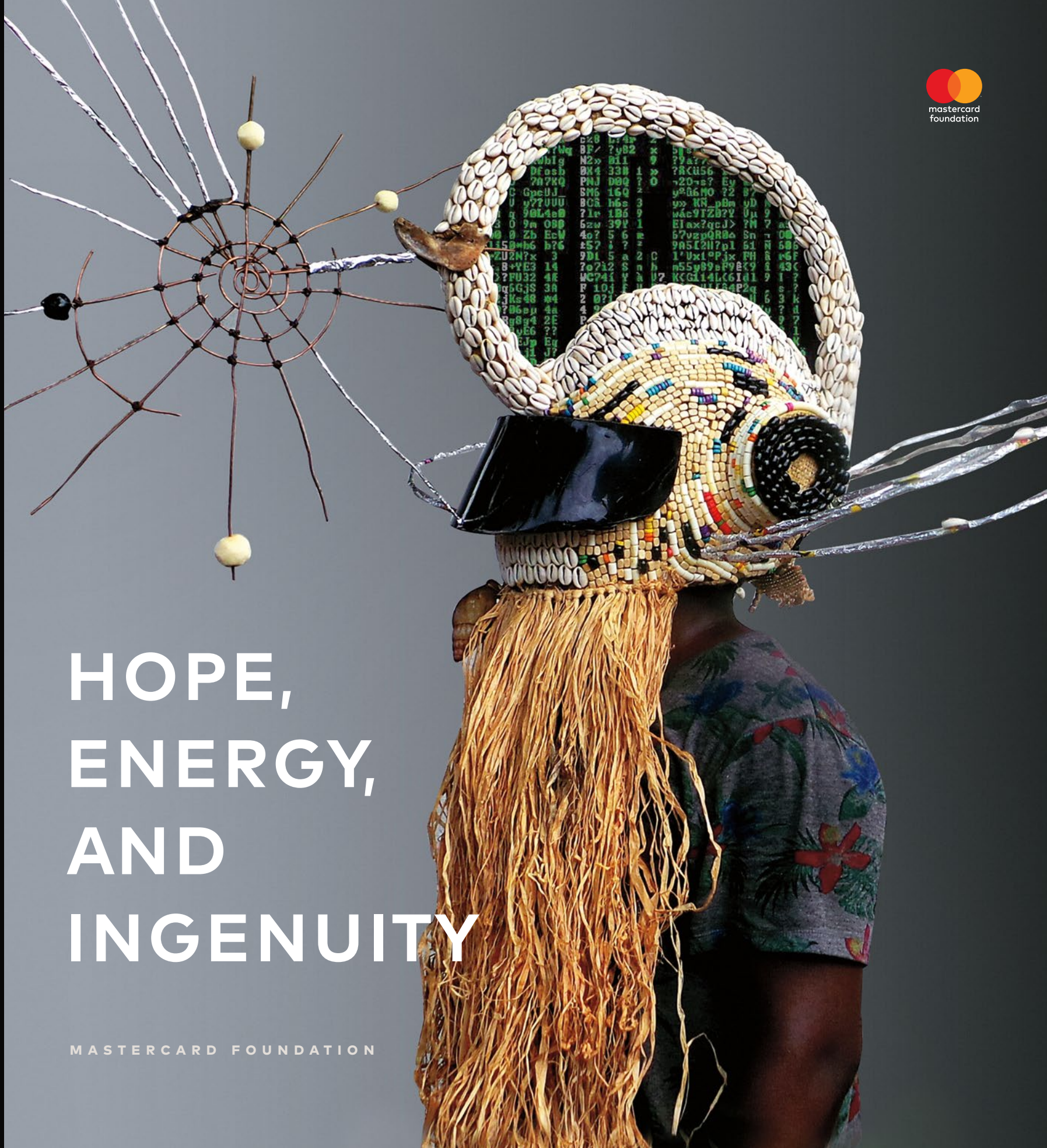




HOPE, ENERGY, AND INGENUITY MASTERCARD FOUNDATION



# HOPE, ENERGY, AND INGENUITY

MASTERCARD FOUNDATION



[www.mastercardfdn.org](http://www.mastercardfdn.org)



**HOPE,  
ENERGY,  
AND  
INGENUITY**  
VOICES OF  
AFRICAN  
YOUTH

**"Positive African stories have, for too long, been largely ignored or told by visitors who fail to appreciate nuances and cultural contexts that often tip the balance of the story one way or another. The people who experience the motherland on a daily basis are best placed to tell her stories."**

**DICKY HOKIE JR. • UGANDA, CURRENTLY RESIDING IN KENYA**

At the Mastercard Foundation, we listen to and work closely with African youth. This book elevates some of the views and ideas they have shared with us. It also demonstrates how prominent the challenge of work is for young people in Africa. Language often falls short of capturing their complex and interconnected lives. Art comes closer. It can provoke us to think and deepens our understanding by conveying insight and emotion.

So we invited young African artists to respond to a question: "What do you hope for African youth?" As illustrated on the following pages, their responses were diverse. But, all of their artistic impressions shared something in common:

HOPE.

ENERGY.

INGENUITY.





# THE FUTURE OF YOUNG AFRICA

## I'M OPTIMISTIC ABOUT CHANGES I SEE

**ACROSS AFRICA** as the Mastercard Foundation enters its second decade of working on this diverse and dynamic continent. From the polling booth to the marketplace, citizens are making their voices heard. African entrepreneurs, through using digital technologies, are changing how we communicate, collaborate, promote services, and acquire knowledge.

Africa is also experiencing a profound transformation: it's getting younger.

Today, there are more than 220 million people between the ages of 15 and 24 on the continent. Within a few decades, this demographic boom will push Africa's workforce to more than a billion people, the largest in the world.

The most complex challenge facing young people and their families, and indeed every African leader, is unemployment, the future of work in Africa, and overcoming poverty. While economic growth in many countries has been strong over the last 10 years, it has come with relatively few employment opportunities. We know such opportunities are critical for families and communities to move themselves out of poverty.

Moreover, for some time, we've observed a mismatch between the skills of the ever-increasing numbers of young people entering the workforce and the needs of employers. The question before us is: how can we bridge that gap?

At the Mastercard Foundation, when we look at the challenge of poverty holistically, we see that some of the answers lie in better access to relevant education, financial tools and services, skills training, and technology. That's why, over the next decade, we will devote our expertise, networks, and resources to these areas, to enable 30 million young people—particularly young women—to secure dignified and fulfilling work.

We appreciate the scale of the challenge. No one organization can solve it alone. We are excited about collaborating with governments, the private sector, educators, and other global funders. All of us have a role to play. Working together, we have an opportunity to improve the lives of millions of people in Africa.

I've met many young innovators who are creating solutions to the challenges they face. From improving education and health care to addressing food security and climate change, they are shaping a future for themselves, and changing the narrative for their families, their communities, and beyond.

I believe in these young people. They're inspiring! With the right investments and policies, they will transform a vibrant continent into a powerhouse for global prosperity.

Young people in Africa are leading the way. We see their intelligence and ingenuity demonstrated throughout the perspectives in this book. Let's accompany them on their journey and support their aspirations for their communities and countries.

## REETA ROY

PRESIDENT AND CEO



To learn more about our vision for the future, visit [mastercardfdn.org/strategy](https://mastercardfdn.org/strategy)

**"I believe that young minds  
and big ideas are what Africa  
really needs. And, for us to  
do that, we need you to  
believe in us, believe in our  
big dreams, support us, and  
invest in them."**

**RITA KIMANI • KENYA**

CO-FOUNDER OF FARMDRIVE,

SPEAKING AT YOUNG AFRICA WORKS 2017



"African youth have constantly experienced bottlenecks in their career paths due to the economic situation of the continent. The unemployment rate has clouded the world's mind to young people's successes and extraordinary achievements in recreating a new perception of African youth. African youth have also shown dynamism in creating companies that have soared successfully."

QUEEN TOCHUKWU NWANERI • NIGERIA

**Rejuvenated V >**

Mixed media on canvas · 114.5 × 114.5 cm

Queen Nwaneri, 25, is a contemporary artist known for her use of bold colour. As a portraitist, she draws her themes from the mood of the women and children she portrays.







"African youth are the future of the continent and also the primary users of technology, including instant messaging platforms. I originally created the emoji after noticing a distinct lack of a true African representation on any digital messaging platforms. Africa deserves its own storytellers."

DICKY HOKIE JR. • UGANDA, CURRENTLY RESIDING IN KENYA

< AfroStickers

Digital illustration

Dicky Hokie Jr., 30, is a graphic designer, multimedia storyteller, and entrepreneur whose work highlights African narratives and representation.



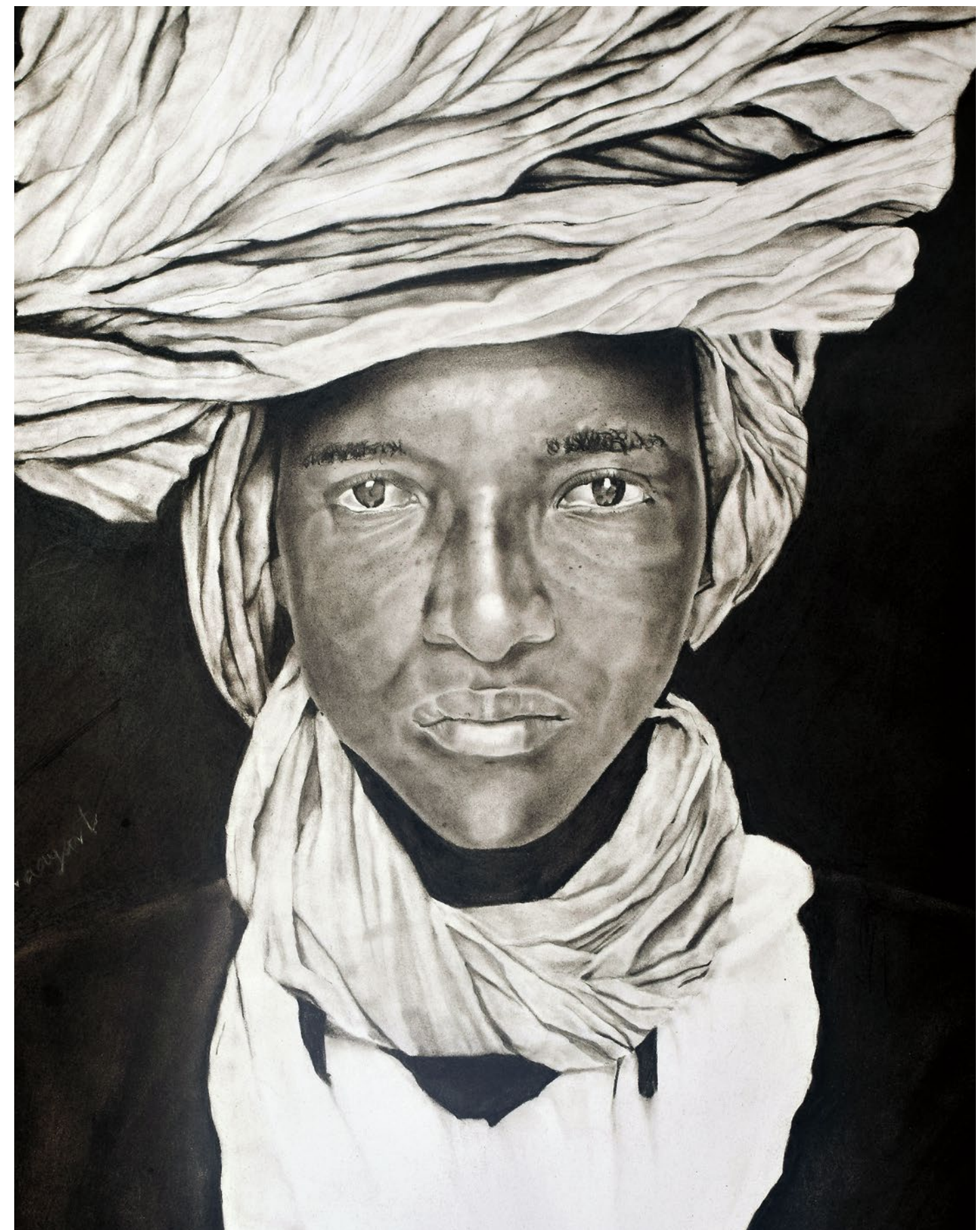
"It is clear that the youth need to organize ourselves to make our voice strong and to challenge this situation where young people have no jobs, no access to education, and no income. The African youth is strong, creative, innovative, industrious. I hope that one day, the African youth will make Africa the greatest continent."

ADEYEMO OLUWASEYI EMMANUEL • NIGERIA

**The Bohemian >**

Charcoal and graphite on cartridge · 41 × 61 cm

Adeyemo Oluwaseyi Emmanuel, 22, is a university student, artist, and writer who has been drawing since primary school. He specializes in portraiture and published his first novelette in 2012.



**"Nowadays youth have the chance to be educated. They have the chance to have a fresh mind and think straight forward. This helps us to plan, know our roots, and have goals. If we take this perspective, our country will achieve its goal."**

**LAMBERT SINZAYIGAYA • RWANDA**

STRYDE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT,

TECHNOSERVE



"Tsemba litsemba is a Siswati phrase meaning 'have hope on hope.' We are actually not the embodiment of misery and gloom, because hope is on the horizon. We have been praying for far too long. Hope is coming, and that is why we still have the power to wear a grin in the midst of everything we see."

MFUNDO (CHARCOAL) NSIBANDE • SWAZILAND

**Tsemba Litsemba >**

Digital illustration and photo composition

Charcoal Nsibande, 29, is a writer, poet, graphic designer, and activist. He fuses politics and art to create social commentary and reflect his personal experiences.







"The future of Africa will depend on the level of involvement and commitment of its youth in all the processes of its development."

TIÉCOURA N'DAOU • MALI

< **Djingareyber 1**  
Photograph

Tiécoura N'Daou, 35, uses photography, video, and multimedia to explore the theme of youth involvement in the restoration and preservation of cultural heritage.



"The way we see Africa tangibly shapes and communicates our convictions about the contribution that the youth of the continent can make to Africa's identity. Our work creates opportunities to celebrate the rich legacy left by those who came before us, a heritage that is biological and spiritual, artistic and scientific."

**HILAIRE KUYANGIKO BALU**

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**Helmet, Nganganaut Tem, Phase 1 >**

Beads, cowry shells, bone shards, grounding wire, motorbike helmet, plexiglass, polystyrene, raffia, electronic cable, and aluminum foil

Hilaire Kuyangiko Balu, 25, is a multidisciplinary artist whose work examines cultural change and identity transformation while exploring the concept of Afrofuturism.



**"In the community I come from,  
there are a lot of women who have  
the need and zeal to change to do  
something extraordinary. I will help  
with a little training in agriculture  
and basic entrepreneurship skills,  
and see the world that I have always  
wanted—equal opportunities, social  
acceptance, and sound businesses  
for the rural woman."**

**ESNATH DIVASONI • ZIMBABWE**

**MASTERCARD FOUNDATION SCHOLAR**

**AT EARTH UNIVERSITY**



"The success of Africa lies in its natural resources and its people. The only solution is to use what we have to solve problems, as innovation breeds success."

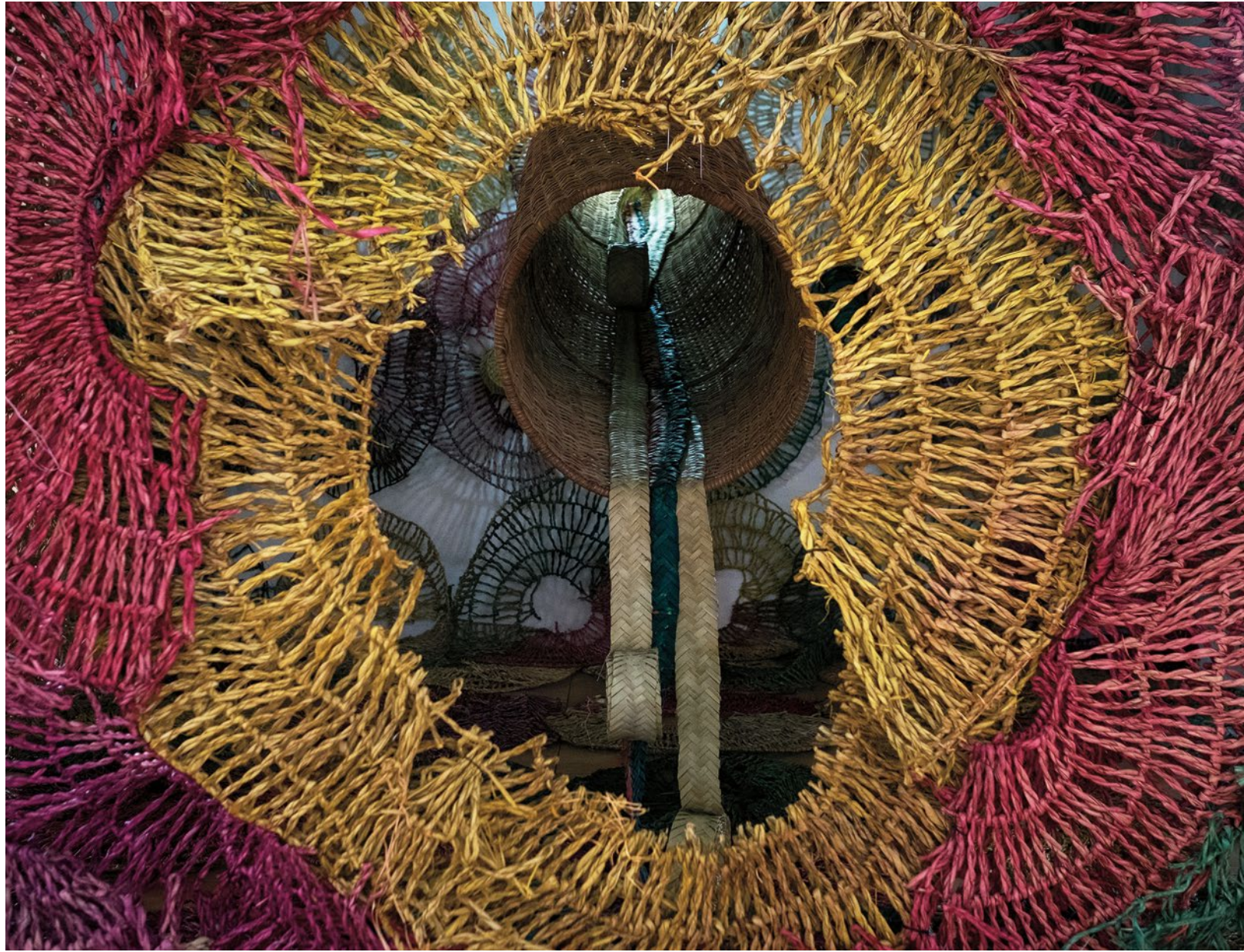
HODARI OLIVIER • RWANDA

**The Nature of Pure Soul >**  
Acrylic on canvas · 80 x 100 cm

Hodari Olivier, 25, studied graphic arts at the School of Arts and Music in Rwanda. He is passionate about using art as a vehicle for lifelong learning and growth.







**She Chose Me**

Kenaf · 366 × 305 cm

Theresah Ankomah, 28, creates installations with everyday woven baskets to examine the complexities of "craft" in trade, and to critique social and economic structures and norms.

"For some time now the role of weaving has been perceived as one of the craft practices which appear today as just decorative objects. My work derives various narratives from these basket weavers' contributions to transporting food from one geographical area (Niger) to another (Ghana and other parts of Africa) with the help of their practices, which are embedded within complex narratives about transborder bilateral trading, consumerism, capitalism, and identity."

TERESA ANKOMAH · GHANA



"When I am painting, I am constantly negotiating and pushing back against constrictions. In this painting, the young woman is about to jump out of the canvas, away from other people's opinions, ideologies, and constricting systems. She is fluid; almost dancing. This painting is inspired by the women around me and their stories—what they have stood for, who they are becoming, and what they are creating in the world."

**IVY BRANDIE CHEMUTAI NG'OK**

KENYA, SOMETIMES RESIDING IN SOUTH AFRICA

**Liberation >**

Oil on canvas · 110 x 150 cm

Ivy Brandie Chemutai Ng'ok, 28, is a fine arts student and emerging painter whose recent work represents a call for agency and equality for young women in Africa.





**"Youth are not  
waiting for  
tomorrow to  
happen to become  
leaders. They are  
leaders today."**

**ROSELYNE MUKUHI MUGO • KENYA**

MASTERCARD FOUNDATION

YOUTH THINK TANK RESEARCHER





**Burial: Erasing Erasure**

Photograph

Gladys Melina Kalichini, 29, is a photographer and painter who addresses the complexities of collective memory and cultural narratives, and the marginalization of women's narratives.

"This work is part of a broader body of work, titled *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), which deals with the erasure of women's historical narratives from a singular commemorative narrative. This piece, titled *Burial: Erasing Erasure*, evokes a notion of both personal loss and national loss in terms of women's narratives that are sidelined in the national archives of Zambia. Though death and erasure as words in themselves do not render a sense of hope, they caution and encourage, especially for the African youth, to look back and reassemble history to better write and archive our own narratives and history."

GLADYS MELINA KALICHINI • ZAMBIA



"The wire sculpture is an illustration of the interrelations of each individual as an agent of his or her environment. The spiral movement around the person suggests a continually changing body. It plunges the custodians of society into an unceasing swirl of new beginnings and ongoing change."

**CÉDRICK SUNGO MOME**

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**Dreams to Share >**

Recycled wire sculpture · 50 × 70 cm

Cédric Sungo Mome, 25, is a visual artist who explores themes at the intersection of culture and environment in order to prompt self-reflection in the viewer.







**In the Midst of Reality**

Mixed media (graphite, charcoal, and coloured pencils) · 71 × 58.5 cm

**Ebube Onyenwe Gideon**, 28, is a self-taught artist who draws inspiration from his environment to depict the struggles and hopes of young people in Africa.

"The work I submitted was inspired by what we pass through on a daily basis as Africans, from how we struggle with our cultural barriers to how we strive each day to overcome frustrations, disappointments, and poverty. This work means so much to me because it clearly shows how I feel as an artist about Nigeria and the future of Africa. There is hope in the midst of our current realities and distresses."

**EBUBE ONYENWE GIDEON** · NIGERIA



"I want to showcase women's role in the household and communal work and in the weaving industry, and to call attention to their minimal involvement in decision-making processes. I hope that future generations have a stronger position to choose for alternative means of livelihood, for more equal decision-making power and division of labour."

LEIKUN NAHUSENAY • ETHIOPIA



**Color of Somale**  
Photograph

Leikun Nahusenay, 36, is a studio artist and teacher who, by using texture and a variety of media, aims to show that experimentation is key to creating a new and better reality.



**"We Africans should take up the challenge to confront problems that are approaching us head on and also harness opportunities knocking at our doors. We should do so with a very strong spirit, fully believing that if we don't take the lead, no outsider will be able to uncover the opportunities that we know, let alone solve our problems without us."**

**NICHOLAS TORONGA • ZIMBABWE**

MASTERCARD FOUNDATION SCHOLAR

AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY



"I believe that the growing youth population has led to a greater desire to know and understand our history. Nairobi city is ever moving and ever growing. I try to illustrate that through the material I use in my work. I use construction materials that I find on the streets of Nairobi to highlight the rapid growth around the city. The spirit of entrepreneurship is very evident in Nairobi youth, another reason I deal with the themes of work and home."

**AGNES WARUGURU NJOROGE • KENYA**

**Untitled (collecting) >**

Acrylic on vellum, leso (traditional cloth), found fabric, coloured pencil, and photographic print on bristol · 21 x 30 cm

Agnes Waruguru Njoroge, 23, is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores her multicultural experiences. Her recent work fuses African and American influences and creative traditions.







"My own work is a demonstration of my confidence in better tomorrows. The images of the future illustrated in my sculptures are expressions of the voices of a young generation that is moving forward while remaining fully aware of the issues it will need to address."

DANNIEL TOYA • DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

< **Robot Computer-Typist**

Wood structure, typewriter, metal and plastic plates, computer and electronic parts, tin cans, radio antennas, articulated joint system, *mousse de babouche*, banknotes, and shoe sole · 100 × 93 × 133 cm

Daniel Toya, 22, is a sculptor and robot designer who repurposes waste materials, building them into machines that reflect commentary on current social themes.



"Maasai Inc. is a visual metaphor to show how new tech and accessible education will give people new opportunities to learn and grow, and create new streams of sustainable income. In my personal life, I see opportunity for innovation in style, product design, and software development if we can connect people to education who wouldn't otherwise be exposed to it."

**BRIAN OMOLO** • KENYA

**Maasai Inc.** >

Pen, pencil, Adobe Illustrator, and  
Adobe Photoshop · 42 × 59.5 cm

Brian Omolo, 31, is a graphic artist and lecturer who uses abstract ideas to tell stories through a blend of hand-drawn illustration and digital media.



Omolo  
2016





### **Obioma**

Technical pen on embossed cardboard  
71 x 61 cm

Christian Echezonachukwu Okwananke, 25, is a self-taught artist and trained architect whose visual art is inspired by the daily routines of average citizens in his home city.

"I try as much as possible to tell tales with my art so as to keep memories soon to be forgotten alive to the generations to come. Obioma is the Igbo word for kindheartedness. It is a name given to tailors that carry their sewing machines on their shoulders, exchanging sewing services for money. The name was given to them because they are not too strict with billing."

CHRISTIAN ECHEZONACHUKWU OKWANANKE • NIGERIA



"In my work I try to bring together the spirit of strength that comes from the experience of being an African woman. The way women express themselves through fashion has always been the muse behind my drawings. This work is a tribute to that. My hope is that African youth find the freedom within themselves to express themselves even more than in past generations."

NGADI SMART • SIERRA LEONE,  
CURRENTLY RESIDING IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE



**Real Friends Side-Eye**

Mixed media (traditional ink, digital)

Ngadi Smart, 29, uses illustration and photography to deconstruct society's preconceived views of "normal," "beautiful," and "right," especially in terms of identity.

**"I'm personally tired of discussing problems. I am a mover, I'm a shaker. I want us to see action. And I believe that young people basically are the fulcrum for that in the decade to come."**

**CATHERINE MLOZA BANDA • MALAWI**

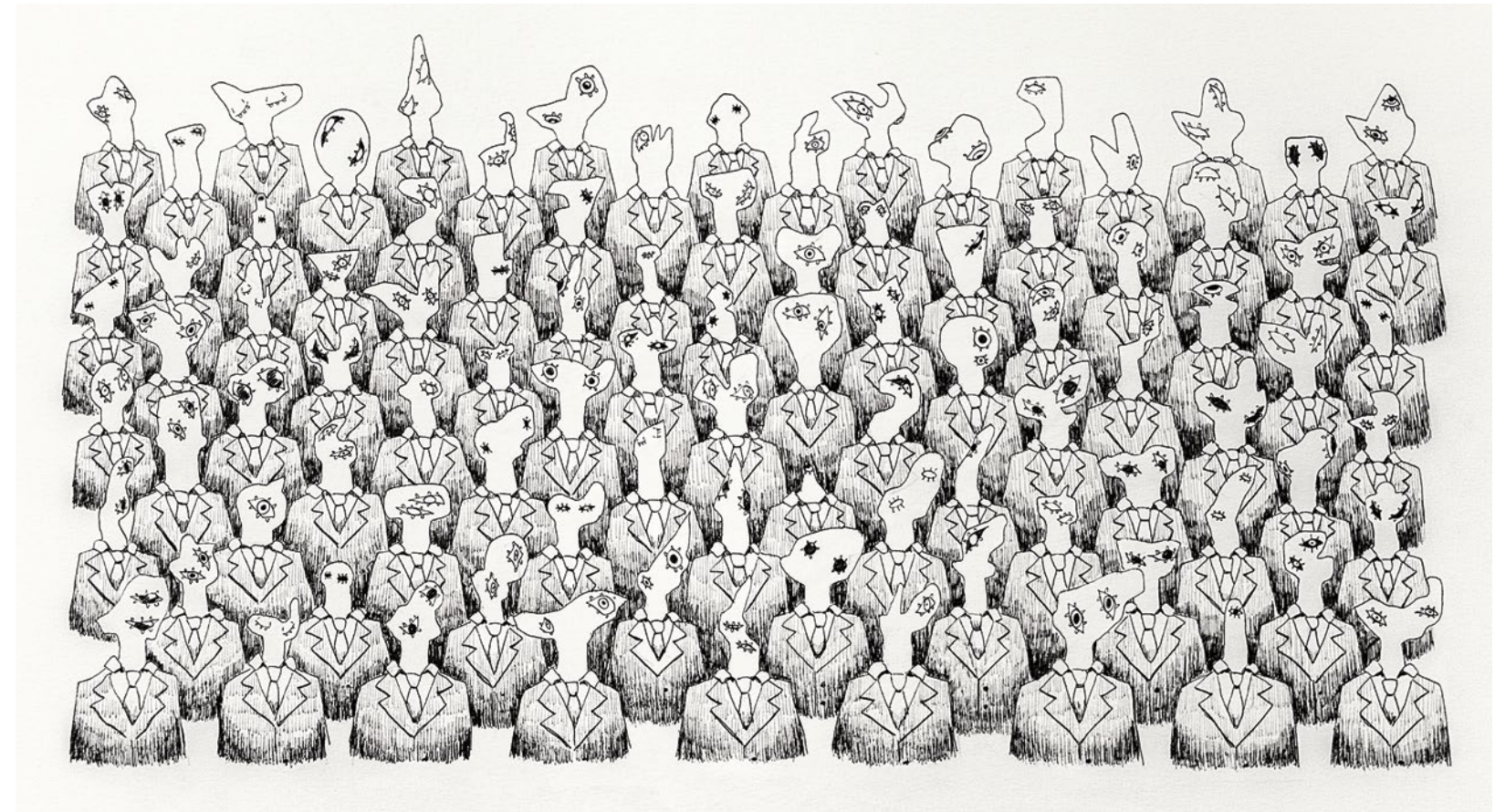
FARM RADIO TRUST, SPEAKING AT

YOUNG AFRICA WORKS 2017



"Every day we observe the effects of population density on people. Everyone is trying to adapt and to live happily. It was interesting for me to compare the world we live in with the microscopic universe—that is, cells. Just as a human being is composed of cells, society is composed of people. Many individuals are necessary to constitute a whole, a collective, a unit."

MEHDI OUAHMANE • MOROCCO

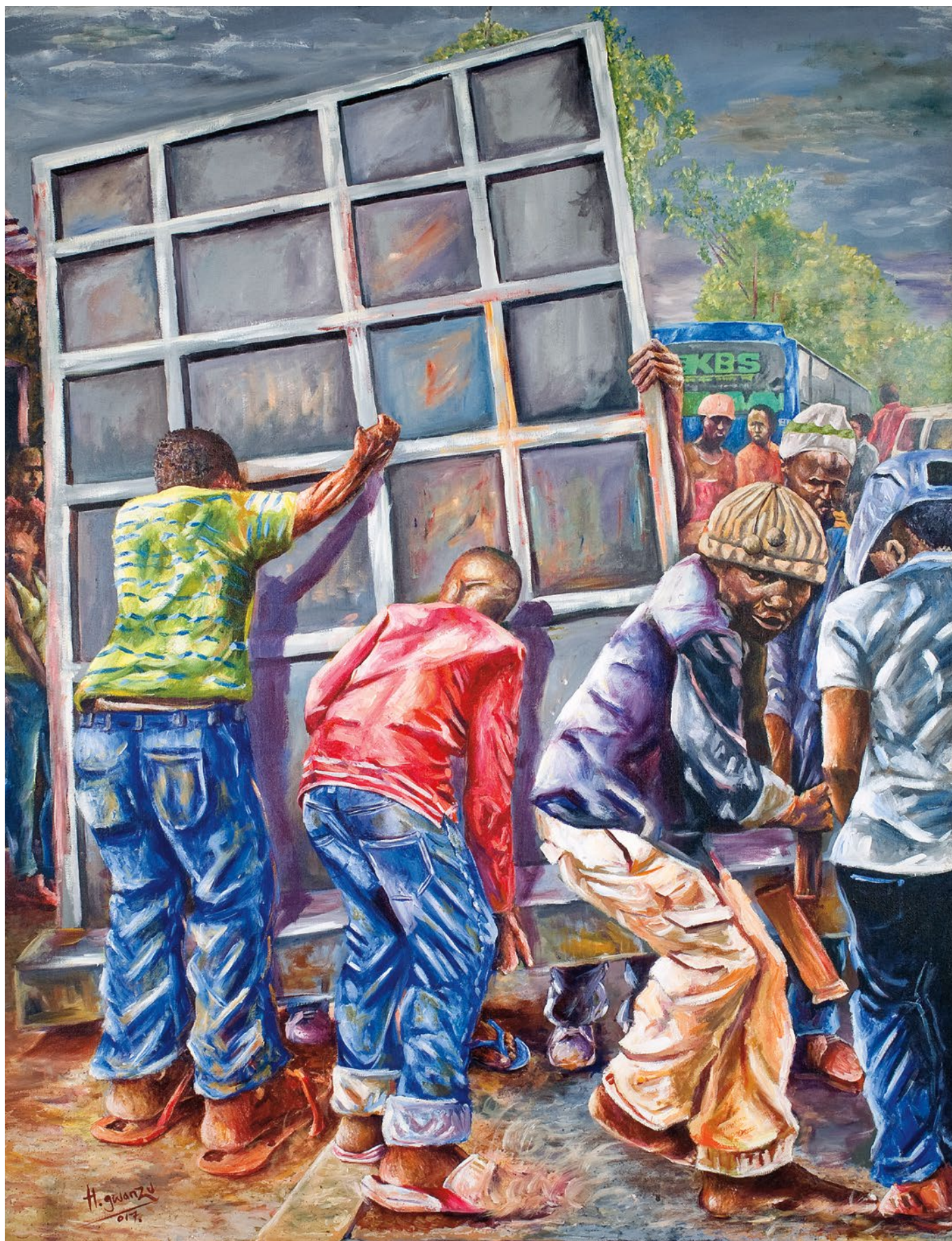


**Workers**

Felt on paper · 65 × 50 cm

Mehdi Ouahmane, 25, is a multidisciplinary artist, trained graphic designer, and fine arts student whose personal work explores the theme of population density.





"Youth have so many abilities that are not put into action. In my painting *Kimoja*, I highlight young people together carrying a huge metal door. I want to see my fellow African youth coming together to work hand in hand so that African narratives can be changed for the betterment of future generations."

HANNINGTON GWANZU • KENYA

< **Kimoja**

Acrylic on canvas · 101 x 120 cm

Hannington Gwanzu, 27, works in various media, including acrylic, pen, mixed media, and charcoal, to portray his society from a social, economic, and political point of view.



"My hope for African youth is simple—that we be authentic. We must endeavour beyond reason to preserve our culture, our heritage, and the communal ethos of Ubuntu, which means 'I am because we are.' I believe 'Afri.can'—but only together in our truth can we."

JOSEPH AWUAH-DARKO • GHANA

**Who Are We Oh Children of Africa >**

Drum rope, authentic cowry shells, strings, and azure glass beads · 60 × 140 cm

Joseph Awuah-Darko, 21, is a sculptor, photographer, graphic designer, and self-described "Afro-optimist" who addresses themes of anonymity and identity of youth in Africa.





**"Nothing for  
the youth  
without  
the youth."**

**FRANCIS ARINAITWE • UGANDA**  
MASTERCARD FOUNDATION  
YOUTH THINK TANK RESEARCHER,  
SPEAKING AT YOUNG AFRICA  
WORKS 2017



## ABOUT THE MASTERCARD FOUNDATION

Our vision is a world where everyone has an opportunity to learn and prosper. We believe that all people, no matter their starting point in life, should have an equal chance to succeed, and with access to education, financial services, and skills training, people can have that chance. We help financially disadvantaged young people in Africa find opportunities to move themselves, their families, and their communities out of poverty to a better life.

The Foundation has programs in over 33 African countries to advance financial inclusion and education. We are among the top five global private foundations in the world and the largest foundation in Canada. We are also among the largest private funders working in Africa. To date, our partnerships have improved the lives of more than 25 million people and their families by helping them to access financial services or acquire the education and skills they need to grow their businesses or prepare them for the global workforce.

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