

## YVANOVITCH MBAYA

Yvanovitch Mbaya graduated from the École Nationale des Beaux-arts in Brazzaville (Congo) in 2013, and went on to study art psychology at the University of Lomé (Togo).

In parallel with his institutional studies, and from 2011, he became the assistant and apprentice of artist Bill Kouélany (the first African woman to be programmed at documenta 12, Kassel 2007), who passed on to him his theoretical and practical knowledge of the arts, as well as a wealth of advice that clarified and enriched his commitment to the visual arts and his working discipline.



In 2012, his singular work was noticed and appreciated by a number of professionals, notably at the first two editions of RIAC (les Rencontres Internationales de l'Art contemporain) organised by Ateliers SAHM in Brazzaville, where he won the Goddy Leye prize for painting, which included a residency at the Art Bakery in Douala (Cameroon).

In 2013, he took part in the Atelier Contraste in Brazzaville, then the Festival Étonnants Voyageurs alongside Frantz Zéphirin, one of the leading painters of the Haitian School.

Mbaya then travelled across the continent to pursue his research into traditional religions that sacralise the aquatic elements. In 2014, he presented some of his works on this theme, linked to the figure of Mami Wata and Voodoo more generally, at the Goethe Institut in Lomé.

In 2015, he decided to settle down and set up his studio in Casablanca (Morocco). Since then, he has taken part in major group exhibitions that have made history and left their mark: United Artists (Off 1-54, Marrakech 2020), curated by Syham Weigant and bringing together all the Moroccan artists; The day after (Abu Dhabi Art Fair, Emirates 2020) curated by the Star Simon Njami in an unprecedented format despite the pandemic crisis; Le Pinceau de l'intégration (Fondation Sonatel, Off Biennale Dak'art 2022) accompanying the great return of the Pan-African Biennale.

Gâta Bantu is the artist's first Solo Show in 2022.