



École du soir - African ingenui...



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presented by Feza Kayungu Ramazani,  
Christian Nyampeta and Prodigé Makongo  
for École du soir



École du Soir space at the 17th Istanbul Biennial

Another Roadmap Africa Cluster (ARAC) comprises all of working groups that are based in African cities and is currently active in the cities of Kampala, Nyanza, Lubumbashi, Kinshasa, Maseru, Johannesburg, Lagos, and Cairo. The working groups not only share a strong commitment to transformative action in Arts Education, but an equally strong need for reflexivity concerning the forms of knowledge production and exchange in current global conditions

École du soir (evening school) has been ongoing since 2015 and is part of Another Roadmap School (AR), a network of educators, artists and researchers working on the history of arts education as an engaged practice in museums, cultural institutions, educational centres and grass-roots organisations in twenty-two cities on four continents. We view arts education as deeply embedded in social and political contexts – but also as a possibility to question and transform the social.

The evening school method is inspired by the Senegalese writer and director Sembène Ousmane, who saw cinema [for example] as an "evening course" or "evening classes", informed by the traditions of orality, sensuality and conviviality in artistic creation and learning in his region and beyond.

### 1. Workshop background

The workshops started as part of the *École du soir : Archives sonores de la littérature noire* (Sound Archives of Black Literature), 2022. This collaboration

between ARAC and Centre D'art Waza are multimedia installations engaging with the ongoing digitisation, transcription, translation, and performance of the *Archives sonores de la littérature noire*, a series of audio recordings released by Radio France Internationale between the late 1970s and 1980s.



Display of the *Sound Archives of Black Literature* originally recorded on vinyl records at 17th Istanbul Biennial, Turkey

This is a project captained by multimedia artist Christian Nyampeta, featuring artistic interventions by Feza Kayungu Ramazani, Rita Mukebo, Prodige Tumba Makonga, and toy making workshops convened by Antony Mutshipule and Prodige Makonga. Also featuring drawings made by guests and fellows during a flower drawing workshop, held in August 2022 as part of a preparatory listening session of *Archives sonores de la littérature noire* at documenta fifteen in Kassel, Germany.

The second series of workshops were held in Lubumbashi along with children from The Centre d'Eveil de la Femme orphanage where toys were created. The toys and drawings created at these two workshops were presented at the 17th Istanbul Biennial in September alongside another series of drawings, games and toy making workshops, which were free and were opened to the public, as part of the exhibition. The participants had the option to keep the toys and drawings they create, or add it to the existing display at the exhibition.



Drawing and toy making workshop with children from CDF orphanage in Lubumbashi, DR Congo

## Childhood

The presentation of the Archives sonores focuses on the “childhood” of some of the figures featured in the series. Listening to the stories of, say, their first days at school is very moving, so much so that, over the past months, we asked the same questions to other people in the workshops. We would also ask questions around games they played as children and look for similar games we all enjoyed. This way, the presentation does not merely celebrate the life and work of already influential figures featured in Archives sonores. Instead, this approach seeks to illuminate the enduring challenges faced by the likes of these figures at home, away, and sometimes in exile.

The approach also helps to engage with long-standing questions we have within École du Soir and Centre d’art Waza, as it aims to address a deeper and fundamental crisis of epistemology, of learning how to live, of what we know and how we know.



Drawing and toy making workshop in Istanbul, Turkey

So, these childhood chronicles help to draw a collective portrait of earlier generations of artistic voices at a moment when they are being transformed by formal and informal educations that formed their subjects. In the process, these children bear witness to the statecraft of what became their nations in a period reaching back to nearly a decennia ago in some cases, traversing the colonial era, all the way through to the times of independence and its wake, often marked by the disillusionment that accompanied the newly found freedom.

## 2.Workshop

The workshops are inspired by the archives, however, they are also independent and do not rely on the archives to exist.

### Drawings

Each workshop begins with the task of drawing a fond memory of one's childhood. We also ask participants to draw the most beautiful flower they have ever seen. This is a practice inspired by one of the conversations in the audio archives, where Emile Cesar speaks of flowers being the representation of all things pure, delicate , yet powerful and bright. What we have learned is, there are some common flowers that keep showing up during each of the workshop sessions.



Busy

scene during the École du Soir toy making workshop at the First Arabic Arts Biennale in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

## Games

Through this presentation, an accent is made on memory of childhood. It is also a presentation of that childhood which existed and does no longer exist due to change brought by technology. These games once united, gathered children from everywhere regardless their religion, ethnical belonging. They are today remembered by this presentation. It is also a homage to the children who created their own dolls from waste recycling materials. Games are universal. Moments that I experienced as a child and which my child will not be able to experience.



Games from *École du soir : Archives sonores de la littérature noire* (Sound Archives of Black Literature) installation at 17th Istanbul Biennial



Games from *École du soir : Archives sonores de la littérature noire* (Sound Archives of Black Literature) installation at 17th Istanbul Biennial

## Toy Making

The other aspect of the workshops include classes where participants are taught to make dolls and/or figurines using electrical wire as well as scrap material/



textile collected from fashion design studios to create clothing. The idea is to upcycle the materials and also tell a story about Congolese toy culture.

We are based in Lubumbashi, which is in the mining province called Haut Katanga in the South of Democratic Republic of Congo. The land is known as The Copper Belt as the biggest concentration of the metal is found there. Copper is a great conductor of electricity, hence scrap wire is found around mining dumps and around neighborhoods close to factories. Children will use these wires to create the skeleton for their figurines/dolls and use scrap clothing materials to create apparel for their toys. The use of scrap clothing material is also a comment on **The Congolese dress in a style known as "Liputa"**, which means the wearing of colorful materials. Wearing nice clothes in our country is extremely important because the nicer the clothes are, the more respect one will receive.





Toys produced during the workshop as part of the *École du soir : Archives sonores de la littérature noire* installation at 17th Istanbul Biennial



Toy making workshop as part of the *École du soir : Archives sonores de la littérature noire* at 17th Istanbul Biennial



Toys displayed as part of the *École du soir : Archives sonores de la littérature noire* installation at 17th Istanbul Biennial

### Target market for the workshops

The workshops are held in English. All ages are welcomed to attend the workshops. The range in activities allow us to cater to all ages. We welcome families, children as well as adults and teens. No prior knowledge or skill in art is required. These are activities everyone can achieve.

The games session (lead by Feza), tend to be more appealing to children. However, adults are welcomed to join as this exercise is meant to remind one of their childhood and the fun games that were created. The drawings (also hosted by Feza) have no age restrictions. Everyone is encouraged to draw their rendition of their favorite childhood memory.

The toy making workshop (lead by Makonga) is a fun and creative learning activity for all ages and involves twisting and morphing wire to create the skeleton frame of the doll. It is then covered/clothed by cutting and pasting the 'Liputa' (Congolese traditional cloth), as well as any other found materials.





Proud participants holding their creations



























