



WALLEN MAPONDERA

BOOTH S2

08.09.22

11.09.22

smac

THE
ARMORY
SHOW

WALLEN MAPONDERA

b. 1985, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Lives and works in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Wallen Mapondera was born in 1985 in Harare, Zimbabwe, where he currently lives and works. Mapondera completed his Masters Degree in Fine Art at Rhodes University in Makhanda, South Africa in 2019. He was awarded the National Gallery of Zimbabwe Artist-in-Residence Programme, hosted at the National Gallery School of Visual Arts and Design Studios in Harare in 2007, and the Artist-in-Residence programme at the Vermont Studio Center, Burlington in Vermont, USA in 2012. In 2015 he was the recipient of Zimbabwe's prestigious National Arts Merit Award, presented by the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe.

In 2022, Mapondera represented Zimbabwe at the 59th Venice Biennale in Venice, Italy, with an exhibition curated by Fadzai Muchemwa, as well as presenting a solo exhibition of new work, titled *Without Leaving a Sign* at Galerie Mitterrand in Paris, France; and a solo booth at The Armory Show in New York City, USA. Mapondera presented a solo booth with SMAC Gallery in the Nova Section of Art Basel OVR: Miami Beach in 2020. Further solo exhibitions include: *Chirema Chine Mazano Chinotamba Chakazendama Madziro (Part One)*, the artist's MFA exhibition which opened at Rhodes University in Makhanda, South Africa in 2019; *Chirema Chine Mazano Chinotamba Chakazendama Madziro (Part Two)* at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town in 2020; *Moving Target* at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town, as well as a solo presentation at Atelier Mondial in Basel, Switzerland, both in 2019; *Emergency Exit* at Tyburn

Gallery in London, UK; and *Samusha Weiri Dongo* at SMAC Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa, both in 2018; and *Tsananguro | Clarifications* at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town in 2017.

Notable group exhibitions include: *Black Luminosity*, curated by Gcotyelwa Mashiaqa, at Smac Gallery in Stellenbosch, South Africa (2021); *Materedality* at Iziko South African National Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa; and *Gather* at Smac Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa, both in 2020; *Five Bhoobh: Painting at the End of an Era* at Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCAA) in Cape Town, South Africa (2018); *Familiar Histories: An Unstoppable Force in Contemporary Art Discourse*, curated by Raphael Chikukwa, at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, in Harare, Zimbabwe (2017); *X: Part III* (2017) and *Nothing Personal* (2016) both at SMAC Gallery in Stellenbosch, South Africa; *Between the Sheets* at Gallery East in Fremantle, Australia (2012); *Colour Africa, Zeitgenössische Kunst Aus Simbabwe* at Kulturallmende gUG in Munich, Germany (2011); as well as *African Expressions* at the University of Avignon in Avignon, France in 2010.

Mapondera has taken part in group presentations at Art Basel Hong Kong, with Gallerie Mitterrand, in 2022; The Armory Show in New York City, USA in 2021; Artissima in Turin, Italy; and 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair in London, UK, both in 2019.



Collar; the Concept of Freedom

Wallen Mapondera's interventions into his mediums mark his process in representing human desire to affect social change in the face of crippling hyperinflation, unemployment and poverty in Zimbabwe, his home country. His materials are most often sourced from the remnants of basic-needs commerce; objects that were once used, handled and later discarded. Mapondera's reclamation of these throw-aways through care and meticulous craftsmanship speaks to an acute understanding of human aspirations towards stability and safety during times of uncertainty.

The image of the collar has both positive and negative associations for the artist, but in most cases it conjures up images of authority and subservience, whether on the neck of a priest or the neck of a dog. Through this body of work, Mapondera asks himself the question "Which side of the leash am I on?", and turns the focus toward himself and his own exploration of self-mastery, in order to better understand the social structures playing out around him. This question arises in Mapondera's experiences of Zimbabwean commerce which have been reshaped by colonialism, poverty and hyper-inflation. The term "The Customer Is King" is commonly heard in its various iterations throughout the world, and speaks specifically to the 'murungu', or the 'white person' within the Zimbabwean context - reflecting the mental colonialism still rife within the artist's community.

Mapondera sees his materials as a continuation of what came before, and his method of mending, reshaping and nurturing acts as a survival tactic: a symbolic gesture of the gradual rebuilding taking place in

his country and in his personal life, as well as a reflection on his own relationship to labour and commerce as a means to survival, highlighting the value in the correlation between time, labour and resources.

Process is elemental to Mapondera's practice. The reaped floor dust of works such as *Simba Mukaka Unosinina* reflects his movement and actions inside of his studio, since it is stripped directly from his studio floor, like a print. The artist sees this dust as his studio's sweat. His studio is his partner, labouring alongside him, and Mapondera understands labour. It is the labour of his mother, a cross-border trader, which inspired his use of woven polythene sacks, synonymous in Southern Africa with back-breaking bulk. His mother's labour was a collar - an action brought about not by choice but by necessity to feed, clothe and look after those under her care. The arduous nature of this labour is also reflected in the palm tree seeds used in *Madhoiri*, which take a minimum of 100 days to germinate and have a germination rate of only 20%. Just as the palm tree seeds require a huge amount of effort to reap little reward, his mother's constant strenuous labour saw little recompense.

In many ways, Mapondera excavates meaning from found objects, staging a return to home by unearthing the objects' history. This body of work is no exception, as Mapondera returns to one of his most utilised mediums: the egg carton. This object, made from cardboard to house fragile eggs, represents the beginning and end of life - they are the remainders of commerce, created to store and protect, but then discarded, only to be picked up by Mapondera and given new life.



Wallen Mpondera

Collar

2022

Silicone, Egg Cartons, Cardboard and
Waxed Thread

114 x 72 x 50 cm







chidimbu cheziya rangu

Wallen Mapondera

Chidimbu Cheziya Rangu

2022

Eyelets, Cardboard, Waxed Thread and
Reaped Floor Dust on Canvas

180 x 400 cm





chudimbu chwedikita rangy



Wallen Mpondera

Torso

2022

Egg Cartons, Cardboard Boxes, Found Woven
Sack, Palm Tree Seeds and Waxed Thread

131 x 66 x 33 cm









Wallen Mpondera

Untitled

2022

Egg Cartons, Found Woven Sack, Palm Tree Seeds,
Cardboard Boxes, Silicone and Waxed Thread

160 x 90 x 70 cm







- Explore your passions
- Ask yourself questions
- Keep a journal

Wallen Mapondera
Kuzvi svaga (searching for self)
2022
Cardboard, Waxed Thread, Ink and
Reaped Floor Dust on Canvas
200 x 472 cm

JAN
FEB







Wallen Mpondera

Simba Mukaka Unosinina

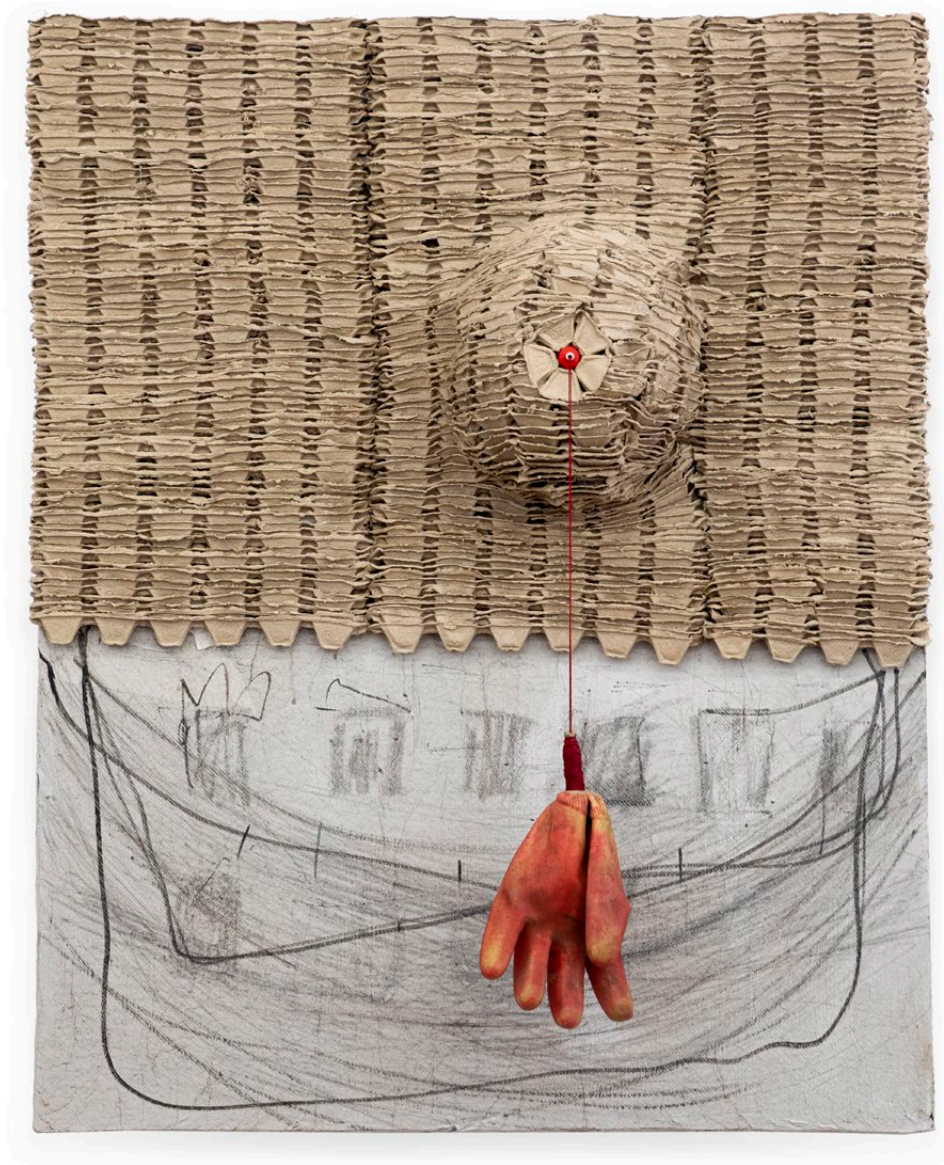
2022

Cardboard, Waxed Thread, Reaped

Floor Dust and Eyelets on Canvas

139 x 115 cm





Wallen Mpondera
Kutsvaga Pangu Chaipo
2022
Egg Cartons, Waxed Thread, Found
Glove and Paper on Board
100 x 80 x 19 cm





Wallen Mapondera
Madhoiri (Triptych)
2022
Found Woven Sacks, Palm Tree
Seeds and Waxed Thread
54 x 54 x 13 cm Each





WALLEN MAPONDERA

CURRICULUM VITAE

smac

BIOGRAPHY

Born 1985, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa.

EDUCATION

- 2019** Masters of Fine Art Degree (MA), Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.
- 2007** Certificate in Visual Arts Training, National Gallery School of Visual Arts Studio, Harare, Zimbabwe.

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

- 2020** Art Dubai Artist-in-Residence Programme, Dubai, UAE.
- 2018** Artist in Residence, Pro Helvetia Studio, Zurich, Switzerland.
- 2016** Artist in Residence, in association with the Kuona Trust, Tafaria Castle, Nairobi & Tafaria, Kenya.
Artist in Residence, Guns & Rain, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2015** National Arts Merit Awards (NAMA) for Two-Dimensional Work, National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (NACZ), Harare, Zimbabwe.
Artist in Residence, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Artist-in-Residence (AiR) Award Laureate, the Africa Centre, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2012** First Prize for Drawing and Graphics: Family, Tradition and Religion, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Artist in Residence, Vermont Studio Center, Burlington, Vermont, USA.
- 2010** First Prize for Drawing and Graphics: FACET – Zimbabwe Now, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Over-all Award for Drawing: Artists in Stream, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 2009** Over-all Award: F.A.C.T , National Gallery of Zimbabwe in association with COTCO, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 2008** Award of Merit: Enriching Woman, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Award of Merit: Post Election Selection, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 2007** Artist in Residence, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 2006** Award of Merit for Painting: Graduate Exhibition, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Award of Merit for Graphics: Graduate Exhibition, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2022** The Armory Show (SMAC Gallery), New York, USA.
Chikokoko (Little Pleasures That Counts), Galerie Mitterrand, Paris, France.
- 2020** *Zai Rakawora*, Art Basel OVR: Miami Beach, Miami, USA.
Chirema Chine Mazano Chinotamba Chakazendama Madziro Part Two, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2019** *Chirema Chine Mazano*, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa.
Moving Target, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Atelier Mondial, Münchenstein, Switzerland.
- 2018** *Emergency Exit*, Tyburn Gallery, London, UK.
Samusha weiri Dongo, SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2017** *Tsananguro | Clarifications*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2016** *Paint My Tea Pot*, Tafaria Castle, Tafaria, Kenya.
- 2014** *SOCIAL ZOOMETRY*, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 2013** *ANI-MAN (a human in an animal)*, Association for Visual Arts Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2012** *TURNING TABLES*, Red Mill Gallery, Vermont Studio Center, Vermont, USA.
- 2009** *X MARKS THE SPOT*, Trueworths Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2008** *MAZUVA OSE (Everyday)*, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2022** *Inner Landscapes*, Bloom Galerie, Geneva, Switzerland.
Art Basel Hong Kong (Galerie Mitterrand), Hong Kong, China.
I did not leave a sign, Zimbabwean Pavilion (SMAC Gallery), curated by Fadzai Muchemwa, 59th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy.
Within the Fold, SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg; Stellenbosch, South Africa.
Fragments, curated by Anna Schmidt, Museum der Kulturen Basel, Basel, Switzerland.
Art Brussels (SMAC Gallery), Tour & Taxis, Brussels, Belgium.
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2021** The Armory Show (SMAC Gallery), Online.

- Black Luminosity*, curated by Gcotyelwa Mashiqqa, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- 2020** *Gather*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Matereality, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2019** *Artissima* (SMAC Gallery), Turin, Italy.
 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair London (SMAC Gallery), Somerset House, London, UK.
 FNB Art Joburg (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
 Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2018** *Five Bhohb: Painting at the End of an Era*, Zietz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA), Cape Town, South Africa.
 UNTITLED, Art (Tyburn Gallery), Miami Beach, Miami, USA.
Back to the Future III – Abstract Art In South Africa: Past and Present, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- 2017** 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), London, UK.
 FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2016** *Turbine Art Fair (TAF)*, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Nothing Personal, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
Suddenly A Dissident (Two Man Show), Point of Order Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2015** *Turbine Art Fair (TAF)*, Johannesburg, South Africa.
 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, London, UK.
- 2012** *Thupelo Workshop Exhibition*, Greatmore Studios, Cape Town, South Africa.
Between the Sheets, Gallery East, North Fremantle, Western Australia.
Tradition, Family & Religion, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 2011** *Colour Africa*, Zeitgenössische Kunst Aus Simbabwe, Kulturallmende, Munich, Germany.
- 2010** *FACET – Zimbabwe Now*, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Live 'n' Direct, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.
African Expressions, The University of Avignon, Avignon, France.
Artists in Stream, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 2009** *Unity*, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Ani-mal, VEO Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
 F.A.C.T COTCO, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 2008** COTCO, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare.
The Young artist Exhibition, Gallery Delta, Harare.

- Salon 91 Art Exhibition*, Salon 91, Cape Town, South Africa.
Miniature Exhibition 2008, VEO Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Enriching Women, The International Women's Film Festival, Gallery Delta, Harare.
Onai (Do You See When You Look), National Gallery of Zimbabwe in Mutare, Mutare, Zimbabwe.
Africa University Annual Festival of Art and Culture: an exhibition of Paintings and Graphics, National Gallery of Zimbabwe in Mutare, Mutare, Zimbabwe.
Post Election Selection, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 2007** *The Young Artist Exhibition*, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Peace Through Unity and Diversity, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
The Sixth Sense, National Gallery of Zimbabwe in Mutare, Zimbabwe.
Drawings and Graphics: An Overview, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
"Edible Mapepa" An exhibition of art pieces from handmade paper, National Art Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.
 Alliance Francaise Annual Exhibition, Maputo, Mozambique.
Zimbabwean change, St Bavo Church, Haarlem, Netherlands.
- 2006** *HIFA (Hand in Hand)*, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.
Our Thoughts, National Gallery of Zimbabwe in Mutare, Mutare, Zimbabwe.
Rembrandt: An African Response, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.
 Manicaland Visual Arts and Craft Association (MANISA), National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Mutare, Zimbabwe.
 Final Year Exhibition, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- 1998** *Why Use Agro Chemicals?* University Of Zimbabwe, Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe.

PUBLICATIONS

Mapondera, W. 2022, *Wallen Mapondera*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

Das, J. 2021. *The Artsy Vanguard 2021: Wallen Mapondera*. Artsy [online]. Available at: <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-artsy-vanguard-2021-wallen-mapondera> [Accessed 11.03.2022]

Artnet Auctions. 2021. *Explore Innovative Works by Four Daring Zimbabwean Artists on Artnet Auctions*. Artnet News [online]. Available at: <https://news.artnet.com/buyers-guide/explore-innovative-works-by-zimbabwean-artists-on-artnet-auctions-2004670> [Accessed 11.03.2022]

Muvhuti, B. 2020. *An exhibition which translates ordinary Zimbabweans' survival strategies in the face of economic hardships*. Arikana.org [online]. Available at: <https://africanah.org/wallen-mapondera-2/>. 9 March 2020. [Accessed 30.11.2020]

Proctor, R.A. 2019. *Art Dubai 2020: Why the Mideast's leading art fair is turning to Africa*. Arab News [online]. Available at: <https://arab.news/vsgqf>. 14 December 2019. [Accessed 30.11.2020]

Moloi, N. 2018. *'Five Bobh' is a taxi to the end of an era*. Mail & Guardian [online]. Available at: <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-11-23-00-five-bhobh-is-a-taxi-to-the-end-of-an-era>. 23 November 2018. [Accessed 22.01.2019].

Morris, C. 2018. *Artists We Love: Wallen Mapondera*. Visi [online]. Available at: <https://www.visi.co.za/artists-we-love-wallen-mapondera/>. 13 March 2018. [Accessed 03.03.2018].

Garan'anga, S. 2016. *Artists light up Gallery Delta*. The Herald [online]. Available at: <https://www.herald.co.zw/artists-light-up-gallery-delta/>. 24 June 2016. [Accessed 22.01.2019].

Happener. 2017. October 30 | *Turner Contemporary Gets Bigger*. Happening Magazine [online]. Available at: <https://www.happening.media/category/artdigest/en/articles/3071/october-30-turner-contemporary-gets-bigger>. 30 October 2017. [Accessed 22.01.2019].

ArtAfrica. 2018. *Right at the Equator*. ArtAfrica Magazine [online]. Available at: <http://artafricamagazine.org/right-at-the-equator/>. 15 February 2018. [Accessed 22.01.2019].

COLLECTIONS

The National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Spier Art Collection, Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Tiroche Deleon Collection, Tel Aviv, Israel.

The Cassat Foundation, The Netherlands.

The Ekard Collection, The Netherlands.

Galila Barzilai-Holannder's P.O.C., Belgium.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact SMAC Gallery for more information regarding the availability of the works included in this portfolio, or for any other queries.

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