

Royal Academy showcase Mabunda's Thrones of Weapons

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Gonçalo Mabunda's two thrones at the Summer Exhibition, London's Royal Academy of Arts

Two Thrones of Weapons, by renowned Mozambican sculptor Goncalo Mabunda, are being exhibited at the prestigious annual Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in London, United Kingdom.

The Royal Academy summer exhibition is highly regarded by art critics and the general public alike, who consider it a time capsule of the art world we live in. "Everything you'll see at the Summer Exhibition represents the art being made today," one commentator remarks. The imposing and colourful Windsculpture VI by Yinka Shonibare in the Royal Academy courtyard is a representative prelude to the exhibition.

For this year's summer exhibition coordinator Aileen Cooper and her team, tasked with "democratising the arts", shortlisted Mabunda's work among a strong field of 12,000 entries from the four corners of the world and representing sculpture, painting, art and film installations. Speaking on BBC2, Cooper said this was a "more inclusive and diverse show than ever before". Mabunda's work is the first entry from Mozambique in the 249 years of this exhibition, which has run every year since 1768.

Mabunda's 'Throne of Weapons' presents a microcosm of Mozambique. Without formal training and from humble beginnings, Mabunda strives to harness and transform the riches and challenges of Mozambique's harsh realities into hope with sculptures made of decommissioned weaponry.



The Telegraph / Gonçalo Mabunda's two thrones at the Summer Exhibition, London's Royal Academy of Arts

“I am thrilled to have my work exhibited in such a prestigious and well-regarded location,” Mabunda says, adding that “I am humbled by the way my work continues to highlight conflict as one of the major challenges of our times”.

At the turn of the millennium, Mabunda's art was at the forefront of peace-building in a country emerging from years of brutal civil war, championing the Christian concept of transforming swords into ploughshares, and joining the Jubilee 2000 campaign to write off the crippling debt of one of the poorest nations on the planet.

Mozambique was declared free of known land mines in 2015. Unfortunately, “sustainable peace continues to be elusive, and crippling debt has come back to haunt this poor nation” said Phil Baker, Mozambique business and travel expert.

This year's RA Summer exhibition takes place in the aftermath of two brutal terrorist attacks in London and Manchester, a chilling reminder of the destruction weapons are capable of inflicting on people's lives.

“The Emperor of the Sands”, Mabunda's individual exhibition, recently showed at the Jack Bell Gallery in London's Mayfair. It highlights the plight of many in relation to natural resources such as land, minerals and gas, in contrast with that of the few in positions of power.



Gonçalo Mabunda (File photo, artslife.com)

Over 200,000 people will file past Mabunda's throne and other exhibits at the RA Summer Exhibition this year, which runs until 20 August.

<http://clubofmozambique.com/news/royal-academy-showcase-mabundas-thrones-of-weapons-in-london-by-salomao-maxaia/>