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**AMAZWI OPENS ART EXHIBITION JUNE 6 FEATURING RENOWNED
KENYAN HUSBAND & WIFE PAINTERS
CHRISTOPHER OYWECHA & RUTH NYAKUNDI**

African Art Gallery Plans New Shows The First Saturdays of June, July, August

SAUGATUCK, Mich, June 1, 2009 – Amazwi Contemporary Art, one of very few galleries in the U.S. to focus primarily on original paintings and sculpture from various countries in Africa, will open its latest exhibition on June 6 featuring well-collected Kenyan painters – as well as husband and wife – Christopher Oywecha and Ruth Nyakundi..

“We first saw Oywecha’s work in a Nairobi gallery on our first buying trip to Kenya in 2004. It took us awhile to track him down, but it was well worth the wait. It was only then we discovered that he was married to Ruth, one of the few African women painters to have gained an international following,” said gallery director Mike Tischleder. “They are quite a couple. Each has their own distinct style, and both are extremely talented.”

Added Amazwi co-owner Wally Petersen, “In 2007, we were able to visit Chris and Ruth’s home and studio in the outlying suburbs of Nairobi. Getting there was itself an adventure, but when we arrived they had arranged paintings all along the exterior of their home. Even a tree crashing through the roof of their studio weeks earlier had not dampened their enthusiasm for pursuing their craft. When we saw them again in March of this year, their work had only gotten stronger. That is why we’re excited to be devoting our first show of the 2009 summer season to them.”

Amazwi will host afternoon receptions from 3 to 7 p.m. on the first Saturday of June, July and August to coincide with the opening of new exhibitions. On July 4, the show will focus primarily on the work of Ugandan painter Ben Bukenya. The Aug. 1 exhibition will feature work from and about Zanzibar, the exotic spice island off the coast of Tanzania that Tischleder and Petersen also visited in March.

Amazwi is located at 249 Culver Street (at Griffith St.), the gateway to Saugatuck’s historic district. Call 269-857-5551 or visit www.amazwi.com for more information.

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