

Stall(s) of Fame

Gareth Nyandoro

Private View: Thursday 28 September 2017, 18.30 - 20.30

Exhibition from 29 September to 4 November 2017



Gareth Nyandoro, *Stall(s) of Fame*, 2017, SAM Art Projects Production, Photo: André Morin

Tiwani Contemporary is pleased to present *Stall(s) of Fame*, Gareth Nyandoro's second solo exhibition at the gallery. This is the first time that this new body of work will be exhibited in the UK, following a solo presentation at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, in the summer of 2017. *Stall(s) of Fame* is an immersive installation, partly inspired by the urban landscape of Paris. Nyandoro's new large works on paper, at once graphic and sculptural, cover the floor and take the shape of a quintessentially Parisian urban structure: the *Bouquiniste* stands, wooden boxes used as second-hand bookshops and scattered along the banks of the Seine. Since their inception in the 12th century, these portable bookshops - the earliest examples of which pre-date the invention of the printing press - have actively contributed to the diffusion of new ideas. Well-loved by tourists today, these precursors of mobile commercial practices embody early connections between innovation, mobility and intellectual enlightenment. They also evoke the informal market economy that has been a great source of inspiration for Nyandoro in recent years: most of his output is inspired by markets and street vendors, whose aesthetic flair and sense of entrepreneurship he has always admired.

Rather unexpectedly, upon opening the *Bouquiniste* stand, the viewer is presented not with books but with a number of portraits. Suspended as they are from the top of the box, the light and eerie faces, drawn with precision in a naturalistic style, float gently in the air. These are portraits of footballers, whose influence across the world is arguably as significant today as the books the stands held many centuries ago.

Featuring famous African players such as George Weah and Roger Milla - captured in a moment of victory in what would become known as his 'corner flag celebration' - the work draws parallels between the ancient economy of the book and the recent economy of football. Nyandoro considers the shift - across time and geography - between various cultural manifestations, from literature to popular forms of entertainment such as sports, and asks where we are to locate cultural value and influence today. Other fundamental questions around the commodification and objectification of players point to wider concerns regarding consumerism, celebrity and exploitation in modern capitalist societies.

Fittingly for an exhibition which was partly inspired by the early modes of dissemination of the printed page, the works were produced using Nyandoro's unique *kucheka-cheka* technique, which calls upon his past training in printmaking. Upon preparing an etching, Nyandoro realised he was equally as interested in the engraved copper plate as he was in the print. He thus developed a distinctive working method, derived from etching: using sharp blades, he cut-draws into large pieces of paper and sponges ink onto the surface before removing the top layer of paper with tape. Only ink that is trapped within the deep paper cuts remains visible, along with coils of scrap paper, which Nyandoro often collages onto the work or leaves sprinkled on the floor as indicators of his labour-intensive process.

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About Gareth Nyandoro

Gareth Nyandoro was born in 1982 in Bikita, Zimbabwe and currently lives and works in Harare. He studied Fine Art at the Harare Polytechnic College and the Chinhoyi University of Technology, Zimbabwe. Nyandoro was recently a resident artist with SAM Art Projects, Paris (2017) and at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam (2014 - 2015). He represented Zimbabwe at the 56th Venice Biennale. Recent exhibitions include *Stall(s) of Fame*, (solo exhibition at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2017), *Mutariri* (solo exhibition at National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, 2013), *A Moment of Grace* (Modern Art Oxford, 2016) and *Ipapo Ipapo* (smac gallery, Cape Town, 2016). In 2016, Nyandoro was awarded the FT/OppenheimerFunds Emerging Voices Art Award.

About Tiwani Contemporary

Tiwani Contemporary exhibits and represents international artists focussing on Africa and its diaspora. The gallery presents work through its exhibition programme and participation in art fairs. In addition to its commercial activities, Tiwani Contemporary runs a public programme, *Art Connect*, supported by the A.G. Leventis Foundation. This provides a platform for discussing contemporary artistic practice through publications, talks and projects.

For further PRESS information and images, please contact:

Jessica Jukes: jessica@tiwani.co.uk

Tiwani Contemporary, 16 Little Portland Street, London W1W 8BP +44 (0) 20 7631 3808 / www.tiwani.co.uk

Opening hours: Tuesday – Friday, 11am – 6pm, Saturday, 12pm – 5pm.