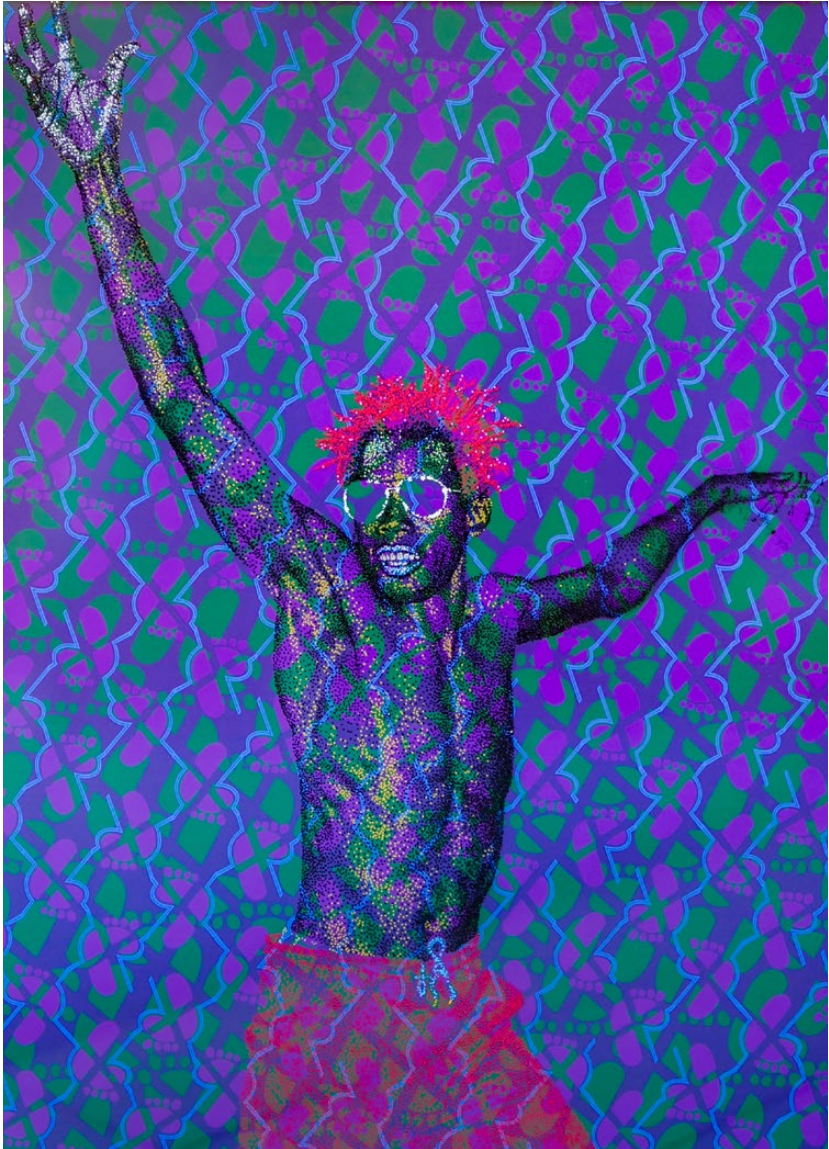


EVANS MBUGUA



FREEDOM IS MINE

11/9 – 18/10/2020



Evans Mbugua

Born in 1979 in Nairobi, Kenya
Works and lives in Paris, France

Freedom is mine

by Sylvain Sankalé

Born in Nairobi in 1979 and after obtaining his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1997, Evans Mbugua decided to continue his studies in France, a surprising destination for a student from an English-speaking African country. After graduating from the University of Toulouse, he enrolled at the l'École Supérieure d'Art des Pyrénées (Upper School of Art of the Pyrenees) and obtained a graphic design degree in 2005.

While at the same time starting a professional career as an art director in a communications agency in Toulouse, Mbugua continued to explore the field of visual arts in his personal studio. In 2011 he decided to go to Paris, where he has since devoted all of his time to artistic exploration and design.

Mbugua has exhibited his work in prestigious institutions and events all over the world. It is his colorful universe, full of energy and the joy of living, that he shares with everyone who knows how to appreciate his work and there are many!

His work has been shown in Europe, the United States and in his home continent, from Morocco to the South African Republic. He has participated in many contemporary art fairs, including some of the most famous fairs dedicated to contemporary African art (principally 1.54 London and Paris by AKAA). Additionally, some of his works have been sold in specialized sales of large auction houses in Paris and elsewhere.

Now, Evans Mbugua is reaching his maturity and his work has gained in confidence, as clearly demonstrated in the most recent evolution of his work!

The series dedicated to body talk presented here perfectly summarizes his concerns revolving around human beings, be they man or woman. In great, highly colorful compositions, Evans depicts the encounters, exchanges, identities and ways of being in his interest in understanding human beings and their many facets.

Very carefully created backgrounds bring to mind the artist's design activity, reproducing the regular motifs of the multicolored fabrics that we find all over Africa. Even footprints are cleverly fused into the plot while at the same time evoking the march and above all the dance.

He detaches, through the use of pointillism, great moving characters that invade the canvas and give it a vitality that contrasts vigorously with the very neutral and uniform, though colorful background. The contrast of vivid colors that, in their antagonistic treatment (linear traces against pointillism, the reproduction of similar motifs against moving characters...), wonderfully animates the work. The techniques in these paintings link painting on plexiglass with digital printing on paper.

This painting is fresh, showing a dynamic Africa in motion, a positive Africa that immediately provokes the desire to love it! For the artist, dance is a universal language. It allows the transmission of expressions of joy, peace, excitement, tension, weight, space, rhythm, flexibility...

However, the artist sows several riddles into the work of which he alone possesses the exact answer. While we can venture explanations, they will not necessarily match his. But isn't it the role of the "observer" to appropriate the work and make it say what they want it to say or understand?

Why do the models wear dark glasses? Through the use of this artifice we are left to consider what dark secret lies behind. Why does the artist try to remove the particular identities of the models? Is it to show that these portraits are not what immortalize youth, in all its forms, regardless of if they are two specifically identified models.

There are certain messages, beyond the aesthetic beauty that hook us immediately, that go further and that we have to learn to decipher, because obviously it is not just a combination of technical skills, that of the dancers and the artist that represents them.

MON STATUT D'HOMME LIBRE | 2020

110cm H x 90cm W | Oil on plexiglass and photo paper- [ENQUIRE](#)



The dancers are black, true, but they are contemporary and "globalized," as evidenced by their hairstyles, the costumes and accessories that they wear, and there is nothing to attribute them to a nationality, an ethnic group, a country, all these symbols of borders, of isolation and conflict. They represent Africa as a whole and its transcendent unity.

In contrast to the clichés in use, it's an energetic Africa, not that of the postcards of dancers in their straw rags and ornaments from another era, but a modern, carefree and complete Africa.

Evans Mbugua makes us want to be happy and optimistic about this continent that we most often represent more in its dramatic turmoil and its deadly contortions, neither of which should be denied. He brings us hope and joy of life and deserves our recognition as such!

Sylvain Sankalé

Art Critic

Dakar, Senegal

DON'T SLOW ME DOWN IF I'M GOING TOO FAST | 2020

100cm x 100cm | Oil on plexiglass and photo paper - [ENQUIRE](#)







SOLO & DUO SHOWS

2020 | Tu m'es indispensable – Regard Sud – Lyon (France)
Freedom is mine – OOA Gallery – Barcelona (Spain)

2019 | A spectacle now – Circle Art Gallery – Nairobi (Kenya)

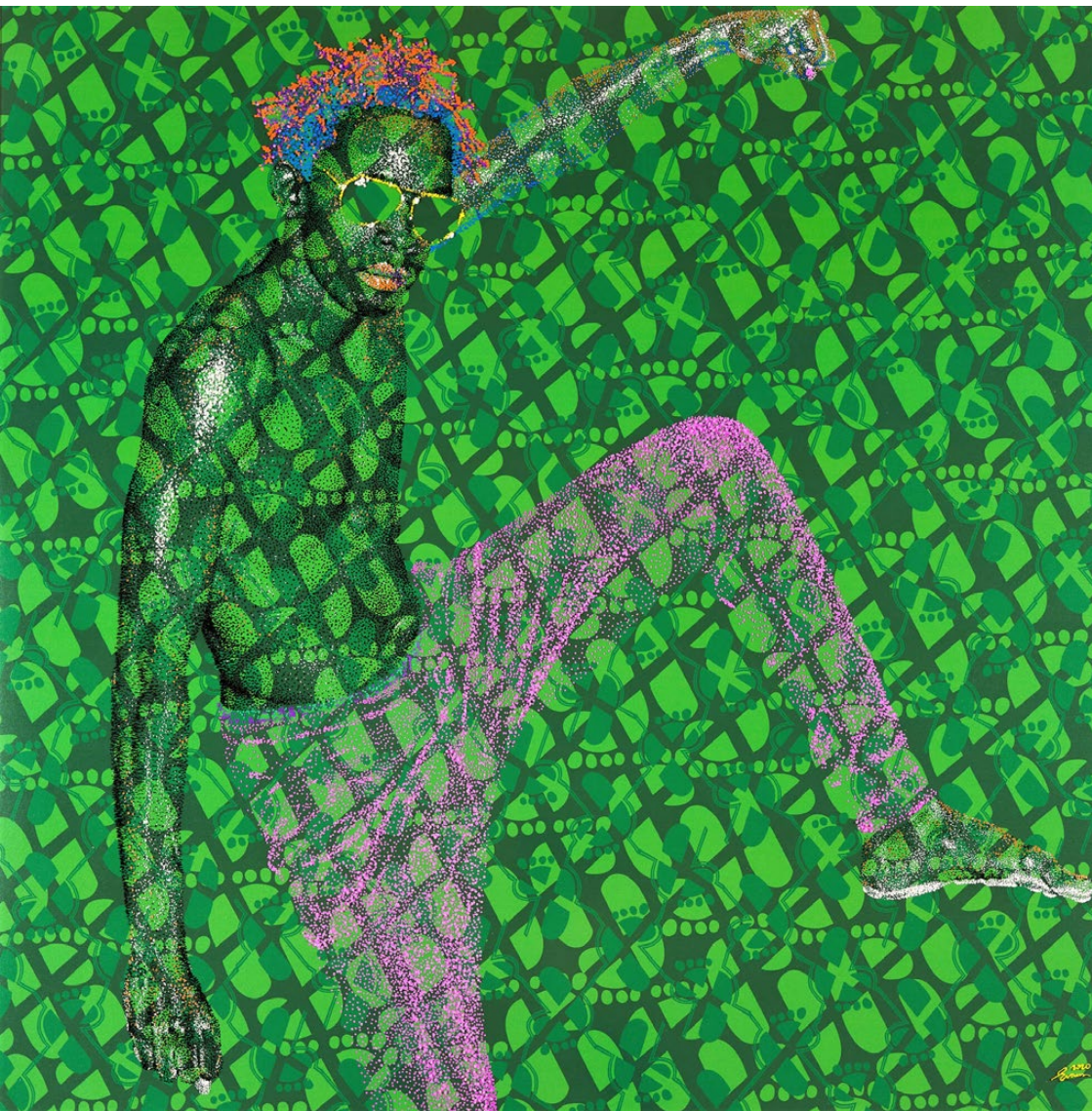
2018 | Recall – Art-Z – Paris (France)
Portrait tiré – Galerie Emmanuelle Rousse – Saint-Savin (France)
Trésors d'Afrique – Maison Chaumet – Paris (France)
Dialogue – Gallery of African Art (GAFRA) – London (UK)
Identities – OOA Gallery – Barcelona (Spain)

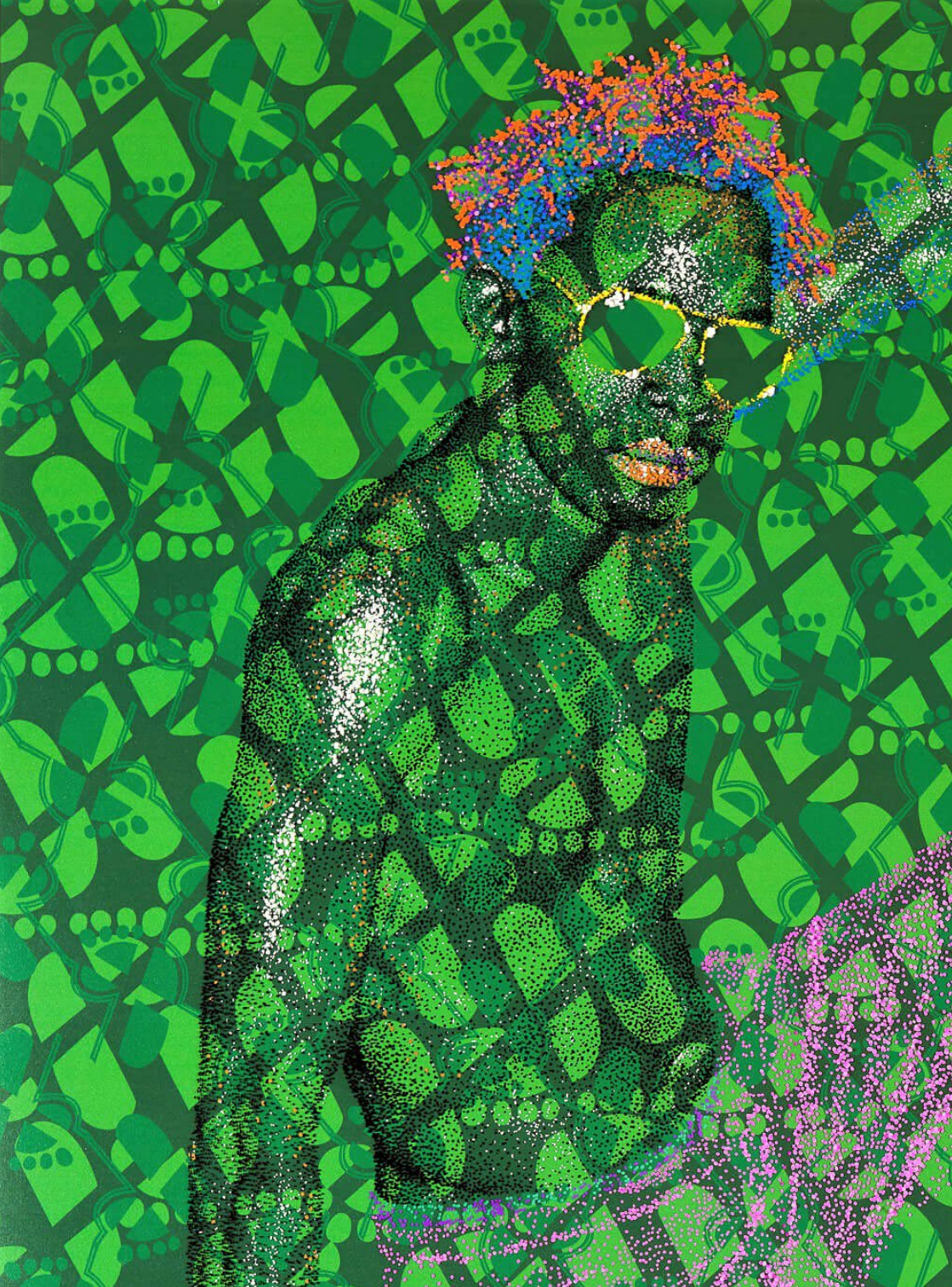
2017 | Identities – OOA Gallery – Barcelona (Spain)
Highlife – Galerie Art-Z – Paris (France)

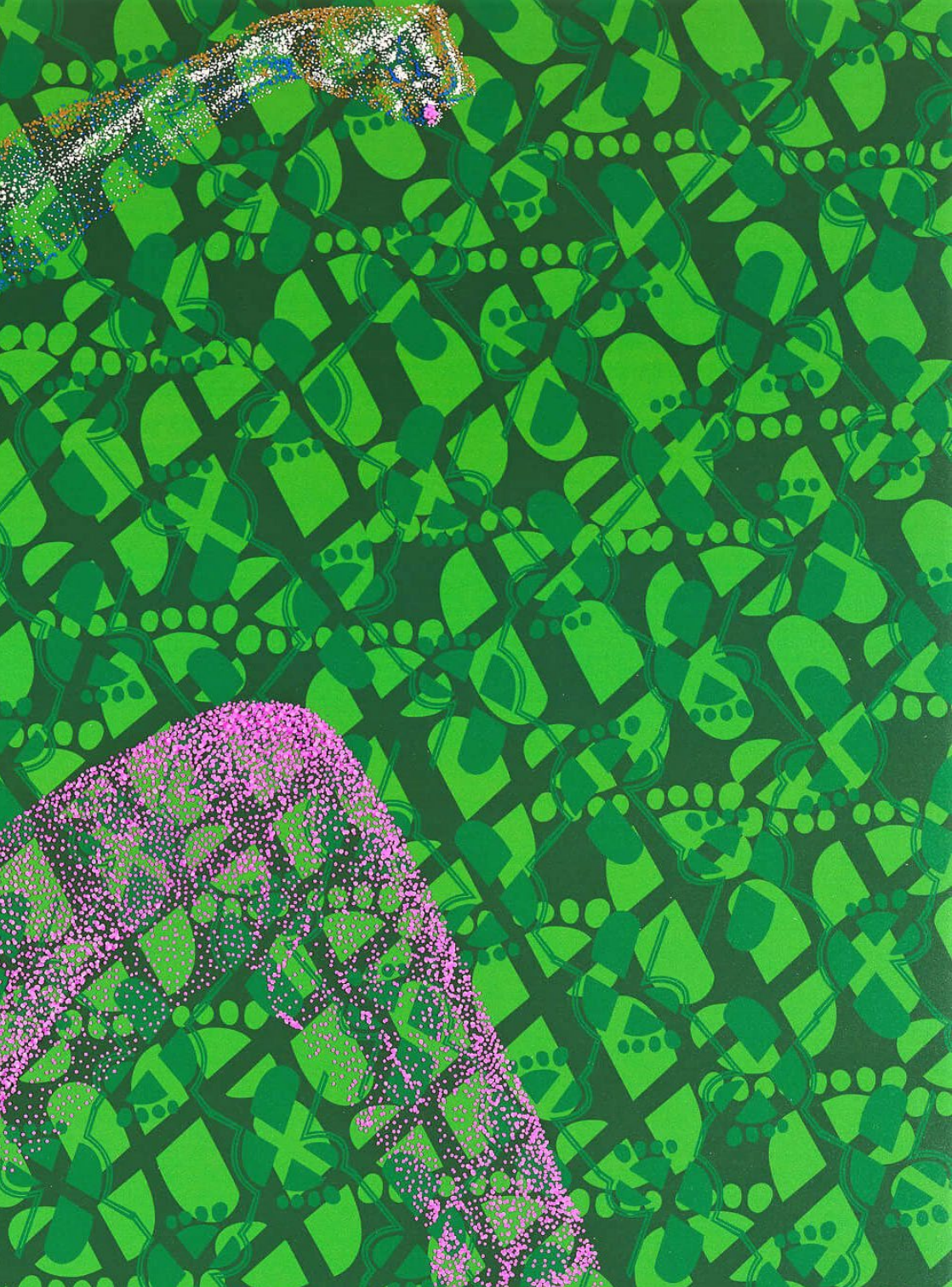
2016 | Evans Mbugua – Ellia Art Gallery – Paris (France)

GIANT STEPS TO THE MOON AND BACK | 2020

100cm x100cm | Oil on plexiglass and photo paper - [ENQUIRE](#)







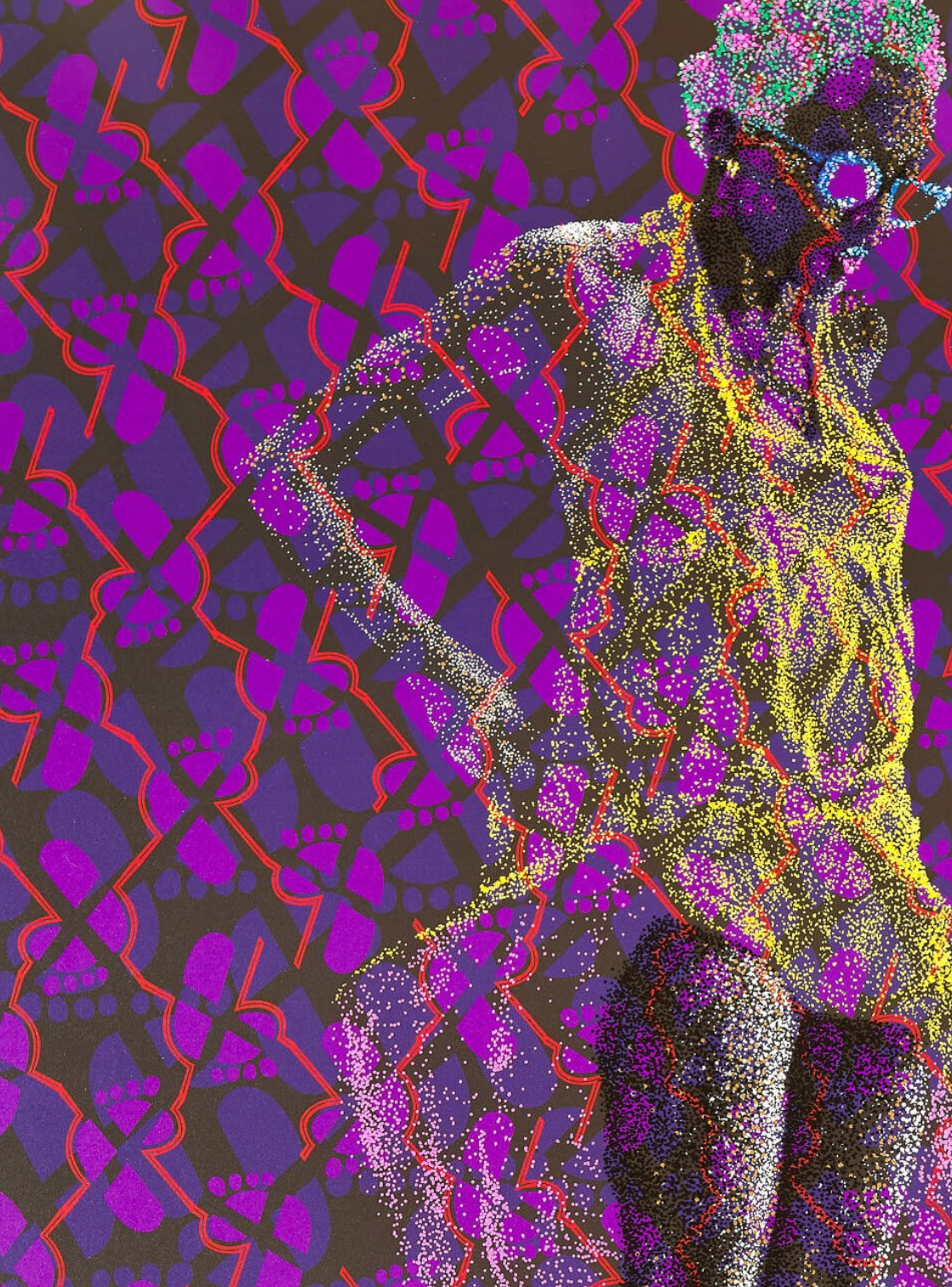
GROUP SHOWS

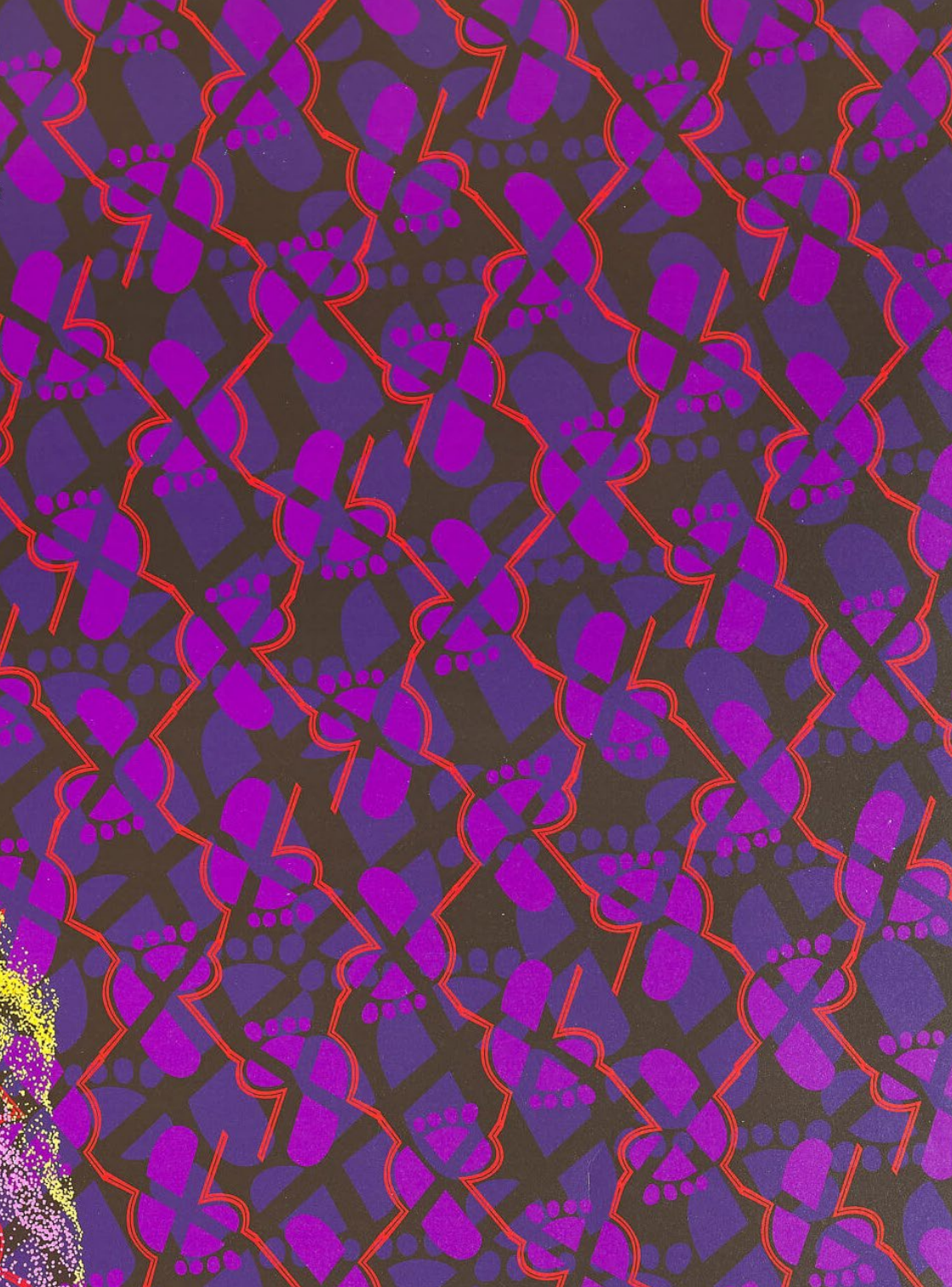
- 2020** | Métamorphoses – Galerie Emmanuelle Rousse – Saint-Savin (France)
Aspiring – ArtCo Gallery – Aachen (Germany)
1-54 New York Online Art Fair – OOA Gallery – New York (USA)
Art X Lagos – OOA Gallery – Lagos (Nigeria)
- 2019** | Les Afriques Autrement – Art-Z – Paris (France)
Art X Lagos Art Fair – OOA Gallery – Lagos (Nigeria)
1-54 London Art Fair – Loft Art Gallery – London (UK)
Beirut Art Fair – OOA Gallery – Beirut (Lebanon)
Nairobi, here we Art – OOA Gallery – Barcelona (Spain)
Mon Rêve est Pop – Loft Art Gallery – Casablanca (Morocco)
Africa – Alexia Werrie Gallery – Tervuren (Belgium)
Afro Funk – Art-Z / Galerie de Photographes – Paris (France)
Afro, rencontres avec des Afriques – Galería de l’Escale – Levallois (France)
Gallery of African Art (GAFRA) – London (UK)
Cape Town Art Fair – ArtCo Gallery – Aachen (Germany)
A spectacular now – Circle Art Gallery – Nairobi (Kenya)
London Art Fair – ArtCo Gallery – Aachen (Germany)

GUTURAMIRA-NGANIA | 2020

100cm x100cm | Oil on plexiglass and photo paper - [ENQUIRE](#)







2018 | Background Africa – ArtCo Gallery / SoArt Gallery – Casablanca (Morocco)
AKAA Art Fair – ArtCo Gallery – Aachen (Germany)
Art X Lagos Art Fair – OOA Gallery – Barcelona (Spain)
Afrik’au coeur – Festival des cultures d’Afrique – Auxerre & Yonne (France)
1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair – Gallery of African Art (GAFRA) – London (UK)
ArtCo Sommerausstellung – ArtCo Gallery – Aachen (Germany)
Portrait Tiré – Galerie Emmanuelle Rousse – France
FNB Joburg Art Fair 2018 – ArtCo Gallery – Johannesburg (South Africa)
GAFRA Summer Exhibition – Gallery of African Art (GAFRA) – London (UK)
Summer Group Show – OOA Gallery – Barcelona (Spain)
Bewegungen – ArtCo Gallery – Aachen (Germany)
15 Ans ! – ArtZ – Paris (France)
Art Paris Fair – ArtCo Gallery – Paris (France)
Cape Town Art Fair – ArtCo Gallery – Cape Town (South Africa)

SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO | 2020

150cm H x 100cm W | Oil on plexiglass and photo paper - [ENQUIRE](#)



2017 | Exode – Galerie Emmanuelle Rousse – Saint-Savin (France)
Expo d'été – Galerie Art-Z – Paris (France)
My collection – MoCADA Museum, New York (USA)
The ArtBall 2017 – Amref Health Africa – New York (USA)
Itinéraires – Galerie Art-Z – Paris (France)

2016 | Mode is Art – Galerie Joseph – Paris (France)
Origines et Trajectoires 2 – Piasa – Paris (France)
Style Fusion – Gallery of African Art – London (England)
Cartes et Identités – Cloîtres des Billettes (curator Olivier Sultan) – Paris (France)
Familles – Galerie Emmanuelle Rousse – Saint-Savin (France)
Le Livre délivre – Galerie ko21 – Paris (France)
Origines et trajectoires – Piasa – Paris (France)
14ème Salon des Arts Plastiques – Centre Culturel Communal de Pierrefite (France)

2015 | Afriques à Venir – Galerie ko21 – Paris (France)
Afric'Art – Villetaneuse (COP21) – HCE Galerie – Mairie de Villetaneuse (France)
La Semaine de l'Afrique – UNESCO – Paris (France)

2014 | La Semaine du Kenya – UNESCO – Paris (France)

CHAKACHA | 2019

150cm H x 100cm W | Oil on plexiglass and photo paper - [ENQUIRE](#)



PERFORMANCES

2016 | Etat d'urgence – Galerie de la Voûte – Paris (France)

ARTIST RESIDENCIES

2019 | Translation (Des Pas et des Mots) – Espaço Luanda Arte – Luanda (Angola)

2018 | Portrait tiré – Galerie Emmanuelle Rousse – Saint-Savin (France)

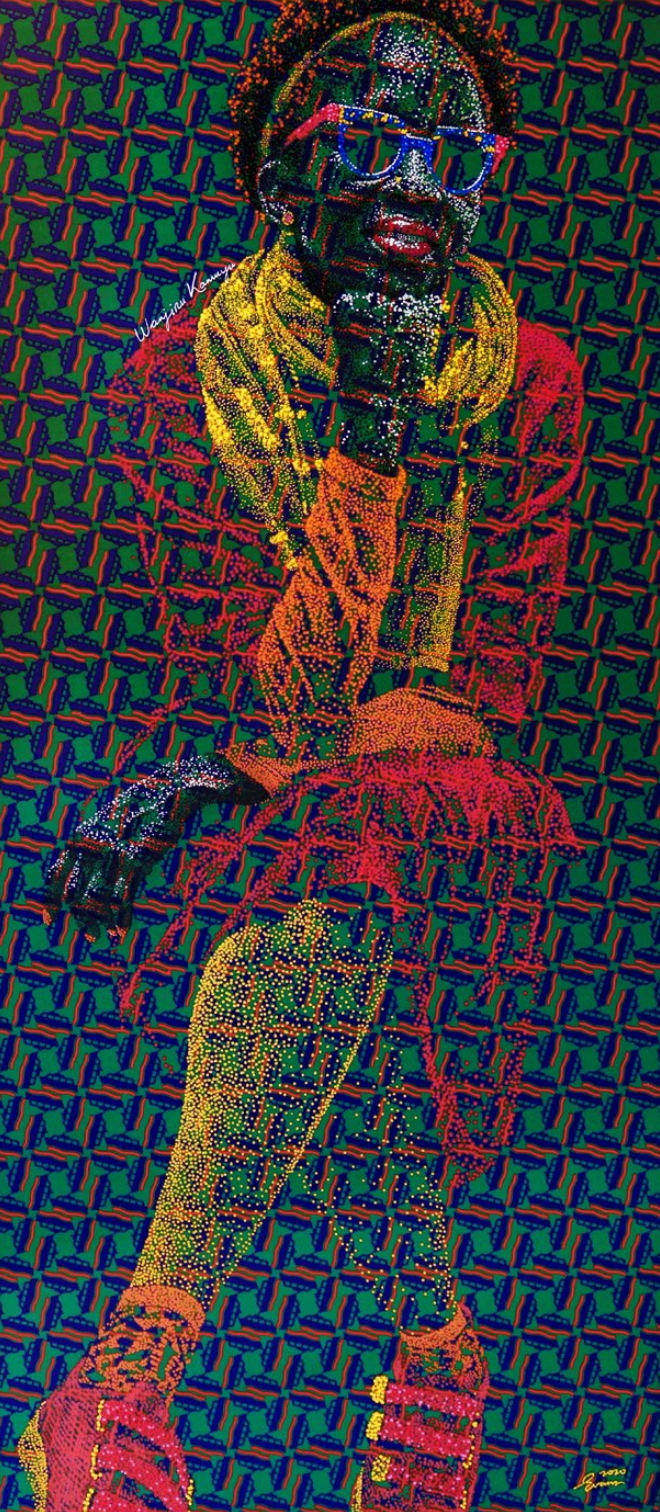
2016 | 2ème Art'Rimal – Galerie d'Art de Oujda – Oujda (Morocco)

COLLECTIONS

His works can be found in private collections in France, England, Italy, Denmark the United States, Kenya, Nigeria and Morocco.

Series "Mes contemporains" - WANJIRU KAMUYU | 2020

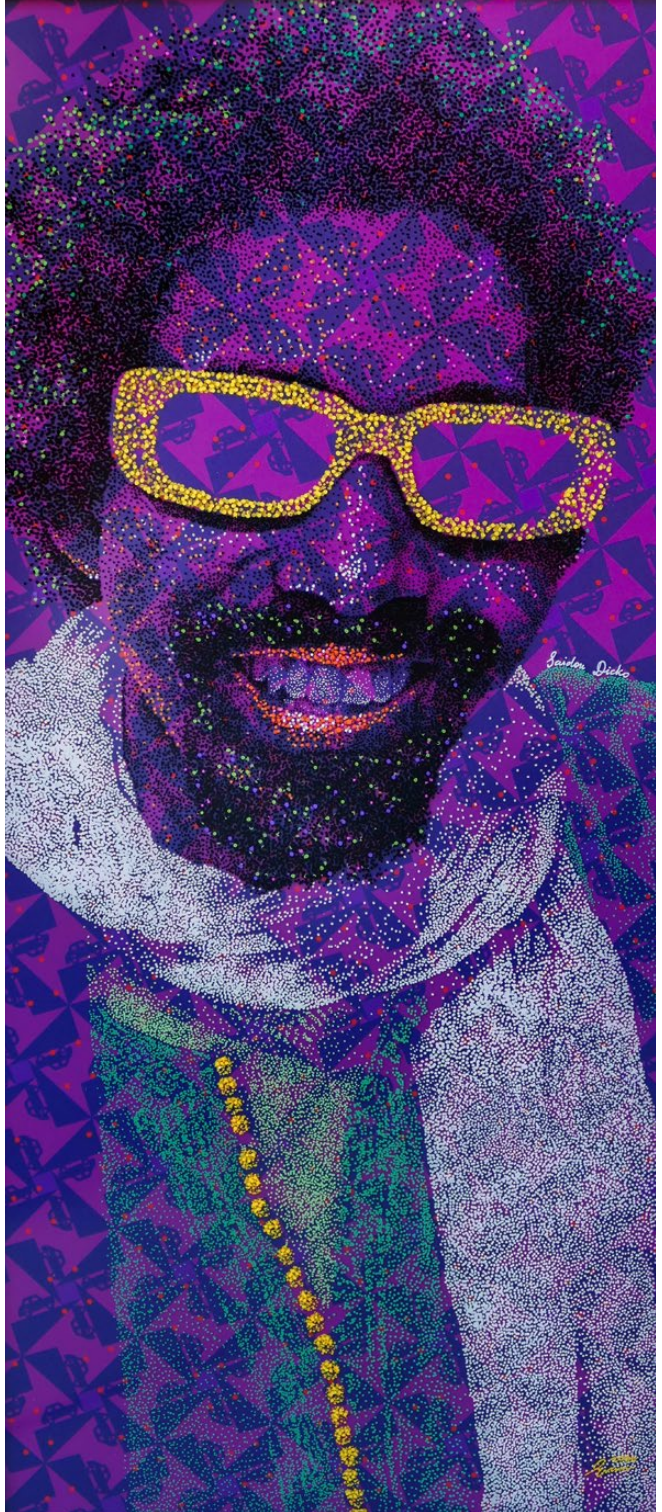
105cm H x 45cm W | Oil on plexiglass and photo paper - [ENQUIRE](#)





Wanjiru Kamuyu





Series "Mes contemporains"

SAIDOU DICKO

2020

105cm H x 45cm W

Oil on plexiglass
and photo paper

ENQUIRE



Series "Mes contemporains"

CLAY APENOUVON

2020

105cm H x 45cm W

Oil on plexiglass
and photo paper

ENQUIRE

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