



USHA SEEJARIM

Un balai, pourquoi pas une balai?

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Un balai, pourquoi pas une balai?

The title of the exhibition asks why a broom is a male object in the French language, where objects are genderised, and why not female. The question posed continues a long-standing investigation into traditional gender roles and in particular that of women in Seejarim's work.

Domestic objects become metaphors in this exploration where Seejarim has previously used wooden clothes pegs, irons and clothes hangers in her work. At Scac Marestaing, a large number of the artworks are made from wooden broom sticks, many of which were donated by neighbours and community members from Montesquieu and other nearby areas. Thus, these objects contain their stories and in this body of work, the artworks take on the form of collective narratives, speaking about broader notions of home, the domestic, service and servitude.

Usha Seejarim was the recipient of the 2018 SCAC Marestaing & The Secular Solidarity Association Sculpture Award at the Dakar Biennale in Dakar, Senegal. Seejarim's exhibition, *Un balai, pourquoi pas une balai?*, is a culmination of a two month residency at SCAC (Cooperative Society of Contemporary Art).



Cooperative Society of Contemporary Art

Marestaing





Usha Seejarim
C'est comme ça
2019
Steel and Horse Shoes
300 x 80 x 90 cm



Usha Seejarim
Cow's Head
2009
Assemblage of Found Objects
39 x 42 x 18 cm



Usha Seejarim
Cow Prints
2018
Acrylic on Paper
70.5 x 100 cm

€650.00 each



Usha Seejarim
Cow Prints
2018
Acrylic on Paper
70.5 x 100 cm



Usha Seejarim
A cutting edge composition
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
53 x 36.5 x 3 cm



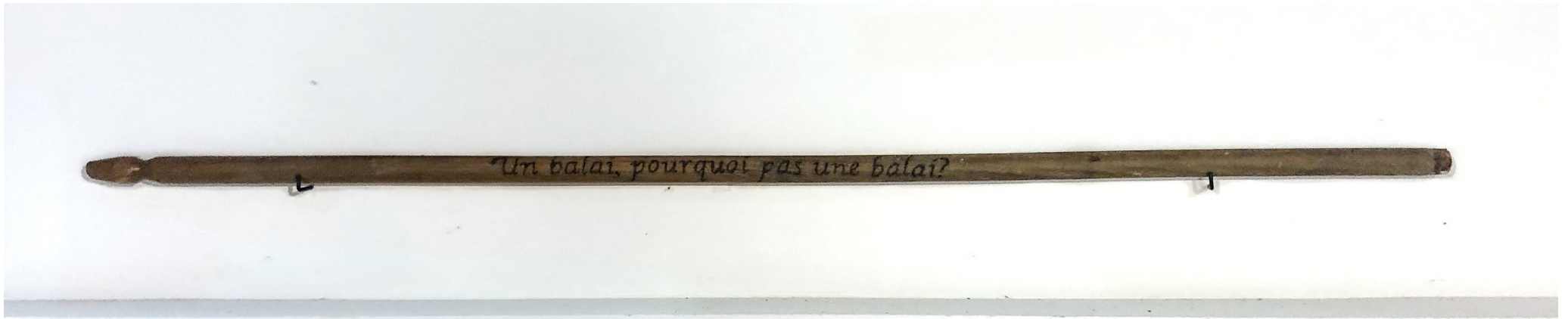
Usha Seejarim
Ready to serve
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
25.5 x 46 x 2 cm



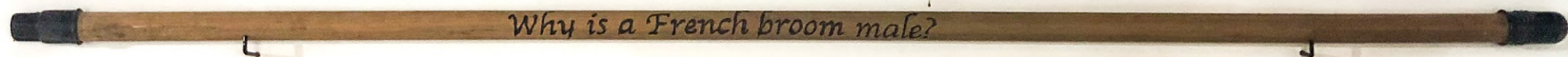
Usha Seejarim
Prepared to serve
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
32.5 x 50.5 x 3 cm



Usha Seejarim
Overdomesticated
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
106.5 x 11 x 12 cm



Usha Seejarim
Une balai pourquoi pas une balai?
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
120 x 2.5 x 2.5 cm



Usha Seejarim
Why is a French broom male?
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
126 x 3 x 3 cm



Usha Seejarim
This is really not a pipe
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
40.5 x 31.5 x 26 cm



Usha Seejarim

It is impossible for water to be wet
2019

Assemblage of Found Objects
243 x 110 x 168 cm



Usha Seejarim
Wetness is not essential to water
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
245 x 41 x 18 cm



Usha Seejarim
Water is not wetness
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
244 x 27 x 28 cm



Usha Seejarim
Water is itself not wet
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
246 x 96 x 60 cm



Usha Seejarim
True to its nature
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
142.5 x 53 x 40 cm



Usha Seejarim
1st Serving of Broom Heads
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
48 x 31.5 x 6 cm



Usha Seejarim
2nd Serving of Broom Heads
2019
Assemblage of Found Objects
24 x 41 x 5 cm



Usha Seejarim
3rd Serving of Broom Heads
 2019
 Assemblage of Found Objects
 48 x 34 x 5 cm

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Usha Seejarim was born in 1974 in Bethal, South Africa. Seejarim currently lives and works in Johannesburg, South Africa, and is a part-time lecturer at the University of Pretoria in Pretoria, South Africa. Seejarim received a B-Tech Degree in Fine Art from the University of Johannesburg in 1999 and a Master's Degree in Fine Art at the University of The Witwatersrand (WITS) in 2008, both in Johannesburg, South Africa. Most recently, Seejarim's site-specific artwork, *Sounds of Sibikwa* was nominated for Design Indaba's Most Beautiful Object in South Africa award. Earlier awards include: the SCAC Marestaing & The Secular Solidarity Association Sculpture Award at the Dakar Biennale, Dakar, Senegal and the Tomorrow's/ Today Prize, at the Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town, South Africa, both in 2018; the Mercedes-Benz Award for Public Art in 2008; the Ampersand Fellowship Award, New York City, USA in 2003 and the inaugural MTN New Contemporaries Exhibition Award (joint-winner) in 2001, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Seejarim presented her solo exhibition *Un balai, pourquoi pas une balai*, following her 2 -month residency at SCAC Marestaing in Montesquieu-Volvestre, France in 2019. Further selected solo exhibitions include: *Transgressing Power*, at SMAC Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2019; *Keepers of the Common* at the Investec Cape Town Art Fair in Cape Town, South Africa in 2018; *Reasons for descending the staircase* at Fried Contemporary in Pretoria, South Africa in 2017; *Venus at Home* - a travelling exhibition presented at the Durban Art Gallery, Kwazulu Natal, South Africa; NWU Gallery at the Northwest University in Potchefstroom, South Africa; the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) in Johannesburg, South Africa and the Atherstone Gallery at National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa (2015-2012).

Group exhibitions include: 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair at Somerset House in London, UK; *The Ampersand Foundation Award 21 years celebration exhibition* curated by Gordon Froud at the University of Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) in 2019; *WomanISM* as part of the 12th OSTRALE Biennale

for Contemporary Art, travelling at the Goethe Institute; Ausländerrat; Historic Tobacco Factory f6, Dresden, Germany in 2019; *The Red Hour* curated by Simon Njami, for the Dak'art Biennale, Dakar, Senegal in 2018; *Twenty: Art in the Time of Democracy*, a travelling exhibition, curated by Gordon Froud presented at the University of Johannesburg in Johannesburg, South Africa; Turchin Centre in Boone, USA and the Beijing Biennale in Beijing, China in 2015; *Where do we migrate to?* at the University of Maryland in Baltimore, USA in 2011, *Another World*, curated by Simon Njami for the 6th African Encounters of Photography in Bamako, Mali in 2005; *Fresh in* 2001 and *Isinto*, curated by Tumelo Mosaka and Zayd Minty, in 1999 at IZIKO South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.

Seejarim has completed numerous public commissions namely: the public portrait for Nelson Mandela's funeral in Qunu, South Africa in 2013; *Figures Representing Articles From The Freedom Charter* in 2008 in, Soweto, South Africa; and an artwork for the facade of the South African Chancery in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2008, amongst others.

Seejarim's work forms part of public and private collections such as the Iziko South African National Gallery (SANG), Cape Town, South Africa; the South African Foundation For Contemporary Art (SAFFCA), South Africa; the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa and the Fondazione Fiera Milan, Milan, Italy among others.

In 2020 Seejarim's work is currently included in the group exhibition *Matereality*, at Iziko South African National Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa as well as SMAC Gallery's group presentation at the 2020 Investec Cape Town Art Fair at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) in Cape Town, South Africa in 2020.



USHA SEEJARIM

CURRICULUM VITAE

smac

BIOGRAPHY

Born 1974, Bethal, South Africa.

Lives and works in Johannesburg, South Africa.

EDUCATION

- 2008** Masters Degree in Fine Arts (MA), University of Witwatersrand (WITS), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1999** B-Tech Degree in Fine Art, University of Johannesburg (Previously Technikon Witwatersrand), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1995** Diploma in Fine Art, University of Johannesburg (Previously Technikon Witwatersrand), Johannesburg, South Africa.

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

- 2019** SEED Award, South African Foundation for Contemporary Art (SAFFCA), Johannesburg, South Africa.
The Centre for the Less Good Idea's Season 6 [workshop], Johannesburg, South Africa.
Artist in residence, SCAC Marestaing, Montesquieu – Volvestre, France.
Most Beautiful Object In South Africa (MBOISA) Award - Nominee, Design Indaba, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2018** *Tomorrow's/ Today Prize*, sponsored by the Fondazione Fiera Milano, Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town International Art Fair, Cape Town, South Africa.
SCAC Marestaing & The Secular Solidarity Association Sculpture Award, Dakar Beinnale, Dakar, Senegal.
- 2013** *Mbokodo Award* (Sculpture) – Nominee, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2008** *Mercedes Benz Award for Art Projects in Public Spaces* – Finalist, Berlin, Germany.
Business Day-Business and Arts South Africa Award (BASA) – Best use of New Commissioned Art for "Why Men", Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2007** *Sasol Wax Art Award* - Finalist, Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2003** *Ampersand Fellowship Award*, New York City, USA.
- 2002** *First National Bank (FNB) Vita Art Award* - Finalist, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2001** Artist in Residence (as part of the Fresh Programme), IZIKO South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
MTN Special Art Award presented to Visual Arts and Crafts Academy (VACA), Johannesburg, South Africa.
Merit Award, Bursary, University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), Johannesburg, South Africa.
MTN New Contemporaries Award, Johannesburg, South Africa.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2020** **[upcoming]** *Vessel of the Fish*, Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Arts, Rotterdam, Netherlands
[upcoming] *The Resurrection of the Clothes Peg* (Site-Specific, Large-Scale Artwork), Burning Man, Nevada, USA, & 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair, London, UK.
- 2019** *Un balai, pourquoi pas une balai*, SCAC Marestaing, Montesquieu – Volvestre, France.
Transgressing Power, SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2018** *The Red Hour*, curated by Simon Njami, Dak'Art: African Contemporary Art Biennale, Dakar, Senegal.
Keepers of the Common (Solo Booth), Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2017** *Reasons for descending the staircase*, Fried Contemporary, Pretoria, South Africa.
- 2015** *Venus at Home* [Travelling Exhibition], Durban Art Gallery, Kwazulu Natal, South Africa.
- 2014** *Venus at Home* [Travelling Exhibition], NWU Gallery, Northwest University (NWU), Potchefstroom, South Africa.
- 2013** *Venus at Home* [Travelling Exhibition], Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2012** *Venus at Home* [Travelling Exhibition], Atherstone Gallery, National Arts Festival, Grahamstown, South Africa.
- 2009/10** *Mine over Matter*, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2006** *The Hole Truth*, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2004** *in place*, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2003** *Forms in Transit*, Natal Society for the Arts (NSA), Durban, South Africa.
- 1999** *Long Distance*, One Person Exhibition, Generator Art space, Johannesburg, South Africa.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2020** *Matereality*, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape town, South Africa.
Investec Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
A Show of Solidarity, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2019** 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Somerset House, London, UK.
Ampersand Foundation Award 21 years celebration exhibition, University of Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.

- FNB Art Joburg (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- WomanISM*, 12th OSTRALE Biennale for Contemporary Art, Goethe Institute; Ausländerrat; Historic Tobacco Factory f6, Dresden, Germany.
- Investec Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2018** *Wish You Were Here*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Weather Report* [Travelling Exhibition], Havana, Cuba.
- FUBA: Preserving a Legacy*, Keyes Art Mile, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Group Presentation, Aardklop National Arts Festival, Potchefstroom, South Africa.
- Trans*, curated by Daniella Géo, University of Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Black Humour*, curated by Johan Thom, Fried Contemporary, Pretoria, South Africa.
- The Art of Lithography: A collaborative Expression of LL Editions*, Wits Art Museum, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- BACK TO THE FUTURE III - Abstract Art in South Africa: Past & Present*, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- 2016** *Hide & Seek*, curated by Teresa Lizamore, Lizamore@Claivaux (Claivaux Estate), Cape Town, South Africa.
- Foundations and Futures - 25 Year Exhibition*, Bag Factory, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2015** *timeline*, The Bag Factory Artist Studios, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Twenty: Art in The Time of Democracy* [Travelling Exhibition], curated by Gordon Froud, University of Johannesburg (UJ), Johannesburg, South Africa; Turchin Centre, North Carolina, USA; Beijing Biennale, Beijing, China.
- Nirox Winter Sculpture Fair, Nirox Sculpture Park, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2014** *Pre-election Connection*, Wits Art Museum (WAM), University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2011** *Where do we migrate to?*, University of Maryland, Baltimore, USA.
- 2009** *Innovative Women*, Constitutional Court, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Postcards to the Edge*, Guth Gafa Documentary Film Festival, Gortahork, Ireland.
- 2007** *Latitudes, Lands of the Worlds*, Paris City Hall, Terres du Monde, Havanna; Paris, France.
- 2007** Sasol Wax Art Award, Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2005** *Another World*, curated by Simon Njami, 6th African Encounters of Photography, Master Classes (photography workshop), Bamako, Mali. (Catalogue)
- 2004** *Post*, curated by Kenji Shiraishi & Monna Mokoena, Tama Art University Museum, Tokyo, Japan. (Catalogue)
- Sugar in the Petrol* [Travelling Exhibition], curated by Doris Bloom, Festival Fotografia, Rome, Italy; Festival Filosofia, Modena, Carpi, Sassuolo.
- A Place Called Home* [Travelling Exhibition], curated by Zayd Minty, Natal Society for the Arts (NSA), Durban; Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town; Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2003** *Latitudes 2003*, curated by Regine Cuzin, Hotel Deville, Paris, France. (Catalogue)
- Show Me Home*, curated by Mads Damsbo, Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa. (Catalogue)
- Playtime* (Festival hosted by the French Institute), Newtown, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- How Latitudes become Forms* [Travelling Exhibition], curated by Philippe Vergne, Douglas Fogle & Olukemi Ilesanmi, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Torino, Mexico City and Monterrey, USA. (Catalogue)
- Forms in Transit*, Natal Society for the Arts (NSA), Durban, South Africa.
- 2002** *FNB Vita Art Award Exhibition*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Sublimation*, curated by Katherine Smith, Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees, Outshoorn, South Africa. (Catalogue)
- Videofomes*, curated by Gabriel Souchevre; South African programme compiled by Clive van den Berg, Carnet de voyage: Afrique du Sud, Expositions Festival, Paris, France. (Catalogue)
- 2001** *Self*, curated by Clive van den Berg, Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees, Outshoorn, South Africa. (Catalogue)
- MTN New Contemporaries*, curated by Clive Kellner, Camouflage, Johannesburg, South Africa. (Catalogue)
- Joubert Park Public Art Project*, Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) & Joubert Park Precinct, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Fresh*, IZIKO South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa (series of Monographs & Zanazo, Vol.2)
- 2000** *Urban Futures*, Rembrandt van Rijn, Market Theater, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Interchange - Moving Images*, curated by autopsy, Camouflage, Brussels, Belgium.
- Killing Time*, Civic Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Weft and Warp*, Civic Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1999** *Isinto*, curated by Tumelo Mosaka and Zayd Minty, IZIKO South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Unplugged IV*, Rembrandt van Rijn Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Personal concerns*, Rembrandt van Rijn Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1998** Ethiopian Arts and Culture Festival, Ethiopia.
- 1997** *50 Stories*, curated by Storm van Rensburg and Tracey Rose, Carlton Center, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Baggage*, Mega Music Warehouse, Newtown, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1996** *Technikon Witwatersrand Student Exhibition*, Rembrandt van Rijn, Market Theatre, Newtown, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1991** *Long Distance*, Generator Art Space, Newtown, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- JP Blachere Foundation* (photography workshop & exhibition), Joucas, France.

SELECTED PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

Moloi, N. 2019. *Banal and Celestial: Usha Seejarim's Transgressing Power* [online]. Available: <https://artthrob.co.za/2019/06/26/banal-and-celestial-usha-seejarims-transgressing-power/>. [Accessed 26.06.2019].

Sassen, R. 2019. *The elegance of the humble peg* [online]. Available: <https://robynsassenmyview.com/2019/07/03/the-elegance-of-the-humble-peg/>. [Accessed 03.07.2019].

COLLECTIONS

Iziko South African National Gallery (SANG), Cape Town, South Africa.
South African Foundation For Contemporary Art (SAFFCA), Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria, South Africa.
Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa.
Fondazione Fiera Milan, Milan, Italy.
Artbank, Johannesburg, South Africa.