



Persona

johans borman

FINE ART



Persona

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johans borman

F I N E A R T

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Persona

In ancient Latin, *persona* meant ‘mask’. Today its meaning is not that literal, but refers to the ‘social masks’ individuals choose to portray versions of themselves. These personas are selected according to the desired impression the individual wishes to create when interacting with other people. People see themselves differently from how they see others, and the personas presented vary according to the individual’s social environment.

In *As you like it*, Shakespeare expresses his view of this human condition in one of his most famous phrases:

All the world’s a stage,

And all the men and women merely players:

They have their exits and their entrances;

And one man in his time plays many parts...

In their 1981 song *Limelight*, the Canadian rock band, Rush, interpreted this phrase into their twentieth century version:

All the world’s indeed a stage,

And we are merely players:

Performers and portrayers,

Each another’s audience,

Outside the gilded cage.

Most of us are deeply driven by our sense of identity. We categorize ourselves, and others, according to religion, culture, skin colour, language, profession and whatever else we believe separates us – putting each other in ‘boxes’. Although we broadly define ourselves by our membership of such groups, we also define ourselves by comparison and contrast with others, even when our experience of others is predominantly based on external observations.

Sanell Aggenbach explores this pre-occupation with appearance in *What a lovely afternoon*; essentially a ‘non-portrait’, where a group of women are portrayed wearing paper bags over their heads. Her reference for this painting was an American photograph from the 1950s, and it challenges our predominantly visual approach when interacting socially – usually based purely on appearance and ‘skin deep’ qualities.

These fascinating human characteristics regulating personal interaction offer a rich study field for psycho-analysts and artists alike. Contemporary portrait painting has thus evolved beyond the historical memorialization of the rich and powerful, the sentiment of ancestral records, or the anthropological documentation of exotic tribes.

The five Duggan-Cronin photographs included in this exhibition were taken during the 1930s and it could be argued that they are, strictly speaking, not necessarily works of art. They are, however, a fascinating example of the categorization of one group of society by another. Michael Godby, Professor of History of Art at the University of Cape Town, published a paper which investigated the original context of Duggan-Cronin’s body of work in political, anthropological and aesthetic terms. He writes:

... Duggan-Cronin may be shown to have constructed his photographs of African subjects in certain ways apparently to create a specific image of Africa that had obvious political connotations. This primitivising image made a forceful contribution to the ‘Native Question’, which was the most important single issue of South African politics of the mid-twentieth century. However, given the openness of visual communication, on the one hand, and change in political circumstances, on the other, the Duggan-Cronin photographs show that, over time, the same image can serve apparently quite contradictory purposes.

The aesthetic context of Duggan-Cronin’s project may best be understood as two separate but overlapping photographic ideas. On the one hand, the photographs are clearly created as self-consciously aesthetic objects, and;

On the other hand, Duggan-Cronin clearly imposed an aesthetic frame onto his ethnographical subjects.

Concluding that:

Duggan-Cronin used the elements of his art to create images of a society that was evidently present in front of the camera, yet simultaneously both past and distant.

One of South Africa’s earliest black painters, Gerard Bhengu, started his artistic career with a commission to paint studies of the various Zulu face markings from 1926 to 1931 for Dr Max Kohler’s anthropological research. These illustrations were published in *Marriage Customs in Southern Natal* (1933) and *The Izangoma Diviners* (1941). The examples of his work included in this exhibition were done much later, by which stage the artist had moved beyond the anthropological aspect of portrait painting to capturing the personas of his fellow countrymen.

George Pemba’s career spanned six decades from the 1940s to 2001, and his paintings provide a visual history of what he had witnessed in a dramatically transforming South Africa. Working mostly in isolation, he established himself as a pioneer of social realism, taking his inspiration from the realities and struggles of urban black people’s everyday lives in a troubled country. Of the four portraits by Pemba included in this exhibition, two are of traditional Xhosa personae, one of a young urban girl carrying firewood, and the fourth is a double portrait of Sol Plaatje. Plaatje (1876-1932) was a journalist, editor, human rights campaigner, politician, novelist and translator at the turn of the 19th century – one of the most gifted and versatile black South Africans of his generation. He devoted his many talents to one overriding cause; the struggle of the African people against injustice and dispossession, becoming the first General Corresponding Secretary of the South African Native National Congress when it was formed in 1912.

The works of Gerard Sekoto, Peter Clarke, Ezrom Legae and Dumile Feni capture the mixed emotions of these black artists under the unjust socio-political system during the 1950s and ’60s. Sekoto’s *Choir singers* is a nostalgic and somewhat sentimental work painted from memory while in exile. It is most likely based on his childhood memories growing up on the Botshabelo mission station, and speaks of fond memories but also of loss – a time and a country he would never experience again. His *Brown head*, however, stands in stark contrast with this vulnerable mood, projecting a bold and monumental presence; brimming with confidence and pride – probably inspired by the many African countries gaining their independence from the colonial powers at the time. Clarke’s *Lonely Child* and Feni’s bronze, *Anguished woman*, similarly speak of pain and suffering, while Legae’s *Young man* beams with pride and confidence – virtually shouting: *Black is beautiful!*

Portraits of the family or friends of an artist will usually have an added sense of endearment and compassion because of the close bond between painter and subject. Maggie Laubser’s portrait of her dear friend Bosman di Ravelli is a telling example of such a work, and when viewing Maud Sumner’s *Poet*, one also gets the distinct feeling that the subject must be somebody she knew, understood and admired. Peter Eastman’s very abstracted, minimalist portraits of two artist friends, Pieter and Sarah – both photographers – confirm how well he knows and understands them, requiring only a few lines to define their personas. Pieter Hugo, the subject in one of Peter Eastman’s portraits, explores this notion of closeness on a different level with his photograph of *Dayaba Usman with the monkey Clear*, taken in Abuja, Nigeria. It highlights the fact that man’s underlying primal qualities may have a much greater influence on his behaviour – and persona – than we would like to admit.

The examples of *dashing young men* by Christo Coetzee, Cecil Higgs and Alexis Preller are each of very different personae, but are all filled with youthful confidence and the promise of a bright future. Preller’s portrait of his lover, Guna, offers a classical side profile reminiscent of the busts and reliefs of Roman emperors – obviously painted with great affection and adoration.

Cecil Skotnes’ seminal influences were the art of the ancient cultures, and Cubism from the Modern era, but it was the masks and woodcarvings of African tribesmen which he recognised as a direct expression of the African environment. Skotnes’ carved portraits symbolically express his contemporary experience of mankind, as is evident in the two works included in this exhibition; one a complex stary eyed persona, and the other confident, bold and radiant.

Referring to Skotnes’ iconography in his visualisation of archetypes, Frieda Harmsen notes: *It is soon evident that the strange homanoid creatures with their feinting and posturing are vehicles of the ironic Skotnes paradox in which the eternal mystery of the human psyche is countered by humour and ridicule. Such ambiguity always intrigued Skotnes. He endeavored to probe and understand the fundamental character of humankind, but simultaneously he encountered flippancy and fickleness, grandiose ambitions and feeble achievements, venerable idealism and tragic failure.*

Contemporary artists, including William Kentridge, Marlene Dumas and Georgina Gratrix, often utilise the portrayal of humanity to deal with political and social themes from a personal and, at times, autobiographical point of view. Dumas uses different personae to critique contemporary ideas of racial, sexual, and social identity. She often manages to capture her human subjects in their own moment in history, stating: *I still believe in the Socratic dialogue. Art is really something that you learn from being around people.* Her approach is illustrated very successfully by both works included in this exhibition; *Barbie (with pearl necklace)* and *A young Nelson Mandela* – the latter inscribed with the question: *Would you trust this man with your daughter?*

Gratrix's portraits range from socialite 'cover-girls', where she examines the cult of celebrity, to the re-mixing of Old Masters. She challenges the aesthetic hierarchies within art history in her Woman Wallpaper series by translating famous paintings of women by Modern icons, such as Picasso (Les Demoiselles), Manet (Olympia) and De Kooning (Woman V), into stripes. Commenting on the more serious nature of these paintings, she said: *Yes, they were quite a lot more calculatedI wanted to make a painting that was completely banal on one level – to be wallpaper – but also incredibly funny and angry a little too.* Her reply also hints at her desire to tease these sacrosanct masters for objectifying women in such a chauvinistic fashion, by deconstructing their masterpieces.

In Kentridge's series of nine short films, of which *Felix in Exile* is the fifth, he introduces two characters or personas – Soho Eckstein and Felix Teitlebaum. They depict the emotional and political struggle endured by many South Africans during the pre-democracy era, while specifically highlighting some of the inner conflicts of white South Africans.

The injustices inflicted by the political and ideological dominants of a population are similarly commented on by David Brown in the series of bronze sculptures titled *Eleven Deadly Sinners*. Inspired by Anne Applebaum's book *Gulag: a history*, Brown comments: *I made the Engine Driver, struck by the harrowing train journey to the forced labour camps. I wondered what the train drivers must have thought.*

This series developed further around the concept of complicity by the sometimes seemingly innocent participants who individually and collectively helped maintain the status quo of this unjust system.

In the same vein, Brett Murray's diptych, titled *I am an African too*, offers a satirical approach, although quite different from that of a political cartoonist. This work formed part of an exhibition titled *Crocodile Tears* which looked at the *African Renaissance* ideologies of the Mbeki era, and refers directly to his *I am an African* speech. It comments specifically on Mbeki's *quiet diplomacy* regarding the political catastrophe that was developing in Zimbabwe under Mugabe.

The arts writer Amanda Botha observes that *people were always important to Marjorie Wallace, but she never had a voyeur's approach. She lived alongside the people in her paintings... her lasting contribution is her cultural-historical record of work on the marginalised people in society.* Wallace captures the misery and desperation of poverty with much empathy in *Mother and children*. The exhausted mother figure watches over seven children – seemingly not all hers by birth, but her responsibility nevertheless.

Self-portraits offer a unique view into the psyches, personalities, emotions, and lives of artists, as they are forced to study their own personas – both physically and emotionally. In her dissertation titled *The exploration of Self: What artists find when they search in the mirror*, Jeanne Ivy writes: *For all artists, the self-portrait is an exploration, an opportunity to see beyond the image in the mirror and begin to search into the soul.*

Although artists may attempt to capture their identities in self-portraits, most will show only what they want us to see, while some may reveal personal secrets. Self-portraits regularly reveal complicated psychological insights into the inner state and well-being of an artist. A good example was Pablo Picasso, who throughout his long career often used self-portraits to depict himself in the many different guises, disguises and incarnations of his autobiographical artistic persona. Another famous self-portraitist who struggled to accept many of his personal afflictions, Vincent van Gogh, painted himself thirty-seven times in just four years.

There are 8 self-portraits of 7 artists included in this exhibition – JH Pierneef is represented by the only two linocut self-portraits he ever produced. Robert Hodgins' self-portrait is very aptly titled 'An old man remembering', and Gregoire Boonzaier's is inscribed on its back with the telling message: *An hour's sketch! + a lifetime's struggle!* Marjorie Wallace's self-portrait at age 70 captures her playing 'Patience' on her

sunlit back stoep – evidence of the peaceful rural lifestyle she and her husband Jan Rabie enjoyed in the sea-side village of Onrus/Vermont towards the end of their lives.

One of the more innovative self-portraits is Sanell Aggenbach's painting titled 'Sonic Baby', for which an X-ray of herself with headphones served as a reference – it depicts how she typically likes to paint while listening to her favourite music. Walter Meyer's unintended and conceptual self-portrait shows his shadow precariously balancing a composition of late afternoon sunlight and shadows against a wintery Kalahari hillside. The artist's triangular shadow anchors the metaphorical aspects of light and darkness; the yin and yang of the persona – typically a continuous struggle for all of mankind.

Marc Stanes' striking photograph of Nelson Mandela on Cecil John Rhodes' chair with the bust of Alfred Beit in the window, was photographed in the Beit Room at Rhodes House in Oxford. Madiba's regal persona fittingly overpowers the setting as he most likely would have experienced a sense of triumph over the colonial raider who was the architect of many discriminatory laws and policies in his native land.

Famous musicians, authors, and artists usually have large followings, and not surprisingly, many fine artists will often paint portraits of their idols. Joshua Miles knew and admired Marjorie Wallace and Jan Rabie, and captures a quirky Marjorie in her studio with much warmth in his mono-chromatic reduction woodcut. Although Cobus van Bosch never met Alexis Preller, Trevor Mancoba or Fred Page, his sincere, painterly portraits of these revered fellow artists speak of understanding and empathy – as only somebody who has to deal with the same questions, doubts and challenges can portray. Ceramic artist Hennie Meyer created a series of complex portraits inside three-dimensional ceramic frames. Three of these – Maria Callas, Francis Bacon and Virginia Woolf – form a part of this exhibition. Each work has either a naught or a cross as an overlay – could the artist be hinting at a game of sorts with the women displayed inside the naughts and the men crossed out?

The two sculptures titled *The lookout* and *Lesson learnt* by Jaco Sieberhagen and Zach Taljaard respectively, both comment on the caring for, and protection of children and the vulnerable members of society. About the boy in a cement suit, Taljaard comments:

We protectively build ourselves in behind cement walls for fear of violent intrusion by man and nature. Although these protective layers are an instant solution and create a feeling of safety, they become a personal burden to us, and especially to those who will follow. These protective measures not only weigh us down mentally, but also alienate us from our immediate environment and the people around us. The suit, reminiscent of a space exploration suit, however, also celebrates those vulnerable individuals who are brave enough to break down the borders and explore 'alien' environments in search of personal growth.

Richard Mudariki's painting, *The dog anatomy lesson*, is a fitting end piece in the catalogue, as it reflects on many of the issues investigated by other works included in this exhibition. This work was inspired by the famous 1632 oil painting by Rembrandt, titled *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, in which Dr Tulp, as official City Anatomist, explains the musculature of the arm to medical professionals of the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons. The concept of dissecting a subject in an effort to learn and understand more of its functions, becomes a metaphor for the suits, or those in charge, analysing their constituency in a *dog-eat-dog* world. There is, however, a striking difference here – the marked-up dog subject is alive and well, challenging its audience of dog-like personae. A possible interpretation of this scenario could be the analysis of society by the ruling elite in an effort to determine the best strategy to *divide and rule*.

The idea for an exhibition of this nature has fascinated me for a number of years, and it is has been an exciting process to bring it to fruition. As this diverse collection of works was discovered and collected over the last few years, the complexity of the concept of personae became much more intriguing. It was with regret that we had to set the deadline, as it would be almost impossible to find many of these works available again. I trust that most art lovers and collectors will find a number of works that will intrigue them and provide them with some *cerebral gymnastics*.

Johans Borman

September 2011

Cape Town

JH Pierneef

(1886 – 1957)

Selfportret

1916

Linocut

Image size 18 x 17 cm

Signed, dated and inscribed with the title in pencil in the margin

REFERENCE

FEG Nilant, *Die Hout- en Lino-sneë van JH Pierneef*,

Cape Town, 1974, No. 124, p 159



JH Pierneef

(1886 – 1957)

Selfportrait

Linocut

Image size 12,5 x 9 cm

Signed and inscribed with the title in pencil in the margin

REFERENCE

FEG Nilant, *Die Hout- en Lino-sneë van JH Pierneef*,
Cape Town, 1974, No. 125, p 159



Duggan-Cronin, AM & Madela, Richard

(1874 – 1954)

Michael Godby, Professor of History of Art at the University of Cape Town, in a paper which investigated the original context of Duggan-Cronin's body of work, writes:

Duggan-Cronin's African assistant, Richard Madela has long been known to have assisted the photographer in various ways both in Kimberley and, from 1930, in the field: he acted as interpreter and, on occasion, persuaded reluctant sitters to submit to the camera; he certainly took the photograph of the infant Sabata, Chief of the Upper Tembu, who would not let any white man near him.

We would like to thank Mr Robert Hart, Curator of the photographic archive at the McGregor Museum in Kimberley, for his assistance with identifying these photographs.

Sabata, hereditary chief of the Tembu

Photographed at age three

1930

Silver gelatin print

20,5 x 14,5 cm

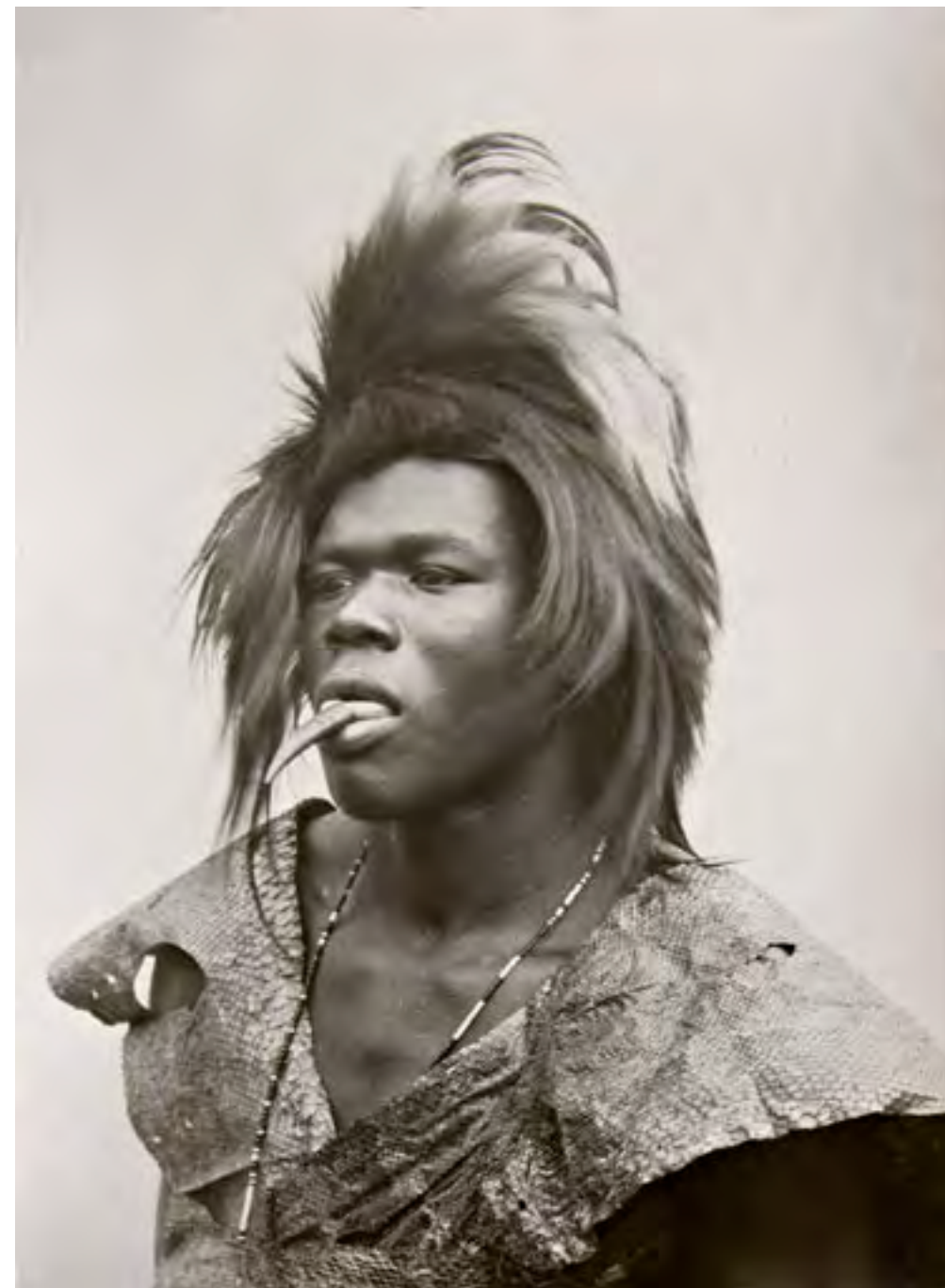


Duggan-Cronin, AM
(1874 – 1954)



**Ukuanyama woman,
South West Africa
(now Namibia)**
1936
Silver gelatin print
18 x 14 cm

**Tsonga youth,
a Khoka or snake dancer,
Portuguese East Africa
(now Mozambique)**
1933
Silver gelatin print
19 x 14 cm



Duggan-Cronin, AM
(1874 – 1954)



San woman of the Naron tribe
Photographed at Oliphant's Kloof,
Bechuanaland Protectorate
(now Botswana)
1936
Silver gelatin print
20,5 x 15 cm



**Ombolantu woman,
South West Africa
(now Namibia)**
1936
Silver gelatin print
18,5 x 14 cm

Gerard Bhengu

(1910 – 1990)

Gerard Bhengu started his artistic career with a commission to paint studies of the various Zulu face markings from 1926 to 1931 for Dr Max Kohler's anthropological research. These illustrations were published in *Marriage Customs in Southern Natal* (1933) and *The Izangoma Diviners* (1941). These examples of his work were done much later, by which stage the artist had moved beyond the anthropological aspect of portrait painting to capturing the personas of his fellow countrymen.

Portrait of a smiling Inyanga

Watercolour

34,5 x 25,5 cm

Signed bottom left



Gerard Bhengu

(1910 – 1990)

Portrait of a young woman

Sepia

40 x 25,5 cm

Signed bottom left



Gerard Bhengu

(1910 – 1990)

Inyanga in traditional dress

Watercolour

34 x 25,5 cm

Signed bottom left



Maggie Laubser

(1886 – 1973)

The shepherd

1931

Charcoal

47,5 x 36,5 cm

Signed and dated bottom left



Maggie Laubser

(1886 – 1973)

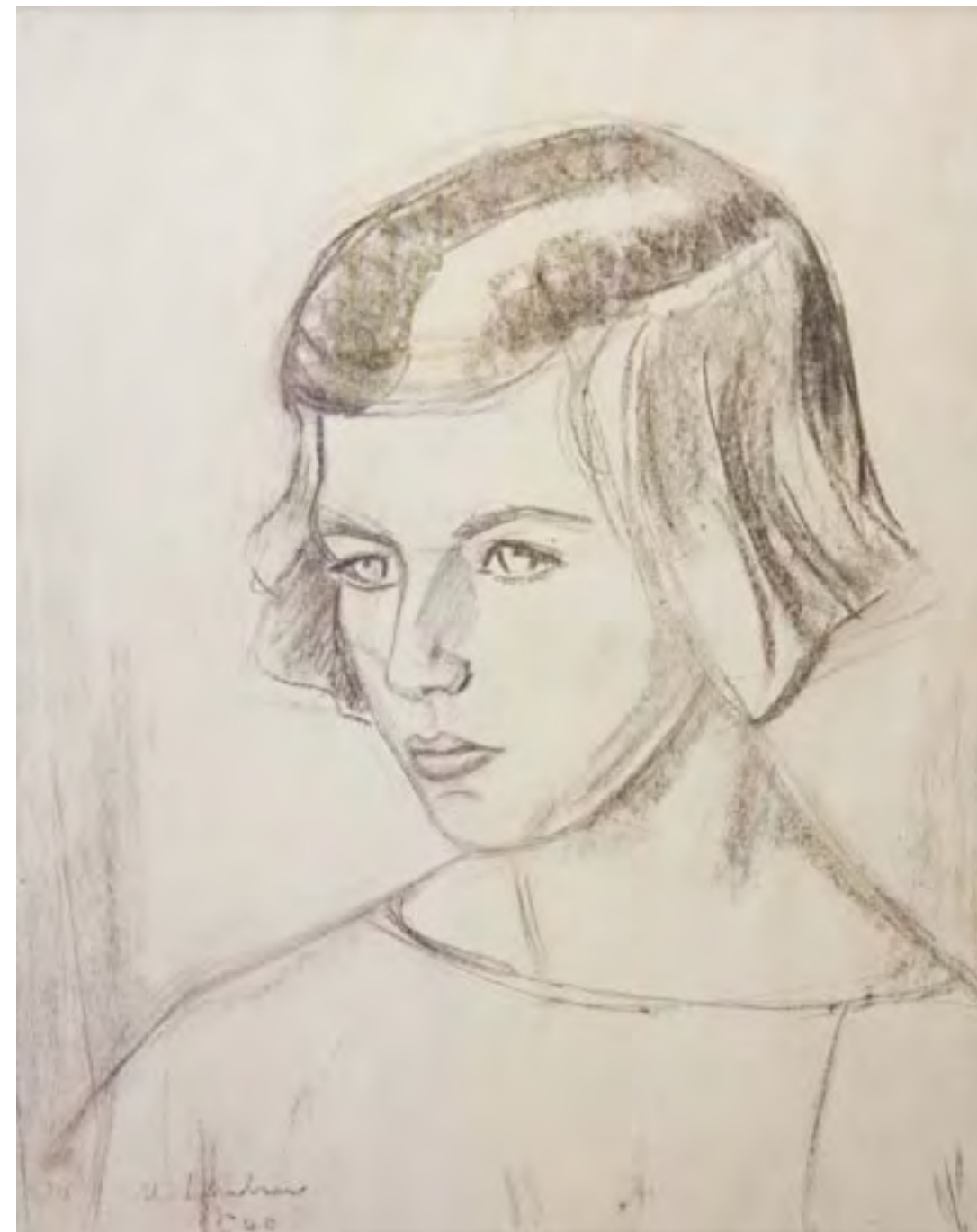
Portrait of a girl

1940

Charcoal

46 x 38 cm

Signed and dated bottom left



Constance Greaves

(1882 – 1966)

My favourite model

Watercolour

21 x 16 cm

Signed bottom middle

and inscribed with the title on the back



Constance Greaves
(1882 – 1966)



Basuto mother and child
Watercolour
21,5 x 15 cm
Signed bottom middle
and inscribed with
the title on the back



Katelo (Pondo)
Watercolour
24 x 21,5 cm
Signed bottom left
and inscribed with
the title on the back

Francois Krige

(1913 – 1995)

Herdsmen

1941

Oil on canvas

67 x 51 cm

Signed and dated bottom left



Irma Stern

(1894 – 1966)

Klopse

1947

Gouache

37 x 31,5 cm

Signed and dated bottom left



George Pemba

(1912 – 2001)

George Pemba's career spanned six decades from the 1940s to 2001, and his paintings provide a visual history of what he had witnessed in a dramatically transforming South Africa. Working mostly in isolation, he established himself as a pioneer of social realism, taking his inspiration from the realities and struggles of urban black people's everyday lives in a troubled country.

Portrait of a man in traditional dress

1950

Watercolour

32 x 24 cm

Signed and dated bottom left

PROVENANCE

Presented to Lowell de Wolf by his "Sun" students at the Ford factory, Port Elizabeth, August 1955.

ILLUSTRATED

Michael Stevenson & Joost Bosland,

'Take your road and travel along':

The advent of the modern black painter in Africa,

Cape Town, 2008, p 85



George Pemba

(1912 – 2001)

Girl with firewood

1957

Oil on board

43 x 30 cm

Signed and dated top left



George Pemba

(1912 – 2001)

Xhosa woman

1964

Oil on board

40,5 x 30 cm

Signed and dated top right



George Pemba

(1912 – 2001)

Sol Plaatje (1876-1932) was a journalist, editor, human rights campaigner, politician, novelist and translator at the turn of the 19th century – one of the most gifted and versatile black South Africans of his generation. He devoted his many talents to one overriding cause; the struggle of the African people against injustice and dispossession, becoming the first General Corresponding Secretary of the South African Native National Congress when it was formed in 1912.



George Pemba with this portrait of Sol Plaatje

Photograph courtesy of Barry Feinberg as published in Barry Feinberg, *George Pemba: Painter of the People*, Kensington, 2000, p 62

Portrait of Sol Plaatje

1985

Oil on board

48 x 37 cm

Signed and dated bottom left



Christo Coetzee

(1929 – 2001)

Young man

1951

Oil on board

31,5 x 16 cm

Signed and dated bottom right



Cecil Higgs

(1898 – 1986)

Portrait of a man

1958

Oil on board

33,5 x 25,5 cm

Signed and dated bottom right



Maud Sumner

(1902 – 1985)

Portraits of the family or friends of an artist will usually have an added sense of endearment and compassion because of the close bond between painter and subject. When viewing Maud Sumner's *Poet*, one gets the distinct feeling that the subject must be somebody she knew, understood and admired.

The poet

Oil on canvas

45,5 x 38 cm

Signed bottom left



Maggie Laubser

(1886 – 1973)

Vere Bosman di Ravelli was the first South African to forge into Europe's musical world as a pianist. Previously known as Jan Gysbert Hugo Bosman, he adopted the pseudonym Di Ravelli in 1902 in Leipzig, when he began his career as a concert pianist. Being the youngest of three children, Bosman 'learned his notes' from his sister in Murraysburg and after school pursued his BA degree. In the year before his final examination he heard the spirited Chopin-playing of Apolline Niay in Cape Town and, by way of contrast, the physical virtuosity of Friedenthal. No other career but music became possible after these experiences.

On 1 October 1899 he set sail for Britain, and after a short stay in London moved to Leipzig where he became the pupil of Winterberger (professor of piano at the Conservatoire at Dufour). While pursuing his career as a pianist he gave lessons in English and the classical languages. One of his students, Hesse – conductor of a choir and chamber orchestra – was the first to appear on stage with Bosman in November 1902. In 1903 Bosman made his debut with Chopin's second piano concerto, supported by Hesse and his chamber orchestra. An extended tour through Germany launched his career which took him across Europe.

In September 1905 Bosman returned to South Africa. In the ensuing five years he gave a great many concerts in the Cape, the Free State and Transvaal without showing any profit. During the time he spent in South Africa he was the first to attempt the setting of Afrikaans poetry into music. He also founded a national academy of music. His skill, which

was far advanced for his time, was unappreciated due to national and political unrest. Disappointed, he returned to Europe in November 1910 to resume his career as a pianist. There his career got into stride again only to be interrupted by the War in 1914. After the war he convalesced in Locarno in 1919, where he studied Arabic, supplementing his studies by delving into Hebrew, Chaldean, Samaritan, Syrian and later also Persian. A result of his studies was the completion of an Arabic – English glossary of the Quran.

Bosman resumed his career as a concert pianist in 1921 with Sharp's of England becoming his sole concert agents. During the approximately nine cold months of every year, he gave up to 80 concerts from Spain to Scandinavia. He used the summer months to prepare himself for the tours of the next year and to continue his oriental and classical studies. The outbreak of World War II meant the end of Bosman's European concert career. After the War, his house in Florence was only restored to him in 1952. Two years later he almost lost his arm in an accident, and in February 1956 he returned to South Africa and stayed with Maggie Laubser in Somerset Strand. In 1959 the South African Academy elected him as an honorary life member and in 1964 his fable titled 'St Theodore and the crocodile' was published.

Dr. Jacques P. Malan, *The South African Music Encyclopedia*, Volume 1, 1979

The pianist (Vere Bosman di Ravelli)

Oil on board

51 x 39 cm

Signed bottom left

REFERENCE

Dalene Marais, *Maggie Laubser: her paintings, drawings and graphics*, Johannesburg, 1994, Cat. No. 1350, p 321



Gerard Sekoto

(1913 – 1993)

Gerard Sekoto's *Choir singers* is a nostalgic and somewhat sentimental work painted from memory while he was in exile. It is most likely based on his childhood memories growing up on the Botshabelo mission station, and speaks of fond memories but also of loss – a time and a country he would never experience again.

Choir singers

Oil on canvas

41 x 33 cm

Signed bottom right



Gerard Sekoto

(1913 – 1993)

Sekoto's 1960 painting, *Brown head*, projects a bold and monumental presence; brimming with confidence and pride – probably inspired by the many African countries gaining their independence from the colonial powers at the time. Similarly, Legae's *Young man* (p 62) beams with pride and confidence – virtually shouting: *Black is beautiful!*

Brown head

1960

Oil on canvasboard

80,5 x 60 cm

Signed and dated bottom right



Peter Clarke

(b 1929)

Lonely child

1963

Lithograph – Edition number 16/16

Image 24,5 x 18,5 cm

Signed, numbered, dated and inscribed with the title in pencil in the margin



Kenneth Baker

(1921 – 1996)

Man with red jacket

Oil on canvasboard

53,5 x 35,5 cm

Signed bottom right



Ezrom Legae

(1938 – 1999)

Young man

1969

Bronze – Edition number 2/10

Height 63 cm

Signed with the initial L and numbered II/X

REFERENCE

Esmé Berman,

Art & Artists of South Africa, Halfway House, 1983, p 405



Dumile Feni
(1942 – 1991)

Anguished woman
Bronze
Height 26 cm
One of four casts



Frank Spears

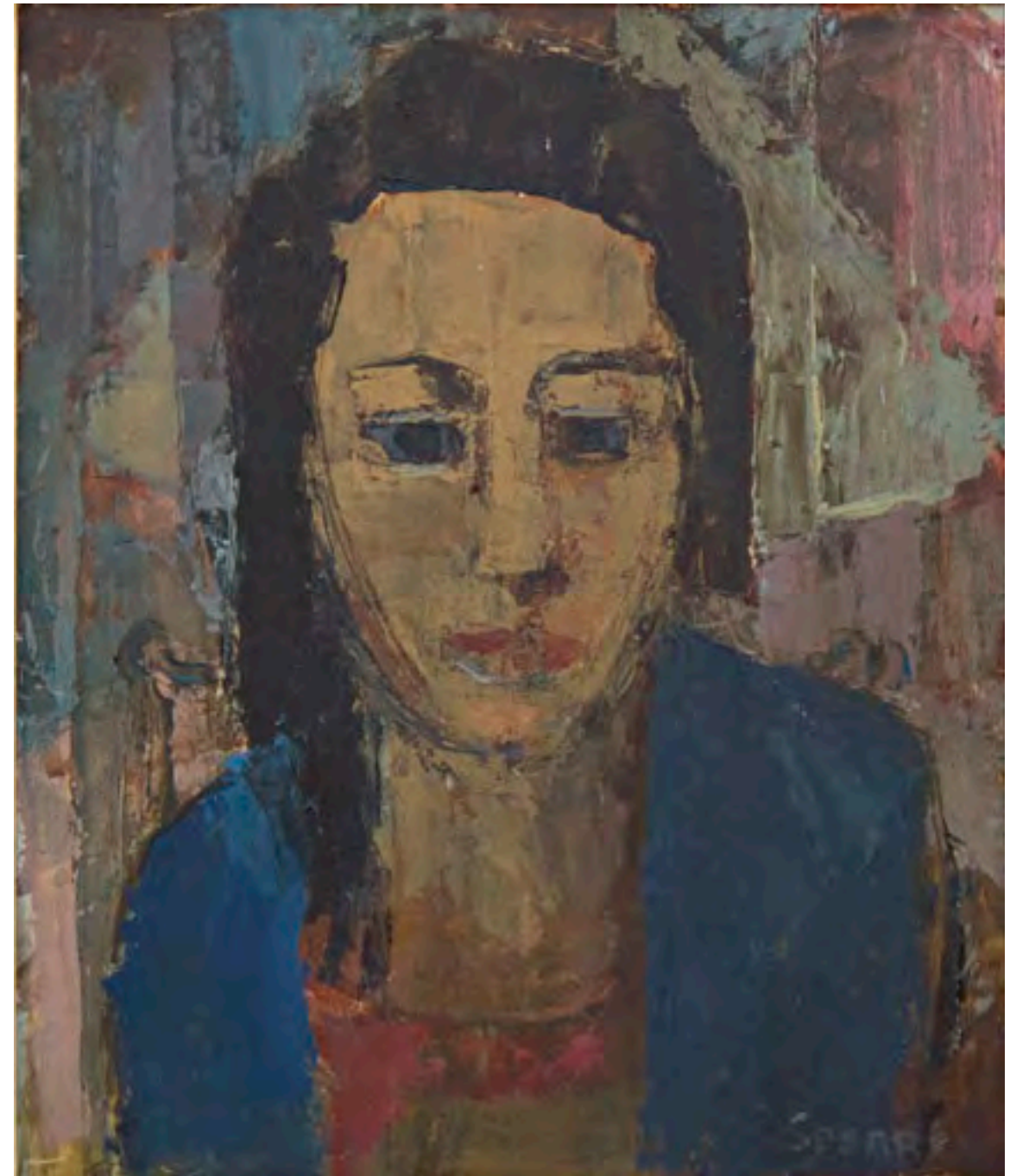
(1906 – 1991)

Portrait of a young woman

Oil on board

36 x 30 cm

Signed bottom right



Alexis Preller

(1911 – 1975)

Preller's portrait of his lover, Guna, offers a classical side profile reminiscent of the busts and reliefs of Roman emperors – obviously painted with great affection and adoration.

Guna

1971

Oil on canvas

61 x 51 cm

Signed and dated bottom left

ILLUSTRATED

Esmé Berman & Karel Nel,

Alexis Preller: Africa, the Sun and Shadows,

Saxonwold, 2009, p 320



Marjorie Wallace

(1925 – 2005)

The arts writer Amanda Botha observes that *people were always important to Marjorie Wallace, but she never had a voyeur's approach. She lived alongside the people in her paintings... her lasting contribution is her cultural-historical record of work on the marginalised people in society.* Wallace captures the misery and desperation of poverty with much empathy in *Mother and children*. The exhausted mother figure watches over seven children – seemingly not all hers by birth, but her responsibility nevertheless.

Mother and children

Gouache

26 x 19 cm

Signed bottom right



Marjorie Wallace

(1925 – 2005)

Marjorie Wallace's self-portrait at age 70 captures her playing 'Patience' on her sunlit back stoep – evidence of the peaceful rural lifestyle she and her husband Jan Rabie enjoyed in the sea-side village of Onrus/Vermont towards the end of their lives.

Self-portrait (playing 'Patience')

1995

Oil on canvas

81,5 x 65 cm

Signed bottom left



Gregoire Boonzaier

(1909 – 2005)

For all artists, the self-portrait is an exploration, an opportunity to see beyond the image in the mirror and begin to search into the soul.

The exploration of Self: What artists find when they search in the mirror
Jeanne Ivy

Self-portrait

1996

Oil on board

40 x 30 cm

Signed and dated bottom left

Inscribed with 'An hour's sketch! + a lifetime's struggle!'
on the back



MC Botha

(b 1954)



150 MC Botha
Gregoire 1996

Portrait of Gregoire Boonzaier

Photograph – Edition number 1/50

30 x 20 cm

Signed and numbered by MC Botha
and signed and dated by
Gregoire Boonzaier on the mount



150 MC Botha
C. Gregoire 1997

Gregoire Boonzaier in his studio

Photograph – Edition number 1/50

30 x 20 cm

Signed and numbered by MC Botha
and signed and dated by
Gregoire Boonzaier on the mount

Marc Stanes

(b 1963)

Usually, when photographing very well-known individuals, one has little time – I was allocated 15 minutes to photograph Mr Mandela (Madiba). A considerable amount of pre-planning was done, and assuming it was going to be a fine English summer day in June, we chose the Beit Room at Rhodes House in Oxford as the setting. As Madiba cannot be photographed in artificial light – a result of the eye damage he sustained whilst working on the limestone quarry at Robben Island – we had a bank of reflectors to make the most of what natural light could make its way into the impressive but dark wood panelled room. The closer we came to Mandela's arrival, however, the darker and more oppressively overcast the sky became. My assistants grew noticeably more nervous, not only because of the weather but also because they were about to meet one of the most famous people on the planet.

Madiba is tall in person, and radiates confidence – on entering the room he immediately set about making all of us feel comfortable, turning on his famous charm. Flattering me, he said the last time he had sat for a portrait was by Karsh of Ottawa in 1990, although I know this was not true. I always prefer to talk to my subjects before photographing them,

and luckily Madiba's PA, Zelda La Grange, and security details were happy to leave us alone in the room with him, saying there was no rush.

That day Madiba was remarkably relaxed and affable, showing an interest in us and our lives. Knowing I had just moved to South Africa, he quizzed me on how I intended to use my photography and other skills to improve the lives of others. There was no escape from his questions or his infectious humour. He turned on the Mandela smile for the camera, amused that he was sitting in Cecil Rhodes' chair observed by the bust of Alfred Beit, another great 19th century entrepreneur and benefactor who made his fortune in Africa. Madiba did not like it when I asked him not to smile but I was very keen to see the other side of him. Suddenly I was faced by the tough, driven leader hidden beneath that smile, and I noticed the sorrow of an individual whose family had become so damaged because of his beliefs and imprisonment. In that moment, I was faced by a completely different person, and this was the one I wanted to capture.

Marc Stanes

July 2003

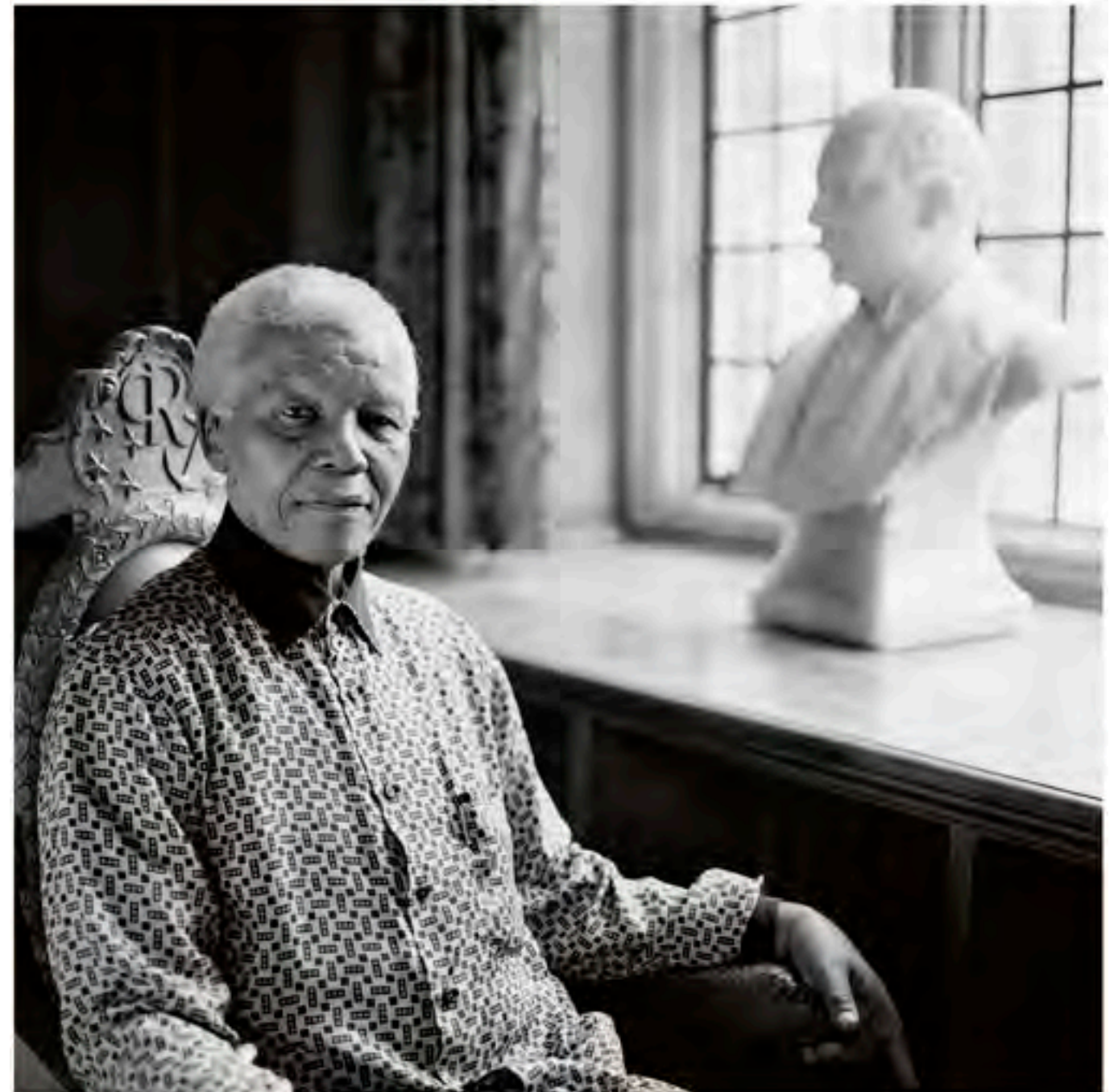
Mandela

2003

Silver gelatin print on dibond – Edition number 1/10

Image 50,5 x 50,5 cm

Signed and numbered in the margin



Cecil Skotnes

(1926 – 2009)

Cecil Skotnes' seminal influences were the art of the ancient cultures, and Cubism from the Modern era, but it was the masks and woodcarvings of African tribesmen which he recognised as a direct expression of the African environment. Skotnes' carved portraits symbolically express his contemporary experience of mankind – of the personas portrayed here, one is complex and stary eyed, and the other confident, bold and radiant.

Referring to Skotnes' iconography in his visualisation of archetypes, Frieda Harmsen notes: *It is soon evident that the strange homanoid creatures with their feinting and posturing are vehicles of the ironic Skotnes paradox in which the eternal mystery of the human psyche is countered by humour and ridicule. Such ambiguity always intrigued Skotnes. He endeavored to probe and understand the fundamental character of humankind, but simultaneously he encountered flippancy and fickleness, grandiose ambitions and feeble achievements, venerable idealism and tragic failure.*

Head

Carved, incised and painted wood panel

102 x 78,5 cm

Signed bottom middle



Cecil Skotnes

(1926 – 2009)

Starry eyed

Carved, incised and painted wood panel

85,5 x 65 cm

Signed bottom right



William Kentridge

(b 1955)

Head

1993

Drypoint, from 1 copper plate and 2 hand printed templates –

Edition number 11/15

Image 103 x 79 cm

Signed and numbered in pencil in the margin

ILLUSTRATED

Bronwyn Law-Viljoen (Ed.), *William Kentridge prints*,
Johannesburg, 2006, p 46



William Kentridge

(b 1955)

In 1994 I made the animated film Felix in Exile, a nine minute film in which Felix Teitlebaum in his hotel room has intimations of other lives and deaths around him, which he can approach but never reach. The film was made at the time of the first democratic elections in South Africa and was partly concerned with how long some historical memory of the past would survive in a new society. As with all the films I make, there is no script or storyboard. This print therefore acted as a kind of retroactive storyboard when the film was finished. Initially I had anticipated that the nine images would be chopped up and separated into nine separate prints, but when the image was printed I decided to keep it as a single image on a single sheet.

William Kentridge.

Felix in exile

1994

Etching, soft ground, drypoint and aquatint – Trial Proof

Image 55,5 x 77,5 cm

Signed and numbered in pencil in the margin

ILLUSTRATED

Bronwyn Law-Viljoen (Ed.), *William Kentridge prints*,
Johannesburg, 2006, p 50-51



William Kentridge

(b 1955)

Portrait

2010

Linocut – Edition Number 14/25

47,5 x 32 cm

Signed and numbered in pencil in the margin

Image courtesy of David Krut Publishing



Marlene Dumas

(b 1953)

Marlene Dumas uses different personae to critique contemporary ideas of racial, sexual, and social identity. She often manages to capture her human subjects in their own moment in history, stating: *I still believe in the Socratic dialogue. Art is really something that you learn from being around people.* Her approach is illustrated very successfully by both the works, *Barbie (with pearl necklace)*, and *A young Nelson Mandela* – the latter inscribed with the question: *Would you trust this man with your daughter?*

Barbie (with pearl necklace)

1997

Lithograph in colours – Edition number 16/100

50 x 38 cm

Inscribed with the title in pencil

Signed, dated and numbered in the margin.



Marlene Dumas

(b 1953)

Portrait of a young Nelson Mandela

2008

Lithograph – Edition number 190/250

45 x 35 cm

Inscribed with 'Would you trust this man
with your daughter?' in pencil.

Signed, dated, numbered and inscribed
with the title in pencil in the margin.



Gail Catlin

(b 1948)

Head of a woman

Liquid crystal, resin and oil on the back of tempered glass

68,5 x 58 cm

Signed in oil on the front



Robert Hodgins

(1920 – 2010)

An old man remembering

2003

Oil over graphite on canvas

45 x 45 cm

Signed, dated and inscribed with the title on the back



Robert Hodgins

(1920 – 2010)

Stand-up comic

2002

Watercolour and pastel

41 x 29 cm

Inscribed with 'And then this guy says to this doll...' in pencil

Signed, dated and inscribed with the title in the margin



Robert Hodgins
(1920 – 2010)

Angry old man
2003
Watercolour
35 x 25 cm
Signed, dated and inscribed with the title in the margin



Pieter Hugo

(b 1976)

Pieter Hugo, explores the concept of closeness on a different level with this photograph of *Dayaba Usman with the monkey Clear*, taken in Abuja, Nigeria. It highlights the fact that man's underlying primal qualities may have a much greater influence on his behaviour – and persona – than we would like to admit.

Dayaba Usman with the monkey Clear, Abuja Nigeria 2005

2005

Archival pigment ink on cotton rag paper – Printer's Proof

Image 50,5 x 50,5 cm

Signed, numbered and inscribed with

'Hyena men of Nigeria 2005' in pencil in the margin

ILLUSTRATED

Pieter Hugo and Adetokunbo Abiola,

The Hyena and other men, Munchen, 2007



David Brown

(b 1951)

The injustices inflicted by the political and ideological dominants of a population are commented on by David Brown in this series of bronze sculptures titled *Eleven Deadly Sinners*. Inspired by Anne Applebaum's book *Gulag: a history*, Brown comments: *I made the Engine Driver, struck by the harrowing train journey to the forced labour camps. I wondered what the train drivers must have thought.*

This series developed further around the concept of complicity by the sometimes seemingly innocent participants who individually and collectively helped maintain the status quo of this unjust system.

The engine driver

2009

Bronze – Edition number 4/6

Height 41,5 cm

Signed with initials DJB, numbered and dated



David Brown
(b 1951)



The preacher man
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 51 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated



The soldier
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 50 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated

David Brown
(b 1951)



The prison warder
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 44 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated



The lumberjack
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 52 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated

David Brown
(b 1951)



The boxer
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 48 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated



The hunter
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 45 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated

David Brown
(b 1951)



The surgeon
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 41 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated



The butcher
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 40 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated

David Brown
(b 1951)



The lion tamer
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 66,5 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated

114



The doorman
2009
Bronze – Edition number 4/6
Height 71 cm
Signed with initials DJB,
numbered and dated

115

Brett Murray

(b 1961)

Brett Murray's diptych, titled *I am an African too*, offers a satirical approach to politics and ideology, although quite different from that of a political cartoonist. This work formed part of an exhibition titled *Crocodile Tears* which looked at the *African Renaissance* ideologies of the Mbeki era, and refers directly to his *I am an African* speech. It comments specifically on Mbeki's *quiet diplomacy* regarding the political catastrophe that was developing in Zimbabwe under Mugabe.

I am an African too

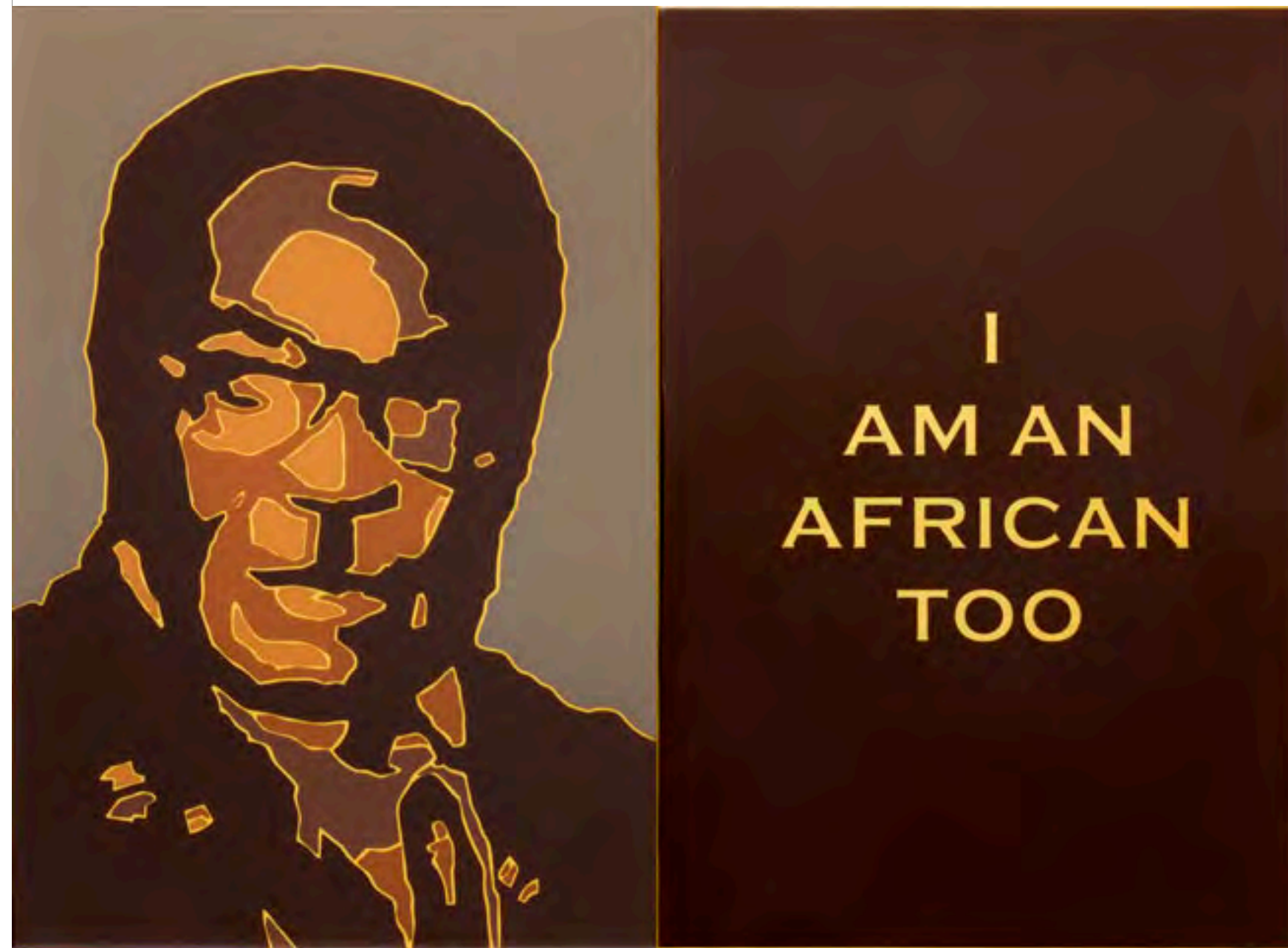
2008

Metal and resin – Edition number 1/5 (Diptych)

Each panel 42,5 x 29 cm (2)

Signed, numbered and dated on the back

The only work in the edition produced to date



Walter Meyer

(b 1965)

Walter Meyer's unintended and conceptual self-portrait shows his shadow precariously balancing a composition of late afternoon sunlight and shadows against a wintery Kalahari hillside. The artist's triangular shadow anchors the metaphorical aspects of light and darkness; the yin and yang of the persona – typically a continuous struggle for all of mankind.

Kalahari met skaduwees

2010

Oil on canvas

55 x 70 cm

Signed and dated bottom left



Walter Meyer

(b 1965)

Dieprug

2008

Oil on canvas

45,5 x 35,5 cm

Signed and dated bottom right



Xolani Moshani

(b 1985)

Waiting for 2010

Acrylic on canvas
80,5 x 60 cm
Signed bottom right



Cobus van Bosch

(b 1962)

Although Cobus van Bosch never met Alexis Preller, Trevor Mancoba or Fred Page, his sincere, painterly portraits of these revered fellow artists speak of understanding and empathy – as only somebody who has to deal with the same questions, doubts and challenges can portray.

Fred Page

2011

Oil on canvas

35 x 50 cm

Signed and dated bottom right



Cobus van Bosch

(b 1962)

Alexis Preller

2011

Oil on canvas

35 x 50 cm

Signed and dated bottom right



Cobus van Bosch

(b 1962)

Ernest Mancoba

2011

Oil on canvas

35 x 50 cm

Signed and dated bottom right



Joshua Miles

(b 1967)

Joshua Miles knew and admired Marjorie Wallace and Jan Rabie, and captures a quirky Marjorie in her studio with much warmth in this mono-chromatic reduction woodcut.

Marjorie Wallace

2010

Reduction woodcut – Edition number 6/7

Image size 28,5 x 18,5 cm

Signed, numbered, dated and inscribed with the title in pencil in the margin



Hennie Meyer

(b 1965)

Ceramic artist Hennie Meyer created a series of complex portraits inside three-dimensional ceramic frames. Each work has either a naught or a cross as an overlay – could the artist be hinting at a game of sorts with the women displayed inside the naughts and the men *crossed out*?

Maria Callas

2010

Glazed Earthenware

35 x 35 x 9,5 cm

Signed and dated on the side



Hennie Meyer

(b 1965)

Francis Bacon

2010

Glazed Earthenware

35 x 35 x 9,5 cm

Signed and dated on the side



Hennie Meyer

(b 1965)

Virginia Woolf

2010

Glazed Earthenware

35 x 35 x 9,5 cm

Signed and dated on the side



Sanell Aggenbach

(b 1975)

Sanell Aggenbach explores the human pre-occupation with appearance in *What a lovely afternoon*; essentially a 'non-portrait'. Her reference for this painting was an American photograph from the 1950s, and it challenges our predominantly visual approach when interacting socially – usually based purely on appearance and 'skin deep' qualities.

What a lovely afternoon

2011

Oil on canvas

40 x 50 cm

Signed, dated and inscribed with the title on the back



Sanell Aggenbach

(b 1975)

Sanell Aggenbach's innovative self-portrait titled 'Sonic Baby', for which an X-ray of herself with headphones served as a reference, depicts how she typically likes to paint while listening to her favourite music.

Sonic baby

2011

Oil on paper

Image 51 x 56 cm

Signed, dated and inscribed with the title in the margin



Sanell Aggenbach

(b 1975)

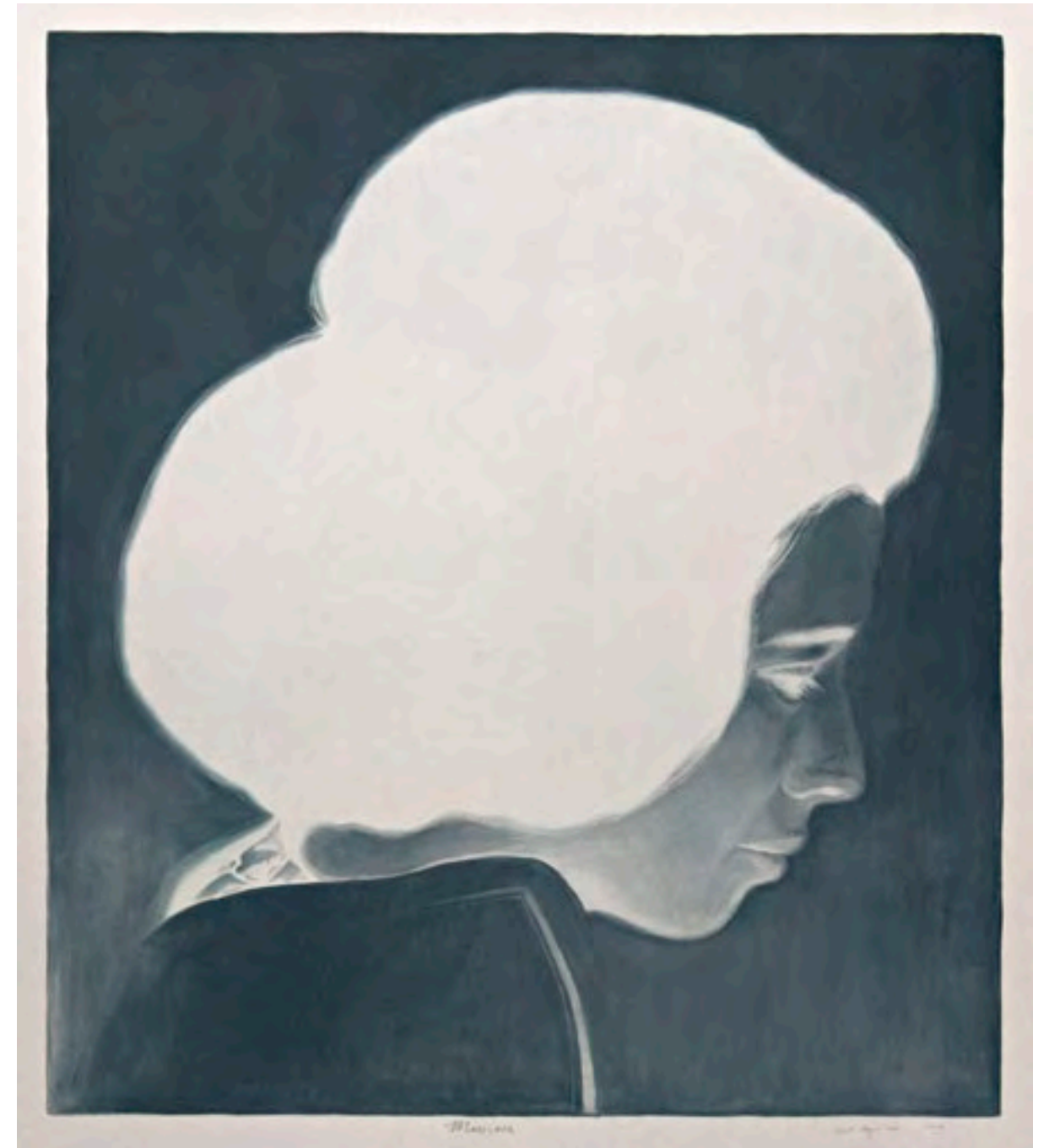
Mimosa

2011

Oil on paper

Image 50 x 42,5 cm

Signed, dated and inscribed with the title in the margin



Georgina Gratrix

(b 1982)

Cover girl

2009

Oil on Fabriano

180 x 119 cm

Signed on the back

Image courtesy of Whatiftheworld Gallery



Georgina Gratrix

(b 1982)

Gratrix's portraits range from socialite 'cover-girls', where she examines the cult of celebrity, to the re-mixing of Old Masters. She challenges the aesthetic hierarchies within art history in her Woman Wallpaper series by translating famous paintings of women by Modern icons into stripes. Commenting on the more serious nature of these paintings, she said: *Yes, they were quite a lot more calculatedI wanted to make a painting that was completely banal on one level – to be wallpaper – but also incredibly funny and angry a little too.* Her reply also hints at her desire to tease these sacrosanct masters for objectifying women in such a chauvinistic fashion, by deconstructing their masterpieces

Woman V

2008

Oil on canvas

154,5 x 114,5 cm

Image courtesy of Whatiftheworld Gallery



Jaco Sieberhagen

(b 1961)

The lookout

2011

Lazer cut mild steel and paint – Edition number 2/7

Height 53,5 cm

Signed and numbered on the wooden base



Zach Taljaard

(b 1978)

We protectively build ourselves in behind cement walls for fear of violent intrusion by man and nature. Although these protective layers are an instant solution and create a feeling of safety, they become a personal burden to us, and especially to those who will follow. These protective measures not only weigh us down mentally, but also alienate us from our immediate environment and the people around us. The suit, reminiscent of a space exploration suit, however, also celebrates those vulnerable individuals who are brave enough to break down the borders and explore 'alien' environments in search of personal growth.

Zach Taljaard

Lesson learnt

2011

Cement, crystal and enamel

Height 46 cm

Signed and dated on the bottom



Peter Eastman

(b 1976)

Peter Eastman's very abstracted, minimalist portraits of two artist friends, Pieter and Sarah – both photographers – confirm how well he knows and understands them, requiring only a few lines to define their personas.

Pieter

2011

Enamel and resin on aluminium

85 x 68 cm

Signed and dated top left



Peter Eastman

(b 1976)

Sarah

2011

Enamel and resin on aluminium

85 x 68 cm

Signed and dated top left



Hennie Niemann Jnr

(b 1972)

The addict

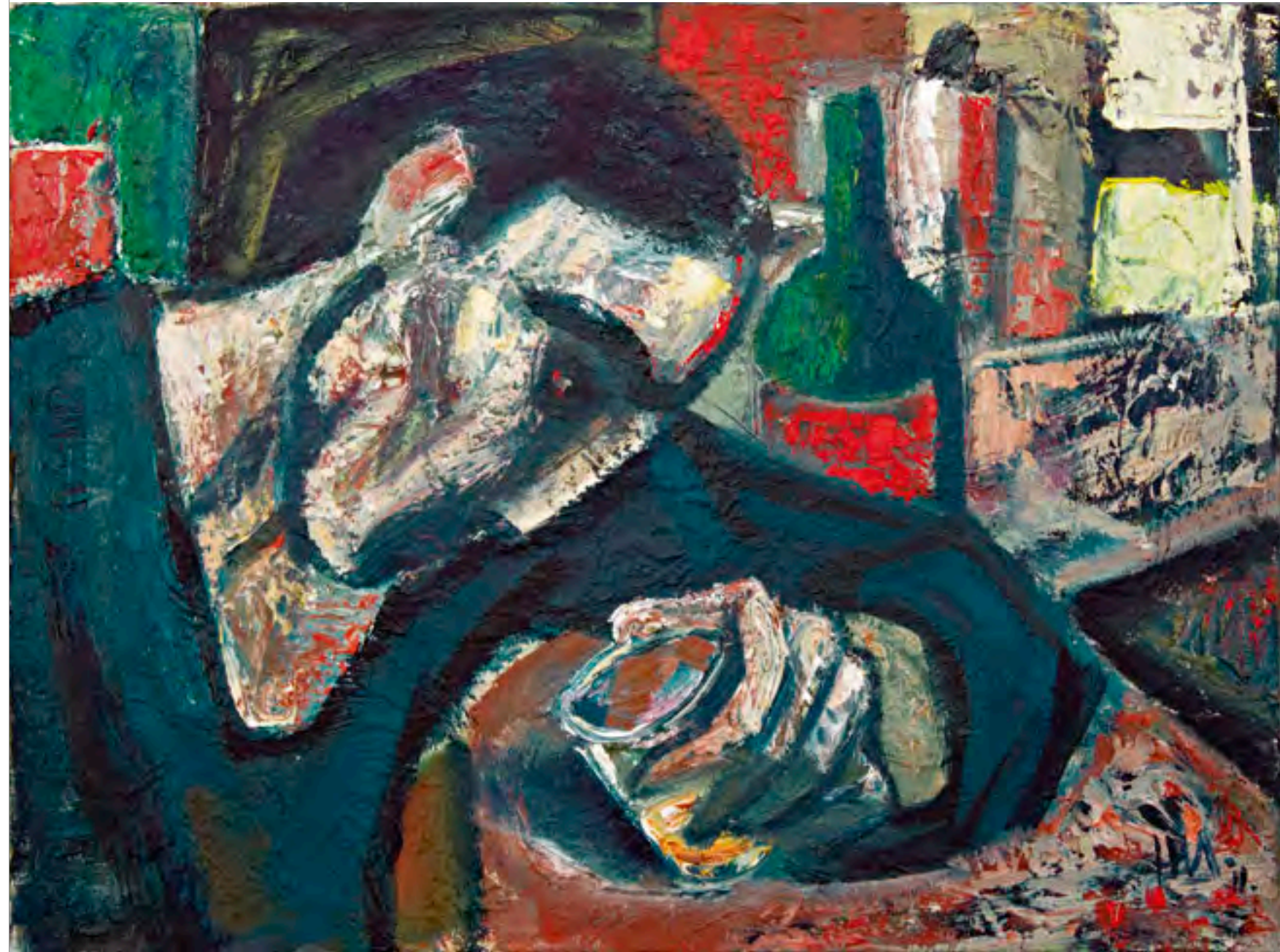
2011

Oil on canvas

45 x 60 cm

Signed and dated bottom right

Signed, dated and inscribed with the title on the back



Hennie Niemann Jnr

(b 1972)

The violinist

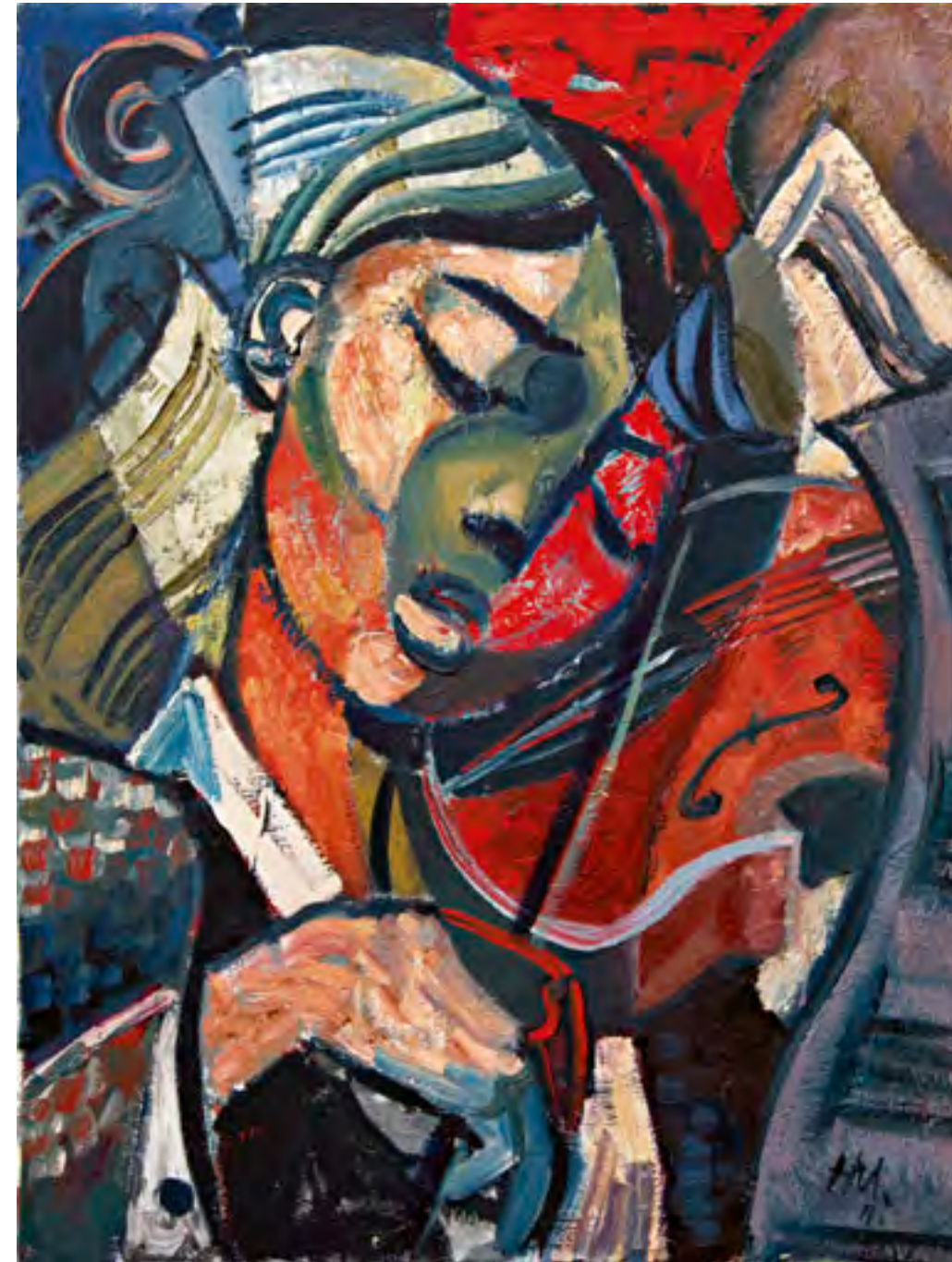
2011

Oil on canvas

45 x 60 cm

Signed and dated bottom right

Signed, dated and inscribed with the title on the back



Philip Barlow

(b 1968)

Transit

2011

Oil on canvas

100 x 100 cm

Signed and dated bottom right

Dated and inscribed with the title on the stretcher frame



Richard Mudariki

(b 1985)

This work was inspired by the famous 1632 oil painting by Rembrandt, titled *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, in which Dr Tulp, as official City Anatomist, explains the musculature of the arm to medical professionals of the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons. The concept of dissecting a subject in an effort to learn and understand more of its functions, becomes a metaphor for the suits, or those in charge, analysing their constituency in a *dog-eat-dog* world. There is, however, a striking difference here – the marked-up dog subject is alive and well, challenging its audience of dog-like personae. A possible interpretation of this scenario could be the analysis of society by the ruling elite in an effort to determine the best strategy to *divide and rule*.

The dog anatomy lesson

2011

Acrylic on canvas

61 x 91 cm

Signed and dated bottom left

Signed, dated and inscribed with the title and medium on the back



