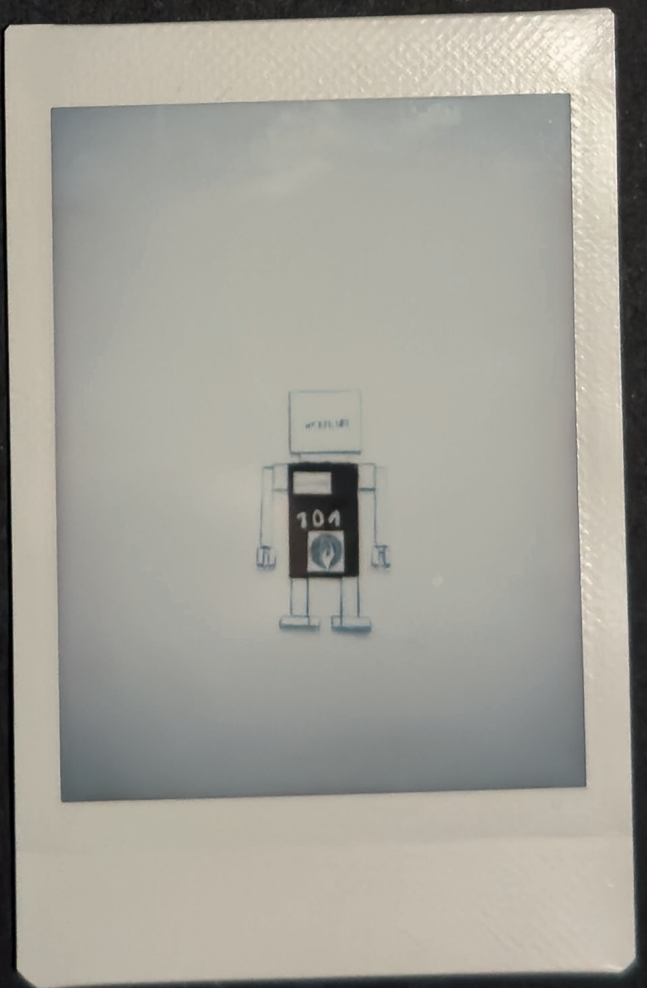
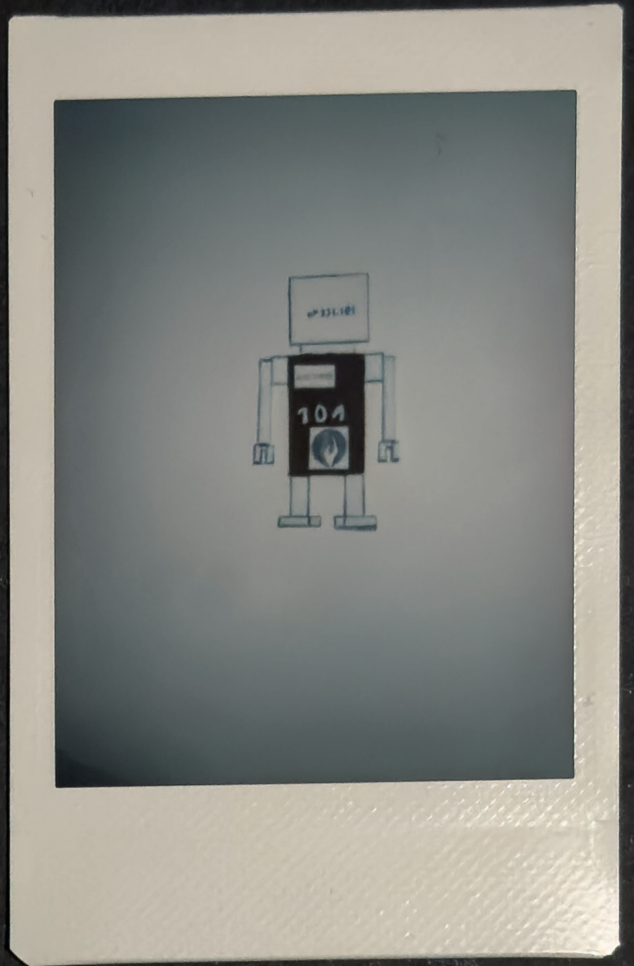


# DAVID SHONGO

From Dead to  
Living Memory

22.03.25 - 18.05.25



Tommy Simoens  
Contemporary Art Gallery

**DAVID SHONGO**  
**FROM DEAD TO LIVING MEMORY**  
 22.03.2025 - 18.05.2025



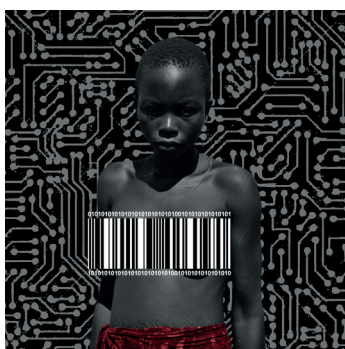
**Café Kuba I, 2025**  
 Digital print on Classic Bariet  
 120 x 80 cm  
 Edition 3+2AP



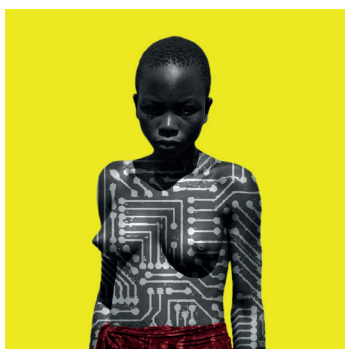
**Café Kuba II, 2025**  
 Digital print on Classic Bariet  
 120 x 80 cm  
 Edition 3+2AP



**Café Kuba III, 2025**  
 Digital print on archival paper  
 120 x 80 cm  
 Edition 3+2AP



**Bugs, 2023**  
*Blackout Poetry, Idea's Genealogy*  
 100 x 100 cm  
 Digital print mounted on Dibond  
 Edition 3/3



**Bugs, 2023**  
*Blackout Poetry, Idea's Genealogy*  
 100 x 100 cm  
 Digital print mounted on Dibond  
 Edition 3/3



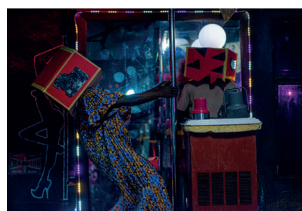
**Untitled, 2025**  
 Car tire and coffee beans  
 75 ø x 40 cm  
 unique



**Café Kuba I, 2025**  
*Essaie d'une contre-fiction*  
 Digital print on Classic Bariet  
 47,5 x 36,5 cm  
 Edition 3+2AP



**Café Kuba II, 2025**  
*Essaie d'une contre-fiction*  
 Digital print on Classic Bariet  
 47,5 x 36,5 cm  
 Edition 3+2AP



**Café Kuba III, 2025**  
*Essaie d'une contre-fiction*  
 Digital print on Classic Bariet  
 47,5 x 36,5 cm  
 Edition 3+2AP



**Café Kuba IV, 2025**  
*Essaie d'une contre-fiction*  
 Digital print on Classic Bariet  
 47,5 x 36,5 cm  
 Edition 3+2AP



**Café Kuba V, 2025**  
*Essaie d'une contre-fiction*  
 Digital print on Classic Bariet  
 47,5 x 36,5 cm  
 Edition 3+2AP



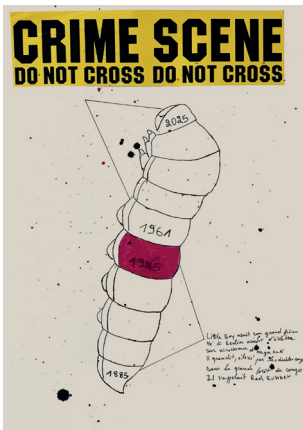
**Café Kuba VI, 2025**  
*Essaie d'une contre-fiction*  
 Digital print on Classic Bariet  
 47,5 x 36,5 cm  
 Edition 3+2AP



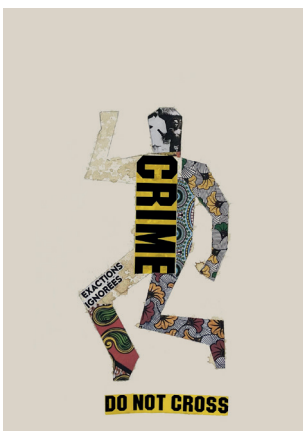
Café Kuba, 2025  
*Processeur d'une memoire*  
 130 x 110 x 60 cm  
 Mixed media



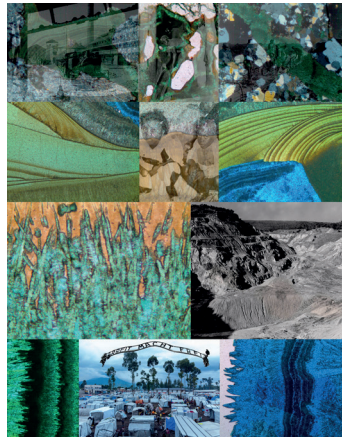
Untitled, 2025  
*Botanique des Morts*  
 34 x 26 x 11 cm  
 Cardboard box, polaroid, plastic tape, pencil, paper



Untitled, 2025  
*Botanique des Morts*  
 30 x 41,5 cm  
 Pencil on paper, plastic tape



Untitled, 2025  
*Botanique des Morts*  
 30 x 41,5 cm  
 Collage



Living Memory, 2025  
 Digital silk screen on HaneMüller canvas  
 150 x 193 cm  
 unique



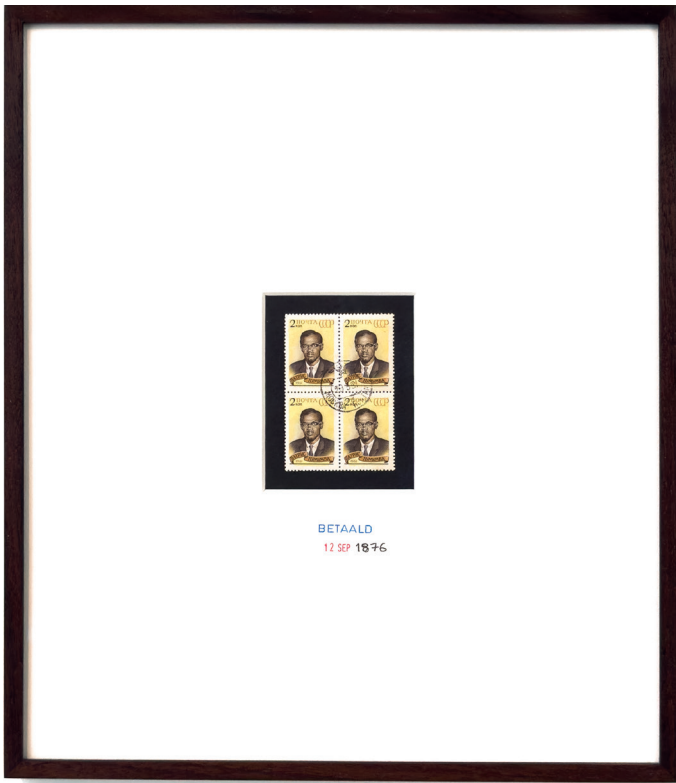
Dead Memory, 2025  
 Digital silk screen on HaneMüller canvas,  
 acrylic paint  
 150 x 193 cm  
 unique



Untitled, 2025  
*Café Kuba - Political light*  
*Mouvement*  
 Set of 10 photographs  
 Digital print on archival paper  
 15 x 10 cm (each)  
 framed



Untitled, 2025  
*Botanique des Morts*  
 20,5 x 27 cm  
 Canson carbon paper



Le Sperme qui a tué le Rêve, 2025

29,5 × 34 cm  
Pencil on paper,  
rubber stamp, pencil  
and post stamp  
unique

supplied uranium to the Manhattan Project during World War II and contributed to the development of nuclear weapons. Shongo's art interrogates the intersection of exploitation, trauma, and the global race for resources, drawing connections between Congo's colonial past and contemporary conflicts over minerals like cobalt, uranium, and coltan.

Through "Dead Memory" and "Living Memory", two large-scale silkscreen paintings featured in the exhibition, Shongo explores the duality of memory. Dead Memory examines the trauma of the past, evoking both personal memories and historical imagery that connects Congo's colonial exploitation to the atrocities of the Holocaust. Living Memory, on the other hand, juxtaposes the idealized imagery of Belgium's atomic age, represented by the Atomium, with the harsh realities of resource extraction in Congo.

Shongo's art calls for a reassessment of historical narratives, highlighting the ongoing exploitation of Congo's wealth and the international powers that have shaped its turbulent history. His work is a poignant reminder of the ongoing cycle of resource-driven conflicts, and the role that memory—both dead and living—plays in shaping the future.

From Dead to Living Memory offers a powerful invitation to reflect on the enduring impact of colonialism, the trauma of the past, and the living memory that continues to shape global conflict today.

#### About David Shongo

David Shongo is a composer, musician and contemporary artist from the Democratic Republic of Congo. His work engages with themes of memory, trauma, and the intersection of history and politics, often exploring the legacy of colonialism and the exploitation of Africa's resources. Shongo's practice spans multiple mediums, including sound, film, digital collage, and visual art, creating immersive experiences that provoke dialogue about historical erasure, collective memory, and the present-day ramifications of past injustices.

Shongo has performed and shown his works at various international institutions and festivals. In 2024 he participated in the 4th Bangkok Art Biennale BAB2024: Nurture Gaia with the project Suskewiet Visions, a collaboration with the Belgian artist Filip Van Dingenen. Suskewiet Visions has been developed as part of the European project S+T+ARTS 'Repairing the Present', and travelled to the 9th Painting Biennale curated by Martin German. Museum Dhondt Dhaenens, MUDAL and Roger Raveelmuseum, Leiestreek Belgium.

In 2023 Shongo participated in the Venice Biennale Musica: Micro-Music, curated by Lucia Ronchetti. In the same year his films were shown at various international festivals, including Ars Electronica, in Austria; KIK Festival Namur, Festival Vues d'Afrique in Montreal and the Afrika Film Festival in Leuven.

In previous years the artworks of Shongo were included in various group exhibitions, including The Whole Life (2022) at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; The Lubumbashi Biennale: ToxiCity (2022); Repairing the Present: REWILD, at Maxxi Museum Rome, curated by Manuel Cirauqui, amongst others.

David Shongo, composer and contemporary artist from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), presents his first solo-exhibition in Belgium, *From Dead to Living Memory*, at the Tommy Simoens Gallery. The exhibition investigates themes of collective memory, trauma, and the ongoing impact of colonialism through immersive art, film, and sound. By blending contemporary geopolitical concerns with historical events, Shongo invites the audience to reflect on how memory—both personal and collective—shapes and continues to affect the present, through the analogy of Dead (ROM) and Living Memory (RAM).

The centerpiece of the exhibition is *Café Kuba*, a cinematic installation combining video and soundscapes. Through the lens of a mobile coffee vendor navigating the streets of Kinshasa, the work offers an intimate research of the complexities facing the Congolese capital—grappling with political instability, urban challenges, and social conflict. The film is set against the backdrop of the turbulent history of the Congo, filmed just before the anticipated assault on Kinshasa following the M23 rebel group's capture of Goma. The work captures the emotional landscape of the city's residents, bringing a fraught national history back to life as they navigate daily conversations amid war and uncertainty. The intersections that form time are stimulated by the very existence of memory, which, consequently, can only be alive.

In addition to *Café Kuba*, the exhibition also features *Botanique des Morts* (Botany of the Dead), a series of new collages based on Shongo's personal experiences through his individual memory and its collective consequences, as well as works from his renowned *Blackout Poetry* series. *Blackout Poetry* reinterprets ethnographic photographs from the 1930s, erasing and recombining elements to create new, politically charged narratives that question colonial histories and deconstruct established power structures.

Shongo's work is informed by the enduring legacy of colonialism, with a particular focus on the exploitation of Congo's resources. *From Dead to Living Memory* reflects on the dark history of the Shinkolobwe mine in Katanga, which