

World Class Museum of Art

“There is need for an institution in East Africa region that will showcase the artists’ work. This museum will help transform the world’s perception of this region. Look at West Africa, they have the same quality of art and talent as East Africa, the difference with them is that they have an institution that brings together the artist and the market.”

This was revealed by Dr. Augustus Casley –Hayford, Director of the National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C. during a discussion he had with artists in Kenya at the One Off art Gallery, Rosslyn in Nairobi on Thursday afternoon November 8, 2018.

During the discussions, Dr. Gus explained how a very small number of artists have ascended to the superstar spot in East Africa and he pointed to the difference in the regional infrastructure. He mentioned South Africa and West Africa regions have increased their arts’ visibility by having world class museums.

“Wangechi Mutu is a Kenyan, who was recently awarded for her vibrant art pieces that are shown in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African art in Washington DC during an annual event,” He emphasized that Most of Kenya’s talented artists are showing their art to the rest of the world because there is no recognized platform and process for an artist to display in Kenya and honored for their work.

Dr. Gus suggested more of art fares and exhibitions and picking artists that best tell the region’s tales to display at the world class museum of art.

He applauded Dr. Maria Amelina, World Bank, who conceptualized this noble idea. He urged her to engage with private sector, University of Nairobi and the government to see to it that the museum comes to a reality.

He urged the artists to have ongoing discussions of how their visions can shape this great institution that will not only shine a light on their work but also contribute to creative development and grow the East African region.