

Chéri Samba, *Merci merci je suis dans la zone verte*, 2020, © Kleinfenn, courtesy galerie MAGNIN-A, Paris

KINGS OF KIN

CHÉRI SAMBA

BODYS ISEK KINGELEZ

MOKÉ

Exhibition from September 12 to October 30, 2020

Opening on Saturday September 12, 2020 from 3pm to 7pm

#KingsOfKin #MagninA #NatalieSeroussi

KINGS OF KIN

From September 12 to October 30, 2020 the Galerie MAGNIN-A and the Galerie Natalie Seroussi join forces to present an important exhibition dedicated to three iconic artists from Kinshasa (DRC): Bodys Isek Kingelez (1948-2015), Moké (1950-2001) and Chéri Samba (b. 1956) in their Parisian galleries.

The exhibition KINGS OF KIN gathers around 30 new and historical works from these artists that are inspired by the everyday life, events of the Congolese society and the international news. As observers of the changes happening to their country and of its political events, their work translates the terrific energy of the Congolese society with its hopes and torments.

These « Kings of Kin », true pioneers of the Congolese artistic scene, are the true guards of the independence of their country. Moké paints the ambiance and the sentiments, Chéri Samba takes a critical look at the global events and Bodys Isek Kingelez imagines the future. While the political life keeps on going, their work spreads more and more internationally and is today part of great public and private collections, amongst which that of the MoMA in New-York that recently organized a retrospective exhibition of Bodys Isek Kingelez.

On exhibition,
2 galleries

In its space in Boulevard Richard Lenoir, MAGNIN-A chose to present the buildings of Bodys Isek Kingelez together with historical works by Moké created between 1974 and 1986 and recent and unseen works by Chéri Samba. The « Grand peintre Moké » is influenced by everyday life, the bustle and sounds of the city, develops a painting in which the Kinshasans can recognize themselves. Chéri Samba's paintings describe in an ostentatious manner the twists of his artist life and his reflexions on the world.

At the other side of the Seine, the Galerie Natalie Seroussi focuses on the colourful and utopian buildings of Bodys Isek Kingelez. In his imaginary models, Kingelez depicts the image of a modern, prosperous and strong Africa. He often uses discarded materials to create his buildings and reminds the Congolese that they can also be the architect of their own dreams. Created between 1990 and the beginning of the 2000's, the sculptures presented by Natalie Seroussi are also exhibited for the first time to the public.



Moké, *Bar Nocturne*, 1981, Huile sur sac de farine, 95 x 188 cm, © Kleinefenn, courtesy galerie MAGNIN-A, Paris

« *KINGS OF KIN* gathers the work of three great artists I discovered in Kinshasa in 1987 and that I never left. I followed them and exhibited them in museums and foundations in the world word. Today, I am still gripped by the liberty, the humour and the beauty of the paintings of Chéri Samba and Moké, and fascinated by the redesigned world by Bodys Isek Kingelez. Only the Democratic Republic of the Congo can inspire such an artistic effervescence. Since *Beauté Congo*, the « *Kings of Kin* » are reunited again, and for the first time in art galleries. »

André Magnin

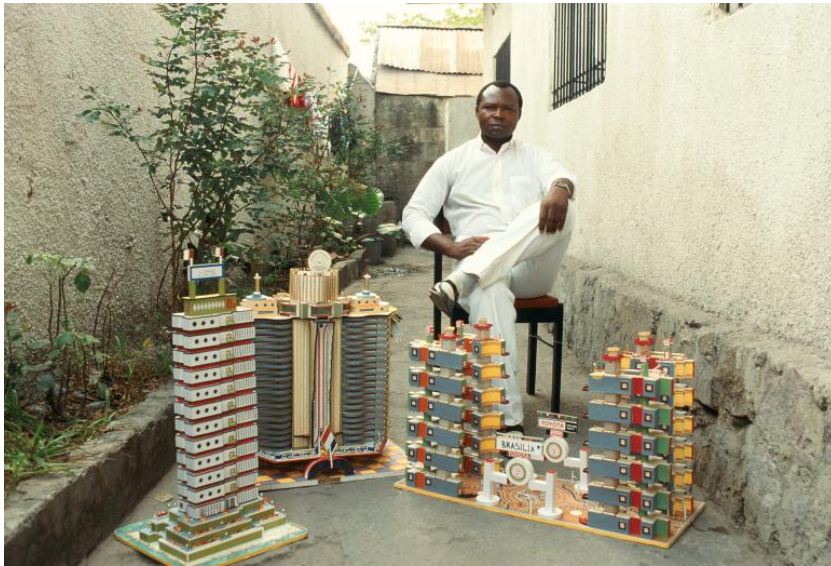


Bodys Isek Kingelez, *La Tupina Restaurant*, 2008, courtesy galerie Natalie Seroussi

"I discovered the Congolese artists in 2015, during the exhibition Beauté Congo at the Fondation Cartier. From this country, I only knew a darker side because of my role at the International Criminal Court. The vitality of its artistic scene immediately touched me, and since my arrival at the Galerie Natalie Seroussi, I had the willingness to contribute to its recognition. The Galerie Natalie Seroussi always promoted audacious dialogues between artistic movements and collaborations with other galleries. The exhibition KINGS OF KIN then naturally became part of our program and working with the Galerie MAGNIN-A gave to this project the dimension it deserved, combining our modern art experience to their fine and precise knowledge of the Congolese artistic scene. »

Julien Seroussi.

Bodys Isek Kingelez



Bodys Isek Kingelez, 1988, Kinshasa, RDC, © André Magnin

Born in 1948 in Kimbembele Ihunga, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Died in 2015 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Bodys Isek Kingelez taught in a secondary school until 1977. After over a year of isolation and research, he creates in 1979 a strange model that catches the attention of the director of the Museum of Kinshasa, where he becomes a restorer. From 1985 onwards, he completely focuses on his work as an artist that he qualifies as « Architecte Maquettiste ». Kinshasa is at the time a big chaotic metropolis, anarchic, always more decrepit. As a witness of the ravages of a policy that cares little about the community, he develops an architectural looking work that gathers all the development conditions of the capital city of his country: living, education, justice, health, security. His poetic and political work questions the human condition.

After creating over a hundred models from discarded materials, paper, cardboard, plastic in which present, future and the hopes of an African renewal seem to coexist, from 1992 onwards he imagines entire cities. These cities are an assembling of building models with unusual shapes, grand buildings, with bright colours that gather all the functions of the ideal city that the artist dreams to build.

« I wanted my art to enable the new generation to create a new world, because the pleasure of the earthly world depends on the people that live in it. I created these cities to make sure that peace; justice and liberty last in a universal way. They will function as small lay towns with their own political structures, without needing the police or the army. »

Statement gathered by André Magnin, Kinshasa, Paris, 2000

SOLO SHOWS (Selection)

2018

Bodys Isek Kingelez: City Dreams, MoMA, New York, USA

2005

Perspectives 145: Bodys Isek Kingelez, Nina and Michael Zilkha Gallery, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, USA

1996

D'autres Ajouts d'Été, Bodys Isek Kingelez, MAMCO Contemporary and Modern Art Museum, Geneva, Switzerland

1995

Bodys Isek Kingelez, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, France

GROUP SHOWS (selection)

2015-2019

Making Africa, A Continent of Contemporary Design, Exposition itinérante (Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein, Germany, Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain, CCCB Barcelona, Spain, Kunsthal Rotterdam, The Netherlands, High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia, Albuquerque Museum, New-Mexico, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, USA

2017

Art/Afrique : le nouvel atelier _ Les Initiés : sélection d'oeuvres (1989-2009) de la collection d'art contemporain africain Pigozzi, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France

On aime l'art...!! Un choix d'Éric Mézil parmi les oeuvres de la Collection agnès b., Collection Lambert en Avignon, France

2015/2016

Beauté Congo - 1926-2015 - Congo Kitoko, Fondation Cartier, Paris, France

2015

AFRIKA, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark

2012

Postmodernism, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom

2006/2007

100% Africa, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain

2005

Arts of Africa, Grimaldi Forum, Monaco, France

2005

African Art Now: Masterpieces from the Jean Pigozzi Collection, Museum of Fine Art Houston, Houston, USA

2002

Documenta XI, Kassel, Germany

2002

Sao-Paulo Biennial, Sao-Paulo, Brazil

1989

Magiciens de la Terre, Georges Pompidou Center, La Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris, France

Moké



Moké, 2001, Kinshasa, RDC, © Titouan Lamazou

Born in 1950 in Ibe, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Died in 2001 in Kinshasa, where he lived and worked.

Moké arrives at the age of 10 in Kinshasa, and transforms the markets into his home, where he survives by painting landscapes on cardboard. He is considered as one of the founding fathers of the « peinture populaire zaïroise » for creating in 1965 a painting representing the general Mobutu waving at the crowd on the occasion of the Independence Day. As a reporter of the urbanity, Moké installed his workshop at the crossing of the great arteries Kasa-vubu and Bolobo, at the heart of the city. His realistic and exuberant painting is a witness of a thorough observation of the Kinshasan everyday life of Kinshasa: street scenes, bar scenes, sapeurs, night parties, neighbour fights. All these everyday and historic scenes can be found in his painting, full of humour and life and always very colourful.

SOLO SHOW (selection)

2002

Afrique dans les murs, Les naufragés du temps, Saint-Malo, France

Monsenguro Kejwamfi dit Peintre Moke, Grand maître de la peinture zairoise (1950-2001), MAMCO, Geneva, Switzerland

FOIRES

2017

Art Paris Art Fair, Grand Palais, Paris, France

2013

1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, London, UK

Art Paris Art Fair, Grand Palais, Paris, France

2010

Marrakech Art Fair, Marrakech, Morocco

GROUP SHOWS (selection)

2018/2019

Congo Stars, Kunsthhaus Graz, Autriche, Kunsthalle Tuebingen, Germany

2017

Art/Afrique : le nouvel atelier _ Les Initiés : sélection d'oeuvres (1989-2009) de la collection d'art contemporain africain Pigozzi, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France

2016

Le Grand Orchestre des animaux, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, France

2015

Beauté Congo - Congo Kitoko, Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France

2007

"Popular Painting" from Kinshasa, Tate Modern, London, UK

2006

100% Africa, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain

2005

African Art Now: Masterpieces from the Jean Pigozzi Collection:

National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, USA

Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Houston, USA

Arts of Africa, The Contemporary collection of Jean Pigozzi, Grimaldi Forum, Monaco

2003

Kin moto na Bruxelles, Hôtel de Ville, Brussels, Belgium

Der Rest der Welt, Neuffer am Park, Pirmasens, Germany

2002

Kinshasa Congo, Espace Croisé, Centre d'art contemporain, Roubaix, France

2001

An/Sichten, Malerei aus dem Kongo 1990-2000, Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna, Austria

Un art populaire, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, France

Chéri Samba



Chéri Samba, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, 2020, © André Magnin

Born in 1956 in Kinto M'Vuila, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Lives and works in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo

In 1972 Chéri Samba moved to Kinshasa, the capital, where he earned his living as a painter of advertisement banners while creating comics for his magazine Bilenge Info. Three years later, he put his comics onto the canvas, inaugurating the « peinture à bulles ». He staged the events of society, morals, sexuality, illness, social inequality, corruption, etc., and rapidly gained a great local popularity. Everyone in Kinshasa knew Chéri Samba, « grand maître de la peinture populaire ». Since the end of the 1980's, he became himself a commentator at the heart of his paintings so « people can know me not only by name but can recognize my face as a TV presenter ». For him, art has no borders. His most recent paintings talk about the global news. They are always painting with a rich and vibrant colour palette with contrasts, and very often with glitters to de-dramatize the subject and to enable the viewer to penetrate the painting without apprehension and find the paintings beautiful regardless of the message.

SOLO SHOWS (selection)

2005

J'aime Chéri Samba: A selection of paintings from the exhibition at the Fondation Cartier, Texas Southern University, Houston, USA

Les débuts de Chéri Samba, Kunstverein Braunschweig, Germany

2004/2007

Chéri Samba, Corso Veneziaotto Arte Contemporanea, Milan, Italy

2004

J'aime Chéri Samba, Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France

2003

Chéri Samba moto na Tervuren, Musée royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgium

1998

Chéri Samba : Tableaux récents, MAMCO, Geneva, Switzerland

Chéri Samba, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart, Germany

1997/1998

Chéri Samba, Musée National des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie, Paris, France

1997

Chéri Samba, Übersee Museum, Bremen, Germany

1991

Chéri Samba, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Etats Unis Chéri Samba, Portikus, Frankfurt, Germany

Formas de dissidencià : Chéri Samba, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, Spain

1990/1991

Chéri Samba: le peintre populaire du Zaïre

Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK

1984

Chéri Samba, Centre Culturel Français, Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo

GROUP SHOWS (selection)

2020

22 Janvier - 10 Mai 2020: Alpha Crucis, Musée Astrup Fearnley, Oslo, Norway

2017

Art/Afrique : le nouvel atelier _ Les Initiés : sélection d'oeuvres (1989-2009) de la collection d'art contemporain africain Pigozzi, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France

On aime l'art...!! Un choix d'Éric Mézil parmi les oeuvres de la Collection agnès b., Collection Lambert en Avignon, France

2016

Congo Art Works. Peinture populaire, Palais des beaux-arts de Brussels (Bozar), Belgium

2006/2007

100% Africa, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain

2005/2006

African Art Now: Masterpieces from the Jean Pigozzi Collection, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Houston, USA National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, USA

1989

Magiciens de la terre, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou et Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris, France

IMAGES AVAILABLE FOR THE PRESS



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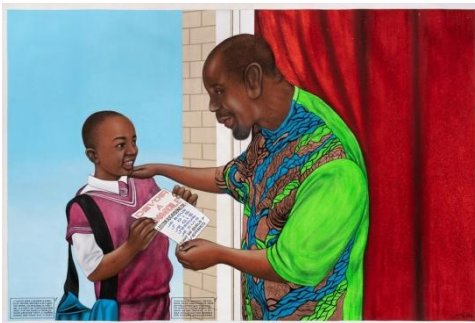
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1 : Chéri Samba, *Merci merci je suis dans la zone verte*, 2020, acrylique et paillettes sur toile, 135 x 200 cm, © Kleinfenn, courtesy galerie MAGNIN-A, Paris

2 : Moké, *Bar Nocturne*, 1981, Huile sur sac de farine, 95 x 188 cm, © Kleinfenn, courtesy galerie MAGNIN-A, Paris

3 : Bodys Isek Kingelez, *La Tupina Restaurant*, 2008, Carton et matériaux divers, 88 x 76 x 41,5 cm, courtesy galerie Natalie Seroussi

4 : Bodys Isek Kingelez, *Black Tower*, 2000, Carton et matériaux divers, 72 x 27 x 36 cm, , courtesy galerie Natalie Seroussi

5 : Chéri Samba, *Devoir à domicile*, 2020, Acrylique sur toile, 135 x 200 cm, © Kleinfenn, courtesy galerie MAGNIN-A, Paris

6 : Moké, *L'Allaitement*, 1981, Peinture sur sac de farine, 94 x 74 cm, © Kleinfenn, courtesy galerie MAGNIN-A, Paris

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