

LÉONARD PONGO

Born in 1988 in Liège, Belgium.

Lives and works in Brussels, Belgium, and, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

EDUCATION

BA in Political & Social Sciences

BA in Visual Arts: Photography

PUBLICATIONS

2023 *The Uncanny* (monograph), published by GOST Books, London, UK

2025 *Apophenia* (part of Non-couché/Uncoated series), published by Maison CFC x ISELP, Brussels, Belgium

Pongo's work has been published in The Wall Street Journal, The Guardian, The Washington Post, National Geographic, The New Yorker, Hart magazine and several other international publications.

FILMS

2024 *Tales from the Source*, 39'

2021 *Primordial Earth: Inhabiting the Landscape*, 8'26"

2013 *The Necessary Evil*, 11'19"

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2026 *Solo show*, FOMU (Fotomuseum), Antwerp, Belgium

2023 *Solo booth at Art Brussels* (with Kristof De Clercq gallery), Brussels, Belgium

2022 *Primordial Earth – Interpretations*, Kristof De Clercq gallery, Ghent, Belgium

Enter 14: Léonard Pongo – Primordial Earth, Mu.ZEE, Ostend, Belgium

2021 *Strangely Familiar*, Foreign Agent, Lausanne, Switzerland

Primordial Earth – The Beginnings, The Agprognostic Temple, Brussels, Belgium

Léonard Pongo: Primordial Earth, Bozar, Brussels, Belgium

2015 *The Uncanny*, Contretype, Brussels, Belgium

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2025 *Living Earth Festival*, Brussels, Belgium

1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair, Somerset House, London, UK (with Project LOOP)

The Armory Show, New York, US (with Retro Africa)

Kunst & Zwalm 2025, Zwalm region, Belgium

Mirages (duo show with Mégane Likin), Maison CFC, Brussels, Belgium

BADAFF I Belgian Art & Design Affair, Ghent, Belgium (with Kristof De Clercq gallery)

Second Nature: Photography in the Age of the Anthropocene, Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University, Stanford, US

Festival du Jeu de Paume 2e édition: Paysages Mouvants (curated by Jeanne Mercier - new commissioned work), Jeu de Paume, Paris, France

25 Arts Seconde: Soluble & Simulacrum, Centre Wallonie Bruxelles, Paris, France

- 2024 *Second Nature: Photography in the Age of the Anthropocene*, The Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University, Durham, US
In communion, La Septième Gallery with 31Project, Paris, France
Encounters - Black Rock Senegal Alumni cycle 3 & cycle 4 (curated by Jareh Das) for the *Dakar Biennial 'Off'*, Blaise Senghor Cultural Center, Dakar, Senegal
MK: 1-54 Art fair (special project group show with Black Rock Senegal), Marrakesh, Morocco
- 2023 *A World in Common: Contemporary African Photography* (curated by Osei Bonsu), Tate Modern, London, UK
Biennial Rencontres Photographiques de Guyane - 'Notre paysage est son propre monument', Saint-Louis, Guyana
11e Biennale De Photographie en Condroz, Marchin, Belgium
Contour Biennial of Moving Images - We Are Rooted But We Flow, Mechelen, Belgium
- 2022 *Horst Festival: The Act of Breathing*, Asiat, Vilvoorde, Belgium
Consume by, Museum Arnhem, Arnhem, the Netherlands
BredaPhoto Festival 2022: Theatre of Dreams, Breda, the Netherlands
Dak'Art 2022 Biennial: (Un)Charted Grounds, Dakar, Senegal
Je suis moi-même le soleil (curated by Liz Gomis), 31 PROJECT, Paris, France
- 2021 *PhotoVogue Festival*, Milan, Italy
My Whole Body Changed Into Something Else, Stevenson gallery, Cape Town & Johannesburg, South Africa
Presence: Five Contemporary African Photographers, The Photographers' Gallery, London, UK
Radically Naive / Naively Radical, Extra City, Antwerp, Belgium
Extractions, A Two Dogs Company, Brussels, Belgium
- 2020 *L'Afrique - Vue par les Photographes*, Patrimoine Culturel Mondial, Völklinger Hütte, Völklingen, Germany
Lagos Photo Festival: Home Museum, Lagos, Nigeria
The Photographic Collective, 1:54 African Art Fair, London, UK
Croyances : faire et défaire l'invisible, Institut des Cultures d'Islam, Paris, France
- 2019 *IncarNations* (curated by Kendell Geers & Sindika Dokolo), Bozar, Brussels, Belgium
6th Lubumbashi Biennale: Future Genealogies, Tales from the Equatorial Line, Lubumbashi, DR Congo
Rencontres de Bamako, Bamako, Mali
The New Jerusalem, VUB, Brussels, Belgium
31 Days of .TIFF - Highlighting Emerging Image Makers, FOMU, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2018 *The 3rd Beijing Photo Biennial*, CAFA Art Museum, Beijing, China
- 2017 *Rencontres d'Arles*, Arles, France
- 2016 *Lagos Photo Festival*, Lagos, Nigeria
Art Basel (with Edition POPCAP), Basel, Switzerland
Nuits de la Photo, Arles, France
- 2015 *Museum of Contemporary Art*, Rome, Italy
Noorderlicht Photo Festival, Groningen, the Netherlands
Delhi Photo Festival, Delhi, India
Fotofestiwal Łódź, Łódź, Poland
Edition POPCAP, Gallery Weekend Berlin, Kasino der Fahrbereitschaft, Berlin, Germany
- 2014 *CAP Prize 2014 winner with 'The Uncanny' in group show*, Basel, Vienna, Addis Ababa, Dublin, Lagos, Cape Town, and Mindelo

FILM SCREENINGS

- 2025 *Afropolitan Festival* (screening *Tales from The Source*), Bozar, Brussels, Belgium
Festival en ville (screening *Tales from The Source*), Brussels, Belgium
- 2024 *DOK Leipzig, Festival for Documentary and Animated Film* / International Competition Documentary Film section (screening *Tales from The Source*), Leipzig, Germany
International Film Premiere for Tales from The Source, Lisbon, Portugal

GRANTS X AWARDS

- 2025 *ArtReview's Future Greats 2025* (selected by Roger Ballen with *The Uncanny*)
- 2024 *Talia Transformation Fund for Documentary Innovation* New York, US
The Eiger African Photobook of the Year Awards (top 4 finalists), Geneva, Switzerland
- 2023 *CAP Prize for Contemporary African Photography*, Basel, Switzerland

- 2022 Leica Oskar Barnack Award 2022 (shortlisted with *Primordial Earth*)
Film Lab, Flemish Community of Belgium, Film Production Grant
Walloon Community of Belgium, Film Production Grant
- 2021 CAP Prize - The Contemporary African Prize (shortlisted)
ICP/GOST First Photo Book Award, London, UK
- 2020 Meitar Award for Excellence in Photography (finalist)
Futur pour la culture, FWB
- 2019 Prix de l'OIF (Rencontres de Bamako) for innovative exhibition design and project
- 2018 Getty Reportage Grant 2018
- 2017 Visura Grant for outstanding Personal Project
NOOR agency
- 2016 PDN's 30 under 30 New and Emerging Photographers to Watch (in selection)
Vocatio Grant
- 2014 CAP Prize, Basel, Switzerland

RESIDENCIES

- 2025 Project LOOP, London, UK
- 2023 Black Rock Senegal (Kehinde Wiley), Dakar, Senegal
- 2019 Le Point du Jour Art Centre, Cherbourg, France
Dokoutine, Bohicon, Benin
- 2016 KAS/Kin ArtStudio, Kinshasa, DR Congo
- 2013 Lubumbashi Art Biennale, Lubumbashi, DR Congo

COLLECTIONS

- KANAL–Centre Pompidou (Belgium)
- The Flemish Community (at FOMU in Belgium)
- Mu.ZEE (Belgium)
- The Chazen Museum of Art (US)
- Sindika Dokolo Foundation (Angola/Portugal)