

Layered Histories **Collin Sekajugo and Kaloki Nyamai** **Gallery 1957, London** **July 28th – August 20th, 2022**

Gallery 1957, London, is proud to present an exhibition of new multimedia works from recent artists in residence, Collin Sekajugo (b. 1980, Uganda) and Kaloki Nyamai (b.1985, Kenya), running 28th July – 20th August 2022. The exhibition coincides with both artists' national participation at the 59th Venice Biennale, 2022 (Uganda and Kenya National Pavilions, respectively).

Showing works created in residence with Gallery 1957, Collin Sekajugo interrogates the subject of identity across his work, exploring socio-cultural, political, and economic issues that afflict ethnic, class, and other identities. These images inspire a sense of disorientation in order to unsettle preconceptions about familiar identities, and to produce new and more accepting understandings of difference. Collage is a predominant technique in Sekajugo's art. These collages are produced using found objects, such as polypropylene bags, wastepaper, and product labels, which renders his art both a commentary on contemporary consumer culture as well as an invitation for his audience to engage with his work through the familiar.

Drawing on the stories his grandmother recounted and his own lived experience, Kaloki Nyamai explores how identity, and the perception of the self is inflected by the past and present. He works with multiple media, layering each work with rich textures that reveal figures and abstract forms, which serve as an antidote to the singular narrative of history that is taught as the definitive account of Kenya and its people. These brand-new works speak to daily life, past events, and the political fault lines of postcolonial Kenya. Nyamai's work is part of a lineage of storytelling his grandmother and other ancestors practiced, passing on tales from one generation to another to produce an understanding of history as complex, plural, and contradictory.

About the Artists

Collin Sekajugo is the child of a Rwandan mother and Ugandan father, resulting in a multi-ethnic identity that heavily influences the content and technique of his art. His art has been exhibited at solo and group exhibitions in Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya, Dubai, the United Kingdom, and Denmark, while some of his work resides in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C. His work is part of the 2022 Venice Biennale's Uganda National Pavillion, for which he received a Special Mention Award (with Acaye Kerunen) for outstanding achievement as a national pavilion.

Born in Kitui, Kenya, **Kaloki Nyamai** moved at an early age to the capital of Nairobi, where he currently resides. His first creative inspirations were his mother, who worked in fashion, and his grandmother, who was a musician. These varied early inspirations are reflected in

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Gallery

Nyamai's multidisciplinary repertoire, as a student of interior design and film, who later taught art classes before dedicating himself to his visual art practice. Nyamai pursued formal training at the Buruburu Institute of Fine Arts (BiFA) and has since exhibited in several solo and group exhibitions in Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, the United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, Germany, and Spain. In recognition of his talent, his work has been shown at the Kampala Biennale, Dakar Biennale, and the Venice Biennale.

About Gallery 1957

Based in Accra, with a London outpost opened in 2020, Gallery 1957 has a curatorial focus on Africa and its diaspora. Presenting a programme of exhibitions, installations, and performances by the continent's most significant artists, the gallery serves as a vital platform for promoting Africa's presence within the art scene by hosting ambitious exhibitions, providing resources for residencies, and participating in international art fairs. Founded by Marwan Zakhem in 2016 with an initial focus on supporting the West African arts scene, Gallery 1957 has since expanded to collaborate with leading artists globally, now hosts three spaces in Accra – one in the Kempinski Hotel and two in Galleria Mall – and a London outpost in Hyde Park Gate.

Title: *Layered Histories*

Artists: Collin Sekajugo and Kaloki Nyamai

Dates: 28th July to 20th August 2022

Opening Reception: Wednesday 27th July, 6-9 pm

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