



ARTIST

Luigi Christopher Veggetti Kanku is a Congolese born artist who grew up in Northern Italy from an early age. He is one of the main principle artists of the Italian contemporary art scene and is currently showing with foreign galleries based in London, Berlin and Gothenburg.

He has a preference for figurative work and he represents multiple subjects including portraits, urban views and landscapes among others. In 2012 he has started a collaboration with Umberto Allemandi publishing, to realise the project of an art book series, composed of 10 volumes dedicated to Italian cities, where the artist describes the beauties of some of the most amazing Italian locations. The first volume "FORTE DEI MARMI" is from 2012, the second one "MONZA E BRIANZA" will be distributed in fall 2017.

In Italy Veggetti maintains an independent identity, choosing not to have any exclusive professional relationship, but keeping his professional relations open instead, which allows him to work freely with public institutions, authorities and publishing houses.

PROJECT

AFROITALIANI is an art exhibition to show a series of portraits dedicated to important citizens of African descendants who grew up or lived in Italy, from the past through to the present day. The portraits will represent all the well known and successful people for their work and their position in the community and whose personal experiences and achievements have had a strong impact on the path of racial integration of Italy. The people's portraits will include writers, artists, politicians, entrepreneurs, athletes and others.

AFROITALIANI will have a dedicated catalogue ISBN (published by Giorgio Mondadori) with a brief presentation and the short biographies of each subject featured.

MESSAGE

Luigi's aim is to show the world that the stereotypical picture of Italy's landscape is changing on many levels. Today Italy is slowly changing, both at the social and political level due to the fact that Italy has finally started to deal with the different cultures living on its territory.

Africans and afro descendants living in Italian cities are often still seen as new elements of the society, when in fact they are paying taxes and have regular jobs that contribute to wealth of the country. The word "afroitalian" seems odd and hard to pronounce and so AFROITALIANI seems more correct and on message for the place we find ourselves in today.

Italy's cultural journey with the influx of African immigrants started in 146BC after the destruction of Carthage in the Africa Vetus province and approximately 50,000 Africans were brought back to Italy by their Roman victors. African immigrants in Roman times have been generals, merchants, musicians, traders and diplomats and even emperors of Rome with Septimius Severus and Marcus Opellius Macrinus who were both from North African descent. Then the Portuguese introduced Atlantic slavery and many more Africans were brought in through the slave trade. Then in this century in the sixties many African students entered Italy for education and employment and still faced strong barriers from parts of the Italian society. It has been a long road and the whisper of sacrifice can still just be heard from the brave ones who had the courage to raise their voice and be heard for the sake of the struggle.

Today although the journey has been long and hard the African Italian culture is finally becoming recognised and celebrated and absorbed with stunning and electrifying results in all forms of Italian art, form and culture.

To better understand and deeply appreciate all the accomplishments, sacrifices and developmental periods, the opportunities for the second generation of African descendants have today for their voices to be heard has never been better. It is fundamental to truly understand what people have done in the past, affecting the path of identity of growth in the future.

AFROITALIANI purpose is to publicly acknowledge the presence, the success of brave and skilled afro Italian, beginning with the memories of the past till the present days.

SUPPORTERS

AFROITALIANI is currently supported by

- the MP Cecile Kyenge, who is collaborating to the project giving precious aid
- The European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) that exists to promote racial equality, counter racism, and educate about non-discrimination in the work of the European Parliament.
- Fondazione Bracco - The Foundation enhances Italy's cultural, historical and artistic heritage at national and global levels. It also stimulates environmental awareness, promotes scientific research, safeguards health, supports education and professional training for young people and develops welfare and solidarity initiatives in order to contribute to collective well-being.
- Fondation Lilian Thuram - foundation against racial discrimination, funded by the football player Lilian Thuram
- Africa - Italian magazine dedicated to the African cultures

The task to find the historically relevant portrait subjects has been delegated to a selection committee that is composed by MP Kyenge, Fiona May (multiple medalist at the World Championship and at the Olympics), Barbara Sorgoni, anthropology expert and professor at Torino's University and Uoldelul Chelati Dirar (professor at Macerata University).

DISTRIBUTION & EXHIBITION

Due to its meaningful message AFROITALIANI will be a touring exhibition at art fairs and cultural events. The exhibition will also be exhibited at the 11th art biennale MANIFESTA that will take place in Palermo, Italy 2018. After all works will be distributed through the Italian Embassies across the world and also some art institutions.