

MAGNIN-A

Chéri Samba

Born in 1956, Kinto M'Vuila, Democratic Republic of Congo
Lives and works in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
Chéri Samba is exclusively represented by the gallery MAGNIN-A, Paris.

In 1972 Chéri Samba left school in order to become a sign painter on Kasa Vubu Avenue in Kinshasa. From this circle of artists (which included Moke, Bodo, and later Samba's younger brother Cheik Ledy) arose one of the most vibrant schools of popular painting of the twentieth century. Working both as a billboard painter and a comic strip artist, Samba employed the conventions of both genres when he began making paintings on sacking cloth (canvas being too expensive) in 1975. Indeed, he borrowed the bubbles from the comics in order to incorporate in his paintings not only narrative but also comments. Samba has recalled how he came to use text in these paintings: "I had noticed that people in the street would walk by my paintings, glance at them and keep going. I thought that if I added a bit of text, people would have to stop and take time to read, to get more into the painting and admire it. That's what I called the 'Samba signature'. Since then I put text in all my paintings." In the early 1980s he began signing his paintings 'Chéri Samba: Artiste Populaire'. Indeed, the popularity of his paintings soon went beyond Kinshasa's borders. By the mid 1980s his work was gaining an international audience.

Samba's paintings of this period reveal his perception of the social, political, economic and cultural realities of Zaïre (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), with subject such as everyday life in Kinshasa, customs, sexuality, AIDS, social inequalities, and corruption. Samba explained, "My painting is concerned with people's lives. I'm not interested in myths or beliefs. That's not my goal. I want to change our mentality that keeps us isolated from the world. I appeal to people's consciences. Artists must make people think." Since the late 1980s on, he became the main subject of his paintings. For Samba, this is not an act of narcissism but the narrative of a successful African artist in the art world.

Find out the interview of Chéri Samba by CHOICES, 2017

SOLO SHOWS

2005

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

Les débuts de Chéri Samba, Kunstverein Braunschweig, Germany

2004/2007

Chéri Samba, Corso Venezia 8, Arte Contemporanea, Milan, Italy

2004

J'aime Chéri Samba, Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France (curator : André Magnin)

2003

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

1998

Chéri Samba : Tableaux récents, MAMCO, Genève, Switzerland

Chéri Samba, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart, Germany

1997/1998

Chéri Samba, Musée National des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie, Paris, France (curator : Jean-Hubert Martin)

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

Provinciaal Museum voor Moderne Kunst, Ostende, Belgium

Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, England

1984

Chéri Samba, French Cultural Center, Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2021

Where the sea is, Passerelle Brest, Brest, France

Face à Arcimboldo, Centre Pompidou Metz, France

2020

Ex-Africa, Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac Museum, Paris, France
Kings of Kin, MAGNIN-A gallery, Paris, France

2020
Power Figures, MAGNIN-A gallery, Paris, France
2020-2021

Welcome home II, MACAAL, Marrakech

2020
Kings of Kin, galerie MAGNIN-A, Paris
22 January - 10 May 2020 : Alpha Crucis, Museum Astrup Fearnley, Oslo, Norway (curator : André Magnin)

2019

Truth Tellers, Richard Taittinger Gallery, New York City, USA

2018

Africa Passions, Evora Africa, art and music festival, Palais Cadaval, Portugal (curator : André Magnin)

Reading Walking. Louis Vuitton Travel Book, Pearl Art Museum, Shanghai, China

Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, A Beautiful Elsewhere, Power

Station of Art (PSA), Shanghai, China

From Vietnam to Berlin, Asia Culture Institute, Gwangju, South Korea

Quel Amour !?, MAC, Marseille, France

African Passions, Palais Cadaval, Evora, Portugal

Louis Vuitton Travel Book, Pearl Art Museum, Shanghai, China

2017

Highlights, Collection of the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art at Museum of Art (SeMA), Korea

Art/Afrique : le nouvel atelier _ The Insiders : a selection of works (1989 to 2009) from the Jean Pigozzi collection of contemporary African Art, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France (curators : Suzanne Pagé, Angéline Scherf, Ludovic Delalande ; scientific exhibition council : André Magnin)

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

E-Mois, MACAAL, Marrakech, Morocco (curators : Othman Lazraq, Meriem Berrada)

Gaia à travers ses miroirs, Villa des Arts, Rabbat, Maroc (dans le cadre de l'évènement L'Afrique en Capitale)

Histoires congolaises, bibliothèque Robert-Desnos, Montreuil, France

AFRICA. Raccontare un mondo, PAC Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milano, Italy

2016

Regarding Africa: Contemporary Art and Afro-Futurism, Art Museum, Tel Aviv, Israel (curator : Ruth Direktor)

L'instance de la lettre, Au Médicis, Galerie Marguerite Milin, Paris, France

Congo Art Works. Popular Painting, Bozar, Brussels, Belgium

Essentiel Paysage, Al Maaden Art Gallery, Contemporary African Art Center, Marrakech, Morocco

Vivre !! La collection agnès b. au musée national de l'histoire de l'immigration, National Museum of the History of Immigration, Paris, France

2015

Picasso Mania, Grand-Palais, Paris, France (curators : Didier Ottinger, Diana Widmaier-Picasso, Emilie Bouvard)

Beauté Congo 1926-2015 Congo Kitoko, Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art, Paris, France (curator : André Magnin)

A Brief History of Future, Musée du Louvre, Paris, France (curators : Dominique de Font-Réaulx, Jean de Loisy, Sandra Adam-Couralet, Martin Kiefer)

2014

Ici l'Afrique / Here Africa, Château de Penthes, Genva, Switzerland

African way, Chapelle de la Visitation, Thonon-les-Bains, France

2013

Raw Vision, 25 ans d'Art Brut, La Halle Saint Pierre, Paris, France (curators : Martine Lusardy, John Maizels)

Peintres reporters de l'urbanité, à Kinshasa, Latitude 21, Dijon, France

Focus sur la collection, Musée de la Fondation Zinsou, Ouidah, Benin

Mehr Licht, Galerie Michel Rein, Paris, France

2012

Afrovision, L'art moderne d'Afrique, Musée d'art moderne, Bakou, Azerbaïdjan

Africa/Africa, Abbaye Saint-André, Centre d'art contemporain, Meymac, France

2011

Riad Al Maaden, MAGNIN-A, Marrakech, Morocco

JapanCongo, Double regard de Carsten Höller sur la collection de Jean Pigozzi

Le Magasin, Grenoble, France

The Garage Center for Contemporary Culture, Moscou, Russia

Group Show with Kura Shomali, Billie Zangewa, Hussenot & Magnin-A Galleries, Paris, France

2010

Kinshasa Pop, group show with Pierre Bodo & Moke, Pangée Gallery, Montreal, Canada

African Stories, Marrakech, Morocco

2009/2010

Africa, una nuova storia, Complesso del Vittoriano, Rome, Italie (curator : André Magnin)

2009

Against Exclusion, 3rd Moscow Biennial, The Garage Center for Contemporary Culture, Moscou, Russia

2007

Think with the Senses Feel with the Mind, 52nd Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

Black Paris, Museum der Weltkulturen, Frankfurt, Germany

2007/2008

Why Africa ? La collezione Pigozzi, Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Turin, Italy (curator : André Magnin)

"Popular Painting" from Kinshasa, Tate Modern, (Room 10), London, England (curator : André Magnin)

Intrusions au Petit Palais : le Fonds municipal d'art contemporain, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France

2006/2007

100% Africa, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain (curator : André Magnin)

2006

Collection de la Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, MOT, Tokyo, Japan

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 (curator : André Magnin)

2005

Arts of Africa, The Contemporary collection of Jean Pigozzi, Grimaldi Forum, Monaco (curator : André Magnin)

2004/2007 (curators : David Elliott, Jean-Hubert Martin)

Africa Remix

Museum Kunst Palast, Düsseldorf, Germany

Hayward Gallery, London, England

Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France

Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan

Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa

2004

Je m'installe aux Abattoirs, La collection d'art contemporain d'agnès b., Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France

Les Afriques, Tri Postal, Lille, France

2003

Africanische Reklamekunst, Iwalewa-Haus, Afrikazentrum der Universität, Bayreuth, Germany

Kin moto na Bruxelles, Town Hall, Brussels, Belgium

Sexuality and death, AIDS in Contemporary African Art, Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum, Cologne, Germany

2002

Iconografias Metropolitanas, 25ª Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Kinshasa Congo. Fabien Rigobert / Moke, Chéri Samba, Espace Croisé, Centre d'art contemporain, Roubaix, France

Painting on the Move, Kunsthalle Basel, Basel, Switzerland

2001

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

2000

Kunst Welten im Dialog, Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Germany

1998

Dak'Art 98, Biennale de Dakar, Dakar, Senegal

Africa Africa: Vibrant New Art from a Dynamic Continent, Tobu Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan

1996

Neue Kunst aus Afrika, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany

1995/1996

An Inside Story: African Art of Our Time (curator : Yukiya Kawaguchi)

Setagawa Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan

Tokushima Modern Art Museum, Tokushima, Japan

Himeji City Museum of Art, Himeji, Japan

Koriyama City Museum of Art, Koriyama, Japan

Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, Marugame, Japan

Museum of Fine Art, Gifu, Japan

1994

Centre d'Art et de la plaisanterie, Galerie des Extravagances, Monbéliard, France

1993

Africa Art Now: Urban Culture from Africa, Setagaya Museum and The Japan Foundation, Tokyo, Japan

1991

Africa Explores: 20th Century African Art

Museum for African Art, New York, USA

New Museum for Contemporary Art, New York, USA

Africa Hoy (curator : André Magnin)

_Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain

_Groninger Museum, Groningen, Netherlands

_Centro Cultural de Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City, Mexique

60 ans de la peinture zaïroise, Goethe Institut, Kinshasa, République Démocratique du Congo

1989

Magiciens de la terre, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou et Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris, France (curators : Jean-Hubert Martin, André Magnin)

1982

Sura dj. Visages et racines du Zaïre, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, France

1978

Art Partout, Académie des Beaux-arts, CIAF, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

FAIRS

2021

1.54 ARTFAIR Paris Christie's

2020

The Armory Show, New York, USA

2019

FIAC, Paris, France

Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town, South Africa

2017

Art Paris Art Fair, Grand Palais, Paris, France

1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, London, UK

2016

Untitled, Miami, USA

1:54 Foire d'art contemporain africain, New York, USA

2015

FIAC OFFICIELLE, Paris, France

1:54, Contemporary African Art Fair, London, UK

1:54, Contemporary African Art Fair, New-York, USA

Art Genève, Switzerland

2014

FIAC OFFICIELLE, Paris, France

1:54 Foire d'art contemporain africain, London, UK

Art Geneva, Switzerland

2013

1:54 Foire d'art contemporain africain, London, UK

Art Paris Art Fair, Paris, France

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2018

Le Guide Hazan de l'art contemporain 2018, Roxana Azimi, Editions Hazan, Paris, p. 164

2017

Un collectionneur - Un regard contemporain sur l'art africain, Musée Mohammed VI

d'art moderne et contemporain, Fondation nationale des musées, p. 30

Essentiel Paysage - Artistes Contemporains Africains face à l'environnement, catalogue d'exposition, Fondation Alliances, Musée MACAAL, sous la

direction de Brahim Alaoui, p. 131

2015

Beauté Congo 1926-2015 (catalogue), Editions Fondation Cartier, Paris (curateur :

André Magnin)

Collections

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Musée National d'Art Moderne - Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

Museum of Modern Art - MoMa, New York, United States

Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, United States

Musée royal d'Afrique centrale, Tervuren, Belgique.

Collection LVMH, Paris, France

Smithsonian Institute, National Museum of African Art, Washington, USA

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Collection LVMH, Paris, France

Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, France

CAAC - The Pigozzi Collection, Genève, Suisse

Collection Sindika Dokolo, Luanda, Angola

Fondation Alliances, Marrakech, Morocco

Zeitz Mocaa, Cape Town, South Africa

Collection agnès.b, Paris, France

Collection Lilian Thuram, Paris, France

Collection Farida et Henri Seydoux, Paris, France

Collection Gervanne et Matthias Leridon, Paris, France