

# Leisure



## “The Art-Safari exhibition speaks the language of Peace and Unity”

BY GLORIA I. ANYANGO

**COLOURFUL** and full of life, the Art-Safari exhibition is one of a kind in the art scene of Rwanda.

Finished paintings brought the jungle life to the halls of Laico Umubano, Kigali on Thursday December 10 2009.

Art-Safari is a duo exhibition that will run until December 20. On display, are the skills of Rwanda's finest visual artists—Epa Binamungu and Arlette Vandenycken.

The exhibition features 80 paintings on Rwandan wildlife from different habitats found in the country. The

paintings are genuine representation of the co-existence of Rwanda's treasures and beauties; the gorillas of the Virunga Mountains, monkeys from Nyungwe forest, elephants from Akagera National Park, as well as various bird species unique to the country.

Arlette Vandenycken, 42, is a Rwandan citizen, who has been living and working in the country since 2000.

This year, she won the 1st prize in painting for the 'Art for Peace Awards' an initiative of the Institute of National Museums of Rwanda.

"This exhibition is not only about National parks and animals living peacefully; it



*Sandra Idosou (wearing a red necklace), explains to one of the guest the paintings.*

is also a lesson for people to understand that they can co-exist in harmony, peace and unity within their families

and society," Vandenycken said.

The Art-Safari is a product of two different people, with different art backgrounds and styles producing the same theme and message. While Vandenycken's paintings exposed the role of the feminine touch within family bonding, Binamungu's paintings adequately depict a more masculine and apocalyptic vision of society. He paints animals that would never live side by side in the wilderness. In doing so, he pictures a world where divisions are banished.

"We used the lesson of wildlife because we wanted to show people that they can live together in peace, love and unity. This starts in a family before spreading into society," Binamungu said.

The art veteran added that as the country marks the Reconciliation week, the theme of the exhibition is timely and in line with the country's goals of achieving reconciliation.

Guests were thrilled by the combination of talent. Morris Munyana, a young painter, said "I am motivated to pursue my painting talent and I am impressed by the professionalism depicted in this exhibition."

The two painters spent months preparing for the Art-Safari and indeed, the exhibition is not only a journey through Rwanda, but also a step through a unified Rwandan society.

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