

Institute for Creative Arts Practice Case Studies

This case study first appeared in the
Newcastle University Institute for Creative
Arts Activity Practice Report 2013-2015

Email: creativeartsinstitute@ncl.ac.uk

Telephone: +44 (0) 191 208 6559

Web: www.ncl.ac.uk/nicap

Twitter: @NCLcreativearts



Working at the intersection of art and craft: celebrating the hand-made in Uganda

In Uganda hand-made versions of daily items are common. In the suburbs of Kampala artisans make a living from producing merchandise such as brushes and brooms, cooking utensils, cash boxes and even television aerials. Some of these items are made by recycling surplus material from larger scale production. Others are made from raw material such as sisal and wood brought into the city from the surrounding countryside.

Although such items are often regarded as low value and low esteem, there is also a sense in which their widespread use means that an understanding of the way things are made – and an appreciation of the materials they are made from – embeds itself in society in a way that has been mostly lost in more economically developed countries. Working in the studios of the School of Fine Art in Makerere University and in the suburbs and markets of Kampala, Andrew Burton and Dr Lilian Nabulime used an Institute grant to research the use of local and recycled materials and hand-making processes and to create new sculpture at the intersection of sculpture, craft and artisan practice.

IMAGE: Nantongo Alex with some special 'long haired' sisal brushes she made for the sculpture Banka Y'ekka conceived by Andrew Burton and Lilian Nabulime for the Makerere Gallery, Kampala, Uganda, July 2015. Photo by Andrew Burton.