

JOÃO DONATO

P O R T F O L I O

João Donato is a self-taught Mozambican ceramicist and sculptor whose work explores memory, collective narratives and social change through the medium of clay.

After an early career in rural development in northern Mozambique, followed by work in social research and market studies, he discovered ceramics in 2002 in Brasília, Brazil, where he studied with master ceramicist Cecy Sato. In 2005, he moved to London and continued his training at City and Islington College. He later worked there as a ceramics technician until 2011, before returning to Maputo, where he now lives and works.

His practice is deeply rooted in Mozambican history and culture. His ceramic sculptures give form to myths, traditions, urban landscapes, migration and contemporary social issues. More recently, several of his series have addressed the human consequences of conflict, including work centred on Gaza, while continuing his exploration of identity, memory and resilience.

Over the course of his international career, João Donato has presented his work in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Mozambique, South Africa, Brazil, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Sweden.



Untitled, 2026
Glazed ceramic
19 x 14,5 x 11,5 cm



Lives and works in Maputo, Mozambic.

Formation

2002 – Formation en céramique auprès de Cecy Sato, Brasília, Brésil.

2005 – City and Islington College, Londres, Royaume Uni, sous la direction de Daphne Carnegie.

2005–2011 – Technicien en céramique, Londres, Royaume Uni.

Expositions personnelles / Solo shows

2024

« Strategic Alternatives: A Brief Manual for the Initiated in N'txuva », Musée Mafalala, Maputo, Mozambique.

« Os Fluxos de Fuga e o Chapa de Milão », (avec Celestino Mudaulane), Centro Cultural Português, Maputo, Mozambique.

2020

« Itinerários », Centro Cultural Português, Maputo, Mozambique.

2011

« Vista Parcial da Via Láctea e Outros Fragmentos », A Arca, Maputo, Mozambique.

Expositions collectives / Groups shows

2026

« Avant que tout ne disparaisse - Faire l'inventaire du quotidien », Galerie PERSON, Paris, France.
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, avec Perve Galeria, Le Cap, Afrique du Sud.

2024

JustMAD, Madrid, Espagne, avec Perve Galeria.

London Art Fair, Londres, Royaume-Uni, avec Perve Galeria.

2011

« Vista Parcial da Via Láctea e Outros Fragmentos », A Arca, Maputo, Mozambique.

2009

Mozambique Contemporary View by 8 Leading Artists, Royal Geographical Society, Londres, Royaume Uni.

2006

Exposition collective du 10^e anniversaire de l'Ambassade du Brésil, Londres, Royaume Uni.



CLAY AS A VESSEL FOR MEMORY

João Donato's practice brings together sculpture, ceramics and storytelling. Modelled in clay, his works explore the connections between memory, identity and place, giving form to the stories and experiences that bind them together.

A self-taught artist, Donato has developed his practice in Mozambique, Brazil and the United Kingdom. For more than twenty years, he has created a body of work rooted in Mozambique's social and cultural history. Clay becomes a medium for passing on individual and collective stories, while bearing the marks of time and transformation.

His work draws on mythologies, folk traditions, scenes of everyday life and Mozambique's changing urban landscape. Moving beyond a documentary approach, he develops a sculptural language in which figures, architectural forms and objects enter into dialogue, evoking the memory of places and communities. Migration and social change run through his work, in which the built environment becomes a stage for human experience.

Committed to social justice and human rights, Donato also addresses the fractures of the contemporary world. Each sculpture becomes a fragment of history, its clay retaining the imprint of the lives it evokes. His works thus bring stories of the past into dialogue with the realities of the present.



Untitled, 2026
Glazed ceramic
27,2 x 8 x 8 cm



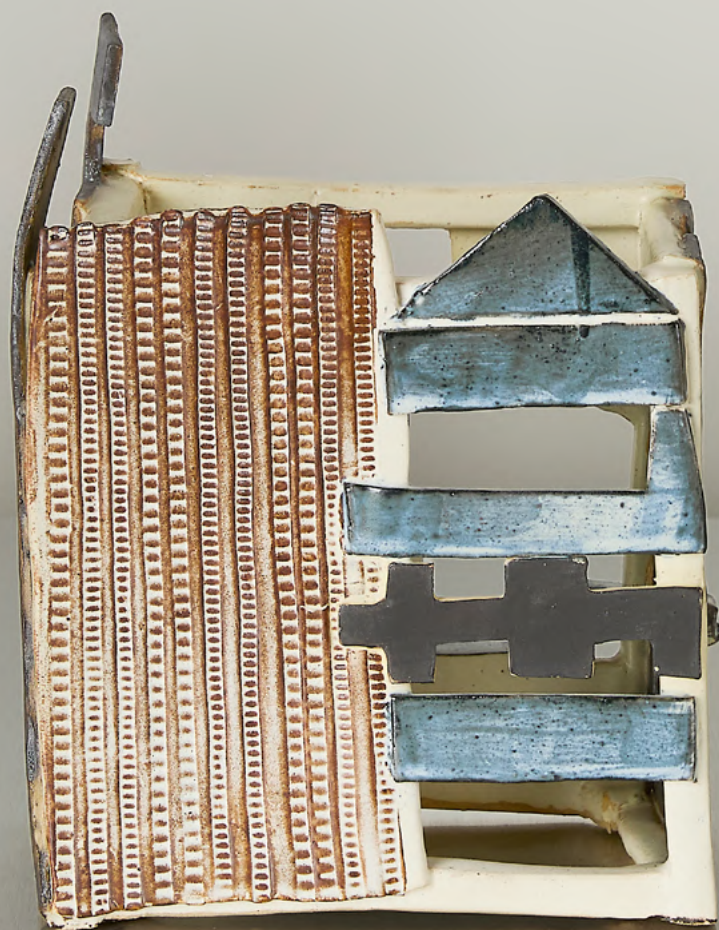
Untitled, 2026
Glazed ceramic
18 x 14,5 x 15 cm



Untitled, 2026
Glazed ceramic
18,5 x 12,5 x 14,5 cm



Untitled, 2026
Glazed ceramic
20,4 x 18,5 x 10,5 cm





Untitled, 2024
Glazed ceramic
22 x 14,1 x 10 cm



Untitled, 2026
Glazed ceramic
19 x 16,3 x 11,2 cm



Untitled, 2026
Glazed ceramic
20,5 x 17,5 x 14,2 cm

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