



'n Argitek se voorstelling van die hoofingang tot Pretoria se nuwe kultuurmuseum
Foto: Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum

Pretoria het 'n ryk kultuurhistoriese erfenis. Tog kry hierdie stad nou eers 'n kultuurmuseum wat reg sal laat geskied aan dié erfenis. Die ou muntgebou in Visagiestraat ondergaan tans 'n gedaante-verwisseling en sal binnekort, in sy nuwe rol as kultuurmuseum, sy deure vir besoekers oopmaak. Die gebou sal ook deel vorm van 'n ambisieuse kultuurprojek vir Pretoria.

Die plasing van die nuwe museum val saam met die opgradering van 'n gedeelte van Pretoria wat vir jare geen ontwikkeling getoon het nie. 'n Voorstel dat die bestaande stadsaal gedeeltelik of ten volle as 'n museum vir wetenskap en tegnologie ingerig gaan word, het die moontlikheid laat ontstaan dat 'n museum "mall", soortgelyk aan die Smithsonian Instituut in Washington, in dié deel van die stad gevestig kan word.

Aangesien die nuwe kultuurmuseum, die voorgestelde Museum vir Wetenskap en Tegnologie en die Transvaalmuseum langs mekaar geleë is behoort dit grootliks by te dra om dié deel van die stad meer lewe te gee. Indien planne realiseer om Minnaarstraat in 'n voetgangerstraat te omskep, kan dit ook 'n groot rol speel om die toeristebedryf in Pretoria 'n hupstoot te gee. Dié straat verbind die genoemde drie projekte asook historiese Burgerspark en Melrosehuis met mekaar.

Die terrein waarop die nuwe kultuurmuseum

Jakarandastad - kultuurstad

Mauritz Naudé
Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum

Die voorbereiding van 'n nuwe kultuurmuseum vir Pretoria is tans in volle gang. In plaas van 'n nuwe gebou te betrek word die ou Muntgebou tussen Visagie-, Minnaar- en Shubartstraat vir die doel omskep

Die Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum, wat jare lank in 'n gebou langs die Nasionale Dieretuin in Boomstraat gehuisves was, is reeds geruime tyd

onvoldoende. Daarby is die versamelings wat in dié ou gebou uitgestal en geberg is die afgelope paar jaar periodiek deur water oorstroom en gedeeltelik beskadig. Die aktiwiteite van die Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum (berg-ruimtes, werkinkels, kantore, uitstallings) was ook tot onlangs in sewe verskillende geboue regoor die stad versprei. Dit maak bedryf en logistiek duur en onprakties.

Die nuwe museum sal bestaan uit ongeveer 6 000 m³ uitstalarea, 'n teater, amfiteater, ontdekkings- en aktiwiteitskamers, bergruimtes en restaurasiesentrums. Die twee wonings op die terrein word as 'n restaurant en gemeenskap-sentrum omskep. Parkering word gedeeltelik op die terrein voorsien en die hoofingang word vanuit die middel van die terrein betree.

ingerig word is ook van besondere historiese waarde. 'n Tronk is tussen 1874 en 1876 hier opgerig. Dié gebou is in 1880 versterk om as fort te dien. Tydens die Boereoorlog is die fort beleër en lede van die Rand Reformers is ná die onsuksesvolle Jameson-inval hierin opgesluit. Die Royal Mint is in 1921 op die terrein gebou en die bestaande gebou is tussen 1968 en 1972 hier opgerig.



They claimed the land in ART

Elza Mles
Fuba Academy

For many centuries artists throughout the world have depicted the environment in many different ways. By looking at the environment through the eyes of artists much has been learned about it. In South Africa the work of landscape artists such as Thomas Baines, Pierneef and Tinus de Jongh are well known. Little is, however, known about the work of contemporary African landscape artists. Although these artists were prohibited to own land, they claimed its beauty and diversity in their art.

The Land Act of 1913 reserved less than 10% of the land for black ownership. African farmers were either forced to the cities or the reserves. Others remained as farmhands on white farmers' land. In the cities their labour was needed on the mines while in the overcrowded reserves their arrival became a burden on the resources. Consequently most of them were destined to live in misery.

Against this historical background contemporary African painters claimed the land with either pencil, pen or brush on paper and canvas for each and every eye to behold. At least four generations of artists scrutinised the land and depicted its history from pre-industrialisation up to the impact that industry and urbanisation had on it.

In 1966 the Museum for Ethnology at Kiel University in Germany presented an exhibition entitled *A Zulu draws the Zulu way of Life*. The exhibition was devoted to the crystalline depiction of the life in Zululand near Ntumeni. Jabulani Ntuli (1898 to 1988) grew up and settled here in the late fifties after spending some time in urban areas as a watchman, domestic worker, gardener and switchboard operator.

Whether Ntuli depicts everyday life at a Zulu homestead, regiments drawn up in combat formation or a hunt, the environment is always allocated equal importance: environment and culture are inseparable.

These grew out of an ashpit by John Koenakeefe Mohl. Oil on board. Johannesburg Art Gallery





Top left: A tranquil scene in the village Makou near Pretoria by Michael Mmutle. Oil on canvas. John Miles

Bottom left: This mine scene by Moses Tladi is one of the masterpieces of South African landscape painting. Oil on canvas board. Private collection



the farmer steers a plough drawn by six oxen while a sturdy youngster is wielding a whip. The dark furrows signify the richness of the soil. Another painting titled *These grew out of an ashpit* touches on urbanisation showing the viewer a vegetable patch that flourishes on an ash pit. Against a light sky, maize and sunflowers guard the intimate growth of pumpkins.

Mining

Tladi, who was born in Sekhukhuneland, worked as a gardener in Johannesburg. His landscapes have featured in exhibitions at the South African National Gallery in Cape Town alongside works of Hugo Naudé, Maggie Laubser and Irma Stern. Similar to Mohl his oeuvre also encompasses the difference between the quietude of the countryside and the effect of industrialisation and mining on the environment. One of the masterpieces in South African landscape paintings is his *Mine scene*. In this landscape Tladi juxtaposes factory-like architecture and mounds of excavated earth with the sky and dwarfed plants that are taking root even on these dumps.

Another African artist who pays attention to life in Zululand and specifically to Zulu religion is the philosopher of Cezaberg Laduma Madela (b. 1908/9) who is renowned for his work *Die Bantubibel*. His drawings of birds and reptiles (both mythical and natural), plants and landscape features are unique within the visual arts of South Africa.

Simon Mnguni (1885 to 1956?), John Koenakeefe Mohl (1903 to 1985), Moses Tladi (1906 to 1959) and Gerard Bhengu (1910

to 1989?) each depicted the different moods of the landscape. In his painting titled *Krantzkop*, Mnguni discovers human qualities in the focal feature of his landscape. Bhengu on the other hand focuses on the dramatic impact of light reflections from cumulus clouds on a Zulu homestead nestled in the greenery of Natal.

Plight of peasants

Unlike the two former painters of Natal who virtually enjoyed no

training in painting, Mohl studied art in Germany at the Dusseldorf Academy. He expresses himself mainly in oils.

His landscapes are a record of the plight of peasants on the move from a rural life-style to everyday existence in urban areas. One is tempted to juxtapose images of farm-life and those of the city throughout his oeuvre. On the one hand Mohl shows the viewer *The ploughing season in Bechuanaland* (now Botswana) where

Man's activities

For Milwa Mnyaluza Pemba (b. 1912) and Gerard Sekoto (1913 to 1993) man is the most significant role player. In Pemba's paintings the landscape of the Eastern Cape as well as New Brighton, where he has spent most of his adult life features prominently. In his superb water-colour painting *New Brighton Cement Works* he records the dichotomy of livelihood earned in a polluted environment. For Sekoto the landscape augments man's activities whether he drives a horse cart in Sophiatown, transports water on a donkey cart in Eastwood or commutes in a train to Orlando.

Land and myth

Gladys Mgudlandlu (1925 to 1979) merges land and myth in her undulating scenes of the Eastern Cape. She allows the viewer to look at the most venerated sanctuary of the Xhosa prophet Ntsikana. Her childhood memories of that place and the tales told by her grandmother, find expression in various gouaches and drawings in which the perspectives are always exceptionally fresh.



New Brighton Cement Works by Milwa Mnyaluza Pemba. Water colour on paper. South African Reserve Bank

Simon Lekgetho (1929 to 1985) comes to mind as a painter of landscapes. However, he also wove thought patterns of mythical dimensions that involved San rock art into his paintings, thus leaving a legacy of land and beliefs.

Alpheus Kubeka (b. 1925) made an impact as a portrait painter and illustrator. Yet he painted many landscapes on the walls in the homes of people in Dube. Most of them have however been destroyed during home renovations. These landscapes evoked memories of times spent in the country and of farms lost after the Land Act.

At the time that

Mgudlandlu was exploring the poetry of folktales in relation to the environment from which they emerged, a generation of young painters started to look at their surroundings in Soweto. Most of them spent their childhood in urban areas. Durant Sihlali (b. 1935) and Ephraim Ngatane (1938 to 1971) did not eschew the poverty they saw and experienced. Their ranks were joined in Mamelodi (near Pretoria) by artists such as Andrew Motjoadi (1935 to 1968) and Enos Makhubedu (b. 1938).

For many years Michael Mmutle (b. 1946) has been visiting a village

conserva Magazine
May/June/July 1994
vol 19
no 3

called Makou near Ga-Rankuwa (north of Pretoria). He has captured in paintings bordering on "magic realism" its informal squares, meandering streets and varied coloured houses.

Railway stations

Thomas Nkuna (1959 to 1992) has not only recorded the urban environment of Johannesburg and the neglected gardens of railway stations such as Kazerne. He also captured the intersections of roads and powerlines that punctuate the natural beauty of the Broederstroom landscape. For him the classical garden fountain takes on a different appearance in the painting titled *On the banks of the Crocodile*. The force of the stream is devastating and white water gushes from beneath the bridge. Nervous linear patterns charge and electrify the shrubbery on the banks of the river.

Although these artists were prohibited to own land of their choice they unequivocally claimed the beauty and diversity of their environment on canvasses and sheets of paper.



For Gerard Sekoto the landscape augments man's activities as shown in this painting titled *Village gossip*. Oil on canvas. Johannesburg Art Gallery