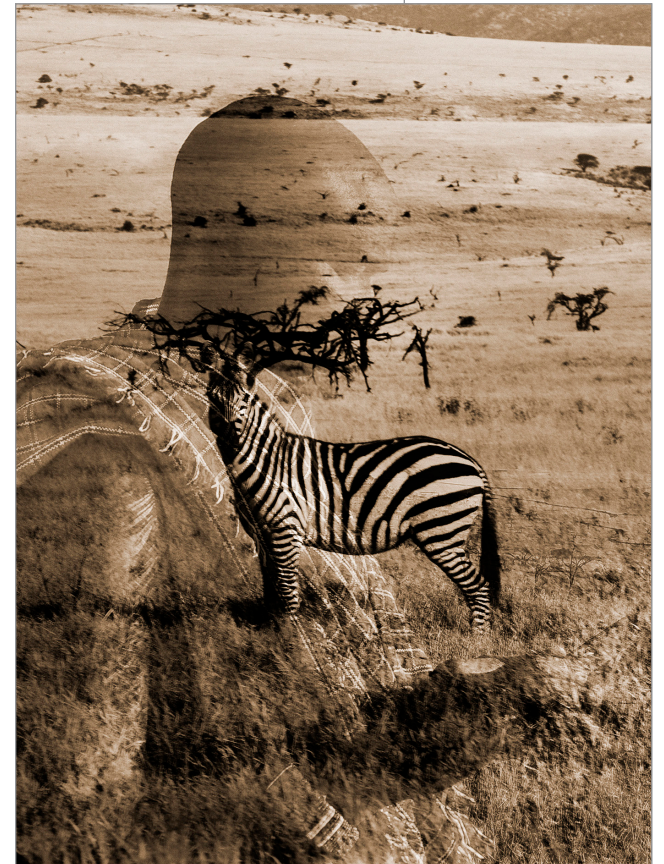


# GALLERY SPACE AT WAGNER



# MATUMAINI

Mauricio A. Rodríguez





## **GALLERY COMMITTEE**

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**T**he Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University is home to the Gallery Space at Wagner. Our mission is to bring artwork into a public-accessible workspace to further engage the NYU community and local audiences in dialogues on contemporary art, culture, and public service. In exploring this intersectionality, we prioritize partnerships that foster social justice, human rights advocacy, and political activism, as well as projects that promote Wagner’s commitment to IDBEA values—inclusion, diversity, belonging, equity, and access.

Since its debut in 2005, the Gallery Space has hosted a variety of dynamic and innovative exhibits featuring both established and emerging artists. Painting, drawing, photography, pottery, collage, textiles, printmaking, digital video, and mixed media are among the multifarious disciplines showcased in the space. Frankie Crescioni-Santoni, Communications & Design Manager, curates the three annual exhibits held at the gallery.

Located on the second floor of the historic Puck Building, the Gallery Space is comprised of two main display areas measuring 10 feet wide by 6 feet tall and 29 feet wide by 6 feet tall, in addition to two auxiliary walls. These spaces are primarily reserved for NYU-affiliated artists with a focus on fostering partnership among the diverse University constituents. Additionally, we host special exhibits by guest artists, curators, and practitioners whose projects align thematically with the School’s academic mission and curricula.

For more information about the Gallery Space, including exhibition schedules, proposal submissions, and viewing hours, please visit us at [wagner.nyu.edu/contact/gallery](http://wagner.nyu.edu/contact/gallery). □



*Arthur, 2022*





*Grevy, 2022*



*Lone Brother, 2022*

With the grim realities of climate change and the rapid loss of biodiversity, there is an enduring hope for preservation—a fervent belief that restoring ecological balance and ensuring the survival of endangered species is, indeed, achievable. Across Africa, a growing coalition of conservationists and local communities are steadfast in their mission to protect the continent’s wildlife and reverse the course of extinction. In partnership, they work to promote education, support legislative reform, and enact lasting solutions. The tireless efforts of these scientists, community leaders, and activists inspired multimedia artist Mauricio A. Rodriguez to create his photographic project *Matumaini*.

*Matumaini* (“hope” in Swahili) documents the wildlife and pastoral scenery of northern Kenya, a place the artist has called a second home over the past ten years. Born in Venezuela and based in New York, Rodriguez’ frequent expeditions to the region’s wild animal sanctuaries exposed him to the horrific worlds of poaching and exotic hunting; however, they also showed him the unwavering conservation work being done to counter those practices and repopulate Africa’s iconic species. In Kenya, he had the opportunity to meet with the leadership at Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and learn about their elephant and rhinoceros repopulation strategies and success rates. Most of the images for *Matumaini* were, in fact, taken on Lewa sanctuary lands. The artist also volunteered at Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary in South Africa, where he immersed himself in caring for newly rescued and in-rehabilitation rhinos. It is through this organization that he learned most directly about the devastating repercussions of the illegal wildlife trade.

Africa, undoubtedly, has had a transformative impact in Rodriguez’ artistic vision and mission. Not only did the splendid scenery provide his lens with an abundance of sights to create his imaginative compositions, but those experiences also guided his studio practice towards more philanthropic aspirations. *Matumaini* is, in essence, Rodriguez’ response to a call to action. In that spirit, the project will continue the



Rodriguez and the Care for Wild team in Baberton, South Africa, with a rhino that had been recently dehorned to avoid making it a target of poaching.

artist’s fundraising efforts with a portion of all proceeds from print sales benefitting Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Care for Wild, and other nonprofits close to his heart. His support of these organizations is a reflection of his commitment to make art a vehicle for wildlife advocacy and social change.

Mauricio A. Rodriguez’ photography seamlessly fuses social consciousness, technical prowess, and aesthetic appeal. Superbly employing multiple exposure—a signature technique he has meticulously developed for over two decades—the artist has created a series of images that poignantly capture the beauty of the Kenyan landscape and its stunning fauna while conveying the urgency of the region’s wildlife and ecological crises. Nevertheless, despite the gravity of these themes, the prevailing mood of *Matumaini* is one of reflection, hope, and aspiration. □

— Frankie Crescioni-Santoni  
Curator, Gallery Space at Wagner







**MAURICIO A. RODRIGUEZ**



Born in Barquisimeto, Venezuela, in 1977, Mauricio A. Rodriguez moved to New York at 17 to pursue a career in physical therapy. After several years in the healthcare industry, he decided to follow his passion for photography and enrolled at Parsons School of Design at The New School, where he received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2010. Upon

graduation, Rodriguez became an assistant for world-renowned photographer Mike Ruiz, and soon after established his own studio, RAM IMAGERY, LLC.

Rodriguez' work can be seen in Ralph Lauren stores and hospitality establishments worldwide, and his images have been published in multiple online and print publications. While his photography has been featured in several group shows across the United States, *Matumaini* is Rodriguez' solo gallery debut. He is currently working on several interior design projects as both photographer and artistic consultant in New York, Kenya, and South Africa.

During the extended periods of time he spent in northern and eastern Africa, Rodriguez visited and volunteered at wildlife sanctuaries, where he developed a keen interest in environmental preservation and animal advocacy. His current artistic practice is in great part devoted to conservation philanthropy.

For more information on Rodriguez' artwork and upcoming projects, please visit [ramimagery.net](http://ramimagery.net) or [@ram\\_imagery\\_nyc](https://www.instagram.com/ram_imagery_nyc) on Instagram. □

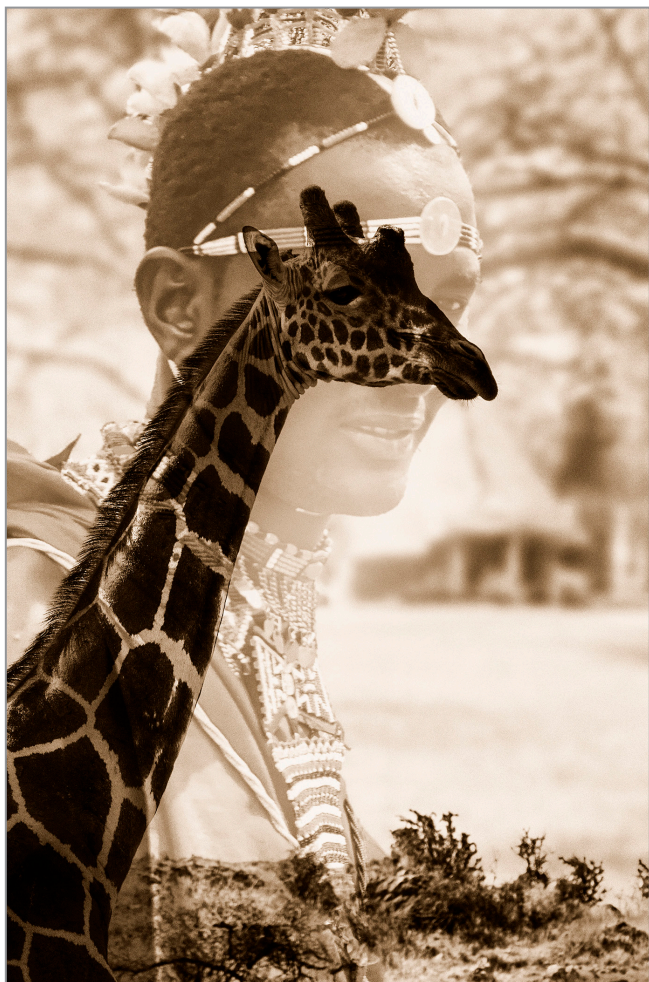
“An elephant's gaze changed my heart,  
and a rhino's cry forever changed my soul.”

—Mauricio A. Rodriguez



*Imado, 2022*





*Peter, 2022*



*Zambia, 2022*



*Matriarch, 2022*



*Godfrey, 2022*



**M**atumaini is only the second in a series of exhibitions following a three-year hiatus at the Gallery Space at Wagner due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In bringing this long-awaited show to fruition, we owe deep gratitude to featured artist Mauricio A. Rodriguez for his patience the dedication to the causes behind the project. The exhibition was also made possible by the generous support of our partners at the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies, as well as the assistance of our co-sponsoring student organizations—the Association of Latinx Students & Allies in Public Service and the Arts & Culture Network. Their individual and collective contributions were paramount to making *Matumaini* a reality. □

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#### CO-PRESENTER

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### Latin American and Caribbean Studies

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Founded in 1966, the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies (CLACS) was the first area studies center at New York University. Today it is considered one of the premier centers of its kind in the United States. Its international reputation derives from the strength of a research-active faculty and a prestigious interdisciplinary MA program. One of the oldest and most successful in the field, CLACS's MA program offers joint degrees with Global Journalism, Museum Studies, Law, and Library Science. Its graduates have gone to work for leading organizations, including the Americas Society, the Washington Office on Latin America, Human Rights Watch, HuffPost, and the UN. The Quechua language program, launched in 2008, provides rigorous language training and has earned media attention from local, national, and international news agencies. CLACS is also home to the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA), whose quarterly report is a long-standing voice in foreign policy analysis. □ [clacs.as.nyu.edu](http://clacs.as.nyu.edu)

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#### CO-SPONSORS



The Association of Latinx & Allies Students in Public Service (ALAS) enhances the educational and social experience at Wagner by creating platforms from which the NYU community can engage and advocate for issues at the intersection of our fields of study and topics relevant to Latinx and their Diasporas around the world. ALAS provides a community-based space for exchanging knowledge, networking, and making cultural connections. □

[wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/engagement/organizations/groups/alas](http://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/engagement/organizations/groups/alas)



The Arts & Culture Network (ACN) promotes discourse on cultural policy and arts management within NYU Wagner, and more broadly, throughout the NYU community and New York City. It fosters professional development and leadership within various cultural industries including, but not limited to, visual and performing arts, fashion and design, digital media, arts-in-education, civic engagement, nonprofit arts management, and arts philanthropy and development. □

[wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/engagement/organizations/groups/acn](http://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/engagement/organizations/groups/acn)



*Sara, 2022*



*Queen, 2022*



## EXHIBITION CATALOG

Page 05: *Arthur* | digital archival print | 39 x 27 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

Page 06: *Grevy* | digital archival print | 33 x 23 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

Page 07: *Lone Brother* | digital archival print | 33 x 23 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

Page 10: *Matumaini* | digital archival print | 27 x 39 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

Page 13: *Imado* | digital archival print | 39 x 27 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

Page 14: *Peter* | digital archival print | 39 x 27 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

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Page 16: *Matriarch* | digital archival print | 23 x 33 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

Page 17: *Godfrey* | digital archival print | 23 x 33 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

Page 20: *Sara* | digital archival print | 23 x 33 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

Page 21: *Queen* | digital archival print | 23 x 33 in | 2022 | limited edition (5/5)

**RAM**  
IMAGERY

All artwork is courtesy of the artist. Dimensions framed.

For information on Mauricio A. Rodriguez' work and sales, please email:

[ramimagery@gmail.com](mailto:ramimagery@gmail.com)



The Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service prepares public service leaders to translate ideas into actions that have an effective and lasting impact on the public good. We ensure that students learn critical analytic skills and frameworks, understand the distinct context in which they are working, and take full advantage of the connections and opportunities within New York City. Ranked eleventh nationally among all schools of public affairs, NYU Wagner has been teaching rigorous methods of management, policy, and planning for over 75 years. We offer Master of Public Administration, Master of Urban Planning, Executive Master of Public Administration, and Doctor of Philosophy degree programs. Learn more at [wagner.nyu.edu](http://wagner.nyu.edu).