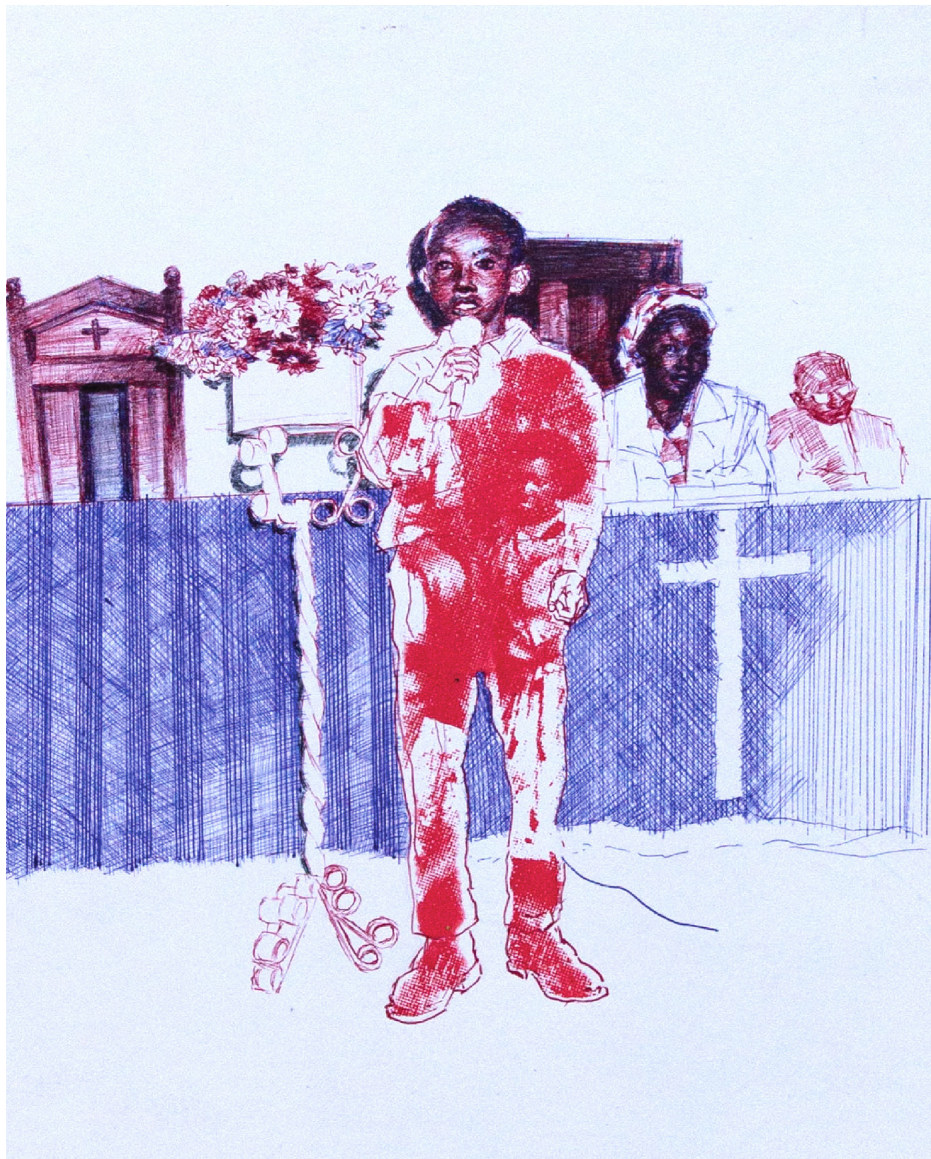


WALKING ON A DREAM

Elias Mung'ora, Jared Onyango, Sandra Wauye

03.10.2024 - 03.11.2024



“Walking on a Dream” showcases the evolving artistic visions of Elias Mung’ora, Jared Onyango, and Sandra Wauye. They are the three artists participating in the first iteration of UJUZI, an alternative learning program for East African artists. The program has been running since November 2023 and is focused on creative research methodologies and contextual thinking to develop conceptual and aesthetic rigour. This exhibition focuses on the artists’ ongoing engagements with various media and thematic areas, highlighting their ideas in progress rather than a series of finished works or projects.

Elias Mung’ora primarily works in painting, often combining it with other mediums such as drawing and photo collage. His work explores the complex and varied histories of his home country, focusing on the impact of colonization and the resulting loss of land and rights for indigenous communities. Recently, he has been researching the role of early Scottish Christian missionaries in East Africa as part of understanding their involvement in the colonial project. Since 2015, Mung’ora has been an active member of Brush Tu Artist Studio. He was a finalist in the Absa L’Atelier competition in 2017 and has exhibited his work in Kenya, South Africa, Italy, the USA, and France. Currently, he is a student of anthropology at the University of Nairobi. Mung’ora’s mentor in the UJUZI program is Abdullah Qureshi.

Jared Onyango’s artistic interests include choreography, writing, photography, video and installation. He trained in dance at P.A.R.T.S in Brussels and Ecole des Sables in Senegal between 2010 and 2019 and studied film at the Mohammed Amin Foundation in 2012. He was a Pina Bausch Foundation fellow in 2016 and a recipient of the Price Klaus Mentorship award in 2022. Onyango’s ongoing project, Jua Kali, examines the impact of public space and architecture on human movement and behaviour. Additionally, he has been investigating the question of river pollution, notably at the Dandora dumpsite and Nairobi River. He is a co-founder of the Tempo Arts Centre, a green space for children and youth Dandora, Korogocho, Lucky Summer, Baba Dogo and Kariobangi communities. Onyango’s mentor in the UJUZI program is Elena Marchevska.

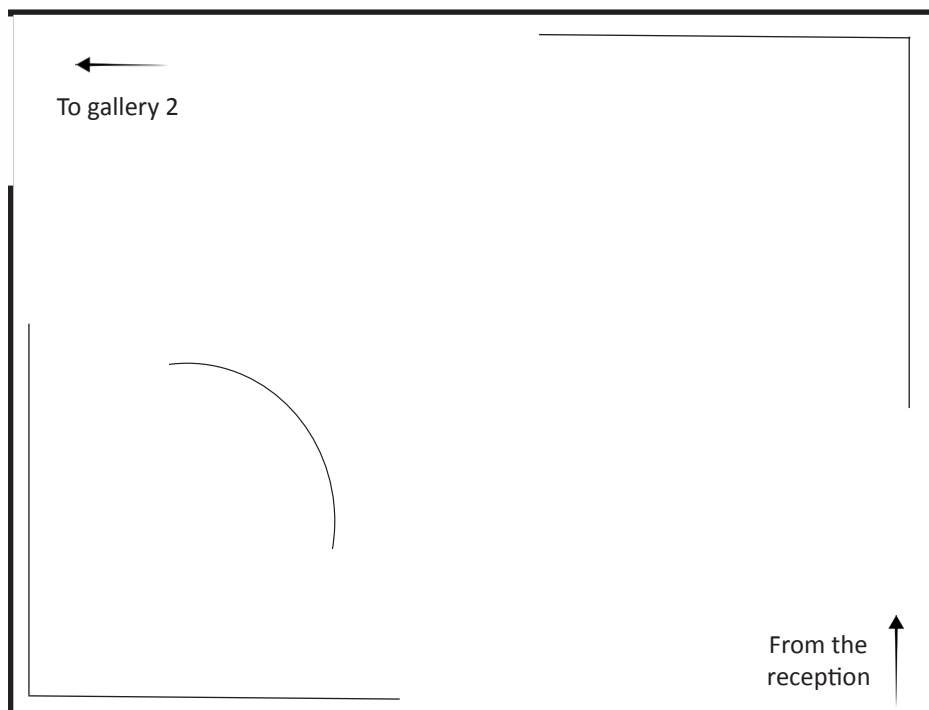
Sandra Wauye works mainly in painting and ceramics, seeking to understand the connections between human beings and nature, ranging from the sacred to the mundane. She is interested in regeneration and resilience, ideas of home and various acts of tending to the soil, and to nature. Wauye participated in the 2024 edition of the KLA ART Festival in Kampala, and was an artist in residence at 32° East in 2023. She has participated in various group exhibitions in Nairobi and Kampala, and was featured in the Sanaa Art Festival in Adelaide, Australia, in 2023 and 2024. Wauye’s mentor in the UJUZI program is Usha Seejarim.

The UJUZI program is delivered through a partnership between Untethered Magic and NCAI.

GALLERY 1

Jared Onyango

Over the last year, Onyango has been looking into the environmental impact and cultural significance of plastics, specifically referring to the Nairobi River, the Dandora dumpsite, and the relationship between these places and the communities around them. Exploring video, installation, and photography, he seeks an approach to materiality that invites viewers to consider their relationship with consumption. This video installation combines footage of people washing uhuru bags collected from the river with sounds of the river's flow, and plastic threads which cast shadows on the moving images, invoking the different realities of life with and around the river.

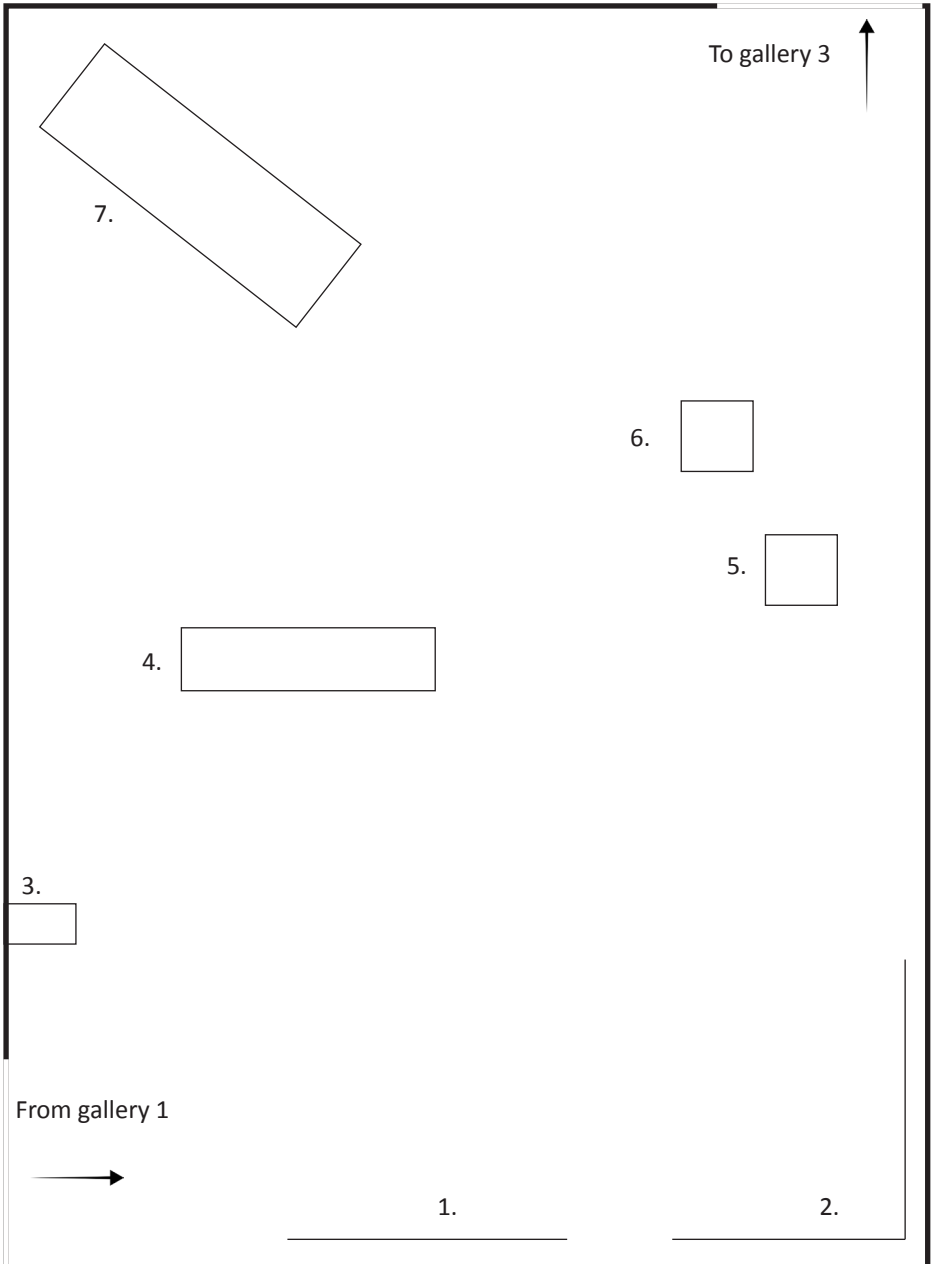


Jared Onyango

People, Rivers and Plastics, 2024

Video Installation

GALLERY 2



1. Elias Mung'ora

Please Walk in a Straight Line, 2024

Acrylic, oil pastels and screen printing on canvas

Using a memory map of his childhood home/village, Mung'ora traces how the countryside adheres to colonial notions of what a "proper" farm should be, the rectangular shape of a homestead, and the rational portioning of land areas for distinct uses, e.g., coffee plantations, trees, maize, cow paddocks, etc. The memory map is drawn over grids suggestive of the natural terrain of the area, and transfers of diagrams indicating the proper organisation of a homestead as promoted by the colonial administration. Here, Mung'ora is interested in colonial efforts to reshape the indigenous people's way of life, and their visible impact on the landscapes they occupied.

2. Elias Mung'ora

Cleanliness is Next to Godliness (ii), 2024

Collage

A collage of photographs and texts drawn from the archives of the East African Scottish Mission at Tumutumu and their Christian converts shown alongside pictures of Mung'ora's own family, including Mung'ora himself in various church and school activities. With this work, he draws attention to the cultural shifts that occurred with the earlier members of his community who converted to Christianity and embraced Western education and ideals, and how that history has directly shaped my family, especially their Christian faith and ideals.

3. Elias Mung'ora

Cleanliness is next to Godliness (iii), 2024

Soap

It wasn't enough that Africans converted to Christianity. They were also required to embrace the daily practices and tools of a "civilised life": a cup, a chair, a new diet, and new hygiene methods. Soap is an object of daily use for cleanliness, and books represent the education brought by the Christian missionaries. Early Christian missionaries' ideas around personal hygiene were bound up with notions of ablutions and purity and the need to cleanse the indigenous body.

4. Jared Onyango

Specimens, 2024

Photographic prints on acrylic

The photographs are created using objects collected from the Nairobi River, where Onyango has been researching pollution and its impact on the surrounding communities.

Taking a scientific approach, he photographed these objects to explore the insights they could provide. Onyango then manipulated the photographs using various processes, intending to preserve the items as specimens for experimentation. His goal is to draw attention to the substances in the river and the information they can reveal about the river's ecosystem, its impact on human lives, and the human impact on the river itself.

5. **Sandra Wauye**

Sanctum of Chaos, 2024

Earthenware ceramics

6. **Sandra Wauye**

Sanctum of Order, 2024

Earthenware ceramics

7. **Elias Mung'ora**

Cleanliness is Next to Godliness (i), 2024

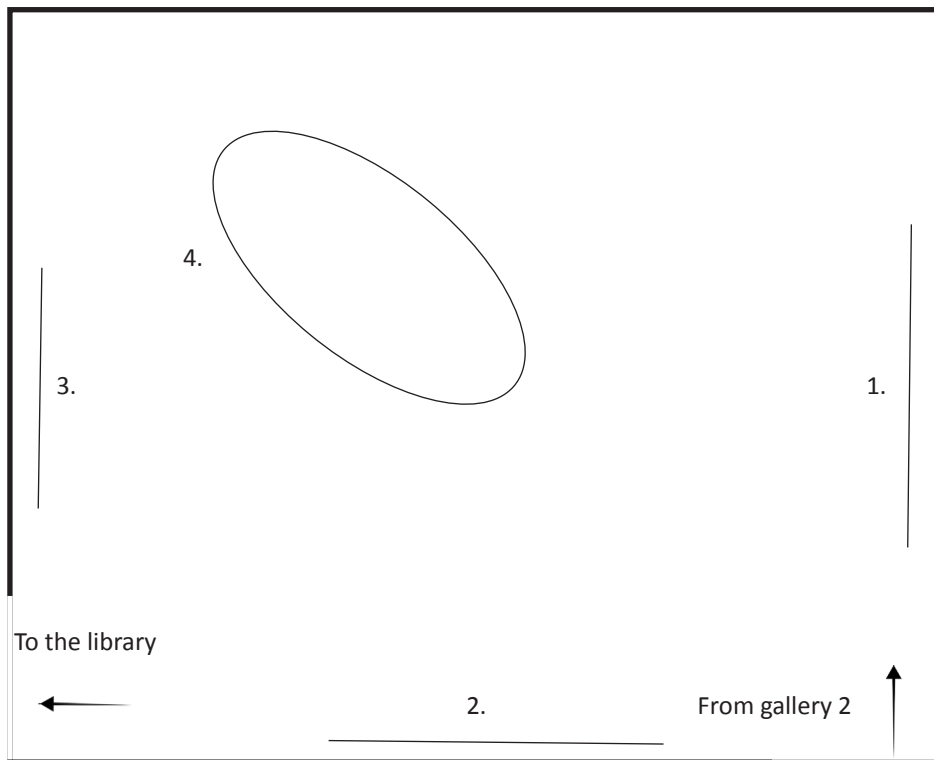
Acrylic & photocopy transfer on canvas, wooden dowels

Okot p'Bitek's Song of Lawino, is a seminal text in African literature, drawing on oral history traditions. Referring to her husband Ocol, Lawino laments the denigration and rejection of her traditions for Western lifestyles adapted by educated elites. An excerpt from Song of Lawino is brought into dialogue with an excerpt from an agreement to sell land to the East African Scottish Mission in Kibwezi, where the first Scottish mission in Kenya was established, highlighting the cost to Indigenous people - the loss of land and culture - that was a consequence of colonisation.

GALLERY 3

Sandra Wauye

When Wauye creates, she thinks about home—the space or feeling of comfort that is constantly longed for in this world of sporadic and never-ending restlessness and loss. Her paintings feature human and animal characters in close proximity to one another, meant to suggest kinship. The paintings are built up with vivid colours applied in successive light layers, with a view to conjuring spaces suffused with warm, inviting energy. Her ceramic forms are informed by the study of plant and fungal forms both for their physical appearance but also as containers for various forms of life and evidence of connections between various forms of life. The ceramics are made from locally sourced clay, forms that mimic organic, ovoid-shaped matter found in nature. They are smoked or treated with earthen oxides, paying homage to traditional African pottery methods.



1. **Sandra Wauye**

Collectively Compositing, 2024

Oil and chalk on canvas

2. **Sandra Wauye**

Clay Bodies and oh Sweet Lamb, 2024

Oil and chalk on canvas

3. **Sandra Wauye**

Does the Mold Ever Break?, 2024

Oil and chalk on canvas

4. **Sandra Wauye**

All the Disjointed Bits and Life's Possible Permutations, 2024

Earthenware ceramics

Cover Image:

Elias Mung'ora

Cleanliness is Next to Godliness (ii) (Detail), 2024

Collage

About UJUZI

UJUZI is a collaboratively produced alternative learning program for East African artists. UJUZI adopts a holistic approach to artistic education encompassing creative research methodologies and contextual thinking to develop conceptual and aesthetic rigour. The program is delivered through a partnership between the Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute and Untethered Magic.

About NCAI

Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute (NCAI) is a nonprofit visual arts space dedicated to the growth and preservation of contemporary art in East Africa. Established in 2020, NCAI builds on a rich legacy of art projects and institutions in the region and seeks to tell the stories of the artists and projects that have shaped the region's contemporary art scene. Through exhibitions, the development of an archive of East African art, an extensive public program of talks, and a multidisciplinary educational program, NCAI serves as an inspiring cultural space and a resource for the thriving East African arts community.

About Untethered Magic

Untethered Magic is an artist residency and collaborative space in the Nairobi National Park begun in 2019 by co-founders Syowia Kyambi and Kibe Wangunyu as an environment to encourage growth and independence, an unlearning and relearning space for process, life and art.

"At Untethered Magic our goal is to provide a supportive communal safe space for creatives, so they may focus on their processes. With a non-Western remit, we strive to push forward research-based conceptual contemporary arts for the East African region. We continually seek out artists and researchers open to the challenges of an environment that demands experimentation, cooperation and exchange."

UJUZI

