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REISPLAN VAN HIERDIE TENTOONSTELLING:
ITINERARY OF THIS EXHIBITION:

Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, Johannesburg, Februarie 1979

Pretoriase Kunsmuseum, Maart-April 1979

Universiteit van die Oranje-Vrystaat, Mei 1979

William Humphreys Art Gallery, Kimberley, June-July 1979

VOORWOORD

Die werk van die Suid-Afrikaanse Swart Kunstenaars het eers in die vyftigerjare werklik na vore gekom en die aandag van kunskenners en -versamelaars, binne en buite die landsgrense begin trek. Dit wil voorkom asof hierdie feit saamhang met die verstedeliking van die Bantoe wat ook eers in die vyftigerjare groot afmetings begin aanneem het. Die Swart Kunstenaars, van wie daar 'n keur van werke op hierdie tentoonstelling te sien is, weerspieël selde die landelike omgewing van vandag. Wanneer hulle wel die landelike uitbeeld, byvoorbeeld 'n kraal, of diere van die plaas, kry dié uitbeeldings dikwels 'n meer simboliese, soms mitologiese betekenis.

Die meeste Afrikakulture staan oop vir die invloed van ander lewenswyses, ander kultuur- en kunsvorme. Vreemde sedes en gewoontes word oorgeneem, getoets en óf aanvaar, óf verwerp. Nogtans kry ons talle kunswerke van Afrikakunstenaars van vandag wat nog tradisionele trekke behou, hoewel hulle nie vir ou, klassieke stukke kan deurgaen nie, maar wat 'n eie skoonheid besit. Die nuwe kuns besit 'n eie karakter; is gewoonlik minder realisties en is al as "meer abstrak" beskryf. Insiggewend is die groter mate van lighartigheid van dié kuns; soms is dit byna eksoties, dan weer grillig en totaal onortodoks. Die nuwe kunstenaars werk vir nuwe klante in die stedelike milieu; hulle vervul nuwe funksies; hulle aanvaar, met sukses, nuwe materiaalsoorte om mee te werk; hulle gee uiting aan hulle eie persoonlikhede; kortom, ons het met 'n renaissance van die kunste in Afrika te doen.

Ons vertrou dat hierdie tentoonstelling u 'n deursneebeeld van hierdie renaissance van Swart kuns in Suid-Afrika sal gee. Prof. De Jager en sy kollegas by die Universiteit van Fort Hare moet geluk gewens word vir die besonder mooi en verteenwoordigende versameling wat daar by die universiteit opgebou is. Verder wil ons die universiteit, en dan veral vir prof. De Jager, hartlik bedank vir die samestelling van die tentoonstelling, die voorbereiding van die katalogus en besondere hulpvaardigheid in die algemeen.

Ons dank ook aan al die instansies wat aan die tentoonstelling meegewerk het, in besonder die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit en die Universiteit van die Oranje-Vrystaat; laastens ook aan mnr. Armand Kok van die Stadsraad van Pretoria se Afdeling Fotografie vir die katalogusfoto's.

A.J. WERTH
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CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART IN SOUTH AFRICA

Much has happened to the South African Black artist and his work since Sekoto, Pemba, Mvusi, and a few others first exhibited in the early thirties of this century. It was during the fifties of this century that Black art in South Africa really gained momentum with what appeared to be almost an explosion of African artistic creativity. Their work has since become an integral part of our art scene and our Black artists have made a very significant contribution to the art legacy of South Africa. Not only have our Black artists enriched our art heritage from a purely aesthetic point of view, but they have contributed immensely to put over our art image abroad and to reflect more fully and meaningfully, in artistic images, the great country in which we live and of which they are part – its peoples, its contrasts, its moods, its problems, etc. Although the history of Black art in South Africa is still relatively short and the quantitative contribution of Black artists to the overall picture by comparison still modest, their contribution is nevertheless a very significant one.

Apart from numerous private collections the work of South African Black artists is contained in all important South African public collections and galleries, including the South African National Gallery, Cape Town, the Durban Art Gallery, Pretoria Art Museum, Johannesburg Art Gallery, Sandton Art Collection, numerous university collections such as that of the University of South Africa, Pretoria, the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, the University of Fort Hare, Alice, etc. It is also included in the collections of a number of large financial concerns such as Rembrandt, Sanlam, Anglo-American, etc. Their work is contained in many collections abroad, both private and public, in countries such as England, Israel, Japan, USA, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Canada and Australia, to mention but some.

Through participation in group exhibitions as well as one-man exhibitions Black artists have locally exhibited in all major centres including Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, East London, Grahamstown, Bloemfontein, etc. These are far too numerous to list. Abroad South African Black artists have exhibited in Monte Carlo, Basle, Frankfurt, Vienna, Zurich, London, New York, Toronto, Stockholm, etc. Major South African exhibitions in which Black artists have participated include: the *Van Riebeeck Festival Exhibition* (1952), *Rhodes Centenary Exhibition* (1953), *Republic Day Art Exhibition* (1961), *Republican Festival Exhibition* (1966), *South African Association of Arts Exhibitions*, *South African Breweries Exhibition*, *Transvaal Art Academy Exhibitions*, *Art South Africa Today Exhibitions*, *South Africa '68 Exhibition* (Cape Town), etc. Internationally South African Black artists have represented their country at both the *Venice Biennial* and *Sao Paulo Biennial* on a number of occasions: at Venice by Sydney Kumalo

(1966), Michael Zondi (1966), Lucas Sithole (1968), Rorke's Drift Arts and Crafts Centre (1968); at Sao Paulo by Dumile (1967), Sydney Kumalo (1967), John Muafangejo (1971) and Leonard Matsoso (1973).

Black artists have not been without their share of prizes and prestige at major South African exhibitions, of which we can mention the following examples: Eric Ngcobo, gold medal, 1961, *Republic Day Art Exhibition*; Michael Zondi, Bronze medal, 1961, *Republic Day Art Exhibition*; Gladys Mgudlandlu, 3rd prize, 1963, *Art South Africa Today Exhibition*; Michael Zondi, 3rd prize, 1963, *Art South Africa Today Exhibition*; Michael Zondi, 2nd prize, 1963, *Art South Africa Today Exhibition*; Louis Maqhubela, 1st prize, 1966, *Artists of Fame and Promise Exhibition*; Dumile, merit award, 1966, *South African Breweries Exhibition*; Ezrom Legae, 1st prize, 1967, *Art South Africa Today Exhibition*; Ezrom Legae, honorary mention, *Transvaal Art Academy*, etc.

We previously referred to the explosion of Black artistic creativity in South Africa since the fifties of this century. An obvious reaction would be to try and find an explanation for this. The answer is certainly not to be found in a single factor, concept or explanation, but rather in a combination of many such factors. It cannot be denied that the African has an innate urge and ability to react to human situations and that his motivations are invariably directed at the human being. The African is therefore by nature not lethargic in his reactions in this sphere of life. This is obvious from a study of his traditional life and society as well as his acculturative experience and is further borne out by his art. It would further appear that in conjunction with this, the South African situation, life and broad society, of which the Black man is an integral part, has been productive in stimulating this reaction on their part. One can, in sociological terms, refer to the position of the Black man in South Africa as being largely one of *ascribed status*. Man is of central importance in African Philosophy and Art, both in the past and at present, with emphasis on ontological explanation and participation. In human relations, feelings and emotions the African is a person and personality that can never be lethargic and uninvolved – that would be contradictory and foreign to his very essence and nature. Almost all Black art in South Africa, to a lesser or larger degree, derives in some form or the other from urban awareness and urban consciousness. It would not be wrong to say that the South African Black artist is bred in our cities and towns and that by far the majority, if not all, derive from urban circumstances. The art of the Black man is therefore an art of the city and is consequently fully rooted in modern and contemporary life and society. As such it has of necessity also derived sophisticated notions, this being an important reason why his urban experiences are not always given back to us in a

simple one to one relationship and why such urban experiences are often not even recognizable as such. Combine all this with the undoubted and inherent artistic ability of the Black man and it is not strange that he reacts also on the level of art and aesthetics to his human situation and predicament, if one may call it that. The reaction of Black artists to this human situation, one that is largely determined by his urban experience and awareness, and one we can broadly translate into and equate with his socio-political position, varies greatly. Not all deal in exactly the same way with this urban motive which is for most Black artists largely the link between life and art, for these can never be totally separated. This variety of approach to urban life and experience is perhaps more readily noticeable in their pictorial art forms than in their sculpture, due to the innate differences in the nature of the pictorial and plastic art forms and mediums.

Black artists react in a variety of ways to the urban environment. Some South African Black artists react more violently in the form of , indignation, social comment, criticism, protest and outright condemnation; to them their art is often a safety valve. They derive their concepts from the group, the social in the human situation and it is upon this that they comment in no uncertain terms. Other Black artists derive more intimately and subtly from the individual, his dilemma and predicament in the human situation and experience. They feel it as a penetrating personal experience and they are able to derive objectively from the personal situation and the individual point of view, universal experiences which they translate into a universal humanism. Although the basis and point of departure are their own experiences and those of individuals from their group, they are able and succeed to a large extent to transcend their immediate circumstances and to arrive at that which is universally human. Other artists use urban life, awareness and content purely visually and without any social, emotional or critical comment at all. They approach it solely as a source from which to derive visual forms and concepts which they translate into aesthetic language. Still other South African Black artists are able to transcend almost totally their personal experiences and those of their group to arrive at concepts and visual images completely universally human and communicated and related in pure formal aesthetic criteria and language.

The African artist is of Africa and he is not separated and alienated from the root source of his existence. He is able to feel, to feed on, to draw from that which is his African socio-cultural and environmental heritage and for which he has a capacity of great sensitivity and understanding. Combined with this is the fact that as far as his contemporary art is concerned it has right from the beginning been

integrated with that of the rest of South Africa. His artistic contribution has always been part and parcel of the South African art scene. It is one area in which he is completely accepted, his contribution valued and the validity of his work understood and accepted. The reason for this is probably to be found in the fact that South African Black artists in the majority of cases have acted and created in a mature way, that their statements and messages portrayed in visual form have, again in the majority of cases, been related in sound aesthetic language and that these have thus not degenerated into mere political and social comment and propaganda. This has not made it less forceful, acute or poignant but if anything more valid and wider in range, extent and impact. Add to this a third factor, also one to which we have already referred, namely, a certain sophistication derived from urban awareness and consciousness. It is here a quality or matter of relationship rather than theme and content derived from urban life. It is this sophistication derived from urban awareness and consciousness that has enabled the contemporary South African Black artist firstly to break through the comparatively narrow confinements and barriers of traditional and tribal life and values, as well as, secondly, the more narrow limits of his own life and society, and to be able to partake fully and to interact fully with modern urban industrial technological society. Of necessity this sophistication, understanding, refinement, or call it what you will, is carried over to creativity and enlarges the artistic ability of the artist, thus enabling him to gain a wider audience and thus to survive more successfully on the level of his profession.

We have at present a number of South African Black artists who have established fine reputations, even on the international level. They rank today amongst the finest. These African artists are meaningful not only for Black art in this country but for South African art as a whole.

There are however a large number of African artists, completely unknown to the art world, who form part of the immense and powerful stream of unfolding talent amongst Black artists. Not all show the same standard and quality of work but they are nevertheless important and have special interest in that they represent a new, strong and optimistic voice. The importance of these artists, some of whom may never achieve the high standard of their predecessors or contemporaries, lies in the fact that they form part of a cultural movement amongst the South African Black population, one which has not previously existed and which is a direct outcome of their interaction with the contemporary world, and in the sphere of art, new and exciting media, involvements, opportunities, insights, etc.

KATALOGUSLYS · CATALOGUE LIST

Alle afmetings in sentimeters, hoogte voor breedte.

All measurements in centimetres, height before width.

BEELDHOUWERK/SCULPTURE

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| 1. ZONDI, Michael | KOP VAN 'N JONG VROU/
HEAD OF A YOUNG WOMAN
Nieshout/sneezewood
38 | 8. ZONDI, Mandlenkosi | DIE WEESKIND/THE ORPHAN
Rooi Ivoorhout/Red Ivory
26 |
| 2. KUMALO, S. | RUITERFIGUUR/RIDING FIGURE
Brons/bronze
116,5 | 9. SHILAKOE, C. | TOTEMPAAL/TOTEM POLE
Rhodesiese kaaat/Rhodesian teak
250 |
| 3. SITHOLE, L. | 'PINDILE' DIE SKAAPWAGTER/
'PINDILE' THE SHEPHERD
Djatihout/teak
62,5 | 10. MOLATANA, K. | NGWALE
Jakaranda/Jacaranda
53 |
| 4. LEGAE, E. | KOP/HEAD
Brons/bronze
62 | 11. RAPHELA, S. | MATOME
Jarra/Jarrahwood
45 |
| 5. NKOSI, S. | KONING LUIPERD/KING LEOPARD
Brons/bronze
51 x 36 | 12. NGUZA, A. | VROU IN PYN/WOMAN IN PAIN
Akasia/Acacia
68,5 |
| 6. DUMILE, M. | DIE SKREEU/THE SCREAM
Brons/bronze
26,5 | 13. MASEKELA, T. | MAERTE/THINNESS
Djatihout/teak
93 |
| 7. NGCOBO, E. | UNOMKHUBULWANA
Tambotie/Umthombothi
38 | 14. GUMEDE, J. | AFRIKAANSE AFGOD/AFRICAN FETISH
Katbosboom
53,5 |

15. MBUYISA, T. OORPEINSING/MEDITATION
Tambotie/Umthombothi
53

16. RAMAGAGA, G. ISIBOSWA
Kiaat
77

17. MAPHIRI, S. SITTENDE FIGUUR/SEATED FIGURE
Gasbeton/gas concrete
45,5

PIKTURAAL/PICTORIAL

18. PEMBA, G. PORTRET VAN PROF D.D.T. JABAVU/
PORTRAIT OF PROF D.D.T. JABAVU
1951, Olie/oil
74 x 59

19. PEMBA, G. PORTRET VAN DIE XHOSA DIGTER: MQHAYI/
PORTRAIT OF THE XHOSA POET: MQHAYI
Waterverf/water-colour
37 x 27

20. MBATHA, A. ONGETITEL/UNTITLED
Linosnee/linocut
63 x 44

21. BHENGU, G. BEBAARDE PRONKER/BEARDED BEAU
Sepia
24 x 32

22. BHENGU, G. NTOMBENTLE
Sepia
30 x 24

23. MOTAU, J. KLASKAMER/CLASSROOM
1968, Houtskool/charcoal
91 x 91

24. DUMILE, M. ONGETITEL/UNTITLED
1966, Houtskool/charcoal
144 x 100

25. DUMILE, M. KWELLING/AGONY
1966, Ink
26 x 18

26. SHILAKOE, C. RORKE'S DRIFT BY SONSOPGANG/
RORKE'S DRIFT AT DAWN
1969, Akwatint/aquatint
40 x 33

27. SHILAKOE, C. WAGTENDE KINDERS/CHILDREN WAITING
1970, Ets/etching
33 x 22

28. SAOLI, W. SKEMER/TWILIGHT
Olie/oil
37 x 33

29. SAOLI, W. SONOP TOT SONONDER/
SUNRISE TO SUNSET
1972, Waterverf en ink/Water-colour and ink
47 x 36

30. LEGAE, E. TEKENING: KUIKENREEKS II/
DRAWING: CHICKEN SERIES II
1977, Gemengde media/mixed media
43 x 32

31. KUMALO, S. FILOSOWE/PHILOSOPHERS
1976, Gemengde media/mixed media
54 x 95

32. SITHOLE, L. HOND/DOG
1962, Akriel/acrylic
91,5 x 73,5

33. SIBIYA, L. DIE VOËL/THE BIRD
Houtpaneel, gekerf en geskilder/
Wood panel, carved and painted
59 x 89

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|-------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| 34. MATSOSO, L. | DIE LEGENDE VAN NONKWAZI/
THE LEGEND OF NONKWAZI
1974, Olie/oil
101 x 75 | 44. SIHLALI, D. | "TOWNSHIP"-TONEEL/TOWNSHIP SCENE
Watersverf/water-colour
48 x 68 |
| 35. MATSOSO, L. | ZULU OFFERANDE/ZULU SACRIFICE
1972, Gemengde media/mixed media
138 x 73 | 45. MALGAS, W.M. | KORSTEN-DORP/KORSTEN VILLAGE
Watersverf/water-colour
55 x 37 |
| 36. RAKGOATHE, D. | TOTEMDANS/TOTEM DANCE
1977, Olie/oil
125 x 92 | 46. MBATHA, E. | SELFPORTRET/SELF PORTRAIT
1972, Ets/etching
35 x 30 |
| 37. RAKGOATHE, D. | FUCLUNDIZI
1975, Linoleumsnee/linocut
69 x 49 | 47. NKOSI, B.C. | EENSAAMHEID/SOLITUDE
1976, Ets/etching
17 x 14 |
| 38. MAQHUBELA, L. | ONGETITEL/UNTITLED
1975, Gemengde media/mixed media
75 x 55 | 48. SALANG, J. | "TOWNSHIP"-TONEEL/TOWNSHIP SCENE
1972, Pastel/pastels
59 x 47 |
| 39. MAQHUBELA, L. | ONGETITEL/UNTITLED
1975, Gemengde media/mixed media
69 x 59 | 49. MBATHA, L. | MPINKULU
Ink
65 x 45 |
| 40. MASEKO, J. | SEUN MET GEEL HEMP/
BOY WITH A YELLOW SHIRT
Olie/oil
120 x 78 | 50. MOGANO, P.D. | "TOWNSHIP"-TONEEL/TOWNSHIP SCENE
1975, Watersverf/water-colour
73 x 51 |
| 41. MASEKO, J. | ABSTRAK/ABSTRACT
1978, Serigrafie/serigraph
65 x 50 | 51. NDZOMBANE, R. | VAGEVUUR/PURGATORY
1977, Ets/etching
31 x 23 |
| 42. MACALA, B. | MADONNA
1969, Gemengde media/mixed media
54 x 36 | 52. FIKELE | ONGETITEL/UNTITLED
Gemengde media/mixed media
202 x 84 |
| 43. NGATANE, E. | DIE GHITAARSPeler/THE GUITARIST
1967, Olie/oil
75 x 50 | 53. MUAFANGEJO, J. | ONGETITEL/UNTITLED
1977, Linoosnee/linocut
34 x 34 |