

Moleskine Foundation

Annual Report
2020

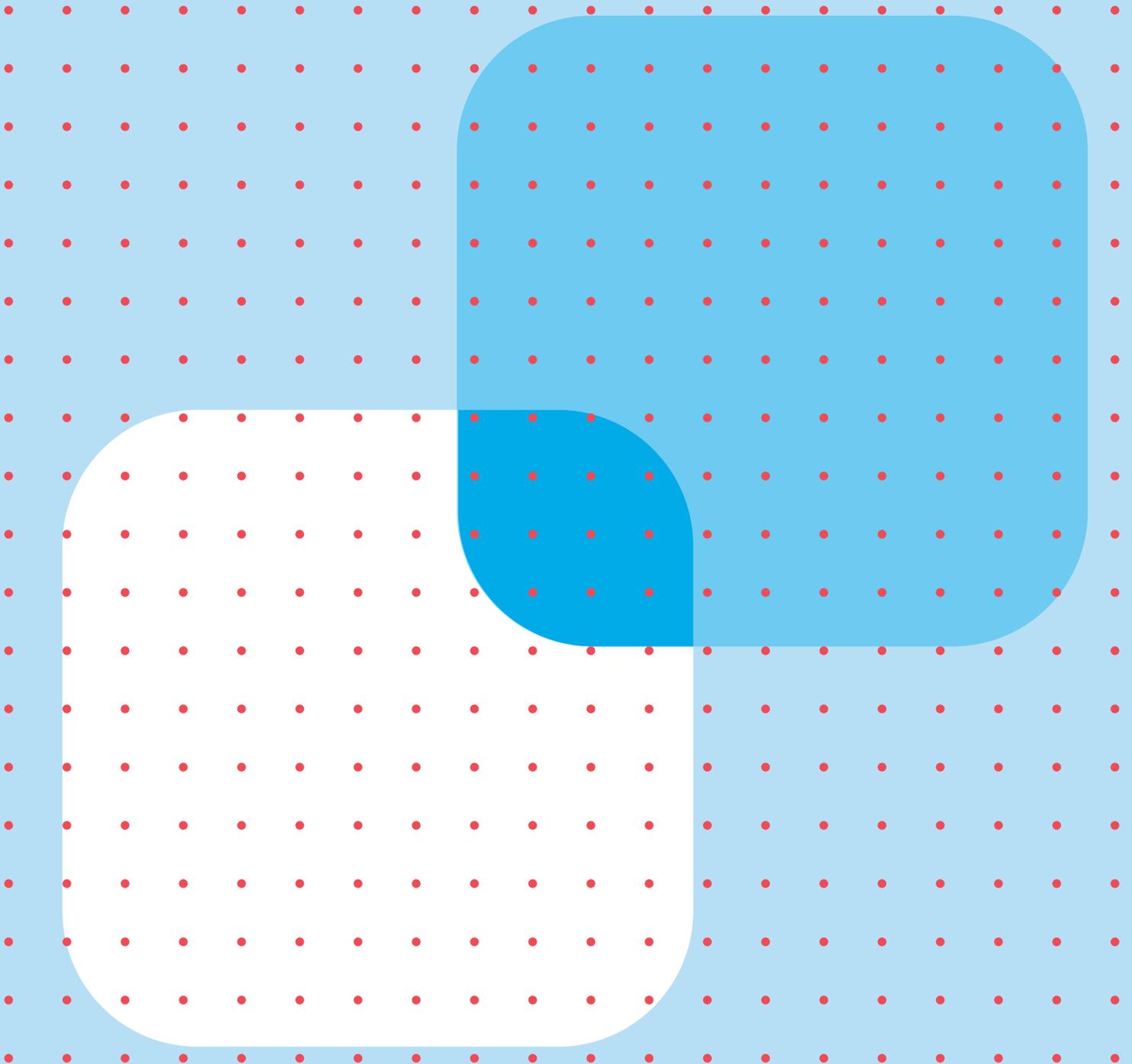




Photo credits: Anna Mainenti

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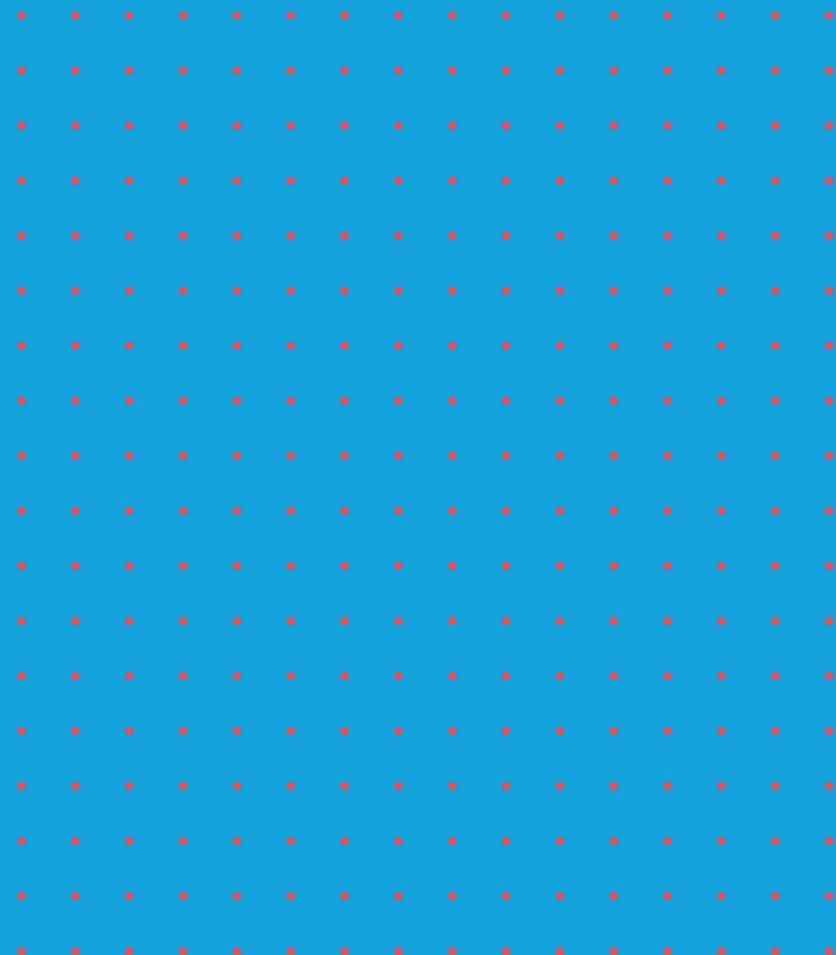
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**“Creativity can
change the
world.”**



A reflection on our identity and mission.

This year, for the first time in a long time, the false sense of certainty we had gotten used to was taken away. As we turned the page to open the chapter of a new decade, a significant part of our life habits had to shift and so did our approach of the work we do. Like many around the world, in the face of the overwhelming events of the pandemic, we took the opportunity for an introspection.

In 2020, we witnessed the overuse of the term ‘resilience’. During one of our creativity pioneers podcast episodes, Moleskine Foundation president Maria Sebregondi introduced a different approach of the word: resilience is not about being hard and tough in the face of obstacles, but rather being able to stretch and expand without losing the original essence of your identity. In other words, ‘being able to receive a hit rather than rejecting it.’ In the context of the pandemic, where all communication had to be redefined, and in order to implement this resilient elasticity, we had to look inward and reflect on the core of our mission, the essence of the work we do.

The WikiAfrica initiative ‘The Solution will not be Televised’ is an example of this mindset. In less than ten days, we had to revise and adapt our strategy and resources for the context of the pandemic. Not only did we exceed our set goals, we witnessed a stronger sense of pride and communion from the participants who helped spread knowledge about current events in their own language. This initiative encapsulated what we believe in: that knowledge is essential to spark creativity and that, purposeful and responsible actions transform a community into a communion of people, and that is the precondition from which social change can occur.

The transformative process we have gone through started with the self, which then impacted others. Through the events of 2020, we made this conscious effort to push the fundamental skills we aim to seed and develop in ourselves and others: critical thinking, creative doing, lifelong learning and a changemaking attitude. With this basis, we were able to pivot and transform who we are in the moment and create a unique approach to our activities this year. A leap of faith brought inspiring results, thanks to a newfound solidarity.

As everyone in the world was looking for new ways to share, exchange and connect with each other, the cultural work proved to be essential. In this moment in time, when all the foundation and pillars of our living have been shaken, the use of Creativity and Culture is more relevant than ever. Not to find one solution for all, but to explore together and articulate this context so that each one of us can build their own tool to face the upcoming challenges.

The capacity to build language, generate dialogue, the emphasis on processes and the importance of navigating ambiguity and complexity are all elements that stay in the cultural world. Now more than ever, investing in this field and supporting all those organizations, institutions and individuals, especially those operating in underserved communities is vital.

We are renewing our commitment to this cause and are conscious that this is not something we will do on our own. Our bold vision and ambition will require the support of our many cultural partners across the globe.

We are grateful for your continuous support and for joining us on a global movement. The urgency of this moment requires new and diverse resources and sustaining spaces where criticality can be cultivated, and creativity can flourish to work and overcome the challenges we are facing.

-Adama Sanneh, CEO of Moleskine Foundation





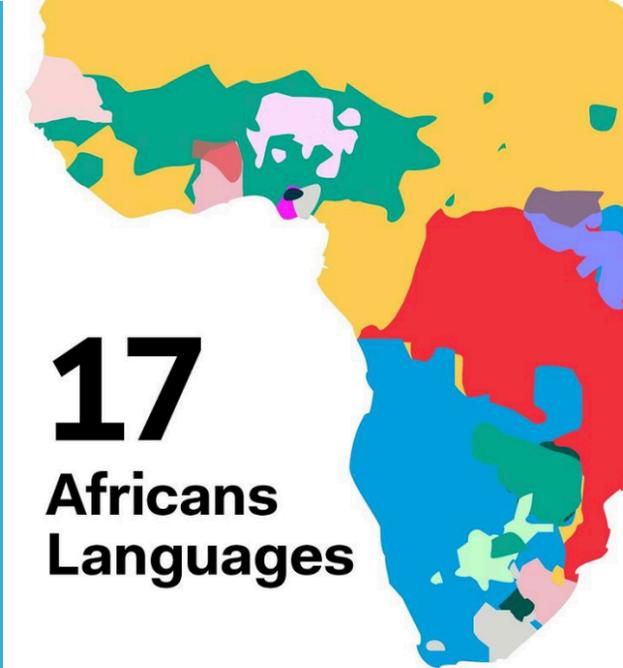
Wiki Africa
Education
by Moleskine Foundation

*“To spark creativity
in solutions to the
problems we are facing,
we need knowledge on
what the situation is.”*

**TAKING ACTION TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE
IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES**

The Solution Will Not Be Televised

- 410 movement members
- 197 articles produced
- 1M article views
- 231.5K words added



In 2020, we consolidated, improved, and refreshed our strategy for the WikiAfrica Education program. We ran a strategy development workshop in January at Constitution Hill, led by consultants Enke who were recommended by our advisor Josh Adler. We had key stakeholders of the program attend the workshops; participants, teachers, Constitution Hill team, interested potential partners, and Moleskine Foundation team. The outputs were then distilled by the consultants, who worked numerous review cycles of the content with us until we arrived at a strategy we felt we could truly get behind, which articulated the strategic intent and desired impact that WikiAfrica Education will have in the next 5 years.

Whilst most of the world discussed COVID-19, millions were unable to join the conversation because the information was not available in their language. The campaign 'The Solution Will Not be Televised' called to action African language speakers to translate COVID-19 related knowledge.

We mobilized a movement of volunteers to translate the 10 most relevant articles, focusing on, 'stationary facts', not competing with mainstream media for the latest updates. Across the contributing languages, we chose to translate articles such as "Pandemic", "hand washing", and "infectious diseases".

We managed to reach or exceed all of the goals of the campaign. We know from feedbacks and calls that participants felt a large sense of pride and public service in creating their articles, and a great sense of unity and Pan-Africanism, as well as positive unexpected spill-over of intergenerational involvement as youth would ask elders for support with grammar or vocabulary.

The campaign was run alongside Fondazione Aurora, and supported by Ethale Publishing, Constitution Hill Trust, Wikimedia Yoruba, Wikimedia South Africa, Wikimedia Tanzania and the Wikimedia Foundation.

We ended the year with a virtual AfroCuration event with the Wikimedia Dagbani community in Ghana, producing knowledge on Covid-19 in Dagbani. 57 articles were created and generated 11 thousand views.



Mahlatse

She's one of our movement's most productive members, translating information on Covid-19 into Sesotho, an official language in South Africa, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe spoken by over 13million people. Despite the pressures of studies, she took a moment away from her Tourism Management studies at the University of Johannesburg to support this Covid response effort.



Mor

Thanks to Mor and his involvement, the Covid-19 article is now available on Wikipedia for 10 million people that speak Wolof. He signed up to support the movement and translated the article in Milan, then the translation was checked by a professor in Senegal and another professor and editor in New York. His article was the 5th most viewed page in Wolof Wikipedia in 2020.



Peri Mason

"I collaborated with my mom to write the articles, she did the proof reading and I the translation of the base article in English to IsiXhosa and IsiZulu. The process was so enriching and eye opening, my mom said reading the article in isiZulu "took her back to her schooling days" because there isn't enough material on the internet in our native tongues.



Hajara

This is Hajara, a student from Tamale, Ghana. "I am a Dagomba by tribe and I'll love to see the Dagbani language being among other international languages when searching for something, so this motivated me to join this challenge when it was introduced to me by a friend so that I can also help promote the language."



At Work'

BY Moleskine Foundation

"Every day we took the time to deconstruct our thinking. Infinitely surpassing our "self" to "know oneself". Through this notebook, we restore everything that has been taken from us."

Yveline Nathalie Pontalier, AtWork Libreville participant

“Where is South?” EXHIBITION

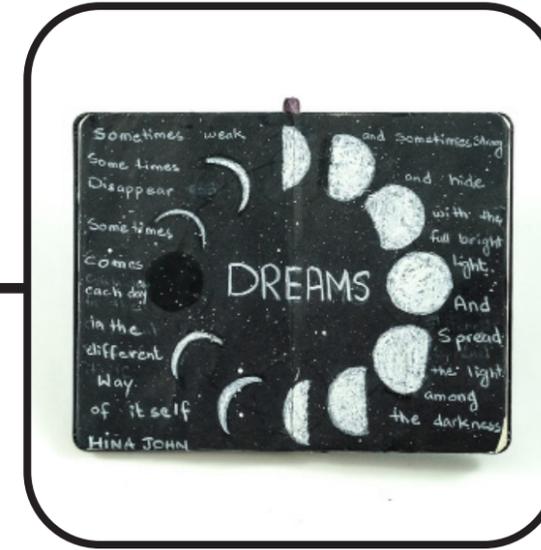
On October 1st, 2020, we held the first-ever virtual exhibition “Where is South?” on our Instagram channel that showcased 90 notebooks created by AtWork 2019 Tour participants. More than 90 young creative talents from five countries, including residents of Gabon, Mozambique, the United Kingdom, and the United States and refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants living in Italy, have liberated the word “south” from ideology and invested it with personal meaning. The works are the creative outcomes of the Foundation’s AtWork initiative, an itinerant educational workshop designed to unlock the creative potential of young people through critical thinking, intense debate, and self-discovery. The workshops were conducted by our advisor and AtWork co-creator Simon Njami, the influential author and curator of contemporary art.

“No matter where we are in the world, there is always a South,” said Njami. “These young people reclaimed their power to define the word as a very intimate notion that varies according to the place where they are and where they want to reach. The exhibit powerfully reveals that there cannot be any South without the gaze we invest it with.”



The inauguration event featured the conversation with the selected participants and key partners that talked about the impact of the workshop on their lives and the local creative communities.

The exhibition program also featured a panel with the Tour’s partners that discussed the importance of Creativity as an engine of social change and in stimulating local creative communities.



The exhibition was co-presented with partners who co-created the workshop experience in each country including: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Venice, Italy as part of “Rothko in Lampedusa” exhibition; the Young People’s Programme at Tate Modern in London, UK; Pfwura Ndzilo and ANIMA in Maputo, Mozambique; ONG Mukasa, Institut Français Gabon, and Musée National des Arts et Traditions du Gabon in Libreville, Gabon; and The Africa Center in New York City, USA.

“No matter where we are in the world, there is always a south.”



“AtWork was phenomenal in that it taught me to deconstruct the received ideas of society, to leave the boundaries of the format within which I had constrained my creativity, a conventional format that in my opinion limits us a bit,” said Makosso. “I am learning to respect the rules that already exist, but also to redefine things according to the expression of my thought, which allows me to believe but above all to think.”

A word from the protagonists of the AtWork Tour

AtWork

"AtWork was like nothing I have ever worked on before. It really speaks to our values and what we seek to do with young people which is using art as a tool to have complex discussions and talk about contemporary issues, but kind of outside the realm of formal education."

Carol Pierre, Assistant Curator of Tate's Young People's Program



"After the workshop we started seeing a big shift in participants. It was evident in the projects they had started creating. We hope to provide more opportunities like this in the future, with more young Mozambicans where they can learn, and then take their learnings into different directions."

*Hugo Chichava, Talent and Business coordinator
Pfwura Ndzilo*

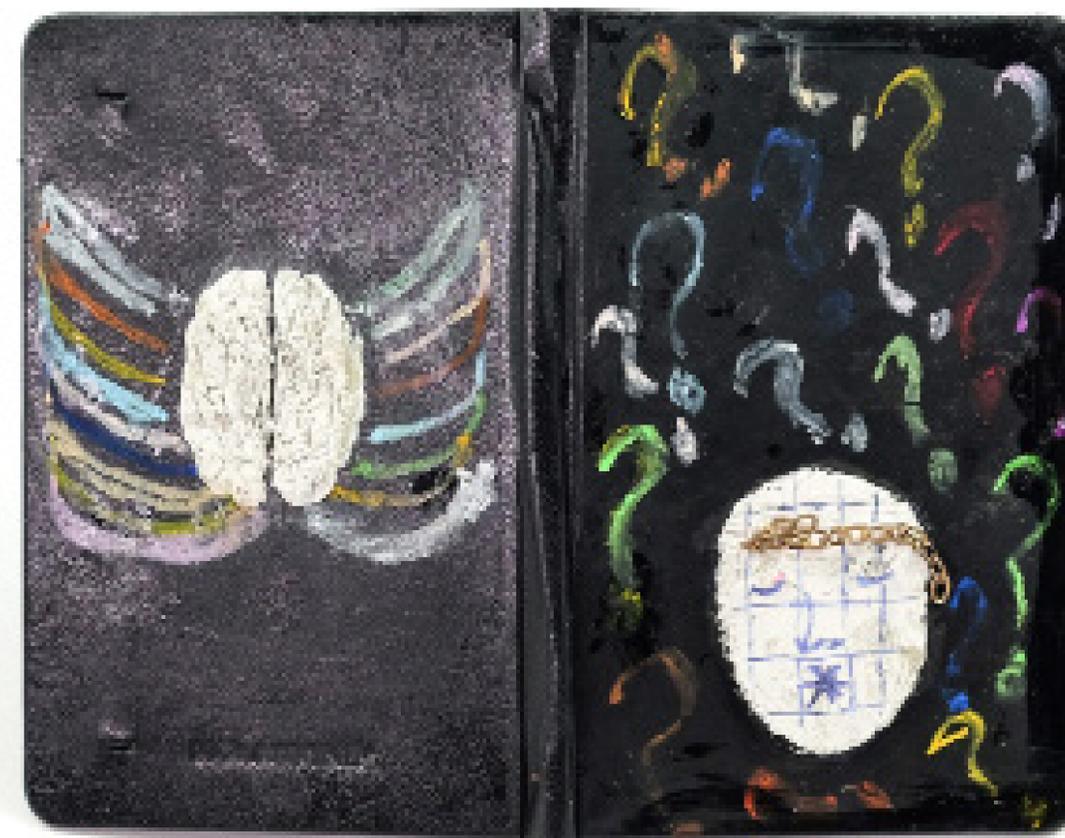


"AtWork was the perfect initiative for our project, since it is about empowering young people. We share with the Moleskine Foundation the vision that Creativity can bring positive change in the society."

Giovanna Li Perni, Head of Partnerships at UNHCR Venice

"I felt like AtWork took off my eyes and gave me new ones. I began to see things differently and I became very critical of myself, it changed me mentally." It started as an interrogation room and then it became therapy. I needed to be shaken like that, I needed to hear those words."

Nosa Ekhtator, AtWork Venice participant



Art notebook by Nosa Ekhtator, AtWork Venice Participant

ATWORK FORMAT STRATEGY & TOOLKIT

In July 2020, we held a 2-day strategic retreat on-line with the key AtWork team (AtWork Faculty members and the Foundation team) in order to set the ground for the program's strategic and operational 10-year plan.

The retreat was conducted by an external consultant Eleonora Corsini and included the following participants: Simon Njami, Heba Y Amin, Maria Sebregondi, Adama Sanneh, Tania Giancesin, Elena Korzhenevich. AtWork alumni Bunny Claude Massassa and Shermaine Telan also took part in the sessions in order to give their input on selected strategic areas and co-create the program's vision with us.

The discussions and decisions took during the 2-day retreat served as a springboard for the 10-year strategic and operational plan that was concluded later in the year by the Foundation's team.

As the first step of the operational plan an external consultant Sherif Osman was hired in order to create AtWork Methodology Toolkit, a theoretical and practical guide into the program's methodology, aiming at the program's replicability and sustainability. The work started in late 2020 with the objective to have the final Toolkit ready and tested in 2021.

Conductor's Toolkit



Inspiring Morning Live Conversations

During the first European lockdown, Moleskine Foundation conveyed a series of online initiatives and resources to support and inspire our followers, alumni and partners. This aligned with our belief that Creativity and Quality Education are key to producing positive change in society and driving our collective future.

Focusing on creativity not just as a source of individual and social resilience, but as the leading method of problem-solving, we offered our contribution towards individual safety and well-being by proposing online stimulating moments and contents under the name of #CreativityForResilience.

The first of these “food for thoughts” were the Inspiring Morning Live Conversations, a bi-weekly talk available online in streaming on our Facebook channel, involving artists, art curators, philosophers and academic researchers, social activists, etc.



Inspiring Mornings Creativity for Resilience

Lwando Xaso

in conversation with **Adama Sanneh**

Moleskine
Foundation



During these conversations, we developed a small, unconventional vocabulary as an inspiration to move forward, suggested by our guest speakers: the participants had to choose three words that are part of the narrative of the moment in order to see beyond their superficial or conventional meaning.

Inspiring Morning Live Conversations was a lively way to offer new perspectives and fresh ideas to amplify our audience imagination and critical gaze. Thanks to their success, they became the pilot activity for developing our future podcast, Creativity Pioneers.

- **Over 283k people reached**
- **1,000 live participants**
- **10k views**
- **6,7k interactions on Facebook**

FOLIOS

Folios is the Moleskine Foundation cultural publication, aiming to highlight and deepen our programs and initiatives, through the voices and experiences of our partners and beneficiaries. Folios is our compass while exploring and discovering new frontiers, in the field of creativity for social change. In 2020 we published 2 new volumes.

FOLIOS VOL. 2: WE, THE PEOPLE



The title of this publication, “We, The People”, is the first sentence of the preamble of the South African Constitution. Beyond the historical value of these three words, the title encapsulates the idea of collectiveness, unity and shared responsibility needed to create the preconditions for a more just, equal, and creative collective future.



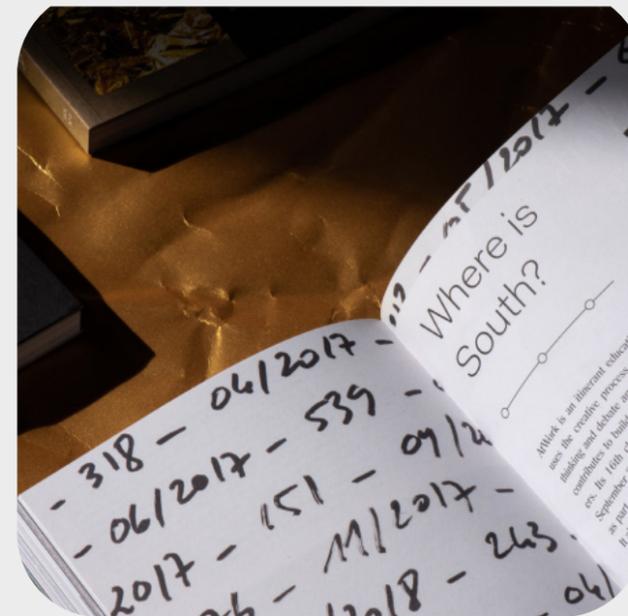
In this Second Issue of Folios, published in April 2020, we showcase our partnership with the Constitution Hill Trust, and give insights into our main activity for getting young South Africans more engaged with the Constitution, and taking more ownership of the digital narrative about their country. Our mass edit-a-thon events, called Afrocurator, are explored through photography and interviews with participants.

FOLIOS VOL. 3: GOLDEN SEA

“Golden Sea”, Moleskine Foundation Folios N.3, is an account of contemporary reorientation, resilience and creativity lived by artists, cultural workers, and civil society in times of displacement and challenged hospitality.



“Golden Sea” is a logbook, an account of a journey across land and sea around the shores of the Mediterranean. The journey in question has uprooted places and stories by symbolically bringing Lampedusa to Venice and then Venice to Trieste in a creative and artistic relay that continues to spread a message of solidarity and hope. Moleskine Foundation has been part of this journey through its initiatives linked to the UNHCR “Rothko in Lampedusa” project.



This project weaves together past and present, established, and emerging artists, memories, and ideas for the future, as well as distant and scattered locations around the globe.

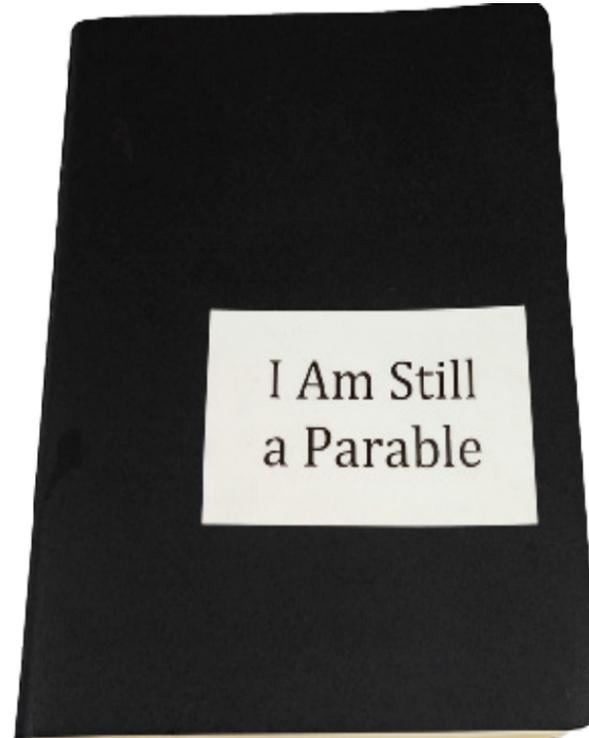
MOLESKINE FOUNDATION COLLECTION

New authors 2020

William Kentridge

“I Am Still a Parable”

Printed texts and images collaged into notebook



The 'I Am Still a Parable' notebook is a book of thinking aloud, testing the relationship of images and text. It is a record of process, rather than having any intended meaning. It gathers scraps of images and text from the studio, and as in many of my notebooks, is a mix of unused space and thoughts accepted and abandoned.

- William Kentridge

Kentridge's aesthetics are drawn from the medium of film's own history, from stop-motion animation to early special effects. Kentridge's drawing, specifically the dynamism of an erased and redrawn mark, is an integral part of his expanded animation and filmmaking practice, where the meanings of his films are developed during the process of their making.

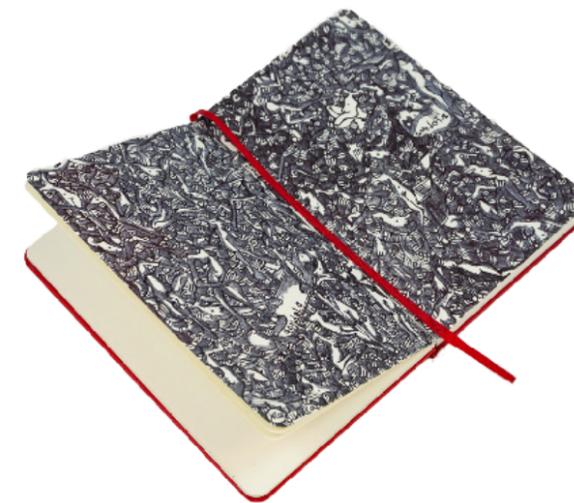


Rodrigo Mabunda

Diving in the Heart of Venice

Ink on paper

"I tell stories about everyday life, about what I see around me. As I walk a lot in the city, I get inspired by what happens on the streets. I tell stories about ceremonies, markets, parties and gatherings; my art talks about places full of people. Venice is a chaotic city. Its small calli are overcrowded by visitors at any time of the day. During my residency, I tried to live the experience fully by diving into the city and its daily life. This work tells the story of my diving and surfacing in the heart of Venice."



Rodrigo is a self-taught artist. Inspired by the chaotic movement of the city of Maputo, the artist Rodrigo Mabunda tells stories through his original illustrations "Sometimes I draw eyes which represent the look on Africa. I like it that people have to search for the different stories in the box." Initially, Rodrigo produced drawings on sheets of paper. But then, by coincidence, a client who had bought a computer in the shop where Rodrigo was working left a box behind him.

Rodrigo picked it up and transformed it, from that day on packaging became his preferred medium "Now, I always see the potential in boxes. That is why I sometimes say I'm a dreamer of the streets because I adopt these boxes as if they were street children." Rodrigo Mabunda gives a second life to those objects that most of us would consider simple wastes.

KARIMA2G

“The Transplanted experience”



Fabric and collage

"I have been pursuing photography in recent years, capturing everyday moments of people of African origin living in the central regions of Italy. An important part of the modern African Diaspora can be found in The African diaspora population in Italy. In an aim to represent a different perspective, a more constructive, positive approach was taken, a new reality, in which the African refugees, migrants, and immigrants, who are often portrayed as victims of the society, are represented differently. By capturing the soul and underlying their values and lives, an invisible reality is empowered and finally become visible to the world."

-KARIMA2G

Karima 2G is a Liberian – Italian singer, rapper, dancer and beatmaker. She began her career as a dancer and became a professional emcee and speaker of the major Italian clubs. Indeed, working with the leading Italian electronic, dance, house music station M2o, she became one of the official voices and the backbone of the network's events.



MONITORING & EVALUATION

2020 saw the start of an organizational effort to develop clear ideas of what organizational impact is, creating a framework for its measurement, and collecting data to evaluate our performance towards our goals.

To support this process, a number of external consultants were engaged and activated at different stages of the framework development.

Tanner Methvin, a familiar face to the Foundation, was engaged in late 2019 and again in March 2020 regarding the setting up of the overall impact framework developed internally.

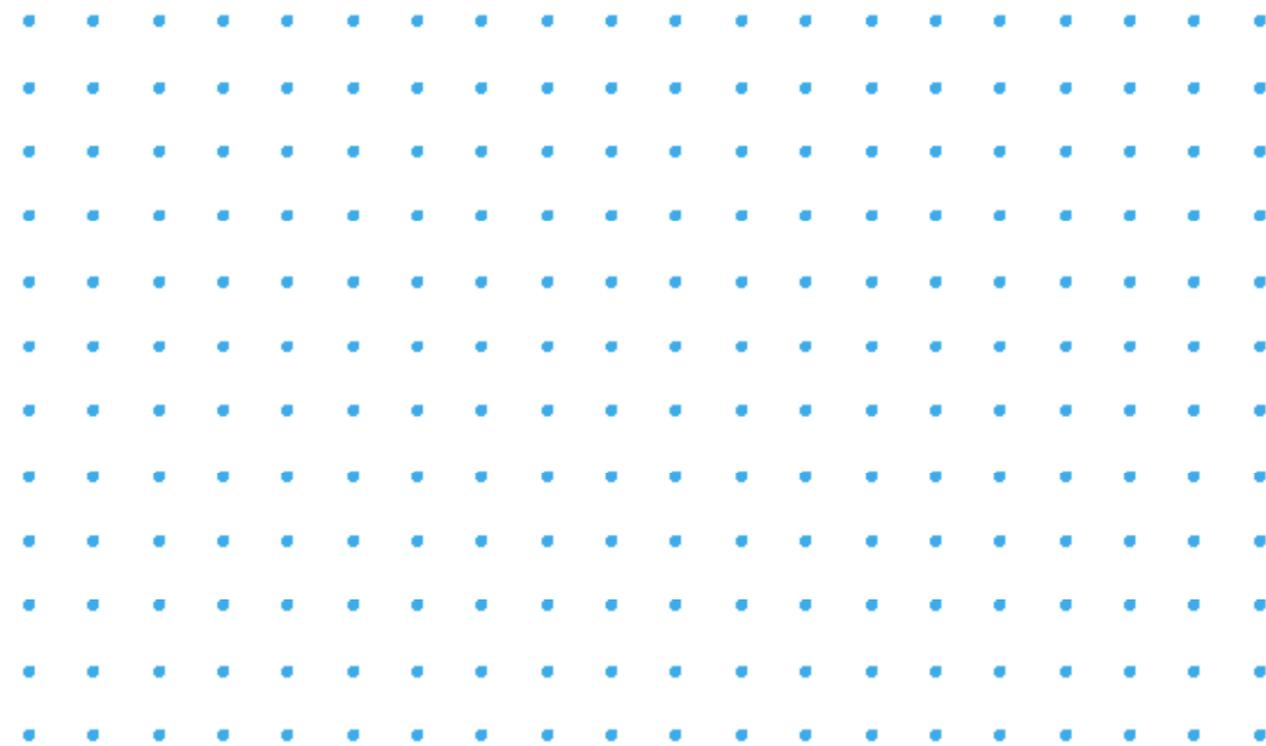
Josh Adler, Moleskine Foundation advisor, was also consulted for feedback on the framework design. Piers Blake from the Costa Foundation was contacted to support in framework development in January 2020, and offer alternative perspectives as another Foundation associated with a corporate, but pursuing its own mission.

Lastly, from late 2019 through to March 2020, AXIA was contacted for support with data analysis and extrapolating themes or impacts from within the dataset already held at MSKF. This collaboration led to a set of recommendations (included at the back of the 2019 report), and a piece of analysis work on our data.

Impact reporting on 2019 was compiled as an internal strategic tool to improve our programming and planning in 2020, and see where we are most effective.



Art notebook by Antonio Scarponi- *Le Confessioni di Calioistro (II)*



PARTNERSHIPS AND DONORS

M MOLESKINE



**CONSTITUTIONHILL
TRUST**



Partnerships are the cornerstone of how we work. Over the past year we partnered with 6 organizations across five countries including Wikimedia communities in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania. We also partnered with Constitutional Hill Trust in South Africa and Ethale publishing in Mozambique to deliver our unique AfroCuration program format.

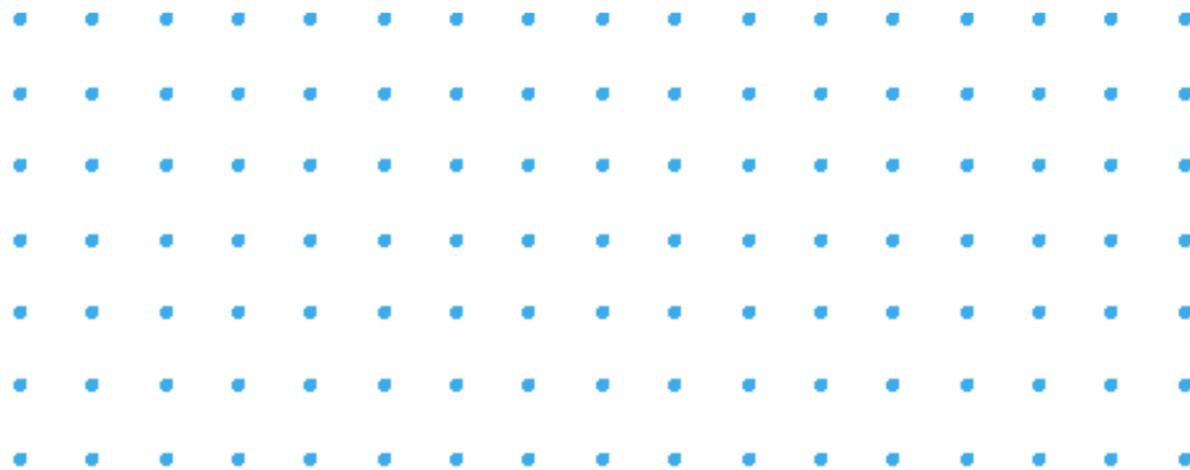
Our long-term partnership with Moleskine fully supports the foundation's operations. This unique model allows us to offer exceptional value to our expanding community of supporters.

We are grateful for the incredible generosity, trust and commitment our donors who raised EUR 563,895 in 2020 to help ensure creativity flourishes even in the most challenging environments.

Thanks to the support of a year-long grant from the European Cultural Foundation, we are piloting a digital AtWork educational format to explore the topic, "What comes first?". This support will enable us to develop new methodologies to adapt the in-person workshop to virtual spaces.

In recognition of the transformational value of creativity to inspire, drive innovation, and transform, we partnered with PromozioniServizi to produce a limited edition of the eponymous Moleskine notebook. Proceeds from this initiative helped to fund the WikiAfrica Education program.

Amplifiers are creative organizations that partner with Moleskine Foundation throughout the year to innovate unconventional solutions for building creative, thriving communities. Through collaborations with Fondazione Aurora (Italy) and Wikimedia Foundation (US) we were able to spark a pan-African movement to protect and stand up for their communities in the fight against COVID.



CREDITS

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Art Notebook by William Kentridge, 2020

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