

EveryDAY
Lusaka
GALLERY

ZAMBIA
BELONGING

Mwaiseni Mukwai



Maingaila Muvundika | Solo

Curated by Sana Ginwalla
Writing by Shilika Chisoko

October 4th 2025 – November 15th 2025
Everyday Lusaka Gallery



Mwaiseni Mukwai

Mwaiseni Mukwai

Catalogue and Reader

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Mwaiseni Mukwai

- Shilika Chisoko

When we look at these images, we believe them, for they tell us a little about how these people imagine themselves. We see these images in terms determined by the subjects themselves, for they have made them their own. They belong and circulate in the domain of the private – Santu Mofokeng in The Black Photo Album/Look at Me: 1890-1900s.

In his sophomore solo exhibition Mwaiseni Mukwai, Maingaila Muvundika continues his critical exploration of the quotidian and fraught aspects of Zambian life. The exhibition is a literal open invitation to engage with the family album as a conceptual, personal and political vehicle through which Black Zambian families and individuals curate intimate perusals of their lives. Questioning the result of this personal intervention on how one is perceived by others, Muvundika simultaneously asks: “how has the Black Zambian’s relationship with photography evolved over time?”

Photographs are a distinct medium of documentation in that they demand immediate belief, which entails that images – as presented in photo albums – construct seemingly uncontested narratives. This point is excellently driven home in the obscured and shadowy musings that appear in the pages of the exhibition. Muvundika probes the accuracy and evolution of memory and the archive through image (re)productions made on linocuts and photographs. He is equally concerned with the fragility of these concepts and how susceptible they are to intangible and tangible damage and/or decay. The subjects of the images in this exhibit are just as important as the state in which they are presented. Some images appear discoloured, punctured, torn or generally bear signs of wear and tear. Here, Muvundika draws us to the complexities of the archival process and remembering.

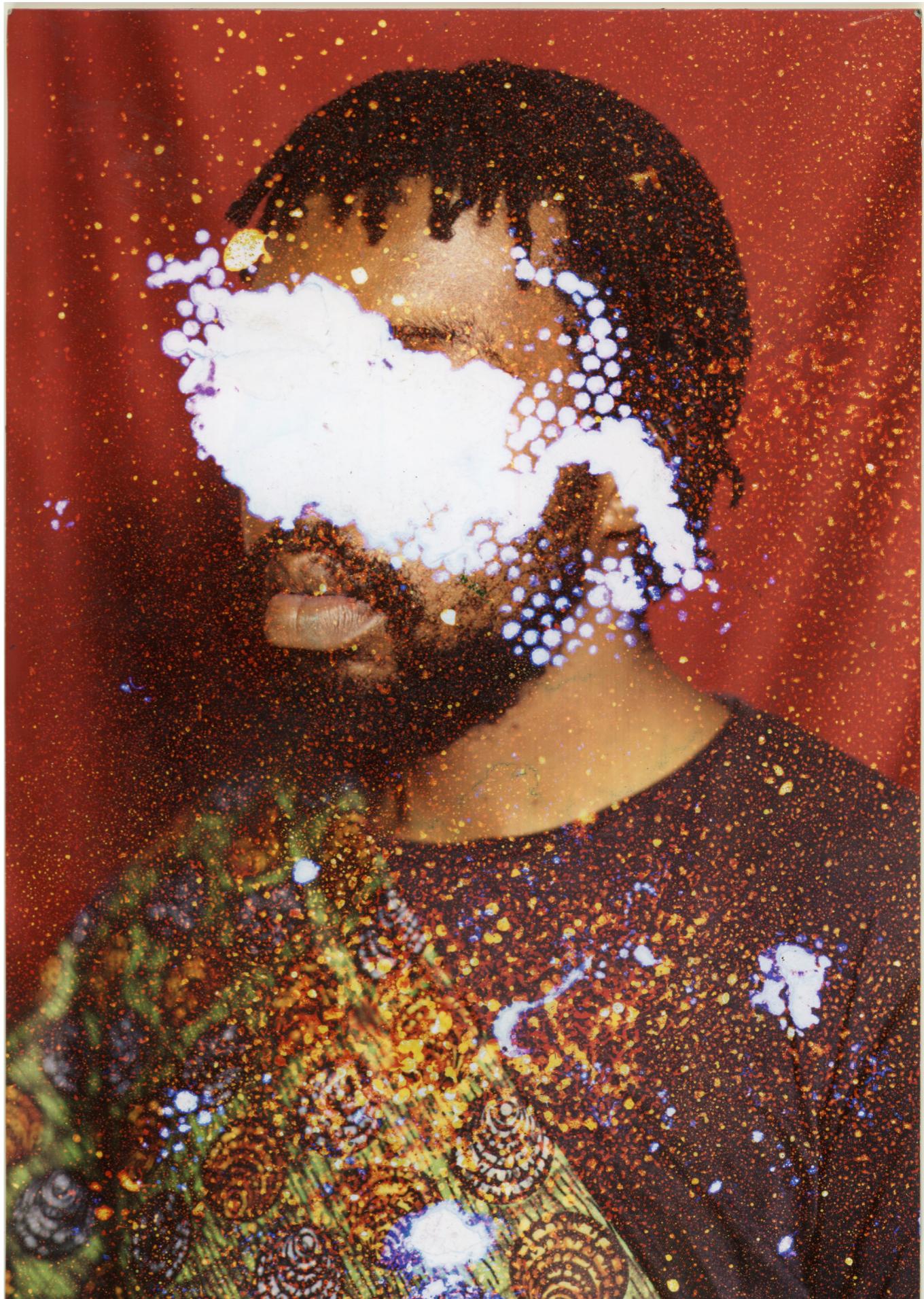
Oscillating between overt and direct referrals

to these thematic concerns, Muvundika makes parallel observation around how one’s image is constructed for the public. Considering that photography was brought into Zambia as a byproduct of colonial domination, Muvundika observes how the Black Zambians relationship with photography has historically been tainted with surveillance and skepticism. As the colonial state rapidly expanded, the need for labour grew with it. This labour force of predominantly Black Zambians was heavily documented by the colonial officers to further expand and justify the imperial agenda.

In early post-independence Zambia, photographic equipment remained to be a luxury, which meant that many working-class people had limited options to create a self-determined photographic representation. It was in quasi-public spaces such as the photo studio or with passerby photographers or ba ‘snap and give’ that one could be “captured”. As film and digital cameras became more accessible in the early 1990s, image production moved into the domestic space for many families.

Muvundika directly draws inspiration from these various eras with pieces that feel like a performance of poise. This performance could be said to be a reclamation of dignity by the once subjugated body or plainly, the desire to be seen at one’s best. Artworks like Motoka ya First and Bale Bomba Sana Bashi Mwana reference these intimate yet universal moments that recorded posed and candid milestones. These memories were placed in photo albums that were given to visitors to look through as a form of entertainment.

Mwaseni Mukwai is a timely interrogation of our relationship with photography and its resulting effects on the construction of individual and shared identity and history. A reminder and reflection of photography’s power a means of storytelling and (self) preservation.



Bali Temenwe Ku Studio, 2025

Multi-Media Collage: Block Prints & Watercolour
on Paper

47 x 59cm

K10,000



Bali Temenwe Abana Babo, 2025

Multi-Media Collage: Block Prints,
Spray Paint & Watercolour on Paper

47 x 59cm

K10,000



Icilio Caba Joe, 2025

Multi-Media Collage: Block Prints,
& Watercolour on Paper

47 x 59cm

K10,000



Ku Bwinga 1, 2025

Multi-Media Collage: Block Prints,
Spray Paint & Watercolour on Paper

47 x 59cm

K10,000





The Zambian Photo Album

Tenderness and vulnerability underpin this segment of the exhibit, evoking familiarity in one sense and provocativeness in another. While the viewer is openly invited to peak into intimate moments of life, there is an aspect of this experience that feels intrusive. Are we welcome to view these images? Muvundika's artworks beckon viewers to decide.

A mixture of documented successes, humor, love and loss, these images lay bare various aspects of Zambian life and touch on how easily these moments can be lost to time for reasons more political than one would suspect. Muvundika artworks triumph at reminding the viewer of the fissures in the individual and collective visual archive owing to a fraught history of self-determination. Placing images like *Uncle Rex on Independence Day* alongside Mainga's *First School Pageant* draws our attention to the air of necessity that characterized early photographs of Black Zambians. These titles imply that these occasions were important, but the images appear damaged - Why? Muvundika asks. This proud presentation of significant moments occurs despite the visible wear and tear of images, suggesting that the damage is not intentional.

The damage, thus, serves as a reminder of the limitations Black Zambians have historically faced in archiving their images. Archiving is a process that requires extensive resources and an affordance of value. The historically limited access to photography also extended to archiving materials, and with a relationship to photography born from necessity, it is no wonder that images that may have been deemed frivolous faded away in cupboards or under newspapers.

Nonetheless, these worn and torn images defiantly feature in *The Living Room*. This reflects the desire for self-determination by Zambians irrespective of social, political and economic barriers. Although the image *The Only Photo of Great-Grand Pa* is obscured, it is there, reminding us not to forget the subject of the photograph. Muvundika brings forth the personal archive into the public sphere, prompting viewers to engage with the difficult histories that characterise Black Zambian photography and their resilience through it all.

-Shilika Chisoko

Ku Bwinga 2, 2025

Multi-Media Collage: Spray Paint & Canvas Photo Transfer on Paper

47 x 59cm

K10,000



Iseni Mumone 1, 2025

Multi Media Collage: Block Print & Photo Printed
on Paper

21 x 29.7cm

K3,500



Iseni Mumone 2, 2025

Multi Media Collage: Block Print & Spray Paint
on Paper

21 x 29.7cm

K3,500

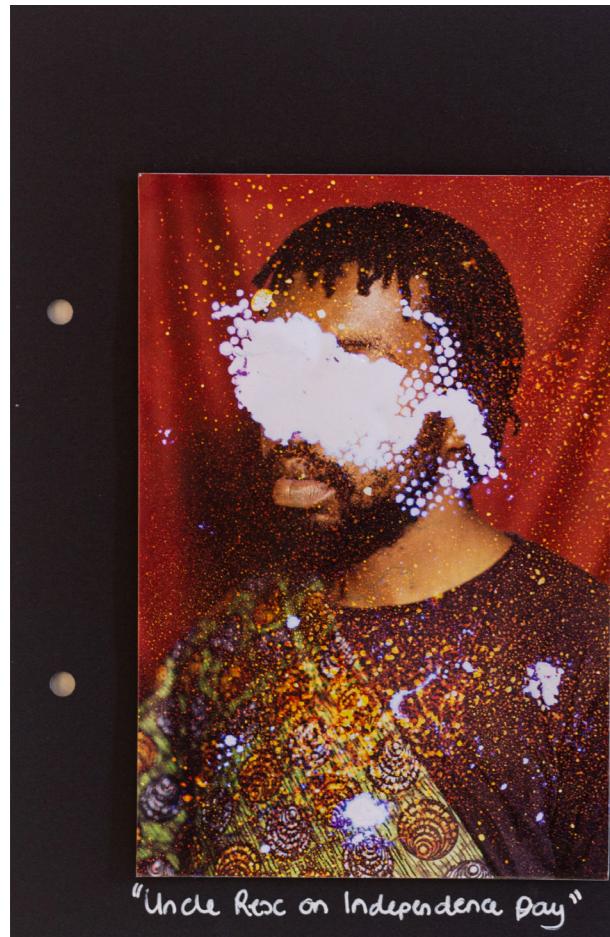


Iseni Mumone 3, 2025

Multi Media Collage: Block Print & Photo Printed
on Paper

21 x 29.7cm

K3,500



Iseni Mumone 4, 2025

Multi Media Collage: Block Print & Spray Paint
on Paper

21 x 29.7cm

K3,500

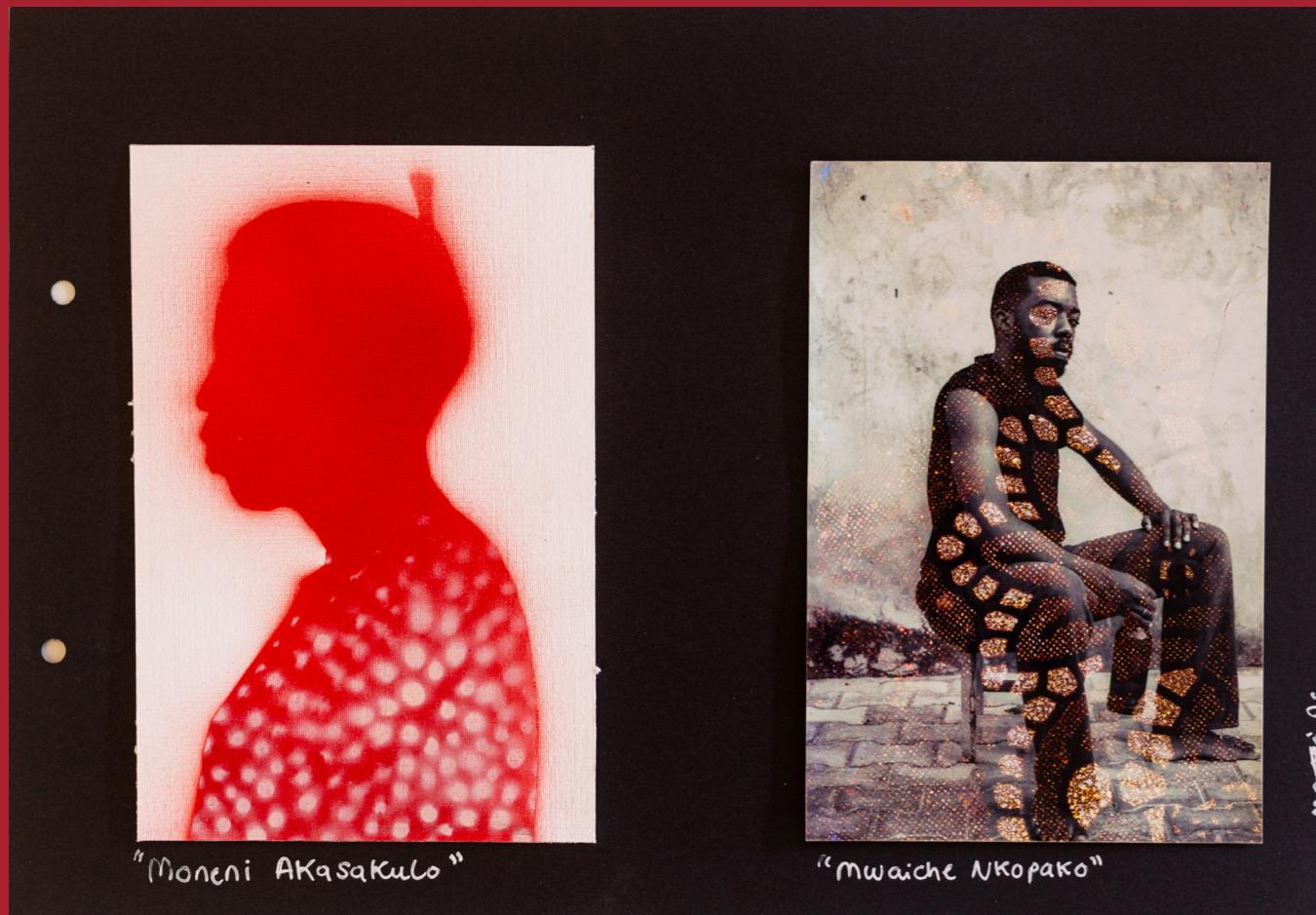


Iseni Mumone 5, 2025

Multi Media Collage: Photo Printed on Paper & Spray Paint on Paper

21 x 29.7cm

K3,500



Iseni Mumone 6, 2025

Multi Media Collage: Photo Printed on Paper & Spray Paint on Paper

21 x 29.7cm

K3,500

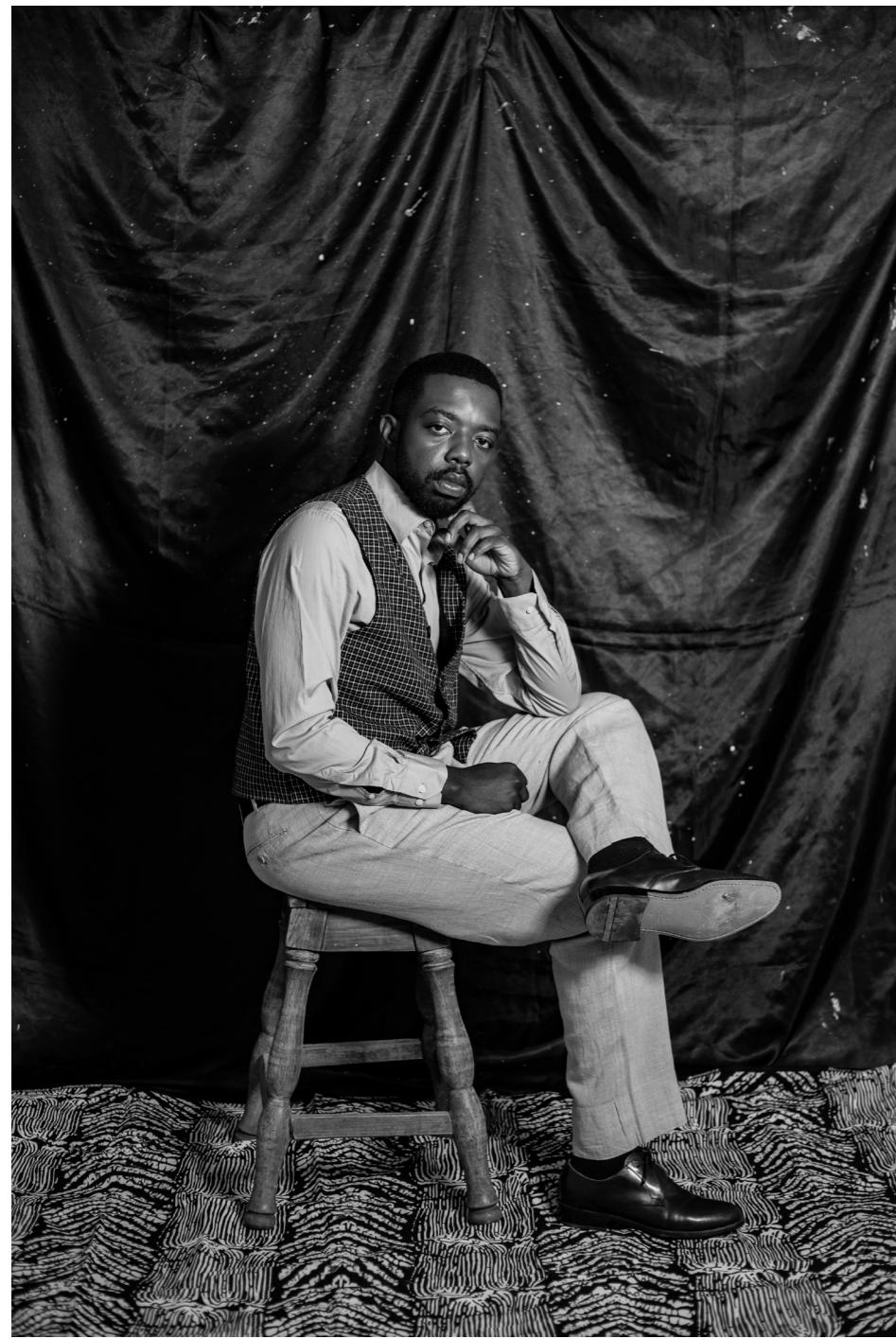


Studio Session I, 2025

Photo Print on Matte Paper

29 x 34cm

K4,500



Studio Session II, 2025

Photo Print on Matte Paper

29 x 34cm

K4,500



Corrupting Influences, 2025

Spray Paint and Water Based Ink
Block Prints on Canvas

130 x 179cm

K12,000

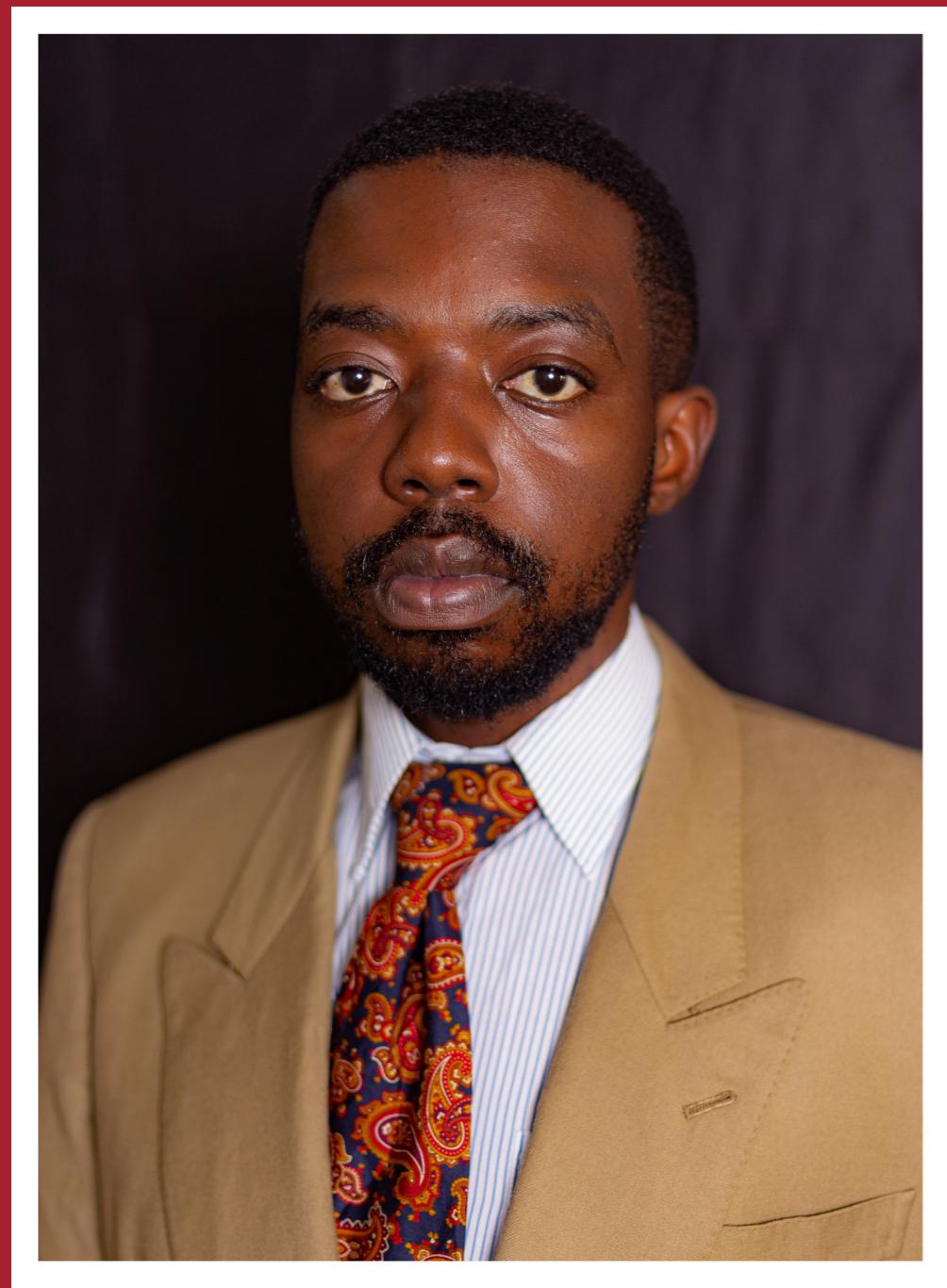


Wall Portrait, 2025

Photo Print on Gloss Paper

48.5 X 69.5cm

Not for sale



The Self Portrait

"The world is not accepting of our true forms." - Maingaila Muvundika

The repeated shadows of portraits we see in Mwaiseni Mukwai appear and disappear like ghosts in and out of the family archive. Maingaila makes a commentary about how our public selves are a form of masking and "code-switching". Yet even so, that image is constructed, misconstrued or pedestalled by the public. In abstracting and obscuring compositions of face, Maingaila exercises self-censorship to reclaim control of his perception. He borrows his own likeness and form and intentionally omits features that would make him identifiable to the public. These self-portraits become Maingaila's self-determined expression of how he wants to be seen.

The discourse around the public image extends into surveillance with National ID, where ID photographs found at Fine Art Studios sit alongside Maingaila's own ID photograph. Here, the artist assesses the relationship between photography, bureaucracy, surveillance, and how one presents themselves for official or national purposes. These compositions subvert Maingaila's public perception, using his own image as a point of inquiry to explore the threshold between how we present ourselves and how we are perceived.

-Sana Ginwalla



Calculated Damage

Adapted from an excerpt written about a Zambia Belonging and Studio 225 collaboration for Hapax Magazine, Issue #2

A Photo of Ba Joe, 2025

Photo Printed on Paper

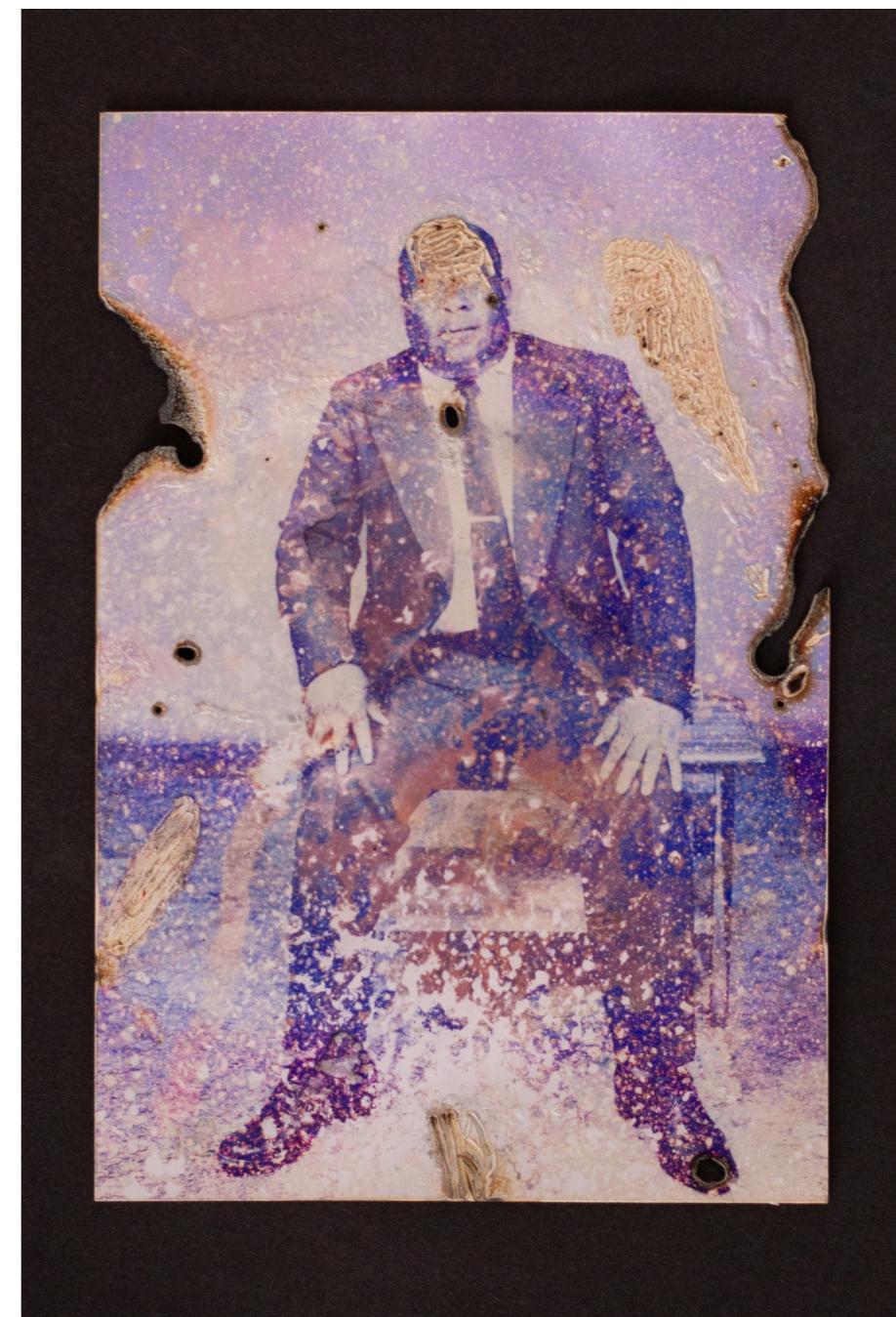
10 x 15cm

K1,000



The process of moving in and out of the archive... (brought rise to images that can be qualified into the realm of what we call a 'calculated damage' and rejection. Damaged by time, rejected by memory... This violence of re-imaging and reimaging was a response to and protest of institutional archives and their rules of engagement. By creating damage, we create a problem - one that addresses how we engage with structures that have otherwise left the vast majority unnoticed... This conscious control of damage speaks to the control of problematic narratives of seen and unseen histories that we seek to expose. The context we create around this image becomes the identity of the work. The images that were not only damaged by their environment but also damaged in memory.

-Sana Ginwalla



Ku Bulaya II, 2025

Photo Printed on Paper

10 x 15cm

K1,000



Ku Bulaya I, 2025

Photo Printed on Paper

10 x 15cm

K1,000



Mirror II, 2025

Oil Based Ink & Spray Paint on Canvas

91 x 69cm

K8,000

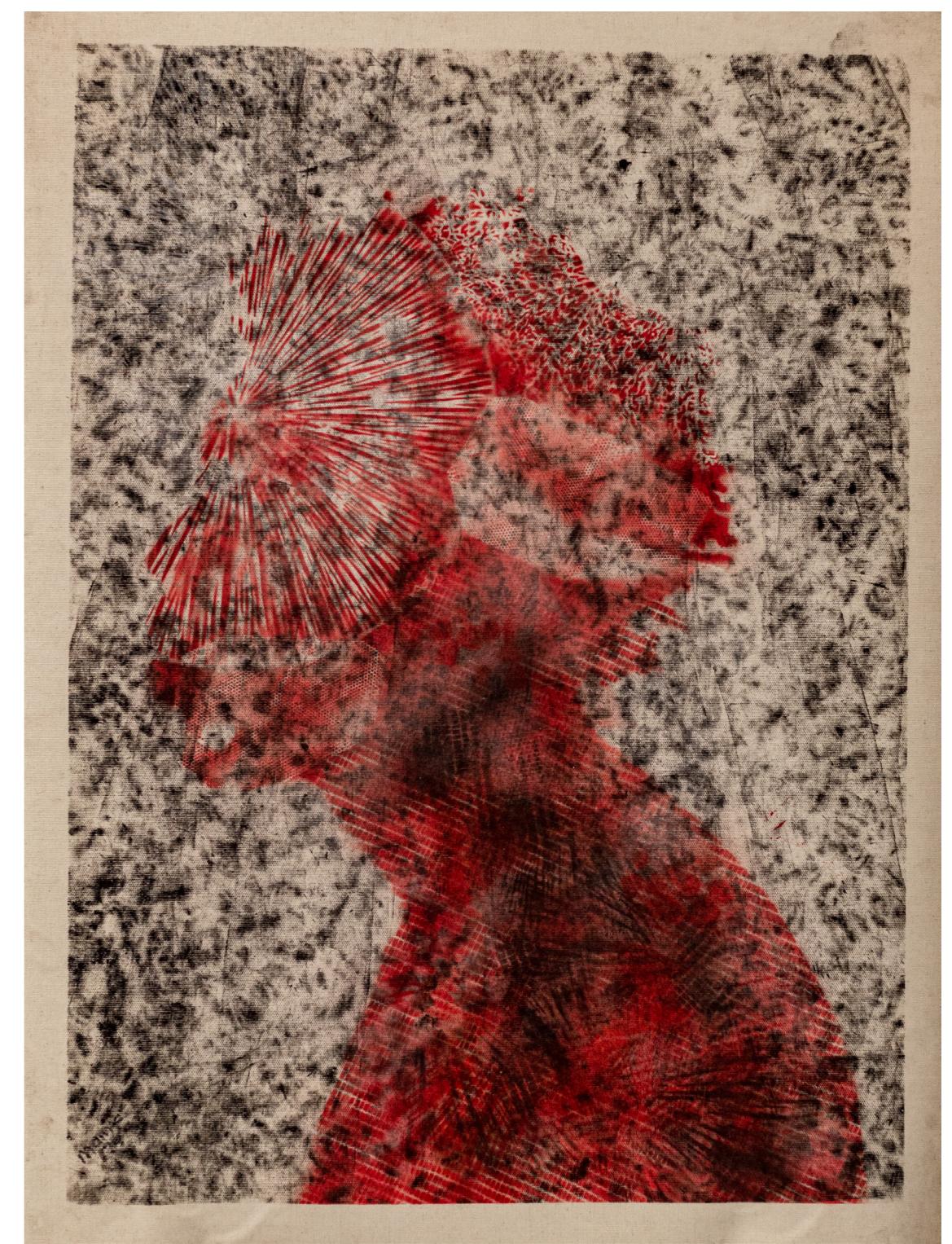


Mirror I, 2025

Oil Based Ink & Spray Paint on Canvas

91 x 69cm

K8,000



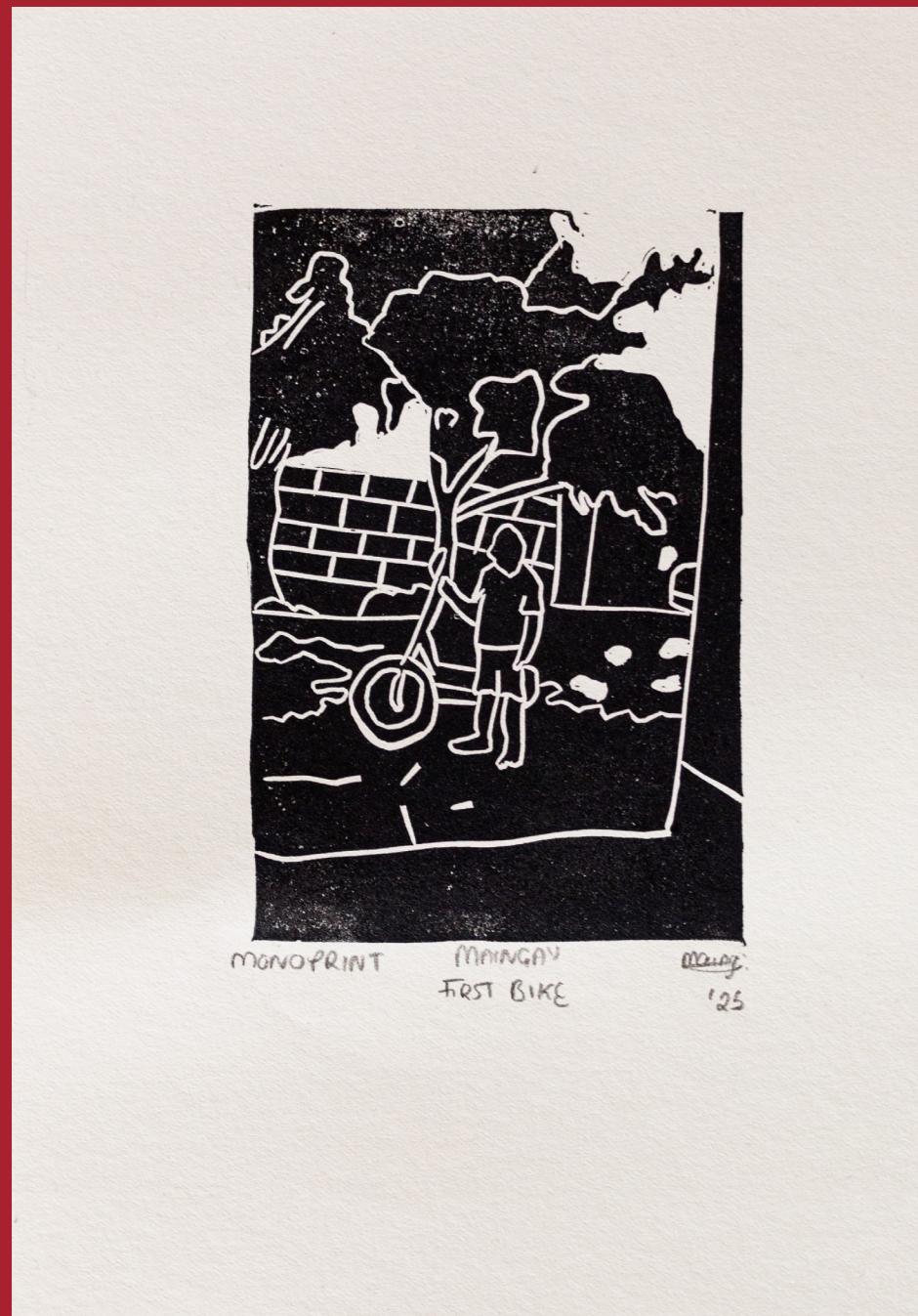


Mainga's First Bike, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

29.7 x 21cm

K2,500

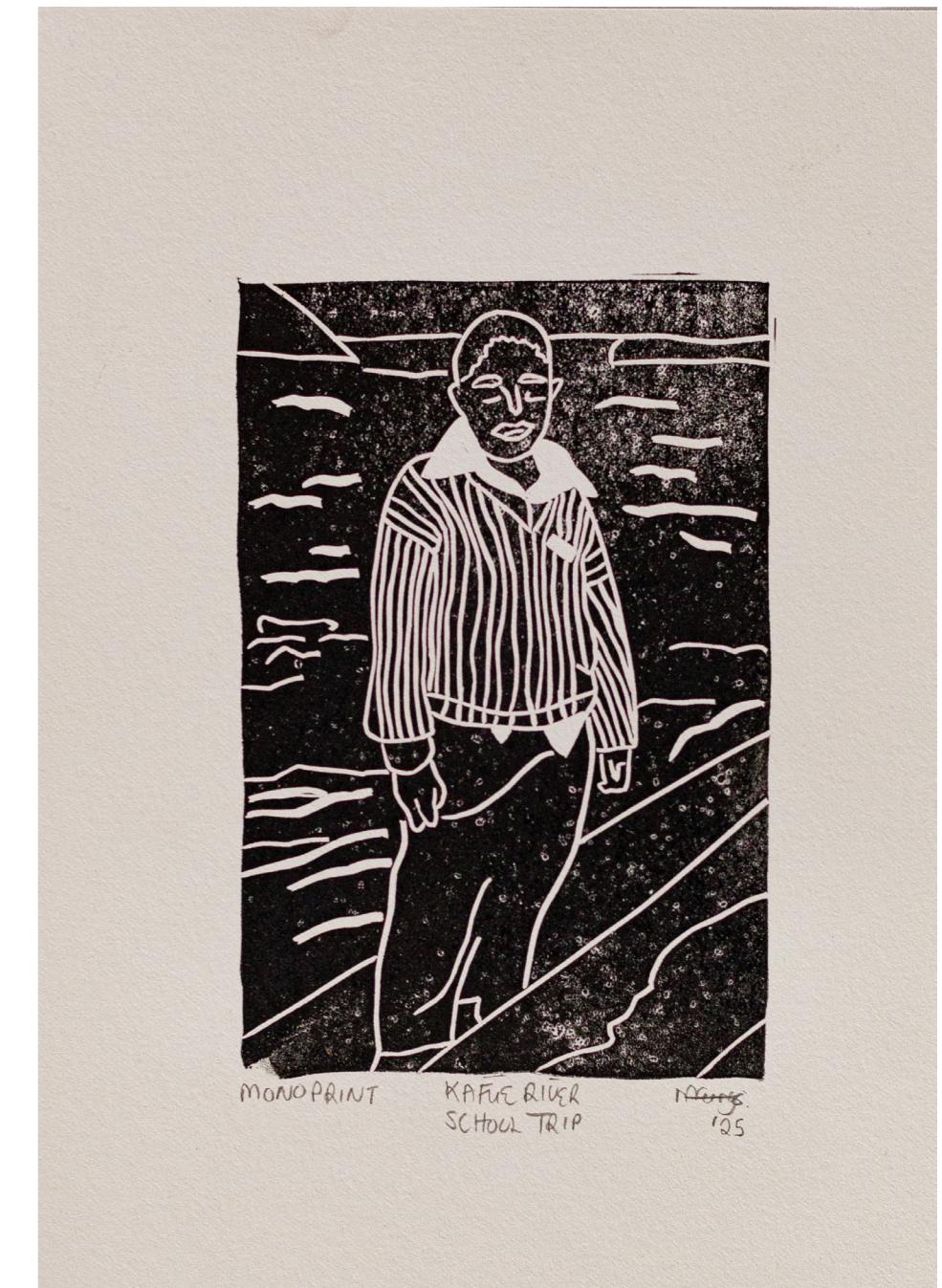


Kafue River, School Trip, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

29.7 x 21cm

K2,500



Apa Ali Ku Matero, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

29.7 x 21cm

K2,500

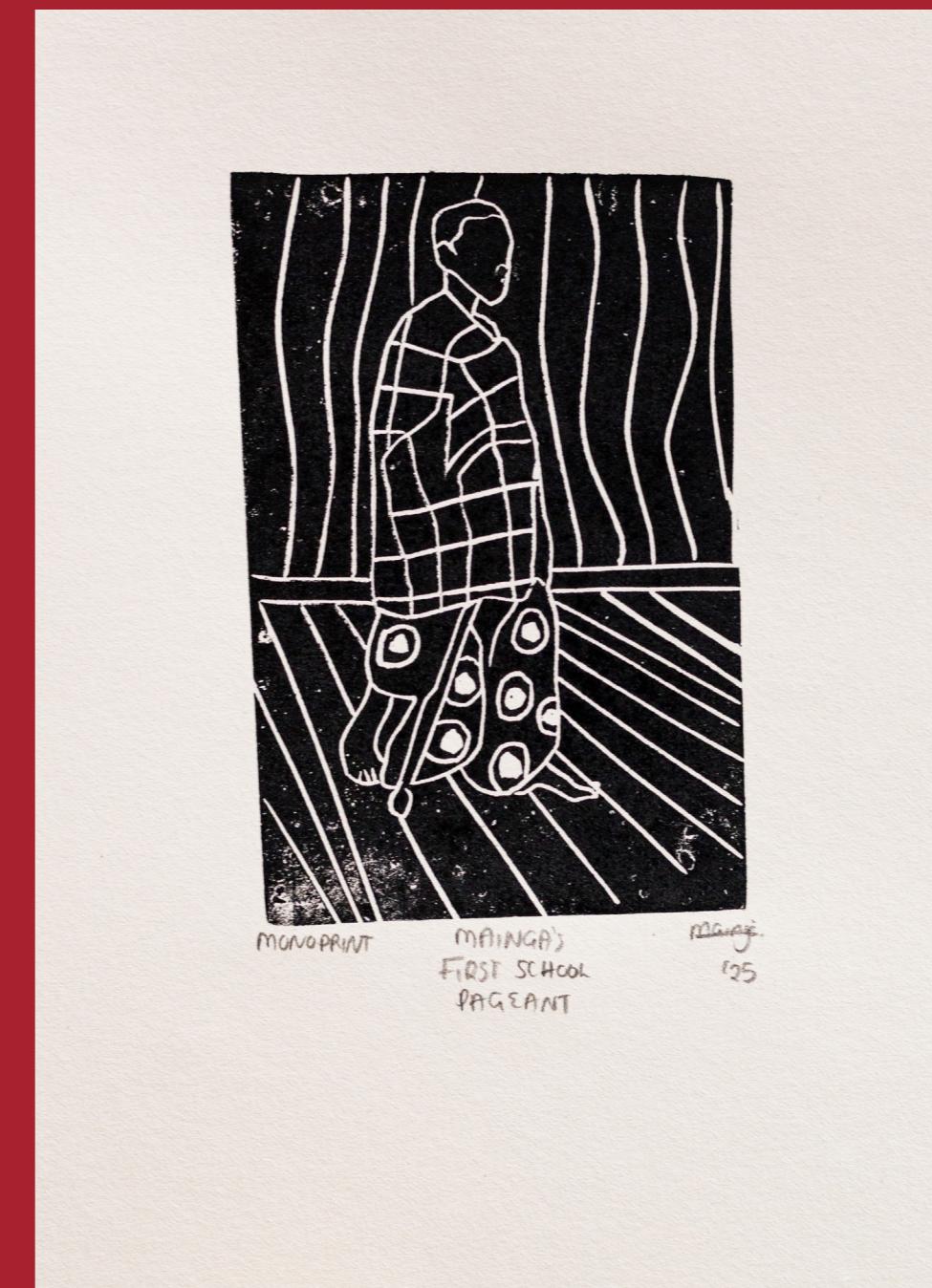


Mainga's First School Pageant, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

29.7 x 21cm

K2,500



Family Portrait, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

23.7 x 35cm

K4,500

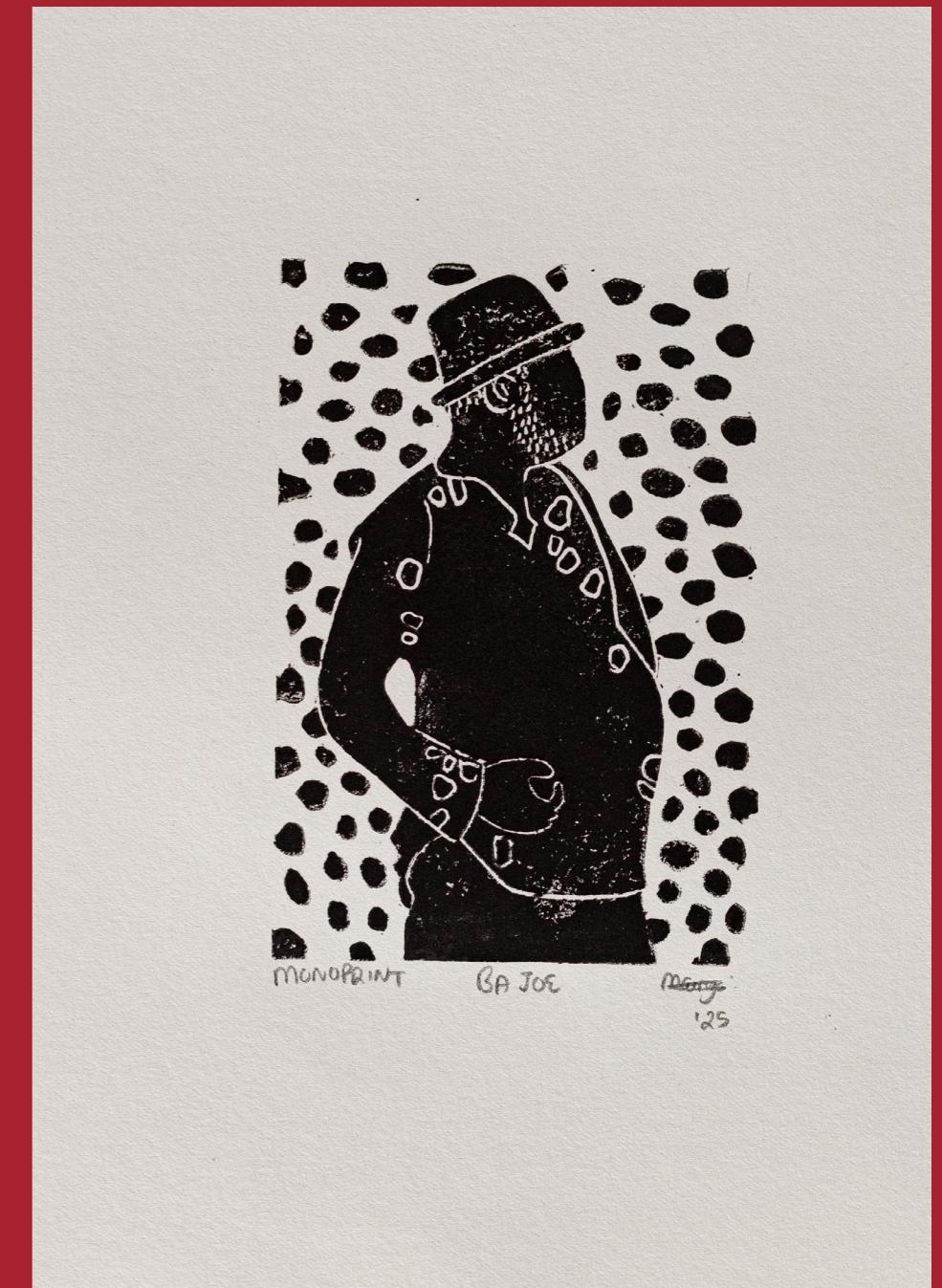


Ba Joe, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

29.7 x 21cm

K2,500

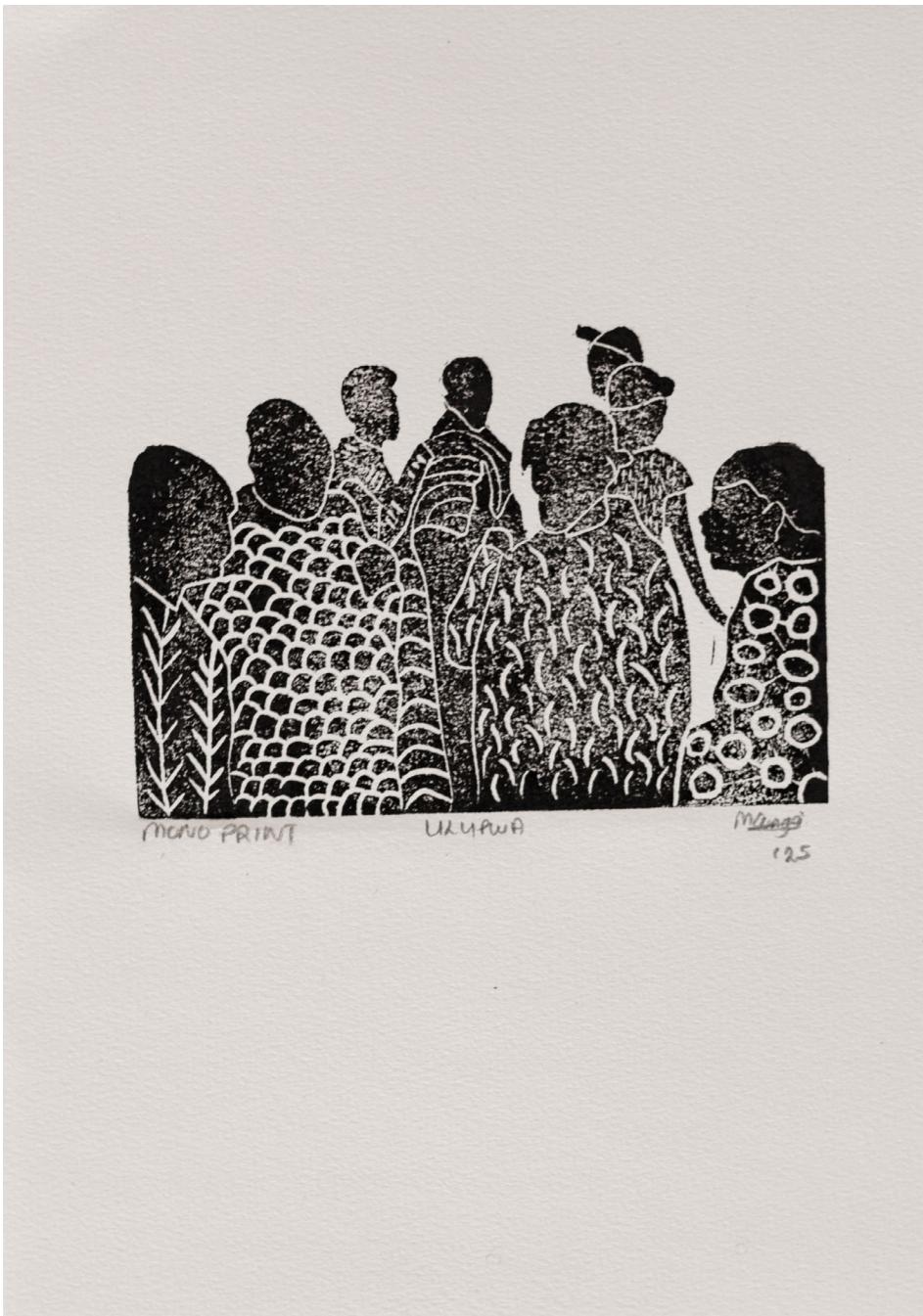


Ulupwa, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

29.7 x 21cm

K2,500

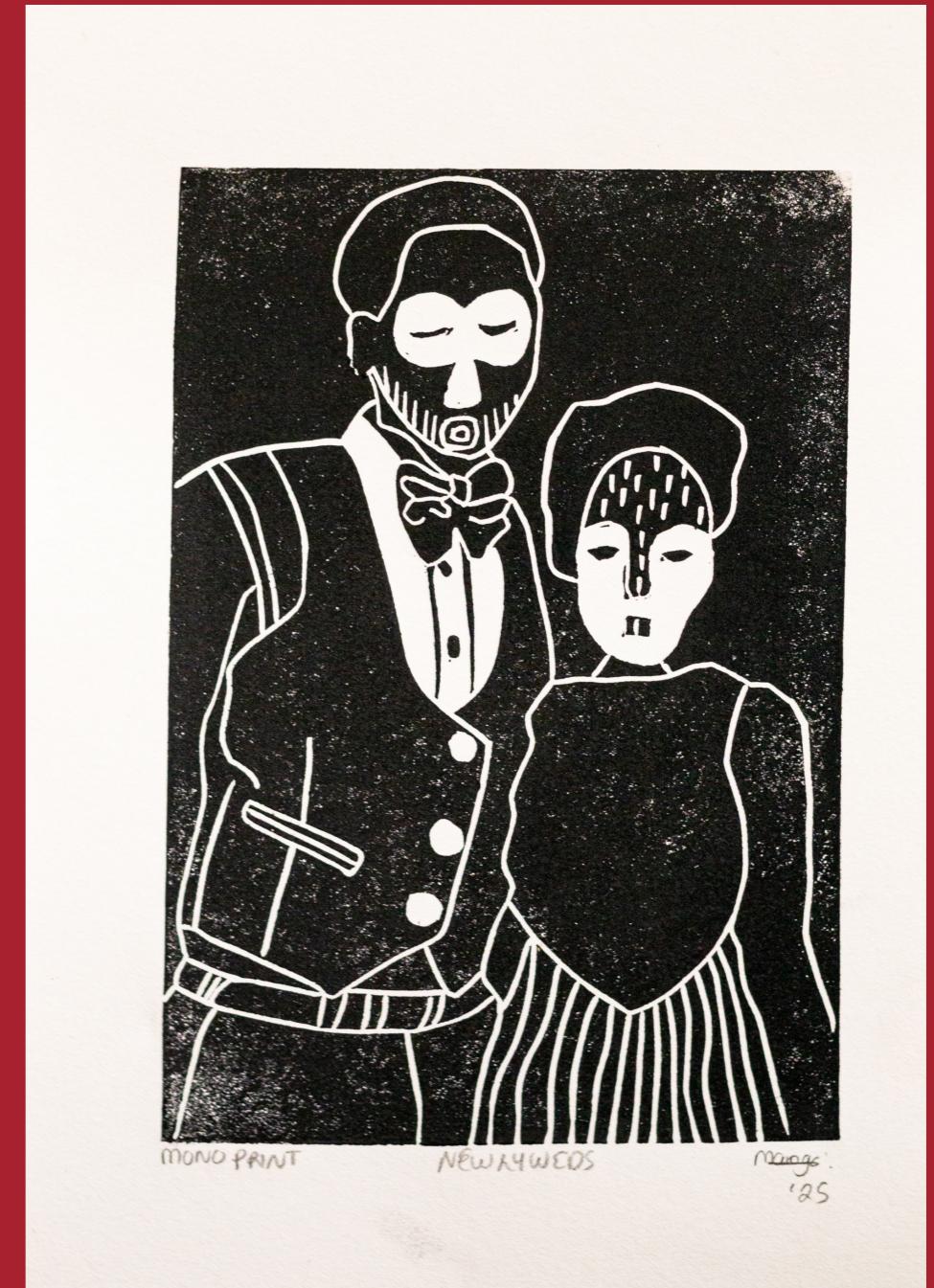


Newly Weds, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

29.7 x 21cm

K2,500



Isaac, 2025

Spray Paint , Photo Printed on Paper

10 x 15cm

K1,000



Nkopako Mwaiche II, 2025

Photo Printed on Paper

10 x 15cm

K1,000



Pallbearers, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

29.7 x 21cm

K2,500

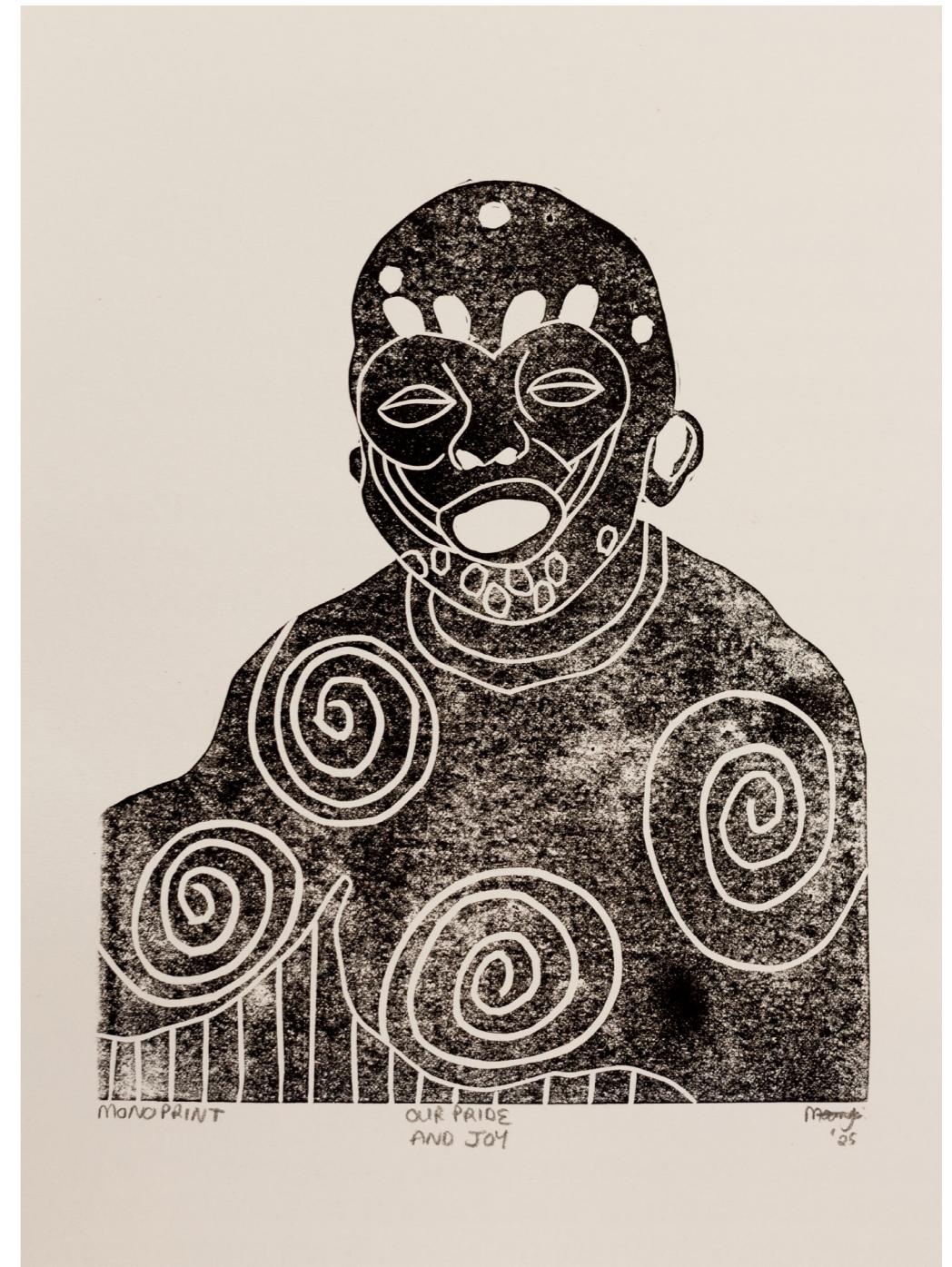


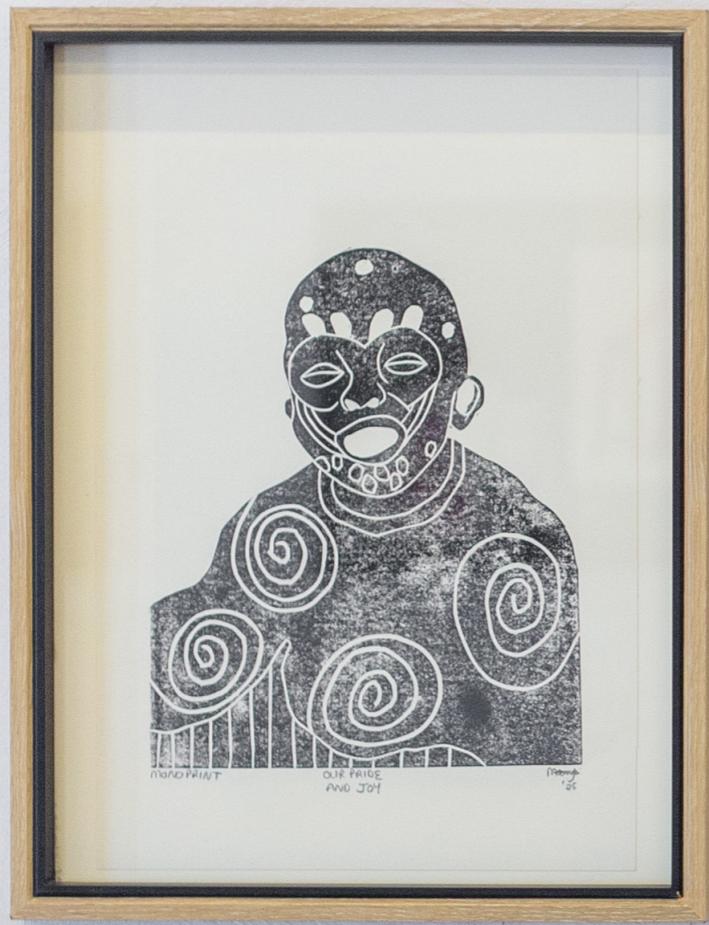
Our Pride and Joy, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

23.7 x 35cm

K4,500





The Boys , 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

23.7 x 37.5cm

K4,500

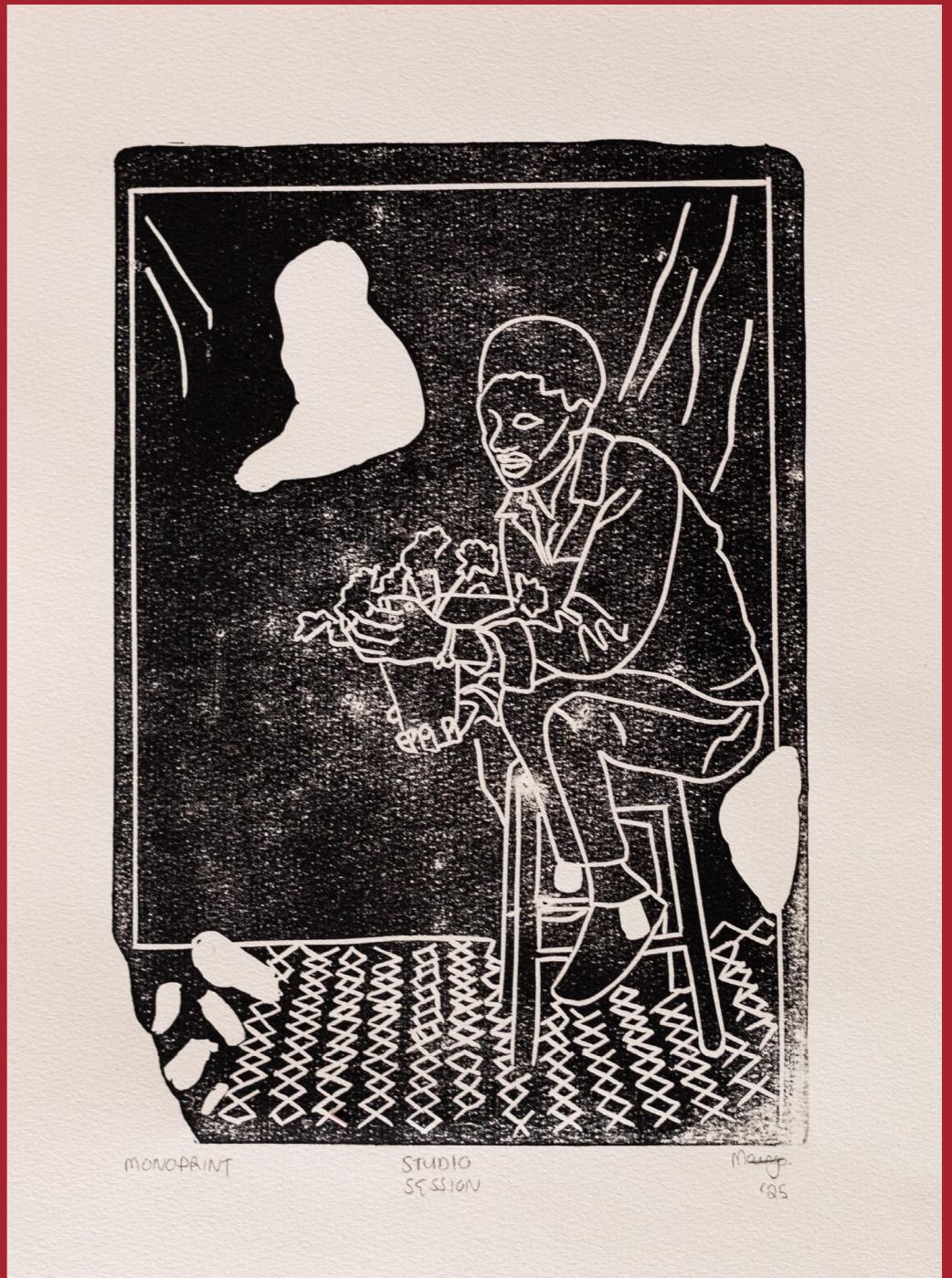


Studio Session, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

23.7 x 37.5cm

K4,500



Combs I, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 19.5cm

K2,500



Combs II, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 21.3cm

K2,500

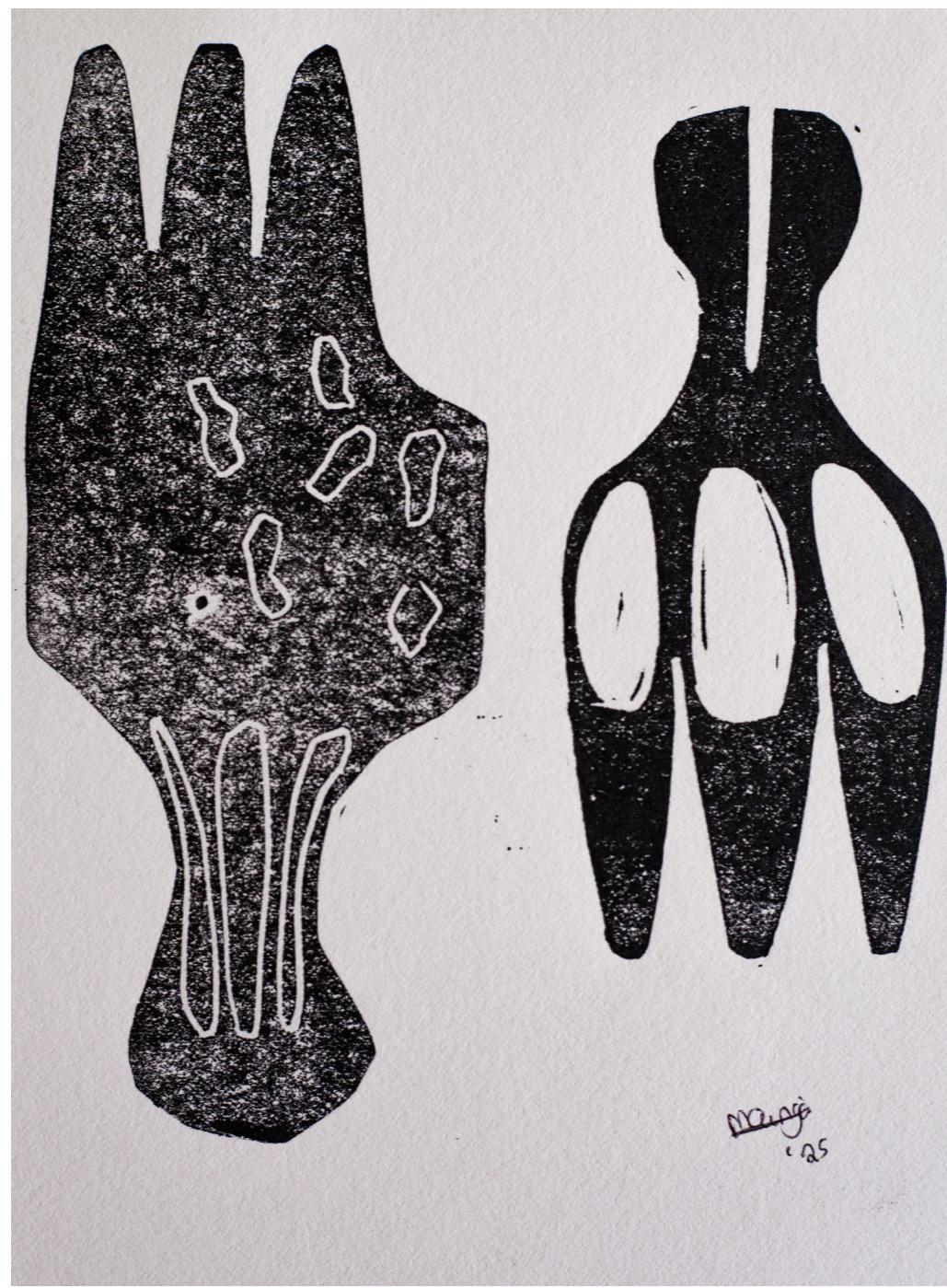


Combs III, 2025

Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 19.5cm

K2,500



Combs IV, 2025

Water Based and Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 19.5cm

K2,500



Combs V, 2025

Water Based and Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 19.5cm

K2,500



Combs VI, 2025

Water Based and Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 19.5cm

K2,500



Combs VII, 2025

Water Based and Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 19.5cm

K2,500



Combs VIII, 2025

Water Based and Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 19.5cm

K2,500



Combs IX, 2025

Water Based and Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 19.5cm

K2,500



Combs X, 2025

Water Based and Oil Based Ink Block Print on Paper

14.8 x 19.5cm

K2,500



The Cambridge Graduate, 2025

Photo Transfer and Spray Paint on Canvas

28.5 x 20.5cm

K3,000



ID, 2025

Spray paint, Oil based ink and assemblage on Canvas

101 x 86.5cm

Not for sale



The Artist to His People

How do we capture syncretic discourse in camera? Street photography of the 1970s in Africa and Asia often revelled in the lasting colonial legacies or the exotic distance we held with people who lived in these lands. Photography distanced and celebrated curiosity as a marker of a people who weren't amongst us. The native documentary photographer was the informer.

Mainga who is born in the year before the millennium in a century where digital production of photography would be available in the quotidian - where a generation photographing themselves would have all the tools, filters and poses to make commentaries of their existence. Mainga instead obscures it with layers, where a digital decoupage happens but sometimes he does so manually where he pastes portraits of himself onto cutouts from magazines. Creating a narrative close to his imagination. An imagination that does not subscribe to how we perceive the truth.

Photography was designed to speak the truth in the media, but within a few decades of its invention people began using techniques to morph reality through photos. Right now with deep fakes and Instagram profiles where an alter ego comes into display - we face a personal myth making in epic measures. Mainga's practice in photography is subversive of the roles men play in traditional African society. How what is expected of them becomes a charade of who they actually are. Mainga makes himself the muse of a narrative where he practices the truth as it is to be perceived by humans - a reflection of who he is.

The Lebanese photographer Akram Zataari depicts the post-war Lebanese landscape through a queer vision. By unearthing the archives of photo studios in rural Lebanon he excavates queer histories among women from an era where Lebanese across confessions came together celebrating a post-colonial nation. Mainga is keen to creatively document the interactions between the tribes that define Zambia's Christian society. How middle-class Zambians live in multi-racial compounds that other the large Zambian society through labour – maids and a gardener.

Much like the South African artist Zanele Muholi who have made self-portraiture and portraits a vocabulary to speak about gender, race and sexuality and have move their portraits out of the two dimensionality of the photo to bronze sculpture, Mainga has moved his practice to linocut block prints on paper. He suspends them one a string that resembles a wash line, as if we are drying something private, here he depicts men and women at labour. How people from the working class in Zambia move about the city to make a living. How their bodies become sculptural tributes to hard work. The clothes they wear adjust to the needs of the work they intend to do. These portraits make Mainga into a poet. A poet from the grassroots.

The Cameroonian-Nigerien photographer Samuel Fosso depicts himself and others in portraits transformed through modes of popular culture such as painting. Mainga has a global inheritance in art and he intends to depict his people not with the eyes to the exotic or in terms of visual vocabulary that turn away from the truth. He is keen to work amongst his audience, becoming the artist to his people - they of Zambia.

- Sumesh Manoj Sharma



Biographies

Maingaila Muvundika is a Lusaka-based conceptual artist who uses photography, digital collage and printmaking to explore human interactions within Zambia's diverse, syncretic society. His work subverts traditional portrayals of being, offering layered, imaginative narratives that challenge conventional notions of identity, truth, and societal roles.

In 2024 he participated in "Re-entangling the Visual Archive", a collaboration between Cambridge University Libraries, Anglia Ruskin University and Zambia Belonging funded by the University of Cambridge's Collections-Connections Communities Strategic Research Initiatives that set out to address inequalities of access to archives and encourage confident, innovative and creative engagements with challenging connections. In 2024, Maingaila was an artist-in-residence at Modzi Arts, where he presented his debut solo print exhibition "UNBECOMING". He also participated in "Two Lizards Sharing One Stomach" a collaboration between Modzi Arts and embassy in Hamburg Germany 2023. In 2024, he was part of the Inaugural Zamstock photography exhibition "Xtreme Photography to Inspire" curated by Ronee T. Mushipee, this was the first fully photographic exhibition Lechwe Trust Gallery has held.

Muvundika is an alumni of Unpunished Africa's Creative Business Studio, 2024. He first exhibited with the Unpublished Africa in 2022 as part of "Narratives Unpublished" in Harare and later "City Life: Resilience" at Pikiha Gallery, Harare in 2023. Muvundika is also a mentee of Through The Lens Collective, an African photography educational platform, specialising in artist mentorship.

His commercial photographic practice has earned him numerous grants, partnerships and placements. In 2021, Muvundika was selected for the Canva Represents Fund, designed to seek out, support, and champion talented artists from underrepresented communities around the world. His work has been featured on leading photography platforms including Tender Photo, PhotoVogue and i-D. In 2024, he was the recipient of Grantsy by Stocksy. The aim of Grantsy is to help contributors with the production of work focusing on content themes outlined in their Client Wishlists.

Recently, his work was exhibited at Stranger's House Gallery in Mumbai in The Material Turn curated by George Varley, Shamooda Amrelia and Prabhakar Kamble. Maingaila was also an exhibitor at the 2025 India Art Fair with the Young Collector's Programme. In 2025, Maingaila was also featured in Through Southern Eyes: Narratives In Focus by Bakashimika International Festival in Sharjah, UAE as part of Xposure Festival. In June 2025, he was an exhibitor in the Inaugural Bakashimika Photography Festival in Lusaka, Zambia. In July 2025, he was part of "The Cairo Road" a group exhibition at Stranger's House Gallery in Mumbai curated by Sana Ginwalla.

Shilika Chisoko is a Zambian writer, photographer and academic who is interested in self-representation and meaning making practices. Her research interests include contemporary African Literature, Zambian Women's literature, Black and African feminist epistemologies and representation practices on digital media platforms. Chisoko was shortlisted for the 2023 E.E. Sule/SEVHAGE Prize for African Literary Criticism and her writing has featured in publications such as Nkwazi Magazine and Narratives of closeness and distance from Central-Eastern and South-Eastern Africa- a multicontextual patchwork (an anthology). She holds a Master of Arts in English Studies from Stellenbosch University, a BA(Hons) and a BA from Rhodes University, both in Journalism and English Literature. Chisoko is currently working as a communications professional in Lusaka, Zambia.

Sana Ginwalla is an Indian-Zambian artist, curator, writer and lecturer born, raised and based in Lusaka. She is the founder of the *Everyday Lusaka Gallery* and *Zambia Belonging* counter-archive – curatorial and artistic outputs dedicated to shifting towards a more considered visual representation of Zambia's past and present to build a contemporary archive for future generations. This work has been presented at the India Art Fair Young Collector's Program (2025), University of Cambridge (2023, 2024), the African Biennale of Photography in Bamako (2022, 2024), Stranger's House Gallery, Mumbai (2024, 2025), the Lusaka Contemporary Art Centre (2023), and the University of Oxford (2023, 2025).

By engaging the public in her exhibitions, Ginwalla's curatorial work often transcends the protocols of gallery and museum spaces through participatory installations. She is drawn towards bodies of work that explore heritage, memory and the belonging. Working in this way allows her to further understand her identity and place in the world and is what she aims to facilitate for others too. Sana is currently running the Everyday Lusaka Gallery while lecturing and pursuing her Masters in Creative Arts at the Open Window University for Creative Arts.

Zambia Belonging is a counter-archive curated by Everyday Lusaka that explores home, identity and belonging with people that have a connection to Zambia. It began in 2018 when around 1000 uncollected negatives, slides and prints were found by Everyday Lusaka founder Sana Ginwalla in the attic of Fine Art Studios – an establishment over 60 years old which is still found on Chachacha Road, Lusaka. The collection also includes over 500 crowdsourced archival photographs from over 30 patrons so far, encouraging a culture of visual and self-governed storytelling.

Zambia Belonging was launched to the public in 2021 the Lusaka National Museum. Since then, Ginwalla has curated presentation of the collection at Galerie Alliance Française de Lusaka (2021), Zamrock Museum, Lusaka (2023), African Biennale of Photography in Bamako (2022, 2024), Lusaka Contemporary Art Centre (2023), University of Cambridge (2023, 2024), University of Oxford (2023, 2025), Stranger's House Gallery, Mumbai (2024, 2025), India Art Fair (2025), and at the Association for Visual Arts in Cape Town as part of the Zambian Pavilion for the inaugural SA*DC Biennale (2025).

Ginwalla's writing about ZB has been published with the Brooklyn Museum (2025) *Sustaining the Otherwise* (2025), Cambridge University Library (2023), Gida Journal (2024), Sometimes Magazine (2023), and Hapax Magazine (2022). Ginwalla is also publishing ZB's first photo-book of archival street photographs from Lusaka by Alick Phiri called "Lusaka Street" which will launch at the Bakashimika international photography festival in Lusaka on 14th June 2025.



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EveryDAY
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GALLERY

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