

GALERIE MITTERRAND

WALLEN MAPONDERA

MANZWI AKAZVITAKURA / PREGNANT WORDS (*Space for breeding and expanding commonalities of things to become*)

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PRESS RELEASE

“Let there be light”, these were the first words that God spoke according to the Scriptures. The declaration was filled with artistic power. God imagined what light would be like. He mentioned it and then- there was light. He went on creating other elements such as land, vegetation, and creatures, just by mentioning what He wanted, and they came to life. In my case, the things I pronounce take different lengths of time to reach the desired outcome, just like pregnancy lasts a while before the delivery. I employed egg cartons in my work, which reminded me of their content, the eggs. To me, fertilized eggs are another perfect form of pregnancy. Under the right conditions, the eggs will eventually hatch, and pregnancy will as well come to term. Words are powerful, be they in the form of thoughts, wishes, dreams, goals, and imaginations. They serve as motivations in people’s lives.

The exhibition *Manzwi Akazvitakura/Pregnant Words* focuses generally on the returns of ideas that emerged from conversations with others within a group or alone. Reflecting on how we were raised as a family, I have to acknowledge that I am a beneficiary of those ideas. My mother and two of her friends used to make doilies to go and sell them in neighboring countries, such as Mozambique, Botswana, but mostly South Africa. I was young when I noticed how the trio did almost everything together as far as production was concerned. They would go and buy twine for the doilies, then crocheted them together. When I started working on the ‘Madhoiri’ series, I was more interested in the stories, the hustles, and the uncertainty that the trio went through while travelling. The worst that could have happened to them in a foreign land was losing their lives or the money they would have individually worked hard for. None of that happened during the seven-year period that they were doing the doilies business. I then realized that the trio’s journey did not start on the bus or train, but from the moment they set a date for departure. They set targets and deadlines when they had tea/svutu-gadzike breaks during their crocheting marathons. Most of all, they prayed for guidance and protection (Shield).

I vividly remember the feeling of waiting for my mom to come back from their trip, because I knew she would be loaded with goodies. Their journey did not end when they got home though. They had to do more trips back and forth because of their responsibilities as parents. With both my parents working hard, my siblings and I were able to be clothed, fed, and were schooled properly. It was probably less than they wished for, but it was standard. I am interested in the breeding and projection spaces of ideas and how people are proactive towards their thoughts through verbal and action affirmation. ‘Collar & Chakafukidza Dzimba Matenga’ comments on the secrecy and choice as to who and how to share the mind’s

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wonderings with, could it be over a glass of beer, tea or when stuck in long queues. In summary, the exhibition focuses on the switch that sparks and allows ideologies to grow, and on spaces that organically accommodate them.

— Wallen Mapondera