

# SCULPTURE FROM FOUND OBJECTS AND LOCAL MATERIALS EXHIBITION

Featuring work by second year students of sculpture of Makerere University under the supervision of US Fulbright Specialist & Sculptor Janet Goldner, Dr. Lilian Nabulime, Edward Balaba, Fidelis Nabukenya, Assoc. Prof. George Kyeyune and Assoc. Prof. Rose Kirumira



**Opening : Wednesday, 20th July, 2022**  
**Makerere University Art Gallery - 4:00pm**  
**Closing : Tuesday, 26th July, 2022**

**Please Note: You should observe COVID-19 SOPs**

Makerere University Gallery working hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Saturday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM, Sunday on appointment.

Please contact: 0756116751 / 0779119626



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# Sculpture from Found Objects and Local Materials

Workshop: June 13 – July 19, 2022

Exhibition at Makerere University Gallery: July 20 –26, 2022

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### **Janet Goldner**

It was a pleasure to spend six weeks teaching in the Fine Art Department of Makerere University as a Fulbright Specialist. I want to thank Dr. Lilian Mary Nabulime and Mr. Edward Balaba for their vision for the project that brought me here, their faith in me, and their guidance during this successful program. I also enjoyed meeting and working with Ms. Fedelis Nabukenya, Assoc. Professor George Kyeyune, and Assoc. Professor Rose Kirumira.

Dr. Nabulime's and Mr. Balaba's idea to focus on found and local materials as art materials is an excellent and timely one. As artists, this focus trains us to be sensitive to our daily surroundings. It guides us to look carefully at the beauty and utility of the "trash" that others discard. It becomes our job as artists to reclaim and repurpose it. The use of found materials as art materials is also important since more traditional art materials are expensive for any art student or artist for that matter. Finding these "gifts from the street" requires highly honed creative skills of observation and transformation. And the use of found materials has an important role in raising awareness about climate change. Use of found and local materials lends itself to examining social issues.

All the works presented in our exhibition and this catalogue were produced during the project. I enjoyed meeting and getting to know the second-year sculpture students and helping guide them into the world of found and local materials. Working with them has taught me



about their lives and their concerns through the social issues they chose to focus on.

The current exhibition is the first time many of the students have exhibited their work publicly. This is an invaluable initiation into the wider art world that will serve them as they develop into professional artists and begin their artistic careers in the years to come. Although many of them struggled to open their eyes to the potential found materials all around them, the work in the exhibition is a testimony that they have risen to the task of this new way of thinking. Bravo!

The six weeks of the project have gone by very fast. Sadly, I am preparing to leave Uganda in the next few days. But I have gained new personal and professional friendships with colleagues at Makerere and beyond. I hope this friendship will continue and grow into new, deeper, fruitful collaborations in the future.

**Janet Goldner, Kampala, July 20, 2022**



**Janet Goldner**

**Title:** *Finding Uganda*

**Year:** 2022

**Materials:** Raffia, wire

**Size:** 31x 40 x 95 cm

I came to Makerere to teach about found and local materials as materials for art making. My own experiments with materials I found at Owino market led to “Finding Uganda”. The work builds on previous sculptures that are made of woven tree branches partly wrapped with yarn and linear sculptures made of metal rods and found metal forms.





**Lilian Mary Nabulime (PH. D)**

It is a pleasure to have worked with Janet Goldner as a Fulbright Specialist from June to July 2022. Upon receiving Ms Goldner, Mr Edward Balaaba and I embarked on overseeing the project, *Ready-Mades: Solving Issues in Sculpture*. Others on the team were Ms Fidelis Nabukenya, Assoc. Prof George Kyeyune, and Assoc. Prof. Rose Kirumira. The project's focus was to enhance student's multidisciplinary knowledge of sculpture and painting and further develop the international the collaboration and synergy between Makerere University (and indeed Uganda at large) and USA.

During the teaching, we discussed students' projects and held critiques. The student's projects were driven as social research committed to espousal of social issues through art, that is "art as a social practice". Due to limited resources the University encourages students and lecturers to explore materials in and outside the university for experimental research.

Second year sculpture students were selected for the workshop as their course design is aimed at exploring materials, new techniques, artistic approaches, and concepts in sculpture while relating to their contemporaries worldwide.

The team stimulated students' awareness through discourse about community issues such as: social disparities, drug abuse, alcoholism, environmental degradation, among others. We focused on increasing the students' knowledge of different art practices through

multidisciplinary and joint activities in both USA and Makerere. The students were encouraged to develop sculptures employing various methods and materials that inspired them. They were expected to discover knowledge gaps and facilitate a thorough study of concepts, principles, and practices associated with social problems embedded within cultural contexts. They were also requested to avoid the traditional sculpture materials namely cement, clay plaster of Paris, and instead focus on non-traditional materials such as discarded (elsewhere known as found /readymade objects) and local materials that required assemblages, mixed media, and experimental techniques to respond to social issues.

### **Achievements**

1. The project has empowered students to attain a variety of approaches, skills in exploration of local materials and offered insight into distinctive creative processes.
2. The project has offered the much-needed *Problem Based Learning (PBL)* as a pedagogical approach in visual arts training by encouraging students to work either independently or in small self-directed teams. As a result, students have been able to discover the gaps in their own knowledge and encouraged to examine the issues, concepts and offer solutions.
3. The project has contributed to improved learning outcomes for the students and increased opportunities for those from disadvantaged backgrounds who cannot afford sculptural materials. There has been increased availability and accessibility of discarded materials thereby ensuring cultural equity in artistic expression, artistic education, values, and ethics underlying artistic practices.
4. The different activities in the project have facilitated generation of knowledge and skills to develop and revise the university curriculum for improved teaching-learning experience, ranging from multidisciplinary education modules

and practice-oriented approaches to social and community engagement.

5. During the program, we have taken Janet to visit artists, local artisans, museums, and creative performances. Some of the artists Janet has visited are Sanaa Gateja, who works with paper and local materials like bark cloth and sisal. We also visited Fred Mutebi, a Ugandan artist who is researching and reviving backcloth, an endangered Ugandan artisanal fabric. Janet immediately saw similarities with cultural work that has led to knowledge and revival of Bogolan (mud-cloth) in Mali. Since Janet's Fulbright Senior Fulbright Research fellowship to Mali in 1995, she has visited Mali every year for cultural research, inspiration, artistic collaboration, and friendship. Her three-decade long commitment to the importance of and protection of local knowledge will inspire future collaborations between African artists from Uganda and Mali and beyond.

**Dr. Lilian Mary Nabulime; 28 July 2022**





**Lilian M. Nabulime**

**Title:** *Untitled*

**Year:** 2022

**Materials:** Bark cloth, sisal, seeds, cowrie shells, glue, ekyangwe (loofah), wood skewers, binding wire, electric wire painting brush, sisal, earring.

**Size:** 37 x 40 x 20 cm

My sculpture is composed of local materials, objects that are materials central in the daily lives among the Baganda. Some are used in construction, trade as well as cultural norms, rituals and day-to-day activities. For example, ekyangwe is used for bathing or cleaning; the bark cloth is a rich textile material used for burying the dead; as bed sheet gives warmth; the cowrie shells were used as a currency in the past, yet it also symbolizes female genitalia.



**Lilian M Nabulime**

**Title:** *Marlyn (detail)*

**Year:** 1997

**Materials:** Discarded wood, beer and soda cans, aluminum rattles, nails, glue, jewelry

**Size:** 12 x 23 x 166 cm



**George Kyeyune (Assoc. Prof).**

### **Janet Goldner, a scholar with a difference**

Janet was a breath of fresh air in the sculpture class, especially at a time when we all are living a frugal life because of the high cost of living. She argued that one need not have a huge financial outlay to make art. In our environs are materials, sometimes in form of trash, which in the hands of an imaginative and reflective artist, can become art. Indeed, she demonstrated this when she took over the second year sculpture class. Her carefully selected slide lectures prepared the students to appreciate the value of working with non-conventional materials. They were taught to recognize connections and relationships in what might seem like disparate objects, to create narratives that strike a chord with our consciousness. Students spoke about social issues, medical challenges, politics, culture and the economy. They were able to display a high level of creativity and good judgment. Many of them were surprised by their achievements. One student remarked at the exhibition opening “I did not know I could make such a beautiful [and engaging] art work ...thanks to Janet’s tutelage”.

Janet’s impact will stay with the school for many years to come. The six weeks we interacted may not have long to cover much ground, but they were enough to raise the interest and aspiration of students. She switched them on and opened their eyes to appreciate things that

although may appear trivial or insignificant, more often than not, become cornerstones of major edifices. She insisted that they observed perceptively so as to generate fresh possibilities and propose new options in their studio practice.

Let me observe that, experimentation has been part of Makerere Art School's philosophy for many years and therefore Janet was not necessarily bringing something completely new. What I found new and fascinating with Janet however, was the way she reviewed found materials. She invested an intellectual spin on them that seemed to transcend boundaries in art as we know them today. What students made were resisted categorizations. Janet also had a singular ability to attract and sustain the attention of her students. She had the language to articulate the complex and nuanced features of art, which gave her students the opportunity to become thinkers and not just artists with skills. What started as ordinary classes quickly progressed into extraordinary experiences. Janet was an inspiration to us all and we need more of Janets in the Makerere Art School.

With gratitude, I would like to appreciate the support of American Embassy that made it possible for Janet to be with us for six weeks. As a Fulbright alumni myself, I highly value the Fulbright program. It creates a space where sharing and exchange of ideas across boundaries are possible for the benefit of mankind.

**George Kyeyune (Assoc. Prof).**



**Mr. Edward Balaba**

Artists and others are confronted with many challenges these days from financial to health problems resulting from consistent use of certain materials. Transformations in technology and advances in our way of life have introduced new materials that are harmful to the environment and litter the communities with harmful waste.

Because of this, artists have begun exploring indigenous and non-conventional materials that enable us cope with these new trends. Artists ought to be on the lookout for opportunities existing in new materials for new objects. But most important, artists should always look back at the community as a rich resource of subject matter and raw material that are ripe for exploration and expression.

The workshop about re-use and re-purposing materials has made a very huge impact on the perspectives of young artists as well as the staff at Makerere University Art School. We thank the visiting Artist Janet Goldner together with the U.S. Government and the US Embassy in Uganda for availing us with this opportunity.

**Mr. Edward Balaba**





**Fidelis Nabukenya**

**Title:** Untitled

**Year:** 2015

**Material:** mixed media

This relief sculpture is about how one can use ordinary objects within their reach to create interesting compositions. The work is left untitled to allow the viewer stretch their imagination about the sculpture, without limitations.



**Rose Namubiru Kirumira**

**Title:** *Chute*

**Year:** 2015

**Size:** 16ft x 5ft x 8ft

**Materials:** Found Media.

This is a group project by Rose Kirumira, Taddeo Kasirisimbi, Sheila Nakitende and Ben Walugembe. The main objective of this artwork was to make a **CHUTE** that is conceptually accessible to the public with all kinds of functional objects made from natural and recycled materials. The project involved building the chute-like space made out of metal square tubes, recycled car tire, cloth, and plastic curtains. In this chute, several objects in the forms of shoes, a bag, a box, a couture dress were made out of the signature style of the artists such as weaving recycled, synthetic and organic materials. The space was to prompt discussions towards developments in the recycling industry. The item is supposed to give a larger than life effect but at the same time be accessible and entertaining. The CHUTE calls to mind the relevance of managing resources and saving the planet.

**Rose Namubiru Kirumira (Assoc. Prof).**

## Artworks by Students



**Biira Hellen and Aliyinza Remmegio**

**Title:** *Recycling African print fabrics*

**Materials:** Compact Discs (CD's), African print fabrics (cutouts), wood, box, glue.

**Size:** 100 x 98 x 10 cm

Our wall hanging is made out of cutouts of African print fabrics. Some of the colours and symbols used in the design (print design) can symbolize a tribe, marriage, and social status of the wearer





**Gwom Timothy**

**Title:** *Dangers of Alcohol Consumption*

**Materials:** Glass bottles, silicon, super glue, bamboo, barbed wire, binding wire, bottle tops, cardboard

**Size:** 160 x 77 x 67 cm

My work is to sensitize the community about the dangers of alcohol consumption to our health in Uganda. I made a bamboo armature and clad the lower part with pieces of broken glass bottles that symbolize the fragility and destruction of alcohol on the human body. The torso is built up with barbed wire, which shows the health hazards of alcohol consumption.



**Kavuma Joel Mark**

**Title:** The Pearl of Africa

**Materials:** Banana fibers, Wood, Compact disc, Broken bottles, Beads, Dropped mat, Glue

**Size:** 80 x 65 x 1 cm

Uganda came to be known as The Pearl of Africa from Winston Churchill's 1908 book, My African Journey. He talked about the beauty of the birds, reptiles, insects, beasts and vegetation. This artwork portrays 3 aspects of Uganda: the trees, the city of Kampala, and the beauty of Ugandan culture.





**Kaweesi Ashiraf and Atim Karla**

**Title:** *Fighting Against Water Borne Diseases in the Community*

**Materials:** Cement, sand, paint, vanish, 5v pump, binding wire, artificial flowers, timber.

**Size:** 65 X 40 x 10cm

We made a fountain to provide safe drinking water in homes. We want to fight water borne diseases like typhoid in the community.



**Kikoyo Benjamin**

**Title:** *Environmental Conservation*

**Materials:** Plastic bottle tops, wood glue, plywood, nails, beads

**Size:** 60 x 50 cm

My wall hanging turns littered, dismissed and available materials into a decorative artwork. This artwork is made of plastic bottle tops of different colors arranged on plywood. I want to help society fight against litter and land pollution. Using these materials sharpens the creativity of artists.



**Kimera Abudal and Kibombo Jude**

**Title:** *Ekibira kya Mabira*

**Materials:** Barkcloth, wood, paper, calabash, wire staples, feathers

**Size:** 147 x 180 x 148 cm

This work is in memory of the Mabira forest, which is being destroyed by man for development. The forest is blessed with trees and vegetation that provides communities with rain and medicine and attracts tourists due to its beauty.





**Mudiro Erick Kuteesa and Nalunga Patricia**

**Title:** *Violation of Freedom of Speech in Uganda*

**Materials:** Fabric, aluminum foil, mesh, binding wire, paper, nails, timber

**Size:** 160 x 70 x 40 cm

The sculpture hints on how the political party in power suppresses the majority by denying them their right of freedom of speech. The political party in power limits speech and expression of the citizens and is blind to their communication.



**Mugumya Abraham**

**Title:** *Within*

**Materials:** Plastic, wood, glue, paper, wire staples, bottle tops, bark cloth, microphone

**Size:** 130 x 136 x 42 cm

This sculpture focusing on drug use and related dangers, the presence of diseases within us, and all the related chaos associated with drug use and how they can be avoided.





### **Muwugumya Agatha**

**Title:** *Life in a Once Cut Tree*

**Materials:** Carton boxes, threads, polythene, soil, glue, dry leaves, plastic flowers

**Size:** 52 x 50 x 50 cm

Life in Once Cut Tree conveys a message that as long as the roots stay in the ground, even when most trees are cut, they can sprout up into a tree again.



**Nabatanzi Mercy**

**Title:** *Abalungi ndagala namu tezigwa mulusuku*

**Materials:** Papers and glue

**Size:** 122 x 61 x 30 cm

Everyone is beautiful in their own way. Here I am referring to women. Different women have different beauty both inner and outer



**Nabwami Suzan**

**Title:** *Flowers (Table Decorations)*

**Materials:** Polythene bags, plastic bottles, binding wire, threads, masks

**Size:** 81 x 81 x 40 cm

The flowers are made from plastic bags that are soil pollutants; to create something beautiful and reduce soil infertility because of plastics dumped everywhere.





**Naddunga Mary Immaculate**

**Title:** *Aloe Vera plant*

**Materials:** Maize husks, sisal and wood.

**Size:** 83 x 54 x 70 cm

The Aloe Vera plant inspires this sculpture. This sculpture is made using natural and environmentally friendly materials.



**Nagginda Latifah Mulumba and Jeremiah Kyangwa**

**Title:** *An Aquarium*

**Materials:** Plastic bottles, Stones, Water, Fish

**Size:** 93 x 40 x 50 cm

We used a discarded plastic water bottle as an aquarium. We wanted to show that discarded bottles can be reused and recycled as a habitats for some animals. We wanted to bring attention to the problem of liter by reusing and recycling plastic bottles. Plastics destroy water bodies and land.



**Nakabiito Ratifah**

**Title:** *Adungu Musical Instruments of the Acholi*

**Size:** 80 x 42 x 80 cm

**Materials:** Plastic straws, wire, thread, glue, bottle caps

I used coloured straws found around compounds, on the streets, in dustbins to represent Adungu musical instruments of the Acholi people of Uganda. Two of the four Adungus I made can make sound when shaken.





**Nakayiki Sophie and Mugagga Fahad**

**Title:** *Evolution*

**Materials:** Paper, grass, wood, plaster, nails, glasses, glue, hard board, glass, soil

**Size:** 90 x 67 x 53 cm

Evolution of the construction of buildings showing different stages of development from the caves and grass houses of early man to the multistoried buildings and skyscrapers of today. This is an inevitable result of economic development in urban/rural integration.





**Nalumansi Fatumah and Kateme Viola Catherine**

**Title:** *Repurposing Found Plastic Cups*

**Materials:** Disposable plastic cups, wire staples, glue, light source

**Size:** 75 x 45 x 75 cm

We recycled used plastic cups that we collected from local restaurants and stapled them together to make a sculpture. The repetition of the cup shapes made an exciting circular form. Our sculpture is about initiating a change of mindset among the public with regard to sustainable use and discarded plastic. It's a call to everyone to think and innovatively reuse plastic without destroying the environment.



**Natukunda Prize and Nalwanga Gladys.**

**Title:** *Correction Table*

**Materials:** Wood, nails, glue, polish, wood filler, paint, cloth, bottle tops, stones, yarn, beads, buttons, bamboo leaves

**Size:** 67 x 66 x 66 cm

This table is to help people with mental health. It includes board games that they can play to relax their minds.



**Nuwagaba Innocent**

**Title:** Inflation against Economy

**Materials:** Wood, Screws, Nails, Plastic, Rubber, Metal, Glue, Hard Hat

**Size:** 110 x 116 x 35 cm

The sculpture is about inflation that has taken over Uganda's economy and is mainly seen in the daily rise in fuel prices. The fuel station and the balance beam are used as symbols. The artwork shows that inflation is heavier than the economy.



**Otto Bobby and Ssendagire Hamza**

**Title:** *All for One, One for All*

**Size:** 170 x 70 x 60 cm

**Materials:** Bamboo, binding wire, plastics, rubber, sisal, rods, wood, nails, boxes, fabric, wax, boxes, sisal fibers, plaster of Paris, feathers, paper, egg shells, stones, elastic, paint

The sculpture is about the position of everyone in the society where we live and what we have to do to support each other for the benefits of all in the society.





**Sabunyo Masiga Samyl**

**Title:** *Chaos in My Air*

**Materials:** Old car parts, scrap from welding shops, binding wire

**Size:** 97 x 80 x 82 cm

Uganda has many old vehicles that destroy the air of our cities. This sculpture addresses the effects of the old vehicles on the air and the possible better air if we use new electric vehicles.

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