

THE CURRENCY LAB – tɛknoumædʒɪkɛs

Elom 20ce, Musquiqui Chihying, Gregor Kasper, Kwamou Eva Feukeu, Dodji Efoui, Onesa Oruoghor, Olumide Adebawale & Kelechi Delight Anyanwu & Ijabiken Moyosoreoluwa & Omoteniola Oyefeso

17 May – 13 July 2025

//ENG

THE CURRENCY LAB - tɛknoumædʒɪkɛs is a long-term artistic research project by the musician, artist and filmmaker Elom 20ce (Togo) and the artists and filmmakers Musquiqui Chihying and Gregor Kasper (Germany).

With the participation of and in dialogue with artists, musicians and scientists from Africa, they examine the utopian potential of currencies and other value systems for an emancipatory future on the planet. The project includes an exhibition with artworks in various media such as film, music and installation as well as a workshop.

Technomagic is a speculative strategy for imagining a future in which blackness, magic, technology and cultural memory are interwoven. Technomagic and Afrofuturism overlap in their interest in reshaping the future by combining ancestral knowledge, cultural identity and speculative technological innovation.

1. Dodji Efoui, *Trio – Sound Panel*, 2025

Three pedestals display objects that the artist Dodji Efoui from Lomé has assembled from electronic waste. Reminiscent of Robert Rauschenberg's Combine Paintings, the works are functioning devices. For example, there is a radio receiver made from an old CD player and other parts. It can be used to find and receive FM

frequencies and thus listen to the radio.

The work confronts us as media archaeologists with technological developments. It also shows how outmoded consumer goods can be used as a resource for new inventions.

In the accompanying video, the artist explains how he made the devices.

2. Onesa Oruoghor, *Connections*, 2024

The three photos are documentations of a performance that the artist made in 2024 at a performance festival with discarded electrical and computer cables. The connection between technology and spirituality is emphasised here by the blurring of the photos.

4. Elom 20ce, Musquiqui Chihying, Gregor Kasper, *The Currency – Sensing 1 Agbogloboshie*, 2023

At the centre of the exhibition, there are the three experimental films from the series ***The Currency, Sensing I (4), II (5), III (7)***. They feature figures equipped with advanced technology such as frequency and contact microphones or geophones. With these devices the figures can receive electromagnetic waves, even frequencies of the spiritual spirit world.

In ***Sensing I (4)***, a performer conducts acoustic field research with these devices in Agbogbloshie, Ghana, at one of the world's largest e-waste recycling centres. This is where the old electrical devices, including those from the USA and Europe, end up. The e-waste is simply incinerated in order to return the metals to industrial cycles. This pollutes the water, air and soil and exposes the people working here to enormous health risks. The site reveals itself as a contact zone of complex global economic, social, power-political and technological processes. A performer examines the e-waste site from a spiritual perspective. Thanks to a feather found on site and a comb, the post-apocalyptic atmosphere is transformed into a hopeful, future-oriented vision for him.

5. Elom 20ce, Musquiqui Chihying, Gregor Kasper, *The Currency* – *Sensing 2 Ladipo*, 2025

Sensing II shows Ladipo, the largest West African market for used car parts, outside the Nigerian capital Lagos. Old cars from all over the world, especially from Europe, are sold here for recycling. We see young men using simple axes to separate the metal parts of the cars. As labour is so cheap and numerous in Lagos, there are no technical solutions for car recycling in sight.

Here, a figure wearing an Egungun mask from the Yoruba culture uses microphones to analyse the used car parts for frequencies and sounds. As a mediator between life and death, the masked figure reflects the spiritual dimension of urban raw material extraction, which goes far beyond profit-orientated economic cycles.

7. Elom 20ce, Musquiqui Chihying, Gregor Kasper, *The Currency* – *Sensing 3 Kailend*, 2025

Sensing III presents the Kailend farm for organic farming in an beautiful mountain landscape in Togo. The farm is a future-oriented social enterprise that goes beyond socialism and capitalism to create a self-organised community.

Here, children wearing banana leaf masks embody ephemeral spiritual beings. With their geo-microphones, they perceive the frequencies of the earth and thus demonstrate respectful interaction. Life on the farm, the children and the greenery make ***Sensing III*** the antithesis of the urban chaos with the consumer waste of the Global North of ***Sensing I*** and ***II***. As a utopian space characterised by technomagical, spiritual thinking, the farm is a model for a different, sustainable future. It can be seen as an embodiment of African Futurism as an African variant of Afrofuturism.

6. Olumide Adebawale, Kelechi Delight Anyanwu, Ijabiken Moyosoreoluwa, Omoteniola Oyefeso, *When Hype Becomes Heartbreak*, 2025

In Nigeria, young people in particular invest in cryptocurrencies to buy dollars.

The four comics were designed by art students from Lagos and are written in Nigerian Pidgin English. They show what the students can buy by investing in cryptocurrency. One comic shows an app that makes it easy to mine Bitcoins. In another comic, an anti-crypto police force is designed, ironically alluding to the fact that the state is officially fighting bitcoins.

These comics can be viewed as NFTs on the blockchain via a QR code and purchased for €50. Each of these NFTs is available in an edition of ten.

8. Elom 20ce, Musquiqui Chihying, Gregor Kasper, *The Currency* – *Agbogbloshie – The Rings (I)*, 2025

The rings on display here are made from those metals (gold, silver or copper) that were recovered from the incineration of e-waste in Agbogbloshie. These rings are worn by many people as protection and as a cultural symbol.

**9. Elom 20ce, Musquiqui Chihying, Gregor Kasper, *The Currency*
– *Agbogbloshie* – *The Rings (II)*, 2025**

This video documents the production of a ring made from scrap metal from Agbogbloshie.

Thereafter, the five workers Olou Haya, Umar Sallssou, Houdou Ahmed, Amlnu Muhammad and Asia Amine talk about the personal meaning their rings have for them. Some see them as protective talismans, for others they have cultural or spiritual significance. Still others see them as aesthetic jewellery.

Their stories give witness to the connection between technology, value systems and spirituality that is created in Agbogbloshie, one of the largest e-waste recycling plants in the world. Here, local traditions and electronic waste merge into new forms of cultural expression.

Exhibition Program

Workshop on Futurology with Kwamou Eva Feukeu and Onesa Orughor

Sat 17 May 2025 | 2 - 5 pm

Fotoecke, Bildhauerhalle

Registration: until 16 May 2025, gruen@ewerk-freiburg.de

Performance Lecture, Jasmine Tutum, Nzam--Time and Spirit

Thur 22 May.2025 | 7 pm

Fotoecke, Bildhauerhalle