

Mickael Marman  
**Colleagues**

**MM:** Hey ok so the title will be colleagues. It refers to collages, colleges, and colleagues as you, me and Burkhard are. I did most of this work in 2016 while on exchange at K.N.U.S.T in Kumasi Ghana. I was staying at a nearby hotel where many students live, it was called standard.. funny one right? I was mostly doing these drawings of things I was thinking about at the time, some refers to books I read, the absolutely rocking architecture of the school (google tropical brutalism), or just small things in general. I did all the drawings at the hotel, romantic right? The bags are something I noticed very early upon arrival in Ghana, some have fake brands printed or christian/positive slogans *success, grace and glory...* etc

The bags are also faking the textiles I used to work with before (google dutch wax) and also the bags struck me as a ready made painting somehow. I acquired the bags throughout the trip wherever I went and some bags u see 1 of and u never see it again. U see them on roadsters, kiosks, markets etc. and they cost a little bit so there kind of some small time commodity, they add a lot of flavor to the everyday life.

**BB:** Didn't you also mention that this trip was sort of horrible for you?

**MM:** Dunno if that's something I want to go deep into.. I had a horrible time before I left already to be honest

**BB:** How about the colleagues over there at the K.N.U.S.T.?

**MM:** To go to a school with a lot of students after being in Frankfurt at such a small school for a long time was very intimidating too me, also I was constantly dealing with identity issues as many people there seemed to have little or no understanding that I also was half African. I talk to people of mixed African/ Euro about this topic and we seem to agree often that one definitely feels very white when in Africa. People asked me if I was Chinese, just to give you a feel of it. I did quite a few weird self portraits there. Most of the time I spent alone there. The students way of socialising was very often linked up to religion at the night time. Ghana is a super religious country. Im not much about religion. .

I met one extremely cool dude there, A professor with the name kaŕî 'kãchã seid'ou (pronounced caricature). Hes like a legend in Ghanaian art, and was extremely knowledgeable about contemporary art, theory etc. and he liked to socialize at the bar late at night talking about art and so on. Meeting this dude was worth the whole trip alone. Hes real magic. Real character too.

And I was often hanging out with a American girl who was there to study too. She was quite a life saver when things got a bit dark. She was also staying at the hotel and we cooked and so on.

the problem with this socializing or not socializing sometimes is that the idea to become an artist in Ghana and try to live from it, is such a crazy plan, that the students takes it super incredible serious. And read and study like its fucking rocket science.

I often discussed this with the professor and he said it was somehow a difficult topic. There's many sides to that topic u know.

But one understand well ones privilege there, imagine most of the students there have seen no other art in real life than whats made in Ghana. Also economy and the condition the school is in. Especially the art department is quite rough.

**ZS:** Ikr also to the identity confusion thing..Im having it in america hard  
Do any of the students end up doing much with art? whats their actual work like?

**MM:** its not only an art school, its a uni. ibrahim mahatma went there...

**ZS:** Wait lol  
Is this the dude thats in a law suit with simcowitz?

**MM:** yeah...  
Have u seen coming to America ? U should look at it  
Great movie

**ZS:** Lol

**MM:** U know it ?

**ZS:** Lol yes  
That and sister act were my favourite movies as a kid

**MM:** One gets exposed to this movies a lot as half black yes

**ZS:** Im a quarter... V confusing in the american context  
Not sure how it would be in Ghana coz i have a Ghanaian name which counts for something, maybe not at first sight tho

**MM:**I was really asked 'Are U Chinese'  
It's not even a joke

**ZS:** Here its more like, ive been consuming black american culture for so long that i kind of fooled myself into thinking that i had some place in it... but i feel totally alienated i actually dont understand anything about this culture.  
Im sure you can relate to this kind of searching for some place in the world. like maybe you had some hopes for ghana like it might give you some clarity or something...when that's not the case it can be V confronting and destabilizing

**MM:** Confronting is good  
I mean u got the whole life to make art... normally comes from experience  
This career bs  
Fuck it.  
Like Rimbaud died when he was 40...Did all the work from 16-19

**ZS:** Yeh by that logic you and me are toasted lol

**MM:**He died in search of being a mercenary in Africa  
I think he was 25 actually

**ZS:** lol  
Its hard not to feel scared tho  
And insecure at times

**MM:** Yeah, I'm rubbing my own anxiety now too  
It was one of the first thing he told me big daddy k . If it's a frame and It's painting in it . The whole world agrees it's art, good or not it's a different topic...