ALMINE RECH

Sala

Dec 15, 2023 — Apr 12, 2026 | Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, MOCAA, Cape Town, South Africa

Following *Two Together*, Zeitz MOCAA's first exhibition that embraced artworks from the museum's permanent collection, *Sala* is a new permanent collection exhibition that aims to further the museum's vision and mission. Through an in-depth research project in collaboration with the 2023 cohort of Zeitz MOCAA & University of the Western Cape (UWC) Museum Fellows, this exhibition aims to better understand the values of the institution, the role of contemporary art in society, how the museum's team link and mediate the work of artists, and how the institution connects with and becomes a home for its audiences.

"More than simply a way to articulate and mediate the contents of Zeitz MOCAA's collection to the public, the process behind *Sala* was consultative and collaborative, bringing together staff groups from across museum departments," says Storm Janse van Rensburg, Senior Curator and Head of Curatorial Affairs at Zeitz MOCAA and the principal curator for the exhibition. "The decision to engage in a dialectic process with the Zeitz MOCAA & University of the Western Cape (UWC) Museum Fellows provided further insight into how our institutional identity is shaped by our holdings.
"I am indebted to my collaborators in this process — Evaan Jason Ferreira, Bulelwa Lomusa Kunene, Mona Eshraghi Hakimi, Pauline Buhlebenkosi Ndhlovu and Ana Raquel Machava —as well as every museum team member who provided insight and guidance or offered different perspectives. Through this process, we have furthered our goal of embracing curatorial practice, exhibition-making and institution-building as intertwined, inseparable, conjoined and entangled."

Central to the exhibition is a set of questions that invite audiences to explore and reflect on the limits and possibilities of the museum. This invitation is championed by the title of the exhibition — Sala. A word that is common among many Nguni languages in Southern Africa, 'sala' is part of a call and response between people parting ways: *hamba kahle*, which provides well wishes of safe travels to those departing, and *sala kahle*, which welcomes those who are staying behind to stay well. As such, *Sala* is an invitation by Zeitz MOCAA to its visitors to stay with the artists featured in the exhibition as well as to stay with the institution in the reimagining of the museum as a new embodied space.

The 17 artists chosen to be featured in the exhibition demonstrate the shifting meaning of 'sala' within the show itself: from a question or set of questions to an invitation to stay and contemplate and converse (with the artists, the artworks and the space). Throughout the exhibition galleries, audiences will have the opportunity to engage and reflect with artists such as South African multi-disciplinary artist Thania Petersen, who provides soundscapes from her Sufi spiritual upbringing; Malagasy inter-disciplinary artist and designer Joël Andrianomearisoa, who navigates time using black and white photography; and Ghanaian sculptor El Anatsui, who elevates everyday materials to challenge the constraints of geographical place.

Other artists include South African Athi-Patra Ruga, known for his performance and painting work; Kenyan sculptor and photographer Cyrus Kabiru; Angolan photographer Edson Chagas; Frohawk Two Feathers, a writer, illustrator and painter from the United States; Julien Sinzogan, a painter hailing from Benin; Zimbabwean multi-disciplinary artist and activist Kudzanai Chiurai; Lungiswa Gqunta, a South African artist who works in video, performance, printmaking, sculpture and installation; South African sculptor and installation artist Michele Mathison; Tunisian-born photographer Mouna Karray; South African painter and collagist Neo Matloga; South African multi-disciplinary artist Robin Rhode; American artist Rashid Johnson; Sudanese painter, designer and filmmaker Salah Elmur; and Zanele Muholi, a South African artist specialising in photography, video and installation.

Koyo Kouoh, Executive Director and Chief Curator of Zeitz MOCAA, says: “At the heart of Zeitz MOCAA’s vision lies a desire to be an African institution that actively contributes to the production and transmission of knowledge on African and diasporic artistic practice, an endeavour couched in a belief in the importance of permanent institutional structures on the continent. In this desire, I look to Sala as an exhibition inviting you, our audience, to stay with us — not just in the rehanging of our permanent collection but on our journey as a museum, too.”