

FIRST FLOOR GALLERY HARARE HARARE | VICTORIA FALLS

Vacancy – Miriro Mwandambira and Zanele Mutema + new friends in Victoria Falls

Art is a space where the impossible becomes real, where the unnecessary become imperative and where the unimaginable becomes inevitable, through the prism of the personal vision. Creativity is an energy that is an implicit driver to all things human but has to manifest itself through things we make. Before art and creativity becomes possible there needs to be an absence, a need, a felt vacuum – a vacancy. In this exhibition we want to open our space and make space for the unexpected and even unreasonable but 100% creative, in conversation with works by two artists who excel in developing their unique personal vision and delivering it in striking and thoughtful ways through performance and installation – Miriro Mwandambira and Zanele Mutema. We invite **women** creatives in Victoria Falls to join the exhibition by contributing works that speak to their unique vision, in whatever ways they want – painting, drawing, photography, design, fashion, sewing, knitting, poetry, writing, dance or even gymnastics. We want to share, amplify and inspire ourselves and others. Join us.

Valerie Kabov
Curator

List of Works

Main Room

Zanele Mutema

When will I see me again? Parts 1, 2 and 3

Clear plastic, weaving, crochet and selected objects

Projection Room

Miriro Mwandambira (Video works)

- 1) **Try to Adore Me, no?** performance Harare CBD, 2017
- 2) **Sugar Embodiment (Lost in Translation)** performance Genoa, Italy 2019

FIRST FLOOR GALLERY HARARE HARARE | VICTORIA FALLS

Artist Texts

Zanele Mtem: When will I see me again?

There are times when Deconstructed Memories make more sense than whole ones. When Location, Time, Events and The Human Body get mangled up and there's no more telling the difference between the conscious and unconscious, reality and utopia everything becomes disconnected, disjointed and disordered. Everything becomes confusing. When one can't tell if they're in a space or are they occupying it, you're in a continuum where in one of those rare moments you see an opening and you want to escape but won't. Continual constant conversations with self and once in a while you connect with yourself and these be those priceless moments to be kept and it is those moments I captured.

Miro Mwandimbira

Try to Adore Me, no? performance Harare CBD, 2017

In Try to Adore Me, no? Mwandimbira brings into the public domain the intimate drama of a young woman drowning in social expectations and peer group pressure. In the middle of a busy downtown street in Harare, we encounter a dramatised dysmorphic version of a young woman in front of a mirror in her bedroom, using every wrong material to achieve the impossible ideals of composure and beauty which are only genuinely available to an inanimate store mannequin. As it unfolds the performance also becomes an intervention and provocation to the public. Debates and discussions among onlookers ensue about what is happening and what is to be done about it, with some becoming angry and wanting to stop the performance and others defending her. From something personal the performance becomes an opportunity to reflect on the ability of a woman or any individual to assert and express themselves honestly in Zimbabwe today.

Sugar Embodiment (Lost in Translation) performance Genoa, Italy 2019

This performance transposes an experience of downtown Harare. While missing an actual port, Harare downtown is also a space of transit, exchange, congestion and trade. In this space of intense consumption and traffic, I situate the woman and the feminine as a participant but also one of the things that is objectified and consumed. A plastic mannequin worked in the performance becomes a symbolic object standing in for both the overwhelming flood of plastic and the humans both responsible for its production and consumption, which dehumanises them and their environment in the process. There are no ethics in the Darwinian survival of the fittest environment, where a woman's default role is one of undefeated resilience in the face of overwhelming inevitabilities. The symbolic object then becomes the subject of the symbolic action of a futile attempt to cleanse it using all the wrong things recalling the myth of Sisyphus performing a task which only appears to have meaning and acquires meaning not through utility but through its endlessness, which is then interpreted as life. The sun starts setting.