

Agnes Achola



I was born 15. October 1973 in Northern Uganda (Lira district), Lango is my language. I have four Sisters and two Brothers.

I went to primary and secondary schools in Uganda, my first school was Ambalal primary School in lira district, and then moved to Kampala which is the capital city of Uganda, where my father was working in Luzira prison there I joined a school called Murchison bay primary school. Then my Father was again transferred from luzira prison to Kigo prison Farm, there I had to change to another primary school called Kibiri Primary school near a Small trading centre called also Kibiri.

And at Kibiri Primary School was both Day and Boarding school, I started day scholar whereby I had to walk for about one hour to the School and back home one hour as well.

But then my father worked hard and saved some money to pay for the boarding Fees and that is when I finished my primary seven in the boarding part in Kibiri Day and Boarding Primary School.

After the Primary Level, I joined Saint Peters Secondary School which was a Day , Progressive Secondary School, Nyenga Secondary School where I finished my Secondary level of School. My Education depended where my father got a job.

I worked in a small art gallery in Kampala called Cassava Republic gallery.

I left Uganda in 1999, for Vienna, Austria.

In October 2003 I was admitted at the University of Applied Arts (Universität für Angewandte Kunst), where I am studying Art Education specializing in Textiles and Fine Arts.

Since October 2003, I do work part time besides my studies in Childrens Museum in Vienna as a workshop Attendant. The Children are between 6 and 12 years old (Interaktives Kindermuseum).

I like and enjoy working with other people and also from different cultural backgrounds. I believe it is the way of being or getting inspired.

I must admit that most of my ideas are developed from group work or even from close friends that I enjoy hanging out with and not only that but I also believe that I learn a lot how to deal and handle people from different Social backgrounds.



Lydia Japaini Alowo

I was born in Eastern Uganda in a town called Tororo in 1985. We moved to different parts of the country with my family because of the nature of my Dad`s work and finally settled in Kampala city in 1993. I then joined Railway Primary School from 1993 to 1997. In 1998 to 2001 I was in St. Joseph`s Girls senior secondary school for my secondary level.

I then joined Katikamu secondary school for my High school from 2002 to 2003 where at the end of it I had to apply for a course at the university.

I was given the course of my choice which was Bachelor of Industrial and Fine Arts at Makerere University. I then joined the University in 2004. The course was for three years which I have just completed. My love for Art drove me to go for it at a high level. I felt that without Art my dream would not survive.

During my studies I did a voluntary work with an organization called Global Leadership Interlink for one year. I had a wonderful experience while doing this because I got to meet people from different countries and shared different ideas.

Music is also a part of me. My mother inspired me to go for it. I would watch her sing in the protestant church where we always prayed from. Her Dad was a Reverend and so she was not to miss any activity in the church. I desired to sing like her, little did I know that she had given me apart of her talent.

I started developing the talent and writing songs as my elder brother played for me the guitar. Recently I decided to team up with a friend to produce an album which am working on now. I love music and without it I feel empty.

At the moment am doing a voluntary work with two Children Non Governmental Organisations. The „Jesus and me children`s ministries“ which deals with street children, orphans and the disadvantaged children. And „Orphans for Christ in Africa“ which deals with orphans only. I sing with the children and also spend time listening to them and encouraging them. It`s such a wonderful experience spending time with kids.

I consider UGATRA as yet another opportunity for me to work with kids, using my art knowledge to inspire them. I love working with different people and getting to know different cultures and changing ideas because it never leaves me the same at the end of the day. I look forward to working as a team.

Claire Chatel

I'm Claire, I was born in France, in Paris, and spent my first three years of life with my parents and my 2 sisters there. Then we moved out to Normandy to a big house in the nature where I spent the rest of my childhood.

I love nature and animals, and spent a lot of time outdoors playing with my 2 sisters, to whom I'm very close. There are just woods, fields and open space around the house. I lived there until I finished grammar school.

[My origins]:: I'm half French and half Austrian. My mother comes from Austria and each year we spent 2 weeks there to visit my Austrian family. We loved to get abroad (Austria and other countries) all together, discovering new things, new cultures, new people and languages.

[My way]:: So after school I decided to spend one year in Austria working as an au pair. I lived with a great family with 3 small children. I very much like spending time with children, being creative with them, and watching their "spontaneity", their fresh view of the world.

After this great experience, I decided to go back to France where I started English studies, and took various creative courses, music, dance, drawing. After one year, I thought I couldn't wait any longer without trying to study Art, but after one year in an Art School I was very disappointed. These mentalities weren't mine.

[My vision of Art]:: For me, Art is a means of communication, and it's very important to be confronted with people, other cultures, other mentalities, to travel, and to learn about our big world... it's also a means to express and communicate problems of our society.

After this unhappy experience, I thought about taking a new way. To become a social worker, because it's also a field I'm interested in, but I decided quite impulsively to go back to Austria, which is a part of my origins, and I discovered these great studies, "Art and Education", at the University of Applied Arts of Vienna.

I'm very enthusiastic about these studies, where we can learn so many things. Children are the future of the world and it can be so interesting to work with them. I'm very interested in Textiles, Photography. And I have loads of ideas for many projects, and a big list of travels I want to undertake. I need to be in movement, meeting people and discovering new things. Life is experience.

[Me and the Ugatra Project]:: I live in Vienna now since September 2006. And I'm very happy to be here. I find this idea of a project with students and kids from Uganda fascinating, and I am very happy to take part in it. It's a big chance to live a great cultural exchange that can only be positive for all of us coming from 2 different countries and continents.

I had the wish to participate in such projects since a long time. After a short trip to Morocco I came back with lots of ideas and wishes, (and I'll return there for 1 month in August 2007)! I knew that I had to live such an experience as soon as possible, because I need it to continue creating, learning, sharing time and experience with people from everywhere! I'm very motivated and I'm looking forward to meeting you!



Jasmina Hirschl

for the good of reflected thought-provoking impulses.
i was born in bavaria/germany. as i am a mixture of german and austrian genes, i decided to live in vienna now. always been interested in doing art and due to the good advices of some friends, i started my studies at the university of applied arts vienna.



at the time i work a lot with photography, drawing, performance and writing. one concrete example for an actual projekt is calledc 'propaganda-posed', that combines a lot of modules in itself.



propaganda-posed, performance

since october 2006 dani tagger and me collect material (in form of reactions to our performance, for example) and in the end we will bunch it all in some booklet format ...
the project deals with the subject 'uniforms' in the broadest sense.

i'm also working on an animation film at the moment. for this filmlet i modelled a small puppet, that looks similar to me. it is walking through the 'colour landscape' of an abstract painting, that i found in a local museum.



animation film

one theme to use as a base for working in my group, could be beauty. today's ideals of beauty (also regarding different nations), inner beauty, stereotypical and individual beauty.

the process could start with asking the children to draw a beautiful person. then we have a reflected look on what came out.

i want also to apply some basics in anthropometry.
this all might be done to raise the children's awareness of predominant 'beauty uniforms'.

tequnique can be drawing and creating sculptures (filament, paper and wallpaper paste; or maybe clay or something similar).



Mona Liska

I was born on the 11th of September in 1980 in Graz, Austria.

I grew up together with my three sisters and my brother and had a great childhood. Still my family is the most important part of my life and I enjoy spending time with them.

I finished high-school in 1999 and afterwards I wanted to get away for a while from the life I was used to and so I spent a year abroad.

My destination was San Francisco, USA. There I got to know a very nice family with whom I lived for 9 months, in Palo Alto which is about 40 km south of San Francisco.

I looked after their two little children Sam and Natalie, picked them up from school, spent the afternoons with them, made dinner for them. We had a lot of fun together and it was hard for me to leave this family and to go back to Austria. But luckily we managed to keep in touch and to see each other every 1-2 years, either in Austria, in the States or somewhere in between. We became good friends during the last years.

Well, so when I came back to Austria I first studied Musicology and Cultural Management for one year. Then I did a school for Ceramics which I finished after two years.

I moved from Graz to Vienna and since October 2003 I have been studying Art Education at the University of Applied Arts.

To be honest, it was very hard for me to decide what to study since I'm interested in different fields. Music is very important for me, I am playing the piano and enjoy dancing and singing a lot. And I like to be surrounded by children. Spending time with them is fulfilling and refreshing for me, I like the way they think, feel and look at things.

In summer 2007 I worked in the organisation of the "Kinderuni", which is a summer program for children from the age of seven to twelve at the Universities of Vienna, offering workshops, lectures and seminars.

What I liked about this job is that I got to know some basics of project management - such as collection and transmission of information, co-ordination of people and communication.

This job was also a good practice for me regarding our project Ugatra.

I'm looking forward to the team work between different cultures and age groups.

Ugatra has already made me experience a lot and now I am curious how our project will develop.

Robinah Diana Mwanje

I am an Ugandan citizen born in Kampala but of two cultures half musoga half muganda. I live in a Kampala suburb called Bwayise and there, I live with my mother, three brothers, one sister and six cousins but I have a married brother and sister with two lovely kids each. Although I am born in a big family where my dad produced 40 children but he passed away and may his soul rest in eternal peace.

I live in an area regarded as a place for low lifes “Gheto” but I love the experience because it has given me a heart that loves to be better and best at the same time. It has taught me that the kingdom of God is taken by violence and the violent take it by force! Ah ... but it is such an experience because you either be violent or you are assimilated. It helps you see the world differently and if you hate what it gives you can be better because you struggle not to take what it gives.

It gives enough artistic compositions because even the deaf have what to sketch and the blind with the noise it brings with it.



Education Background

I completed my primary school in 1997 and attained a Uganda Primary Examination Certificate, attained my Uganda Certificate of Education in 2001, which experience I loved because I did every thing that made me a star in school but never smoked or drunk alcohol. In 2003 I attained my Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education but there I was the head girl of the school for 2002 – 2003, I joined Makerere University in 2004 where I studied art with electives of painting, advertising design and weaving.

In second year we had training and I trained in weaving in Nairobi – Kenya with an organization called Woodley Weavers but training in this organization taught me how to deal with illiterate women. I love working in projects that deal with art and any projects that helps reveal what I know.

As an Artist

I call art life because it is every where from the creation stories in the bible to date art is found in every aspect of life. Art is a very abstract way of commanding a situation at hand say it may not be verbally but visually for example during the 1970s Amini was very fond of artists because he thought that they never attacked him, but they did as it was in an abstract sense.

My source of inspiration is from what we see, touch hear but mostly through traveling since I love creating new feelings in my works to avoid monogamy and boredom.

When one calls me an artist, I feel proud because I know I see deeper that what the microscope sees. Uh...

Most of my art works have a smooth touch (in painting) but I balance painting with weaving and I call myself a technician because with it one can join almost every pattern and design you can think about I love weaving situations that happen daily and anything that comes / crosses my mind, I usually 1st sketch then weave my sketches.

For the Ugatra project I still would like to combine painting and weaving because even a weaver would love to see depth in her composition and am looking forward to trying out anything with anyone.

Stefan Nowak

I was born in 1984. My mother divorced from my father in 1985, moved to another man and had a child with him, my brother Max. She separated from this man again (~ 1990), and had a series of boyfriends. Although we are technically half-brothers, Max and me grew up as brothers. We lived at different places in and around Vienna with several different father figures. These men had influence on me, and to two of them I have built up strong relationships, but my mother always remained the main educator of us. I was used to this patchwork family system, and I didn't doubt it at this time.



Early enough my brother and me got duties in the household. Our access to TV, Cinema and Radio was limited. We were never bored, we were creative in various ways: We made music together (me the drums, my brother the singer), played many games and role-plays, thought out stories and drew a lot of cartoons and adventures. We developed a lot of fantasy. We also haven't been in a structure with regular events and behaviours, such as a soccer or youth club. And compared to other parents my mother let us out alone very early. By this our spare time was very much designed by ourselves.

My stepfather was and still is a graphic designer who migrated his work into the digital realm already in the late 1980ies. I often visited him at his atelier and from 1992 on he very much supported me to learn the computer in a playful manner. Very soon my curiosity pushed me to get a deeper look, not only apply standard programs, but to really dive into the computer. What happens when you move this, delete that, configure some certain settings, etc. At a friend's place in 1995 I had my first experiences with the internet! Amazing! Around 1997 I got to know an electronic music producer from the at this time uprising "Vienna Scientists".

Through all this I got very interested in the field of Computers and Electronic Arts/Music, very contrary to my mother's education of limited electronic media access.

I graduated from high school in 2002 and did 1 year of compulsory civil service by helping elderly people at home. In 2004 I started my study "Media Design/Digital Arts" at the university of Applied Arts.

Teachings of art history, communication and perception theories and all the "crazy" guys in this art environment fascinated me. It was an exciting time. At the beginning I was mainly interested in creating electronic music and sound installations, but due to problems with my hearing I had to stop these activities around 2005. A was a painful way but I managed to get interest in the visual arts. I had to catch up and develop technical skills. Using standard applications did not satisfy me, for my ideas I had to learn programming which I started in 2006. Meanwhile I have developed more interest in media/information technology and its innovations than in media design itself, and at the time my professional future is not clear to me.

One of my shortcomings is that I am so curious that I tend to always only get into something, but then not finish it. Ugratra was very challenging for me. I liked being part when something was developed from the ground up, and how it slowly evolves, and I like being part of something, which hopefully gets real and exciting!

Name

I am Vincent Okuja



Background

Most friends of mine love calling me Okutoon because of my artistic and dramatic characters. I was born on the morning of 25th Sep 1982 at Larcor Hospital in Gulu District- Uganda; we then moved back to **Lira** our home land. I am a Ugandan by nationality and **Lango** by tribe.

Am not so much aware where I spent my childhood playing hide and seek but only came to my senses when I joined primary one in 1991 in Apac district in northern Uganda.

My Art History

When I got promoted to primary two, I was sent back to the village because of my musical talent whereby I would sing and dance for money. It only came to my parents notice when one old woman was knocked down by a bicycle on a market day when she was overshadowed by our performance. This behavior was a taboo and therefore repugnant in our culture for the young.

Art is not something I was taught it is in blood and inherited from my ancestors. Art is the collaboration between God and the artist and the less the artist does, the better therefore God was also responsible for these skills. To realize that I was not too Picasso was when one disabled boy drew a masterpiece of men in War. That was in primary three and I thought I was nothing but a dreamy artist, this made me build a competitive mind and soon I realized my skills. I sold about five artworks that year.

One day, my Mother got one of my paintings and used as a toiled tissue and that was her fast and last. Why? Because I used local materials like –Red pepper-for painting and leaves.

Work experience and my Art

I love working and socializing with people and sharing ideas with other people throughout the world. I am interested in making the depressed smile through Art therapy. I work part time with **Let Art Talk (LAT)** an art project based in Uganda; its aim is to empower the community through art. We specially deal with children and elderly of the war affected zones and those affected by **AIDS**. I am working as a communication specialist and a trainee.

I am also volunteering with **Art for community Development (AFOCOD)** based in Kitgum and managed by former students of Industrial and fine arts Makerere University.

This project is not in its full potential due to lack of funds to carryout the workshops with the children. It aim is healing the mind through art.

My Art is not limited I keep on changing with the environment but my major at the University was **Illustration**. I attended Makerere University in Kampala for three years from Sep 2004- Jun 2007 for a degree course in Industrial and Fine Arts. I also took Graphics Design, Design communication (web Development), Print making and design. Am familiar with most of the computer aided design programs like Photoshop, Dreamweaver, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Indesign, Page maker, Macromedia flash, Anime8, 3D max, Ulead 3D, Xzara 3D, PowerPoint. I also know some video editing and documentation programs like; Ulead Video studio, Pinnacle studio, Movie Gear, windows movie maker and. Music editors like FL Studios, Cool Edit, Adobe audition.

Linguistic proficiency

I speak English and used it during all my educational instructions.

- Acholi
- Langi

- Kiswahili
- Kuman
- Luganda
- Little Lugisu and Lusoga.
- Japadhola .

Attribute	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average
<i>Artistic skill</i>		☀		
<i>Academic performance</i>		☀		
<i>Emotional stability</i>		☀		
<i>Character</i>			☀	
<i>Creativity</i>	☀			
<i>Ambition</i>		☀		
<i>Perseverance</i>			☀	
<i>Interest in sharing ideas</i>	☀			
<i>Initiative and self-motivation</i>			☀	
<i>Ability to work with others</i>	☀			
<i>Ability to meet deadlines</i>		☀		
<i>Ability to assimilate new information</i>	☀			
<i>Ability to accept criticism</i>		☀		
<i>Skill in verbal expression</i>	☀			
<i>Attention to detail</i>		☀		

Interest in UGATRA

I picked interest in this project from the beginning and now I play a role as the chairman on the **Ugandan** side working together with our **Austrian** partners to meet our project objectives stated in our concept. I am going to work hand in hand with Stefan in computers as a media of communication and Design. Within this workshop module I will also introduce interested students to the process of hand illustration, character design and the identify problem. We shall do things both the traditional and western ways.

Since we are a group of artists with a common objective, I will contribute in any area that I feel I can. I will also work with Lydia in Print making and Design for textiles (styles and techniques of tie and dye like; shibori, Square, Rectangle, Picking etc) and the use of local materials to make something Artistic and usable. All in all we all hope to learn from each other with both students and our institutional professors.

Isaac Okwir

I was born on the 07th June 1983 in a small village in Lira District Northern Uganda called 'Bar-Ogole' directly translated as ('Eagles field') to a small family of nine children of which I am the sixth born. I was raised by my father for sometimes before he passed away and left all of us to our mother who since then has been single handedly providing and running the family including paying my tuition at the university



Art and me

I have been a self-motivated artist since time immemorial because despite the soothing nature of art, it is also one of the best languages I can express myself fluently for others to benefit from.

I joined Ugatra on the first day that the idea was introduced and I am still an active member. This has been because of its 'art content', which is "what drives me". From memory "Art" is the only good thing that has ever happened in my life. For this reason, I joined the Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Arts Makerere University Kampala so as to attain a degree where my love for art manifested its self much in the subject of sculpture, 'drawing special' and my area of specialization, Illustration. I have a "special interest" in animation making which at the moment is not being practiced in the country since seems no one is 'fluent' in the subject.

Education

Year	School	Award
2004 - 2007	Makerere University	(BIFA). Hons. Degree
2002 - 2003	Makerere High School	U.A.C.E
1998 - 2001	Lango College	U.C.E
1990 - 1997	Ambalal Primary School	P.L.E

Working Experience

2004 - to date	Self-employed artist (illustrator, painter, sculptor) sculpture carving and modeling, water color, oil painter.
2006 - to date	Lira district programme coordinator AFOCOD Art for community development. A non-profit making community based organization (CBO) to provide life skill training in art and craft to the internally displaced peoples camps in Lira district.
2007	Art therapist with the NGO 'Let Art Talk' where we offered art therapy to a number of school children in Gulu District under the theme "empowering the communities through art"

Workshops Attended

1998	Paper art by the Indian artist supported by the Indian communities in Lira
2006 - to date	Pangolin bronze casting workshop Makerere University Kampala.
2007	Industrial art design Makerere University Kampala
2008	Artists and art work markets in Uganda Makerere University Kampala.



Reflective Biography

Daniela Tagger (Vice-chairwoman of ugratra)

I was born in Salzburg in the mountains. I grew up in Kaprun, a little tourist-village with about 3000 inhabitants. There I lived with my parents in a flat until I finished the technical school for building construction in a city about 30km away from Kaprun.

The general values from this area are typical austrian tourist-village-values.

If you go some kilometers up you will find a different behaviour from the people in the smaller villages. There is a lot of classification and wealth-frustration in the “rich villages”, I would say. The “representational-value” is still very important. A big, expensive car and a good looking house with nice flowers makes the people work a lot, which is beneath sports very necessary to have a good status.

There are only a hand full of people from outside of Europe living in the area permanently, they are not always well integrated, because a lot of cliches in the society are working against them.

The gender roles in our generation are quite various, but you can find much more traditional family-structures as in a city.

Traditional mainly looks like: the woman is taking care of the children and the house and likes to talk about intrigues with (or about) the neighbours and the man works alot and afterwards needs a lot of beer with his football-friends.

My Educational and Work Background

I started in Kaprun with the primary school, then I went to a musician and creative secondary school in Zell am See. As I already wrote, I made my exam at a technical school for building construction in Saalfelden.

In the first year of this school I promised to myself to go to the other side of the world for one year as soon as I have my final exam. So I did, and spent a year full of freedom, nature and simple life in Australia. I would say I was very lucky to do this, to find my own values, which have nothing to do with materialism like the society in Austria and the media from everywhere tried to let me know.

When I came back to Austria I went to Vienna and wanted to study photography, because I wanted to do something with art and also had the idea of a traveling life. The class at the University for applied arts has just been recently founded and I went there quite naive with my workmap.

They didn't take me and I chose to study architecture at the Technical University. For one year I liked it but then I found out how versatile and exciting the Art-Education-classes at the University for Applied Arts were.

Since 2002 I study Textile and Art and Communication. There are a lot of interesting things to study. I'm already in the fifth year and still want to learn a lot.

At schools I mostly engaged in "textil-mobil", a project from our textile-class, touring through Austria with the intention to bring the textile-theme closer to the schools and make it more popular and interesting.

My artwork

My most interests are art-projects which address the problems of society. A strong personal point is act against racism.

(Whenever it was possible I traveled as long as possible. Countries from which I learned most about values, which our western society has mostly lost, were i.e Indonesia and Georgia. In these "poorer" countries the life at most times has an other richness, the people need to help each other and it's normal.

For me its important to learn about other cultures directly from somebody from this culture to really understand something. Here in Vienna I also get to know alot of interesting people to whom I love to talk and find out new things for me.

If you ask me what I learned in school about other cultures, my answer is very poor and this is something I would like to change in our school-system, because I think it's very important for students to get in contact with foreign people to prevent racism.)

So, back to my artwork...hmm its quite difficult for me to describe my own works, I also cannot say that I'm very specialised in one field or category. Maybe because I never wanted to get putted in a drawer, and also because everything is quite interesting for me.

I figured out one strong line, which I'm following up. It's about combinations from different medias, for example textile and performance and video. I'm not an artist who exists in artistic loneliness, I like working with other people most of the time.

For the ugratra-workshops I would like to go into this direction – I'm waiting for influence!!



Robert Zimmermann

I was born in 1982 in a small town in southern Germany. After living in Cologne for one year, doing my civil service, I started my study of Art Education in 2004 at the University of Passau, a small town at the German-Austrian border. After one year I applied at the Universität for Applied Arts in Vienna to continue my study.

I've chosen this kind of study because I consider art as a means of rethinking our surroundings, as a basic tool to question both, banal and complex structures which influence our daily lives. Therefore I believe that it's important to mediate this knowledge in order to sharpen the perception of people. My main interest in doing arts is music, drawing and filmmaking.

I can't remember a time when I wasn't drawing at all. One of my first childhood memories is when I was about 5 years old. I was sick, lying in bed and drawing rock-bands whose members were skeletons. I love black and white and all shades of grey inbetween, working with lines, areas and volume. I get confused by colours if I don't use them separated, in a graphical way.

My father plays acoustic guitar, so I also started playing the guitar when I was twelve. But soon I got bored with it and, of course, wanted to play an electric guitar. When I was fourteen two friends and I started our first punk-band. For about two years we played some gigs, then broke up and formed another one. And after that another one. The music grew harder and we ended up doing noise music.

I had to quit playing in bands when I moved to Cologne. For the lack of band members, and my growing interest in electronic music, I started to use the computer to produce sound and to sketch ideas. The next step was trying out recording on my own and then to play various instruments, all of them in quite a ragged way but I'm much more interested in the shape of the sound than in sophisticated playing. I try out guitars, bass, home organs, keyboards, digital synthesizers and drum computers, electronic effects and post-production possibilities to do music. The latest news is that I'll start playing the violin this summer.

At the moment I'm busy doing an animation film, drawings of musicians and dancers in movement, recording improvisational music...