

Margaret Trowell 1904 – 1985

by Margaret Bray
(Granddaughter of Margaret Trowell)



1930

with Elizabeth

- Founded the Art School at Makerere University, Kampala
 - now part of the Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Art
- Artist, art teacher, ethnographer and writer
- Feminist



Rosemary Karuga

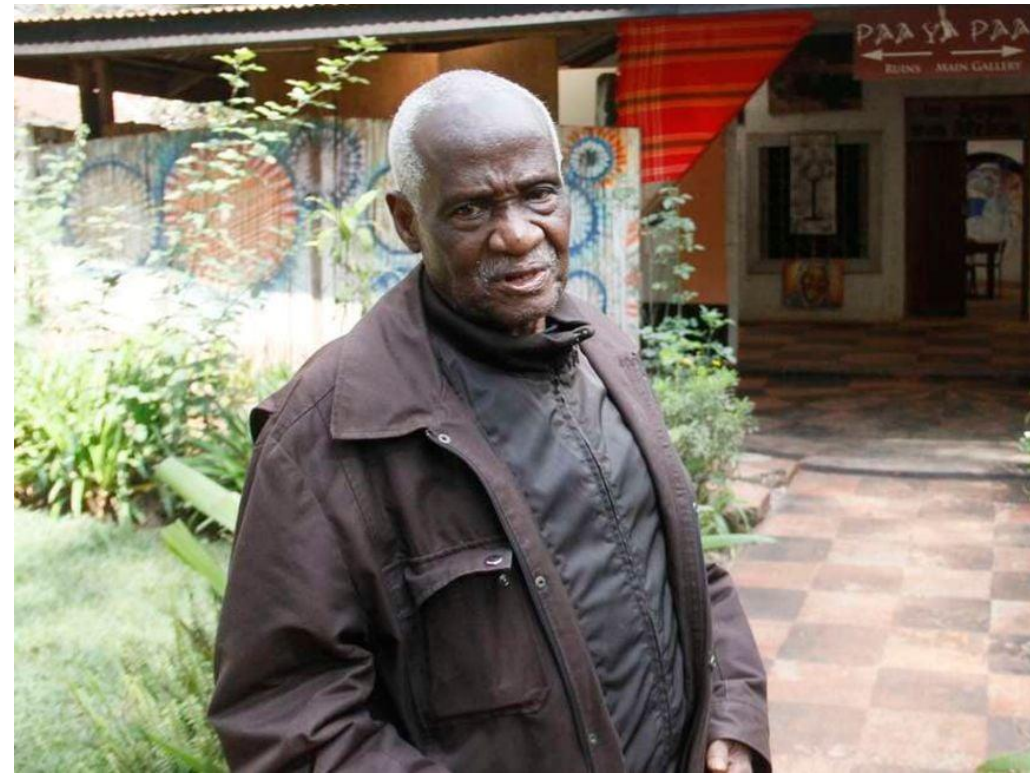


Gregory Maloba





Elimo Njau





Sam Ntiro





Amanda Tumusiime

Re-reading the Warps and Wefts in Trowell's Mother and Child Print: Debates and Contests

*StartJournal Contemporary Art
on the African Continent
April 2017*

<https://startjournal.org/2017/04/re-reading-the-warps-and-wefts-in-trowells-mother-and-child-print-debates-and-contests/>

Margaret Trowell has been called the 'mother of contemporary art in Uganda and a feminist'. This is because in the mid-1930s she introduced the teaching of contemporary art at Makerere University and wrote widely on issues concerning family, women and children.

Professor Amanda Tumusiime,
Dean MTSIFA



Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa

- Margaret Trowell's School of Art.

A Case Study in Colonial Subject Formation

- diaphanes eText lizenziert für einmaligen Gebrauch / 23.02.2015
- <https://another-roadmap.net/articles/0003/3069/eww-margaret-trowell-s-school-of-art.pdf>

Sanyal Sunanda

Imaging Art, making history

PhD Thesis, Emory University, 2000

Margaret Trowell's legacy and a new era

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

Alan Donovan, Murumbi Trust

Nairobi Gallery 2018 Exhibition:

Pioneer Women of the Arts

- <https://africanheritagehouse.info/exhibition-pioneer-women-of-the-arts/>

Podcast: A conversation about the creative world of Kampala, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in the era of independence

- Angelo Kakande, Makerere
- Anna Adima, York
- Elsbeth Court, SOAS
- <http://dartodunoon.com/blog/podcast/art-and-culture-in-east-africa-in-the-1960s/>

Margaret, her parents
Alfred and Alice Sifton,
and brother Will.



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Will was killed in World
War I, Christmas day 1915



Margaret's education

- St Paul's Girls School 1916 – 24
- Slade School of Fine Art 1924 – 6
- Marion Richardson's course at the London University Institute of Education 1926 – 7.
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marion_Richardson

Marriage and Children

- Married Hugh Trowell
(doctor, 1929)
- 4 children,
1930, 1932, 1934, 1940.
- 10 grandchildren



- Leaving England behind

Kenya: settler colony 1929 - 35

- Machakos, 35 miles from Nairobi
- Nairobi, 1 tap in the “Native Civil Hospital”

Not members of the club

- Muthaiga Country Club
- White Mischief – Happy Valley
- Aristocratic, expensive
- Adultery, drugs, alcohol, murder

- Devout Anglican Christians
with a non-conformist background

Not evangelical

Not missionaries



Uganda
Protectorate

1935 – 58

Lweza, Kampala

Influences: Pre – Raphaelites



Ophelia, Millais 1851 -2

- Medievalism
- Women as
 - model
 - muse
 - mistress

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/millais-ophelia-n01506>



William
Morris

Arts and Crafts Movement

The Middle Ages were a period of greatness in the art of the common people. ... The treasures in our museums now are only the common utensils used in households of that age, when hundreds of medieval churches – each one a masterpiece – were built by unsophisticated peasants.



Madonna of Humility,
Fra Angelico,
1433 – 1435

Thyssen-Bornemisza
Museum in Madrid

On loan to National Art
Museum of Catalonia.

Classical African Sculpture



Margaret
Trowell

It is generally accepted today that what may be termed 'classical' African art is great art, worthy of a place among the other great arts of the world.

- Based on 1944 lectures for students at Makerere.
- There were at the time no comprehensive English books on African Art.
- Faber, 1st edition 1954, 3rd edition 1970

It was not until well into the present (20th) century that, on the one hand scientific expeditions began to collect material with careful ethnographic data, and on the other, the art critics and collectors began to realize the aesthetic value of the pieces which found their way into the curio shop or sale-room.

The two approaches were for the most part kept separate.

- African Arts and Crafts and Teaching in African Schools (1937)
- Tribal Crafts of Uganda (1953)
- Classical African Sculpture (1954)
- African Design (1960)
- African Tapestry (1957, memoir)



How Much Does Picasso Owe to African Art?

Lisa Mondiano

The Collector, April 2022

<https://www.thecollector.com/picasso-and-african-art/>

Margaret Trowell

- African Tapestry
 - Memoir
 - Faber, 1957



Makerere Art School

Students at work on textile designs

1937 Classes for Africans on her home veranda

1938 Exhibition in Kampala opened by the
Governor

*“a Kampala Occasion with a printed invitation
card, hats, gloves, stockings and all.”*

1939 London Exhibition,
Imperial Institute, South Kensington

Student work and Tribal Crafts

“I spent the next few months going all round the Protectorate by plane and car getting together a supporting collection of tribal crafts.”

1939 - 49

Classes in the college buildings at Makerere. Later their own rooms. Shows in Kampala.

Encouraging Principal of Makerere

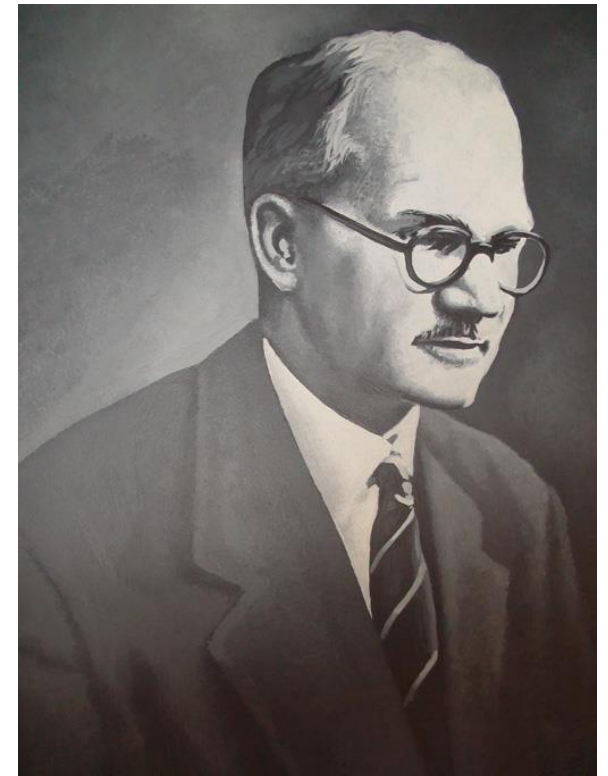
Art became an optional minor, then optional major subject

1949 Exhibition in London.

Dr William Lamont

Principal of Makerere 1947 – 49

negotiations to enter into special
relations with the University of
London



Letter from Margaret to Elizabeth, 7 August 1949

It looked as though the Art School was really and finally sunk as it just wouldn't fit into the new academic Makerere.

I walked Walter Adams up and down the garden and I think I retrieved the situation. Lamont is going very soon indeed.

1954? Diploma in Fine Art (Makerere)



Uganda Museum founded 1908

1939 -45 Margaret honorary curator,

using a classroom block at Makerere

Feminism

The conflict between a woman's personal professional life and her equally important life as a wife and mother is a very real one

Quite rightly many of us feel that we have our own contribution to make in the world as doctors, artists

Patterns of colonial family life.

No marriage until end of 20 years service.

Earlier marriage, children at boarding school in UK.

Where does the woman go?

Earlier marriage, children at boarding school in Africa.

Ayah for small children.