

Establishing a Contemporary East African Arts Sector: Perspectives from Kenya

The seminar presents a broad overview of ongoing development of contemporary arts & culture within the East African landscape, as experienced through a Kenyan lens and the shaping of Kenya's own diverse arts' trajectories. How the development of artists, spaces, programs and audiences is, and has been unfolding will be presented and discussed, against an historical and socio-political context.

Part 1 - *Contextualizing Growth of the Arts in Kenya*

Part 2 - *Anchoring Policy*

Part 3 - *Sustaining the Arts*



Contextualizing Growth of the Arts in Kenya



The Promise of Independence

From culture as
'the vital and
essential force of
the nation, the
safeguard of our
existence and
the ultimate
resource of our
combat'¹...

to....?

1. Pan African Cultural Manifesto, 1969

Sculpture of Freedom fighter Dedan Kimathi,
Artist Samuel Wanjau

The 60s - Birth of a Nation

Inherited colonial structures and procedures- challenges to begin to adapt these for a new African nation

- *Africanization or not?*
- *Prime Minister or President?*
- *Federalism or not?*

1935	1945	1955	1965
 <p>Margaret Trowell</p>	   <p>Makerere Art School begins informally in 1937</p>	 <p>First Makerere trained artists: R. Karuga, E. Njau, L Mwaniki</p>	<p>Kibo Art Gallery, 1964 (Njau) ChemChemi 1963 (Mphalele) Paa ya Paa (1965)</p>
1975	1985		
   <p>E. Ong'esa. H. Owiti, S. Wanjau</p>	  <p>Jony Waite Ruth Shaffner Gallery Watatu</p> <p>Watatu Artists include Sane Wadu, Jak Katarikawe, Joel Oswaggo, Kivutha Mbuno,</p>		
1995	2005		
 <p>Kuona Trust 1997</p> <p>BIFA, Creative Arts College</p>	 <p>The GoDown 2003 Kenyatta University, Moi University</p> <p>Brush Tu Collective Dust Depot</p> <p>The Nest Collective The Bus/Alchemist Creative Garage</p> <p>One-Off Gallery, Little Gallery Circle Agency, Polka Dot</p>		

The 70s - Rise of Intelligenstia

- A Decade of tumult-
 - University students and teachers exercise their voice
 - A nervous centre of power asserts itself by clamping down on dissenting views & criticism
 - Detention without trial- Seroney, Shikuku, Oneko, Anyona, Wamwere, WaThiongo
 - Murder of JM Kariuki
 - Succession- death of Kenyatta
- Regionally-
 - EA Community collapses
 - Obote ousted, Terror of Idi Amin
- Social Changes-
 - Rural -urban migration, cities grow
 - Urban families- growing in a 'cosmopolitan' environment & emergence of sheng; new histories and identities forming



The 80s - Creative Wastelands?



- Moi tightens grip on power by buying loyalty and dealing a heavy hand on opposition and criticism
 - Charges of sedition rife
 - Coup attempt and consequent declaration of one-party state
 - Student activism 'contained' by decentralisation of Nairobi University- 6 separate colleges created.
 - Kitu kidogo thrives
- Internationally-
 - Nation's international & pan-African engagement widens- Kenya hosts OAU summit, Pope John Paul visits, UN Decade for Women Mtg
- Socio-cultural repercussions
 - Kenyans on 'tiptoe'
 - Permissions for staging of plays
 - 8-4-4 eliminates teaching of the arts in schools

The 90s- Voices of Youth

- Nation a cauldron coming to the boil
 - Int'l pressure, cancellation of aid, criticism of lack of democratic practices resulting in reinstatement of multi-party politics
 - Incitement of ethnic animosities- tension high
- Social/cultural-
 - Youth represent the largest sector of the population- 70% of the nation under the age of 30
 - Spate of youth violence & rebellion- St Kizito rapes and deaths; Bombolulu arson(?); continual school strikes and closures
 - Tough 'gangsta-derived' lifestyle emerges among urban youth- hip-hop craze
 - Escalating poverty and joblessness

The 00s: New Directions

- Politically-
 - Democratic space has widened but still fragile
 - Citizenry steadily becoming more vocal and even pro-active
- Socio-cultural-
 - A 'contemporary Kenyan' is emerging
 - Predominantly urban bred/influenced
 - Assimilated modern & western culture
 - Yet desires to assert an African identity that incorporates aspects of western non-African culture
- Ramifications
 - The field of performing arts responds to the new Kenyan: 'new' artforms- contemporary dance, fusion styles of music, underground youth sheng expression in poetry and conversation

Models of formation and operation

- Training of individual talent
- Strengthening frameworks and structures that grow the discipline and the community structures which 'complete the picture'- venues, institutions, events (e.g. Festivals)
- Emerging structures and frameworks:
 - The Godown
 - Music Awards (Kisima, Kora)
 - FM Radio
 - Dance Encounters- african contemporary dance platform
 - Regional Festivals: Busara Music Festival (ZNZ); ZIFF
 - Kwani Narrative Nights
- The future needs vision and steadfast action to realize the vision
 - Enabling career development in the performing arts
 - National level policies to secure and ensure the growth of the field
 - Nurture local support- audiences and resources.

AfroFutures





The truth is,
we have only started to
see
what we will look like.

Binyavanga Wainaina, Kenyan writer



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Anchoring Policy

Many issues, little mitigation

- Foundational training for creative industries (the education curriculum)
- Business skills for creative entrepreneurs
- Copyright awareness, protection and enforcement
- Leveraging digital technology for the creative industries
- Recognition of and investment in the creative industries
- Documentation and mapping of the creative industries
- Value chain strengthening
- Infrastructure development for the creative industries
- Promotion of local content development
- Lack of policies

Creating spaces for articulating and advancing
policy advocacy

east-african



**The East Africa
ARTS SUMMIT 2013**

"A Journey of Reflection & Celebration"

**24-27 April
Nairobi, Kenya**

The 7th East Africa Summit takes place in Nairobi from Wednesday 24 - Saturday 26 April, 2013.

This Summit, held in the context of the 10th Anniversary of the GoDown Arts Centre is both a celebration, and a reflection.

It marks the notable growth of the creative sector, and also looks back at major themes and issues that have been the subject of projection, of deliberation, even anxiety, and engagement of past summits as we look to the coming years.

From initial concerns with defining, and mapping the sector through the building, or not, of institutions, and the putting in place of relevant and supportive policies, to the more deliberate attempts to look at very specific areas such as the interlinkings through the concept of value addition, we move to a sustained engagement with the interface between creativity, culture and economics, the idea energising current debates around the Creative Economy. And most recently, the summit stepped back into questions of Regionality, as we seek to broaden the scope of creative synergies as well as strengthen and enhance coherence and cohesion.

The GoDown
arts centre

Agenda EA Arts Summit 6-9 November 2006

- The Summit was launched on Sunday 5th November with Cocktails and the Opening of East Africa Prints Exhibition at the GoDown Arts Centre. The exhibition ran throughout the Summit. Subsequent events were held at the Silver Springs Hotel, apart from the public Forum with Nobel laureate for Literature, Professor Wole Soyinka, which was held at the Stanley on the 8th of November.
- The event brought together policy makers in both the private and public sector, academics, media owners and staff, theatre, performance and arts practitioners. A dynamic meeting of theory and practice, it marked the Summit's determination to influence arts and cultural space through the broadening of dialogue and institution of meaningful and much needed change.



Creating spaces for articulating and advancing
policy advocacy

pan-african

**ARTERIAL
NETWORK**





Arterial Network Launched in 2007

Aim: To build and/or further develop effective, sustainable national regional and continental networks within and across regions to play advocacy and lobbying roles in support of African creative sector

- Establishing a Continental secretariat
 - Continental and regional convenings
 - Building partnerships with African Union, IFACCA, UNESCO, etc
 - Establishment of an Africa Fund for Arts & Culture
 - Developing toolkits for policy advocacy
- Launching National Chapters
 - Websites, policy advocacy and implementation frameworks, arts activities, network-building
- Establishing regional secretariats
 - Conducting regional workshops and leadership training

Some Key Documents

International

- 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
- 2008 UNESCO Creative Economy Reports – 2008, 2010, 2013, etc
- 2010 Structure & Value Chains in Kenya's Creative Economy (The GoDown)

Continental

- Pan-African Arterial Network conference reports on the Creative Economy

National

- 2007 Nyariki D, report Economic Impact of Kenya Copyright-based Industries (WIPO)
- 2012 Roadmap to position Kenya Creative Industries as Catalyst for a Kenyan Knowledge Society (Min of ICT)
- 2012 Unearthing the Gems of Culture – Mapping Kenya's Creative Industries (ACRI)
- 2015 National Creative Economy Report (CEWG)
- 2015 Scoping Report for East Africa Creative Economy (British Council)
- HIVOS report (2013) on the East African Creative Industries

County Government

- Nairobi County Cultural

Kenya: A Chronology of Activities/Experiences to Inform a Policy Framework

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNESCO 2005 convention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EA Arts Summit 2006• Mngt, Admin & Prod of Contemp'ry Dance EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nyariki Report on CE economic contribution• Music Policy Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EA Arts Mngt Research (GoDown)• UNESCO 2008 Creative Econ Rpt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Value Chain Research (GoDown)• Creative Econ Conference (GoDown)• African Creative Econ Conf- Arterial Netwk• Kippira Research (Dpt of Culture)• Cultural Policy launched (Min Culture)

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kenya Constitution: Culture as foundation of the nation Arterial Pan African Creative Eco conf, Nairobi UNESCO 2010 Creative Econ Rpt Aga Khna U Curriculum for Arts & Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative ways of Organizing in Kenya Contemp'ry Dance British Cncl Business Skills Intensive GoDown, Natverkstan (SE), Goldsmith's college, Creative Industries Task Force (Min ICT) Draft Film Policy (KFC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBM Creative Indfustries Kenya Rpt, ACRI Rpt on Cultural Industries, GoDown Creative Entrpnshp 10-wk course, cohort 1 GoDown& Technical U discussions on joint CE Course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GoDown Creative Entrpnshp 10-wk course, cohort 2 & 3 Draft Languages Policy (Twaweza) Creative Econ Working Grp (CEWG) formed CEWG attends Ona African Creaiive Econ Conf, SA Arterial Netwk Local content percentage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligned Kenya Cultural Policy Draft Cultre Bill CEWG Naivasha Rpt (CE framework and planning for Ntl Ce Conf) HIVOS commissioned research on CE TUK Centre for Creative & Cultural Industries

2015	2016	2019	2020	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Cncl launch of Creative Econ scoping reports • Ntl Creative Econ Conf (CEWG) • GoDown Creaive Ent Course Cohort 4 & 5 • Launch of HEVA funf for Creatve entrepreneurs • KEPSA board for creative industries • EA Creative Industries Bill • Music Policy launched 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA Arts Summit 2006 • Mngt, Admin & Prod of Contemp'ry Dance EA • Pre-study on Creayive Econ (Swed. Embassy) 	Copyright Amendment Act 2019	Draft National Film Policy	

Emerging Collective Advocacy for Creative Sector in Kenya

- The Creative Economy Working Group is a network of practitioners in culture and the creative industries.
- Aims:
 - Partnership building with relevant government ministries & departments
 - Policy advocacy and safeguarding freedom of expression
 - Capacity building and knowledge sharing within the creative economy
 - Data collection – cultural statistics



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**Sustaining
the arts**





Sustainability as a factor of mission & vision

Cultural Anchor

A centre significant & relevant to the community as cultural real estate, promoting creative industries, and existing symbiotically with other neighborhood/city activities

Anchor institutions are entities having a large stake in a city, usually through a combination of internal missions and landownership... They encompass universities, hospitals, cultural institutions (including museums, libraries, performing arts facilities), churches, military installations and occasionally large corporations... As entities consuming sizable amounts of land, they have an important presence in cities and their neighborhoods.

Sustainability as a relationship between the arts centre & community



NAI NI WHO

a CELEBRATION OF NAIROBI NEIGHBOURHOODS



EASTLANDO 2017

SATURDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER

Music Concert at Greenspan Mall from 11am



FEATURING MEJJA

Local Artists:

MC Damian
MC Nebs
MC Keysha
Sauti Crew
Ngatia Band
Morgan & Claris Band
Mababu
Pinfaz & Deki
Don Santos

Erick Omondi
Migra Michael
John Simba
Bwana Mlumbi
T.I.T dance crew
Samuel vicker
Mc Mike Bila Mic
Genesco



NaiNiWho

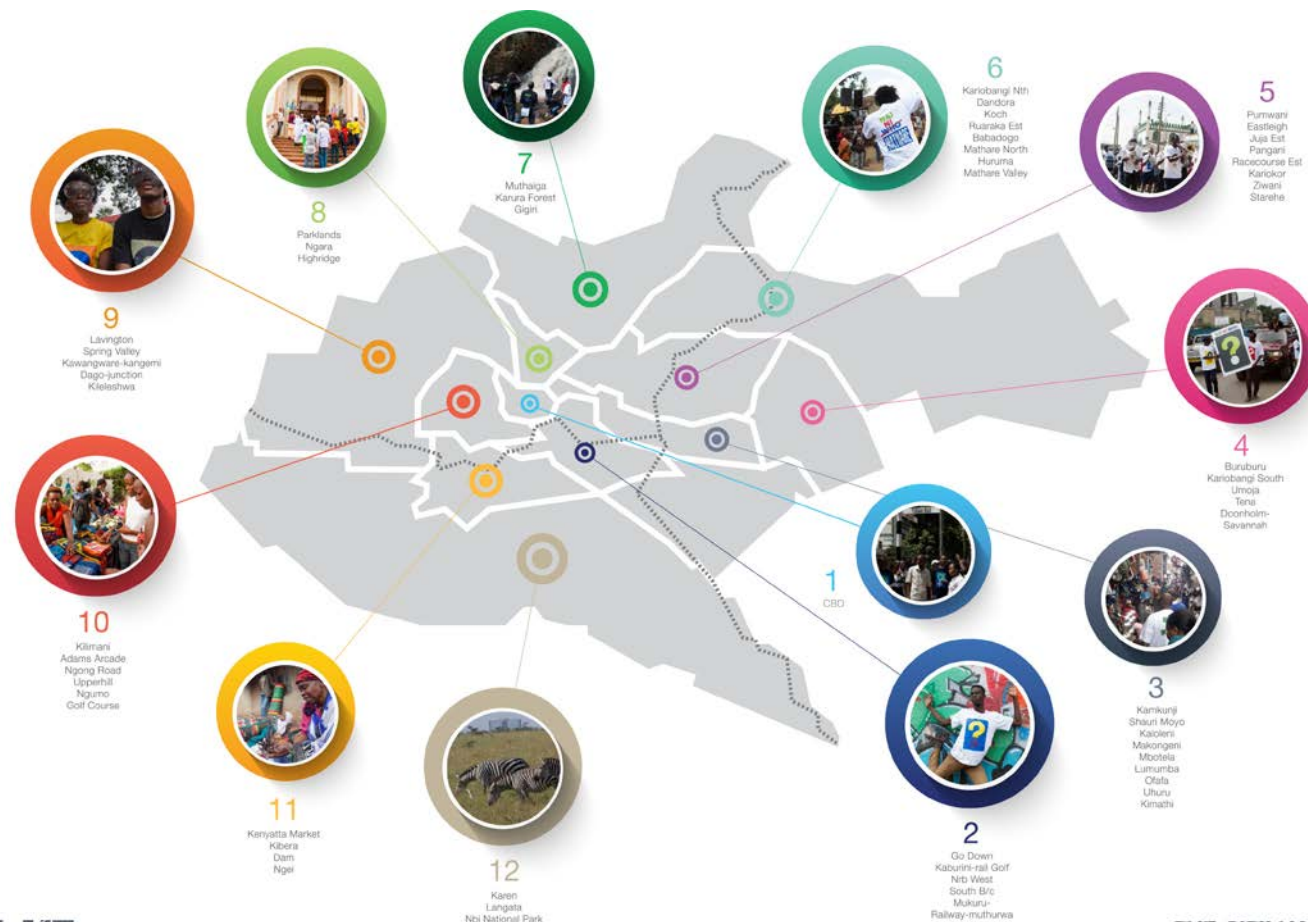


#NaiNiWho

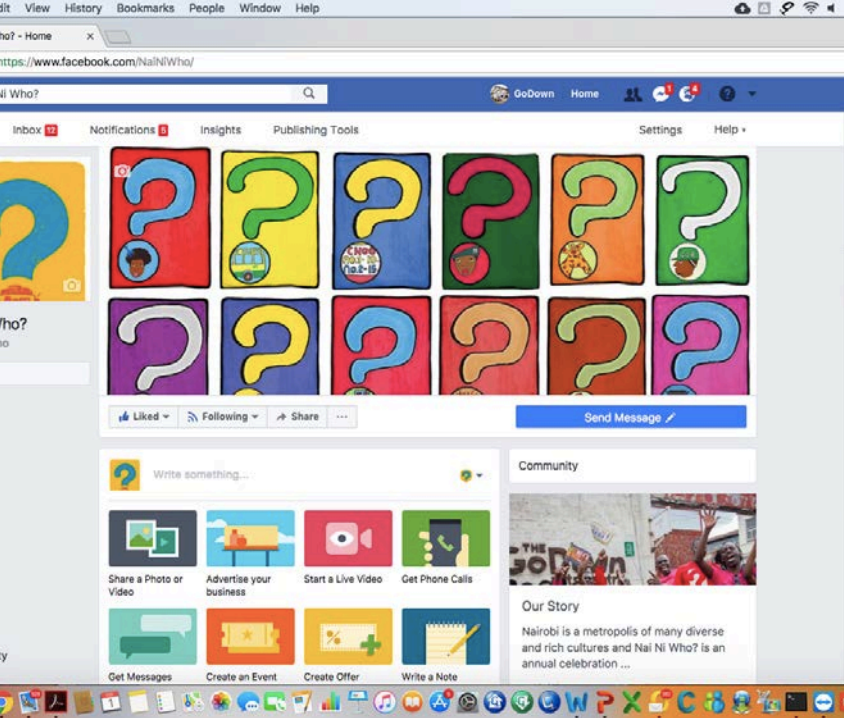


NaiNiWho

THE HOODS



THE CITY HAS BEEN
BROKEN DOWN INTO
12 NEIGHBOURHOOD
ZONES THAT HAVE BEEN
INVITED TO TAKE PART

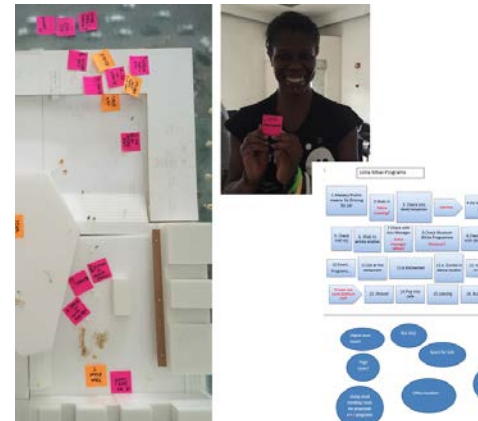


Sustainability as a relationship between the arts centre & city





inclusive stakeholder workshops





Arts and Creativity

The GoDown's Practice: Dynamic & Intersectional

- Arts & Creativity
- Community
- Identity & Self-determination
- Knowledge generation





Sustainable Practice Particularities of The South

Commonalities of Practice: Morocco, Nairobi, Dar-es-salaam, Addis, Accra, Joburg, CapeTown

- Horizontality –the quality of finding alternative and other solutions
- Second chance, Re-use – in creative practice and use of space
- Performativity – intentional practice affecting action, change
- Elasticity – responsiveness at many levels
- Convergence – tying yesterday, today and tomorrow