

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

2025 *Black Earth Rising*, by Ekow Eshun, published by Thames and Hudson, New York, US

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 exhibition*, FOMU (Fotomuseum), Antwerp, Belgium

2025 *Solo exhibition*, Project LOOP, London, UK

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

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

2026 *Insistent Presence: Contemporary African Art from the Chazen Collection*, Palmer Museum of Arts, Pennsylvania, US

2025 *Living Earth Festival*, Brussels, Belgium

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 | 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 *Lusinga* (screening *Tales from The Source*), Upemba National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
- Bozar (screening *Tales from The Source*), organised by Centre Vidéo de Bruxelles – CVB, Brussels, Belgium
- Festival Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin* (screening *Tales from The Source*), Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, Paris, France
- Film Africa Festival* (screening *Tales from The Source*), London, UK
- Art Cinema OFFoff* (screening *Tales from The Source*), Balatkas greenhouse - Plantentuin Meise, Meise, Belgium
- The Screen at Art Brussels* (screening *Tales from The Source*), Brussels, Belgium
- Lumière cinema at FOMU* (screening *Tales from The Source*), Antwerp, Belgium
- Festival en ville* (screening *Tales from The Source*), Brussels, Belgium
- Afropolitan Festival* (screening *Tales from The Source*), Bozar, 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

- Cera Collection (M Leuven), Leuven, Belgium
- KANAL – Centre Pompidou, Brussels, Belgium
- The Flemish Community (FOMU), Antwerp, Belgium
- Mu.ZEE, Ostend, Belgium
- The Chazen Museum of Art, Wisconsin, US
- Sindika Dokolo Foundation (Angola/Portugal)