

KENYA MUSEUM SOCIETY

TRACKER

October 2019



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Affordable Art Show is almost here!

25-27 October 2019: Something for Everyone to Enjoy Art

This is the seventh consecutive year of the Affordable Art Show and its importance to the arts community has increased every year. It is the largest art show in this part of the world, exhibiting more than 300 paintings and sculptures, selected from about 900 submitted pieces, created by 160-180 artists. All art is priced under Ksh 100,000, hence the name “Affordable”. The show features works from well-known and successful artists (i.e. Adrian Nduma, Patrick Kinuthia, Leonard Kateete) to brand-new artists, some exhibiting for the first time. The average price for art is Ksh 38,000 and several pieces are under Ksh 10,000. The show takes place in the courtyard of the old Administration Building, with a unique outdoor effect, protected by overhanging eaves. We have never sold less than 28% of the art, and last year sold just under 40%, which means that many artists benefit from the show and many buyers find pieces that interest or inspire them.

Schedule of Activities

The show begins with an opening party from 6-9pm on Friday, 25 October, typically attended by 350-400 potential art buyers. When we first began, there were almost no Kenyans in attendance, but last year about 30% of the audience were Kenyans; the rest are principally expatriates working in Nairobi. There is a Ksh 500 entry fee with a complimentary drink and bitings provided. It is a pleasant evening that gives buyers and others a wide range of art to admire as they listen to classical music by the Peponi Ensemble.

The show continues on Saturday and Sunday. 26-27 Oct, from 10am-4pm with no entry fee. Lots of families come on those days. On Saturday morning from 10:00 we have a participatory art activity for children 6- 12 years old (while some of the parents shop for art). There is a Ksh 800 charge per child, who will create a 3-dimensional and/or a 2-dimensional piece of art. At 2:00 on Saturday afternoon we offer a free tour for young professionals to help them understand what they appreciate in art and encourage them to start buying art.

What is done with the proceeds?

Each year the proceeds have increased. Last year we netted Ksh 1.1 million. Those funds are being used in 2019 for NMK-determined infrastructure or exhibition projects. This year KMS funded a beekeeping travelling exhibition that features the diverse methods of beekeeping by various cultures and promotes food security through the protection of bees. KMS also funded the preparation of a new exhibition on the beads of Kenya that will open later this year. In previous years we have funded

infrastructure projects, such as much-needed shelving for the Cultural Heritage Department and a taxidermy lab for the Mammalogy Department.

We invite you to come to the Affordable Art Show and ask that you help advertise the event to your family, friends and colleagues.

Two Special Art Show Activities for Children and Young Adults Sat 26 Oct

Children's Participatory Art Event 10:00-12:00

Ksh 800 Member child & Ksh 1,000 guest child

Children from 6-12 years will create their own art (2-dimensional and/or 3 dimensional) under the guidance of a professional artist, who will also give them a brief tour of the show.

For planning purposes, please register in advance at: 0724 255 299
info@kenyamuseumsociety.org

Young Professionals Art Tour 2:00 pm No charge

Take a brief tour of the show with a professional artist who will help you see differences in techniques, media and subjects that may help you understand what kind of art you appreciate most. You may even find a piece you want to buy as the first in your eventual art collection.

For planning purposes, please register in advance at: 0724 255 299
info@kenyamuseumsociety.org

KMS  KENYA MUSEUM SOCIETY Upcoming Trips 2019-2020	
<i>By participating in KMS events, you are helping to support projects of the National Museums of Kenya.</i>	
Nov Fri 15 – Sun 17	Baringo – Possible Telescope stargazing at Tumbili Cliffs
Dec 26– Wed 1 Jan	Christmas trip-Samburu/Shaba Reserves
Jan 2020	Great Zebra count towards end of the month
Feb	Serengeti Calving
Mar	Mombasa by Train
Bookings: 0724 255 299/0780 755 231,020 2339158 info@kenyamuseumsociety.org	

Exploring the Universe at Nairobi National Museum

Saturday 16th November 2019, from 6 pm -10 pm

Join Kenya Museum Society and The Travelling Telescope at Nairobi National Museum as we observe the Cosmos in a fun yet informative way.

We shall have a mobile planetarium, remote navigator and one of the largest telescopes in Kenya. Nobody is too young or too old to get involved. The Travelling Telescope Company* will provide all the tools necessary – all anyone needs is to show up and be curious.

The focus for the 16th of November will be the moon. During this phase of the Moon we'll be able to see incredible details on the surface, including craters, mountains and some of NASA's Apollo mission landing sites. †

We shall also have a laser guided tour of the night sky, using a powerful laser pointer to highlight different constellations, bright stars and other objects of interest in the sky.

The event is open for kids aged 3 years and above as well as adults.

This is an incredible event that you don't want to miss!

Book and pay for your spaces early enough as there will be a limited number of participants allowed.

#NightAtTheMuseum

Cost

KMS Members – Ksh 2,500 Guests - Ksh 2,750

Payment Options:

Safaricom: M-PESA Paybill, Business No: 400800, Account: 6571570019

Airtel Money: 0780 755 231

* See them on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheTravellingTelescope/> (ed.)

† For the phases of the moon in Kenya see <https://www.timeanddate.com/moon/phases/kenya/nairobi> (ed.)

"A forest restoration project in Kenya: a 20 year case history"

Mark Nicholson

Saturday 9 November 2019: Muthaiga Country Club, 7pm

In 2000 Plants for Life International started to plant a small forest from scratch by taking out exotic trees and replacing them with 120,000 indigenous trees and shrubs of 650 species.

Why are so few indigenous trees and shrubs grown in Kenya when there are more than 1500 species to choose from?

Can society plant its way out of climate change and is the Amazon forest really the lungs of the earth?

Mark Nicholson will talk about the problems and successes of restoration and will address some global issues of forest creation and protection.

Bitings & Bar 6:30pm, Lecture 7:00 pm

Cost:

Ksh 3,300 Canapes, Lecture and Dinner, Child (7-12 yrs) Ksh 2,600

Ksh 1,500 Canapes and Lecture only, Child (7-12 yrs) Ksh 900

Note: Prices do not include drinks.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be a club surcharge of Ksh.500 for any unregistered guests.

NOTE: Members of KMS can invite guests. For security arrangements with the club, kindly bring your KMS membership card and national identification cards for all in your party.

**A Museum visit and guided tour for the KMS Members' staff
Sunday, 8 December 2019 8am – 2.30pm
Nairobi National Museums: to Ornithology (Birds) Section, Bird Gallery &
Snake Park**

#KnowYourMuseum

When was the last time your employee(s) visited Nairobi National Museum?

The Kenya Museum Society has organized an interesting and educational outing to the Museum, particularly Ornithology Section for your employees, their family and friends in December.

The Ornithology Section is a leading centre for ornithological research in Kenya and Africa. Our specimen collection boasts over 30,000 study specimens, tissues, nests and eggs. The specimens date to as far back as 1895 and include a good number of holotypes (the original specimen used to describe the species). The section also stores thousands of egg shells, tissue samples, feathers slides and photographs.

What there is to learn;

- The Bird Collection; how many Bird species we have in Kenya, the importance of specimen preservation and conservation.
- Practical demonstration of Bird ringing – how is it done, why is it done and how does it contribute to the efforts of conservation?
- How we can all participate in bird conservation – Citizen Science

Cost: KMS Members' Staff – Adult Ksh 1,650, Child 1,400 (4 – 16 years)

Guests - Adult Ksh 1,800 Child Ksh 1,550

Included: Entrance fees to Nairobi National Museum & Snake Park, Lunch, Tea & Snack and guide fees.

Cost excludes: Transport to and from home and any other personal expenses

What to bring; Notebook, a pen, extra drinking water **Optional:** binoculars and cameras

Payment: M-Pesa: Paybill business number 400800, Account: 6571570019

RSVP: 0724 255 299 or info@kenyamuseumsociety.org



The Best of Kenya & East Africa



Museum Gift shop

The Kenya Museum Society (KMS) is a not-for-profit organization set up in 1970 to support and promote the National Museums of Kenya (NMK).

Visit the KMS Gift Shop at the Nairobi National Museum for souvenirs, gift items and books on nature, prehistory and culture. **Free entry if just visiting the shop.**

OPEN DAILY

9am-5.30pm

NAIROBI NATIONAL MUSEUM

Tel: (254) 0713354926
info@KenyaMuseumSociety.org
www.KenyaMuseumSociety.org

At the Museum Shop: Kenya Arts Diary 2020 @ Ksh 1,700

Featuring works for over 70 Kenyan artists with full colour photos of art, contacts for artists as well as various galleries.
A week to a page – with art on each facing page

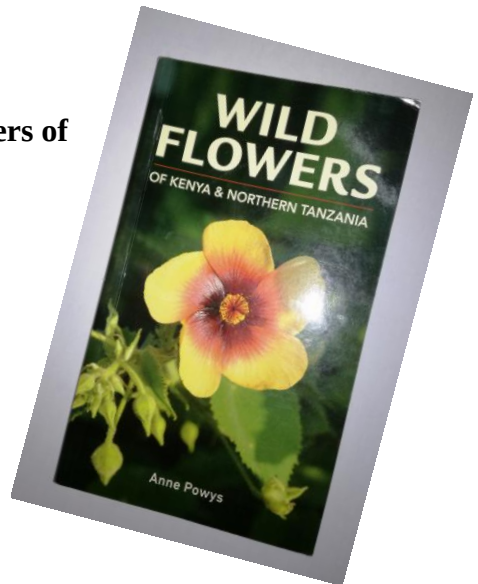
The Kenya Art Diary is published by Kitengela
Glass Research
and Training
Trust

[See also pp. 20
& 22]



**Wild Flowers of
Kenya and Northern Tanzania**
By Anne Powys, @1,700
Your go-to guide for easy flower ID

Payment can be made via Mpesa; Paybill No.
400800 Account No. 657 157 0019.
KMS Shop is open Mon-Sun, 9am – 5pm.



Account of a KMS trip by Wasafiri

Tsavo, where all became possible.

By Nestor Navajas (Photos by Cataline Osorio and Nestor Navajas)

If a sentence could summarize this trip, it would be “A problem? No problem!!” , or perhaps that well known Swahili expression “hakuna matata”.

From the beginning, this trip was full of challenges, logistical most of them, which gave it, apart from the incredible flavour one of the most beautiful places in Kenya, some epic moments, born from the feeling that, in the wild, things are never easy and sometimes you have to deal with the unexpected, especially in high season.

DAY 1: Everything begun at 06:00, in the cold and dark morning of the 8th August 2019, where the 12+1 excited travelers gathered at the Nairobi National Museum parking found themselves with no transport to initiate the journey. Things couldn't have started better!!!!!!

Long conversations with the transport company, a nice breakfast at Vogue Cafeteria in between, led finally at 09:00 am to our final departure, not in our dreamed Land Cruisers, but in a very comfortable shuttle, towards our first destination, Mtito Andei and the entrance to Tsavo West National Park.

On the way, near Makindu, John Mbutu,



our guide for the trip, joined us, starting immediately to explain us all the beauties and history of the National Park.

After a mandatory stop at the gate, and once all cleared, we proceeded to enter the Park at 14:15, discovering on our way the incredible landscapes, the strangely naturally shaped cliffs, hills and mountains that form the Ngulia Hills formations, together with a nice variety of wildlife (elephants, zebras, kudus, warthogs,...) running fast while crossing the road or staring at us with a curious, and sometimes a bit preventive, look from the side of the road as we passed them.

We finally arrived at 16:00 pm to our destination for the day, Ngulia Safari Lodge, perched on the Ndawe Escarpment just below Ngulia Hills, overlooking the Rhino Sanctuary, with very nice views on the surrounding plains.

As per the hour, being a bit late on our schedule, everybody met at the restaurant, built in an open-air style, where we negotiated some tables facing floodlit water holes and the Leopard dining tree, for a late buffet lunch.

After lunch and a short rest, everyone returned to the viewpoints waiting for the arrival of the main attraction of the place, leopards coming from the wilderness to feast on goat meat strategically hung by the Lodge on a well illuminated wooden structure in front of the restaurant.



And the leopards didn't deceive anyone that night, at least one of them, who climbed to the structure and didn't leave it until he hadn't finished his meal.

After dinner, while some of us went to sleep, others stayed a bit longer watching the buffalos, impalas, kudus and elephants that had come, on the cover of the night, to drink at the waterholes.

DAY 2: We started our second day early, and after breakfast and packing our things into the two provisional vehicles provided by the transport company (the definitive ones were on their way and would be waiting us at Rhino Valley Lodge after lunch), we headed first to Rhino Circuit where we were able to see elephants, kudus, zebras, giraffes and warthogs all together drinking at the ponds, a huge number of vultures in the air and on the ground scavenging on a dead animal that unfortunately we could not see, and beautiful eagles perched on the highest branches of surrounding baobabs observing the scene. Then we continued our way to Chaimu Crater, driving in the middle of impressive lava flows, sharp stones breaking under our wheels until one of them punctured one of the Land Cruiser tires. Those things happen often and as it was rapidly dealt with, we quickly arrived at the crater and did an extraordinary hike up to the top (all of us!!!!!!) where we enjoyed some really breathtaking views. Before going down we collected some dozens of empty plastic bottles “forgotten” by previous visitors.

Lunch time approaching, we decided to go to the Lodge and continue our adventure in the afternoon with the definitive vehicles that were waiting for us at Rhino Valley Lodge. Sounded like a good plan until the propeller of the Land Cruiser broke, fortunately close to Kilaguni Serena Lodge. So, “hakuna matata”, new plans: lunch and change of vehicles in Kilaguni.



Full of energy and with bright “new” cars, we started our afternoon visits. First, Mzima Springs, an incredible verdant oasis where we drank exquisite water

emerging from the underground after a long trip from the Chyulu Hills, admired a huge family of hippos bathing and a crocodile sunbathing, and beautiful shoals of blue barbels. Second, Roaring Rocks, a unique hill with outstanding views of the Ngulia and

Taita Hills, that takes its name from the presence of roaring lions in the past. There, our guide explained us the origins of the Ngulia tribe and how they got to occupy that area.

On coming back to Rhino Valley Lodge, we were blessed with the most beautiful sunset in a long time, where the vanishing sun tainted with incredible red and orange color all the rocks, hills, mountains on our ways, while the shadows of the coming darkness highlighted the profiles of the sharp surrounding geography.

At the lodge, we enjoyed a nice dinner, which we had to fight for, as the lodge was full, and when we arrived the rest of the guests had already finished almost all the buffet. But – “hakuna matata” - soon the buffet was full again with food (but very few desserts).

DAY 3: After a good and a not so good night (depending on who you ask), and a good breakfast, we continued our way, starting the longest driving day of the trip. First stop, Shetani Lava flows, an impressive ten kilometers long black lunar landscape made a cracking lava stones covering all the area with almost no space for vegetation, where we wandered and admired the capricious forms that volcanic rocks take when solidifying.

With that impression we continued to Shetani caves (there are two in fact). Accompanied by the ranger we visited the part of one of them which is accessible to the general public, the rest of the cave, finishing close to Mombasa, being accessible only by speleologists. The second cave, having a quite terrifying legend of visitor disappearances, apparently was not the most indicated to be visited. Quite a disappointing visit.



Having done this and having in mind the long drive awaiting us, we proceeded to Kilaguni Lodge for lunch, and from there we headed south towards Lake Jipe, stopping shortly at Poachers Point, a hill used some time ago by poachers to spot their prey, now under control by rangers, with amazing views of all the surroundings plains and mountains.

On our way to Lake Jipe, alternating paths of sand and rocks, we crossed extremely arid lands in the middle of which ran a tributary of the Tsavo River forming an oasis and a green belt in the middle of that desert, in which the presence of people was more than evident, in view of the huge amount of cattle that were seen grazing on the banks of the river.

After three hours' drive, and a puncture, we left Tsavo National Park through Ziwani Gate, just to enter lands owned by senior government officers, full of wildlife, as a shortcut to reach the Taveta – Voi road, before leaving the tarmac again to reach Lake Jipe. When the day was starting to fade we passed close to Grogan Castle, a beautiful ensemble, part monastery, part Moorish fort and part hacienda architecture with English- inspired decor, now transformed into a hotel and museum, built by one of the most iconic settlers in Kenyan history.

We finally arrived at Lake Jipe Camp in the evening, just in time for dinner and a good sleep after having some special discussions with the manager about the differences between bandas and tents.



DAY 4: Well recovered after a good sleep, we prepared ourselves with a good breakfast to one of the challenges of the trip, a boat ride in Lake Jipe, an inter-territorial lake straddling the borders of Kenya and Tanzania, a wonderful experience full of bird and hippo watching but without border crossing.

While leaving the place and before reaching Lake Jipe Camp for lunch, we enjoyed the great spectacle of two huge elephant families with numerous babies interacting while taking a midday bath in the lake.



After lunch, we rushed to the cars, having just time to reenter and exit Tsavo National Park in an hour and a fifteen minutes, as our park tickets were expiring at 14:15. We drove calmly, stopping from time to time to observe the variety of the park wildlife, until we realized we were to be late at the exit unless an effort on the accelerator was done. And it was. We exited the Park through Maktau Gate at 14:10.

We took the tarmac again of the Taveta – Voi Road for a few kilometers before deviating to the Lumo Conservancy entrance and heading to Lions Bluff Lodge, where we found very cozy and comfortable huts both at Leopards Lair and Lions Bluff Lodge.

After some rest, our cars took us to the sundowner spot where we enjoyed great views of the surrounding plains and a tasty snack picnic while, little by little, the sun was going to sleep.

Back to our huts, we had dinner before embarking again in our cars to do an epic night game drive. We were lucky to see lions, buffalos, hares and even an owl before going back to sleep.

DAY 5: Morning started early for some of us who decided to do an excellent bird



watching hike in the hills, accompanied of course by a ranger, Lions Bluff doesn't bear its name for nothing and we had had proof of that the night before.



After that they joined the rest for breakfast and then again some of us in one car to have a local community experience in Msorongo. Unforgettable mwazindika dances, enveloping and hypnotizing drum and njugha rhythms, and a taste of kimanga, a traditional Taita delicacy made of

mashed combination of beans plus either cassava, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, or bananas, were on the menu of that visit. Unfortunately we couldn't visit the skull caves (somebody somehow understood school instead of skull), that will have to be another day, another trip.

Back to the Lodge for lunch, a last glimpse at the imposing views from the main viewpoint of Lions Bluff and back to the road, this time towards our last destination, Sarova Salt Lick.

An improvised game drive through Lumo Community Conservancy as we transferred from Lions Bluff to Sarova Salt Lick allowed us to have an overview of the miracle we were to see once arrived to our destination: herds of elephants, buffalos, zebras, wildebeest, waterbucks, warthogs along the road.

And once arrived, what we saw could not be more astonishing!!!! All kind of wildlife around the lodge, coming to drink water and do some networking, apparently indifferent to the presence of the humans, not paying any attention to all our movements around. From the viewpoint, from the bunker, from the gangplank, all that we saw was

incredible. I guess no one would have wanted this moments to finish, but after a breathtaking sunset, that colored all the landscape in red / yellow / orange color, we went all for dinner and then to sleep.

DAY 6: Last day of the trip, after breakfast, a glimpse of the wildlife around the lodge and check out, we drove to Taita Hills Lodge where the manager of the lodge was waiting for us to introduce us to the unknown history of World War I in Tsavo. It was a small but brilliant exhibition that included rare artifacts and lots of information about that period, all explained by a passionate curator. There couldn't be a best end to this trip.

We then had lunch at the lodge, before heading to Voi where we said goodbye to our cars and drivers and took the shuttle that drove us safely back to Nairobi.

Travelling with my KMS card

Having the good fortune to go to Kilifi for meetings, we decided to take the opportunity for a little tourism. First stop was Gede, near Watamu. It is not quite as romantically situated as another old Swahili town, Jumba la Mtwana, which is right next to the sea. But Gede is larger, and has some very impressive ruins. The area within the outer wall is 18 hectares.



It is a World Heritage site. UNESCO says that it was built in the 14th/15th centuries. Within its inner wall are the remains of the palace, the houses of the wealthy, mosques and wells. Between the inner and outer wall the middles classes lived, while the



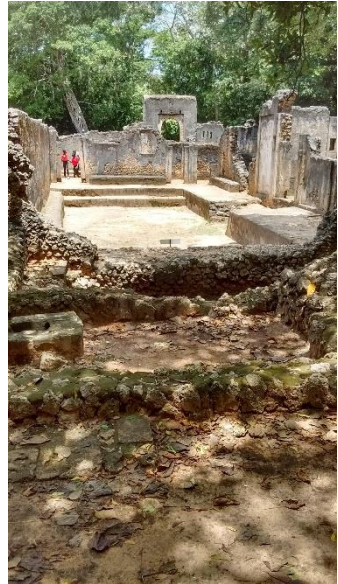
1 Palace entrance

peasants lived outside the outer wall, and built dwelling that have not survived, we were told (presumably of wood, thatch and mud).*

The town was

abandoned eventually – though gradually it seems. UNESCO says explanations vary: it was overcome by an army from Mombasa on its way to attack Malindi around 1530 AD, or because of the raids of the Galla [Oromo] people around 1600 AD, or because of lack of water.

The ruins are well maintained and very well worth a visit. The baobabs and the ficus seem to have inherited the site!



2 Within the palace - halls where the King heard men (larger in the rear) and women (in front) petitioners and complainants.

From Gede to Malindi. There you

can see the Portuguese chapel dating from the 15th century. An NMK plaque explain that Vasco da Gama buried two of his sailors there

on his India voyage in 1542. The Portuguese left in 1593, and the cemetery was not used for 300 years. The British use it occasionally until 1958.

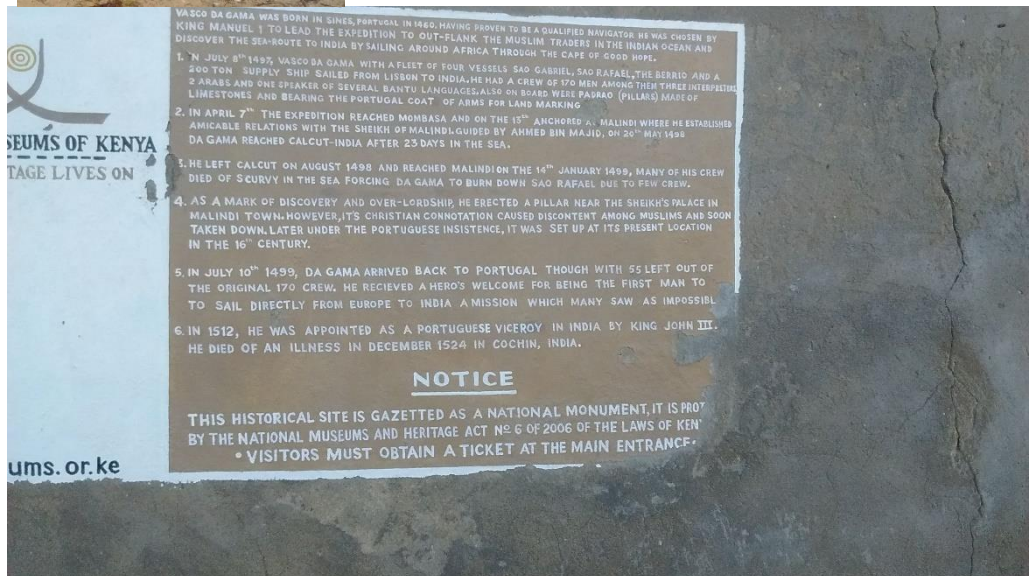
From there to the Vasco da Gama Pillar – which we reported last month is to be repaired before it falls into the sea. We were unable to get close up to see the reported cracks – the approach is a bit much for the elderly. Maybe NMK can spend something

* There is an interesting account – Alders, “Archaeological Survey and Landscape History at Gede” (2016) at <https://tinyurl.com/gederuins>.



on that, too. The choice was between a long leg stretch from one piece of coral to another across a pool, with the risk, at that time, of being drenched as a wave at high tide hit the neighbouring rocks, or running across the sharp coral bowl surrounding the pool as we saw one brave person do.

Another NMK plaque explains that history of both Vasco da Gama (in outline, of course) and the pillar (see below).



About or at the National Museums of Kenya

Exhibitions

Creativity Gallery, Nairobi National Museum



Nearly Extinct: Elephants & Rhinos

G. Motondi, D. Kombo, P. Kenyanya and R. Mbera, forming part of the Mutuma Marangu Sculpture and Art Collection.

This is an exhibition of beautiful sculptures showcasing a unique wildlife heritage that sets Kenya apart from the rest of the world and why it should be accorded special protection for the sake of the economy and future generations.



Other Exhibitions

Alfajiri Street Kids Art



This is a nice exhibition that was created with a mission to reach street children through art creation and discover our common humanity, and visioning a world where street children discover and are given their true worth.

You can support them by purchasing some of their products at the KMS Gift Shop:





NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF KENYA
WHERE HERITAGE LIVES ON

THE NAIROBI GALLERY & THE MURUMBI TRUST
PRESENTS

LEGENDARY ARTISTS OF TANZANIA

October 13, 2019 - January 13, 2020

Opening Celebrations at 2pm on October 13, 2019

The Nairobi Gallery

at

The Old PC's Office next to Nyayo House beside Kenyatta Avenue
Private Entry and ample free parking
open daily 8.30am - 5.30pm



For the past eight years, the Pioneer Gallery, housed in the Old Provincial Commissioner's Office of Nairobi in the epicenter of the city, has focused on works by the Pioneer Artists of Africa, those artists who started their careers in art at the time of independence, or shortly thereafter. Many of these artists were associated with the African Heritage Pan African Gallery and its founders Alan Donovan and Joseph Murumbi.

During 2019, the gallery has been exhibiting the works by the legendary artists of Tanzania. Since May, it has shown works by second and third generations of "TingaTinga" artists, ie disciples of the original master of this genre, the late Edward Saidi TingaTinga (signed E.S. Tingatinga). TingaTinga used enamel bicycle paint to produce colorful works on Masonite ceiling boards that were used in colonial era houses.

His style of art has been carried on by a multitude of East African artists, most of them following closely his original naïve style of painting. This art has inspired children's books, a TV series and even a Broadway play.

Original TingaTinga paintings are now collector's items selling for the highest prices paid for East African art.

On October 13th, the Pioneer Gallery will unveil works by a series of other pioneers artists from Tanzania.

This exhibition includes works by the -rst generation of TingaTinga artists. Many, like Mkura, were influenced by TingaTinga. Others have developed their own unique styles, including those who have acquired fame through NYUMBA YA SANAA, an art colony cum studio founded in the 1970's by a Mary Knoll Sister from the USA, the late Sister Jean Pruitt. Her work left an indelible mark on the formation of Tanzanian art as exhibited by Robino Ntila, George Lilanga, Edward Kiiza, Valentino Saudi, Augustino Malaba and other artists. Oil paintings in this exhibition range from the stunning "African Pride" by Professor Elias Jengo from the University of Dar es Salaam who worked with Sam Ntiro, another artist who encouraged and influenced the late Jak Katarikawe in his early days, to Aggrey Mwasha, whose paintings emerge like a dream from the mist, to the stark realism of Claud Chantanda in "Umoja!" or Muzo Sulemani's "Bao Game".

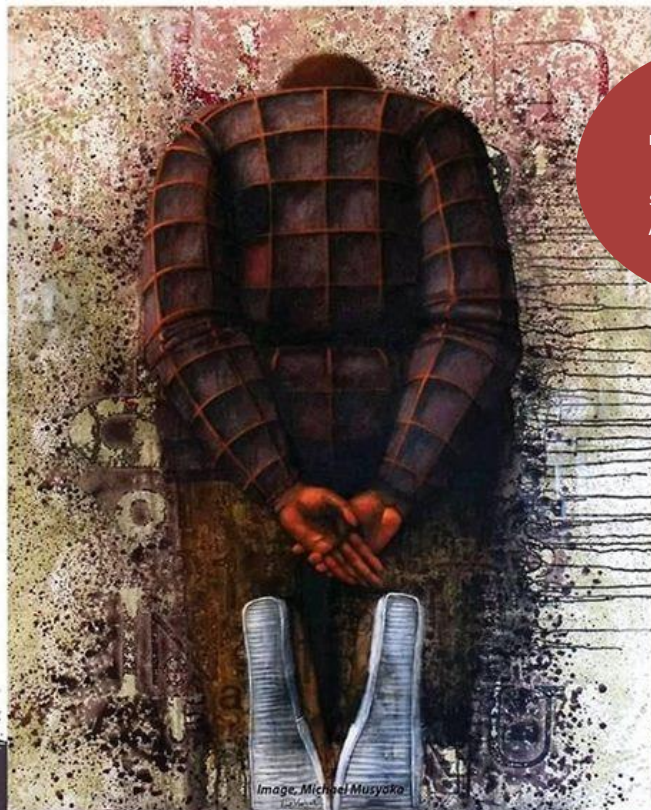
There are also more whimsical works like the charming "Grace with her Thoughts" by Mohamedi Charinda, and the more serious "Alien" by Joseph Lyombo, depicting the landing of a space ship!

The Legendary Art of Tanzania exhibition opens on 13th October at the Pioneer Gallery located in the epicenter of Nairobi known as POINT ZERO, where measurements were taken to all other destinations from Nairobi from more than a century ago when the city was founded. We look forward to you joining us in this continuing series supporting the original pioneer artists of Africa.

Karibu! Welcome to the world of art from our neighbor, Tanzania!



KENYA ARTS DIARY 2020 LAUNCH AND ARTS EXHIBITION



You may have missed the Launch – but you can still see the Exhibition. And buy the Diary!

OFFICIAL DIARY LAUNCH, 4TH OCTOBER 2019 STARTING 3 P.M. AT HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG

**PUBLIC ART EXHIBITION 6TH - 31ST OCTOBER
@ NAIROBI NATIONAL MUSEUM**

**LAUNCH ENTRY: BY INVITATION ONLY
DAIRIES AVAILABLE FOR SALE**

 **HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG**
NAIROBI
Kenya | Uganda | Tanzania |
Somalia/Somaliland


NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF KENYA
WORLD HERITAGE CENTER




THE KING POST
GUESTS & RESIDENCE
NAIROBI



Japan Day

Food Culture & Sports

November 2, 2019 (Sat.) | 10:00am - 5:00pm

Venue: Nairobi National Museum (Courtyard)

*Experience performances and various
Japanese exhibitions*

**Entry
Free!**



For more information, contact:

Tel +254-20-2898-515

Website: https://www.ke.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/jicc.html



(Facebook)



NMK in the News

A National Art Gallery?

The *Business Daily* (September 26) reported that Nairobi National Museum has “called a wide range of so-called ‘stake holders’ to discuss the notion of developing a National Art Gallery of Kenya. Apparently there was a scheme in the late 1970s to turn the former Bank of India into such a gallery. But then, the funds “disappeared mysteriously” – and the space became the National Archives.

Remembering the Land and Freedom Movement (Mau Mau)

Monument in Othaya

A building in Othaya constructed as a social hall, and later designed as CDF Hall, was built over the site of a mass grave of Mau Mau fighters. It was recently gazetted as a national monument and a room designated as a museum. The *Nation* (October 7) reported that “It has photographs, files and artefacts such as guns. Visitors can also listen to oral narrations by veterans. Perhaps the most outstanding item is a home-made gun allegedly used by the Mau Mau in the 1950s as they fought the colonial interlopers.”

But the museum is not as yet very well stocked with exhibits, and has no permanent curator.

Googling this item also turned up various other things.

Museum of British Colonialism

This digital (so far) initiative says “To date, our team of volunteers has researched and visited a number of sites formerly used to detain and torture thousands of Kenyans. We have collected a wealth of documentation, including oral testimonies from former detainees, and contemporary and archival images. We have also produced a number of media pieces including a podcast, documentary, short films and a blog. We are now working on a digital map documenting these sites and an oral archive.”*

Sites in Nyeri

On August 1, the *Nation* included an item about the Mau Mau flagsite in memory of freedom fighters 1952-195. However, it commented that the site “is abandoned, unkempt and hardly has visitors”.

On the other hand – and the other side of the road, the former ‘native law court’, now a museum, is well maintained, “ filled with items related to the Emergency war such as the colonial shields, helmets and colonial government’s movement ‘Pass books’.”

* <https://www.museumofbritishcolonialism.org/>

World of Museums

Defining “museums”

The debate highlighted in September’s *Tracker* rumbles on. *Time* magazine recently published an article* from which the following might strike a chord in Kenya:

“As museums become more and more conscious of the strong social role they play, there’s a need for a more explicit platform of values from which we work,” says Sandahl, who is the founding director of the Museum of World Cultures in Sweden and the Women’s Museum of Denmark. “Saying that museums can only fulfill traditional functions or play these new roles is what I feel we’ve outgrown in the 21st century.” Sandahl wants that “or” to be replaced with an “and.” She also firmly rebukes the criticism that the new definition has a “political” tone: “When you say that something is political or ideological, well, is it political to work with marginalized communities and women, as many museums are doing now, or is it political not to?”

“How a Museum Wields Its Power in Crafting a National Identity”

This is the title of an article on the National Museum of Honduras,[†] commenting, for example, on how “The museum devotes a significant amount of space in its permanent exhibitions to Mayan culture, ... as if the Mayans constitute the only culture to ever occupy precolonial Honduras, even though they were present only in the western fringes of the modern state.” Apparently “This policy dates back to the 1940s dictatorship of General Tiburcio Carías Andino, who wanted to position Hondurans as the inheritors of the Mayan legacy.”

Gender Bias in Museums?

Apparently there is a tendency for animal specimens in museums to be biased towards the males (so the tendency is not limited to exhibits on man!).[‡] This is not so of bats, anteaters, and sloths. There are suggested explanations: male specimens are possibly more likely to fossilize because they are larger; or male mammals tend to travel long distances and are more likely to live alone, which means their bodies can be found in more locations, or human hunters (who quarry may end up in museums), are more

* “Why a Plan to Redefine the Meaning of 'Museum' Is Stirring Up Controversy” September 22.

† <https://hyperallergic.com/519157/how-a-museum-wields-its-power-in-crafting-a-national-identity/>.

‡ <https://hyperallergic.com/517296/the-surprising-gender-bias-on-display-in-museums-animal-exhibitions/>.

likely to target males because of their larger size, and their decorative horns and manes and to avoid killing mothers that need to care for their young.

Returning exhibits

Apparently the museum in Manchester, UK, is to return sacred artefacts to Indigenous Australians, beginning with 43 ceremonial objects, under a project to mark the 250th anniversary next year of Captain James Cook's first voyage to Australia. "The artefacts range from traditional body ornaments and slippers to a *churinga*, a wood or stone item believed to embody the spiritual double of a relative or ancestor, and clapsticks, the musical instrument used in Aboriginal ceremonies."*

Tomb of Süleyman the Magnificent to be museum

An agreement between Turkey and Hungary on archaeological excavation led to the unearthing of the tomb of this Sultan who died while besieging Szigetvar Castle in 1566.

By the end of this year, the excavation site, including the tomb, is to be inaugurated as an open air museum.†

* *Guardian* October 7 2019.

† www.hurriyetdailynews.com/tomb-of-suleyman-the-magnificent-to-be-museum-146363.

Kenya Museum Society's Mission, Benefits & Annual Rates

Kenya Museum Society is a non-profit members' organization founded in 1970. Our mission is to support and promote the National Museums of Kenya, the custodian of Kenya's natural and cultural heritage that manages six World Heritage Sites, twenty-two museums and over a hundred sites and monuments across the country.

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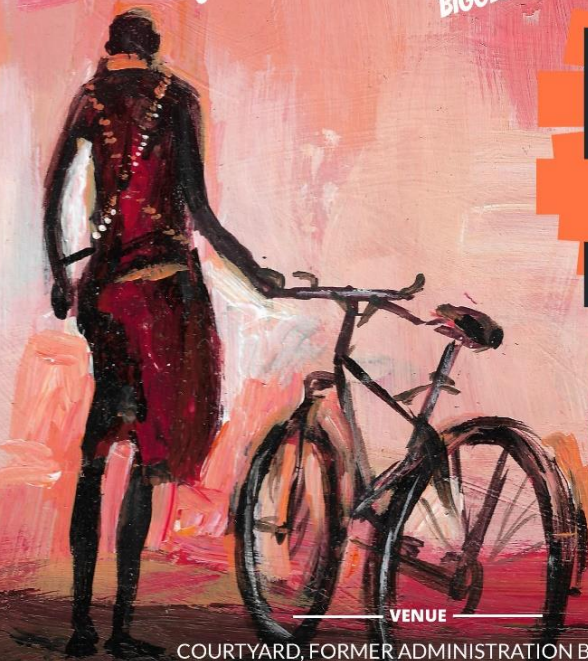


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