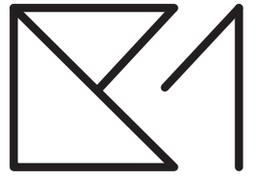


# KINSHASA (N)TONGA



between  
future  
and dust

23.09—  
20.11.2022



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## 1. PRESS RELEASE

*Kinshasa (N)tóngá* presents a unique vision of the Congolese capital, its development, and its urban structure. *(N)tóngá* means "needle" or "construction site" in Lingala and therefore refers to the informal course that characterises Kinshasa's evolution to date. The impact of colonialism and the influence it has had on the architecture of the third largest city on the African continent are the focus of the exhibition. The featured artists depict the working methods and production processes that allow the people of Kinshasa to go against an imposed vision of the city and its identity.

Curated by Estelle Lecaille and Aude Tournaye (Twenty Nine Studio) in collaboration with KANAL-Centre Pompidou, the exhibition is structured around a scenography designed by Traumnovelle which, through the materials used, recalls the aesthetics of a city in the making. *Kinshasa (N)tóngá: Between Future and Dust* opens on September 23rd at K1, the pavilion situated across the water from KANAL-Centre Pompidou. This temporary venue will host a programme of events leading up to the opening of the future KANAL-Centre Pompidou.

Throughout history, Kinshasa, today metropolis of 17 million inhabitants and a hub of world trade, has been built in successive layers, with the first traces of human habitation recorded on the banks of the river dating back to around 500. The modern city was developed from 1881 onwards with the arrival of the Belgian colonisers imposing large-scale plans for urban development. The colonial city was deeply segregated along the lines of its wide avenues, railway tracks, and parks that housed administrative buildings. Despite a grid plan imposed by the colonial regime and multiple master plans proposed after 1960, Kinshasa is to this day characterised by vernacular constructions and informal architecture.

Comprising both original works and archival material, *Kinshasa (N)tóngá* offers an in-depth look at the Congolese capital, its inhabitants, heritage and perspectives for the future. Archival photographs trace the indigenous customs and roots of Kinshasa from the late 19th century to the 1970s. Modernist utopias and the city's colonial past are documented in Magloire Mpaka Banona's work, and are questioned in Prisca Tankwey's performance *Leopoldville Mourning* as well as in Sammy Baloji and Filip De Boeck's film *The Tower: A Concrete Utopia*. In dialogue with this artistic momentum from Kinshasa, the exhibition presents archives from Italian architect Eugene Palumbo and his Congolese associate Fernand Tala N'Gai, who worked under President Mobutu Sese Seko during the return to "authenticity" in the 1970s. Comprising a large number of official and private projects, Palumbo's work remained in tune with the currents of modern architecture, while seeking to embody the precepts of a so-called "authentic" culture.

Featured artists: Bianca Baldi, Sammy Baloji, Filip De Boeck, Dirk Dumon and Mweze Dieudonné Ngangura, Azgard Itambo, Godelive Kasangati, Kongo Astronauts, Gosette Lubondo, Magloire Mpaka Banona, Mega Mingiedi, Pume Bylex, Isaac Sahani, Tankila Studio, Prisca Tankwey.

In March 2022, *Kinshasa (N)tóngá: Between Future and Dust* was exhibited at the Académie des Beaux-Arts of the Congolese capital. The exhibition is part of Living Traces, a project initiated by KANAL-Centre Pompidou and its partners that connects Brussels and Kinshasa.

## 2. CURATORS OF THE EXHIBITION

### **Twenty Nine Studio**

Twenty Nine Studio & Production is a company created in 2017 by Rosa Spaliviero and Sammy Baloji. It offers all consultancy, research, prospecting and production activities in the fields of artistic practice in its various forms, particularly in the visual and audiovisual arts. The activities of Twenty Nine Studio & Production are supported by Estelle Lecaille and Aude Tournaye.

### **Estelle Lecaille**

Estelle Lecaille is an art historian, teacher, art critic and curator at m̀osso in Brussels, an independent collaborative platform of contemporary art practices that develops and supports international projects in Europe with the Global South. Since 2016, she works as production and research manager with artist Sammy Baloji at Twenty Nine Studio & Production.

### **Aude Tournaye**

Aude Tournaye is an interdisciplinary practitioner based in Brussels. She works as an independent researcher, art critic and curator. Since 2020, she works as a communication, production and research assistant at Twenty Nine Studio & Production.

### 3. KINSHASA (N)TÓNGÁ: BETWEEN FUTURE AND DUST

#### Artists in the exhibition

##### Bianca Baldi

Born in 1985 in South Africa, Bianca Baldi lives and works in Brussels. She graduated from the Michaelis School of Fine Arts in Cape Town (2007) and continued her studies at the Städelschule in Frankfurt. Her work has been shown in international exhibitions such as the 8th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (2014), the 11th Shanghai Biennale (2016), the 11th African Biennale of Photography in Bamako (2017) as well as numerous group and solo exhibitions.

##### Sammy Baloji

Born in 1978 in Lubumbashi (DR Congo), Sammy Baloji lives and works between Brussels and Lubumbashi. He graduated in humanities at the University of Lubumbashi, and then specialized in photography and video art at the École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Strasbourg. Since 2019, he has been conducting a research PhD in art at the Sint Lucas University in Antwerp. He has received numerous grants, awards and distinctions. Among others, the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres from the French Ministry of Culture (2016), the prizes of the Dakar Biennale (2016) and the Rencontres africaines de photographie de Bamako (2007).

##### Filip De Boeck

Born in 1961 in Antwerp, Filip De Boeck is a writer, curator, film-maker, professor and coordinator of the Institute for Anthropological Research in Africa, a research unit of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the KU Leuven. Since 1987, he has conducted extensive anthropological fieldwork on urban and rural communities in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition to his numerous academic publications, Filip De Boeck directed the 2010 documentary *Cemetery State*, which shows how the youth of Kinshasa use the burial ritual as a moment of revolt and political protest.

##### Godelive Kasangati

Born in 1996 in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo, Godelive Kabena Kasangati currently lives and works in Ghana. In 2017, she completed a two-year training in the photography programme initiated by EUNIC-RDC, the Goethe Institute and the Academy of Fine Arts in Kinshasa. The artist graduated in painting at the Academy of Fine Arts of Kinshasa (2018). She is currently conducting her MFA at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Zambia.

##### Kongo Astronauts

Kongo Astronauts is an artist collective based in Kinshasa initiated in 2013 by Eléonore Hellio and Michel Ekeba. Fluctuating and multidisciplinary, this collective is composed of between

two and seven artists. Their multimedia practice and performative actions related to the postcolonial environment of Kinshasa and the Democratic Republic of Congo mix photography, film, sculpture and performance.

### Gosette Lubondo

Born in 1993 in Kinshasa, Gosette Lubondo lives and works in Kinshasa. At the age of 18 she enrolled at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kinshasa. She graduated in 2014 in visual communication and presented her first exhibition at the Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles in Kinshasa the same year. Winner of the Résidences Photographiques du Musée Jacques Chirac du Quai Branly (2017), she also received the Cap Prize for her series *Tala Ngai* (2020), which bears witness to contemporary Kinshasa, as well as the Prix Maison Ruinart (2021).

### Mega Mingiedi Tunga

Born in 1976 in Kinshasa, Mega Mingiedi Tunga graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kinshasa (2001) and obtained a master's degree from the Haute École des Arts du Rhin in Strasbourg (2008). Mingiedi is co-founder of the *Eza-Possibles* collective, a group of artists in Kinshasa whose objective is to bring contemporary art closer to the everyday life of the people of Kinshasa. He participates in numerous international exhibitions and residencies.

### Isaac Sahani

Born in 1992 in Kinshasa, Isaac Sahani lives and works in Kinshasa. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kinshasa (2012) and is currently a student at the National Institute of Arts in Kinshasa. Isaac Sahani is the founder of the collective *Bokutani artistes réunis*, which brings together young Kinshasa artists since 2010. Initiator and artistic director of Laboratoi'art, he was also artistic director of the 2nd edition of the Yango Biennale of Kinshasa (2022).

### Prisca Tankwey

Born in 1997 in Kinshasa, Prisca Tankwey lives and works in Kinshasa and graduated in Fine Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts (2019). As a multidisciplinary artist, her work includes painting, illustration, photography, installations and sculptures. She is an assistant lecturer in painting at the Academy of Fine Arts.

### Pume Bylex

Born in 1968 in Kinshasa, Pume Bylex lives and works in Kinshasa. He decided to follow his destiny and became a self-taught artist. Designer and sculptor, he models a personal utopia through functional objects. He has participated in prestigious group exhibitions, including the Lyon Biennial (2000), and from 2004 in the "Africa Remix" exhibition in Düsseldorf, at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, then in London and Tokyo.

### Dirk Dumon & Mweze Dieudonné Ngangura

Born in 1943 in Roeselare (Belgium), Dirk Dumon graduated from the RITCS (Royal Institute for Theatre, Cinema and Sound) in Brussels in 1966. As a documentary film maker, his films focus on humanities subjects (socio-cultural and anthropological) with films broadcast internationally. Many of these films are used and exhibited in universities and museums.

Born in 1950 in Bukavu, Mweze Dieudonné Ngangura is a Congolese film director. After a scholarship from the Belgian government, he arrived in Belgium at the age of 20. Back in Zaire in 1976, he was a lecturer at three higher institutes in Kinshasa and made documentary films for Zairean television for ten years. Since 1986, he has been working as a freelance filmmaker and has set up the association "Films Sud" in Belgium, which aims to promote intercultural communication and North-South audiovisual cooperation.

### Azgard Itambo

Born in 1990 in Kinshasa, Azgard Itambo is a photographer and graphic designer. After his baccalaureate, he joined the Academy of Fine Arts in Kinshasa. Since 2013, he discovered his interest in photography and later in performance art. The artist documents the Congolese everyday life through photos and videos, which he wants to convey to the viewer in the most authentic and faithful way possible.

### Magloire Mpaka Banona

Born in 1990 in Kinshasa, Magloire Mpaka Banona is a visual artist who graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kinshasa with a degree in visual communication. Very active in the audiovisual and artistic communication sector, he has been working with various agencies since 2010. He has also followed several workshops focused on photography and presents himself as an "urban" photographer.

### Eugène Palumbo & Fernand Tala N'Gai

Born in 1925, the Italian architect Eugene Palumbo (1925-2008) was educated in Milan and Lausanne. He first went to the DRC between 1952 and 1959 to work on technical projects such as dams and power stations. In 1962, he was asked by UNESCO to direct the national schools programme, for which he designed the Polytechnic Faculty of Lubumbashi between 1964 and 1969. Palumbo's proximity to the Congolese elite enabled him to design the most emblematic public monuments of the Mobutu era as well as the private residences of the Congolese elite, including that of the president.

Born in 1938, the Congolese architect Fernand Tala N'Gai (1938-2006) trained at La Cambre, Brussels. A politician (Minister of Finance under Laurent-Désiré Kabila) and professor at the Institute of Public Buildings and Works in Kinshasa, he later became a member of the political opposition to Mobutu, was a political prisoner and was sentenced to death, a sentence not carried out thanks to the intervention of Amnesty International. Fernand Tala-N'Gai is best known for his large-scale constructions during the 1970s and 1980s in Kinshasa, including the

Palais de Marbre and the residential areas of the Cité Verte of the Cité Mama Mobutu, in the west of the city.

### Jean-Jacques Tankwey (Tankila Studio)

Born in Kinshasa in 1979, Jean-Jacques Tankwey graduated from the Kinshasa Academy of Fine Arts in interior design in 2004. Co-creator of the polyv'art platform (2010) of which he is manager between 2010 and 2018, he creates Tankila Studio in 2018 and initiates the Kin Design Week project "Kindeswe" in 2020, which is the first international design exhibition in Kinshasa.

### Exhibition Design

Traumnovelle is a militant faction founded by three Belgian architects Léone Drapeaud, Manuel León Fanjul and Johnny Leya. Traumnovelle uses architecture and fiction as analytical, critical and subversive tools to emphasize contemporary issues and dissect their resolutions. Traumnovelle alternates between cynicism and enthusiasm all the while advocating for critical thinking in architecture. Traumnovelle champions a multi-disciplinary approach with architecture at the crossroads. Traumnovelle distances itself from current forms of naive architecture and refuses to glorify the mundane. Traumnovelle sides with those who have not sacrificed ambition and criticism.

#### 4. PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

##### **Performance Prisca Tankwey 'Leopoldville mourning'**

**Friday 23.09 18:00**

**Location: Monument au Travail, Rue Claessens, 1020 Brussels**

During her performance *Leopoldville mourning*, Prisca Tankwey takes the participants in a funeral procession from the Monument au Travail (Rue Claessens, 1020 Brussels) to the Church of Our Lady of Laeken, where Belgian royalty including Leopold II are buried. Pulling a tombstone at arm's length adorned with archival photographs of Leopoldville, the public follows the artist in this funeral procession to the entrance of the church to symbolically bury the colonial city.

##### **Walk & Talk**

**Brussels Academy: Urban struggles and the right to the city**

**Thursday 06.10 17:30 – 19:30**

Brussels Academy is an urban educational platform to share Brussels knowledge for and by its inhabitants. To accompany *Kinshasa (N)tóngá*, Brussels Academy organizes a series of thematic city walks. The first event, titled "Urban struggles and the right to the city" is an introduction to the cycle of walks and conferences on the *informal city*. In relation to the exhibition and its reflection on Kinshasa, the series questions the informal dynamics that contribute to building a city like Brussels. Often perceived as characteristics of Southern , informal dynamics also play a role in European capitals such as Brussels. During the visits and lectures, experts, artists and associations will discuss the variety of processes (squats, alternative access to jobs, etc.) that co-construct the urban fabric and create access to the city.

##### **Podcast 'Sororités, conversations with my sistas'**

**Saturday 08.10 17:00**

Rokia Bamba, radio maker, sound artist, DJ and Afro-feminist art-ivist from Brussels, welcomes female artists to her podcast. Recorded live in Brussels, these conversations traverse intimacy and politics through themes of intersectionality, feminism, decolonization, care, representation of women, and music. In the framework of *Kinshasa (N)tóngá*, this conversation with Gia Abrassart and Leïla El-Mahi is recorded live from K1.

##### **Book Launch & DJ set**

**Colonial Tales, Trails and Traces – Nicholas Lewis & Anne Wetsi Mpoma**

**Saturday 15.10 17:00**

Book launch and presentation of Nicolas Lewis' *Colonial Tales, Trails and Traces*, published in 2022. The book focuses on the traces of colonial history in the public space of Brussels, such as monuments and street names. During this event, the author enters into conversation with art historian and gallerist Anne Wetsi Mpoma. DJ set by Mambele to follow. Walk & Talk

Brussels Academy: The (in)formal urban fabric

**Thursday 20.10 17:30 – 19:00**

This walk through the Quartier Nord, Rue de Brabant, and Parc Maximilien demonstrates the tension between the spatial planning processes and the reality of informal trade and migratory flows resulting from globalization.

**Launch sika magazine #3**

**Estelle Lecaille, Ayoh Kré Duchâtelet & Quentin Nicolai**

**Thursday 20.10 19:00**

*Sika* is a publication about art and postcolonialism. Born of the conviction that our globalized world cannot be understood without addressing the historical and asymmetrical relations of power that underlie it, *sika* proposes to take stock of it from Brussels, a world-city inserted in the networks of colonial history and European political construction. The presentation will be followed by a sound performance by graphic designer Ayoh Kré Duchâtelet and architect Quentin Nicolai, based on the latter's "*dépaysement*" contribution published in *sika* #3.

**Leaving Living Dakota**

**Museum Night Fever**

**Saturday 22.10 21:00 – 01:00**

On the occasion of Museum Night Fever, Brussels collective Leaving Living Dakota takes over K1 for a festive night of art and music by DJs Gomar, Renoi Terrible, Golce, and Cövco. The collective, comprising Wutangu and Golce Dabbana (among others), offers a space and an experience where queer and POC artists can express themselves freely.

**Talk**

**Brussels Academy: Working in Brussels: labor on the shadow of the city**

**Thursday 10.11 17:30 – 18:30**

**Performance by Éric Androa Mindre Kolo / Yannos Majestikos**

**Screening documentaire *Faire-part* – Anne Reijniers, Nizar Saleh, Paul Shemisi, Rob Jacobs (OV FR 63')**

**Thursday 10.11 19:30**

Éric Androa Mindre Kolo is known for his performances which emphasize the relationship between the body, current events, and global conflicts. It takes a poetic look at the future, examining the role of humour, personal testimonies, and the public space. In performances by Yannos Majestikos, his exuberant costumes, often used in public space, draw attention to issues such as environmental crisis and colonial heritage. In these performances at K1, the artists turn their attention towards Brussels and Kinshasa's urban fabric. The performances are followed by a screening of *Faire-part*, a documentary by cineasts Paul Shemisi, Nizar Saleh, Anne Reijniers and Rob Jacobs about resistance to legacies of colonialism.

### **Brussels Academy: Final debate**

**The informal city: a perspective from Kinshasa and Brussels**

**Thursday 17.11 17:30 – 18:45**

Debate tackling the tensions between formal and informal processes that contribute to the making of Brussels. In this panel, several associations, artists and researchers discuss ownership of the city.

### **Film Screening & Q&A**

**Systeme K – Renaud Barret: Belgian premiere (OV FR 94')**

**Thursday 17.11 20:00**

**Location: RITCS Cinema – Rue Antoine Dansaert 70, 1000 Brussels**

*System K*, a film by Renaud Barret from 2018, portrays the artistic scene of Kinshasa. It depicts the social, political, and cultural context of Kinshasa, and shows the ways in which a vibrant performance scene emerges despite harassment from the authorities and the artists' personal difficulties.. There will be a Q&A with director Renaud Barret after the screening.

### **Film Screening**

**Systeme K – Renaud Barret: Belgian premiere (OV FR 94')**

**Friday 18.11 20:00**

**Location: RITCS Cinema – Rue Antoine Dansaert 70, 1000 Brussels**

*System K*, a film by Renaud Barret from 2018, portrays the artistic scene of Kinshasa. It depicts the social, political, and cultural context of Kinshasa, and shows the ways in which a vibrant performance scene emerges despite harassment from the authorities and the artists' personal difficulties..

### **Finissage with Customs & Borders**

**Sunday 20.11 16:00 – 20:00**

Customs & Borders is a Brussels collective focusing on visual art and performance with an Afrocentric vision. Customs & Borders was founded on better representation for artists of African descent. In order to do so, Customs & Borders collaborates with local and international artists to realize events that reflect the singularity of their artists and partners. On the last day of the exhibition, they have invited artists, performers and DJs for an afternoon of music, art, and live acts.

### **Librairie: Ici Sont Les Lions**

**22.09 – 20.11**

During the exhibition, K1 will occasionally host the *Ici Sont Les Lions* bookshop, a temporary project led by Dulia Lengema at 180 Rue Haute, Brussels. It offers, in conjunction with the *Kinshasa (N)Tóngá* exhibition, a multilingual literary selection presenting art books, children's

books, and African literature and philosophy. The bookstore acts as an expansion of the exhibition. K1 pop-up bar door Café Congo

**K1 pop-up bar door Café Congo**  
22.09 – 20.11

The K1 pop-up bar will be hosted by Gia Abrassart, an independent journalist and activist dealing with the legacies of colonialism. She founded Café Congo in 2018 as an artistic, feminist, decolonial and queer third place. Gia will share her expertise on Congolese products and drinks, and her love for ginger, bissap and natural wine.

**Radio Bala-Bala**  
20.09 -- 20.11

*Radio Bala-Bala* is a sound project by artists Mega Mingedi and Jaguar Ntumi. In 11 2-hour episodes, *Radio Bala-Bala* evokes the soundscape of Kinshasa from the viewpoint of its inhabitants, its artists, and its 'users'. Listen on the website → [www.kanal.brussels](http://www.kanal.brussels)

Radio Bala-Bala was commissioned by Radio Art Zone as part of Esch22, European Capital of Culture

## 5. LIVING TRACES

*Living Traces*, a bridging project between Kinshasa and Brussels, is articulated around various multidisciplinary artistic proposals that were and will be held between the two capitals between March 2022 and March 2023. The project reflects the desire of KANAL-Centre Pompidou to broaden people's perception by inviting them to discover the artistic diversity of the Congolese, Belgian and Belgian-Congolese communities.

The 60 years of Congolese independence serves as a starting point to have a two-sided look at the past and present of the Democratic Republic of Congo and its links with Belgium. What traces were left behind by the colonisation of Congo? And what remains of this (de)colonisation in the two countries today?

Curators Sorana Munsya and Evelyn Simons, Johnny Leya and Twenty Nine Studio, Gia Abrassart and Joelle Sambi are the driving forces behind the project's narrative, working closely with the Academy of Fine Arts of Kinshasa, Horst Festival, Cinematek, CIVA and Café Congo.

Aware that the work around *Living Traces* is not univocal and that the appropriation of colonial history has multiple aspects, both emotional and militant, KANAL decided to make all these voices heard and enable a platform for exchange, dialogue and artistic expression between March 2022 and March 2023.

## 6. COLOPHON

### **Artists**

Bianca Baldi, Sammy Baloji, Filip De Boeck, Pume Bylex, Azgard Itambo, Godelive Kasangati, Kongo Astronauts, Eric Androa Mindre Kolo, Gosette Lubondo, Yannis Majestikos, Mega Mingiedi, Magloire Mpaka Banona, Eugène Palumbo & Fernand Tala N’Gai, Isaac Sahani, Tankila Studio, Prisca Tankwey

### **Filmmakers**

Dirk Dumon, Mweze Dieudonné Ngangura

### **Curators**

Estelle Lecaille and Aude Tournaye (Twenty Nine Studio)

### **Exhibition Design**

Traumnovelle

### **In collaboration with**

Gia Abrassart (Café Congo), Brussels Academy, Studio Balado, Rokia Bamba, Renaud Barret, CMCLD (Collectif Mémoire Coloniale et Lutte contre les Discriminations), Customs & Borders, Leaving Living Dakota, Ayoh Kré Duchâtelet & Quentin Nicolai, Dulia Lengema (Librairie Ici Sont Les Lions), Nicholas Lewis, Anne Wetsi, Leïla El-Mahi, Kevin Mambele, mòsso asbl, Anne Reijniers, Nizar Saleh, Paul Shemisi & Rob Jacobs

## 7. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

*Kinshasa (N)tóngá: Between Future and Dust*

23.09 > 20.11.2022

Open from Thursday to Sunday, from 12:00 to 20:00

K1

Avenue du Port 1

1000 Brussels

[Kanal.brussels](http://Kanal.brussels)

Located on the other side of the canal, right across KANAL's building, K1 is a temporary venue that will host a program of events leading up to the opening of the future KANAL-Centre Pompidou.



Press contact



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