

Press Release

ÂNGELA FERREIRA. HERE I STAND

24.10.26 — 28.02.27

Ângela Ferreira, a pioneer in the artistic exploration of the postcolonial perspective

From 24 October until February 2027, MAC/CCB presents Ângela Ferreira's *Here I Stand*, bringing together 25 works and installations dating from 1992 to 2026 and offering a broad overview of her artistic practice. Through works such as *Site and Services* (1991–1992), *Indépendance Cha Cha* (2014), *Rádio Voz da Liberdade* (2022), and *Stone Free (Zama Zama)* (2026), Ângela Ferreira examines the consequences of colonialism, both in the past and in contemporary societies.

Through installations, sculptures, drawings, and moving images, developed from intensive research into archives, historical figures, architecture, and spaces associated with the colonial experience, the artist examines specific situations and realities in the social, cultural, and political history of the African continent. Attentive to feminist and racial issues, she also creates works such as *1 Million Roses for Angela Davis*, dedicated to a leading figure in the struggle against racism.

Ferreira consistently works against forgetting. Her art does not seek to offer a definitive account of the colonial past, but rather to show that history is constructed through accounts, images, and power structures that can and must be re-examined.

In the words of the exhibition's curator and MAC/CCB's artistic director, Nuria Enguita, Ângela Ferreira is "a pioneer in the artistic exploration of postcolonial reality. Her practice is rooted in a life experience shaped by a hybrid identity and guided by an ethical, committed approach that understands art as a way of thinking about the contemporary world."

The artist herself reflects: "Looking back, as I prepare this exhibition, I realise that my work continues to be about freedom. It remains constructively engaged with Africa and Portugal. These are the ambitions I had as a young woman, and I think I have managed, in some way, to fulfil them over time. When I came to live in Portugal, at the age of 29, my main ambition was to work on the relations between Africa and Portugal."

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Born in 1958 in Maputo, Mozambique—at the time still a Portuguese colony—Ângela Ferreira lived in South Africa during the apartheid era, where she completed a degree in Fine Arts from the Michaelis School of Fine Arts at the University of Cape Town. She currently lives and works in Lisbon, where she also pursues a teaching practice that is strongly informed by her own creative work.

Postcolonial thought, which analyses the consequences of colonialism both in the past and in contemporary societies, finds a rigorous visual expression in Ângela Ferreira's artistic practice. The questioning of how Europe and the West imposed knowledge, identities, and ideas upon colonised peoples (or denied them), together with the exposure of the consequences of this domination, and the examination of subsequent processes of national liberation constitute an attempt to understand the concrete reality of a culturally situated time and place. In the same vein, they inform a profound critical interrogation of the foundations upon which our ways of life are built.

Ferreira seeks to dismantle the historical amnesia and silence associated with colonisation and its effects by reviving the popular and the vernacular, highlighting, for example, the importance of radio in liberation movements. Attentive to both feminist and racial issues, she develops a critique of all forms of absolute power, whether cultural or political, denouncing the mechanisms of assimilation, classification, and domestication of the discourse of otherness that are disguised under the guise of "recognition."

By investigating the relationship between architectural structures, ways of life, and power relations, Ferreira explores the value of things and the possibility of understanding society through its material and symbolic production. Materials, objects, and their design play a part in the construction of religious, social, and political values, and the spread of the latter depends on the economic power that produces them. It is here that other tensions are also revealed—between tradition and development, between industrial and artisanal production, between magical

thinking and instrumental rationality—alongside the emotional ambivalence and insecurity of humanity in the face of the emergence of an economic system which, while promising progress, threatens ways of life and traditions.

These strategies can be seen in works that illuminate some of the key strands of Ângela Ferreira's practice:

- In *Indépendance Cha Cha* (2014), the artist revisits the unfulfilled promises of colonial modernity and the expectations generated by African independence.
- In *Adventures in Mozambique and the Portuguese Tendency to Forget* (2015), she questions the authority of archives and colonial forms of knowledge production.
- In *1 Million Roses for Angela Davis* (2020), she brings together geographies and historical moments from the struggle against racism to recover an international memory of resistance.
- In *Stone Free (Zama Zama)* (2026), she exposes the contradictions of colonial extractivism and its consequences, including poverty and the dream of a free life.

Architecture, sound, the archive, and sculpture thus become tools for questioning what remains hidden beneath official narratives. Ferreira's artistic practice demonstrates that decolonisation involves not only a re-examination of the past, but also a transformation of the ways in which that past shapes our understanding of the present.

IN DETAIL

Sites and Services
1991–1992

The installation brings together twelve colour photographs, a pastel drawing, and four floor sculptures. The work dates back to 1991, when the artist photographed the Khayelitsha area, on the outskirts of Cape Town, using 35mm slides. The photographs focused on grey concrete toilets, isolated on suburban plots before construction began. The photographs inspired expressionist architectural drawings of interconnected structures; these drawings, in turn, suggest the abstract forms of rudimentary sculptures made from the same building materials found on site: concrete, corrugated iron, and white plastic pipes. In this way, the work evokes modernist artistic practice and processes of construction.

The title refers directly to an urban planning policy under the apartheid regime that provided basic infrastructure (plots, roads, sanitation, and water points), enabling residents to build their own homes. Although designed to address rapid urbanisation, this strategy primarily served as a political instrument for controlling and segregating the townships.

Drawn to the vastness, aridity, and austerity of that landscape, Ferreira saw in these elements an alternative architecture. Rather than directly criticising the government, the work lays bare the profound ambiguities and complexities of South African social reality, inviting aesthetic and political reflection on the marginalisation of housing and sanitation, poverty, uniformity, mass production, and the quest for decent living conditions.

Realistic Manifesto
2022

Realistic Manifesto foregrounds the idea of recycling complex, interconnected forms. On the one hand, the artist literally recycles machinery, furniture, and architectural structures that no longer serve their purpose from her everyday surroundings: carpentry tools, gas appliances, a laboratory table and security bars. On the other, the works draw on her sustained study of the Russian Constructivist artistic project, and of the utopian avant-garde proposals for political art that emerged in the early 20th century. The artist draws on the work of Naum Gabo (1890–1977), who sought perfection through the three-dimensional study of time, space, and line. The title is adapted from the manifesto Gabo co-wrote with Antoine Pevsner and which was read and distributed as a poster at the opening of an exhibition with Gustav Klucis in Moscow on 5 August 1920.

Finally, the artist also draws on her personal archive, reprinting old portraits of

herself in her overalls in the courtyard of the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town, around 1980. In them, she performs a gestural language with red Plexiglass circles, similar to those she uses in the exhibition's new sculptures.

This series of works evokes labour movements, gas supply, geographical boundaries, and revolutions, as well as the interplay of different discourses surrounding abstract art movements and 20th-century geopolitics.

1 Million Roses for Angela Davis
2020

This work examines Angela Davis and her emergence as a political symbol during the Cold War, with particular attention to her ties to the Eastern bloc, especially the Soviet Union and East Germany (GDR). While people critical of the American model viewed the East as an alternative to capitalism and racism, these regimes also resorted to censorship and the manipulation of information. The GDR used Davis as proof of Western oppression, while in the USA she was branded a threat, serving as a propaganda tool in an intense symbolic struggle depicted in contemporary newspapers and posters.

Ângela Ferreira's artistic tribute to Davis is structured around two elements: a sculpture inspired by a printing press (representing the media and the political instruments of propaganda) and an audiovisual component. The video brings together a range of archival materials, juxtaposing images of Davis in the USA with audio praising her in the GDR, and records of her visits to the GDR with American accounts depicting her as a terrorist. The work also draws a connection between Angela Davis's trajectory and that of the Mozambican poet Noémia de Sousa, using these historical contradictions to reflect on the Cold War, propaganda, and its influence today.

Indépendance Cha Cha
2014

This work grew out of Ângela Ferreira's participation in the Lubumbashi Biennale in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2013 and was first presented in Portugal at Lumiar Cité, Lisbon, in 2014. The work consists of a sculpture that evokes the 1950s colonial architecture of the urban centre of Lubumbashi, the capital of Katanga, a mineral-rich province in what was then known as the Belgian Congo. The sculpture draws directly on the work of Belgian architect Claude Strebelle.

The sculptural structure responds to the architectural conditions of the MAC/CCB exhibition space and also serves as a screen for two video projections. The first documents the performance organised by the artist for the Lubumbashi Biennale, in which two singers perform the poem-song "Je vais entrer dans la mine," sung in Kibemba, the region's formerly predominant language. The lyrics are based on a

man's letter to his mother, in which he expresses his fears of death while undertaking forced labour in the mines. The second video, which lends the work its title, shows the Park Hotel band from Lubumbashi performing "Indépendance Cha Cha." This emblematic anthem of the independence movements in French-speaking countries during the 1960s was written by Congolese musician Joseph Kabasele in Brussels on the night the Belgian government and the Congolese delegation agreed on the date of the country's independence.

Untitled '98
1998

This performance consists of an aerobics sequence filmed at the National Stadium in Lisbon, Portugal. The stadium's architecture has remained largely unchanged since its construction in 1940. The memory of the Estado Novo gymnastic festivals that once took place there is evoked through the out-of-focus imagery. The video marks an encounter between the events organised by the Mocidade Portuguesa during the Salazar regime and contemporary choreography.

PEGA
2000

This video, comprising edited documentation of a performance by the artist, presents a choreography that combines tauromachic and sexual allusions, evoking the moment when the female bullfighter confronts the bull in a Portuguese bullfight. The camera lens assumes the point of view of the animal, which eventually plunges into the woman's genitals.

Adventures in Mozambique and the Portuguese Tendency to Forget
[Text by Elvira Diangany Ose]
2015

Adventures in Mozambique and the Portuguese Tendency to Forget (2015) is based on the lives and work of anthropologists Jorge and Margot Dias, whose research on Mozambique's Makonde people brought them international recognition in the 1960s and 1970s. Their monograph, *The Makonde of Mozambique*, is essential reading for understanding the culture, rituals, and socioeconomic aspects of this society. Ângela Ferreira's research reveals the significance of this work for the new anthropology, while also exposing the political agenda underpinning the couple's research and their alliances with the Salazar regime.

As anthropologist Harry G. West points out, the couple continually grappled with the dilemma of whether to align themselves with authoritarian power or resist it. It was this tale of ambiguity and ambivalence that captivated the artist. Ângela Ferreira's intention is not only to make evidence available but also to challenge the public to construct a different history from her reworking of the anthropologists'

imaginary.

Ferreira focuses in particular on Margot Dias's diaries, subverting her colonial gaze through a critical shift that makes the researcher herself the subject of another researcher's study. The work is directly concerned with memory: the memory of events from an untold history, and the institutionalisation of that unrealised memory, which remained hidden for decades in the archives of the former Ministry of Overseas Territories, now the Ministry of Defence.

Stone Free (Zama Zama)
2026

This proposal evokes two distinct moments: an image of a mining tower built in rural Mozambique in the mid-1970s, recalling a monument to an African utopia and represented by a suspended, floating tower; and a 1966 Jimi Hendrix song entitled "Stone Free."

The two films shown in the structure form part of Ângela Ferreira's extensive series investigating contemporary forms of mining; the smaller screen presents a collage of the *Zama Zama* films, focusing on the artisanal aspect of this practice. In South Africa, at least 6,000 mine shafts abandoned by large mining companies remain unsealed. Artisanal miners, also known as *zama zama*, risk their lives in these mines, working in extremely hazardous conditions to earn a living. The government considers most of these informal operations illegal.

The larger screen is the result of a collaboration with Portuguese musician Scúru Fitchádu. Ferreira challenged Fitchádu to respond to the images and questions surrounding the *zama zama* miners and to create his own musical film—a personal interpretation of "Stone Free." The lyrics, in Cape Verdean Creole, are interspersed with proclamations in Portuguese by Mozambican miners ("we are already dead") and phrases in isiZulu ("rites of freedom") by the South African band Shameless. The raw, electronic punk sound and accompanying performance formally echo the harsh working conditions of the miners depicted in the work.

Rádio Voz da Liberdade
2022

Rádio Voz da Liberdade (1962–1974), broadcast from Algiers by RTA (Radiodiffusion Télévision Algérienne), was a cornerstone of the anti-fascist and anti-colonial struggle against the Estado Novo regime. Broadcast in Portugal and its colonies, it served as a mouthpiece for opponents of Salazar's dictatorship, leaders of African liberation movements fighting for independence, and women's rights activists, bringing their demands into the struggle for the emancipation of peoples.

Both stations operated as sister radio stations, born of resistance and shaped by the battle against colonial power over the airwaves. This historical memory is given material form in a project that brings art and architecture together. Two sculptures

inspired by illustrations on stamps from the 1960s stand out: their Constructivist vocabulary evokes iconic works such as Tatlin's Tower. They are accompanied by large-scale murals based on photographs and archival material documenting the history of these revolutionary media.

The tribute to Radio Voz da Liberdade underscores the pivotal role of broadcasting in liberation struggles worldwide. By giving concrete form to clandestine radio frequencies, the work situates artistic creation within a political discourse that brings into view a historical process shared by the two shores of the Mediterranean. In doing so, it reverses the colonial perspective and foregrounds the international solidarity that played a decisive role in paving the way for the Carnation Revolution and the fall of the dictatorship.

Zip Zap Circus School
2000 – 2026

The installation *Zip Zap Circus School* draws on two sources of inspiration: an image of a model for an unrealised project by Mies van der Rohe for the Kröller-Müller family museum, and a desire to approach architecture as an idea—as something one longs for, or a dream one strives towards.

The work centres on the Zip Zap school, an educational project for children in Cape Town who had no permanent home. Mozambican architect Pancho Guedes designed a speculative project, presented in 1996, that was never built. Ângela Ferreira, in turn, built a full-scale wooden and canvas representation of part of that design, mounted on wheels. In this way, she gives the desired structure a fleeting, impermanent form.

In her research practice, the artist regards buildings as anthropological, sociological, and political structures. Ferreira reinterprets unrealised architectural plans, demonstrating how these theoretical ideas can be adapted to new uses, contexts, and human experiences.

LIST OF WORKS

Zip Zap Circus School
2000–2026
Wood and fabric
350 × 500 × 460 cm; 660 × 500 × 730 cm; 100 × 50 × 200 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art

1 Million Roses for Angela Davis (Sculpture)
2020
Wood and metal
400 × 120 × 160 cm
Exhibition copy
Courtesy of the artist
The original is part of the collection of the Albertinum/Dresden State Art Collections

Let My People Go / 1 Million Roses for Angela Davis (Video)
2020
Video, 4:3, colour, sound (with English and Portuguese subtitles), 11’47”, loop
Exhibition copy
Courtesy of the artist
The original is part of the collection of the Albertinum/Dresden State Art Collections

Sites and Services
1991–1992
Cibachrome print (12 elements); cement, steel, wood, PVC, zinc, and aluminium
30 × 40 cm (each print); 120 × 110,5 × 110,5 cm; 160 × 120 × 80 cm; 19 × 65 × 237 cm; 100 × 70 × 220 cm
Coleção Nacional de Arte Contemporânea – Portugal

From the Sites and Services Series
1991
Pastel on Fabriano paper (diptych)
98 × 68 cm (each)
Coleção Norlinda e José Lima, in deposit at Centro de Arte Oliva

Realistic Manifesto 3 Components (self-portrait – performance at Michaelis circa 1981)
2022
C-print on Alucolic
90 × 63 cm each
Courtesy of the artist and NF/NIEVES FERNANDEZ

Realistic Manifesto – Burglar Bar
2022
Painted iron, plexiglas, nylon cord, steel cable
102 × 80 × 16 cm
Coleção Diogo Bento & Ricardo Costa

Realistic Manifesto – Gas Water Heater
2022
Iron, copper, PVC, speaker, sound
180 × 110 × 140 cm
Courtesy of the artist and NF/NIEVES FERNANDEZ

Realistic Manifesto – Lathe
2022
Iron, MDF, plexiglas, aluminium, Bakelite
170 × 156 × 104 cm
Courtesy of the artist and NF/NIEVES FERNANDEZ

Indépendance Cha Cha
2014
Pinewood, MDF, translucent and opaque screens, 2 videos (alternating colour and sound), 5'9", loop
257 × 1350 × 250 cm
Coleção de Arte da Fundação EDP

Compósitos* (*Indépendance Cha Cha)
2014
Photographic prints and graphite on Fabriano paper (4 elements)
100 × 70 cm (each)
Coleção de Arte Fundação EDP

Stone Free (Zama Zama)
2026
Wood, metal barrel, steel cables and video (2 front projections)
530 × 180 × 180 cm
Large screen: «Stone Free», written and composed by Scúru Fitchádu, IsiZulu interventions by Musa (Shameless band), 4'11" (loop); small screen: *Zama Zama*, 4'03" (loop)
Courtesy of the artist and Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art

La Voix de l'Algérie Libre et Combattante
2022
Aluminium, MDF, beech veneer, wire mesh, iron, steel, copper, steel cable
500 × 109 × 109 cm (tower); 800 × 182 × 6 cm (ellipses)
Exhibition copy

Courtesy of the artist
Sammlung der Kunsthalle Recklinghausen

Rádio Voz da Liberdade
2022
Aluminium, MDF, PVC, iron
330 × 230 × 190 cm
Collection du Frac Sud — Cité de l'art contemporain

Rádio Fanon
2022
MDF, PVC, plexiglas, TV monitor
70 × 190 × 120 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art

Patrouille à l'Est d'Amar Laskri
1971
35mm film (converted into video), sound, 115'
Produced by: O.N.C.I.C.

Opérateur radio à Radio Algérie II
2022
Acrylic paint
400 × 230 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art

Colonialismo vence-se
2022
Acrylic paint
460 × 320 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art

Independência para as colónias
2022
Acrylic paint
Source: *As paredes em Liberdade*, *Lobo Mau*, ed. Teorema, 1974
150 × 207 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art

Études pour Rádio Voz da Liberdade I & II
2022
Framed stamps (2 elements)
37,7 × 29 cm (each)
Collection du Frac Sud — Cité de l'art contemporain

Études pour Rádio Voz da Liberdade I & XVI
2022
Framed drawings (16 elements)
Dimensões variáveis / Dimensions variable
Collection du Frac Sud — Cité de l'art contemporain

Fourteen PIDE Documents
2022
Framed prints on Fabriano paper (14 elements)
21 × 29 cm (each)
Collection du Frac Sud — Cité de l'art contemporain

Adventures in Mozambique and the Portuguese Tendency to Forget
2015
16:9, colour, sound, 19'15"
Courtesy of the artist and Cristina Guerra Contemporary Ar

Untitled '98
1998
Video, Mini-DV transferred to DVD, colour, silent, 4', loop
Courtesy of the artist and Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art

PEGA
2000
DVD, colour, sound, 4', loop
Courtesy of the artist and Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art

MAC/CCB'S 3RD ANNIVERSARY

23.10 — 25.10.26

MAC/CCB celebrates its 3rd anniversary from 23 to 25 October, with free admission. The programme includes the opening of Ângela Ferreira's *Here I Stand*, and the installation of her large-scale work *Zip Zap Circus School* in the CCB Square, where it will be activated by students from the Chapitô Circus School. Friday evening concludes with a DJ set by Party Smith. On Saturday, the "Discreet Music Series" presents a concert by Nkisi and Gonzo, alongside conversations around Frida Orupabo's exhibition, guided tours, and a lecture by António Guerreiro. The Playroom welcomes younger visitors, while the occasion also provides an opportunity to present the latest catalogues published by the museum, devoted to the exhibitions *Multiple Eyes*, *Terra Crua*, *Cloud of Confusion*, and *"May I Help You? Posso Ajudar?" Arts and Artists from the 1970s Onwards*.

23.10.26

6:00pm MAC/CCB Auditorium
Conversation with Ângela Ferreira and Nuria Enguita

7:00pm Floor 0
Opening of the exhibition *Ângela Ferreira. Here I Stand*

7:30pm CCB Square
Performance at Ângela Ferreira's *Zip Zap Circus School* by students from the Chapitô Circus School

8:00pm Floor 0
DJ set by Party Smith

24.10.26

11:30am, 12:00pm, 12:30pm, 2:30pm, 5:00pm, and 5:30pm
30-minute tours of the MAC/CCB collections, led by the Education and Mediation team

3:00pm Floor -1
Tour/conversation with curator Marta Mestre, Colectivo FACA (Andreia Coutinho and Maribel Mendes Sobreira), and Ícaro Lira, as part of the exhibition *Frida Orupabo. Cloud of Confusion*

3:00pm
Family activities for children aged 6–12, led by the Education and Mediation team

5:00pm Floor -1
Nkisi and Gonçalo F. Cardoso / Gonzo in the “Discreet Music Series”

6:00pm CCB Square
Performance at Ângela Ferreira’s *Zip Zap Circus School* by students from the Chapitô Circus School

25.10.26

11:00am
Family activities for children aged 6–12, led by the Education and Mediation team

11:30am, 12:00pm, 12:30pm, 2:30pm, 5:00pm, and 5:30pm
30-minute tours of the MAC/CCB collections, led by the Education and Mediation team

15:00 Floor 0
Tour/conversation with Ângela Ferreira and Nuria Enguita

4:00pm MAC/CCB Auditorium
Presentation of the catalogues published in 2026: *Terra Crua*, *Multiple Eyes*, *Cloud of Confusion*, and *"May I Help You? Posso Ajudar?" Arts and Artists from the 1970s Onwards*

5:00pm MAC/CCB Auditorium
"The Temptation of Legibility: The Critical Dimension of Art in the Face of Thematic Conformism." Lecture by António Guerreiro, introduced by Nuria Enguita

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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