

Covers for the World – Introduction

Covers for the World is a project on art and healthcare set up by artist and activist Pierre Mertens in collaboration with curator Edith Doove. With this, Covers for the World aims to launch itself as a global art initiative that addresses decolonisation in both art and healthcare.

An essential pillar of the project is the decolonial reinterpretation of Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)* from 1907 in which African masks are appropriated by the artist. Pierre Mertens created a first version of this as part of the East African Biennale in 2008 with Ricardo Brey (Cu), Willo Gonissen and Mulugeta Tefesse (Et). To this is now added one created entirely by the Tanzanian artists Prince John Hugo, Lightness Jonas, David Valerian Lay, and Lilian Munuo. In addition to their work, photographer Daniil Zozulya shows a selection of photos from a project on spina bifida and hydrocephalus in Uganda while also documenting the new project.

After the introduction in Moshi, the idea is to develop the projects in other countries in the Global South where Child-Help International is active.

As the founder and president of Child-Help, Pierre Mertens has been working for decades to give children with spina bifida and hydrocephalus in the Global South the same access to surgery, continence care and dignity as in the Global North. His art and activism are intertwined: as part of the Covers for the World project, he is bringing more than 4,000 of his drawings, made daily since 2014, to the art market, with his entire share going to the new knowledge centre in Moshi.

<https://pierremertens.be/en/>

Edith Doove is a curator and researcher, currently based in Rouen, France. Her practice is based on the original meaning of the word curator: *curare*, meaning 'to take care'. She has worked intensely with Pierre Mertens since 2005 on the shows *Loving Care* (Antwerp, Belgium, 2020), *Bolero - an international art project on the move* (Rouen, France, 2021) and *Composition - Watou Arts Festival* (Watou, Belgium, 2023).

<https://bureaudoove.com/>

Covers for the World – Utangulizi

Covers for the World ni mradi kuhusu sanaa na huduma za afya ulioanzishwa na msanii na mwanaharakati Pierre Mertens kwa kushirikiana na mkurugenzi wa maonesho Edith Doove. Kupitia mradi huu, Covers for the World inalenga kuanzisha mpango wa kimataifa wa sanaa unaoshughulikia masuala ya *ukoloni mamboleo* katika sanaa na huduma za afya.

Nguzo muhimu ya mradi huu ni ufafanuzi mpya wa ki koloni wa kazi ya Picasso *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* ya mwaka 1907, ambamo msanii alijumuisha barakoa za Kiafrika bila muktadha wake sahihi. Pierre Mertens alitengeneza toleo la kwanza mwaka 2008 katika Biennale ya Afrika Mashariki akiwa na Ricardo Brey (Cu), Willo Gonnissen, na Mulugeta Tafesse (Et). Sasa tunaongeza toleo jipya lililotengenezwa kikamilifu na wasanii wa Kitanzania: Prince John Hugo, Lightness Jonas, David Valerian Mlay, na Lilian Munuo. Mbali na kazi hizo, mpiga picha kutoka Ubelgiji Daniil Zozulya anaonesha picha kadhaa kutoka mradi wake kuhusu *spina bifida* na *hydrocephalus* nchini Uganda, sambamba na kuandika kumbukumbu za mradi huu mpya.

Baada ya utangulizi wa Moshi, mpango ni kuendeleza miradi mingine katika nchi za *Global South* ambako Child-Help International inafanya kazi.

Mwanzilishi na rais wa Child-Help, Pierre Mertens, amefanya kazi kwa miongo kadhaa kuhakikisha watoto wenye *spina bifida* na *hydrocephalus* katika *Global South* wanapata upasuaji, huduma za udhibiti wa njia ya haja, na hadhi sawa na wenzao wa *Global North*. Sanaa yake na uanaharakati wake vimeungana: kama sehemu ya mradi wa Covers for the World, anapeleka zaidi ya michoro yake 4,000, aliyochora kila siku tangu 2014, kwenye soko la sanaa—sehemu yake yote ya mapato ikienda kwenye kituo kipya cha maarifa Moshi. Website: pierremertens.be/en

Edith Doove ni mkurugenzi na mtafiti wa maonesho, kwa sasa anaishi Rouen, Ufaransa. Huduma yake inatokana na maana ya asili ya neno *curator: curare*, inayomaanisha "kutunza". Amefanya kazi kwa ukaribu na Pierre Mertens tangu 2005 katika maonesho: *Loving Care* (Antwerp, 2020), *Bolero* (Rouen, 2021), na *Composition* – Watou Arts Festival (Ubelgiji, 2023). Website: bureaudoove.com

Pierre MERTENS and Willo GONNISSEN – African Heroes, 2009

First made for the Biennial of East Africa, this kanga is imprinted with a map of Dar es Salaam, hand lines and star constellations. To this are added the names of African Heroes, such as artists and politicians. You are invited to add your own, whether it is a well-known figure, a family member or a friend that you see as your personal hero.

Kanga hii ya kwanza ilitengenezwa kwa ajili ya Biennale ya Afrika Mashariki. Ina ramani ya Dar es Salaam, mistari ya viganja, na makundi ya nyota. Pia ina majina ya Mashujaa wa Kiafrika—wasanii, wanasiasa na viongozi wengine. Unakaribishwa kuongeza jina lako mwenyewe: awe mtu maarufu, wa familia, au rafiki unayemwona kama shujaa wako binafsi.

Pablo PICASSO, Les Demoiselles d'Avignon, 1907

Cubism developed from 1907, and this large scale painting (8' x 7' 8", 243.9 x 233.7 cm) in the collection of MOMA, New York, is its most famous example. Moving from traditional forms of copying nature, African art is an essential inspiration for how bodies are depicted, and the inclusion of African masks. Picasso first saw African art in May or June of 1907, when he visited the ethnographic museum at the Palais de Trocadero in Paris. In the composition of the painting he might also have made use of photographs of African subjects that were easily available at the time and of which Picasso owned several in the form of postcards. Throughout his career Picasso tended to absorb, combine, and transform a vast range of visual sources in the development of his work. This could include sources from art history, seen in life or in reproduction, images from popular culture, and daily life. In the case of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* the source material ranges from ancient Iberian sculpture and tribal masks to paintings by El Greco, Rubens, Titian, Ingres, Delacroix, Manet, Cézanne, and Gauguin.

Cubism ilianza kujitokeza kuanzia 1907, na uchoraji huu mkubwa (243.9 × 233.7 cm) unaohifadhiwa MOMA, New York, ndiyo mfano maarufu zaidi. Akitoka katika mbinu za kitamaduni za kunakili maumbile, Picasso alivutiwa sana na sanaa ya Kiafrika, hasa jinsi miili ilivyochorwa na uwepo wa barakoa za Kiafrika.

Picasso aliiona sanaa ya Kiafrika kwa mara ya kwanza Mei/Juni 1907 katika Makumbusho ya Ethnografia, Palais de Trocadero, Paris. Inawezekana pia alitumia picha za watu wa Kiafrika zilizokuwa zinapatikana kirahisi wakati huo na ambazo alikuwa nazo katika mfumo wa kadi za postcard. Maisha yake yote, Picasso alichanganya, kubadili na kuunda upya vyanzo vingi vya kuona—kutoka historia ya sanaa, utamaduni wa watu, hadi maisha ya kila siku.

Source: Janie COHEN, Staring Back: Anthropomorphic-style African Colonial Photography and Picasso's *Demoiselles* in *Photography & Culture*, Volume 8, Issue 1, March 2015, pp. 59-80

Taking back, 2025

Lightness Jonas, Lilian Munuo, Prince John Hugo, David Valerian Mlay

For this new reinterpretation of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, Picasso's painting is returned to four Tanzanian artists, who bring it back to its African origins.

Top left: Lilian Munuo; top right: Lightness Jonas (*The Rebirth of African Light*); bottom left: David Valerian Mlay; bottom right: Prince John Hugo.

Katika ufafanuzi huu mpya wa *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, kazi ya Picasso "inarudishwa" kwa wasanii wanne wa Kitanzania ambao wanairudisha kwenye mizizi yake ya Kiafrika.

Juu kushoto: Lilian Munuo

Juu kulia: Lightness Jonas (*The Rebirth of African Light*)

Chini kushoto: David Valerian Mlay

Chini kulia: Prince John Hugo

**Ricardo BREY, Willo GONNISSEN, Pierre MERTENS, Mulugeta TAFESSE,
Les Demoiselles d'Avignon reinterpreted, 2008**

This first reinterpretation of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* was made for the Biennial of East Africa by Pierre Mertens and three artists based in Belgium.

Top left: Ricardo Brey (Cu); top right: Mulugeta Tafesse (Eth); bottom left: Pierre Mertens; bottom right: Willo Gonnissen.

Ufafanuzi huu wa kwanza wa *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* ulifanywa kwa ajili ya Biennale ya Afrika Mashariki na Pierre Mertens pamoja na wasanii watatu walioko Ubelgiji.

Juu kushoto: Ricardo Brey (Cu)
Juu kulia: Mulugeta Tafesse (Eth)
Chini kushoto: Pierre Mertens
Chini kulia: Willo Gonnissen

LIGHTNESS JONAS, 2001, Arusha,

Lightness Jonas has been drawing since she was a young girl. When she joined The School of St Jude in Arusha, she had access to art materials, clubs, and great mentorship. No one ever formally taught her how to paint, but instead she would observe closely and teach herself. Due to her disability, through which she cannot use her hands, she paints with her feet.

Lightness is connected to Rafiki Painting, a group of artists based in Mto Wa Mbu that provides them with a form of income, answering the command from the camps, a big gallery and other shops in the neighbourhood. They also organise painting workshops for children every weekend. A percentage of sales goes to the village to help orphan children. See Rafiki Painting – https://www.instagram.com/rafiki_painting/

Apart from her contribution to *Taking Back*, we show a selection of animal portraits as well as AI generated computer prints by Lightness Jonas. Of this latter *Rooted in Greatness* represents the deep roots of African identity, leadership, and legacy. The central figure, blending a human face with a plant, symbolises growth, life, and connection to the land. The roots take the form of human limbs—hands and feet—showing the power of action, work, and movement grounded in ancestral wisdom. The four stars surrounding the figure bear the names of iconic African leaders: Mandela, Nkrumah, Nyerere, and Sankara—visionaries who planted seeds of unity, liberation, and dignity. These names are not just historical—they shine as guiding stars, influencing the present and future. The mountain in the background, likely Mount Kilimanjaro, anchors the scene in East Africa, representing strength, elevation, and endurance.

Legacy in Our Hands tells a visual story of African empowerment through art, history, and ancestry. The five women at the centre represent strength, grace, and the resilience of African womanhood — often the silent backbone of revolution and culture. Behind them rises Mount Kilimanjaro, symbolising African pride and elevation. Above, star constellations spell out legendary names — Edward, Tafari, Mandela, and Nkrumah — freedom fighters and visionaries who lit the path for the continent. They are literally written in the stars, guiding us like ancestors. In the foreground, we see the artist's hand and feet — grounded in the soil, holding a brush — painting from the earth, a branch of green life in hand. This symbolises that creation is rooted in heritage, and the future is painted by those who remember where they come from.

Lightness Jonas amekuwa akichora tangu akiwa msichana mdogo. Aliposhiriki katika *The School of St Jude* huko Arusha, alipata fursa ya kutumia vifaa vya sanaa, kujiunga na vilabu, na kupata mwongozo bora. Hakuwahi kufundishwa rasmi jinsi ya kuchora, bali alitazama kwa makini na kujifunza mwenyewe. Kutokana na ulemavu wake, ambao unamzuia kutumia mikono yake, anachora kwa miguu yake.

Lightness anahusiana na Rafiki Painting, kundi la wasanii walioko Mto Wa Mbu linalowapa kipato kwa kujibu ombi kutoka kwenye kambi, kwenye gallery kubwa na maduka mengine katika jirani. Pia wanapanga warsha za uchoraji kwa watoto kila wikendi. Sehemu ya mapato kutoka mauzo huelekezwa katika kijiji kusaidia watoto yatima. Angalia Rafiki Painting – https://www.instagram.com/rafiki_painting/

Mbali na mchango wake katika *Taking Back*, tunaonyesha mchujo wa picha za wanyama pamoja na uchapishaji wa kompyuta uliofanywa na AI na Lightness Jonas. Kati ya haya, kazi ya *Rooted in Greatness* inawakilisha mizizi ya kina ya utambulisho wa Kiafrika, uongozi, na urithi. Mhusika mkuu, ambaye uso wa binadamu umechanganywa na mmea, unaashiria ukuaji, maisha, na uhusiano na ardhi. Mizizi yake inachukua sura ya viungo vya binadamu — mikono na miguu — ikionyesha nguvu ya hatua, kazi, na mwendo uliofungamana na hekima ya mababu. Nyota nne zinazoizunguka mhusika zinaonyesha majina ya viongozi mashuhuri wa Kiafrika: Mandela, Nkrumah, Nyerere, na Sankara — wazoefu waliopanda mbegu za umoja, uhuru, na heshima. Majina haya si ya kihistoria tu — yanang’aa kama nyota zinazoongoza, yakiaathiri sasa na siku za usoni. Mlima uliopo nyuma, uwezekano ni Mlima Kilimanjaro, unashikilia mandhari ya Afrika Mashariki, ukionyesha nguvu, uinua, na uvumilivu.

Legacy in Our Hands inasimulia hadithi ya kuona ya uwezeshaji wa Kiafrika kupitia sanaa, historia, na urithi wa mababu. Wanawake watano katikati wanaashiria nguvu, neema, na ustahimilivu wa mwanamke wa Kiafrika — mara nyingi msingi kimya wa mapinduzi na utamaduni. Nyuma yao kuna Mlima Kilimanjaro, unaashiria fahari na uinua afrika. Juu, kundi la nyota linaandika majina ya hadithi — Edward, Tafari, Mandela, na Nkrumah — wapigania wa uhuru na wazoefu waliowasha mwanga wa njia kwa bara. Kwa kweli yameandikwa katika nyota, yakiwongoza kama mababu. Katika mstari wa mbele, tunaona mkono na miguu ya msanii — ikiwa imefungamana na udongo, wakiwa wameshika brashi — wakichora kutoka ardhini, tawi la maisha ya kijani mkononi. Hii inaashiria kwamba uumbaji umefunikwa katika urithi, na siku za usoni zinachorwa na wale wanaokumbuka walikotoka.

https://www.instagram.com/mbwambo_lightness/

<https://bureaudoove.com/2025/10/15/covers-for-the-world-interview-with-lightness-jonas/>

Lilian MUNUO, Moshi, Kilimanjaro

Lilian Munuo is an artist, curator, disability rights advocate, and founder of Beyond the Label Initiative (Tanzania). She was a member of the international curator cohort who visited Liverpool Biennial 2025 as part of the British Council's Biennials Connect programme. *Strings of Hope* was presented with support from the Goethe-Institut in partnership with Rangi Gallery and Together with Tanzania.

“Born from Munuo’s personal journey of navigating disability and self-expression, the installation transforms simple threads into powerful metaphors of resilience and optimism. Through woven forms and sculpted elements, Munuo invites viewers to trace lines of struggle and triumph, reflecting on strength, creativity, and the enduring capacity for hope.” (Stages 13, Beyond Limits, Liverpool Biennial, 2025)

Lilian Munuo has used the technique of working with threads also in her contribution to the Taking Back version of Les Demoiselles d'Avignon. Apart from that we show an installation with plasters that the artist has used to shape her feet, and thus are like sculptures of them.

Lilian Munuo ni msanii, mkurugenzi wa maonesho, mtetezi wa haki za watu wenye ulemavu, na mwanzilishi wa Beyond the Label Initiative (Tanzania). Alikuwa mmoja wa washiriki wa kikundi cha makurugenzi wa kimataifa waliotembelea *Liverpool Biennial 2025* kama sehemu ya mpango wa Biennials Connect wa British Council. Mradi wake *Strings of Hope* ulitolewa kwa msaada wa Goethe-Institut kwa kushirikiana na Rangi Gallery na Together with Tanzania.

“Ilizaliwa kutokana na safari binafsi ya Munuo ya kushughulika na ulemavu na kujieleza, unakishaji huu unageuza nyuzi rahisi kuwa methali zenye nguvu za ustahimilivu na matumaini. Kupitia mitindo ya kushona na vipengele vilivyochongwa, Munuo anawaalika watazamaji kufuatilia mistari ya mapambano na ushindi, wakitafakari juu ya nguvu, ubunifu, na uwezo endelevu wa matumaini.”

Munuo pia amejumuisha mbinu ya kutumia nyuzi katika mchango wake kwa Taking Back, na pia tunaonyesha unakishaji wa plasta ambazo msanii amezitumia kuunda miguu yake, na hivyo kuwa sanamu zake.

https://www.instagram.com/hettie_lillie/

<https://bureaudoove.com/2025/10/13/covers-for-the-world-interview-with-lilian-munuo/>

PRINCE JOHN HUGO, 1999, Mwanza

Prince John Hugo grew up in Tanzania, surrounded by stories, colours, and history. Since childhood, he's always been fascinated by the power of images, how a single drawing can carry emotion and truth. He started drawing seriously with a simple ballpoint pen and found his voice. Over time, people connected with his work, and that encouraged him to dedicate his life entirely to art. For him, art is a form of preservation and a way to tell real African stories that might otherwise be forgotten. Every piece he creates carries memory, emotion, and a message for future generations. For him, art means more than beauty; it's memory, identity, and truth. It's how he communicates with the past and offer something to the future.

Apart from his contribution to *Taking Back*, we show two of his works. As explained by Prince John Hugo the highly symbolic and exquisite drawing of a girl in ballpoint (*Anima*) represents the modern human being — especially the African — regardless of gender. The girl is simply a symbolic vessel, standing in for every one of us navigating life today. Her head wrap signifies her African identity, her roots, and her cultural pride. She wears Tanzanite earrings, symbolizing the value of what surrounds us—our natural resources, our heritage, and the beauty we often overlook because it feels too familiar.

She carries a bag with a mouse, a small vulnerable creature that rarely receives care or respect. Yet she has chosen to protect it, showing that the value of life is not measured by power or importance but by our willingness to care for the weak. This symbolizes the truth that humans are custodians of the earth, responsible for defending those who cannot defend themselves.

She leans against a pillar representing the world—the very foundation we all rely on to survive. At the top sits a crown of thorns, symbolizing pain, inherited survival rules, and the cultural fears passed down to us: the fear of speaking truth, the fear of defending the voiceless, the fear of losing everything when we choose integrity. It represents the cost of living within systems built on fear and suffering.

A piece of newspaper hangs on the pillar, symbolizing the information age—a world built from a mixture of truth and lies, news and propaganda, without regard for the consequences. It reminds us how easily society shapes our beliefs through what we consume.

A snake coils around the pillar, representing life, people, temptation, and duality. The snake gives the girl a flower, symbolizing admiration, love, or appreciation—but at the same time offers a cigarette, symbolizing danger, destruction, and harmful choices. This reflects the nature of the world: it offers both beauty and poison.

The cigarette in her hand is unlit, meaning the decision is hers: whether to ignite destruction or reject it is a choice every human must make.

The snake expects something in return (the mouse) revealing manipulation, conditional affection, offers that come with hidden costs. But the girl chooses to protect the mouse. Because of this, the manipulation fails, and the snake begins to withdraw — leaving without the reward it expected. This moment symbolizes the power of choosing what is right over what is convenient.

Her glasses represent clarity, the ability to see far beyond the surface, not with physical eyes but with knowledge, wisdom, and awareness. Even without seeing the future directly, humans must use understanding as the “lens” through which we protect the generations that will follow.

Her clothing is modern to show that this story is not from the past. It is today’s African, today’s human, who’s living in the complexity of the present world.

The pillar is covered with various symbols — of peace, balance, harmony, love, and universal principles. They represent the ideal world humanity longs for and what the earth demands of us to live in balance. This artwork narrates the journey of the modern human:

a life shaped by propaganda, temptation, manipulation, inherited fears, and difficult choices —yet still capable of choosing compassion, clarity, truth, and protection of life. It is the voice of a generation learning to reject manipulation and embrace humanity.

The Last Dance is a hyperrealistic painting that portrays an elderly man dressed in very old-fashioned clothing, holding a vintage violin that has accompanied him through the long journey of his life. Although he looks worn by age, there is still a gentle flame of hope burning within him. He is a man who once dreamed of witnessing the future—a world he believed in and imagined, even though age no longer allows him to reach that far.

This thought leads him to the universal question every human eventually faces:

“What if I die today, or tomorrow, or three minutes from now—what will remain?”

Instead of fearing the end, he chooses to live fully in the present. To enjoy the moment. To embrace everything that gives him peace, joy, and meaning in the seconds he still holds. He chooses to play his final dance for the earth, for the sky, and for the world.

In the blurred lights behind him, we see the glow of a modern city—an environment where his appearance clearly does not belong. Yet this city represents the future he hopes for, the world he longs to see come true even if his body will not be there to witness it.

His clothes are painted with stars and a galaxy pattern, symbolizing infinity life—the idea that even if he dies today, his spirit, his words, and his actions will continue to live on. He becomes a small piece of the endless universe, forever echoing the dreams he fought for in his lifetime.

The violin is more than a musical instrument; it is the symbol of his message to the world.

Music is the loudest voice humanity shares—reaching across all corners of the earth.

Through the violin, he delivers his final message to generations now and generations to come. *The Last Dance* reminds us that it is better to die today fighting for a better tomorrow, than to live forever for nothing.

Prince John Hugo alikulia Tanzania, akizungukwa na hadithi, rangi, na historia. Tangu utotoni, amekuwa akivutiwa na nguvu ya picha, jinsi mchoro mmoja unavyoweza kubeba hisia na ukweli. Alianza kuchora kwa umakini kwa kutumia kalamu ya mpira rahisi na akapata sauti yake. Kadiri muda ulivyosonga, watu walivutiwa na kazi yake, na hilo lilimhimiza kujitolea maisha yake yote kwa sanaa. Kwake, sanaa ni njia ya uhifadhi na njia ya kusimulia hadithi halisi za Kiafrika ambazo vinginevyo zingesahaulika. Kila kazi anayoibua hubeba kumbukumbu, hisia, na ujumbe kwa vizazi vijavyo. Kwake, sanaa ina maana zaidi ya uzuri; ni kumbukumbu, utambulisho, na ukweli. Ni jinsi anavyowasiliana na yaliyopita na kutoa kitu kwa siku zijazo.

Mbali na mchango wake katika Taking Back, tunaonyesha kazi zake mbili (maandishi na Prince John Hugo):

Mchoro wenye alama nyingi wa msichana kwa kalamu ya mpira unawakilisha mwanadamu wa kisasa — hasa Mwafrika — bila kujali jinsia. Msichana huyo ni ishara tu, anayewakilisha kila mmoja wetu anayeishi maisha ya leo. Kitambaa chake cha kichwani kinaashiria utambulisho wake wa Kiafrika, asili yake, na fahari yake ya kitamaduni. Anavaa hereni za Tanzanite, zinazowakilisha thamani ya yale yanayotuzunguka—rasilimali zetu za asili, urithi wetu, na uzuri ambao mara nyingi huupuuza kwa sababu tunaouzoea sana.

Anabeba mfuko wenye panya, kiumbe mdogo dhaifu ambaye mara chache hupewa uangalizi au heshima. Hata hivyo, amechagua kuilinda, akionyesha kuwa thamani ya maisha haipimwi kwa nguvu au umuhimu bali kwa utayari wetu wa kuwatunza wanyonge. Hii inaashiria ukweli kwamba wanadamu ni watunzaji wa dunia, wenye jukumu la kuwatetea wale wasioweza kujitetea.

Anategemea nguzo inayowakilisha dunia—msingi wenyewe ambao sote tunategemea ili kuishi. Juu yake kuna taji la miiba, kinachowakilisha maumivu, kanuni za urithi za kuishi, na hofu za kitamaduni tulizorithi: hofu ya kusema ukweli, hofu ya kuwatetea wasio na sauti, hofu ya kupoteza kila kitu tunapochagua uadilifu. Inawakilisha gharama ya kuishi ndani ya mifumo iliyojengwa juu ya hofu na mateso.

Kipande cha gazeti kimepandikizwa kwenye nguzo, kikiwakilisha enzi ya habari—ulimwengu uliojengwa kutokana na mchanganyiko wa ukweli na uongo, habari na propaganda, bila kujali madhara yake. Inatukumbusha jinsi ambavyo jamii huunda imani zetu kwa urahisi kupitia kile tunachokitumia.

Nyoka amejipinda kuzunguka nguzo, akiwakilisha maisha, watu, kishawishi, na upande wawili. Nyoka anampa msichana ua, akiwakilisha sifa, upendo, au shukrani—

lakini wakati huo huo anatoa sigara, akiwakilisha hatari, uharibifu, na maamuzi hatari. Hii inaakisi asili ya dunia: inatoa uzuri na sumu.

Sigara mkononi mwake haijawashwa, ikimaanisha uamuzi ni wake: iwe kuwasha uharibifu au kuukataa ni chaguo ambalo kila mwanadamu lazima afanye. Nyoka anatarajia kitu cha kubadilishana (panya), jambo linaloonyesha udanganyifu, upendo wa masharti, na ofa zinazokuja na gharama zilizofichwa. Lakini msichana anachagua kumlinda panya.

Kwa sababu hii, udanganyifu unashindwa, na nyoka anaanza kujiondoa — akiondoka bila zawadi aliyoitumaini. Wakati huu unaashiria nguvu ya kuchagua kile kilicho sahihi badala ya kile kilicho rahisi. Miwani yake inawakilisha uwazi, uwezo wa kuona mbali zaidi ya juu juu, si kwa macho ya kimwili bali kwa maarifa, hekima, na ufahamu. Hata bila kuona siku zijazo

moja kwa moja, wanadamu lazima watumie uelewa kama "lensi" ambayo kupitia kwake tunalinda vizazi vijavyo.

Mavazi yake ni ya kisasa kuonyesha kwamba hadithi hii si ya zamani. Ni Mwafroika wa leo, mwanadamu wa leo, anayeishi katika utata wa ulimwengu wa sasa. Nguzo imefunikwa na alama mbalimbali — za amani, usawa, maelewano, upendo, na kanuni za ulimwengu wote. Zinawakilisha ulimwengu bora ambao wanadamu wanautamani na kile ambacho dunia inatutaka ili tuishi kwa usawa. Kazi hii ya sanaa inasimulia safari ya mwanadamu wa kisasa:

maisha yaliyoundwa na propaganda, kishawishi, udanganyifu, hofu za kurithi, na maamuzi magumu — lakini bado ana uwezo wa kuchagua huruma, uwazi, ukweli, na ulinzi wa maisha. Ni sauti ya kizazi kinachojifunza kukataa udanganyifu na kukumbatia ubinadamu.

Ngoma ya Mwisho ni mchoro halisi sana unaomwonyesha mzee aliyevaa nguo za zamani sana, akiwa ameshika fidla ya zamani iliyomsindikiza katika safari ndefu ya maisha yake. Ingawa anaonekana kuchakaa kwa sababu ya umri, bado kuna moto mdogo wa matumaini unaowaka ndani yake. Yeye ni mwanamume ambaye aliwahi kuota kuona mustakabali— dunia aliyoiamini na kuifikiria, ingawa sasa umri haumruhusu kufika mbali kiasi hicho.

Wazo hili linampeleka kwenye swali la ulimwengu mzima ambalo kila mwanadamu huikabili hatimaye:

"Vipi kama nikifa leo, au kesho, au baada ya dakika tatu—nini kitakachobaki?" Badala ya kuogopa mwisho, anachagua kuishi kikamilifu katika wakati uliopo. Kufurahia wakati huo. Kukumbatia kila kitu kinachompa amani, furaha, na maana katika sekunde anazobaki nazo. Anachagua kucheza ngoma yake ya mwisho kwa ajili ya dunia, kwa ajili ya anga, na kwa ajili ya ulimwengu.

Katika mianga iliyotawanyika nyuma yake, tunaona mng'ao wa jiji la kisasa—mazingira ambayo mwonekano wake haufai kabisa. Hata hivyo, jiji hili linawakilisha mustakabali anaotumaini, ulimwengu anaotamani kuuona ukiwa kweli hata kama mwili wake hautakuwepo kuushuhudia.

Nguo zake zimechorwa nyota na mchoro wa galaksi, ikiashiria maisha yasiyo na mwisho— wazo kwamba hata akifa leo, roho yake, maneno yake, na matendo yake yataendelea kuishi. Anakuwa kipande kidogo cha ulimwengu usio na mwisho, akirudia milio ya ndoto alizopigania maishani mwake milele.

Filimbi ni zaidi ya ala ya muziki; ni ishara ya ujumbe wake kwa ulimwengu. Muziki ndiyo sauti kuu zaidi ambayo ubinadamu hushiriki—ikifikia kila kona ya dunia. Kupitia filimbi, anawasilisha ujumbe wake wa mwisho kwa vizazi vya sasa na vizazi vijavyo. Ngoma ya Mwisho inatukumbusha kwamba ni afadhali kufa leo ukipigania kesho bora, kuliko kuishi milele bila maana.

<https://www.instagram.com/pijey.ink/>

<https://bureaudoove.com/2025/10/18/covers-for-the-world-interview-with-prince-hugo/>

David VALERIAN MLAY, 1992, Arusha

David Valerian Mlay is one of the young people who have gone through a difficult life, but he did not give up. Instead he formed an arts group together with colleagues, twelve years ago. The [Pamoja Boys and Girls](#), help young people who are going through difficult times to gain skills that would help them in their daily lives and survive. The goal was to help young people and vulnerable children develop artistic skills to create products they could sell and earn an income. The group has helped to change their lives and achieve their dreams and goals. David believes there are still young people and children who need this kind of help and says he will never give up on helping those in need of help and enlightenment to achieve their goals.

This belief is also reflected in the two paintings we show of him apart from his contribution to *Take Back*: the portrait of a strong woman carrying bananas and that of a woman carrying her child, in which he recuperates painting rests. They express his admiration for the mothers that take care of their children while the father is away, as he experienced it himself.

David Valerian Mlay ni mmoja wa vijana ambao wamepitia maisha magumu, lakini hakukata tamaa. Badala yake, aliunda kikundi cha sanaa pamoja na wenzake, miaka kumi na miwili iliyopita. The Pamoja Boys and Girls, huwasaidia vijana wanaopitia nyakati ngumu kupata ujuzi ambao ungewasaidia katika maisha yao ya kila siku na kuishi. Lengo lilikuwa kuwasaidia vijana na watoto walio katika mazingira magumu kukuza ujuzi wa kisanii ili kuunda bidhaa wangeweza kuuza na kupata kipato. Kundi hili limeisaidia kubadilisha maisha yao na kufikia ndoto na malengo yao. David anaamini bado kuna vijana na watoto wanaohitaji msaada wa aina hii na anasema hatakata tamaa kuwasaidia wale wanaohitaji msaada na mwongozo ili kufikia malengo yao.

Imani hii pia inaakisiwa katika picha mbili za uchoraji tunazomuonyesha mbali na mchango wake kwa *Take Back*: picha ya mwanamke imara anayebeba ndizi na ile ya mwanamke anayebeba mtoto wake, ambapo anarejesha mapumziko ya uchoraji. Zinaonyesha kupongeza kwake kwa akina mama wanaowalea watoto wao wakati baba hayupo, kama alivyopitia yeye mwenyewe.

<https://www.instagram.com/ddaxl/>

<https://bureaudoove.com/2025/10/21/cover-for-the-world-interview-with-david-valerian/>

Daniil Zozulya, 1998, Karaganda, Kazakhstan

Daniil Zozulya is a photographer based in Brussels, Belgium. In 2024, he worked on E'SSUUBI, a project about hope, an ongoing close collaboration with SHAU (Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association in Uganda).

Every day Ugandan youths with Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus strive to gain their undeniable rights and values in their society. E'SSUUBI is a photographic documenting work resulting from a close collaboration with SHAU (Spina Bifida, Hydrocephalus Association). Through these images, the aim is to highlight an issue that severely affects the Ugandan population and against which SHAU has been intensely fighting since their creation in 2016. Moreover, finding photography as a medium to, I hope, push forward inclusivity. Together with the residents and members of the association, the wish was to assert their presence in an effort to break what was considered a taboo 25 years ago. E'SSUUBI demonstrates the pride and resilience of people who experience and have experienced the challenges associated with Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus. It's an attempt in which photography serves as a conduit for the most accurate and comprehensive representation of the word 'hope'.

Daniil has documented the Covers for the World project.

Daniil Zozulya ni mpiga picha anayeishi Brussels, Ubelgiji. Mwaka 2024, alifanya kazi kwenye E'SSUUBI, mradi kuhusu matumaini, unaofanya kazi kwa karibu na SHAU (Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association in Uganda).

Kila siku, vijana wa Uganda wenye Spina Bifida na Hydrocephalus wanajitahidi kupata haki zao na thamani zao katika jamii. E'SSUUBI ni kazi ya kufuatilia kwa picha, inayotokana na ushirikiano wa karibu na SHAU. Kupitia picha hizi, lengo ni kuonyesha tatizo linaloathiri sana watu wa Uganda na ambalo SHAU imekuwa ikipambana nalo tangu kuanzishwa kwake mwaka 2016. Aidha, mradi huu unakusudia kuhimiza ujumuishi. Pamoja na wakazi na wanachama wa shirika, lengo ni kuthibitisha uwepo wao na kuvunja kile kilichokuwa kitabu cha siri miaka 25 iliyopita. E'SSUUBI inaonyesha fahari na uimara wa watu wanaopitia changamoto za Spina Bifida na Hydrocephalus.

Zozulya pia anaandika kumbukumbu za mradi wa Covers for the World.

<https://www.zozulyadaniil.com/work/essuubi>

<https://bureaudoove.com/2025/11/17/covers-for-the-world-interview-with-daniil-zozulya/>

Pierre MERTENS, Twelve Words for Healing – Moshi Edition, 2025

Twelve infusion bags represent twelve African values that were threatened by colonial aggression. Each bag is both a medical and spiritual symbol: transparent, essential, fragile — referring to care and recovery.

Chupa kumi na mbili za maji ya kuingiza mwilini zinawakilisha maadili kumi na mbili ya Kiafrika yanayo wakilisha uvamizi wa kikoloni. Kila mfuko ni ishara ya kimatibabu na kiroho: wazi, muhimu, dhaifu — ikimaanisha utunzaji na kupona.

1. Mzizi – Roots
2. Ujamaa – Community
3. Maadili – Dignity & Ethics
4. Utu – Humanity
5. Uhuru – Freedom
6. Amani – Peace
7. Upendo – Love
8. Uadilifu – Integrity & Justice
9. Nguvu ya wanawake – The Strength of Women
10. Ardhi – Earth, Land
11. Heshima – Honour & Respect
12. Utamaduni – Culture & Heritage

Pierre MERTENS, Loving Care, Moshi edition, 2025

In line with his series of paintings *Loving Care*, of mothers and their children with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, this is a painting of one of the first guests at the House of Hope in Moshi.

Kulingana na mfululizo wake wa michoro ya Upendo na Utunzaji, inayowaonyesha akina mama na watoto wao wenye spina bifida na hydrocephalus, hii ni mchoro wa mmoja wa wageni wa kwanza katika Nyumba ya Matumaini huko Moshi.