

YOLANDA MAZWANA:

'WHAT HER BODY DOES' AN EVOLUTION OF PRACTICE

Something tangible sparks in one's chest when watching the natural progression of an artist's practice.

My first encounter with Yolanda Mazwana's work was during preparations for *'Hiatus'*, a group exhibition curated in September of last year by Christina Leigh Fortune and Nani Mntonintshi at EBONY/CURATED, Cape Town.

The two artworks featured, *'A Blobbing Mess'* and *'Intertwined'*, were installed on the wall alongside my desk and together became soft points of focus in the month that followed. There is an intimacy with which I came to know these works as they met me each day. A companionship felt with the feminine complexity mirrored back to me: devoted, messy, undefined, enraged, vulnerable- yet unwavering in truth.

Meeting Mazwana's practice a little over a year later at Kalashnikovv's curation *'What Her Body Does'*, evoked a familiar feeling of resonance.

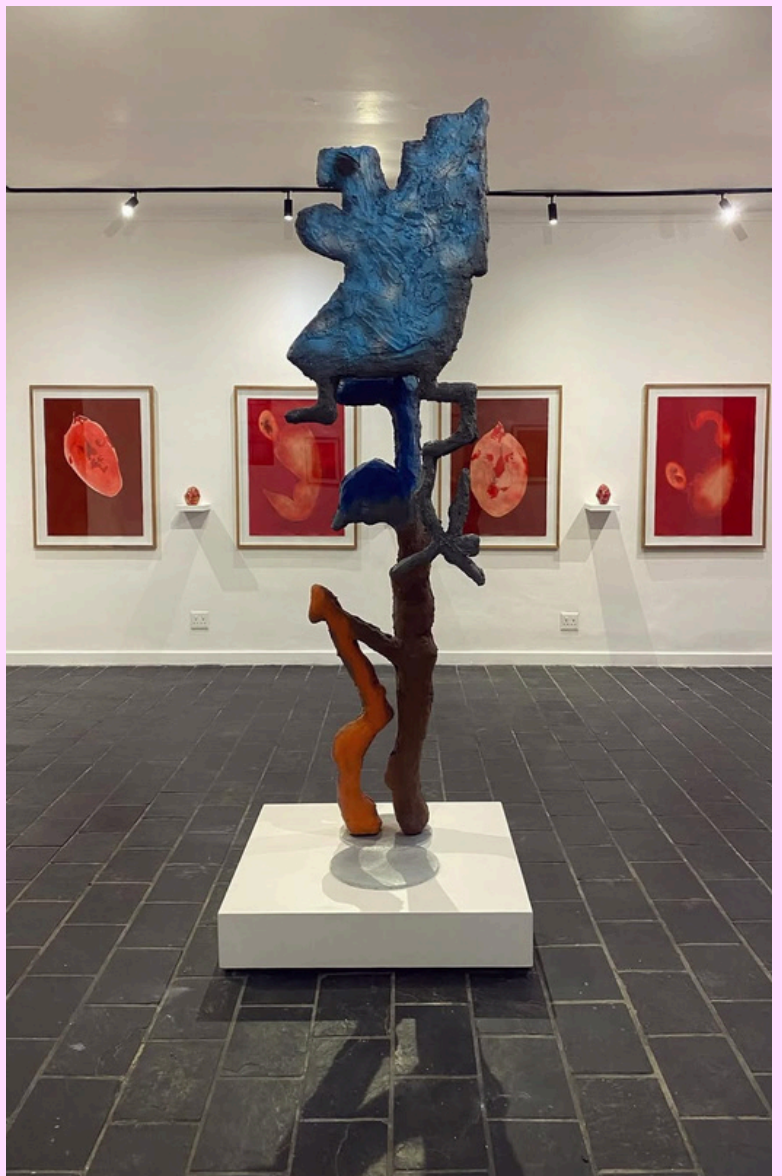


Image: Yolanda Mazwana, *'What Her Body Does'*, Solo Exhibition. Kalashnikovv Gallery, Cape Town.

THE SOFT WALL ARCHIVE.

Rich crimson,
maternal bloodlines,
weighted but floating in a sea of red,
all around, embracing/ confronting you.

Origin- womb space filled with playful
discomfort/ the agony of joy,
tickling the belly of the patriarchal beast.

Ruby root networks seeking to connect
beneath the soil,
comforting/ daydreaming/ the stuff
of nightmares.

The body as vessel:
made hollow, used to hold.
The body as victim: (no need to elaborate
here [#freepalestine](#) [#stopfemicide](#)).
The body as village: site of collective
homemaking, caretaking, outpouring.

out-out-outpouring.

The newness of Mazwana's clay works:
pressed, prodded and pierced, soft,
adorned with warm, splattered glazes.
These sculptural inclusions, curated as
quiet moments of contemplation
between monumental moving forms,
evoke a stirring feeling of what it is to be
held/ handled (with and without care).

The successful contrast in materiality
between these two and three-
dimensional works, tied together by the
same intimate, painterly mark-making
present throughout her solo presentation
and broader portfolio, inspired a
meditation of musings on the evolution of
artistic practice.

And, watching Yolanda Mazwana's
journey over the past year- I remain
eager for what awaits us ahead.

Jade Avigayil Staples, November 2024



Image: Yolanda Mazwana, 'What Her Body Does', Solo Exhibition. Kalashnikovv Gallery, Cape Town.



Image: Yolanda Mazwana (1996-) *A Blobbing Mess*.
Oil Paint, Enamel and Dry Pastel on Fabriano Paper
Varnished in Gloss, 2022. 99 x 70 cm



Image: Yolanda Mazwana (1996-) *Intertwined*.
Acrylic and Oil Paint on Fabriano, 2022. 99.3 x 71 cm.

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✦ Musings ✦

Do the sensations of curiosity, imagination and exploration become so embedded in the fabric of artworks that the essence of discovery meets the viewer the same visceral way it met the artist at the point of its creation? Do the tingles that inspire new territory in studio echo in the viewer's excitement when meeting a known artist in a new place of practice? A shared realisation and joy that something new is unfurling- a community investment in the creative narrative continuously weaved amongst and between us as a collective.

(Weaved through the making, viewing, feeling,
- and writing of art.)
