

Affirmation Arts, a multi-disciplinary contemporary art space in Hudson Yards, is pleased to present *Kenyan Collectives*, a showcase of pieces by *Pamoja Art Collective*, formerly “Hog Ranch Art Department”, and *Turkana Artists Xchange*, a collaboration between artists from Turkana County, Nairobi County and beyond. The exhibition runs from May 17 – May 26 and marks the first time both collectives are showcasing their work in the United States.

The members of *Pamoja* were frequent collaborators of legendary photographer Peter Beard in many illustrations of his work for over four decades (1968-2017). The members include Nathaniel Kiboi (Kenyan, b.1943), Solomon Misigo (Kenyan, b.1976), Mwangi Gibson “Mzee Mwangi” (Kenyan, b.1945), Gabriel Macharia (Kenyan, b.1947), Marimbe Parsimei (Kenyan, b.1978), Gibson Kuria (Kenyan, b.1976), Nicholas Njenga (Kenyan, b.1981), and Macharia Mwangi (Kenyan, b.1994).

*Turkana Artists Xchange* was conceptualized by Jackie Lebo in 2018 as a companion project that grew out of working on the forthcoming feature documentary, *Turkana: Race for Resources*. It brings together 14 creatives who make new collaborative artworks uniting practices across visual arts, music, fashion and design inspired by and responding to urgent issues in Turkana.

*Pamoja’s* work is mainly inspired by nature and revolves around wildlife and environmental conservation themes. Most of the members are either self-taught or benefitted from mentorship from other members, like Mzee Mwangi, who attended an arts program in secondary school in 1961. They utilize various techniques ranging from dotting to collage to create contemporary and abstract pieces which highlight our interconnectedness with nature.

*Turkana Artists Xchange* has, to date, created seven projects since its inception and this is their first exhibition in the United States where work from the projects will be showcased. The exhibition will also feature a unique collaboration between *Turkana Artists Xchange* and *Pamoja* to create new work uniting photographs with hand-drawn frames. Alongside these photo-based works is a collection of original paintings from the eight members of *Pamoja*.

This exhibition will provide a platform for *Pamoja* to be championed for their little-known contributions to global art. It marks the first step in staking claim on their identity as talented artists, who never gave up on their passion or talent, despite failing to achieve the recognition they deserved. It will also showcase the beauty and talent that Turkana County has to offer.

## Affirmation Arts

Affirmation Arts is a contemporary arts complex dedicated to the success and encouragement of visual and performing arts. Having supported and partnered with many nationally and internationally recognized artists, galleries, and museums, Affirmation Arts presents dynamic exhibitions and events that champion art and artists' role in contemporary culture.

Instagram: @AffirmationArts

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