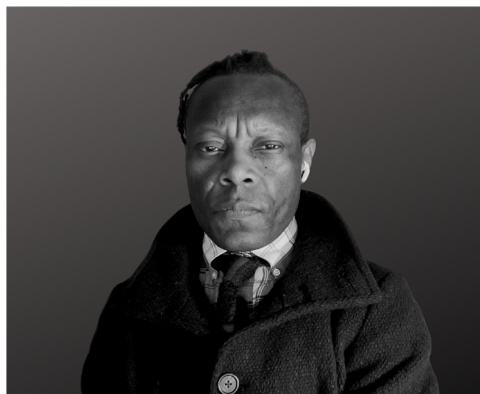


S o i l & W a t e r D i a l o g u e s :
K i g a l i C r o s s i n g
p r e s e n t s



“Community and Memory”

A talk featuring:

Ibrahim Mahama and Olu Oguibe

Moderated by Johan Thom

15:00 - 16:30 (GMT+2): Arrival, art walk & welcoming

16:30 (GMT+2) : Talk

25 August 2026

Nyandungu Eco-Park, Kigali (Rwanda)

To RSVP email peace@nyandunguecopark.rw

The talk will be live-streamed via Instagram
[@nyandunguecopark](https://www.instagram.com/nyandunguecopark)



Soil & Water Dialogues: Kigali Crossing presents

**“Community and Memory”,
a talk featuring Ibrahim Mahama and Olu Oguibe,
moderated by Johan Thom.
16:30 (GMT+2) 25 August 2026**

Soil and water are at the heart of all life on earth, including our evergreen capacity to comprehend, imagine, and embody various forms of community. Historically humans established and built our communities around fertile, natural basins where the ready availability of raw materials such as water, clay, wood, and diverse fauna and flora first ensured our survival. Today, beyond the current scientific certainty that without access to healthy soil and fresh water we cannot survive, the arts serve as a powerful reminder that materials, living organisms, and objects are not simply resources for production and consumption, but constitute the very heart of our communal, creative, and political life. Developed through this sense of the common, the arts function as a different kind of lifeline: it shows us that we are not merely survivors and that life matters a great deal beyond the mere fact of its existence and our daily toil.

This talk at Nyandungu Eco-Park, Kigali (Rwanda), is held in anticipation of the launch of the group exhibition *Soil & Water: Kigali Crossing*, which opens on 29 August 2026 and runs until 31 March 2027.

The talk will feature the voices of two of the most influential contemporary artists today: Olu Oguibe (US, 1964) and Ibrahim Mahama (GHA, 1987). Oguibe and Mahama’s respective practices are deeply rooted in resplendent notions of community, history, and belonging.

Oguibe is an artist, writer, and curator whose artistic and scholarly projects helped pave the way for the full recognition of contemporary African art as a key component in global artistic practice, on its own terms. His large-scale commissions and activist art projects — such as “Monument for Strangers and Refugees” (Kassel, Germany, 2017) and “Sex work is honest work” (2021) — often highlight the plight of neglected communities, helping various social groups and individuals in our fraught society to (re)claim their visibility through poetic, deeply affective ways.

Mahama has become one of the most recognisable contemporary artists in the world today, not only for his artworks and installations — such as the “Malam Doodoo National Theatre” (1992-2016) in Accra, Ghana, and “Out of Bounds” (2015) in Venice, Italy — but also for his ambassadorial role as an artist, where he has championed the expanded role of community in contemporary art. Mahama is the founder of a number of organisations that serve as active examples of what art could be if we take the issue of community seriously, including the Savannah Centre for Contemporary Art (2019) and Red Clay Studio (2020) in Ghana.

The talk will be moderated by Johan Thom, co-curator of *Soil & Water: Kigali Crossing*. An artist and academic in his own right, Thom actively campaigns for not-for-profit artistic initiatives, community engagement, and artistic practices that often exceed the expectations of the commercial art market. Currently Dr. Thom is also Professor and Coordinator of Fine Art at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

The talk is co-hosted by Nyandungu Eco-Park (RW), NIROX Foundation (ZA), and the Gihanga institute of Contemporary Art (RW). It will be live-streamed via Instagram.

Soil & Water is a large-scale, international artistic research project collaboratively developed by Prof. Johan Thom (Pretoria), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Basak Senova (Vienna), and NIROX Foundation, located in the Cradle of Humankind in South Africa. The project launched at NIROX in 2025, with previous iterations held in Kyrenia and Nicosia (Cyprus) and Vienna (Austria), and, in addition to this iteration in Kigali (Rwanda), a forthcoming activation in Paris (France). The project serves as a dynamic, modular platform for in-depth creative and scholarly reflection on the delicate balance between soil and water — two key substances that define and support the continued existence of life on earth. The project is supported by a broad range of partner organisations from the public and private sector, including international arts organisations, governmental agencies and funding programmes and includes the work of over 60 international artists already.

Soil & Water: Kigali Crossing includes works by:

Paula Anta (SP, supported by the Embassy of Spain, Tanzania),
Herrana Addisu (ET/US),
Willem Boshoff (ZA),
Wayne Binitie (UK),
Serge Attukwei Clottey (GHA),
Inma Herrera (ES/FL, supported by the Embassy of Spain, Tanzania),
Benji Liebmann (ZA),
Caroline le Mehauté (FR, supported by Fondation L'Accolade),
Ibrahim Mahama (GHA),
Io Makandal (ZA),
Diego Masera (AR),
Seretse Moletsane (ZA),
Sethembile Msezane (ZA),
Innocent Nkurunziza (RW),
Egle Oddo (IT/FL, supported by the Embassy of Italy, South Africa),
Olu Oguibe (US),
Barbara Putz-Plecko (AT),
Alet Pretorius (ZA),
Eugénie Touzé (FR, supported by Fondation L'Accolade),
and Johan Thom (ZA).

For more information about the project as a whole, previous iterations, and our previous partnerships, visit:
www.soilandwater.net

