

LÉONARD PONGO

CURRICULUM VITAE

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BIOGRAPHY

b. 1988 in Liège, Belgium.
Lives and works in Belgium and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

EDUCATION

2009 BA in Political & Social Sciences
2012 BA in Visual Arts: Photography

GRANTS AND 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 Joop Swart Masterclass (World Press Photo)
 Getty Reportage Grant
2017 Visura Grant for outstanding Personal Project
2016 PDN's 30 under 30 New and Emerging Photographers to Watch (in selection)
 Vocatio Grant
2014 CAP Prize, Basel, Switzerland

SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

2026 Solo Exhibition, FOMU (Photo Museum), Antwerp, Belgium
2025 Apophenia, Project LOOP, UK
2023 Art Brussels (Kristof De Clercq Gallery), Brussels, Belgium
Primordial Earth, Sorbonne Artgallery, Paris, France
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 AND PRESENTATIONS

2026 *Mulhouse Biennale Sedimentation(s)* curated by Ange Frédéric Koffi, Mulhouse, France
2025 1-54 London Contemporary African Art Fair, Somerset House - Special installation project and talk alongside Johnny Leya and Elena Ndindi, London, UK
 Living Earth Festival Brussels installation for *Primordial Earth: Inhabiting the Landscape*, Abbaye de la Cambre, Brussels, Belgium
Mirages, duo exhibition with Mégane Likin at Maison CFC, Brussels, Belgium
 The Armory Show NYC, Javits Center (Retro Africa Gallery), NY, USA
 Kunst en Zwalm Festival, Zwalm, 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
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 and 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, French Guiana
 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 - 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 and 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 Fahrerbereitschaft, 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

2023 Cinéma Lumière Mechelen (Avant-Première, CONTOUR Biennale), Belgium

2024 Ishango Encounter, Goma, DRC

Doclisboa (International Premiere), Lisbon, Portugal

DOK Leipzig (German Premiere), Germany

Goldsmiths CCA, London, UK

2025 Festival En Ville!, Brussels, Belgium

Festival du Jeu de Paume (commissioned installation), Paris, France

BOZAR (Afropolitan Festival), Brussels, Belgium

Cinema Lumière at FOMU, Antwerp, Belgium

Academy of Arts, Vilnius, Lithuania

Cinéma Fen, Gabès, Tunisia

Art Brussels "The Screen", Brussels, Belgium

Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Brussels, Belgium

PUBLICATIONS

2025 Apophenia (monograph), published by Maison CFC, Brussels, Belgium

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

Pongo's work has been published in The Wall Street Journal, The Guardian, The Washington Post, National Geographic, The New Yorker, Hart magazine, Fisheye Magazine, Le Monde, Der Spiegel, Volkskrant, Vogue, TSA 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"

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact SMAC Gallery for more information or any other queries.

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