MASIMBA HWATI

Sokunge / As if

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Sokunge / As if

Sokunge, translated from Shona, describes a phenomenon wherein something presents itself as *other* than its true nature. When directly translated to English it means *as if*. The resulting phenomenon exists as an in-between space, referencing the *real* object while at the same time obscuring it.

The exhibition is based on research around various forms of cultural resistance and the use of symbolism to modify power and contest domination. The works in the exhibition were created at the intersection of sculpture, sound and the body, allowing for an exploration of liminal spaces in the post-colonial context. It reframes this space as a breeding ground for unfamiliar sounds, forms, hybridity, confusion and dissonance. The works allow for a sonic bodily engagement with the sculptures, opening up a nuanced lexicon of resistance and negotiation with power giving the viewer an opportunity to experience a state of surrender.

Human behavior can be likened to sound waves with regard to navigating obstacles. The way sound moves around and through matter is sometimes diverted through contact with other matter. Sound studies have become popular with behavioral scientists and anthropologists as a way of providing another perspective on human behavior and social politics. *Sokunge / As if* focuses on the way people operate like sound, in terms of how they structure and configure themselves around dominant powers. In situations of repression, instead of confrontation, people may negotiate with or navigate around power.

Sound exists on a spectrum from super audible to almost inaudible, speaking to matters of visibility politics or class politics, wherein some people are hypervisible and some are invisible. Some are heard and some go unheard.

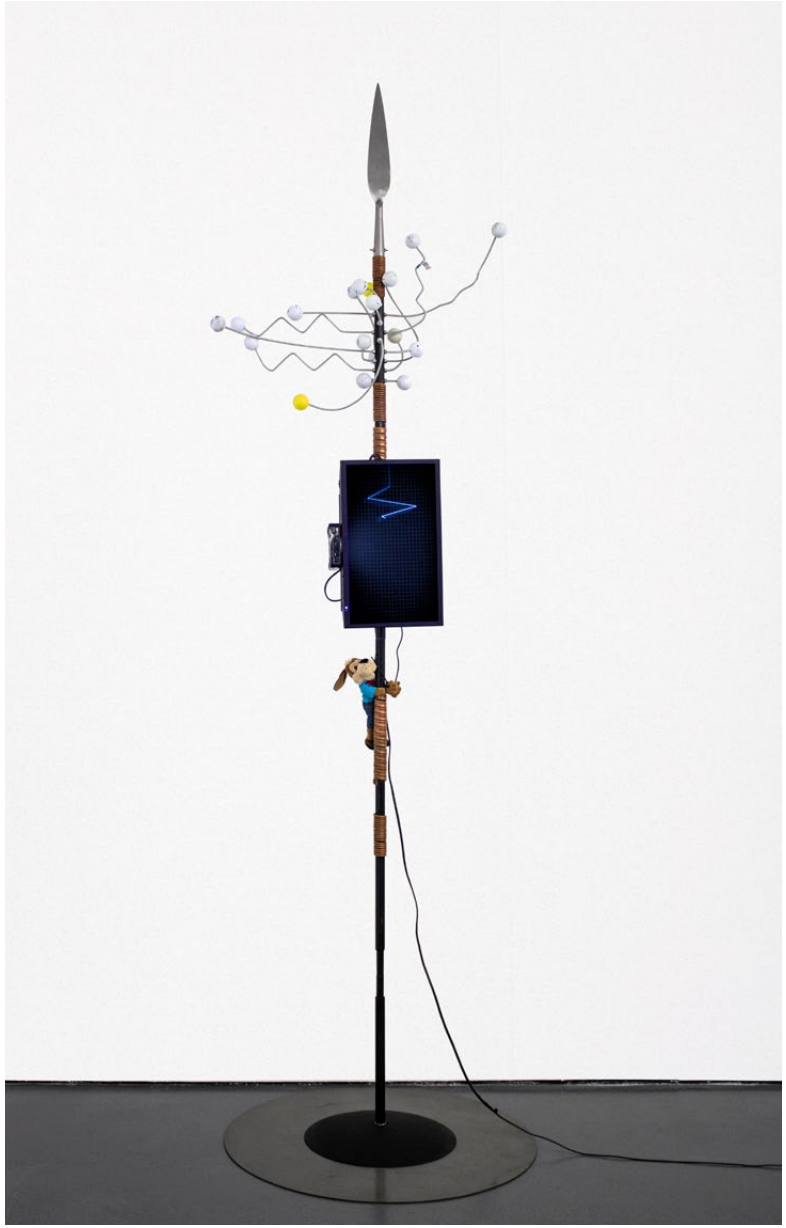
In Harare, the city that does not sleep, there is a constant flux – a continuous, restless configuration. This insomnia becomes a state of restless socio-political awareness. It often feels like a deep-seated instability while simultaneously being a survival tactic. The political situation in Zimbabwe produces a confused rage of responses against the brutality of a repressive political machine. Depending on where you stand, the subjects/people either seem to be negotiating with power in order to modify it, or appear to be playing a dangerous game of resistance – while at the same time passively enabling the system, when it serves to benefit them. Achille Mbembe describes this as playing with power – in his words,

> *"This is what allows us to assert that, by dancing publicly for the benefit of power, the 'post-colonized subject' is providing his or her loyalty and by compromising with the corrupting control that state power tends to exercise at all levels of everyday life (over benefits, services, pleasures…) the subject is reaffirming that it is incontestable-precisely in order the better to play with it and modify it whenever possible."*
>
> *- Achille Mbembe, on the Post Colony (2001)*

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge / As if
2019
Installation View

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge 1
2019
Metal and Copper Tubing, Metal Plate and Found Objects
227 x 85 x 85 cm

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge 2
2019
Metal Plate, Fabric and Found Objects
250 x 100 x 85 cm



Masimba Hwati
Sokunge 3
2019
Steel Pipe, Brass, TV Monitor with Visual Playback, and Found Objects
288 x 85 x 85 cm

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge 4
2019
Steel Pipe, Brass and Found Objects
257 x 106 x 85 cm

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge / As if
2019
Installation View

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge 5
2019
Steel Pipe, TV Monitor with Visual Playback,
and Found Objects
272 x 85 x 85 cm

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge 6
2019
Steel Pipe, Television Monitor with Visual Playback,
and Found Objects
285 x 85 x 85 cm

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge 7
2019
Steel Pipe, Copper Tubing and Found Objects
186 x 85 x 85 cm

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge / As if
2019
Installation View

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge 9
2019
Steel, TV Monitor with Visual Playback, and Found Objects
213 x 33 x 22 cm

Masimba Hwati
Shiri 1
2017
Steel and Found Objects
106 x 20 x 14 cm

Masimba Hwati
Shiri 2
2017
Steel, Found Objects
106 x 20.5 x 14 cm

Masimba Hwati
Sokunge / As if
2019
Installation View

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

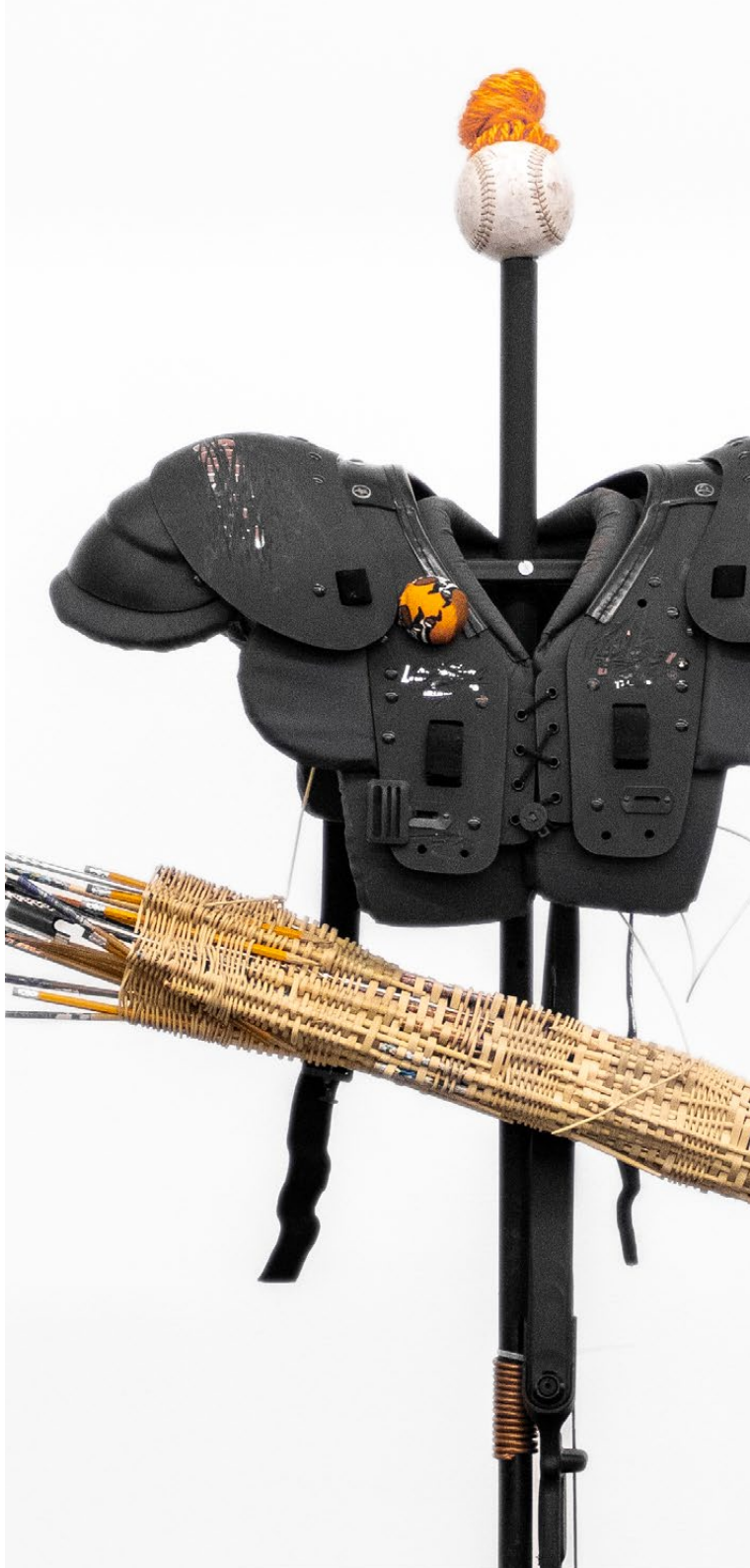
Masimba Hwati was born in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1982. He graduated from the Harare Polytechnic in 2003, and has continued to live and work in the capital city. In 2017 he obtained a Certificate in Building Indigenous Knowledge Systems for Development at Coady International Institute, St Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Canada. Hwati recently completed his Master's degree in Fine Art from the Stamps School of Art & Design at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA, which culminated in a MFA thesis exhibition titled *Dry Socks in a Submerged Canoe* at Stamps Gallery in Ann Arbour, Michigan in 2019.

In 2016 Hwati was the winner of the Cape Town Art Fair's Special Projects Section: Tomorrows/Today, curated by Azu Nwagbogu and Ruth Simbao, with his solo presentation: *don't worry be happy*. In 2015 he participated in the Zimbabwean Cultural Centre of Detroit (ZCCD) Artist Exchange programme, partnered with the Witt Visiting Artist Program at the Stamp School of Art and Design, University of Michigan, USA.

Hwati presented his most recent solo exhibition *Sokunge / As if* at SMAC Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2019. His works also formed part of SMAC Gallery's presentation at FNB Art Joburg at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2019. In 2018, Hwati's works were included in the Montreal Museum of Fine Art's (MMFA) exhibition, *From Africa to the Americas: Face-to-Face Picasso, Past and Present*. The exhibition was produced by the Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac in partnership with the Musée National Picasso, Paris, with an adaptation by the MMFA. Hwati also participated in the group exhibition, *Contemporary Art for Schools*, which was hosted at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe in 2018.

In 2017, Hwati was the featured artist for SMAC Gallery's presentation at Art Brussels in Brussels, Belgium. In 2015, Hwati was one of three artists selected for *Pixels Of Ubuntu/Unhu*, curated by Raphael Chikukwa for the Zimbabwean Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale. Solo exhibitions include: *Instruments of Memory / Simbi dzeNdangariro* at SMAC Gallery in Stellenbosch in 2016; *Quantumlogik* at Gallery Delta in Zimbabwe in 2014 and *Facsimiles of Energy* in 2011, also at Gallery Delta in Harare, Zimbabwe. Group exhibitions include *Trek – Following Journeys* at SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, in 2015 (Hwati's South African debut); *Between the Sheets: 2012 Artists' Books Exhibition* at Gallery East in North Freemantle, Australia in 2012; *Colour Africa: Zeitgenössische Kunst Aus Simbabwe,* Kulturallmende in Munich, Germany; and *Food for Thought,* National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, both in 2011.

Selected collections include: Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa; Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, Canada; Scott White Contemporary, San Diego, USA; George R. Nnamdi Collection, Harare, Zimbabwe; National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe and the Gervanne & Matthias Leridon Collection, Paris, France.



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MASIMBA HWATI

CURRICULUM VITAE

MASIMBA HWATI

C.V

BIOGRAPHY
Born 1982, Highfield, Zimbabwe.
Lives and works in Michigan, USA.

EDUCATION

2019 Master of Fine Arts (MFA), University of Michigan, Penny Stamps School of Art and Design, Ann Arbor, USA.

2017 Certificate in Building on Indegenous Knowledge Systems and Resistance, C aody International Institute, St Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Canada.

2003 National Diploma in Fine Art, Harare Polytechnic, Harare, Zimbabwe.

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

2019 (current) Hub Bub, South Carolina, USA

2018 Jar House, Hamtrack, Detroit, USA

2016 *Special Projects Section: Tomorrows/Today (Winner),* Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa

Visiting Researcher Arts of Africa Research Team (AART) and the SARChI Research Chair program in '*Geopolitics and the Arts of Africa*', Fine Art Department at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.

Jean Paul Slusser Award: MFA Candidate, Penny Stamps School of Art and Design, University of Michigan Ann Abor MI, USA.

2015 Zimbabwean Cultural Centre of Detroit (ZCCD), Artist Exchange Programme, partnered with the Witt Visiting Artist Programme University of Michigan Stamp School of Art and Design, Michigan, USA; Popps Packing Artist Residency, Hamtramck, USA & Njelele Art Station, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2014 Arist in Residence, Greatmore Studios, Cape Town, South Africa.

Artist in Residence, Jar House, Hamtramck Detroit, Michigan, USA.

2012 *Multi Media Award: Tradition, Family and Religion,* Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2006 *National Arts Merit Award* (NAMA), Harare, Zimbabwe.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

2019 *Sokunge / As if*, SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.

2017 Art Brussels (SMAC Gallery), Tour & Taxi, Brussels, Belgium.

2016 *Instruments of Memory/ Simbi dzeNdangariro*, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Don't Worry Be Happy, Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.

2015 *Detroit Sound* [public performance], Detroit, Michigan, USA.

2014 *Quantumlogik,* Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2011 *Facsimiles of Energy,* Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

2019 FNB Art Joburg (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johanneburg, South Africa.

Dry Socks in a Submerged Canoe, Stamps Gallery, Penny Stamps School of Art and Design, University of Michigan Ann Abor, USA.

2018 *From Africa to the Americas: Face-to-Face Picasso, Past, and Present,* Montreal Museum of Fine Art , Montreal, USA.

Expectations - Pre Election Selection Exhibition, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Mbende Jerusarema Tehkno Sculptor & Movement Study [public performance], Duderstadt Video Studio, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA.

2017 *African Voices: Confronting Frontiers of Reality*, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

#exstrange, Art E-bay Auction, curated by Rebekah Modrak and Marialura Ghidhini.

X: Part III, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Unpacking the Vision: From Rembrant to Mubayi, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

An Unstoppable Force in Contemporary Art Discourse, National gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Identity, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2016 FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Pixels of Ubuntu/Unhu: Exploring the Social and Cultural Identities of the 21st Century, [Travelling Exhibition], curated by Raphael Chikukwa, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe; Assosiation of Visual Arts (AVA) Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.

SUMMER SHOW '16, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Consuming Us (Special Projects Section), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.

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Zig Zag Boundries, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Gallery Delta Benefit/Collectors Exhibition, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2015 *Pixels of Ubuntu/Unhu: Exploring the Social and Cultural Identities of the 21st Century*, [Travelling Exhibition], curated by Raphael Chikukwa, National Pavilion of the Republic of Zimbabwe at the 56th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy.

The Energy of Objects, 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair (KooVha Gallery), London, UK.

Trek, Following Journeys, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.

The Annual Summer Exhibition, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Art and Artifacts, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Simbi Dzebasa, curated by Chido Johnson, N'namdi Gallery, Michigan, USA.

2014 *Tragedy and Comedy,* Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

The Annual Summer Exhibition, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Way Finding: A Tribute to Friedbert Lutz, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2013 *Redefinitions IV,* Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2012 *Tribute to Nikos Kasantzarkis,* Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Between the Sheets, Gallery East, North Fremantle, Australia.

2011 *Redefinitions III,* Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Food for Thought, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Colour Africa: Contemporary Art of Zimbabwe, Kulturallmende, Munich, Germany.

2010 *FACET: Zimbabwe Now*, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2009 *Redefinitions II,* Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Expression of Africa, University of Avignon, Avignon, France.

Comesa Club Art Exhibition, Comesa Center, Lusaka, Zambia.

2008 *Determination*, Harare International Festival of Arts (HIFA), Harare, Zimbabwe.

2007 -*Vibes, Pledges and Oracles*, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2006 *SADC Annual Exhibition,* Thapong Visual Arts Centre, Gaborone, Botswana.

2005 *Shrines*, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Lusaka, Zambia.

Intwasa Arts Festival, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Conditions of Sculpture, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Visual Records, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Harare Biennale, National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Non Conformists, Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

2004 *Redefinitions,* Gallery Delta, Harare, Zimbabwe.

SELECTED TALKS/TEACHINGS

2018 Graduate Student Instructor (GSI), Universtity of Michigan, Ann Abor, USA.

South Oregon University (S.O.U) Ashland, Oregon.

2017 Graduate Student Instructor (GSI), Universtity of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA.

2015 Penny Stamps Lecture Series, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA.

2005-2016 Sculptor, Ceramics, Drawing and Art History Instructor, Harare Polytechnic, Harare, Zimbabwe.

SELCTED WORKSHOPS & PROJECTS

2016 *Hiervaandiern*, Stellenbosch Outdoor Sculpture Project, Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Research Residency, Rhodes University, Grahamstown Department of Fine Art and Visual Culture, Grahamstown, South Africa.

2015 Speaker, Penny Stamps Lecture Series (Witts Visiting Artists Program) University of Michigan Ann Arbor, USA.

2013 *Renaissance Men Performance Khayelitsha* ,Du Noon 5, Cape Town, South Africa.

An aspect of Migration, Logical minds, Black Cultural Center of Nova Scotia Halifax, Canada.

COLLECTIONS

Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.

Scott White Contemporary, San Diego, USA.

George R. Nnamdi Collection, Harare, Zimbabwe.

National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, Canada.

Gervanne & Mattias Leridon Collection, Paris, France.

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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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