

Senzeni Marasela is a cross-disciplinary artist who explores photography, video, prints, and mixed-medium installations involving textiles and embroidery. Her work deals with history, memory, and personal narrative, emphasizing historical gaps and overlooked figures. Marasela is part of a generation of post-apartheid female South African artists, who continue to re-centre bodies-of-color through the strategy of performative fictive masquerading.

Marasela explores the psychogeography of Black women's lived experiences, incorporating matrilineal stories narrated to her as a child, and wider sociocultural and political histories of South Africa. In her work, she translates memories of struggle and urbanization through the use of material culture and narratives, such as the use of the color red, which refers to cultural memories around the time of the "Red Dust" – a period of drought in the 1930s in South Africa. Marasela's mother's collection of doilies and Victorian lace works handed down in her family, influenced her artistic practice. Her work taps into cultural memories using, printing archival materials such as newspapers and photographs on colonial textiles. It tells stories of black women in South Africa and builds an "intimate archive", giving voice to experiences of Black women. Marasela is known for her six-year performance work *Ijermani Lam* when she was wearing the same red dress every day.

„As women, the clothes we wear are cultural markers of the many roles we perform, as mothers, sisters, partners, workers, family members, wives, and so on. We constantly have to reinvent ourselves in the everyday. In performing *Theodorah*, I wore the same red dress daily, and it frustrated people. They couldn't handle it as I moved from one space to the next.“

– Senzeni Marasela

Senzeni Marasela (b. 1977 in Thokoza, ZA) has obtained her BA in Fine Arts at the Wits School of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, ZA. The artist was part of the South African Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale (2015) and most recently has received the K21 Global Art Award 2023. Marasela's work has been featured in solo exhibitions at Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, ZA; Gallery AOP, Johannesburg, ZA; Axis Gallery, New York, NY, US; Stenersen Museum, Oslo, NO; A Museum of Women, Dolls and Memories, Devon, UK; Upstream Public Art Project, Amsterdam, NL; South African National Gallery, Cape Town, ZA. Marasela participated at group exhibitions at Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, US; Transpalette, Bourges, FR; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, US; Sean Kelly Gallery, New York, NY, US; Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan, IT; Centro de Investigação Artística, Lisbon, PT; Royal Academy of Fine Art, Antwerp, BE; Absa Gallery, Johannesburg, ZA; Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, Alabama, US; Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland, NZ; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, DE; Bildmuseet, Umea, SE; Mercedes-Benz Museum, Stuttgart, DE, among others. Her work features in prominent international and private collections, including the Newark Museum, Smithsonian Institution, and MoMA. Senzeni Marasela lives and works in Johannesburg, ZA.