

# MASOLO

FOREIGN AGENT



**KURA  
MALIZA  
& SHOMALI  
KIASUWA  
JOYCENATH TSHAMALA**

**4 SEPTEMBER–  
6 NOVEMBER  
2021**



**Foreign Agent is proud to present *Masolo*, a group show featuring three exciting Congolese artists presented together for the first time: Kura Shomali, Maliza Kiasuwa and Joycenath Tshamala - their first gallery show in Switzerland.**

In Lingala, one of the main languages spoken in DR Congo, *Masolo* means conversation as well as storytelling. *Masolo* initiates a conversation across histories and cultures, where the artists play – often using collage - with various incongruous elements in order to generate new narratives which tell us another kind of history, one which celebrates the carnivalesque, the hybrid and the marginalized. But as with most things Congolese, always with humour. In *Masolo*, identity, migration and the shocking legacy of King Léopold are examined and deconstructed by the artists.

Traditional Congolese elements such as Luba caryatids and other power objects figure prominently in the storytelling of the artists as indexes of identity and power. Kura Shomali exposes with irony our paradoxical fascination with the return of looted African artefacts while Maliza Kiasuwa uses features from traditional African artworks to “Africanize” old European engravings representing white bourgeois figures thus creating an intimate conversation between her European and Congolese ancestors. In Tshamala’s work, these noble pieces restore dignity to King Léopold’s forgotten victims, now portrayed as heroes.

Kura Shomali’s work is an urgent reaction to the commotion, chaos and excitement of Kinshasa, the buzzing metropolis where he lives. Both cynical and humorous, he playfully appropriates the images of notable African photographers such as Samuel Fosso, Sammy Baloji and Malick Sidibé, as well as images from popular culture like cowboys (Mobutu loved dressing up as a cowboy), Mick Jagger, John Cougar Mellencamp, Bodyz Kingelez and others. Predominantly working on paper, Shomali applies bold charcoal, ballpoint pen, gouache, ink, marker and collage to create rich textures that are synonymous with his work.

Maliza Kiasuwa, who is of mixed Congolese and Romanian heritage, examines questions of identity and lineage through painting, stitching and collage by revisiting old engravings representing stiff pot-bellied white paternal ancestors and reimagining them with features from traditional African art in a labor of intimate métissage, reminiscent of surrealism.

Joycenath Tshamala explores migration issues, through the *file d’attente* series representing the bureaucratic exodus of Congolese people, waiting in line at airports to be processed, with their passports in hand. Tshamala works using rusty razor blades – the rust indexing chaos and entropy and the blades representing the cutting and uprooting of individuals leaving for Europe, often cutting off all ties with their families. His other series explores the restoring of human dignity – an attempt both to expose the atrocities perpetrated under King Leopold and to repair the horrific injuries suffered by hordes of unknown and forgotten Congolese, by sitting the mutilated victims on Caryatid stools, traditionally reserved for royalty.

**KURA SHOMALI** was born in 1979 in Kananga, Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 2001, he left his medical studies to study at the Fine Arts Academy in Kinshasa, before attending the École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Strasbourg. Shomali has exhibited in several groups shows in Europe and the US, including the seminal *Beauté Congo* at the Fondation Cartier in 2016. His most recent shows include *Figures de Pouvoir* at Magnin-A in Paris in April 2020, alongside other African artists such as Omar Victor Diop and Fabrice Monteiro. Shomali's work has been presented in notable art fairs, such as 1:54 London and New York, and Art Paris.

**MALIZA KIASUWA** was born in 1975 in Bucharest, Romania to a Romanian mother and Congolese father. A self-taught artist and a true citizen of the world, Kiasuwa was raised in Kinshasa and currently lives on a disaffected farm by lake Nainashasha, in the heart of the Rift Valley in Kenya. Kiasuwa has had solo exhibitions in Europe (including recently at Sulger-Buel Gallery, London) and in Africa where she is represented by Circle Art in Nairobi, Kenya. She is also currently exhibited in Washington DC, USA, at Morton Fine Art and will present at the Congo Biennale in Kinshasa later this year.

**JOYCENATH TSHAMALA** was born in 1993 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, where he lives and works. Tshamala graduated from the famous Fine Arts Academy of Kinshasa in 2012. Keen to make his mark on the art scene, Tshamala took part in his first group show in 2011, before his graduation. Since then he's exhibited in major African events: Ségou, Mali (Light of Ségou, 2019), Dakar, Senegal (2018 Biennale, OFF), Brazzaville (H2K20, 2018) and of course Kinshasa, DR Congo (Talkin 2018). In September, he will be showcased in a group show in Bamako, Mali.

**FOREIGN AGENT** is a young and dynamic contemporary art gallery established in 2019 in Lausanne, Switzerland showcasing exciting emerging and established contemporary artists as well as leading designers mainly from Africa and the Diaspora in a uniquely curated environment. An African Memphis with a neo-pop afro-futuristic vibe. Foreign Agent, live bold.





KURA SHOMALI  
FAR WEST, 2020  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
80 × 75 CM





MALIZA KIASUWA  
EMPIRE HYBRIDE, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
(COTTON THREADS AND ACRYLIC)  
60 × 80 CM





JOYCENATH TSHAMALA  
MODÈLE 1, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON CANVAS  
(MAROUFLAGE AND ACRYLIC)  
160 × 120 CM





1 KURA SHOMALI  
MICK JAGGER, 2020  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
124 x 75 CM  
6500 CHF



2 KURA SHOMALI  
FAR WEST, 2020  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
80 x 75 CM  
5500 CHF



3 KURA SHOMALI  
MELLENCAMP, 2020  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
100 x 70 CM  
4500 CHF



4 KURA SHOMALI  
HOMMAGE KINGELEZ, 2020  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
85 x 55 CM  
4000 CHF



5 KURA SHOMALI  
COUP DU MARTEAU, 2020  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
160 x 100 CM  
8500 CHF





6 KURA SHOMALI  
LE MYTHE DE LA TRIBU LUBA, 2020  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
110 × 180 CM  
9500 CHF



7 KURA SHOMALI  
L'AFRIQUE DANS MA POCHE, 2020  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
100 × 75 CM  
6500 CHF



1 MALIZA KIASUWA  
THIS IS MY PLACE, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
(COTTON THREADS AND ACRYLIC)  
60 × 80 CM  
3500 CHF



2 MALIZA KIASUWA  
EMPIRE HYBRIDE, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
(COTTON THREADS AND ACRYLIC)  
60 × 80 CM  
3500 CHF



3 MALIZA KIASUWA  
LES COURONNES ANCESTRALES, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
(COTTON THREADS AND ACRYLIC)  
60 × 80 CM  
3500 CHF





4 MALIZA KIASUWA  
DUALITÉ, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER  
(COTTON THREADS AND ACRYLIC)  
60 × 80 CM  
3500 CHF



5 MALIZA KIASUWA  
MASOLO 1, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON ENGRAVING  
35 × 45 CM  
900 CHF



6 MALIZA KIASUWA  
MASOLO 2, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON ENGRAVING  
35 × 45 CM  
900 CHF



7 MALIZA KIASUWA  
MASOLO 3, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON ENGRAVING  
35 × 45 CM  
900 CHF



8 MALIZA KIASUWA  
MASOLO 4, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON ENGRAVING  
35 × 45 CM  
900 CHF



1 JOYCNATH TSHAMALA  
FILE D'ATTENTE 1, 2021  
RUST AND ACRYLIC ON CANVAS  
140 × 130 CM  
3500 CHF

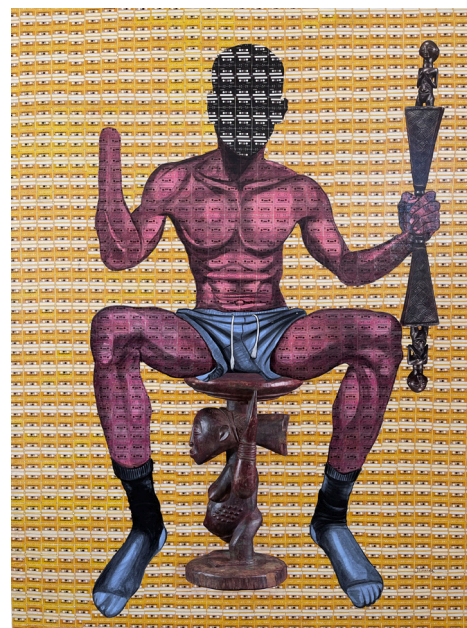




2 JOYCENATH TSHAMALA  
FILE D'ATTENTE 2, 2021  
RUST AND ACRYLIC ON CANVAS  
140 × 130 CM  
3500 CHF



3 JOYCENATH TSHAMALA  
MODÈLE 1, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON CANVAS  
(MAROUFLAGE AND ACRYLIC)  
160 × 120 CM  
4500 CHF



4 JOYCENATH TSHAMALA  
MODÈLE 4, 2021  
MIXED MEDIA ON CANVAS  
(MAROUFLAGE AND ACRYLIC)  
160 × 120 CM  
4500 CHF