

FIRST FLOOR GALLERY HARARE



WOMAN-MIRIRO MWANDIMIRA

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Miriro Mwandiambira – Woman

Which subject is so much larger than yourself that it can encompass the world and which is concurrently, exactly the same size as you are? In *Woman*, her debut solo, Mwandiambira explores this very conundrum of oscillating between the personal, the intimate and the universal and arriving and synergies and unexpected poetic harmonies among the many tensions that this dynamic relationship pivots on.

Mwandiambira's *Woman* is the one she is most intimately familiar with, who is like herself urban, Zimbabwean, African and injected into the contemporary global pop culture, with strong traditional roots and beliefs. And so we begin, with a patchwork identity, which has built an integrated whole despite all the contradictions. *Mambokadzi (Mujibva wangu) – Queen (My dress)* the key work in *Woman*, is precisely that, a patchwork assemblage, which graduates to majesty, despite and precisely because of not being whole, its grandeur being a testament to overcoming struggle personal and family, an aspiration towards self-actualisation, as well as a cognaisance of ancestral tradition in which every woman is a queen and every man is a king.

At the same time, Mwandiambira, asserts the domain of woman's work and creativity into the space of art, in a way that does not entertain a compromise with or deference to the oft male dominated mediums and fields like painting and structure. Sawing, fashion, hair design and elements of self-decoration, like artificial nails are legitimized and undeniably art media in this work. Equally so, Mwandiambira disrupts the divide between public and private domains in society, the male and the female by bringing into the show the elements of home. The woman's domain, curtains, bed sheets, table cloths are drawn into the gallery space and integrated with conventional art materials with grace and intention.

At the same time this assertiveness is not without self-awareness, humour or self-reflection. In *Obsession I and II*, *Close Together* and *If I could see clearly* Mwandiambira takes a satirical look at the preoccupation of women with the superficiality of fashion (nails, dresses and shoes), to which they are bound and which obscure their view of the bigger picture. Most interestingly, while the male presence is a latent possibility in this body of work, it is not a necessary condition. The show begins and ends with the possibility and celebration of self-sufficiency, self-determination and equality, no more and no less.

Mwandiambira's *Woman* is a powerful assertion of confidence in oneself, as well as a comprehensive ability to reflect on complexity of social and historical issues, which define the self and her self in particular, here and now.

11 August 2016

Valerie Kabov
Curator

Miro Mwandiyambira

Born in Harare, Zimbabwe
Works and lives in Harare

Graduated from National Gallery of Zimbabwe Visual Art Studio in 2014. Currently, resident artist at Chinembiri Studios, Mbare, Harare. As an artist Miro is interested in lives of women and in particular, lives of young living in Harare, their obsessions, dramas, dilemmas and challenges. As a social commentator and story-teller, she identifies with her contemporaries and creates paintings, installations and sculptures, which range from humorous and playful to dark and complex, incorporating both conventional materials and those which form part and parcel of women's lives from acrylic nails to bed sheets and curtains. Mwandiyambira has been exhibiting regularly throughout her student career and is represented by First Floor Gallery Harare internationally.



Infinity, 2016
Acrylic, Nails, Velvet
210 X 130cm



Obsession Part 1, 2016
Curtain, Acrylic, Nails and ink
250 x 180 cm



Obsession Part II, 2016
Curtain, Acrylic, Nails and ink
223 x 234 cm



Mambokadzi-Mujibvawangu(Queen- My Dress), 2016
Fabric, Acrylic and nails
962 x 219cmt



Close Together, 2016
Paint, Bed sheet
220 x 150cm



If Only I Could See Clearly, 2016
Curtains, Paint
300 X 210cm



Crossing Samora Machel on Sunday Parts 1-5, 2016
Documentation of performance, Photographer Rodney Badza
5 x 3.5cm



Crossing Samora Machel on Sunday Parts 6-10, 2016
Documentation of performance, Photographer Rodney Badza
5 x 3.5cm



Crossing Samora Machel on Sunday Parts 11-13, 2016
Documentation of performance, Photographer Rodney Badza
5 x 3.5cm



Crossing Samora Machel on Sunday Parts 14-16, 2016
Documentation of performance, Photographer Rodney Badza
5 x 3.5cm











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