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the art foundation

NEWSLETTER 1st quarter 1992

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Cite WANS

FOUNDER: BILL AINSLIE.

DIRECTOR: STEVEN SACK

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR: FIEKE AINSLIE.

PATRONS: I HAGGIE, C MENELL, H OPPENHEIMER, W WILSON.

MAM RAN mam

YOU ARE INVITED

Friends and members of The Art Foundation and Community Arts Centres are
invited to the following career orientated talks:

1) TEACHING CHILDREN ART - MY EXPERIENCE
by MAGGIE MAKHOANA
Date: 7/5/92

Time: 13h00 - 14h00

STORY TELLING - A CAREER TODAY
by GCINA MHLOPE
Date: 29/6/92

Time: 13h00 - 14h00

RSVP

Anna Varney Tel: 646-6197

WE EXTEND AN INVITATION TO EVERYONE TO OUR FIRST TERM

OPEN DAY

STUDENTS WILL DISPLAY WORK FROM THREE FULL-TIME COURSES

FOUNDATION COURSE GRAPHIC DESIGN FINE ART COURSE

on WED. 1st APRIL 1992

official opening: 6pm, but the work will be on show from 12pm

(3)

A REPORT:

by Steven Sack

Art Foundation Director

We began 1992 with great uncertainty. Corporate advertising budgets have been cut and art sales are drastically down everywhere. The international art boom of the 80s, carried by the enormous growth in world stock markets and SA's own boom, sustained ironically by the cultural boycott, are a thing of the past. In the 80s local money could only be used to promote local culture. This benefited many artists. An example is the case of the Rembrandt Group who were known in the seventies for their international art shows, exhibited at the old Milner Park Show grounds. In the eighties they had no choice but to promote local culture and they did so to the great benefit of South African artists, in the form of the four Triennial exhibitions; national travelling exhibitions. They brought contemporary SA art to many thousands of South African viewers. However only the last Triennial saw a concerted effort to broaden consultation and to include many more black selectors. It was made quite clear that the 1995 Triennial would be the event at which to really allow for the many new and constructive ideas that were debated during the consultative process that preceded the 1992 Triennial. Yet it is now reported that Rembrandt have stopped their funding of the Triennial. One wonders about their reasonsâ\200\231 for withdrawing, and I can only speculate. Firstly there were the controversies that surrounded the judging and selection of all the exhibitions: Secondly the tendency for a number of established professionals not to submit work any longer seriously diminished the importance of the occasion and thirdly the new options which must be opening to the Rembrandt group as the cultural boycott falls away and the new South Africa begins to take shape.

What is our role as artists in this time of transition? Has it changed since the 70s and 80s? For some people the making of pure art (fine art) during the draconian years of apartheid was really quite impossible. They could not allow themselves to celebrate. Art was the revelation and enactment of an ordeal.

A recent visit to the Gaborone National Art Museum, reminded me of what it meant to live and practice as an artist under apartheid. The work from the permanent collection of the Gaborone Museum spans three decades, the 1970s to the 1990s. The work of the 70s is produced almost entirely by South African artists. And what one notes is that the work by so many artists, both black and white, in the 70s was comprised largely of images of negation, pain and conflict. The work of Shilakoe, â\200\230The blindâ\200\231, dating from 1969, and that of Nils Burwitz, his 'Its about time' series, as well as many other work by a number of artists, attest to the stress and pressure of the 70s. Even Larry Scully's painting of a mystical white circle has a red line slashing across the canvas. The art of the 90s in this collection is markedly different in feeling and in the new freedom that artists have found. The work produced by contemporary Bushmen artists give substance to a new vitality and new imagery. It's as if we've entered a new and different trap. The desire to celebrate, the sense that a new society is possible and the chance to explore the dreams. BUT with no money, limited resources and the realization that the function of the artists to critically observe and comment will continue despite any euphoria. The art produced through the Thupelo era has been seriously underappreciated. The gallery is full of paintings that should be hanging in corporate collections. Why is this not happening at a larger scale? Is it because of the recession or do

(3)

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St corporations and businesses only buy from up market framing shops? Perhaps we must look to Mozambique for inspiration. Look at what

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langatana has done for Mozambiquan art. He is a member of the committee and is an arts ambassador for Mozambique. He is a teacher of art and conducts drawing workshops in which he and the children

use the sand, using different coloured sands. Every business (I am

told) in Maputo buys art by local artists

We have a potential crisis on our hands and many of our Art Centres are in danger of closing down. I hear talk of a "developmental approach" to

the funding of art and culture: a strategy in which we are encouraged to

identify low-cost developmental projects from within our own communities

and use resources from within to sustain these projects. The people

started a low-cost community based project and it lasted a matter of

months or in some cases months. Did this popular movement require central!

to maintain its impetus?

I warned that by taking money from the state or foreign agencies, we will fall into the trap of indebtedness that follows massive injections of capital and foreign aid. A developmental model argues that we should have an art and culture appropriate to our resources.

The sports stadiums of South Africa will fill up, with future

events, thus providing the sports associations with money

with which to build new opportunities in the black sector. Much of the

ticket-money paid to attend such events will come from the black

community. Where will we find such money for art and culture? How will

we continue to run the many art centres that were established in the 80s.

Can it not be with state money?

But we must make it clear that although the concepts of self-reliance and neediness are most relevant, the level of poverty in many

communities makes some form of subsidization essential.

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Will

Every recreation centre must have a vibrant art programme. We have to look at municipal recreational centres, and redefine and broaden their scope of operation. We need to call upon government to provide tax

incentives so that companies and private individuals will be encouraged

& assist in the growth of art education and the arts industry as a

whole. We need as artists and art educators to discuss and investigate a

development strategy for the arts. We need to consolidate the gains made

in the 80s in the alternative arts movement and build co-operation

between formal and non-formal arts facilities. Perhaps we need an artist

or two in our new parliament.

REPORT The Fine Art Majors

This year, in the Fine Art Major Studio (ie. the second years & third years), you might be surprised to see slots on the time-table called "FIG" and "ABS", rather than the usual "PAINTING" or "DRAWING". This is because, as an experiment, Charles, Steven and I decided to try and categorize the activities of learning art differently this year for the senior students.

And so, Charles took charge of a section entitled "Towards Abstraction"

the boundaries of drawing & painting. of 2-D and 3-D. Learning through the year. the achievement & meaning of abstract form - via a number of approaches, sometimes approximating those explorations in 20th century art history. Simultaneously, the students are exposed to the work of the abstract painters and sculptors of our age, and discover the principles that underpin all artmaking. The figuration course,

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"Understanding Figuration". deals of course with the figurative image ~- we look at its evolution through time, the changing identity of the human being as he ("he") depicts himself, the link between the depiction of the human image in art history, the history of religion. : politics & of social systems. The students in their own work explore meaning of the figure: as a vehicle for expression, as narrative. exploration of form of anatomy, of spatial & psychological relationship Here too we will be crossing the boundaries between the pictorial & 3rd dimension, between drawing & painting.

the students are in addition this year being equipped with the class

sculptural & print making techniques.

Their plan right now is to descend upon the Grahamstown Festival & install a fringe exhibition. Furthermore we (the senior group) have been asked by the Johannesburg Art Gallery Education department to create 4 projects in Joubert Park designed to entice the passers through & inhabitants thereof to be curious about art. It's becoming a busy & adventurous year...

Ruth Sack
F.As Coordinator

A REPORT CONCERNING CHILDREN

by Anna Varney

Children's programme Coordinator

I met with Maggie Makhoana and Thandi Dayel in February; Thandi runs 4 projects for children at The Mofolo Art Centre and Maggie (an ex-Art Foundation student) has a long history of working with children in several Centres in Soweto.

They made two proposals:

i) A CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP On-April 25th. to take place at The, Art Foundation, involving children (ages 5-16) from our centre. Mofolo Art Centre, Dube and other areas in Soweto. The theme of the workshop will be landscape. It was discussed that children will work from observation; detailed drawings. rubbing of leaves, sections of tree trunk, grass patches, etc, to be collaged onto a mural.

We will see what materials we already have and spend as little as possible. Materials required are: wall paper glue, paper, paint, crayons & other collage. Hats should be worn as the workshop will take place outside. I suggested that Story-Telling could be included, the theme for this workshop could be a "Creation of The World" story - emphasizing landscape. The last Children's workshops I participated in at the Mofolo Art Centre and at The Art Foundation with The Katlehong Art Centre included Story-Telling. I believe we may have started a tradition. This also led to some discussion on the idea of ensuring that Story-Telling becomes an extension of Community Centres.

We thought that the Workshop murals may become part of the ACAC Festival later this year. Networking like this should be encouraged and the neglected area of Child Art in most centres should now be addressed - so that further possibilities of such workshops be possible.

2) We talked about a "MASK DAY" - Which could include a parade (of masks made before the event) by children. This day would also be a birthday of Khula Udweba. It could possibly be a collective Open Day for children of Community Arts Centres. It is hoped that this Day will be based in Soweto on the 17th October.

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Lionel Abrahams Writers workshop contribution:

GIRL (5) HAS JAW BROKEN IN RAPE

The Citizen 8/2/92

CONFESSIO

Nursery newness cobwebs me
My teeth unbundle her
From mother's maw

I travel her with my tongue
Mount her spin

Stuff her faithless mouth
Freeze her with yellow ice

She thrusts her trust inside my longing
Suckles my dripping fingers
With quick-lipped Knuckles

Cringes to dark against my touch
I mount her spin

Force my thrust past her trust

Force my thrust past her trust
Our Father

Force my thrust past her trust
Who art in Heaven

Force my thrust past her trust
Hallowed be thy name

Force my thrust past her trust
Thy Kingdom come

I shut her throat against Thy will

Force my thrust past her trust
Force my thrust past her trust

Force my thrust past her

Ice ice
Bursting bursting

freezing
freezing

I am freezing
I am freezing
I am freezing

I open the coffin
Lick silk from my

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STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS :

-

We have received an encouraging response from students as far as contributions for this newsletter are concerned. In fact more material has been received than can be used. I hope that the organizing, selecting, layout, etc of student work will be taken on by our SRC or a student body Newsletter Committee in future; in order to make entries

even more representative.

Anna Varney
Ed.

The Mended day

Sunrise meets the shattered sky,
Like coloured glass the clouds blow by
Across the scattered sunbeams a silent cry,

The earth releases a sign.

The different hues mix and blend,
No borderlines to transcend
on each other they depend,

As they unitedly mend.

A rainbow in full array,

Has a compliment to pay.

As this is the dawning of a new day,
Apartheid gives way.

by Angela Duffield
Foundation Student

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HOMELESS

Who is that man homeless

He is without shelter

Naked like tree without leaves

Wandering like a spirit out of the dead

Wandering up and down like whirlwind

Lost from his beloved one

Like a star between the dark clouds

A cry for the uncovered body

by Tsheko Kabasia

Graphic design students design a logo for Alex Aids Action.

Within the corrupt and often wrought chambers of human society there perhaps none more treacherous an element than that is far too often overlooked. Aids. A fear so welled up within us that at times we are too afraid to believe, let alone recognize its mere presence. Yet it is. there - gripping every vein of every life it callously touches tearing them apart without notion of race, sex or age.

But it can be stopped - not cured but surely prevented. And that is the aim of the Alexandra Aids Action, an organization formed from the need to isolate the disease and take care for its victims.

was approached by the clinic, via the community conscious organization

the Johannesburg Art Foundation, to represent their plight, to the masses who are in dire need of assistance. This was to be a symbol or logo highlighting the general theme of the center and its influence within the dark world of this disease. There was no fixed criteria for

the image I needed to create, only a broad outline steering me away from any cliched version which quite frankly would have had no appeal whatsoever. Noticeably, this was not an easy task, but one which urgently needed to be tackled.

er considering dozens of figure related sketches, narrowed down onto

plified version of an all encompassing image backed by the support

: ae LMeaadsâ\200\231 It was perfect - idealizing what was essential to all classes and gender.

of all, it showed to me, to us, what the admirable Alexandra
ion needed to say. " Because I care, because you care, because we

Guy Lerner
GRAPHIC DESIGN

The Party. (Howz your Dad)

was decided among the graphic design students that with permission
-om our teachers we would hold a party on Friday 14th Feb. â\200\23092. The
party venue was around the pool area of The Art Foundation. After much
discussion Fine Art & foundation students decided to join us. The
â\200\234graphic design party animais" led the way, begins with volleyball &
drinking, a braai & soon the aroma of burnt boerewors filled the air!~ As
the day got hotter beer flowed & swimming & volleyball became more
adi FFU le .. Philip & Dennis arrived eventually & immediately began
scavenging around for beer & boerewors - picking every morgel they could

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£ ind. Later the party really hotted up. Things got raucous only a few hardened Graphic design students remained. Dennis had begun his "Funny Dive" antics as they watched in disbelief.

To conclude; most students got to know each other better & all in all the atmosphere had been great. I'm sure everyone enjoyed themselves. (Even the Fine art students.) ;

o.<

P.S. I'm sure all agree that a party should be held every month.
Anon

KICK IN THE EYE

Strange faces; weird looks; look at him, look at her, the thoughts rushed through my head. My preconceived ideas about the Art Foundation were shattered...

It all started on a sunny January morning, we were seated on the grass and introduced to our teachers, I felt like I was at a SAP identity parade. After the formalities I shuffled into the Foundation Course. Now there's a strange bunch of people! The kind of people from posters, prudes, pretty boys to pseudo punks... The ladies are super sweet £0 superbitch, sensual or silent types. Very interesting I don't envy the job of those who teach us. No wonder the holidays are so long.

£\200\234We will teach you how to draw", and so they did, the weeks of suffering they endured, in vain I thought, and then my eyes were opened, and I did not feel so bad about the extra late night shift my ageing father had taken on to pay my fees. On one of the few hours I see him each month he commented that he was pleased to see I was doing such advanced work. He loved my drawings of the very many stools, he adored my drawing of a piece of paper, and he could not get enough of my cardboard boxes, but then again Monet had his haystacks...

Our dear teachers must by now have realized that everyone wants a longer break as each day they find themselves teaching to vacant easels periodically. Charles however never forgets to let us know that artists are always punctual. I had the experience of being taught by Liz, and found out that on a bad day when her voice is raised the neighbors invite friends around to take a correspondence course. Today I discovered why Dummi stays in the print room, after working down there all day, my mind filled to capacity with toxic fumes I had the most intrepid adventure trying to make it up the "stairs of death". Needing to replenish my energy I went to the canteen to choose from the £\200\234enormous£\200\235 variety of rolls and £\200\234huge" selection of chips. Do the suppliers think we all need to go on a diet when it comes to drinks?

The graphic students seem like an interesting bunch but it would be nice if they were friendlier, just slightly sociable. I've been told the girls upstairs do actually smile, try it downstairs sometime. The Fine art students top the bill in friendliness though, I've heard great artists keep to themselves, but this is ridiculous. "Smile and the world smiles with you, do art and you stand alone." Hope that is not the case chaps.

Through all this I have learnt that no matter how awful you may think something is, as long as you choose words like, £\200\234wonderful marks": "stunning lines"; "amazing form" to describe it, it's considered fe

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be really good. Strange but true. I had the honor of being taught sculpture by our Director, Steven and was shown how to use space, although "my idea of space" always seemed outside, much to his disapproval. -

On the ANNIVERSARY to the Art Foundation, I must say it's nice to see
going, happy voting...
Tim Anderson
FOUNDATION STUDENT

â\200\234aR

ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC ACAC

was involved in the initial stages of the formation of

I hope he will play an active role in ACAC as consultant and

writer/recorder. To date about 30 centres nationally have shown interest

in participation- in- ACAC. A workshop will take place on the 29th March

where ACAC will be formalized and launched. We are also planning: a

Festival in which all Centres will participate, and a joint Newsletter is nearing completion.

Anna Varney
ACAC Communications/Co-ordination
Committee

RES
by DAVID KOLOANE

The major problem confronting independent art centres is and has always been funding. The obvious reason being the fact that there is no state subsidy for this and other similar types of... projects: It is not surprising as such to realize that a host of other multi-faceted problems common to these projects revolve around the funding issue. These could take the form of inadequate staff salaries, art material and other necessary equipment, transport, nepotism staff, intimidation and so forth. The idea of initiating an Association of Centres has always been in the air and several meetings in this regard were convened at the university of the Witwatersrand a few years back. It must be borne in mind that there is no available formula which can be employed to assure the success of such an initiative. The only vehicle which can be relied upon is past experience. It is for this reason that I have offered the following thoughts for reflection.

A problem which immediately comes to mind regarding the Association of Community Arts Centres is the incestuous relationship which will exist between Art Centre personnel and Association membership. A common malady which may arise out of this relation is that the Association might end up reflecting the view point of one or two power wielding personalities who tend to dominate proceedings and are conversant with abstract concepts. In other words members who because of a poor education background will feel intimidated and fade into the background. On the contrary ACAC should by all means create a free participatory environment through a simply verbalized communication. By this I mean that articulate ACAC members should be discouraged from intellectual nit-picking. It is important to ensure that members on whatever committees should not be mere office bearers but should be practical and functional agents who stimulate fresh ideas into the programme. ACAC should become a nerve

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centre for the respective centres and other similar projects. A multidisciplinary approach should be encouraged in order to vitalize whatever available resources as well as to stimulate a varied approach to reactive experience. As for example a story-telling workshop conducted by someone such as Gcina Mhlophe can be employed to improve the oral skills of students and simultaneously revitalize story-telling in a contemporary sense. The story-telling concept can be successfully utilized in theater, visual arts and dance. ACAC has to be neutral in its operation without being manipulated by members of one centre or project over others. This means that the Association must attend to each project request without minimizing any projects significance. It would be ideal in the long run for ACAC to operate from a neutral venue with an autonomous staff to avoid engaging staff with dual responsibilities.

NOTES ON MY EXPERIENCES: PACHIPAMWE WORKSHOP 1991/ZIMBABWE

(Extracts from a report made to the Thupelo Art Project.) by Anna Varney

Participants: Paul Wade - Zimbabwe (painter), Paul Goodwin - Italy (painter, sculpture, 3D work), Bill Noland - USA (sculptor), Lacadia Ndandarika - Zimbabwe (sculptor), Rashid Jogee - Zimbabwe (painter sculptor), Richard Jack - Zimbabwe (sculptor, paintings), Steve Pratt - Zimbabwe (painter). Anna Varney - South Africa (painter, 3D work), Sirkka Liisa Lonka - Finland (painter, paper making). Christiane Stolhofer - Zimbabwe (sculptor). Caterina Niklaus - England (installations, painting), Victor Sousa - Mozambique (painter), Adam Mwansa - Zambia (painter), Afonso Masongi - Angola (sculptor), Fabian Madamombe - Zimbabwe (sculptor, painting), Joseph Muzondo - Zimbabwe (sculptor). Voti Thebe - Zimbabwe (sculptor, paintings, print making, installations, handmade paper, etc). Louis Meque - Zimbabwe (painter), Martin van der Spuy - Zimbabwe (painter), Francisco Conde - Mozambique (painter), Howard Minne - Zimbabwe (ceramics). Eddie Masaya - Zimbabwe (sculptor).

This was my first taste of an International Art Workshop and I quickly came to understand why it is a desirable thing. One gets to know one's country, especially a country as cut off from the world as ours. and it becomes less and less easy to be surprised by the work of our artists. If doors are opened, exposing one to work by artists from elsewhere, light streams in. I particularly valued the experience of working with and meeting the artists from other countries in Africa. I became aware that there are jewels out there which we have no chance to know of and can only benefit from. One dreams. Dreams of an Africa without borders, pooling resources, becoming an independent unit able to shake off imposters - Europe and America. Africa is on its knees. Neocolonialism scars Zimbabwe badly.

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THE SACRIFICE

Out of the barrenness

a poet speaks.

Combative,

accusing the prison warden
of cauterizing his history,
bartering it to waylayers
for their definition

of gold.

Cis) -

The sculptors worked in steel, wood, mixed media and stone. Zimbabwe is a country of stone whose rock formations appear like sculpture created by the land itself. Rocks balance on rock, like toys placed by a huge hand. Painters all used pigment and base called DM6, ..supplied by the workshop

and rationed. I shall talk about the work of some of the participants: Joseph Muzondos' work made an impact on me

often just because of its.

sheer beauty. He usually put two pieces of stone together. One sculpture was of a woman embracing a half raw, half polished rock formation which rose up from her chest. And my favorite piece which he made light of, saying 'I was just having fun': an oiled black stone into which a glittering slab of white marble with light engravings was slipped. . Joseph, often wearing camouflage and military-like gear, was big and powerful in build, his work; light and lyrical: : Howard Minnes' ceramics were ambitious. . Rough, human scale vases leaned toward each other as though in communication around a glowing coal fire creating an atmosphere demanding reverence as did the paintings of Paul Goodwin, also working in this studio. Paul unfortunately had a seriously infected foot which cut his stay in half... Although the work in this studio was not about putting in a lot of time' it was about bursts of energy, working on the edge and taking chances, - combined with being ambitious and a non-acceptance of mediocrity. |

Rashid Jogee was described as an action painter by one of the artists and others swore they'd never attend a workshop without him. In between splashes and attacks in paint which obliterated and, built up until reaching the point of having arrived, he played drums, the flute, sang

or yelled at the music playing in the studios. . Take him whichever way one does and one has to - because he is no ordinary' person when it

comes to behavior patterns - he is a good painter, consistently. Voti Thebe is a very special person. He worked in every medium including jamming with Rashids singing. His work often had a playful element which was never frivolous or detracting from the special quality of everything he did. One work of his I particularly loved was a rock into which two openings were carved. Wires were pulled across these openings creating a stringed musical instrument appearance. An egg shaped stone was placed behind the 'strings' of one opening. Vote has a way that causes one to examine words said in haste or thoughtlessly so that one gains a focus and sharpness normally absent: in casual conversation.

Sirkka Liisa Lonka created some lovely whispering paintings which made me think of water and movement in water. But she stopped these and industriously made paper from early until late every day. She certainly made me realize that there is more to paper making than I ever expected. For example she used rock as moulds, creating a likeness in colour and texture. When the piece was dry it was removed from the rock and was three dimensional, organic and tough in appearance.

Bill Noland worked far away from everyone in order to have access to welding equipment, but the walks to his working space were worthwhile as one saw the progress of one work he completed which was an incredibly tall, narrow for its height, structure of sheets of steel and pipes which twisted and winded subtly, adding up to a sound no-nonsense composition. It was interesting to talk to him, being reminded of the highly competitive and pressurized art world in the States. He was quirky with a good eye and a straight forward way of talking about art.

When I first arrived I had the privilege of meeting Antonio de Costa

(from Angola). I had long admired pictures I'd seen of his work, and , though disappointed that he was not to be a workshop participant, found great pleasure in our short meeting. I was standing in the middle of my empty studio wondering where on earth to start when he walked in saying "my god - look at that window!" I looked up to see light through

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textured gauze divided into sections by rough planks - by the time Antonio left I was buzzing around energetically collecting material. I used earth colour in my work into which I mixed dark or light ash,

achieving light textural surfaces. I made a number of small collages which I saw as little extras to off load onto though some of the artists felt they were my better work. I made several very large paintings - the

biggest being about 4m x 3m. I was inspired by a childhood memory which had become so integrated with me that when I acted it out as a theme in these works it felt as if I were running through a well practiced ritual: In Lesotho the floors of huts are freshly layered with a mixture of mud

and dung from time to time. This is applied in sweeping arced movements creating a patterned surface - this became the central inspiration to all my bigger paintings as I explored this theme in various ways. I was

working in a way I had never worked before.
THE COMING TOGETHER (pachipamwe 1991)

A black butterfly

circles my studio

and I believe
we are having a relationship.
A second enters

and I see

they are quite unaware of me.

This power

I sometimes find

between myself and another
some name it chemistry
yes, that may be so

but it may also be fate
or a secret force

that draws us that way.

