

Enigma of Origin

Terrence Musekiwa

4 — 8 December 2024

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Solo Presentation by Terrence Musekiwa

Positions | Booth P15

Catinca Tabacaru Gallery for Art Basel Miami 2024

Catinca Tabacaru Gallery proudly presents Enigma of Origin, a solo exhibition by Zimbabwean artist Terrence Musekiwa. Known for his intricate stone and found-object sculptures, Musekiwa merges traditional stone-carving techniques with contemporary sculptural practices, building upon the layered narratives embedded in everyday objects and historical artifacts.

Rooted in Chikaranga heritage, Musekiwa's practice reflects a nuanced, syncretic exploration of the ecological, historical, and socio-political contexts of the African continent. Viewed through this lens, Musekiwa engages in a global dialogue that reveals the interconnected nature of resistance struggles, where histories of oppression and acts of defiance are woven together across temporal and geographic boundaries. Each movement for autonomy or justice resonates beyond its immediate context, linking one to another as part of a shared pursuit of liberation and resilience.

Musekiwa carves heads from a myriad of rare stones specific to mines in Zimbabwe. Most prominent is Springstone, a rich black stone which Musekiwa connects to the ancestral spirits of another realm. He inlays the blackness with red jasper and pastel-green butter jade, recalling scarification practices. Adornments of cowrie shells, pearls, plastic broom fibers, and brass bullet casings sourced from the Salisbury Plain Training Area in the UK—an expansive military site where global powers conduct training – are added to accentuate the works' connection to the socio-political moment.

The bodies of the sculptures range from full figures to totemic forms and hybrid beings, each constructed from recycled materials—copper pipes, bicycle parts, artillery shells, brass plates, internet cabling, and Victorian rings. Through layering, twisting, and interweaving these elements, his figures manifest as hybrid entities, drawing connections between indigenous customs and remnants of global militarization.

Presented atop glass-brick plinths, Musekiwa's works nod to the architectural heritage of post-independence African nations, where glass bricks, influenced by Modernist and Brutalist ideals, came to symbolize resilience and modernity. Soviet and Eastern European architectural collaborators helped shape educational and government buildings in Zimbabwe, incorporating Brutalist designs that expressed stability and progress. In this context, the glass bricks bridge architecture and sculpture, cluing the viewer into the works historical continuity.

This spiritual realm, as channeled by Musekiwa, mirrors humanity itself: a fusion of divine and earthly influences, where cultural resilience meets legacies of governance and occupations by a foreign nations and indirect forms of domination that have created contemporary realities, yet to be fully understood. Musekiwa offers a meditation on the human experience, reminding us that our connection to the divine is woven into the fabric of our everyday lives.