conversations that should be had collectively. As an apparent post-colonial state, South Africa has not moved away from its past that gave precedence to some polities over others forms the basis of my work.



**Tlotlo Sereisho** (b. 1993) is an artist from Vryburg, North West Province. In 2020 he completed his BA in Visual Art at the University of Johannesburg and is currently busy with his BA Honours in the same field. At the same educational institution. He has been busy building his technical skills and thus on 'something to offer' in the past three years and things are finally looking up. In this time he has been part of several group exhibitions like the departemental UJ Best of the Best (2018 and 2019) and the 2019 Nothern Lights (Antwerp, Belgium) street exhibition. So far? Things are looking up!



# Tshegofatso Tlatsi

*Time to disrupt* (Triptych), 2021  
ink and charcoal on canvas, size varies



**Tshegofatso Tlatsi**, born 10 September 1999, is black female visual artist based in Johannesburg. Born in Diepkloof and raised in the suburbs of Roodepoort, her work is inspired by popular culture, music and films. With no artistic background or formal training and education, Tshegofatso was self-taught until she attended the University of Johannesburg in 2019 where she is currently completing her BA in Visual Arts. Through painting, video and sculpture, Tshegofatso's works are mainly informed by her emotions and personal experiences. Her works explore the deconstructing and constructing of one's identity, reality and beliefs as well as finding order and meaning in chaos.

The drawings are of a female figure. The figure is drawn expressively, with inks stains and splatters consuming its entire body, standing in a room or space suggested by three thin lines which are more simple compared the chaotic nature of this figure.

The first drawing shows (195.5cm x 156.5cm) the back view of the figure, with its arms flung back and its hands coming towards the viewer. Both hands differ in position as one is shown to be slightly bent, whilst the other reaches out, revealing its hand with a dark mark in the centre of its hand.

The second drawing shows (202cm x 157cm) the back view of the figure standing, whilst slightly bending over backwards, giving the impression of a headless figure – and its arms to its sides. The figure's hands are strongly suggested and appear as if the figure is grabbing onto something. Thin lines go back and forth between the figure's wrists, to the point where one of the wrists are slashed.

In the third drawing (209.5cm x 156.5cm) the front view of the figure is shown. Its position is very feminine and quite passive compared to the other two. The figure is shown with one arm on its side and its hand slightly clenched, whilst the other arm is hidden, only revealing a small portion of the figure's hand. Even the hand appears to be very sensual in its position.

**The representation of women in art and media has created this narrative of what and how a woman should be in society. As a black female living in South Africa, one is reminded every day that there's really no safe space for women, especially women of colour. There's this unseen but strongly felt expectation of what a female should be: clean, quiet, and small. Especially in art, we must be seen as passive and less threatening. I go against this idea by making these figures bigger, dark, uncomfortable and expressive. I allow them to make a mess and disrupt the simple space they were put in.**



# Cazlynn Peffer

*Untitled, 2021*



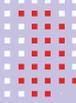
**Cazlynn Peffer's** work possesses a quietness that becomes unsettling to the viewer. Her sculptural pieces tell stories of candid moments laden with trauma from experiences of domestic abuse and sexual violation. The ambiguity of Peffer's work help viewers ponder about issues pertaining gender and sexual based violence in a South African context, without confrontation. The artist's use and display of materials hold memory, they stand in the place of absent individuals in how they evince specific human activity - usually of an intimate pairing gone wrong.



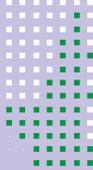
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