

The song of the weaver
by GONE RURAL
2013



As we work, we braid the strands together, just as our mothers and grandmothers have before us. Inspired by the past and created in the present, with the constant evolution of life, we weave together the elements, creating new patterns and new possibilities.'

Following the daily routine of weaver Siphwe Mngometulu in rural Swaziland, three biography baskets have been crafted, telling the stories of three Gone Rural women, over three generations of Siphwe's family.

Hour by hour, the baskets capture each strand of the women's days: days spent in seamless harmony with nature.

Everything is done by hand in the homestead: from grinding maize to thatching roofs, with each material collected, used and re-used resourcefully. This is reflected in the baskets, for which traditional weaving techniques have been revived, revamped and redeveloped.



Unravelling the Biography Baskets

Pink - Bonakele's love for her daughter.

Metal loops - this symbolises her husband and his unstable employment.

The depressed base - Bonakele's depression at having to leave school.

Top of the basket - the vases she weaves and her prayer for more work in the future.

Bonakele

Bonakele is Siphwe's first-born daughter. Like her, she left school at 16, when she became pregnant.

She was depressed about this, but her daughter gave her joy. She learnt to weave from her mother and joined Gone Rural to support her child.

Bonakele has a good relationship with her husband, but he does not have permanent employment. There are many ups and downs in their life. She wishes for more orders of woven vases so she could work more herself. This is her prayer for the future.

bonakele

LIFELINE (Series 1)



1_THE COOKING POT

Lutindzi Grass, Lucazi Grass, Sisal fibre, recycled aluminium

2_MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

Lutindzi Grass, Lucazi Grass, Sisal fibre, recycled aluminium

3_UPS AND DOWNS

Lutindzi Grass, Lucazi Grass, Sisal fibre, recycled fabric

bonakele

BLOCK WEAVE (Series 1)

1_LARGE BLOCK WEAVE BASKETS
50cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi grass

2_MEDIUM BLOCK WEAVE BASKETS
40cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi grass

3_SMALL BLOCK WEAVE BASKETS
30cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi grass

Available in; Tangerine, Black, Gold, Pink, Turquoise, White





Unravelling the Biography Baskets

Bone - Sipiwe is the backbone of her family.

Goat skull - Sipiwe slays a goat when her husband returns.

Metal disc - this symbolises her husband, who always visits by bicycle.

Layers - the years of Sipiwe's life (some fertile, some dry).

sipiwe

Sipiwe is the backbone of her homestead. She left school after falling pregnant and began weaving to support her child. Together, Sipiwe and her husband had six more children, building a life at his homestead. Then one day he sold all their cattle and left. He did not return for four years.

Sipiwe had to leave her husband's family homestead. But with her income from Gone Rural, she was able to start her life again; building a new house and buying animals. Her husband now visits a few times each year. She celebrates his return by slaying a chicken or goat for him. However, she is yet to regain her cattle herd. This is her ultimate dream.

siphude

BACKBONE (Series 1)



1_ARC BOWL
Bone, Recycled fabric, Lucazi Grass

2_THE PILLAR
Bone, Recycled fabric, Lucazi Grass

3_ARC PLATTER
Bone, Recycled fabric, Lucazi Grass

siphude
LACE (Series 1)



1_LARGE CUP

60cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass, Sisal, Bone, Recycled fabrics, Clay Beads

2_LACE PLATTER

60cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass, Sisal, Bone, Recycled fabrics, Clay Beads

3_LACE BASKET

70cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass, Sisal, Bone, Recycled fabrics, Clay Beads

siphude

LACE (Series 1)



1

1_LACE PLATTER

60cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass, Sisal, Bone, Recycled fabrics, Clay Beads



Unravelling the Biography Baskets

Water container - a key element of her daily life.

Stick framework - the framework of a traditional house in her homestead.

Metal - the weight Gogo carries, especially the men in her family.

Cooking pot - the skills she has passed on to her children

gogo christina

Known as 'Gogo' or 'Grandmother', Christina is the head of her family. She has been weaving since Gone Rural began 20 years ago. Her daughter Siphwe and granddaughter Bonakele are weavers too.

Gogo had 12 children. She is sad so many have passed, including several grandchildren. Her daughters made her proud, but the boys have disappointed her. She regrets not teaching them about HIV, although she taught them well in the ways of the home.

gogo christina
RIBBED (Series 1)



1_SMALL POT
16cm Tall, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass

2_MEDIUM POT
24cm Tall, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass

3_LARGE POT
32cm Tall, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass

4_OPEN BASKET
50cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass

gogo christina
RIBBED (Series 1)

1_LARGE OPEN BASKET

70cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass

2_OPEN BASKET

50cm diameter, Lutindzi and Lucazi Grass



gogo christina
FRAMEWORK (Series 1)



1_POT PART 1
40cm tall, Lutindzi Grass, Lucazi Grass

2_POT PART 2
40cm tall, Lutindzi Grass, Lucazi Grass, Wood



Credits:

Photography – Mel and Steve

Master weavers – Siphwe Mngometulu, Gogo Christina Mngometulu, Bonakele Ngwenya

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