Mercy Moyo "Bringing In Hope and Peace"



The James E. Lewis Museum of Art Morgan State University

Cover *Kumazhanje (wild fruits gathering)* 10" x 13" 2021

Mercy Moyo "Bringing In Hope and Peace"

February 12 - March 28, 2022 The James E. Lewis Museum of Art

> Morgan State University Carl J. Murphy Fine Arts Center 2201 Argonne Drive Baltimore, MD 21251

"We wish two things for our children: the first is roots; the second is wings."

- Sudanese Proverb

Gabriel Tenabe - Director, James E. Lewis Museum of Art

The James E. Lewis Museum of Art is an academic support program at Morgan State University created by James Lewis with the intention of bringing artworks from around the world. We are proud to present an exhibition of an up-and-coming artist, Mercy Moyo from Zimbabwe, Africa.

It is artists like Moyo, from across the water, that JELMA provides an arena for height ened visibility and takes pride in exposing to the community. It is also artists like Moyo that help us to supply a well-rounded educa tion for students, faculty and staff, we are equally proud of presenting a diverse cultural experience.

Mercy Moyo started her journey as an artist going with her grandmother into the forest to collect barks of trees to use for dying fibers and mixing colors for weaving baskets and mats in different sizes and dimensions. Her grandmother would say, "get the best" and "choose wisely" because different trees made an assorted color creation. As her grandmother worked, she would tell the best fairytales which inspired

Mercy to tell stories through her artwork. Weaving was like drawing so it is not strange that she started drawing and painting at a very young age; it seems as if it runs in the genes.

Moyo's artwork depicts ordinary people within their environment because she loves to show people who are never known to affluent surroundings. She shows the rural side, fetching water, where there are challenges for electricity and firewood, looking at the modern, never acceptance, but holding on to culture.

Moyo has made much progress presenting her work in several parts of Europe and Africa. We are proud to present her here at Morgan State University. We hope that by the end of the exhibition, the Morgan family and the community will have enjoyed the work of Moyo as much as we have enjoyed presenting it.

Robin Cherry Howard - Curatorial Statement

Zimbabwean women were rarely accepted as practicing artists in public spaces being recognized for their talent and subjectivity. Certainly, the traditional domestic crafts of basket weaving, beadwork and pottery no matter how skillful in the execution, were born out of necessity.

African women's artistry has relevance in leadership, creativity, education of children, cultural roles and guardianship. The absence in numbers of women artist shows denial of identity not just in Africa, but around the world. Largely unnoticed are painters, printmakers, sculptors and videographers, the struggle for representation continues.

Mercy Moyo considers herself lucky as her work has graced galleries in Zimbabwe and internationally. She has won several awards including Zimbabwe's highest the National Arts Merit Award. Despite her success, her position as a female artist is not without handicaps.

As a nuanced professional, Mercy explores

deeply weighted topics of social economic and cultural influences, comparing old, traditional culture to contemporary African norms.

"Bringing in Hope and Peace" fosters an appreciation for the conventional ways of life, choosing carefully, patiently and pursuing the best. Moyo uses her visuals to tell the story of her life. Her work interprets the beauty of real African women in traditional garments, long skirts, head nicely wrapped and humility in check.

Her narratives convey passion and elements of realism with recognizable images that make you say, "what will happen next?". She compares challenges and stories, some are painful, harsh stories examining political situations where the economy is hard but tries equally to show the positive side.

In 2008 when Zimbabwe couldn't get food or materials, most shops and businesses closed

and there was no way to buy anything. People left the country, they left books that were being thrown away and for Moyo old books became substitutes for canvases and paper. As book pages became the standard many times the words from the stories would be the inspiration for the artwork on the page. With fabric, acrylics and the book text she trusted her ability to communicate through collage. Ironically, created out of necessity rather than design, the response was impressive. As a result, Mercy has been able to produce a profitable body of work.

I see her work as a gift of global friendship and community. It reminds us that all nationalities want the same thing. It is not by coincidence that Mercy has been holding her own in her expression of Zimbabwean culture.

Mercy Moyo - Artist Statement



I began to draw as a very young person, and used my drawings to describe the world around me and tell the story of life in contemporary Africa. My images are primarily collages, incorporating objects, which complement and reinforce the images depicted. I use oil, acrylics, charcoal (and most recently smoke from candles) and pencils to create vibrant images of contemporary women in Zimbabwe today. I want to use my art to showcase the beauty of African women be they from the village or the capital city of Harare.

I have exhibited at the National Gallery of Art, Zimbabwe many times. My work has been included in shows in the Czech Republic, Finland, South Africa, and the United States. I have the distinction of being the first woman artist to win the National Arts Merit Award for two-dimensional work in Zimbabwe (2006) and have received a number of residencies.

I studied at the Peter Birch School of Art and Design and the National Gallery of Zimbabwe Visual Art Studios. Significant accomplishments include exhibitions in Denmark, in March, 2013, and participation in the Vermont Studios Residency in November of the same year. In 2015, my work was exhibited in support of HIV/AIDS awareness and Women At The Top at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, a solo exhibition at Lafayette College, Easton, PA, the acquisition of artworks by the David C Driskell Center in MD, and a group show at the Ellarslie Museum in Trenton, NJ.

2016 began with a collaborative residency, at the "NJ Printmaking Studio and EPI" under the tutelage of Curlee Holton, an art exhibition with the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. of Prince George County, an exhibition and gallery talk at Centenary College during Black History month and residency with a solo exhibit at the Artists Association of Nantucket. After returning home, I was a participant in the CCA Lagos Akiko curatorship program in Ethiopia and ended 2017 as a contributing artist in an all-women's exhibition "Neshango" at the National Museum of Zambia in the Henry Tayali Gallery.

2018 amounted to another exciting year with the Kuboneshango show in Lusaka, Zambia, commissioned artworks during women's history month at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, National Wild Geese Art Fair, as well as artworks selected for the Belt and Road Afro-Sino art exchange in Beijing, China, African Impressions, Verandah Galley in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Of tremendous significance three of my works were selected to be rented to the Office of The President of Zimbabwe.

Although a challenge due to the pandemic, 2020 still proved to be extraordinary. The year included gallery representation in Denmark, and being selected as one of the 263 artists from around the world to participate in the United Nations "symbol of life, freedom & happiness" online exhibition. Ending the year on a momentous note, one of my work was included in the New Jersey Governor's mansion for the traditional diversity event and the headquarter offices of the Neighborhood Housing Services in Manhattan.

As for 2022, my visit to the US ends with a solo exhibition of new works at the Black Wall Street Gallery in New York, "From Zimbabwe with Love" and "Bringing In Hope and Peace" at the James E. Lewis Museum of Art at Morgan State University in Baltimore.

"Art is my life and those of my ancestors and constant changes. It is through our art that we make sense of the world and the constant changes".

Traditionally, it was believed that their spirits could be communicated with to provide guidance. There is a reduced belief in the spiritual realm and the ability of ancestors to intervene with life, one's heritage remains crucial to Zimbabweans' concept of personal identity.

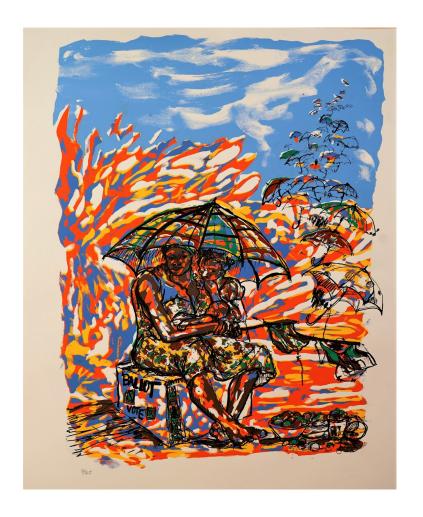


Zvaringana (it is well), 2018 5.5" x 8.5" Ink, fabric, acrylic, charcoal on book page

Looking into social networks people create and maintain with each other this enables society to function.

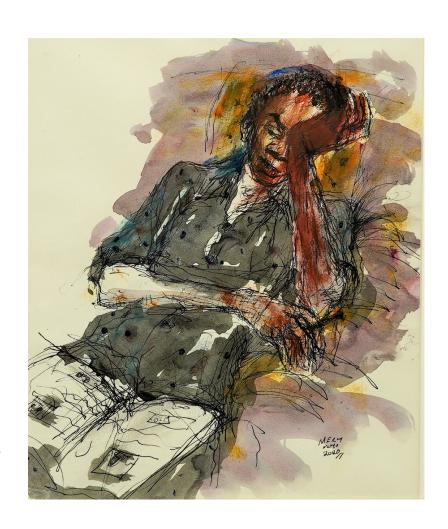


Murehwa and the Blue Box, 2021 8.5" x 11" Acrylic and ink on book page

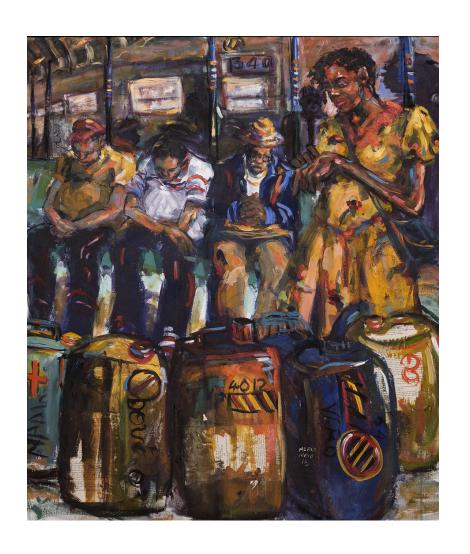


Looking into covering and blending of cultures to get shelter and hold on to it, unfortunately part of the shelter is blown away.

Fukidziro (shelter and wind), 2021 26.5" x 36" Published at Raven Fine Art Editions Master Printer: Curlee Raven Holt Experimental Reductive Serigraph Print



Kutsi kwehope (deep sleep), 2021 8.5" x 11" Acrylic, charcoal on book page



Subway Ride, 2018Oil on paper

46" x 36"



Don't Shush Me, 2018 Acrylic on book page 24" x 36"



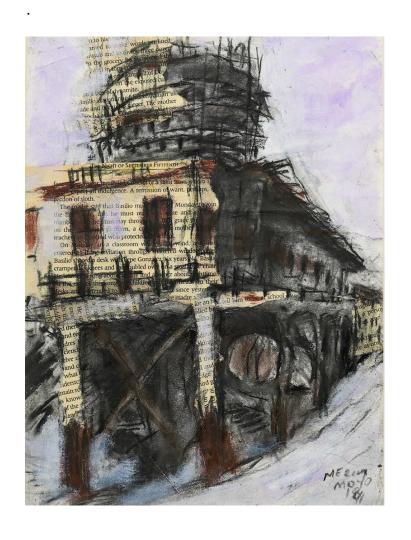
The jury panel, 2020
Acrylic, charcoal on book page 8.5" x 5.5"



Zvaringana, (it is well), 2016Fabric, acrylic and charcoal on paper 18" x 12.5"



Ratenderara (turning wheel), 2008 25" x 17.5" Charcoal on paper



Laundry Day, 2021 8.5" x 11" Acrylic, charcoal on book pages

List of Artworks

Zvaringana (It Is Well I)

6" x 10"

Fabric, acrylic, charcoal on book page

2016

Fukidzior (shelter and wind)

Print on paper

26.5" x 36"

2021

The Glove

Charcoal on paper

18" x 12.5"

2008

Zvaringana (It is well)

Acrylic and charcoal on paper

18.5" x 24.5"

2016

Ruvarawa (Fallen Rose)

Acrylic and charcoal on paper

23.5" x 27.5"

2021

Ratenderara (Turning Wheel)

Charcoal on paper

25" x 17.5"

200

Munana

Acrylic on charcoal on paper

19" x 24"

2016

Zvaringana (It is well, II)

Fabric, acrylic on book page

11" x 11"

2021

Zvaringana (It is well)

Fabric acrylic and charcoal on paper

18" x 12.5"

2021

Zvaringana (It is well, II)

Acrylic, charcoal on book page

8" x 11"

2020

Waiting

Acrylic on book page

4.6" x 8.5"

2020

Don't Shush Me

Acrylic on book page

34" x 26"

2016

Zvaringana (It Is Well)

Acrylic, charcoal on paper

18" x 26""

2021

Man Leaning

Acrylic on paper

36" x 24"

2015

Subway Ride

Oil on paper

48" x 36"

2016

Village 69

Acrylic, charcoal on book page

6" x 10"

2021

Vendor

Acrylic, charcoal on book page

8.5" x 5"

2020

Waiting

Acrylic on book page

8.5" x 4.6"

2013

Zviregwe seated

Charcoal on book psge

6" x 8"

2013

List of Artworks

The Jury Panel

Acrylic, charcoal on book page 8.5" x 5.5" 2020

The aroma

Acrylic, charcoal on paper 5" x 8.5"
2018

Kutsi Kwehope (Deep sleep)

Acrylic charcoal on book page 8.5" x 11" 2020

Murehwa and the blue box

Acrylic and ink on book page 8.5" x 11" 2021

Musaborina (Umbrella)

Acrylic on book page 8.5" x 11" 2021

Zvaringana (It is well) II

Fabric, acrylic on book page 8" x 11"

Kumanazhanje (Wild fruits gathering)

Acrylic on book page 10" x 13" 2021

Zvaringana (It is well)

Fabric, acrylic and charcoal on book page 6" x 10" 2021

Zvaringana (It is well, II)

Fabric, acrylic on book page 5" x 8.5" 2021

Zvaringana (It Is Well)

Acrylic, charcoal on book page 10" x 13" 2021

Wheel barrow

Acrylic on book page

8" x 11"

2020

Laundry Day

Acrylic, charcoal on book page

8.5" x 11"

2021

Crossroads

Acrylic on book page

6" x 10"

2018

Zvaringana (It is well)

Fabric acrylic and charcoal on book page

8" x 5.5"

2018

Acknowledgements

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WHERE ART, HISTORIES & CULTURES MEET