

TIWANI CONTEMPORARY

Gareth Nyandoro: *Pfumvudza*
23 April – 15 June 2024



Gareth Nyandoro, *Chickens for Sale 1 (Call Now 0735 570829)*, 2024 Mixed Media / Paper Mounted on Canvas
Framed: 120 x 92 x 4 cm / 47 1/4 x 36 1/4 x 1 5/8 in | GNY 104

We are delighted to open our spring solo exhibition with Gareth Nyandoro: *Pfumvudza*. Living in Ruwa, a town 30 minutes' drive from Harare, Nyandoro has been observing and documenting the everyday lives, and informal entrepreneurship of its residents in small to large-scale mixed-media drawings and installations, in his inimitable *kucheka- cheka* style influenced by etching techniques, paper-cutting, assemblage, and props.

The exhibition presents Nyandoro's personal engagement with the concept of *pfumvudza* meaning early shoots, to bloom or thrive, and the name of the 2020 Zimbabwean government-sanctioned programme funded by the UN, advocating citizen self-sufficiency, to help mobilize, train and support families and small crop growers to implement conservation agriculture to restore, and renew the fertility of soil, to grow plots of maize, millet, and wheat to mitigate food insecurity and the decline of large-scale industrial production.

Amidst other challenges on resources such as energy and water; climate change, hyperinflation, lockdowns, and post-pandemic life, are contexts highlighted in this corpus of new and recent works, capturing working-class Zimbabweans thinking about food sustainability, urban farming, economic migration within and outside of Zimbabwe, and resilience.

The Upper Gallery outlines the polarities of the experiences lived during and post the pandemic. In the same year that *Pfumvudza* was introduced, the uncertainties and enforced lockdowns restricting movement and commercial activity caught people stranded, as depicted in Nyandoro's portrait of his Uncle, in *Locked Chill* (paper and ink on wood panel, 2021).

The generally positive uptake of *Pfumvudza* during this period transitioning to present-day circumstances was reportedly met with a spirited industriousness and desire for self-sufficiency and return to 'normal' life as reflected in *Pfumvudza/Maize-cob Steelers* (ink, paper mounted on wood panel, 2021) depicting a grower harvesting and protecting his small crop, and the idyllic, *Greenhouse Trellising* (mixed media, paper, mounted on canvas, 2023) a portrait of Nyandoro; inspired by

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botanical illustrations, this large-scale drawing with three-dimensional forms depicts the trellised tomato plants and their fruits to reimagine the colour, texture and condition of the plant and its yield.

The *Pfumvudza* programme is not exempt from criticism of its longer-term effectiveness and has raised questions as to how small-holder farming will be supported in the future. *Panorama* (mixed media, paper mounted on canvas, 2023) features a lone 'spirit' figure onboard a fishing boat looking through a telescope not for a shoal of fish but for a missing population - an allegory that attests to the reported 84% (Population and Housing Census, 2022, ZIMSTAT, 2023) of the population that have left Zimbabwe to look for employment elsewhere.

Commerce and 'backyard' projects feature in the Lower Gallery capturing chicken rearing and hawker trading. *Chicken Run Setup* (mixed media, paper, mounted on canvas, 2023) reflects the exponential rise of small-scale poultry rearing. Here Nyandoro is influenced by the quotidian aesthetics of market-place advertisement posters being replicated on virtual platforms in *Chickens for Sale #1,2,3 [Call Now 0735 570829]* (mixed media, paper, mounted on canvas, 2024). Zimbabwe has one of the highest interest and inflation rates in the world. The primacy and stability of the US dollar is recreated in its fragile and torn states alluding to its high-frequency usage and value in trading in iterations of *We Buy Torn Dollar Notes #1,2,3* (mixed media, paper mounted on canvas, 2024).

Corner Glenara and Nelson Mandela Hustle (mixed media, paper, mounted on canvas, 2023), captures vendor activity around the intersections of Glenara and Nelson that connects the highway from Zimbabwe to Mozambique. The artist is inspired by the colors, forms and movement of the vendors and their goods which almost look like regalia, and their tenacity to shift shape, adapt and be present across informal and legitimate market spaces as a matter of survival.

About Gareth Nyandoro

Gareth Nyandoro is noted for his large works on paper, which often spill out of their two-dimensional format and into installations that include paper scraps and objects found in the markets of Harare, where he lives and works. The artist's chief source of inspiration is the daily landscape of the city and its residents, both within the local milieu and the larger cultural panorama of Zimbabwe. Inspired by his training as a printmaker, and derived from etching, the artist's distinctive technique, Kucheka-cheka, is named after the infinitive and present tense declinations of the Shona verb cheka, which means 'to cut'.

Recent exhibitions include *I See You*, Tiwani Contemporary, Lagos, Nigeria (group - 2022); *Suburban Bliss*, Althuis Hofland Fine Arts, Amsterdam, Netherlands (solo - 2022); *Maworks*, Van Doren Waxter, New York NY, USA (solo - 2021); *Ruwa*, Tiwani Contemporary, London, UK (solo - 2020); *Read All About It*, Van Doren Waxter, New York NY, USA (2018); *Par Amour du Jeu*, Magasins Généraux, Paris, France (2018); *Drawing Africa on the Map*, Quetzal Art Centre, Vilda de Frades, Portugal (group - 2018); *Five Bhoobh – Painting at the End of an Era*, Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, South Africa (group - 2018); *Stall(s) of Fame*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (solo - 2017); *Kaleidoscope*, Modern Art Oxford, Oxford, UK (group - 2016). Nyandoro won the FT/ OppenheimerFunds Emerging Voices award in 2016 and was a resident at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam, Netherlands in 2014-2015.