

### **Kenya Girls School/**

*Lwanda Magere*, Local Legend Mural, 2006

Oil on canvas

173" x 64"

### **Kenya High National Girls School**

Kenya High School, the national girls school, collaboratively produced a mural that depicts the indigenous teachings of the Sodho clan of Kano—a #510 tale about Lwanda Magere, a Luo warrior.

Art teacher: Genevieve K'opiyo

### **'Lwanda Magere' (as written by the Kenya High School students)**

Lwanda means a 'rock' whereas Magere is just a name in the Luo community. Lwanda Magere is said to have been an invincible Luo warrior. His strength made him to be regarded as superhuman. Lwanda Magere came from the Sodho clan of Kano. His home was at Ngeny near the River Chialo which separated it from its rival community, the Lango. The Lang'o are a sub-tribe in Kenya. Lang'o was the Luo name for the Nandi.

Often under cover of the night the Lang'o made cattle raids into the Luo territory but with the help of Lwanda Magere, the Luo always emerged victorious. The Lango made a plan to discover the source of Magere's strength and thus decided to send him a young, beautiful Lang'o girl who was as brown as a ripe "Osaye" fruit (it's a medicinal berry with a milky sap) and he immediately fell in love with her. They got married in spite of the first wife's jealousy and objections claiming that she (the Lango girl) was a spy.

One day, Lwanda Magere fell ill while the first wife was away thus the second wife had to nurse him. Lwanda told her to make incisions on his body so as to apply the medicine but she realized the task was impossible because his body was like a rock. He then told her to cut his shadow. As she was cutting, she realized that blood was trickling from his body though she was cutting the shadow. From this encounter, she realized that Lwanda's strength lied in his shadow. She fled to her hometown and spread the news of her new found discovery to the Lang'o elders.

On this discovery, the Lang'o decided to wage war against them. The war led to the bloodshed of many warriors. In the midst of the war, a Lang'o warrior remembered the advice of Lwanda's second wife and plunged his spear into Lwanda's shadow. He immediately began to turn into a mighty rock which was later called "Kit Mikayi"

It was indeed a sad day in the Luo community, but it was believed that whenever anyone sharpens his sword or spear on this rock before hunting they will never fail to kill or capture their enemy. Long live Lwanda Magere.