



# Creators

ART

## Everyday Objects Become 'Doppelgänger' Sculptures

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Dec 12 2016, 1:05pm



Brooms and building materials become representations of people in Pedro Pires' work.

A gallery in South Africa is currently populated with figures that are stand-ins for us. *Doppelgänger*, an exhibition by Pedro Pires at Gallery MOMO Johannesburg, questions how our identities are defined by the materials with which we interact. Pires tells The Creators Project, "The materials that I choose are used to cover the human body. I tend to use real life copies of people and these materials cover them, creating something like a new skin or armor which becomes the new identity of those bodies." By turning these materials into figures, Pires intends to confront viewers with reflections of themselves. "My idea is to create characters with specific identities that can act like doppelgängers of situations and contexts, and that also can become doppelgängers of the viewer."



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Like someone who wears bifocals, Pires' view of the world is split between two cultural lenses; one Angolan, and one Portuguese. Pires was born in Angola, just three years after the country gained its independence from Portugal, and divides his time between Angola's capital city of Luanda and Portugal's Lisbon. These different perspectives inform the materials that Pires chooses to create his figures. "The different materials bring these contexts into the exhibition and create a dialogue with the gallery space, they are mirrors or doubles of our life. Some relate to poor contexts but others to everyone, like for example the brooms."



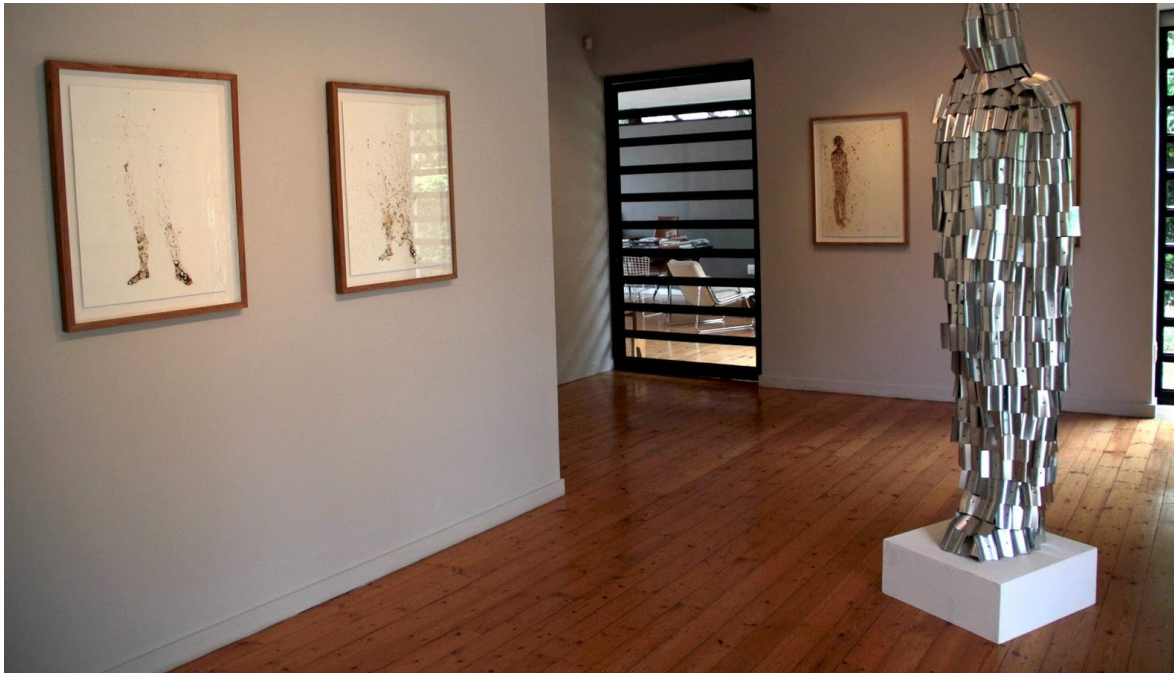
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The work in the exhibition was made during Pires' residency at Gallery MOMO Johannesburg in October and November of this year, where he was influenced by the local art community and the city itself. "I was integrated in the normal functioning of the gallery, which is next to the residency. I met a lot of artists that work with the gallery and a few others, so there was a lot of input and conversation during the whole residency. I also got to know the city, understand it, and react to it."



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Although all the work in the exhibition relates to the human figure, there are two distinctly different processes represented. One approach consists of building figurative sculptures from found materials. “My choice of materials comes from their banality and from the contexts and history that they carry. So for example, the corrugated steel is used to build the poorest houses that exist in South Africa (and in Angola, from where I come from), so they are a symbol for this.”



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The other approach is seen in Pires' 2D "fire drawings," which as their name suggests, are made by applying flames to paper. "All of the drawings are made using a technique that I have developed in the past 10 years. They are a result of the use of power tools used to work metal and for construction of structures, such as grinders (that create sparks when cutting metal). To me it is very important that they are a result of this action because it adds meaning to them."



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Like their sculptural counterparts, the fire drawings are about issues related to identity. “So, for example, there are figures that are disappearing, others are exploding inside, others are mirrors of each other relating to the idea of a doppelgänger,” says Pires. Considering that these drawings are made from the same power tools that Pires uses to create sculptures, there seems to be a poetic connection in Pires’ body of work which suggests a similarity in the formation of all of our identities, no matter where we come from.





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Pedro Pires' *Doppelgänger* will be on display at Gallery MOMO Johannesburg, South Africa, through mid-January of 2017. See more of Pire's work on his [website](#).

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All images courtesy of Pedro Pires

