





The Wanderers Club, Illovo, Johannesburg
5 June 2017 – 8 pm

Important South African and International Art

Evening Sale
Lots 201–304

Lot 227 Peter Clarke *Still Life with Indigenous
Flowers and Rocky Landscape* (detail)



201

John Piper

BRITISH 1903–1992

Landscape

signed; inscribed with the artist's name, the
title and medium on an Everard Read Gallery
label adhered to the reverse

mixed media

39 by 57,5 cm

R100 000 – 150 000



202

Antoni Clavé

SPANISH 1913–2005

Still Life with Fish on a Table

signed

mixed media on board

55 by 74,5 cm

R50 000 – 80 000

PROVENANCE

Purchased by the late owners from
Henri Lidchi Art Gallery, 1968.

The Collection of the Late Mrs
Liselotte Hardebeck. All proceeds
from the sale of this lot will benefit
the Umamawothando Trust.

203

Lynn Chadwick

BRITISH 1914–2003

Walking Couple III

executed in 1987
signed with the artist's initials and
numbered C61 5/9
bronze with a black patina on a
Perspex base
height: 42 cm, excluding base

R400 000 – 600 000

EXHIBITED

Another example from the edition
exhibited at Osbourne Samuel,
London, *Lynn Chadwick (1914–2003):
A Centenary Exhibition*, 15 May – 28
June 2014

LITERATURE

Lynn Chadwick (2014). London:
Osbourne Samuel; another example
from the edition illustrated in colour
on pages 64–65.
Dennis Farr & Eva Chadwick (2014).
Lynn Chadwick Sculptor, London:
Lund Humphries. Catalogue
number C61



204

Lynn Chadwick

BRITISH 1914–2003

Sitting Woman III

dated 1986 and numbered C30S 1/9
bronze, mounted on a perspex base
height: 14 cm, excluding base

R200 000 – 250 000





205

Strat Caldecott

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1929

The Red Tray

signed
oil on canvas
35 by 40 cm

R150 000 – 200 000

EXHIBITED

Strat Caldecott, Argus Gallery, Cape Town, March 1944,
Catalogue number 29.

LITERATURE

J du P Scholtz (1970) *Strat Caldecott*, Cape Town: AA Balkema.
Illustrated as plate 16, unpaginated.

Kimberley-born Strat Caldecott is one of South Africa's most influential, almost forgotten artists, who made an invaluable contribution to the South African art establishment. He became known as the Cape Impressionist and is widely regarded as the leading local exponent of French Impressionism in the early 20th century, 'with a freshness of vision rarely seen in the South African art of that era.'¹

Caldecott lived and worked in Paris for more than ten years and studied art at the Academie Julian in 1912 and then at the École des Beaux Arts from 1913 under the French painter Gabriel Ferrier. During this time he acquired a first-hand knowledge and understanding of French Impressionist painting techniques: the broken, rapid, choppy brushstrokes, the use of complementary colours such as the cool violet blues and warm yellows of shade and sunlight.

This is clearly recognisable in *The Red Tray* with its brightly coloured impressionistic blooms in cornflower blues, burnt orange tones, touches of yellow and brightly rendered green foliage. *The Red Tray* depicts a jar filled with zinnias so it is likely to have been painted in full summer. The flowers are set before a lacquered cinnabar red tray and catch the light, colour and movement with bold brush strokes, often juxtaposing black with white or lighter shades to create a sense of light typical of the Impressionists.

The Red Tray is one of only a few still lifes known to have been painted by Caldecott: apart from *The Red Tray*, another still life, from 1920, featured a bottle and glass, while *Sideboard* was found in 1970 in the estate of his widow F Zerffi-Caldecott.

1. L. Alexander & E. Cohen, *150 South African paintings, past and present*, Cape Town, 1990, p58.







206

Frans Oerder

SOUTH AFRICAN 1867–1944

East African Coast

signed

oil on canvas

42,5 by 69 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

PROVENANCE

Purchased at the old Pretoria Club in 1994 by Hans van Schaik.

Frans Oerder, who trained at the Rotterdam Academy in the school's typically conservative mode, settled in Pretoria in 1890, later sharing a studio with Anton van Wouw. After becoming a burgher of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek in 1896, and at the request of President Paul Kruger, he joined the Boer forces in 1899 as an official war artist to make sketches and paintings in the field. During his internment as a prisoner of war at Meintjeskop, and thanks to his quickly-noted talent, Oerder made a number of portraits and drawings for his captors too in return for certain privileges. After his release, the artist travelled up the East Coast of Africa in 1903 and made numerous intoxicating paintings there of makeshift wharfs, semi-cleared mangrove forests, rickety, beachfront lean-tos, and barefoot, turbaned figures in the sun. While most surviving examples from this expedition are small-scale, exotic vignettes, the present lot must have received the artist's complete attention: it is particularly large, fully realised and meticulously executed. Oerder took great care to show the salt-encrusted plastered walls facing the sea, the hardy, bleached-apricot rooftops, and the slack-shouldered, slow moving figures on the shore. Moreover, he managed to evoke an amazing sense of the seaside weather: the air is still in the smaller coves where hulls rest in the sand and coconut-husk cords hangs limply, while the Indian Ocean breeze bends the high palm trees over the town and rustles through their fronds.

Oerder might be better known for his exquisite still life paintings of delicate flowers and glazed ceramics on polished surfaces, but a picture like the present lot suggests that he also belongs to the same dazzling topographical tradition in Africa as do Thomas Baines, Thomas Bowler, George French Angas, Frederick l'Ons and Hugo Naudé.



207

Frans Oerder

SOUTH AFRICAN 1867–1944

Wolkberg, near Haenertsburg

signed

oil on canvas

46,4 by 100 cm

R300 000 – 500 000

PROVENANCE

Purchased at an exhibition in Pretoria in
1941 by JL van Schaik.







© The Estate of Maggie Laubser | DALRO

208

Maggie Laubser

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1973

Basutoland Hills

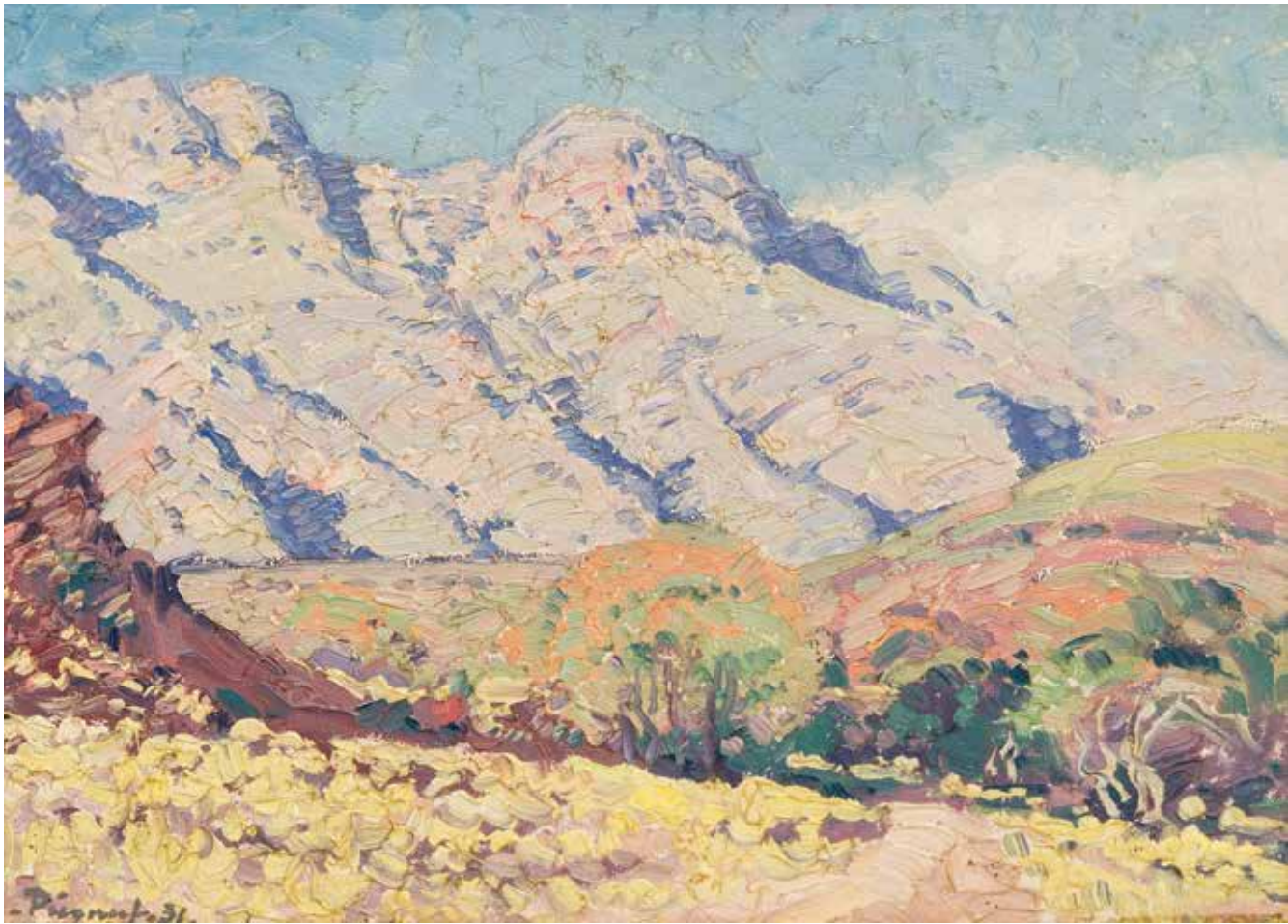
signed; signed and inscribed with the title in another hand on the reverse oil on canvas laid down on board 40 by 50 cm

R600 000 – 800 000

From an early age Maggie Laubser was enchanted by the landscape and the light, particularly at sunset when it flooded the valley she traversed on horseback. These experiences, together with her exposure to German Expressionism and Modernism, were to shape her stylised landscapes with the use of strong colour and simplified, assertive forms that give her canvases a powerful impact.

In the 1940s a Cape architect named Henri

Louw was supervising the construction of a stone church in Marquard on the Lesotho border when he set eyes on a captivating young woman, Helena van Niekerk, who he was later to marry. As a wedding gift to his young bride he purchased *Basutoland Hills* to commemorate the area of their chance encounter and her love of the landscape of her birth. This work has remained a treasured possession in the Louw family for over sixty years.



209

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

Farmstead in the Foothills

signed and dated 31

oil on board

27,5 by 38 cm

R300 000 – 500 000

PROVENANCE

The Collection of the
Late AJ Theron.



210

Hugo Naudé

SOUTH AFRICAN 1868–1941

Rocky Coastline

signed with the artist's initials

oil on board

22,5 by 29 cm

R60 000 – 80 000

PROVENANCE

The Collection of the Late AJ Theron.

LITERATURE

cf. Adèle Naudé (1974) *Hugo Naudé*. Cape Town: Struik. A similar work illustrated on page 52.



© Irma Stern Trust | DALRO

211

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Blossom Branches in a Vase

signed and dated 1936

gouache

48 by 62cm

R800 000 – 1 200 000

PROVENANCE

Purchased from Stevenson Gallery, Cape Town, 2003



212

Frans Oerder

SOUTH AFRICAN 1867–1944

Sunflowers in a Vase

signed
oil on canvas
50,5 by 41 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

PROVENANCE

The Collection of the
Late AJ Theron.



213

Irmin Henkel

SOUTH AFRICAN 1921–1977

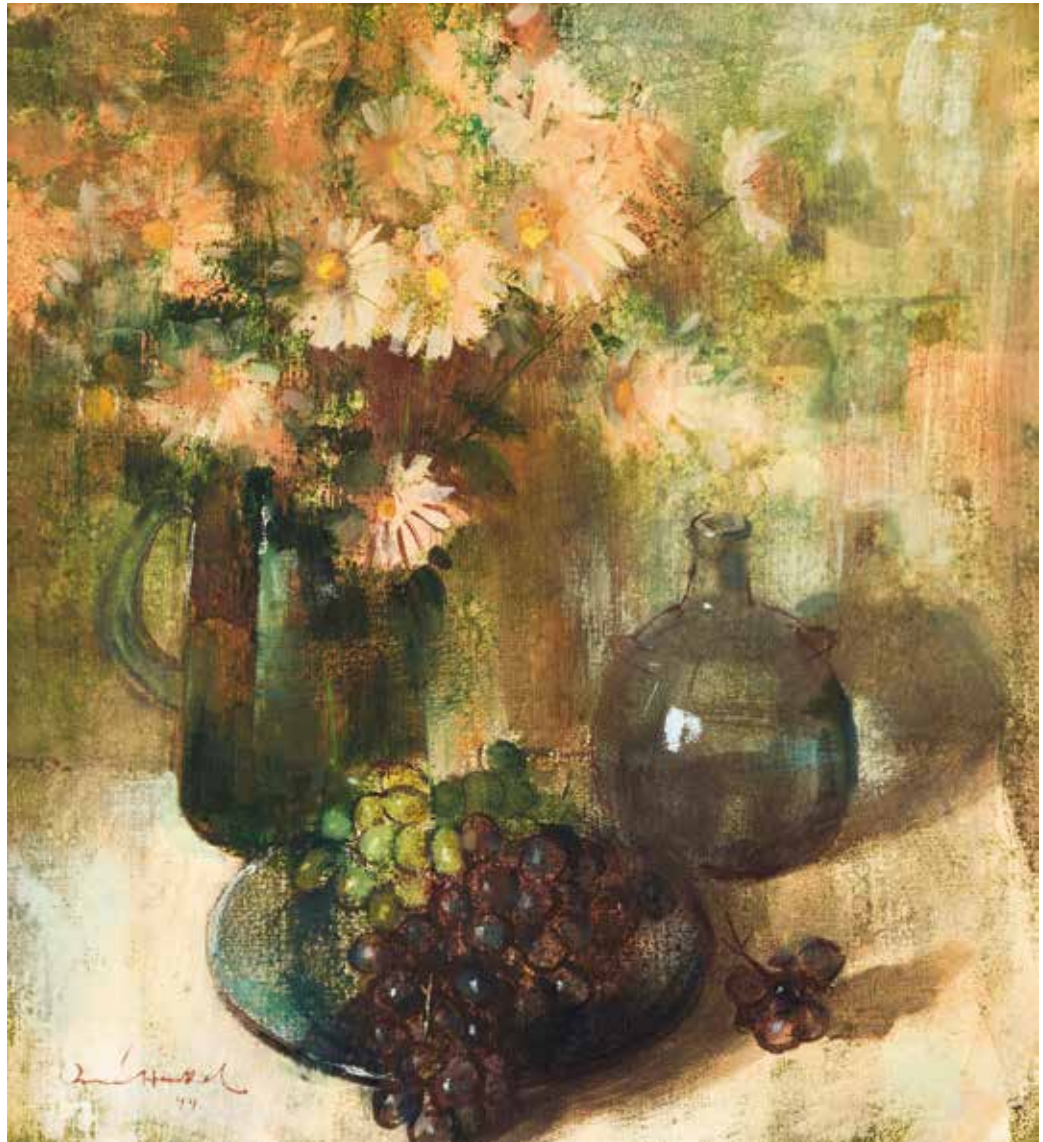
Still Life with Grapes

signed and dated 74

oil on canvas

58 by 53 cm

R100 000 – 150 000





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214

Maggie Laubser

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1973

Landscape with Grazing Cow

signed
oil on board
35 by 43 cm

R500 000 – 700 000

LITERATURE

Dalene Marais (1994) *Maggie Laubser: Her paintings, drawings and graphics*. Cape Town: Perskor. Illustrated on page 202.

PROVENANCE

Stephan Welz & Co, Johannesburg, 8 November 1999, lot 504

215

Maggie Laubser

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1973

Still Life with Flowers in a Vase

signed

oil on canvas laid down on board

50,5 by 35,5 cm

R350 000 – 550 000

PROVENANCE

Johans Borman Fine Art



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216

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Malay Woman

signed and dated 1954

oil on canvas

49 by 49 cm

R3 000 000 – 4 000 000

Irma Stern was a prolific and skillful portrait painter. Her work in this genre falls essentially into two categories: the portraits – whether commissioned or otherwise – of people in her cultural and social milieu, and the 'exotic' portraits of people she encountered on her travels to Central and East Africa. The former are compellingly observed expressions of individual character, at once demonstrating what Irma Stern Museum curator Christopher Peter calls 'a nice bit of social and personal history', as well as Stern's ability to convey a powerful sense of the sitter's personality.¹ The latter tend, as Marilyn Wyman puts it, to focus 'not on the personalities of her sitters but on the expressive quality of the swirling paint on the surface'.² In effect, these Arabs, Indians, and Africans are passive participants in the lush staging of Stern's romantic and expressive interest in exoticism and otherness, rather than fully realized individuals. Both the subjects and the paintings in which they are depicted are thus dazzlingly decorative objects, bespeaking a nostalgia for an imagined past of Baudelairean luxury, calm and voluptuousness.

This painting, of a young coloured woman, is interesting in the extent to which it straddles both these worlds. On the one hand, it is emphatically modern; the young woman's short, stylishly waved hair, fashionable dress, elegantly plucked eyebrows and make-up locating her unequivocally in Stern's temporal present. On the other, her demure attitude, dusky complexion, and almond-shaped eyes position her well within Stern's repertoire of timeless, exotic Others. The overall effect is intensely compelling, the anonymous sitter rising above stereotype to emerge powerfully as an individual. As such, it is a captivating and unusual example of Stern's artistic and personal interests, produced at a time when she was at the height of her painterly powers. Certainly, all her skill as a painter is brought to bear in the lustrous application of paint, the young woman's glowing complexion, rose-pink lips, gold earrings and vibrantly patterned dress dramatically offset by the jazzy blue-black highlights of her hair.

While the identity of the sitter has not been recorded, it appears that the painting was made in Stern's studio. The lemon-yellow background is the same colour as the walls of her studio, and the painting-within-the-painting of a nude figure in the left-hand corner is reminiscent of various figures that Stern painted on the doors and furniture in her home. In the absence of any record, one can only speculate that Stern saw this young woman somewhere in Cape Town, and, captivated by her striking appearance, asked her to sit for a portrait. Mona Berman – whose parents, Freda and Richard Feldman were close friends of Stern's, and with whom she had an ongoing correspondence – notes that Stern wrote only one letter to the Feldmans in 1954. In the letter, she states, 'I am coming for a show at the Gainsborough ... it is since 51 my last show in Johburg [sic]'.³ Given that this painting has been in the same Johannesburg family since 1954, it is likely that it was purchased at this exhibition, and indeed may have been painted specifically for the Johannesburg show.

The dynamic interplay between modernity and exoticism in this work positions it at once as a fine period piece, and quintessentially representative of Stern's remarkable *oeuvre*.

1. Federico Freschi (2011). A great seduction: The UCT Irma Stern Museum, Rosebank, Cape Town. *De Arte*, 84, page 96.

2. Marilyn Wyman (2000). Irma Stern: Envisioning the 'Exotic'. *Woman's Art Journal*, 20 (2), page 22.

3. Mona Berman (2017). Letter from Irma Stern to Freda and Richard Feldman, 7 September 1954. Personal correspondence with Federico Freschi, 27 March 2017.

Federico Freschi



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© Irma Stern Trust | DALRO

217

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Reclining Nude

signed and dated 1948
pencil and gouache on paper
50 by 63 cm

R250 000 – 400 000

LITERATURE

cf. Neville Dubow (1974) *Irma Stern*. Cape Town:
Struik. A similar work illustrated on page 40.



© Irma Stern Trust | DALRO

218

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Fishermen

signed and dated 1963

felt tip pen on paper

35.5 by 50.5 cm

R60 000 – 90 000



219

Hugo Naudé

SOUTH AFRICAN 1868–1941

Landscape with Figures and Mountains

signed

oil on board

26,5 by 36 cm

R80 000 – 120 000

PROVENANCE

The Collection of the
Late AJ Theron.



220

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

*Landscape with
Distant Mountains*

signed

oil on board

15,5 by 21 cm

R150 000 – 200 000



221

Hugo Naudé

SOUTH AFRICAN 1868–1941

View Over the Matopos

signed

oil on canvas

50 by 76 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

Naudé was the first South African to train seriously abroad, working at the Slade in London, the Kunst Akademie in Munich, and then for a year in 1895 with the Barbizon painters in Fontainebleau near Paris. It was perhaps the latter experience most of all that helped him develop his distinctive, homespun Cape Impressionist style on his return. Like the Barbizon painters before him, he set out to capture honest vignettes in the landscape, but did so using the spirited, brilliant, buttery strokes of colour that better reflected the African light around him.

The artist is perhaps best known for his spectacular springtime vistas of Namaqualand in bloom, his purple, moody mountains, and his intimate backyard scenes in Worcester, but during his wide travels across the country he painted a number of remarkable views of iconic landmarks. The present lot, a breathtaking, far-reaching view over the Matopos in Zimbabwe, is one such example. It was most likely painted on his first trip to the Victoria Falls in 1897. Naudé, like Cecil Rhodes, who chose the Matopos as his resting place, was hugely moved by the area's solitude and its endless horizons, not to mention the now familiar shapes of the prehistoric, weathered, balancing granite boulders and dramatic *kopjes*. *View Over the Matopos*, while foreshadowing his smaller-scale, more fleetingly painted pictures, is a particularly large, carefully observed, and fully realised work. Evidence of the great care the artist took to settle on his design can be found in one of his earliest sketchbooks, now in private hands, in which he drew numerous studies of the scene (right). With this sketch at hand, one is also reminded of Naudé's contribution to the great tradition of topographical pictures in the country (see also Frans Oerder's *East African Coast*, Lot 206). With its intuitive combination of creamed purples and gently-dulled yellows, *View Over the Matopos* is an earnest, beautiful record of a lost view.





222

Gregoire Boonzaier

SOUTH AFRICAN 1909–2005

Landscape with Two Oaks, Newlands, late Autumn

signed and dated 1980; signed and inscribed with the title on the reverse

oil on board

35 by 40 cm

R80 000 – 120 000



223

Gwelo Goodman

SOUTH AFRICAN 1871–1939

Cape Dutch House in Franschhoek

signed with the artist's initials

oil on canvas

50 by 45 cm

R60 000 – 90 000

224

Alfred Krenz

SOUTH AFRICAN 1899–1980

Carnival Haiti

signed and dated 54
watercolour on paper
95,5 by 83 cm

R30 000 – 50 000

LITERATURE

Ellen Davis-Mesman (1998). *The
Colourful Palette of Alfred Krenz*.
Cape Town: Ellen Davis-Mesman.
Illustrated on page 17.



225

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Shangaan

signed, inscribed 'S.A. Joh-burg' and foundry 'G. Massa Rome' on the base bronze with a brown patina, mounted on a wooden base

height: 35 cm, including base

R350 000 – 500 000

LITERATURE

ML du Toit (1933) *Suid-Afrikaanse Kunstenaars: Anton van Wouw*.

Nasionale Pers. Another cast illustrated as plate 15, unpaginated.

AE Duffey (2008) *Anton van Wouw: The Smaller Works*. Pretoria: Protea Books. Another cast illustrated on page 63.



226

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Bushman Hunter

signed and dated 1903; engraved with the artist's name and the title on a plaque adhered to the base
bronze with a brown patina, on a wooden base
height: 49,5 cm, excluding base

R400 000 – 600 000

LITERATURE

A.E. Duffey (2008) *Anton van Wouw: The Smaller Works*, Pretoria: Protea Book House. Illustrated on pages 36–37.



227

Peter Clarke

SOUTH AFRICAN 1929–2014

*Still Life with Indigenous
Flowers and Rocky
Landscape*

signed and dated 14.3.1959
gouache on paper
44 by 35,5 cm

R250 000 – 350 000



© The Estate of Peter Clarke | DALRO





228

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

*Extensive Landscape with
Mountains*

signed and indistinctly dated 1937
casein on paper laid down on paper
24 by 29 cm

R500 000 – 700 000

Because of their rarity and their brilliance, Pierneef's caseins are often considered to be his jewels. Casein, similar to poster paint or gouache, is a very strongly adhesive substance made from fresh curd, the proteins in which act as a binding agent. Pierneef discovered the medium for himself while he was awaiting art supplies ordered from the Schweickerdts firm in Pretoria, and its quick-drying properties suited his experimentation with impressionism and pointillism.

The present lot is evidence of Pierneef's mastery of the casein medium. With its small scale, detailed composition and twinkling colour, the work is a dazzling example of his dexterity as an artist. Each brushstroke is eye-catching; 'each,' AC Bouman has noted, 'is a facet of a cut crystal which the sharp cutter, Pierneef, has taken in his hand!'

¹ AC Bouman. (1938) *Art in South Africa*, Cape Town: AA Balkema, page 77.

229

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

Farm Jonkershoek with Twin Peaks Beyond, Stellenbosch

signed and dated 1928; inscribed with a dedication in another hand on the reverse

oil on canvas
73,5 by 100,5 cm

R6 000 000 – 8 000 000

PROVENANCE

Acquired by Professor A.E. du Toit, the first professor of Mathematics at the University of Pretoria, and the University's Vice-Chancellor and Principal between 1927 and 1934; thence by descent.

Dedication reads: 'To dear Susan, with much love from mama, Anne du Toit'

As a major, magnificent example by Henk Pierneef, *Farm Jonkershoek with Twin Peaks Beyond, Stellenbosch*, is at once instantly recognisable and breathtakingly unique. Painted in 1928, at the beginning of what Esmé Berman and PG Nel have long described as the artist's most celebrated period of 'discovery and mastery', the picture not only offers a beautiful, iconic view, but is also Pierneef's stunning precursor to his famous *Stellenbosch* panel that was installed in the Johannesburg Railway Station in November 1932 (fig.1). No comparison between the two versions has been possible until now as the present lot has always remained in private hands, and has never been exhibited or illustrated.

Although Pierneef and his family had settled briefly in Hilversum and Rotterdam during the Anglo-Boer War, the artist made his first professional trip to Europe in July 1925. With his wife May he visited London, Rotterdam, Dusseldorf, Munich, Berlin, Paris, Antwerp and Bruges, and was endlessly struck by the various guises of modernism he encountered, as well as the lingering aesthetic of Art Nouveau. In Amsterdam he met Anton Hendriks (who would later become the director of the Johannesburg Art Gallery) and Willem van Konijnenburg, whose art theories, based in the main on severe geometric principles and harmonious proportion, made an immediate impact on him.

Back home, energised by his European experiences, and armed with a hoard of catalogues and books on Impressionism, Neo-Impressionism, Symbolism and

Art Nouveau, Pierneef felt ready to adjust his style, assimilate his new influences, 'deliver a heavy blow on the Pretoria frontier', and to 'shock many an art connoisseur.' In this vein, he revealed some of his early, gently modern experiments with mixed success at small shows at the Levson Gallery and Girls' High School in Pretoria in 1926, and at Lezard's in Johannesburg in 1927. While some critics encouraged his new-found *avant-garde* spirit, buyers were more cautious. A much larger exhibition the following year in Polliack's Music Shop in Pretoria, however, which featured a good number of deliberately reduced, markedly geometric compositions with Symbolist undercurrents, while generating much debate, proved a financial disaster. Works such as *Study in Blue* and *Komposisie – Geometriese Landskap* (fig.2), now deservedly iconic, were widely panned, and the artist was persuaded to turn back towards his more familiar, monumental style. *Farm Jonkershoek with Twin Peaks Beyond, Stellenbosch*, executed in the same year as the Polliack show, is particularly special as it captures most spectacularly the moment of the artist's stylistic transition. The mountainside splintered into shards of pure colour is an obvious link to his recent European exposure, while van Konijnenburg would have appreciated the linear clarity, architectonic structure and proportional discipline on show, but in depicting the simple vernacular homestead nestled amongst ordered gardens and enormous, watchful trees, Pierneef returned to a more characteristic and endearing mode.

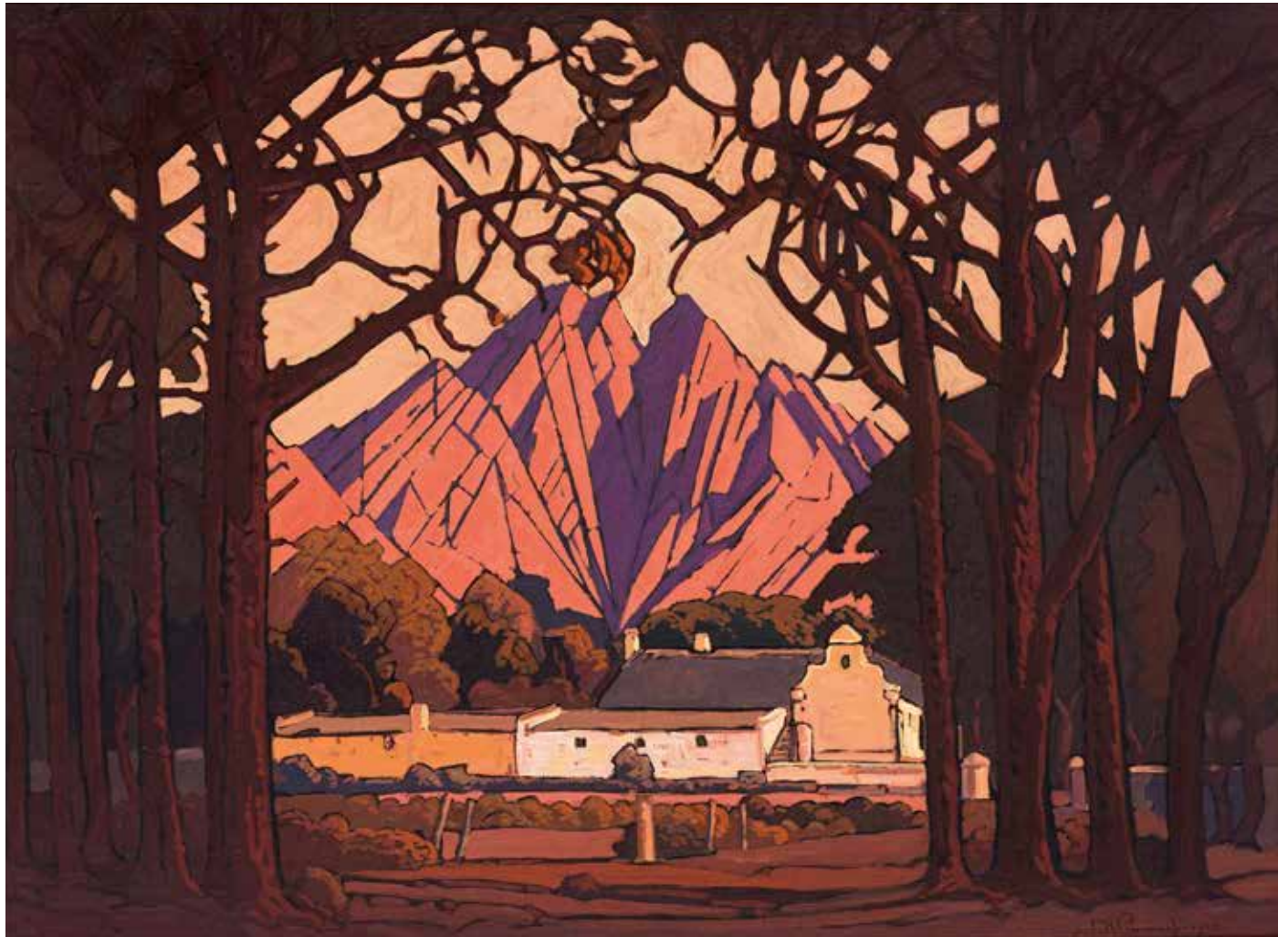
continued on page 184



Fig 1. *Stellenbosch* panel.



Fig 2. *Geometriese Landskap*.



continued from page 182

Pierneef painted a number of smaller canvases using a comparable viewpoint. *Die Pieke vanaf Lanzaac* (1925) in the Pretoria Art Museum, with its vineyards in shadow, and the ridges and clouds painted up in similar crimsons, lavenders and carmine, immediately comes to mind, as does a much earlier, more painterly example that the artist presented as a wedding gift to a friend in 1923. But neither have the weight and power of *Farm Jonkershoek with Twin Peaks Beyond, Stellenbosch*, nor indeed do they conjure the same sense of sheer decorative delight.

Pierneef was a master printmaker, having been guided in the medium by George Smithard, Pieter Wenning and Frans Oerder, and there is a controlled, graphic element, and a search for essential form, evident in many of his milestone paintings, including the present lot. The Twin Peaks in the painting, in particular, with their angular, carved lines and panes of colour, bears a striking stylistic resemblance to at least two of the artist's well-loved linocuts from 1922 and 1925 (fig.3 is the former), as well as the admittedly later covers of *Die Stellenbosse Student* and *Die Nuwe Brandwag* (fig. 4 is the latter).

One of the more memorable aspects of the painting's composition is the group of aged, elegant, straight-trunked trees that frame the view of the homestead and the Peaks. Their dark, entangled branches that arc through the sky form a graceful and masterfully-carved Art Nouveau tracery that is accentuated by the rose, dusky light behind. The compositional choice had a number of precedents in the artist's *oeuvre*. Perhaps the earliest are two stage backdrops that Pierneef designed for the production of *Amakeia*, a poem by AG Visser (1886–1929). One of these, *Amatola*, captured in a 1920 aquatint (fig.5), offers a particularly interesting comparison. It is also a neat coincidence that the stage-like composition from 1920 re-frames such a theatrical view at Jonkershoek in 1928.

Works of this quality and size are few and far between, and a more dramatic, spine-tingling combination of coloured fragments in mauve, violet and electric pink could not have been locked together anymore beautifully.

1. See letter from Pierneef to T.M. Steele, dated 3 September 1925 (Johannesburg Art Gallery: J.H. Pierneef Collection); also see PG Nel (ed), JH Pierneef: *His Life and His Works*. Johannesburg: Peskor, 1990, page 67.



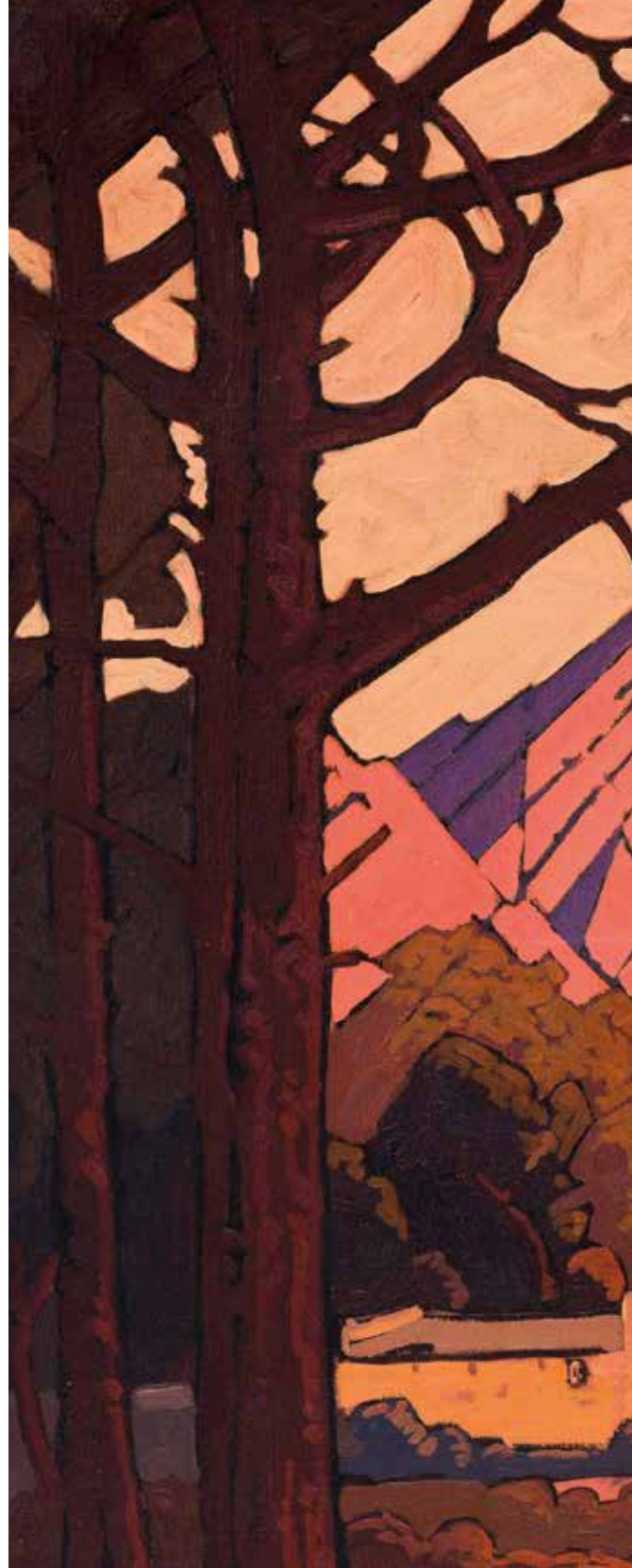
Fig 3. Twin Peaks, 1925.



Fig 4. Cover of *Die Stellenbosse Student*.



Fig 5. *Amatola*, 1920.





230

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Die Noitje van die Onderveld

signed, dated 1907 and inscribed with the title, 'SA Joh-burg', 'Transvaal Rustenburg syn distrikt', 'Fonderia G Nisini Roma' on the base
bronze with a brown patina
height: 44 cm, including base

R300 000 – 500 000

LITERATURE

ML du Toit (1933) *Suid Afrikaanse Kunstenaars: Anton van Wouw*. Nationale Pers. Another cast illustrated as plate 5, unpaginated.
AE Duffey (2008) *Anton van Wouw: The Smaller Works*. Pretoria: Protea Book House. Another cast illustrated on pages 56–58.



231

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Kruger on the Station

signed, inscribed 'S.J.P. Kruger', 'SA'
and 'foundry G. Massa. Rome.'
bronze with a brown patina,
mounted on a wooden base
height: 22,5 cm excluding base

R250 000 – 350 000

PROVENANCE

The Collection of the
Late AJ Theron.

LITERATURE

A.E. Duffey (2008) *Anton van
Wouw: The Smaller Works*, Pretoria:
Protea Book House. Illustrated on
pages 104.







232

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

Storm Over the Lowveld

signed and dated 42

oil on board

44,5 by 60 cm

R500 000 – 700 000

The many sketches of clouds in the South African National Archives in Pretoria, and the significant number of oils featuring clouds beyond the landscape, attest to Pierneef's fascination with this subject matter. The present lot depicts one such typical cumulonimbus cloud formation hovering over a flattened, wintery lowveld landscape with a shadowed foreground, and a slim line of deep blue mountains on the horizon that dramatically contrast with the reflecting sunlight. A similar work, *Wolke*, from 1952, forms part of the Pierneef collection in the La Motte Museum, Franschoek.



233

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

***Extensive Landscape,
Northern Drakensberg***

signed

oil on canvas

75 by 90 cm

R3 000 000 – 4 000 000

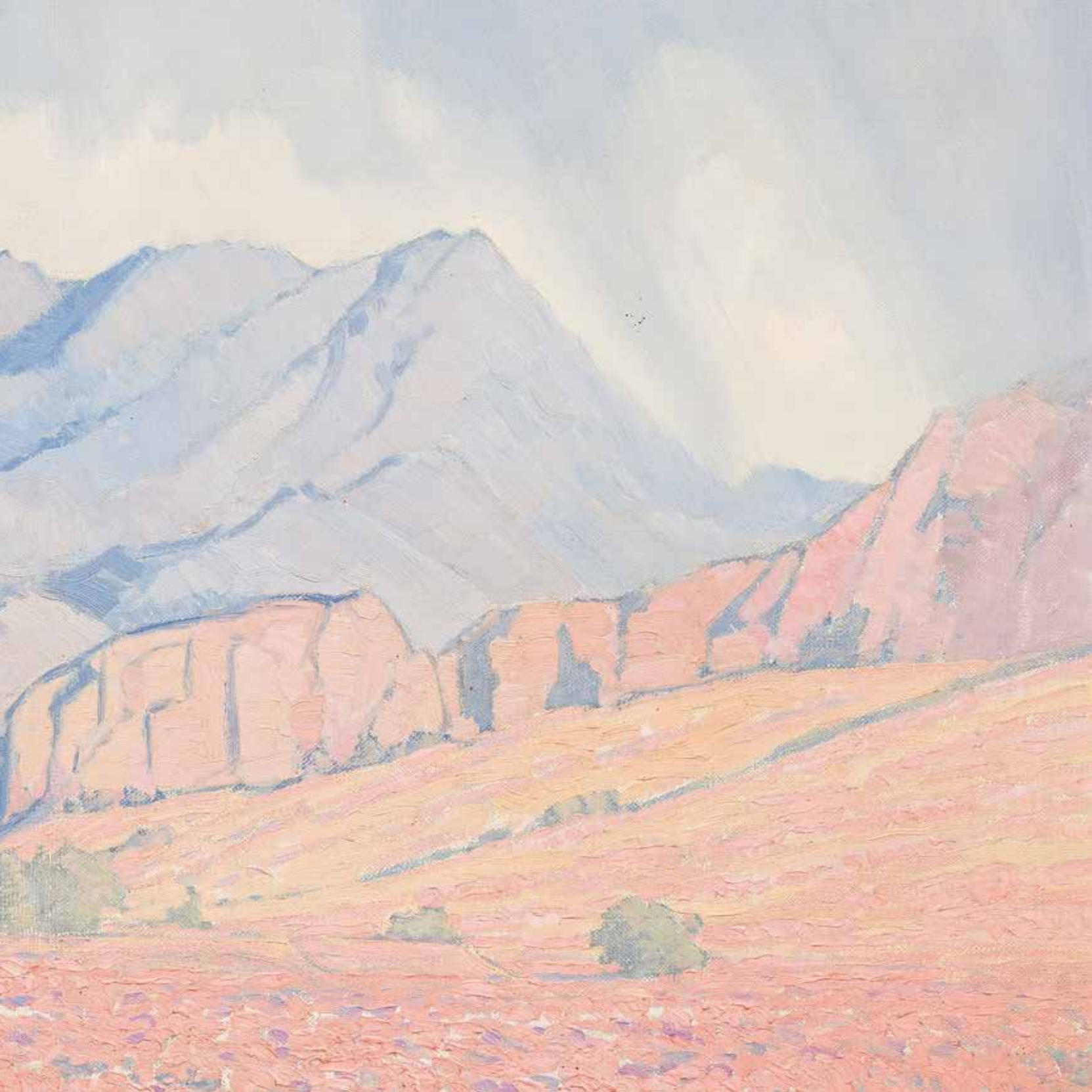
In terms of composition, the present lot recalls many of Pierneef's majestic mountain landscapes in his eponymous Johannesburg Railway Station panels. In no fewer than 14 of the 32 panels Pierneef depicted towering ranges from various parts of South Africa. This very large canvas, with its golden overall effect, has a strong affinity in particular with the *Drakensberg* and *Mount-aux-Sources* panels. The resemblance is particularly evident in the diagonal lines that criss-cross the picture plane, creating steep cliff formations and deep, mysterious valleys beyond.

Extensive Landscape, Northern Drakensberg suggests the variety of Pierneef's painterly practice: the pointillistic style of the short shrubs in the foreground; the decorative, geometric abstraction of the cliffs towards the right; and the impressionistic, colourful clouds above is evidence of his technical diversity and mastery of his medium. The beautiful combination also points to his inherent sense of pictorial harmony. In the opinion of Gré van der Waal-Braaksma, 'The colours emphasise the geometric outline and in an understated way separate the different levels and planes from one another. This intellectual approach and structure strengthens the mood of the African scenery in its austerity and its brilliance.'

1. PG Nel. (1990) *JH Pierneef: His Life and his Work*. Cape Town and Johannesburg:Perskor Publishers, page 144.









234

Jean Welz

SOUTH AFRICAN 1900–1975

Picnic

signed and dated 58

oil on board

45,4 by 54 cm

R150 000 – 250 000



235

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

Gauguin's Beach, Tahiti

signed and inscribed with the title

oil on canvas

44 by 49,5 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

Battiss was fascinated by Gauguin from an early age. He placed the Frenchman high on the list of artists to be studied, as is evident from the syllabus he drew up for his students at Pretoria Boys' High where he taught intermittently from 1936 (the syllabus and his class notes are presently housed in the school's museum). Gauguin left France for Tahiti in 1891, writing in his autobiography, *Noa Noa*, that in doing so he had 'escaped everything that is artificial and conventional'. Battiss visited the same island in 1978, and made a watercolour of Gauguin's grave. He also visited what he thought of as 'Gauguin's Beach', marking the special moment by including playful semi-nudes and the full title on the canvas. 'Like Gauguin, Battiss was deeply interested in the mythical or cosmological nature of indigenous cultures and felt the need to escape, in some manner, the confines of his own restrictive world.'¹

¹ Karel Nel. (2016) 'Rock Pools and Islands: The Imaginative Landscape of Walter Battiss: King of Fook' in Warren Siebrits. (2016) *Walter Battiss: 'I invented myself', The Jack Ginsberg Collection*. Ampersand Publications, page 306.



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236

Gerard Sekoto

SOUTH AFRICAN 1913–1993

Leaving the Township for Work

signed and dated '72; inscribed with the artist's name, medium and the title on a Johans Borman Fine Art Gallery label adhered to the reverse

gouache on paper

38 by 56 cm

R80 000 – 120 000

237

Gerard Sekoto

SOUTH AFRICAN 1913–1993

Dog Drinking Water

signed and dated '72; inscribed with the artist's name, medium and the title on a Johans Borman Fine Art Gallery label adhered to the reverse
gouache on paper
56,5 by 38 cm

R80 000 – 120 000

LITERATURE

Barbara Lindop (1988) *Gerard Sekoto*.
Randburg: Dictum. Illustrated on
page 256.



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Alexis Preller

SOUTH AFRICAN 1911–1975

Still Life with Thangka and Pomegranates

signed and dated '51

oil on canvas

55 by 67,5 cm

R4 000 000 – 5 000 000**PROVENANCE**

Purchased directly from the artist.

After Alexis Preller's return in 1949 from his painting sojourn along the east coast of Africa in the remote island group of the Seychelles, he painted the 1951 *Still Life with Thangka and Pomegranates* and was to undertake a number of similarly sized still lifes over the next three years that evoked a sumptuous exoticism in their use of rich colour and evocative ambience. Preller's compositions capture the still life from a slightly elevated view, revealing the objects perfectly arrayed across a shallow shelf. In another work such as *Seychellois Still Life, 1949*, the pomegranates, lemons, flowers and the flamboyantly coloured leaves are painted in typically Prelleresque dark mauves, pinks, oranges, yellows, lime greens and viridian. The works are also punctuated with strident lapis blue accents which further enliven their visual syntax.

These works all share a shallow composition, the space articulated by draped cloth that cascades over the edge in the foreground, a definitive device quoted from the great European tradition of carefully constructed still life paintings to be seen from Chardin and Cézanne to Gauguin. Preller embraces this tradition to his own ends and

transforms the everyday talismans of his life into a more symbolic visual tableau, something more akin to the works of Gauguin, the abiding influence on his work.

Preller drapes his still lifes luxuriantly with plain coloured or distinctively decorated cloths. These geometrically decorated Swahili cloths, collected from the east African coast, form a dramatic backdrop to the objects, their strident graphic detail used by Preller to activate, animate or structure the composition. In the 1951 *Still Life with Thangka and Pomegranates*, the brilliant red patterned edge of the cloth snakes its way through the objects in the mid-ground, the black serrations on it like the teeth of a crocodile creating an unnerving leitmotif. The backdrop of cloth puckers into a mountain-like form which then cascades downwards across the surface spilling over the front edge of the shelf.

In the Tatham Art Gallery's version, *Still Life with Pomegranates* of 1951, and in the work on auction, the Persian vase, so often seen in Preller's work, becomes a central object, its elegant tapered form and lyrically decorated surface with its arabesque of flowers, leaves and patterned roundels is a

significant recurring object in Preller's work. This vase, given to him as a boy by his mother, was cherished and was often referred to by Preller as one of his 'household gods', a collection of modest but important objects that were to inspire works throughout his lifetime.

Finally, the mythological tableau in the background evokes a radiant sage surrounded by an aura, a mandorla of light. A gathering of seated figures with halos surround him and seem to pay obeisance to him. The fascinating fact is that this central holy figure seems a direct reference to a fine Tibetan thangka which Preller owned and hung in pride of place above his fireplace on the back wall of his beloved small thatched home, *Ygdrasil*, on the outskirts of Pretoria. An historic photograph by Constant Stuart shows Preller standing next to this ornately gilt-framed thangka in the large living space of his studio, surrounded by a number of significant Preller still lifes of the time, including *The Feast* of 1946 and the mysterious *Strange Altar* of 1945.

Karel Nel

The Persian vase.

Alexis Preller, *Still Life with Pomegranates*, 1951 – Tatham Art Gallery.Preller standing below his Tibetan thangka above the fireplace at *Ygdrasil*, circa 1948.Cézanne *Table Napkin with Fruit* – Barnes Foundation.







239

Maurice Louis van Essche

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1977

Congolese Women

signed
oil on board
58,5 by 48 cm

R150 000 – 200 000

Elements of radical stylisation and simplification characterised Maurice van Essche's paintings throughout his life. Both works presented for auction, *Congolese Figures* and *Two Congolese Women*, typify the artist's rendering of beautifully composed groupings of Congolese women gracefully going about their daily tasks framed by stark tree trunks and branches.

The artist's romanticised rendering of African life has a strong linear quality with his characteristic elongated figures draped in white and softly shaded blue, pink and yellow cloth, the off-the-shoulder garments adding a seductiveness to *Congolese Figures*. In this work the staged and dramatically stylised figures are contrasted against rich earthy reds, deep orange and a commanding royal blue background that further accentuates the theatricality of the painting.

Van Essche was born in Belgium and studied art at the Brussels Academy (1924–25) under the expressionist and surrealist artist James Ensor and later, in 1933, he worked with Henri Matisse after a chance encounter with the artist. In 1939 he won a scholarship from the Belgian Government that took him on a painting expedition to the Belgian Congo, an experience that was to have a profound influence on his art making.



240

Maurice Louis van Essche

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1977

Two Congolese Women

signed

oil on board

64 by 53 cm

R180 000 – 240 000

Two Congolese Women is an unusually bold portrayal of two women, seemingly a mother and daughter, one with a white top and the other in a white skirt of draped fabric over their rich brown bodies. The mother figure steadfastly commands at least half the surface of the painting and the young bare chested girl and stripped down tree, both set back, occupy the remaining space. In this work Van Essche renders the stylised figures, and the bare tree, with more fluid and curvaceous lines, lending an added sensuality, elegance and grace to this work. Typically Van Essche retains his distinctive theatrical setting that he has here accentuated with the richness of the background painted in large swathes of distinctive orange and midnight blue tones.

Van Essche arrived in South Africa in 1940 and soon became a prominent member of the art community. Van Essche's work differed greatly from earlier South African portrayals of African subjects as he filtered his subject matter through a modernist prism. He generously imparted his knowledge of modern and historical European painting, and his influence and authority on the South African art establishment was far-reaching. He significantly bolstered the modern movement in South Africa and had a remarkable influence on a younger generation of artists such as Stanley Pinker, Erik Laubscher and then emerging black artists including George Pemba. Van Essche was also at the forefront of efforts to get South African art recognised abroad.





241

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

East African Village

signed; inscribed with the title on the reverse

oil on canvas

20 by 40 cm

R120 000 – 160 000



242

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906-1982

Congolese Village Scene

signed

oil on canvas

29,5 by 40 cm

R80 000 – 100 000





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243

Maggie Laubser

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1973

*Landscape with Water Carriers
and Geese*

signed
oil on board
39 by 49,5 cm

R700 000 – 1 000 000

PROVENANCE

Purchased from Frieda van Schalkwyk,
Pretoria art dealer, in 1990

After her first exhibition in Cape Town in 1925 was met with great scepticism by critics and the general public, Laubser retreated to the family farm in Oortmanspost, Malmesbury. She had just returned from her travels in Germany where she had been exposed to the work of Marc, a member of Der Blaue Reiter, as well as Nolde, Schmidt-Rottloff and Pechstein, all of whom had been members of Die Brücke in Dresden. Life on the farm inspired her anew: 'At the back of the farmhouse there was a large dam and every evening I used to watch the cows coming to drink, and the coloured women with babies on their backs to fill their buckets. Near the dam the geese were kept. How many a time, when they were hatching, out of curiosity, did I not approach their nests? There was a whirring and flapping of wings with a hoarse cry, and if I had come too near, I am sure they would have attacked me!'

1. See transcript for 'I Remember' feature in *SABC Bulletin*,
24 June 1963.

244

Gerard de Leeuw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1912–1985

Mother and Child

signed and dated 80
bronze, mounted on a wooden base
height: 57,5 cm including base

R150 000 – 200 000



245

Alexis Preller

SOUTH AFRICAN 1911–1975

Portrait of Pat Philip

oil on canvas laid down on board
20 by 15,5 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

The present lot shows a woman in a stage-costume dress, with her distinctive, elongated profile set against a graded, emerald green light. Reminiscent of the devotional, *quattrocento* portraits by the likes of Lippi, Piero and Botticelli, the work sits neatly with Preller's numerous other formal profile portraits such as *Girl with an Oriole* (1948) and *The Gateway* (1949). While Preller very rarely painted recognisable portraits of his close circle, the sitter in this instance is certainly the artist's dear friend, Pat Philip. She appeared in at least three other paintings by Preller: she was the subject of *The Profile* (1952), which was exhibited at the Galerie Vincent; the very same work was painted into *The Long Shelf* (1952); while Karel Nel, co-author of the recent, double-volume monograph on Alexis Preller, has also suggested that she was the likely model for the recently re-discovered *Woman with Red Hair* or *Ophelia* (1944).

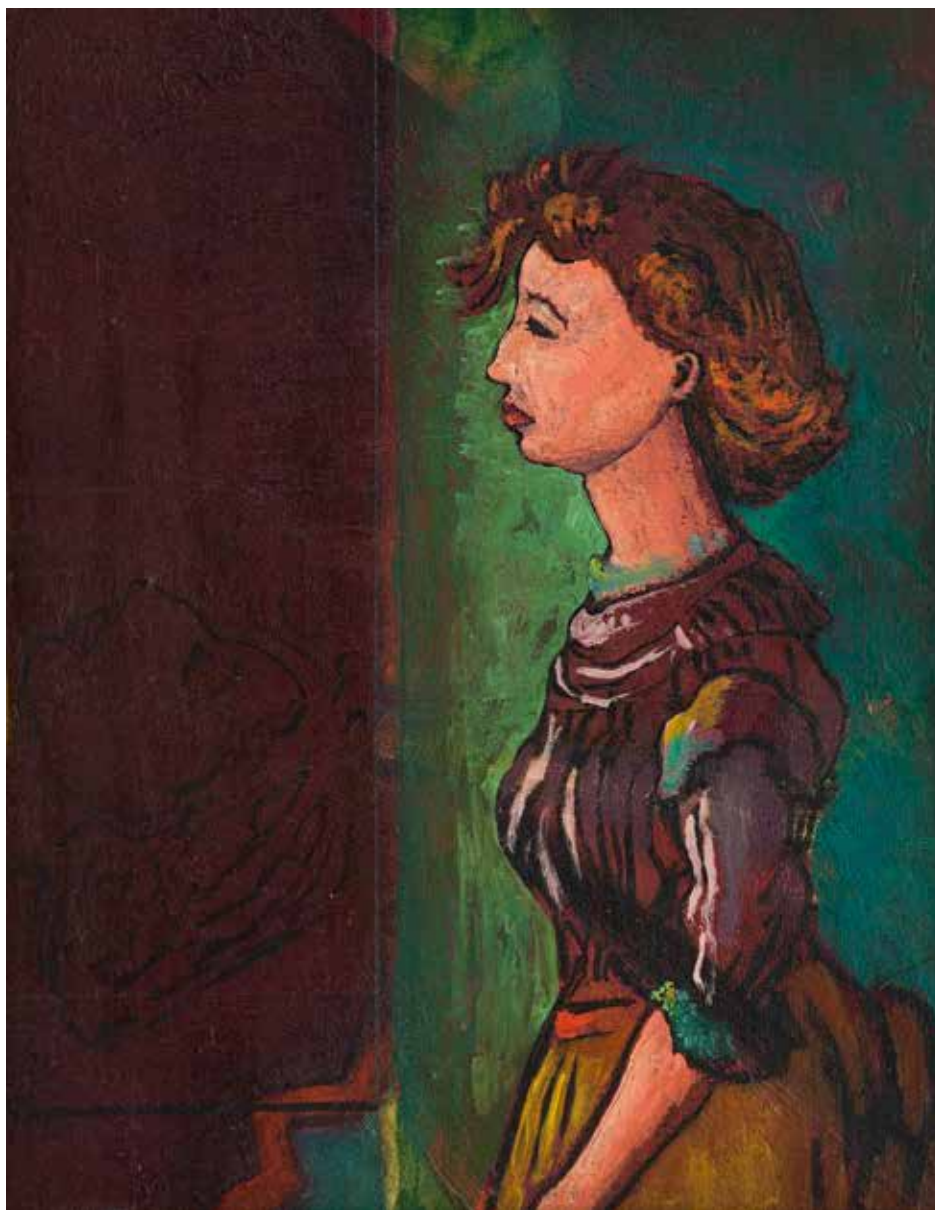
Interestingly, for many years Pat Philip owned both the *The Profile* and *The Long Shelf*. She also kept the present lot as it comes to auction directly from the sitter's relative.



Woman with Red Hair or Ophelia



Pat Philip in front of *The Profile*.



246

Alexis Preller

SOUTH AFRICAN 1911–1975

Still Life with Barotse Vessel, Red Cloth and Petunias

signed and dated '40

oil on canvas

34,5 by 59,5 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

PROVENANCE

Purchased from Mastromatteo, Pretoria, and thence by descent.

In retrospect, this seemingly unassuming still life painted by Alexis Preller in 1940, the year he signed up to join the South African Medical Corps, has a wistful but significant allusion to his earlier studies at the Westminster School of Art in London under Mark Gertler. Gertler was at the time a prominent London painter closely associated with the Bloomsbury Group which included figures such as the writer Virginia Woolf, and the painters Vanessa and Clive Bell, Duncan Grant and others.

The famous country home, Charleston, which this group frequented and decorated in a distinctive manner influenced by the Fauves had mantelpieces, walls and furniture painted with flat decorations of flowers, plants and figures. The distinctive palette of soft yellows, salmons, violet, greens, oranges and turquoise became a signature feature of this moment in English art history. The simplified and stylised decorative domesticity of these interiors and the works produced by the associated painters were to influence a movement of which this early Preller work is an echo.

In the previous year of 1939 Preller had undertaken an ambitious painting expedition, driving all the way from South Africa up into the Belgian Congo, staying en route at Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika. Here he acquired three Barotse terracotta vessels; a pair of characteristically sleek shaped Lodzi birds and an unusual small figure with a large vessel-shaped head. These three modest objects added to his collection were to become part of his 'household gods' and were to influence his work in time, appearing in many guises in his work throughout his lifetime.

This *Still Life with Barotse Vessel, Red Cloth and Petunias* painted just prior to Preller's departure for North Africa at the outset of World War II, includes one of these birds for the first time. Here the depiction of a series of ostensibly disconnected objects has an eerie uncertainty about it. Preller includes in this work a book in the far left corner with the Barotse bird seemingly gazing at it, a strident draped salmon-red cloth centrally placed unusually dominates the still life. To the left a small green sculpture of a female water bearer jostles for attention. A Nile-green vase, placed on the tail-end of the salmon drape, is filled with half open petunias in violet, pinks, and purples. The distinctive decorative flatness of the work with its simplified and stylised rendition of objects is played off against the soft yellows and greens that permeate the whole composition, all harking back to the English influences of the Bloomsbury.

In 1945 on Preller's return from the war he takes refuge in his small house, *Ygdrasil*, on the outskirts of Pretoria and continues to paint a number of strangely beautiful but disarming still lifes of the same Barotse birds entitled *Strange Altar* (1945) and *Strange Altar in the Studio* (1946), but these paintings are populated with hauntingly mysterious figures and are in stark contrast to gentleness of his earlier still life.

Karel Nel





247

Sydney Kumalo

SOUTH AFRICAN 1935–1988

Figure on Bull

signed and numbered 4/9
bronze with a brown patina
height: 39 cm

R300 000 – 400 000



248

Cecil Skotnes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1926–2009

Encounter

signed

carved, incised and painted wood panel
122 by 120,5 cm

R500 000 – 700 000

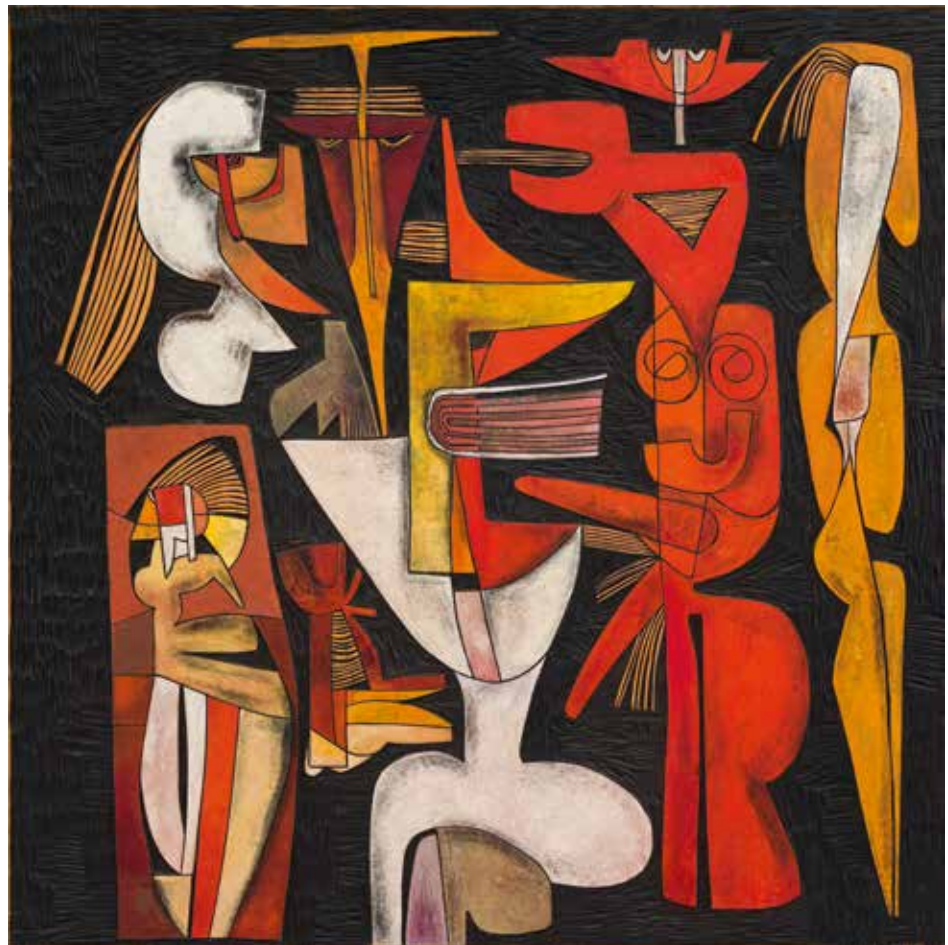
PROVENANCE

Purchased directly from the artist by the current owners and thence by descent.

This large, square, incised wooden panel, so characteristic of Cecil Skotnes's work, was most probably produced in the early 1970s at the time when Skotnes had been commissioned to undertake the large mural for Ciba-Geigy for their Johannesburg offices in 1971. Both works are characterised by Skotnes's tendency to simplify the human form into a series of bold, flat coloured shapes in contrast to the delicate filigrees and tracteries in his panels of the 1960s.

In *Encounter*, a group of five or six vertical figures interact, while a group of syncopated shapes and forms, with stylised details, imply heads, breasts, torsos and legs. The stylised faces with striking eyes and vertical nose-like accents stare out at us in an imposing manner. The intense vermillion, ochre, white and red is amplified by the dark whittled surface of the background panel. The applied pigments have a textured roughness which is characteristic of Skotnes's inclusion of marble dust into the paint giving the surface a patina like quality associated with the application of significant pigments in ritual art. The inventive physiognomy in Skotnes's figures alludes to interest in the abstract rendition of the human body as seen in much traditional African sculpture which he collected, was particularly interested in and was to influence his work throughout his life.

Karel Nel



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249

Edoardo Villa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1915–2011

Sentinel – Automaton

ducoed Polystyrene

height: 130,5 cm

R80 000 – 120 000

This humorous bright orange two-sided vertical sculpture has a distinctly robotic feel. An unusual piece produced in 1990, it is surprisingly constructed of Polystyrene industrial components, sprayed with a glossy duco which consolidates the piece into a coherent whole.

Edoardo Villa's experimentation with this challenging new material that was simultaneously bulky and light enabled him to produce works which would have a volumetric dimension quite different to the planar qualities of steel, his preferred medium. This piece was exhibited in 1991 at the Standard Bank Gallery in Johannesburg amidst a body of similarly brightly coloured ducoed sculptures, each dramatically displayed in its own gleaming Perspex box. This solo exhibition startled his viewing public by his playful and innovative use of Polystyrene, an essentially 'throwaway' medium. These works challenged the viewer's preconceptions of his use of more weighty materials and subject matter. This compact vertical orange robotic figure configured of industrial packaging has a rectangular robotic face, large eyes, and complexly articulated body with humorous square-toed feet. It is probably broadly located within public consciousness by the popular precedent of the delightful diminutive 'automaton' R2D2, from Star Wars. Edoardo Villa in 1990 had visited the Venice Biennale and seemingly was prompted to explore the use of unconventional materials. Over successive years visiting the Biennale, Villa had spent time with his lifelong friends Vittorino and Paulina Meneghelli in their historic family Pallazo in Mestre on the coastline near Venice. Meneghelli, in Johannesburg, was the owner of an influential African art gallery, Totem Meneghelli in Jeppe Street, that specialised in both traditional African art and artefacts as well as showing the work of significant contemporary artists such as Cecil Skotnes, Pino Cattaneo and Aileen Lipkin. Meneghelli, an ardent admirer and collector of Villa's work, had an influential effect on the artists whose studios he frequented, at times shifting their direction by his forceful and innovative views. *Sentinel – Automaton* was in the Meneghelli collection and I surmise that he had a hand in the genesis of this challenging body of Villa's work.

Karel Nel



250

Edoardo Villa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1915–2011

Fortress Figure

signed, dated 2010 and incorrectly numbered II/VI;

from an edition of 3 with an artist's proof

bronze

height: 113 cm

R600 000 – 800 000

EXHIBITED

Nirox Sculpture Park, Magaliesberg, *Arnaldo Pomodoro and Edoardo Villa: A Sculptural Dialogue*, 5 June – 31 July 2010

The cast bronze versions of the Polystyrene sculptures of 1990 have a distinctly serious and inhuman mechanistic quality in stark contrast to the lightness and brightness of the Polystyrene series shown at the Standard Bank Gallery. The compact works have an architectonic quality, abstract, yet at times are punctuated with small robotic or anthropomorphic allusions to faces or body parts. The interlocking and overlapping elements of the original Polystyrene, while not being obviously revealing of the shapes of objects they were designed to protect, reveal their extruded nature and the spaces which are created in them suggest absent but pre-existent forms. The deep recessive, buttresses and futuristic 'architectural' elements in the works produce a science-fiction-like edifice. Many of the compositions are relief like and could read as control panels of sorts or as mechanistic, high relief cyphers. Some are characterised by aggressive saw toothed ridges that were to find their way into many subsequent steel configurations.

The one off bronze sculptures cast in the 1990s by Irene Metal Industries Sculpture are extremely heavy due to the innovative process of their casting, as is the editioned work presented for auction. For the earlier 1990 bronzes, oil impregnated casting sand was packed around the original Polystyrene prototypes creating a direct mould. Molten bronze was then poured onto a funnel attached to the fragile Polystyrene sculpture. The extreme heat of the bronze vaporised the Polystyrene on impact, filling the cavity with molten bronze to the top of the funnel. In so doing it literally cast the sculpture in solid bronze rather than as a hollow shell characteristic of the traditional lost wax method. The solid mass of bronze was left to solidify and cool, later excavated and removed from the packed sand mould before being cleaned and patinated. The accuracy of this technique of casting is to be seen on all the surfaces of the one off sculptures where the original injection moulded texture of the Polystyrene is perfectly reproduced.

In 2010 Edoardo Villa gave permission for moulds of a pair of his 1990 Polystyrene sculptures to be made and cast in an edition of 3, and an artist's proof, in solid bronze. A pair of these sculptures was exhibited on the 2010 exhibition *Arnaldo Pomodoro and Edoardo Villa: A Sculptural Dialogue* at the Nirox Sculpture Park, Magaliesberg. Villa died the following year, 2011, and no bronzes are permitted to be cast posthumously.

Karel Nel



251

Sydney Kumalo

SOUTH AFRICAN 1935–1988

The Little Dancer

signed with the artist's initials and

numbered IV/X

bronze with a green patina,

mounted on a wooden base

height: 31 cm, excluding base

R150 000 – 200 000





252

Sydney Kumalo

SOUTH AFRICAN 1935–1988

Reclining Mapogga

signed and numbered 1-5
bronze with a brown patina
length: 60 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

This low slung stretched image of a reclining woman with stylised bands around her neck alludes to a ceremonially dressed Mapogga woman, her

neck characteristically decorated with brass rings. The title *Mapogga* refers to a distinctive Ndebele speaking nation situated north of Pretoria, known for their dramatic beaded dress, decorated architecture and cultural innovation.

The reclining figure as subject for Kumalo appears more dominantly after 1967 when Kumalo changes his representative gallery from Egon Guenther's Gallery to Goodman Gallery. Kumalo had worked closely with the dealer Egon Guenther in close proximity to his collection of classical African art. These African works and Guenther's interest in German Expressionism had a strong influence on Kumalo's sculptures produced in the early 1960s. His

wide range of works is characterised by powerful vertical and crouching *madala* (old man) figures, satirical heads and predatory animals with highly worked striated and pock-hammered surfaces.

In the contrasting work, *Mapogga*, the smooth dark bronze surface and stylised forms of the reclining figure make direct reference to the work of Henry Moore who Goodman Gallery represented in South Africa and exhibited on occasions. Kumalo was exposed to Moore's work here as well as in his wider looking at world art, and both were to make a significant impression on his works at the time.

Karel Nel



253

Cecil Skotnes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1926–2009

Tapestry for The President Hotel

signed by the artist and weaver

hand-woven tapestry

335 by 488 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

PROVENANCE

The President Hotel

Dr Peter Wissekerke Collection

The President Hotel, bounded by Eloff, Plein and De Villiers Streets in Johannesburg, opened in October 1967 and cost its investors then in excess of R7 000 000. Thankfully, a significant share of the budget was set aside to fund a number of commanding, site-specific new artworks by Transvaal artists. Major paintings by Aileen Lipkin, for instance, depicting the geological wealth of the Rand, were hung on the first floor of the building, while Walter Battiss and Larry Scully, both encouraged to draw inspiration from the local countryside and cityscape, provided a pair of paintings each for the second floor. Carved and painted mural panels offering wide views of the veld, moreover, were executed by Pino Cattaneo for the so-called Transvaal Room. But perhaps the showpiece of the hotel's decorative scheme was the present lot, a luxurious, vast tapestry woven by Marguerite Stephens from a design by Cecil Skotnes. Composed with geometric and contrasting segments of yellow, amber, maize, ochre, olive and charcoal, and measuring nearly 3,5m by 4,5m when unfurled, the tapestry took pride of place in the hotel's palatial central lobby (see photo on page 213).

Remarkably, The President Hotel tapestry was one of Marguerite's earliest commissions as a professional weaver. Without any assistance, limited by a modest Gobelin loom in her mother's hand-weaving studio in Swaziland, and using aniline-dyed mohair that was hand-carded and hand-spun, she completed it according to the artist's original cartoon over a period of six months. The central, frieze-like section of the work, brilliant in colour and enlivened by birds in flight, fish, and stylised, upward-arching branches, was as wide as her loom would allow, while the two narrower sections above and below it, made up of a patchwork of greys, were each produced separately.

Besides its striking and obvious decorative quality, there are few better examples in a South African context of the power of collaboration. The splendour of the work relies just as much on the artist-designer as it does on the artist-weaver. Moreover, as Marguerite went on to produce tapestries with Cecily Sash, Edouardo Villa, Sydney Kumalo, Robert Hodgins and Judith Mason, and continues to do so with the likes of Norman Catherine, Penny Siopis, Karel Nel, Sam Nhlengethwa and William Kentridge, The President Hotel example should be recognised as a vital catalyst for the medium.



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254

Cecil Skotnes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1926–2009

Kist for The President Hotel

incised and painted wooden panels
92 by 404 by 79 cm

R500 000 – 700 000

PROVENANCE

The President Hotel
Dr Peter Wissekerke Collection

Skotnes made this kist to accompany and complement his tapestry. Marguerite Stephens recalls the two works being unveiled together, and being seen very much as a centrepiece ensemble in the Hotel's main lobby. The same stylised birds from the tapestry re-appeared on the kist's heavy lid, while the artist's familiar, elongated figures, incised and painted in his characteristic red, yellow, black and white palette, dominated the guest-facing, front panel.





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255

Cecil Skotnes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1926–2009

Planter Mould for The President Hotel

concrete

300 by 42 by 5 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

One of the many other decorative elements that Skotnes produced for the President Hotel was a flower planter with botanical motifs in bas-relief. The present lot is the mould for the main frieze of the planter, formed in concrete under the watch of the Lupini Brothers, and featuring a typically imaginative snaking vine of stylised spines, leaves and thorns. The quality of the modelling and casting underlines the crucial collaborative relationship between artist and craftsman. With this in mind, the President Hotel should also be seen as an important example of the contemporary trend of enlisting local artists and craftsmen to develop cohesive decorative programmes for state, civic and public buildings in South Africa. Work at the Hyde Park Shopping Centre stands as a good example, as do the monumental, landmark murals and mosaics by Alexis Preller, Battiss and Sash in the Transvaal Provincial Administrative Building in Pretoria.

PROVENANCE

The President Hotel



The palatial central lobby of The President Hotel is furnished with deep-embossed leather couches. The huge tapestry on the back wall was designed by Cecil Skotman and woven in Johannesburg by Marguerite Stevens.



256

Vladimir Tretchikoff

SOUTH AFRICAN 1913–2006

Poinsettias

signed and dated 1950
oil on canvas
62,5 by 87,5 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

The Russian born artist, Vladimir Tretchikoff, arrived in Cape Town in 1947 and South Africa would remain his home for the rest of his life. The typically smooth quality of his paintings, the licked finish, dazzling colours and subject matter, often associated with an exotic 'Eastern' sensibility, found resonance with a post World War II audience, not only in his adopted home country but also in the USA and further afield.

In the still life, *Poinsettias*, 1950, his usual smoothly finished canvas with highlights of thick paint is turned

around as almost the entire surface is painted with distinctively visible brush strokes. In this instance he uses the texture of the paint to capture the turquoise blue of the ocean with shimmering light reflecting off the rippling sea beyond the window, the lime green and gold flowers and rich red velvety poinsettia leaves. Here only the glass vase and the windowsill are painted with a smooth or licked finish allowing the focal elements of the composition to come to the fore in this striking work.



257

Vladimir Tretchikoff

SOUTH AFRICAN 1913–2006

Chrysanthemums and Green Vase

signed and dated 51

oil on canvas

73,5 by 78 cm

R600 000 – 800 000

Chrysanthemums and Green Vase, from 1951, is typical of Tretchikoff's still lifes with a smooth rendering of much of the painting. Here the entire background is given texture by the weave of the canvas picture plane that, like the striking emerald green vase, is highly finished. In contrast the bountiful chrysanthemum blooms painted in sharp citrus yellow tones are radically raised from the canvas with thick impasto brush strokes creating an astonishingly realistic appearance of the flowers.

258

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Untitled Drawing for Mango Groove Music Video (Drive-In Screen and Megaphone)

signed and dated 94

sheet size: 75,5 by 105,5 cm

chalk pastel and charcoal on paper

R1 800 000 – 2 500 000

In 1994 William Kentridge directed the music video for *Another Country*, the title song from popular musical ensemble Mango Groove's third album. (For a full discussion of the collaboration, see Lot 259). This drawing appears two and half minutes into the music video and features vocalist Claire Johnston 'projected' into the blank area of the drive-in screen. She sings: 'There is a place for anger, things we won't forgive/ And I know it's not enough to face your shame with words you'll never live.'

The megaphone and drive-in screen are common motifs in the artist's work. Kentridge's recent film *Other Faces* (2011), for example, includes studies of Top Star, a drive-in cinema that sat atop a mine dump in central Johannesburg. The megaphone first appeared in his animated film *Monument* (1990). In a 1999 interview with art historian and curator Carolyn Christov-Barkargiev, Kentridge explained that megaphones 'indicate what needs to be heard or seen, outside of oneself. I draw megaphones because ... they appear, for example, in photographs of Italian Futurist concertos for factory workers. I feel I'm part of earlier heroic attempts at connecting the world with art.'

It is not an illogical jump from concertos for factory workers to music videos for mass audiences.

Kentridge's treatment of the night sky also deserves comment. It clearly shows evidence of Kentridge's iterative method of drawing, of creating a drawing that is 'continually making itself – marking, erasing, and eventually changing into different images', to quote the artist.² In Kentridge's music video, the space occupied by the megaphone initially features a tin of fish, which morphs into the megaphone, a process that also generated a constellation of quasi-stars.

In 1998, during the first blush of international success, Kentridge exhibited his work at The Drawing Center in New York. He was explained as 'the Anselm Kiefer of South Africa' by one critic.³ The comparison was no doubt influenced by Kiefer's and Kentridge's toned-down palette and sombre examinations of German and South African history. The art historian Gerhard Schoeman further explored their affinities, writing at length about Kiefer's and Kentridge's 'melancholy imaging of history as catastrophe'.⁴ According to Schoeman, Kentridge and Kiefer shared a similar way of

working: of repeatedly returning to the 'haunted/haunting site' of the past as 'a sombre point from which to project the irreducible complexities of the present'.⁵ *Another Country*, a melancholic ballad steeped in the dilemmas of history, is similarly constructed: the peace song was consciously written with the 1992 Boipatong massacre and 1993 assassination of South African Communist Party leader Chris Hanu in mind. Kentridge's suitability or rightness to direct the music video is clear.

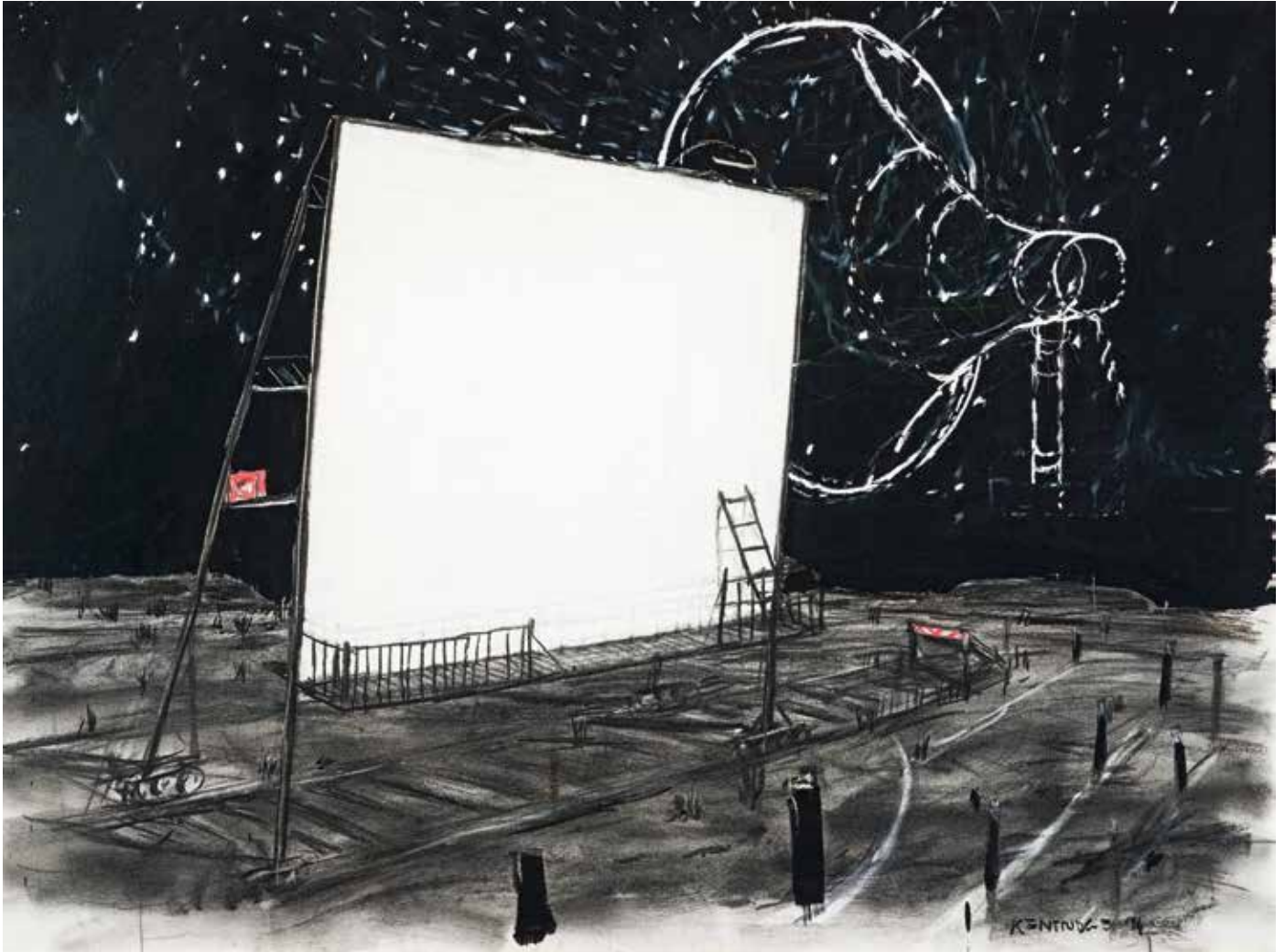
1. Judith B. Hecker, *William Kentridge: Trace-Prints from The Museum of Modern Art*, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2010, page 60.

2. Michael Auping, 'Double Lines, A 'Stereo' Interview about Drawing with William Kentridge', in *William Kentridge Five Themes*, San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2009, page 241.

3. Roberta Smith 'William Kentridge', *New York Times*, 6 February 1998, page E36.

4. Gerhard Schoeman, *Melancholy Constellations: Walter Benjamin, Anselm Kiefer, William Kentridge and the Imaging of History as Catastrophe*, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of the Free State, May 2007, page 131.

5. *Ibid.*, page 118.



William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Untitled Drawing for Mango Groove *Music Video (Megaphone on Pylon)*

signed and dated '94
chalk pastel and charcoal on paper
sheet size: 74 by 115 cm

R1 800 000 – 2 500 000

In 1994 William Kentridge directed a music video for the popular musical ensemble Mango Groove. Formed in 1984 by bassist and songwriter John Leyden and fronted by vocalist Claire Johnston, Mango Groove is known for its 'marabi pop' sound, a fusion of kwela and marabi big-band jazz traditions with western pop. The mixed-race band came to prominence with their song *Special Star*, included on its eponymous 1989 debut album.

In 1993 Mango Groove released *Another Country*, an ambitious crossover album featuring a stellar line-up of guest musicians, including guitarist Condry Ziqubu, jazz bassist Siphon Gumede and ethnomusicologist Andrew Tracey. The album was well received by critics. *Billboard*, a respected industry magazine in the United States, praised the album's title song as 'one of the most beautiful songs to emerge from the transition to democracy'.¹ Kentridge's music video is low on concessions to the pop music genre and was produced in the style of his stop-motion films. It however differs from his career-defining films by featuring a live actor, Johnston – she is the only member of the band to appear in the video. Set in an abstracted version of Kentridge's Johannesburg, the music video includes ample evidence of social tumult. The heaving throngs with red banners, who march down city streets and congregate around pylons and monuments, are clearly referenced from Kentridge's earlier films *Monument* (1990) and *Sobriety, Obesity, and Growing Old* (1991).

Similar to his theatre collaborations with the Handspring Puppet Company, in which live actors and puppets interact with the artist's projected drawings, Johnston's performance revolves around

her negotiation of this scenography. Johnston is presented as a larger than life presence in Kentridge's charcoal-drawn world: she is at once an entertainer, whose image fills billboards and drive-in screens, and a rainmaker able to bring relief to a complicated and visceral reality. This particular drawing forms part of the music video's opening montage, which culminates in Johnston's introduction. Pylons and megaphones feature prominently in Kentridge's work from the 1990s. The earliest examples appear in his etching series *Little Morals* (1991), as well as the two films already mentioned. The pylons reference the form of the tower-like structures that carry electricity cables across Johannesburg, as well as the steel headframes of the city's defunct gold mines. But their function in the music video is specific, and connected to ideas of mass communication and propaganda that occupied Kentridge at the time.

During a lecture at the National Arts Festival in 1986, Kentridge spoke of his interest in Soviet painter and architect Vladimir Tatlin's *Monument to the Third International* (1919–20). Ambitiously scaled and purposefully propagandist, Tatlin's Bolshevik-sponsored monument to the glory of the Russian revolution was also famously unrealised. Kentridge referred to Tatlin's speculative architectural piece as 'one of the great images of hope ... a hope and certainty that I can only envy. Such hope, particularly here and now, seems impossible'.² This idea of deferred hope amidst insurmountable odds is a key theme of Mango Groove's song. *Another Country* was written with two recent events in mind: the 1992 Boipatong massacre and 1993 assassination of South African Communist Party leader Chris

Hani. The song's lyrics speak of 'a place for anger' and actions that are hard to 'forgive', but also poses a counter argument: 'let's begin to look within, to where the future lies/ And find the strength to live beneath another country's skies/ Another time, another place/ Another country, another state of grace'.

Kentridge was also interested in this notion of achieving a state of grace. In his 1986 lecture he spoke at length about the complexities of making art in a country where 'one's nose is rubbed in compromise every day'.³ Kentridge's understanding of the ethical complexities of achieving a state of grace in a situation where he was 'neither active participant nor disinterested observer' may account for his ambivalence towards the finished music video.⁴

Kentridge's music video was well received at the time of its release, winning a prestigious Loerie award in 1994. Now, two decades later, this drawing from that video is a valuable document of creative collaboration from a fraught political time. It shows Kentridge, then still little known outside art and theatre circles, successfully testing his ideas in the mass-market pop realm.

1. Arthur Goldstuck, 'South African artists reflect optimism', in *Billboard*, 30 April 1994, page 89.
2. William Kentridge, 'Art in a state of grace, art in a state of hope, art in a state of siege', in Carolyn Chistov-Bakargiev (ed.), *William Kentridge*, Brussels: Société des expositions du Palais des beaux-arts de Bruxelles, 1998, page 56.
3. Ibid.
4. Stella Viljoen, 'Authorship and auteurism in *Another Country*', *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde*, 2004, Vol. 41 (2), page 53.



260

Greg Marinovich

SOUTH AFRICAN 1962–

Dead Zone

a portfolio of 41 digital photographic prints with accompanying texts by Greg Marinovich and introductions by Sean O'Toole and Karel Nel each signed, dated, numbered 3/5 and inscribed with their respective titles in pencil
each sheet size: 46 by 60 cm

R250 000 – 350 000

Following the unbanning of 33 political parties and release of political prisoners in 1990, in the protracted lead-up to non-racial elections in 1994, South Africa teetered on the brink. The topography of war in this portfolio includes a cramped Thokoza hostel, a rain-soaked street in Duduza west of Nigel, a Bantustan capital in the Eastern Cape, a rural valley north of Durban, and Shell House in Jeppe Street, Johannesburg. In a 1994 article for *Leadership* magazine, Marinovich collectively described these places as the 'dead zone'. While Thokoza, a working-class settlement southeast of Johannesburg that was a fulcrum for his best work, may well be a 'forgotten battlefield from a forgotten conflict', as Marinovich proposes in a caption, his photographs are less sceptical. They offer unflinching witness to the painful becoming of a nation.







Greg Marinovich
DEAD ZONE

Norman Catherine

SOUTH AFRICAN 1949–

Predator

signed and dated 1993
oil on canvas
58 by 88 cm

R550 000 – 700 000

Predatory monsters are integral to Norman Catherine's output. This lot, portraying an anthropomorphic reptile in police uniform, is part of an evolutionary line of surreal animal-human hybrids that date back to the mid-1970s, a period of inventive experiment with painting, sculpture and performance for the artist. *Predator* (1975), an airbrush painting depicting a realistically described young man in swimsuit with a bird of prey's head, sees Catherine use the mediated human figure to both evoke, surprise and convey existential unease.

After 1976, Catherine's work began to reflect a more explicit engagement with, and critical stance towards, South Africa's social and political realities. His shift from airbrush to oil in the 1980s saw him move from a precisionist style to a looser, less academic approach in his descriptions of the human figure. Energetic and frenzied, his luridly coloured paintings and sculptures from this period are characterised by a graphic, comic-book whimsy. Where Catherine's earlier descriptions of animal-human hybrids were firmly humanoid, his new creatures were more beastly and brutish.

Catherine's idiosyncratic bestiary includes menacing cats, fire-breathing crocodiles and monstrous policemen with sharp teeth, snake tongues and peaked hats. The central figure in

this lot is a progeny of the animalistic policemen that featured in a portfolio of six hand-coloured drypoint etchings entitled *States of Emergency* (1988). Commenting on this portfolio in 2011, Catherine linked his grotesquely stunted policeman character to 'the state of maniacal frenzy and bloodthirsty, animalistic behaviour of the Special Branch Police, who would stop at nothing to keep the status quo. Their demonic grins with forked/snake tongues speak of duplicity and deceitfulness.'¹

Catherine's paintings from the early 1990s, the period of this lot, are characterised by attitudes of consolidation, repetition and renewal. While grounded in the deep uncertainties of the political transition of 1990–94, Catherine nonetheless sought to depict more than just the degraded realities of life in South Africa. As critic Ashraf Jamal notes: 'Catherine's art is never merely a vehicle for commentary.'² Alongside his early-1990s studies of secretive meetings and malicious male figures, Catherine also made paintings that were 'free of irony and agitation,' that were 'introspective, meditative and infused with religious symbolism.'³

The rondavel structure in this lot recurs in works from this period. But it is the monstrous rhinohorned predator who dominates this composition,

which is further marked by its anxious red ground. The meaning of this unavoidable protagonist in Catherine's work is thoughtfully parsed by Jamal: 'If we are *less than human* as J.M. Coetzee has stated, if monstrousness is the very foundation of South African experience, then it is not surprising that Catherine should forego a limited and deceptively transparent realist aesthetic for one richly populated with bizarre and monstrous variations.'⁴

David Bowie, a noted collector of Catherine, saw in the artist's mature work affinities to art from West Africa and Mexico. By distinction, Jamal sees in Catherine's monstrous figures a debt to classical Egyptian art, but qualifies this reading by adding: 'though Egyptian art is a key influence, Catherine's repertory does not amount to an equivalent integrated mythology. Rather, his is an inspired and degraded bestiary; a secular late-modern art of profanation and de-sanctification.'⁵

1. Norman Catherine, blog post for exhibition *Impressions from South Africa, 1965 to Now* at Museum of Modern Art, New York, 22 July 2011.

2. Ashraf Jamal (2001). *Norman Catherine and the Art of Terror*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal, page 18.

3. Hazel Friedman (2000). *Norman Catherine*, Johannesburg: Goodman Gallery, page 113.

4. Jamal, *op.cit.*, page 12.

5. *Ibid.*



STELLEN BOSCH 1990



GEBASEER OP 'N WARE VERHAAL SOOS VERTEL DEUR JELLO BIAFRA, VERWERKING & ARTWORK DEUR JOE DOG ©



Anton Kannemeyer

SOUTH AFRICAN 1967–

***Nag van die Wit Skrik*, five**

each signed, dated '92, numbered 3/10 and inscribed with the title in pencil in the margin

colour screenprints

each sheet size: 64 by 46 cm

(5)

R80 000 – 120 000

LITERATURE

Anton Kannemeyer & Conrad Botes (2006) *The Big Bad Bitterkomix Handbook*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media. Illustrated on page 158.

Anton Kannemeyer, sometimes working under the pseudonym of Joe Dog, founded *Bitterkomix* with Conrad Botes in 1992. The aim of the satirical magazine was to look at the foibles of White Afrikaners on the cusp of a new political dispensation. Revered for its dark humour and subversive stance, *Bitterkomix* quickly gained cult status among the old guard who could laugh nostalgically at themselves, as well as a new generation in search of an alternative Afrikaner. The present work, *Nag van die Wit Skrik*, appeared in the first issue of the comic book and was included in the later compendium, *The Big, Bad Bitterkomix Handbook* (2006). It relates the story (supposedly based on truth) of a young white university student (possibly Kannemeyer himself, who studied at the University of Stellenbosch at the time) mistaken as homosexual and consequently attacked by a group of white thugs. Heaving a sigh of relief when a policeman arrives on the scene, the young man is left stunned (not to mention battered and bruised) when the constable sides with his attackers. The themes of police brutality, homophobia, and right-wing conservatism that this work addresses were particularly relevant in the contemporary context. The story also comments wryly on one of the ubiquitous phobias of apartheid: the so-called 'swart gevaar'. Whiteness, Kannemeyer suggests, or 'die wit skrik', seems equally insidious. Andy Mason noted that 'Kannemeyer has displayed a Duchamp-like ability to manipulate the media by generating controversy, in a full-frontal assault on the Afrikaner mainstream. For Kannemeyer, it has been a concerted campaign of revenge against the hated authority figures of his boyhood – his father who abused him, 'Barries' [the teacher] who caned him, and all the headmasters, dominees, policemen and rugger buggers who in one way or another attempted to indoctrinate, punish and belittle him'. *Nag van die Wit Skrik* can also be construed as a form of public, artistic confessional, through which things are revealed that are often swept under the carpet. As such, it constitutes, as Mason continues, 'a broader psychosexual, socio-historical critique of Afrikaner culture and South African society in general'?

1. Andy Mason. (2006) 'Silent Comics, Critical Noise, and the Politics of Pielsuig' in Anton Kannemeyer & Conrad Botes (2006) *The Big Bad Bitterkomix Handbook*. Jacana Media, page 7.

2. Ibid.





263

Robert Hodgins

SOUTH AFRICAN 1920–2010

Clubmen of America: Mafiosi

signed and dated 2001; inscribed with the medium and the title on the reverse
oil and charcoal on canvas
90 by 120 cm

R500 000 – 700 000

LITERATURE

Brenda Atkinson (2002) *Robert Hodgins*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers. Illustrated on page 109.

In 2000, Robert Hodgins began work on a suite of paintings depicting various American social archetypes, including gridiron footballers, uniformed cadets, hooded Klansmen, pinstriped financiers and this empty-eyed group of red-tie wearing *mafiosi*. While bounded by a unifying theme and shared title, Hodgins adopted a range of compositional techniques in his Daumier-influenced exploration of social identity. His figures ranged from rudimentary to finely wrought, while his palette reflected a conscious move between taut economy and lavish abundance. Unlike *Clubmen of America: Academy Cadets* (2002), a detailed study in blue of trainee officers sold by Strauss & Co in 2015 for R1 591 520, this work is consistent with a subset of more graphic paintings. In each, the pictorial subject is rendered through form and line; colour plays a supporting role. It is almost as if this quartet of men with monolithic heads resembling *moai* sculpture from the Easter Islands were chiselled rather than painted.





264

Penny Siopis

SOUTH AFRICAN 1953-

Allsorts

signed
oil on canvas
53 by 72 cm

R300 000 – 500 000

PROVENANCE

Stephan Welz & Co, Johannesburg, 10 July 1989, lot 276

Allsorts is a striking example of Penny Siopis' paintings from 1986, the year of her residency at the Cité des Arts in Paris. Many of these works reference her magnum opus *Melancholia*, the painting that won her the inaugural Atelier award and the chance to live in the French capital for six months. Visiting the famous Clignancourt flea market in Paris in search of curious objects to reference in her paintings and drawings, Siopis discovered an alluring figurine cast in a bronze-like metal. The form of the figurine and her gesture of picking petals from a flower, became imbued with personal significance. In the painting the figurine is presented with other objects on a floral tablecloth, a visual feast of colour and impasto paint, each daub constructing the pattern of the fabric in a masterful display of palette-knife technique. The bright blue and purple of the figurine stand in stark contrast to the warm reds and yellows of the cloth. The other objects - a tortoise shell, a Zoo Biscuit, liquorice allsorts sweets and seashells - are direct references to *Melancholia*. There are more correspondences with *Melancholia*. The tilted up perspective evokes the foreground table of the larger piece and accentuates a tension between illusionistic space and Modernist flatness. Then there is her signature treatment of the painted surface, in building up impasto form into high relief where the medium both serves its subject matter and maintains its independent physical properties.

Melancholia offers an interpretive frame for viewing *Allsorts*, but this arresting painting has a particular resonance in its bird's eye perspective of an intimate scene, the play of contrasting colour and the associative qualities of the objects which suggest there is another story which the artist is not divulging.



265

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Untitled Drawing towards Responsible Hedonism

signed and dated '88
charcoal on paper
97 by 111,5 cm

R3 500 000 – 5 000 000

William Kentridge's method as an artist is essentially iterative: visual motifs and artistic themes are progressively developed, refined and adapted over time. This lot derives from a period of sustained focus in the later 1980s on the moral quandaries of life in apartheid South Africa. Similar to the writing of Nadine Gordimer, a Kentridge family friend, the artist repeatedly returned to the habits, manners and environs of the white upper classes in his work from this time. These early drawings and prints are important precursors to Kentridge's celebrated stop-animation films, started in 1989, presenting in germinal form many of the subjects and ideas that would occupy his subsequent practice.

In 2004, the Italian-American curator and art historian Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, a well-known international promoter of Kentridge's work, highlighted the significance of his early charcoal and pastel drawings in an exhibition she organised at Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin. 'The second half of the 1980s constituted an intense period of experimentation, as Kentridge attempted to join draughtsmanship with his interests in politics and film,' elaborates Christov-

Bakargiev.¹ His drawings from this period essentially functioned as test sites for his contradictory thoughts of South Africa's late bourgeois world.

'Drama, denunciation and melancholy are accompanied, however, by humour and irony, as well as by the numerous references to pleasure and desire that characterise all of Kentridge's art. As in Max Beckmann's prints and paintings, which Kentridge knew well, the drawings of this period are structured according to dramatic spatial angles ranging from compressed, dense spaces to deep, vertiginous ones, replete with figures and events.'²

This lot directly references Kentridge's 1986 print series *Industry and Idleness*, which he based on (and also titled after) a 1747 engraving series by English printmaker William Hogarth. Kentridge's suite of eight prints relocates the action from London to Johannesburg and is significant for the introduction of a corpulent businessman in pin-stripe suit, an early prototype of Kentridge's Soho Eckstein protagonist. A print in the suite, *Responsible Hedonism*, includes a detail of an aristocratic couple kissing in a suburban swimming pool, which

Kentridge returned to in two drawings made in 1988.

The present lot has been described as a study towards a larger drawing also known as *Responsible Hedonism*.³ Visually complex, that drawing shows the kissing man and woman in reverse, and also incorporates a study towards the artist's 1989 drawing *Casspirs Full of Love*. Unlike the poolside setting of the print and drawing, both titled *Responsible Hedonism*, this lot presents two male figures taking leave of one another at a taxi waiting at the stairs of an unknown building. Both appear to be businessmen, one with possible links to industrial operations in Welkom and Brits. Their passionate kiss sees Kentridge adapt a familiar visual motif to further complicate his exploration of 'guilt, complicity, agency, and resistance,' enduring themes in his work.⁴

1. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev (2004). *William Kentridge*, Milan: Skira Editore, page 64.

2. Ibid.

3. Correspondence with Neil Dundas, Goodman Gallery, April 2017

4. Maria-Christina Villaseñor (2005). *William Kentridge: Black Box/Chambre Noire*, Berlin: Deutsche Guggenheim, page 31.





266

Sam Nhlengethwa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955-

Miners

signed and dated '97

oil on metal

92 by 96 cm

R120 000 – 160 000



267

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955-

Head

signed

charcoal on paper

52,5 by 69,5 cm

R400 000 – 600 000



268

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Dancing Couple

signed and dated 89

charcoal, pastel and gold ink on paper

sheet size: 160 by 105,5 cm

R1 500 000 – 2 000 000

Countering William Kentridge's ubiquitous concerns in his art with such socio-economic and political concerns as liberation, migration and displacement, land appropriation, and capitalism, *Dancing Couple* (1989) comes as a lyrical reprieve in his oeuvre. An intimate, private relationship plays itself out in the dance, pitted against a bleak, desolate public landscape that often constitutes the backdrop of many of Kentridge's work. This landscape, however, is ameliorated by the subtle use of such colours as soft blues, browns and greens in parts, enhancing the elegiac nature of the dance. One is reminded of Kentridge's film, *Johannesburg, 2nd Greatest City After Paris* (1989), in which Felix Teitlebaum - a melancholic artist and eternal, deep thinker - subtly seduces the wife of his arch rival - Soho Eckstein, a greedy industrialist and property developer - in a delicate dance sequence. The dancing couple frequently appears in Kentridge's work of the 1980s: *The Conservationist's Ball* triptych (1985), comes to mind, as does *Swinging Lady* (1986), and the *Flood at the Opera* triptych (1986).

Kentridge's early work was inspired by the last vestiges of 20th century European civilization that was wrecked by World War I; this spirit was depicted in works such as Max Beckmann's *The Night* (1918) and Otto Dix's *Big City* triptych (1927). Rather than invoking the frenetic dancing in the nightclub scenes these two artists showed, Kentridge's *Dancing Couple* rather reminds one of Marc Chagall's many lovers floating through the sky of Vitebsk, and later over Paris.

Similar in size and subject matter, *Dancing Couple* can be seen as continuing the three drawings of ballet dancers and dancing couples Kentridge made for the Standard Bank National Arts Festival in Grahamstown in 1987, when he won the Young Artist Award.

NOT
DIS



269

Johannes Meintjes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1923–1980

Kaapse Visserman met sy Dagga

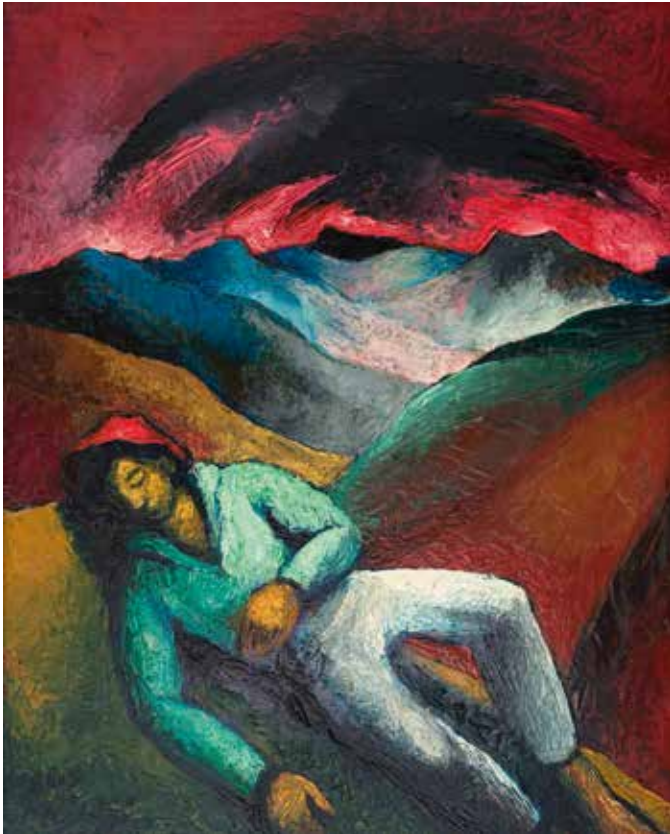
signed and dated '56

oil on board

60,5 by 44 cm

R100 000 – 150 000





270

270

Johannes Meintjes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1923–1980

Reclining Figure in the Mountains

signed and dated 1967

oil on board

49,5 by 39,5 cm

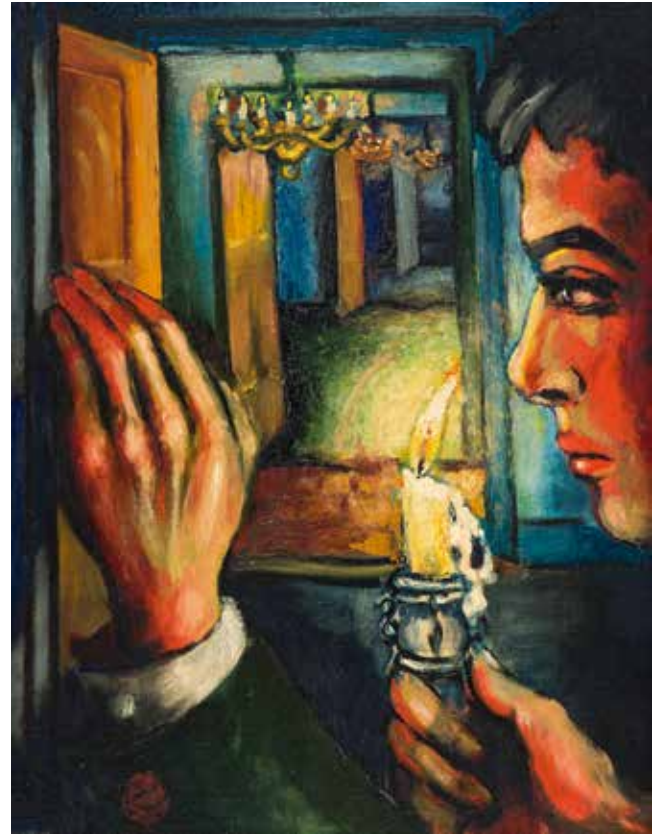
R70 000 – 100 000

PROVENANCE

Dagboek van Johannes Meintjes. (1972)

Molteno: Bamboesberg-Uitgewers.

Catalogue number JM 941.



271

271

Johannes Meintjes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1923–1980

The Open Door

executed circa 1950

signed

oil on board

44,5 by 34 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

PROVENANCE

Dagboek van Johannes Meintjes. (1972) Molteno:

Bamboesberg-Uitgewers. Catalogue number JM 311.



272

Larry Scully

SOUTH AFRICAN 1922–2002

Abstract

signed and dated 74

oil on canvas

122,5 by 182,5 cm

R80 000 – 120 000



273

Robert Hodgins

SOUTH AFRICAN 1920–2010

Clem

signed, dated 1983 and inscribed with the title on the reverse
oil on board

61 by 80,5 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

In June 1975, Clement Greenberg, an influential American art critic of the post-war period, visited South Africa for a lecture tour. 'Regrettably, his introductory appearance was not a great success,' recalled art historian Esmé Berman, who had befriended Greenberg in the early 1970s and extended the invitation to visit. 'Although eminently articulate, Clem lacked the charismatic vocal skills required to captivate the crowded auditorium.' The *Los Angeles Times* reported that many South Africans found Greenberg to be 'dull', 'strangely evasive' and 'surprisingly insubstantial' on his specialty.' Robert

Hodgins, himself a seasoned art critic, reported on Greenberg's final lecture at Rand Afrikaans University. He was withering in his judgement: 'Greenberg did not tell us something we expected, he, in fact, said nothing at all, gave us nothing serious to think about.'² Hodgins's scornful take on Greenberg, a champion of American painterly abstraction, is still discernible in this later, caricaturing portrait.

1. Esmé Berman, 'All art has a history', in *Art South Africa*, March 2010, page 23.

2. Robert Hodgins, *Artlook*, August–September 1975, page 8.

274

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955-

Iris in Clamp

signed and numbered 32/50

lithograph

154 by 110 cm

R300 000 – 500 000



275

Larry Scully

SOUTH AFRICAN 1922–2002

Abstract Composition in Red

signed and dated 69

oil on canvas

122 by 76 cm

R40 000 – 60 000



276

Cecil Skotnes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1926–2009

Figure Head

carved, painted and incised wood panel,
mounted on a steel base
height: 168 cm, including base

R60 000 – 90 000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist by
Vittorino Meneghelli circa 1971 thence by
descent to the current owner.

This unusual shaped panel, *Figure Head*, by Cecil Skotnes was owned by the renowned collector Vittorino Meneghelli and was shown on the 1971 exhibition entitled *Icons* produced specifically for the Totem Meneghelli Gallery in downtown Johannesburg. In this engraved panel the head and body are conflated into a single iconic image. The graphic, circular eyes and long nose create a dominant gestalt which is visually buttressed by a series of organic, amorphous forms which amalgamate to create an abstract body, an imposing presence, a 'figure head'.

In most of Skotnes's work his anthropomorphic forms are set off against a dark whittled background creating a mysterious yet physically tactile context. The *Icons* exhibition was characterised by a series of cut-out figures and heads. In these unusually shaped works the figures were cut free from background creating a series of striking shapes that were placed on stands or hung off the wall at 90 degrees enabling viewers to see both sides of the panel. This unusual departure in Skotnes's *oeuvre*, I surmise, had much to do with the influence of Vittorino Meneghelli who as a gallerist often challenged and shifted his artist friends' consolidated or fixed working practises, goading them to explore and experiment beyond their defined boundaries.

Karel Nel



© The Estate of Cecil Skotnes | DALRO

277

Cecil Skotnes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1926–2009

Totem Figure

carved and painted wood
207 by 29 by 5 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

PROVENANCE

A gift from the artist to the current owner.

This work, *Totem Figure*, relates to a series of tall elongated anthropomorphic works engraved on hardwood planks that characterised Cecil Skotnes's work of the mid to late 1960s. This format enabled Skotnes to create a series of simplified, emblematic ancestral figures often characteristically formed of excessively long legs, joined by a curve at the top, an extended horseshoe-like form from where the arms extend downwards and a distinctive Y-shaped head emerges. Often a filigree of connecting lines visually threaded and joined the two dominant verticals implying a torso or body and included stylised details such as breasts. In this work the internal cavity of the torso extends through a narrowed passage to the space between the tall legs.

These emblematic figures have an archaic, symbolic and almost calligraphic presence. The white pigment rubbed into the surface of the figure highlights it in an eerie manner giving it a ghost-like ancestral presence that made Skotnes's work stand out significantly as both contemporary and 'African' amongst the emerging artists of the 1960s.

Karel Nel



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278

Robert Hodgins

SOUTH AFRICAN 1920–2010

Untitled

signed and authenticated by

Jan Neethling on the reverse

oil on canvas

90 by 90 cm

R400 000 – 600 000



279

Robert Hodgins

SOUTH AFRICAN 1920–2010

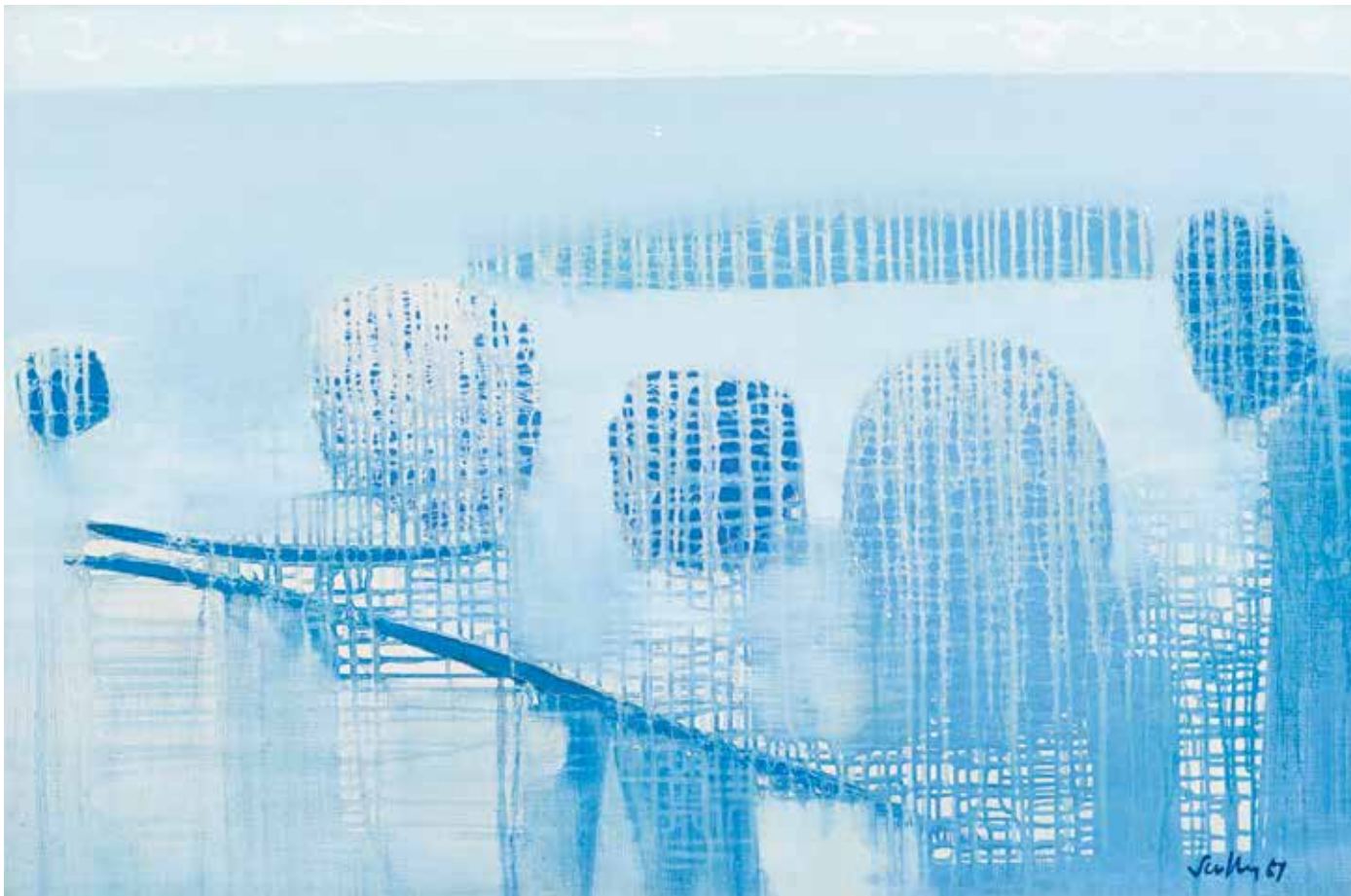
Can-Can ce n'est pas Gentil

signed, dated 2002 and inscribed
with the title on the reverse

oil on canvas

55 by 54,5 cm

R180 000 – 240 000



280

Larry Scully

SOUTH AFRICAN 1922–2002

Abstract Composition

signed and dated 67

oil on canvas

60,5 by 90 cm

R40 000 – 60 000



281

Sam Nhlengethwa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

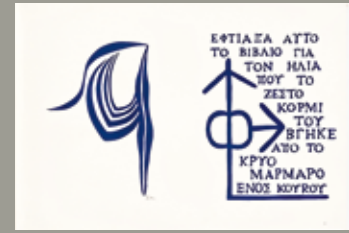
Image III

signed, dated '90 and inscribed with the title on
the reverse

acrylic and sand mixed with gel on canvas

150 by 200 cm

R150 000 – 200 000



282

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

Nesos 54 1969

49 signed, 54 numbered and 53 inscribed with the title; the colophon reads: 'Nesos is the Greek word for Island. The contents of this book include images from 16 Greek islands that I know. All the serigraphs have been made by me and no printer has touched the pages. There are 25 numbered copies this one is number 22 for Hans van Schaik. Walter Battiss, Athens, 1968' colour silkscreen book: 35 by 51 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

LITERATURE

Warren Siebrits (2016) *Walter Battiss: 'I invented myself'. The Jack Ginsberg Collection*. Johannesburg: Ampersand Publication. Another edition illustrated on pages 87–93 and 317.

Golden-haired
youth
Lapis-lazuli
hair
Shin of
Oliver in the

in the sun
feet in sand
and a
loneliness in
the green
heart think-
ing of Xenia

Some say that horse-
men in grand array
some that infantry
some that ships
are the most beauti-
ful on this black
earth
But I say it is
what one loves--
I speak now of the
girl ANACTORIA

far away
whom I can see
with her charming
way of walking
and the bright
radiance of her
glowing face.
For my girl is more
beautiful than
Lydian chorists
and armed men



SAPPHO
No more
The Pleiades
have set
Midnight
time has set
yet I lie
alone

The nubile
girl passes
by...
Old island
man there
is blood on
a cut on

Your forks
is
Then I see
the warm g
low of an
inner fire
resenting the

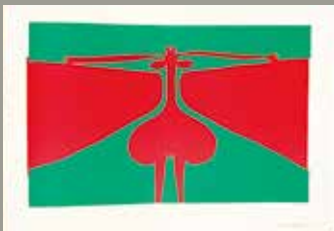
body's impot
ence...
The nubile
girl passes
by...

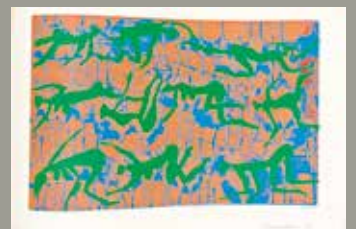


An empty
landscape
without life
like
a virgin's
womb



Beside the
wine-blue
sea
the flame of
eros sets me
limbs afloat







Walter Battiss
Nesos 54 1969



283

Lionel Smit

SOUTH AFRICAN 1982–

Head

signed, dated 2010 and
numbered 2/12
bronze, mounted on a steel base
height: 56 cm, including base

R100 000 – 150 000



284

Diane Victor

SOUTH AFRICAN 1964-

Learning Posture

signed, numbered 2/4 'artist proof'
and inscribed with the title in pencil
etching on embossed paper
200 by 99 cm

R80 000 – 120 000

LITERATURE

Elizabeth Rankin & Karen van Veh
(2008) *Diane Victor*. Johannesburg:
David Krut Publishing. Another
example from the edition illustrated
on the front cover and on page 37.





285

Norman Catherine

SOUTH AFRICAN 1949–

Identikit

signed and dated 1990

oil on canvas

120 by 160 cm

R500 000 – 700 000





286

David Goldblatt

SOUTH AFRICAN 1930–

*A Farmworker's Cottage and a Navigation Beacon for
Air Traffic, Groenfontein, Sutherland, Northern Cape,
17 August 2003*

signed, dated 17 August 2003 and numbered 2/6 in pencil in the margin
digital print

image size: 98,5 by 123,5 cm

R50 000 – 80 000

David Goldblatt is well known for his austere yet empathetic black-and-white photographs of people and places in apartheid South Africa. Technological advances with colour negative emulsions in the late 1990s prompted him to use colour in his new post-apartheid work. In the early 2000s, Goldblatt initiated a project to photograph the intersection of every latitude and longitude line in South Africa. This photograph, first exhibited at Michael Stevenson Gallery, visually animates an insight he gained during his solitary travels through the Karoo's apparent nothings: 'It is deep, bland, vast and seemingly featureless. Yet precisely in these qualities is a presence that is difficult to hold or suggest in photographs.'¹

1. Michael Stevenson, 'Markers of Presence', in David Goldblatt, *Intersections*, Munich: Prestel, 2005, page 105.



287

David Goldblatt

SOUTH AFRICAN 1930–

Man Laying Tiles

signed, dated 17/2/02 and numbered 4/6

in pencil in the margin

digital print

image size: 56 by 56 cm

R20 000 – 30 000



288

Billy Monk

SOUTH AFRICAN 1937–1982

The Catacombs Series, ten

silver gelatin prints on fibre paper

image sizes: 25 by 38 cm;

sheet sizes: 28 by 41 cm

(10)

R80 000 – 120 000

EXHIBITED

Brodie/Stevenson, *Nightclub Photographs*, 20 January – 18 February 2011, another example from this edition was exhibited. Each accompanied by a letter of authenticity from Stevenson Gallery.

Printed by Jac de Villiers.

Edition: HC 4

Billy Monk worked as a bouncer for the notorious nightclub *The Catacombs* in the dock area of Cape Town harbour, taking photographs of the club goers with a Pentax camera and selling these back to his models. The photographs constitute a veritable archive of the seedy nightclub world of apartheid South Africa in the early-1960s, and are populated with the same-sex and interracial couples that were so brutally marginalised at the time. When the filmmaker Jac de Villiers hired studio space in Cape Town some time later, he discovered and developed some of Monk's contact sheets and negatives, mounting an exhibition at the Market Theatre Gallery in 1982. Monk was not in a position to attend the opening night, but he made plans to visit the gallery two weeks later. Sadly he was gunned down on his way. Many of his photographs are now included in the SFMoMA's permanent collection.







© Andrew Verster | DALRO

289

Andrew Verster

SOUTH AFRICAN 1937-

Blue Curtain

signed; inscribed with the title

on the reverse

oil on canvas

98,5 by 167 cm

R100 000 – 150 000



290

Robert Hodgins

SOUTH AFRICAN 1920–2010

Dancer and her Admirer

signed, dated 1991 and inscribed with
the title on the reverse

oil on canvas

75 by 100 cm

R500 000 – 700 000

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist.



291

Jack Heath

BRITISH/SOUTH AFRICAN 1915–1969

Thornveld

oil and wax on board
120 by 180,5 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

Trained at the Birmingham School of Arts and Crafts, and then at the Royal College of Art in London, Jack Heath settled in South Africa in 1946 having already developed a recognisable, vanguard style amongst such famed British Modernists as Paul Nash, Stanley Spencer, Edward Bawden and Sir William Nicholson. The present lot is evidence of the artist's wonderful sense of clean, dramatic design and bold, fearless colour. From a distance *Thornveld* is instantly engaging and beautifully decorative; up close the texture and intricate, patterned brushstroke, achieved through the artist's unique, wax-based medium, is utterly mesmerizing.



292

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

Composition in Yellow and Blue

signed
oil on canvas
40,5 by 60,5 cm

R300 000 – 400 000

PROVENANCE

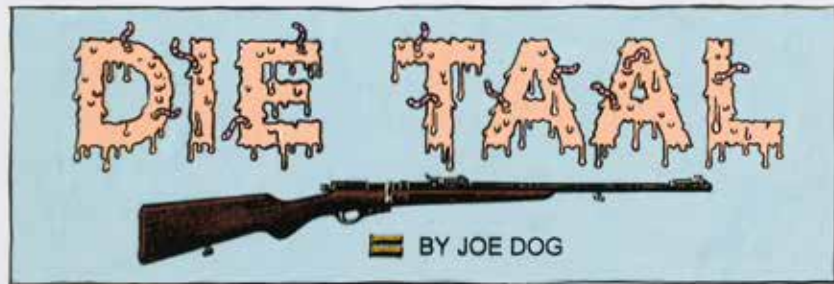
Acquired from the artist by the current owner's father-in-law.

EXHIBITED

Matseke Art Collection, University of South Africa, 2000

Highly sought after by collectors, the present lot is a rare example of the calligraphic style of painting Walter Battiss employed in two phases of his artistic career: in the late-1950s and again in the mid-1960s. Battiss developed this style of painting as a direct result of his research into southern African rock art, particularly the petroglyphs in the Douglas area of the Northern Cape, which he considered to constitute a type of rock *language*. He included images of these petroglyphs in his book, *The Art of Africa* (1958), and they formed the basis, together with Southern Arabic, of the Fook alphabet he developed in the late 1960s. When a similar work by Battiss from this period was exhibited in The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany in 1958, alongside other works by Higgs, Jentsch, Laubser, Pierneef, Preller, Stern and Welz, the German art critic, Lore Schatten, singled out Battiss's work as being entirely 'rooted in the culture of his native country' and 'indissolubly bound up with his studies of the South African cave paintings'.¹ Similar examples to the present work are in such prominent public collections as those held at Unisa and the Pretoria Art Museum.

¹ Murray Schoonraad, *Walter Battiss*, Struik Publications, 1974, p 18.



KANNEMEYER 2000

293

Anton Kannemeyer

SOUTH AFRICAN 1967-

Die Taal, two

each signed and dated 2000 in pencil in the margin acrylic on paper and printed acetate each: 39 by 28 cm

(2)

R80 000 – 120 000

LITERATURE

Anton Kannemeyer & Conrad Botes (2006)

The Big Bad Bitterkomix Handbook.

Johannesburg: Jacana Media.

Illustrated on page 58 and 81.

SIENA WAS OFF-DUTY THE LAST WEEKENDS OF EACH MONTH - A TIME SHE WOULD USE PROFITLY TO VISIT HER SISTER



SIENA'S SISTER, MARTHA, WORKED AT A POLICE STATION IN A TOWNSHIP SOUTH-WEST OF JOHANNESBURG



ONE DAY, TOWARDS THE END OF 1968, SHE TOLD ME ABOUT CERTAIN THINGS SHE HAD WITNESSED AT THE POLICE STATION



SHE DESCRIBED TO ME IN DETAIL HOW BLACK MALE SUSPECTS WERE TORTURED



THE POLICE OFFICERS WOULD ALSO HEAT GALVANISED WIRE IN A FURNACE...



O? DIE BLIKSEM VERSTAN MY KAMSTIG NIE...



WEE BARS!! JAMMER MY BARS! MOOI SANSIBLE, MY BARS...! HOU OP MY BARS!



SIENA TOLD THE STORY ALMOST AS IF SHE THOUGHT IT WAS QUITE FUNNY. HER SPORADIC LAUGHTER MADE ME VERY UNCOMFORTABLE.



THE NEXT DAY AT SCHOOL I TOLD MY CLOSEST FRIENDS



I ALSO TOLD AN OLDER FRIEND HE WAS A "LIBERAL" AND EXTREMELY CRITICAL OF THE NP - GOVERNMENT.



A FEW YEARS LATER THE SAS MURDERS WERE REVEALED BY NEWSPAPERS. NUMEROUS ARTICLES EXPLAINED IN DETAIL HOW BLACKS WERE TORTURED. THE FIELD TELEPHONES TURNED OUT TO BE ONE OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS. THE REACTION OF MANY WHITES AT THE TIME WAS AS FOLLOWS:



SURELY APKAKHANS, THE LANGUAGE OF THE SPKANKER, IS STILL TODAY (IDEOLOGICALLY) PIVOTAL OF THE MEMORY OF APKAKHANS.



FROM MY EXPERIENCE (HAVING BEEN LABELLED "MORALLY UNSOUND" AND EXCLUDED FROM THEIR FESTIVALS, THEIR SHOPS, THEIR PRINTERS, AND RECENTLY THEIR TV PROGRAMMES) IT'S EVIDENT THAT THE APKAKHANS TODAY ARE AS INTOLERANT, SELF-RIGHTEOUS AND UNDEMOCRATIC AS THEY ALWAYS WERE.



AFTERWORD





294

Johannes Phokela

SOUTH AFRICAN 1966–

Ghost of Maximilian

oil on canvas

92 by 122 cm

R80 000 – 120 000

After three years of diploma studies at the FUBA Academy under Durant Sihlali, Johannes Phokela went to the United Kingdom where he obtained a Master's Degree in Fine Arts at the Royal School of Arts in 1993. Like many struggling artists in London before him (Robert Hodgins comes to mind), Phokela often took refuge against the winter cold in the National Gallery. He was particularly struck there by one of Edouard Manet's versions of *The Execution of Maximilian* (1867). Phokela replicated

this famous work, and painted various versions too. The first, titled *The Lord Works in Mysterious Ways*, was exhibited at the Standard Bank Gallery in 2009 after Phokela won the prestigious Young Artist's Award that year. In Manet's *Maximilian* (which itself was based on Goya's *Third of May 1808* from 1814), the Emperor is absent, having been removed with a section of canvas for political reasons. Phokela, however, brings Maximilian back to life, albeit through a ghostlike shape.

295

Norman Catherine

SOUTH AFRICAN 1949–

A La Carte

signed, dated 1990 and inscribed with the title
acrylic and gouache on paper
103 by 74 cm

R80 000 – 120 000

LITERATURE

Goodman Gallery (2000). *Norman Catherine*, Johannesburg: Goodman Gallery Editions. Illustrated in colour on page 87.



296

Sam Nhlengethwa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Portrait of Dolly Rathebe

signed and dated 2002
mixed media on paper
150 by 95 cm

R60 000 – 90 000

Dolly Rathebe (1928–2004) was a
South African musician and actress.





297

Mr. Brainwash

FRENCH 1966-

Kate Moss

signed

screenprint and mixed media on paper

96 by 111,5 cm

R150 000 – 200 000



298

Adriaan Boshoff

SOUTH AFRICAN 1935–2007

*Landscape with Dust Road
to Village*

signed

oil on canvas laid down on board

60,5 by 89 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

299

Dylan Lewis

SOUTH AFRICAN 1964–

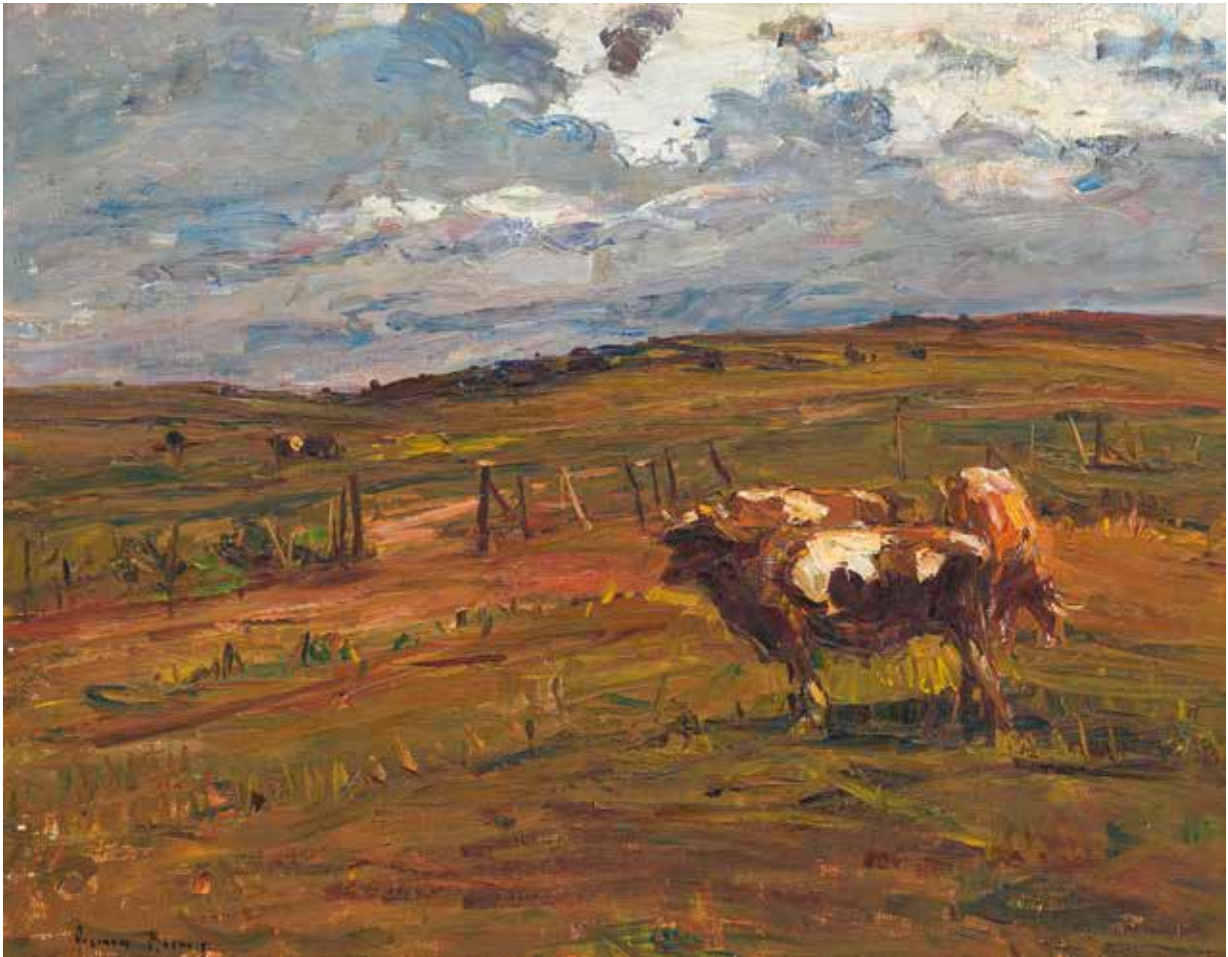
Cheetah Head II

signed, numbered 8/15 and
impressed with the foundry mark
and numbers S195; engraved
with the title on a plaque on the
underside

bronze with a brown patina
height: 42,5 cm, including base

R80 000 – 120 000





300

Adriaan Boshoff

SOUTH AFRICAN 1935–2007

Cattle in a Field

signed

oil on canvas laid down on board

54 by 69 cm

R70 000 – 100 000



301

Adriaan Boshoff

SOUTH AFRICAN 1935–2007

Flowers in a Brass Vase

signed

oil on board

73,5 by 60 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

302

Keith Alexander

SOUTH AFRICAN 1946–1998

Grand Parade

signed and dated 90; engraved with
artist's name and the title on a plaque
adhered to the frame
oil on canvas
105 by 75 cm

R300 000 – 400 000

PROVENANCE

Purchased directly from the artist.

Keith Alexander spent his honeymoon visiting the ghost towns of the Namib and the eerie, sand-sunk wrecks on the country's coast. Generally drawn to the surreal, the enormous, deserted steel hulls sinking and reappearing in the desert, as well as the abandoned buildings preserved in sand, made a lasting impression on the artist. *Grand Parade* recalls these formative images using a carefully controlled perspective, a serene, low-key palette, and a beautifully balanced, symmetrical composition.





303

Neil Rodger

SOUTH AFRICAN 1941–2013

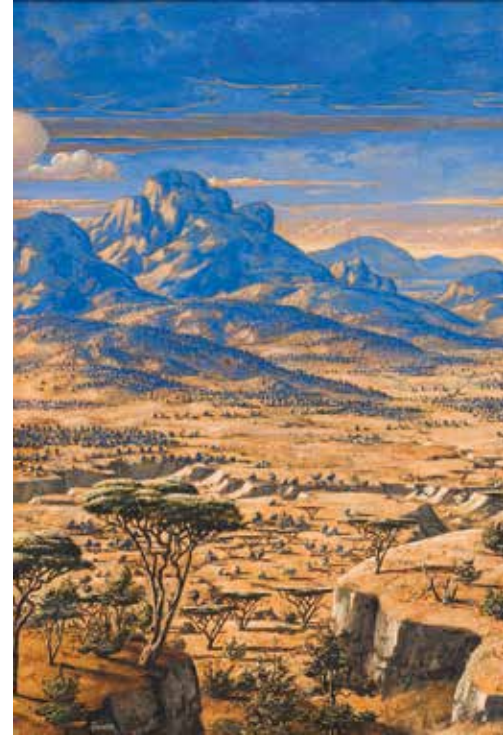
Still Life with Fruit and Ham

signed and dated 94; inscribed with the artist's name, title and medium on an Everard Read Gallery label adhered to the reverse

oil on canvas

74,5 by 120 cm

R100 000 – 150 000



304

Werner Peiner

GERMAN 1897–984

Afrikanische Landschaft, triptych

each signed

oil on board

each: 59 by 78,5 cm

(3)

R100 000 – 150 000



END OF SALE