



**YAV**

YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES MAGAZINE

**ENVISION TOMORROW TODAY**

**MARCH/APRIL 2013**

**YAV MAGAZINE VOL. 2 ISSUE FOUR NEW AFRICAN IDENTITY**

**HOUSE OF STYLE: HOUSE OF R'AOOF**  
**INTRODUCING AKEEM COLLINS**

**VISIONARY OF THE MONTH:**  
**EDIOMI UTUK**

**YAV TECH 4CHANGE:**  
**ONLINE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE**

**BAMBADJAN REFLECTS ON PAPA**

**NEW AFRICAN VOICES**  
TWO VISIONS  
**SIKA & ATTUKWEI**

**10** TOP CITIES  
WHERE YOUNG  
AFRICANS ARE  
MAKING MOVES

**AFRICAN DIGITAL ART**  
**ADA PERSPECTIVES**

# YAV

YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES MAGAZINE

## WHO WE ARE

## ENVISION TOMORROW TODAY

# YAV

YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES MAGAZINE

MARCH/APRIL ISSUE

**VOL. 1 ISSUE ONE: AFRICAN RENAISSANCE**



### THE MAGAZINE INNOVATIVE

### OUR BUSINESS ENTERPRISING

### OUR AUDIENCE INSPIRING

### OUR COMMUNITY CREATIVE



### YAV MAGAZINE: MISSION STATEMENT ENVISION TOMORROW TODAY

YAV MAGAZINE SEEKS TO FIND THE MOST INNOVATIVE WAYS TO PROVIDE STORIES TO OUR READERS THAT ARE RELEVANT. OUR ENTERPRISING SPIRIT, ALLOWS FOR A BUSINESS THAT WILL GROW WITH OUR READERSHIP. WE TAKE PRIDE IN THAT OUR AUDIENCE INSPIRES OUR TEAM TO REPORT STORIES OF TRIUMPH, SUCCESS, & INSPIRATION. YAV MAGAZINE IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR CREATIVE WAYS TO ENGAGE WITHIN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF YOUNG AFRICANS WORLDWIDE.

# YAV

YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES MAGAZINE

VISIT US ONLINE AT [WWW.YAVMAGAZINE.COM](http://WWW.YAVMAGAZINE.COM)

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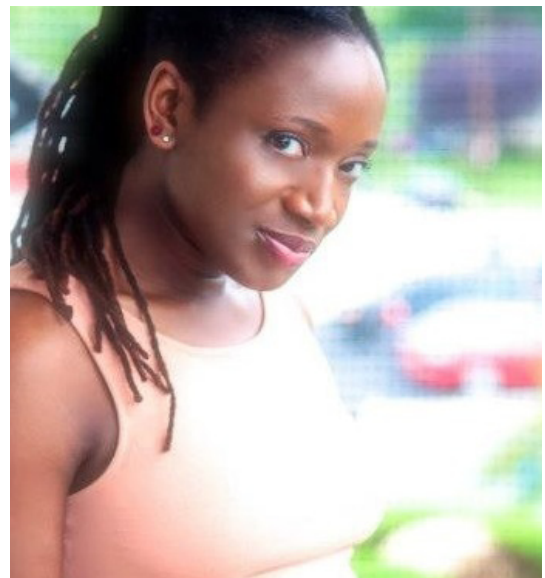
## *Letter From Editor*

### **An Issue of Identity-A New Africa as We Define It**

Nurturing our creative side; the art movement in Africa is undeniably present and strong. With over hundreds of years of art coming from the continent, it is no surprise that currently some of the world's most celebrated artists are coming from Africa. In this issue we explore the idea of identity through expression. How young Africans are using artistic and creative ventures to express ideas on a modern African identity. It is essential that art be a vehicle for social change in Africa. The presence of artistic expression is at the core of our humanity and correlates a conversation between what can be created, imagined, and manifested. Art teaches us that the mind's elasticity is beyond just common thought and chemical reactions. Art allows for deeper connections, allows for birth of ideas that can shape generations to come. For Africa, art is as powerful tool for empowerment and progression.

Young Africa We Salute You,

**Rebekah A. Frimpong**  
Editor-in-Chief /Publisher  
YAV Magazine-BGNB Productions



Visit YAV Magazine [www.yavmagazine.com](http://www.yavmagazine.com) Follow Us on Twitter @YoungAfricanVis



# YAV

YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES MAGAZINE

## ENVISION TOMORROW TODAY

### CONTRIBUTORS

Clarah Manuhwa

Writer

Mazuba Kapambwe

Writer

Gilbert Frank Daniels

Photography

Sandraphotography

Photography

### NEW AFRICAN IDENTITY

Issue four of YAV Magazine: *New African Identity* will feature stories of some of the most innovative creative thinkers coming out of Africa presently. These young African artists and creative thinkers are challenging age old traditions and notions on what "African Identity" means. With brilliant conceptual ideas on technology, environmental activism, and educational art programing the new African identity is one of modernism and creativity.



# YAV

YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES MAGAZINE

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**BAMBADJAN BAMBA**

STORYTELLING



Ediom Utuk & Akeem Collins;  
Ediom Utuk is our Visionary of the  
Month, read more inside.



STATUESQUE EVENTS

by Feyisola

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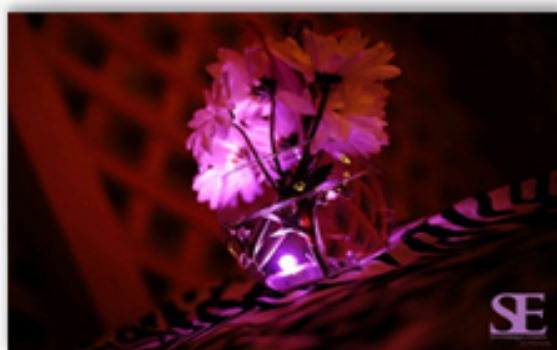
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Project Wedding & More!

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A woman and a young child are featured in a warm, orange-toned photograph. The woman, on the right, has her hair braided and is looking off-camera with a serious expression. The child, in the foreground, is also looking off-camera. The background is a soft-focus landscape. The text 'SOUL Purpose' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# SOUL *Purpose*

in partnership with  
Mama  
Africa

VISIT [WWW.MAAFRICAPROGRAM.ORG](http://WWW.MAAFRICAPROGRAM.ORG) FOR INFO



## **YAV Scholarship Recipient: Orach Derrick**

### ***Awarded for Environmental Work and Innovation-Uganda***

Meet Orach Derrick YAV Scholarship Winner for 2012-2013, Derrick has been able to make sustainable energy, push for community activism around environmental issues in his community in Uganda.



Born in a humble family in Uganda on February 21, 1992, Orach Derrick began his journey to work towards making a better world for others. Derrick is the second youngest son to Mr. Orach Tonny and Mrs. Namusisi Justine. Derrick began his studies in 1998 from SOS Herman Gmeiner School and later 2004 joined Kampala Junior and Child Care School for his Primary, in 2006 for Secondary he went to Our Lady of Africa S.S, St. Mbaaga's College, St. Mary's Lugaazi and BASESCHO. In 2012, Derrick Enrolled at Makerere University for a Certificate in Networking where he is currently studying and work towards completion. During his childhood, Derrick has been an innovative boy and at the age of 12 years old he made a radio station out of scrap metals. He later went on to explore working on environmental activism like the use of biogas and sustainable fuel as well as and environment conservation projects in society. Derrick is also working with some youth in his community in different activities.

## EDUCATION



### YAV Magazine Scholarship Initiative

YAV Magazine will have a special scholarship initiative that will be available to three promising young African visionaries! We will be rewarding youth in these three fields of leadership:

- Environmental*
- Social Awareness*
- Health and Science*

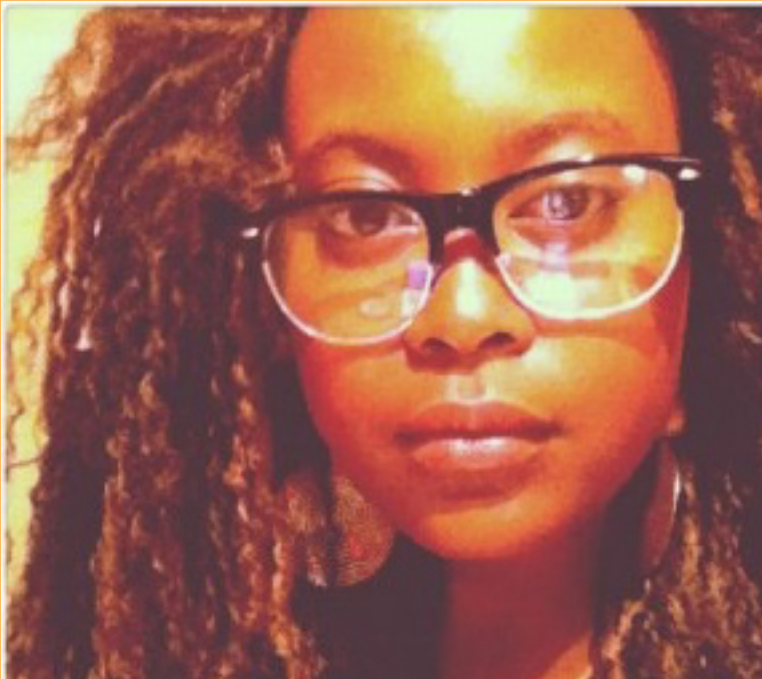
#### **Here is How to Apply:**

Visit [www.yavmagazine.com](http://www.yavmagazine.com) and submit an essay describing in detail your story and what makes you a visionary. All rules and guidelines are on the website and the winners will be announced later this year and get featured in an issue of YAV Magazine. For more information email [yavmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:yavmagazine@gmail.com) to learn about the YAV Scholarship.



# AFRICAN DIGITAL ART

Interview By YAV Staff and Photos Courtesy of ADA Website



Jephumba is a creative facilitator of sorts bridging African creative minds from around the world together through the organization she developed call ADA-African Digital Art. This organization has an online community of African creatives connecting and creating art movements on many continents.

### **Q: What inspired the concept behind ADA (African Digital Art)?**

African Digital Art really grew out of a need to showcase our continent's talent. African Digital Art is an online collective, a creative space, where digital artists, enthusiasts and professionals can seek inspiration, showcase their artistry and connect with emerging artists. We are really proud of the fact that ADA continues to be a platform for innovation and inspiration with a sophisticated blend of fresh talent and successful designers and artists. The African Digital Art Network is dedicated to fostering the growing technology-driven creative community that still remains in its infancy in Africa.

### **Q: Being apart of an African artist community, what can you share are some challenges African artists are facing today?**

Unfortunately, there has been little development in art education in Africa. I would argue that the education system in Africa is designed to create doctors, lawyers and engineers and not too many artists. There are just not enough art programs in Africa. Many professional artists have received their education abroad and many struggle to find sustainable income in Africa, where art is not as valued. At the end of the day it all comes down to sustainability. The art industry in Africa is mainly geared towards foreign consumption. Art is mass produced for tourism and is undervalued within local communities.



**Q: What African artist is inspiring you (music, film, photography, etc..) and why?**

This is a difficult question to answer. What I can say is that I am inspired by everyone who is on our site. I love my job because I get to have a front seat to the incredible talent that is on our continent and also learn more about those who are inspired by it. With that said, there are some area of Africa that I am particular interested in. I am always keen to see film from the Congo, video art from Cameroon, illustration from South Africa and animation from Egypt.

**Q: What are some of your goals for the growth of ADA, where do you see ADA in the next 10 years?**

We have a lot of work to do and our goals and vision might seem ambitious. We would really love to help foster a creative economy in Africa. We want to convince young people that there is a career in the creative industry. We also want to create more spaces (studios/labs/galleries) where young artists can collaborate and create together. We want to inspire more Africans to be inspired by the intersection between technology and creative. We have more exhibitions, workshops, festivals and events in the works so watch this space. <http://africandigitalart.com>

**Q: Lastly, please let us know where we can find your work and learn more about ADA.**

First and foremost our website. <http://africandigitalart.com> and our community of creatives. <http://africandigitalart.com/community> as well as Facebook. <http://facebook.com/africandigitalart.com> , Twitter. <http://twitter.com/afrodigitalart> , and Tumblr. <http://adacreate.tumblr.com>



# HEEL THE WORLD

MORE THAN JUST SHOES

Written By YAV Staff Photo By HTW

**YAV Magazine got to interview the young men behind the company HTW--Heel The World, Fred Deegbe and Jeffrey Manu. These young men and their business partners have figured out a creative way to take fashion and use it for the better good of youth in Africa.**

**Q: What inspired you to pursue these projects both Heel The World (HTW) and LightCreative ?**

**Jeff:** It would have to be the will to start something meaningful. I was working with an advertising agency when Heel The World (HTW) started about two years ago. I later left the advertising agency and started LightCreative at which point Fred and Vijay were busy growing HTW. I immediately started with marketing and branding at HTW while I got my feet wet with LightCreative.

**Fred:** HTW is not a shoe company. It is the manifestation of hard work and effort that comes from young, creative people in Africa. We started with high-end shoes because we believe they would boost the image of Africa, and also give us enough revenue to do what we actually loved to do-help startups. The irony is that we are a startup ourselves, and also that Vijay and I have no background in fashion/design. We didn't see that as an impediment though, but instead as a testimony that you can be more than you studied in school if you work hard, focus, and believe in your dream.

**Q: Can you explain to us the concept behind "HTW"?**







**Jeff:** Heel The World is a footwear brand with a social conscience that works to empower startup companies. We believe you can achieve any dream in your heart as long as you decide to do something about it. We create well designed, high quality leather products such as shoes and the famous HTW Empowerment beads.

**Q:** Why is the HTW project so important for Ghana and do you hope to start the project in other countries?

**Fred:** HTW is important because of the ever increasing start up culture that Africa is experiencing. Our help is much needed in other countries as well so we plan to scale this project at some point.

**Q:** In a perfect world, what would be your dream or wish for HTW to grow in Ghana?

**Fred:** I would hope a lot of people turned around and said HTW inspired/directly helped us start our businesses and follow our dreams. It has been reported that 70 percent of students, who are done with college or a year on, claim they cannot get a job. If HTW can make people think more entrepreneurially, and assist them along that journey, it will reverse the pattern and have an awesome effect on our economy. It is funny that global studies indicate that 70 percent of Africa will be under 30 by 2020. It is HTW's job to make sure that by the time they are that age, they know they can do anything and more importantly that they know HOW to do/start something.

**Q:** So far what has been your greatest accomplishment with HTW and what are you looking forward to working on in the near future?

**Fred:** It has been the most exhilarating experience interacting with youth(both rich and not so well-off) tell us that we have encouraged them to aim higher, work harder, focus and start something. A young man who was going to apply to a university locally to become a doctor because it was a safe job, has now deferred going to college for a year to study for his SATS so he can go to school in Harvard/MIT to study engineering and come and power villages without electricity. He is one of many our journey a worthwhile experience.

LEARN MORE ABOUT HTW

**Heel The World** [www.htwshoes.com](http://www.htwshoes.com)



# BLUNTED REALITY

## Interview with Author Chinedu W. Achebe

Written By YAV Staff Writer Photos Courtesy of Chinedu W. Achebe

***A***uthor Chinedu W. Achebe shares with YAV Magazine his experience as a new author and what inspired him to write his first book *Blunted on Reality*.

**Q: What made you decide to write a book? And can you tell us a little about your book?**

I always wanted to write a book, but I never felt that I had a compelling story to tell. *Blunted on Reality* tells the story of Obi Ifeanyi, a Nigerian American man in his late 20s, dealing with his career choices, family, and deciding between two women, one is his Black American ex-girlfriend from college and the other is his Nigerian American home girl from law school. The story takes place the day after the 2008 presidential election victory of Barack Obama and covers the first year of his presidency.



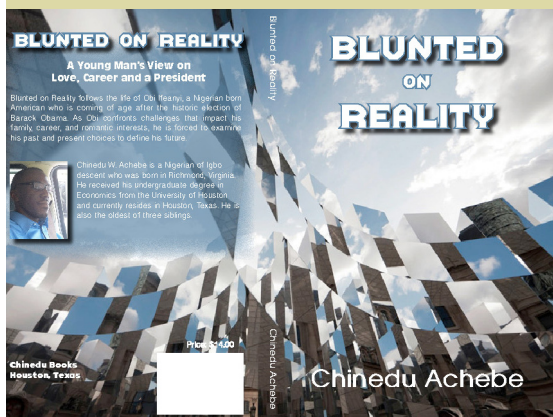
**Q: What writers do you draw inspiration from or are currently reading?**

I have drawn inspiration from various writers like Chinua Achebe and Michael Eric Dyson. I also was inspired by the filmmaker, Spike Lee. His ability to use his movies to discuss social and political issues while still entertaining his audience is something that I tried to emulate in some aspects of my writing. I am currently reading *Malcolm X, A Life of Reinvention* by the late Manning Marable.

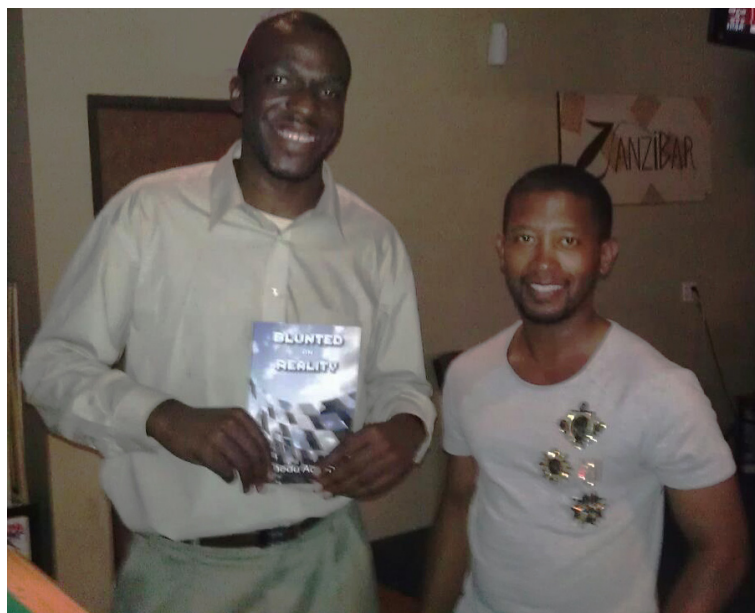
**Q: With your new book, what do you hope to accomplish? What is next for you?**

I felt that with all the excitement that was generated over the historic presidency of Barack Obama, in my opinion there has been a lack of commentary about what Obama meant to first generation Africans in the

***"...I never felt that I had a compelling story to tell".***



U.S. along with their immigrant parents. Also what people thought Obama's plans would be for the continent of Africa. So what I wanted to do was give an African perspective to this period of time. I also wanted to show that at times we have tough choices to make in our professional and personal lives and the answers aren't always black and white. Right now I am still working on promoting my book and getting some exposure. I hope to start writing my second book hopefully in the beginning of 2013. I am also trying to get more information about maybe turning Blunted on Reality into a film. I will let you guys know if goes that route.



**Q: How have you been able to share your book with the public? Are having any book tours or readings coming up?**

I had a small book signing in Houston, Texas in September. I hope to do more of an outreach in 2013 and try and do book signings and events.

**Q: Who inspired the characters in your book?**

The characters were based off of different friends and family, along with some women that I have dated and came across over the course of my life.

**Q: Where can we purchase your book?**

The book is available on amazon.com and amazon.co.uk in both paperback and kindle.

# YAV CONTRIBUTORS

## YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES--REAL PROFILES

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Learn a bit about our team and the young Africans that contribute to helping build YAV Magazine's mission. Get a personal look at Mazuba Kapambwe, Bwette Daniel, and Clarah Manuhwa.

**M**y name is Mazuba Kapambwe and I am from Lusaka, Zambia. I was born in Washington DC, and raised in Germany, Zambia, Ethiopia and New York. I recently graduated with a degree in Africana Studies. In the past, I interned for magazine Pop Africana, women's wear line Mimi Plange, Selfless Tee and African inspired E-commerce store Heritage 1960.

I worked for Jamati.com where I interviewed celebrities like Nollywood actor Van Vicker, Korto Momolu of Project Runway, Nigerian Project Fame winner Iyanya and the former face of Dark and Lovely Nonhle Thema. I currently work for Australian based Radio station Radio Afro as the New York correspondent and in that role, I tell listeners about African events around the world and facilitate interviews with African artists like Black Coffee, Just A Band, Iyadede, Alec Lomami and more.

I have written for many sites and magazines including Applause Africa, Mimi, Afripop and Young African Visionaries. I have so many dreams, but now that I am moving back to my country indefinitely, I would like to open Zambia's first fashion school one day, and to open a Museum of African Fashion and Textiles. I would love to have my own television show or be a VJ at MTVBase or Vuzu TV in South Africa. One day, I would like to set up my own public relations/ social media consultancy firm. I am currently working on my goals now which are to write my first novel. Another goal is to produce a documentary about Zambian soccer and to launch a foundation in memory of my cousin.





**B**wette Daniel also known as Gilbert Frank Daniels, is a community youth activist and team leader at the Bavubuka Foundation. He is also a founding member of the dance community Jericho Breakers, an ICT (Information and Communications Technology) consultant for Early Life Radio and Heart In Action, the Ugandan Correspondent, and Senior Photographer for Youth Journalism International and YAV Magazine. Bwette Daniel is also a freelance Photographer and Journalist for Masaani Art - Uganda. In 2008 Gilbert joined the Bavubuka Foundation and began to develop his passions with the goal of applying them in his community to create positive change and a platform for the voice of the youth to be heard. His commitment to his community earned him a place as a finalist in Uganda's 2010 Young Achiever Awards.



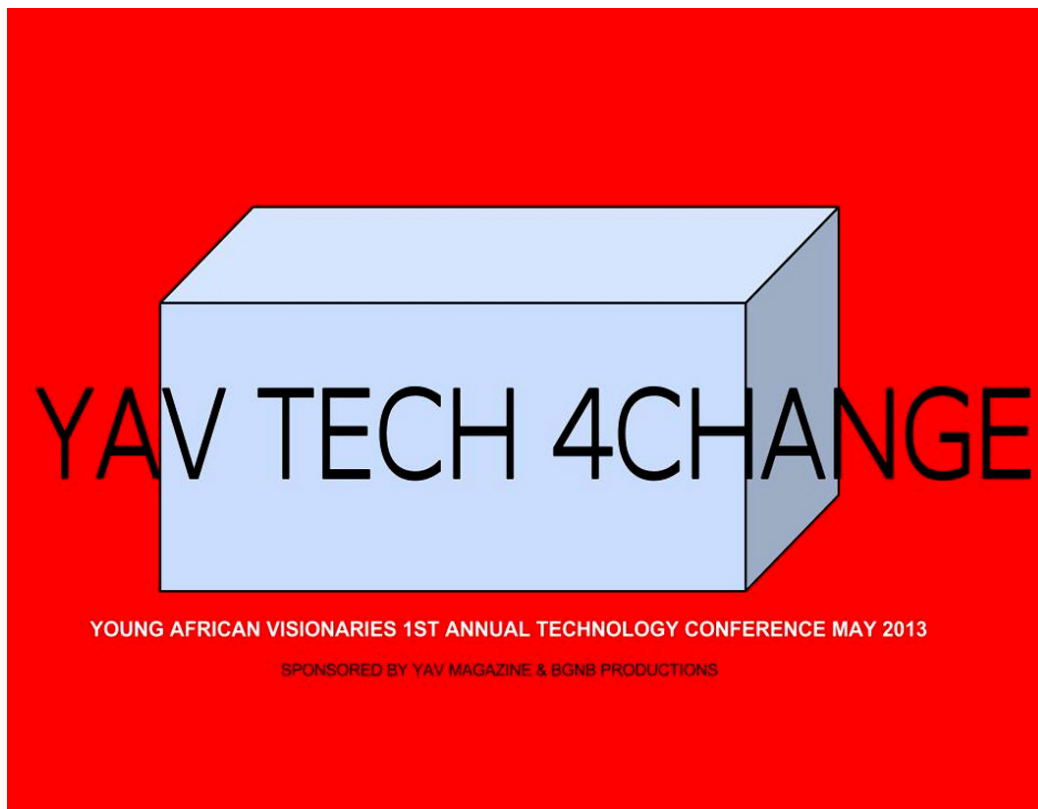
In addition to his extensive professional freelance work, Daniel is dedicated to ensuring that the skills he has learned are passed onto the next generation and that the opportunities he is given are also offered to his community whenever possible. He is active in high schools across Uganda leading workshops and sharing his journey as an inspiration for youth to gain confidence through journalism, art, photography and technology. He encourages each student he reaches to celebrate their culture and use their passions to create a voice for themselves and their communities. As a community focused photographer Gilbert has had exhibitions internationally at MoCADA (Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts) New York in 2011, locally at Uganda National Cultural Theatre during the Bayimba Cultural Festival 2011, Collaborative Exhibitions with local and international photographers in Bozar European Union / African Union exhibition 2012, LagosPhoto exhibition 2012, and the upcoming Stadsgalerji Breda 2012/2013. Through his work as a Bavubuka Foundation team leader for CHANGE IS VISIBLE Gilbert participates as both a community leader and as a member on the ICT team. This collaborative youth project is dedicated to providing a virtual conference platform for passionate youth leaders of Africa to share ideas and build visions for the future of their Continent. 2012 promises to be Gilbert's most exciting year yet as he leads the launch of Bavubuka Dynasty's UG Hip-Hop Archivist Movement. This indigenous movement, inspired by the original Luga Flow Movement, is a collective of Hip-hop creative writers, researchers, journalists and photographers who are committed to archiving and preserving Uganda's golden hip hop history, celebrating the past, present and future. As a founding member of the collective Gilbert will be leading the most creative and intelligent minds of Uganda's youth as they develop the vision of the archiving indigenous hip hop history in Uganda. "Our voice shall be heard today and will be echoed in the future lives of the next generation"



Clarah Manuhwa currently in Ivory Coast, remembers having a vivid memory of her first cries in Zimbabwe her home country, thus she feels regardless of how enlarged her global experience could be, her roots are planted in the continent of Africa.

Clarah Manuhwa writes: “I have hope for Africa every day of my life. I believe that change is not just coming; it is there presently at our doorstep waiting for us to open the door! As a young African lady, I have hopes and dreams just like any other young girl out there, despite that I wake up each morning eager to be in the forefront of African development, excited to put Africa in the forefront through whatever business venture I indulge in. Having seen so many negative images of Africa overshadowing the good happening within it, sometimes the heart becomes weary. But no matter what my goal is to be one of the leading change agents for my beloved nation. Others may try to run our race, but the race will only be won when we as Africans put the first leg in with that drive, passion, energy and persistence to solve our own problems. We must take the lead, no one else but us united as a continent! ”

# Technology Conference



## **Young African Visionaries 1st Annual Technology Conference (YAV Tech 4 Change)** May 4, 2013 VIRTUAL ONLINE

This conference will focus on the use of technology on the African continent & within international African communities highlighting these three major areas:

**Media/Entertainment  
Business  
Education**

### **We Invite You to Participate:**

We are currently looking to confirm venues, speakers, panelists, sponsors, and volunteers to be apart of the YAV Tech 4Change Technology Conference. If you are interested, please fill out the form below. The conference will focus on the innovation of African youth both on the continent and abroad. The theme of the 1st Annual YAV Tech 4 Change technology conference will be "Elevate Technology-New Horizons" looking at next steps in taking technology to the next level in Africa and African communities worldwide bringing innovative technology use to the forefront of various fields creating educational platforms, dynamic technological advances, and creative interactive platforms. The conference will include a guest speaker panel, interactive demos, workshops, and technology set-ups.

### **For More Information and YAV Tech 4 Change Participation Form**

Send an Email to [yavmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:yavmagazine@gmail.com) by April 15, 2013





  
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# REVISITING YAV PROFILES

## THE YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES PROJECT

### YAV Archives: Emmanuel A. Gamor

#### Where He is From:

Ghana, West Africa

#### What He Does:

The New Ghanaian Editor, Photographer,  
& Host on Sunlight Radio

#### Find His Work:

Website <http://mytngonline.com>

#### Why He is a Visionary:

Emmanuel has always appreciated the power of the pen. *New Ghanaian* newspaper was started in 2001 by Emmanuel's father. So, Gamor grew up with journalism and appreciating the power of the press. After graduating from college he became editor the New Ghanaian newspaper working for his father after his father's business partner stepped down. Once Gamor joined the *New Ghanaian* the newspaper evolve from being just a newspaper into an online business called Media Afrika. The *New Ghanaian* newspaper is now published under Media Afrika and has a new collaboration with Sunlight Radio that was established in 2010.

Gamor wants to document through media (the *New Ghanaian* and Sunlight Radio) a living record of what Ghanaians in the US have been doing as well as back in Ghana. He is glad that the *New Ghanaian* newspaper and Sunlight Radio have given him the opportunity to merge visions that Africans can be world citizens and through media a platform can be made to recognize the work of Ghanaians and other Africans. Gamor wants to continue to collaborate and work with others who are interested in pushing forward his vision. Recently he has started looking



into collaborating with *BFH Magazine* in partnership to display all African events, models, work, and information in a timely manner. Gamor hopes the *New Ghanaian* newspaper can be a business model for the development of a New Nigerian newspaper or New Liberian newspaper and so on. What motivates Emmanuel is his appreciation for the talent of his people and knowing that if given a chance so much can be accomplished. He sets a standard for himself and sees his work as a responsibility that will encourage the youth of Ghana to keep striving for excellence.



# 10 AFRICAN CITIES WHERE AFRICAN YOUTH ARE MAKING MOVES

Movements and Enterprises in Africa Involving Young Africans

## 1 Uganda Kampala

Environmental Activism, Skateboarding, and Hip-Hop

LEAD Africa (<http://orgs.tigweb.org/lead-africa>) offers sustainable development measures for young people and rural women. It targets rural women, unemployed persons living with HIV, school drop outs, communities affected by war and conflict, orphans and child headed households, illiterate immigrant youths and unemployed young people. The Uganda Skateboard Union ([www.ugandaskateboardunion.org](http://www.ugandaskateboardunion.org)) in Kampala city offers alternative activities for youth in Kampala that encourages team work, sportmanship, and community outreach. The Breakdance Project Uganda infuses Hip-hop in breakdancing as a way to promote community and teamwork with youth in Uganda. Visit [www.voiceproject.org](http://www.voiceproject.org) for more information about Breakdance Project Uganda.



## 2 Ghana Accra

Arts Movement and Educational Development

ACCRA [dot] ALT is a cultural network that promotes the alternative work of young Ghanaian artists and emerging creatives across the globe. ACCRA [dot] ALT provides critical space for filmmakers, photographers, musicians, visual artists, designers, writers, academics, activists, and students to exhibit their work in imaginative ways. Every December ACCRA [dot] ALT their signature INDIE FUSE Music Festival featuring new upcoming artists in Ghana. More on ACCRA [dot] ALT can be found here: <http://accradotalttours.wordpress.com/>





### 3 Tanzania Dar Es Salaam

Black Panther and Youth Unite

Pete O'Neal (former Black Panther) join forces with his wife "Mama C" to develop the United African American Community Center UAACC, a non-profit community based NGO, started in 1991 for the purpose of providing programs and projects for the enrichment of the Arusha community, both urban and rural and also to promote closer cultural ties to communities in America and around the world. UAACC is one of several institutions in Arusha who have been granted free internet connection by the Philanthropic Society of Arusha Node Marie. Go to <http://eol.habari.co.tz/> to find out more about this community program. They have several ongoing, daily programs which target the youth in our community including computer classes, art and craft classes, music, history, health and nutrition, sports and yoga as well as English classes. There are HIV/AIDS awareness and outreach programs that encourage expression through the arts such as community theater, song and poetry.



### 4 Senegal Dakar

Hip-hop and Politics

Positive Black Soul (PBS), Daara J, and ALIF are just a few of the Senegalese Hip-Hop artists that helped or were apart of the politically driven youth movement in Senegal to make politicians more accountable for their actions and encouraging Senegalese youth to empower themselves by lending to the democratic process of voting. This underground Hip-Hop movement of sorts was documented in the film "Democracy in Dakar".

## 5 Egypt Cairo

Political Uprising and Unity

Heritage Conservation Think Tank is an Adobe Youth Voices partner organization: Introducing heritage related stuff in an interactive way that makes history learning and heritage preservation. Through which youth brainstorm, and innovative planning youth can find solutions to heritage-related problems.



## 6 South Sudan Khartoum

The Newest African Country and A Homecoming

The people of South Sudan have withstood decades of war and unrest, which unfortunately continue today in places like Abyei, South Kordufan, Blue Nile, Nuba Mountain and Darfur. But there are a group of young South Sudanese activists returning home to make a difference. Awer Bul, Mari Malek, and Ger Duany are just a few who have started projects to build water wells, create art programs, and help heal their communities with love.



## 7 South Africa Johannesburg

The New Face of South Africa



Peace Africa Youth Forums act as a vehicle for the concentration, empowerment and building of self-esteem and self reliance of young people through education and training, self-help initiatives, the promotion of positive indigenous values, and youth advocacy at the national and international level. Umtapo Centre has been conducting a Peace and Anti racism Education Program in communities and in schools since 1997. Peace activity in the community is coordinated by several Peace Africa Youth Centers around that were solely established by young people themselves.

## 8 Ivory Coast Abidjan

Creatives at Work



YCD|Young Creative and Digital | A Cultural Movement is Abidjan's creative outlet. Co-founded by Ismael Coulibaly, John James and Frederic Tape, the Young Creative and Digital |YCD | night was imagined as a platform that provides a regular networking opportunity for young, creative or digital Abidjan-residents. YCD provides the chance for young people in Abidjan to make connections, present ideas and be inspired by their peers.

## 9 Nigeria Lagos

Social Media and Business



SOCIAL MEDIA WEEK LAGOS 2013 was a huge success for the youth of Nigeria. The first time Social Media Week took place in Lagos bringing together thought leaders, creatives, entrepreneurs and everyday citizens from Nigeria and from throughout the continent. Social Media Week Lagos was produced by Dragon Africa and AFRIKA21. Social Media Week is a worldwide event exploring the social, cultural and economic impact of social media. Find out more about it here: <http://socialmediaweek.org/lagos/>

## 10 Kenya Nairobi

Filmmaking Central



The Kibera Film School is a film school in Kenya helping put young Kenyan filmmakers on the map. The first ever film school for the youth in Africa's largest shantytown: Kibera. The film school offers hands-on training and gives opportunities to youth to learn and tell their own stories through film. The Kibera Film school has 65% of graduates employed in the media industry. Learn more here: <http://kiberafilmschool.blogspot.com>



# HEALTH SPOTLIGHT:

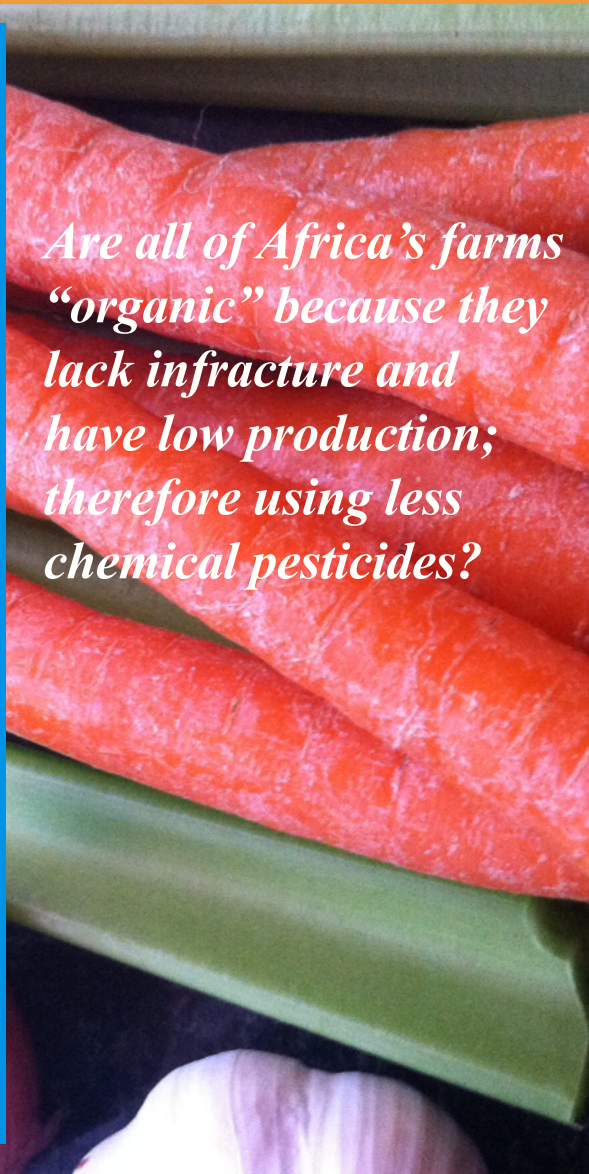
YAV SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

## Going Organic—Africa Chiming In

### African Organic Foods

The market demand for organic foods worldwide is constantly growing . In Africa there are over 4,000 working farmers in just West Africa alone, it makes sense that now more African farmers and agriculture based companies are exporting organically-grown goods to various parts of Europe. But what does this mean for the future of the “African farmer”?

More African farmers are now benefiting from getting the stamp of “organic and fair-trade” through international certification help from the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Looking at new ways to make the process from planting to harvesting and the plate increasingly profitable for African farmers stays a challenge. Many farmers worldwide struggle to afford chemical fertilizers and Africa could in turn be ahead of the game with many African farmers still using natural fertilizers. If the organic agriculture process in Africa can be managed well through farm associations and partnerships with international agriculture organizations, Africa’s organic future could be the key for pushing many African countries into financial freedom not seen in decades. The products that organic that are in high demand found in African crops are cocoa, cane sugar, fruits, and vegetables



*Are all of Africa’s farms “organic” because they lack infracture and have low production; therefore using less chemical pesticides?*

### Check Out These African Organizations and Organic Africa Movements:

**Organic Africa—Great Resource for Farmers with Organic Agriculture Training Manual**  
<http://www.organic-africa.net/>

**Zambia OPPAZ-Organic Producers and Processors Association of Zambia**  
<http://www.oppaz.org.zm/>

**NOGAMU Nation Organic Agriculutal Movement of Uganda**  
<http://www.nogamu.org.ug/>



**YAV**  
YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES MAGAZINE

MARCH/APRIL ISSUE  
**VOL. 1 ISSUE ONE: AFRICAN RENAISSANCE**



**YOUNG AFRICAN FILMMAKERS**  
**KEEPING AFRICA RELEVANT**  
LILIAN BLANKSON

**VISIONARY OF THE MONTH**  
**MARI MATI AND ESPIONAGE**

**YAV**  
YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES MAGAZINE

MAY/JUNE 2012  
**VOL. 1 ISSUE TWO: AFRICA IS THE FUTURE**



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JULY/AUGUST  
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## PAUL SIKA LOOKING IN THE MIRROR

YAV Magazine Interview with Artist Paul Sika Photos by Paul Sika

### Q: What inspired you to explore your creative side?

In February 2003, I arrived in London, England to study software engineering as I wanted to create video games. During the months leading to the new academic year starting in September of the same year, I was studying English. It was within this period that things became clear. Once, I was walking down Tottenham Court Road, a street famous for its computer shops, when in one window I saw the trailer of *The Matrix 2: Reloaded*. Upon seeing it, I was impressed, remained quiet and thought to myself: “if this is the type of imagination required to make great movies, I think I am well equipped”. It revealed and crystallized for me the will to become a film director. Busy with my software engineering studies, I bought a still photo camera in order to experiment the still picture which I conceptualized as the unit of the moving picture. By the time I finished software engineering, the plan of entering a film school was no longer a priority. I had discovered the vastness of photography.

### Q: What do you hope your audience will get from your work?

The MIRROR. I will explain. When I was in high school, there were times we





would be asked to talk about art. And I had my opinion. I thought the greatest art work would be one that can act like a mirror for the soul. Such an art piece would map the good and bad of the inner being in order to offer people a way to review and correct themselves. A young French woman came to Abidjan, Ivory Coast, in December 2012 and came to the exhibition of my latest collection “Lilian’s Appeal” at Cécile Fakhoury Gallery. As with many others throughout the month and a half the exhibition was on, I gave her a guided visit of the collection. She remained mostly silent and I understood it more when she later sent me a message which said: “...thank you for your explanations...your universe touches me a lot; there is a mirror feeling to it. It is as if you had answered very personal questions....” I believe the journey still continues and such a message is a sign of the right direction.

**Q: As an artist, what have been some of the challenges you faced in getting your work out?**

As human beings first, then as artists, there are at the heart of us gemstones that define our core and real identities and personalities. These are all beautiful in their own unique ways because they touch upon the essential patterns and spring from the fabric of life. It is with these gemstones that for example one realizes their sense of beauty. They can also mark your advancements of your understanding of essential things. My greatest challenges to get my work out have been to find my first and main gemstones.

**Q: In Africa, what do you hope will be next in the artistic and creative movement on the continent?**





I hope that more artists will focus on finding their gemstones. That is the only way to truly shine.

**Q: So far what has been your greatest accomplishment and what are you looking forward to working on in the near future?**

As of now, with no doubt, my greatest production is Collection 2 : Lilian's Appeal. Lilian's Appeal is an ensemble of seven photo series and stories I have created. It introduces the mythological World of Paisley through seven stories which develop at different epochs. The seven stories are Marmite Mouso, Mami Momi, Alphabet's Beard, Dandelia, Puneu Puneu, Mister Tout-Mignon and Lilian's Appeal, after which was named the collection and exhibition. During the exhibition of Lilian's Appeal in Abidjan at Cécile Fakhoury gallery, I gave guided tours to visitors. And I would like to share a comment made after a guided visit by Franck Ekra, an art critic and winner of the AICA Incentive Prize for Young Critics: "If I have to compare Paul Sika to someone, it would be to Tolkien." It is in plan to make a book of the world of Paisley which I hope to share with all. But before I need to work on the 2nd Edition of my first book At the Heart of Me.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# RWUL Presents: "I Luv Africa" Film Festival in Ghana

*Come Celebrate Independent African Filmmakers*

## Three Days of Screenings & Discussions

May 17-19 2013 Accra Ghana



This is a special event that will celebrate the work of young African independent filmmakers. RWUL will present this three day film festival in Ghana, West Africa, and screen over ten independent films, host discussions, and more. RWUL has successfully run this event in America for over three years and now wants to bring it to Ghana!

## This Event Will Include:

- Feature Film & Short Film Screenings
- Film Workshops Digital Filmmaking in Africa
- Special Guest Filmmakers & Panel Discussions
- Parties & Musical Guests

## About RWUL

*We Motivate Create Live Love Build Network Start Focus Mentor Serve Communicate...* Reel Worldwide Underground Link RWUL (pronounced r-u-l-e) is a non-profit organization that originated in Richmond, Virginia in March 2007. RWUL has since expanded and hopes to build a foundation that will give a voice to all artists worldwide by supporting positive creative film ventures in the independent film community and by promoting global awareness through the media of film.

**Sponsored By** RWUL, BGNB Productions, and YAV Magazine  
**Contact Info:** Reel Worldwide Underground Link (RWUL) Web: [www.rwul.com](http://www.rwul.com)

**RWUL Presents: "I Luv Africa" Film Festival in Ghana (c) 2013 RWUL/BGNB PRODUCTIONS**



# BEHIND THE LENS OF ALASKALAND

Insight Behind the Film *ALASKALAND*, An Interview with Filmmaker Chinonye Chukwu

Interview By Rebekah Frimpong and Photos Courtesy of Chinonye Chukwu



**G**etting special buzz on the film festival circuit, Chinonye Chukwu's new film *ALASKALAND* shares an unique story. YAV Magazine asks Chukwu a few questions about what inspires her and what she wants her audience to get from her film.

**Q: What inspires you to pursue film?**

Images, music, life experiences, life observations...there is a story everywhere and in everything. Making films is how I tell these stories in a way that uses all of these things that inspire me: my films are composed of these images, sounds, remnants of life experiences and elements of humanity.

**Q: What do you hope your audience will get from your work, in particular "Alaskaland"?**

I hope that audiences will enjoy watching my work, including *AlaskaLand*, and that they have gone on an emotional journey, from the first second of the film to the last second. I hope that my work tells stories from uncommon perspectives audiences haven't really thought about; but after watching my film, they are now inspired to think about this other layer of humanity.

**Q: As a female, do you ever feel like it is harder for you to have your voice heard?**

I don't ever really think about any aspect of my life being harder because of "x, y or z." I'm very aware of the history of struggle that people who look like me have had and continue to have, and I definitely have experienced a level of adversity and discrimination, and I know I'm not impervious to those kinds of experiences happening again; but to be honest, I don't think about that at all. For me, it's debilitating to focus on struggle and limitation. I focus on always moving forward, figuring out ways to make the work, making great work and growing as an artist and thinker. And I've been really fortunate and grateful that I've been able to do that, and I know I will continue to do that as well.



**Q: Who were your role models growing up, both within film and outside of film?**

My parents have been my greatest role models. My mom is my quintessential example of what it means to be a woman, and to be strong, independent and fierce - no matter what. My dad is absolutely fearless and has taught me to always walk with my head held high - no matter what. He taught me that I should always show the same level of love and compassion for every individual, no matter who they are, and that nobody is better than me, no matter what I have or don't have. My parents have taught me to see the humanity in everybody, which has really helped my storytelling. They have instilled in me the value of constant gratitude: any success I have is not solely because of me, but is because of a wide variety of people and experiences throughout my life, so I need to always keep that fact in the forefront of my mind.

**Q: So far what has been your greatest accomplishment and what are you looking forward to working on in the near future?**

You know, my accomplishments I'm most proud of aren't directly related to my filmmaking career. I've had some great successes in my career thus far, but I think one of my greatest accomplishments is the work I do in the classroom. I'm a film professor, which is the single most selfless thing I've ever done in my life, but it's also incredibly fulfilling. I'm proud of the impact I've been able to make on some of my students, in terms of their growth and development as artists and human beings. When I think of accomplishments, that's definitely one of the most invaluable ones I have.









integrating them within their older traditions or by trying to replicate their real experience or circumstance within their communities in their artwork. Now, community art and culture learns from the Ghanaian artists but, it is dependent on who is doing the learning. Though stereotypes still exist, there is an expanding lean towards selling and exhibiting Ghanaian Art. The collector and the public at large are buying the uplifting, bright paintings, sculptures and computerized art. These contemporary art collections bring excitement and profitable rewards, while giving many homes a modern color, touch, and feel. For over a decade now Ghanaian art is beginning to gain the recognition and place it has earned since years past. Thus, Ghanaian contemporary art should not be tossed into some odd sub-category, but be acknowledged instead for its level of class, sophistication, and growing appeal. For these contemporary Ghanaian artworks, and that is what they are, are being made by a group of sophisticated, classy, and smart art community that is beginning to show up in all corners of the Earth.

**Q: Why do you feel art education is important?**

The arts, both performing and visual, are part of our humanity. They are what make us human. Different from the sciences, which are predictable and governed by laws of nature, the arts provide us a variety of ways to express ourselves. We can express our feelings and our opinions through the various arts. Art is important because it encompasses all the developmental domains in community development. Art lends itself to physical development and the enhancement of fine and gross motor skills. For instance, when kids work with play dough, they fine-tune their muscle control in their fingers. All manipulative movements involved in art help develop hand and finger muscles that are needed to properly hold and use a pencil. Art activities also help children's social and emotional development. Children learn about themselves and others through art activities. It really helps them build self-esteem. It's an opportunity for children to make a personal statement about their uniqueness through art while allowing them to express happiness, joy, and pride. The arts can be seen as a reflection of their society, rather than driven by their society. This is a major reason why art education is important. It's an excellent way to understand the time period, by seeing what the artists were expressing. For example, when you look at the 19th century, it's easier to understand the time period when you consider the Romantics' rebellion against Neoclassicism and the Academy. Many times in history, the arts have been used to express ideas that were not acceptable in their society. Few Ghanaian artists across time have used their art to be critical of their world - Kofi Setorji, El Anatsui, Bernard Akoi- Jackson, Tei Huagie and including myself to name just a few. Also, the arts provide us with aesthetic qualities. Imagine how missing our country would be in art if not for the beauty of an El Anatsui bottle cap installation. Taking time to appreciate this beauty is what, makes us human, and that's a very important quality to hang on to, especially in these days of budget cuts and technological innovation.

**Q: What are some of the accomplishments you have made so far with the Attukwei Foundation?**

We currently focus on schools lacking in funds, urban slums and street children to find cathartic means of expressing themselves through art. We work in several schools throughout the year. We have volunteer opportunities which allow us to purchase more art supplies. We run festivals and work with street children not enrolled in school. We've helped over 800 students of all ages tell their story through art. Many of them have said they feel 'less alone'. We've showed them financial empowerment through selling their artwork and run workshops for teachers and students alike. Empowerment and relieving poverty through the arts. We've been an organization for three years. Schools know the name of our organization now and some schools have even requested our programming. When we started working with them, some of the kids didn't even know how to open a marker, which was really sad to me. They have a hard time learning to be creative." The children involved in the project gradually learn tasks as simple as passing paint to one another and creating murals as a team. In Ghanaian schools, emphasis is placed on competition, so

concepts such as working together are foreign to children. Some children even consider it a great offense to make mistakes. But the founders have done an admirable job with over 800 children thus far. The project has taught Ghanaian children important virtues such as financial empowerment (by selling their artwork) and using one's imagination and creativity. Most importantly, the program teaches children how to play an active role in their society, and how to focus on bettering their world. The local schoolteachers have nothing but praise for the foundation, especially in areas that lack the funding for special programs. We have major plans for the foundation, which is now offering a musical theater program and has expressed a desire to turn it into a proper school, hopefully reaching out to victims of HIV/AIDS and abuse, and special needs children before the school year ends. As it stands, the project has already run festivals and reached out to street children not enrolled in school. This NGO is not about creating change in the world, it is about providing a way for children to experience the cathartic nature of art. Balancing my desire to create social change and study and practice real anthropology has been a battle, because anthropology does not include sustainable change, or any change. It is about observing and writing, not changing. They don't want ethnocentric Western ideologies imposed on indigenous communities.



**Q: What inspires you to created art?**

Every second across the world, someone leaves a faucet running, takes a long shower, or pours out some unwanted water. Where in Ghana —everyday not everyone has access to running water; the streets are filled with children carrying yellow buckets on their heads on their way to a fountain. All the time in Ghana, more trees lining the streets are cut down so that trucks carrying large loads can pass by. I've known for some time that global warming is an issue, but I did not used to be particularly concerned. In Ghana where I am from, it is not a problem we do much about or even discuss. I learned how global warming is an urgent problem that affects me and my country, and I had to spread the message with my art. It hit me that it was my personal responsibility to fill in the gap in education. I returned to my studio, began to make sculptures out of wood, recycled materials, and the yellow plastic buckets people use in Ghana to collect water from the nearest fountain. I wanted to create art that would represent the anguish and violence that go along with our planet's problems. People do not realize how their own suffering is tied to the environment: to their long trip to fetch water, or their discomfort under the heat when the streets have no trees. Some parts of Africa are among the driest countries on the planet, according to the International Panel on Climate Change, and it faces some of the most detrimental consequences from climate change and water shortages. Yet the government does nothing, so I have taken it upon myself to educate through art. Global warming is not a major concern in Ghana, and it is difficult to win support or an audience. The government does not want to fund my criticism

of its policies. People do not care to listen about how they should use less water or waste less. Children are not educated about global warming in school, and they are not inclined to take action on the issue. The burden falls upon me to make my art accessible and actively seek out engagement. I create multi-dimensional sculptures with a variety of shapes and materials that are appealing to people of all walks of life. My work is appropriate for the high art world, but it also draws in the locals of Ghana who rarely interact with art yet whom the issues affect. No one else in Ghana creates artwork like mine: sculptures that challenge individuals, the government, and society at large on the subject of climate change. My work is so radical for my community that it has even damaged some of my family ties. My father, Seth Clottey, is a famous Ghanaian painter who is known for his scenes of women and markets. When I began painting, I followed his style. As I grew older, I realized I wanted to create art that sends a message and will make a difference. My father disapproved of my work on climate change, and the situation became so tense that I had to leave our house and live with my uncle. Not only is the subject of my work a challenge, the form is too. The art world in Ghana is thriving, but it is centered on traditional paintings like those of my father. There is not much of a space for contemporary art, especially not abstract sculptures on climate change. I have had my work displayed in the U.K., but in my own country, the gallery owners do not seem to be interested. I have to make people interested. I do not just display my work at galleries. I go out onto the street corners of slums to talk to the youth who do not receive education on global warming. I engage them with my art and invite them to my studio. It is difficult to instill passion for a subject people have not been taught to care about. The art thus acts as a point of connection that leads to dialogue and then action.

**Q:How can we find your artwork and find out more about the Attukwei Foundation?**

My recent mixed media are consumed with an elegant grandeur in which personal, political, history slave trade economies, threading through stories and myths of political struggle and human rights, the visual displays create an installation of sculptures, found objects, photography, film and a series of on-site live performances that will engage. And religious conduct is presented like fantastic allegories of the African Renaissance. They have all the passion and torment of European influences precursors but are unambiguously of our time. My works can be found in few museums in Europe such as Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (Netherlands) , Casoria Contemporary Art Museum (Napoli- Italy), Nubuke Foundation, and Foundation for Contemporary Art( Accra- Ghana). Attukwei Art Foundation (AAF) is a NGO existing in the Greater Accra region of Ghana as a charity. Using both educational and social approaches, AAF is fostered by the belief that every child should experience art. We currently focus on schools lacking in funds, urban slums and street children to find cathartic means of expressing themselves through art. We aim to expand to HIV/AIDS patients, victims of any kind of abuse, and special needs children before the academic year is over. We've done minimal work with all three groups so far in our one year of being legally recognized and plan on doing much more in the upcoming months. Our main goal, with AAF, is to use artistic methods of teaching to educate children in Ghana about the world we live in today. We wish not only to teach these children about the world itself, but also how to play an active role in society focused on bettering our nation and the rest of the world. Our passion for art has influenced our desire to start a foundation that reaches out to underprivileged children allowing them to experience the wonders of art and what it can do to help them. Our mission is multi-faceted because we aim not only to teach children about the world around them and how they can initiate change in their own communities; we also want to create a safe place for students to express themselves through a variety of mediums. The Attukwei Art Foundation is an NGO based in Ghana, so our work will be based here, but the focus of the art education would not be limited to one region or area. Our essential goal is to help these children develop a sense of the world and ways in which they, as art students, can help: **[www.attukweiartfoundation.org](http://www.attukweiartfoundation.org)** .





# SOULPURPOSE

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# NEW AFRICAN IDENTITY

VISION EXPRESSION FREEDOM UNITY



**Photography By Sandraphotography**

Stylist: House of R' Aoof

Models: Akeem Collins, Ediomu Utuk, Wallace David, Julian Washington

YAV MAGAZINE MAR/APRIL 2013

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# FREEDOM







# EXPRESSION





# VISION

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## VISIONARY OF THE MONTH

# EDIOMI UTUK

Written By YAV Staff and Photography By Sandra Photography



**E**diomi Utuk is an advocate for Sickle Cell Disease. She uses her experience as a model in the fashion industry to connect activism with fashion. Utuk shares with YAV Magazine her story as a young person living with Sickle Cell Disease and her dreams to make things better for others.

**Q: Can you tell us about the Converse 4 a Cure Project? What motivated you to get this project started?**

Converse 4 a Cure is a non-profit organization that I started in 2009. The mission is to raise awareness about Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) via fashion, art and entertainment. Our objective is to use innovative forums to capture the attention of those uninformed and/or misinformed about SCD. As an individual living with SCD, I was surprised by the outstanding number of people who had

never heard of the disease. I feel it is critical to simultaneously, increase healthy dialogue about SCD in a fun and impactful way while raising funds to find a cure. Please note, that I am no longer operating under the name Converse 4 a Cure. To better fit the overall goals and mission of the organization is being renamed.

**Q: What new projects are you working on now?**

I have a number of exciting new upcoming projects! I recently became a volunteer Citizen Schools Instructor where I will be teaching a 10-week Fashion Modeling 101 course to middle school students. The concept behind Citizen Schools is to transform the afternoon, for three hours after traditional school hours, into a time of discovery, exposing them to careers and life altering experiences that will set students on track to success. I will be giving the kids an in-depth experience of what it means to be a model while coaching them to develop their own personal star qualities. I am working on a personal modeling project that is a creative venture pushing me to explore myself both as a model and artist. The content that I am creating is truly exciting and has me shooting in locations internationally like Paris and Johannesburg and closer like NY and LA. I am working with some of the industry's finest like Lindsay Adler (photographer), Lisa Craig Smith (stylist), Chris Saunders (photographer) and Griselle Rosario (MUA) to name a few.

**Q: As a model and activist do you ever find it hard to balance the two?**

Who doesn't? I am not perfect but I am honest with myself. I think the balance comes when you are genuine with yourself and others about how much you can truly handle at one time. I may do a lot but I am thankful for a healthy and strong support system but let's not take for granted that the ability to say NO is a powerful thing!



**Q: Can you share your most valued achievement thus far with us?**

I am thankful for the little things. Like I said, I live with a life-threatening disease where my reality is that I can go from healthy to needing a blood transfusion in a blink of an eye. I know this may seem small and others may take it for granted but I truly value achieving a healthy live regiment that allows me to be a dream liver. So many of my peers have either passed from Sickle Cell Disease or are not able to stay out of the hospital long enough to make their dreams come true...and I dedicate this feature to them!

**Q: If there was one thing you could do that would positively impact the world and you had all the resources necessary to fulfill this quest, what would you do?**

Wow, I would shoot the world with a love gun! You know like how our large nations have created nuclear bombs and weapons of mass destruction in scores? I would just flip the script and create a massive love gun that when shot love, compassion and understanding would pour over the world like an atomic cloud. More love is necessary and that would be a great cure to so much that is very wrong within us and the world.



# Bambadjan's Story

Written By Adjowa Badu Photography Courtesy of the film "PAPA"

**B**ambadjan Bamba wanted to share his story; the story of a young man finding his calling as an actor, the story of an immigrant leaving home to make a new life, and the story of a filmmaker breaking new ground with the short film PAPA.



**Q: Can you tell us a little bit about your background? How did you get started as an actor?**

I'm originally from Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast). I was born in Man and raised in Abidjan the cultural hub of West Africa during the 1990's when Abidjan was ABIDJAN! Ice skating around Christmas in Hotel Ivoire, attraction parks and Attieke Garba on the beach in Grand Bassam every weekend. We moved to the states when I was 10 years old and grew up between New York City and Richmond, Virginia. The first acting experience that I can remember was in 7th grade when Mrs. Marsh my drama teacher in Manchester Middle School gave me a role in the school play Huckleberry Finn. I remember the audience laughing like crazy after every single line I said! I remember feeling a high I never experienced. I guess that was when I caught the acting bug. Mrs. Marsh had the picture of my character blown up and framed in front of her class until she retired eight years later (true story). She's still my number one fan. I continued doing plays in high school and found out that acting could actually be a career. I spoke to my parents about it and to my surprise they were very supportive. I started applying to a couple of acting schools in New York City during my senior year and got accepted to the Conservatory of Film & Dramatic Arts. That's how I got started. My first official acting gig was in 2006. I landed a guest star role on LAW & ORDER playing Tonya Pinkin's son and holding a gun to Michael Imperioli's head. It was a very emotionally charged character and I had to hold my own opposite season vets like Dennis Farina, S. Epatha Merkerson and Jesse Martin. It was such a great achievement for me at that time because for one I was playing an African-American character which meant that I had achieved some success with perfecting my American accent. I haven't stopped working since!



**Q:Do you feel there are enough roles out there for African actors? What would you like to improve in the industry?**

The FACT is they're definitely not enough roles to go around for black or ethnic actors in Hollywood as a whole. If you are an African actor the pickings become even slimmer. Which is why it is imperative for African actors to perfect the American accent if they have any aspirations of having a career Hollywood. Look at people like Boris Kodjoe, Idris Elba and Chiwetel Ejiofor. I encourage everyone who wants to be involved in the creative process in Hollywood to learn how to write, produce and direct. This can be a very daunting task but like Woody Allen says "it's not rocket science". Being an actor is great and some people just book one job and make it to the top but most actors waste a lot of time waiting for the phone to ring or for someone to give them a job. If you are a writer, you can write yourself in a movie and control your own destiny like Matt Damon and Ben Affleck when they wrote GOOD WILL HUNTING and ended up winning an Oscar. If more Africans or African Americans get involved behind the scenes I believe we can revolutionize Hollywood as we know it. It has been one of the most challenging but yet fulfilling and empowering moves that I've made since deciding to go all or nothing with this career of mine.

**Q:With the film PAPA, what do you hope your audience will be able to get from it?**

PAPA is a short film based on my personal experience as a teenager caught between the challenges of assimilating in America and the struggles of coming of age in a home dominated by a stoic and unwavering African father. The father/son relationship I believe is one of the greatest challenges especially for Black men in this generation. PAPA is dedicated to my father because it marks the event that changed the relationship between us. We went from general/soldier to father/son and less than five years later he passed away. I hope this film inspires people to restore relationships with their fathers/parents/love ones before it's too late so they can experience the healing, liberation and wholeness that come with it....I hope I'm not getting too deep. PAPA was a perfect example of creating my own opportunities. I jumped in the water head first and figured out how to swim. I wrote the script, raised the money, and brought an amazing team together to make my vision of PAPA a reality. I was very fortunate to have an amazing Spirit Award nominated Ivorian actor like Souleymane Sy Savane to play the lead role of PAPA and a 2010 NAACP





image award nominee Matthew Elam to play myself. In addition I would've never been able to get this film done without the support of my family, friends, fans and the African publications, websites, bloggers who have been beyond supportive every step of the way. I just completed the film last year. I'm in the process of submitting it to film festivals all around the world. The trailer is available on the film's website: [www.papathemovie.com](http://www.papathemovie.com).

**Q: What is next for you?**

I'm currently working on finishing the feature script for PAPA. The goal is to use the short film as a tool to secure funding to get the feature film made and distributed. I'm currently working on a film with French director Quentin Dupieux called "REALITY" with a big supporting role opposite John Herber (Napoleon Dynamite). I also just finished working on a project with SNOW WHITE AND THE HUNTSMAN director Rupert Sanders that I can't say anything about now but should be out early next year.

**Q: Can you share your most valued achievement thus far in the film/movie industry with us?**

Apart from being named one of the sexiest African Entertainers by Essence.com last year I mean....(laughs). On a more serious note, two years ago I was working on a blockbuster film called CONTAGION starring Matt Damon, Laurence Fishburne and Gwyneth Paltrow. After a long day on set I was sitting at the bar of the Ritz Carlton Hotel in downtown Chicago having a drink, and Steven Soderbergh walked in and invited me over to his table with a couple other producers. Next thing I know Soderbergh and I were the only two people left in the lounge and it was 4am in the morning. We talked about everything from why he was planning on retiring, films and their impact on society, African politics, future projects, and etc... who would've thought that one day a boy from Man would be working and chatting up with a powerhouse like Steven Soderbergh. Even though my scenes didn't make the final cut I have to say that it's probably one of the most valued moments on this journey and it's only the beginning by God's grace!

**Find out more about the film PAPA:** [www.papathemovie.com](http://www.papathemovie.com)

**Facebook:** <http://on.fb.me/Tpm7gq>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/ivostar>

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm2262926/>



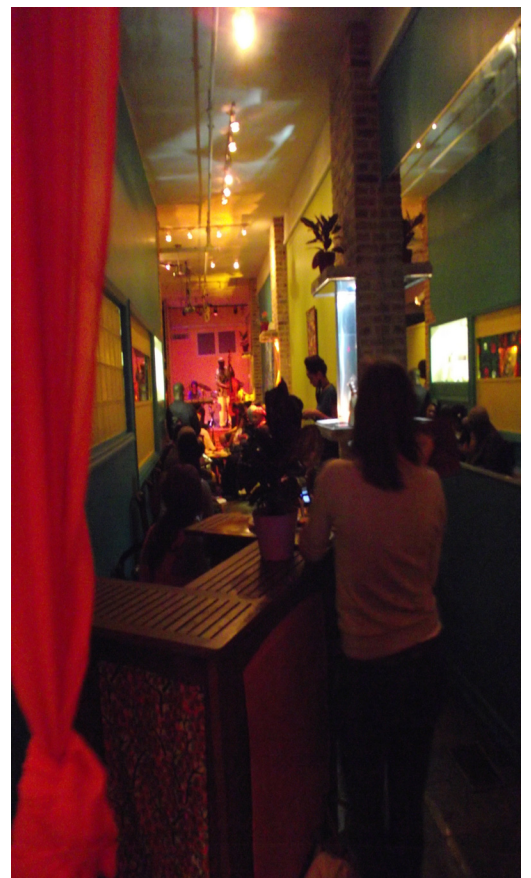
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# YAV MAGAZINE'S MUSIC CORNER

A salute to creative female musicians, this issue YAV Magazine's Music Corner highlights two amazing female musicians representing Africa and innovation. Check out Zaki Ibrahim and Tawiah.

## *THE SOUL MIXER & VOCAL ECLECTIC*

**T**awiah is a soul/R&B singer from South London, England of Ghanain descent who blends soul stylings as diverse as Christmas songs to break-up heart soothing jams. She has been a backup singer for Corinne Bailey Rae, The Guillemots, and Mark Ronson's touring band, The Version Players. Tawiah's soul styling got her the notice of producers such as Mark Ronson, and she later toured as part of his live band internationally. Tawiah self-released her debut EP **In Jody's Bedroom** was released on her own record label, Bush Girl. She received overwhelming attention for her song "Watch Out" in 2007, and also was named the winner of Worldwide Award's Best Newcomer in the following year. In 2011, Tawiah appeared in the BBC's documentary series *Secrets of the Pop Song*, in which she appeared in with songwriter Guy Chambers and Mark Ronson, to sing lyrics for the song "Ghost" which was composed on the show. In 2013, Tawiah is bringing more heart felt soul with her new single **Tear Drop**.



Visit Tawiah Online:  
<http://www.tawiah.co.uk/>

# YAV MAGAZINE'S MUSIC CORNER

## INSTRUMENTAL GENIUS & QUEEN OF DANCE



**Z**aki Ibrahim is magical, her careful vibe makes her dance beats both hypnotic and memorable. This Canadian-born South African singer/songwriter debut album **EVERY OPPOSITE** is on heavy rotation DJ playlists worldwide. She blends diverse sounds and vocal grace with the genius of such producers as Tiago of Tumi and the Volume, Wawesh from Kenya (Just a Band) and Toronto's Alister Johnson. Her past collaborations have included Spook Mathambo, King Britt and Boddhi Satva.

Zaki Ibrahim somehow effortlessly can stretch her vocal chords and fit into many music genres providing her listeners with a full spectrum of musical madness. **EVERY OPPOSITE** is an album with superb alignment of her vocal prose with alluring instrumental arrangement. Zaki Ibrahim sounds impressively seasoned on each track as if she has "been and done it before", and the world she brings her listeners to is not only tinged vibrancy but also a bit of brilliance that has been missing for awhile on the African dance scene. **EVERY OPPOSITE** was composed with a diverse group of producers, from Kenyan producer Wawesh (Just a Band), South London production team LV, and Canada's Ghanaian Rich Kidd (Drake, K-Os, Redman). **EVERY OPPOSITE** was released on June 19, 2012 and produced by Tiago Correia-Paulo and Zaki Ibrahim and recorded at Motif Studios, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Visit Zaki Ibrahim Online: <http://zakiibrahim.co.za/>





The Association of African Journalists and Writers (AAJW), a New York-based organization is a unified platform for African journalists to connect; network; collaborate; and promote better reporting and understanding of Africa and African communities living in North America.

**AAJW is a platform for African journalists and writers is a place :**

- To network, connect professionally and build partnerships
- To share, exchange ideas and collaborate on media or writing projects
- To engage in programming to promote the work of African journalists and African writers
- To engage in informative, educational forums and discussions with the general public to improve understanding of African issues and the African immigrant experiences in North America
- To engage with African-born or children of African immigrant students who are studying journalism or creative writing and are looking for internships, mentorships and guidance
- To form a support network for African media and African writers to interact and engage with like-minded peers who are from Africa or children of African immigrants with a professional focus on African affairs or African issues
- To bring informative, educational, entertaining programs, dialogue that uplifts and engages African media and African writers
- To promote informed and accurate reporting of the African continent and African communities living in North America
- To create a database of African media and African writers who can serve as a resource for the mainstream media on African topics in African immigrant communities or issues happening on the Continent to bring informed, accurate reporting on Africa issues
- To improve understanding of the diversity of the African continent and African immigrant communities

The Association of African Journalists and Writers (AAJW) welcomes Africans and Friends of Africa who are interested in an accurate and informed portrayal of the Africa and African communities living in North America. For questions, please email [AAJWnewyorkcity@gmail.com](mailto:AAJWnewyorkcity@gmail.com).



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# YOUNG AFRICAN VISIONARIES



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## About Young African Visionaries Project & YAV Magazine

YAV Magazine's mission statement is: "Envision Tomorrow Today", meaning dream and make it happen. YAV Magazine strives to achieve a commitment to excellence by sharing authentic stories of real young Africans making a positive change in the world. YAV Magazine is committed to telling these stories without bias or subjective perspectives but rather allowing our readers to observe for themselves stories of success, triumph, and even stories that tackle challenging topics. We present to our audience the choice to have a say in the world they see beyond them and to also commit to excellence along with us. YAV Magazine celebrates the achievements of African youth worldwide. YAV Magazine is apart of the Young African Visionaries Project that is a three part project; a magazine, a documentary film, and an open forum to celebrate the achievements of African youth.