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*FASHION, CULTURE & SOCIAL JUSTICE*

**FestivalAFRICANA returns for next installment, with a  
spotlight on creatives from Rwanda**

DATES: **JUNE 25-27** | PRESENTED BY **FASHIONAFRICANA x MOON-LOOK.COM**

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PARIS, France, x PITTSBURGH, Pa. (June 3, 2021) -- Following a debut event last fall that was screened online by viewers from around the world, **FashionAFRICANA** and **MoonLook** have teamed up again to present the second installment of their **FestivalAFRICANA event series**. The goal of this four-part program is to magnify the talents of Black creatives and to give audiences an up-close-and-personal look at African culture through fashion and design.

This time, the spotlight will be on rising creatives from Rwanda's fashion, art and design communities. FestivalAFRICANA is collaborating with **Illume Creative Studio** in Kigali, Rwanda, to expand what people know about the country, beyond the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi.

Programming will run **June 25-27**, with the following highlights:

- From **2:30-4 p.m. EST June 25**, FestivalAFRICANA will commence with a global online celebration connecting creatives and audiences in Paris, Kigali and Pittsburgh.
- An in-person kick-off from **5:30-7:30 p.m. EST June 25** for U.S. audiences in the Grable Visitor Center at The Frick Pittsburgh (7227 Reynolds St., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania). V.I.P. guests will be treated to an installation of fashions and home decor made exclusively for FestivalAFRICANA, a limited-edition gift and

more. Internationally renowned photographer [George Lange](#) also will be on site to bring to life a UNITY photo shoot with attendees. Photo shoot participants will then be encouraged to share on social media how they embrace unity in their respective communities. Plus, enjoy a music set by DJ That Dana Game.

- From **3-4:30 p.m. EST June 26**, tune in online for a documentary film featuring creative portraits that showcase Rwanda through the eyes of its most dynamic creatives, including fashion designers, artists, arts producers and a Grammy-nominated jazz vocalist. More surprises are in store, too. Programming will be rebroadcast online from **2:30-4 p.m. EST June 27**.
- The chance to shop fashions created exclusively for FestivalAFRICANA at [Moon-Look.com](#), which specializes in ethical and sustainable African fashion.

FestivalAFRICANA is spearheaded by **Demeatria Boccella**, global philanthropy professional and founder of Pittsburgh-based FashionAFRICANA, and **Nelly Wandji**, a Paris-based Cameroonian producer, gallerist and branding/retail specialist. For the Rwanda edition, they're partnering with creative director and curator **Anne Mazimhaka** and producer **Joan Mazimhaka**, the co-founders of Illume Creative Studio.

The event series premiered in fall 2020 with an online spotlight on creatives from Ghana -- many of whom have outfitted celebrities such as Beyonce, Tracee Ellis Ross, Zendaya and Angela Bassett and have been featured by major fashion media outlets, including Vogue, Essence, Harper's Bazaar, Nylon and Refinery 29. The celebration shared unapologetic Black joy, along with creatives' stories and design processes.

### **ABOUT FASHIONAFRICANA**

Established in 2001 by Demeatria Boccella, [FashionAFRICANA](#) is a multimedia event series and educational platform that explores Black beauty, culture and history through fashion and art. FashionAFRICANA advances the cultural equity of the African diaspora through the lens of quality programming that illuminates artistic and cultural history. Programming reflects the vitality of the creative human spirit and has brought to Pittsburgh and celebrated the work of renowned global designers and artists.

### **ABOUT MOONLOOK**

[MoonLook](#) is the go-to destination for African curated immersive experiences of creativity. It showcases brands and creatives from the continent and the diasporas with authentic signatures and a DNA celebrating culture and heritage through fashion, beauty and design items. MoonLook's consultancy department provides strategic partnerships to creatives that combine branding, marketing and communication to help them take their ideas from production to retail.

## **ABOUT ILLUME CREATIVE STUDIO**

Illume Creative Studio is a 10-year-old Kigali-based communications agency and creative studio founded with the vision of challenging single narratives of African countries and people. With clients and creative partners throughout Africa, as well as in the U.S., the U.K. and Europe, the boutique agency specializes in designing concepts and developing and marketing content for individuals, organizations and businesses and works with clients to bring their vision to life in a way that is unique, fresh and dynamic.

## **MEET THE PRODUCERS**

### **DEMEATRIA BOCCELLA, FESTIVAL PRODUCER**

Demeatria Boccella, an independent global arts and philanthropy professional, supports creative excellence by pursuing fresh ideas and programmatic innovation. She instigates, commissions, convenes and otherwise seeks to build communities at the intersection of arts conceptualization, funding, management, performance and education. As founder of FashionAFRICANA, Boccella is focused on broadening the standard of beauty and cultivating a more life-giving and globally aware approach to African-inspired fashion and culture. She provides the artistic vision for FashionAFRICANA, which has grown from a regional event to one with national and international reach and appeal. She shared her work as a speaker at the 28th Annual Dynamic Women in Business Conference at Harvard University in 2019. Her most recent work includes the production of “Heroes & Sheroes: The Art and Influence of Ruth E. Carter on Black Cinema” in 2018 at the Heinz History Center and the curation of “Costumes of The Wiz Live” exhibition celebrating the work of Tony Award-winning costume designer Paul Tazewell. Designers, photographers, musicians, filmmakers and many other artists have joined the FashionAFRICANA fold.

### **NELLY WANDJI, FESTIVAL PRODUCER**

Nelly Wandji is a cultural curator and advocate of Africa’s creative industry. She’s the founder and managing director for MoonLook. She also has more than 14 years of management experience in selective distribution for international luxury brands, including Omega, Chopard, Dior and Tiffany & Co. In 2014, she started a new path to further explore her African heritage and uses her professional experience and passion to improve the African narrative. She strives through her work to create a bridge between continents and people and to enable impactful business opportunities in global creative spaces. From 2016 to 2019, her multidisciplinary gallery based in the Paris golden triangle — walking distance from Avenue des Champs Elysées — curated and shared with global collectors a range of collectibles from renowned artists and creatives such as Barthélémy Toguo, Aissa Dione and Imane Ayissi. With her team, she curates nomad exhibitions and produces immersive experiences to celebrate culture, creativity and craftsmanship.

### **ANNE MAZIMHAKA, CREATIVE DIRECTOR AND CURATOR**

Anne Mazimhaka is the co-founder and creative director of Illume Creative Studio. She would like to someday be known as a fierce advocate of social justice who traversed the globe, visited each country in Africa, wrote about it, and then produced the film and its soundtrack. She has a bachelor of arts degree in political science (international relations), a bachelor of laws in comparative law and a master of laws in international human rights law. She has worked for government institutions in Rwanda, in international NGOs and in the United Nations Development Program. Throughout her early career, she became passionate about communications and media, particularly the growing world of digital media and IT. In 2010, she left the UNDP to become a founding partner and creative director of Illume Creative Studio, a collective of “purveyors of awesome” whose mission is to be the change they want to see in Africa and in the world. Her role is managing Illume’s brand and online presence, digital media management and monitoring, and content development and management. She is also responsible for identifying and participating in networking opportunities. She recently curated the Créateurs en Mouvement festival commissioned by the Swedish Institute in Stockholm and held in Paris, France, in April 2019 at the Institut Suédois.

### **ABOUT JOAN MAZIMHAKA, PRODUCER**

Joan Mazimhaka is the co-founder and CEO of Illume Creative Studio. Previously, she worked for 10 years as a consultant advising industry leaders on strategy objectives and initiatives within Rwanda’s Tourism and Investment sectors. In her role as junior consultant at OTF Group, an international economic development consulting firm, and as technical advisor for the Tourism Board within the Rwanda Development Board, her work focused on strategy development, project development, and marketing and branding. She’s also contributed to international magazines and publications, film productions and national development strategies toward the promotion of investment and tourism in Rwanda. Since starting Illume Creative Studio, she has taken the lead in client management, sourcing contracts, and content development and marketing. In her current position as CEO, she is responsible for client relations, business development and overseeing the day-to-day running of the company. An avid traveler, she is an alumni of the Peace Through Business Program through the Institute of the Economic Empowerment of Women, and she holds a bachelor of arts degree in psychology and humanistic studies from McGill University in Montreal, Canada, as well as a master’s degree in tourism studies from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa.