

**San Francisco Tribal & Textile Art Show Special Project**  
**Ralph Ziman: *The Casspir Project***  
**February 21- 23, 2020**



Ralph Ziman, *SPOEK 1*, Installed at PULSE Art Fair, 2019.  
Image courtesy of The Rendon Gallery.

The 34th edition of The San Francisco Tribal & Textile Art Show will welcome artist Ralph Ziman's traveling exhibition, *The Casspir Project*, and the presentation of *SPOEK 1*, an 11-ton decommissioned, apartheid-era Casspir vehicle that has been restored and reclaimed. *SPOEK 1* was completed in collaboration with artisans from Zimbabwe and the Mpumalanga province of South Africa, who used 70 million brightly-colored glass beads to turn the symbol of tyranny into a spectacularly adorned sculpture that represents humanity and creativity.

This marks the first time *The Casspir Project* will be presented in Northern California. Ziman is known for his work that interrogates human rights issues such as apartheid, the over-militarization of police, and state violence. *SPOEK 1* is the central part of Ziman's *The Casspir Project series*, which also comprises installation, photography and film. The work will be located at the entry inside the fair where it can be viewed February 21-23, 2020 during fair hours.

*SPOEK 1* will be showcased alongside significant textile and indigenous works from artisans in Africa, Asia, Indonesia, Oceania and North America. For the first time, audiences will be treated to both the 34th edition of The San Francisco Tribal & Textile Art Show and The 36th American Indian Art Show, all under the same roof. "*The Casspir Project* is about remembering the past, so as not to repeat in the future. It's an important message that I think needs to be presented to

as many audiences as possible and I'm thrilled to be able to showcase it for the first time in Northern California," says Ziman.

*SPOEK 1* and *The Casspir Project* is presented by The Rendon Gallery as part of the Special Projects section. For more information, visit: [www.therendongallery.com](http://www.therendongallery.com)

## **ABOUT THE CASSPIR PROJECT**

*The Casspir Project* is a traveling exhibition by Los Angeles based artist, Ralph Ziman, that is comprised of sculpture and photography as well as the central work, *SPOEK-1*, a restored and reclaimed, apartheid-era Casspir vehicle. Restored and refitted, the 11-ton Casspir has been transformed into a work of art for *SPOEK 1*, its surfaces covered in 70 million, elaborate and brightly-coloured glass beads, arrayed in panels of traditional patterns. Completed in collaboration with artisans from Zimbabwe and the Mpumalanga province of South Africa, including women of the Ndebele tribe, known for their craftsmanship, Ziman's work subverts narratives of violence and oppression, reclaiming *SPOEK 1* as a symbol of beauty and humanity.

Casspirs are armored, bulletproof, mine-proof, all-terrain vehicles developed in South Africa in the 1970s. They were used extensively by the South African Police, as well as the South African Defense Force, against civilians in urban township areas from the late '70s through early '90s during apartheid. Developers of these vehicles named them Casspirs, an anagram combining the name of the designer (the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, CSIR) and the end user (the South African Police, SAP).

Post-apartheid, Casspirs were decommissioned in South Africa, their hulls left to rust, a relic of the past better forgotten, except for the ones that were sold to the United States during the Iraq war years, rebranded as the MRAP (Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected). After the war, these Casspirs were given free of charge to local United States police departments under the Pentagon's 1033 Program.

In the age of Ferguson and Black Lives Matter, the Casspir has returned, a poltergeist from the past which continues to haunt us. The issue of over-militarized police departments has come to the forefront of the American debate on police tactics and aggression. Policing in the western world resembles apartheid era policing more than ever. Through the resurfacing and reclamation of *SPOEK 1*, Ziman seeks to challenge the viewer to confront how cultural memory, often entangled in violence, may bear upon the contemporary.

First presented in 2016 at the South African National Gallery in Cape Town, *SPOEK 1* continued to travel as part of *The Casspir Project* and went on to be exhibited at venues throughout Johannesburg in 2017, including The Turbine Art Fair and The Melrose Gallery. In 2018, *SPOEK 1* arrived in the United States and was the Special Projects selection at the fourth edition of 1-54, the Contemporary African Art Fair, in New York, where it remained on view at

Pioneer Works in Brooklyn throughout the summer. In 2019, *The Casspir Project* made its West Coast debut at an exhibition hosted by The Rendon Gallery in Los Angeles and then traveled to Miami where it was the special project selection at PULSE Art Fair.

### **About Ralph Ziman**

Ralph Ziman was born in 1963 in Johannesburg, South Africa, and currently lives and works in Los Angeles, California. He has had solo exhibitions at Joseph Gross Gallery in Tucson, Arizona, and C.A.V.E. Gallery in Venice, California, as well as group exhibitions at the National Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa, Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts in Brooklyn, New York, and the FNB Art Fair in Johannesburg, South Africa. His work has been written about in *Art in America*, *CNN*, and *The Guardian*, among other publications.

### **About The San Francisco Tribal & Textile Show**

The San Francisco Tribal & Textile Art Show, one of the most important tribal art fairs in the world, returns to the Fort Mason Center Pavilion, February 21 through 23, 2020 for its 34th year. Known for showcasing exceptional tribal artwork and textiles, including many rare and unique pieces from Africa, Asia, Australia, Oceania, and the Americas, the fair will feature top-tier galleries and dealers from the United States and around the globe. For additional information visit: [www.SanFranciscoTribalAndTextileartshow.com](http://www.SanFranciscoTribalAndTextileartshow.com)

### **San Francisco Tribal & Textile Show Hours**

#### *Opening Preview*

Friday, February 21 | 2pm - 8pm

#### *Weekend Show Hours*

Saturday, February 22 | 11am - 7pm

Sunday, February 23 | 11am - 5pm

### **Location**

Fort Mason Center, Festival Pavilion  
2 Marina Blvd  
San Francisco, CA 94123

### **Ticket Prices**

Single Day Pass: \$20

Multi-Day Pass: \$30

Opening Preview: \$75

Tickets are available for purchase on the SF Tribal & Textile Art Show Site or at the door.

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