



NKEMBOMOSWALA  
Installations

[info@nkembomoswala.com](mailto:info@nkembomoswala.com)

[www.nkembomoswala.com](http://www.nkembomoswala.com)

+447359644783

+1613410 3747

Born in 1989 in Democratic Republic of Congo  
Lives and works between Milton Keynes & Quebec

Raised in a Kinshasa area renowned for being eventful, for gangsters “Kuluna”, who impose their laws and for the omnipresence of pubs along the roads where people feast until morning. **“I’m inspired by my local urban reality, while echoing the pain of a globalized world.”**

His work is currently articulated around the notion of renaissance and renewal. Throughout his artistic journey, and in his creations, he has stressed the harmful nature of the global society we are living in. Our unbridled economy and consumption drive have caused lots of damage and suffering. Nkembo’s work on tarp, through the act of incision and branding, or Nzoloko , denotes the wounds that we, as citizens of this world, are enduring. **“The fact that I incise, perforate and brand to find the light represents the pursuit of happiness, everyone’s Eldorado. It causes suffering for those left behind, suffering often inflicted by the most powerful of this world”** Looking at his direct environment, he sees signs and traces of cultural consumption. He sees waste, artefacts, despair, and hope. **“Chaos cannot be an end”**. Art allows him to explore the transformative potential of today’s cultural consumption. From an initial will to denounce, he moves to visual and contemporary reinterpretations, exploring new mediums and compositions.



### **In the Skin of Isidore Bakanja - Series**

Facets of migration. Voluntary or suffered. Hope, living in the expectation of a certain or uncertain outcome. To take its dash towards the springboard of a desired future, but at what price? Succession of concessions, there is no ambition which is carried out without sweat or sacrifices. Each incision on the back of these curved silhouettes is a pain that builds a woman, a man. From the shadow springs the light. The stature of the creations presented here is an allegory of dignity, the one with which every life path, every aspiration and every being should be accomplished.

Quebec, land of welcome, at the price of work. A life of labor, adaptation and learning with the aim of integration. Eldorado. Promises of better days. In the face of all these stories, the story of Isidore Bakanja surfaces. Young Congolese, converted to Catholicism at the beginning of the colonial era, his self-sacrifice, his resilience, his devotion to the word of

God and its transmission, will have had the better of him. Bakanja, in the irreproachability of his colonized behavior, and in his evangelical elevation, reminds us that the gift of self, the will to surpass oneself and to put on a good show, does not guarantee better days.

In this Other Station, Nkembo Moswala proposes a return to the past, a stop in the present and a leap towards the future by revealing a wardrobe that prepares us for displacement. Interior displacement, displacement of the body, displacement of dreams. These outfits on which idols are fixed are next to reverence, acts of idolatry and subjugation. To take the ways of immigration or to engage towards the unknown, the uncertainty is a course of faith, a way of the cross for some. One's gaze is directed towards the people one has left behind, one's ambition and choices resolutely turned towards the future, and the reality of the present sometimes made of disillusion. In the service of a homeland, an economy, an ideology with which newcomers and/or foreign workers seek to identify, their devotion can become a pretext for all sorts of abuses.

These abuses can be seen in the artist's representations where notions of power, idolatry, submission and emancipation are intertwined to erect the most imposing of silhouettes. The process, Nzoloko, an ancestral incision technique that means scarification in Lingala, is applied to large costumes dominating the room. They thus take on a divine aura that invites contemplation. The four pieces that make up "In the skin of Isidore Bakanja" challenge all conventions of adaptation and put the garment into perspective as an object of worship and adoration/valuation, and as an indicator of social presence.

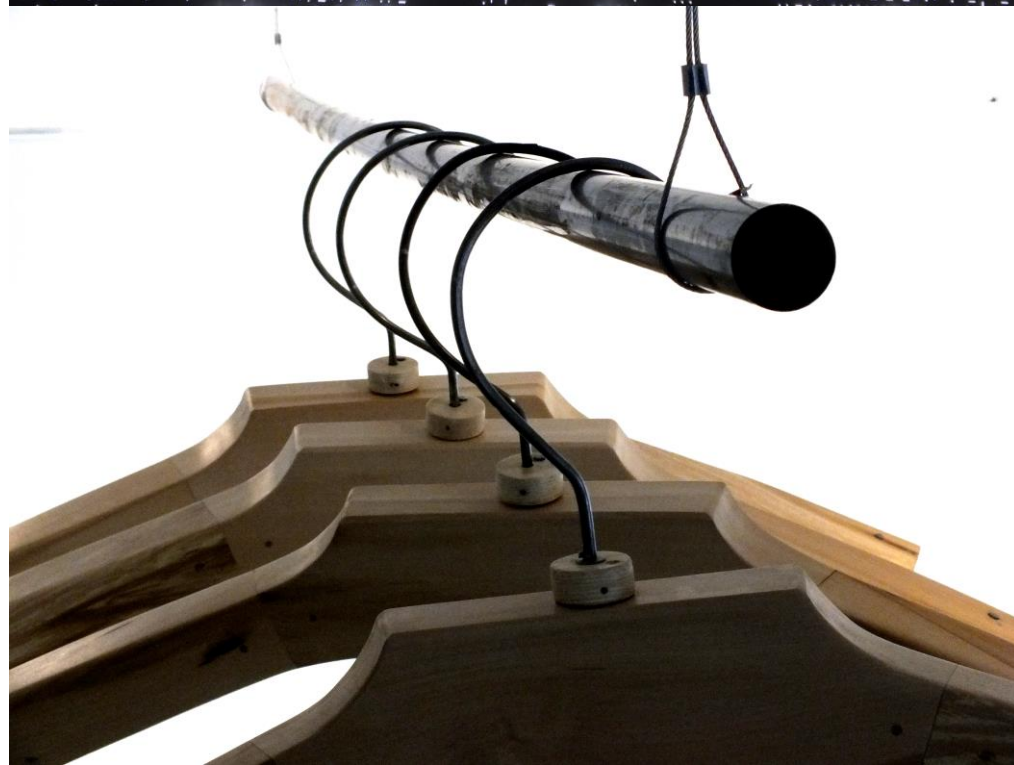
This installation, in its scope, technicality and purpose, navigates between the harsh and violent nature of human relationships in a context of displacement and labor, and the quest for stability and dignity of any person aspiring to a future outside of their land, their culture. The artist's technique, which incises to let the light in, and the ambivalence of faith coupled with devotion or idolatry, testify to this in-between. It is at the crossroads of the many spiritual and religious symbols, and the acts visible in these monumental works, that one feels in the skin of Isidore Bakanja. A posture that seems forever irreconcilable but that Nkembo Moswala invites us to sublimate, just like Patrice Lumumba before him: "Neither brutality, nor abuse, nor torture have ever led me to ask for mercy, because I prefer to die with my head held high, my faith unshakeable and my deep trust in the destiny of my country, rather than live in submission and contempt for sacred principles.

***Jean-Sylvain Tshilumba Mukendi***





Untitled "*In the skin of Isidore B.*" series 2022, Branding incision on Imitation leather & Blackout Fabric (Clothe) + Hanger + Light 330 x 212 x 50 cm





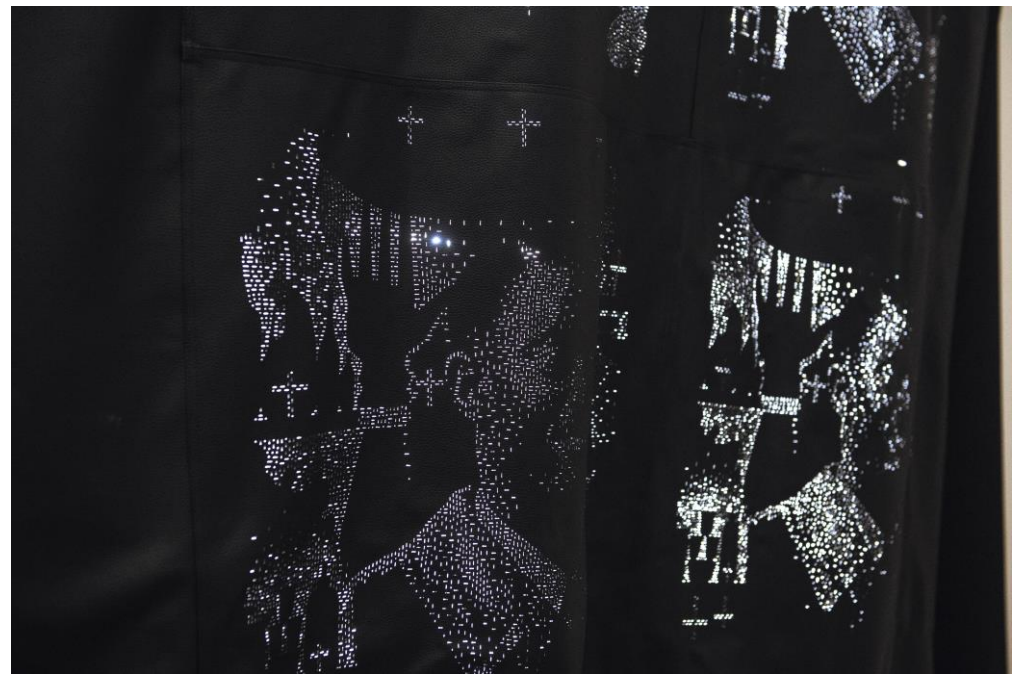
Untitled "*In the skin of Isidore B.*" series 2022, Branding incision on Imitation leather & Blackout Fabric (Clothe) + Hanger + Light 330 x 220 x 50 cm





Worship "*In the skin of Isidore B.*" series 2022, Branding incision on Imitation leather & Blackout Fabric (Clothe) + Hanger + Light 300 x 235 x 55 cm





Lumumba "In the skin of Isidore B." series 2022, Branding incision on Imitation leather & Blackout Fabric (Clothe) + Hanger + Light 292 x 245 x 35 cm

## **Mayebo**

Is an installation art project evoking a plantation garden made out of recycled waste plastic packaging and labels of our daily consumption products. The plant that grows and composes this garden is a kind of flower of multiple colors inspired by the shape of a mold fungus from which the term 'MAYEBO' originates. In fact, *Mayebo* is nothing but the translation of 'fungus' into Lingala, my mother language.

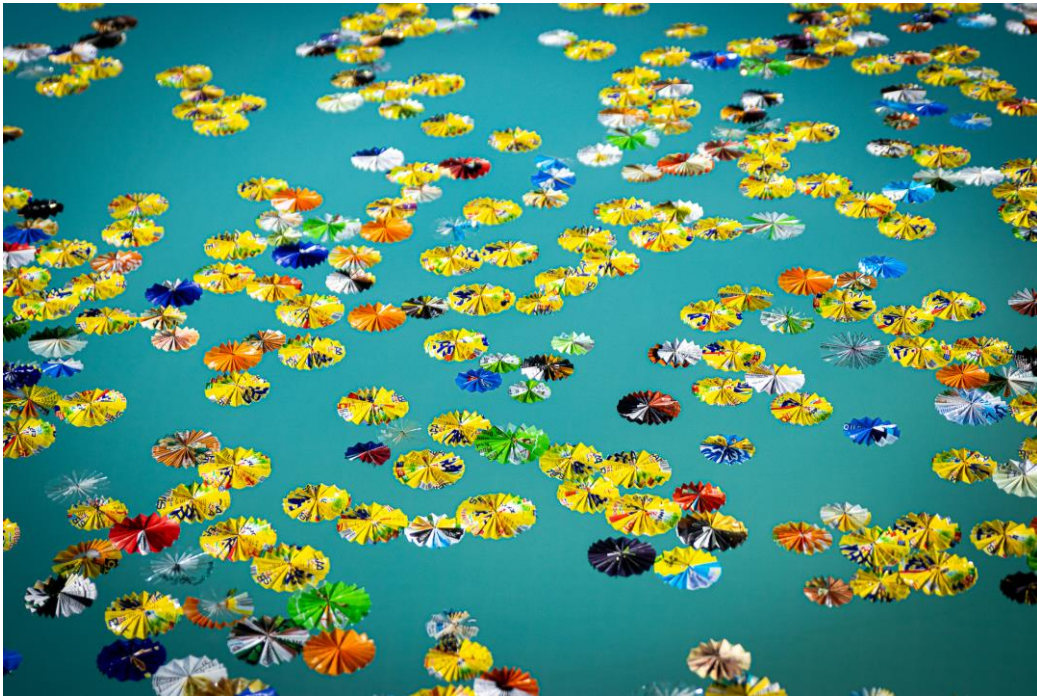
This living organism that grows in a wild environment inspires me with hope. It comforts us with the idea that life can be born out of madness and confusion. Planted in an organic soil or on clay, the fungus particles that I create are, for this occasion, put in perspective or in contrast with the daily news or the climate of fear which we are living in. Concerned by the chaotic state of our global society that is consumed by all kinds of evil and pollution, I equally believe in mankind's resilience and transformation.

Having recycled these plastic packages waste in Kinshasa, Blanca, Paris, Milton Keynes, Madrid, New York, Virginia and Ottawa, and turning them into this blossoming installation, I aim to continue this process, forming an immense garden, invading walls, ceilings, hoping to fill a whole room and that of any surface.

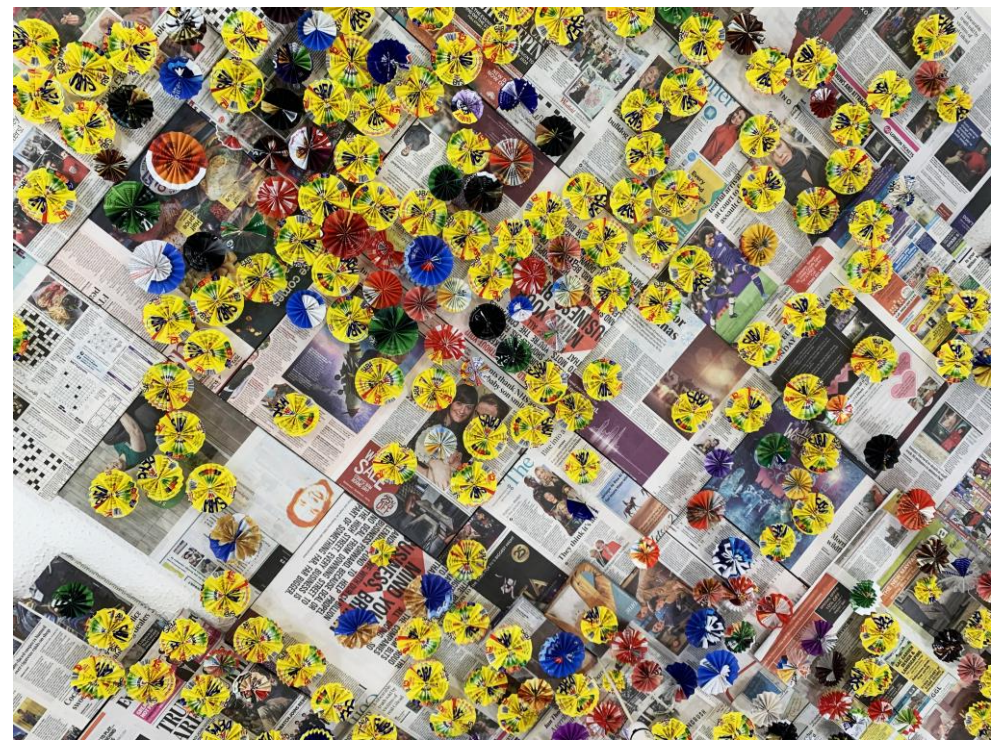




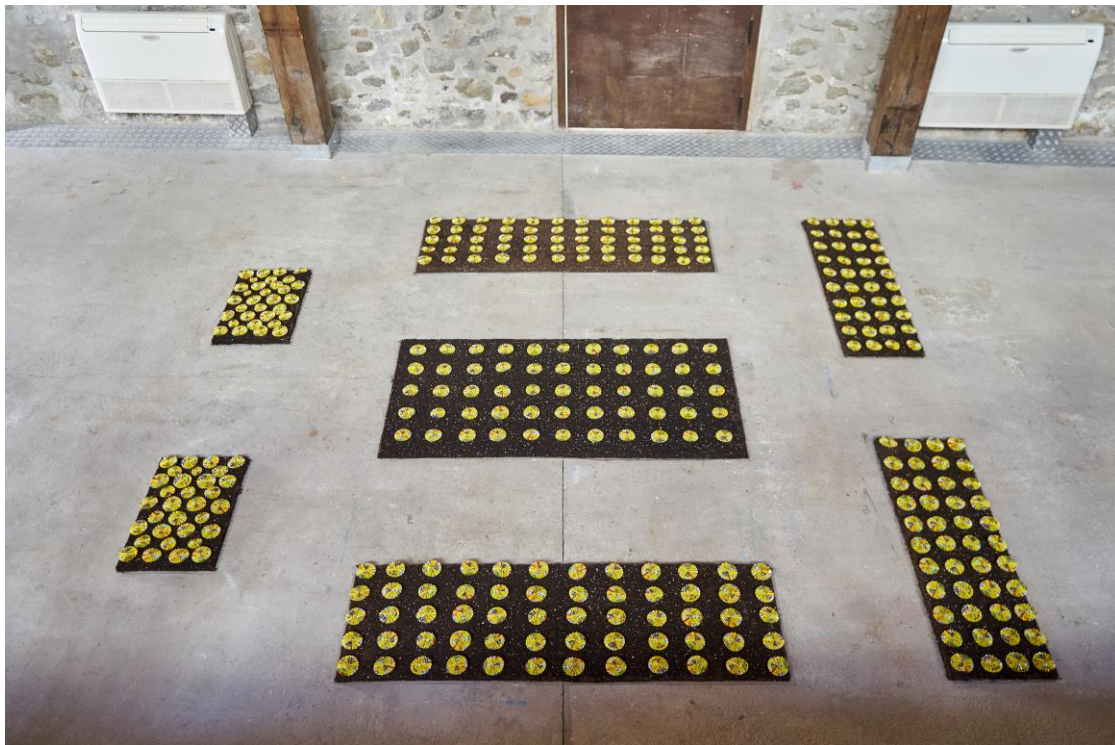
**Mayebo** 2021, Gardening; Plastic Packaging recycling of consumption product on 7 basins covered by newspaper on water, Variable size



**Mayebo**, 2020, Gardening; Plastic Packaging recycling  
Of consumption products on water, Variable size



**Mayebo**, 2020, Gardening; Plastic Packaging recycling  
Of consumption products on newspaper, Variable size



**Mayebo**, 2019, Gardening; Plastic Packaging recycling  
Of consumption products + Organic Soil, size variable

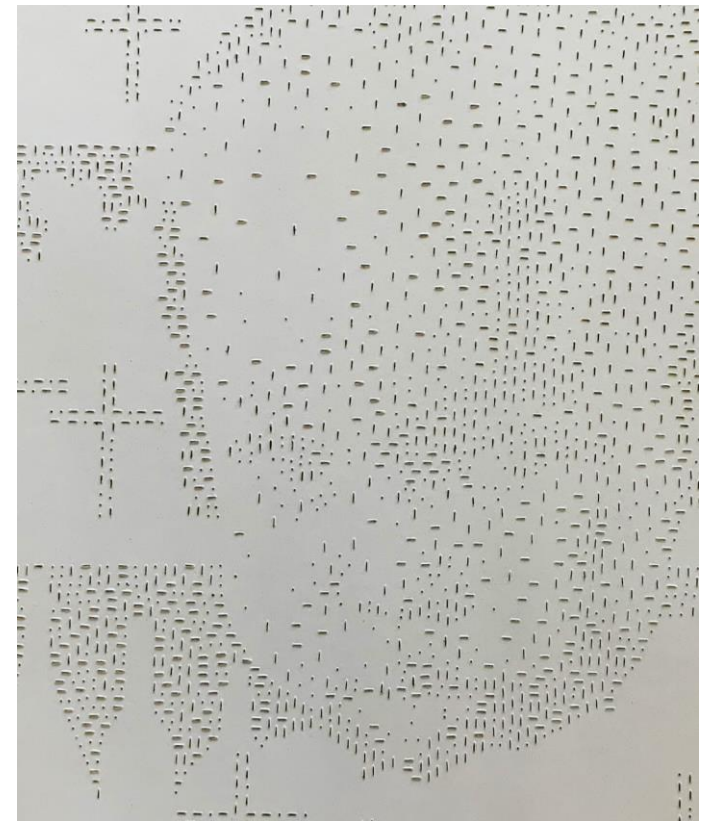
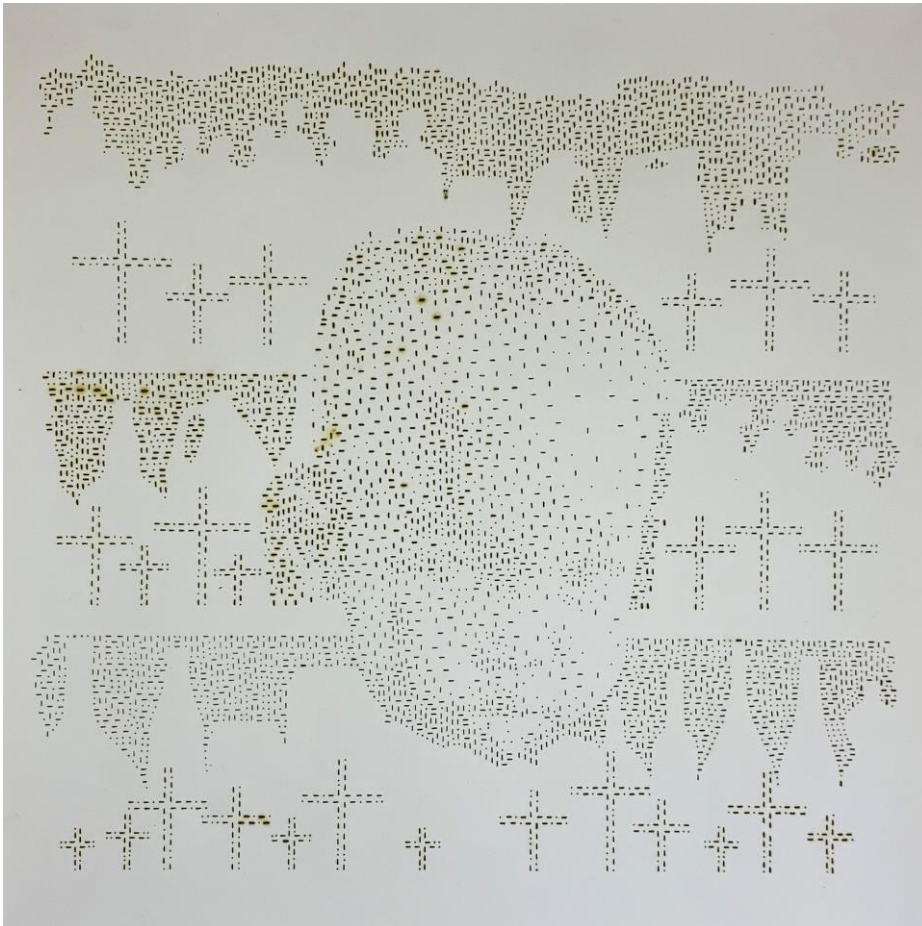


**Mayebo**, 2019, Gardening; Plastic Packaging recycling  
Of consumption products + Clay on Rock, size variable

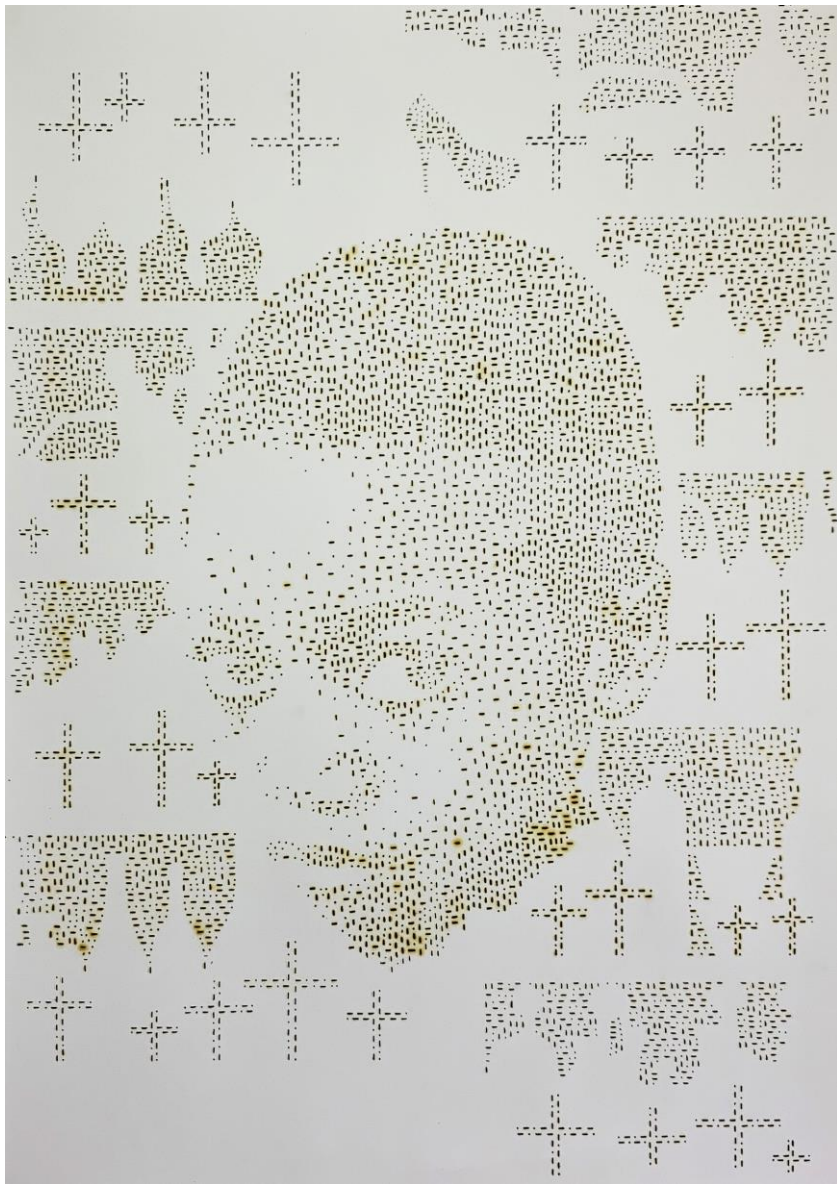


***For Sale***, series

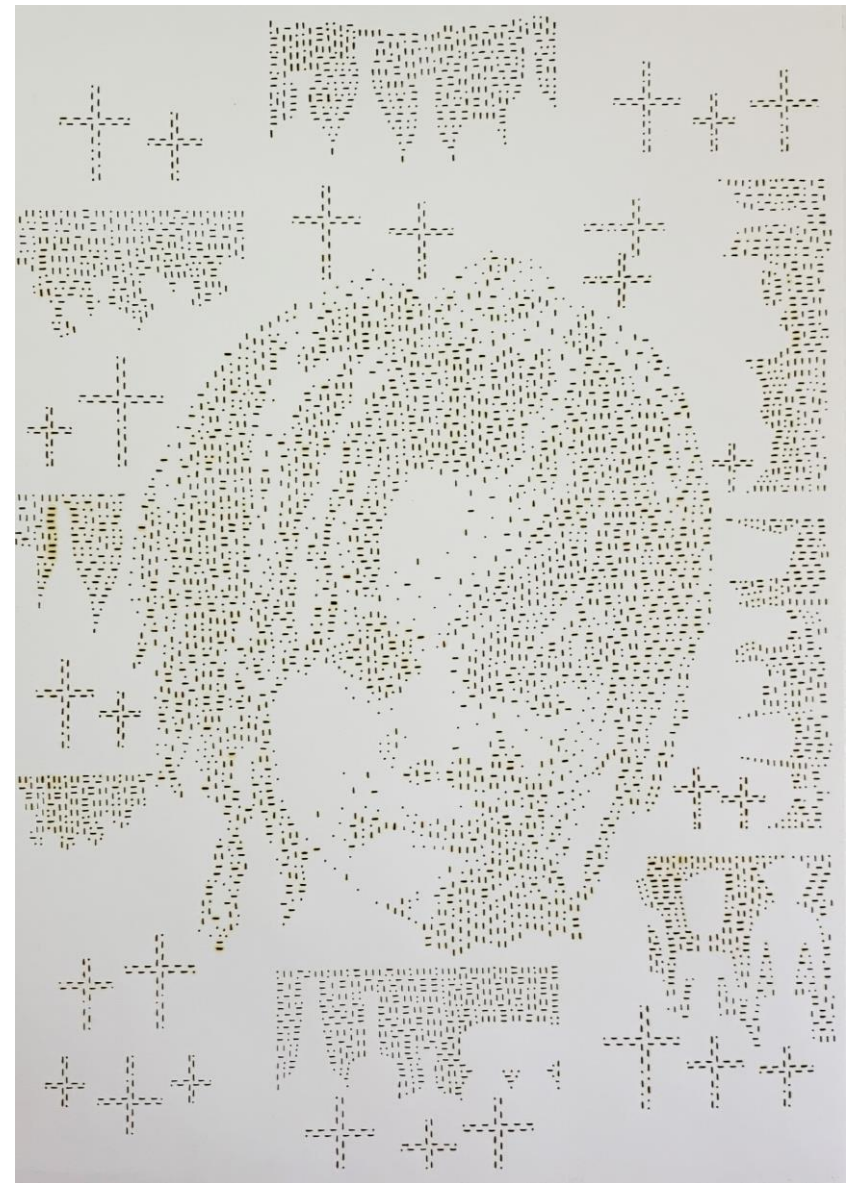
I am paying tribute to the most vulnerable of our globalized world. War, terrorism, migration, traffic and children abuse have become part of our daily life. All of us were children, and I wonder what will be the world of tomorrow that will be made up of adult children whose childhood was sold for the benefit of others living in today's world.



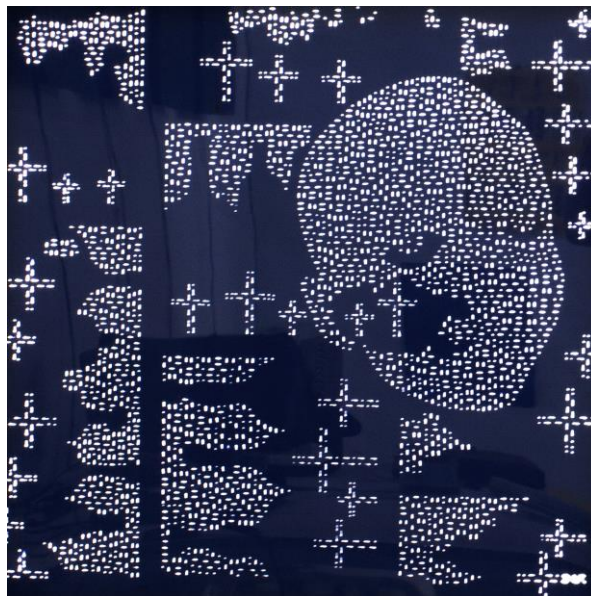
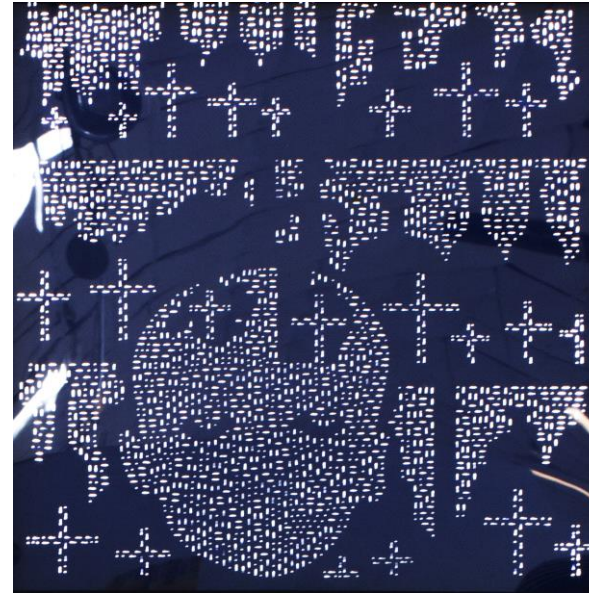
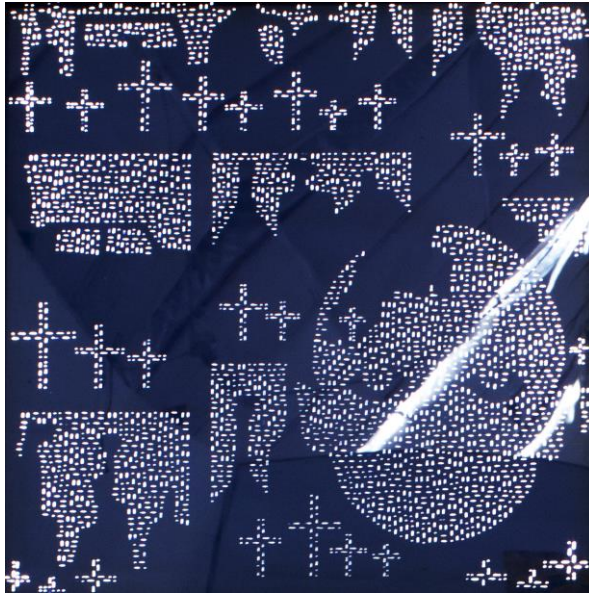
Untitled ***For Sale*** series 2020, Branding on paper, 60 x 60 cm



Untitled **For Sale** series 2020, Branding on paper, 60 x 84 cm



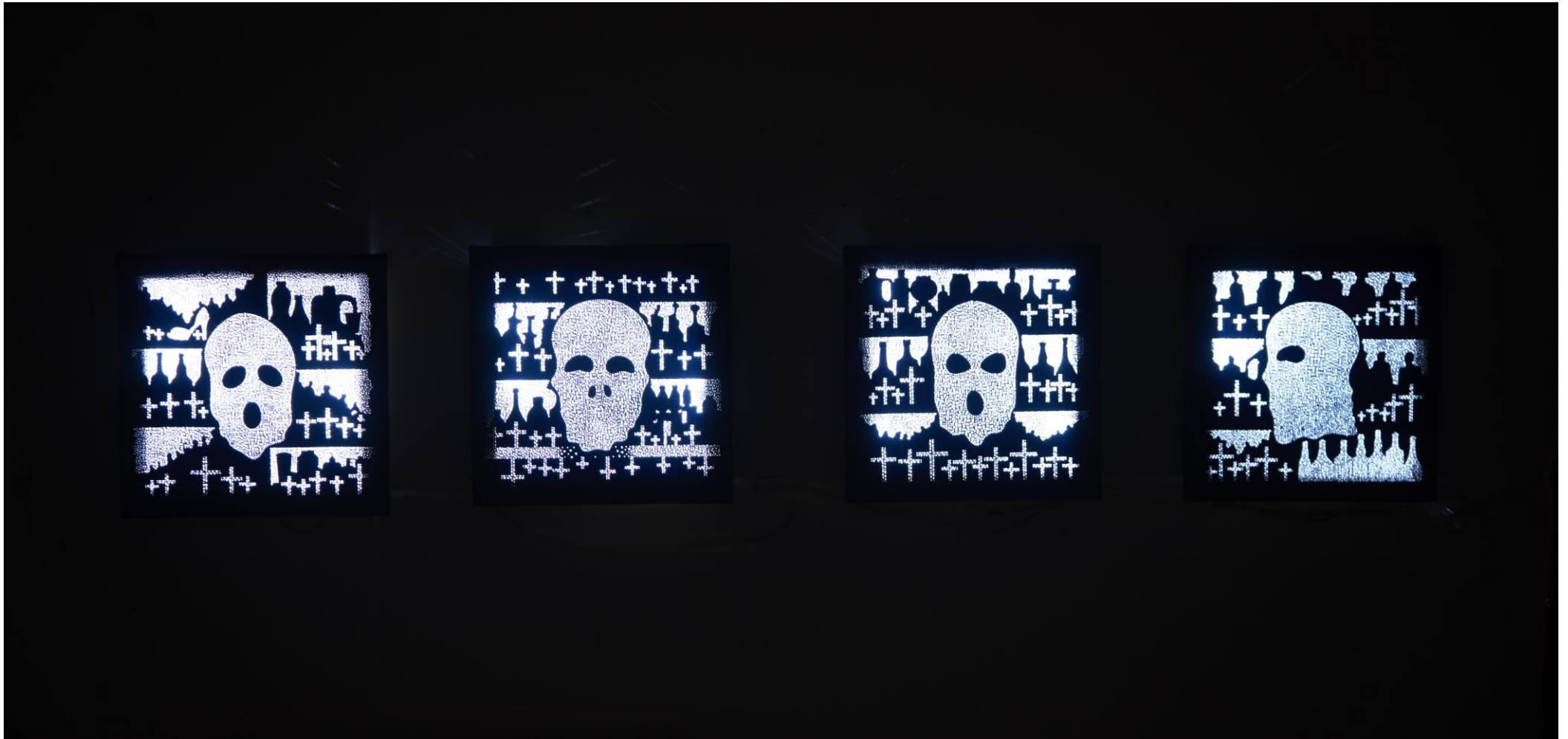
Untitled **For Sale** series 2020, Branding on paper, 60 x 84 cm



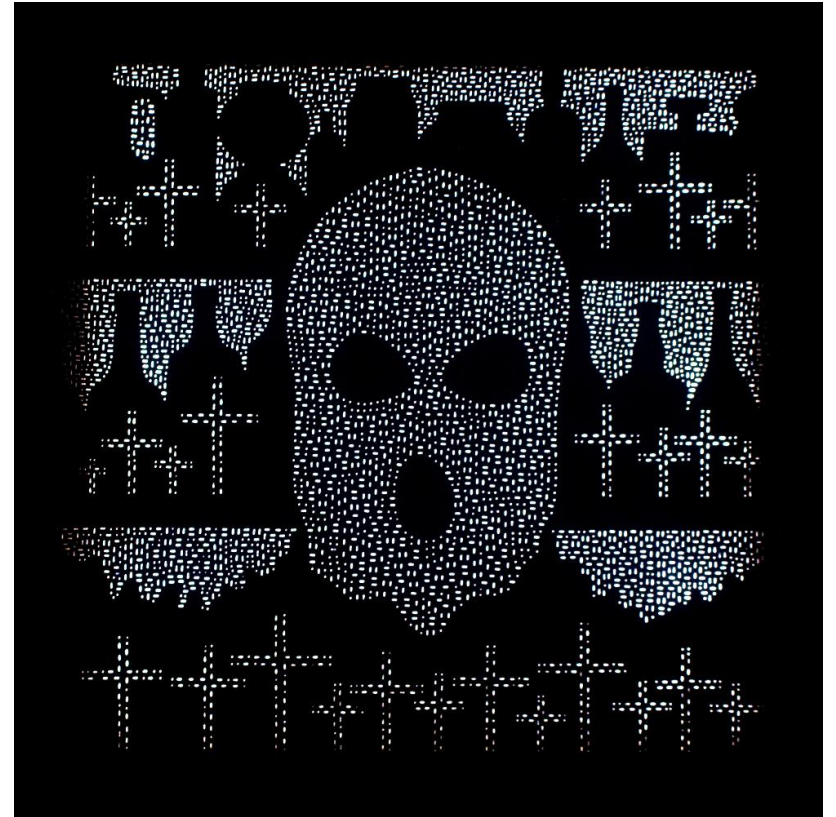
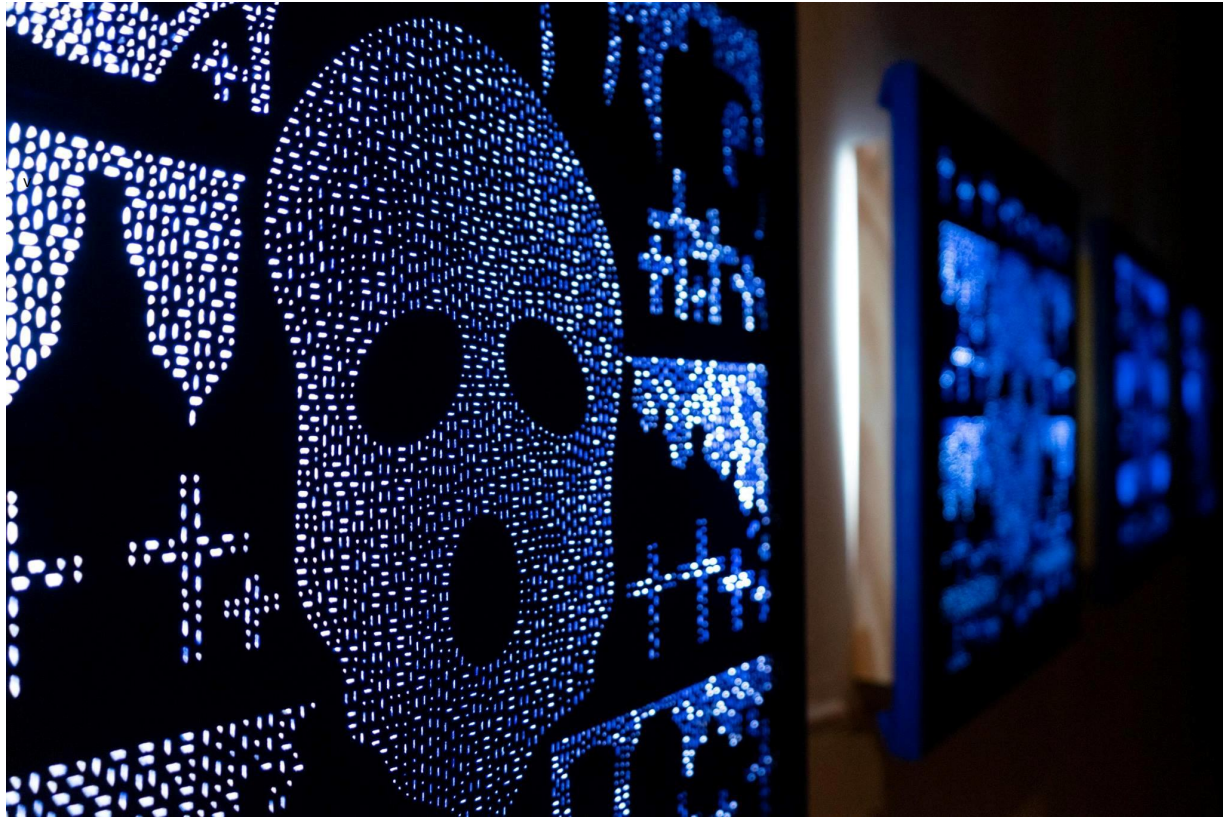
Untitled **For Sale** series 2019, Branding on Truck Tarpaulin + Light, Installation of 4 pieces of 40 x 40 cm

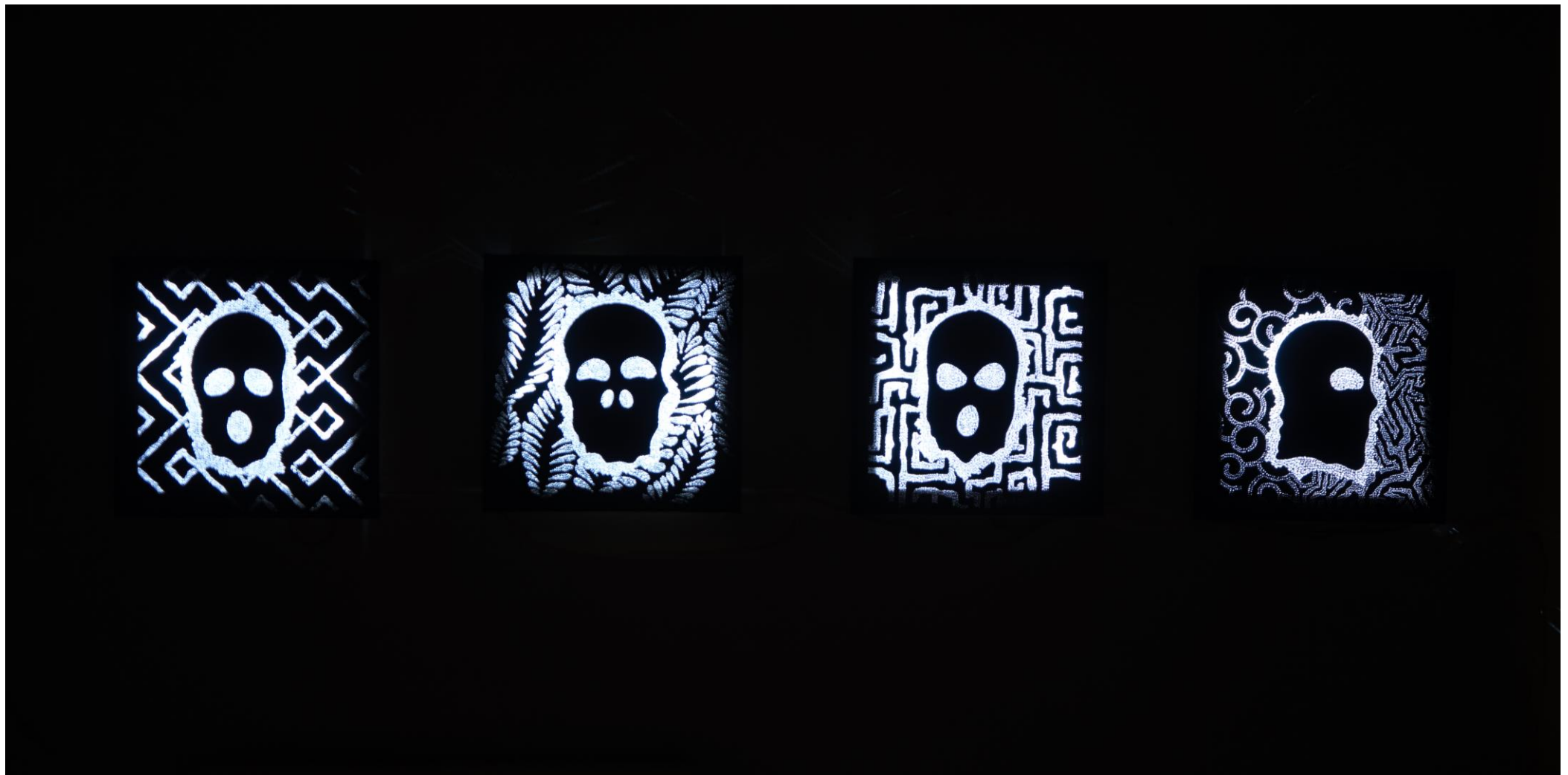
### **Wanted**, series

These wanted poster represented by the hoods, represent how in our globalized world we are searching for something we ignore, which is mainly motivated by our selfishness, promoted by any kind of promise we have in the advertisement; and this demand produced by this Stigmatization pushes us to the infernal strand of happiness and even to the peril of human lives and the environments.

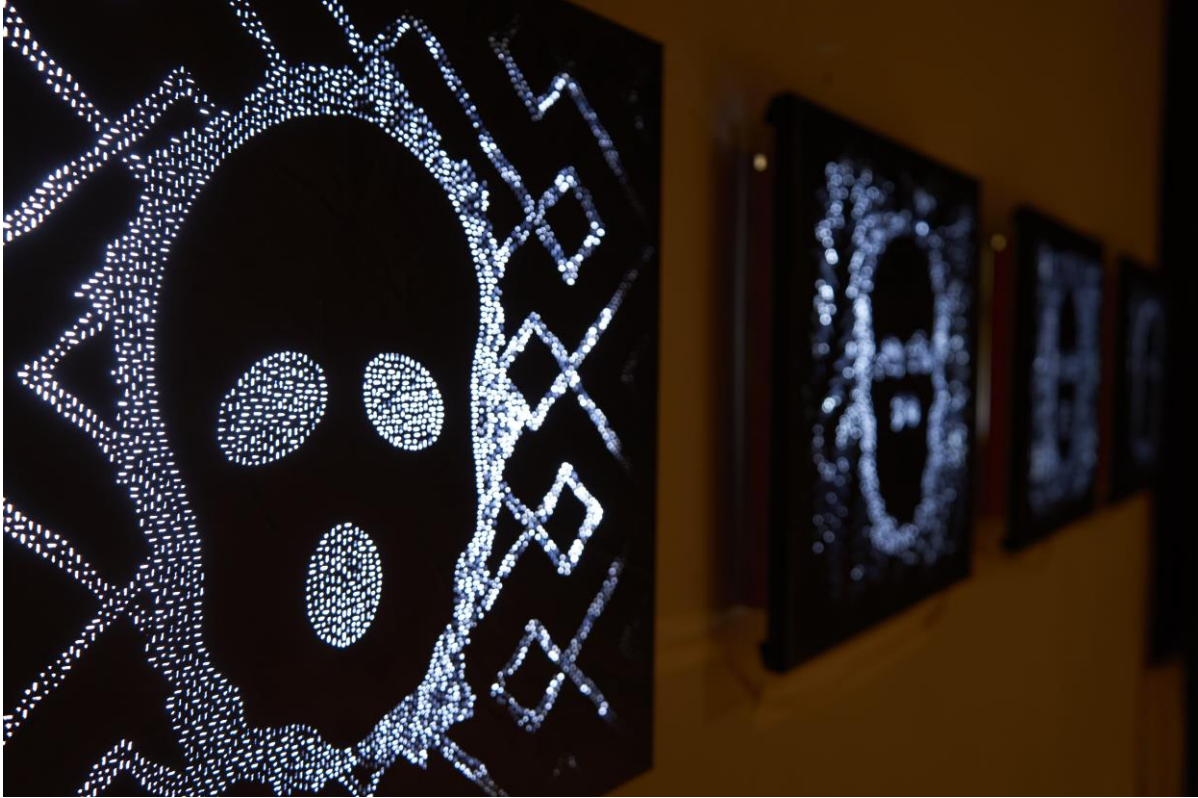


Untitled **Wanted** series 2018, Branding on Truck Tarpaulin + Light, Installation of 4 pieces of 50 x 50 cm

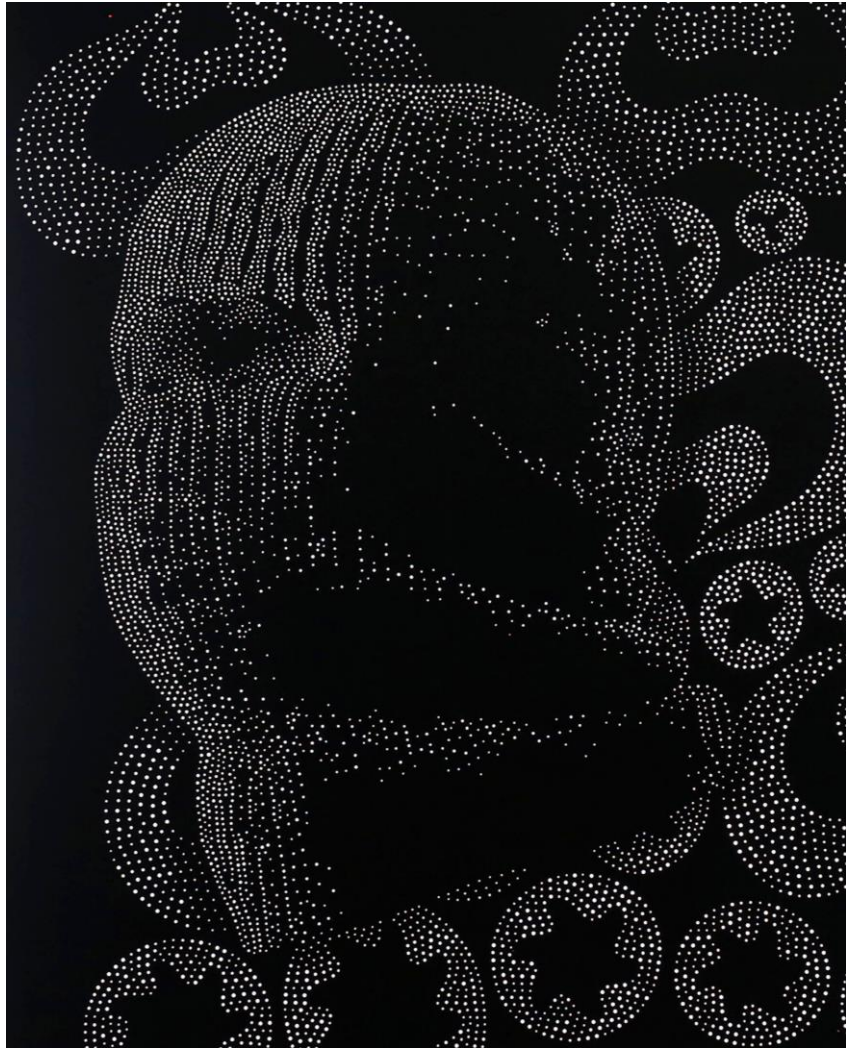




Untitled **Wanted** series 2017, Branding on Truck Tarpaulin + Light, Installation of 4 pieces of 50 x 50 cm

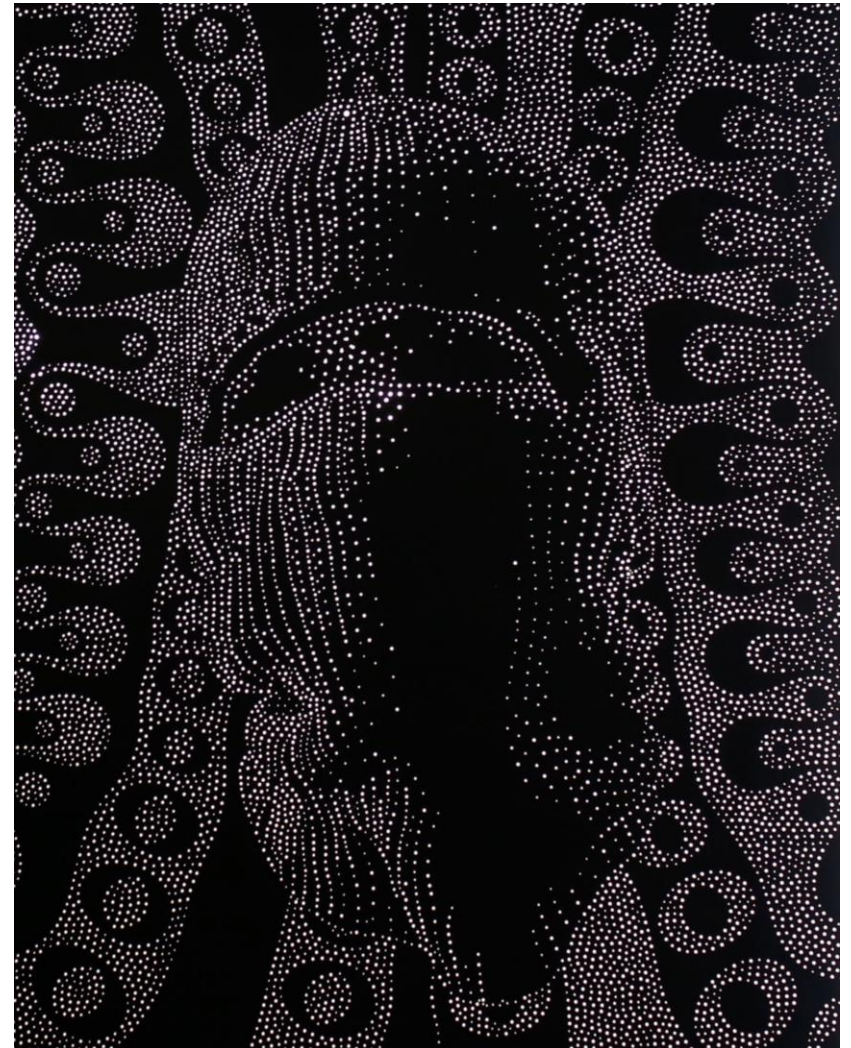






Untitled **Wanted** series 2016, Truck Tarpaulin holed + Light, 275 x 190 cm





Untitled **Wanted** series 2015, Truck Tarpaulin holed + Light, 275 x 190 cm

***“I incise, perforate and brand on tarpaulin. The spirit of my work is expressed by the light which is the raw material I extract and transform. It is the energy and the source that gives life to my installations. So, the work I do on the tarp is a way to channel and sculpt the light. I translate this technique by 'NZOLOKO'; a word borrowed from a Congolese ancestral practice of self-inflicted incision on the skin for cosmetic or therapeutic purposes, i.e. scarification.”***

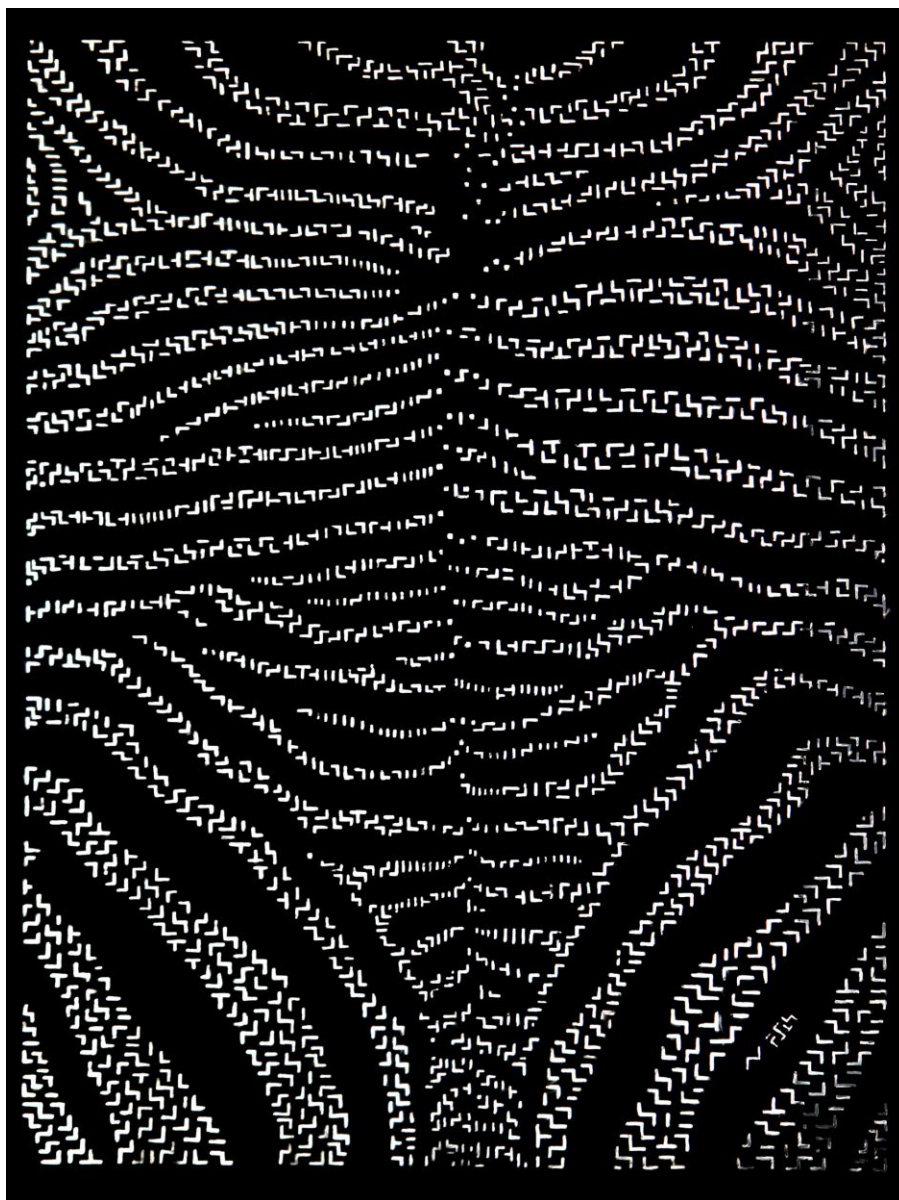


**Trap**, 2016, Truck Tarpaulin holed + Light, 150 x 150 cm

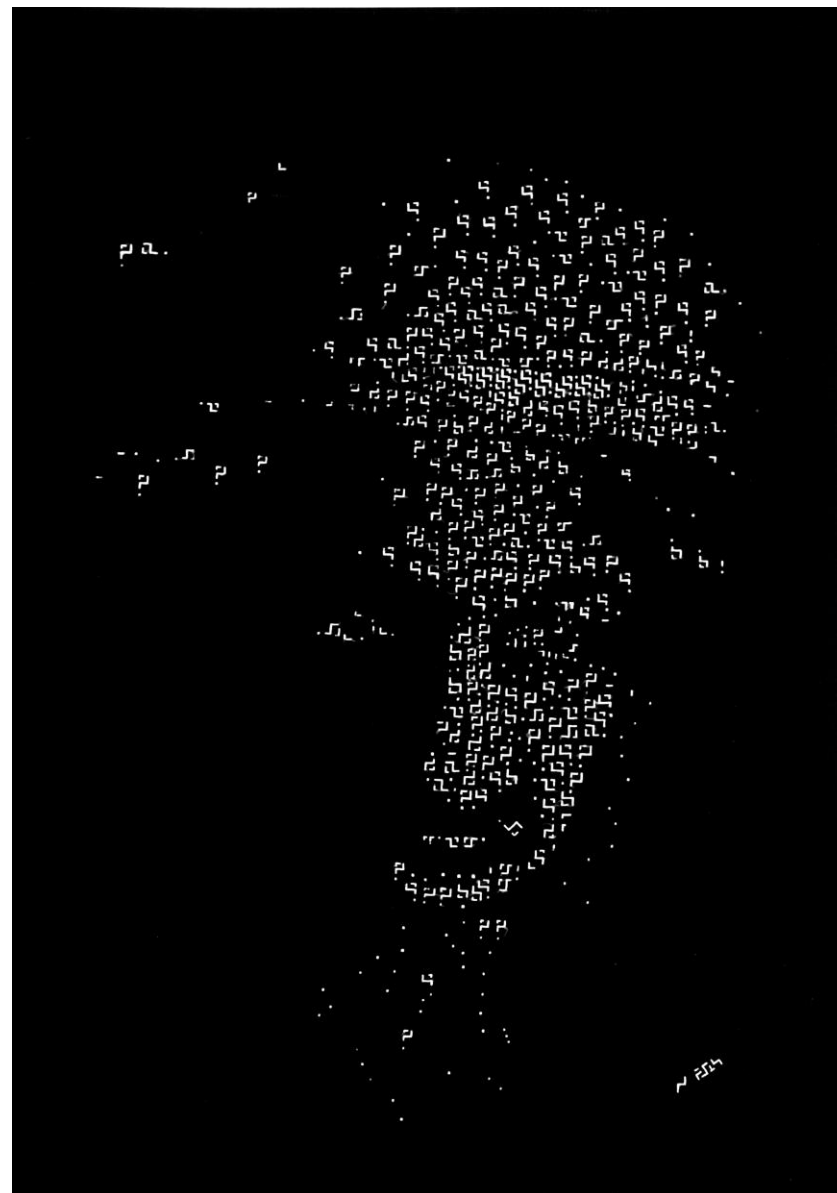


*Calculator*, 2014, Incision on Vinyl Tarpaulin + Light 53 x 64 cm

Which corner of the world should be next turned upside down? An issue the multinationals cannot help to wonder about day and night. I had the pleasure to overturn the portrait of one of theirs.

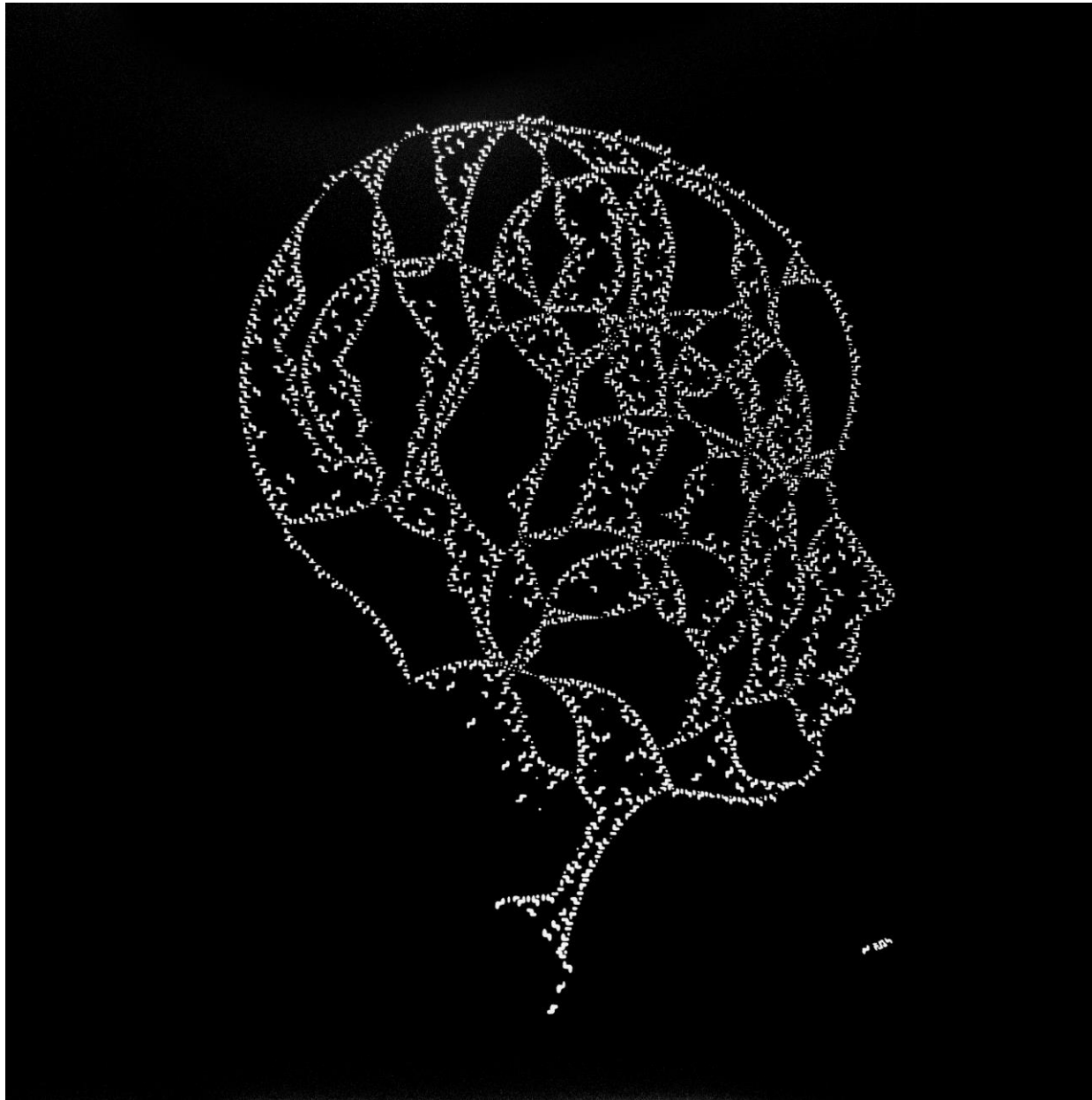


**Nzoloko**, 2014, Incision on Vinyl Tarpaulin + Light, 30 x 20, 5 cm



**Question mark**, 2014, Incision on Vinyl Tarpaulin + Light, 31 x 43 cm

What is this phenomenon? Who is the creator?  
Who is the real actor? Who funds it then?



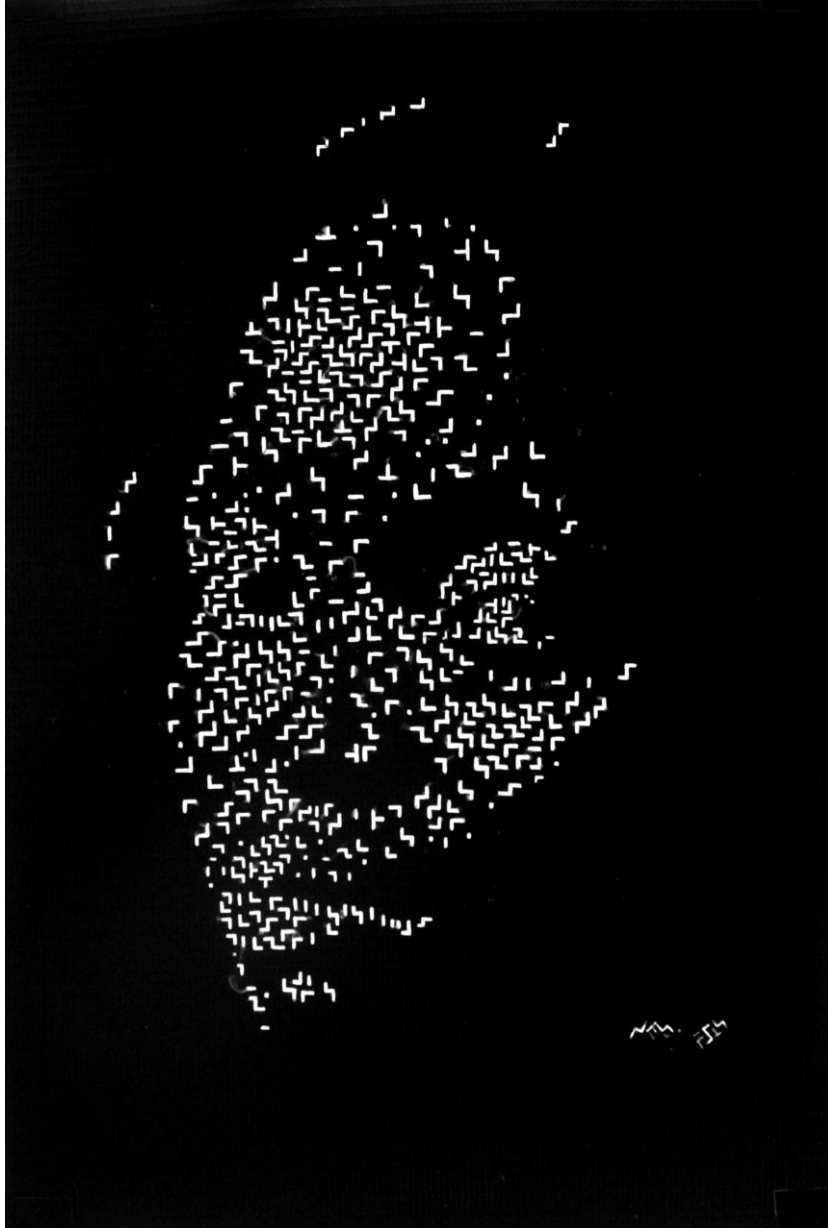
This is all what remains after big losses, provided it is used wisely. Only a good conscience and a good reflection can find the right solutions in this sick world.

*Survivors*, 2014, Incision on Vinyl Tarpaulin + Light, 98 x 98 cm



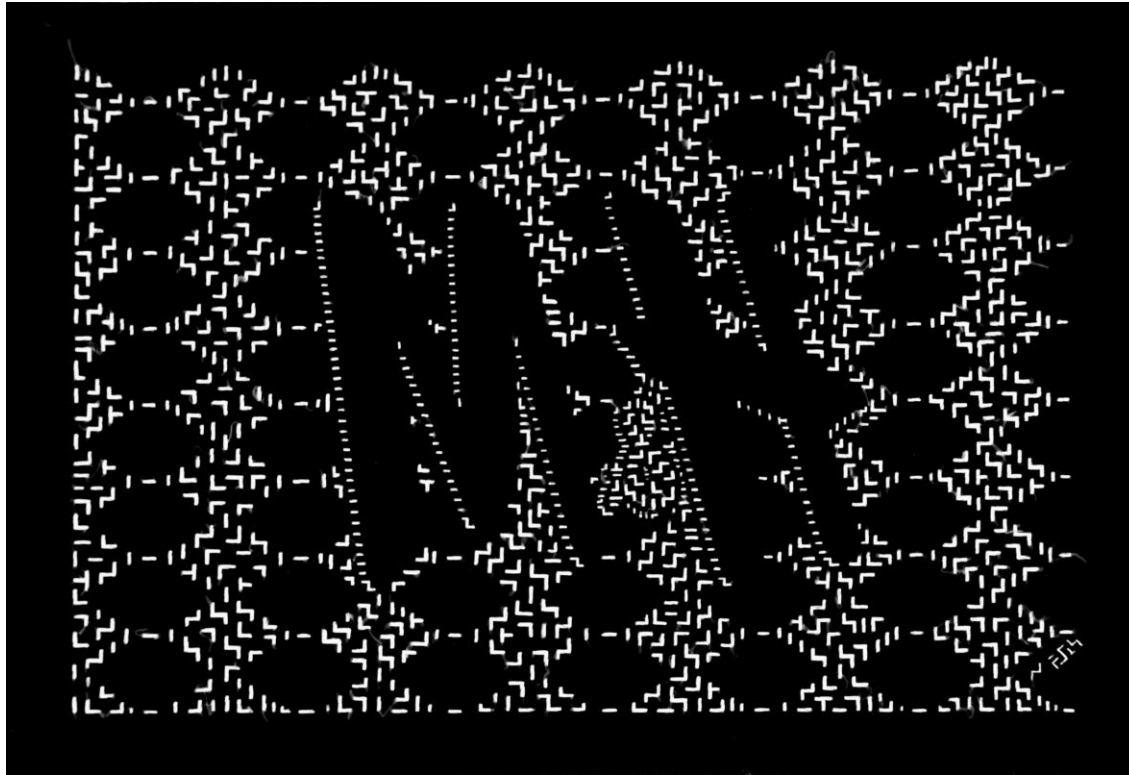
*Untitled*, 2014, Incision on Vinyl Tarpaulin + Light, 100 x 64 cm





*Untitled, 2014*, Incision on Vinyl Tarpaulin + Light, 30 x 20, 5 cm

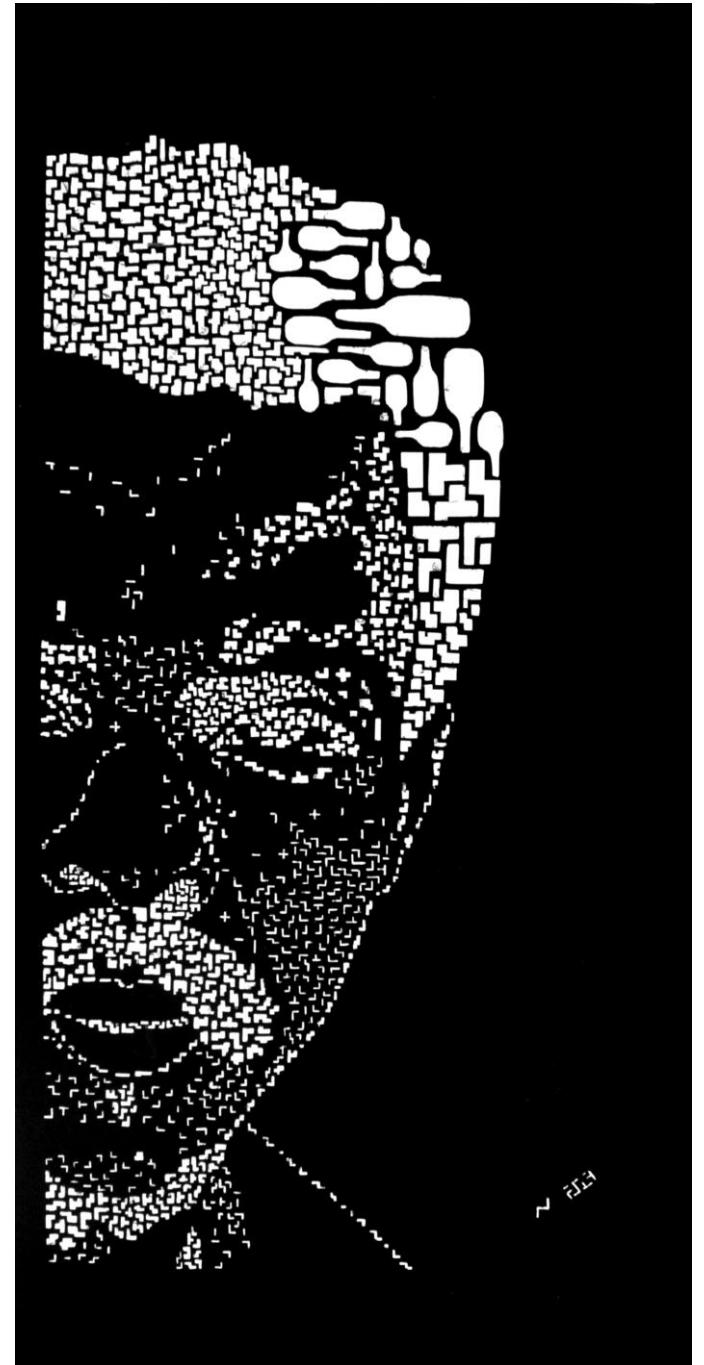
No way to ignore the violence in the eastern part of my country because some people badly need Tantalus to make money.

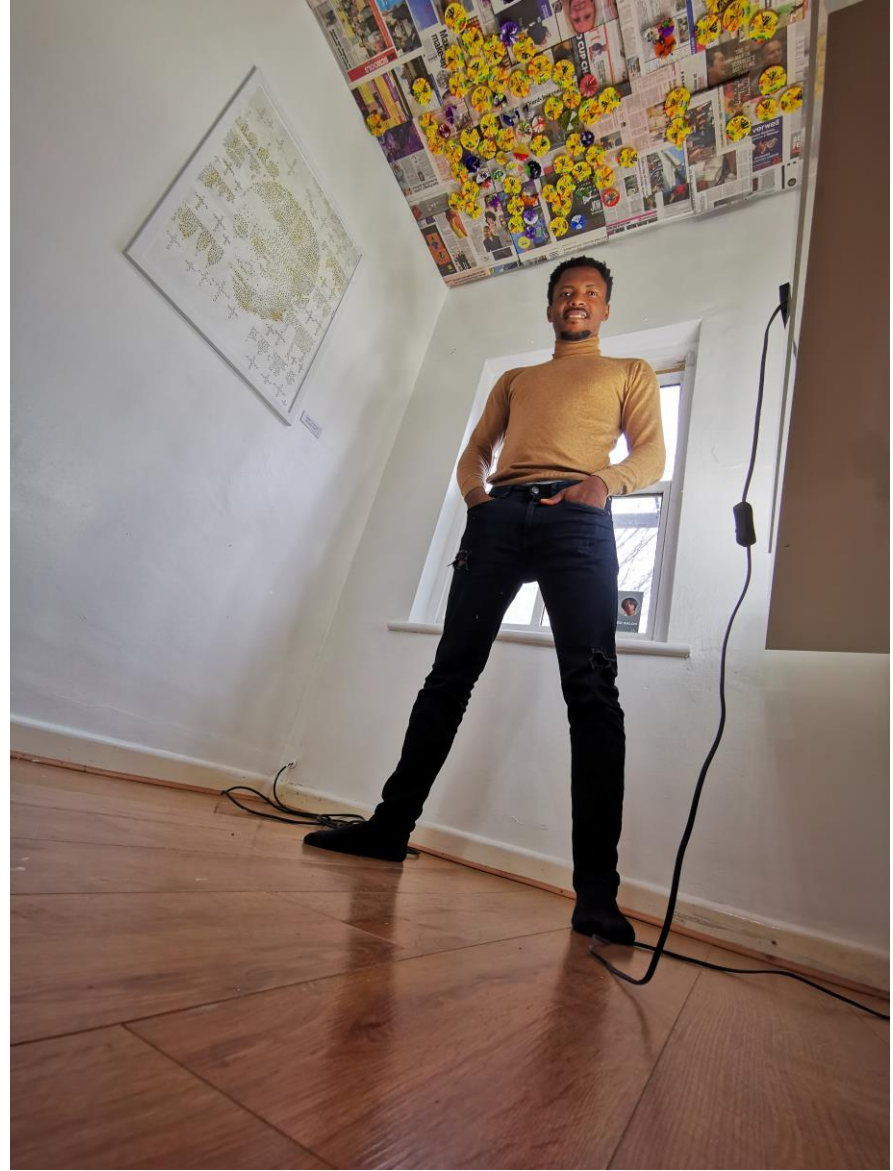


*Untitled, 2014*, Incision on Vinyl Tarpaulin + Light 30 x 20, 5 cm

*Portrait, 2013*, Incision on Vinyl Tarpaulin + Light, 50 x 25 cm

Beyond my features in negative, this palette reflects the creation, the history and the evolution of my Nzoloko technique.





# NKEMBO MOSWALA

Born in 1989 in Democratic Republic of Congo  
Lives and works between Milton Keynes

## Educations

**2006 – 2011** Académie de Beaux-Arts, Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

**2000 – 2006** Institut de Beaux-Arts, Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

## Residencies

**2019 Jun – July** Art OMI, Ghent, New York, USA

**2019 February** AADK Spain, Centro Negra, Blanca, Murcia, Spain

**2014** Master Art 2, Kin Artstudio, Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

## Solo Show

**2022 December** “In the skin of Isidore Bakanja”, Centre Regart, Levis, Canada

**2021 July – September** “Mayebo”, Parc de la paix, Centre (Regart), Levis, Canada

**2020 February** “World For Sale – Prix Mangondo”, Jojo Hair Lounge, Milton Keynes, England

## Groups Shows

**2020 September** Art Off Scren, Neumeraki, New York, USA

**2019 Jun – July** Art OMI, Ghent, New York, USA

**2019** AADK Spain, Centro Negra, Blanca, Murcia, Spain

**2014** OFF Biennale YANGO, Centre Wallonie Bruxelles, Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

**2014** Master Art 2, Kin Artstudio, Kinshasa D.R.Congo

## Workshops

**2016** Goethe Institut, Comment développer un projet artistique convainquant, by N’Goné Fall and Virginie Dupray, Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

**2014** MasterArt2, KinArtstudio, Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

**2013** MasterArt1, KinArtstudio, Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

**2008** Studio Malembe Maa CWB, Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

## Grants

**2022** Culture et Inclusion, Quebec government

**2019** Mobility fund Prince Claus Fund, Amsterdam

## Designs

**2018** Trophy "Lorenzo Natali Media Prize" European Union, Collaboration with **Diakota Mabilama Serge**

**2015** Brand image "Supreme Hand", Milton Keynes, England

**2014** Trophy "Gospel Day", Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

**2011** Trophy "Okapi Award", Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

**2009** Trophy "Podium Exprimez - Vous" Tigo, Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

**2009** Trophy "Festival International de Gospel de Kinshasa", Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

**2008** Trophy "Festival International de Gospel de Kinshasa", Kinshasa, D.R.Congo

## Press/Media

### **Journal de levis**

[https://www.journaldelevis.com/1298/%C3%80\\_la\\_une\\_aujourd\\_hui.html?id=104992](https://www.journaldelevis.com/1298/%C3%80_la_une_aujourd_hui.html?id=104992)

### **Journal Le Soleil - Québec**

[Nkembo Moswala: faire pousser l'espoir | Arts | Le Soleil - Québec](#)

### **Radio Canada**

[Œuvres d'art public à Québec et à Lévis | Vidéos | ICI Radio-Canada.ca](#)

### **Journal de levis**

<https://www.journaldelevis.com/1068/Art.html?id=81288>

### **AADK Spain**

[NKEMBO in residency at Blanca Murcia Spain - YouTube](#)

### **Art Africa Magazine**

[Spotlight on the Art of Darkness - Art Africa Magazine](#)

### **CNN, Kinshasa's trash-to-treasure art**

<https://edition.cnn.com/videos/international/2014/07/25/spc-inside-africa-kinshasa-art-b.cnn> **6:04**

## Contact

info@nkembomoswala.com

+447359466783

www.nkembomoswala.com

+16134103747