



Sam Hopkins is an artist whose work responds to the specific social and political context within which he is living; as such he can be described as a contextual artist. In a sense his art is maybe more akin to documentary; probing, investigating and re-imagining stories, characters and elements of daily life. Rather than work with strategies of reference and allusion, his position is to try to make autonomous works; art which can be 'read' without necessarily knowing a specific canon of Art. Whilst Art will always be referential in the sense that it is not produced within a cultural vacuum, for Hopkins these references are not the intended primary mode of meaning.

As his practice is triggered and defined by a context, the work exhibits a broad spectrum of both media and content. Although wary of grand narratives, much of his work does seem to orbit around issues of public space and the negotiation of participatory practice. Process is a critical component of the work, which is often project-based and long term. Projects such as Slum TV and Urban Mirror, a collective of public space activists in Nairobi of which he is an active member, build and develop over many years. However, his practice also encompasses more immediate and lyrical responses to the city as seen by his work with the Usually4 collective, whom he has with worked since 2006. He has developed a body of interventions and installations, which recently have begun to focus on the peculiarities and aesthetics of the 'Development' sector which is of powerful symbolic importance in Kenya.

Born in 1979 in Rome, he was raised in Kenya and England before studying History and Spanish in Edinburgh and Cuba. He then proceeded to postgraduate studies in Contemporary Art in Oxford and Weimar, returning to Nairobi on a permanent basis in 2006. As well as working with Slum TV and Urban Mirror he is also a frequent collaborator of the Nairobi-based collective Maasai Mbili.