



*Fig. 1 Eric Lubisi
Winterveld
Oil on Canvas (41 x 85 cm)*

an abandoned bicycle. It is clear that the artist was intrigued by the haphazard pattern of the exposed roof beams. Alongside the hut three women are seen basking in the African sun, while an old man is busy amusing a child on the porch. They pay little attention to the pig in front of their house. Many details add to the gentle humour permeating this scene: the abandoned brazier lying on its side, the empty zinc bath, and the elaborate pipe system devised to catch the rainwater from the roof.

However, like all the paintings in this series, Fig. 1 displays technical carelessness. The artist disregards the tactile qualities of paint, applying it in thin, sketchy brushstrokes. The colour range is also unduly limited.

Fig. 2

All the elements in this painting combine to create an atmosphere of poverty and despair.

The setting sun casts a dirty glow through the smoke-laden air onto the barren earth and rigid trees. Barbed wire, a recurring image

in the *Winterveld* series, is very dominant in this composition. It is the only one of the *Winterveld* paintings that communicates bitterness and dire need.



*Fig. 2 Eric Lubisi
Winterveld, 1971
Oil on Canvas (41,5 x 85 cm)*

Fig. 3

Central to the picture plane and dominating the composition is a dirty, broken down outhouse. This might be just one more picturesque detail presented to the buyer, or it could well be a pointed commentary on the living conditions of the squatters.

As in most of the *Winterveld* paintings the picture plane is divided into three unequal horizontal areas. The foreground is usually relatively empty so as to emphasize the bare sunbaked earth. (Lubisi grew up in a very similar environment and seems to be trying to compensate for this barrenness of his childhood years by



Fig. 7 Eric Lubisi
Sacrifice to the Gods, 1977
Oil on Canvas (99 x 50 cm) Private collection

This painting has much in common with Figs. 5 and 6. it displays the same symmetrical composition, highly stylized design, symbolic images and also their technical weaknesses.

New Development

Lubisi's most recent works (Fig. 8 and 9) display interesting technical developments. He uses the palet knife extensively, and no longer restricts himself to symmetrical compositions. The colours are more subtle than in his earlier works, yet display greater depth and richness.

The themes of these paintings are more sophisticated.

Women's Liberation (Fig. 8)

In Africa, as in many other cultures, the women are expected to be subservient to the men. Traditionally the African women do all the manual work such as cultivating the land and building new villages. Children tend the cattle and help their mothers with lighter tasks. The men, according to Lubisi, "sit around and drink beer all day, while discussing political and domestic matters" (Interview, 16 October 1979). No modern woman could tolerate such suppression and, according to the source on which this painting was based, help was sought from the witchdoctor.

The African witchdoctors, while scorned by many modern Blacks, still play an important role in township life. They are consulted in personal, physical and spiritual matters. Many people still believe in their magic powers, but the majority know that, although witchdoctors can cure minor illnesses through the use of herbs, their true powers stem from a thorough knowledge of human nature. They combine sensible advice with "muti" (medicine of dubious value), and so solve the problem.

In this painting two women are being transformed into trees, according to the artist, symbols of strength and permanence. They stand, tall and proud, with branches growing from their arms and roots from their feet. Three men are seen cowering at their feet,



Fig. 6 Eric Lubisi
Hanyisani Mangwa, 1977
Oil on Canvas (Measurements not available) Private collection

As a solution to this conflict, the artist envisages a new race that would bridge the barrier between Black and White, as the zebra does in the animal world. This vision, depicted as a man with a zebra-like black-and-white skin, dominates the picture plane. The bold pattern and strong colour contrast form a visually exciting focal point in this typically symmetrical composition.

In spite of Lubisi's utopian ideals, it is evident that he is not unaware of the problems confronting such an integrated society in Africa. He portrays the figure enthroned on a cracked calabash, with feet resting on two smaller ones, equally damaged. This symbol derives from an idiomatic expression in Tsonga (the artist's mother tongue) used to communicate instability. Two figures are straining to keep the calabashes from crumbling further. Of these Lubisi says: "This is you and me. This is our task; to keep the zebra alive" (Interview, 16 October 1979).

An undefined embryo-like face, in the centre of the composition symbolizes those suffering under the existing social structure. According to Lubisi, he chose blue rather than a colour which could have racial connotations, because more than one race is affected by this situation. This colour also serves compositional purposes. It establishes a visual link between the upper and lower halves of the picture plane, because the specific shade of blue evokes both the green and light blue overtones used in the respective areas.

Although some technical difficulties remain, this is a work of great boldness and courage.

Sacrifice to the Gods (Fig. 7)

The artist himself explains that "Sacrifice" is a work about daily living. It shows a hand about to milk a cow — symbolizing the obtaining of food. The thorns prove that this is not always easy; the two people at the bottom are contemplating the possibility of hunger, while the calabash at the bottom will never fill, since it is bottomless." (Bonanza, September 1979). The six teats of the cow's udder (in reality a cow has only four) symbolize abundance, while the bone at the bottom represents starvation.



Fig. 5 Eric Lubisi
Dyo'vo la khombo, 1977
 Oil on Canvas (Measurements unknown) Private collection, Kenya

all subsequent children. "Dyo'vo", thus also means "Children" or "Generation". By placing the symbols inside a Dyo'vo, the artist is in effect symbolically portraying a generation of the children of Africa.

At the top of the picture plane a human face can be seen. The lips, teeth and tongue are clearly defined. Empty eye sockets give the impression of being turned upwards. The horns and beard lend a distinct goat-like appearance to the face, identifying it as that of the god to whom sacrifices are made at the birth of children. Agony communicates itself very strongly. To the lower left an undefined but clearly pregnant figure is depicted, which exudes some mysterious force, symbolized by bands of colour that seem to radiate from the body. This archetypal earth mother is guarded by a bodyless spectre, the spirit of the ancestors. On the far right a group of symbols portray the antitheses to the first group. A female figure is suggested. Torso and legs are separated by jagged, menacing shapes. Hovering over this symbol of destroyed fertility is a white eyeless face, which symbolizes the Whites' inability to see, and therefore understand, what is happening to Africa.

These groups frame the central scene. The African continent is depicted, bleeding itself empty through the southern tip. Out of this gaping wound grow green shoots. Tiny figures cling desperately to this symbol of hope, while others are seen falling into a bleak void. Eggs, obvious symbols of fertility, surround the continent. They are cracked or broken, their contents spilling into the chasm outside the "Dyo'vo".

Lubisi uses repetition of texture, colour and shape to give structure to the composition. The tail of the goatskin at the bottom of the picture plane recalls the god's beard, and the round shapes of the eggs are pictured again under the curved horns of the god. As in many of Lubisi's symbolic works, the composition is essentially symmetrical.

Hanyisani Mangwa ("Keep the Zebra Alive") (Fig. 6)

In this highly symbolic work, Lubisi visually comments on the complexities of South African society and politics. The situation as it currently exists is symbolized by two horses, both wounded, facing in different directions.



*Fig. 8 Eric Lubisi
Women's Liberation, 1979
Oil on Canvas (Measurements not available) Private collection.*

symbolically turning into grass which can be trodden on, and bent by every wind. A complete reversal of roles is thus depicted.

The bodies form an organic whole. The intertwined limbs and tree branches form a strong rhythmic surface pattern, well contained within the square dimension of the painting surface. The repetition of forms adds to the compositional strength. Lubisi deviates from his usual technique in this painting. he makes use of the palette knife which plays an important role in the structuring of the colour planes. Greater self-confidence is reflected in both technique and composition.



*Fig. 9 Eric Lubisi
Imisebenzi, 1979
Oil on Canvas Collections — French Embassy*

Imisebenzi (Daily Occupation") (Fig. 9)

The artist portrays the traditional dress of the two women doing their washing with great effectiveness, stylizing the intricate folds of their headdress and clothes into highly decorative surface patterns. The figures in the background are reduced to the essentials but can still be recognized as men carrying picks. The groups are linked by abstract vertical shapes. Compositionally the artist has



Fig. 3 Eric Lubisi
Winterveld series, 1979
Oil on Canvas (49 x 62 cm)

surrounding his own house with masses of flowers.) In this painting a woman is about to hang out clean washing while another is watching her. In the second or middle plane the slum dwellings are depicted. The sky, in the top area, always plays an important role in creating atmosphere.

It is obvious that the painter identified strongly with the plight of the slum-dwellers. He not only paints them with great sensitivity, but is currently involved with literacy classes and self-help centres where the unemployed are encouraged to learn new skills.

AFRICAN IMAGERY

During 1977 Eric Lubisi painted works with far greater visual and spiritual impact than the more commercial *Winterveld* series (Fig. 1 — 4). Although technically the paintings (Fig. 5 — 9) are not

quite up to standard, they nevertheless display a strong awareness of design and composition. Bold images are used to communicate the artist's views on the society in which he lives.



Fig. 4 Eric Lubisi
Winterveld series, 1979
Oil on Canvas (61 x 89 cm)

Dyo'vo La Khombo (Children of Misfortune) (Fig. 5)

The contemporary tragedy of Africa is depicted through African symbols and the portrayal of ancient traditions. This results in a highly personalized visual language.

The composition is contained within the outline of a "Dyo'vo", or carrying skin. Traditionally a goat is slaughtered at the birth of a child.

This animal has extremely important religious connotations, as it is sacrificed exclusively when there is a need to communicate important events to the gods. Mothers use the goatskin to carry babies on their backs, and usually the "Dyo'vo" of the firstborn is used for

1992

ERIC M. LUBISI

Eric was born in 1946 in Highlands, Pretoria South. From 1958 - 1977 he lived in Mamelodi, and thereafter in Soshanguve. He is an artist who uses African symbols and traditions in his depictions of urban life. He works in oil, charcoal, in various graphic media and woodpanels. He worked on the "Winterveld" series from 1970 - 1979, and from 1966 - 1969 he worked with Andrew Motjuoadi and Enos Makhubeda. From 1970 - 1977 he was encouraged by Walter Batiss, but he is mostly self-taught. In 1977 he was the co-founder and organiser of the Studio Des Independents, Pretoria with Roy Ndinisa. In 1983 he became a founder member and director of the Independent Visual Arts Council, Doornfontein, Johannesburg.

Between 1968 and 1987 he has exhibited in various galleries in South Africa, Spain, the U.K., Botswana and Australia.



LIJNES, Karin

Born 1955

She obtained the B.A. (F.A.) degree at UNISA in 1989. Her work was exhibited at the Market Galleries, Johannesburg in January 1992, and she won a Merit Award at the New Signatures exhibition in Pretoria in the same year. She says of her work: "My works are material, visual metaphors of my inner being which is searching for the true self, as opposed to the temporal and outward appearance of things. In it I try to bring the pieces of my inner self together. There is a breaking down of the rigid artificial patterns of my thoughts and a restructuring of them in a more vital and renewed order."

44 TREE OF LIFE

Oil and fabric, 122 x 119 cm

Signed b.l. K. Lijnes

LUBISI, Eric

Born 1946 Highlands, Pretoria South

An artist using African symbols and traditions in his depictions of urban life. Works in oil, charcoal, in various graphic media and on woodpanels. He also studied ceramic art under John Blem at the Transvaal College of Education. From 1966 to 1969 he worked with Andrew Motjoadi and Enos Makhubedu. From 1970-77 he was encouraged in his art by Walter Battiss, but he is mostly self-taught. His work is vigorous and expressionistic in character. A large number of his works contain social comment, and he has also depicted prison life. He was attracted in his art to the free, informal architecture which he perceived in a number of townships.

45 FOREST FLOWER

Oil on canvas, 60 x 90 cm

Signed b.r. Lubisi 1991

Ogilvine

LOWNDS Gordon Stafford

Born 1896 London, England.

Resided in SA from 1903.

An artist working in oil, watercolour, pastel and charcoal. Depicted landscapes and seascapes.

Studies Mainly self-taught with some advice from W G Wiles (qv).

Profile From 1926 a member of the East London Fine Art Society, of which he was the first Honorary Secretary and Treasurer and subsequently Life Vice-President. Until 1937 lived in East London; 1937-42 and 1950-56 lived in Johannesburg; 1942-49 in Tzaneen, Transvaal; 1956-70 lived in Durban; 1971-74 travelled extensively in SA and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), thereafter lived in the Eastern Province.

Exhibitions Participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions from 1926.

Represented Ann Bryant Gallery, East London.

LUBISI Eric Magamana

Born 1946 Highlands, Pretoria South.

An artist using African symbols and traditions in his depictions of urban life. Works in oil, charcoal, in various graphic media and on woodpanels. 1970-79 "Winterveld" series.

Studies 1966-69 worked with Andrew Motjuoadi (qv) and Enos Makhubedu; 1970-77 encouraged by Walter Battiss (qv), but mostly self-taught.

Profile 1977 co-founder and organiser of the Studio des Independants, Pretoria, with Roy Ndinisa (qv); 1983 a founder member and Director of the Independent Visual Arts Council, Doornfontein, Johannesburg. 1978-83 cartoon illustrations for *The Eye*, published by the SA Bishops Conference. 1977 designed the stage and backdrop for "Divorce", a play by Oswald Msimanga. 1958-77 lived in Mamelodi, thereafter in Soshanguve, Transvaal.

Exhibitions 1968 joint exhibition with Richard Mbuyomba; 1970 Plaza Centre, Pretoria, first of two solo exhibitions; he has participated in group exhibitions from 1977 in Spain, the UK, Botswana, Australia and SA; 1987 FUBA Gallery, Johannesburg, joint exhibition with Roy Ndinisa (qv).

References *Phafa-Nyika*, edited by Ute Scholz, 1980, University of Pretoria; *Bonanza* September 1979.

LUCAS Thomas John Captain

Resided in SA 1848-62.

A painter of landscapes, tribal people and their genre, military life on the Eastern Cape Frontier and animals. Worked in watercolour, pen and pencil.

Profile A soldier in the Cape Mounted Rifles.

Publications by Lucas Wrote and illustrated *Pen and Pencil Reminiscences of a Campaign in SA*, quarto, 21 colour-tinted lithographs, 1861, Day & Son, London; *Camp Life and Sport in SA*; *Experiences of Kaffir Warfare with the Cape Mounted Rifles*, 1878, Chapman & Hall, London.

References Pict Art; SESA; Pict Afr; BSAK 2; SA Art.

LÜCKHOFF Carl

Born 1914 Cape

Died 1960 Cape

A self-taught botanist

Profile A professional

Groote Schuur Herbarium

National Life Science

concerned with the

White and Black

Flowering Plants

Institute. A Trust

council member

Exhibitions 1945

Pretoria.

Publications by

Heritage after 300

Quarter and its People

References SAA

LUDIK Jan

Born 1937 Doornfontein

A painter of abstract

collages with mixed

Port Elizabeth.

Studies 1966-69

(qv).

Profile From 1966

thereafter in Cape

Exhibitions H

1968 Port Elizabeth

LUGG Jack

Born 1924 Port Elizabeth

A painter and

charcoal and

wood, brick and

Studies 1946

Stainbank (qv)

of Art, London

Paris, under

Profile From

Technical College

Gallery, East

Examination

East London

London. From

by the Xhosa

PRETORIASE SKILDERS EN BEELDHOUERS

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Katalogus en tentoonstelling
saamgestel deur
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ERIC LUBISI

Tia Hugo

Some students of South African art feel reluctant to venture into the field of contemporary Black art.

This is probably due to a conscious or sub-conscious sympathy with the philosophy of "Négritude", a literary movement that originated in the former French colonies of West Africa in the thirties, with the concept of the "African Personality" as expounded by Kwame Nkrumah and Léopold Sédar Senghor. About this awe, felt by Europeans towards the concept of the "African Personality", Ulli Beier, the expert on contemporary African Art, states: "... Applied to the field of art it sometimes led to a peculiar theory which assumed that there was an undefined mysterious quality in African art that could be 'understood' only by Africans — and for some reason or other it could not be explained to outsiders. The implication is that only Africans are entitled to write or talk about African art because Europeans are incapable of interpreting its symbolism. Taken to its logical conclusion, this view makes nonsense of African art: it loses its main function which is communication." (Ulli Beier, 1968, p;167).

In the art of contemporary Black South Africa the subject of this communication is man in his physical as well as spiritual complexities. The majority of the artists strive for universality of expression and for communication with all mankind. Even a superficial study of Black art in South Africa will reveal that very little which is generally regarded as unique to the spirit of Africa can be discerned in this particular type of art — although people of other cultures and races seldom feature in the works of Black artists. The artists' primary concern is their art, and their role as artists in the community, rather than their ethnic origin. Like many of their modern counterparts, contemporary Black South African artists visually comment on society and its problems; on poverty, the dilemma of industrialization and acculturation, the too sudden urbanization of a rural tribal culture, middle class values, politics, and the ironies of daily living. Even in so-called "symbolic" works, where African folklore and traditions are the source of inspiration, the majority of artists give a highly original and personalized interpretation of the theme. The sterility of the tribal traditions which prescribe to the

artist a certain pattern of imageries, has been rejected in favour of creativity.

What does remain uniquely African in this art are the styles or means of expression. There is, however, no one style which can be described as "The South African contemporary Black style". For this the movement is too diverse, and the artists too individualistic. What is most apparent, however, is that many artists have stylistic difficulties. Some tend to repeat themselves meaninglessly. This very common fault is largely due to indiscriminate praise and premature recognition, and is aggravated by commercial success.

The causes that give rise to another problem are less easily explained. Even the problem itself is difficult to define, and this is: a dualism of style which goes beyond the excuse of minor inconsistencies. There is a general tendency among Black artists to have at least two distinct styles at their command which they use at random, or in succession, in such an unrealistically short time that it is difficult to accept the second style as a logical development from the first. The two styles are by no means compatible and the works can hardly be recognized as being by the same artist. This characteristic is particularly evident, and warrants serious consideration when studying the work of *Eric Lubisi*.

Biography

Eric Lubisi was born on 11 October 1946 at the Highlands squatters camp east of Pretoria, an only son and the youngest of a family of six children. Because of their parents' excessive protectiveness they were not allowed to associate with the children of the neighbourhood. His sisters spent their time inventing games to play with one another, usually excluding the young Eric. He describes himself as a lonely child with no outlet for his creative energy. Driven by frustration he started drawing with odd pieces of charcoal in old scrapbooks, and when even these were not available, with a stick or with his fingers on the ground.

At schoolgoing age he was allowed more freedom. Although not a good sportsman himself he was a keen spectator, and remembers fascinating days spent with school friends at local foot-

ball matches. In 1958 the family moved to Mamelodi East, a township bordering on Pretoria, where Lubisi joined a youth club, and along with other talented members took part in art activities. It is here that his ambition to form an art group that can work and exhibit together, emerged. At this time he was also actively encouraged by *Alex Selepe*, a teacher at Mamelodi High School, where Lubisi studied art as a subject.

After matriculating in 1965, he decided on art as a career. It seems that his parents up till then had no objections to his artistic activities as long as they did not interfere with his schoolwork, but now they insisted that he, like his sisters, should have some kind of professional training. He thus attended the teachers training college at Amanzimtoti, Natal. No art courses were offered there and this, coupled with financial difficulties, caused him to abandon his studies after six months.

Lubisi returned to Pretoria where, again at the insistence of his parents, he secured employment at a photographic studio. Unexpectedly, there were advantages in being a photographer's assistant. *Peter Carr*, Lubisi's employer, had at that time been commissioned to photograph works by some of South Africa's better known artists, and Lubisi had the rare opportunity of studying works in private collections. The influence of *Gregoire Boonzaaier* is still evident in Lubisi's *Winterveld* series (Fig. 1 - 4).

Lubisi spent most of his earnings on art materials, and after three years at the studio, in 1968, decided to attempt a career in art. By this time he had met Professor *Walter Battiss*, who not only helped him by criticising his work, but also introduced him to other artists and critics. Lubisi had also become familiar with the works of *Andrew Motjoadi* and *Louis Maqhabela* (artists of the older generation), and today acknowledges them as having influenced him profoundly. Within the same year he exhibited with *Richard Mbuyomba*. Then came marriage and children and with them financial need that drove Lubisi to seek more lucrative employment. Between 1972 and 1974 he worked as a temporary cashier at different banks in Pretoria. He exhibited in Durban and Cape Town in 1973, but found that he had

too little time to devote to his art. Once again financial security was exchanged for creativity. In 1975 some of Lubisi's paintings were sent (as part of group exhibitions) to Europe and the United States, where they were moderately well received. The following year saw the realization of Lubisi's greatest ambition: "Studio Des Independents" was founded with Roy Ndinisa. Premises were rented, not in a township, but in the city centre of Pretoria because it was more accessible. The studio flourished.

At the height of its success sixteen artists worked there, including Laurence Ngwenya, Mike Mukalare, Miles Pelo and Cheryl Petlele. Materials were bought in bulk, and attempts were made to obtain sponsorships from various institutions and individuals. The group first exhibited in February 1977 at the house of Dr. Joachim Braun, collector and patron of Black art, and again in August at Kingsley Centre, a shopping mall in Pretoria. Both exhibitions were highly successful. In November of that year, however, the group's treasurer, and its funds, disappeared. The group had no alternative but to vacate the studio and disband. It was a tragic ending to a bold and unique venture, and a serious disappointment to all who had been part of this promising group.

During this stimulating and productive year Lubisi also took part in an exhibition with artists of international repute, including Lucky Sibiyi, (creator of the "Umabatha" portfolio portraying scenes from Zulu history related to the plot of *Macbeth*) and Lucas Sithole. In 1978 Lubisi was again able to rent a workshop where he not only worked in oils, graphics and woodpanels, but helped promising artists such as Ranko Pudi and Cheryl Petlele. He has since had to give it up and is currently working at home under very difficult conditions, among them lack of space, facilities and adequate lighting.

Eric Lubisi said of his own work: "My paintings are based on reality. I use them as a way of communication with people"

Winterveld series (Fig. 1 — 4)

Lubisi finds himself in the position where he has to make a living from his painting. This forces him to work, for at least part of his

time, in an idiom acceptable to the middle class White buyer, as an art-loving (and buying) public has not yet evolved amongst the Blacks. Having found "that township scenes sell most, both here and abroad," (Bonanza, September 1979), he concentrates on this subject for paintings in his commercialized style. These works do have artistic merit, however, despite their painter's cynical intentions. Lubisi's keen sense of observation, irrepressible talent and unfailing eye for picturesque detail, together with his empathy with the slum-dwellers, save these works from pure commercialism.

Winterveld is a squatters camp. It is a refuge for those with nowhere else to go, either because of poverty or because of inadequate housing in townships. People live there in mud huts and corrugated iron shanties. They have no electricity, running water or sanitation. In spite of this, what should have been a festering slum has been saved by its inhabitants. Evidence of their activities permeates the scenes painted by Lubisi. Women are portrayed, hanging out clean washing, sweeping a yard or grooming one another in the sun. Signs of poverty and hardship abound, but these are painted with sensitivity and humour. The variety and colour of the squatters camp are much to be preferred to the monotonous and depressing sterility of the mass housing complexes in the townships. Perhaps the artist's own need for individuality, seen in his attempts to make his own house and plot in Mabopane less stark, found expression in these profoundly human scenes.

Traces of the influence of a South African painter in the Cape impressionist style, Gregoire Boonzaaier, can be recognized in this series. Boonzaaier painted the Cape slums with great sympathy and acute awareness. Lubisi's paintings are less skilful, but show equal sincerity and ability to use colour to create atmosphere.

Fig. 1

This dilapidated mud dwelling is probably very much like thousands of others in Africa, yet the artist succeeds in giving it a character of its own. The roof, consisting of little more than rusted corrugated iron sheets, is held down by stones and the wreck of

succeeded in creating a compact unit by skillfull repetition of colours and shapes.

Imisebenzi is one of the first paintings in which the physical elements of art take precedence over symbolic and narative imagery. Lubisi seems to have discovered the intrinsic qualities of paint and colour. He has developed rapidly since 1977 (Fig. 5 — 7).

At the time of writing, Lubisi has just had a successful one-man exhibition. Although he is currently working on his own, he is still striving, against almost insurmountable odds, to break the isolation in which most Black artists in South Africa find themselves, and to create informal training facilities for those still at the beginning of their careers. His ideal is a small studio where young artists could exchange ideas and receive technical assistance from those more experienced.

SYNOPSIS

Ute Scholz

In the foregoing study of a number of Black artists, chosen at random, the following aspects of their work and their situation were highlighted: the isolation of the artists, their lack of self-assertiveness and sense of identity due to the loss of tradition and, most important of all, their lack of formal training.

The urban Blacks living in townships are a product of two worlds; they reject the one — the traditional tribal life — and are being rejected by the other — the European culture — as a result of their socio-political situation. *I s o l a t i o n* is detrimental to any creative person, and so it is to the Black artist. It should, however, be borne in mind that there are also positive factors in this scanty contact with the outside world. It has frequently been proved that artists from Black Africa, who underwent western training in western surroundings, have adopted a wholly westernized attitude and style, and completely lost their African identity. From an admittedly — perhaps arrogant — western point of view this is detrimental, since something strong and unique exists in the African spirit, which must be preserved at all costs.

Thus, the positive aspect of the isolation of the contemporary Black artists in South Africa could be the retaining of an element of what could eventually develop into a strong and individual art. Yet, on the other hand, it has become apparent that this isolation in South Africa, and especially in the Transvaal, is resulting in a rapid deterioration of artistic standards, which could eventually lead to the disintegration and even disappearance of contemporary Black art in this country.

Sadly enough the White artists in South Africa find themselves in a similar predicament. With a few exceptions, South African art has not yet succeeded in creating any artistic tradition characteristic to this country so diverse in rich sources of inspiration. This dearth of tradition may account for the low level of Black art, since the Whites, except for the few lonely leaders without any followers in this country, had nothing meaningful to offer. Consequently, there was no immediate artistic heritage to