



UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, ARTS AND SPORTS



La Biennale di Venezia

60. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

The United Republic of Tanzania will participate in the 60th International Art Exhibition - the Venice Biennale 2024 - with a National Pavilion

At the 'Fabbrica del Vedere', artists Happy Robert, Naby, Haji Chilonga and Lute Mwakisopile will bring culture and creativity from the African continent

For the first time, the United Republic of Tanzania will present a National Pavilion at the upcoming Biennale Arte 2024, scheduled from April 20th to November 24th, 2024. The Pavilion will be housed at the Fabbrica del Vedere - Archivio Carlo Montanaro in Venice, Calle del Forno - a magical and emblematic location for the exhibited artworks.

Tanzania's participation marks a significant milestone for the country's art scene, offering the opportunity to share its culture and creativity with an international audience.

The project has come to fruition through the dedication of the Italian Embassy in Tanzania, particularly Ambassador Mahmoud T. Kombo and their team, who embraced the proposal from the **Italian Collective "Ultimi Futuristi" in collaboration with CEFA Ets**, an NGO based in Bologna that has been aiding the world's poorest communities for 50 years, promoting food self-sufficiency and fundamental rights.

Leading the project as the Pavilion Commissioner is Mrs. **Leah Kihimbi**, Assistant Director of Arts at the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Sports in Tanzania, bringing extensive experience in the arts as well as the promotion of Tanzanian culture.

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The Pavilion's curator will be **Enrico Bittoto**, an expert in modern art, historical avant-gardes, and sociology, known for curating various publications on the subject and private archives related to the 20th century.

The Pavilion explores the intricate interaction between humans and nature, focusing on the evolution of the concept of the "Other," embodied in the archetype of the trickster, a mythological figure that acts as a mediator between the divine and the human.

Throughout history, perceptions of nature and the "Others" have often bred prejudice and distrust, fueled by ignorance.

The exhibition project aims to highlight the importance of transcending such preconceptions to facilitate constructive dialogue. It reflects on the awareness of values such as peace, hospitality, and respect for diversity, emphasising the need to consider humans as an integral part of nature and to recognise the common thread uniting all living beings. Understanding this connection becomes crucial in addressing current challenges and building a more harmonious vision of our role within the Earth's ecosystem.

The National Pavilion of the United Republic of Tanzania will showcase the works of four artists who eloquently represent the diversity and richness of the country's artistic expression in a dialogic relationship with a European artist. The selected artists representing Tanzania are: **Happy Robert, Naby, Haji Chilonga, and Lute Mwakisopile**, each with a unique and distinctive style reflecting the complexity of dynamics, old and new, guiding human interaction with the foreigner and with nature, in line with the general theme of the Biennale Arte 2024 set by its Curator, Adriano Pedrosa.

Art and solidarity

The Pavilion of the United Republic of Tanzania will be realised with the support of companies and organ

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isations, and a portion of the proceeds will be allocated to a cooperation project promoted by CEFA to enhance the income and nutritional contributions of over 22,000 small tea growers in southern Tanzania.

Artist Biographies

HAPPY ROBERT

Happy Robert is a visual artist born on April 30, 1989, in Songea, southern Tanzania, and currently lives and works in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Happy worked as an administrative employee in two different private institutions before deciding to pursue her passion for art and become a full-time independent artist in 2014.

In 2017, she began collaborating with the Vijana Vipaji Foundation (VVF) in Dar es Salaam and attended various artistic workshops and training courses within and outside the country.

Her artworks have been exhibited in Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Arusha, Nairobi, Europe, America, Uganda, Rwanda, and in both collective and solo exhibitions.

Most of her artworks are colourful semi-abstract paintings focusing on African women expressing their feelings, emotions, and beauty, as well as paintings of wildlife.

NABY

9th June, 1968 - Naby is born in Bologna.

1990 - Graduates from the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna.

2016 - Awarded the Jury Prize at the Vergato ARTE competition, President Luigi Ontani.

2017 - Solo exhibition with the performance PLAY WITH ME, curated by Giuseppe Virelli - Galleria Olio su Tavola by Filippo Bacci di Capaci, Lucca.

11th November, 2017 - 20th April, 2018 - With the performance, PLAY WITH ME, participates in the exhibition "LA TROTTOLA E IL ROBOT, TRA BALLA, CASORATI E CAPOGROSSI," curated by Daniela Fonti and Filippo Bacci di Capaci, Palp di Pontedera, Pisa.

11th May - 24th November, 2019 - Solo exhibition PLAY WITH US at the Hotel Hilton Molino

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Stucky, Venice, Artist of the 100 years of the Hospitality Society, with the Patronage of the Veneto Region and the City of Venice.

26th January, 2020 - 7th November, 2021 - Solo exhibition PLAY WITH US, curated by Gian Paolo Borghi, at the National Museum of the Carousel, Bergantino, Rovigo.

May 2022 - Solo exhibition NABY PLAYS WITH STAY, curated by Enrico Bittoto, on the occasion of ARTE FIERA - ART CITY WHITE NIGHT Bologna.

18th August - 10th September, 2022 - Rebirth, solo exhibition curated by Martina and Filippo Bacci di Capaci and Enrico Bittoto at the halls of the Galleria Olio su Tavola, Lucca.

31st March - 23rd April, 2023 - Solo exhibition BETTER TOMORROW, curated by the Centro Studi Ricerche Espressive, at the Frescoed Halls of the Municipal Palace of Pistoia.

Naby's art employs various media (paper, painting, composite materials) and ranges from large installations to more intimate works inspired by camouflage and Pirandello's mask. The encounter between peoples and cultures, and the interactive dynamics among humans and between humans and nature in general, inspire her work which is always aimed at conveying a message to the viewer.

COLLABORATIONS

Marta Pederzoli, artist's tailor - Gatti ceramic workshop - Max Casacci Subsonica - Luca Verdone Director - Stefano Barbieri direction and editing.

HAY CHILONGA

Haji Chilonga was born in 1969 in Masasi, the capital of the Mrwara region in southeastern Tanzania.

Coming from a family of blacksmiths on his father's side and potters on his mother's side, Chilonga's talent was discovered at an early stage as he entered primary school.

In 1992, he was pursuing his dream of painting still lifes and some abstract works on canvas. His talent was recognised, and he was invited twice to the International Summer Academy of Fine Arts in Salzburg, in 2007 and 2014, to further develop his abilities.

To date, Chilonga, an established and internationally recognised artist, has exhibited in 18 solo exhibitions within and outside his country and in collective exhibitions in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Zambia, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom,

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Austria, the United States, and Canada.

LUTENGANO MWAKISOPILE (LUTE)

Lutengano Mwakisopile (Lute) was born on 26th July, 1976, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. His studio is located at the Morogoro Store Oysterbay in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. He expresses his ideas through various media such as recycled materials, pencil, charcoal, colours and brushes, canvas, paper, or wood engraving.

His boundless creativity stems from thoughts, memories, experiences, hopes, and aspirations through colour, form, and objects. Through figurative images he creates caricatures of society or political messages extracted from everyday life, lifestyle, and events, fostering a dialogue between his art and the audience.

He has held several solo and group art exhibitions, participated in various artistic workshops, artist residencies, and artistic training courses at both local and international levels. He has collaborated with numerous companies, NGOs, ministries, associations, and book publishers for various projects.

He has also received several accolades for his works, including the first prize at the African Creativity Oscars 2019 in Cairo, Egypt. His extensive experience in fine arts and textile design at the Nyumbaya Sanaa Arts & Crafts Centre, honed over 20 years of study and apprenticeship since 1992, has led him to be an artist member of the Nafasi Art Space for Contemporary Art in Dar es Salaam for 10 years, also serving on the board of directors, as the president of the Fine Artist Association of Tanzania, and president of 14+ Artists.

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