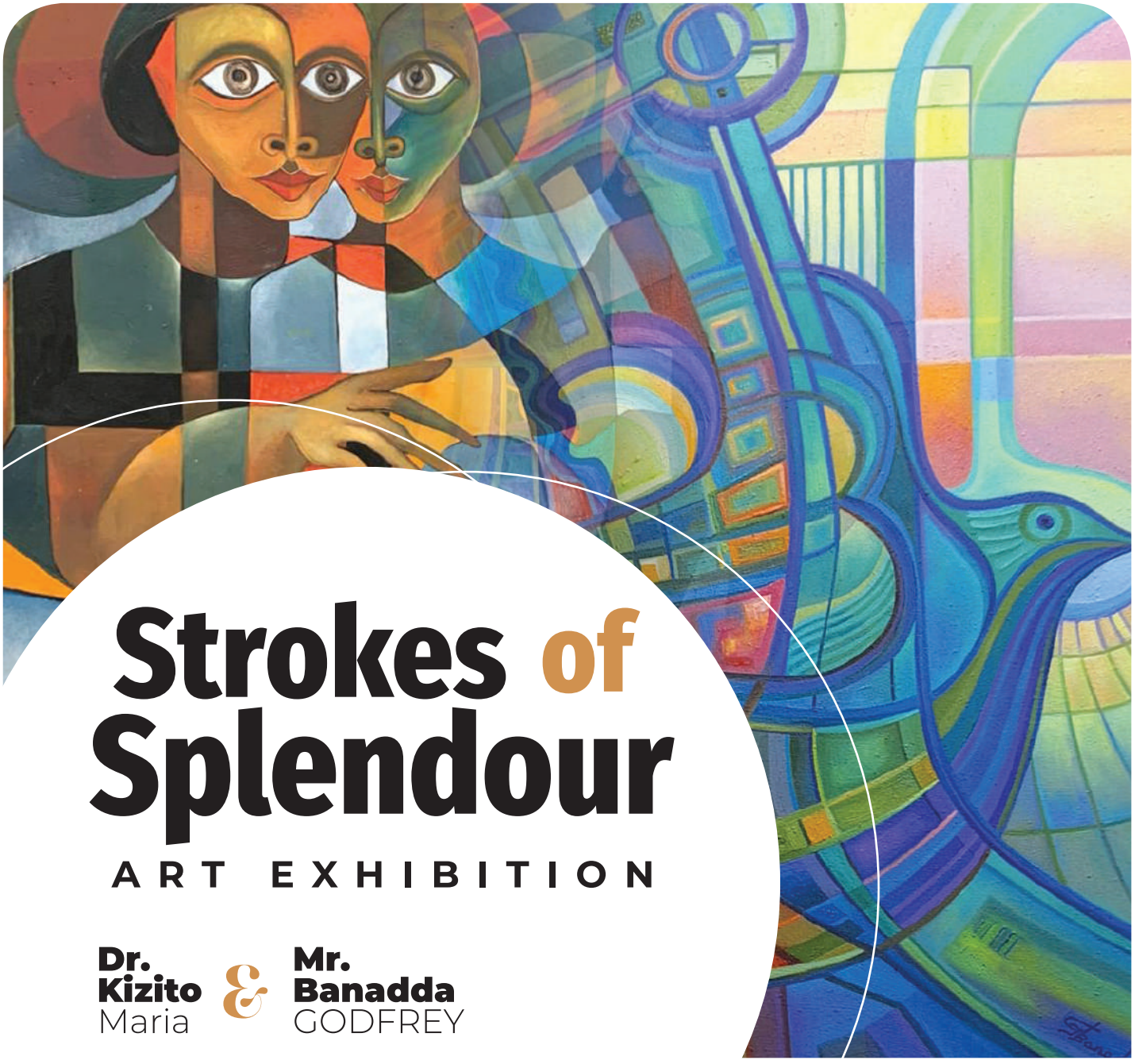


Strokes of Splendour

ART EXHIBITION

Dr. Kizito Maria & **Mr. Banadda** GODFREY

CATALOGUE 2024

Strokes of Splendour

ART EXHIBITION

Exhibition Description

By Jude Kateete

What is "Strokes of Splendour" Art Exhibition about? This exhibition is presenting the themes and ideas of two eminent Ugandan masters, Kizito Maria Kasule and Godfrey Banadda. The intellectual fervour that matches their artistic energy, and the social commentary and emotions evoked in their work, is based on their reflective spirit. Their visual analysis through the painting medium is intended to appeal to the broader audience and invoke internal thoughts, so that the viewer can understand more about the images and their embodied themes and ideas as presented to them through painterly means on canvas. Conceived as a joint art exhibition of the paintings of Kizito Maria Kasule and Godfrey Banadda, two of Uganda's prolific artists come together in a one-month show, from 20th April 2024 until 20th May 2024, a show under the theme *Strokes of Splendour* that features a number of their artworks at Umoja Art Gallery in Kampala. They are masters in the trade and have mentored a number of Ugandan artists through their indelible legacies as academics and art practitioners. The exhibition *Strokes of Splendour* leaves behind a legacy of artworks in colours that speak to the spirit of the age in which the Ugandan artist they epitomize takes centre stage in a number of stripes: as a public intellectual, and as an intellectual and social commentator, to mention a few strands. It also leaves behind an insight into the creative practice of Kizito and Banadda, what their artwork's imagery means in the broader context of "Strokes of Splendour," and the work's historical significance to Modern Art in Uganda, or to Contemporary Ugandan Art. Delving deeper into the exhibition one will see splendid "Strokes of Splendour" that define the two artists and their art.

April, 2024.

GODFREY BANADDA

Artist, Intellectual, and Social Commentator

By Jude Kateete

Any study on Modern Art in Uganda, or on the Ugandan masters of the late twentieth and early twenty first-century art would be inconclusive without relishing Godfrey Banadda's splendid strokes. In contemporary Ugandan art, he stands out as a colourist, in the sense that colour turns out to be the dominant feature of his consequential work. The Color Field painting style that emerged in New York City in the 1940s and 1950s liberated colour from the objective context and turned it into the subject of interest. In similar vein, Banadda's painting style has evolved over the years to make the subjective context more prominent while retaining the objective context as the intellectual and philosophical thread of the indigenized Ugandan spirit in the work, with oil on canvas as his favorite medium. The science of his colours is kaleidoscopic and is unified into the narratives that are products of his intellectual conviction. As a colour psychologist, he uses the language of colour to enhance the visual appeal of his narratives by choosing colours that match his message, that pitch the message to his audience, and that embody his intentions.

The one-month art exhibition *Strokes of Splendour*, from 20th April 2024 until 20th May 2024, presents to the world the colourful corpus of Banadda's oeuvre meticulously painted with sanctity of art as a sacred value of his narratives. His *Birds in Flight*, the *Fishy Woman*, and *The Bond* are some of the artworks which epitomize his masterly in the kind of social commentary that has distinguished his practice. In *Birds in Flight* Banadda concentrated on the movement of the Aves without labouring much into its physical or objective appeal but rather its subjective one. He approaches it in the spirit of visual epistemology. The epistemic potential of the artwork leads one in the direction of what the visual image is, or should be understood, by interconnecting its external

and internal image and the interplay of image, the intention of the artist, and the perceiver of the image or the spectator's discernment of it. Arguably, *Birds in Flight* is in similar epistemic spirit as Constantin Brancusi's *Bird in Space*, a marble sculpture which tried to convey the notion of flight rather than the physical attributes of the bird. In harmony with other Banadda paintings in the exhibition, it speaks to *Strokes of Splendour* not only through its splendid colours but also through the spirit in those strokes. He also harmonizes the subjective aspects of colours with objective form to address the philosophical questions of what is flight in *Birds in Flight*, what is fishy in *Fishy Woman*, and what is bond in *The Bond*. In the process of engaging with such a visual epistemology, he makes social commentary and painting is manifested as agency for his embodied vision. In 2018, his artwork was a subject of scholarly investigation in Henry Musoke's undergraduate dissertation at Makerere University: "*Analysis and Interpretations of the Selected Paintings of Mr. Godfrey Banadda*." That study was carried out with the intention of exploring how Banadda "has reflected his beliefs in his painting environment." It extended scholarly interest in rethinking Banadda the artist and his work.

Godfrey Banadda was born in 1958. He studied Fine Art at Makerere University's Margaret Trowell School of Fine Art for his undergraduate and postgraduate studies, and he taught at the same institution for a number of years. Notably, during his undergraduate studies he went through the guidance of Professor Francis Nnaggenda, Professor Francis Musango Gwantamu, Mulindwa Peter, Ignatius Serulyo, Josephine Mukasa, Ochiti Santos, and Fabian Mpagi. He worked for some time outside academia before he subsequently embarked on an academic career at Makerere University for over two decades. He distinguished himself as an academic, a prize winner of a number of art competitions, and a prolific painter who has held a number of solo and group exhibitions in Uganda and around the world. He has worked on a number of public art projects, has made book illustrations and publications, and has engaged in community-based art projects and community outreach activities. Godfrey Banadda fits the description of an "artist, intellectual, and social commentator," and *Strokes of Splendour* art exhibition with Kizito Maria Kasule further presents to the world the life, the intellect, and the spirit in his strokes.

April, 2024.



REFLECTIONS OF ADDICTION

108cmx109.2cm
Oil on Canvas.
2020

$3500 - $3000

Among humans, addiction is not confined to one addictive substance, circumstance, or behaviour. One addictive substance, or behaviour can form a chain of related undercurrent addictions within an individual; but only one addictive behaviour may saliently volcanize to manifest into visible surface repulsive conduct. The underlying facets of addiction within an individual may therefore appear as reflections, echoes or silhouettes of unbecoming behaviour accruing from one another but flowing below the major surface manifestation. These behavioral undercurrents may with time make intermittent independent manifestations at different times. When we are conceived and born from our mother's wombs, our accompanying behaviour and destiny is already predetermined by the Zodiac System; the placement and position of stars in the cosmos. However, this should not block the proper function of every individual's conscience and rational judgement to determinants of acceptable social behaviour.



BIRDS IN FLIGHT

103cmx103.2cm.
Oil on Canvas.
2021

Space is a virtual Canvas upon which unseen and unrecorded flight movements of Birds in space occur. And even when flying through vegetation, the relationship between the fly past of a bird against a stationary plant, shrub or tree goes un registered. The picture attempts as a starting inspiration to this question, to in colour register these unrecorded scenarios of Birds in flight.

$3500 - $3000



FISHY WOMAN

99.3cmx70cm
Oil on Canvas.
2020

$2500-$2000

When viewed in different contexts, a woman can be "a fish" if she is perceived as being attractive alluring or convincingly feminine. She can be regarded as "fishy" when her character becomes questionable, doubtful, shady, suspicious, vulgar and abusive. The interpretation of these relationships can be extended to the slipperiness of a fish. In my opinion, she ceases to be real; and we lose her natural description of form and character. The painting attempts to merge all these varying contexts and interpretations into one abstract descriptive system.



THE LIBATION

89.2cmx71.1cm
Oil on Canvas.
2023WW

$2000-$1500

At least within Ganda culture, spirits of the recent and long departed relatives are believed to persist and continue lingering around the abodes of their children, grandchildren and kinsmen. The dead and the living are in constant spiritual touch and harmony. Being aware of this, every Muganda is not expected to simply take a swig; or start drinking his local brew or Spirit before pouring some on the ground with incantations dedicated to the spirits of the dead or departed. This act is believed to appease the spirits, quench their thirst; and to ward off any misfortune believed to accrue from not having formalized or carried out this taboo.



THE BOND

68.2cmx91.2cm
Oil on Canvas.
2020

$2500-$2000

Two lovers are normally bonded by destiny or other situations within their lives. But most importantly, they are bonded by the affection, love and uncontrollable attraction between them. Normally with time, the bond may wane and disintegrate as the same conditions under which it came into existence melt, sublime and evaporate. The vows of the church during marriage make matters of the bond more concrete, fixed and legally bound. After love and affection have vaporized, the knotted parties may wish to separate; but the different knots and invisible locks of the new circumstances around them may not be easy to undo. Depression, Desperation, Violence and sometimes loss of life may occur.



NABUZAANA

88.4cmx71.4cm
Oil on Canvas.
2020

$2000-$1500

Among the Baganda, Nabuzaana is a female deity concerned with duties of the feminine gender. Matters of fertility and the kitchen are her main duties to set right. If a woman realizes that every time she cooks food it gets burnt and smells, there is something Nabuzaana wishes and demands her to streamline in terms of kitchen taboos. Not until these demands are met and fulfilled, the food will continue burning and tasting bad. Sometimes, the food may not get ready at all; however long it is cooked. Nabuzaana is believed to constantly reside behind the three cooking stones in every kitchen of a Muganda woman. Hence “Nabuzaana enkoto”.



NAMUNYE (THE CENSUS)

108cmx108cm
Oil on Canvas.
2002

$3500 - $3000

Namunye is a small bird with black and white strips running from its head to the tail. It is a regular visitor in people's homes and normally takes a rest on the roof tops of their houses. Among the Baganda, Namunye is deified. It is regarded as Gods prime minister; and is responsible for carrying out a census on Gods behalf in every household. It is taboo to kill this bird. If one does kill it by intension or mistake, he or she is expected to give it a decent burial equivalent to that given to a deceased Muganda. The burial is supposed to be conducted by the lake side. Some Ganda children when playing are often heard chanting "Tombalabala Namunye yambalabala dda. Tombalabala Ebeere lya Nyabo Lyambalabala dda" (Don't count me Namunye counted me long ago. Don't count me, I am already counted by mother's breast)



THE KING (POWER DEVOLUTION)

125.3cmx96.2cm
Oil on Canvas.
2001

$3800-$3300

In Buganda, the King is supreme with subservient subjects below him. Along the deification hierarchy, he ranks third after God and "Lubaale" (Traditional gods). When coming to Buganda, Kintu (First King of Buganda), came with gods led by the arch god Bukulu. Bukulu did not settle in Buganda but continued to Ssese islands with gods like: Mukasa, Musisi and Wannema. Those gods who didn't proceed to Ssese with Bukulu settled in Buganda and occupied conspicuous high hills spread around the region known as Muwawa then. These hills later acquired the names of these gods; and around them, the current Counties were formed. Some of these were: Kyaddondo, Busiro, Bulemeezi, Kyaggwe etc. Upon these hills, the gods erected their Temples for traditional worship. The subsequent County Chiefs for the Kingdom were later to occupy these very hills and the King established County headquarters for them to administer his subjects on his behalf. The chiefs carried equal powers devolved from above from the King. They represented the kings power and authority to the grass root subjects. The King never took any national decision without consulting the arch gods from the Ssese Islands across lake Nalubaale (Victoria). The gods from Ssese later settled on the mainland as a result of a war precondition and indemnity set by Wannema; the father of Kibuuka (Kyoobe Kyomubazzi); to King Nakibinge; that his son was not supposed to be killed during war between Baganda and Banyoro. Kibuuka was a great supernatural fighter who used to fight and shoot arrows from a dark cloud above the enemy. King Nakibinge had hired Kibuuka as a mercenary against the Banyoro worriors. Kibuuka was shot from the clouds and died. Under this indemnity, Wannema's children who also carried occult powers established temples on various Buganda hills. With some territories ruled over by Buganda like Busoga, the same mode of traditional worship and power devolution spread over to those territories.



SERPENT OF EDEN

117.3cmx90cm
Oil on Canvas.
2022

$4000 - $3500

Genesis 3:1-20 refers to a serpent who triggered the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden in Eden. Adam and Eve were commanded by God never to touch the fruits of the tree amidst the garden. "You shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" God said. In the story and narrative which follows, the serpent or snake is also referred to as "the most cunning of all the wild beasts which the Lord had placed in the garden". The Serpent is portrayed as the main tempter in the interaction and dialogue between it and Eve. The language of interaction between these two is not clear. In my view, the scenario has more than one tempting pillar. The tempters were three. (a) The forbidden tree (b) The Serpent and (c) Eve herself. When asked of what they could define as what was the forbidden fruit, most people didn't have a definite answer. To some, it was an Apple, to many others; it was Sex. To the rest, it could have been any type of fruit. This confirmed man's ignorance of what the forbidden fruit really was. It is all speculation covered under the dark mist of dogmatic metaphysical belief and unquestioning conviction. The picture attempts to make a trichotomy of a single monolithic superstructure of a woman representing the person of Eve; the forbidden fruit and the Serpent to encapsulate temptation and sin.



WAVES AND SCHOOLS

124cmx82cm
Oil on Canvas.
2020

$3800-$3300

Waves and Schools attempts to describe the inseparable union between the waves of turbulent water; and related resonance of the two synchronized flows of water and life carried along with it in a dynamic current. The synchronized rhythmic flow of aquatic buoyant life together with the waves is expressed both within and on the surface of the aquatic scape with opposing directional movements.



BEHIND THE FACE

125.3cmx97cm
Oil on Canvas.
2019

$3800-$3300

Most surface readings of the human face are normally deceptive. Behind every human face hides the true psychic interpretation of an individual. The interpretation per person may be relative, personal, subjective and to some extent abstract.



CRESTED CRANE

107.4cmx108cm
Oil on Canvas.
2018

$3500 - $3000

An attempt is made to have a symmetrical and reflective Plano graphic lateral description of the Crested Crane in abstract. The two merged birds are made to share the same or equal forms and colour.



THE DEFILER

96.3cmx60.4cm
Oil on Canvas.
2005

$2500-$2000

Sex is intimately rhythmic, synchronized and musical. Acts of defilement and rape destroy all these virtues. The psychic and self-esteem of the victim is permanently dented, injured, traumatized and destroyed. As a biological musical entity and seductive instrument, the feminine chords are broken and the musicality of the raped individual is lost for life.



REJUVENATION

108cmx108cm
Oil on Canvas.
2020

$3500 - $3000

In Buganda, It is not uncommon after intentionally felling a tree, or when under natural calamities a tree falls to the ground, some trees have been known to rise and stand upright acquiring their former erect posture even after some long time on the ground. The mysterious actions of such trees are normally attached to some rejuvenating metaphysical supernatural powers within the forces of nature. This occurrence is common with a specie botanically known as: “Ficus Natalensis” (Mutuba tree). Among the Baganda, It is from this tree that bark cloth is made. The tree is also believed to provide sanctuary to roaming spirits of the departed or other types of spirits.

KIZITO MARIA KASULE

Artist as Public Intellectual

By Jude Kateete

In Sabeth Buchmann's notable book "*The Artist as Public Intellectual*?" which was published by Schlebrügge in 2008 the artist is presented as a "social figure, as the product of a society and the agent of political interests." In that light, the artist takes on a role of the public intellectual through willingness to use the visual language to make social commentary on contemporary events. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, in an interview with Rose-Marie Rychner, Kizito Maria Kasule was quoted in light of the unifying aspect of art beyond political, ethnic or religious limits. Kizito remarked taking the following position: "Unity is what all people long for, as without it Africa will not survive politically, socially, or economically in the next century." Those words featured in Rychner's publication on *Contemporary Art in Uganda*, published in 1996. It is now water under the bridge and, in this day and age, in the first quarter of the twenty first century Africa's survival has been, arguably, about forging unity in its different forms. In that respect, and from the vantage point of moral reasoning, Kizito Maria Kasule was right. Through his artwork over the years, in different exhibition spaces around the world, he has continued to voice the unifying aspects of art in a more moderate way. The one-month art exhibition *Strokes of Splendour*, from 20th April 2024 until 20th May 2024, is a continuation of the voice of conscience which is embodied in his artwork. In retrospect, in the waning years of the twentieth century, contemporary Ugandan artists courageously used the means within their disposal and reflectively studied the environment in which they situated themselves to make social commentary.

For Kizito Maria Kasule, life in the visual arts has been modelled after a number of strands from his years of practice. From the first strand he distinguished himself when he resiliently worked as a sculptor whose mallet and chisel brought new life to gigantic logs under earlier tutelage from Professor Francis Nnaggenda. The art exhibition *Strokes of Splendour* testifies to the sculpturesque quality in the corpus of his work in the Afro-Mannerism and Afro-Surrealism styles depicting elegant figures with intellectual sophistication and his giving space and voice to them. He is a skillful sculptor and from that hability he offers something special to painting in terms of his language of form. The paintings in this exhibition enhance his intellectual standing as an interdisciplinary artist who brings a synthesis of ideas from one discipline to another in order to address differences and develop a hybrid of knowledge in a problem-solving situation.

The second strand, uncontestably, is painting using his favorite medium of oil on canvas. It continues to fix the impression of his intellectual life as a social commentator with transferable skills of critical thinking, visual rhetoric, and reflective practice which he brings in *Strokes of Splendour*. For instance, in the paintings *Freedom*, *It is Me*, and in *The Desire to be Free*, there is an embodied vision of freedom talking about the spirit of the age which needed unity in order to survive politically, socially or economically. That meant not simply being satisfied with the status quo but to imagine alternative ways of life. In the case of those paintings, the viewer is drawn to the depicted characters to join in the dialogue for freedom. In *Hope*, *Serenity*, and *The Spirits of Innocence* there is synergy of the group which resonates with the following famous quote by Henry Ford: "Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." He harmonizes colour with form in an attempt to address the philosophical questions of what is hope in *Hope*, what is serenity in *Serenity*, and what is innocence in *The Spirits of Innocence*.

The third strand defines Kizito Maria Kasule in the identity of an artist as a public intellectual. He is able to communicate with abstract concepts such as love, freedom, serenity, innocence, desire, the persona (as in the painting *It is Me*), hope, and history (as in the painting *Once Upon a Time*). Certainly, there is a generic intellectual class to which artists belong. They hold the power of visual rhetoric, communicating to a cross-section of audiences, especially the visually literate audience with access to the spaces where the artwork goes on display. The artist-intellectual in the Ugandan society helps in the comprehending of humanity's consciousness to the life in society and the conditions one finds oneself in that society. While he is the product of the same society, Kizito emerges as a social figure who also measures as a scholar, an academic, and an administrator in the arena of art and in academia. Thus, *Strokes of Spendour* introduces him as an artist in stripes of artistdom which lies below the surface of his numerous artwork.

Kizito Maria Kasule was born in Masaka, in 1967, about 130 km southwest of Kampala. He is a very enterprising and an entrepreneurial artist. He studied at Makerere University at the Margaret Trowell School of Fine Art where he got his Bachelor's degree. He also earned a Master's degree in Fine Art, and a PhD in Art History from Makerere University. He subsequently won a scholarship to Burren College of Art in Ireland. He has taught at Makerere University for a number of years and rose through the ranks to become an Associate Professor, and Deputy Principal of the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT). He is a founding director of Nagenda International Academy of Art and Design (NIAAD). He is a prolific artist and has held a number of solo and group exhibitions around the world, and has participated in a number of community-based art projects and community outreach activities in Uganda and beyond. Kizito Maria Kasule fits the description of an "artist as a public intellectual," and *Strokes of Splendour* art exhibition with Godfrey Banadda further presents to the world the life, the intellect, and the spirit in his strokes.

April, 2024.



SERENITY
210cm by 140cm
Oil on Canvas.

$ 4000 - $3500



MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD
144cm by 120cm
Oil on Canvas.

$2500-$2000



DIFFERENT BUT ONE
194cm by 120cm
Oil on Canvas.

$ 4000 - $3500



HOPE
152cm by 153cm
Oil on Canvas.

$ 4000 - $3500



THEIR STORY
153cm by 152cm
Oil on Canvas.

$ 4000 - $3500



ONCE UPON A TIME
143cm by 144cm
Oil on Canvas.

$3000 - $2500



THE DESIRE TO BE FREE
144cm by 116cm
Oil on Canvas.

$3000 - $2500



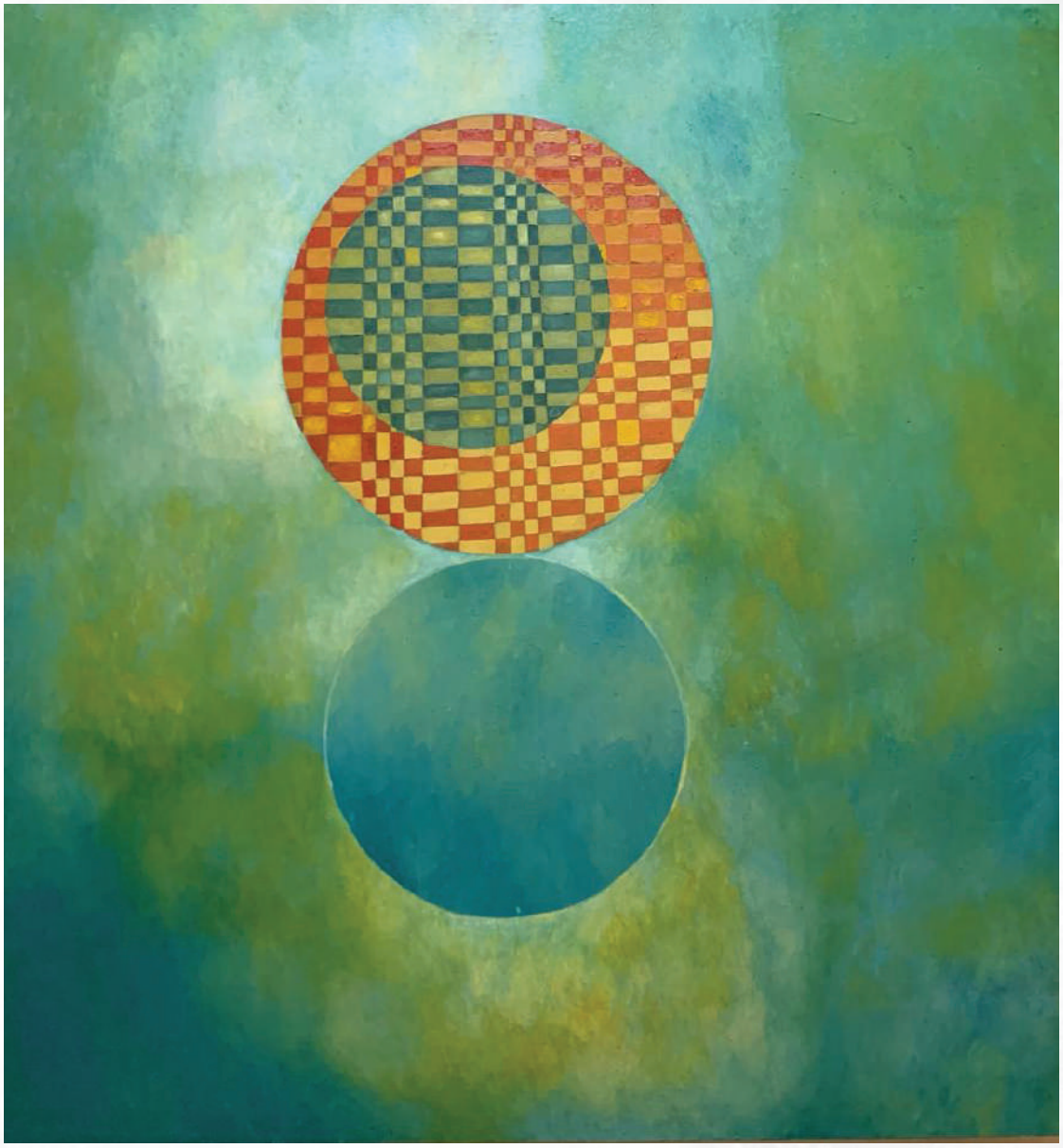
THE SPIRITS OF INNOCENCE
150cm by 198cm
Oil on Canvas.

$3500-$3000

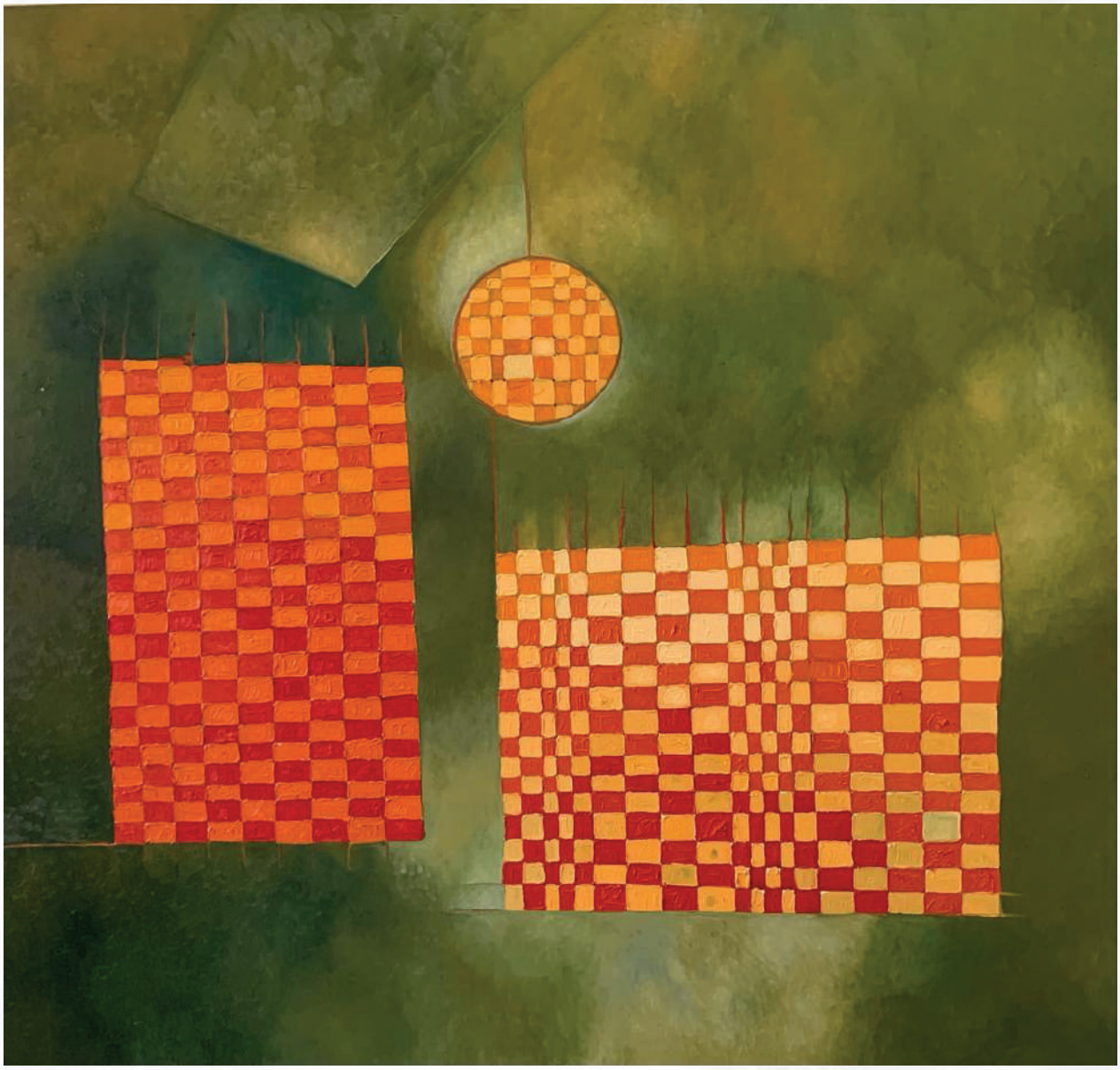


FREEDOM
143cm by 119cm
Oil on Canvas.

$3000 - $2500



Complimenting Lense 1
Oil on Canvas.



Complimenting Lense 2
Oil on Canvas.



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