



Januario Jano

KIM-KIM

Curated by Yuki Miyake and Ana Teles

07 SEP - 08 OCT 22

White Conduit Projects

1 White Conduit Street London N1 9EL

www.whiteconduitprojects.uk info@whiteconduitprojects.uk

KIM-KIM is an exhibition that weaves together distinct cultures which span Africa, Europe and Asia through the kimono.

It causes us to reflect upon our connections with familiar, quotidian objects and the meanings we attribute to them. The exhibition also evokes ideas of cultural appropriation and assimilation, not only those resulting from European colonialism but also the more innocent and productive cultural exchange between peoples.

Ambundu women, who live in the north-west of Angola where Januário Jano was born, dress themselves in a wrap made from brightly coloured fabric that resembles a kimono.

Angola has an important textile manufacturing industry known for the iconic *Samakaka* printed fabric, full of bright, geometrical patterns. Jano's hometown, however, did not have a strong local textiles tradition. Instead, the kimono-style garments worn by the women were mostly made using imported Western fabrics.

The use of fabric plays a crucial role in Jano's art practice. It is a medium that allows him to reconnect with his Angolan roots. Fabric also provides an emotional connection to childhood sensations of comfort and security and an opportunity for introspection; a series of threads of thought weave through his adult mind, linking his recollections of his formative years with a sense of displacement and loss.

Memory also features centrally in Jano's work — memories stirred by photographs discovered in archives, the stories passed down and re-told by his family, and fragments from his childhood that insistently resurface in his work. These images and narratives provide vehicles for him to reflect on his personal connection with the place of his birth and his sense of identity.

The Japanese fabric used to make the works in this exhibition was donated specifically for this purpose by friends of White Conduit Projects. In addition, Jano selected fabric and images from his own personal archive of photographs and objects that he has collected and preserved. The images Jano chose to feature in his compositions show ethnographic details, specifically the legacy of Catholicism, imposed on the Angolans by the Portuguese. This historical experience has parallels with Japan. Eager to trade with Japan after their first contact with Japan in 1543, the Portuguese soon began trading through the port of Nagasaki. Although Angola and Japan had quite different experiences of contact with Europe, with regard to religious and commercial exchange.

Januario Jano (b. Angola)

KIM-KIM

Wed 7 Sept - Sat 8 Oct
6:30 - 9 pm

Curated by Yuki Miyake and Ana Teles

/

#januariojano
#kimkim
#whiteconduitprojects

Jano's compositions in this exhibition borrow from the simplicity of formal elements in the Japanese aesthetic tradition. White fabric (cotton based) is a recurrent feature of Jano's work and typically symbolises Angolan women's resistance to colonial rule. He is interested in the processes of cultural production and identity, assimilation and appropriation as well as the resistance and rejection which develop in response.

The works speak of Jano's encounters with diverse cultures: he was born in Luanda, but has also lived in Namibe Province, Lisbon, and London and currently in Madrid, and continues travelling around the world. Cultural exchange and confrontation with distinct ways of life are important for Jano's practice, allowing him to reflect on his own sense of identity.

By cutting and sewing together fabrics, painting over images, and combining objects derived from various sources, places, and times, he has created work that integrates Japanese kimono fabric with fabric selected from his own archive. In this project, therefore, Jano himself performs a process of assimilation, echoing the wearing of kimono by the Kimbundu people and valuing the similarities between fabrics pertaining to different cultures.

ARTIST PROFILE

Januario Jano is an interdisciplinary artist who works across sculpture, video, photography, textile, sound installations, and performance. He holds an MFA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths University and his practice is substantially research-based.

Januario's work has been exhibited internationally and is included in notable private and public collections.

His commitment to cultural and social engagement led him to establish Pés Descalços, a cultural and philanthropic collective focused on developing and promoting artistic and cultural projects in Angola. The collective complements the need for intervention in a sustained and grounded manner to enhance the current cultural reinvention taking place in that country. Since 2012, Januario has also been the driving force to help rewrite Angola's next chapter, from civil war-torn state to innovation hub with the launch of TEDxLuanda, which he organizes and curates.

In 2021, Januario had a solo show, *Unsettled Feelings of an Object and Self* at Kristin Hjelldjerde gallery in London, shortlisted for The Norval Sovereign African Art Prize and The Queen Sonja Print Award. Januario's first major solo exhibition at Gallery Jean-Claude Maier in Frankfurt, curated by Mahret Ifeoma Kupka, the exhibition has been reviewed on major art platforms and was named a "Top 5" best exhibition to see in the E.U. by Frieze magazine.

His work was also featured in a group show at the Tree Art Museum in Beijing. In addition, Januario was selected for the Vantage Point Sharjah 9 project by the Sharjah Foundation, also performing at Goldsmiths CCA in London, and was one of the selected artists for Poldra 2021, a sculpture park project in Viseu, Portugal. He also participated in a "Masterclass" at Circuit by Braga Media Arts 2021 in Braga, Portugal.