

ART

Mathias Tusiime

***He is a clear example
of profound art
statements***

He is a self-taught artist from Bushenyi, who paints with oil and acrylics on his own handmade paper, and commercially produced paper and canvas. Tusiime's day job is being a ground man at Makerere School of Art, a creativity charged environment. His keen and observant eye has earned him a place of respect in the art community and he has consequently exhibited in Uganda, Kenya, Denmark and the USA.

He converts waste like discarded paint, paper and sugar cane pulp into bright cheerful artworks. His subjects are often children with large bright eyed stares. With this, he can be easily compared to Jack Katarikawe, a self taught Ugandan artist based in Nairobi, whose artistic career too started at the Makerere School of Art where he was not a student, but a driver.

Tusiime's talent and involvement in narrative art can be traced few decades back. In 1999, he came into contact with what one could call a sheer pleasure, as a result of labouring at one of the oldest East African Art schools, The Margaret Trowel School of Industry and Fine Arts.



His success story

- I am known beyond the Ugandan border. My work is appreciated by people of different classes and tastes beyond borders.
- I have exhibited at Makerere University, Kampala Gallery, Denmark, Netherlands, and USA.
- I make my own handmade paper (Canvas).

Tusiime says he has partly received what he had dreamed of. One of his pieces graced the cover of *Minstrel Literary Magazine* in the USA. He has also sold some of his pieces on the European market and other Scandinavian countries. His work has been highly acknowledged both locally and internationally and has subsequently been invited to conduct workshops about his work in the University of Columbia, Merry Land University and Florida University.

This to him marks one of the greatest achievements despite the fact that he was not able to go. By making experimental research on waste materials, he managed to come out with his own technique of turning waste materials into unique paper (canvas) for painting.

Future prospects

Tusiime has bigger plans to expand and begin to produce his own painting materials and art paper, so that he can sell some and supplement his income. He says he would like to learn how to make his own colours and become the greatest painter in the industry. He also plans to do Art as a full time job and set up his own studio where clients can find him. At the same time he plans to increase the number of his exhibition both abroad and back home.

