

INSTITUUT VIR EIETYDSE GESKIEDENIS

Die Universiteit van die Oranje-Vrystaat



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ARTS AND LEISURE



□ 'This Was', by Mirupa Sing

Women artists pull together

ART/ Seven Women Artists

POLARISATION is an intrinsic part of the South African psyche. So much so that even the supposedly unifying world of art is often divided into two; art as practised from a black perspective, and art made from a white standpoint. It is therefore refreshing to discover that the show of seven women artists at the Fuba Gallery is free from these racial qualifications.

The exhibition, on show until tomorrow, was organised by Fuba director David Koloane as a tribute to several women who both teach and practice art in South Africa. The invited artists — Bonghi Dhlomo, Helen Sebidi, Mirupa Sing, Monika van Moltke, Sybille Nagel, Anthusa Sotiriades and Mapula Mashao — have taught in environments ranging from academic institutions to township craft centres.

Their diverse contexts are reflected in their imagery. For example, Sing's lyrical style is pervaded by an Eastern influence, whereas Von Moltke's imagery derives largely from European folklore. Dhlomo and Mashao's imagery may also be juxtaposed in terms of defined and blurred boundaries between art and craft; the former experiments in painterly abstract expressionism, while the latter weaves within the tradition of "women's work". However, the exhibition's worth lies predominantly in the motivation behind it. The term "women artists" often draws public expectations of strident feminist statements. But in this show, if there exists a feminist message, it derives from the sociological context in which the works are shown rather than through their visual content.

HAZEL FRIEDMAN

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