





The Wanderers Club, Illovo, Johannesburg
20 May 2019 at 7 pm

Modern, Post-War and Contemporary Art

Session 2
Lots 211–316

Lot 302 Christo Coetzee *Mobius Infinity Chain* (detail)



211

John Craxton

ENGLISH 1922–2009

Street Scene

signed and dated 58
watercolour on board
30,5 by 36,5 cm

R180 000 – 250 000

PROVENANCE

A wedding gift to the current owner
from Dr Leslie Sohn.

John Craxton was an English painter who spent most of his adult life living and working on the Greek islands, particularly Crete. As a student, he attended the Académie Julian and the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris, but with the outbreak of World War II, and unable to enlist for health reasons, he returned to London and completed his studies at Westminster School of Art, the Central School of Arts and Crafts, and Goldsmiths College.

He is regarded as one of the leading Neo-Romantics, along with Graham Sutherland, Paul Nash and John Piper, but Craxton himself rejected

the epithet. From the late 1940s, Craxton's favourite subject was 'the sun-baked south, with its sparkling seas, olive trees, goats and human inhabitants; and his characteristic mood was a lyric contentment very different from the bleak misanthropy of many of his contemporaries'. He produced book illustrations and set designs in the 1950s and 60s, with characteristic Romantic pastoral themes, for opera and ballet companies. He continued to live between Greece and London until his death at the age of 87 in 2009.

1. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/culture-obituaries/art-obituaries/6599933/John-Craxton.html>



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212

Peter Clarke

SOUTH AFRICAN 1929–2014

Landscape with Red Succulents

signed and dated 19 Sept 1957; inscribed
with the artist's name, the date and the
title on the reverse

watercolour and coloured ink on paper
24,5 by 29,5 cm

R80 000 – 100 000



213

Mary Riter Hamilton

CANADIAN 1873–1954

Arras 1919

signed, dated 1919 and inscribed with the title
oil on canvas laid down on board
26 by 33,5 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

PROVENANCE

Acquired by Dr Anthony Scott Parker of Severn Lodge, Alvington, Gloucestershire, in the 1920s and thence by descent.

Mary Riter Hamilton was a fearless, trailblazing artist who left a remarkable and moving wartime record for her Canadian countrymen. After early instruction in Toronto, and leading a china-painting studio in Winnipeg after the death of her husband in 1893, Hamilton spent the first years of the twentieth century training in Europe, initially in Berlin, and then

at the Académie Vitti in Paris. She returned to Canada in 1911, and her reputation grew steadily through successful exhibitions in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Winnipeg and Calgary.

When war broke out in 1914, Hamilton was determined to play her part. She urged the Canadian War Memorials Fund to send her to Europe as an official war artist, but was repeatedly denied the opportunity: men could paint on the frontlines, but women artists were confined to the home front. After the Armistice, however, Hamilton received a commission from the Amputation Club of British Columbia to paint the devastating aftermath of the war for their veterans' magazine, *The Gold Stripe*. Painting *en plein air* under the harshest conditions, quickly and on a small scale in order keep mobile, and in most cases well before any reconstruction had begun, she produced a visceral and harrowing archive of a decimated and sorrowful landscape. For three years she painted prolifically, her evocative smears of paint capturing scenes of churned up earth, makeshift cemeteries, ghostly and still-smoking forests, cold, stagnant puddles, teetering

church ruins, brooding skies, and wet, slow-moving crowds. But she also painted colourful moments of hope and renewal: a springtime garden; a lovingly placed wreath; crisp, proud flags fluttering in the wind.

The present Lot shows the annihilated town of Arras in northern France, shortly after the fighting ended. Barbed wire collects in the foreground, while the saddest horizon is defined by the ruined silhouette of the Hotel de Ville.

Hamilton's three years on the battlefields left her drained and dispirited. She never painted seriously again, although the collection she donated to the National Archives of Canada remains one of the most poignant, sweeping, selfless and exhilarating wartime memorials from the period.

RIGHT The Battle of Arras took place on April 9th 1917, when British, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand forces attacked the German Hindenburg defensive line. This image shows Canadian troops on the slopes of Hill 145 looking down towards the city.

Photo credit: Paul Reed





214

Lynn Chadwick

BRITISH 1914–2003

Jubilee

stamped with the artist's monogram and numbered 760 and 7/8

bronze with a black patina and polished surfaces

height: 26,5 cm

R600 000 – 800 000

Unlike many sculptors who make a small maquette and then scale it up, Chadwick frequently made a large work first and then an edition of smaller works. The large-scale *Jubilee IV* (C27) (left) is in the grounds of Lypiatt Park (Gloucestershire, UK), the Tudor manor house the artist bought in 1958 and slowly renovated and restored until his death in 2003. The present Lot is a small-scale, mirror image of *Jubilee IV*.

Thanks to the artist's estate for assistance.

Photo credit: Steve Russell Studios © the estate of Lynn Chadwick



215

Neels Coetzee

SOUTH AFRICAN 1940–2013

Untitled I (Double Skull)

1976

signed with the artist's initials, numbered 2/6 and stamped with the SF (Sunet Ferreira) foundry mark
bronze on brass base

height: 15 cm excluding base, 18,5 cm including base

R300 000 – 500 000

EXHIBITED

Circa, Johannesburg, *Neels Coetzee: Crucible*, 3 to 26 September 2015.

LITERATURE

Afrox (1978) *Neels Coetzee Afrox Metalart Guest Artist*, Johannesburg: Afrox. Illustrated in colour on page 13.

Koulla Xinisteris (2015) *Neels Coetzee: Crucible*, Johannesburg: Circa. Illustrated in colour on page 41.

'The human head, which is built around the skull, is seen as the seat of all human faculties, the finest as well as the most wicked. The centre of [wo/]man's talent, the centre of [wo/]man's achievement. Yet, when stripped of its appendages, the skull is a symbol of death, destruction, a symbol of danger. Here is a contradiction. Why? It becomes diametrically opposed, the exact opposite pole of what it is in life.'

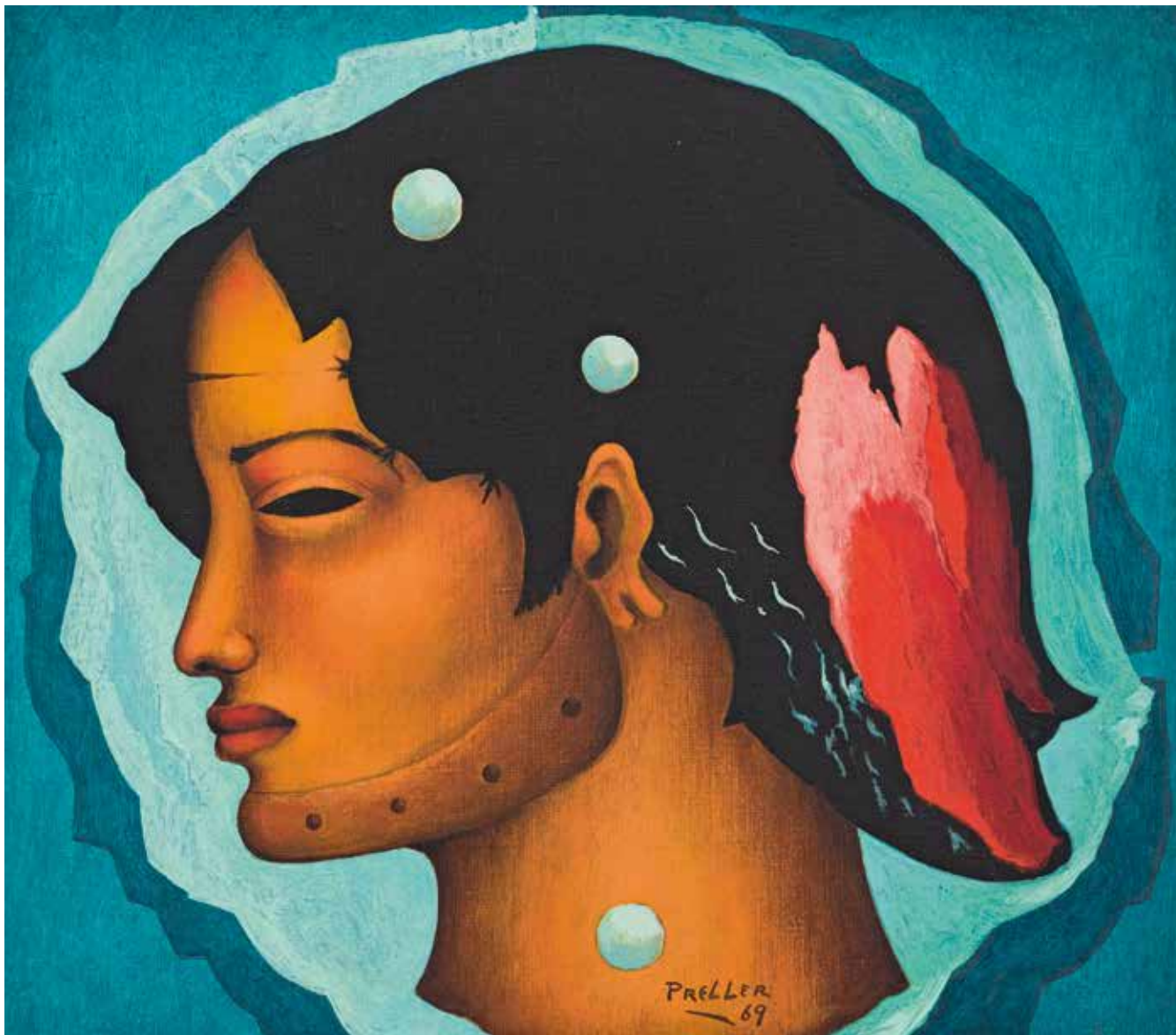
'The one skull appears to be tumbled on its back by the other. A series of differently shaped 'humps' and 'hollows' within each skull form are fashioned to create a sense of force, inside the modelled form, which apparently thrusts the surface into different undulations. It differs from traditional closed core casts, which suggest a solid form. Here the form is opened on at least one side, indicating that there is, in fact, no interior substance other than a void. While certain angles would suggest a solid form, a crack or dislodgement of a plane would arrest the illusion, revealing the hollowness of the form ... The double skull turned out to be more like two forms in a sort of dialogue, each with their own inner preoccupations, while at the same time involved with their emotional relationship with each other. While the single skull sculptures tend to be preoccupied with themselves and aggression is turned outwards reflecting an internal conflict.'

1. Neels Coetzee (1990) quoted in 'Images in Bronze: A Commentary of the Sculpture of Neels Coetzee', in Graham Saayman (ed) *Modern South Africa in Search of a Soul: Jungian Perspectives on the Wilderness Within*. Boston: Sigo Press, page 242.

2. Neels Coetzee (1985) *The Skull: Formal and Iconographical Sculptural Derivations*. Unpublished Master's Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, page 38.



THREE VIEWS OF LOT 215



216

Alexis Preller

SOUTH AFRICAN 1911–1975

Profile Head

signed and dated 69
oil on canvas
40,5 by 46 cm

R600 000 – 800 000

Over a lifetime, Alexis Preller painted a long line of powerful and symbolic heads, floating or disembodied portraits of mythical gods, kings, princes and

angels, portraits that relate to the notion of a sculptural fragment. *Profile Head* is unusual as, even though it follows the prototypes of Preller's seemingly accurate renderings of wooden sculptures, it is not one of Preller's mythographically themed heads. It is the idealised portrait of a young man, most likely in Preller's close circle of friends, whose identity remains uncertain.

Preller very rarely painted actual portraits besides his rare self-portraits – of which only three are known to exist – or images of people in his close circle such as his sister Minnie, Christi Truter, a rare

portrait of Pat Philip and, much later, a few portraits of Guna Massyn.

In this beautifully scaled *Profile Head*, Preller brings to the pensive young man a fragility and sensitivity. Set against a halo of aquamarine that casts a shadow against the recessive teal blue, the young man is given a perfectly sleek profile, refined nose, dreamy narrowed eyes, sensually pouting red lips and a rose-coloured luminosity to his flawless light brown skin. His head is crowned with a mop of thick black hair into which Preller inserts a swath of hibiscus reds and pinks alongside the wavy aquamarine lines, and floats three

circular drops of aquamarine water above his hair and neck.

The young man's stylised beard bears a closer resemblance to that of an actual person than those of his mythical or symbolic heads. Unlike his mythologically or symbolically themed portraits Preller does not embellish this portrait with the elaborate headaddresses to be found in his 1957 portraits, *The Young King* and *Young King*, or the *Poet Prince* of 1975 (Lot 589, Strauss & Co, October 2017) with his crimson red conical fez and a jewel encrusted beard.

217

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

Roodeplaat

signed

oil on canvas

23,5 by 34 cm

R300 000 – 500 000

PROVENANCE

Purchased from the artist, thence by descent.



218

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

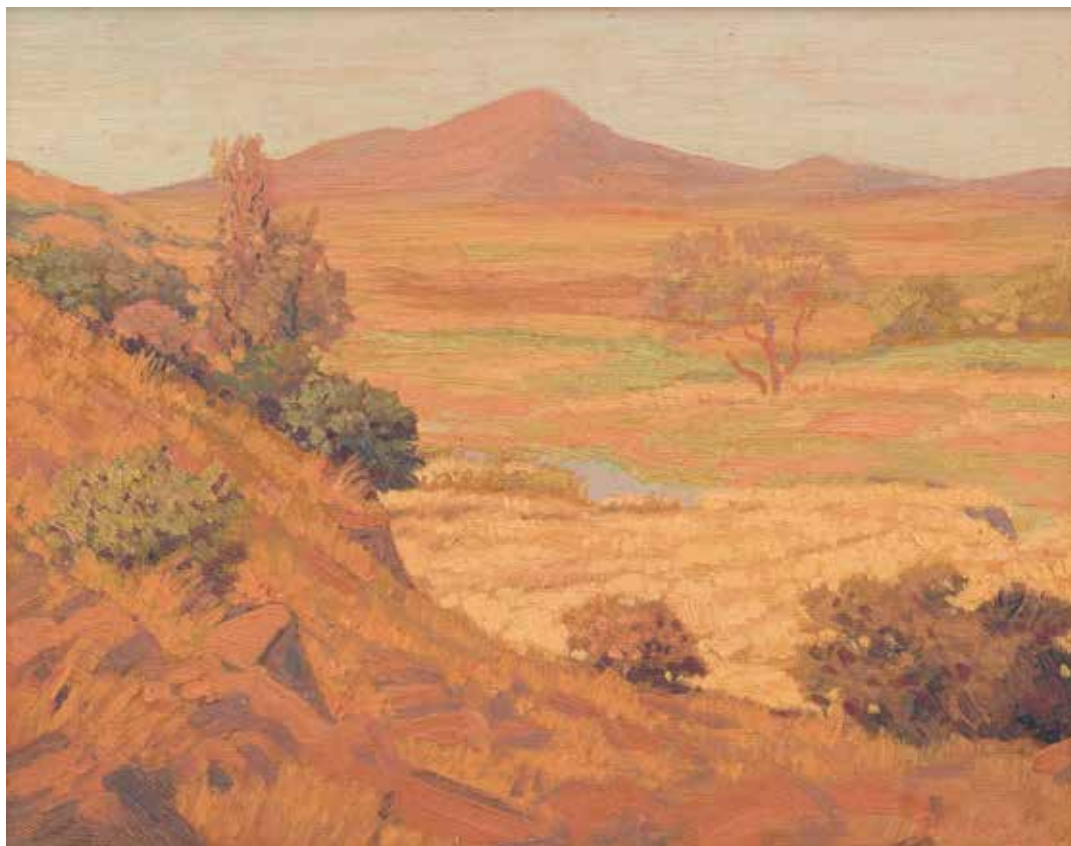
Landscape

signed and indistinctly dated

oil on canvas

29 by 36,5 cm

R250 000 – 350 000





219

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

Voortrekkerhuis, Naboomspruit

signed and dated 1937

oil on board

29 by 39 cm

R700 000 – 1 000 000

Pierneef used the same view in the well-known linocut, *Voortrekkerhuis, Naboomspruit* (Nilant 50), illustrated in FEG Nilant (1974) *Die Hout- en Lino- en Linosneë van JH Pierneef*, Cape Town: Balkema on page 83.





Installation view of Lot 224, Lot 223, Lot 222, Lot 220, Lot 227, Lot 225 and Lot 226



Casting a new light on Anton van Wouw

The literature on Anton van Wouw, South Africa's key, early sculptor on the Highveld, has recently and dramatically been turned on its head. A chance finding in the State Archives by Gerhard de Kamper, Chief Curator of Collections at the University of Pretoria (UP) and a leading specialist on the artist, has shed new light on the provenance and casting histories of many of Van Wouw's most beloved, small-scale masterpieces. Attached to the artist's original will – UP had only ever kept an apparently partial copy – De Kamper found previously overlooked order schedules, as well as dated documents relating to the whereabouts and movements of certain plasters and moulds. These discoveries, particularly in the context of the extensive, preceding research on the artist carried out by Professor Alex Duffey, Chris de Klerk and De Kamper, give a clearer picture of Van Wouw's career than ever before, and provide some answers to a number of questions that have for so long frustrated academics and collectors: which foundries, for instance, cast the artist's work during his lifetime? During which periods did these foundries cast? Exactly how influential were Nisini and Massa, those two elusive Romans? And how many casts of each work were produced before the artist died in Pretoria in 1945? While a forthcoming article by De Kamper will reveal some of the long-awaited casting numbers, the fine, rare group of examples appearing in this catalogue, including the fabled maquette of Paul Kruger from the Rand Club in Johannesburg, provides an opportunity to present some revelations.

Without evidence to suggest otherwise, it had always been assumed that the Nisini and Massa foundries cast concurrently. That is to say, either foundry's mark appearing on a Van Wouw casting had previously given no clue about the date of its production. It seemed perfectly reasonable that over nearly half a century the artist had simply alternated between the two foundries depending on changing costs, waiting lists, or the preference for one master engraver over another. De Kamper has now made it clear, however, having uncovered a cache of order lists largely drawn up by Van Wouw's major syndicate of backers, that the Nisini foundry not only pre-dated the Massa foundry, but that it had ceased production before Massa was even established. The earliest extant records confirm that Nisini cast the bust of President MW Pretorius in 1905. While in all likelihood Nisini had worked with Van Wouw prior to that date too, the foundry's last-known casting for the artist, the bust of Dr David Draper, was in 1928. Revealingly, the first

sculpture to be cast by Massa, the *Laughing Basuto*, was only in 1936. It follows, then, that Van Wouw used Nisini up until about 1928, and engaged Massa to cast his work from at least 1936 onwards. The change, one expects, would have been down to Nisini's retirement or his death. This is confirmed by one of De Kamper's most surprising and neatest discoveries: the Nisini and Massa foundries occupied the same Roman premises, the one after the other! Each and every Nisini and Massa casting therefore came from the same, no-doubt gritty workshop on the Via del Babuino (64-65), a short walk, incidentally, from the Spanish Steps and the Villa Medici. The shared location is a tidy coincidence, of course, and it also goes some way to explaining why the recent testing on the bronze alloys from both foundries revealed such close compositional similarities.

In another twist, it appears that neither Nisini nor Massa were genuine foundrymen. Rather, Giovanni Nisini was an art dealer trading from his Via del Babuino front. He would have bankrolled the foundry, and released the castings under his name. Similarly, Galileo Massa, who in the past has been mistakenly referred to as Giovanni Massa, marketed antiques from the same address. It seems that he took over the foundry from Nisini in the early 1930s, and sold bronzes under his own trademark. The possibility that some of the very same craftsmen were at work for both foundries is as intriguing as it is unexpected.

These revelations are only the beginning. While it has generally been presumed that Van Wouw only cast in three Roman foundries – Nisini, Massa, and Bruno, where the initial casting was done for the Kruger Monument – De Kamper has identified two others that the artist used in the city, namely those under the names of Giovanni Bastianelli and Oreste Buongirolami. With the addition of Prowazek Stöxen Kunstgieterij in Leiden, LE Giessen in Frankfurt, Galizia & Son Ltd in London, and of course Renzo Vignali in Pretoria, the number of known foundries the artist used in his lifetime is far greater than previously assumed. The recent findings make the group of examples featured in this catalogue quite remarkable too. For the first time in history, Van Wouw castings from at least six different foundries will go on show together: the *Maquette for the Paul Kruger Monument* and *Leemans the Postman* (both Nisini), *The Accused* (Massa), the *Bust of Louis Botha* (Buongirolami), the *Bust of 'Onze Jan' Hofmeyr* (Prowazek Stöxen), and the *Self-Portrait of the Artist* (Galizia).



TOP: The artist c.1896, with an early maquette of Paul Kruger in view.

BOTTOM: Van Wouw working in his Doornfontein studio, c.1910.

Photo credit: Anton van Wouw Archive, Pretoria

220

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Self Portrait

inscribed with the artist's name and
'Cast by John Galizia, London' on the
reverse

bronze with a brown patina, on a
wooden backing panel; cast by the
Galizia foundry, London
24 by 19,5 cm

R100 000 – 150 000



221

Anton van Wouw

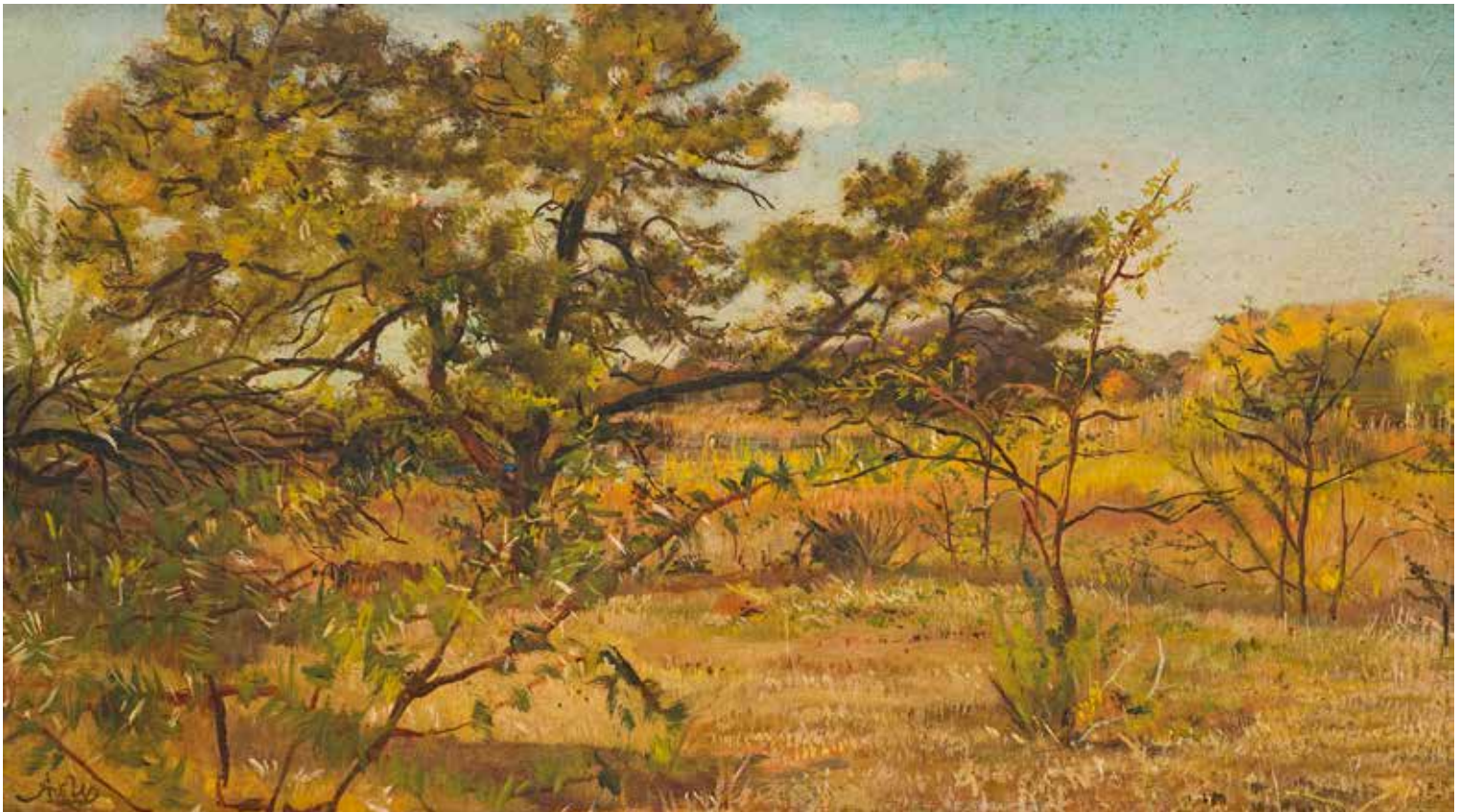
SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Meintjieskop

signed; inscribed with the artist's
name on the reverse

oil on board
19,5 by 34 cm

R40 000 – 60 000





TWO VIEWS OF LOT 222

222

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Bust of Louis Botha

inscribed with the artist's name and 'Louis Botha' bronze with a dark brown patina; cast by the Buongirolami foundry, Rome height: 41 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

Louis Botha – Boer war hero, big-hearted politician, and the first prime minister of the Union of South Africa – left an indelible mark on his country's history. His bravery and sense of duty prompted the highest praise both during and after his lifetime. Winston Churchill, for instance, spoke of him often, and fondly: 'Few men that I have known have interested me more (than) this grand, rugged figure, the Father of his country, the wise and profound statesman, the farmer-warrior ... the deep, sure man of solitude.'

The present Lot is one of three known bronze castings of this bust, and the only one not to be in state hands: both the other known castings belong to Parliament, and are kept in Pretoria and Cape Town. Each was cast at the newly-identified Buongirolami foundry in Rome and, thanks to a 1924 photograph in the Van Wouw House Collection showing the collection of Sir Hugh Levick, would likely have been produced in or around 1923 before the unveiling of the General Louis Botha monument in Durban.



TWO VIEWS OF LOT 223

223

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Bust of Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr

inscribed with the artist's name
bronze with a dark brown patina, on a bell-shaped
wooden base; cast by the Prowazek Stöxen foundry,
Leiden

height: 43 cm

R500 000 – 600 000

Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr – or Onze Jan, as he was affectionately nicknamed – was a long-serving member of the Cape House of Assembly, and wielded much political influence in the Cape Colony in the decades prior to Union, particularly among the Dutch-speaking supporters of the Afrikanerbond (an organisation not to be confused with the later Afrikaner Broederbond).

This handsome bust is certainly related to the commission Van Wouw received in 1915 to produce a large-scale statue of Onze Jan for Cape Town's Church

Square. Sitting proudly atop a bell-shaped base, this is the only known bronze casting of this bust. It is still unclear when it came out of the Prowazek Stöxen foundry in Leiden – most likely in 1915 – but the sharp casting of the gently frowning brow and the luxurious beard gives the bust a weighty, lifelike presence.

Onze Jan died in London in October 1909, just months before Louis Botha was installed as the first prime minister of the Union of South Africa.



224

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Paul Kruger

bearing the foundry mark
bronze with a dark brown patina;
cast by the Nisini foundry, Rome
height: 102 cm

R2 200 000 – 3 200 000

PROVENANCE:

Sir Ernest Oppenheimer.
The Rand Club, Johannesburg.



Few South African sculptures have as rich a provenance as the imposing, time-burnished bronze maquette for the Paul Kruger Monument. Fewer still are so entwined in the histories of the Transvaal Republic; its folkloric, top-hatted president; the Second Anglo-Boer War; and the backroom, helter-skelter, treasure-bargaining years before the Union. It is also remarkable that such an item, forever in private hands, should now go on view to the public for the first time in well over a century.

In 1895, Sammy Marks (1844–1920), the shrewd entrepreneur and Kruger confidant, provided the necessary funding to erect a permanent monument to the Transvaal's president in Pretoria's Church Square. His enormously generous gift of £10 000 would first-and-foremost cover the production costs of the statue, while any excess would go towards public improvements for the city. Such a prestigious public commission naturally caught the attention of Anton van Wouw who, incidentally, having arrived in the Transvaal in 1890, lived on the same street at the president. He quickly set to work on a small-scale model of the monument to be considered by Marks, the Pretoria City Council, and Kruger himself. This model is well-known from a number of contemporary photographs, and it clearly pleased the president: Van Wouw was awarded the commission in October 1897.

The artist's concept was grand, ambitious, and in the

spirit of the finest public monuments of early modern Europe. Bringing to mind Pietro Tacca's *Monument of the Four Moors* (1626) in Livorno, for instance, Van Wouw's design set Kruger atop a slender, square-edged pedestal, and placed four Boer soldiers on a quadratic base below, each of them crouching and armed. Four high-relief panels were also to be set into the sides of the plinth.

While initially considering a studio in Holland, Van Wouw eventually modelled each of the five major figures in Rome over a number of months between 1897 and 1898. Each was colossal. The squatting Boer soldiers – a pair of contemporary types, and a pair from the Great Trek – stood 7ft high, while Kruger measured a full 14ft in his boots and top hat. The casting in bronze was left to the master Roman foundryman, Franciscus Bruno. By the time Van Wouw arrived back in Pretoria late in 1898, the monument's base and pedestal had been prepared. Due to the outbreak of war some months later, however, the completed bronze figures, as well as the four accompanying relief panels, were impounded in Delagoa Bay, their enormous crates loaded into the warehouse of the London-registered African Boating Company. With Pretoria under British sway, and the guerrilla Boers forever on-the-run, Kruger's monument seemed doomed.

Sensing an opportunity, Lord Kitchener of Khartoum



LEFT: Van Wouw's studio c.1896, with the initial maquette for the Kruger monument. His great friend, Frans Oerder, paints alongside him.

ABOVE: Rudolf Steger's photograph used for a postcard, December 1904.

Photo credit: Anton van Wouw Archive, Pretoria



(1850–1916), the British chief-of-staff, negotiated the appropriation of the bronzes with Sammy Marks, and arranged to have the four Boer figures redirected to England. The Kruger figure languished in the Delagoa Bay warehouse (although rumours persist that this original casting was dumped in the Bay). While Kitchener planned to split the Boer soldiers between Sandhurst and Woolwich military colleges, one pair was eventually installed at the School of Civil Engineering at Chatham, and the other in the gardens of Broome Park, Kitchener's country seat: spectacular spoils of war.

In 1914, a decade after Kruger's funeral in Pretoria, his statue was returned to the city and lifted atop a lone plinth in Princess Park. Despite Louis Botha's best diplomatic efforts, the Boer soldiers remained in Britain for a generation; only in the aftermath of WW1 did Jan Smuts facilitate their return to South Africa. After being repatriated late in 1921 (Kitchener had died in 1916), the four soldiers were finally reunited with their general in 1925, when all were installed together outside the old Pretoria Railway Station. Finally, in 1956, the monument was positioned in its intended location in Church Square, albeit upon an amended base.

When modelling the five figures in Rome, Van Wouw made a number of small amendments. In the final version of Kruger, for instance, he changed the figure's weight distribution and the position of the presidential sash; the walking stick was added too, and the beard pressed more firmly against the collar. This definitive maquette was probably cast in plaster in Rome, and captured in an image by Rudolf Steger. It was exhibited at the Pretoria Art Association's inaugural exhibition in October 1904, and it formed part of the memorial decorations at the president's Pretorian funeral in that December. Thereafter it was acquired by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, and returned to Rome pre-1907 to be cast in bronze. Only a single casting was made by the Nisini foundry before the plaster was destroyed. This astonishing, solitary casting, with its deep caramel patina, was donated to the Rand Club in Johannesburg by Sir Ernest. At the entrance to the bar for generations, Oom Paul – regal and weighty – has enjoyed a unique view of the country's history.

The maquette has been identified by SAHRA as an item of significant historical importance, and will not be issued an export licence.

RIGHT A still from the intervention *The Silver Lining*, by n, October 2014, Church Square, Pretoria. The work formed part of the Cool Capital Biennale, 2014, and was sponsored by Strauss & Co.

Photo credit: Liam Purnell



225

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

Leemans the Postman

inscribed with the artist's name,
dated 1901 and bearing the foundry mark
bronze with a green patina; cast by the
Nisini foundry, Rome
height: 45 cm

R700 000 – 1 000 000

LITERATURE

J Ernst (2006) *Anton van Wouw: 'n Biographie*.
Vanderbijl Park: Corals. Another cast from the same
edition illustrated on page 102.

Leemans the Postman remains one of the rarest of all
of Van Wouw's early masterpieces. Conceived and
modelled in 1901, with Pretoria in British hands, it
is enlivened with a force of character that belies its
small scale. The dignity and humility of the figure,
with his crumpled jacket, his sweat-soaked veld hat,
his workmanlike hands, and his untamed beard, is
unmistakable.

The story of Leemans (1840–1908) is extraordinary
too. A Dutchman, he met Kruger when the president
was on official business in Holland prior to the
Second Anglo-Boer War. Kruger made a promise to
Leemans – without second thought, presumably –
that there was a job waiting for him should he ever
manage to get himself to the Transvaal. One can
only imagine Kruger's surprise then when Leemans
turned up at his home in Pretoria some time later,
having landed in Delagoa Bay, and made his way
to the capital, mainly on foot. Kruger honoured
his promise, and made Leemans responsible for
delivering local telegrams. The pose Van Wouw
chose for the figure was therefore a familiar one
for Pretorians expecting mail: Leemans apparently
removed his hat before handing over each telegram,
bowed slightly, and noted that 'die aflewering is
kosteloos' (the deliver is free).



226

Anton van Wouw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1862–1945

The Accused

inscribed with the artist's name and bearing the foundry mark
bronze with a golden brown patina, on a wooden
base; cast by the Massa foundry, Rome
height: 29 cm excluding base, 35 cm including base

R700 000 – 1 000 000

LITERATURE

Esmé Berman (1983) *Art and Artists of South Africa*,
Cape Town: AA Balkema. Another cast illustrated in
black and white on page 344.

University of Pretoria (1981) *Anton van Wouw en die
van Wouwhuis*, Durban: Butterworth & Co. Another
cast illustrated in black and white on page 29,
Fig. A18.

J Ernst (2006) *Anton van Wouw: 'n Biographie*.
Vanderbijl Park: Corals. Another cast illustrated in
black and white on page 70.

The Accused – or *The Basuto Witness*, as it has also
been titled – is one of Van Wouw's most poignant
and beautiful portraits. It shows a testifying
mineworker, his arms close to his sides, his eyelids
heavy and weary, his brow deeply furrowed, and his
expression one of bewilderment and unease. There
is no way of knowing on which side of the law the
mineworker stands, but despite his obvious anxiety,
he remains proud and dignified.

The present casting is an exquisite example, and
it would have come out of the Massa foundry after
1936. The frayed edges of the figure's makeshift
hessian vest are sharp and hard to the touch, the
lines of his lips and cheekbones keen and graceful,
and his skin supple and unblemished.

The sitter for this work also appears in *The Skapu
Player* (1907) and *The Dagga Smoker* (1907).



227

Abraham Broadbent

ENGLISH 1868–1919

Atlas

inscribed with the artist's name
and dated 1914
bronze with a dark brown patina,
on a marble base
height: 46,5 cm excluding base,
51,5 cm including base

R200 000 – 300 000

PROVENANCE

Harry Adams, quantity surveyor
for the construction of the Union
Buildings, and thence by descent.

Abraham Broadbent, carver, modeller and stonemason, more often than not on an architectural scale, built a reputation as an outstanding sculptor in the English Baroque style. Grounded at the South London Technical Art School in Lambeth, and widely exhibited, most notably at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, the Art Workers' Guild, and the Royal Academy, his work is perhaps most famously represented by the portraits of Huntington Shaw (the noted English blacksmith) and Thomas Tompion (the father of English clockmaking) that form part of the Aston Webb façade of the Victoria & Albert Museum.

No doubt on the strength of his Victoria & Albert Museum assignment, Broadbent was commissioned by the Transvaal Colonial Government to contribute to the decorative programme of Herbert Baker's Union Buildings on Meintjieskop in Pretoria. The design of this iconic structure, which took shape between 1910 and 1913, and was so beautifully documented by the likes of Pieter Wenning and Henk Pierneef, was loaded with political connotations. Most notably, the symmetrical, semi-circular plan, which relied on two identical wings, each supporting a domed tower, symbolised the union of English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans that had been politically formalised in 1910. Broadbent cast two monumental representations of Atlas – the world on his shoulders – to top the domes: a classical, crowning flourish.

At least five small-scale replicas of *Atlas* were cast in bronze after the building was completed, and presented as mementos to the major players involved in the scheme. Castings were given to Herbert Baker (the architect), the Transvaal Colonial Government (the client), MCA Meischke (the building contractor), Broadbent (the artist), and Harry Adams (the quantity surveyor). The present Lot is Adams' final example, and has been a treasured family heirloom for over a century.

RIGHT One of the large-scale *Atlas* figures being installed at the Union Buildings, Pretoria, 1913.

Photo credit: University of Pretoria Architecture Archives, Van der Waal Collection.



TWO VIEWS OF LOT 227



228

Pieter Wenning

SOUTH AFRICAN 1873–1921

Near Pretoria (Bishopscote)

1910–1912

signed with the artist's monogram;

inscribed with the title on a label

adhered to the reverse

oil on panel

25 by 45 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

PROVENANCE

Mr Phillip Lapin

Mrs Esther Lapin (née Franks)

Professor Peter E Franks

EXHIBITED

The Individualists, *Second Exhibition*,
Pretoria, 29 July – 1 August 1912.

Accompanied by a conservation report and letter of authenticity by Jan Middeljans, Conservator of Fine Art, National Museum of Cultural History, Pretoria. The painting depicts the house known as Bishop Bousfield House, and later Bishopscote, in Struben Street, Pretoria. At the time the painting was executed, the house was occupied by Bishop Carter. Wenning was often accompanied on painting trips around Pretoria by his friend, JH Pierneef, who also made several sketches, linocuts and paintings of the house.



229

Pieter Wenning

SOUTH AFRICAN 1873–1921

Blue Gums, Pretoria

signed; signed and inscribed with the

title on the reverse

oil on canvas

34,5 by 29,5 cm

R220 000 – 260 000

PROVENANCE

Sotheby Parke Bernet, Johannesburg,

19 April 1977, Lot 40

Strauss & Co, Cape Town, 3 March

2011, Lot 211.

EXHIBITED

South African National Gallery, Cape Town, Pretoria Art Gallery, and William Humphreys Art Gallery, Kimberley, *Commemorative Exhibition*, 1967, cat. no. 4b.





230

Lucas Sithole

SOUTH AFRICAN 1931–1994

***Dancing by the Riverside*
(LS8506)**

1985
carved umgwawuma wood with a
golden brown patina
height: 82 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

PROVENANCE

Die Kunsamer, Cape Town.
Gallery 21, Johannesburg.

EXHIBITED

Gallery 21, Johannesburg, 1985
cat. Xo.5

LITERATURE

City Press Prospects, Johannesburg,
1985, illustrated.
Fernand Haengg (2015) *Lucas Sithole*
1931–1994: Highlights, Basel: Fernand
Haengg. Illustrated in black and
white on pages 132 and 133.

231

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Indian

signed and dated 1945; inscribed with the artist's name, the date, the title and the medium on a Grosvenor Gallery, London, label adhered to the reverse; inscribed with the artist's name and 'Irma Stern 1895–1966, Memorial Exhibition, 14 March – 15 April 1967' on a Grosvenor Gallery, London label adhered to the reverse; inscribed with 'cat 109' on the reverse
tempera on card
39 by 29 cm

R300 000 – 500 000

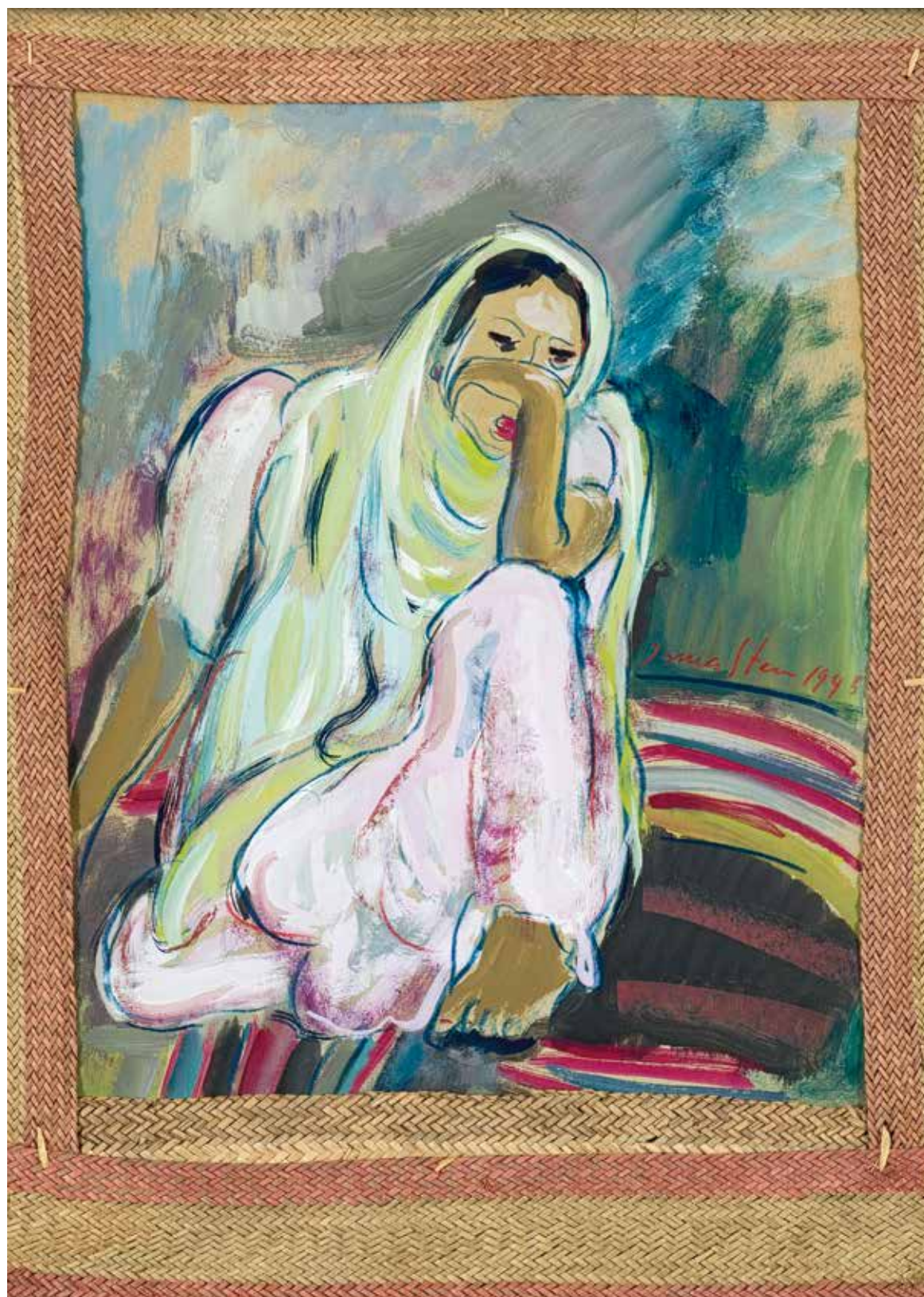
PROVENANCE

Grosvenor Gallery, London.

EXHIBITED

Grosvenor Gallery, London,
Irma Stern 1895–1966 Memorial Exhibition, Paintings of Europe and the African Continent, 1914–1965,
14 March – 15 April 1967.

The cover of the exhibition invitation is adhered to the reverse.



© Irma Stern Trust | DALRO



232

Alexis Preller

SOUTH AFRICAN 1911–1975

The Open Book

signed and dated 46
oil on canvas laid down on board
40 by 50 cm

R700 000 – 1 000 000

LITERATURE

Esmé Berman and Karel Nel (2009) *Alexis Preller: A Visual Biography*, Johannesburg: Shelf Publishing. Illustrated in black and white in Volume I, *Africa, the Sun and Shadows*, page 93.

PROVENANCE

Bought from the artist by the current owner's grandfather, Mr Toby Louw.

The vivid blue morning glories found in at least three of Alexis Preller's still life paintings were cultivated around the artist's studio at Ygdrasil, from seeds that his friend, Sampie de Wet, had given him. In *The Open Book*, the flowers are contained in a deep blue rectangular vase next to a white spider conch sea shell. These are framed by an open book showing a colour plate of Netherlandish master Rogier van der Weyden's fifteenth century *Portrait of a Lady*.

Books were extremely important in Preller's life and they are the subject of a large number of his paintings. He read voraciously on many subjects and was heavily dependent on art

books for their visual content. The books Preller depicted in the still life paintings were often open on a page illustrating a historic European figure or a work by a favourite artist.

In the same year, Preller painted *Blue Flowers*, a still life composition with morning glories arranged in one of his much-loved 'household gods', a 'Persian' vase given to him by his mother. In *Morning Glories and Thorns* (1947), a bright red hibiscus is added to the arrangement and Preller again creates a stage-like setting with a book as backdrop, this time the open page showing a colour plate of El Greco's *Virgin and Child* (1599).

233

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Still Life with Fruit and Dahlias

signed and dated 1946

oil on canvas

85 by 95 cm

R12 000 000 – 15 000 000

EXHIBITED

Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg, *Irma Stern:*

Expressions of a Journey, 25 September to 29

November 2003.

LITERATURE

Standard Bank (2003) *Irma Stern: Expressions of a*

Journey. Johannesburg: Standard Bank. Illustrated in

colour on page 163.

Although Irma Stern produced still life paintings prolifically throughout her life, her biographers agree¹ that those of the 1930s and 40s represent the high-water mark of her career. Along with the portraits of this period, these works unequivocally express her confidence and mastery, and are a compelling testimony to her virtuosic gifts of colour and expression. While the still life paintings share some common characteristics – the inclusion of objects from her collection, the canary-yellow backdrop of her studio, a shallow perspective that tilts the flowers into the viewer's space with exuberant urgency – each is a unique example of Stern's unconstrained delight in celebrating the splendour of these canonical signifiers of the beauty, joy and transience of life.

Stern clearly loved flowers, and her taste in them was diverse, ranging from the 'larkspurs, stocks, enormous geraniums, all shades of pelargoniums, great balls of white and also yellow daisies, violet and yellow poppies, sunflowers, and many, many roses, carnations, petunias, fuchsias'² that grew in her garden, to exotic hothouse varieties sold by local flower sellers. While there is no evidence to suggest that she was at all interested in any conventional symbolic 'language' of flowers, she certainly returned repeatedly to some varieties that lent themselves to her expressive technique. These included chrysanthemums, lilies, anthuriums, zinnias and, as with this example, dahlias. Indeed, this is the fourth of five paintings featuring dahlias produced during the

1930s and 40s and is one of the most elaborate and compelling, both compositionally and formally.

This painting was produced after Stern's second visit to Zanzibar in 1945 (she first visited the island in 1939) and is formally in keeping with the work she produced in the early 1940s influenced by these visits. The pictorial elements – in this case a generous, multicoloured bouquet of dahlias in a partially glazed Chinese *martaban* jar,³ two bowls of fruit on Zanzibari woven mats,⁴ and two large, sliced papayas – are presented in a flattened pictorial space, crowding the surface of the canvas. The bright yellow background of Stern's studio is largely obscured by the flowers, which set the overall tonalities of orange, red and yellow, and has the effect of increasing the shallowness of the space rather than providing a sense of depth. A strong tonal contrast is provided by the dark purple-black of two bunches of grapes, one in each bowl, a tone that is picked up in the dark viridian of the jar's glaze. Bluish-green hints offset against complementary tones of red and mauve are repeated in the stripes of one of the woven Zanzibari mats, which in turn is tilted forward so dramatically as to be almost parallel with the picture plane. The eye is drawn to the intensely bright yellow dahlia in the bouquet, while the tones of intense lime green in the fruit bowls tantalise the periphery of the viewer's vision. Further reinforcing the formal link to works of the Zanzibar period, this still life is presented in a Zanzibari frame with carved flower motifs.

At once a dramatic and captivating assertion of Stern's unchallenged mastery of expressive form and an unapologetic celebration of exoticism and sensuality, it is unsurprising that this painting set a record for the highest price paid to that point for a twentieth-century South African artwork when it last appeared on auction in 1999.⁵ However, it is ultimately the painting's virtuosic celebration of the expressive possibilities of the still life that makes it an extraordinarily compelling work, and one of the artist's finest.

1. See Esmé Berman, Neville Dubow, Marion Arnold, and Irene Below, for example.
2. From a letter to her friend Trude Bosse, dated 14 November 1928, quoted in Karel Schoeman (1994) *Irma Stern: The Early Years*, Cape Town: South African Library, page 88. Christopher Peter, long-time Irma Stern Museum curator, notes that today the situation is very different: 'The garden at 'The Firs' ... is cold, shady and tricky. ... Not nearly enough sun or the right soil for zinnias, larkspurs and delphiniums which often feature in her still lifes' (Christopher Peter (2018) 'The Creation of Irma's Still Lifes – A Personal View', in Wilhelm van Rensburg (ed.), *Life Force: The Still Lifes of Irma Stern*, Johannesburg: RMB Turbine Art Fair, unnumbered page).
3. A *martaban* jar of southern Chinese origin, possibly Yuan or later. Irma Stern Trust Collection accession number 533.
4. Photographs of similar mats are illustrated in Irma Stern's *Zanzibar* (JL van Schaik, Pretoria, 1948; pages 42, 63–64 and 80).
5. Chimaimba Banda, *Irma Stern painting sells for record R1m*, 8 November 1999. Accessed 18 August 2018. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/irma-stern-painting-sells-for-record-r1m-18924E>.

Federico Freschi



234

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Figure on the Beach

signed and dated 1962; inscribed with the artist's name, the date, the title and the medium on a Johans Borman Fine Art label adhered to the reverse
oil on board

49,5 by 59,5 cm

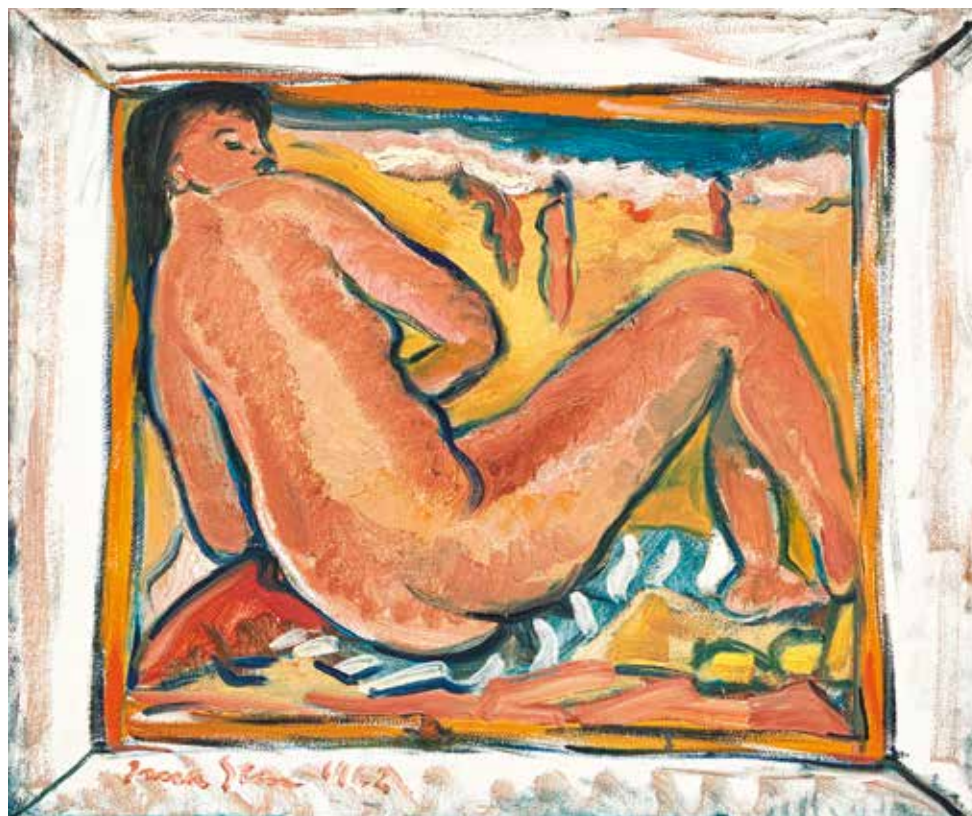
R800 000 – 1 200 000

PROVENANCE

Johans Borman Fine Art.

LITERATURE

Neville Dubow (1974) *Irma Stern*, Cape Town: Struik. Illustrated in colour on page 41.



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235

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Fishing Boats on the Beach

signed and dated 1931

gouache on paper

37,5 by 47,5 cm

R300 000 – 500 000

PROVENANCE

Estate Late Mrs Sonia Lapin.



© Irma Stern Trust | DALRO



236

Alexis Preller

Boy on a Horse

signed and dated '50
oil on wood panel
17 by 20,5cm

R600 000 – 800 000

PROVENANCE
Dr Jacobson.

EXHIBITED
Galerie Vincent, Pretoria, Paintings 1948–1950,
21 October to 4 November 1950.

A related letter from the artist, dated 14.11.50 and written from an address on Prospect Street, Pretoria, was sent from the artist to the owner at the time: 'Thank you so much for letting me have your *Boy on a Horse* for my exhibition. I was very glad to see it again and it was a great success on the show. With kindest regards, yours sincerely, Alexis Preller.'

237

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

Bathers

signed

oil on canvas

23,5 by 31 cm

R150 000 – 200 000



238

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

Goat Herders

signed

oil on board

43 by 24,5 cm

R200 000 – 300 000



239

Ephraim Ngatane

SOUTH AFRICAN 1938–1971

Miners on Leave

oil on board
60 by 75 cm

R150 000 – 200 000

PROVENANCE

Purchased from Everard Read,
Johannesburg, c.1970s.



© The Estate of Ephraim Ngatane | DALRO

240

Ephraim Ngatane

SOUTH AFRICAN 1938–1971

Row of Figures

signed and dated 67; inscribed with
'To Professor J. F. vd S. de Villiers.
Presented at a farewell luncheon
on 20th May, 1968, to mark 28 years
of fruitful association with the
Johannesburg Coronation Dental
Infirmary' on a plaque adhered to the
frame

oil on board
58,5 by 76 cm

R120 000 – 150 000



© The Estate of Ephraim Ngatane | DALRO

241

Gregoire Boonzaier

SOUTH AFRICAN 1909–2005

Free State Mountains

signed and dated 1953

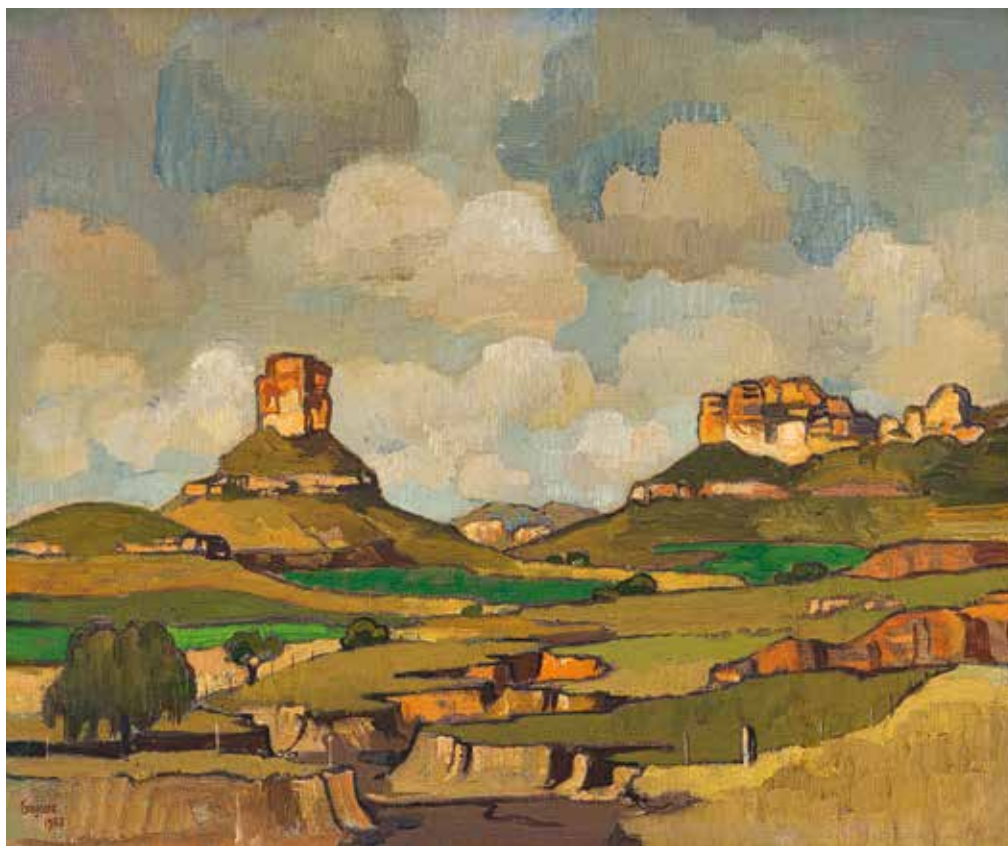
oil on canvas

50 by 60 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

PROVENANCE

Strauss & Co, Cape Town,
October 2016, Lot 549.



242

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

Landscape with Trees

signed and dated 45

oil on canvas laid down on board

29,5 by 39,5 cm

R300 000 – 400 000





© The Estate of Maggie Laubser | DALRO

243

Maggie Laubser

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1973

Landscape with Sheep

signed

oil on canvas laid down on board

45 by 40 cm

R500 000 – 700 000

244

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Still Life with Basket of Flowers

signed and dated 1937

oil on canvas

77,5 by 83,5 cm

R4 500 000 – 6 000 000

The still life genre provided Irma Stern with a fitting outlet for her passionate interest in colour. In the 1930s she became dissatisfied with her limiting palette. At her 1930 exhibition in Paris, while hanging her artworks, 'she found that she had difficulty in giving a total impression of her work without repeating her colour schemes. The brown bodies of the natives, with orange, red and green, were domineering colours in her canvases, and this made her think that her palette was limited, except for a few still lifes in which she saw a wealth of colour scheme, and on those still lifes she determined to build her career.'¹

The present Lot attests to Stern's embracing of a much more exciting colour palette. It is especially evident in the splashes of red, pink, purple and orange of the zinnias. The thick paint application echoes the texture and shape of the colourful stiff petals. The vase of flowers is placed on a red table, which seems to have been a favourite studio prop. The artist depicted the same table in other still lifes auctioned by Strauss & Co – *Still Life with Red Flowering Gums* (1936), which sold for R3.8 million in 2009, and *Gladioli* (1939), which sold for R12 million in 2010.

The still life genre gave the artist an ideal opportunity to experiment with the formal qualities of painting such as

colour and texture. It seems to have been a counterpoint to her portraits of family and friends, and the exotic 'others' she encountered on her travels in East Africa. And flowers were the natural fulcrum for her still life compositions – her house, The Firs, in Rosebank, Cape Town, has an extensive garden, and its bounty was a constant source of inspiration in the studio. Esmé Berman maintains that 'Stern's ebullient brush was frequently occupied by the flamboyant brilliance of sub-tropical blooms.'²

Marion Arnold considers Stern's still lifes to be 'more than a decorative statement of vigorously applied, strong colour: they speak of the hybridisation process that makes these flowers unlike the delicate blooms of indigenous species. But despite the fact that flowers within still life painting possess meanings related to environmental concerns, flower painting has come to epitomise a very popular subject, the antithesis of arcane and serious avant garde imagery.'³

1. Karel Schoeman (1994) *Irma Stern: The Early Years, 1894–1933*, Cape Town: South African Library, page 99.
2. Esmé Berman (1983) *Art and Artists of South Africa*, Cape Town: AA Balkema, page 168.
3. Marion Arnold (2001) *South African Botanical Art: Peeling Back the Petals*. Cape Town: Fernwood Press, page 148.



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245

Hugo Naudé

SOUTH AFRICAN 1868–1941

Brandvlei Dam, Worcester

signed

oil on board

34,5 by 29,5 cm

R60 000 – 80 000



246

Hugo Naudé

SOUTH AFRICAN 1868–1941

Namakwaland

signed

oil on board

34 by 43 cm

R250 000 – 350 000





TWO VIEWS OF LOT 247

247

Gerard de Leeuw

SOUTH AFRICAN 1912–1985

Die Siek Kalfie/The Sick Calf

signed and dated 77

bronze on a wooden base

height: 47 cm excluding base, 49 cm including base

R200 000 – 300 000

PROVENANCE

Acquired from the artist in the late 1970s by the current owner.

EXHIBITED

University of Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, and Sanlam Art Gallery, Belville, *Gerard de Leeuw 1912–1985: A Centenary Exhibition – 100*, 9 May to 31 May 2012 and 24 July to 28 September 2012.

LITERATURE

Matthys J Strydom (1979) *Gerard de Leeuw*, George: Suidkaap. Illustrated in colour on page 9. University of Johannesburg Art Gallery and Sanlam Art Gallery (2012) *Gerard de Leeuw 1912–1985: A Centenary Exhibition – 100*, (exhibition catalogue), Johannesburg and Bellville: UJAG and Sanlam. Illustrated in colour on page 43.



248

Erik Laubscher

SOUTH AFRICAN 1927–2013

Still Life with Urn

signed
oil on board
70 by 44 cm

R350 000 – 500 000

PROVENANCE

The Collection of Ben and
Cecilia Jaffe.
Sotheby Parke Bernet,
Johannesburg, October 1981,
Lot 206.
Strauss & Co, Johannesburg,
May 2016, Lot 273.



249

Sir Jacob Epstein KBE

BRITISH 1880–1959

First Portrait of Lydia

bronze with a green patina

height: 52 cm

R150 000 – 200 000

PROVENANCE

Blue Bird Farm, Oppenheimer Collection



TWO VIEWS OF LOT 249

250

Sir Jacob Epstein KBE

BRITISH 1880–1959

Tiger King, Man of Aran

bronze with a golden patina on stone base

height: 43 cm excluding base, 54 cm including base

R80 000 – 120 000

PROVENANCE

Blue Bird Farm, Oppenheimer Collection

Coleman 'Tiger' King played the lead role of Irishman Robert J. Flaherty in the 1934 film *Man of Aran*. Apart from this he was also known as a fisherman, blacksmith and farmer, but, it was his fighting spirit and passion for guns that earned him his name of 'Tiger King'. Epstein had six busts cast from 'Tiger King', the current lot being one of them.



TWO VIEWS OF LOT 250

251

Maud Sumner

SOUTH AFRICAN 1902–1985

Abstract Sunset

signed
oil on canvas
37 by 60 cm

R150 000 – 200 000



252

Maud Sumner

SOUTH AFRICAN 1902–1985

Tree Reflections

signed
oil on canvas
25 by 60 cm

R70 000 – 100 000

PROVENANCE

Strauss & Co, Johannesburg,
November 2010, Lot 79.



253

Maud Sumner

SOUTH AFRICAN 1902–1985

A Bridge over the Seine, Paris

signed
oil on canvas
33,5 by 41,5 cm

R150 000 – 200 000

PROVENANCE

Strauss & Co, Johannesburg, March
2009, Lot 63.





254

Jean Welz

SOUTH AFRICAN 1900–1975

Kitchen Interior

signed and dated 47; inscribed with the artist's name, the title, and the exhibition 'Jean Welz Retrospective 1970' on a South African National Gallery label adhered to the reverse; inscribed 'Norman Eaton, Pretoria, 1948' on the reverse
oil on canvas on wood panel
44 by 59,5 cm

R350 000 – 500 000

PROVENANCE

Norman Eaton.
Toby Louw and thence by descent.

EXHIBITED

The South African National Gallery, Cape Town, *Jean Welz Retrospective*, 1970, cat. no. 122.

LITERATURE

Elza Miles (1997) *The World of Jean Welz*, Cape Town: Fernwood Press and Rembrandt van Rijn Art Foundation. Illustrated in colour on page 80.

A sketch for this work is in the Naudé House Collection.

Esmé Berman wrote that Jean Welz's paintings 'projected the alternating emphasis of intellect and intuition, reason and emotion, in his perception of reality.' Welz was well served by his experience of living and working in the European cultural centres Vienna and Paris, and his association with modernists such as Le Cobusier and Adolf Loos. These influences are discernible in *Kitchen Interior*, 1947, made manifest by the architectural planes, shadows, the circular, vertical and horizontal lines and subdued hues. *Kitchen Interior* demonstrates how Welz interpreted architectural and artistic movements of the time and then transformed them into

his own distinctive visual vocabulary.

These qualities no doubt appealed to renowned architect Norman Eaton, an independent thinker and designer revered for his devotion to architectural perfection. He acquired *Kitchen Interior* in 1948, the same year Welz represented South Africa on the Venice Biennale. Upon his death, Eaton bequeathed this early work to fellow Pretoria architect and friend Toby Louw.

To quote Hans Franssen, 'Jean Welz is an artist of stature who rises above all attempts at categorisation.'²

1. Esmé Berman (1983) *Art and Artists of South Africa*, AA Balkema, Cape Town, page 492.
2. Hans Franssen (1982) *Three Centuries of South African Art*, AD Donker, Johannesburg, page 310.

255

Robert Gwelo Goodman

SOUTH AFRICAN 1871–1939

Drakensberg

signed with the artist's initials;
inscribed with the artist's name on a
plaque adhered to the frame
oil on canvas laid down on board
29,5 by 39,5 cm

R80 000 – 120 000

PROVENANCE

Estate Late Mrs Sonia Lapin



256

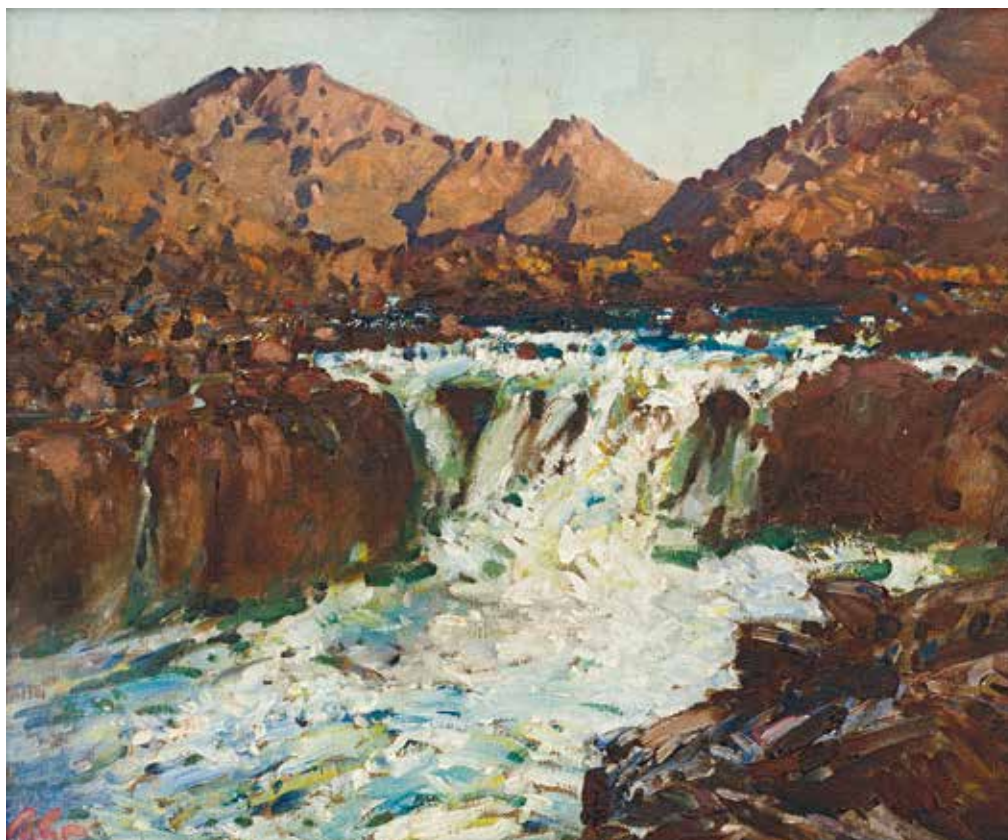
Robert Gwelo Goodman

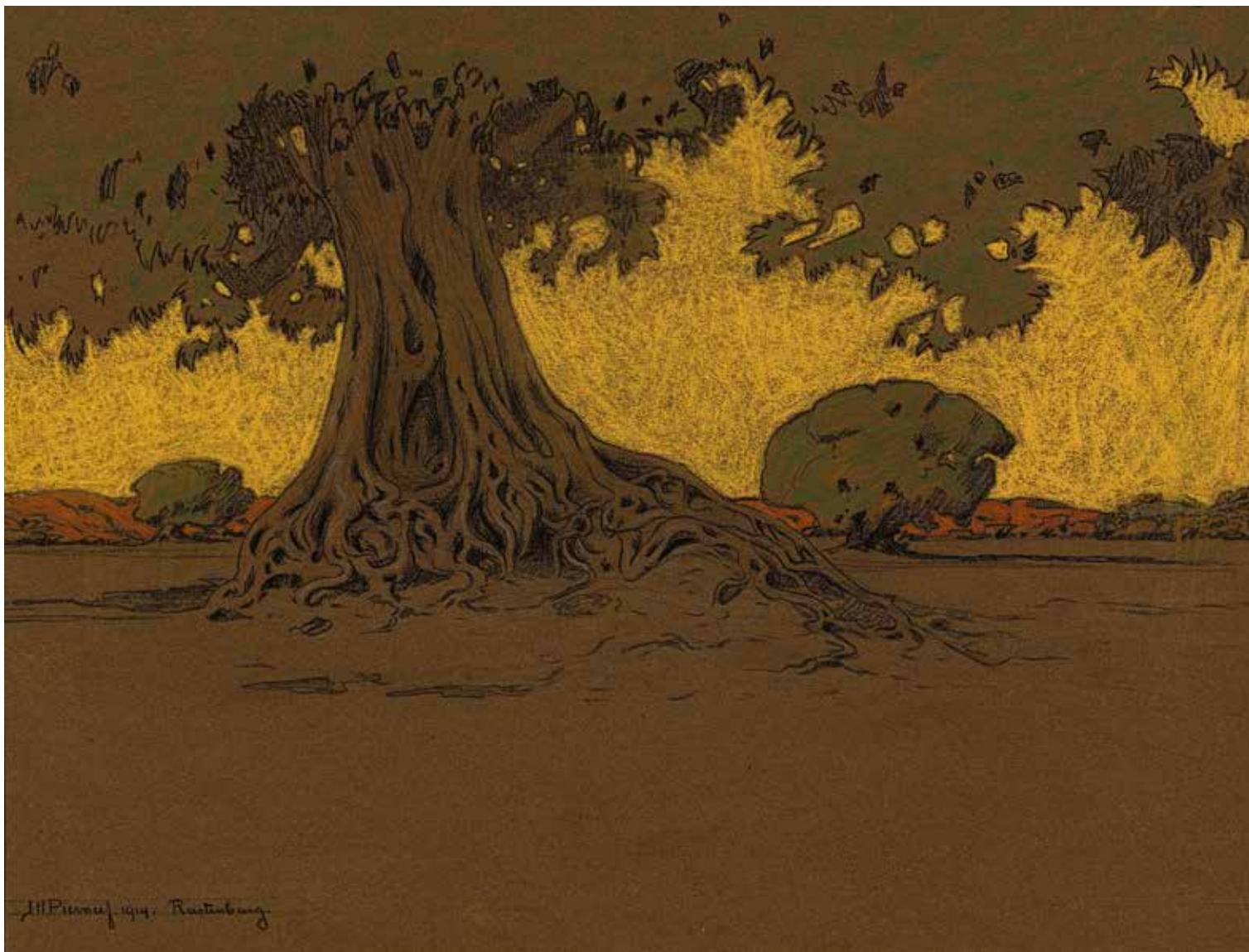
SOUTH AFRICAN 1871–1939

River, Drakensberg, KwaZulu-Natal

signed with the artist's initials
oil on canvas
39,5 by 47 cm

R120 000 – 180 000





257

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

Rustenburg

signed, dated 1914 and inscribed with the title
pastel and charcoal on card
32,4 by 42,5 cm

R250 000 – 350 000

PROVENANCE

Bought by the current owner's father at a Lezard & Co auction, Pretoria, 1959.

Shortly after Pierneef's death in 1957, Emil Schweickerdt held an exhibition of the artist's last works at his gallery and framing shop in Pretoria. The present lot, *Rustenburg*, was included at the request of Pierneef's widow, May.¹

1. J.L. Pretorius (1983) *Kunshandel in Johannesburg en Pretoria met Besondere Verwysing na E Schweickerdt (Edms) Bpk*, University of Pretoria, unpublished Master's dissertation.

258

Sydney Kumalo

SOUTH AFRICAN 1935–1988

The Blessing

1981/1982

signed and numbered 3/5

bronze with a brown patina, cast at the Vignali

Foundry, Pretoria

height: 64 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

EXHIBITED

The Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, *South African Art, 1850–2002*, 30 August to 7 September 2002.

Works in public collections: Pretoria Art Museum, edition number unknown (incorrectly titled *The Messenger*).

LITERATURE

Gavin Young (1988) *Art of the South African Townships*, London: Thames & Hudson. Illustrated in colour on page 22.

Michael Stevenson and Deon Viljoen (2002) *South African Art, 1850–2002*, Johannesburg: The Goodman Gallery. Illustrated in colour, unpaginated, edition number unknown.

Esmé Berman (1983) *Art and Artists of South Africa*, Cape Town: AA Balkema. Illustrated in black and white on page 404.

The Blessing served as a maquette for the large-scale sculpture that Sydney Kumalo was commissioned to make for the City of Cape Town. A 3.2m version of the work was erected in the concourse of the City's Civic Centre in 1983.

Thanks to Gavin Watkins for assistance with cataloguing information.



259

Lucas Sithole

SOUTH AFRICAN 1931–1994

Winter II (LS7503)

1975

signed on the base

carved Rhodesian teak on liquid steel base

height: 102 cm

R250 000 – 350 000

PROVENANCE

Gallery 21, Johannesburg.

Die Kunsamer, Cape Town.

EXHIBITED

Gallery 21, Johannesburg, 1975, cat. no. ZAR1300.

Sithole Retrospective Exhibition, Rand Afrikaans

University, Johannesburg, 1979.

Sithole Retrospective Exhibition, Pretoria Art

Museum, Pretoria, 1979.

Gallery 21, Johannesburg, 1987.

Sithole's representations of human forms as simplified yet graceful elongated figures, were carved from a single piece of wood and mounted on a modest base (usually wood, stone or liquid steel). These figures reflect Sithole's remarkable ability to depict human emotion and social realism through his carving, allowing the wood to reveal an emotional form. Only a handful of these elongated figures were carved with separate legs. In most, the legs are fused or at most a small parting can be seen close to the base. Perhaps often the wood did not allow for it, but presumably too Sithole could carve a more stable and taller figure by retaining the legs as a unified piece. *Winter II*, with its distinctly separate long legs, as well as the double head, makes this figure unusual in his oeuvre.¹

1. <http://sithole.com/SITHOLE-LS7503.htm>



TWO VIEWS OF LOT 259

260

Alexis Preller

SOUTH AFRICAN 1911–1975

A Box of Mangoes

signed

oil on canvas

41 by 51 cm

R300 000 – 400 000

A Box of Mangoes (circa 1938) is an early painting by Alexis Preller thought to have been painted in 1938 after his return to South Africa from London. Preller's early work shows his interest in painting still lifes in which objects of special significance to him appear, and items of fruit such as mangoes or apples take on singular importance. Throughout his career Preller revisited earlier themes, subject matter, mythical and symbolic objects and prototypes, but what is significant and unusual here is that twenty years later Preller painted another version of the same painting, *The Box of Mangoes* (1958), from the same raised angle. He lays out the richly coloured mangoes on the cardboard box in almost the exact same position, but in the later version, the much-repeated device of fragments of spider conch shells are more clearly visible.

cf. *A Box of Mangoes* (1958), sold Strauss & Co, 12 November 2018, Lot 323.



261

Alexis Preller

SOUTH AFRICAN 1911–1975

Two Male Nudes

signed, dated 34 and inscribed with 'Studio (or Student) Painting, Mark Gertler corrections' on the margin of the canvas.

oil on canvas

49 by 38 cm

R250 000 – 400 000

PROVENANCE

Volks Art Auctions, Pretoria, 3 March 1978, *Paintings, Intaglios and Drawings by Alexis Preller, Estate Late Alexis Preller and Estate Late Guna Massyn*, Lot 1. The catalogue entry for the auction states 'Inscribed on fold of canvas: Studio Painting, Mark Gertler corrections'.

Alexis Preller studied under Mark Gertler at the Westminster School of Art in London in 1934, the year that *Two Male Nudes* was painted. This imposing and earnest painting is of particular significance as it is the first known painting by Preller of the male nude, a subject he was to revisit throughout his life. Preller clearly valued this study as it remained in his collection throughout his life, only being sold as part of his estate sale in 1978, following the death of the artist and his partner Guna Massyn in 1975.



262

Sydney Kumalo

SOUTH AFRICAN 1935–1988

Seated Mother and Child II (Sitting on Brick)

signed and numbered 7/10

bronze

height: 66 cm

R700 000 – 900 000

From 1967 to 1971, Kumalo was at the peak of his powers and produced some remarkable sculptures. Amongst these were a series of large standing and seated figures: *Large Seated Woman* (1970), exhibited at *Re/discovery and Memory*, Norval Foundation, 2018; *Mother and Child (Seated)* (1970), from the Harry Lits sale in 2014, and exhibited at *Re/discovery and Memory*, Norval Foundation, 2018; *Standing Mother and Child* (1971), exhibited at *Re/discovery and Memory*, Norval Foundation, 2018; and the present lot, *Seated Mother and Child II (Sitting on Brick)*.

Seated Mother and Child II (Sitting on Brick) was produced by Egon Guenther in 1971 but only two bronzes were cast by Guenther from an edition of 10 (edition numbers 1/10 and 2/10). Linda Givon produced a further 5 casts of this sculpture (3/10 through to 7/10). All 7 casts were made by the Vignali foundry.

Seated Mother and Child II (Sitting on Brick) was exhibited by Linda Givon at the SA Kunsvereniging in November 1976 (edition number 4/10 exhibited) and at the Jack Gallery in New York and the Circle Gallery in San Diego in June and October 1985 when Linda Givon toured the United States with a 're-formed' Amadlozi Group consisting of Kumalo, Villa, Skotnes and Legae. An image of this sculpture appears in Hans Franssen's *Three Centuries of South African Art* on page 158.

Given the number of dubious Kumalo sculptures that have come on the market over the last few years, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find authentic early sculptures by the artist. This is unquestionably an important sculpture from arguably the most important period of Kumalo's working life.

Gavin Watkins



263

Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Malay Woman

signed and dated 1962;
inscribed with the artist's name
and the title on a plaque adhered
to the frame
oil on canvas
82,5 by 69,5 cm

R2 000 000 – 3 000 000

PROVENANCE

Estate Late Mrs Sonia Lapin.

The late Sonia Lapin (née Kalmanson) (1922–2018) grew up in New York City, but after marrying Joseph Lapin (1921–1999) in 1971, lived for the rest of her life in Houghton, Johannesburg. The couple travelled widely and collected fine art and jewellery.

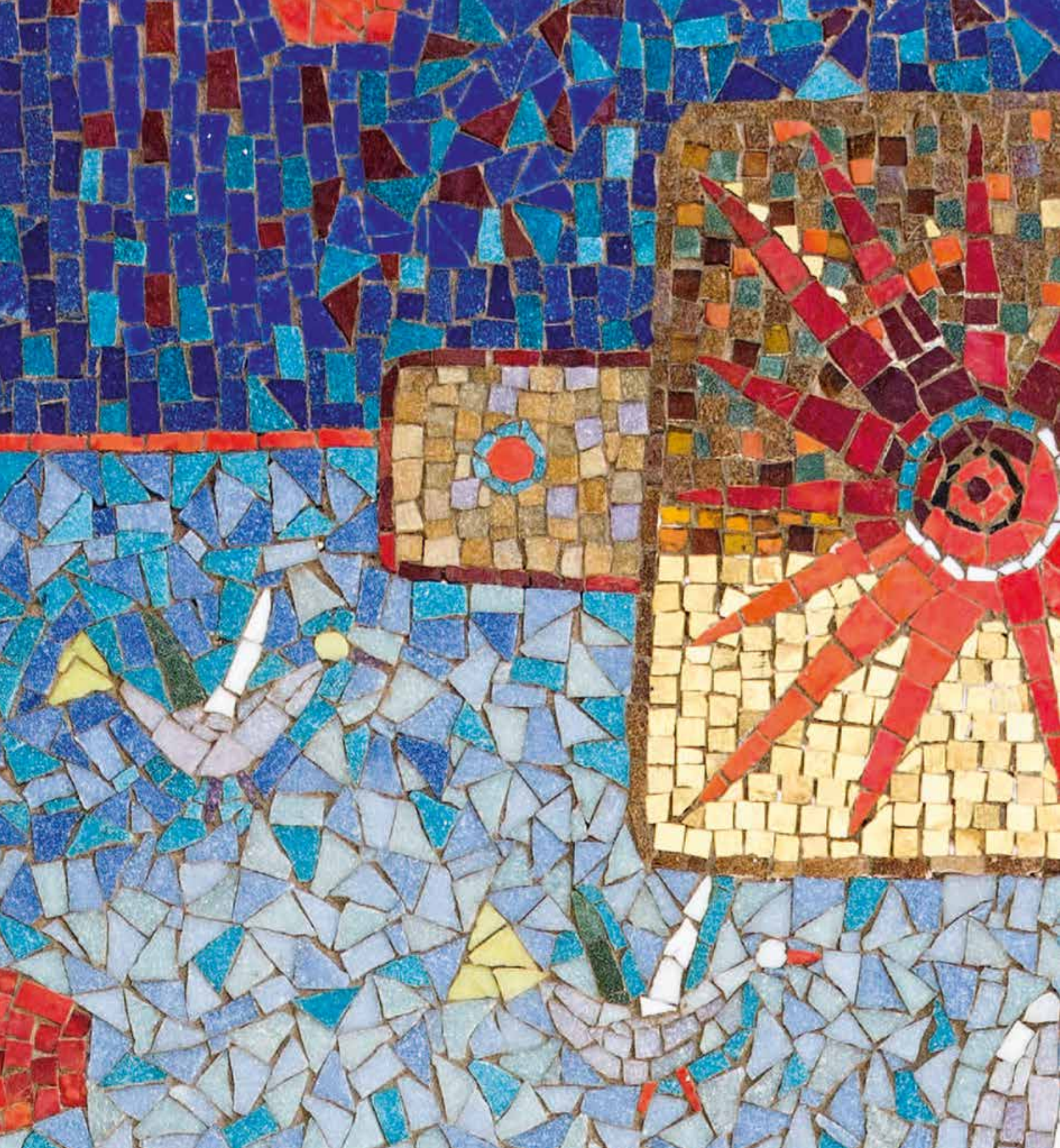


Irma Stern was fascinated by Malay culture in Cape Town. She was taken by the vibrant flower and fruit sellers on the Parade outside the City Hall, and admired the colourful and varied bridal dresses at Malay weddings. She travelled widely further north in Africa, visiting Senegal in 1937, 1938 and 1946, and the island of Zanzibar in 1939 and 1945. Many of her portraits and figure studies, including the present Lot, are imbued with the history and culture of those countries. Stern mentions the wonderfully colourful dresses of the women on Zanzibar in her travelogue, *Zanzibar* (1948), commenting on the rich textures and gold trimmings of their garments. The identity of the sitter in this portrait is not known, but her pink headscarf and cerise dress bring that evocative text to mind.

A subtle dynamism pervades this lovely portrait: the contrast in colour between the pinks in the foreground and the greens in the background activates the whole picture plane, and in the semi-circular rhythm created by the headscarf draped around the sitter's neck and in the folds of the dress around the breasts and the waist, Stern animates a static, seated pose in a very interesting and lively manner.



© Irma Stern Trust | DALRO







264

Alexis Preller

SOUTH AFRICAN 1911–1975

Mural

mosaic

269 by 86,5 cm

R6 000 000 – 8 000 000

LITERATURE

Esmé Berman and Karel Nel (2009) *Alexis Preller: A Visual Biography*, Johannesburg: Shelf Publishing. Illustrated in colour in Volume I, *Africa, the Sun and Shadows*, pages 202 and 203, and in Volume II, *Collected Images*, pages 190 and 191.

In situ murals are all too often destroyed when the buildings of which they are an integral part, are renovated or demolished. So, it is both a pleasure and a relief that this remarkable mosaic by Preller, the only one of its kind, has survived, and remains pristine and intact more than sixty years after its completion.

Commissioned for the private home of his friends, the Meyers, for their newly completed modernist house in Waterkloof, Pretoria, Preller created the mural directly next to the main entrance. There are accounts of his travelling almost daily to work with the tiny, jewel-like glass tesserae as he translated the work from his cartoon drawing onto the wall. His handling of the materials is reminiscent of the archaic use of this medium in places like Torcello and Ravenna, which Preller had visited during his 1953 study trip, specifically to look at murals in Italy and Egypt in preparation for the major commission, *All Africa*, 1953–55.

Seemingly standing on the curve of the Earth, the five towering figures form a compact group. It takes the viewer time to discern the separate figures from amidst the luxury of their robes. Despite being in close proximity to one another, the figures generally face outward, composed and formal in their demeanour. The composition of the figures is realised through a series of ellipses, both large and small, which define the heads, the robes, the mysterious bowl-shield forms and the shape of the group as a whole.

The tessellated background in cerulean, lilacs, violet and Adriatic blues, is indeterminate, but mostly suggests that the figures have their heads and shoulders among mountainous cumulus clouds. Within this airy realm, a flock of stylised birds makes its way, and strange, pointed leaves emanate from the group.

More gods than people, the figures seem almost to fill the space between Earth and Sun. The emblematic radiance of the sun is represented in a shimmering square cartouche. The broad band of blue, defined by a thin red horizon seems to separate the local solar system and its sun from deep space above.

Karel Nel

RIGHT Alexis Preller and Agnes Meyer viewing the completed mural, Waterkloof, Pretoria, 1958.



265

Robert Hodgins

SOUTH AFRICAN 1920–2010

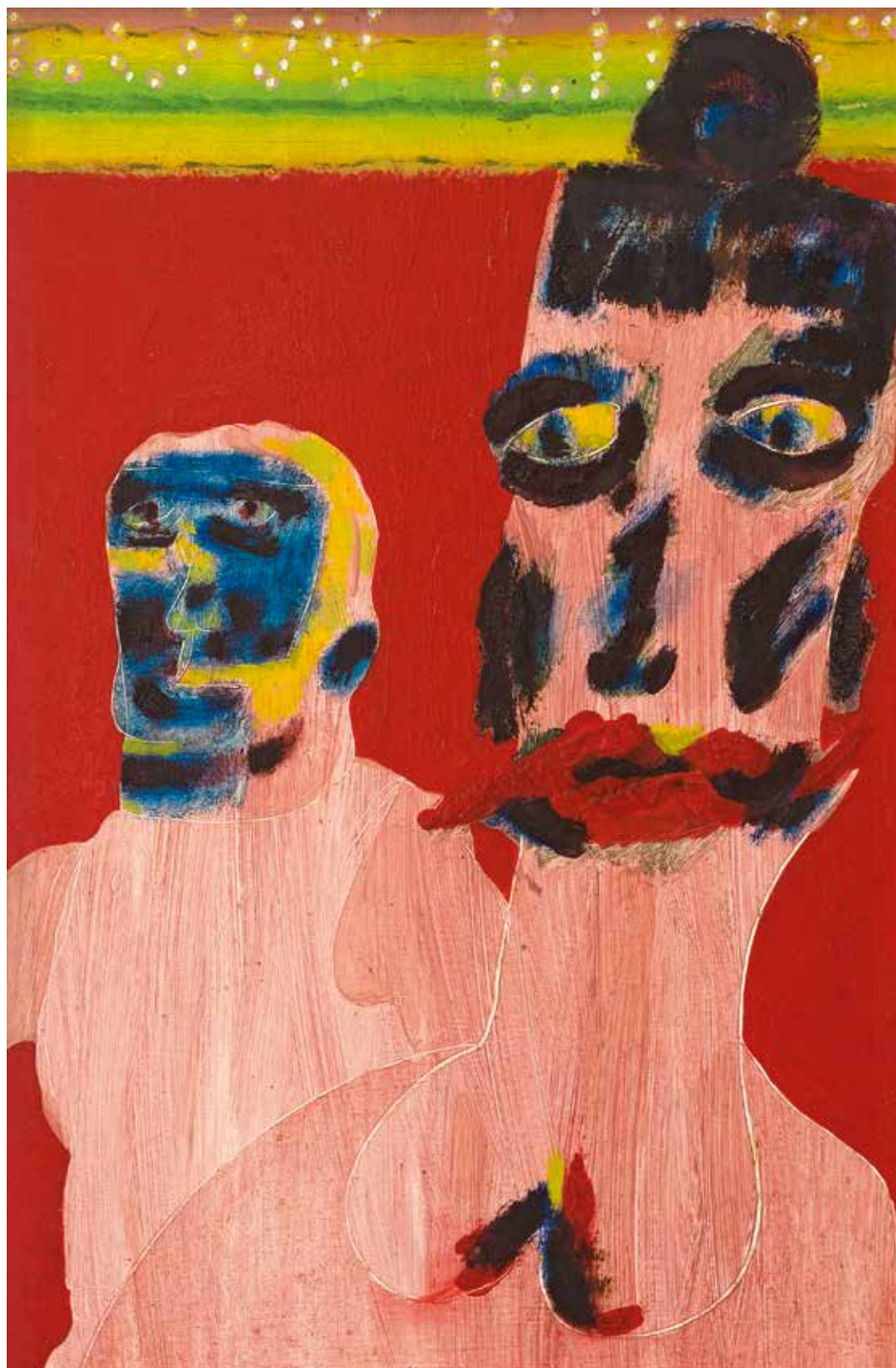
Low Life

inscribed with the title; signed
and inscribed with the artist's name
and the title on a label adhered
to the reverse
oil on board
42,5 by 28 cm

R150 000 – 200 000

LITERATURE

Hennie Aucamp (1994) *Dubbeldop:
Kabaretekste en -opstelle*, Cape Town:
Human & Rousseau, used as the
cover image.



266

George Pemba

SOUTH AFRICAN 1912–2001

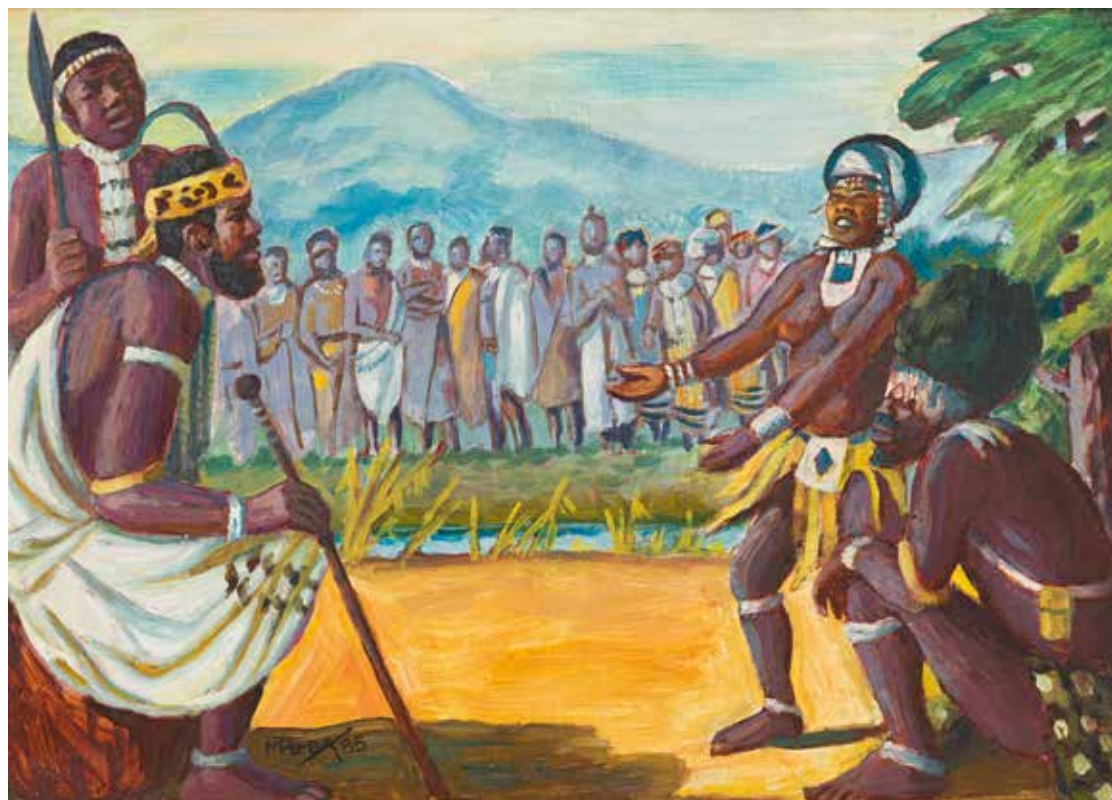
The Dream II

signed and dated 85; inscribed with the artist's name, the title and medium on a label adhered to the reverse

oil on board
44 by 61,5 cm

R250 000 – 300 000

Inscribed on a label adhered to the reverse: 'This painting is one of a series of works by Pemba illustrating the story of Nonquase, the Xhosa woman whose prophecy resulted in the virtual suicide of the Xhosa Nation. This was painted sometime after Pemba wrote the musical play which was undoubtedly inspired by HE Dhlomo's play 'The Girl who Killed to Save' (quoted from *Against All Odds*, Sarah Hudleston, page 44). Another work from this series is taken up in the National Gallery, Cape Town collection.'



267

George Pemba

SOUTH AFRICAN 1912–2001

The Card Players

signed and dated 1952
oil on board
31 by 46,5 cm

R150 000 – 200 000





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268

Cecil Skotnes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1926–2009

Abstract Figure

signed

incised and painted wood panel

61 by 45,5 cm

R140 000 – 180 000

269

Cecil Skotnes

SOUTH AFRICAN 1926–2009

The Family

signed

incised and painted wood panel

61 by 122,5 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

PROVENANCE

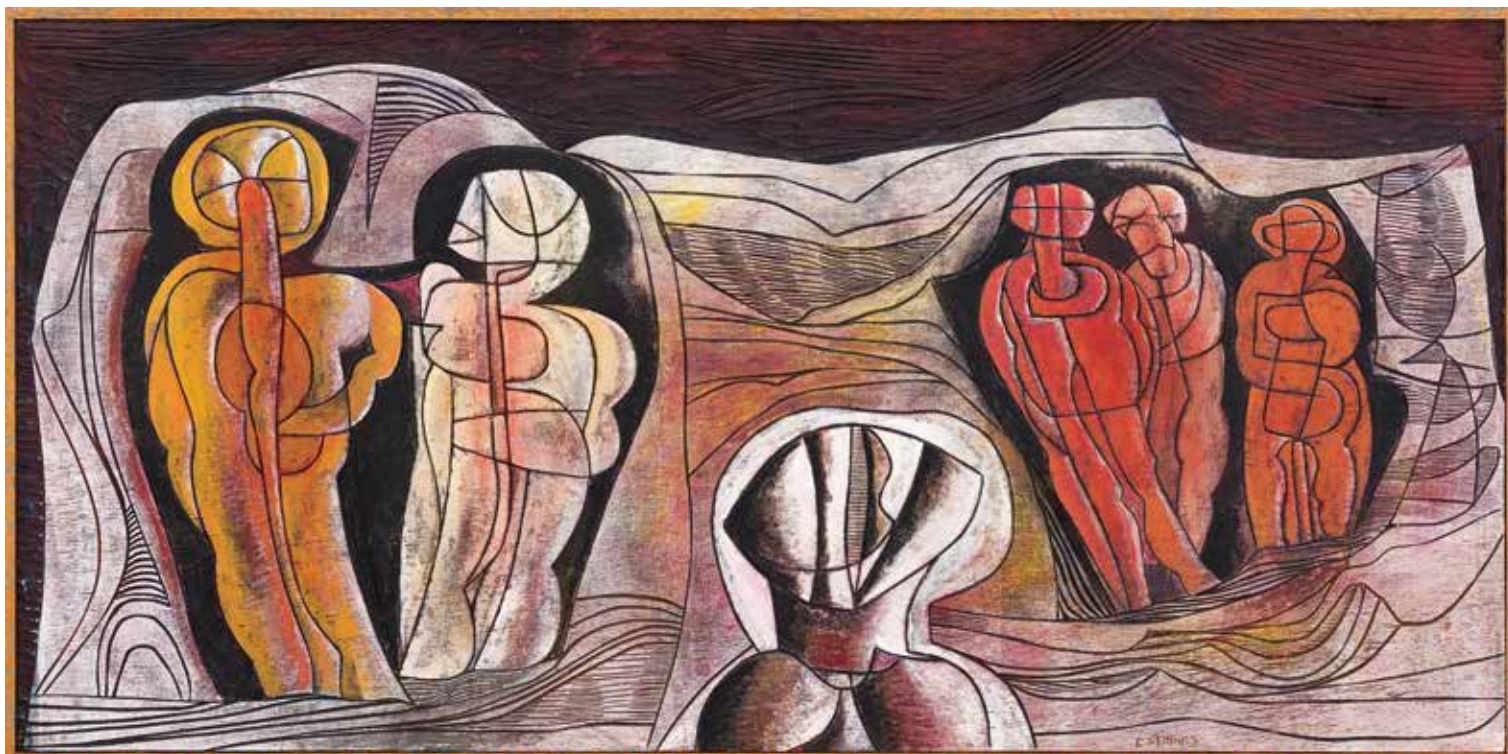
A gift from the artist to his godson, Thomas Guenther.

Cecil Skotnes was introduced to Egon Guenther towards the end of 1954, a meeting that proved to be a turning point in the artist's career. Skotnes recalled, 'At Guenther's I saw woodcuts at close range for the first time, and he gave me my

first set of tools and showed me how to handle them. I also became acquainted with German Expressionism and the great similarities between it and tribal art, though I had developed a stylistic basis long before I became aware of the importance of the tribal art field."

Skotnes became an integral member of the Amadlozi, a group of artists that Guenther, with his impeccable taste, high standards and knowledge of contemporary art in Europe, recognised as having talent. He encouraged and nurtured these artists, not only by acting as their dealer, but also by initiating animated discussions that challenged and stimulated his protégés.

1. <http://archive.cecilskotnes.com/exhibits/show/collaborations/guenther>.



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270

Cecily Sash

SOUTH AFRICAN 1924–

Insect Composition

signed and dated '63-7; inscribed with the artist's name, the title, the exhibition 'Retrospective' and catalogue number 57 on a Pretoria Art Museum label adhered to the reverse

mixed media on board

158 by 75,5 cm

R120 000 – 160 000

EXHIBITED

Pretoria Art Museum, Pretoria, *Cecily Sash*

Retrospective 1954–1974, cat. no 57,
not illustrated.

Unfinished landscape painting on the reverse.





271

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

Hadhramaut, Portfolio of 41 Ink Drawings

most signed, some dated, and all inscribed with the title in the margin; portfolio cover signed and dated Dec. 1964; signed with the artist's initials and inscribed with '41 to Murray 16.1.76' and 'First drawing is upside down' ink on paper secured between cardboard covers each 35,5 by 43 cm (41)

R200 000 – 300 000

Walter Battiss visited the Persian Gulf and the island of Bahrain in the early 1960s, only managing to view the Hadhramaut, the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula, from the aeroplane window. Southern Yemen (formerly Aden, a British Protectorate) cast a spell over the artist and he managed to gain entry into the Hadhramaut some years later, visiting the area for three weeks in late 1964, early 1965. He set himself the task of recording his impressions of this country in the form of a series of ink drawings, possibly the first Western artist ever to do so. He described the coastal towns as 'magical, almost like pink and green alabaster, backed by rose-green mountains'. Battiss traversed this enchanting area, sketching the major coastal towns of

Mukalla, Saiyun, and Shihr and the surrounding areas.

After his return to Pretoria, Battiss gave an illustrated talk about his visit. He spoke of his curiosity about the mystique of the desert, the scents and smells in the heat, and the rhythm of the local Bedouin. He said: 'Who wants to talk of a lovesickness for the desert that must be thought of and felt without words, with silences for nouns and breathing for verbs.' These drawings certainly leave one in complete awe of the beauty of the Hadhramaut, seen through the artist's eyes.

1. Walter Battiss, quoted in Murray Schoonraad (1985) *Battiss in the Hadhramaut: Sketches of Southern Arabia*. Pretoria: Elmur Publications, page 7.

272

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

Abstract Composition

signed

oil on canvas

50 by 60 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

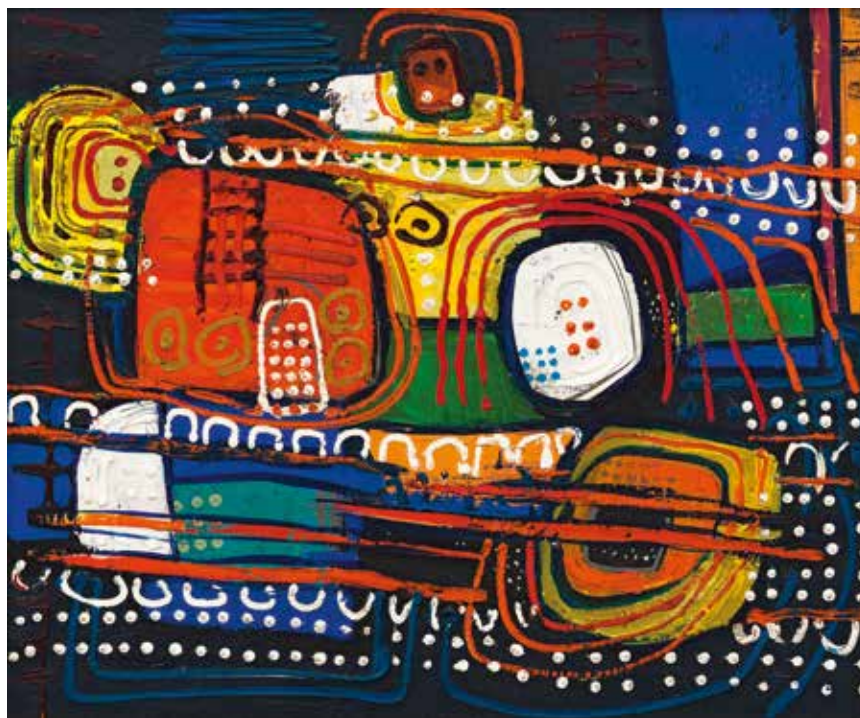
PROVENANCE

Gordon Mckintosh, purchased directly from the artist, mid-1960s, and thence by descent.

Gordon Mckintosh was a prominent Pretoria architect, responsible for the design of many iconic buildings in the city including the Pretoria Art Museum in Arcadia. On his sketches for the Modernist design for House Munro, he included a quote by the European architect Walter Gropius, which indicates his interest in the International Style and suggests both his architectural design motivation and, perhaps, his reason for acquiring this painting from Walter Battiss: 'The ground plan ... is a geometrical projection of its spatial idea – the organizing plan for moving within a house. The elevation, facade, is the result of that plan and not the starting point ... Hence, no artificial symmetry, but a free functional arrangement of the succession of rooms.'

Mckintosh was the president of the Transvaal Provincial Institute of Architects from 1936 to 1942 and received the Institute of South African Architects Gold Medal in 1968.

1. <https://www.artefacts.co.za/main/Buildings/archframes.php?archid=1958>.



273

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

The Initiate

inscribed with 'This painting was in Walter Battiss' studio when he died. It has been in my possession since that time. Signed: Rain Battiss formerly Belinda Battiss. 18/5/2006' on the reverse; signed by Giles Battiss on the reverse

oil on board

60 by 59,5 cm

R300 000 – 500 000





274

Alfred Neville Lewis

SOUTH AFRICAN 1895–1972

*Portrait of a Woman with
Red Headscarf*

signed
oil on canvas
60 by 50 cm

R220 000 – 260 000



275

Sam Nhlengethwa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Abstract with Yellow Triangle

mixed media on canvas

136 by 223 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

Sam Nhlengethwa is best known for his figure-based paintings and collage works exploring themes of social and art history, jazz music and domestic life. This mature body of work was preceded by his enraptured experimentation with abstract painting in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Nhlengethwa's interest in abstraction was influenced by his participation in the Thupelo series of artist workshops organised by artists David Koloane and Bill Ainslie. Established in 1985, the objective of the annual, two-week workshop in Johannesburg was, in the words of Koloane, 'to inspire artists to research and experiment [with] medium and technique so that they are able to expand their creative vocabulary.'¹ Not without controversy, the Thupelo workshop series is nonetheless associated with sponsoring personal growth and creative innovation among urban black artists in the face of domineering market forces and political circumstances. Nhlengethwa attended every workshop until its demise in 1991. His abstract compositions from this period are characterised by their energetic but precise mark-making and preference for a low-key colour palette that he sometimes juxtaposed with brightly coloured elemental shapes, notably triangles.

¹ John Pepper (2009) *Art and the End of Apartheid*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Page 151.

Sean O'Toole





276

Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

Matlala's Kraal

signed and dated 46; inscribed with 'Native Huts, Basutoland' on the reverse
oil on board

45 by 60 cm

R2 000 000 – 3 000 000

EXHIBITED

Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg, *A Space for Landscape: The Work of JH Pierneef*, July to September 2015.

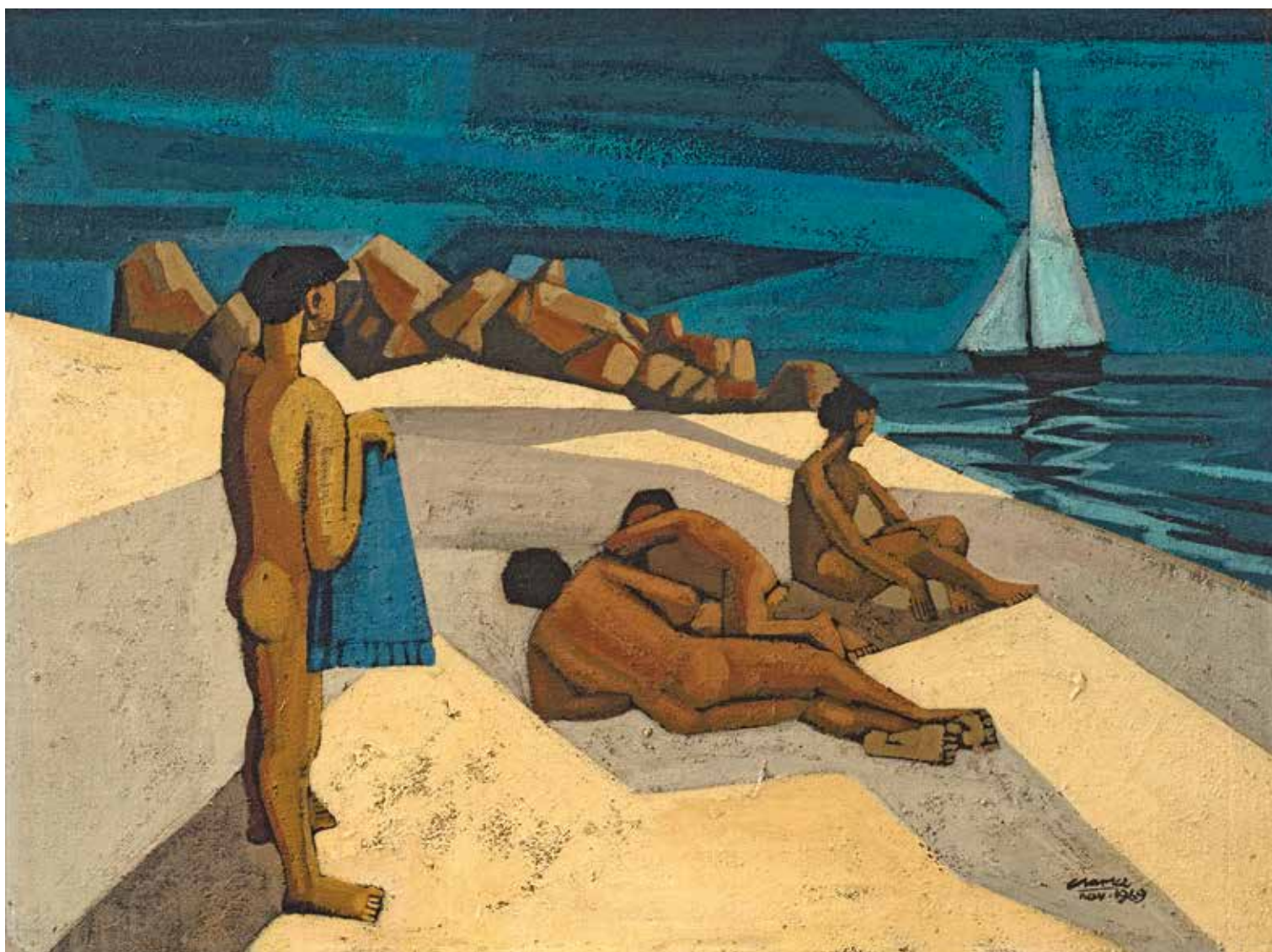
LITERATURE

Wilhelm van Rensburg (2015) *A Space for Landscape: The Work of JH Pierneef*, Johannesburg: Standard Bank Gallery. Illustrated on page 57.

Matlala's Kraal is a tiny village that nestles in the foothills of a mountain range close to Polokwane in Limpopo. Pierneef was particularly drawn to this site, so much so that he used it in a number of different works: a well-known linocut, with its dramatic interplay between black and white planes, was based on the scene, as were various water colours and caseins. The artist even considered the scene for one of the murals he painted for South Africa House on Trafalgar Square in London in 1935. What is remarkable in all of these renditions, is the fact that the architectural structures in the foreground are so integrated with the background that one can hardly distinguish between the natural world and the constructed. What is special about this work, though, is the abstract, geometric composition extending across the whole picture plane. The huts in the foreground seem to be facets of the rock surfaces in the background. The integration of these elements is achieved by means of the soft brown and ochre tones mingled with cool shades of blues and greys. The stylised, isolated forms of trees and other verdure function as symbols of life in Pierneef's silent, ordered version of nature. The abstraction of forms in his landscapes never detract from their integrity, however. In later life Pierneef switched from geometric abstraction to what could be called schematized realism.¹

1. Hans Franssen (1982) *Three Centuries of South African Art*, Johannesburg: AD Donker, page 295.





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277

Peter Clarke

SOUTH AFRICAN 1929–2014

Sandy Bay

signed and dated Nov 1969
oil and sand on canvas laid down on board
45 by 60 cm

R1 000 000 – 1 500 000

PROVENANCE

Stephan Welz & Co, Cape Town,
18 October 2016, Lot 520.

The shorelines of the Cape Peninsula figure strongly in Simon's Town-born Peter Clarke's irrefutable work. The artist's earliest gouaches and watercolours from the mid-1940s include various descriptions of False Bay and Misty Cliffs. In 1952 he produced a vivid series of drawings of black beachgoers at Kalk Bay, which along with Strandfontein, being nearer the harbour, were informally designated for black users – nearby Muizenberg and St James were frequented by white beachgoers. By the late 1960s, when this lot was produced, the implementation of 'petty apartheid' had legally enshrined these privileges. This wistful study of four bathers at Sandy Bay, while evocative of Paul Cézanne's gregarious studies of naked male bathers from 1897 to 1898, can be read as a statement of gentle defiance, of seeking – and finding – provisional pleasure in the face of the throttling reality of segregation. The scene is not imagined: Clarke and his friends would often seek out remote beaches where they would not be harassed on account of their skin colour, including Sandy Bay.

278

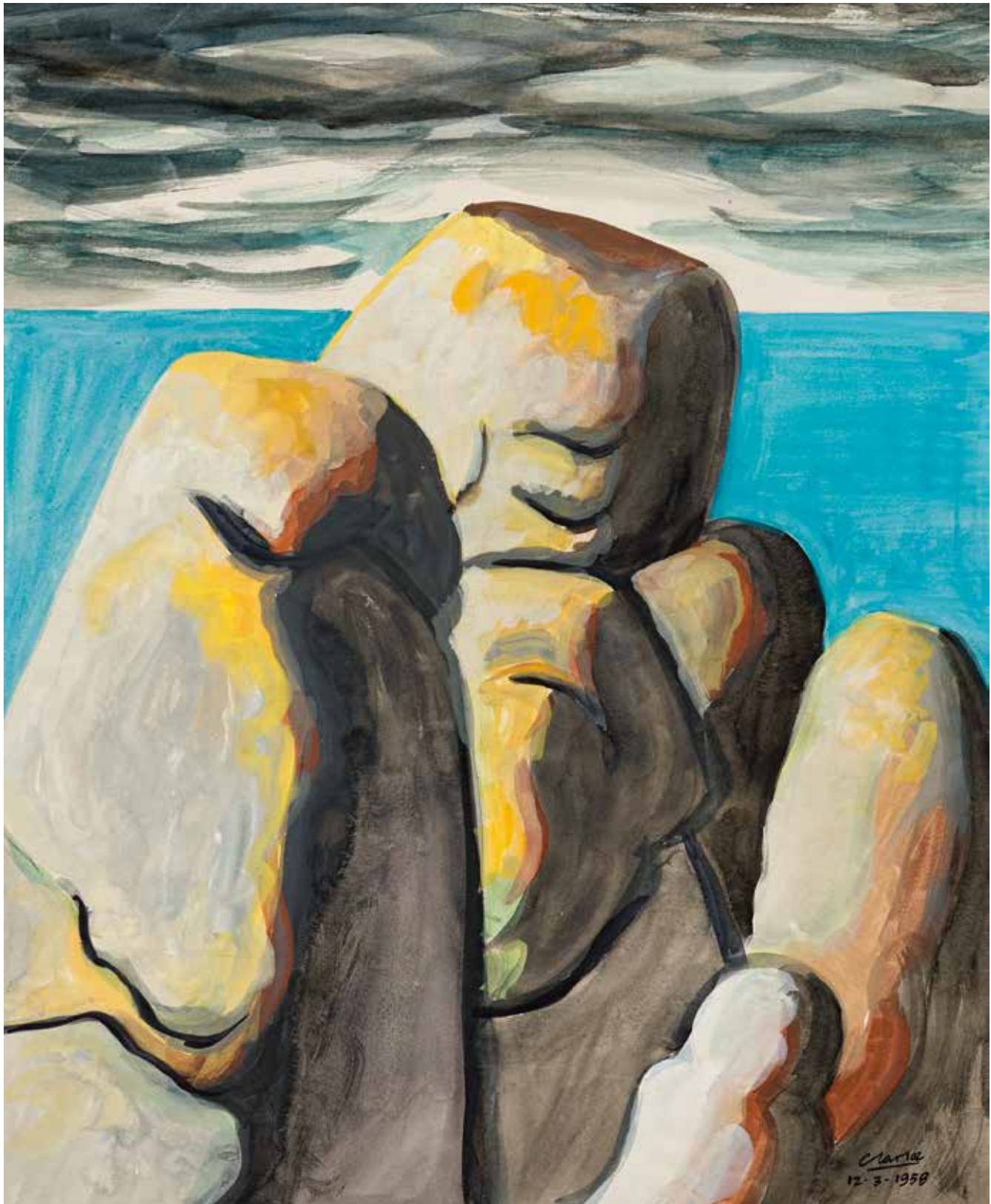
Peter Clarke

SOUTH AFRICAN 1929–2014

Rocks, Froggy Pond

signed and dated 12.3.1958;
inscribed with the date and
the title on the reverse
gouache on paper
42 by 34 cm

R60 000 – 90 000



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279

Walter Battiss

SOUTH AFRICAN 1906–1982

Abstract Composition

signed and dated 66

oil on canvas

35 by 51 cm

R180 000 – 240 000



280

Christo Coetzee

SOUTH AFRICAN 1929–2000

Harlequin Fish

signed; inscribed with the artist's name on the frame;
inscribed with the artist's name, the title, the medium
and 'Temple Newsam' on a Hanover Gallery label
adhered to the reverse
oil on board, in original artist frame
59 by 120,5 cm

R300 000 – 500 000

PROVENANCE

Joseph Farley, acquired directly from the artist. (Joe Farley was an artist and picture framer, and a friend of Christo Coetzee, who lived in Cape Town until he moved to London circa 1954–5. In 1962, he and his wife Madalyn Farley founded the renowned prop rental firm Farley).
Private collection, Johannesburg.

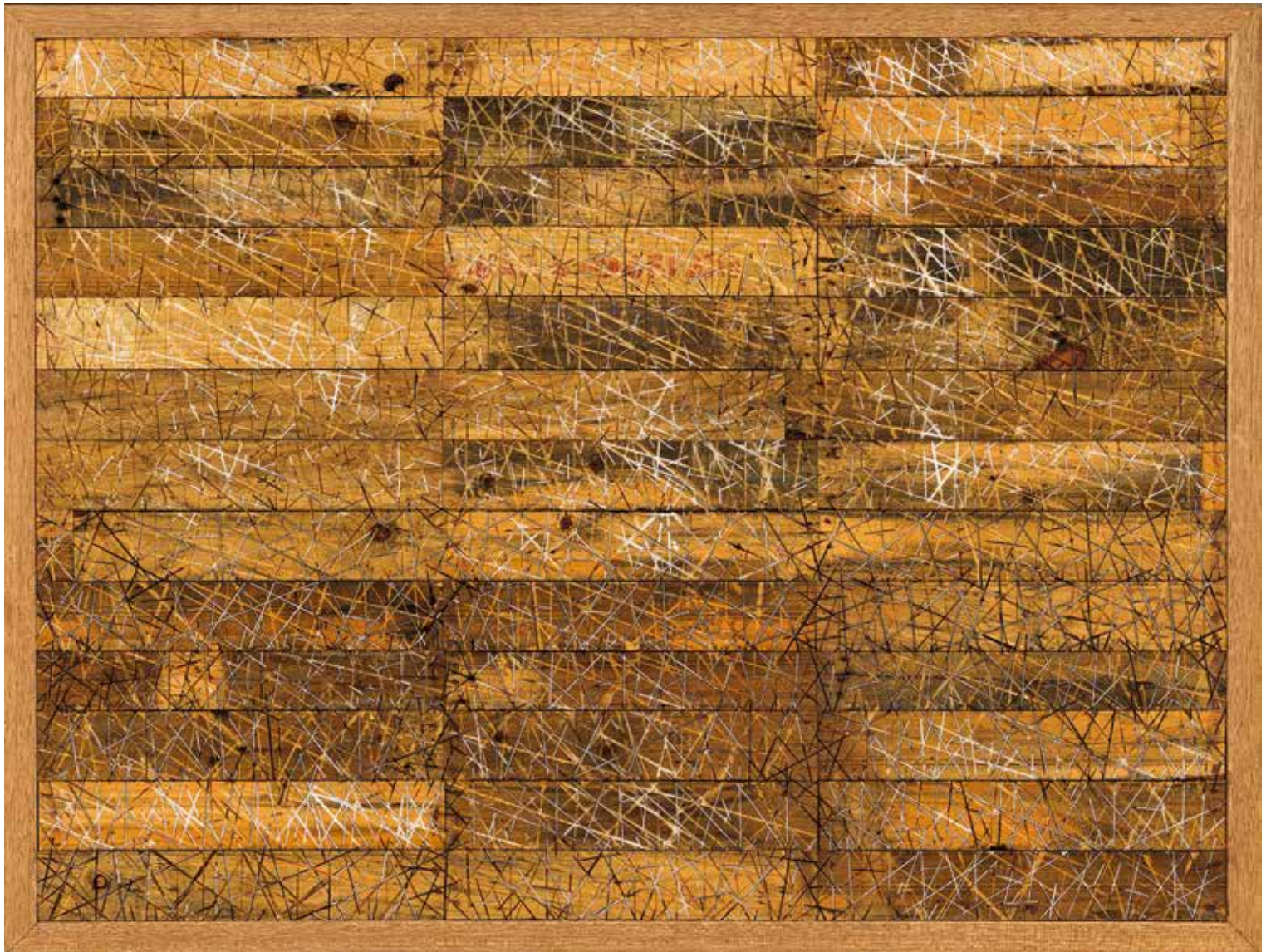
EXHIBITED

Hanover Gallery, London, *Still Life Paintings by Christo Coetzee*, 17 March to 15 April 1955.
Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg, *The Safest Place is the Knife's Edge: Christo Coetzee (1929–2000)*, 5 October to 1 December 2018.

LITERATURE

Muller Ballot (1999) *Christo Coetzee*, Cape Town: Human & Rousseau. Illustrated in black and white on page 29, titled *Still-life with Strange Fish in Basket* (1954–5).
Alet Vorster and Wilhelm van Rensburg (eds) (2018) *The Safest Place is the Knife's Edge: A Retrospective Exhibition of the Works of Christo Coetzee*, Johannesburg: Standard Bank. Illustrated in colour on page 40, titled *Still-life with Strange Fish in Basket* (1954–5).

Arguably one of the best still lifes on Christo Coetzee's exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery in London in 1955, *Harlequin Fish* represents the culmination of the first phase of Coetzee's artistic career, which he labelled his Genre Painting period. After studying at Wits under Heather Martienssen, and then under William Coldstream at the Slade School of Art, Coetzee became part of the group of British and continental Modernist artists in the Governor stable that included Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud, Frank Auerbach and Alberto Giacometti. Anthony Denney, a London-based society photographer was his chief mentor and patron at this time, opening up many opportunities for the young Coetzee to work in Paris, and enabling him to visit Japan, where he came under the spell of the famous Gutai group of artists.



281

Willem Boshoff

SOUTH AFRICAN 1951–

Crossfire

signed, dated 2018 and inscribed
with the title on the reverse

incised and painted found wood
91 by 122,5 cm

R120 000 – 180 000



282

Douglas Portway

SOUTH AFRICAN 1922–1993

Untitled

signed and dated 76; inscribed with the artist's name, the date and the title on a label adhered to the reverse
oil on canvas
117 by 163 cm

R180 000 – 240 000

LITERATURE

JP Hodin (1983) Douglas Portway: *A Painter's Life*, Philadelphia: The Art Alliance Press. Illustrated on colour as Plate xiii.



283

Jake Aikman

SOUTH AFRICAN 1978–

South Atlantic

signed and dated 2017 on the reverse

oil on canvas

97 by 126 cm

R100 000 – 150 000

In October 2018, Goldmark Atelier released 15-layer screenprints of this work in a limited edition of 40.

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Untitled: Man, Woman and Warthog

1985

signed

charcoal on paper

99 by 70 cm

R1 800 000 – 2 500 000

'I certainly think drawing is the closest way we have of making visible the way we are in the world, both the way we think and the way we move through the world, which is provisional, changing, constructed out of incoherent fragments into a seemingly coherent subjectivity. And I think that drawing, and the process of making a drawing is as good a method as any for that activity.'

What seem to be three loose, fragmented motifs (a warthog, the face of a woman, and the back of a nude man) in a drawing by William Kentridge, are in fact three quite significant images in his oeuvre. The drawing was made in the mid-1980s when Kentridge was exploring visual metaphors for a country under siege. The situation reminded him of the crumbling interwar Germany of the 1920s and early 1930s and the art produced by such second-generation German Expressionists as Georg Grosz and Max Beckmann. Kentridge set his sights on the complacent middle classes in South Africa, producing such ironic works as the triptych, *The Conservationist's Ball* (*Culling, Game Watching, Taming*) (1985), which has trinkets of Africa embellishing the picture plane, including a miniature rhinoceros dancing on a table, a civet pelt draped around a shoulder, and a warthog floating over diners in a café.

The image of a warthog appears again in a work, titled *Family Portrait* (1985), a work referring to three generations of Kentridges: his grandmother in the far background, his parents in the middle ground, and the artist and his wife, Anne, in the foreground. This time the shirt of the artist is printed with small green rhinos.

The motif of the back of a nude man, first appearing in a work titled *Flood at the Opera* (1986), recurs often in Kentridge's subsequent works, such as in the drawings for the video piece, *Johannesburg, Second Greatest City after Paris* (1989) which has a memorable frame of the same nude, this time possibly an alter ego, the artist Felix Teitlebaum, foil to the capitalist, Soho Eckstein, staring at a drive-in screen bearing the words 'Captive of the City'. And again later, in a series of prints collectively referred to as *Man with a Megaphone* (1999). The three arbitrary images in the present Lot take on the function of a repository of meaning with personally relevant references.

¹ William Kentridge, quoted in Leora Maltz-Leca (2018) *William Kentridge: Process as Metaphor and other Doubtful Enterprises*, Oakland: University of California Press, page 195.





285

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Russian Fragments, three

each drawing signed
collage and mixed media
each 38 by 28,5 cm
(3)

R120 000 – 160 000

When a journalist once asked William Kentridge why he prefers drawing as the main medium of his artistic process, he replied: 'Speed'. The artist added that he preferred drawing because painting comes to be about colour or about paint, which are not his main interests in art. 'I can think with charcoal' he said. 'Drawing is thinking, in other words.

Kentridge's favourite Russian writer seems to be Gogol, whose short story, *The Nose* (1928), he has used as inspiration for many works, including the Shostakovich opera he directed for the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. In the seven drawings of the present Lot, Kentridge is thinking about other Russian writers apart from Gogol. These drawings subsequently formed the basis for the screenprint edition the artist published in 1989 (Lot 149).

1. Leora Maltz-Leca (2018) *William Kentridge: Process as Metaphor and other Doubtful Enterprises*. Oakland: University of California Press, page 200.



286

Penny Siopis

SOUTH AFRICAN 1953–

Cakes: Treats

oil on canvas
63 by 89,5 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

EXHIBITED

KZNSA Gallery, Durban, *Red: The Iconography of Colour in the Work of Penny Siopis*, 23 June to 19 July 2009.

In the early 1980s, while teaching fine art in Durban, Siopis began work on a series of paintings depicting cakes and confections displayed in unusual perspective on tables, often with lace settings. This early *Lot* from 1982 is somewhat unusual for its hovering, casually photographic vantage – typically Siopis depicted her subjects frontally – but in broad terms it is also typical. All Siopis's 'cake paintings' are at once illusionistic representations of domestic opulence – in the tradition of Dutch and Flemish still lifes – and energised sites of material experiment. Siopis, who grew up in Vryburg in the Northern Cape, drew on her experiences in the family bakery to produce her richly textured paintings. After laying down her ground with a palette knife, Siopis used cake-icing instruments (like decorative nozzles) to describe and embellish her sexualised confections. The material sensuality and excess that resulted is key to the criticality of the series. 'Provocatively displayed, Siopis's fetish-like treats bemoan the loss of youthful feminine innocence. Cakes are split open like vaginas, cherry-topped éclairs and queen cakes resemble disembodied breasts, and a cream-horn pastry becomes a phallus,' notes art historian Jennifer Law. 'Siopis's genre paintings are not innocent, and they are certainly not still. The surfaces of her paintings seem to be crawling with life ... Abundance is signified in both the imagery and materiality of the paint itself. It is all too much. Yet for all their abundance, these are scenes in which the middle-class domestic realm – and by extension society at large – teeters on the edge of decay.'¹

1. Jennifer Law (2014) 'Historical Delicacies', in *Penny Siopis: Time and Again*, Johannesburg: Wits University Press, pages 70 and 71.

Sean O'Toole

Robert Hodgins

SOUTH AFRICAN 1920–2010

A Transvaal Still Life (*Thunder Cloud, Mine Dump,* *Vaguely Ethnic Rug ...*)

signed, dated 2000 and inscribed with the title and the medium on the reverse; inscribed with the artist's name and the title on a Michael Stevenson and Deon Viljoen label adhered to the reverse of the frame.

oil on canvas

90 by 90 cm

R700 000 – 900 000

EXHIBITED

University of Potchefstroom, *Robert Hodgins: 50 Years a Painter*, Aardklop festival artist, exhibition travelled to Stellenbosch, Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg, 2001–2002.

LITERATURE

Brenda Atkinson (ed.) (2002) Robert Hodgins (Aardklop exhibition catalogue), Cape Town: Tafelberg. Illustrated in colour on page 83.

In June 2000, the year the present *Lot* was painted, Robert Hodgins turned 80. The occasion was marked by an exhibition titled *New Works* at the Goodman Gallery, in May and June. At the dawn of the 21st century Hodgins commanded, if somewhat belatedly, both the critical acclaim of his peers and the appetite of his collectors and dealers alike.

Schooled in the Post-War tradition of English Modernism, Hodgins' early education at Goldsmiths, University of London, would result later in the wry classicist seen here, flirting with the sublime in this brooding still life. Completed after his birthday exhibition, the work toured as one of the few still lifes on the travelling retrospective *Robert Hodgins: 50 Years a Painter* in 2001/2.

Having championed painting in the 1990s, a decade when it was conceptually out of fashion, Hodgins came to be regarded quite differently by many in the new millennium, as South

Africa's greatest contemporary painter. As Kendell Geers notes, his was 'a voice of reason in an age when video (had) all but killed the painting star'.¹ For Elizabeth Rankin, Hodgins would 'reinforce the concept of painting as the encounter of mark against mark';² while Ivor Powell described his work as a painterly intention to 'make colour so real that it dominates or even creates the picture'.³

Employing the revolutionary manoeuvre made by Henri Matisse in *L'Atelier Rouge (Red Studio)* (1911), Hodgins uses a warm base colour to flatten his pictorial perspective, challenging the viewer's perception of space. Moving through the warmer gradations of the spectrum, the painting presents a rose-tinted atmosphere full of glowing forms, described by radiating lines of cooler complimentary colours. Within the interior of this pink field, a lavender thunder cloud casts a gloomy red shadow over the corner of a table of fruit. Outside, visible through a window,

a green and yellow mine dump looms. Below this view, floating in a pool of orange, lies a red rug, decorated with green horizontal stripes. Hinged to the upper left of the composition is a closed door, outlined in blue.

While the title of the painting indicates the *mise-en-scène*, a more ominous association is carried by *A Transvaal Still Life*. ... As Hodgins confessed in a conversation with William Kentridge and Deborah Bell, the 'violence I paint is always removed. It's always somewhere else in history, somewhere else in geography'.⁴ In many ways this statement exposes the deeper resonance of the painting which is between both time and space.

Characterising Hodgins' painting as a type of allegorical purgatory, the late Colin Richards observed that each of his works 'is an atrocity of association and allusion. He presents heaven, a hell and a hiatus between. His works liquidate what sticks, and liberate the free-flow,

or free-fall of desire. His is a wry, literate, apocalyptic art. His approach is of a lapsed romantic, an antagonist, and a funny one at that. And it is in all these that the imaginative possibilities lie for us as viewers in this artist's immense creative generosity'.⁵

1. Kendell Geers (2002) 'Undiscovered at 82', in Brenda Atkinson et al., *Robert Hodgins*, Cape Town: Tafelberg. Page 62.
2. Elizabeth Rankin (2010) quoted in Neil Dundas 'Robert Griffiths Hodgins (1920–2010)', *South African Journal of Science*, vol. 106, no. 7/8, article 347.
3. Ivor Powell (2002) 'Through Ubu's Eyes', in Brenda Atkinson et al., *Robert Hodgins*, Cape Town: Tafelberg. Page 45 and 46.
4. Brenda Atkinson (2002) 'Conversations, Collaborations', in Brenda Atkinson et al., *Robert Hodgins*, Cape Town: Tafelberg. Page 60.
5. Colin Richards (2012) 'Vaguely Disreputable: The Printmaking of Robert Hodgins', in Anthea Buys et al., *A Lasting Impression: The Robert Hodgins Print Archive*, Johannesburg: Wits Art Museum. Page 100.



Athi-Patra Ruga

SOUTH AFRICAN 1984–

Ilulwane ... he's not one of youz

thread on tapestry canvas

86 by 136 cm

R200 000 – 300 000**EXHIBITED**

WHATIFTHEWORLD, Cape Town,

The Teeth are the Only Bones that Show,

6 October to 14 November 2010

LITERATUREAthi-Patra Ruga (2013) *Beyond Every Horizon there**is Another One: The Works 2006–2013*, Cape Town:

WHATIFTHEWORLD. Illustrated in colour on page 55.

Embroidered tapestries are integral to Ruga's richly metaphorical and narrative practice, serving as sketches for embryonic ideas as much as elaborations of his inventive mythologies. Ruga's earliest tapestries were textile interpretations of Irma Stern's 1940s paintings of Watusi (Tutsi) people from the African Great Lakes region. Ruga first encountered Stern as a high school student at the Belgravia Art Centre in East London. The present Lot, from 2010, forms part of a follow-up series of homoerotic portraits of male figures, some fictional, later translated into physical performances. The long-nosed figure in this work elliptically and metaphorically addresses taboos around male circumcision in Xhosa culture. 'Ilulwane' is Xhosa for bat, but also functions as a taunt in relation to young men who have opted for a hospital circumcision over traditional ritual. 'God damn you if you are not from the bush! Then you are not a man, you are ilulwane,' explained Ruga in 2012.¹ His work visually establishes this pariah status by invoking the Pinocchio-inspired metaphor of lies producing the bodily deformity of a long nose. In 2011 Ruga participated in the fourth edition of *Performa*, a New York-based performance biennial, where he staged a synchronised-swimming performance exploring the complications of tradition and modernity embodied by the ambiguous insider-outside character of Ilulwane.

1. Charl Blignaut (2012) 'The Dramatic Rise of Athi-Patra Ruga', *City Press*, 16 March.

Sean O'Toole



289

Wim Botha

SOUTH AFRICAN 1974–

Afterimage

signed and dated 07
mixed media
103,5 by 158 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

EXHIBITED

Stevenson, Cape Town, *Wim Botha: Apocalagnosia*,
11 January to 10 February 2007.
Warren Siebrits, Johannesburg, *The Rationalism of
Nationalism*, 2008.

LITERATURE

Warren Siebrits (2008) *The Rationalism of Nationalism*
(exhibition catalogue), Johannesburg: Warren
Siebrits. Illustrated, unpaginated.

This double-sided work features an incomplete rendering of South Africa's old coat of arms (recto) and a ghostly study of a bird of prey (verso). First exhibited on Botha's exhibition *Apocalagnosia* (2007), the recto image introduced audiences to his on-going method of partially depicting figurative subjects. Botha is well known for his appropriation, mimicry and distortion of religious and political iconography and art historical symbols. This extends to South Africa's former coat of arms. Adopted in 1910 and replaced in 2000, this heraldic symbol featured a quartered shield flanked by a springbok and a gemsbok, with a lion at the crest, and a Latin motto below. Botha's exhibition *Speculum* (2003) included two sculptural likenesses of this lapsed symbol, both made from white synthetic marble, as well as a number of works on paper that similarly portrayed its component elements as slowly diminishing. This lot radically progressed that dissolution: it only records aspects of the mantle, helm and crest of the coat of arms in delicate brushstrokes and pencil marks. The verso image was produced with coffee and water, and resembles Botha's *Watermark/Oilslick* series (2003), spectral monotone paintings of various heraldic symbols.

Sean O'Toole





290

Edoardo Villa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1915–2011

Prisoner

signed, dated 1983 and numbered 3

welded and painted steel

height: 137 cm excluding base, 215 cm including base

R500 000 – 600 000

Edoardo Villa imbued his work with aesthetic concerns of a formal and individual nature. Although his themes tend toward the universal, they are informed by his personal experience of internment as a prisoner of war in South Africa during World War II, and the subsequent adoption of this country as his home. Villa's *Prisoner* series of caged vertical anthropomorphic figures made up of alternating geometric and organic forms suggests a restrictive and claustrophobic containment. The present Lot alludes to an internal sense imprisonment within a broader notion of incarceration, of a nation enduring enormous pressures during the twenty years that preceded the first democratic election in South Africa in 1994.



291

Sam Nhlengethwa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

The Jazz Player, Miriam Makeba

signed and dated '16

oil and collage on canvas

140 by 240 cm

R200 000 – 300 000





292

Robert Hodgins

SOUTH AFRICAN 1920–2010

Clubmen of America: Good Ole Country Boys

2001

signed, dated 2001 and inscribed with the title, the medium and a dedication 'For Brenda Atkinson: Gratitude, Respect, Love. Rob' on the reverse

oil on canvas

90 by 120 cm

R800 000 – 1 200 000

PROVENANCE

Gift from the artist to Brenda Atkinson

LITERATURE

Brenda Atkinson (ed.) (2002) *Robert Hodgins*, Cape Town: Tafelberg. Illustrated in colour on page 110.

Clubmen of America: Good Ole Country Boys (2001) is a beautiful example of Robert Hodgins' talent for blistering social observation through a deliciously seductive aesthetic. Its figural composition anticipates *A Day at the Office* (2007), but it gathers energy quite differently. The *Office* painting is a minimalist study in disconnection (and perhaps mutual incomprehension), established against a blank white field. But *Country Boys* depicts a tight tableau of simmering male aggression that is shared and mutually endorsed against a backdrop that hints at rural anonymity. Its central figure backs up a younger man at left while extending a welcoming arm to a bald brute who enters from the right, his fist tinged with red. We register, slowly, the possible violence off-scene. The viewer is not made more comfortable by the way these smug, smudgy, dodgy, dark characters are enfolded in a palette of pastel blue tinged with buttery yellow.

Hodgins made his *Clubmen of America* series twenty years after diving into a full-time painting career with his Ubu works, themselves inspired by the spirit of the *Savage God*¹ propelling Alfred Jarry's titular despot in his play *Ubu Roi*. The *Clubmen* series gives more nuanced form to the Ubu-esque theme of absolute power and its inevitable corollary, absolute corruption.

Country Boys is one of Robert's most striking paintings and one of his most prescient. It's not a representation of the unrestrained large-scale excesses of an Ubu/Trump/Zuma, but an insight into the small cultural moments that enable the Ubus on the world stage. The characters suggest a world in which self-preservation is possible through exclusion or eradication of difference.

At a time when North America is run by clubs and divided by ideological bunkers,² this painting is more relevant and startling than ever. And Robert's ever-present wit, precision, and insight blaze through.

1. The Irish poet WB Yeats was said to have called out, 'After us, the Savage God!', after watching a performance of *Ubu Roi*, Alfred Jarry's wildly irreverent play about power and greed.

2. Brené Brown's term, from *Braving the Wilderness* (Penguin Random House, 2017).

Brenda Atkinson

293

Edoardo Villa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1915–2011

Black Rhombus I

1998

welded and painted steel

height: 57 cm

R150 000 – 200 000

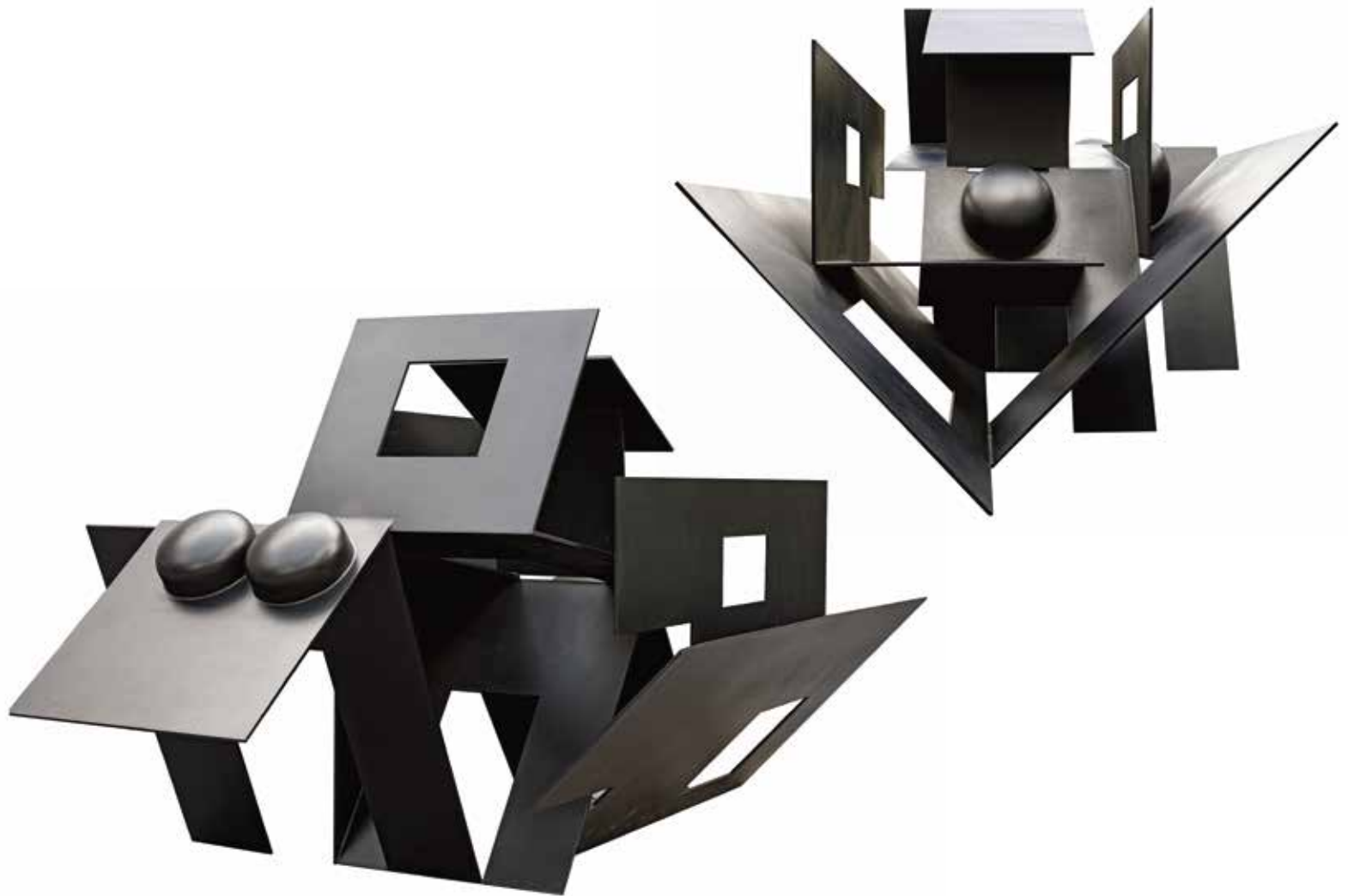
LITERATURE

Karel Nel, Elizabeth Burroughs and Amalie von Maltitz (eds) (2005) *Villa at 90*, Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball with Shelf Publishing. Illustrated in black and white on page 50 in the background of a photograph of the artist with Lucas Legodi.

Villa was particularly interested in the Cubism of Picasso, which opened up almost infinite new possibilities for the treatment of visual reality in art. 'Cubism broke up closed sculptural volume into multiple planes, each suggesting a different three-dimensional view of the same object, but now dislocated in space and time.' With this sculpture, Villa picks up on the characteristic exploded views associated with Cubist analysis, the complex relationships between form, space and time. *Black Rhombus I*, with its three-dimensional complex grid and extended rods capped with black dots, shows different viewpoints at the same time, thereby creating a three-dimensional form. The structure floats in space and functions in a way quite different from the artist's usual earth-bound works which confirm gravity.

1. Monty Sack and Karel Nel (2005) 'Villa, Johannesburg and the Modernist Context', in Karel Nel, Elizabeth Burroughs and Amalie von Maltitz (eds), *Villa at 90*, Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball with Shelf Publishing. Page 150.





294

Edoardo Villa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1915–2011

Environment

welded and painted steel
height: 158 cm

R700 000 – 900 000

PROVENANCE

The steel sculpture, titled *Environment* was created by Edoardo Villa in 1984 and kept at his home for his personal enjoyment until 2009 (right) when it was acquired by a private collector. The current owner acquired the work in 2017 for a building in Braamfontein that housed the Department of Environmental Affairs.

Edoardo Villa's *Environment*, is made up of an array of angled black steel plates, rectangular cut outs and rounded protrusions. Viewed from any angle, the steel sculpture creates a quirky horizontal anthropomorphic presence. It appears to have a square face with circular eyes or breasts, a torso of abstract wing-like planes and a stumpy round tail at its rear. This sculpture relates to the urban modernist environment, the grid, squares and rectangles of the City of Johannesburg, its architecture heavily influenced by modernist architects such as Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe and Oscar Niemeyer.



295

Georgina Gratrix

SOUTH AFRICAN 1982–

Marilyn Muse

oil on canvas

70 by 90 cm

R120 000 – 160 000

PROVENANCE

SMAC Art Gallery.



296

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Drawing from Felix in Exile

1994–2001

signed

charcoal, pastel and poster paint on paper

50 by 65,5 cm

R800 000 – 1 200 000

LITERATURE

Lilian Tone (ed) (2013) *William Kentridge: Fortuna*, London: Thames & Hudson. A similar work from the same series illustrated in colour on page 174.





297

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Zeno II (Man and Woman)

each signed with the artist's initials
and numbered 7/7

bronze

height: 32,5 cm

(2)

R400 000 – 600 000

PROVENANCE

Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg.

298

Karel Nel

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Presence: Leaf Shrine, North Island, Seychelles

2014

inscribed with the artist's name, the date, the title and the medium on the reverse in the artist's hand
charcoal, pastel and pigment on bonded fibre fabric
167 by 167 cm

R400 000 – 600 000

'My first overwhelming experience with leaves was in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, while visiting my paternal grandparents. Here I saw massive banana leaves for the first time. I was overawed by their luxuriance, their scale and their life force – such a vital and dramatic contrast to the desiccated landscapes of the Free State. Back in Welkom, as a boy of four, I remember arranging rows of bottles of water with leaves and flowers in them, which were changed daily. This rekindled the vivid memory of my coastal experience and is evidence of my first collecting impulse, and early fascination with nature and its beauty.'¹

Years later, when Nel first encountered a startling *coco de mer* leaf, it seemed to him like a massive explosion of living greenness. In drawing these leaves, he has found that the only way of representing their unexpected enormity is by providing some form of human scale and placing them in an architectural environment.

The first of these drawings, in a series undertaken over a decade, was made under a simple palm-leaf lean-to, when North Island was still completely uninhabited. On each subsequent visit, Nel cut a single leaf, placed it in the space where he slept, and drew it. Over time, the rudimentary shelter was replaced by the spacious, environmentally sensitive, thatched dwellings of an eco-lodge designed by Silvio Rech and Leslie Carstens.

Unlike most of Nel's other Seychellois tonal drawings, the present Lot is distinguished by radiant hues that represent the large *coco de mer* leaf, its huge serrated form catching the breeze, in an otherwise muted timber and thatch context. The points of the leaf move across the soft white sea-sand below it, leaving evanescent traces. To the left of the leaf, an eidetic image of a leaf shrine, actually present on the island, makes its appearance. Beyond the presence of the leaf, a glimpse of the island, as though in moonlight, can be seen – elusive peaks and silvery waves.

1. Karel Nel (2007) 'In the Presence of Leaves', in Karel Nel and Emile Maurice, *Lost Light: Fugitive Images from Deep Space*, Johannesburg: Standard Bank Gallery.



299

Willem Boshoff

SOUTH AFRICAN 1951–

Homage to Kurt Schwitters

2013

wood and various sands

244 by 122 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

'Kurt Hermann Eduard Karl Julius Schwitters (20 June 1887 – 8 January 1948) was one of the historical mainstays of DADA, the avant-garde European art movement of the early twentieth century. Schwitters believed his Merzbau installations to be the major contribution of his life's work. They consisted of jumbled interiors assembled haphazardly using rather voluminous everyday objects.

The word merz derives from the second syllable of the German word Kommerz (Commerce), and it is strongly revered by Dadaists for its close relation to the French merde! (shit!). Raoul Hausmann concluded that merde is the Dada attack on society values.

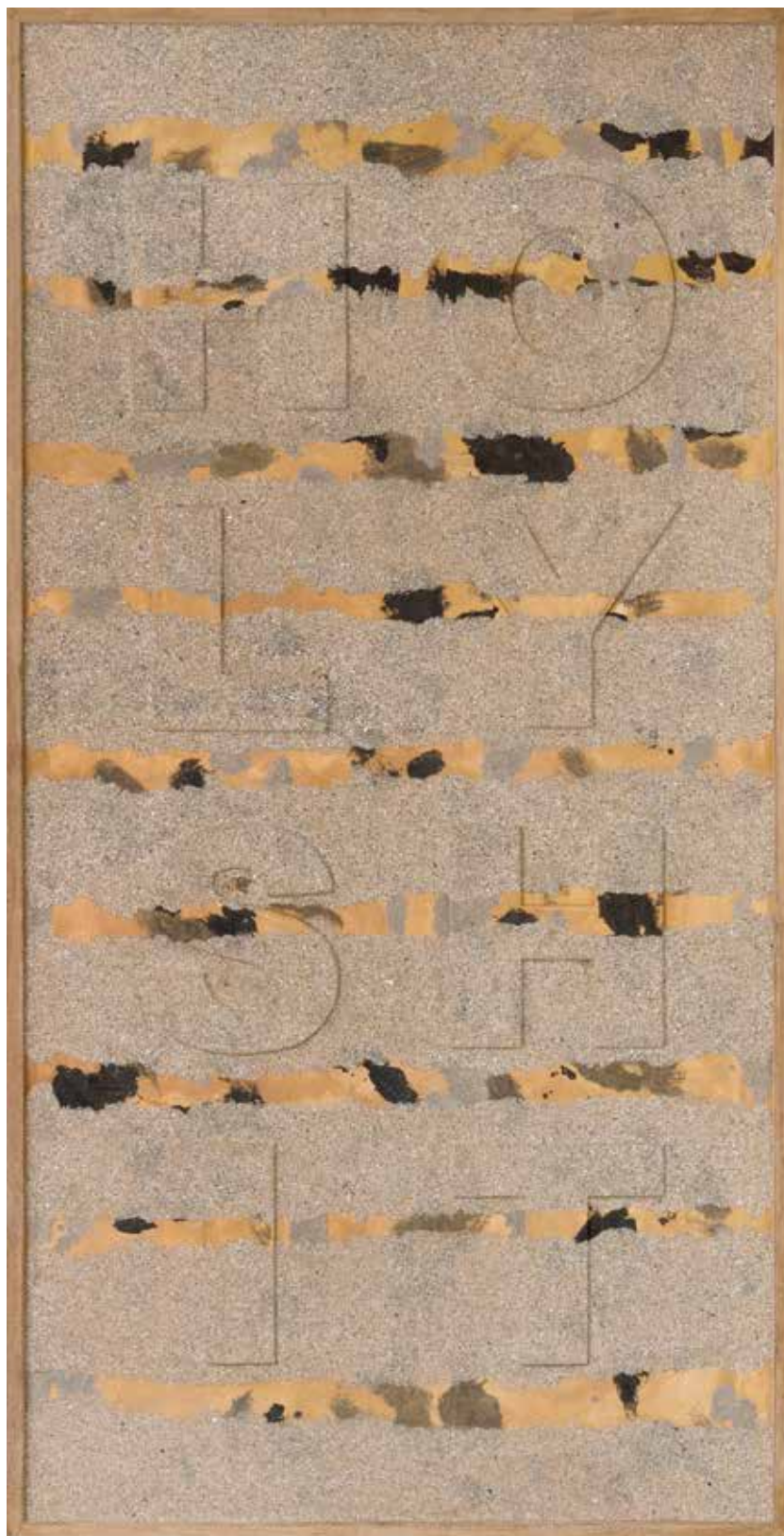
The DADA movement deified coincidental inconsistencies: Tristan Tzara, one of its leaders proclaimed seriously:

Dada is this; Dada is that; Dada is this;

Dada is that; Dada is nevertheless shit.

Yes, DADA stood in awe before the "shit" of life, and especially before the havoc that such "shit" might cause. It should also be noted that Sterculius, the Roman god of excrement, presides over all stercoraneous issues – in Latin stercus is 'dung'. In this spirit of reverence, I refer to Kurt Schwitter's "shit" as "holy shit"

Source: <https://www.willemboshoff.com/product-page/homage-to-kurt-schwitters>



300

Andrew Verster

SOUTH AFRICAN 1937–

Beach Scene

signed and dated '76
oil on canvas stretched
on a wooden door
204 by 81 cm

R100 000 – 150 000



© Andrew Verster | DALRO

301

Moshekwa Langa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1975–

Untitled 1

signed, inscribed with the artist's name and dated 2008 on the reverse

mixed media on paper
140 by 100 cm

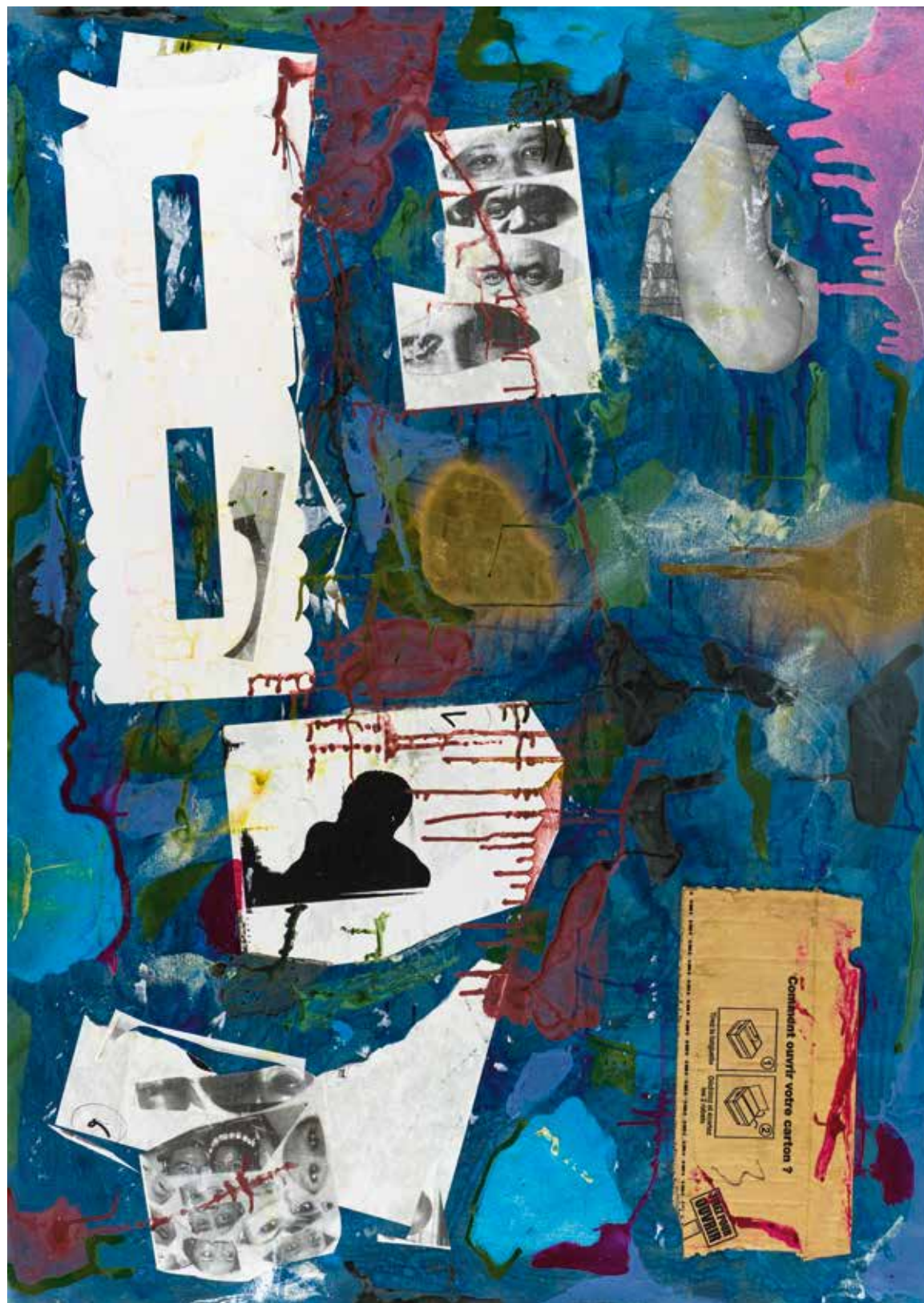
R200 000 – 250 000

EXHIBITED

Goodman Gallery,
Johannesburg, *Moshekwa Langa:
Thresholds*, 25 November to 18
December 2009.

'In Moshekwa Langa's art, every inch of the picture plane is filled with what appears to be islands in a deep blue sea, land masses, deltas seen from an aerial perspective and annotated with lists of names, ideas, a world of never-never lands.'

Sue Williamson (2009) *South African Art Now*. New York: Collins Design, an imprint of HarperCollins. Page 230.





302

Christo Coetzee

SOUTH AFRICAN 1929–2000

Mobius Infinity Chain

signed and dated 76; signed, dated and inscribed with the title on the reverse
mixed media on canvas
123 by 122 cm

R200 000 – 300 000

PROVENANCE

Strauss & Co, Cape
Town, March 2010,
Lot 436.

Christo Coetzee combines a number of styles in this lively painting. First, he places writhing tube-like forms across the picture plane. These are reminiscent of his tubular period of the late 1960s and early 1970s. One can also clearly distinguish the two black built-up volcano-like shapes, which harp back to the artist's early 1960s assemblage works in Paris, with the emphasis on the circle as dominant

symbol at the time. One can even detect a sense of the slashing of works, and the dramatic occurrence of 1975 when Coetzee took a blade and cut 23 of his paintings to shreds at the opening of one of his exhibitions in Cape Town. He then went on to repair the works in what came to be regarded his best paintings. The present Lot synthesises all these different styles.

Vladimir Tretchikoff

SOUTH AFRICAN 1913–2006

Footballer

signed; inscribed with the title on the reverse
oil on canvas
115,5 by 79 cm

R2 000 000 – 2 500 000**PROVENANCE**

Stephan Welz & Co, Johannesburg, 30 August 1994,
Lot 367 (titled *Football Players*).

Tretchikoff was keen on portraying rugby or tennis players, but *Football*, also known as *Football Players*, is probably the only soccer-themed painting in his oeuvre. The artist has often been denounced for painting only what the public liked, but the accusation is hardly fair. When Tretchikoff did paint to please, it was usually a calculated gamble. He needed a special reason to choose footballers as his subject.

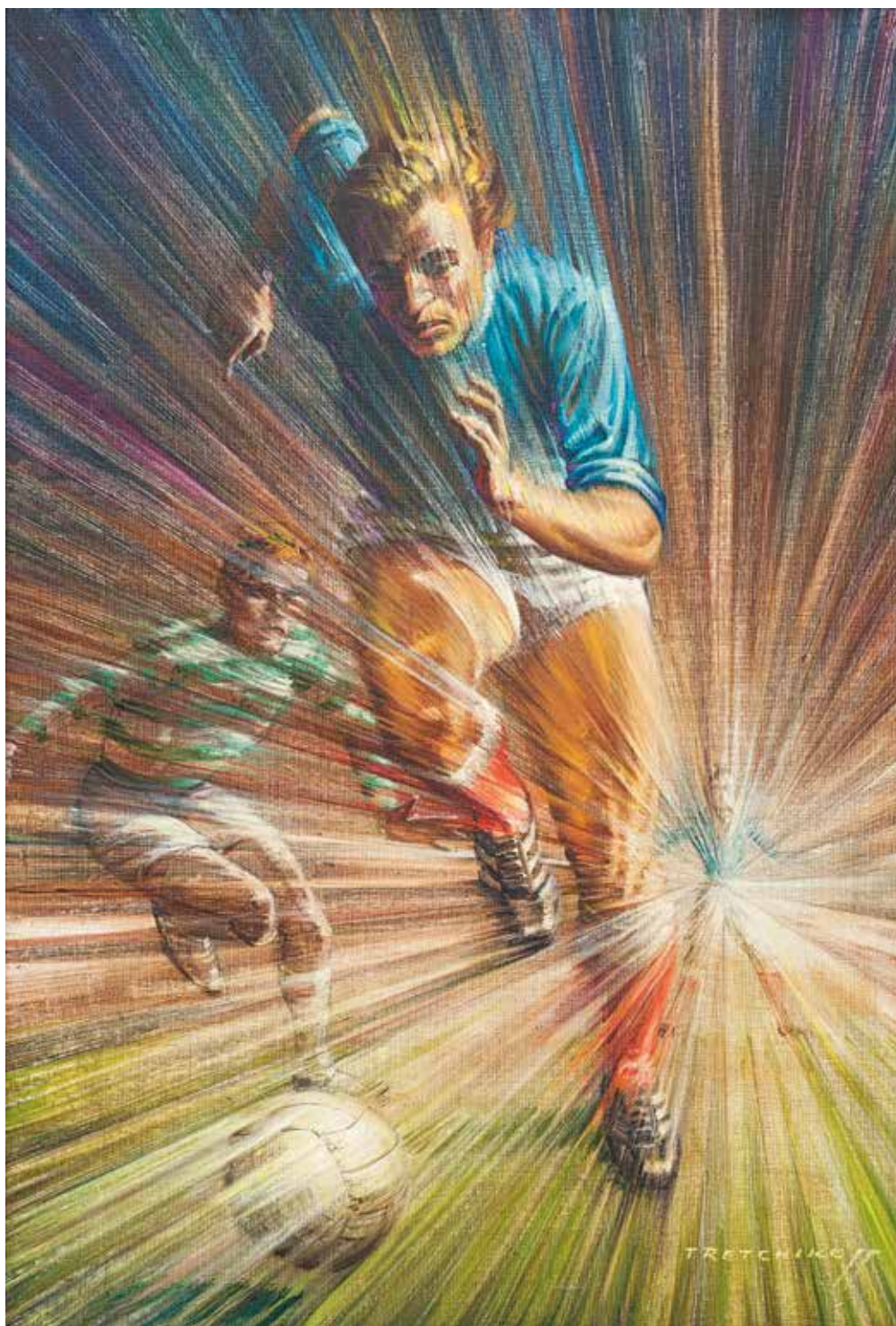
Tretchikoff's first British show had taken place at Harrods, with an attendance of 205 000. In the early 1970s, he was preparing for his second exhibition, to be held at Rackhams, the Harrods group's department store in Birmingham. Harry Dare, a Birmingham building contractor with business interests in South Africa, visited the artist at his studio in Cape Town. Dare, the owner of two Tretchikoff canvases, recounted: 'He was doing a rugby painting, and I said to him, 'It's no good, that. If you're coming to Birmingham, you'll have to have a round ball.' 'What do you mean?' Tretchi says to me. 'Soccer', I said. Three weeks later, he started it and here it is.'

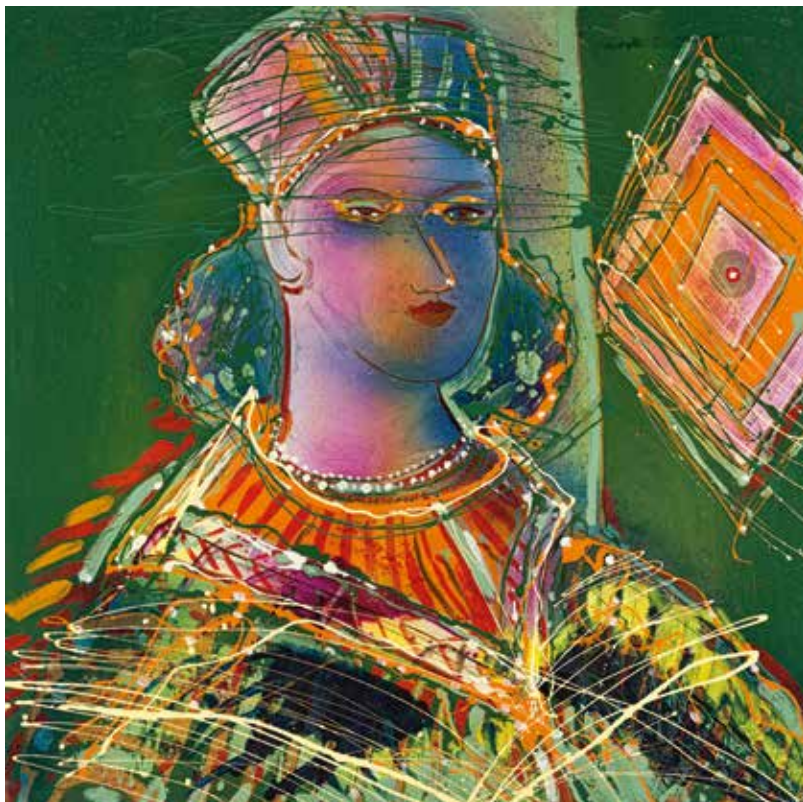
Football was one of the highest-priced works among the forty that Tretchikoff took to Birmingham in 1972. The artist's six-week exhibition attracted 132 000 visitors and proved to be his most lucrative. Shows in Manchester and Edinburgh followed.

In this painting, we see a game between Birmingham City and Celtic. The attacking player wears the blue and white home colours of the Birmingham team. Dare, a director of City football club, opined that the player resembled Keith Coombes, the son of the Birmingham City chairman Clifford Coombes. Under the leadership of Coombes Snr, the team reached an FA Cup semi-final in the 1971–72 season. Keith Coombes later succeeded his father as chairman of the club.

Football, a painting that was meant to cater to English tastes, returned to Tretchikoff's home country and entered a South African private collection. It was purchased by the current owner from an auction at Stephan Welz & Co in 1994. The price paid was the highest for a Tretchikoff at the time.

Boris Gorelik





304

Christo Coetzee

SOUTH AFRICAN 1929–2000

Sudora

signed and dated 96; signed, dated
and inscribed with the title on the
reverse

mixed media on board

122 by 12 by 3 cm

R180 000 – 240 000



305

Christo Coetzee

SOUTH AFRICAN 1929–2000

Simon's Icon

signed and dated 99; signed,
dated and inscribed with the
title on the reverse

mixed media on board

118 by 120 cm

R100 000 – 150 000

306

Deborah Bell

SOUTH AFRICAN 1957–

Shaman

signed and dated 2007–10

mixed media on paper

157 by 121 cm

R250 000 – 350 000

Deborah Bell is recognised for her skills across a number of mediums including painting, printmaking and sculpture. The iconography in her work draws deeply on historical and mythological sources and includes images of power and spirituality across various cultures and philosophies. In the present Lot, Bell presents the idea of a Shaman, a messenger or intermediary who is able to access the spiritual world. The Shaman figure stands strong, wrapped in a tiger skin still bearing the head, with two snakes curled around his waist. He holds the head of one snake up as he steps forward. Snakes and tigers are potent symbols and serve as poetic metaphors bridging the 'real' and the 'supernatural'. 'I've always been aware that when you take two unlike things and put them together, it's the gap between them that creates the poetic potential'.¹

1. Deborah Bell (2011) *Deborah Bell Presence* (exhibition catalogue), Johannesburg: Everard Read, page 18.





307

Deborah Bell

SOUTH AFRICAN 1957–

*Custodians (Face of Waters, Lady of the Beast,
Hearer of Cries, Upon This Rock)*

each signed on the base and figures signed and
numbered 6/12

bronze with a silver brown patina, on a steel base
height: 75,5 cm excluding base, 91,5 cm including
base

(2)

R300 000 – 400 000



308

Wilhelm Kuhnert

GERMAN 1865-1926

Trek through the Namib Desert

signed
oil on canvas
49 by 99 cm

R700 000 – 1 000 000

LITERATURE

cf. Wilhelm Haacke and Wilhelm Kuhnert (1901) *Das Thierleben der Erde* (Animal Life on Earth), Berlin: M. Oldenbourg.

cf. Max Eschner (1902) *Deutschlands Kolonien*, Leipzig: FE Wachsmuth.

Wilhelm Kuhnert blurred the boundaries between art and science. A renowned animal painter, he researched obsessively in his quest to depict his subjects with anatomical accuracy, in appropriate natural habitats. Kuhnert travelled extensively, undertaking three expeditions to Africa, in 1891–2, 1905 and 1911. The Transvaal Exhibition in Berlin in 1897 was most likely the impetus for the painting of this work, which Kuhnert authority Dr Angelika Grettmann-Werner dates to c.1896–1898, based on its style and signature.

The theme of the painting is probably the Dorsland Trek. Seeking political independence and better living conditions, groups of trek boere migrated from South Africa to Namibia and Angola, beginning in 1874 and continuing into the early

twentieth century. The conditions on these treks were extremely harsh and almost 3000 people are believed to have died along the way. The location depicted is thought to be Damaraland, approximately 400 km south of the Angolan border (not far from the coast), with the Brandberg in the distance. The clothing of the 'touleiers' is typical of the Nama people and the oxen belong to the Sanga species found in Botswana and Namibia.

Kuhnert manages to capture the spirit of the Namib Desert masterfully, using an impressionistic sky to create the kinetic effect of a heat haze. By skilfully cropping the front welwitschia, he underlines the expansiveness of the landscape, which literally continues beyond the edges of the painting. His rendering of the horse attests

to his skill as an animal painter par excellence. Wilhelm Kuhnert's works are represented in numerous international private and public collections and a major retrospective exhibition was held at the Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, from October 2018 to January 2019. The present Lot is a significant discovery, as southern African scenes by Kuhnert are extremely rare. Early depictions of The Dorsland Trek and the flora of the Namib Desert are equally rare, making this painting an important cultural historical document.

With thanks to Dr Angelika Grettmann-Werner for confirming the authenticity of this work. It will be included in her forthcoming catalogue raisonné on the artist as WV No. 6499.



309

John Meyer

SOUTH AFRICAN 1942–

Towards Wilgebosch

signed; signed and inscribed with the title on the reverse
acrylic on board
59 by 120 cm

R140 000 – 180 000

PROVENANCE

Everard Read, Johannesburg.

310

John Meyer

SOUTH AFRICAN 1942–

Great Valleys

signed; dated 1975 and inscribed with the title on the reverse
acrylic on board
37 by 75 cm

R100 000 – 150 000

William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Art in a State of Grace; Art in a State of Siege (Tatlin in Berea); Art in a State of Hope (100 Years of Easy Living)

1988

each signed, dated '88 and numbered 9/13 in pencil in the margin

screenprint on brown paper

each 165 by 99,5 cm

(3)

R1 200 000 – 1 600 000

LITERATURE

Dan Cameron, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev and JM Coetzee (1999) *William Kentridge*, London: Phaidon. Another impression from the same edition illustrated in colour on page 108.

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2001) *William Kentridge*, Chicago and New York: Museum of Contemporary Art and New Museum of Contemporary Art. Another impression from the same edition illustrated in colour on pages 78 and 79.

Bronwyn Law Viljoen (ed) (2006) *William Kentridge Prints*, David Krut: Johannesburg. Another impression from the same edition illustrated in colour on pages 34 and 35.

Mark Rosenthal (2009) *William Kentridge: Five Themes*, San Francisco and New Haven: San Francisco Museum of Art and Yale University Press. Another impression from the same edition illustrated in colour on page 38.

This silkscreen triptych originated out of a clandestine poster project in 1986 that, although unrealised, was intended to coincide with celebrations marking the centenary of Johannesburg.¹ Kentridge was asked to join a group of people working against the centenary, this at a time of widespread social unrest and state repression. For his contribution Kentridge created a drawing titled *Johannesburg 100 Years of Easy Living: What Cause to Celebrate?* Although abandoned, the drawing informed his composition *Art in a State of Siege*, which features an early precursor of his corpulent Johannesburg industrialist Soho Eckstein. Indeed, all three Neo-Expressionist compositions feature motifs typical of Kentridge's practice of the period (aristocratic suburbanites, industrial landscapes, megaphones, Constructivist pavilions). The titles of the individual works chart three distinctive artistic positions: that of Grace, Hope and Siege. Grace, elaborated Kentridge in a lecture in Grahamstown in 1986, was a romantic or lyrical vision of art removed from society, which he regarded as personally 'inadmissible'.² By contrast, Hope represented an activist conception of art, which his links in his composition to the impossible idealism of Vladimir Tatlin's unfulfilled *Monument to the Third International* (1919–20). Siege represented a synthesis of the former two poles: in this latter mode art is 'neither submerged by a programme outside itself; nor does it see itself as separate from society, but rather hopes to work with open-ended questions and arrive at meaning through the activity of making the work'.³ This proposition still fairly reflects how Kentridge works. Printed on brown paper by Malcolm Christian at the Caversham Press and bonded onto crème-coloured Vélin d'Arches paper, MoMA print curator Judith B Hecker has characterised this triptych as a seminal work.⁴

1. Bronwyn Law-Viljoen (ed.) (2006) *William Kentridge Prints*, Johannesburg: David Krut Publishing. Another print from the same edition illustrated on page 34.

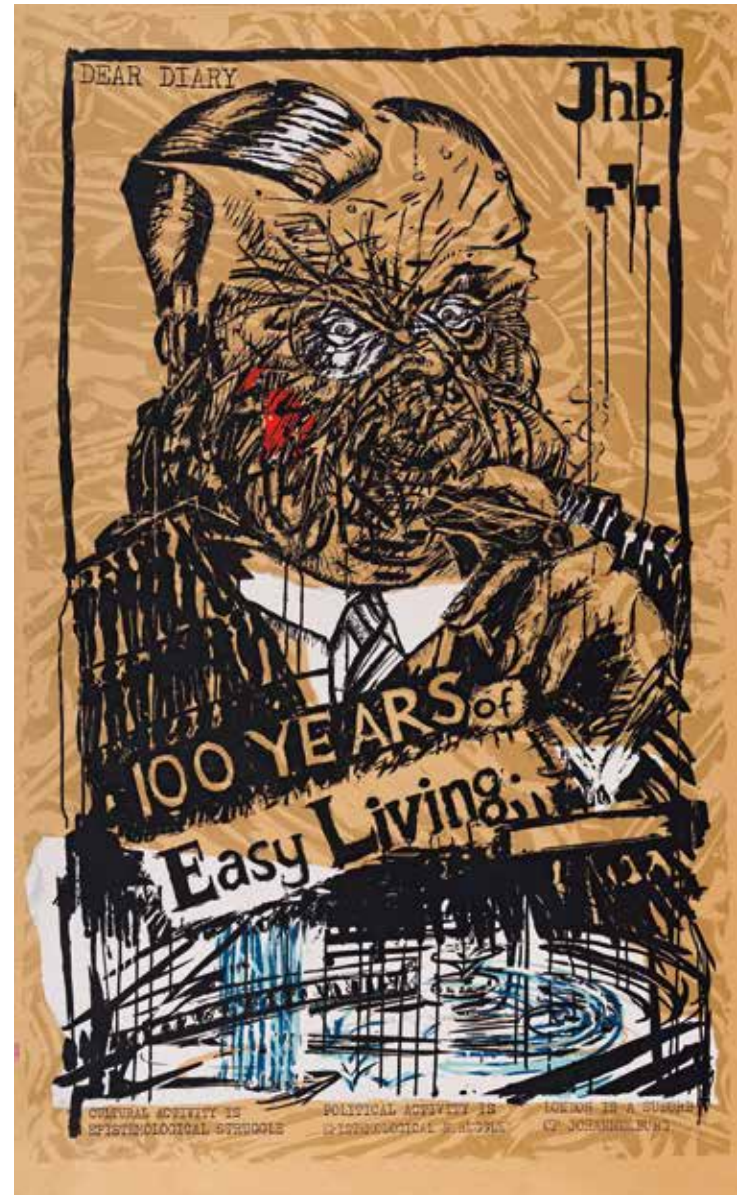
2. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev (1998) *William Kentridge*, Brussels: Société des Expositions du Palais des Beaux-Arts. Another print from the same edition illustrated on page 55.

3. Law-Viljoen, *op.cit.*, page 34.

4. Judith B Hecker (2010) *William Kentridge: Trace: Prints from the Museum of Modern Art*, New York: Museum of Modern Art, page 58.

Sean O'Toole







312

Nelson Makamo

SOUTH AFRICAN 1982–

Power over Love

signed and dated 14; inscribed with the artist's name, the title and the medium on an Everard Read gallery label adhered to the reverse
charcoal and acrylic on paper
100 by 150 cm

R150 000 – 200 000

PROVENANCE

Everard Read, Johannesburg.



313

Nelson Makamo

SOUTH AFRICAN 1982–

Mother and Child

signed and dated 2018

charcoal on paper

108 by 85 cm

R90 000 – 120 000

Greg Marinovich

SOUTH AFRICAN 1962–

Dead Zone, portfolio

a portfolio of 41 digital photographic prints, with accompanying texts by Greg Marinovich and introductions by Sean O'Toole and Karel Nel, in a portfolio box; each print signed, dated, numbered 4/5 and inscribed with the title in pencil

digital print

each sheet size: 46 by 60 cm

R250 000 – 350 000

Greg Marinovich is a highly regarded photojournalist, filmmaker and author who distinguished himself photographing the fatal conflicts that preceded the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Spot News Photography in 1991 for a series of photographs of African National Congress supporters murdering a man they suspected of being an Inkatha Freedom Party spy. This portfolio, compiled in association with Strauss & Co's founding director Stephan Welz and printed by Dennis da Silva and Andreas Kahlau of Silvertone in 2013, offers a wide-ranging visual history of the internecine conflicts and violent strife that engulfed large parts of the country in the 1990s.

Marinovich co-authored a non-fiction book *The Bang-Bang Club* (Basic Books, 2000) with João Silva that took readers beyond the photographs, giving context to that tumultuous time as well as many personal stories of those involved. 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'.

By his own reckoning, Marinovich covered a dozen massacres during the 1990s, a massacre being an event marked by the indiscriminate and brutal slaughter of many people. Marinovich later discovered a Truth and Reconciliation Commission report that spoke of 122 massacres in the Pretoria, Greater Johannesburg and Vaal Triangle areas from 1990 to 1992 alone. 'There is so much that wasn't covered,' he says. 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, but his photographs are less sceptical. They offer unflinching witness to the painful becoming of a nation.

1. Interview with Greg Marinovich, 23 January 2014.





315

David Goldblatt

SOUTH AFRICAN 1930–2018

*Carvings for Sale on
William Nicol Drive*

signed and dated 3/7/99 on

the reverse

photographic print

20,5 by 25 cm

R80 000 – 100 000



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David Goldblatt

SOUTH AFRICAN 1930–2018

Nqondwana

signed, dated 6/5/2007 and inscribed

with the title in the margin

photographic print

21 by 25 cm

R50 000 – 70 000

