
YAKHAL' INKOMO

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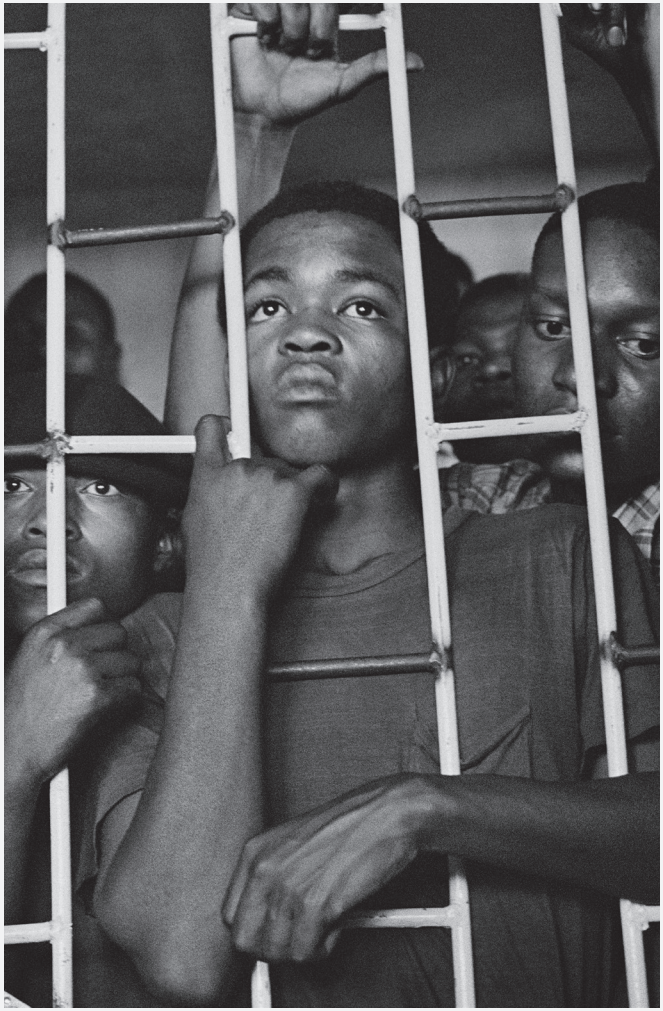
THE BONGI DHLOMO COLLECTION



ERNEST COLE
From "House of Bondage," 1967
These boys were caught trespassing in a white area.
© Ernest Cole Family Trust

COVER PAGE:
NHLANHLA XABA
Ancestoral Objects, 1987
Drawing

BY

TUMELO MOSAKA | SIPHO MDANDA | PHUMZILE TWALA

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ALF KUMALO
Artists Alfred Maqubela, Sydney Khumalo and Ephrahim Ngatane practice their craft in the street,Pimville, Soweto,1970s.

We must acknowledge other contributors whose loans have added tremendous insight to the period being explored in the exhibition. Our sincere thanks to institutional and private lenders for sharing their works: Oliewenhuis Art Museum (Bloemfontein), SABC Art Collection (Johannesburg), The Artists' Press (White River), and the Barbara Masekela Collection (Johannesburg). Posters were sourced from Sydney Selepe Collection, Judy Seidman Collection, South African History Archive, Ali Hlongwane and Sibikwa Arts Centre. Films were sourced from Yale University Library's Manuscripts and Archives, Geoff Mphakati and Aryan Kaganof, Chris Austin, Chimurenga, David Max Brown, Adrian Steirn and the 21 ICONS project, Sifiso Khanyile, Rehad Desai (Uhuru Productions), Sausage Films and Trevor Moses (South African National Film, Video and Sound Archives). Photographs were supplied by Africa Media Online courtesy of Alf Kumalo Family Trust, Cedric Nunn, Ruth Motau and the Ernest Cole Family Trust. Music was sourced from Siemon Allen at FLAT INTERNATIONAL and licensing from the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO). The Staffrider Magazine Collection was borrowed from Gamakhulu Diniso. Books were sourced from the University of Pretoria Library, Sipho Mdanda, Bongi Dhlomo-Mautloa. In addition, we are grateful to the contributing writers, Andries Oliphant, Hlonipha Mokoena, Nkgopoleng Moloi, Boitumelo Thloaele and Vusumzi Nkomo for their insights and examination of works. We also thank Lethabolaka Gumede for her assistance with the research and Keely Shinners for copy editing this catalogue.

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This project could not have happened without the vision, dedication and perseverance of Bongi Dhlomo-Mautloa who has dedicated her life to bringing black artists to the public's attention. The art and histories presented here are but a fragment of a larger narrative that still needs to be uncovered. We hope the project inspires others to continue the work of recovering histories with an eye to see the world differently from what we known.

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Yakhal'Inkomo Curatorial Team
Sipho Mdanda, Phumzile Nombuso Twala, Tumelo Mosaka

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MY NAME

Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa by Magoleng wa Selepe

Look what they have done to my name...
the wonderful name of my great-great-grandmothers
Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa

The burly bureaucrat was surprised.
What he heard was music to his ears
'Wat is daai, se no weer?'
I am from Chief Daluxolo Velayigodle of emaMpondweni'
And my name is Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa.'

Messia help n.e!
My name is so simple
and yet so meaningful
but to this man it is trash...

He gives me a name
Convenient enough to answer his whims
I end up being
Maria...
I...
Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa

by Magoleng wa Selepe (Staffrider, March 1979: 7)

Alf Kumalo

Winnie Mandela in1974 after serving a six– month prison sentence in Kroonstad Prison.

INTRODUCTION

by Tumelo Mosaka

The bellowing of a bull before a ritual slaughter, is understood as both a warning to other bulls and considered a blessing by the ancestors who symbolically accept the animal sacrifice. Its gut-wrenching roar of rage cannot be contained. Under such duress, cattle show signs of distress by bellowing and kicking in defiance of the violence inflicted. Thousands of animals are sacrificed every month in ceremonial rituals marking births, deaths, weddings, and major personal achievements. These ritual practices stem from ancestral worship among many African traditions. Such practises symbolize communication between the living and the dead to secure prosperity in life and cleanse or purify the hosts predicament conditions. While this sound evokes pain and suffering, many artists have associated this experience with the struggle of Black South Africans. The image of the bull has featured predominantly in African culture as wealth, and as a medium of communicating with the spiritual realm identified as the ancestors. The practice of animal sacrifice in African culture remains common practice as it represents a cultural belief system between the living and the dead.

The bellowing not only conveys deep pain, it also gestures towards defiance and resistance adopted by Black South Africans against apartheid regime. Events like the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre and Soweto Youth Uprising in 1976 demonstrated the brutality directed toward unarmed Black citizens. Saxophonist and composer Winston Mankunku Ngozi recorded the song *Yakhal' Inkomo* in 1968 with pianist Lionel Pillay, bassist Agrippa Magwaza and drummer Early Mabuza. The song was interpreted by white audiences as rendering of pastoral lifestyle reminiscent of pre-colonial era, while for Blacks, it captured a passionate expression of grief inflicted on Black bodies. The brutal violence and the repression that followed this uprising, gave rise to many deaths and arrests. Many artists and intellectuals fled into exile in the 1960s because of the draconian laws imposed, others met their death in local prisons and in exile. Artists like Hugh Masekela, Miriam Makeba and Dumile Feni, Lefifi Tladi, and Louis Maqhubela among many, settled abroad in fear of being persecuted as enemies of the state. Thami Mnyele described the experience in the following words, "Apartheid is huge and ruthless. We must employ equally huge graphic methods to complement the efforts of our people; work big in size and concept and organize around unsentimental principles. There can never be artistic freedom or freedom of expression from a people in captivity."[1]

From afar, writer and poet Wally Serote in 1972 reflected on seeing Mankunku play of *Yakhal' Inkomo*,

"I once saw Mankunku Ngozi blowing his saxophone. His face was inflated like a balloon, it was wet with sweat, his eyes huge and red. He grew tall, shrank, coiled into himself, uncoiled and the cry came out of his horn. That is the meaning of *Yakhal' Inkomo*."[2] Writer Percy Mabandu in his 2015 monograph, *Yakhal' Inkomo: Portrait of Classic Jazz* contextualizes the music with the politics of the time. Mabandu states that "Ngozi was grappling with the loneliness and isolation brought on by apartheid."[3] Many of his peers like Jonas Gwangwa and Bheki Mseleku had left the country

Alf Kumalo
Painter and sculptor Dumile Feni and artist Julian Bahula (right) are surrounded by artwork at Feni's home in London in the early 1970s.
© Alf Kumalo / african.pictures

and playing music was becoming difficult. Ngozi was quoted by Gwen Ansell in her 2003 interview saying, "I was always being arrested and a lot of my friends and I thought it was so tough for Black people, and I put that into the song. So, it was The Bellowing Bull: for the Black man's pain. And a lot of people would come up to me and say quietly: Don't worry bra. We know what you are playing about."[4] It expressed the interiority of Black South Africans dealing with their suffering. In an unexpected turn of events, this song became the unofficial anthem articulating Black pain and resilience during the apartheid years.

Art and culture became a tool through which Black lives could express their anger, anxiety, fear, and hope. Artists deployed various strategies to avoid censorship and imprisonment by using metaphors to disguise the true meaning of their works, especially from white officials who did not understand the depth of African languages or speak the language. As such, Ngozi's song circulated with unlimited restrictions and became popular within the Black community. It inspired many artists like Feni who created a suite of drawings with the same title. Similarly, Serote published a book of poems in 1972 with the same title. Common between these works is the cow motif representing Black values and cultural life. Earlier songs by Makeba, such as "Jol' Inkomo" from 1967 and "Ziphi Nkomo" by Letta Mbuli (1973), explored not only ideas about fertility and wealth, but also addressed the experience of dispossession and alienation. Meaning in Ngozi's song extended beyond personal pain and reflected hope and despair prevalent within Black communities.

Exhibition

> "The Bongi Dhlomo Collection is a narrative of twentieth century art produced by Black artists who have made an undeniable, but often ill-acknowledged, impression on South Africa's artistic heritage."[5]

This exhibition critically examines the cross-section of Black arts emerging between the 1960s through to the 1990s. Inspired by saxophonist and composer Winston Mankunku Ngozi's song, the project adopts the metaphor "bellowing bull" as the key symbol connecting struggle, sacrifice and defiance displayed by Black artists. While the bellowing draws attention to the injustices and indignity suffered, it also offers death as a welcomed respite from suffering. Poets, and writers among many creatives forged acts of defiance under the oppressive system. The project featured works from the Bongi Dhlomo Collection placed in conversation with various other artistic genres from different collections. Among the selection of artists included were artists from urban and rural areas, some lessor known and untrained because of the limited access to art education provided to Black people at the time. This assembly of works, covers a broad range of styles, expressions and ideas informed by various trends and interests that were in some ways, critical of the cultural and political landscape of the times.

Yakhal'inkomo Mankunku Quartet, Album.
World Recording Company
1968

During the apartheid era, a lot of Black artists gravitated towards recycled materials for art

supplies to create spaces for imagination with limited resources. Working with found materials was one of the forms of expression alongside printmaking and drawing, which didn't require as much working space. While most works were shaped by a history of violence, poverty, and racism, other themes such as love, religion were also evident, but publicly less visible. Artists who received attention were mostly from the urban areas and usually trained at Rorke's Drift Art and Craft Centre, or Polly Street Art Centre and Ndaleni Teachers Training College, which were the only formal training centres available and later to be complimented by FUNDA, FUBA and Johannesburg Art Foundation. These institutions more importantly afforded artists the space to gather and support each other's ideas during the apartheid years. What stood out as a central inquiry during these years, was the quest for imaginative freedom. The arts were not only the space for self-exploration, but they were also a platform for mobilising ideas and the community against the racist government.

During the unrest period, Black artists offered healing and unity through their creativity, while also commenting on the horrors of apartheid. Working across different genres, artists in the exhibition capture the expansive representations of subjects and themes that aligned with the political vision captured most directly by posters and protest songs, which were collectively produced. Other works deviated from this approach and critiqued the social conditions under which Black people lived. Much of this work focuses on recapturing and resisting the repressive conditions. Artists applied certain tropes to address these inhuman conditions. For example, drawings by Louis Khehla Maqhubela, Dumile Feni and Ezrom Legae depict dislocated and fragmented bodies to highlight the dispossession and alienation experienced through exile and displacement. This experience resonated prominently with poets like Wally Serote, Oswald Mtshali and Mafika Gwala who illustrate the emotional impact of estrangement. These works highlight the triumph of the human spirit.

The exhibition's transdisciplinary approach, aimed to elaborate the extensive exchange of ideas between artists across generations, genre, and periods. This constant movement between media, and materials, for many artists was a means of generating new ideas about selfhood and national identity. Common among many artists was the portrayal of everyday life as a way of embodying an interior landscape that aspired to be unbound and free from racial trappings. However difficult this was to achieve, given that land was racially segregated, artists depicted how communities reimagined their survival. Artworks such as Peter Clarke's *Back Street, Thomas Nkuna's Backyard Bedrooms and Durant Sihlali's Oupa's Donkeys* in Athena Gekoop all portrayed street life in the township. The backyard and street scenes represent spaces of hyperactivity where illicit trade happened and where connections were cultivated without state surveillance. These works focused on retelling narratives about the resilience of humanity amidst appalling conditions. Life in overcrowded townships with poor infrastructure, limited amenities, poverty, and desperate conditions were deliberate

attempts to dehumanise Black people. However, the desire to escape or be rescued could only happen through exile, or fantasy, and death. The former was harder to achieve, as it relied on an extensive network outside of the country or town which at times, was provided by the liberation movement. Fantasy on the other hand, offered individuals an opportunity to reimagine the world differently from what was available in the township.

Among the many creative genres applied, music became a central feature of urban life, offering entertainment and a reprieve from everyday hardship. Marabi and Kwela musical styles were popular earlier in the 60's and performed in the streets and shebeens (illegal beer halls). The sound of Kippie Moeketsi and Spokes Mashiyane gained popularity for their upbeat melodies. Their musical style became known as township music, which later gave rise to a unique jazz sound reflecting the dangers and hardships of township life. While the influence of music goes beyond protest or documentation of life, its impact is evident in how the body moves in response to the sounds. For example, the Toyi Toyi song originates from guerrilla troops in exile and was adapted for urban performance at massive demonstrations in South Africa. It represented a powerful symbol of resistance together with its rhythmic dance that instilled fear into the enemy's heart, and motivated people to continue the fight against injustice. Different in approach is David Koloane's drawing called *Mgodoyi*. This work depicts a stray dog roaming within the city looking dangerous and unpredictable. The term Mgodoyi in isiZulu is usually associated with an insult, however, in this case, the stray dog is a metaphor for survival referring to Black body desire to survive the injustices of apartheid.

Thomas Nkuna
Meeting of the Homeless in Boksburg
1991

Possibilities

Growing up in Soweto under apartheid, we knew to be fearful of white people especially anyone representing law enforcement. When the Soweto Youth Uprising occurred in 1976, the regimes brutal force was once again exposed. Bearing witness to police shootings, beatings, teargassing, and constant threat of arrest became a reality for any school going child. The exposure to violence instilled rage and hatred towards the regime. I came to understand how Blackness was under attack and that we all needed to play our part to change the system at whatever the cost. During this time, attending rallies, funerals, and night vigils, was common practice as the cycle of violence never ended creating an ambiguously mingled reality informed by fear, anger, and uncertainty. I discovered the arts and began to channel my anger and frustration. I chose photography as my medium because I believed it was necessary to document real life events as a way of exposing the atrocities, and at the same time, defining my existence through these images.

It was not long before I met Bongi Dhlomo-Mautloa (also known as SisB) in the early 1990s. At the time, she worked at the Alexandra Arts Centre while I was working as a freelance photographer. It was only much later that I got to work with SisB at the Africus Johannesburg Biennale in 1995. I joined the Biennale as a trainee curator, and SisB was the Outreach and Development Project Coordinator tasked to expand the Biennale's reach in the Black community. Her advocacy enabled many Black artists to participate in the first Johannesburg Biennale. Many of us young artists and curators, saw SisB as a mentor whose artistic knowledge and skill at navigating the white art world offered more access to many Black artists.

Among the many activities staged by the first Johannesburg Biennale, was an exhibition at the Mofolo Art Centre focused on artists from Soweto. This was the result of my collaboration with SisB to engage artists and Soweto community. Since then, we've collaborated on numerous other projects, including the photographic exhibition *Soweto Youth Uprising: Point of No Return* and the public art project *Soweto Garden Project* in 1996. The Soweto Youth Uprising exhibition was hosted in containers because of lack of exhibition space. This gesture inspired city to build the landmark Hector Pieterson Museum in Soweto as a monument to the courage of students who gave their lives to the struggle. Our most recent engagement includes the exhibition *Yakhal' Inkomo at the Javett-UP Art Centre*. This project explicitly comments on the mutual exchanges, acknowledgements between Black creatives at the time when Black personhood was denied.

"Apartheid is huge and ruthless. We must employ equally huge graphic methods to complement the efforts of our people; work big in size and concept, organize around unsentimental principles. There can never be artistic freedom or freedom of expression from a people in captivity." [6]

The history of Black arts in South Africa cannot be narrated only by those who have been enabled. This project recognizes that other marginalised voices need to include to portray a more dynamic picture of life under apartheid. South Africa has been struggling to overcome its corrosive racial history. Attempts to address past disparities have not been seriously taken. This exhibition was conceived as a collection of multiple stories told by Black artists from various vantage points aimed at celebrating the strife and survival of human spirit amidst adverse conditions. For example, Muziwakhe Jake Nhlabatsi and Julian Motau drawings of Black bodies express the loss, dispossession, and fragility of life. Apartheid alienated and disempowered Black bodies. This experience often alienated and instilled fear among Black people who feared retribution by the state. Poets like Wally Serote, Stanley Motjuwadi and Keorapetse Kgositsile explored links between the physical and psychological conditioning. They used subtle proses to expose the evil entrenched in the apartheid system. Their poetry sought to create an awareness of the absurdity of apartheid by giving voice to their experiences. Other artists adopted recurring tropes like trains to suggest migration and dispossession. The train appears in many songs like "Stimela" by Hugh Masekela and "Mbombela" by Miriam Makeba and Harry Belafonte, among others. For instance, Ernest Cole's photographs and Thomas Nkuna's *Booysens Station* drawings capture the train and station as symbols of industrialisation and sites of convergence. In the early nineties, the trains became mobile meeting spaces where workers, activists, and

Hector Pieterson Memorial Container Exhibition.
© Tumelo Mosaka
1996

preachers could conscientize the public with little interference from the police. These spaces became known for awakening the collective consciousness and for mobilizing community.

Artists and cultural activists contributed towards defining new roles that demanded different approaches to articulating the challenges and opportunities available to Black people. Serote points out that "it is up to those oppressed by apartheid to fight back through different means of resistance. Some would take up arms, some would peacefully protest, while others would sing and create large public demonstrations, facilitating the power of collective mass."[7] While some artists considered art as a weapon and instrumentalised their medium to combat the apartheid system, others preferred not to be as direct

in the ways they responded to the injustice. The role culture played became crucial in defining Blacks struggle. At the 1982 ANC conference in Botswana titled, "Culture and Resistance Conference," several artists and activists from exile and within the country gathered to develop a national perspective on culture in South Africa and to expose work done by South African cultural workers. In response, Albie Sachs published in 1990 an article titled "Preparing Ourselves for Freedom," wherein he challenged his fellow ANC members to desist from calling "culture a weapon of struggle." He argued that "art is complex and belied with contradictions, ambiguity, and hidden intention." [8] He believed that art was more than one thing and its power lay precisely in its ability to expose contradictions and reveal new meanings at different times. This perspective was very controversial, especially since the ANC was promoting artists as cultural works in the service of the collective struggle. This position established how complex the understanding of what art can mean beyond the political frame.

Peter Clarke
Sunset at Windemere (Mayibuye Afrika)
1957

Black life under apartheid was often depicted through lens of violence, and themes of resistance became dominant forms of expression. Images of joy, fun and love were rarely accessible. Through songs, dance, film, art and poetry, artists communicated both desire and despair in all its forms. These works exist today as a record capturing both the psychological and physical realities. Artists like Cyprian Shilakoe and Dan Rakgoathe drew inspiration from African mysticism and religion, adopting symbols from traditional and ceremonial practices and dreams. Their images were at times, unintelligible and always embedded in an understanding of the relationship between nature and humanity. Their approach allowed for alternative forms to capture an interior universe of ecstasy and melancholy. These artists expressed genuine concern over the human conditions by opting to consider how the spiritual and cosmic realms offered new possibilities for imaging love, tenderness, and beauty surrounding our everyday life. Author and critic Njabulo Ndebele reinforces the idea by stating that "Culture in South Africa needed to go beyond the limits of pamphleteering art." [9] He believed that making a difference required new solutions to old problems and not just being reactive. A strategy he proposed was to pay more attention to the ordinary struggles and how people went about their daily rituals as acts of defience. In Peter Clarke's artwork *Sunset at Windemere* (Afrika Mayibuye), it depicts the vulnerabilities faced by residents of Windermere. Clarke's emboldened portrayal of three men seated in an outhouse appears deceptively comical and

revealing. This dehumanisation process forced upon Black communities is illustrated with humour. These artworks are layered texts dealing with trauma and hardship experienced, but addressed with satire, which was something unexpected. By documenting such seminal moments in the struggle against apartheid, some artists looked beyond the objectionable and tried to also poke fun at deplorable situations.

In a country which denies that men and women are human, where the Constitution excludes them as sub-humans, the creative act is an act of dissent and defiance: creative ability is a quintessential part of being human: to assert one's Creativity is also to assert one's Humanity. This is a premise on which I have acted all my life and it is the premise I have offered to others as an inspiration."[10]

This exhibition *Yakhal' Inkomo* was an inquiry into how the Black struggle is historicised throughout the apartheid decades. By employing a transdisciplinary approach, we sought to examine how history is retold from the perspective of the oppressed. The bellowing was not only a cry of pain; it symbolised an awakening that sought to be free from any kind of bondage. Works in the exhibition documented trauma and violence, but also captured the hope and dreams of emancipation. This bellowing represents a rallying cry for change. While it is all consuming and can be self-destructive, it is a call to action. While reckoning with the past is important, the question today is how to engage the inequality and disparity that continues to prevail? What will it take to transform the bellowing into an ecstasy of joy?

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Julian Motau
A Mother's Comfort
1967

GIVING WOOD ITS VOICE

by Vusi Nkomo

Spirit of Revolution, an ambitious sculpture by Meshack Matamela Raphalalani (b. 1950), is as firm and resolute as the June 16 Soweto 1976 upheaval that produced it, which is to say, that it is in dialogue with and response to. Its overtly masculinist structure is striking and could be characterized as indicative not only of the political climate that is its condition of possibility but a notorious tendency (both in Black art practice and history in general) to represent Black rage/revolt in the figure of the Man[1].

However, the sculpture's scale is impressive and its surface is inviting. Produced at arguably the height of white supremacist terror and violence in South Africa, my eyes are drawn to the black gaping holes of the dry, hard teak wood/body of the figures. I am immediately tempted to read them as wounds; bodily, psychic, emotional, and spiritual wounds that predate and outlive the 1976 'Soweto riots'.

The dominant figure in front, supported by or leaning on the figure behind it/him, seems to be throwing a stone with the full might and force its/his body can muster. However, concentrated in this gesture is both the rage characteristic of the 70s during apartheid South Africa (following what has been erroneously dubbed the decade of a lull i.e. 60s) as well as the political imagination and inventive spirit synonymous with the Black consciousness generation. The latter point is evident in the manner of the outstretched hands that I think, more than anything, are pointing forward (into the future) beyond the 'current' [70s] despotic order.

Furthermore, I am interested in how this work, through the intensity of its ideas and 'embodied' sentiments, contributes to the Black radical traditions as they make sense of how people could live in this country and relate in ethical ways free of systemic violence.

Raphalalani's *Spirit of the Revolution*, by its title and materiality, is already implicated in this issue, that is, its aesthetic concerns, as well as its political and spiritual qualities, collide to enrich how we may think about relations in this country and sculpture-art. In comprehending at least what the title could be hinting at, we might take Avhashoni Mainganye's words: "It is the form, texture, tones and the grains that give the wood sculpture the voice, the embodiment of the spirit in the wood". Raphalalani seems to suggest that we could draw some similarities between the essence of the tree/wood and the spirit of the revolution (as both a disruptive political upheaval and a regeneration, recreation of the 'true' spirit of what it means to resist as a people). As grand as this

sculpture's ethical dilemmas, there remains something charming about its smooth surface, and delicate edges of figures that flirt with being figures (without ever being fully recognizable human figures) hinting at something elusive and as mythical as being-in-the-world.

NOTES:

[1] We must remember the historic slippage/fault internal to the Black radical (and aesthetic) tradition of conceiving Black people's suffering as an attack on 'our manhood', and consequently thinking Black 'freedom-dreams' as restoration of 'Manhood' to the Black community. What then happens is equating 'freedom'/'liberation' with mahood and therefore continue to think it is only fitting that Black men must lead such struggles to end our suffering.

Meshack Raphalalani
Spirit of the Revolution
Photo by Anthea Pokroy
UNDATED

REFLECTIONS ON THREE DECADES OF OPPRESSION

By Sipho Mdanda

It was a privilege to be invited to co-curate the *Yakhal 'Inkomo* exhibition with Tumelo Mosaka. The Bongi Dlomo Collection was huge, comprising 138 paintings and sculptures. Some were very strong in technical execution, while others were less so. This posed challenges, as the diverse works were from different periods and generations. The curatorial team analysed and agonised as to how to approach the curation of this wide rendition. Eventually, themes emerged, thus making curating this show plausible. The whole process was intense and challenging, as we deliberated over the approach to take (faced with such diverse works and styles) the analysis of the work against the theme that had been chosen. Overall, it is an experience I will cherish.

The challenge that faced the curators was the number of exhibition spaces at the Javett Art Centre at UP. Each was different in size and character and, to maximise our use of the space, we needed to make other interventions into what was going to be displayed. By introducing additional art genres like music, film, poetry, photography, theatre, literature, and posters, we were better able to develop a narrative that was coherent. We began sourcing other works and received overwhelming support from private and corporate collections.

- Catalogues by their nature play important roles as documents, carrying images of the physical exhibition as well as essays to be accessed by those who missed the exhibition during its original run at the gallery. The essays amplify the context and understanding of the curators and the messages they communicated through the staging of an exhibition. This catalogue is no different except it will live online for anyone to access, anywhere in the world. This is consistent with modern technologies and assists in reaching a wider audience.

- Catalogues give exhibitions their frameworks and their total components. This speaks to the curators' essays and any other salient information that adds value to the whole experience. The beautiful photography and video clips of the show, the educational programming, audience responses and media reviews, all add important layers to the whole narrative.

- This was envisioned as a supplement to (rather than a documentation of) the exhibition. It supplements by including information on the exhibition, documenting the events that took place over the duration of the exhibition, the attendance, school visits and extracts from various debates that arose. The exhibition was well received in numerous centres where educational programming happened. It is a resource for future exhibitions.

- Finally, this has a photographic documentation of the evolution of the ideas, research, debates, planning, fabrication and installation of the exhibition.

What follows are my impressions of the exhibition and the impact the art and artists have had on the development of Black arts education in South Africa.

[But] culture is another matter, for it is one area of human enterprise that most stubbornly resists legislation. A good example of culture as a bulwark in the face of totalitarianism and state terror is easily found in the art production in the critical years of state of emergency, when fear and violence roamed the open and cluttered heart of the South African social body.[1]

Enwezor's words above capture the ethos of the exhibition, *Yakhal' Inkomo,* featuring a selection of works from Bongi Dhlomo Collection by mainly Black artists, spanning a period of over four decades. This includes the most brutal period of the apartheid regime. The 1950s were characterised by the amalgamation of the Afrikaner people as the dominant cultural group with a singular, totalising hegemony. The 1960s saw an increased repression that destroyed the fabric of Black intellectual life (including political activism), some going to jail and others into exile. This left a huge void that was predominantly filled by the arts and spiritual leaders. The 1970s saw the Black Consciousness movement and young people resisting the status quo, resulting in the Soweto Riots, flights of youths into exile, the death of Steve Bantu Biko in detention and the ban on 18 cultural groups. The 1980s emerged with mass democratic movements that torpedoed the apartheid government, and the 1990s opened doors to political prisoners, while exiles returned en-mass to consolidate Black people's power against the minority white regime.

This exhibition is a bird's eye view of what the artists reflected on over the years in question, expressing unequivocally the conditions under which they lived. It comes at an opportune time when the country's transformation of cultural institutions is yielding positive results. More and more Black professionals are taking control of these institutions and, slowly, changes are beginning to bear fruits in the recognition of the diversity that this country is about. The Bongi Dhlomo Collection comprised paintings and sculptures; therefore, the curators brought in other art genres that reflect the lived experiences of the past. This decision allowed artists to be more exploratory with materials and mediums. Again, networks between artists were not limited to genre but understood individually. The issues were

universal but expressed differently by each artist. The genres cover works of theatre, poetry, visual arts, photography, posters, music, literature, and films made at the time, thus giving the audiences a comprehensive picture of the lived experiences of the arts practitioners over the decades.

It is important to clarify that the curators came to the project when the 138 art works had been acquired and a need to curate the collection arose. Key to the curatorial intervention was to highlight and amplify emerging themes. The themes in the exhibition were strong and spoke to the title and theme of *Yakhal Inkomo* (The Bellowing Bull), based on Winston Mankunku Ngozi's classic song of the same name.

As explained above, most importantly is to elaborate on the idea introduced in the exhibition, providing additional context. There are five essays that we commissioned. In seeking to advance an intergenerational approach in the reading and contextualisation of the voices in this catalogue, we invited established scholars (Professors Andries Oliphant and Hlonipha Mokoena) and younger scholars (Boitumelo Tlhoaele, Vusi Nkomo and Nkgopoleng Moloi). The first two essays highlight and contextualise the lives Black people led under the apartheid regime. To juxtapose the messages in the exhibition, the authors underscore the importance of art in societies. Paying tribute to the saying that 'artists are the eyes and ears of society'.

To expand the narratives and interpretation, giving a contemporary reading of the works, three scholars were given selected artworks by prominent artists (Mmakgabo Mmapula Helen Sebidi, Meshack Raphalalani and Nhlanhla Xaba). These interpretations gave a fresh meaning to the exhibition content. They were asked to reflect on the works, refraining from writing academic critique to express what the works say to them. This contribution is important in bringing various voices to the exhibition that benefited from inclusion of many genres. The genres may be varied, but all reference the artists' lived experiences. Collectively, the essays bring many reflections on the works in the exhibition. They also help the readers to appreciate the contexts in which the works were made, that is, an awakening of consciousness by Black artists against oppression.

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Illuminating the catalogue

The character of the works (mainly sculptures, paintings and drawings) in the exhibition is best illustrated by the art historian Thembinkosi Goniwe. He characterised this collection as "strong, compelling, and highly valued works are presented in the company of weak, lowly and implausible pieces. Their makers are an uneven band, ranging from renowned, established and institutionalized to the lesser-known, minor, marginal and unfamiliar." [2] Goniwe acknowledges the challenges Black artists had to go through in the face of inequality in this country. The lack of infrastructure (training institutions) and the fact that support systems (galleries and museums) favoured, white artists left Black artists to do with the little that was available at their disposal. Goniwe further posits that, "These artists and their work make up a fascinating collection whose consequential character would seem to defy (discriminative) hierarchies informed by western etiquettes of ranking, recognition, reputation and eminence".

Goniwe's observations are spot on. The collection challenges the discriminatory western art canon that classifies artists according to their academic training and social standing. This classification nullifies the artistic creative process and ignores the fact that Blacks were denied art education and the only art institutions available were limited to Polly Street, Art Foundation (later Johannesburg Art Foundation) and Rorke's Drift. The former two were situated in Johannesburg and the latter in rural northern Zululand. All these institutions had limited resources; trained staff and student intake was severely limited. They did not offer art training based on formal curricula but used workshop methods of teaching. The workshop method encouraged collective training and learning experience, allowing art students to focus on their weaknesses.

The fascinating feature of this exhibition is its inclusiveness of both formally trained and 'self-trained' artists under one roof. The formerly trained artists are Sydney Kumalo, Ezrom Legae, Sam Nhlengethwa and Mmakgabo Sebidi. Kumalo and Legae were trained and mentored at Polly Street before they went and furthered their skills under Edoardo Villa, the famous Italian-South African sculptor. Nhlengethwa first trained at Rorke's Drift before joining the Art Foundation. There, he met Sebidi who initially was trained by John Koenakeefe (Mohl) Motlhakana and joined the Art Foundation run by Bill Ainslie. Those who were self-taught were Dr Phuthuma Seoka, Nelisiwe Patience Dlamini and Owen Ndou, just to name a few. This exhibition is a recognition of their achievements and determination against the glaring odds they faced in their quest to be artists.

Ephraim Ngatane
Zion Church Dancers (Detail)
1964

Sam Nhlengethwa
Miners
1997

The arts educator Randy Martin puts it succinctly that "In practice, artmaking is an intricate journey where public and private are at once the vehicle, the route, and the destination".[3] This exhibition conjures these words amicably as the artists (whether trained or self-taught) were one with their communities; they listened, saw, and reflected on their plights. They consummated the cries, passions, and griefs, ensuring generations to come will know how they lived and reflected. This is well illustrated by Stan Motjuwadi's *Madam Please*, a poem that directly expresses the anger of domestic work against the mirrored demands by her white madam. Ernest Cole, too, brings the dark side of the apartheid government's treatment of Black labourers in his photographs. These artists captured white arrogance and laid it bare for generations to see.

The interplay between films, music, political posters, sculptures and other works of different genres is spectacular. Music has played a conscientising role for

a long time, hiding meanings in metaphors, but in the 1980s, after the Culture and Resistance conference held in Gaborone, Botswana in 1982, there was a call to use art as a cultural weapon. A few workers were trained in silkscreen printing techniques to print political messages on posters to subvert the apartheid system. These posters were not supposed to be signed to avert police harassing the creators. This method gained traction and, in townships and urban centres, most people woke up to hundreds of posters with messages of protest In this exhibition, the past is brought into the present with long forgotten names and works, thus giving a glimpse of how far this country has come. The visitor gets to see the bigger picture of the challenges Black artists had to endure. This exhibition sheds light on how the artists, over four decades, saw, thought, and acted in their lives. This is exemplified by themes such as estrangement, displacement, spirituality, and resistance. The works, despite these overarching themes, reflect happiness, restlessness, grief, sorrow, and triumph of the human spirit, amidst difficulties.

Sydney Kumalo
Man On Bull,
UNDATED

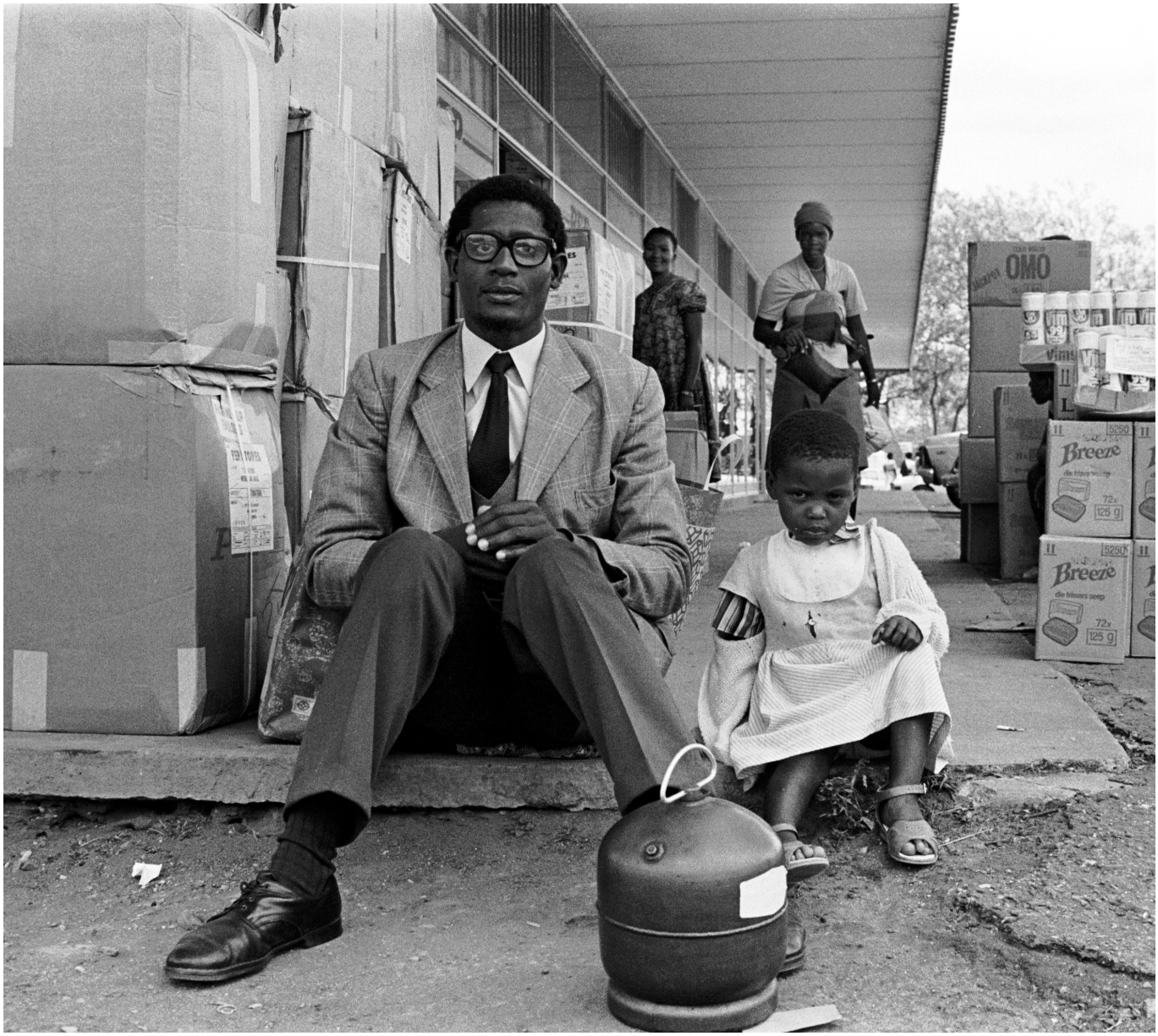
Leonard Matsoso,
Praying Woman,
1976

Expectations

As curators, we expected this exhibition in its diverse genres, themes, and messages to spark debates and conversations. The discovery of works by artists like Keith Sibiya, Dinah Molefe and Johannes Maswanganyi, we hope will generate more research to recover new material with the aim of enlisting it into the mainstream of South African art history. We also enjoyed learning about some of these artists, who they were, and the conditions under which they lived while pursuing artmaking. In realising the importance the exhibition raised by bringing all these artists together under one roof, a programme to engage artists and families was developed. During the engagements, enlightening insights were revealed. Children spoke of the strength of family bonds during tough times when sales from artworks were not forthcoming.

David Phoshoko (featured artist in the exhibition) told a haunting story of the times he was jailed by police for pursuing art. The importance of the first person's account added nuanced anecdotes, never to be found in documented literature. Others talked about how the new government has not changed their life experiences and pleaded with the organisers to intervene on their behalf. This touched the families at the final recognition of their loved ones' work and efforts. The experience brought in delayed pride, and they left the event knowing that their family members' legacies made important contributions that need to be recognised. More importantly, there are narratives that remain untold. We as curators are pleased to contribute in a small way to opening new interest in the lives and works of these artists. On an academic level, the curators expect the generation of interest in new research perspectives to emerge going forward.

This exhibition opens as the world experiences the brutality, murder and destruction of Ukraine by Russia, accelerated aggression by the Israeli government on Palestine occupied territory and violence in other parts of the world. These acts of gross human rights abuses of power, including torture of the innocent children and women, brings back scenes of when the apartheid regime reigned over the Black majority. The world took note of and condemned, characterising apartheid as 'crime against humanity'. Artists like Cole, Ruth Motau and others risked their lives in taking photographs deemed offensive to the status quo, exposing to the world the brutality of the state. But culture, as Enwezor, stated above, "is one area of human enterprise that most stubbornly resists legislation, and oppression", I might add. If culture is a way of life, no legislation can stop people resisting in all forms. This is exemplified by the Sharpeville Massacre (1960), The Soweto student riots (1976) and labour strikes (1980s) that dominate this exhibition. The masses of the people defied the oppressive laws, including the state of emergency, imposed on the ungovernable townships. Artists took note and dramatised, satirised and documented their dissatisfaction, employing their deep and rich linguistic metaphors, hence the title of this exhibition, *Yakhal' Inkomo* (The Bellowing Bull). These metaphors helped transmit messages to the Black masses and eluded



Cedric Nunn
Father and daughter. Mtubatuba, KwaZulu/Natal 1982 ©
Cedric Nunn / Independent Photographers / african.pictures

the special security police, whose job was to sensor any material that was subversive to the state. Art is about matter and metaphors and, indeed, matters pertaining to the times in which they lived are dealt with extensively in the works in the exhibition. To avoid censorship, the artists rarely made direct reference to the atrocities of the status quo. Instead, they coded messages through the artworks that the untutored eyes of the apartheid authorities would not be able to ascertain. The use of the metaphors in the exhibition is exemplified by artists like Legae in his *'chicken series'* drawings that were inspired by the brutal killing of the Black Consciousness leader in detention, Steven Bantu Biko, in 1977.

The transformative process that allowed a Black woman activist and artist to research and secure this collection is a first for this country. This gesture must be celebrated and encouraged. Michael Javett's vision to outsource the collection of Black artists from the late 20th century is highly unusual, the timing of the collection, where most of the Black art has long been jettisoned out of the country or held in private collections. What Bongi Dhlomo-Mautloa collected lends weight to the diverse skills and talent within the country, although bias is shown towards the Johannesburg artists. Her daunting task is evidenced by this amazing collection that shares a glimpse into the periods that are covered.

Christopher van Wyk (author and editor of various literary publications), although in the following quote he is referring to literature, his observations can be attributed to other arts as well. He summed up the achievements of Black artists of these periods eloquently when he praised their efforts against the lack of arts education in the country for Blacks:

I have always been impressed by the power and profundity of some of the images of the seventies, despite my reservations and criticisms. I am still overwhelmed by the extent to which people without an accessible literary heritage emerged from the ravages of Bantu education and produced a literature which people inside the country and all over the world stood up to listen.[4]

As the country reconstructed and transitioned from apartheid to democracy, institutions of culture and education must be rebuilt. This is slowly taking shape but, as demographics change, more brilliant Black artists are emerging from the previously white tertiary institutions and taking centre stage in all spheres. This exhibition comes at the most critical stage, highlighting the amount of work needing to be done to catch up on lost time. The exhibition challenges researchers and scholars to revisit these periods and rewrite our histories anew.

The importance of both the exhibition and the collection adds to the existing collections at University of Fort Hare in Alice, Eastern Cape and William Humphreys Gallery in Kimberley, Northern Cape. These institutions hold the collections that feature the most work by Black artists in the country. The Bongi Dhlomo-Mautloa Collection is adding a

significant chapter to the art collections this country has. Her contribution and the vision by Michael Javett have assisted in decentralisation of these rare works by Black artists. It is hoped that these collections will be digitised and made available for further study by scholars and researchers alike.

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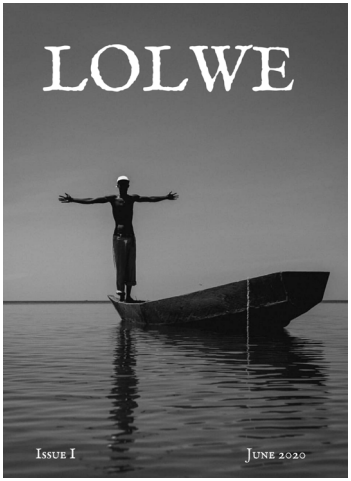
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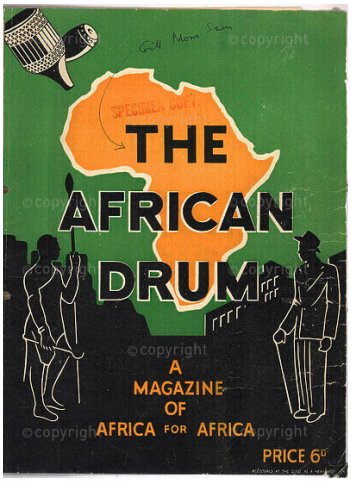
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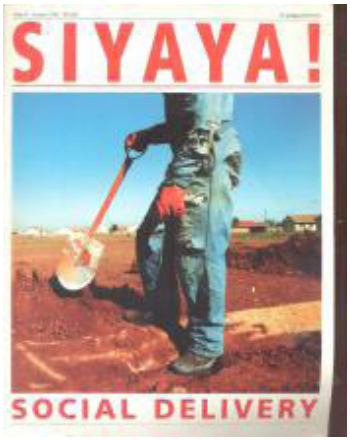
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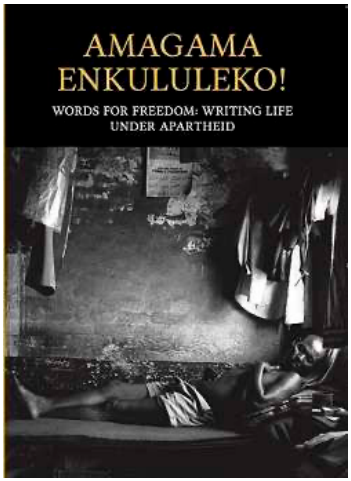
AMAGAMA ENKULULEKO!
WORDS FOR FREEDOM: WRITING LIFE UNDER APARTHEID


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JUNE
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African People's Pictorial
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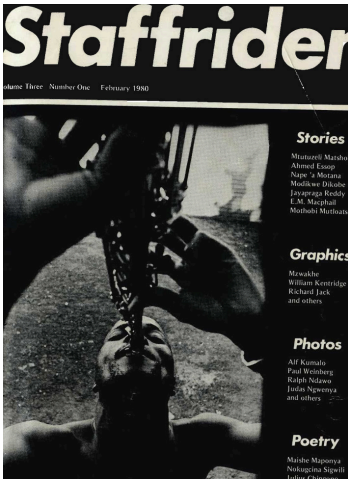
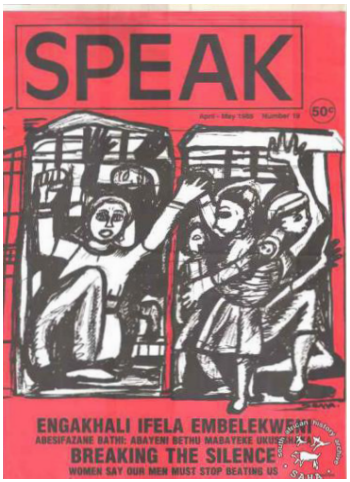
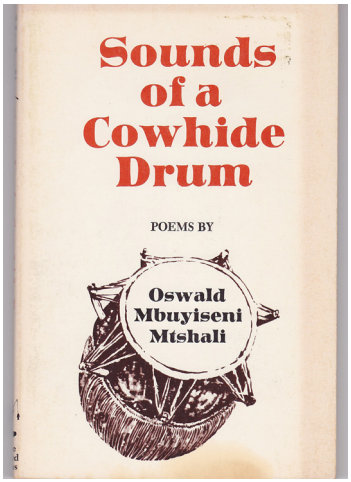

Staffrider
Stories
Graphics
Photos
Poetry


SPEAK
ENGAKHALI IFELA EMBELEKWENI
BREAKING THE SILENCE
WOMEN SAY OUR MEN MUST STOP BEATING US


Sounds of a Cowhide Drum
POEMS BY
Oswald Mbuyiseni Mtshali

UNYAWO ALUNAMEHLO, LUYIMPUMPUTHE

ubophatha kahle abantu - By Phumzile Nombuso Twala

The end of 2020 – arguably one of the strangest years of recent times – found me at a crossroads in my career and on the edge of what feels like a shift consistent with what had been experienced worldwide throughout the year. At the time, I felt like there was a palpable shift in consciousness and a call to raise more awareness about the things that truly matter in life. Existential crises aside, I have always loved storytelling – in different forms. Little did I know that I was about to become part of a powerful story that featured various reflections on many marginalised narratives of Black artists living and practising during a specific period in 20th century South Africa.

In 2021, the *Yakhal' inkomo* exhibition was introduced to me by my colleagues Tumelo Mosaka and Sipho Mdanda as an important story that needed to be told, primarily based on the lived experiences of Black artists. I was initially excited by the prospect of not only rediscovering many narratives, but also making sense of the influence of the politics of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s on artworks created within this period. Having the privilege of walking this journey with Mam' Bongi Dhlomo-Mautloa has been even more special. The creative possibilities that emanate from this re-reading of a very specific part of South African art history gave me hope for a continued centering of Black artists' experiences by contemporary Black artists, curators and cultural producers.

Act I: On public programming and evolving practices of care

My role in the project presented me with interesting prospects. One of them was working with my two vastly experienced co-curators, who offered insight, knowledge, expertise, gentle guidance and wisdom along the way. Another was the opportunity to become part of a moment that writes Black artistic brilliance into the art historical canon with a greater sense of care. Furthermore, this presented me with my biggest challenge yet: stepping into the arena of curatorial practice, through the lens of public engagement curating.

As an arts practitioner, convenor and cultural producer grappling with the notion of curatorial practice and the elevation of care for the artist within the work I do, I have resisted being called a 'curator'. This has mainly stemmed from a post-post-apartheid trend of labelling practitioners as curators as a default if they

don't fit into 'conventional' boxes of artistic practice. The *Yakhal 'inkomo* exhibition pushed me to step out of my comfort zone, challenging me to define a space for myself within the ambit of public engagement curating. As a curious and analytical person, I always questioned things. Naturally, I probed what this role meant within our unique team dynamic and how one would navigate a role that demands a symbiotic relationship with more 'traditional' understandings of the role of the curator.

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By expanding the definition of what it means to care for a collection, I initially viewed my role as a disruptor of sorts. I chose to lean into my first instinct, which was to embrace a radical reflection of the work of the artists in the Bongi Dhlomo Collection (BDC). But I soon realised that this approach needed to be tweaked and moulded anew. In my view, not only are these works a snapshot of a very specific moment of life in South Africa, but they offer a glimpse into the lives of ordinary people at a time when it is often assumed that artworks were rooted mainly in protest, rather than works that were the result of links between art and pleasure. Peter Clarke's 1957 piece *Sunset at Windemere* (Afrika Mayibuye) carries a humorous essence as it simultaneously depicts the struggles of daily life in, and commentary on, forced removals. Mmakgabo Mmapula Mmangankato Helen Sebidi's 1993 work *Mo Mahaena Ke Mathata* (resists definition, situating its place in the realm of magical surrealism. Rather than presenting myself as someone who could speak on behalf of the artists, and inserting my own biases, I asked open-ended questions as a way of reading the works. This, I believed, may better serve my curatorial practice.

As a curatorial collective, we agreed to ground the story we were telling in the celebration of Black artists practising in 20th century South Africa as protagonists. Our role as the curators called for us to adjust when necessary throughout the lifecycle of the exhibition. As custodians of this narrative, we had clear intentions to hold space for largely unknown narratives that emerged during the focus period. We agreed to always hold one another accountable to our vision, our capabilities as well as our limitations moment by moment. We were also aware that our aim to centre the artists' lived experiences had the potential to create a shortsighted reflection of the BDC and additional works that make up the *Yakhal'inkomo* exhibition. It became important for us to clarify that the exhibition offered a vehicle through which lived experience could be better understood, while also connecting to contemporary concerns of artistry, cultural production and Black personhood.

Act II: Making the invisible visible and making the visible invisible

Our public programme presented the ideal opportunity to expand on ideas, encounters and unresolved questions emanating from the physical artworks exhibited at Javett Art Centre at UP gallery walls as a starting point. In my view, the public programme of the exhibition should be just as central to the physical display of works.

Rather than being framed as complementary to the 'main' exhibition, this element informed a parallel reading of the exhibition's narrative. By inviting different publics to engage in an experiential form of reading the exhibition, it was our intention to create more space for alternative ways of encountering the gallery and exploring the various artists' responses. The interplay between the visible and the invisible became the vessel through which our curatorial conceptions came to the fore.

We premised our vision on the idea that individuals take a journey together not only as viewers, but as participants reimagining the multiplicities of encounters expressed by those who lived and practised as Black artists in apartheid South Africa. This supported our intention to have the spotlight on artists whose works have not been adequately canonised. How else can Black artists be written into history beyond the medium of text? How can reflections through music, spoken word, photography and discourse centre peripheral narratives and lived experiences? We pondered these questions throughout our collective thinking and often returned to them as our guiding principles. While this exhibition aims to be an in-depth contemplation of the metaphor of the bellowing bull subtly-yet-powerfully unleashed in Winston Mankunku Ngozi's timeless classic, the role of music has been an important conceptual tool that cannot be discounted. In addition to the curated playlists in the galleries, which offered numerous soundtracks to important moments throughout South African history, our public programme also managed to feature the musicality of the era, activated and interwoven in collaborative conversations, documentary screenings and impromptu performances.

© Javett Art Centre at UP (LEFT AND RIGHT)

Act III: Ubophatha kahle abantu

Caring for a collection, its various constituents and the artistic legacies therein in an ever-changing world of connections – forged via multiple device screens, poor network connections, laughs shared over endless virtual faux pas and fears of artificial intelligence dominating cultural production – has meant leaning into the discomfort, uncertainty and unfamiliar territory of the digital landscape.

What set the tone for how the public programmes' tonality unfolded was an online conversation that partially honed in on the impact of the release of the classic jazz standard '*Yakhal'inkomo*' by Winston Mankunku Ngozi. Led by Professor Thembinkosi Goniwe and Dr Mongane Wally Serote, this programme managed to attract a diverse online audience in a transitional 'post-Covid-19' era that has seen fewer people interested in participating in hybrid programming.

By connecting the past to the present, Goniwe and Serote helped to shape the many interpretations of the impact of *Yakhal'inkomo* as a movement or ideology, rather than just a song. While paying homage to Mankunku's song, it became important for us to clarify

the exhibition's messaging. Taking care of the legacy of Mankunku's creation, by virtue of the exhibition's title, demanded a negotiation of sorts. Locating the song's significance within the cultural sphere and indicating the many ways through which it lent a voice to the voiceless, while effortlessly displaying its brilliance as a musical composition, we were able to begin to illuminate the power of art. The effectiveness of this composition in reflecting the struggles and its ability to evoke a spirit of triumph within Black communities is what we intended to highlight. How was creative expression influenced by the release of this song and its underlying message? How did this further shape the role of the Black artist in society at the time? How did artists respond to injustices at the time? More importantly, how do artists respond today? These are some of the questions that this collaborative conversation foregrounded.

Goniwe's call-and-response approach – coupled with visual and sonic interpretations of this legacy interspersed at various points throughout the online engagement – set the terms for this ongoing negotiation. Serote's first-hand accounts of his direct connection to the song and the moment of awakening inspired it became key to mediating expectations of how the exhibition would be received in the public domain. The digital platform we used for this engagement invited critique and analysis in a setting that wasn't too formal. It encouraged the free-flow of ideas and the expression of multiple assessments of what the exhibition attempted to do. Through this forum, we were able to engage with this collection intellectually, enabling a collaborative curation of ideas while addressing contemporary issues.

Act IV: Izwi namazwi

The rallying cry of the 'bellowing bull' signified not only the mobilisation of action through song, but it also found agency at the intersection of the various artistic disciplines. This loud declaration of resilience was found in the literary arts as much as it reverberated on stages. The embodiment of this transdisciplinary approach to artistic practice was expressed in two programmes in mid-2022.

Dr Nokuthula Mazibuko Msimang offered a moving, intellectually stimulating critical audit of the musical life of Dolly Rathebe. This sonic intervention, laced with readings from her upcoming manuscript, gave our publics a front row seat into snippets of the life of 'Africa's first Black female film star'. While many people may already be somewhat familiar with Ma Dolly's visual representation as a Drum magazine cover star, we aimed to offer an alternative rendering of parts of her artistic trajectory. By locating some of her community-building legacy in Mabopane, while highlighting fascinating unknown nuggets on her artistry, our collaboration re-humanised and accentuated Ma Dolly's less-visible contributions as an artist. Vocalist Nthabiseng 'Nthabysang' Motsepe's flawless and poignant musical renditions helped to anchor this intimate gathering, transporting everyone in the room to different eras within the South African musical landscape.

The value embedded within the written word as a powerful mechanism for activating change is further evident in the annals of Staffrider magazine. On October 17th, 1977, Mike Kirkwood writes in a letter to Mothobi Mutloatse:

> "A magazine: there's backing for one, the essence of which will be frequency (one every two months) and inclusiveness - room for every one, and all the news on the literary front. As well as the 'big names' we aim to publish the activity of writing groups as well as examples of the work produced - lots of interviews, manifestoes, short biographical notes, etc. So there will be a 'workshop' feel to the mag without that being the only thing. No 'omniscient editor' set-up but a forum for the exchange of views and experience."

We delved into the power of words through our Staffrider: Between the lines conversation, focused on the triumph of the human spirit through creativity. By contextualising the experiences of racism and repression through creative expression, Staffrider became a pivotal mouthpiece for Black masses in South Africa.

The founding principles of this iconic publication and its influence on cultural production became the lens through which we scrutinised Black creativity during a tumultuous period in the country's history. Envisioned through an inter-generational exchange featuring Dr Mothobi Mutloatse, Danielle Bowler and Sam Mathe, this offered an opportunity for different publics to engage with segments of the Yakhal'inkomo exhibition outside of the gallery space.

The Forge Braamfontein
Photo by Mwelela Cele

Our collaboration with The Forge Braamfontein, a pan-African space that is often home to fiery political discourse, created opportunities for reaching a more diverse audience beyond the convention of the gallery space. It also exposed our programme to a critical undressing that demonstrated what it means to fully immerse our ideas in the public eye for scrutiny. Although this does happen in the gallery space, there is a different kind of terrain of vulnerability and openness that one has to be willing to navigate. With a lot at stake, including artistic integrity, and holding space for reflecting on the past without getting stuck there, along with the institutions' reputation, it became even more important to lead with a truly collaborative mindset.

© Javett Art Centre at UP
Photo by Mwelela Cele

Our engagement with different publics throughout this exhibition was intended to be multi-faceted. This challenged us by having to be very specific about our aims and delineating what work the exhibition could and couldn't do. The multitude of voices that converged in the space added significant value to ongoing conversations on the essence of resilience captured by artists. Through the lens of Staffrider and

a deeper inquiry into the role of its positionality as a dynamic disruptor within apartheid South Africa, we were able to revisit the past, while also reimagining the future with younger generations.

Act V: Articulating legacies into history and reimagining their relevance in contemporary society

Spreading the language of creativity was a workshop modelled as an intervention at the Javett Art Centre at UP. A short film screening centred on the artistic journey of Michael Paul Sibisi – coupled with an interactive experience wherein we invited publics to explore the space in a semi-guided tour – formed the basis of this programme.

Designed to be experimental and conversational, we encouraged visitors to share their own reflections on exhibition themes through poetry, readings and interactions with strangers. What emerged from this was a spirit of open-mindedness that fuels the kind of flexibility required to enable fluid forms of public programming that respond to the needs of various communities.

The proximity to the University of Pretoria (UP) was a factor we intended to leverage as a tool for driving more organic engagement with younger audiences. Through this engagement, we explored what could become of a targeted, community-led, experimental curatorial practice of public engagement. By embracing a more reflexive approach, this intervention gave new insights into how the exhibition was read. In this setting, the negotiation of ideas, space and contemporary art

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concerns could flourish, giving room for viewpoints other than our own, as curators, to emerge to be further explored.

With the contemplation of lived experience being an ongoing theme throughout this exhibition, it was important for us to further the conversation through various lenses. The History of Black Photography programme presented us with an opportunity to better understand what it was like being a photographer during this period. Dan Tleketle, Ruth Motau and Gcotyelwa Mashiqa initiated audiences to the different kinds of visual language expressed at the time and the various tools used to navigate issues of access to equipment, oppression and straddling the thin line between creating documentary and artistic photographs. By illustrating the magnitude of apartheid's reach within the sphere of cultural production, this conversation was able to personalise many experiences and bring to the fore the true effects of injustices.

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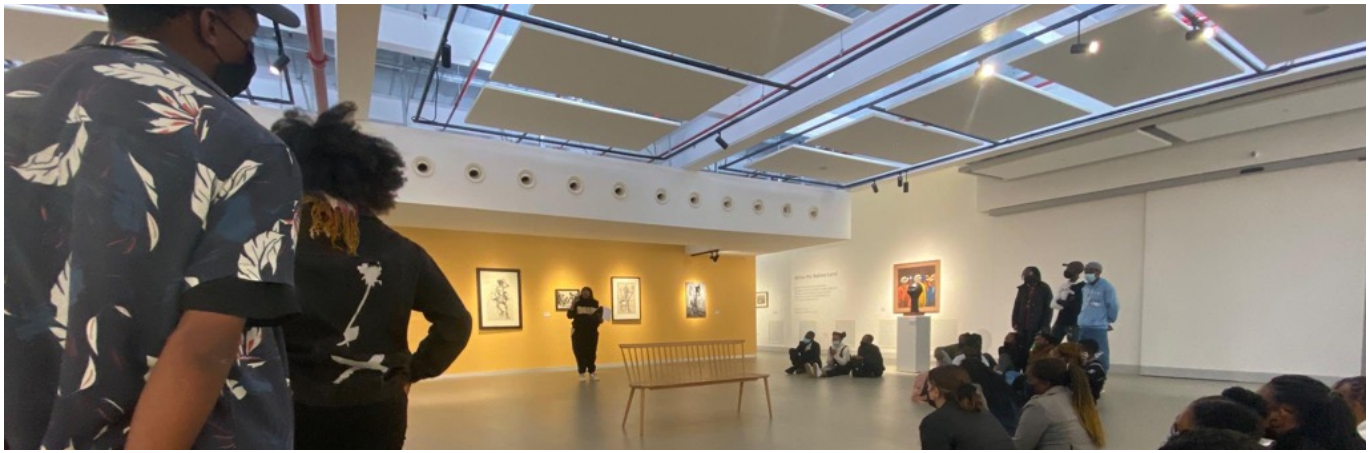

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The intention to highlight lived experience also found new expression in the 'Sediments: A Familial Perspective' artist gathering hosted at the Javett Art Centre at UP towards the tail-end of our exhibition and its programming. Through this initiative, we were able to create a dialogue between historical and contemporary perspectives. The collection's social purpose was accentuated through this articulation of artists' legacies. By broadening the conversation to include the experiences of the artists' family members, this gathering gave us an intimate understanding into some of the successes, pitfalls and challenges facing some of the artists in the BDC. By reckoning with some of the fraught history tied to the creation of some of the artworks within this collection, this curatorial strategy expressed a timely gesture towards artistic dialogue and a layered exchange of knowledge. By foregrounding some neglected voices, this engagement offered an opportunity to express ongoing forms of care.

This gathering ultimately illuminated aspects of how artists' legacies are framed and resulting implications. During this gathering, the guests bore witness to a dance between the complexities of intellectual property concerns, ongoing knowledge production and collecting practices. Wrestling with these multiple entanglements, the panel presented not only practical solutions but extended possibilities to address the ways in which Black South African artists are written into history and the knock-on effects on legacy building.

In marking the achievements of this exhibition, my hope is that the show inspires more artistic inquiry into the artworks within the BDC. My anticipation is for our curatorial strategies to spark more discourse and interventions by knowledge producers. As a significant major exhibition post-2020, the show continues to be a rich source of material for rigorous engagement through scholarship. Our programmes attempted to extend creative expression based on nuanced curatorial practices. It is my hope for these interventions to continue to find further forms of expression as part of presenting creative work for different publics.

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Ernest Cole
Separate Amenities Act, Separate Development Act, Transport Signage

Ernest Cole
Group medical examination, men are herded through a string of doctors offices

Alf Kumalo

Here, a crowd protests outside Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape in 1985 after police killed 20 protestors on the 25th anniversary of the Sharpville Massacreof 1960.

THE AESTHETICS OF PAIN AND EMANCIPATION

by Andries Walter Oliphant

"No attempt must be made to encase man, for it is his destiny to be set free."[1]

This essay explores the inscriptions of trauma and pain encoded in the Bongi Dhlomo Collection of Black South African art. It establishes the historical context of the works in the collection and relates this to broad social, cultural, and political developments in South African society during the second half of the 20th century. This is done, by contextualizing the collection and conducting close readings of selected works. The central theme of the essay is the exploration of the inscriptions of physical and existential agony inflicted by racist oppression and brutality on the being of Black South Africans and the crystallization of this in the art works in the collection.

Accordingly, the essay consists of two interrelated parts. The first covers the historical context of the Dhlomo Collection and outlines the conceptual underpinnings of the essay that flows from this. This is done by historically situating the works that constitute the collection. This is followed by a discussion of selected works with the aim to link the existential aesthetic practices of different artists around the theme of existential pain. This is done with the intention to arrive at a synthesis of the historical context and formal aesthetic aspects of the works and to dispel the pernicious practice of dismissing the work of Black artists, for example expounded by Younge (1988:10), who introduces his book Art of the South African Townships thus:

It will undoubtedly come as a surprise to many people that any art at all has come through the bleak, dusty streets of urban squalor of the South African townships. The world at large is perhaps aware the township residents' queue long before dawn and return home well after sunset to which often do not have the convenience of electric light. There seems little space for creative pursuits. It is therefore even more surprising that the work celebrated in this book should prove to be of such sustained quality and complexity.[2]

While Younge, emphasizes harsh conditions and depravations imposed on the urban dormitory

Louis Khehla Maqhubela
Exiled King
UNDATED

townships designed to accommodate Black workers and their families, he makes a special plea to readers, who he assumes are unfamiliar with the harsh realities, to understand that artists disregard for elusive aesthetic refinements, is a consequence of the deprived, oppressed and exploitative conditions imposed on them by the oppressive and exploitative racist political social, economic and cultural order of Apartheid. At the heart of this view is the assumption that artistic work of "quality and complexity" coming from oppressed and exploited communities is a surprising and unexpected anomaly.

In this regard, Powell (1995:261), in a conversation with David Koloane makes the following dismissive assertion:

"In South Africa, as is the case in much of the continent of the spontaneously "African" in township art is the merest inventions. The root of the style lies in European expressionism: it refers in no way to the indigenous African tradition. This is Africa invented for the consumption of whites."[3]

In the light of this, the aim of the essay, then, is not merely to refute this ill-conceived generalization concerning twentieth century art by Black South African artists but to explore the links between the twentieth century Black South African art with indigenous African aesthetics. This is to dispel sweeping and reductive categorizations such as "Township Art" while art from the white segregated suburbs of Apartheid South Africa is not dismissed as self-indulgent, European derived, colonial "Suburban Art".

African art can be defined as the creative practices, traditions, and modalities that, as pointed out by Tyrrell & Jurgens (1983), among others, are as old as, human life on earth.[4] Ancient manifestations of this are visible even today, on rock faces, the walls of dwellings, wood panels, fabrics, carvings metal work, garments and even on human bodies. It constitutes a vast and varied heritage from which countless generations of African artists have drawn as an immense creative resource, extending, renewing, and even transforming traditional African artistic practices. The manifestation of this history is visible today in the enormous body

of work by contemporary African artists, working in various parts of the continent and in the diaspora, not as newcomers, but as the true initiators of what has come to be known as modern art's diverse aesthetic modes.

The abstract murals of the Ndebele, writers Courtney-Clarke (Thames and Hudson:1986) are forerunners of non-figurative art associated in Western art history with the work of the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian.[5] Thus, what goes by the appellation of "Black South African Art" or other designations such as "Township Art", should be treated as contemporary practices, that is, the ongoing work of responsive reconstruction, creativity and innovation grounded in ancient visual and creative traditions of artmaking on the African continent and in the diaspora.

Despite this, the advent of colonialism, as a project of conquest, dispossession, oppression, and exploitation brought with it extreme ethnocentric and crude racist convictions and practices which projected barbaric attributes onto African peoples. Represented in letters, logbooks and travel writings, indigenous peoples are routinely described as savages lacking in culture, language, art, religion, and humanity. These racist views can be read in Raven Hart's two volumes (1967 &1971) in which the "observations" of European visitors and settlers at the Cape, culled from letters, diaries, and official reports, are cited.[6]

Correcting the distortions, can, of course be perused from different perspectives and angles of interest. In this instance, the focus falls on Bongi Dhlomo's collection of South African artists, that constitutes the exhibition which this essay seeks to explore. A starting point for this is to historically situate the collection. Accordingly, the works that make up this collection can be broadly located in the second half of twentieth century South Africa. This was a time, which saw the upsurge in popular revolt against the long history of colonial domination and racist white minority rule in South Africa.

This, viewed from a historical perspective was the culmination of the racist colonial project in South Africa. Consolidating, the territorial gains made over three centuries of unremitting wars of resistance in the face of colonial advancement and territorial conquests which at the commencement of the twentieth century were, for all intents and purposes, complete in so far as it pertained to the subjugation of the indigenous South African peoples. The long history of land dispossession, subjugation and even genocide, reached its pinnacle with the advent of Apartheid and the Afrikaner Nationalist Party's rise to power in 1948 with a blatantly white supremacist agenda.

Turning to works in the Dhlomo Collection, it can be categorically stated, that this is a substantial and representative body of work by diverse artists from different generations. It straddles the second half of the twentieth century which encompasses the rise and the fall of Apartheid. The work can be grouped into three generations; work from 1950-1960, which may be termed Early Modern Black South African Art followed by the 1970-1980 period of Black Consciousness Art. The last period covers the 1990s to the present. The

Gerard Bhengu
Veld Fire
UNDATED

bulk of the collection covers the first two periods which were historically marked by the consolidation of Apartheid, on the one hand, and the intensification popular resistance, culminating in democracy in 1994. A few works belong to the post-Apartheid period. Taken together, the collection covers a critical period in the history of South Africa.

The collection is substantive and very representative of the art produced by Black artists spanning some seventy years. I will discuss a handful of works from different decades. This is done with reference to the focus of the essay, which seeks to refute the reductive claims that artworks by Black South African artists are nothing more than sentimental township derivatives of European expressionism produced for white South Africans and European tourists. Mmakgabo Mmapula Mmangankato Helen Sebidi's' *Mahaeng Ke Mathatha* (1992) translated as At Home is Difficult, depicts a mother taking care of two children while her husband is sleeping next to her in the cramped space of a small room that is also home to mythological animals. The painting is a multilayered composition in which the mother, propped up in bed, is burdened with an ill

infant that clings to her breast in a chaotic household where she battles to survive. The image evokes a biblical scene reminiscent of the stable in which Christ, as the scripture had it was born. The pervasive blue, purple and green acrylic hues blended onto canvas is masterly composed and painterly resonant.

Willie Bester's *Trojan Horse* (1994/1995), on the other hand, is a mixed media assemblage, of a horse on a wheel inspired by a massacre on ,15 October 1985 in Athlone, Cape Town during waves of anti-Apartheid demonstrations which swept across South Africa at the time. A railway truck, covered with crates to conceal armed police, drove up to a gathering of anti-Apartheid protesters. The police emerged from the crates and open fire on the unarmed protesters on Thornton Road, killing Jonathan Classen's aged 21, Shaun Magmoed, 15 and Michaela Miranda, 11.

The killings were compared to the Greek Wars in Homer's poem *The Odyssey* which narrates the wars of antiquity during the Greeks left a massive wooden horse hidden with soldiers outside the gates of Troy. They scrumptiously entered the fortified city when the wooden horse was taken by the Trojans through the gates of their city. Once in the city, they emerged at night and sacked the city. Bester's sculpture plays on this cunning strategy by applying it to the deceitful conduct of the South African police in their attempts to suppress the intensifying popular uprising against Apartheid of the 1980s.

The collection includes Gerard Bhengu's *Veld Fires* (undated) and Louis Maqhubela's *Exiled King* (undated)

Dumile Feni
The Prisoner
1977 - 1991

and *Flight* (1967). These works encode the ravages of destruction, exile, and oppression indirectly by invoking images with symbolic meanings that have social, political, and historical connotations. Dumile

Feni's contemporary drawing on paper, *The Prison* (1977-1991,) on the other hand, viscerally depicts a family consisting of a father, mother and two children behind bars. The work is an open denunciation of the killings and repression which followed the 1976 Soweto Uprising. Sam Nhlengethwa's realistically depicts a group of mine workers clad in red, blue, and yellow worker overalls and wearing protective hats with headlights. They stare expressionless into the space in front of them as if posing for a photograph. Ephraim Ngatane's *Zion Church Service* (1964) depicts a group of church goers dancing in a circle in an open space with township houses in the background.

David Koloane's *Night Vigil* (1992), Lucas Sithole's *Not Me* (undated) and many other fine works on paper, canvas and sculptures by leading Black South African artists vividly depict various aspects of life under oppressive conditions. To disparagingly refer to these varied and accomplished works of art as "Township Art" is both inappropriate, condescending, and uninformed. What shines through from the works in the collection are the varied subjects and, the diversity of styles and modalities applied by different artists. The works are the creative products of highly skilled creative practitioners imbued with sensitivity and ethical clarity. They constitute a remarkable collection of creative and artistic accomplishment which is a far cry from the reductive and condescending, misapprehended, thoughtless and dismissive criticisms.

A more appropriate engagement with the art of Black South Africans would be to, first, discard condescending labels by paying close attention to the aesthetic qualities and individual styles of different artists without mechanically forcing individual artists into crude categories. What is called for, in my view, is a reappreciation of the entire canon of South African art, free from the mechanical misapplications of ready- made and rigid aesthetic schemas. In this way, we might free South African art from the aesthetic prisons of colonial and Eurocentric sensibilities by shedding light on its specific properties. The work of these diverse and gifted artists is equal to, and in some instances towers above the arbitrary models enlisted in crude assessments. The art works in the Dhlomo Collection are manifestations of artists overcoming the oppressive constraints imposed on them by colonialism and Apartheid to free themselves as Fanon enjoins us.

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Photo by Anthea Pokroy


JONAS GWANGWA & SHANAWE with DENNIS MPALE
NO APARTHEID WAR
TROOPS OUT OF ALEXANDRA
END RACIST CONSCRIPTION
SKOM PLAYERS
DUKUZA KAMACU'S
NIGHT OF THE LONG WAKE
DOWNSTAIRS AT THE WITS THEATRE
FROM 7 JANUARY 1987
DIRTY WORK
GANGSTERS
THAMI MNYELE

MO MAHAENG KE MATHATA

by Nkgopoleng Moloi

Mo Mahaeng Ke Mathata is a vivid, enchanting colourful painting made by Mme Helen Sebidi in 1993. The image is composed of hybrid figures that morph into each other —birds, sheep, cattle and humans fill the plane, frustrating any notion of linearity or hierarchy.

The use of animals and hybrid creatures is recurring in Sebidi's work. People often appear two faced and linked with their animal counterparts. Writing on the occasion of Mme Sebidi's solo exhibition at Norval Foundation; *Batlhaping Ba Re!* (2018), curator Portia Malatjie notes that Sebidi's work "conjures up thoughts of animism and human-animal coexistence as a recuperative way of undoing neoliberal capitalism, with its pseudo-inclusivity of specific black bodies..." In *Mo Mahaeng ke Mathata,* we can read a refusal of racialization and of gendering as well as a resistance towards any sort of pecking order — what Malatjie refers to as "undoing". Through the work Sebidi's subjectivity is simply gestured at (as with the title), thereby allowing the painting to remain open and propositional. It is difficult to deduce with any certainty what each of the figures in the image is doing exactly and what role they occupy in Sebidi's made up fantasies. But despite this there's a sense of tenderness, of caring for and being cared for.

Sebidi is well known for using her work to reflect on and depict conditions of life around her — which at the time meant making art as a Black woman in apartheid South Africa. But she does so in an interesting way. Her depictions are filled with magical surrealism that rests on irrational juxtaposition, unusual mix of colour and dreams. Reality is merely nudged at, giving us clues into her complex subconscious.

Mo Mahaeng Ke Mathata is generally translated as "Home is difficult" or "there are difficulties at home". This work is important to me for a number of reasons, one of which is the question of translation. Because of the time during which it was catalogued many sources have titled the work *"Mo Mahaena Ke Mathata".* Mahaeng of course (and not Mahaena) speaks of the home/homestead and even the countryside. As I read the translation that seeks to contextualize the work I'm confronted with its failure. The depth of what "home is difficult" could even begin to mean, is only understood when I choose to stay with the original language. When Jazz musician Bhudaza sings *E thata Nthoena*, those of us who speak the language know that "It's a difficult thing" only lightly touches on what he means. Sebidi's untranslatable title produces the same feeling. And just as textual translation can lead to certain losses through miscommunication, visual translations can do the same. *Mo Mahaeng ke Mathata* is both chaotic and calming, and resists full translation. Because of this, the painting manages to transform through warmth and through mystery.

Mmakgabo Helen Sebidi,
Mo Mahaeng Ke Mathata (At Home is Difficult),
1992

MADAM PLEASE!

By Stanley Motjuwadi, 1972

"Madam please! Before you shout about your broken plate
Ask about the meal my family ate, madam please
Before you laugh at the watchmen's English,
Try to answer in his Zulu language, Madam please!
Before you say that the driver stinks, come
Take a bath in a Soweto sink
Madam please! Before you ask me if your children are fine
Ask me when, ask me when I last saw mine
Madame please! Before you call today's funeral a lie
Ask me why my people die; ask me why my people die. Madam please!"

DOODLIN'

The Timelessness of African Modernism
By Hlonipha Mokoena

"The artist's artist", is a phrase that is often used to define an artist who has the charisma, talent, and affability to be noted and liked by their peers.[1] The "artist's artist" normally has the wisdom and forethought to collect and pay attention to the work of other equally unique and underrated artists. This may be what characterises the Bongi Dhlomo Collection in the broadest sense of the term — it is an "artist's artist" collection; it is a carefully curated statement on the history of Black art and Black artists in South Africa. But, that is not all. It is also a collection that bears witness to the many untold stories of how African artists are often not praised while they are still alive. The accolades only come post-mortem. It is therefore a collection that can also be described as a memento mori to African modernism; it is a eulogy to the artists whose work didn't receive the recognition it deserved. As with other memorialisations and memorials, nostalgia sits snugly next to reminiscences about the careers, the lives, the adventures, and the vivacity of the artists who made the work. The visual trajectory that cuts through the twentieth century thus functions as a reminder of the high and low points of this past time. Although the curators decided to use Winston Mankunku Ngozi's famous tune, *Yakhal' Inkomo* as the title for the exhibition, it may have been equally apt to choose the title *Doodlin'* from the same 1968 album. This is because *Yakhal' Inkomo* is an unambiguous Africanist tune; it is a statement about the meaning of "African jazz". It is comparable in its toe-tapping hip-swaying appeal to Abdullah Ibrahim's *Mannenberg* (1978) or Hugh Masekela's *Grazing in the Grass* which was also released in 1968. Both tunes are musical odes to the vibrancy of the shebeen; the drama and the tragedy of skokiaan and the morning after's bhabhalazi. *Doodlin*" on the other hand, evokes the hard bop songbook; it is a studied homage to John Coltrane, Dexter Gordon, Ornette Coleman, and Sonny Rollins. It is a palette drawn from the year 1959 when Miles Davis released *Kind of Blue* and Dave Brubeck's Quartet recorded *Take Five*. Jazz would never be the same again and Winston Mankunku Ngozi's 1968 album was the product of these seismic shifts in jazz's experimentations. The jazz lover's anthem *Yakhal' Inkomo* is therefore also a marker of the slipperiness of time and memories; it beckons the hearer to remember where and when they first heard the song's calling; it is a reminder of the innocence of the countryside and the real or imaginary bulls that bellow in the song's progression. By merging the 1968 tune with the work of Black modernist artists, the exhibition turns Ngozi's composition into an inspired soundtrack of a bygone era in art and in jazz.

There are two ways of thinking about the meaning

George Pemba
Black Jesus
1985

of "recognition" and why it is that David Koloane or Ezrom Legae were not lauded in their time as great artists. Recognition can be thought of as simply about praise and financial reward — the exhibition openings, the adoring collectors, the international repute, the appreciating price of one's work, the celebrity endorsement etc. If this was the case, then recognition could easily be dismissed as just an ego trip, a tool for creating artistic conformism and a selection process by which only the most mediocre of artists get to be recognised. There is however a second way of thinking about recognition, namely, to think about recognition as a way of seeing; as a way of paying attention to art as not just a practice but a language through which an artist speaks to the world and addresses an attentive humanity. From this perspective, the artist is not so much an orator as they are an oracle, tapping into the dark and bright unconscious of their society. I added "bright" to anticipate my later argument that Black modernism in South Africa wasn't just about the relentlessness of oppression and discrimination but it was also about the joy of being in the world and of living in a Black skin. The humanity of the Black body is as much a part of the language of Black modernist artists as are the degrading and oppressive strictures of segregation and apartheid. To think of the recognition of these artists as an act of seeing is to appreciate the breadth and multiplicity of subject matter and artistic technique that is preserved in the Bongi Dhlomo Collection. To the artists who are collected, their juxtaposition and proximity to their contemporaries is probably in itself a form of recognition. This is especially true for those artists like Ernest Mancoba and Louis Khehla Maqhubela who chose exile rather than continue working under the limited possibilities of segregated South Africa. Recognition for them means a reunion of sorts with their contemporaries such as David Koloane who chose to wait it out in apartheid South Africa. It is by no means an easy reconciliation — not least because exile often meant a turn to abstraction — yet, in its variegated and thorny

intractability this bringing together of artists who were separated by power and politics means that Black or African art can be showcased for its uniqueness. If this artistic reconciliation were a jazz tune, it would sound something like Bheki Mseleku's 2003 *Home At Last* album, especially the title *Home At Last*. In this album, Mseleku does with musical compositions what the Bongi Dhlomo Collection does in visual form — Mseleku bridges the gap that separated those who left and those who stayed behind while at the same time challenging younger jazz musicians to take stock of the traditions that they have inherited.

Although it has been noted many times under the descriptor "township art", one of the constant themes of this Collection is the physical labour that was extracted from Black people by the economic necessities of apartheid. In John Koenakeefe Mohl's *Back from Working to Soweto to Jo'burg (SA)* (1965) the hunched backs of the pedestrians and the windswept and dusty surroundings are evocations of this daily grind. Yet, even amid this social realism, Mohl's penchant for and facility with colour is evident — the blazing, bright orange sky brings luminosity and radiates its light on the colourful clothing of the walkers. The empty horizon towards which they are walking opens up possibilities and implies that even in this bleak environment, the future is in no way closed off. Similarly, in David Mogano's 1993 *Old Pimville T.ship*, the scenery conforms to the township art thematics — the busy and crowded street, the shabby, dilapidated corrugated iron roofs, and the smoke-spouting chimneys — and yet, even here the

David Mogano
Old Pimville Township
1993

artist is also displaying their intimate knowledge of colour by balancing the obvious markers of township life with the not so obvious touches of humanity and quotidian elegance. As was common in modernist art everywhere, the struggles of "Man" against circumstances — be it war, the industrial revolution, want and poverty or powerlessness — inspired South Africa's Black artists to closely read and augment the modernist memo. In their work, "Man" didn't just mean the masculine gender identity, but it meant the travails and sufferings of humanity. Thus, for example in Dumile Feni's *The Prisoner* (1977-1991) it is immaterial whether the figures behind bars are men or women or both, the artist's eye is focused on portraying the confined and incarcerated body and not its gender. The amorphous and genderless "Man" could be said to have been a stand-in for "suffering humanity" even though I think in the case of South Africa, the preference is to see "Man" as meaning "Black Man". Here it is possible to argue that artists such as Feni

were not just influenced by the modernist impulse of their time but that they were also reading and thinking about the emergence of the Black Power and the Black Consciousness movements in South Africa and in the United States. Ezrom Legae's *To Be A Slave?? Never!!* (Personal) (1974) is an emphatic and direct quotation from the Black Consciousness manifesto and ethos and yet, even here, the figure could be read as a metaphor for the universal human striving for freedom and self-expression. The tension created by a localised, contextual, or even parochial reading of these works as addressing apartheid's racialised social order versus a universalistic language of the human condition, is in itself part of the interpretive task of understanding how these works contributed to the history of Black modernist art. In addition, the use of "Man" as a conception of humanity in general should also be counterbalanced by the palpable presence of masculinity as a theme of modernist art. Thus, for example, in Sam Nhlengethwa's *Miners* (1997), the mine workers who are arrayed around their white "foreman" are unambiguously male; they do not represent a generic "Man" but the specific use of black men in South Africa's extractive industries. In this image, "Man" cannot be reduced to "man" and vice versa; the artist intended to present the distinct conditions of Black masculinity in South African history and how black and white males are positioned in the mining industry's racial hierarchy. Without this directness, Nhlengethwa's "Miners" would have failed to speak to apartheid's job reservation policy and the dehumanisation of Black males as a dispensable labour force.

John Mohl Koenakeefe
Back from working to Soweto to Joburg (S.A.)
1965

Whereas the place of "Man" / "man" is assured by modernism's preoccupation with the human condition, the role of "woman" in the making of South Africa's art history is not as tangible and accessible. It is, for example, not possible to think of an exclusively "feminist" art form or style, or movement. The work of South Africa's women artists is often uncritically read as part of the canon and not as working against it. Although it is true that in keeping with other artistic traditions, the "Mother and Child" motif is well represented in the Collection, it is also equally true to say that the valorisation of womanhood and the role of women in South Africa's history is expressed in

variable styles and media. Logically and conceptually, the struggle against apartheid has inspired many artworks featuring women as the central characters. Even paintings that borrow from iconic Western images, such as the crucified Christ, were often political in their address. Thus, for example, George Pemba's *Black Jesus* (1985) politicised the figure of Christ by making him Black. More poignantly, Mary Magdalene and the other Marys are multiplied into a congregation of women, all of whom are Black. By referencing, Ronald Harrison's 1962 "The Black Christ", Pemba replaced Harrison's "white" Roman centurions with the Marys and thereby converted the story of Christ into the story of what Steve Biko had termed "a fighting god". In addition, Pemba's *Black Jesus* also served as a substitute since Harrison's painting disappeared in the 1960s and was not seen again until the end of apartheid. The substantive point however is that in Pemba's painting, the congregation of Marys is as prominent as the figure of Christ and he thereby transformed the biblical image of Ecce Homo ("Behold the Man") — the lonely degraded Saviour — into an experience of collective suffering, especially of suffering women, as expressed in liturgical Latin's Stabat Mater ("The Mother Was Standing"). If in Pemba's painting, women represent the shared affliction of biblical women and, by transmutation, Black women, then Leonard Matsoso's *Praying Woman* (1976) extends Black modernism's conversation with the biblical motifs of women in distress. In Matsoso's image it is the solemnity and the solitude of the praying woman that makes her piety visible; and, her Sphinx-like face gives the painting a majestic loftiness even while it speaks to the language of abstract forms. The enigma of the work lies in the fact that the details and circumstances of the prayer are not revealed; we don't know who the woman is praying to or what form of penance she is offering to the receiver of her supplications. The idealisation of women as mothers comes to life in Julian Motau's *A Mother's Comfort* (1967) and in Benjamin Macala's *Mother And Child* (1985) both of which rely on an already familiar classical image of *The Madonna*. Again, the important point is that in the hands of Black modernist artists, the seemingly clichéd Mother and Child narratives became a metaphor for Black womanhood and the predicament of women who have to offer their children comfort even when they are lacking it themselves. This expectation of anguish and self-sacrifice is also depicted in David Koloane's *The Night Vigil* (1992) in which the meaning of death and loss is drawn onto the face of the woman figure. Amid the political violence that was unleashed in the townships by the end of apartheid, the holding of a night vigil for a deceased relative became a risky undertaking and Koloane's trio of faces may be a representation of that anxiety and grief. On the other hand, it is possible to read in the woman's face, what Mamphela Ramphele defined as "political widowhood" — that is, when personal loss has to be accompanied by public grieving. As an "embodiment of ambiguity", to use Ramphele's words, a woman's body signifies the public's desire for political heroism and for this heroism to live on in the body of the surviving female spouse.[2] When read from this perspective, Koloane's sketch is of a piece with Sydney Selepe's *Women in the Struggle* (1989). In the latter case, women are depicted offering comfort and sacrifice in various

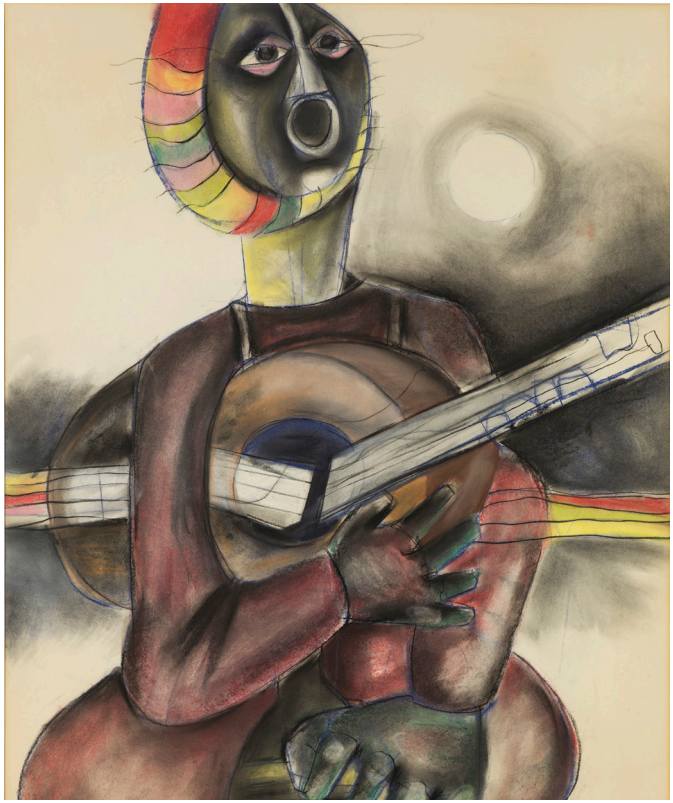
guises and the artist chose to define these everyday acts of feminine labour as part of the struggle against apartheid. By being mundane and unremarkable, the

Sydney Kumalo
The Musician
1967

women's bodies also mark the spaces where apartheid had its most silent and irreversible effect, namely, the home. In Selepe's interpretation of apartheid and women's role in fighting it, the domestic sphere is as political as the public marches and demonstrations.

If Black modernist artists were only about rallies, slogans, protests, and the grand themes of the twentieth century, then most of their work would have been left behind at the turn of the twenty-first century. Their continued relevance and prominence is therefore not just due to their political commitments, however tenuous these were. Black modernism was also about the art of living, and living copiously. In Sydney Kumalo's *The Musician* (1967) the choice to live abundantly is symbolised by the life-sized banjo-like instrument that the musician is playing. By exaggerating the body-instrument ratio, Kumalo made both the instrument and the player the subjects of the image. By giving the musical instrument the same proportions as the human player, Kumalo was applying an anthropomorphic sensibility and creating an emotion or mood in which the instrument and the musician are playing each other, with neither being the master. Even the pegs of the stringed instrument have a digital quality that evokes the motions of a human hand. In several other sketches, paintings and sculptures, the artists placed music and musical instruments at the centre of their visual narratives. In Chabani Manganye's *Broken Guitar* (1986), the human figure's anguish and/or vocalisation is given heightened emotional valence by the fact that the fretboard of the guitar also functions as a horizontal light beam that cuts across the human's torso. By being both an instrument and a line of light, the guitar becomes one with the human being who is mourning its loss. This

musicality embedded in the work of art performs a political function: it is a reminder that even under the most oppressive conditions, a human, an African will find reason to compose a song or whistle a tune. Yet, this humanism and its creative expression are not the only functions of musicianship in Black modernist art. Music is present even when no visible instruments are being played. Thus, in Ephraim Ngatane's *Zion Church Dancers* (1964), the spirit of religious revival and ecstasy is impressionistically visualised through the circle of worshippers who we know from the title of the painting are dancing; their voices are only indexed by the fact of the dancing. Similarly, in Owen Ndou's *Dancing Lady* (1994/95), the body's motions remain, even when the music is inaudible. Although there have been several seminal attempts to explain the link between music and politics in South Africa via documentary films such as *Amandla!: A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony* (2002) or David Coplan's book In the *Township Tonight!* (1985), there has yet to be a compilation of the music that inspired Black modernist artists. There has yet to be a theoretical stab at the cross-fertilisations that occur when artists think musically, and musicians think in line and colour. In some senses, such a theorisation was already presaged in Léopold Sénghor's often-cited essay on "African-Negro Aesthetics". In his wide-ranging meditation on what makes African art, literature, and poetry distinctive, Sénghor identified rhythm as one of the defining characteristics of an African artist's sensorial universe. He offered the following definitions, "What is rhythm? It is the architectural structure of our being, the internal dynamism that gives us form, the network of undulations that Others receive from us, the pure expression of vital force. Rhythm is the vibrant shock, the power which, through our senses, lays hold of the very roots of our being. It expresses itself by the most material, the most sensual means: lines, colors, volume, in architecture, sculpture, and painting; stresses in poetry and in music, movements in the dance. But, having done this, it channels all that is concrete into intellectual spirit. For the African-Negro rhythm illuminates the spirit so that it becomes embodied in sensuality. The African dance disdains bodily contact. Yet look at the



Chabani Manganye,
Broken Guitar,
1986

dancers. While their lower limbs are agitated by the most sensual movements, their heads partake of the serene beauty of masks, of the dead."[3]

From this aesthetic viewpoint, South Africa's art theory and art history need to come to terms with how music actively facilitated the conversion of what is "concrete into the intellectual spirit", to use Sénghor's words. Our thinking about the history of Black modernist art has to account for how Velaphi Mzimba's *The Guitar Man* expresses the same intellectual spirit as Chabani Manganye's *Broken Guitar*. Each artist was attempting to explore in pigmented colour and joined lines what Sénghor described as the illumination of the spirit, "the serene beauty of masks, of the dead."

In the age of playlists and streaming audio files and content, it probably doesn't seem so far-fetched or difficult to create a soundtrack that captures a zeitgeist or the sound of a generation. It probably seems simple enough to guess what music Dumile Feni, George Pemba, or Ezrom Legae were listening to while working. Yet, even with our technological endowments, the unity of the work of art still seems elusive especially when it comes to the absent aural quality that the artists often signaled with their work. It is not so much the resounding silence of the gallery white space or the fact that seeing and hearing are often separated in exhibitions, it is also the undeniable obsession with the "pure" artist that leads us to cleave and splinter the artist's world into the "visual" and the "aural". As Sénghor's arguments show, in Africa at least, it could be argued that the painting, the image, the visible is inextricably also an expression of musicality, an expression of rhythmic enchantment and seduction. In thinking about how Winston Mankunku Ngozi's Yakhal' Inkomo may have functioned as an artistic anthem for several generations of artists, this essay has drawn a connecting line between what could be summed up in three words — "Man", "Woman" and "Jazz Band". In delineating these themes, the essay has attempted to reveal the aural milieu and soundscape of works of art that are often unheard when the work is extracted from its context and read as purely "art for art's sake" (another term used in Sénghor's essay). In this way, I have intimated some of how contemporary readers and viewers can tap into the "intellectual spirit" of Black modernist art. The intention was not to make an argument about canonisation or exceptionality. It was rather an attempt to infiltrate the past and resurrect the moodiness, the swirling giddiness, and the irresistible witchery that is born when jazz, or music in general, becomes the refuge for those who are otherwise denied their place in the world.

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ANCESTRAL OBJECTS

by Boitumelo Tlhoaele

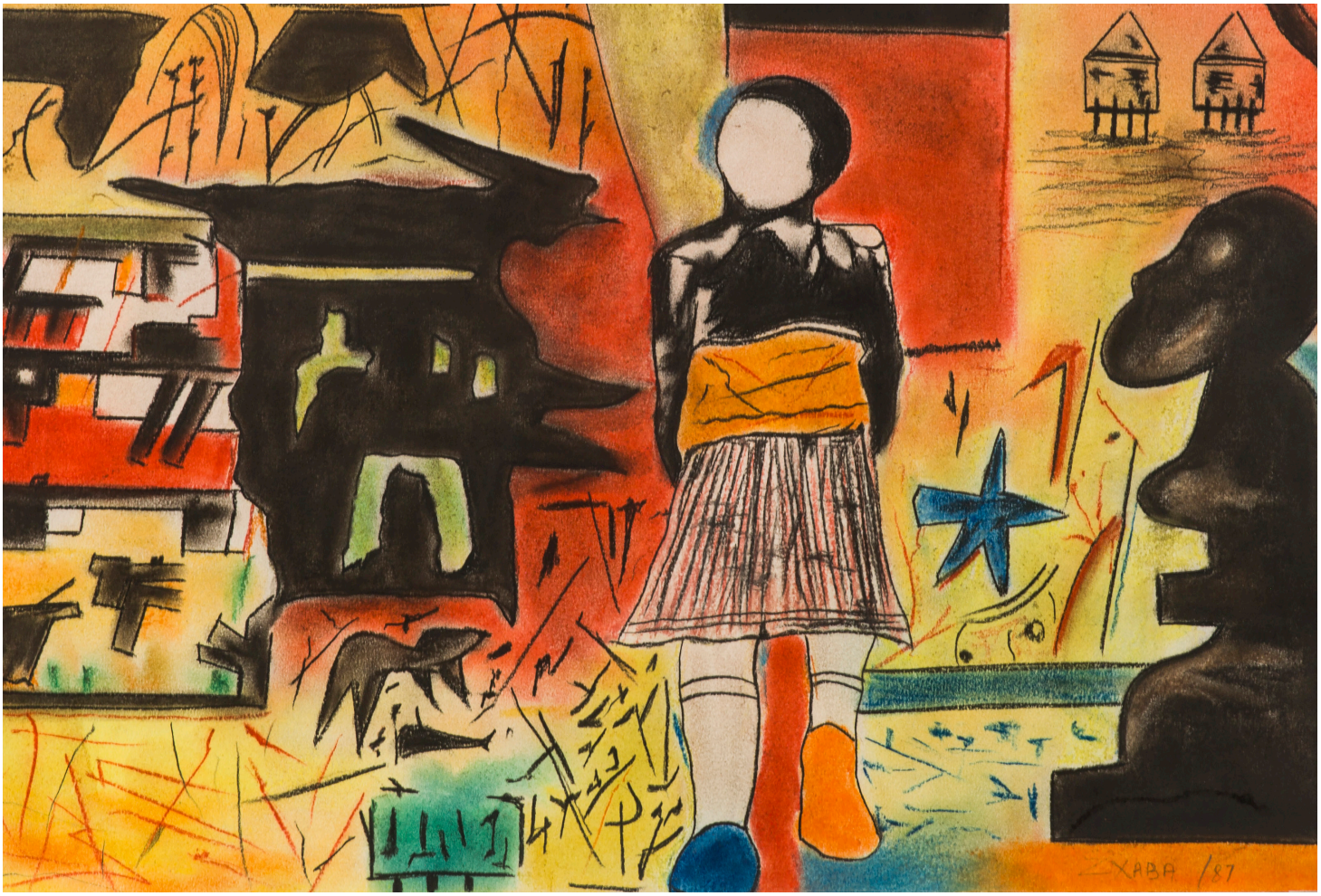
Looking at Nhlanhla Xaba's artwork, *Ancestral Objects* (1987), I was drawn to the bold use of colour. The hues of red and ochre fill up the image, complementing the markings, lines, and patches of black. In the image, several elements stand out. Firstly, it is the figure of a faceless woman who seems to hold a strange position (either walking towards or away from something), while the other is a sculptural figure who frames the right side of the image.

Looking at the woman's figure, I am reminded of the Sankofa symbol – originally from the Akan community of Ghana. It is a symbol of a bird whose head is turned backward towards its body. It has an egg in its beak and its feet are facing forward. The symbol centres on the notion that to know your current self, you must look back into history and your heritage. Nhlanhla's title, *Ancestral Objects*, conjures up these ideas around heritage and what it means to know oneself through tracing one's roots.

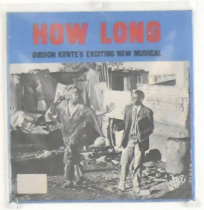
It is hard to miss the sculptural figure of the woman with protruding breasts who partly frames the rest of the image. This figure, in its stoic presence and seemingly honorable sitting position, could have been a reference to Sydney Kumalo's sculpture *Seated Woman* (1958-1959). By extension, Xaba may also be referring to an "African" sculpture tradition, which Kumalo himself was said to have been inspired, in which questions of spirituality and identity are a central theme.

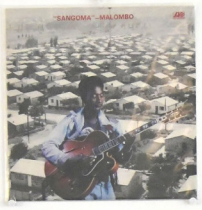
When looking at other Xaba's artworks such as *Talk to Me* (2003) and *Children of the Forgotten Dream* (2003), the sculptural figure and the blue star appear as they do in *Ancestral Objects*. These symbols were quite important to Xaba and, in part, characterise his style. Perhaps Xaba wanted to convey the ideas of the physical and spiritual worlds as ever-colliding, shifting between the known and unknown, the lucid and the mystical. Parts of this work feels like coded language that remains a mystery.

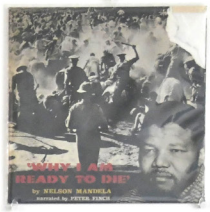
In the work, some huts are suggestive of the importance of the rural areas or the notion of being connected to our ancestral lands. Kolodi Senong writes that Xaba's work insinuates that "the rural areas are spaces where a connection to the past still exists". However, it is important to state that this is written with the knowledge that, while Xaba refers to rural life and its consideration, he was born and raised and developed his artistic practice in an urban setting. I must state that, while this assignment was about interpreting an artwork of a particular artist, what I found intriguing and disturbing, was how little Xaba has been written about.

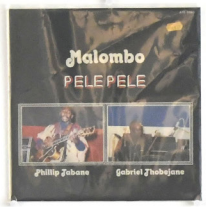


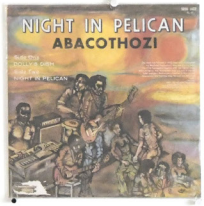
Nhlanhla Xaba
Ancestral Objects
1987











Photos by Anthea Pokroy


s, music and rhythm are not luxuries but part and parcel of their way
ced was made much more real by song and rhythm. - Steve Bantu


communication. Any suffer
Steve Bantu Biko, 1978


With Africans, music and rhythm are not luxuries but part and parcel of their way of communication. Any suffering
we experienced was made much more real by song and rhythm. - Steve Bantu Biko, 1978

CURATOR BIOGRAPHIES

Curator

Tumelo Mosaka is a Johannesburg-born, New York City-based independent curator. He has worked within and outside museums exploring global transnational artistic practices, especially from Africa, the Caribbean, and North America. He has curated numerous exhibitions including, *Usha Seejarim*, A Solo Exhibition (2020) at Kunstinstituut Melly (Formerly known as Witte de With) in Rotterdam, *Turning Tide*, at the Mémorial ACTe Museum, Guadeloupe (2017), *Andrew Lyght: Full Circle*, Dorsky Art Museum, New York (2016), *Poetic Relations*, Perez Art Museum, Miami (2015), and *Otherwise Black* at the 1st edition of International Biennale of Contemporary Art in Martinique (BIAC) 2014. Mosaka is the former Chief Curator for Investec Cape Town Art Fair, South Africa. (2016-19). Previous positions include curator at the Krannert Art Museum (KAM) in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois where he curated several exhibitions including *Blind Field* (2013), *OPENSTUDIO* (2011), and *MAKEBA!* (2011). Before joining KAM, Mosaka was the Associate Curator of Exhibitions at the Brooklyn Museum, NY where he curated *Infinite Islands: Contemporary Caribbean Art* (2007), and *Passing/ Posing: Kehinde Wiley* (2004) among others. He is currently the Mellon Arts Project Director at the African American and African Diaspora Studies Department at Columbia University and a curator at large for the Ten North Group, Miami.

Image: Tumelo Mosaka

Co-Curator

Sipho Mdanda is an artist, writer, and current curator at Freedom Park Museum and a Research Associate at the University of Johannesburg. Born in Durban, he holds degrees in Fine Arts, Art History, and Art Education from the University of Fort Hare, Witwatersrand, and the University of Wales, in Cardiff. Mdanda has been a high school art teacher and also taught art in teacher training colleges, community art centres, and universities. He has participated in numerous initiatives as an artist, curator, writer, curriculum developer, mentor, and researcher. Some of his curated local and international shows include *Urban-Features*, Johannesburg: Artists Proof Studio (2000), *Racism*, Durban: Arts and Culture Department (2001), *Sondela: Witnessing 10 years of Democracy*, Boston National Centre for Afro-American Artists (2004) and *Cleansing and Healing*: a Photographic exhibition, Johannesburg, Kimberley, Durban, Polokwane Museum and Freedom Park (2004). He has published widely in peer-reviewed journals and edited books that include *Democracy X* (2005: Unisa Press), *Visual Century*: 1907-2007 (2011: WUP).

Image: Sipho Mdanda

Educator & Researcher

Phumzile Nombuso Twala is a Soweto-born writer, researcher, curator, and art practitioner. A contributor to various cultural and creative industries projects, she is currently developing an interdisciplinary heritage, research, and development praxis, informed by public engagement and curating models. She has been affiliated with Funda Community College, through the Creative Arts Incubator Programme (2017), Bag Factory Artist Career Boot Camp (2017), and the Funda and Sandberg Institute collaborative Decolonial Futures Exchange Programme (2018). She is an alumni of the Independent Curators International (2019) and holds a BA Honours degree in History of Art from Wits University and is a recipient of the Standard Bank Group Foundation of African Art Postgraduate Prize (2021) for Outstanding Achievement in Postgraduate African Art Studies. She has curated numerous exhibitions including the *Black Gaze: Overexposed or Underexposed?* (2017), and Black Hair Matters, at Eyethu Art Space, Soweto (2018), The African (Literature) Image Funda uFundise Book Exhibition, *June 16 Interpretation Centre*, Soweto (2019), *Diturupa x Photography*: visual narratives exploring SA's untold past Virtual Exhibition (2020), the Oxfam ZA Women and Work Exhibition, Workers Museum, Johannesburg (2020), *Give Her a Crown* Exhibition, The Change Collective, Johannesburg (2020). She has been a researcher for numerous projects including the Winnie Madikizela-Mandela Interpretive Centre/Museum, Norval Foundation, Goethe Institute, British Council and DSAC Visual Arts South Africa Review among others.

Image: Phumzile Nombuso Twala
Photo by Shamase Studios

CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

HLONIPHA MOKOENA

Hlonipha Mokoena received her Ph.D. from the University of Cape Town in 2005. She is currently an associate professor and researcher at WiSER (Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Her articles have been published in: the Journal of Natal and Zulu History; Journal of Religion in Africa; Journal of Southern African Studies; Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies; Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies; Image & Text and Critical Arts.

NKGOPOLENG MOLOI

Nkgopoleng Moloi is a writer based in Cape Town. She is interested in the spaces we occupy and navigate through and how these influence the people we become. Writing is a tool Moloi uses to understand the world around her and to explore the things she is excited and intrigued by, particularly history, art, language, and architecture. She is fascinated by cities; their complexities and their potential. Her work has appeared in Art Forum, Elephant Art, Mail & Guardian, and the British Journal of Photography. She recently curated "Practices of Self-Fashioning", an exhibition exploring queer mobility, at the Goethe-Institut in Johannesburg.

VUSUMZI NKOMO

Vusumzi Nkomo is a writer based in Cape Town. His work has been published in Contemporary And, ArtThrob, Africanah.org, iLiso Magazine, Culture Review, The Thinker and [in review].

ANDRIES WALTER OLIPHANT

Andries Walter Oliphant is a former Fulbright Scholar in Comparative Literature, a writer, critic, and cultural policy developer. He chaired the Ministerial Arts and Culture Task Team and co-wrote the 1996 White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage and its 2020 Revision. He is the Founding Chair of the Arts Culture Trust (ACT). Former editor of Staffrider Magazine and Journal of Literary Studies, he served on the editorial boards of the English Academy Review, Alternation, Scrutiny2 and De Arte. A co-founder of the Congress of SA Writers Publishing, he formulated the criteria for the Sunday Times Fiction Award and chaired its Adjudication Panel. He writes on South African literature, art and photography. He is a recipient of the Thomas Pringle Award for Short Stories (1992), the Sunday Independent Book Journalist of the Year Award (1997) and an ACT Lifetime Achievement (2019).

BOITUMELO TLHOAELE

Boitumelo Tlhoaele is an Associate Lecturer in the Curatorial, Public and Visual Cultures department at the University of the Witwatersrand. She is also a Doctoral Fellow at the Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation (Stellenbosch University). Her research interests explore the intersections between jazz and art, working with music and visual archives within the context of curatorial practices. She holds an MA in Heritage Studies (University of the Witwatersrand). Her curatorial projects include the exhibition, *Leeto: A Sam Nhlengethwa Print Retrospective* (2019) amongst others.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Artists

Richard Keresemose Baholo (1959)
Willie Bester (1956)
Gerard Bhengu (1910 – 1990)
Peter Clarke (1929 – 2014)
Ernest Cole (1940 - 1990)
Bongiwe Dhlomo - Mautloa (1956)
Patience Nelisiwe Dlamini
Mapula Embroidery
Dumile Feni (1942 – 1991)
Daniel Gabashane (1948 - 2014)
Goswana R
Kay Hassan (1956)
Shandrack Hlalele (1956)
Thamsanqa Rutherford Jali (1955)
David Koloane (1938 - 2019)
Percy Konqobe (1939)
Alf Kumalo, (1930 - 2012)
Cyril Kumalo (1950)
Sydney Kumalo (1935 – 1988)
Ezrom Legae (1938 - 1999)
Noria Mabasa (1938)
Monty Mahobe (1934)
Louis Khehla Maqhubela (1939 – 2021)
Avhashoni Mainganye (1957)
Anthony Makou (1949)
Jane Makhubela (1965)
Phillip Malumise (1956)
Ernest Mancoba (1904 - 2002)
Chabani Manganye (1959)
Bhekisani Manyoni (1945)
Johannes Maswanganyi (1948)
Leonard Matsoso (1949 - 2010)
Pauline Mazibuko (1972)
Azaria Mbatha (1941 - 2018)
Eric Mbatha (1948-2012)
Sfiso ka-Mkame (1963)
Micheal Mmutle (1948 - 2010)
David Mogano (1932 -2000)
John Koenakeefe Mohl (1903 - 1985)
Nathaniel Mokgosi (1946)
Julian Motau (1948 - 1968)
Ruth Seopedi Motau (1968)
John Muafangejo (1943 – 1987)
Selby Mvusi (1929 - 1967)
Velaphi Mzimba (1959 - 2021)
Anthony Nkotsi (1955)
Thomas Nkuna (1959 – 1992)
Ephraim Ngatane (1938 – 1971)
Jake Muziwakhe Nhlabati (1954)
Sam Nhlengethwa (1955)
Bonnie Ntshalintshali (1967 - 1999)
Cedric Nunn (1957)
George Phemba (1912 – 2001)
David Phoshoko (1945)
Dan Rakgoathe (1937 – 2004)
Meshack Raphalalani (1950)
Mmakgabo Helen Sebidi. (1943)
Johannes Segogela (1936)
Sydney Selepe (1964)
Dr Phuthuma Seoka (1922 - 1997)
Mavis Shabalala (1956)
Durant Sihlali (1935 – 2004)
Cyprian Mpho Shilakoe (1946 – 1972)
Lucky Sibiya (1942 - 1999)
Lucas Sithole (1931 - 1994)
Enoch Tshabalala (1959)
Nhlanhla Xaba (1960 - 2003)

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4. Black Man, You're On Your Own, 1972 - Wally Mongane Serote, (1944)
5. Still The Sirens, 1993 - Dennis Brutus, (1924 – 2009)
6. Africa My Native Land, 1913 - Adelaide Tantsi

Posters

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3. End Conscription Campaign (ECC) at the Screen Training Project (STP), 1984 Courtesy of: South African History Archive § (SAHA) as custodians
4. Culture and Resistance, 1982, (Gaborone) Silkscreen Thami Mnyele for Medu Art Ensemble Collective Courtesy of Judy Seidman
5. Vuka, 1986 Presented by Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre Courtesy of Ali Hlongwane
6. Jazz With Allen Kwela Courtesy of Sydney Selepe
7. Untold Story Designed by Sydney Selepe Courtesy of Ali Hlongwane
8. J.S. Solomon Mahlangu Silkscreen, 1983 Courtesy of Judy Seidman with Medu Art Ensemble Collective
9. Our Children Need Peace, Not Bullets, 1986 Silkscreen For Black Sash Courtesy of South African History Archive (SAHA) as custodians

10. Toro: The African Dream Presented by Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre Courtesy of Sydney Selepe
11. CODESA Designed by Judy Seidman Courtesy of Sydney Selepe
12. Children of Asazi Courtesy of Sydney Selepe
13. Pula Presented by Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre Courtesy of Ali Hlongwane
14. Support the Education Charter Campaign: June 1976: 10 years: What's changed: Education Crisis Demands Your Attention, Projects Committee Courtesy of South African History Archive (SAHA) as custodians
15. 1976-1986 June 16: The Struggle Continues Katlehong Residents, 1986 Courtesy of South African History Archive (SAHA) as custodians The SAHA Poster Collection
16. Thami Mnyele, 1985 Silkscreen Courtesy of Judy Seidman for Medu Art Ensemble Collective
17. Dirty Work Presented by Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre Courtesy of Ali Hlongwane
18. Night of the Long Wake Presented Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre Courtesy of Ali Hlongwane
19. End Racist Conscription End Conscription Campaign (ECC) Courtesy of: South African History Archive (SAHA) as custodians
20. No Apartheid War: Troops out of Alexandra End Conscription Campaign (ECC) Courtesy of: South African History Archive (SAHA) as custodians
21. Struck a rock, 1981 Judy Seidman with Medu Art Ensemble Collective Silkscreen Courtesy of Judy Seidman
22. Jonas Gwangwa and Shakawe with Dennis Mpale, 1983 Judy Seidman for Medu Art Ensemble Collective, Gaborone Silkscreen Courtesy of Judy Seidman
23. Goree, Presented by Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre Courtesy of Ali Hlongwane
24. 5 Million Souls Presented by Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre Designed by Sydney Selepe and courtesy of Ali Hlongwane
25. Cosatu 4th National Congress, 1992 Litho Print Courtesy of Judy Seidman for COSATU
26. Salute the Workers, 1984 Lithograph Thami Mnyele for ANC Courtesy of Judy Seidman
27. June 16 Commemorations, 1982, (Gaborone) Silkscreen Courtesy of Thami Mnyele and Albip Gonzolas with Medu Art Ensemble Collective
28. StayAway: June 16 SA Youth Day United Democratic Front (UDF); African National Congress (ANC); Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) Courtesy of: South African History Archive (SAHA) as custodians
29. Youth Unite: The Future Is Ours, 1985 United Democratic Front (UDF) Courtesy of: South African History Archive (SAHA) as custodians

Record Covers

Abacothozi - Night in Pelican - 1976 - Soul Jazz Pop - Gallo
Almon Memela - Funky Africa - 1975 - Atlantic - WEA Warner
Amandla - Amandla - 1980 - Swedish Labour Movement
Amandla - ANC Cultural Group - 1982 - Melodia - Melodia
Batsumi - Batsumi - 1977 - Disc Jockey - Satbel/Joburg Records
Beam Brothers - Hambani Magoduka - 1976 - Motella - Gallo

Record Covers (continued)

The Beaters - Harari - 1975 - The Sun - Gallo
Chris McGregor & Castle Lager Big Band - Jazz/The African Sound - 1963 - Gallotone- Gallo
Dollar Brand (Abdullah Ibrahim) -Underground in Africa - 1974 - Mandla - Gallo
Dollar Brand (Abdullah Ibrahim) - Mannenberg is Where It's Happening - 1974 - The Sun - The Sun
Dollar Brand with Kippie Moeketsi - +3 - 1973 - Soultown - Gallo
Dorothy Masuka and Job's Combination - Ingalo - 1980 - Starplate - Starplate
Dudu Pukwana - And the Spears - 1968 - Quality - Trutone
Gibson Kente - How Long - 1978 - Jo'burg - Jo'burg Records
Gideon Nxumalo - Gideon Plays - 1968 - JAS Pride - Manley van Niekerk
Gideon Nxumalo - Jazz Fantasia - 1962 - Renown - Trutone
Harari - Rufaro Happiness - 1976 - The Sun - Gallo
Heshoo Beshoo Group - Armitage Road - 1971- Starline - EMI
Hugh Masekela - Give It Up/District 6 - 1981 - Moonshine - Trutone
King Kong Original Stage Cast - 78rpm 10" disc - 1959 - Gallotone New Sound - Gallo
Ladysmith Black Mambazo - Isitimela - 1974 - Motella - Gallo
Mahotella Queens - Best of the... - 1977 - Gumba Gumba - Gallo
Mahotella Queens - Meet the... - 1966 - Motella - Gallo
Malombo - Pele Pele - 1976 - Atlantic - WEA Warner
Malombo - Sangoma - 1978 - Atlantic - WEA Warner
Malombo - Music of the Spirit - 1971 - Third Ear - Third Ear
Manhattan Brothers - Concert of Zulu Folk Songs - 1963 - Tropitone - Tropitone
Manhattan Brothers with Miriam Makeba - 78rpm 10" disc - 1956 - London - Gallo
Mankunku Quartet - Yakhal'inkomo - 1968 - WRC - World Record Company
Mayibuye - The Spear of the Nation - 1978 - Varagram - Varagram
Mayibuye - Thina Maqabane - 1991 - Third World Music - EMI Sounds of Soweto
Miriam Makeba - Pata Pata - 1967 - Reprise - Reprise (USA)
The Movers - Black Reggae - 1975 - City Special - Teal

Quotes

Selby Mvusi

"The artist is the people, whether he or the people know it or not, meaning is realised and resolved [by] linking the individual with the collectivity."

Source: The Art of Life in South Africa, by Daniel Magaziner, pub:New African Histories, 2016

Mongane Wally Serote

"I once saw Mankunku Ngozi blowing his saxophone. Yakhalinkomo. His face was inflated like a balloon, it was wet with sweat, his eyes huge and red. He grew tall, shrunk, coiled into himself, uncoiled and the cry came out of his horn. This is the meaning of *Yakhal'inkomo*."

Source: A.S. van Niekerk, (1982).Dominee, are you listening to the drums? Tafelberg (page 63), 1972

Steve Bantu Biko

"With Africans, music and rhythm are not luxuries but part and parcel of their way of communication. Any suffering we experienced was made much more real by song and rhythm."

Source: No Fears Exposed; Quotes from Steve Biko. (Ed. Arnold, Millard. W) (1987). Skotaville Publishers. 1978

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The book presents an astonishing visual record of artists from different genres forging acts of creative defiance between 1960s to1990s during apartheids most tumultuous times. Their works not only recorded their hopes, aspirations, and fears; they also redefined Black identity as a symbol of resistance in the face of brutal aggression and dispossession.

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