



Steve Bandoma, *Reflex Caoutchouc*, 2018

Steve Bandoma

BIOGRAPHY

Steve Bandoma

Born in 1981 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

Lives and works in Kinshasa

Steve Bandoma enrolled at the School of Fine Arts in Kinshasa, graduating in 2004. During his studies, he felt that academic creations produced nothing innovative and rebelled against teaching methods that were too far removed from contemporary popular art, which was flourishing outside the school. He was part of the Librisme Synergie group, a branch of the Librisme contemporary art movement in Kinshasa, which rejected the theoretical confines of naturalism and Black African art. In 2005, he travelled to South Africa, where he took classes with Kevin McCauley, whom he considered a mentor. He observed the work of Jeff Koons in particular and admired the innovation of the American avant-garde: « I spent almost a year looking for the right contacts in artistic circles, first in Johannesburg and then in Cape Town. South Africa was exactly where I wanted to be. Every hour, minute and second I spent here inspired me even more to become an artist. » However, Steve Bandoma showed determination and, at the Cape 07/X-Cape festival, the opportunity presented itself. He did not return to Kinshasa until 2010: « Culture is a dynamic. Art is a dynamic. People and artists are a dynamic. Creation is a process. »

The artist expresses himself through various techniques, including sculpture, painting, drawing and collage. He creates his collages from magazine images, which he reuses, giving them new meaning and, as he says, 'a new life'. The mix of techniques brings a dynamic, an aesthetic inspired by the hustle and bustle of Kinshasa and reflecting an ever-changing African society. Through a combination of drawing, splashes of colour and collage, Bandoma reflects the implosion, between chaos and humour, against a backdrop of political turmoil. Faces, limbs, body fragments, animated statuettes and fetishes bring to life creations that appear unrestrained and disjointed, but are in fact thoughtful and carefully composed. His works are grouped into series that comment on politics, culture and current events. Whether through his « Black code », « Kitsch » and « Ghost » series, Steve Bandoma is working to write a new black code, a reappropriation of African history. Playing on the tones of disaffection, love and humour, the artist exposes a world weighed down by policies that corrupt morals, minds and spirits. The Surrounders series in particular reflects an optimistic and positive outlook, a desire to change and redirect things.

SOLO SHOWS (SELECTION)

2025

Gardiennne du temps, Un hommage pictural à l'héroïque femme noire, Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles, Belgique.

2017

Steve Bandoma. *Possession*, Tetaf-Bilembo Space, Kinshasa, DRC (curators: Chantal Tombu, Christine Decelle)

2013

Mutatis Mutandis, (CCF) French Cultural Center of Kinshasa

2012

Jack Bell Gallery, London, UK

L'heure des chocs, Wallonie Bruxelles International de Kinshasa

2009

Féminisme, Cité Internationale des Arts de Paris, France

2008

Contempocalypse Alliance Française of Cape Town, South Africa

GROUP SHOWS

2021

Ex Africa, musée du quai Branly-JacquesChirac, Paris, France (curateur: Philippe Dagen)

2019-2020

Fiction Congo, Museum Rietberg, Zurich, Switzerland (curators: Michaela Oberhofer, Nanina Guyer)

2019

Na Kinshasa Eza Possible, Galerie MAGNIN-A, Paris, France

Megalopolis - Stimmen aus Kinshasa, Grassi Museum für Volkerkunde zu Leipzig, Germany (curators: Freddy Tsimba, Eddy Ekete)

2018

African Passions, Palais Cadaval, Evora, Portugal (curators: André Magnin, Philippe Boute)

2017

Histoires congolaises, Library Robert-Desnos, Montreuil, France

2015-2013

Kongo accross the water, traveling exhibition (curators : Robin Poynor, Hein Vanhee, Susan Cooksey)

New Orleans Museum of Art, USA ; Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey, USA ; Musée royal de l'Afrique central, Tervuren, Belgique ; Musée Samuel P. méfaits, Floride, USA ; University Press of Florida, USA

2011

Deux mille dix raisons de vivre dans une petite ville, Ghothe on Main, Joburg

2008

Le meilleur de l'artreach, AVA Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

2007

Traite des êtres humains, Iziko Slave Lodge National Museum, Cape Town, South Africa

2002

Cultural Center Boboto, Kinshasa, DRC

2000

Académie des beaux - arts of Kinshasa, DRC

GRANTS & SUBVENTIONS (SELECTION)

2009

Visas pour la Création Afrique et Caraïbes en créations, Culturesfrance, Paris, France *Art Buzz Collection*, price with honours, USA

2007

Winner of the contest Table Mountain (collective) Cape town, South Africa

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, Florida

Nirox Foundation, Johannesburg, South Africa

Fondation Alliances, Casablanca, Morocco

C.A.A.C. collection Pigozzi, Geneva, Switzerland

Collection Farida et Henri Seydoux, Paris, France

Collection Jacques Azibert

The Robert Devereux Collection

Collection Gervanne et Matthias Leridon

Sapeurs, silks and selfies: African contemporary arts - in pictures

From photography to abstract work, via painting and tapestry, more than 30 artists are showing work at the African Passions exhibition in Évora, Portugal

Wed 8 Aug 2018 07.00 BST

Stranger on Red Carpet, 2016, by Steve Bandoma

Kinshasa-based Steve Bandoma creates collages with images from magazines, giving them a modern meaning and, he says, a new life - an aesthetic inspired by the bustle of Kinshasa and reflecting a constantly changing society

