

Samson Kambalu



Biography

Samson Kambalu (b. 1975, Malawi) is an artist and writer working in a variety of media, including site-specific installation, video, performance and literature. His work is autobiographical and approaches art as an arena for critical thought and sovereign activities. Kambalu's work fuses aspects of the Nyau gift-giving culture of the Chewa, the anti-reification theories of the Situationist movement and the Protestant tradition of inquiry, criticism and dissent.

Kambalu has been featured in major exhibitions and projects worldwide, including the Dakar Biennale (2014, 2016), Tokyo International Art Festival (2009) and the Liverpool Biennial (2004, 2016). He was included in *All the World's Futures*, Venice Biennale 2015, curated by Okwui Enwezor. More recently Kambalu was the Malawi Cultural Consultant for the film *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* and translated the script into Chichewa. He also was included on the 2019 Dallas Medianale.

Kambalu studied at the University of Malawi (BA Fine Art and Ethnomusicology); Nottingham Trent University (MA Fine Art) and Chelsea College of Art and Design (PhD Fine Art). Kambalu, who began his academic career at the University of Malawi, has won research fellowships with Yale University and the Smithsonian Institution, and is an associate professor of Fine Art at Ruskin School of Art, and a fellow at Magdalen College, Oxford University.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2017 *Graphomania*, James Gallery, New York, USA
- 2017 *Wounded Negatives*, Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2016 *Bronze Age_*, NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale, Miami, USA
- 2016 *Introduction to Nyau Cinema* Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK
- 2015 *The Unbearable Lightness of Nyau Cinema* Gallery U Mloka, Olomouc, Czech Republic
- 2015 *Double Feature* Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2012 *Tattoo City: The First Three Chapters (with guests)*, Castlefield Gallery, Manchester, UK
- 2009 *Roseanne*, Sai Gallery, Osaka, Japan
- 2008 *The Jive Talker*, book launch and installation, INIVA, London, UK
- 2005 *Black My Story* Nottingham Castle and Art Gallery, Nottingham, UK
- 2004 *Holyball Exercises and Exorcisms*, Usher Gallery, Lincoln, UK
- 2004 *Holyballism*, Art Exchange Gallery, Nottingham, UK
- 2001 *The Gideons' Room*, Winston Hotel, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- 2000 *Exercise IV* Thami Mnyele Foundation, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2000 *Holyball Exercises and Exorcisms*, Chancellor College, Zomba, Malawi

Group Exhibitions

2019 *Happy*, NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale, Florida

2018 *African Metropolis*, MAXXI, Rome, Italy

2017 *Afriques Capitales*, La Villette, Paris, France

2017 *The Silences Between*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

2017 *The Public Body*, Artspace, Sydney, Australia

2017 *El Usman Farooqi Here and a Yonder: On Finding Poise in Disorientation*, Savvy Contemporary, Berlin, Germany

2017 *The Art of Dissonance*, Seoul Museum of Art (SeMA), Seoul, Korea

2017 *Cinema mon amour: Film in the Arts*, Aargauer Kunsthau, Switzerland

2016 *Retrograde*, The Rogan Centre, University of Chicago, USA

2016 *Detail is All*, Kunsthalle Mainz, Germany

2016 *Dakar Biennale*, Dakar, Senegal

2016 *Liverpool Biennial*, Liverpool, UK

2016 *Lost & Found*, Paradiso, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2015 *Embodied*, Nikolaj Kunsthal, Copenhagen, Denmark

2015 *50/50*, New Church Museum, Cape Town, South Africa

2015 *Transformation Marathon*, Serpentine Gallery, London, UK

2015 *Schema*, Stevenson, Cape Town, South Africa

2015 *Venice Biennale*, All the World's Futures, Venice, Italy

2014 *Chroma*, Stevenson, Cape Town, South Africa

2014 *Dakar Biennial*, Dakar, Senegal

2014 *Nyau!*, Espace D'art Contemporain, Porrentruy, Switzerland

2014 *The Book Lovers*, Artist novels project, Cricoteka, Krakow, Poland

2014 *The Book Lovers*, De Appel, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2013 *The Book Lovers*, Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, Poland

2012 *Luke Fowler: Pilgrimage from Scattered Points*, HMVCurzon Wimbledon, guest artist showing Early Film, London, UK

2009 *Tokyo International Art Festival*, Tokyo, Japan

2009 – 2010 *Dialogue Among Nations*, Art for Humanity, South Africa. (Part of FIFA World Cup 2010)

2008 *Art Osaka*, Osaka, Japan

2008 *The Mausoleum of Lost Objects*, INIVA, London, UK

2008 *Next We Change Earth*, The New Art Exchange Gallery, Nottingham, UK

2006 *Hinterland*, Nottingham, UK

2006 *Ballkünstler* (Part of FIFA World Cup 2006) Museum der Bildenden Künste, Leipzig, Germany

2006 *The Beautiful Game*, Brooklyn Institute of Contemporary Arts, USA

2004 *Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2004*, The Barbican, London, UK.

2004 *Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2004*, Liverpool Biennial, UK

2004 *One Step Beyond*, Derby Museum and Art Gallery, UK

2003 *Nottingham Open*, Nottingham Castle Museum, UK

2003 *Guess Who*, Stedelijk Museum, Zwolle, The Netherlands

2003 *Black My Story*, Museum De Paviljoens, Almere, The Netherlands

Curated Exhibitions

2015 *Nyau Cinema for The One Minutes*, Amsterdam

2012 *Tattoo City: The First Three Chapters*, with Clarissa Corfe of Castlefield Gallery

Teaching, Lectureships and Workshop

*2013*_Guest speaker at Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, at the invitation of Professor Pavel Büchler, as part of the series of Tuesday Talks in collaboration with the Manchester Metropolitan University

*2012*_Guest Lecturer at Salford University.

*2010*_Guest speaker at the University of Salzburg, Austria, at the invitation of Professor Sabine Coelsch-Foisner

*2010*_Guest speaker at the Literature Salon, Leibniz University Hannover, Germany.

*2006*_Guest Lecturer at Nottingham Trent University.

2002-2005_Select Education, Supply art instructor in schools and colleges in the East Midlands.

Conference and Workshop Participation

2016 *Permissions: The way we work now*, Goldsmiths, University of London
2016 _Artist talk, Leeds School of Contemporary Art, Leeds Beckett University
2016 *Nyau Cinema*, Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford
2016 *Nyau Cinema*, Camberwell School of Art, UAL, London
2015 *Photography and the Archive*, panel speaker, Chaired by Paolo Barrata, Venice Biennale 2015
2015 *Symposium: Art and Collaboration*, SOAS, University of London
2013 *The Art of Hyperbole: Meschac Gaba's Museum of Contemporary African Art*, Chelsea College of Art and Design, with Paul Godwin and Lara Pawson
2013 African Film and Literature Festival, The Gasteig's Blackbox, Munich
2013 *Africa: The Place of Non-Fiction*, Royal African Society's Africa Writes, British Museum, London
2013 _Uccello's Vineyard presentation, Formation International Photography Festival
2013 _Artist Talk for Tattoo City, Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, UK
2012 _Nightingale Theatre, Brighton, UK
2010 _SimensForum, Auditorium, Munich, Germany
2010 _Weltempfang, Frankfurt International Bookfair, Germany
2010 _Museum Baerengasse, Zurich Switzerland
2010 _Vienna Public Library, Austria
2010 _Afrika Festival, Graz
2010 _University of Salzburg, Austria
2010 _Allerweltshaus, Cologne, Germany
2010 _St Gallen Library, St Gallen Switzerland
2010 _Literature House, Basel, Switzerland
2010 _Cabaret Voltaire, Zurich, Switzerland
2010 _Ono Theatre Bern, Switzerland
2010 _Literature House, Basel, Switzerland
2010 _Literarischer Salon, Leibniz University, Hannover, Germany.
2010 _Rauriser Literaturtage., Rauris, Austria
2010 _Schloss Elmau, Bavaria, Germany
2009 *Holyball Exercises and Exorcisms*, Mellons Garden, London
2009 _Whitton Library, Richmond, UK
2009 *Holyball Exercises and Exorcisms*, Nextex, St Gallen Switzerland
2009 _Edinburgh International Book Festival
2008 _Plum Live, Whitechapel Gallery, Lon

Awards and Merits

2016 _Artist residency, Headlands Centre for the Arts, San Francisco, USA
2015 _Research fellowship, Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, USA
2014 _Research fellowship, Yale Centre for British art, USA
2013 _Adler Entrepreneurship Award, Germany
2013 _AHRC PhD Research Award, UK
2010 _Artlink, Performative reading book tour award, Switzerland
2010 _Schloss Elmau Writer-in-Residence, Bavaria, Germany
2010 _Rauris Literature Festival Honoured Guest, Austria
2010 _Jive Talker Winner of National Book Tokens Global Reads
2010 _Arts Council Writing Grant for Tattoo City
2010 _Society of Authors Writing Grant, London for Tattoo City
2006 _The Fritschy Award Nominee, The Netherlands
2005-2010 _ACME, The Fire Station Residency
2004 _Decibel Visual Arts Award (Arts Council)
2004 _The Arts Council Exhibition Grant (Holyballism, The Art Exchange Gallery, Nottingham)
2004 _Bloomberg New Contemporaries. Selectors: Kate Bush, Dinos Chapman, Tacita Dean, Brian Griffiths.
2000 _The Thami Mnyele Artist Residency, Amsterdam

Selected Articles and Reviews

Goodman Gallery

- *2016*_Play and the profane in Samson Kambalu's Holy Ball, Holyballism and (Bookworm) The Fall of Man by Massa Lemu, Stedelijk Studies, Third Issue
- *2015*_Venice Biennale: Highlights and the best of the rest by Louisa Buck, The Telegraph
- *2015*_Samson Kambalu: Souverain du Cinema Nyau by Eric Loret, Café des Images,
- *2015*_Gianfranco Sanguinetti contro la Biennale di Venezia by Raffaella Pellegrino, Artribune
- *2015*_L'écrivain italien Sanguinetti porte plainte contre la Biennale de Venise by Roxana Azimi, Le Monde
- *2015*_Entering the Arena, All the World's Futures: Samson Kambalu on the 56th Venice Biennale, Contemporary And,
- *2015*_Samson Kambalu interview by Matteo Mottin, ATP Diary 22 May
- *2014*_For the Ranter the whole World is a playground: Samson Kambalu interviewed by Massa Lemu, Contemporary And,
- *2012*_Tattoo City: The First Three Chapters, The Guide, The Guardian
- *2010*_Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zwischen Nietzsche und Holy Ball, Switzerland
- *2010*_Salzburgh Nachritchen, Ein Steilpass von Nietzsche by Bernhard Flieher
- *2010*_Jive Talker by Ulrich Baron, Spiegel Online
- *2009*_Mister Motley, Démonen Wegtrappen!, (magazine article) by Daphne Pappers, The Netherlands
- *2009*_Recreating the Portrait of the Young Artist, WASI, review by Steve Chimombo, Malawi
- *2009*_An Artist's Genesis by Joscelyn Jurich, Bookforum USA
- *2008*_Reviews of The Jive Talker (Random House, Simon and Schuster, and Unionsverlag) in UK and USA include The Sunday Telegraph, The Independent, The Guardian, Bookforum and TimeOut New York
- *2008*_Good News from Africa by Giles Foden, The Guardian
- *2008*_The Adventures of an African Huckleberry Finn by Aminatta Forna, The Telegraph
- *2008*_Portrait of the Artist as a Young African by Susan Williams, The Independent
- *2005*_Metro Review
- *2004*_Samson Kambalu: Holyballism, review by Michael Forbes, a-n Magazine
- *2004*_Forget Goldenballs, it's Holyballs for Sam (article), The Lincolnshire Echo
- *2004*_Picture Perfect: New British Talent by Adrian Searle, The Guardian
- *2004*_Strangeness and Charm by Richard Dorment, Telegraph
- *2004*_Feeling Queasy on the Mersey Side, by Thomas Sutcliffe, The Independent
- *2004*_BBC 2 Newsnight with Thomas Sutcliffe
- *2003*_Deterritorialism, Eddie Chambers, Art Monthly
- *2003*_NRC Handelsblad, Door Cornel Bierens
- *2003*_Nederlands Instituut voor Zuielijk Afrika
- *2002*_WASI, Steve Chimombo

Publications

Authored by the Artist

- 2014 *Great African Minds: Dr Charles Chanthunya* by Samson Kambalu, Peter Hammer, Verlag
- 2013 *The Museum and the Individual*, essay on Meschac Gaba's Museum of Contemporary African Art commissioned by Tate Modern
- 2012 *Uccello's Vineyard (a novel)* by Samson Kambalu
- 2011 *Der skurrile Diktator* by Samson Kambalu (A review of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *The Wizard of the Crow*), Kulturaustausch, IFA, Germany
- 2010 *Dr Albert Schweitzer's Troublesome Young Brother* by Samson Kambalu, Kulturaustausch, IFA, October 2010, Germany
- 2010 *Windmill Jive* by Samson Kambalu, Salz Magazine, April 2010, Austria
- 2009 *Action Bitte – Malawians at Leisure* by Samson Kambalu, Kulturaustausch, IFA, August 2009, Germany
- 2008 *The Jive Talker (autobiographical novel)* by Samson Kambalu, Jonathan Cape UK, Simon and Schuster USA, Unionsverlag Germany

Other Publications

- *2011*_Atelier Gespräche, Sabine Coelsch-Foisner, Verlag Anton Pustet
- *2009*_Artsadmin 30th Anniversary, Artsadmin, London
- *2008*_Next We Change Earth_, The New Art Exchange Gallery, Nottingham
- *2006*_Ballkünstler, Museum der Bildenden Künste Leipzig
- *2004*_Museum de Paviljoens: Journal of a Building 1992-2004_, the Museum de Paviljoens
- *2003*_Black My Story_, Museum De Paviljoens, Almere, The Netherlands.
- *2003*_Exedra_, Phillip Van De Bossche