

Arnold, Ben
Untitled 1988
terra cotta 128x181 cm
Private collection

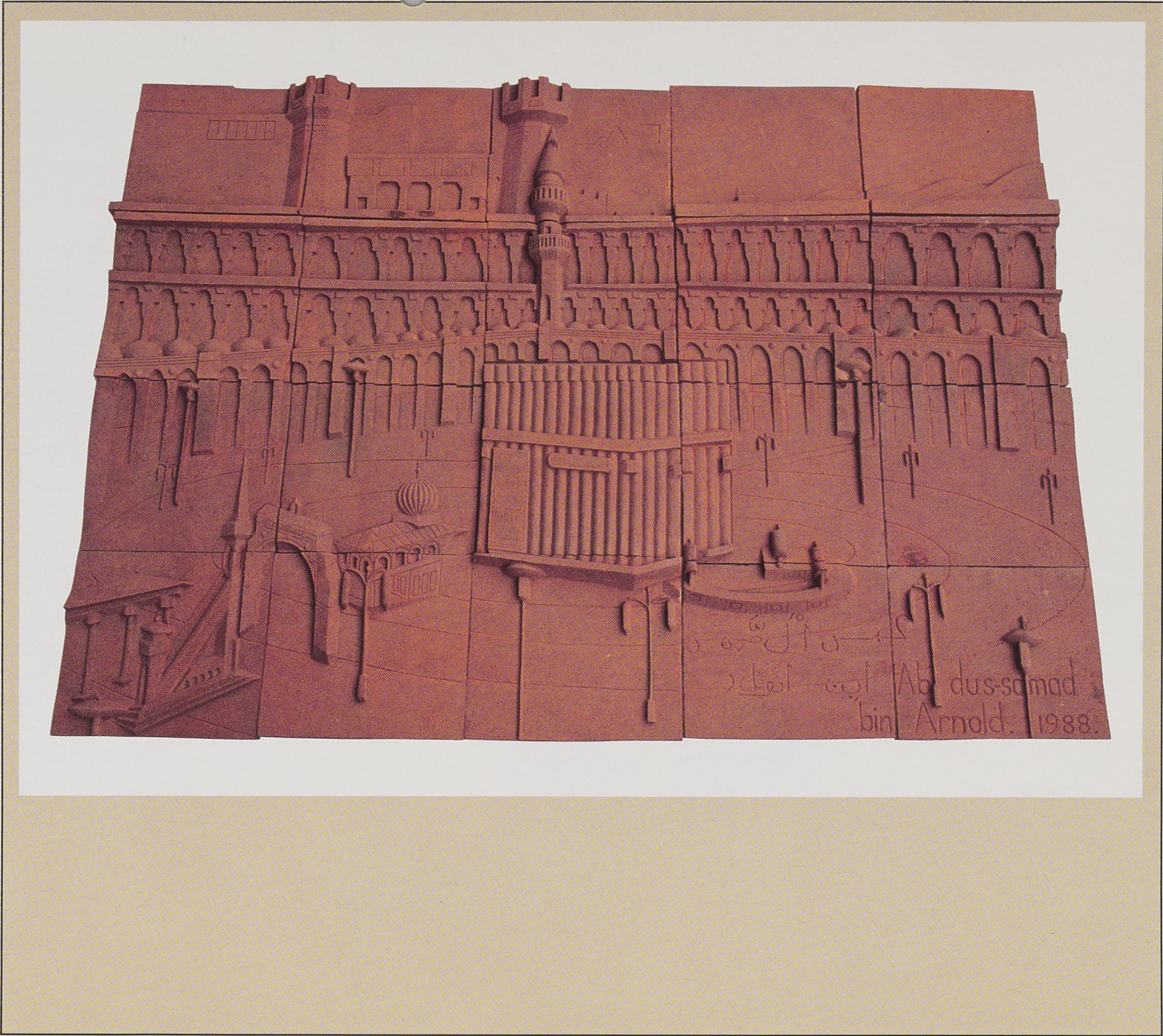
Abdus-Samad Ben Arnold was born in Albertsville, a suburb next to Sophiatown, on 19 July 1942. His parents, Frederik and Dora (née Baardman) came from Middelburg in the Cape.

Arnold’s father was a skilled stone-mason. He was the first to recognise his son’s talent and he contacted Cecil Skotnes at Polly Street Art Centre. Here Arnold studied art under the guidance of Skotnes from 1958 to 1965. His formal schooling took place at Albertsville, Newclare and Coronationville.

Arnold and his brother William frequently had to assist their father in his work. Arnold admired his father as an artist in his own right. One is tempted to link the faceted surfaces of Arnold’s terra cotta sculptures with his father’s masonry. Arnold’s experience in masonry proved invaluable. In 1967 he was commissioned to install a terra cotta relief in the courtyard of the CNA building in Johannesburg.

At Polly Street Art Centre, students had the opportunity to model in brick clay. Of the artists trained at Polly Street, Arnold in particular adapted the medium to his needs.

One can almost follow the different formal options of this malleable medium in his hands. Figurative elements are spread in relief over an even background so that the panels retain a plaque-like appearance. Or the figures are separated and freed from their confining backgrounds to create a queue e.g. *Ready for departure*. Or Arnold gathers the clay into a lump and cuts loose dynamics of



Mothlalefi Mahlabe

Mothudi’s *Dove of Peace* was chosen as an image for the Christmas card of the South African Institute of Race Relations in 1978. In 1984 he made a large sculpture entitled *Peace* for the South African Council of Churches. Four years later this piece was severely damaged in the bomb blast at Khotso House where the SACC was based. Operation Hunger has selected one of his recent paintings of a mother and child to feature on their 1992 greetings cards.

Currently Mothudi is chaplain of St Mark’s College at Jane Furse in Lebowa.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Justice Mkame 1963	4	5	6	7	8 Thabo Mothudi 1936 Mario Sickle 1951
9	10 Noria Mabasa 1938 Ruben Xulu 1942, d. 15 Dec. 1985, Greytown	11	12	13 Andrew Motjuoadi 1935, d. Nov. 1968, Mamelodi	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 Learmont Mahlango 1939	21 Dumile Feni 1939, d. 17 Dec. 1991, New York	22
23	24 Ranko Pudi 1949	25	26	27 Tommy Motswai 1963	28	29
30 Mandla Mlotshwa 1960	31 Edmund Mseleku 1964					

Mothudi, Thabo
Untitled 1992
oil on canvas board 45,7x60,9 cm
Private collection

Thabo Gregory Mothudi draws inspiration for his art from his environment. “I enjoy watching life. Looking through a window at children playing can inspire me to paint.” He expresses himself not only in pastels, acrylics, oils and water-colours but also in wood, bronze and other metals.

Mothudi was born on 8 May 1936 in Western Township, Johannesburg. From early childhood he showed an interest in drawing and he was encouraged by his artistic mother and his clergyman father.

Due to his father’s work the family travelled extensively. Mothudi attended several primary schools before he eventually enrolled at St Peter’s Secondary School in Rosettenville. He reluctantly left the school when Bantu education was introduced.

Since 1962, Mothudi has illustrated several religious books and he subsequently wrote a religious column for the Sowetan. Readers of the newspaper Elethu may still recall some of his cartoons. He was also involved in the layout of Bona and he worked for several silk-screen firms in Johannesburg.

Mothudi is basically self-taught. In the sixties he was awarded a scholarship to the Africa Writing Centre in Kitwe where he enjoyed formal training under the guidance of Marjory Murray. Later, in 1968, Bill Ainslie tutored him.

Mothudi has held many solo exhibitions in Johannesburg and he has taken part in several group shows in South Africa and abroad.



Mothhalefi Mahlabe

movement. Steadily Arnold dissolves all preconceived figurative references and from the clay emerges another life force. He transforms a lump of clay into a source of energy in the same way the German sculptor Ernst Barlach (1870-1938) had done in wood.

In one of his recent sculptures Arnold returns to the two-dimensional aspect of the relief panel. Contrary to the hustle and bustle of the crowd in the relief which he carried out for the CNA building in Johannesburg, he now emphasises the solitude of a town square. Classical architectural features, lamp-posts, and Arabic calligraphy testify to human presence. Arcaded enclosures allude to niches for daily prayers.

The panel consists of separate rectangular tiles. In assembling these tiles, the viewer symbolically enacts the holy pilgrimage. Assembled they conjure up the Ka’aba, Allah’s house, and the square where pilgrims from all parts of the world assemble to profess Allah’s existence and to observe the five pillars of their faith.

Arnold converted to the Islamic faith in 1981.

Over the years Arnold and the Liebermann Pottery factory, where his clay images are fired, have maintained a close relationship.

Arnold has held several solo exhibitions and took part in many group exhibitions in South Africa. His art is represented in the National Museum and Art Gallery of Botswana, Gaborone and in the Johannesburg Art Gallery.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Martha Modiba 1961	3 Leonard Xaba 1964
4 Ernest Kholoza 1967	5 Johnny Ribeiro 1950	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Napo Mokoena 1958	15	16 Johannes Maswanganyi 1949	17
18	19 Ben Arnold 1942 James Mphahlele 1954 Phineas Modiba 1964	20	21	22 Peter Sibeko 1940	23	24
25	26	27 Maria Nobela 1964	28	29	30	31

Maseko, Mizraim
Mother and child 1989
natural stains on calf hide 44,5x34,4 cm
Private collection

Mizraim Maseko (also documented as Mizream, Mizriam, Mizram) was discovered by the painter John Mohl (see September) in a small curio shop. Maseko was painting designs on scarves. Mohl encouraged him to concentrate on formal painting and he taught him the rudiments of painting techniques.

Maseko was born on 10 June 1927. In his childhood he was fond of drawing and after his schooling he began to work as a house painter. He was intrigued by the art he saw in the houses he was decorating and it inspired him to paint. With the aid of books on painting he started to experiment with watercolours and oils.

Maseko is self-taught. Painting manuals were the major source of his art education. A book by H J Groenewald on leather-craft inspired him to try his hand at painting portraits on leather. Teddy Winder, art critic of the Rand Daily Mail, commented on Maseko's "masterly" handling of the beaten-leather technique.

For most of his models, Maseko favours a frontal pose. Hereby he emphasises the central axis which calls for a symmetrical arrangement of the parts. The archaic air of his portraits is further emphasised by the smiles of his sitters and the meticulous detail with which they are depicted.

He prefers to work on modeling hide which is imported from England.

Maseko lives in Pietersburg. He is a deacon in the Zion Christian Church and travels extensively in the rural areas. There



Natasha Pincus

he portrays people wearing traditional costumes. Maseko exhibits regularly with Artists Under The Sun at Zoo Lake in Johannesburg.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Ezrom Legae 1937/8	2 Peter Clarke 1929	3	4 Dineo Skosana 1944	5 David Koloane 1938
6 Duke Ketye 1943	7	8	9 Anthony More 1954	10 Mizraim Maseko 1927	11	12
13 Mandla Nkosi 1962, d. 1987, Johannesburg	14 Sellolucas Malemane 1949	15	16 Keith Moletsane 1947 Solly Malope 1953	17 Hargreaves Ntukwana 1938	18 Selby Mvusi 1929, d. 1967, Nairobi	19 David Phoshoko 1945 Richard Magoma 1953
20 Simon Masilo 1936 Dumisani Mabaso 1955 Matsemela Manaka 1956	21 Lionel Davies 1936 Leonard Matsoso 1949 Alfred Thoba 1951	22	23 Sophie Peters 1968	24	25 Isaac Nkoana 1948 Bongiwe Dhlomo 1956	26 Kay Hassan 1956
27 Omar Badsha 1945	28	29 Azaria Mbatha 1941	30 Emil Maurice 1955			

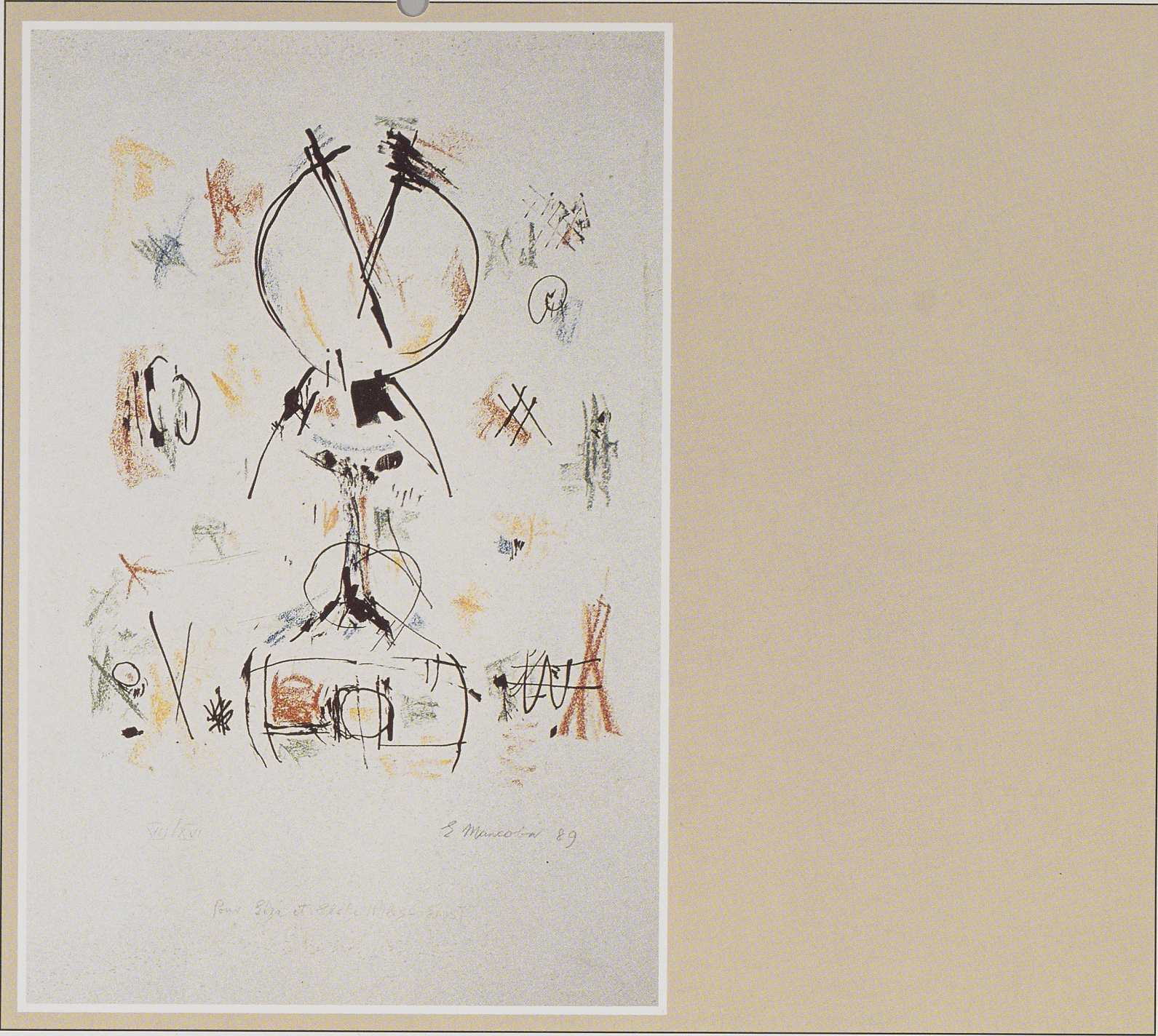
Mancoba, Ernest
Untitled 1989
litograph 64,5x46,7 cm
Private collection

Ernest Methuen Mancoba was born in Boksburg on 29 August 1904. His father, the Revd Irvine Mancoba, who worked on the Comet mine, was a revered evangelist on the East Rand. His mother, Florence (née Mangqangwana), saw to it that he received a sound education through Anglican Church schools on the East Rand and later at the Diocesan Training College at Grace Dieu near Pietersburg. He enrolled at the Native College of South Africa (now the University of Fort Hare) with the prospect of a career in journalism. In 1937 he obtained a BA degree.

Before Mancoba left South Africa in 1938 to further his art studies in Paris, he enjoyed acclaim as a sculptor. His *African Madonna* (1929) was regarded as “a most notable contribution” to church art; carvings by him were selected in 1934 and 1935 for exhibitions of The South African Academy; and in 1935 he was awarded first prize for the carving *Future Africa* in the Esther May Bedford Bantu Art Exhibition at Fort Hare. He stopped sculpting in 1950.

Mancoba’s mother, an accomplished potter, imprinted on him a lasting reverence for their Fingo history, the African philosophy of the brotherhood of man, and poetry. When, as a child, he was surprised by the “crude” language that poets sometimes used, she explained to him the significance of poetry that expressed the “unsayable”.

During the mid-thirties, Mancoba befriended the artists Irma Stern, Lippy Lipshitz, Elza Dziomba, Gerard Sekoto,



Mothalefi Mahlabe

Johannesburg proved fruitful because he met John Mohl (see September) who encouraged him to concentrate on scenes from his own milieu and persuaded him to devote himself to art. He also went to Cape Town where he briefly attended art classes at the studio of Maurice van Essche. (There are contradictory reports as to whether it was in District Six or Eastwood, Pretoria that he met Gerard Sekoto who encouraged him to try his hand at oil painting.)

The Bantu Welfare Trust commissioned Pemba in 1944 to paint Xhosa tribal life and in 1947 he exhibited with Barbara Tyrrell, Gerard Bhengu, Hezekiel and Jabulani Ntuli (see October) at a beadwork and painting exhibition in Durban organised by Dr Killie Campbell. In 1952 his work and that of Samuel Makoanyane, John Makhafola and Paul Ramagaga was selected for the Oranje Exhibition of Pan African Arts and Crafts in Bloemfontein.

To support his family he had to teach, work in a magistrate’s court as an interpreter, collect rent and work as a shopkeeper.

From the outset Pemba’s pictorial interpretations had been marked by his own experiences. His murals in the family home were based on the animals he modelled from clay and his first drawings were representations of the photographs of his father’s employers. Later he recorded tribal life and also painted portraits of fellow artists Gladys Mgudlandlu and John Mohl as well as some poets. The impact of immediacy marks Pemba’s particular form of expression.

April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 George Pemba 1912 Sydney Holo 1952	3
4	5 Ezekiel Madiba 1948	6 Mpolokeng Ramphomane 1955	7	8	9	10 Thomas Kgobe 1954
11 Zamokwakhe Gumede 1955	12 Garth Erasmus 1956	13 Sydney Kumalo 1935, d. 11 Dec. 1988, Johannesburg Ben Macala 1937/8	14	15	16 Floyd Langa 1956	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	